

Remembrance Day Reflections

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[0 : 0 0] Okay, children, it's good to see you here again today. I'm going to speak again about Roscoe today and something that's very important to us in the manse and also, I'm sure, to himself in his own doggy way. Roscoe has a very good memory. He remembers things very easily. He remembers which cupboard his food is in, for example. If he's hungry and you ask him, what's wrong, what do you want? He'll go to the cupboard where his food is if he's hungry and he'll stand at the door of the cupboard till you open it and give him something to eat. He remembers where the ball that he plays with, he's got a small tennis ball that he plays with, and if I don't know where the ball is and he wants to play, if I ask him, where's your ball? He'll stop for a minute and he'll go to where he knows he's left it, even if it's in another room, and he'll go and find it, and he'll usually bring it back. Sometimes if we've shifted it from the time he last had it, then he'll be a bit confused then, of course, but usually he will find it so he remembers where he left it. But he also remembers people, and if people come to the manse and they make friends with him, he'll remember them the next time they come, and he'll show real affection for them. He'll start jumping up in excitement, and he'll let them know that he remembers them and that he appreciates, again, their friendship.

He also remembers, although occasionally, it doesn't happen very often, but if someone does something that he doesn't like, if someone isn't very good to him, he'll remember that as well, and he'll show that he's not very pleased the next time they come along. So he remembers things, and he remembers people, and today we're remembering, particularly today, those who died in battle. Sometimes war happens, and war has happened in our country's history, and war is always in itself bad, even though at times we've had to go to war to protect things that are precious to us. But war is always bad because many people get killed, not just those who are fighting in the forces, in the army, in the navy, in the air force, but sometimes also even ordinary people like you and me in our homes get killed in a time of war, and that's always very sad. And it's always important for us that we remember those who died in a time of war, because all the good things that we enjoy today, your school, your nurseries, the freedom we have to worship here today, all of these good things, and many other good things, are so important that they are worth protecting. And sometimes we've had to protect them by going to war against people who were evil. And so today I want you to remember this as well, to remember that in the history of our country and of our island, a lot of people lost their lives because they were fighting for something very precious to us. So please remember that we have so much to be thankful to God for, but also thankful that there were people who actually went to fight for our freedoms.

Okay, let's have a wee prayer now before you go through. Lord our God, we thank you today that we, as we reflect on those who fell in times of war, that we owe so much to them, and especially that we owe so much to yourself for ensuring that our freedoms were observed, defended, and maintained. And we pray today, O Lord, that you'd bless the children here as they grow up in a time of relative peace amongst us. We pray that they may come to appreciate in our own history as a people those times when war was the experience of our nation.

We pray that they will learn as they grow up the importance of those things that are valuable and precious to us in the gospel and in other things too in our ordinary life. We pray that you bless them today, O Lord, as they learn of those things in the gospel that are precious to us above all else. And help them, we pray, as they grow up in years, that you would help them develop into a people of peace and a people who will value righteousness and truth and who will maintain that in the presence of any threat to it. Receive our thanks, Lord, we pray, for them today as they form part of our congregation. Bless them and keep them, shine upon them with your face, and may all that they do today be pleasing to you. For Jesus' sake, amen.

[5 : 15] Let's sing once again to God's praise, this time in Psalm 57, Psalm number 57. That's in the Scottish Psalter as well, on page 288, singing verses 1 to 4. The tune is Martyrdom.

Be merciful to me, O God, thy mercy unto me do thou extend, because my soul doth put her trust in thee. Psalm 57, Psalm 57, page 288, singing the verses marked 1 to 4 to God's praise.

Be merciful to me, O God, thy mercy unto me.

Do thou extend, because my soul doth put her trust in thee.

Yea, in the shadow of thy wings, my refuge I will place, until the sad calamities do holy overpass.

[7 : 01] My cry I will cause to ascend, and to the Lord most high.

To God who doth all things for me, perform most perfectly.

From heaven he shall send thou and me, from his reproach defend.

That, O Lord, devour me, God, his truth, and mercy forth shall send.

My soul, O Lord, my soul, among his finances, I five brats live among.

[8 : 30] Men, sons, whose teeth, their spears and darts, a sharp sword is their tongue.

Let's turn now to read and hear God's word from Deuteronomy. The book of Deuteronomy in the Old Testament, chapter 32. And we'll read verses 1 to 18.

Deuteronomy chapter 32, page 208 in the Church Bibles. We'll read from where the division there is at verse 30 of chapter 31.

Deuteronomy 31 at verse 30. Then Moses spoke the words of this song until they were finished in the ears of all the assembly of Israel.

Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak, and let the earth hear the words of my mouth. May my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distill as the dew, like gentle rain upon the tender grass and like showers upon the herb.

[9 : 49] For I will proclaim the name of the Lord, ascribe greatness to our God. The rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he.

They have dealt corruptly with him. They are no longer his children, because they are blemished.

They are a crooked and twisted generation. Do you thus repay the Lord, you foolish and senseless people?

Is not he your Father who created you, who made you and established you? Remember the days of old. Consider the years of many generations. Ask your Father, and he will show you.

Your elders, and they will tell you. When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples, according to the number of the sons of God.

But the Lord's portion is his people. Jacob, his allotted heritage. He found him in a desert land, and in the howling west of the wilderness, he encircled him, he cared for him.

[10 : 54] He kept him as the apple of his eye, like an eagle that stirs up its nest, that flutters over its young, spreading out its wings, catching them, bathing them on its pinions.

The Lord alone guided him. No foreign god was with him. He made him ride in the high places of the land, and he ate the produce of the field, and he suckled him with honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock, curds from the herd and milk from the flock, with fat of lambs, rams of Bashan and goats, with the very finest of the wheat.

And you drank foaming wine made from the blood of the grape. But Jeshurant grew fat and kicked. You grew fat, stout and sleek. Then he forsook God who made him, and scoffed at the rock of his salvation.

They stirred him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations they provoked him to anger. They sacrificed to demons that were no gods, to gods they had never known, to new gods that had come recently, whom your fathers had never dreaded.

You were unmindful of the rock that bore you, and you forgot the God who gave you birth. Amen. May God bless to us.

[12 : 15] Reading again from his holy word. Let's praise him now from Psalm 85, in St. Psalms this time, Psalm 85, page 113, and from verse 4 down through to the end of the psalm.

God, our Savior, now restore us. From us turn away your rage. Will your anger burn against us?

Will it last from age to age? Will you not again revive us, that we may rejoice in you?

Show us, Lord, your covenant mercy. Your salvation grant anew. Singing to the tune, High for Doll, Psalm 85, page 113, singing verse 4 through to the end of the psalm.

God, our Savior, now restore us. God, our Savior, now restore us.
From us turn away your rage. Will your anger burn against us?
[13 : 23] Will it last from age to age? Will you not again revive us, that we may rejoice in you?
Show us, Lord, your covenant mercy, your salvation grant anew.
I will hear what God the Lord says, who is saved, he offers peace.
But his people must not wander, and return to foolishness.
Surely for all those who fear him, his salvation is at hand, so that once again his glory may be seen within our land.
[14 : 49] Love and truth are made together, righteousness and peace and grace.

Righteousness looks down from heaven, from the earth springs faithfulness.
What is good the Lord will give us, and our land will yield, will build.
Righteousness will go before him, and his royal way repair.
Let's turn now to the passage we read in Deuteronomy, the book of Deuteronomy, chapter 32, and looking at verse 7 as the basis of our thoughts this morning.
[16 : 01] Deuteronomy 32, verse 7, Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations. Ask your father, and he will show you, your elders, and they will tell you.

We know how easy, or much easier it is, to remember things when they're put into music or song. Maybe you've done that with various things in your life that you wanted to remember particularly. Some people in school remember things like multiplication tables, if they put them in the form of a song. Not sure if that's successful for everyone, but some people find that useful. Also, things like the books of the Bible, the Ten Commandments. Various things like that have been put to music or in the form of songs, so that it makes them easier to remember. And you'll notice here that what Moses is setting before the people of Israel, at this time, just before they are about to enter into the land of Canaan, Moses in Deuteronomy is recapitulating, or just going back over their history, in the main parts of their history at least, so as to set those things before them as a reminder to them of where they've come from, what God has been to them, where they're going to, what they need to do once they've entered the land of Canaan.
[17 : 34] All of these things are put here in the form of a song. Moses spoke the words of this song until they were finished. So these following verses in chapter 32 are obviously verses that the people of Israel came to know in a musical form, in some way or other, at least in a poetic form, so that they were, hopefully by that, better able to remember them and to carry them forward into their future.

And that's too what we're doing today in terms of remembrance, not putting it in the form of a song, but we're here to remember certain things that are important to us in our society and as a people, and indeed as an island, and as a church as well.

On this Remembrance Sunday, we remember the fallen, remember them not just in the terms of remembering the fallen of two great world wars, but also other conflicts since then and even before then.

And right up to the present day, we know that there are those who give their lives in the service of their country in various places of conflict in the world today. Not only do you remember the fallen, but we also remember their families. We sought to do that in prayer, to remember those who look after the injured servicemen that we find also in various places in our land, and the trauma for their families as they continue to try to cope and even overcome the difficulties of living with loss of limbs, with loss of mental capacities, with post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of war and conflict, and experiencing things which none of us would want them or ourselves to experience.

[19 : 33] But as we do so, we extend our remembrance to remembering God's goodness, because that's essentially what Moses is doing as he sets out these words in the form of a song for Israel.

Yes, we remember those who fell in conflict. We remember their families. We remember the consequences of that for ourselves and the protection of and maintenance of our freedoms and many things that we enjoy and still have as a society to hold precious. But above all of that, and indeed before all of that, in a sense of importance, is that we remember the role of God in all of that, something which may not be evident in every gathering of remembrance today and in every thought of remembrance, but actually it's God that dominates the chapter, isn't it?

They're not just to remember their history and what happened to them in Egypt and subsequent to Egypt and through the desert and on to this point before they're just about to enter the promised land.

They have to remember their God. And they have to remember their God for all that he has done for them, because that's really the key to where they're at at this moment as Moses speaks to them.

[20 : 43] What we owe to God in our history is also hugely significant to us today. So let's look at two things. First of all, what we are to remember, and we'll look at that in terms of God's dealings with us.

And secondly, how we are to remember or the method by which we are to remember, and that is in inquiring and learning as this text sets it before us.

Remember the days of old. Consider the years of many generations. And then he also says, ask your father and he will show you your elders and they will tell you.

There's an inquiry and a learning process regarding this remembering of God's dealings with us. So what we are to remember then is first of all, God's dealings with us.

Here you see, Israel are reminded of their formation as a people. Where did their formation come from? How were they set up as a people? To whom or to what do they owe their existence as they stand here on the threshold of the promised land?

[21 : 54] Well, Moses is reminding them that this in fact is where they came from, from the creative grace of God. They are to remember God's grace as they stand here as he says in verse 6.

Is he not your father who created you, who made you, and established you? They are to cast their minds back to what they were and what they became.

What they were before God fashioned them into a people that bore his name with which he was in covenant. And they are to remember as they reflect upon their history that they owe everything really that's precious to them to this God, to his grace, to his mercy toward them.

And so too, in our remembrance today, as we remember and reflect upon the cost of our freedom, as we remember those who fell in conflict, we remember too the goodness of God, the grace of God.

And we remember especially the contribution of God's truth to us as a people. I know that that's something which is sadly dismissed from many people's thoughts, from too many people's thoughts in our society today.

[23 : 16] They don't have a problem remembering those who fell in conflict, those who actually gave their lives in the service of their country. They're genuinely grateful for that, I'm sure.

But ask them to say, yes, but that's because in God's goodness, in the overarching sovereignty and rule of God, he actually provided us with the means by which, even at great cost, our freedom was secured, the gospel was secured, our Christian basis as a society was secured and would continue through that.

that's something that sadly too many are prepared to say, no, I don't believe that. I don't accept that aspect of it. But you know it's true.

You believe in this God. You acknowledge that this is the God of history. The God's plan is being worked out in the history of the nations and in the history of this world and in our own history as a people and in our history even not only as a church and as a nation but as an island as well.

You think about all the things that we do hold precious today. Where have our important democratic principles actually come from?

[24 : 29] Where have the interests of truth and justice actually come from that we find applicable to our judiciary, to our forces of law and order, to the maintenance of order in our society?

Where have our educational principles actually arisen from? Where does the moral code that we have as a nation to this day? Where does it actually come from? It didn't come from our pagan background.

Of course, every human being is imbued with a sense of right and wrong. Every human being to an extent has a finger on some of those values and some of those important principles.

But by and large, they came to be formed as a basis for our society from the teaching of God's truth, from the Bible, from the way in which God reveals himself to us and still reveals himself to us through the pages of Scripture, through the teaching of the Gospel.

We are to remember today the days of old, to consider the years of many generations as years where we've seen the grace of God at work, where we've seen the way in which God used his truth

to mold us as a people for whom as a society this Christian truth would form a basis and a foundation for individual and for community life.

[26 : 06] Now that is in danger of being eroded. We're quite confident that God will maintain his truth as he sees fit, that he will maintain his church, that there will be people who bear his name and testify to him right down through the generations to the end of the world.

But you know as well as I do that this particular emphasis on God's role in our history is very steadily being erased from the teaching that people receive.

And I'm afraid to say that in the enemy strategy that enemy of truth that devilish dark force that's always at work is targeting our schools particularly because the more you get of a Christian basis removed from our children's education the more likely it is that the next generation will have even less of those things in their remembrance in their values in their way of life.

We are to remember God's dealings with us in his grace but you notice to his goodness in the way in which of course his grace and his goodness combine and interact we're not making a great distinction between them but his goodness as seen verses 10 to 14 there for example he found that Israel he found Israel in a desert land and in the howling waste of the wilderness he encircled him he cared for him he kept him as the apple of his eye like an eagle that stirs up its nest and flutters over its young spreading out its wings catching them bearing them on its pinions the Lord alone guided him no foreign God was with him he made him ride on the high places of the land he ate the produce of the field he suckled him with honey out of the rock and so on through to the end of verse 14 what is that saying is telling us about God's goodness God finding this people God forming this people God protecting encompassing this people God leading these people

God's compassion God's God's settling of them God giving them of the very best of the produce and of course that's true in our own case as well hasn't God been good to us as a people don't we today take the words of verse 7 remember the days of old consider the years of many generations and can't we say let's count our blessings can't we say today as we remember the fallen that we remember God who in his overarching goodness despite the fact that many had to give their lives and did so willingly nevertheless in God's goodness we as a people have come to benefit from the way in which he secured our freedoms through their loss and at such great cost and you see verses 8 to 9 there when the most high gave to the nations their inheritance when it divided mankind he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of

[29 : 28] God but the Lord's portion is his people Jacob that means Israel is his allotted heritage now what's that saying to them that's reminding them that when the Lord as the most high divided all the nations and gave them their allotted place in the world he had a particular regard for Israel not because they were the biggest not because they were the most numerous people not because they were necessarily the ablest people of all the people in the world but simply because he specially set his affection and favor upon them for his own good pleasure we're not the biggest country in the world we're not the most numerous by any means in terms of population we're not the biggest geographically glory and yet down through the years God has blessed us singularly God has brought blessing after blessing to us in our society in our history as a people we could say we're very small compared to other places in the world and yet

God has seen fit to single us out as a people for many blessings and secure to us the freedoms we enjoy at such great cost and can we not say the same of ourselves as an island what is the island of Lewis or the western islands let's just say Lewis and Hannes what are we in comparison to the whole of the UK what are we in comparison to the whole world geographically we're such a small tiny sliver of land if you like looking at it that way what are we as a population compared to the vast population the billions that live in the world and yet God has seen down through the generations has seen fit to bless us to bless us with so many blessings to bless us especially through the gospel and with the gospel to bless us as a people with so much that we hold valuable in our culture and in our tradition as well as a people that people to this day are envious of you only have to look at some of the TV crews that came in recent times just in the past few weeks with regard to American developments of the

American presidential election and so on and time after time you find these people coming to the island they've never been here before they leave with a sense of how precious and special this place is and yet they don't necessarily know how precious it is for us as a gospel people but God has blessed us friends remember the days of old consider the years of many generations how we've seen wave after wave of gospel blessing of people's lives influenced for good by the gospel

and that thankfully though maybe not to the extent we'd like is still with us God continues to favor us with blessing the fact that you're all here today is testimony of that this place could be empty today but it's not why is it not because God's goodness is still directed to us because you want to be here to worship this

God and to serve this God and to pay your respect to God's goodness in securing all of this to us although we acknowledge it's at cost at the cost of people's lives at times in conflict it's acknowledged that this island is not a source of pride in the wrong sense but maybe pride in a good sense if that's possible that this island provided many more soldiers airmen and army personnel during times of war proportionally than any other part of the country and that correspondingly this island suffered losses proportionally greater than any other part of this country and yet God has seen fit to bless us still and God continues to show his goodness to us and although we're finding that there are still attempts as there always have been but maybe increasingly in our own days that this would be eradicated from our history as well as an island the role of God the place of the gospel the blessings of God's truth the formation of our thoughts and our outlook as a people from the truth of God today we stand together and say

Lord thanks to your name and to your goodness we are what we are by the grace of God I am what I am we are to remember God's dealings with us in his grace and in his goodness and to do so as he continues to bless us and as we pray he will bless us even more yet how are we to remember well notice what he says in the second part of the verse ask your father and he will show you your elders and they will tell you now this is something that you find very consistently in Deuteronomy indeed throughout the Old Testament if you look back to chapter 4 for example and at verse 9 you'll find Israel were constantly told by God to do this sort of thing to carry out this exercise all the time chapter 4 and verse 9 you find it there only take care and keep your soul diligently lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen unless they depart from your heart all the days of your life make them known to your children and to your children's children and you'll find the same at chapter 6 verses 7 and verse 20 on chapter 6 at verse 7 you'll find the same emphasis there you shall teach them diligently these are the commands the instructions that God was giving through [36:06] Moses you shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house when you walk by the way when you lie down and when you rise and then at verse 20 from verse 20 to the end of that chapter 6 when your son asks you in time to come what is the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes and the rules that the Lord our God has commanded you then you shall say to your son we were fatal slaves in Egypt and so on in other words they were to practice as a people this exercise of remembering and reflection on their history on where they came from on the way that God had actually been so good to them on the grace and goodness of God towards them and they were to pass this on in their generations in their families in their homes not just when they sat at certain times of worship but even during their ordinary course of life daily when they went about their business they were to instruct their children people we know the history of our nation that we know why conflicts arose what they were to do with what they were about and as we pay our memory and respect to the fallen it would be a disrespect to them if we didn't actually bother to give our minds to reflect upon why they actually had to go to war and what was involved in these wars and why they arose

I know there would be contentious issues in that and perhaps in more recent times than when it was more obviously the case that you had to go to war against Hitler and the Nazis and yet even to this day there is an oppressor an evil in the world a force that wants to destroy our freedoms that we have come to know through the gospel we have to withstand that and if need be even in conflict it's important that we realize in our history as a nation why these things took place how important were biblical principles then to us and now to us what was foundational in the thinking of our leaders and of our people as we went to war as we engaged in war as we suffered losses how did we cope with losses how did we keep our resolve and it wasn't just a matter of a leader such as Winston Churchill whom God in his providence undoubtedly provided for assassination at that critical time and other leaders before and since perhaps but even in churches addresses and speeches you'll find many references to the gospel to the Bible to the Ten Commandments to the Bible's descriptions of evil in other words God's truth was even then and maybe particularly then really precious to us as to how to cope with war how to approach losses how to deal with devastation how to deal with mass bereavement and sorrow and trauma and as an island we're no strangers to that are we how did we cope with the loss of the Iola how did all these families in the

island approach such huge loss how did the next generation manage without all of these men suddenly removed in the mystery and sorrow of God's providence well maybe not everybody but most people had a biblical way of looking at it they had a trust in God they realized God's sovereign wisdom they turned to God's care they had an inherent sense through the gospel people that the God of Israel was their God too that he would be a rock to them as he had been to previous generations that's too what we want to pass on ask your father ask those who still remember that conflict what was it like and isn't it true of us too as a church it's the same in principle for the church as for the nation deliverance from various forms of darkness or spiritual oppression what was the reformation about why did it happen what were things like before then what did it mean for the church in the western world suddenly to be emancipated from the darkness of these centuries before then when the gospel in terms of its essence and the freedom of its preaching had virtually disappeared when people were held in the grip of dark superstition and so many other things in the corruption of the church throughout Europe in the dark ages and the middle ages why is the reformation important why should we remember God's goodness in opening up his truth for us through people like Luther and Calvin and their followers how much do we realize our own background as a church our history as a church who was Athanasius way back in history why was he so important when the deity of Christ was at stake who was John Calvin why is he of such stature in church history what difference did he make under God to the whole of Europe you might say who was Thomas Chalmers who were the men who led the free church when it was formed in 1843 why did they do so why were they so insistent on what they stood for why is that important to us today ask your father make inquiry buy the books read the accounts ask people that's so important to us because as it was for Israel they were to take this into their future in the promised land they were to carry these things with them in their mind and in their practice because the

[43 : 55] Lord was telling them if you forget these things then you're in trouble you'll lose your stability as a people and so he's saying to us too today remember the days of old consider the years of many generations ask your father and he will tell you your elders and they will tell you no elders doesn't mean just those who sit in the elders pew those who are elders in the congregation elders means those of an older generation and one of the things that this brings to us very pointedly is the need for the generations to be well integrated together in other words that there isn't a very obvious divide or distance between the younger people and the older people and that's true of this congregation and every congregation as well not just in our society or in the church at large but let's look at it in the more immediate context of our own congregational life young people ask your elders be with them ask them why they believe what they believe ask them how have they come to appreciate the history of their church and if they can't tell you then tell them that they should be ashamed of that because it should be something we're prepared to and equipped to pass on generational cooperation that gives you an ongoing recurring cycle this is the ideal of it that's why Israel were actually given these instructions by God because this cycle would then continue you see this generation as they're instructed as they pass it on to the next generation they're equipping them to become the instructors and the teachers of the next generation and so the cycle continues there aren't that many left nowadays that actually saw service during the second world war there are still some but they're very old and they're venerated rightly for the fact that they are able to recount their experiences some of them but every year that goes by the number is getting fewer and fewer and it'll soon be the case when there'll be nobody left in our nation that actually served in the second world war but their contribution is not forgotten the memory of them is not forgotten why because they passed it on to ourselves and so it is the same in the church as well there are not many people left in Stornoway that knew the last revival in our island or in any church in the island but they passed something on to those of us who followed them in my generation that's now precious to us because we know what it meant to them and could see what it meant to them and could see in their lives the outcome of that in the way they lived in their dedication to God and in their zeal and in their prayer that this would again be the case that God would return in power to our island to our people to our congregations ask your father ask the older generation take time to be with them and you who are older take time to pass on what you know from the gospel from your history as a congregation as a people as an island let's make it our business to do this more and more because if we lose the practice of passing it on of asking and of giving the information if we lose the practice we'll lose the knowledge and if we lose the knowledge we've lost so much of our

grounding ask your father and he will show you your elders and they will tell you but you see he is saying remember the days of old consider the years of many generations not to be an asking simply out of mere curiosity it's to be an asking with a desire to really study it when he uses the word consider here it means give your mind to it don't just treat it as a kind of passing exercise or something as a hobby it's too important for that consider it remember it considerably remember it studiously give time to study it that's what he means because all of this is really against the background of what

Moses knew would happen in the land of Canaan and what he knew would happen in the land of Canaan is in chapter 31 and verse 24 onwards these verses when Moses had finished writing the words of this law in a book to the very end Moses commanded the Levi take this book of the law put it by the side of the ark of the covenant that it may be there for a witness against for I know how rebellious and stubborn you are behold even today while I'm yet alive with you you have been rebellious against the Lord how much more after my death verse 29 for I know that after my death you will surely act corruptly and turn aside from the way that I have commanded you and in the days to come evil will befall you because you will do what is evil in the sight of the Lord provoking him to anger through the work of your hands why is Moses telling the people all this in chapter 32 why is he putting it into a song to make it easier for them to remember it because he knows their tendency to rebel against the

Lord he knows that in the future they are going to go away from obedience to the Lord the song in chapter 32 is a reflection really of the whole book of Deuteronomy and especially in chapter 28 where God divides the chapter between blessings and cursings and where he says if you do this and if you do this and if you do this then you will be blessed you'll be blessed in your homes you'll be blessed in your field you'll be blessed in your businesses you'll be blessed in every way but if you neglect the Lord if you turn to other gods then you will be cursed in your homes in your fields in your projects and that's what happened in our history and today we remember because we seek more of God's blessing and if we forget we will have his curse instead if we forget the Lord his goodness his grace shown to us so many times over so many years if we now cast that away if we turn away from that then we will have exactly what

Deuteronomy specifies for the people of Israel take heart he said at the end of this chapter take to heart all the words which by which I am warning you today that you may command them to your children that they may be careful to do all the words of this law for it is no empty word for you but your very life and by this word you shall live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess we will not have the blessing of God irrespective of our allegiance to him that's essentially why we remember today the cost of our freedom the loss of so many in conflict and above all the goodness of God still extended to us let's pray

[52 : 11] Lord help us we pray to remember in the way that you require of us and instruct us help us to remember with consideration with an application of our mind to those great truths that we have set before we have set before us in your word help us to remember Lord the cost of our freedom but help us to do it with gratitude to you that you secured those things that are so valuable to us still that you did so out of your goodness and regard for us as a people may we show Lord our gratitude to you continually and may we seek to pass on to those who come after us those things that are precious to us in the gospel and all that's related to it may we be able by your grace to explain to our children why they are important and precious to us and enable them too to be prepared for their own day receive our thanks we pray now continue with us through this day and pardon our sin for Christ's sake amen now we'll sing in conclusion in psalm 115 psalm 115 singing in the sing psalms version that's on page 153 verses 9 to 15 4 verses 9 to 15 o house of Israel place your trust upon the

Lord alone he is the mighty help and shield of all who are his own 1915 page 153 let's stand to sing o house of Israel place you trust upon the Lord alone he is the mighty help and shield of all who are his own o house of Israel trust the Lord he is help and help and shield all you who fear him trust the Lord he is your help and shield the

Lord remembers Israel and he will bless his soul the house of Aaron and all those who hear him great and small may God the Lord make you increase both you and all your line may you be blessed by God who makes all things by his design I'll go to the side door immediately after benediction now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you now and always

Amen