

Give Thanks to God

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Date: 24 November 2024

- [0 : 00] We're going to begin our worship just now by singing to God's praise. We're going to sing from Psalm 92 in the Scottish Psalter, Psalm 92, verse 1 to verse 6.
- ! We're going to sing this to the tune, The Bays of Harris. We're coming with thanksgiving to God, and it says here, To render thanks unto the Lord, it is a comely thing.
- And to thy name, O thou, most high, do you praise aloud to sing. Thy lovingkindness to show forth when shines the morning light. And to declare thy faithfulness with pleasure every night.
- We'll stand to sing from verse 1 to 6 to God's praise. To render thanks unto the Lord, it is a comely thing.
- And to thy name, O thou, most high, do you praise aloud to sing.
- [1 : 10] Thy lovingkindness to show forth when shines the morning light.
- And to declare thy faithfulness with pleasure every night.
- On Athens' ringed instrument upon the psaltery.
- And on the harp with solemn sound and great sweet melody.
- For thy Lord, by thy mighty words, Has made my heart bright glad.
- [2 : 34] And I will triumphed in the works which by thy hands were made.
- How great Lord, by thy words, Each thought of thine, the deep it is.
- A British man, it knoweth not, Those understand not this.
- When those land good and wicked have, Spring quickly up like grass, And work our children, And work our children iniquity, To flourish all our peace.
- Let's bow our heads in a word of prayer. Let us pray. Our gracious Lord, We thank you for this day.
- [4 : 06] We thank you to be able to come, Acknowledging thanksgiving to you anew. We thank you that there is this day set aside for that purpose of thanksgiving. For a particular reason, For every good and perfect gift is from above, As your word reminds us.
- And we are thankful that as we look back over this year, We can see the provision that you have made for us, In so many different ways. Practically Lord, The food on our tables, The water, The warmth of our homes, All that we enjoy, And so often take for granted, Lord, We thank you for every provision you make for us.
- But above all, We thank you for the promise of your constant companionship with us. That you are the one that we are to look to, The one that we are to give thanks to for all these things.
- And today, May you help us to be truly thankful for all that is ours, And especially all that is ours through Jesus Christ as our Lord. We pray that you will bless your word to us today, Bless us together as a people here, In all our homes and our families and our communities, Lord, We ask that you will be near to us, Helping us, Lord, With all our different needs.

We just ask for your spirit to be with us, To lead us and to guide us in all of these things, That you would lead us into your word and into your truth, That it would speak to us, And remind us, Lord, Of all the reasons that we have, To look back and give thanks, To look at our present and give thanks, And to look to the future, And asking your blessing on all the days that lie ahead of us.

[5 : 42] So continue with us, Lord, We pray, Bless us and keep us and pardon us, And as we ask all these things in Jesus' precious name. Amen. Just a wee word to the young ones.

Some of you may be going out to the holiday tweenies in a minute, But if not, You'll be staying in the service as well. It's good to have you here. I know it's holiday weekend, So there's a number of people traveling away as well. Those who have been able to get away because of the ferries not sailing And things like that, The different weather situations, It's been hard for many people.

And sometimes when we're coming to give thanks to God, It can seem quite strange to give thanks when there's so many things going on That are maybe wrong in the world, Or sad in the world, Or making us feel as if things just aren't going our way.

But that's why it's so important for us to come to God's word, And to read God's word together, And to remind ourselves that God is so precious to us.

And that when we have him, We have so much to be thankful for. A couple of weeks ago, There was a partial that came to the manse. It wasn't a big partial, It was a box, That wide, Not very deep.

[6 : 55] And on the front of the box, It said flowers. So it was a flower delivery. Now if you're used to getting flower deliveries to your house, Maybe some of you are, You get flowers, They come, But very often they'll come maybe in a big bouquet, So you can see them immediately.

But this was a box, And it said flowers. You think, It doesn't look very big. What's going to be inside this box? And the box was opened, The box wasn't for me, But the person it was for, They opened the box, And inside was a bunch of flowers.

And first reactions to think, The flowers are dead. They just looked as if they had died. They just looked as if they were withering away in this box.

And you're thinking, Oh man, The poor person who sent this, We're going to have to tell them that the flowers were dead when they arrived. And we could have easily just maybe thrown the box out and thought, Well, these flowers are just died.

They're rubbish. We'll just put them in the bin. But on the box was instructions. And it said on the box that, Though you might think the flowers look dead, They're not.

[8 : 07] What you have to do is you have to feed them. And there was instructions of how to feed them in different ways. There was three stages as to how to feed the flowers.

And so the flowers, Although they looked as if they were wilting, They were put in a vase and given this feed. And over time, the flowers came to life. They bloomed and they're still in our kitchen now.

Still flowering there in the kitchen. And what made the difference was reading the instructions and doing what the instructions say.

And that's what it is like giving thanks at times as well. We might look on things and think, Well, there's so much around us that's sad. There's so much going on. And we think, What reason do we have to give thanks?

We have to give thanks. But then when we read the instructions, When we read God's word, We realize as we go through God's word, We have so many things to give thanks for.

- [9 : 06] That there are times when everything seems to be withering and perishing away. But that God is able to give life. And that as we hear what he's saying to us, As we follow his instructions, He is the one who gives life even into the saddest of situations.
- And we are able to give thanks to him, That he remembers us, That he is with us. And that is his promise always. So we take heart in the midst of everything else that goes on.
- Some things will be sad and hard for us. But we have the Lord with us. And we do have so much to give thanks for. So may our hearts truly be thankful to God today, For all that he does for us.
- We're going to say the Lord's Prayer together now. Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
- Give us this day our daily bread, And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil.
- [10 : 17] For thine is the kingdom, The power and the glory forever. Amen. We're going to sing again to God's praise this time in Psalm 105, The Scottish Psalter version, Page 374.
- Psalm 105, Page 374. We'll sing from verse 1 to verse 7. And the tune is Peter's Ham. If there are any young ones going out to the holiday twenties, You can do that during the singing.
- Just as usual, Coming out the door to my left here. Psalm 105 at verse 1, Give thanks to God, Call on his name, To men his deeds make known. Sing ye to him, Sing psalms, Proclaim his wondrous works.
- Each one. We'll stand to sing the Psalm, Verse 1 to 7, To God's praise. Please, Please, Please, Please, Please, Please, Please, Please, Please, His wondrous works each one.
- See that in His holy name to glory do accord.
- [11 : 44] And let the heart of everyone rejoice that seeks the Lord.
- The Lord almighty and His strength with steadfast hearts be ye.
- His blessed and His gracious grace seek ye continually. Think on the works that ye have done which admiration breed.
- His wonders and the judgments all which on His life proceed. O ye that are of Abram's race, his servant well approved.
- O ye that Jacob's children are whom He chose on His own.
- [13 : 03] Because He and He only is the mighty Lord our God.
- And His most righteous judgments are in all the earth abroad. Amen.
- We're going to turn to read together now in the Old Testament, the book of Deuteronomy, chapter 8. Deuteronomy chapter 8. And we'll read the whole of this chapter.
- So children of Israel have been led to the border of the promised land. As we see here in Deuteronomy, they're on the verge of going into it.
- But they go into it with these words ringing in their ears that they are to remember the Lord their God. And especially in the midst of all the plenty that they are going to see in the land.
- [14 : 07] The food, the trees, the fruits of them. There's so much that they are going to have in terms of food and harvest and all of these things. But the Lord is reminding them to remember Him.
- So Deuteronomy chapter 8. The whole commandment that I command you today, you shall be careful to do. That you may live and multiply and go in and possess the land that the Lord swore to give to your fathers.

And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you. These 40 years in the wilderness. That He might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart.

Whether you would keep His commandments or not. And He humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna. Which you did not know, nor did your fathers know.

That He might make you know that man does not live by bread alone. But man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. Your clothing did not wear out on you.

[15 : 10] And your foot did not swell these 40 years. Know then in your heart that as man disciplines his son, the Lord your God disciplines you.

So you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God by walking in His ways and by fearing Him. For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land. A land of brooks, of water, of fountains and springs.

Flowing out into the valleys and fields. A land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates. A land of olive trees and honey.

A land in which you will eat bread without scarcity. In which you will lack nothing. A land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper.

And you shall eat and be full. And you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land that He has given you. Take care lest you forget the Lord your God.

[16 : 10] By not keeping His commandments and His rules and His statutes which I command you today. Lest when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and live in them.

And when your herds and flocks multiply. And your silver and gold is multiplied. And all that you have is multiplied. Then your heart be lifted up.

And you forget the Lord your God. Who brought you out of the land of Egypt. Out of the house of slavery. Who led you through the great and terrifying wilderness.

With its fiery serpents and scorpions. And thirsty ground where there was no water. Who brought you water out of the flinty rock. Who fed you in his wilderness with manna.

That your fathers did not know. That he might humble you and test you. To do you good in the end. Beware lest you say in your heart. My power and the might of my hand has gained me this wealth.

[17 : 13] You shall remember the Lord your God. For it is He who gives you power to get wealth. That He may confirm His covenant. That He swore to your fathers as it is this day.

And if you forget the Lord your God. And go after other gods and serve them and worship them. I solemnly warn you today. That you shall surely perish.

Like the nations. That the Lord makes to perish before you. So shall you perish. Because you would not obey the voice of the Lord your God.

Amen. And may God bless that reading of His word to us. We will again engage in a word of prayer. Let us pray. Our gracious Lord.

We do thank you for these words that we have read. And remind us Lord. That we are to focus upon you. And we ask that you will help us. Any distractions that are in our minds.

[18 : 12] Any thoughts that come our way. Even as we are under your word. That you would remove them from us. That we would be able to hear. What your spirit has to say to us. And we thank you Lord.

That you are a God who speaks. And who ministers to us. In all our different needs. That you are a God who reminds us. That you are worthy of all our thanksgiving. And all our praise.

And as we have so much to give thanks for our Lord. We are reminded. That we are not to forget you. That we are not to think. That it's by the might of our hand. Or by our own strength.

That we have accomplished anything. But only through your goodness. And your grace towards us. So Lord may you keep us humble. And may you keep us ever dependent upon you.

And also ever looking to you. With thanksgiving and prayer. And we do thank you Lord. That we have a harvest to be thankful for. We thank you that although we so often.

[19 : 11] Maybe don't see it ourselves today. Because we do not depend upon the land. As our fathers and forefathers once did. But yet oh Lord. We are still dependent.

On the earth which you have made. The earth belongs unto the Lord. And all that it contains. Your word tells us. And we are reminded that our harvest comes.

From around us. And throughout our country. And even to the ends of the earth Lord. We have an abundance of provisions. That come our way. We do thank you for all who provide us.

With these things. For the many who labour. All year round. Seeking to produce a harvest at the end of it. And we thank you Lord. That even in the midst of difficult times.

That you have still blessed. We do give you thanks for all. Involved in industry that helps us. To have so much. The food on the tables. And the water that's provided for us.

[20 : 07] And the clothes that we wear. We thank you for those who are involved. In transporting it. Throughout our country. And even throughout the world. We thank you that there are so many. Who work to that end of serving others.

And so we give you thanks for all of these things. But above all Lord. We give thanks to you. As God and Lord of all. The harvest is yours Lord. And we thank you. For the provision that you make.

And we thank you that today. In prayer we can come to you. With thanksgiving. But also with our petitions. Asking for your help. And your blessing over us. And so many different things.

We do think of all that's going on. Around us today. We thank you Lord. For the work of the gospel. We continue to pray. For your blessing on the word.

That goes out here. And throughout our island communities. And throughout our nation. And the world. We thank you for the gospel. And its power. And we pray Lord. That it will be powerful.

[21 : 04] Even today. We thank you for your people. Who pray. And we thank you. That we can join in with others. Praying today. For your blessing on us.

And for all our different needs. And the many reasons. That we have to pray. Are even laid before us today. As we have been looking over. Even our own bulletin sheet. And thinking of all the many things.

That are going on. We remember those who are mourning. And grieving. We remember families. In their own communities. As we commit. Let a Campbell's family to you. Asking your blessing.

And peace and comfort to them. We remember too. The family of Robert Smith. Thankful for his years of ministry. Some of them here in the congregation.

And for the blessing that he was to many. Throughout the congregation here. And through his service in the church. We thank you for that. And we pray for Janice. And we pray for Lisa and Gareth.

[22 : 00] And their families at this time. Asking for your comfort. And your blessing on them. And we think too. Of those who are unwell. Many who are in hospital. Or at home unwell.

We commit them. To your care and keeping. We do pray for little Ruth today. Granddaughter of Ivor. And daughter to Mary Catherine. And the whole family at this time.

Lord. We ask that you will bless them. And be with them. Help those who are caring for her. Lord. That your hand. Would be upon her for good. We commit them all to you. Lord. As the one who is able.

We think too Lord. Of the work of the gospel. We thank you for the presbytery camp. Going on this weekend. We pray for all the young people. And the leaders. Who are there at the Scalladale Center.

For this weekend. That your spirit be with them. To bless them. And to minister to them. That you'll be with them Lord. Over these days. That you will encourage them. And help them to see.

[22 : 56] The wonder of the gospel. And the beauty of Jesus Christ. And even in their young years. To come. And commit their lives to you. We think too. Of difficult situations.

In our islands. Communities at this time. As we have been hearing. In this past week. Of people missing. And searches going on. We continue to pray. For those who are looking.

For the young boy. Missing here. In Stornoway. And we pray Lord. That you will protect. And help those who are out. Even just now. Searching for him Lord. And we just commit. That situation to you.

We commit. The search going on. In Benbeculas. Well today. For that young woman. Who's missing. Again Lord. Asking for safety. And protection. Over all. Who are out and about.

For your comfort. And your blessing. Over these families. Who will be so anxious. At this time. Lord. May you surround them. Uphold them. And strengthen them. Throughout these days.

[23 : 52] Lord. We are reminded of. How we dependently are. Upon you. And we pray Lord. That today. As we worship you. That you will minister to us. That you will draw us to yourself.

That we would realize. How precious you are. How precious life is. And as we even think. Of our parliament. And the meetings. Even in this coming week. For the assisted suicide bill.

We pray that. Many members of parliament. Would see. The dangers of it. And come to seek. To protect life. In all its. Sanctity.

And all that it is. That life is from you. So give wisdom. To our leaders. In these things. And we pray. Oh Lord. That you will protect us. From going down these paths.

So Lord. We commit ourselves. Into your hands. Now asking for your blessing. Over us. Continue with us. As we open up your word. Together. As we look to you. We look to your blessing. On us. Asking forgiveness.

[24 : 46] For all our sins. In Jesus name. Amen. Well we're going to sing again. Before we turn back. To this passage. In Psalm 96a.

The Sing Psalms version. Page 127. Psalm 96a.

Page 127. We'll sing from verse 7. Down to the end of the psalm. All nations to the Lord. Ascribe the glory. That is due. Glory and strength.

Ascribe to God. And praise his name. And you. We'll sing from that verse 7. Down to the end of the psalm. The tune is Bloxam. We stand to sing to God's praise. Amen.

All nations to the Lord. Ascribe the glory. That is due.

Do not forget the Lord. It's the words that ring in this passage as well. And there are words that should be ringing in our ears today as well, that we should not at any point forget the Lord, but always be thankful to him for all that we have.

[31 : 29] Now, as we're looking at the situation of the people and the children of Israel here, and we look at our own situation today, you maybe think a service of Thanksgiving.

Sometimes it's so difficult to see reasons for Thanksgiving. You know, as we've been praying together and thinking about the different things on the bulletin sheet and hearing difficult situations that our people are in, it can be hard to give thanks.

Maybe some of you come in here today or are tuning in online today, and you're finding it hard to give thanks. Yet we're reminded that in every circumstance, we have the Lord with us.

There's a preacher by the name of Alexander White in Edinburgh, and he was noted for always having a reason for Thanksgiving. And this day that he came into church, it was a wild day, but like we have outside today or even looking ahead to the forecast tonight, a wild day, a wet day.

And one of the congregations sitting in thought, what's he going to have to give thanks to God for today? And yet he started his prayer by saying, we thank you, Lord. It's not always like this.

[32 : 38] And that's a reminder to us today that our circumstances, even when we are in the most difficult situations, it's not always like this. And it won't always be like this.

And especially as we are looking and trusting in the Lord Jesus. So let us not forget the Lord, but let us be thankful to God for all of his provision, all that he gives to us on a regular, on a daily basis.

And we're looking back, especially over this last year, thankful to him for all the provision made. Thankful today in the present and looking to his blessing to continue on us going forward, that we would not forget the Lord.

So we want to look at this passage together, just under these three kind of themes. Thanksgiving, Thanksgiving, looking back to the past, Thanksgiving, looking to the present, and Thanksgiving, looking to the Lord's continued blessing going forward as well.

So we want to begin by thinking of Thanksgiving for the past. And that's really where this passage begins. As we're looking at Deuteronomy 8 here, the setting is this waiting to go in to the promised land.

[34 : 01] And even as you read through this passage, you're seeing so much that they are going to enjoy in this land. It's going to be a precious land.

In verse 7, it says, The Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks, of water, of fountains and springs, flowing out of the valleys, lands of wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive trees, honey, all of these things, things that they haven't had for a long time.

In the wilderness of 40 years, of wandering through the wilderness, through their own disobedience, of not listening to God, not trusting God.

They've been 40 years in the wilderness with so little in many ways, and yet the Lord providing for them. Here he is now about to bring them into a land that's going to be full of so many different things, so many blessings.

But before they go into the land, he wants to focus on their past. And especially looking back and remembering how the Lord has helped them.

[35 : 13] Even in a time that there wasn't that plenty, a time of need, the Lord was with them. And you see that in verse 2. Before you go into this land, he says in verse 2, you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these 40 years in the wilderness, that he might humble you.

And then he goes on to say, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. So the Lord was reminding them, as they were to look back and see, in the past, the Lord has helped.

You have reasons to give thanks looking back. Times of deliverance that they can see, times of judgment that they could see, but all the time, the Lord has led you, he is saying.

The Lord has led you these 40 years. He was with them all the time. Whether it was in times of some joyous times or whether it was sad times, the Lord was with them.

He gave them the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire so that by day and night they could move if that was the Lord's will for them. He never left them. They were always dependent on God and God was putting them to the test.

[36 : 42] Would they continue to hold on to his commandments or not? Would they continue to listen to his word or not? And as is often the case with God's people, there were times when they did listen, when they were obedient and things went smoothly, other times they were disobedient.

They didn't listen and things didn't go well. And again, it's a reminder to our own experience and to our own lives as well. Whatever age we are today coming in here, we can look back over maybe short years, maybe long years.

However many years of our lives we're looking back over and we could say like the word of God says here, the Lord your God has led you. Whatever you think of God, whatever this world thinks of God, this is still true today as it was then.

The Lord your God has led you. And the Lord your God has tested you along the way. He is always putting his people to the test.

Will they listen to the word of God or not? And so for ourselves today, we see the remarkable way that God has helped us over the years.

[38 : 08] The way that he has led us over the years. We are dependent on God. Utterly dependent on him.

He humbles them here in the past so many times that they would acknowledge him as Lord and God. And today should be a day of humbling for ourselves today.

Because in thankfulness there is so much humbling in that as well. That we would come and look back on our own lives and our own experiences and think yes, without the Lord where would we be?

Without the Lord's provision where would we be? We would have nothing. Apart from him we can do nothing. So we are dependent upon him.

We are dependent on him for food. We are dependent on him for clothes and water and all of these blessings that are ours. But what is the central part of all of this is God's word.

[39 : 16] word. Remember the Lord your God. Remember the whole of the way that the Lord your God has led you. And remember the word of God to keep his commandments.

The word is central. The word is what is to be at the heart of our thanksgiving. So as we look back we do so through the eyes of faith looking to his word.

So when we are tempted to say we can manage without. When we are tempted to say as you see later on in this chapter when he says I think it's verse 14 do not forget the Lord who brought you out of the land.

And then further on he speaks in verse 17 of beware lest you say in your heart my power and the might of my hand has gained me this wealth.

that is always the danger with us. In forgetting the Lord we believe it's our own strength our own hand that has provided.

[40 : 24] And Jesus in the New Testament actually quotes from this passage as well. Man doesn't live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.

We are dependent on the word of God. In Matthew 4 verse 3 the tempter came to Jesus and said to him, this is when he was in the wilderness himself, if you are the son of God command these stones to become loaves of bread.

Jesus was hungry and the tempter Satan was saying to him if you are the son of God if you are who you say you are you could make these stones become loaves of bread.

To satisfy your hunger. But Jesus answered by saying it is written man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God from this passage.

And so we are dependent on the word of God. And the word of God reminds us looking back how he has always led us and how he has always helped us.

[41 : 35] Christian writer Fred Marsh described the Christian looking back in this way and especially quoting from Deuteronomy. He said when you look back the Christian can see the deliverances of the Lord.

The way the Lord has led looking at verse 2 of this passage the blessings that he has bestowed the victories he has won and the encouragements that he has given.

The Christian can see these things looking back. So as we look back with thankfulness to God we can see the deliverances of God over our years.

We can see the way the Lord has led us over the years. We can see the blessings that he has given us over the years. We can see the victories that he has won for us over these years.

We can see the encouragements that he has given to us over these years. So our thanksgiving is based on looking back.

[42 : 36] But it's also based on looking to the present. It's not just about remembering something that we do once. Thanksgiving is a constant ongoing thankfulness to God.

Even though this is a day appointed as harvest thanksgiving it doesn't mean this is the only day we give thanks for our food or the water or our clothes. It is a constant thanksgiving.

That's what we are being taught in scripture. We go on in this sense of thanksgiving to God. A couple of years ago at this time of year we know that in America it's a time of thanksgiving there as well.

Well a British newspaper started had an article about this and the headline was Thanksgiving the latest US tradition to take root in the UK.

And in the article they said Thanksgiving has no place in British tradition. And you think to yourself wow how could we possibly be thinking along these lines.

[43 : 48] Now in part you could see what they were meaning. We don't have turkey just now like they do in America. We don't sit and watch American football which is such a big part of their Thanksgiving weekend.

We think we don't have that. But to say Thanksgiving has no place in British tradition. You know sadly there's truth in that writing.

It's because we've lost a focus on God and Thanksgiving almost has no part now. But it doesn't mean that we are not to be thankful. Because we have so much to be thankful for.

not taking in all the trappings that might go with it. But having a focus on God. Thanksgiving should very much have a place in British tradition.

As in every tradition. Because Thanksgiving is to God. And so we are to be thankful to God in the present circumstances of where we are for all that he has given to us.

[44 : 54] Again another writer G.K. Chesterton put it like this. When it comes to life the critical thing is whether you take things for granted or take them with gratitude.

Isn't that so true of our own experience? Do we take things for granted or do we take them with gratitude? So much we just take for granted.

So much in life we just think it's going to be there. We go to our fridge, we go to our freezer, we go to our cupboard. There's food there in abundance of selection.

We go to our supermarkets, we go to our shops, we go there and we see a selection of different kinds of foods from all over the world.

We take it for granted. And we forget that there were days when cupboards were bare. We forget that there were days when there was no food to put on the table. We forget that there were days and even today for some it is a struggle to put food on the table.

[46 : 01] We take so much for granted. And yet the word of God is always saying remember. Remember the Lord. Remember what he has given to you.

Look to him and to his word. And often in God's word you see a way is put in place that is a constant ongoing remembrance.

Even as the children of Israel came out of Egypt they did so with a remembrance of the Passover. How the Lord delivered them in that night.

And the Passover was to be remembered going forward. To remember their deliverance from Egypt. And then throughout the Old Testament you find different points.

And especially putting up stone piles of remembrance. In Joshua chapter 4 verse 6 it says taking these stones may be a sign among you when your children ask you in time to come what do these stones mean?

[47 : 06] Then you shall tell them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. So they went across the dry ground of the Jordan and they set up a remembrance there of the Lord's deliverance.

In 1 Samuel 7 Samuel it says there took a stone the Ebenezer stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen he called it the Ebenezer stone for he said till now the Lord has helped us.

Hitherto the Lord has helped us. So there's this remembrance ongoing. In the last few weeks we've come to do remembrance day.

Remembering deliverance from times of war an annual event that takes place lest we forget. Next week God willing we will have the Lord's supper a remembrance of our great deliverance from sin that as we put our faith in the Lord Jesus we have that deliverance that salvation from our sin.

Again we do that in remembrance of him. And so our thanksgiving today is in light of so many different things going on around us.

[48 : 23] In our present we thank God for all that he is doing for us. We do that coming today remembering as James acknowledges in the New Testament every good gift and every perfect gift is from above coming down from the father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

We look to the one who never changes. We are dependent upon him. We have past help to remind us of thanksgiving.

We have present thanksgiving too as we look to Jesus who is the rock of our salvation. And just we will think here the children of Israel on the border of the promised land.

To go in there not forgetting the Lord. We could say of ourselves today in our present situation we too are on the border of a promised land.

We are on the border of eternity. We are on the edge of eternity and eternity is before us all. And where are we going?

[49 : 41] In Matthew 25 Jesus there speaks of two different kingdoms two different places. In Matthew 25 verse 34 and this is in light of those who have been faithful in what the Lord has given to them.

He says there to those who have been faithful then the king will say to those in his right come you who are blessed by my father inherit the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world.

There is blessing in going into a land prepared for the Lord's people. But there is a curse as well because in Matthew 25 the same passage in verse 41 it says then he will say to those on the left depart from me you cursed into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

There is a warning there to remember the Lord. The warning that we see in verse 11 take care lest you forget the Lord your God by not keeping his commandments and his rules because in forgetting as it goes on to say in verse 19 if you forget the Lord your God and go after other gods and serve and worship them I solemnly warn you today that you shall surely perish.

take care lest we forget the Lord. So in our present situation we have this warning ringing in our ears if we're thankful we are not to forget the Lord but to remember every blessing that is ours in him.

[51 : 29] And third and finally here we have thanksgiving looking to the future. this whole chapter for the children of Israel would have been surely ringing in their ears all that they had heard the excitement of looking to a land looking ahead to a place of plenty they had manna and they had water but they grumbled over the years about all of these things but here they were looking ahead to all of these blessings springs of water harvests of wheat and barley it says vine and fig trees pomegranates honey olive trees it was a land of plenty so there was much to be excited about but there was also this warning take care lest you forget and this is the constant warning ringing throughout this chapter it's the word remember and the word forget it's mentioned again and again and that is the words that we are to take with us today as well a day of thanksgiving looking back a day of thanksgiving in the present we can be thankful for all that we have but thanksgiving also looks forward and it's based on not forgetting the

Lord so that as we go forward as we come even into a season of Christmas as we have plenty before us once again as we go into a new year God willing as we go forward will we take these words with us take care lest you forget the Lord your God and verse 17 beware lest you say in your heart my power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth that verse 17 is something that we see around us so much today thanksgiving has no part in British tradition the newspaper headlines says and this is the reason why because so many and too many think my power and the might of my hand has gained me this wealth they've forgotten the Lord and every one of us has that danger in our heart that we would be a people who forget the

Lord let not that attitude come into our hearts but let us go on dependent on the Lord and seeking his blessing yes there's so much going on around us and our hearts maybe don't feel so full of thankfulness at times we feel sorrow we feel sadness we feel pain we grieve over so much we grieve over the lack of thanksgiving we have in our hearts we grieve over our sin we grieve over the condition the state of our world and all that's going on around us but constantly we're reminded that when we are truly thankful to God there is better to come there is a poem called out of the darkness and it reminds us that there are times of testing needed for times of joy to come and the poem goes like this out of the dark forbidding soil the pure white lilies grow out of the black and murky clouds descends the stainless snow out of the crawling earth bound worm a butterfly is born out of the somber shrouded night behold a golden morn out of the pain and stress of life the peace of

God pours down out of the nails the spear the cross redemption and a crown we are reminded there that out of the darkness can come something of beauty and even in the world in which we live which has so little thought of thankfulness to God or dependence on God still out of that can come praise to God our prayer is that today our hearts would be filled with thankfulness and that we would go praising God thankful to him for all of his blessings past present and future and thankful for the blessings that are ours in Christ so even as we prepare our hearts God willing for next weekend we would do so seeing that out of the nails the spear the cross what came redemption and a crown that there is joy for

God's people through faith in Christ we thank God for all the provision that we have we thank God for a harvest that has kept us in this last year but above all we thank God who keeps us who has led us this far and we pray will lead us on let us pray we thank you for redemption and crown for your people through all that was done at the cross through Jesus who gave himself for his people hear our prayers and continue with us and forgive our sins as we ask all in Jesus name amen we'll conclude by singing to God's praise in Psalm 36 on page 44 of the psalm books Psalm 36 we'll sing from verse 5 to verse 9 tune is

[57 : 54] Huddersfield Psalm 36 on page 44 at verse 5 your steadfast love is great O Lord it reaches heaven high your faithfulness is wonderful extending to the sky we'll stand to sing these verses to God's praise your steadfast love is great O Lord it reaches heaven high! your faithfulness is wonderful! fold extending to the sky!

Your righteousness is very great like mountains high and steep Your justice is like ocean death, both man and beast you keep.

How precious is your steadfast love, what confidence it brings.

O thy love, find shelter in the shadow of your wings.

[59 : 50] They feast within your hearts and play from streams of your delight.

For with you is the source of light, in your light we see light.

After the benediction, I'll go to the door to my left. We'll close with a benediction. Now may grace, mercy and peace from God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit rest upon and abide with you all now and forevermore.

Amen. Amen.