

The Crisis of Faith and the Cross Connections

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Preacher: Rev Callum Macleod

[0 : 00] So let's begin a worship of God by singing to his praise from Psalm number 45 and sing Psalms, that's 45a, Psalm 45a on page 56 and we're singing at the beginning of the psalm.

! Our lips are full of grace, for God has blessed you evermore as light shines on your face. We stand and sing from verse 1 to the verse 6 to God's praise. Amen. Amen. O mighty one, take up your sword, and bind it on your thigh. With glorious splendor, clothe yourself, and with your majesty.

[2 : 06] Right or fenced in victoriously, for being met, truth and right.

Let your right hand display your deeds of awesome power and might. Let your sharp arrows pierce the hearts of those who hate the king. And all the nations of the earth into subjection bring. Your royal throne, O God, will last throughout eternity.

[3 : 13] Your kingdom, Scepter, will be one of truth and equity.

Let's join together in prayer. Let us pray. Almighty and most gracious God, we gather to worship your name and rejoice in you and in your word.

And we are thankful for the way in which you have made yourself known to us through the pages of Scripture. The words that you have breathed out that speak to us of the kind of God that you are. That speak to us of your purposes for humankind in this world. And that speak to us of the way in which you will fulfill and realize all of your purposes.

Through the passion and work of your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior. We are thankful for the words that we read and sang together. Rejoice in you, King, the Son of God, the Savior of the world.

[4 : 25] Rejoice for the way in which, having died for our sins, the way in which he rose triumphantly on the first day of the week. And we are thankful that he is at your right hand in glory.

That he reigns supremely in heaven and in earth. And in the midst of our ever-changing world, we are thankful to you that he reigns continually. That everything that takes place in our lives personally, everything that takes place in the world around us.

That all is within the bounds of your purposes and plans. And that day by day you are the God who through him and by the power of your Holy Spirit is building your church.

It's extending the boundary of your kingdom. It's claiming this world for yourself. And we pray tonight as we do worship you that we may sense something of such power.

Sense something of such purpose. And know what it is to sense in our hearts. That we are within your saving purpose. That we belong to your kingdom.

[5 : 31] That Jesus Christ is truly our King. And that we love him because of the fact that he first loved us. And just like the psalmist, that we may see the beauty of your Son as our Savior.

Marvel at the way in which you have shone through him. And have our lives, our hearts devoted to him day by day as we journey on through life. Being inspired by the way in which he gave himself for us.

Being inspired also by the example that he gave to us. And the life that he lived here in this world. Help us to walk in his footsteps. Help us to be the light of the world.

Help us to be the salt of the earth. Help us to do the things that are pleasing to you. And guide us and keep us day by day. We do pray. We acknowledge as we journey on through life.

That we are open to so many temptations. That so often we fall away from you. We are conscious of the way in which our sin causes a separation between us and you.

[6 : 35] We are thankful to you for your steadfast love and your faithfulness. That you will never let your people go. That you will bring them back to yourself. That you will wash away their sin.

That you will give them the freshness and the newness. And the joy of forgiveness. And that you will bring them ever closer to yourself. And so we pray tonight if we do find ourselves personally at a distance from you.

We pray oh Lord our God that you will reach out to us. And draw us back to yourself by embracing us with your gracious, lovely, fatherly arms.

And draw us into your own embrace. That you may find contentment and satisfaction and fulfillment once more in you. Bless your words to us all together we do pray.

That we may all sense that belonging to you. And that love which will never come to an end. Bless every heart and life and home connected to us.

[7 : 35] We pray for your blessing to be upon everyone here. And everyone joining us online. And everyone in their homes tonight. May you draw near with blessing to each. May you bless parents who are praying for their children.

And perhaps not hearing or seeing an answer from you. May you help them to continue to wait upon you. May you bless also children who may be praying for their parents.

And do long to see them tasting that the Lord is good. And that there is salvation in Christ Jesus. May you encourage all such to continue to pray to you.

Pray your blessing to those who may be praying for wives and for husbands. And for loved ones and for families in any way tonight. May you hear their prayer oh Lord our God.

And may you rescue those who continue to wander around aimlessly and life without you. May you reach out to them and bring them back to yourself. And that people may come to find peace and satisfaction through faith in Jesus Christ your Son.

[8 : 36] Encourage us all to continue in prayer for our families and for our homes. And for our congregation that we may truly see blessing descending from you. The heavens being opened and the refreshing times from your right hand.

Coming to descend upon us like the dew descending upon our hearts. And giving us that sense of newness and that freshness. And that sense of life and vitality in our relationship with you.

That we may go on from strength to strength day by day we do pray. And pray for those belonging to us who mourn a grievance at this time. We pray your comfort for them. We especially pray for the family of Onetta Campbell and Asadio Comfort and bless them.

At this time of loss may you draw near to them. May you present yourself around them. And may you give them to know your peace and your love and your mercy and your favour during these days.

We also remember the family of Reverend Robert Smith who passed away in recent days. We pray your blessing and your comfort for them. And pray that you will be near to them. And that you will comfort them as they look to you.

[9 : 42] As their God who is our Father in Heaven. May you reach down to them and presence yourself around them. We do give thanks to you for your servant Reverend Robert Smith. We give thanks to you for his ministry.

We give thanks to you for his service. We give thanks to you also for his friendship. And we give thanks to you for the way in which you worked in his life. And we give thanks to you that in accordance with your promise that you give your servants rest.

And in the words of John Payton that your servants are immortal until their work is done. And we give thanks to you tonight for the way in which you have called him and all of your people to find their eternal rest in you.

So bless all of these families as we commit them to your care. Be with us in the coming week as it unfolds before us. Guide us through each day. Through every challenge. Through every opportunity.

May you help us. And may you give wisdom to us. May you give words to us. May you give to us all that we have need of. And may you help us in every time of need. To truly believe and to come to experience that your grace is sufficient for us.

[10 : 45] And prepare us for coming on next Lord's Day. We ask you to help us always to understand the preciousness of the death of your Son. And we know that we can become forgetful.

And forgetful of the significance of so much that happens in our Christian experience. But help us day by day to live as those who truly remember the death of our Lord.

[16:39] Let's turn together to read the Word of God, first of all, in the Old Testament and in the prophecy of Sechariah and chapter 13.

Sechariah chapter 13 and reading the whole of this chapter. Let us hear the Word of God.

On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness.

And on that day declares the Lord of hosts, I will cut off the names of the idols from the land so they shall be remembered no more. And also I will remove from the land the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness.

And if anyone again prophesies, his father and mother who bore him will say to him, You shall not live, for you speak lies in the name of the Lord. And his father and mother who bore him shall purge him through when he prophesies.

[17:44] On that day every prophet will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies. He will not put on a hairy cloak in order to deceive, but he will say, I am no prophet, I am a worker of the soil, for a man sold me in my youth.

And if one asks him, What are these wounds on your back? He will say, The wounds I received in the house of my friends. Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who stands next to me, declares the Lord of hosts.

Strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered. I will turn my hand against the little ones. The whole land, declares the Lord, two-thirds shall be cut off and perish, and one-third shall be left alive. And I will put this third into the fire, and refine them as one refined silver, and test them as gold is tested. They will call upon my name, and I will answer them.

I will say, They are my people. And they will say, The Lord is my God. Now we turn to the New Testament and to the Gospel of Matthew, and chapter number 26.

[18:51] I'm reading at verse 20. Matthew 26 and at verse 20. And as we read these words in the context of the Passover, and the institution of the Lord's Supper, we understand that Jesus was very aware of the words that we read in Zechariah 13, as he prepared to go to the cross.

We pick up the reading at verse number 20. When it was evening, he reclined at table with the twelve. And as they were eating, he said, Truly I say to you, one of you will betray me.

And they were very sorrowful, and began to say to him one after another, Is it I, Lord? He answered, He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me. The Son of Man goes as it is written of him.

But woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would have been better for that man if he had not been born. Judas, who would betray him, answered, Is it I, Rabbi?

He said to him, You have said so. Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it, broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my body.

[20:05] And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

And I tell you, I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Then Jesus said to them, You will all fall away because of me this night, for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered. But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.

Peter answered him, Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away. Jesus said to him, Truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.

Peter said to him, Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you. And all the disciples said the same. Amen. This is the word of God, and we trust you are blessed to us these readings from it.

[21:13] We turn to sing in Psalm number 22 and sing Psalms, and we're singing at verse number 14. It's on page number 26. It is the psalm of the cross that was clearly the meditation of the Lord Jesus as he was suspended on Calvary's cross.

Psalm 22 at verse 14, and we're singing to the tune, Like water, I am emptied out, and all my bones are torn apart.

My inmost being melts away, and into wax has turned my heart. We stand to sing from verse 14 to verse number 20, to God's praise. Amen. I am emptied out, and all my bones are torn apart.

I inmost being melts away, and into wax has turned my heart.

My strength is blind like shattered clay, and as I fight to draw my breath, my tongue is sinking through my jaws, and into wax.

[22 : 56] I am emptied out, and all my bones are torn apart. I am emptied out, and all my bones are torn apart. I am emptied out, and all my bones are torn apart. I am emptied out, and all my bones are torn apart. The Lord of God's end loses me, Eres our power, our weakness on me.

I am beset by evil men, And will have pierced my hands and feet.

I count the number of my courts, With floating eyes of people's veil, With all the dice to get my court, Among themselves my goals they share.

A quickness to be my strength, Do not be far from me, O Lord.

Take me from power, all evil not, My precious life from you else for.

[24 : 39] Let's turn back together now to our first reading in the Old Testament, in the prophecy of Zechariah, and in chapter 13. And we can read verse number 7. Zechariah 13, at verse number 7.

Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, Against the man who stands next to me, Declares the Lord of hosts. Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.

I will turn my hand against the little ones. And so on. Now although we perhaps from time to time come across, At least through TV and through news media, Scenes of destruction and scenes of desolation, It is perhaps hard for us to cast our minds And to imagine the situation into which Zechariah was writing these words.

The people of God had been on a journey, And it wasn't the best of journeys, And it was a journey away from God, And because of the rebellion against God, They were carried away to Babylon. And in accordance with the promise of God, 70 years later, God took them back to Jerusalem. And here they are, back in Jerusalem, And there's the scene of desolation.

[26 : 03] The walls of the city are down, The king's house has been burnt, The temple has been burnt, And it is complete desolation. Looking around them, All of the evidences of the presence of God, That they knew in the past, All of the evidence is now gone.

And there is this great rebuilding project that they have, As they look at the temple, Which they embark on rebuilding. And time after time, After commencing that great building project, They ground to a halt, Because of discouragement, Because of the size of the task, And because of the sense that God was no longer with them.

And for over 20 years, They struggled before they managed to complete the building project. So it was a difficult time, And to which, Sechariah was giving his message.

As we read earlier on in the prophecy, We see the way in which, The people felt a real sense of weakness. They felt a real sense of their sin.

They felt a real sense of how great the enemy was. Read through chapter 4, And that's the picture. There is the great mountain of their enemy. There is their own weakness. And how possibly can they continue in the work of the Lord, In such a context, And in such circumstances.

[27 : 29] And of course, We are thankful that we are not in that scene of desolation tonight. But we can be in a similar situation, In a relationship with God.

The things that represented the presence of God to us and for us, Sometimes disappear. And we become overwhelmed with a sense of our sin.

We become overwhelmed with a sense of our weakness. We get to the stage where we feel we simply cannot go on doing the Lord's work. And we get a sense of the enemy around us in the world, Being so much stronger than ourselves.

And we feel paralyzed. Our Christian journey grinds to a halt. And we cannot see ourselves making any progress. I think that kind of experience, It's not something that's constant.

But it's something that we can pass through. And these questions arise before us. And I want us to think about that tonight. And think about the way in which Sechariah in this letter, He addresses the sense of their sinfulness, The sense of their weakness.

[28 : 41] He encourages them that the house will be built, That the serb who laid the foundation will finish this building, And that one day the glory of God will fill the temple of God.

And what we do discover as we come to the end of the book is, That much of what Sechariah promised, Was not going to happen in 520 BC. It was going to happen with the coming of the Lord Jesus.

And we saw that from a reading in Matthew, That Jesus was very conscious of these words, As he was on the way to the cross.

And against that background, We want to think tonight of the crisis of faith, And the cross connections.

We want to see first of all, That we have a declaration. And the declaration is by the Lord of hosts, The God of the whole universe, The God who has everything in his hands.

[29 : 44] He makes a declaration. And the declaration is one of summons. And the summons comes to us in these words, At the beginning of verse 7, This word, Awake.

Throughout these passages, There's a sense of, On this day, Or in that day, There's a looking forward to a particular day and time. And we ourselves, We have that summons to awaken every morning.

It's a new day. We don't know what that day brings. But there's that summons in the morning, To awaken and to rise up. And strangely, As we read through the Bible, And read through the book of Psalms, We see the psalmist, Because of a sense of having lost God, And Sam Neberati, Is saying to God, To stir yourself up.

It's that sense of, Awakening from sleep, Something that has been lying, And resting, And not involved in any kind of activity. Awake.

It's a summons. And the summons is, With regard to, The sword. That weapon of warfare, That was so common in the Old Testament, It is that, The sword would, Awake.

[31 : 05] And the sword was commonly used, In the sense of, Of the battles, Which the children of Israel fought. But as we, Read through the history, Of the children of Israel, We understand, One thing in particular.

That there were, Times when, The sword of God's, Just as, Rows up against, The people of God, And that was, Promised to them, Or threatened by God, In Leviticus, Chapter 26, That the day would come, If they were rebellious, Against him, And turned their backs upon him, That he will bring, The sword upon you, And bring the sword upon them, That he would execute vengeance, He said, Just God, And our sins deserve, The punishment of God.

And, In that sense, That this, Sword has, Been working, And it worked in particular, When these people, Were carried away to Babylon, In 586, It was the sword of God, That was, Active, And powerfully moving, As he, Stood with their enemies, Instead of with themselves, And they were, Carried away, By the nations.

And the sword that, Has been, Silent and resting, Since then. In the sheath, Of the silence, Of the purposes of God, Awaiting the day, That God had appointed, When the alarm, Was going to be sounded, When the call, Was going to come out, To the sword, Come out of your sheath.

And if we, Pause and think of, Of the way in which, The people, In the days of Sechariah, We're going to, Hear these first, Two words, Awake, O sword, First three words, Awake, O sword, We can imagine, The terror, Is it not possible, That they will be thinking, Oh surely not again, We have just, Recovered from, The awful execution, Of your sword, When you were carried away, By our enemies, Surely, Not again, The justice of God, Requires, That our sin, Is punished, And as we reflect, On where they are, And think about, Where we are, In our sinnership, In our sometimes, Rebellion against God, We recognize, And appreciate, The teaching of the word, Of God, That the justice of God, Requires, That sin, And the sinner,

[33 : 46] Receives, What they deserve, Because of their sin, And if, If, There are, Experiences in our own lives, Where we suffer, Particular pain, And something similar, Seems to appear, Later on in life, There is that sense, Of fear, Because we have, Experienced this before, And here are people, Who are, Full of fears, Who are full of weaknesses, And all because, Of what God has done, In the past, And now they're hearing, This fresh call, For the sword, Of the justice of God, And establishing, His government in the world, For that sword, To once more, Awake, There is, A declaration, There is, A surprising summons, Secondly, There is, A direction, There is,

A surprising, Target, What a relief, For this people, To hear, What comes next, What is, What direction, Is this, Sword of God's justice, Going to take, Awake, O sword, Against my shepherd, Says the Lord of hosts, The problem, With the people, During these days, As I read chapter 10, And 11, The problem was, That the shepherds, The leaders of Israel, Simply did not, Care for the people, They weren't, Carrying out, The duties, To which God, Had called them, They weren't, Caring for the people, They weren't, Providing for the people, They were looking, After number one, And ignoring, The people of God, And because of that, The people were scattered, Like sheep, Without a shepherd, And God is now, In this declaration, He is, Drawing attention,

To the fact, That there is someone, Who is, My, Shepherd, And Jacob, When he's reflecting, Upon his own life, He refers to God, As the one, Who has been my shepherd, All of my life, He is Jacob's shepherd, We'll read the psalm, Which speaks about, The Lord is my shepherd, The Lord is the shepherd, Of the psalmist, He's the shepherd, Of Jacob, But here we see, That the shepherd, Belongs to someone else, First, The shepherd is, My shepherd, It's the God, Who says to, The people of God, In Ezekiel 34, I myself, Will shepherd my sheep, I will come and, Gather them from, Where they have been scattered, I will come and, Bind them up, I will come, Come and lead them, To good pasture, I will come and, Cause him to lie down, I will bring them back, To their own land, I myself, Will be their shepherd, And we, Understand that Jesus, As he comes into the world, And as he, As he ministers to, The folks around him, And that great passage, In John chapter 10, I am the good shepherd, And we may ask Jesus, Whose shepherd are you? Who do you belong to? And we hear from the words here, That this good shepherd, Is the shepherd of God, He is my shepherd, And he is the good shepherd, Because he is, In accordance with the heart of God, Because he has, The ability to, Carry out the will of God, He is fit for purpose, As God's shepherd, And Jesus is, Clearly conscious, That that's who he is, As he comes into the world, The direction, Of the sword, Is towards the person, Who is the new shepherd, The unique shepherd, The my shepherd, In a day, In a way in which, David was never, The shepherd of God, Although he was, God's king, Here is, The unique, Passion, Of Jesus, The good shepherd, And that's,

[38 : 19] Such a relief, For them to hear that, As this sword, Is taken out of its sheath, It's not going to come, After us once more, We're not going to be scattered, Across the world once more, Instead, The sheath, In this mysterious, Remarkable, Stunning way, Is directed, At someone, Who is the shepherd, Of God, Who has not yet appeared, Who is not here, But the day is coming, When the summons, Will go out, And the sword, Will be unsheathed, And will be directed, At the person, Who is, My shepherd, Says the Lord, Of hosts, And then, He goes on, To, To give, A clear statement, As to, Who my shepherd is, Against the man,

Who stands, Next, To me, There's a man, Who is my shepherd, He stands next, To the Lord, Standing next, In the sense of, Being a close, Neighbor, Being a, Close friend, Being the person, Who is with them, As we read in Proverbs, Chapter 8, He was always, The delight of God, When he created, The ends of the earth, He was there with them, As the master workman, Here is, The son of God, Standing next, To God himself, As, The person, Who is, His, Close, Neighbor, And when you read, The gospel of John, Once more, Who is the person, Who is, Who is, Standing next to God, Is it not the son of God, The word of God, Who comes into the world, The way in which, John, Opens his gospel, In the beginning, Was the word, The word was, With God, And the word, Was God, The direction, Of the sword, Is directed, At the person, Who is, The son of God, And we, We hear, The psalmist, And in Psalm, The barate, Speaking of, And crying out, Let your hand, Be upon, The man of, Your right hand, That that person, Whom you have made, To stand strong, For you, That the son of man, Whom you have made strong, The son of God, The son of man, Of Daniel, Seven, God himself, Who comes, To be with us, And we, Hear, The voice of heaven, At the baptism of Jesus, In Luke chapter three, You are my beloved son, In whom, I am well pleased, The close, Friend, The neighbor, Who stands by, The God, The Lord, Of hosts, And when we, Read through, The Old Testament, We, We understand, That the neighbor, Is deserving, Of special protection, We are to love, The Lord our God, With all of our hearts, We are to love, Our neighbor, As ourselves, The neighbor, Deserves, Special, Protection, And yet here, In this, Unique way, In which God, Is speaking, With regard to his son, There are special, Circumstances, Where, With regard to his son, Who is his neighbor, That is the execution, Of his sword, In the direction, Of his son, Something unthinkable, Something that, Humanly speaking, With regard to what God, Has already said, Should not happen, And yet, God is here, Declaring in this, With regard to this, Unique shepherd, Who is his son, That because, Of the work, In which he is engaged, That he will, Direct the sword, Against the person, Who deserves, Protection most, And that reminds us, Of the words, Of Paul in Romans 8, He who spared, Not his own son, And when, The sword of, Justice is directed, At the son of God, As the surprising, Target, That is the assurance, That the justice of God, Is not here, To, Find satisfaction, In them, As they were,

[43 : 29] The people of God, Or in us tonight, As we are, The people of God, And what would Jesus say, Well we read, What he said, And he sits, In the upper room, With the disciples, And

Judas, Is going to betray him, And he's on the way, To Gethsemane, And to Calvary's cross, And he sets out, The Passover, And he institutes, The Lord's supper, With them, And then he makes, This announcement, And it is, And that makes clear, That these words, Are written in his mind, And written in his mind, In such a way, That he not only, Understands, That the sword, Will strike him, But that he understands, That it is, God himself, Is going to do, The striking, The agent is God, And Jesus, Is on the way,

To the garden, Where he will, Cry for this cup, To be taken from me, Nevertheless, Not my will, But you should be done, But explaining, To the disciples, Showing clearly, What's on his mind, That they will all, Fall away, And that he will be, Left alone, As he goes on his journey, To Calvary's cross, The direction, Of the sword, Against the person, Of the son of God, Who is the shepherd, Of God, The way in which God, Promises to deal, With this situation, By bringing everything, Into his, Own relationship, With his son, And setting up, The scene, That brings us, To understand something, Of what happens, When Jesus Christ, Died on the cross, At Calvary, So there is the declaration,

There is the direction, And thirdly, We want to think of, The deliverance, And the deliverance, Comes, Through the, Shepherd, Not being delivered, Or not being, Saved from, What God has designed, That he should go through, Strike, The shepherd, Go and, Place, The sword, Into, My son, Who is my shepherd, Whom I have sent, Into the world, The Jesus of Nazareth, Awake, O sword, And go and, Purse my son, And the very sense, Of that striking, The shepherd, Speaks of the way, In which, He will strike him, So that he, Dies on Calvary's cross, Death is the outcome, There is the wounding, There is the piercing, And there is the dying, On Calvary's cross, Strike, Strike, The shepherd, And I say, I have 53 words, That are so closely, Connected to this, What did the people think?

What did the people see? We esteemed him, Stricken, Smitten by God, And afflicted, The servant of God, The servant of Jehovah, The son of God, On Calvary's cross, Here is the estimation, Of he is stricken, By God, But, The words that introduce us, Into the very, Heart of what God is doing, Follow on in that same chapter, It was the will of the Lord, To crush him, He was crushed, For our iniquities, The Lord laid on him, The iniquities of us all, He was crushed, For our iniquities, He makes his soul, An offering for sin, The will of the Lord, Will prosper in his hand, The striking, That we see taking place, On Calvary's cross,

[47 : 53] The striking concerning, Which we sang, In Psalm number 22, In verse 14 onwards, You lay me in the dust of death, And the prayer of Jesus, Deliver my soul from the sword, My precious life, From the power of the dog, It's the striking of the shepherd, That we find in the darkness, Of these hours, Where Jesus was on the cross, And darkness covered the whole, Of the earth, As this unique moment took place, And this unique time, Between God the Father, And God his son, And where God the son, Is a sacrifice, For our sin, And where he bears, The wrath and curse of God, Due to us, For our sin, And there suspended, On Calvary's cross, We hear Jesus,

Clang out, My God, My God, Why have you forsaken me? Because of the way, In which, God humanly speaking, Has turned against him, And turned against him, So that we who have turned against God, Would be reconciled to him, The God who, Redeems us, Or the Christ who redeems us, From the curse of the law, Having been made, A curse, For us, The deliverance, That comes, From the painful experience, Of the son of God, On Calvary's cross, A unique moment, In his experience, With the father, A unique moment, In the history of the world, And a unique, And special moment, For all of us, Who are the children of God, An unforgettable moment, An unforgettable death, In the experience,

Of an unforgettable person, Because of the unforgettable, Wisdom of God, That reveals itself, And brings salvation to us, In such a marvelous way, The deliverance, That becomes ours, Because he was handed over, And the guilt, That belongs to us, Because of our sin, He bore in his passion, So that he became, The target of the justice of God, And peace, Was made through, The blood of, The cross, But what about, Those who need encouragement, What about their deliverance, Strike the shepherd, And the sheep, Will be scattered, And I will turn my hand, Against, The little ones, In the striking, Of the shepherd, The sheep, Will be scattered, The people of God, Those who are, The covenant people of God, Those who, Who have come back, From the exile, And who are, In Jerusalem, The people of God, They, Will be scattered, When this moment, Takes place, And that's what, Jesus warned, The disciples about, That when, This happened to him, That they would all, Fall away, And that he would be, Left alone, And as we read on, In Matthew, 26, That's exactly,

What happened, They all fell away, And we know that, That Peter went to deny him, But they left, Jesus, Alone, The scattering, In that moment, A moment, That was unique, And a moment, That is unrepeatable, Because the people of God, Simply do not, Scatter themselves, Or disperse themselves, Away from, From the, The death of Christ, It's the very place, Around which, They gather, Remembering, The death of the Lord, The sheep will be scattered, And I will turn my hand, Against, The little ones, Who are, The little ones, They are the little ones, Who are, Sensing their weakness, In chapter four, They are the little ones, Who are sensing, The power of the enemy, They are the little ones, Who are, Are sensing the absence of God, They are the little ones, Who are the people of God, And who are looking to rediscover, The grace, The love, The covenant love of God, In their lives, They are the little ones, Who are looking to be lifted up, They have been humbled, And crushed to the ground, By all that has happened to them, And they are looking for God,

[53 : 00] To place his arms around them, And to lift them up, They are the little ones, And interestingly, Jesus says, In the gospel, Of John, I think it is, He says to them, That it is, The father's good pleasure, To give the little flock, The kingdom, The little ones, You and I tonight, As the children of God, The ones humbled, By your journey through life, The ones who need to rediscover, The presence of God, And the power of God, The little ones, And with regard to the little ones, I will turn my hand, Against, Against, The little ones, And there is a preposition here, And we can, Translate it in a negative way, Or a positive way,

In the, Translation that we have here, I will turn my hand, Against the little ones, It's turning against them, As their enemy, To destroy, And to tear apart, And to, To consume, And to remove out of sight, But if you read the preposition, In a positive way, It speaks of protection, It speaks of care, It speaks of, Of what a shepherd does, That he lays his hands, On those who are his sheep, And I suggest to you tonight, That we should read, This part of this verse, I will turn my hands, Towards, The little ones, He will place, His hand, Upon them, And when God does that, On your life, And on mine, It's transformation,

However it's going to work, It's going to bring about, Transformation, And there are two things, That I want us to carry with us, As we come to close, And think of, Of the hand of, God being upon us, As the little ones, And the first thing is, That he causes us, To turn around, And to see exactly, What God has done, On Calvary's cross, And that turning we see, In verse 10, Of the previous chapter, I will pour out, On the house of David, And the inhabitants of Jerusalem, A spirit of grace, And pleas for mercy, So that, When they look on me, On him whom they have pierced, They shall mourn for him, As one mourns for an only child, And weep bitterly over him, As one weeps over a firstborn, What is the first thing, That happens, When God puts his hand,

On your life, To be his child, It's you turn around, Because you sense the presence, And in turning around, The scene opens before you, And you will come to see, Exactly what Zechariah is saying here, You will look on Jesus Christ, On the cross, Pierced for your sins, Wounded, Crushed for our iniquities, You will look to him, And you will mourn, And you will cry, Because of, What your sin has done, And because of what he has, Suffered for you, And we can jump forward, To Acts chapter 2, Where Peter is, Preaching on that day of Pentecost, And he's, Telling the people, That Jesus whom you have crucified, God has made him, Both Lord and Christ, And what happened, They were cut to the heart, The sword of the spirit, Pierced their hearts, Men and brothers, What can we do, Repent, And be converted, Be baptized, In the name of Jesus Christ, For the forgiveness of sins, And you will receive, The gift of the Holy Spirit, The hand of God, That turns our lives around, That brings Jesus, Into our focus, That gives us a faith, That is fixed upon him, And that gives us a heart, Devoted to him, The son of God, Who loved me, And who gave himself, For me, For me, And tonight, You can ask yourself, If the touch of God, Has so come upon your life, You can ask yourself, If your life, Has been turned around, A change of direction, Instead of, Walking away from God, And walking away, From the Lord Jesus, Having your eyes, Fixed upon him,

[58 : 09] He's still resistible, You cannot live without him, He is all that you need, For satisfaction, For fulfillment, As he is all that you need, For peace with God, The hand of God, That begins, That great work, In the lives, Of those who are, The little flock, Those whom God has come, To save, And to give the kingdom to, And what is the second thing?

It is the way in which, Seheriah goes on, In verse number 8, The whole land declares the Lord, Two thirds shall be cut off, And perish, And the one third, Shall be left alive, And I will put this third, Into the fire, And refine them as one, Refine silver, And test them as gold is tested, What begins, When

God places his hand upon us, There is the turning to look to Jesus, And there is also, The certainty that we are called, To suffer for him, And God begins a process, Through which he removes, Everything in our lives, And in our faith, The impurities, He cleanses and he purifies, And he brings us through life, So that we leave all of these things behind, Some of which are childish things, Some of which are sinful things, Some of which do not belong, To the life of faith at all, God with his hand upon our life, He will purify, And he will cleanse, And he will transform, And that whole process, Is what we see in the New Testament, Where the people of God, The little flock, Are being changed, Into the likeness, Of the Son of God, Transformed into his image, The deliverance, The threefold connections, Of the deliverance, As we close, The hand of God, Brings Jesus to our attention, And we're fixed upon him, The hand of God, Begins to work in our lives, To cleanse and to purify, And the hand of God, Will ensure, That we will never be lost, But that the day will come, When the kingdom, That he speaks about, In the next chapter, When we will go into that, Eternal kingdom of the Messiah, And be in perfect peace with God, There forevermore, And may God, Help us to appreciate, The processes through which, God went there, The work which Jesus did, And the work which he is now doing, In our hearts and lives, As he brings, His own purpose to pass, In building his church, And in establishing, His people in the world, May God bless his word to us, Let us pray, Most gracious God, We give thanks to you, For your goodness to us, And for the way in which you, Planted your son in this world, The way in which he came to live here, We give thanks to you, For the way in which, On that cross at Calvary, The way in which, The judgment of this world took place, And the way in which, The ruler of this world, Was cast out, And we are thankful to you, For the peace that is ours, Through faith in his name, We give thanks to you also, For the protection that is ours, And we give thanks to you, That no matter how great we may see, The power of our enemies, And of our great enemy, From time to time, We are thankful to you, That the victory belongs to you, And because it does, That we are more than conquerors, Through him who loved us, So hear us, And accept your prayer, And bless you, Lord we ask, For we ask these things, For Jesus' sake, Amen, So the closing psalm, Is psalm number 126, In the Scottish Psalter, It's on page 419, And we sing the whole of the psalm, Psalm 126, The whole of the psalm, The tune is, Lingam, If I pronounced that right, Psalm 126, When Zion's bondage, God turned back, As men had dreamed were we,

[62 : 45] And filled with laughter was our mouth, Our tongue with melody, We stand to sing the whole of the psalm, To God's praise. singing, singing, When time on is gone sometime, I'll spend a dream where we, I'll spend a dream where we, And filled with rock, our walls are mine, Our tongue with melody, our tongue with melody, our tongue with melody.

They must be, and said the Lord, make things more than hath bought, make things more than hath bought.

The Lord hath done, make things more than hath bought, when joy to us is gone.

As streams water in the south, our bondage are become, our bondage are become.

The Lord hath done, make things more than hath bought, when joy to us is gone. The Lord hath done, make things more than hath bought, when joy to us is gone.

[64 : 42] The Lord hath done, make things more than hath bought, when joy to us is gone. The Lord hath done, make things more than hath bought, when joy to us is gone.

The Lord hath done, make things more than hath bought, when joy to us is gone. The Lord hath done, make things more than hath bought, when joy to us is gone.

The Lord hath done, make things more than hath bought, when joy to us is gone.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all now and forevermore. Amen. And I'll go to the main door.