

Are we Prepared for God's Answers to our Prayers?

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[0 : 00] As we continue with our studies of Peter's life and his ministry as an apostle, Acts chapter 12.

We read the beginning, about that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church. He killed James, the brother of John, with a sword, and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also.

The Lord had specifically foretold that times of trouble and even persecution would come to the disciples, to the apostles, as they went out with the gospel in the name of Christ.

You find that in different places in the gospel records themselves. Matthew chapter 10, for example, where he spoke in terms of the disciples who were then being sent out, but also extended that to how they would be brought before those who would persecute them in the Gentile world as well.

And then, of course, in John chapter 15, another example there. In chapter 15, verse 18, if the world hates you, know that it hated me before it hated you.

[1 : 17] If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own. But because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you.

A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.

Now, of course, that meant for them the type of persecution that we read of here in Acts chapter 12. But in principle, that opposition is there for all of God's people in every generation to one extent or another.

Go back into the Old Testament and you find, for example, there in the book of Nehemiah, just to take one example of when the attempt had been begun to rebuild Jerusalem, rebuild the temple, rebuild the community of God in Jerusalem, having come back from Babylon, that they were very soon facing opposition, misrepresentation, different kinds of persecution that was applied to them.

And all really because they were standing for the cause of God and seeking to establish that once again. And so here you find Peter and, of course, Peter himself, when he wrote his first epistle, as you have it.

[2 : 37] You remember that one of the things you find there is an epistle really written to those who are suffering for their faith and have been scattered around different places.

And in chapter 4, for example, this is what he wrote from his own previous experience. Of course, this is how he put it. Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you as though something strange were happening to you.

But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evildoer, or as a meddler. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name.

There's so much from that that we take and can apply to the world, the generation that we also live in and are part of. So as we look at this chapter, let's look first of all at prayer to God for Peter.

[3 : 48] And then we'll look secondly at prayer for Peter answered by God and some of the detail that you find under each of those. First of all, prayer to God for Peter.

Now we mentioned the persecution under Herod, the king that broke out at this time under Herod's direction. He killed James, the brother of sword.

He was assassinated, put to death. And when he saw that that pleased the Jews, he then proceeded to take hold of Peter also. He imprisoned him, intending that he too would be put to death.

That's really, I think, what it means when he would be brought out before the people, just to show him prior to his execution. Herod saw the church as a threat.

And on a political level, you can see that this really was on a political level something that Herod himself saw as a threat to his authority and to the government that he sought to preside over.

[4 : 51] Although, actually, ultimately, really the Romans, of course, were in charge. But in his own district, this was as far as Herod was concerned. He was the king. He was the man in charge. He didn't like any threat to his authority and to his way of doing things.

But, of course, spiritually, and you see this really right through the book of Acts, right up to this point, there's another power at work, even a darker power even than Herod's.

And you see that as the gospel in the book of Acts is seen to advance beyond Jerusalem and on into the Gentile world, you can see, and certainly at times even reading between the lines.

And when you know the Bible well enough as you do, you actually see that Satan is at work behind many of these maneuverings and many of these turnings of events.

So as to seek to thwart the advance of the gospel and to actually stop in its tracks the advance of Christ's church. And really, that's actually, as we'll see, one of the great emphases that you have in this chapter.

[5 : 50] That despite the attempts of Herod, yet, as it says there in verse 24, the word of God increased and multiplied. See something of the encouragement that that gives us ourselves as well.

So there's two things there. There's the political side of things where Herod, on that level, seeks to set against the church and set against them in a way that would try and stem this increase of disciples who come to follow this Jesus and who come to be a threat as he sees it to his authority.

And then, of course, on the spiritual level, there's just the sheer hatred that the man has for God and for Jesus. And, you know, that is something that you very well know of yourselves as behind so much of what you see in the present order of things.

When you find different groups and different pressure groups, especially against the gospel, and for all that there's talk of tolerance and for all that there's talk of Christians really having an equal share of things and an equal say in things, you can very soon detect where the hatred is really directed.

It's not just directed at Christians. It's directed at Christ. It's directed at the Lord. Just, in fact, as it was for Saul of Tarsus himself before he came to the Lord, when the Lord stopped him on the way to Damascus.

[7 : 12] And when he spoke to him, that was how he put it. Remember, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? Why are you persecuting me?

He was persecuting the people of God. But what Jesus said to him was, actually, you're persecuting me. Your hatred is against me and against me personally through my people.

And as we said earlier on, we do remember tonight, not just tonight, but we do remember, especially when we read these incidents in God's word, of how many people throughout the world tonight are actually in prison for their faith, just as happened in the days of Herod, as happened with Peter and James.

And as you look at different reports that you find, and they're very easy to find if you just Google Christians in prison, you'll find different reports from various reliable agencies that tell you that in various countries of the world, this is, in fact, a reality for many people like ourselves, who have the freedom tonight to come and worship here in Stornway Free Church.

These people can't do that. It's not just that they're afraid of their lives, though they're faithful to God, but they've been incarcerated. They've been taken hold of and placed in prison, and been told that if they don't recant, if they don't come back to Islam, or whatever it is, as the dominant religion or ideology of the place, then their families will be killed.

[8 : 41] These are the realities facing these people, and we have to remember them, even in a way in which we're counseled to do so by the writer to the Hebrews. You remember what he says in chapter 13, Remember those who are in prison as though in prison with them.

And those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body. Remember those in prison, as though in prison with them, or as bound together with them. Tonight, as Christians, we're bound together to other Christians in the world, wherever they be, whatever differences there are with ourselves.

And we have to be bound together with them as we remember them, as we never neglect putting them before God in our prayers, because that's the reality for them, as it was for Peter and his companions.

At this time. So there's the persecution, first of all, briefly. But secondly, prayer was made. So Peter, in verse 5, was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church.

Now there's a wonderful contrast there. Prayer, of course, is something you see all the way through these chapters in the book of Acts, up to now, such an important feature of the church. You go to the likes of chapter 1, verse 24, chapter 2, verse 42.

[9 : 58] And you don't need to read them just now, but chapter 4, verses 24 to 31. They're all specifically, they all specifically mentioned the importance and the place that prayer had in the church at the time.

And that it still has for ourselves. And here it's specific. Prayer was made for him to God, for the specific man, the specific situation.

And the word but there is really of huge significance. Because that's where you see the contrast.

So Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church. In other words, the iron gates of the prison were closed against Peter.

And many avenues were being closed to the church. And yet the gates of heaven were open. And nobody could actually close them. Prayer was made to God, for him, by the church.

[11 : 02] And that wonderful contrast really remains with us to this day. Nobody and no power on earth or anywhere else has the power to close the gates of heaven against prayer.

That's why we meet to pray. Because we believe in prayer. And we believe in prayer as a means, as an avenue, by which in contact with God, we actually see God coming to work in response to prayer and in answer to prayer.

Peter was in prison. But earnest prayer to God was made for him by the church. And you see, it's important, too, that it says it was by the church.

It wasn't just by his fellow apostles. It wasn't just by one or two people isolated from the rest. Prayer was made by the church.

One of our most valuable privileges is that we can meet together for prayer.

[12 : 05] That we can come together to worship God, but sometimes specifically to pray. And to engage with God in prayer, even if we're not all heard audibly.

This is one of the things that we really have to appreciate and increasingly appreciate for ourselves as a congregation. That meetings specifically for prayer are one of our highest privileges.

Because there, the church is making petition to God and coming before God to pray to him. It's great that we're able to pray on our own and in our own homes and in our families.

But it's the church that's here at prayer. It's the gathered church. It's the people of God combined and collected together.

And united together. And concerned to be together. To pray to the Lord. Why do we have prayer meetings? It's so that we can collectively come as the church of God to plead with God.

[13 : 07] To pray to God. Yes, there are teaching elements to the midweek meetings as well. And that's deliberate too. Because we try and somehow get into the greater depths of doctrine or whatever to bring out the teaching of scripture.

But they are also for prayer. And there are meetings in the congregation, as you know. That are specifically for prayer. Without the teaching element in them. And these are all of this great privilege we have.

To meet together to pray. You know, it would be very different if we were tonight. Like our fellow Christians in these parts of the world where they're imprisoned.

The most valuable things very often are only appreciated by us when they're taken from us. It wouldn't take all that much to take away our liberties.

And among our liberties is the liberty to meet together for prayer. For the church to be together to pray. So never neglect that.

[14 : 13] Never think of that as just something tacked onto the life of the church that you can opt in or opt out of. As Christians, we should be delighted to take that privilege we have of being together in prayer.

And you know, prayer meetings, midweek meetings, mother meetings for prayer. You mustn't think of them as just for those who are communicants. Or for those who maybe you think are sure of their salvation.

Most of the people there are not sure of their salvation. Not least all the time. These meetings are there to worship God. To pray to God. To join together in prayer to God.

And that's what our great privilege is. And that's what God in his kindness has placed us in. This favorable situation.

So prayer was made by the church. But you see, it's also earnest prayer. Peter was kept in prison. But earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church.

[15 : 17] That word earnest is used only in a few other places in the Bible. In fact, it's only used in Luke chapter 22 and verse 44. And in 1 Peter chapter 1 and verse 22.

In Luke 22, it's used in regard to the Lord's situation in Gethsemane. Being in an agony, Luke says, he prayed the more earnestly.

Now when you look at that, and you realize the agony of Jesus in Gethsemane. And that that led him to pray more earnestly. Never think to yourself that anything in our life comes anywhere near to a Gethsemane.

You might find some people or in some books describing some Christian deeply, deep suffering on the part of some Christians to be a Gethsemane in their experience. It never is.

There's only one person who was ever in Gethsemane in an agony, in the agony of Gethsemane, as Luke describes, and that is Jesus. We don't have Gethsemanes, even though we have deep sufferings, some Christians from time to time.

[16 : 25] But you can take and extract the principle of earnest prayer from the Lord's prayer in Gethsemane to our own petitions too.

Because while there's no Gethsemane in our experience, there has to be an earnestness in our prayer that corresponds to the earnestness of the Lord Jesus Christ in Gethsemane.

And that earnestness is here made, when the church made prayer for Peter, earnest prayer. That kind of prayer that wrestles with God was made by the church for him.

And when Peter uses the word again in his first letter, it's actually interesting how he uses it there because it's actually specifically in terms of Christian love.

In 1 Peter chapter 1 and at verse 22, he uses that word where he says, Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart.

[17 : 29] The earnestness that you attach to the Lord Jesus Christ in praying in Gethsemane, the earnestness that you attach to this church here in Acts 12, praying to God for Peter, is the earnestness, the very same word, the very same force of the word, that has to mark our Christian love for one another.

It's not half-hearted, it's not something lukewarm, it's earnest, it's something really sincere. And so Peter uses that word, having had it used here about himself, in the prayers of the church for him.

And you notice there's no sense of panic. Nothing like that here in the church's experience. Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church.

That's the prayer along with the persecution in the prayer made to God for Peter. Let's move secondly to the prayer for Peter answered by God.

And there's a number of elements there that we want to just briefly mention. First of all, there's a miraculous release. And then there's an unbelieving response on the part of the praying church, which is remarkable.

[18 : 46] And then thirdly, you have Herod's demise near the end of the chapter. And along with that, you have the progress of the word of God. Let's briefly just mention a few things in relation to these.

Prayer for Peter answered by God. Now, you notice there, when Herod was about to bring him out from verse 6, you find Peter there described as sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains and sentries before the door, were guarding the prison.

And then the angel came and struck him and woke him, led him out of the prison. And as we read through the chapter, the angel departed from him when he had deposited him. And he came to that particular place that the angel disappeared and left Peter there.

What's remarkable about that, first of all, is the way that it mentions Peter sleeping so soundly. He's on death row. It's the night before what he expects to be his execution.

And yet, how is he described? Is he fully awake? Is he disturbed in his sleep? No, he's not. He's actually sleeping soundly between two soldiers.

[20 : 00] But he's sleeping so soundly that when the angel came into the prison and this light fills the prison cell in which he was being kept, he didn't wake. The angel had to prod him awake.

And it looks as if he was still at least half asleep as he went out into the streets, out from the prison and into the street. It was then, after the angel disappeared, that he actually woke up properly and realized it wasn't a vision after all, and that the Lord had indeed sent his angel.

Now, that's remarkable in itself. Nothing else describes, nothing else is really a key to that description, surely, but the peace that Peter himself had in his heart, even in the midst of such persecution.

See, the Lord gives that peace to his people, at times at least, maybe not to everyone. But in the case of Peter, that's his situation. He's not pacing about anxiously.

You wonder even if the angel himself or itself was amazed at this man and how soundly he was asleep in these situations.

[21 : 11] Well, of course, you can say from that how soundly, as Christians, we should be able to sleep. Yes, there are things, of course, bodily pain.

Are there things that keep us awake? Are there anxieties that from time to time will keep us awake? May it never be the case with me or with you that you are kept awake because of unforgiven sin, because we have not repented and turned to God, because we don't know God as our Savior, because we don't have Jesus as our friend.

The psalmist put it in Psalm 4, In peace you make me to lie down and sleep.

That's how the psalmist put it, despite facing his enemies. In peace you make me lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, are a refuge to me.

You alone look after me. You alone are able to be my security. So I can sleep soundly. I don't have a bad conscience, he was saying. I have peace with God.

[22 : 30] That's really what the saint, what the forgiven sinner is able to do. Are you going to sleep soundly tonight? Will you go to your bed with something still not right between you and God?

Something that you haven't yet dealt with? Or even worse than that, will you sleep soundly even if your sins aren't forgiven? Well, here is Peter as a lesson to us of how secure in Christ, even in these circumstances, he can actually sleep soundly, even though he's kept under lock and key between soldiers, incarcerated, maximum security, but Peter is soundly asleep.

He has his rest in Jesus. He has Christ as his master. And then you have, as he is released and as he comes to himself and says, now I'm sure the Lord has sent his angel, when he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John, whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together.

And you know what happened from a reading of the chapter there. A servant girl came to the gate, the outer gateway, where Peter was knocking, and she recognized Peter's voice, but in her joy, she went back in.

She didn't open the gate. She reported that Peter was standing at the gate. And they said to her, oh, you're out of your mind. It's his angel. Whatever that exactly means, we can't be sure. It looks like there may have been a belief at the time that there was a guardian angel for each of these apostles, or maybe for each Christian, who knows?

[24 : 11] But in any case, this is what they said. It is his angel. It can't be himself. He's in prison. And it's remarkable, isn't it, that there was the church together, praying to God for Peter.

We're not told specifically that they were praying for his release, but surely that would have been part of what they were praying before God and setting before God. And yet, when he was here knocking at the gate, and the seven girls said he was standing there, they didn't believe her.

Well, that's a lesson to ourselves too, isn't it? Because, because, sometimes it's like that with us too. An elder at one time visiting, an old housebound lady, who had been a Christian many years, said, he started to describe to her, how the Lord had answered, prayer very remarkably, that he'd been praying, for something specific for a while, and he described how the Lord had answered the prayer.

And then he said to this old lady, isn't that wonderful? She said, no, not really. The Lord is always true to his promise.

She didn't see it as remarkable, that the Lord answered prayer. It was what the Lord did. So to her, the remarkable thing would be, if you were amazed, that God answered prayer, that didn't actually, really, come into her reckoning at all.

[25 : 48] And it asks a lot of questions, of ourselves tonight. Do we expect, our prayers to be answered? Are we more content, with the act of praying, than looking for answers, or expecting answers, to our prayers?

What is our mindset, as we leave our prayer meetings, or as we leave prayer, on our own, personally, privately? Are we prepared, as we pray for revival, for a gospel blessing, are we prepared, for an influx, of people into the church, into this congregation, in answer to those prayers?

Are we praying, but without thinking, of what the outcome, of that prayer, could be, or would be, if God were to answer them? Are we praying tonight, as we pray, for people out there, to come, to be part of the church, to come to be saved?

Do we really want, all kinds of people, who are out there, to come to be, in the church? Do we want people, that aren't the same, as ourselves, who are very different, in many ways? Are we afraid, that somehow or other, we won't be able, to deal with, that sort of thing?

Well, if we're earnest, and sincere, in our prayers, and if we expect, God to answer our prayers, that's what's going, to happen. And we have to, actually anticipate that, by being prepared, for the Lord, to answer our prayers, and bring that influx, and bring an enlargement, and bless people, under the gospel, and then come, to see an increase.

[27 : 24] And you know, it's important for us too, to remember, when all of this, is set before us, and the challenge, of that is set before us, not to lose heart, don't get into the mindset, that some people out there, have some, Christians will have, and they'll say to you, well, you know, the Lord has not answered, it's your fault, it's because your faith, is not strong enough, it's because your faith, is not big enough, it's because you're not, believing properly, as you should be.

The Lord is, is sovereign, and as Mr. McLeod mentioned, this morning, in his prayer, the Lord has his own timing, and we can't hurry God, and we can't dictate to God, though we can plead with him, and wrestle with him in prayer, he's the one, who has the timetable, in his hands, and so don't lose heart, if you think the Lord, is not answering your prayers now, but believe, that praying to the Lord, will bring an answer, believe that praying to the Lord, will in fact, bring the Lord's response, in his own way, in his own time, but believe, that God himself, in answering prayer, will sometimes surprise us, and will bring things to us, that we didn't really expect, even though we expect, our prayers to be answered, the miraculous release, and the unbelieving response, of the church, are two things, that are held together, in some sort of tension there, just to remind us, that we should never, actually be amazed, when God answers prayer, in fact, we should be amazed, that if he didn't at all, because his promise, that promise is, that he will hear, his people, when they call to him, and so the prayer for Peter, was answered by God, in this remarkable way, but that led to,

Herod's demise, he killed the soldiers, he had ordered them, to be executed, when he examined them, when he couldn't find, Peter anywhere, so, we're then told, that sometime later, he went down, to Tyre, and Sidon, and, on that great occasion, for Herod, he appointed this day, when he would, appear on his throne, and this splendor, and, and, and, he made this great oration, this great speech, to them, and, they were so, spellbound, by the, the, the magnificence, of his appearance, and by the word, that he spoke, they shouted out, it is the voice, of a God, and not of a man, and, and immediately, an angel of the Lord, struck him down, because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms, and breathed his last, now, we're told in some, ancient historians, that, Herod's death, came about, through his, contracting a severe, abdominal, or intestinal, infection, and that he died soon, after contracting, that infection, and what you find here, in this account, is quite in keeping, with that, although it mentions here, that the angel of the Lord, struck him down, yes, it was from the Lord, it was an act of God, using these means, but what's important, in the chapter is, the contrast, between Herod, and the word of God, and the church of God, we should also remember, of course, that, when the Lord, has a steadfast love, to his own people, to his own cause, to his church, we should remember, that God is, as steadfast, against his enemies, as he is, for his people, that word, steadfast love, as it's translated, in the modern translations, especially, in the Old Testament, word,

God's covenant, commitment, to his people, to their well-being, to their ultimate, destiny, God is, committed to that, absolutely, in his covenant love, and as he's committed, to them, in his covenant love, it means, that those who seek, to destroy them, he's committed, against them too, and Herod, really, when the church, started praying, Herod was doomed, this is part, of the Lord's answer, to the church's prayers, the death, the demise, of Herod, he did his best, he did everything, he could, to try and stem, the advance, of the church, he did everything, he could, to throw the apostles, into prison, and to please the people, by putting them to death, and instead, although he killed James, with the sword, actually, he's the one, who comes to grief, he's the one, who comes, to a sudden end, so when you're praying, for blessing, remember, that you're praying, for the destruction, of evil, and it's not wrong, to pray for that, do I hear you asking, the question, does that mean, that we pray, for the destruction, of evil people, who carry out, evil deeds, against the church, well it's our, privilege, and our business, as Christians, to pray for their salvation, to pray that God, will change them, to pray that God, will bring them, to know himself, and to be turned out, of their evil ways, so from that point of view, we pray for them, but we also pray, against them, and we pray, against them earnestly, for what they're doing, for what they're, seeking to bring about, for their attempts, to stifle the gospel, for their stand, against God, against righteousness, against gospel peace, and all of these things, it's a very solemn thing, to pray, for the advance, of God's kingdom, because inevitably, you're praying, for the destruction, of God's enemies, you leave it to God, whether he converts them, or just destroys them, but one way, or the other,

God will deal, with his enemies, he is God, he's not mocked, he doesn't treat, sin lightly, and he doesn't treat, lightly, any attempts, to persecute, his people, Herod found that, out to his cost, here he is, doing everything possible, to actually bring about, the destruction, of the gospel, and of the church, and he ends up, with a wretched death, in God's answer, to his people's prayer, leave the outcome, to God, but pray, and pray, as you're counseled, here to pray, and you see, the contrast, with that, is important too, here's another, but at the beginning, of verse 24, and it corresponds, to that, but in verse 5, Peter was kept, in prison, but earnest prayer, for him, was made to God, by the church, and here you find, at verse 24, that Herod, having died, he was eaten, of worms, and breathed his life, but, the word, of the Lord, the word of God, increased, and multiplied, worldly glory, could not prevent, the death of Herod, worldly advantage, and worldly position, cannot prevent,

[34 : 51] God working, cannot prevent, God's judgment, and worldly persecution, cannot prevent, the gospel's progress, as God will bless, his word, as he did here, the very thing, that Herod, tried to prevent, is the very thing, that happened, but, the word of the Lord, increased, and multiplied, now tonight, surely for you, and for me, that's encouraging, as you know, of the attempts, that are made, in the present day, to overthrow, the gospel, and to throw out, of public life, this Bible, that we value, and the Christian life, that, is so closely, connected with it, and the Christian stand, that people take, in their place of work, or in their own establishment, wherever it is, so, so many attempts, increasingly, it seems, to stem, to stem, the advance, of God's cause, to stem, the advance, of the church, to thwart, the progress, of the gospel, here's your encouragement, it's in the hands, of God, no persecution, is able, to stop, the advance, of the gospel, when God, looks into his diary, and says, it's time, for a thousand Christians, to be added, to the church, in Stornoway, who's going to stop it, who's going to say, it can't happen, who's going to, in any way, stem, what God himself, and his purpose, has decreed, to bring about, friends, it's our privilege, tonight, to pray to God, to pray to God, for ourselves, to pray to God, for those of our fellow Christians, it's our privilege, to know, that God answers, the prayers of his people, sometimes, even to our surprise, he's able to do, exceeding abundantly, above all, that we can ask, or even think, it's our privilege, tonight, to know, of this response, to prayer, that God, encourages us, to believe in, it's our privilege, tonight, to pray to God, for the advance, of the gospel, to be ourselves, part of that advance, it's our privilege, to wait upon God, for the answer, to our prayer, but when it comes, let's anticipate it, believingly, expectantly, for it is God's answer, to his people's prayers, let's pray,

Lord, our God, we pray, that in, your great kindness, that you would hear, our prayers, and respond to them, as only you can, as only you can, we thank you, for the privilege, tonight, of praying to you, and speaking directly, with you, we thank you, for the privilege, of collectively, praying to you, as your church, and we bless you, Lord, for the encouragement, that that brings us, when we are able, to be together, by your will, and purpose, so that we will, engage your minds, in seeking, to petition, the Lord, and to, wrestle with you, in prayer, for your blessing, and further blessing, to come to us, Lord, we pray, that you would hear us, as we seek, that blessing, even this evening, pour your fullness, into our emptiness, grant to us, oh Lord, that we may, ourselves, be overtaken, and that we may, ourselves, come to wonder, at the way, in which you come, to answer our prayers, hear us now,

Lord, for Jesus' sake, Amen. Well, let's conclude our service, this evening, we're singing, finally, in Psalm 56, on page 287, singing verses 1 to 4, and then also, verses 11 to 13, so five verses, to the tune, Belmont, Psalm 56, verses 1 to 4, and then the final, two verses, 11 to 13, show mercy, Lord, to me, for man would swallow me, outright, he me oppresseth, while he doth, against me, daily fight, they daily would me, swallow up, that hate me, spitefully, for they be many, that do fight, against me, oh most high, verses 1 to 4, and then verses, 11 to 13, it's time to sing, O mercy, Lord, turn me for mine.

Would swallow me, I cry, In me, O present, widely come, Against me daily fight.

A daily would be swallowed up That made me spitefully, For there be many not to fight
Against me, O most high.

[40 : 52] When I now pray, I'll trust in me. In God and praise His word, I will not fear what flesh can
do.

My trust is in the Lord. In God I trust, I will not fear What man can do to me.

My words upon me are, O God, I'll render praise to Thee.

Well, Thou, God, who from death be saved, My being from false decree, To walk before
God in the light Of those that live in me.

I'll go to the main door after the 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
evermore.

[42 : 45] Amen. Amen.