



**Israel's Greatest Hits Vol. II-Part 8**  
**Life in Perspective**  
**Pastor Mike Fabarez**

So I hear that they are remaking that old Twilight Zone TV show. You've seen that? I can't imagine though it'll be any freakier than the original, in part because I'm not 9-years-old anymore when it used to freak me out so much. I remember sleepless nights as a kid and getting up from bed and going into the family room and seeing it on there on our TV, the old black and white reruns of the Twilight Zone. And even the simplest special effects on that show when I was 9-years-old could just keep me tossing and turning for hours. The nightmares that I would have from the Twilight Zone. A lot there were because, as Rod Sterling put together on the screen there, were some really fanciful depictions of monsters and giants, in particular. A lot of giants in his episodes.

Except for one episode, I remember, the giants weren't all that scary looking. As a matter of fact, they were American astronauts who landed on another planet. If you're a Twilight Zone fan you might remember that episode. They come upon a colony of little people, that's the name of the episode, "The Little People." As they get there these American astronauts trying to fix their spaceship come across this colony and there's one self-aggrandizing astronaut who loves the fact that he's so much larger than these little people and claims that he's a god and has them construct a big statue, an idol of himself. As everything seems to be going well in his, you know, glorified state in his own thinking, the episode ends with a characteristic twist by Sterling's plotline, as he is discovered, as he's enjoying and basking, this deified astronaut. He is discovered by another astronaut from another planet who walks over the mountain range of the planet and, of course, he's like a hundred times larger than our astronaut who thinks he's so big. He reaches down to pick him up because he sees him there and picks him up and accidentally crushes him. And he dies. He throws his body back down into the dirt, which of course is the valley where the statue has been erected and he falls and breaks the statue into pieces. Then chain-smoking Rod Sterling comes on and he says, "Our astronaut, he's a victim of delusion," he says. "And in this case the dream dies harder than the man." And I thought, indeed it does. The dream dies harder than the man.

There's a lot of that dreaming going on on our planet that we are all that. That we are big. We're in charge. We've got a lot of things happening in our lives and it's our doing and WE are to be credited and WE are responsible. And yet as we often remind ourselves as we study God's Word from this platform, we've got to get ourselves in perspective. In reality we are not God. And we really don't have much control and much power really at all. Matter of fact, all of our power and our sovereignty and our control is all derived. It's not inherent. It's not really a part of who we are. And there is a God, as I often say, and you're not him. In reality we live under his jurisdiction, we live under his control. While we may not see this God as he seems to exist far away over the mountain range, one day he will appear and he will call his creatures to account.

And intuitively we recognize that. But we don't often live like it. Well, there are psalms in God's inspired songbook in the Old Testament that pull our attention back to that reality. And it reminds us, look, get yourself in perspective. Understand the greatness of God, understand the power of God, understand the sovereignty of God. Just get your lives in perspective because that's the way to live. As a matter of fact, all this striving to try and beat our chest and

deify ourselves is a futile and frustrating endeavor. Get back to putting God in his rightful place in your heart and in your minds. Get yourself in your own perspective the way you need to be. And, you know what? You can have gladness. You can have contentment. You can have peace. That's the right way to live.

Matter of fact, it changes everything about the way we live. We can't afford to ignore psalms like this. And of course, the psalm I want to bring you to, if you haven't already looked at it, it's there printed on your worksheet, it's Psalm 33. I'm going to invite you to turn there. I'm going to read it for you. It's a rather long psalm this morning, 22 verses. It's a psalm of praise, it starts out here with a shout of praise, as you'll see, calling us to praise God. We'll try and look at all the details of this as best we can and understand how it can get everything in our lives in its proper perspective. You'll leave, I trust, with a much better handle on how God would have us view ourselves and him and, thus, experience a ton of positive benefits that are derived therefrom.

Take a look at this text. I'll read it for you. Psalm 33. No superscription in this case. It is traditionally understood to be a psalm of David, though I should add. I'll read from the English Standard Version. Verse 1, "Shout for joy in the Lord." And again, you'll see the capital O-R-D here in your printed text. That's a reminder this is God's proper name, the Hebrew word, Yahweh. So God's proper name.

"Shout for joy in Yahweh, O you righteous! Praise," this kind of praise, this kind of recognition, "befits," it's appropriate, "to the upright. Give thanks," verse 2, "to Yahweh with the lyre," that's the old harp, "make melody to him with the harp of ten strings!" That's the supercharged harp. Verse 3, "Sing to him a new song; play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts. For the word of Yahweh is upright, and all his works are done in faithfulness. He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the steadfast love of Yahweh." Verse 6, "By the word of Yahweh the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their hosts. He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap; he puts the deep in storehouses. Let all the earth fear Yahweh. Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him! For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm. Yahweh brings the council of the nations to nothing; he frustrates the plans of the peoples. The council of Yahweh stands forever, the plans of his heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is Yahweh, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage! Yahweh looks down from heaven; he sees all the children of man; from where he sits enthroned he looks out on the inhabitants of the earth, he who fashions the hearts of them all and observes all their deeds. The king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength. The war horse is a false hope for salvation, and by its great might it cannot rescue. Behold, the eye of Yahweh is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love, that he may deliver their soul from death and keep them alive in famine. Our soul waits for Yahweh; he is our help and our shield. For our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name. Let your steadfast love, O Yahweh, be upon us, even as we hope in you."

This is a great and positive psalm that ends with this attitudinal adjustment of our hearts and we need that. But it's only possible if we understand and can digest the truth of what's found in this text. So let's tackle the first five verses here and get a sense of what's being called for. It's clear it's something loud, it's something that's supposed to be done eagerly, it's something

that is supposed to be done enthusiastically, but it's a call for us to praise God, to worship God, to thank God, that's what praise is really all about, it's crediting God with something.

Then there's a list in verses 4 and 5. It speaks of his word, it speaks of his work, it speaks of his faithfulness, speaks of his righteousness and justice that he loves. He loves to see it in the world that he's made. And of course, he loves the earth, he loves the people. His steadfast love is upon the people. So what we get here is a call for people to enthusiastically and eagerly thank God. And then we have just a representative cluster of attributes that the ancients used to call the perfections of God. I love that, because they are an attribute, of course, is anything you can say that is true about God and the things that you can say that are accurately true about God are all perfect.

So I love that phrase and I like to put it down that way. First five verses call us to "Eagerly Thank God for His Perfections." You want to get yourself in perspective, start exploring the perfections or the attributes of God, particularly the communicable perfections of God. The perfection that you say, "Well, I know something of faithfulness, but, man, look how faithful he is. I know something of love, but look how loving he is. I know something about righteousness, but look how righteous he is." I mean that kind of comparison gets everything in the right place in our minds. First of all, the distance grows between you and the God of the Bible. You start recognizing he is, as it says in verse 21, holy, his name is holy, everything about him is holy. Holy, separate, distant. That word in Hebrew and in Greek, "qadosh" or "hagios," has that concept of being completely in another category.

Sometimes we talk about the attributes of God and that he is a transcendent God. He's so other, he's so distant in terms of the superiority of his greatness. And that's a good thing for us to recognize and the more you recognize that the more excited you can get about it. I hate to work backwards here through the first section to this passage, but to see his love and to see his justice and his righteousness and his faithfulness and the uprightness of his word, can start to get you really excited about praising God and thanking God for those things, because all we see is a real distant reflection of that.

I think of the old hymn that says, "My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness." A lot of great verses in that song. And it talks about the reality of our trust in him. Right? We hope in him, we trust in him. And there's that line that "all other ground is sinking sand." Well, most people don't realize that. We build our house on a lot of things, so to speak, that are sinking sand. We don't recognize how sinking that sand is until the things go wrong and we realize, "Hey, that really wasn't worth putting all my hope in, my trust in."

In reality there are a lot of things that this world, our non-Christian counterparts, if you happen to be a Christian this morning, that are out there putting their confidence and their hope and seeking their joy and putting all their assurance in things that in the end they will not be what they hope them to be, they will not have for their lives what they hope to derive from those things.

Your family makes a real lousy God. Your spouse makes for a real lousy God. Your kids make for a real lousy God. Your vacation home, your money, your bank, your bank account, your job. In the end those things really are not the things that provide what really our hearts long for and that is to connect with, to credit, to start to really extol the virtues of the perfect one. The

more you realize how perfect that is the more enthusiastic, the more eagerly you can go after the praise of God.

If you want to take anything out of this first point, I guess it's getting you back to something we teach in our one-on-one discipleship program around here in the very second chapter. We start with making sure we're Christians in Chapter 1 and then we say, "OK, now if you're going to connect with God you need to understand the attributes of God, you need to understand the perfections of God." And we try to train people in our discipleship program, can you just try and get those attributes before your mind every single day? Can you try to at least explore the depths of these things?

Let's start in the bottom here. The steadfast love of the Lord in verse 5. "Steadfast love" and you'll see this in the English Standard Version translating a simple Hebrew word that's a consonant-le language, three consonants. We vocalize it as "hesed." Hesed is translated here "steadfast love" and it's a weird translation, I suppose. It's like a lot of languages. Our word for love is so stretchy it can, you know, can stretch over your spouse or your children and Cheez-Its and pretzels. I mean, it's a word that we use in so many different ways.

But when you speak of the word hesed in Hebrew, it speaks of a kind of loyalty to someone else, a goodness that you're going to provide for someone else with no thought of equity. I mean there's nothing in return, in reality. In other words, the word hesed is usually referring to God's love for us. But there are times you see the word hesed, which translates steadfast love, used of people. But that's when English translations usually put it in another form because it's just a strange way to put it.

Let me give you one example of that. We studied in, if you were in our men's and women's Bible study, through First and Second Samuel. And there's that scene when Saul dies on Mount Gilboa with his sons. And at the end of that book it says that the men of Jabesh-gilead, which is a little town in Israel, they travel all night under the cover of darkness to find Saul's body after the folks who had killed him had hung his body on the wall of a place called Beth Shean. And so they go to this town and they stealthily sneak in and steal his body. Now he's dead. He's been dead for hours. And they take that body back and they give the king the best burial they can give him, which the body was a corpse and in really bad shape at that point, but they do the best to bury him respectfully.

And David sends messengers and he says this. I'll just quote it for you, it's from Second Samuel Chapter 2 verse 5. David sent messages to the men of Jabesh-gilead and he said, "May you be blessed by the Lord, because you showed hesed to Saul your Lord and buried him." And the way it translates in the English Standard Version is you showed loyalty, you showed devotion.

What in the world did they expect to get back from Saul? Right? Nothing. I mean they knew about who the rightful king was, David. And a lot of people went into David's presence thinking, "Aren't you glad that Saul is dead?" They went out there simply because of their loyalty to the king who now can do nothing for them. Talk about a one-way kind of sacrificial love that goes to the extreme. Now, it's not a passage most people study in Second Samuel Chapter 2, to think about God's love for us but it's not a bad example. These nameless men



who travel all night to do something for the honor and loyalty and love for a king who is dead, just so that they can show honor, just so they can show their respect for him.

God is a kind of God who spends and expends and expresses his love for us, and there's nothing, really, that we can give him in return. We do our best. We present ourselves as living sacrifices, we worship him, I get all that. But when it comes down to it, God demonstrates his love for us in this that while we're still sinners Christ dies for us. Just to explore the love of God, as Paul said, "The height, the length, the breadth and the depth of the love of God," to understand that, "to comprehend this." He says, "I'm praying that God would help you understand that." And that's just one attribute.

When you look at something and moving back in this passage, like his justice. Those seem pitted against each other, that God is just and yet God is loving. It's one of the reasons, by the way, that justice is so long delayed in God's economy. If you think about it, the moment that Adam and Eve reached out to grab that piece of forbidden fruit and to eat it, they should have had immediate justice. Matter of fact, it's become part of the jurisprudence lingo of our day to say that "justice delayed is justice denied." Smile at me if you've heard that phrase before. "Justice delayed is justice denied." It's really built in all way back to the Magna Carta, the concept that you need a speedy trial, it certainly has made its way into, you know, our rights here in the United States.

We recognize though that even with a commitment to a speedy trial there is often a big distinction in time between when the infraction takes place, even when the indictment comes down, to when finally the sentence is given and the judgment is carried out. There's a timespan there. For us it's all about making sure we get the facts straight, making sure we do this right. At least that's the theory of American jurisprudence.

But God puts a lot of distance between the sinner's infraction and transgression and his judgment. And sometimes we say, "Why are you taking so long?" Matter of fact, that's a phrase very familiar throughout the Psalms. "How long, O Lord, how long are you going to put up with this?" They're even singing that in heaven it says, they're crying out to God with a plaintiff kind of a petition. How long are you going to let this go on during the Great Tribulation? Why aren't you going to judge these sinners?

The Bible is very clear that "God is not slow in keeping his promises as some count slowness," to quote Second Peter Chapter 3, "but because he's patient, not wanting any to perish." He really doesn't take any pleasure even in the death of the wicked, the Bible says. But he's patient. He's wanting people to come to repentance. And if you just look at even the dimensions of justice. Will the judge of all the earth do right, as it says in the book of Genesis? Of course he will. But even in understanding his justice and the confluence of justice and love on the cross that God would love us so much and that he would show this forbearance towards sin, patiently waiting to punish us while his love can swoop in and save the penitent. We realize that the distance between that transgression and the judgment gives room for this love that we celebrate every time we come together. I hope you recognize that we're celebrating the fact that God would love sinners like us enough to grant us forgiveness. That's an amazing truth and one that's very important for us to realize.



The more we study the depth of God's justice and dimensions of it, the more we see the breadth and the height, the length and the depth of his love, the more you should appreciate that. Any time you compare something you think is good, like human love, like human justice. You might feel like, "Yeah, that happened and that's good and that's right." And then you compare it to something great, you realize, man, I know nothing of what I thought I did about love. I know nothing of what I thought I did about justice.

Or how about righteousness, working back in this passage in verse 5. I mean, we know people who are righteous, we know things that are righteous. Well, God loves righteousness, he is righteous, the foundation of his pillar is righteousness, he loves to do right and he does. The Lord is a good and righteous holy, morally, ethically pure God. Now he allows for a lot of things on earth because of his patient love. But we've got to realize, we study this God and the perfections of God, and love calling them that, the dimensions of God's perfections and his attributes, you will start to say, "Man, this is really great."

I get excited about things that I think are good and then someone brings something else along that's so much better. And I revealed too much when the men were out at the camping trip how much I love flashlights and knives. But hopefully the manly men will agree with me here. They're too manly to grunt or say Amen. But I recognize that you realize how good a good pocket knife is or good flashlight is or whatever your thing is, stereo system...

Well, you can celebrate that and think it's going really well in terms of I've got a great knife, I got a great flashlight, I got a great stereo system at home. But then you can go somewhere and you can meet someone who has got something so much better. And you get some pretty understated and reserved men to get really excited like little boys when they see something that seems so transcendently great. And there are passages about that. That's how it starts. I understand verses 4 and 5 and understanding the uprightness of God's word, his faithfulness and his faithful work, his righteousness, his judgment, his love, you can start to see why shouting for joy, it starts to make sense.

You're never going get to that kind of expression, eager expression, enthusiastic expression of thanksgiving about God's greatness unless you study it. And the more you study you'll see the distance between what we think is good and what we see is great in God, and you can get pretty excited about that.

This is all about music in this regard. It's one of the vehicles of worship. There's an old phrase, "pulling out all the stops," smile at me if you remember that phrase. Right? "I'm going to pull out all the stops." Do you know where that comes from? It really comes from church, "pulling out all the stops." What are you talking about? Well, the old organs, remember back in the day when preachers didn't preach with a backdrop of drums on the stage? You had pipes behind them. Pastors are preaching, you know, preaching in robes and things like that.

That cultural expression of worship, well there was a time when the organist would pull out those stops. Have you seen it? They've got multiple rows of keys and then they have all these things that look like buttons. Well those are sliders and you pull those out and the more you pull those out, the richer and greater the sound of that organ gets. Don't correct me on this because I'm just speaking in generalities here. But I know this, the more stops you pull out, the more you push that "gas pedal" down at the bottom of the organ, that thing GOES!

And I've been in some 4,000 seat auditoriums with pipe organs that, you know, look like cannon barrels up there, and had my clothes shaking. Right? So don't talk to me about the drums are too loud. Right? I mean, I've had those organ pipes just rattle my clothes. And that's the picture here. They didn't have big pipe organs, they didn't have drum sets, at least not as we have them. But they're saying, "Man, can you start loudly worshipping God?" And again, this is not just about decibels. This is about can you get more enthusiastic and eager about praising and thanking God for how great he is? You're never going to do that if you don't study the attributes of God. Just study them.

If you've never read a single book on the attributes of God, and I don't know how many I had room for on the back. I'm always trying to hit various themes from my sermon in the book list. I mean you can start with Tozer's little book "The Knowledge of the Holy." Would you start there? If you've never read that book let me tell you as your pastor go read that book this week, just go read it. We've got one in a bookstore. You can download, I'm sure, online, get it on your Kindle or whatever, read it on your phone, but "The Knowledge of the Holy." And that's just one starter book. And if you've read it you probably go, "Ah... that was a great book," then read it again.

There are so many big fat books you can read on the attributes of God. Certainly, Packer's book "Knowing God." There are a million different books, Charnock's book on the "Attributes of God." Pink's book "The Attributes of God." Lots of great books, a lot of good systematic theologies. But, man, just start to get those attributes back in your mind. If you went through Partners a long time ago, our discipleship program, and you haven't been praying through the attributes of God every morning, get back to doing that. You never are going to have this kind of enthusiastic, exciting thanksgiving for God until you plumb the depths of God's attributes. Value the perfection of our perfect God.

Verses 6 through 15, we start getting into things again, what we've been in in the psalms about the creation. Well, there's something else here. Thanking God for the things that he's done. But in this case, it's not just who he is, it's what he's done and what he's done that expresses the greatness of God, certainly starts with his creation. How hard was it for him to create the world? Verse 6, "By the word of Yahweh the heavens were made.

"Shamayim" in Hebrew, just like in Greek, the word "heaven," represents three different spheres. Heaven, we think of, we usually use it because we reserve that word for where God lives with the dimension and the place where God lives, heaven. But in this case, and I know this from the context, the Hebrew parallelism here, we're talking about the hosts, the host up in the sky. We're talking there about stars. So we know we're talking about space, that's another use of the word heaven. We have heaven where God lives, we have heaven where the stars hang out, and you have heaven, which is the sky where the birds fly and the tops of the trees brush up against.

So we have "sky" they call that heaven, they have the heavens up there where the stars hang out, space we call it, and then the place where God lives. Well, we're talking here about space. And that's pretty amazing. Matter of fact, I was just sitting down in my home library just going through a few my books on astronomy. Every Christian should study astronomy, not all the theoretical, historical, you know, theories about it all but just the amazing realities of what's



going on, the novas and supernovas and black holes and stars. I mean, there's just something about the greatness of God's creation that will make you feel really small.

Then you look at passages like this and God speaks a word, which of course, he doesn't have teeth, he doesn't have a tongue, he doesn't have to say anything. This is all anthropomorphic language. It's all language that makes us think of God in human ways to know what it is when we think something and we decide to do it, we speak it. "Let's go to lunch today here." I say it, that's my decision to do it, my volitional expression. And God volitionally expressed "I want to create the universe." BAM! And it happened.

"By the word of Yahweh the heavens were made, by the breath of his mouth all their hosts." Then he starts thinking about the oceans. "He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap; and puts the deeps in storehouses." The part of our planet we haven't even fully explored yet, the depths of the oceans. That's another thing, you might be into marine biology or something. It's an amazing thing to think that God speaks these things into existence. There's the power of God.

What should the response be? Verse 8, "Let the earth fear Yahweh; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him!" Most people don't do that. They think God is just, I don't know, some spirit who wants us to do good and, you know, I should probably send my kids to Sunday school when they're small because maybe, I don't know, they should be, I don't want them on drugs." I mean, that's how they think of God. They don't fear Yahweh, the God who made the world by the word of his power. They don't sit there and say, "I stand in awe of him." Well they should. Why? Because think about it, verse 9, "He spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm."

You can either believe that about the real God who is, or you can just sit there and live in Alice in Wonderland and believe that somehow, by a set of theoretical or physical rules, things came into being through something that you can't explain out of a singularity of nothingness, with a set of physical laws that don't exist anymore. You can believe in all that, which is a God of your own making anyway.

Or you believe that there's an intelligent God of great superior and perfect intelligence who designed things in his mind instantaneously from the supernovas of outer space all the way down to the protein molecules strung together in your genetic code, in your DNA, in your chromosomes, to get you who you are, all the way down to the... I mean, whether it's a telescope or a microscope to stand by and say that God is a powerful God. And we're used to thinking that through because we've looked at Psalm 8 and a few others in this series.

But he now takes it from the power of God in creating things to now saying, now think about how he's managed things. That starts in verse 10. "Yahweh brings the council of the nations," that means they sit around and decide things. God decides things and they happen. People decide things and they start to happen, they intend things to happen. They put tariffs on stuff, to be as modern as the headlines this morning. They make decisions about war that they're going to declare. They make decisions about their borders or whatever. They make their decisions. But you know what? God can say, "Nah, we're not doing that today." BAM! He brings all that counsel to nothing.



And they can say we are all about this and he can just, with his word, frustrate the plans of the people. Now, the council of the Lord, if you want to compare the council of people, even powerful people, even the dictators of our world. You want to bring in North Korean dictators and compare them to God? "God's counsel stands forever, the plans of his heart to all generations." He gets done what he wants in history.

Now, "Blessed is the nation whose God is Yahweh." It would be great if God were on your team. It would be great if God looked to your nation. Now, that is Israel, of course, the covenant people of God. But I think certainly we can recognize as a church, the international organization that exists under the governments all over the world, what a blessed thing it would be to have that God be our God. "The people whom he has chosen as his heritage!" It would be great to be a part of a church of the elect. The people who God has called out from the world. It would be good when that God, the God who creates everything out of the word of his power, and then manages everything and does it the way he wants. Whenever he thinks someone's getting out of line, he goes, "We're done with that." That would be a great God to have on our side.

As Moses said, "What great nation is there that has God near them the way our great God is near us whenever we pray." It would be great to have God look to us with favor. How blessed, that's the great Hebrew word "Asher." It's a Hebrew word "happy," how happy, how contented, how great it would be to have God be like that toward you.

It's also a little scary, just like it was scary to think about God's creative power, "Let the earth fear, let all inhabitants of the world stand awe of him!" Look at now verse 13, "The Lord looks down from heaven; he sees all the children of man; from where he sits enthroned he looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth, he who fashions the hearts of them all and observes all their deeds." In history, God looks. He can frustrate our plans and our counsel. He can bring all the things that we think that we should do to nothing, and we ought to live with that great awe and respect and fear of that God.

Number two on your outline. Let's think of it that way. This brings us to humility. We need to "Humbly Thank God for His Power." Number one, if we're going to eagerly thank God for his perfections let's move that to now, OK, it's more than just enthusiastic high-fives, Jesus up there, my homeboy, God is great, I love the worship music. Great. All that's good, but now it's like bowing your head down and saying, "Whoa." God is a powerful God, a sovereign God. He's in charge of all things.

We read on our Daily Bible Reading this morning. Naaman, remember the Syrian governor came down and wanted to be healed of his leprosy. "Is there a prophet here in Israel?" Did you read that this morning? And he was frustrated because Elisha says, "Go dip in the Jordan River seven times." Now, this is a strange season of biblical history. Only about a hundred, less than a hundred miraculous miracles of the Bible where God is breaking natural law. But we see a rash of those with Elijah and Elisha.

So in the middle of all that we're having these chronicled for us in our Daily Bible Reading and one of them is the healing of this Syrian official. And he's frustrated because he didn't want to go dip in the Jordan River, the Jordan River is an Israeli river. He's got his own rivers up in Damascus up in Syria. "Why would I have to do this?" And so he leaves and someone talks

some sense to him and says, "Well, come on. If he told you something spectacular you would do it. Just do this, it's simple, just do it." So he does it and he's healed.

I thought to myself, what an amazing thing this is. Leprosy, a terrible skin disease. That God, just with a word, can say to Elisha, "I'm going to fix it this way." And he does, with a word of his mouth. He can intervene in history and do what he wants. Now, it doesn't happen very often. And usually, it's just a reminder that these are the prophets who speak the word of God and we ought to listen to them. But God certainly works within providence, without breaking natural law, to do many things in his providence and even in response to our praying. That is a God who we serve and you ought to be in awe of power, you ought to be humble about that. Just like God can make it go away, he can make it come. Just like God can bring, just like God can eschew the skin disease, he can bring it. The involvement of God in space and time.

I'd love to look at a passage with you, a couple of them, but let's start with this one. First Samuel Chapter 2. Turn with me, if you would, to First Samuel Chapter 2. Call that up on your device and look at this text. You know the book is named after Samuel. Samuel's the prophet. He's a super important person. He anoints David the king, works with Saul, all of that. Well the story of his childhood, of course, is the story of Hannah who can't have kids, she's infertile. But she cries out to God for a child and she's granted that request. So she has a child and she drops him off with Eli, who is probably not the best, you know, foster parent to have as we find out. Nevertheless, God guides Samuel's life and he becomes a godly prophet. Well, Hannah is rejoicing in God and she prays this prayer, she sings this song.

Talk about getting everything in perspective. Look at it with me. Verse 3. "Talk no more so very proudly." One thing I should learn about the power of God when he intervenes and does things and he directs life, I ought to think, "Man, I got no place for pride in my life." "Let not the arrogance come out from your mouth." That's not a bad thing whenever you hear it in your kids, when you hear it in yourself. Shut that down. "For Yahweh is a God of knowledge." He knows, just like we saw, we ought to fear, he sits enthroned, he watches the deeds of people. "By him actions are weighed." He's looking. And the prototypical sin of the universe was what? Think about it. The thing that brought down a third of Heaven was pride. It was people thinking, "I'm all that." You know, it's that picture again, as I started with, someone thinking that they are important, they deify their own thinking. And God says, "We're not going to have that. We're not going to have that because it's wrong, it's wrong for you, it's wrong for the universe, it's wrong for me, it's just wrong.

"The bows of the mighty," they seem so very proud, they've got these great military tools like bows and arrows and "they're broken. The feeble though they bind on strength." I mean think about that, what would happen, not long from now as a little kid, a shepherd boy that Samuel, Hannah's son, would anoint, and he would stand in the shadow of Goliath with a slingshot and take down the biggest, baddest, Philistine warrior that the world had ever seen.

I mean, the feeble, a shepherd boy, can be strong. "Those who were full," they had everything, they ate, you know, five meals a day, now "they're hiring themselves out" like beggars "for bread." They're standing by the side of the road doing something to just get a few bites of food. "And those who were hungry have ceased to be hungry," they're full. "And the barren," just like she was, didn't have children, "has borne seven, but she who has many children," man, her life's all messed up like she's borne none, she's "forlorn.

Yahweh kills and Yahweh brings to life; he brings down to Sheol," that's the Old Testament way to speak of the graves, brings down to death, "and he raises up. Yahweh makes poor and he makes rich; he brings low and he exalts. He raises up the poor from the dust; and he lifts the needy from the ash heap to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor. For the pillars of the earth are Yahweh's, and on them he set the world." God is the creator. Look at the power in creation.

Now, look at how he deals with people. "He will guard the feet of his faithful ones, the wicked though, cut off in darkness." Oh, justice may be delayed but it's certainly not denied contra today's jurisprudence. "For not by might shall a man prevail. The adversaries of Yahweh, broke into pieces." Verse 10, "Against them he will thunder in heaven," it's coming. "Yahweh will judge the ends of the earth; he will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed." But here's the key: they've got to stop talking so proudly, verse 3. Stop with the pride.

You and I need to be humble before God in light of his power. I'll tell you what, I found a lot of very arrogant men rejecting Christianity. They think it's weak. "For my wife and my kids, they can have it, but I have nothing to do with this." Interesting how God can just do something so small, he can tweak your back and throw you on a bed of pain and say, "What kind of big shot are you, really?" You don't need God? "Well, I don't need God because I've got a good job, I got things in charge, I got good health." God with just a thought, with a word, with an intentional, volitional decision can take all that away.

Hannah recognized that, being lifted from the ash heap, from the barren status in an ancient near-eastern world, to say, "You can have a kid, not only one kid, you can have more kids than that." She ends up being lifted up. She says, "God can do whatever he wants with the powers of heaven."

Speaking of that, that's a line, by the way, that came from a Babylonian king, a pagan, idolatrous king. Can I show you that one real quick? Let's go to Daniel Chapter 4. The second passage I'd like you to look at, just the think about our need for humility in coming to God in thankfulness for what a great and powerful God he is. He can do what he wants with the powers of heaven. And right now, I don't know where you're at, you can be in the ash heap or you can be sitting with princes, but you need to know that all of that is determined by God. God gives you power to produce wealth, if you're wealthy, that's his doing. "What do we have that we have not received?" the Apostle Paul said.

Well that's the lesson that Nebuchadnezzar would learn. Nebuchadnezzar, by the way, the Babylonian king, was known for building the hanging gardens of Babylon that he built for his wife. You want to talk about a building, you know, a builder. This guy was like Herod in that regard who, you know, hundreds of years later he would have such a monumental building project, everyone would say, "Wow, you're amazing." Matter of fact, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world was built by Nebuchadnezzar. He was a great builder, a great and powerful king.

And he was used by God to come and discipline his nation, the nation of Judah, Israel if you will, the lower half of Israel. He was going to punish them because of their idolatry and sin. It

didn't mean the Babylonians were virtuous people but God was willing in his grace to work with Babylonian kings like that, not just to use them as a tool of discipline on his own people, but when he came in touch with and encountered Daniel he started to recognize that God that Daniel serves, that God of Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, aka Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, was a pretty powerful God. I should stand in respect of him.

Well, in the beginning of the chapter in Daniel Chapter 4, he's praising God because he recognizes after seeing Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, if you will, taken out of the fire, he says, "Well, that's a God who you don't want to trifle with." Well, after all that he gets back to business as usual and he has a dream. He calls Daniel in to interpret the dream because Daniel's already established himself as someone who is in touch with the real God who knows mysteries and so Daniel gives him the conclusion and he tells him what this dream is going to be all about and that is, "You're in for trouble because of your pride. You don't thank God the way that you ought to."

Drop down of verse 29. Let's just pick it up there. Here's the king, Nebuchadnezzar, the great builder of the ancient near-east. "At the end of twelve months he was walking on the roof of his royal palace of Babylon, and the king answered and said, 'Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?'"

Now, that may not be what flows out of your mouth sometimes when you stand back and look at your week of work. I was talking to a guy last night about cleaning his garage and I kind of said, "Yeah, that feels good doesn't it?" "You know, is this not my garage I organized for the majesty of my power?" You know. No you don't say that kind of thing but you sometimes feel that. Right? "This is great. I got everything just the way I want it." Sometimes it reflects this detachment from the God who gives us everything, the God who gives us power, the God who gives a skill, the God who keeps our brains, you know, from scrambling.

Verse 31, "While the words were still in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven," and he'd been warned about this, but now it's come to fruition. "O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you." All it takes right now, whatever it is that you have, you have good health, you're a smart person, you got good things going for you, you got a great job, got a good house. All it takes is for God to say "game over." Any part of your life. BAM! You ought to stand and respect of that kind of power, you need to be humble in light of that power.

I've been in this long enough, the people business, for three decades now, I've seen the greatest of our society in Southern California. I mean, the people living at the top of the top of the top come to nothing. Just by God saying, "I'm done with that. I'm done with you doing that and thinking that way because you just are full of your own pride." And it's not that God can't take the rivals. God loves to exalt his creation. There's something demented and something wrong about even Lucifer thinking that he's going to be something he's not. It's a horrific, tragic, moral disease to think you're something you're not. The creatures need to remember they're creatures.

Because the kingdom was now in Nebuchadnezzar's hands, it didn't mean he earned it, and in verse 31, "I'm done. I'm done. Your kingdom's departed." And how is he going to do that? In a very dramatic way with a huge mental illness in verse 32. "You shall be driven from among

men, and your dwelling shall be with the beast of the field." Now, he's sitting on the royal palace porch looking off this veranda at his, you know, the hanging gardens he built for his wife and now he's going to be crazy, living like an animal? "He's to be made to may eat grass like an ox, and seven periods of time shall pass over you," was that seven months or seven years, not sure, "until you know that the Most High," and that's a well-chosen phrase for God, the Most High.

You may be high. People might be bowing to you just like they bowed to David and David just remembered, "It's amazing..." he wrote the psalm saying "It's amazing that people come and bow before me." He recognized where all of that power came from, it's all derived, all the sovereignty he had over Israel was derived. Now, Nebuchadnezzar didn't get that, but he was going to get it now. You're going to have this terrible experience "until you know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will."

God dispenses power however he wants. It's never really given to you, it's all loaned to you. You going to give it all back one day. Verse 33, "Immediately the word was fulfilled against Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven from among many and ate grass like an ox, his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair grew as long as eagle's feathers, his nails were like birds' claws. At the end of those days," living like a crazy person, as, you know, I can see the servants chasing the king around the mountainside, who's growling at them and foaming at the mouth and eating grass.

"At the end of those days," verse 34, "I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed," not just God, not the Lord, not the man upstairs, "I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored him." This is a pagan, idolatrous king. I mean, he's getting it right, right now. "I praised and honored him who lives forever, whose dominion," his sovereignty, his power, his control, "is an everlasting," power, sovereignty, control, "dominion, and his kingdom," his authority, it "endures from generation to generation," people come and go, that God is eternal, and "all the inhabitants of the earth," even Nebuchadnezzar who was at the top of the heap, the undisputed leader of the ancient world at that time in the 6th century B.C., "all accounted as nothing, and he does according to HIS will among the host of heaven," up there in heaven, "and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him." Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, wait a minute. I'm not done with my kingdom right now. Wait a minute, I'm not done with my good health, I'm not done with my good family life. "No one can stay his hand." Does that make you humble? I hope it does. What makes you fear this great God?

"At the same time," verse 36, "my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my majesty and splendor were returned to me." God didn't want to put that Babylon away quite yet. No, he didn't want to do that. "My majesty and splendor," God's going to give it back to him. Just like he did with Job. "My counselors and my lords sought me, and I was established in my kingdom, and still more greatness was added to me. Now," that's a big word. "Now," he got it "I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King," not of earth, "the King of heaven, for all his works are right and his ways are just," and you should underline this, "and those who walk in pride he is able to humble." I wonder how much pride you have in your heart about the things that are going well in your life.



Our psalm would remind us with the word of his power he creates things out of nothing with the appearance and history of age they never have. He does things that are absolutely amazing, creation ought to lead you to that whether it's with a microscope or telescope. And in history he's taken the high of the high and brought them low. He's taken the low of the low and brought them high. You ought to learn, if you take nothing else away from this second point, what James tells us. You shouldn't even plan a business trip without saying, "If the Lord wills." I recognize everything is dependent on God's will. He does what he wants with the power and the kingdom and the dominion of heaven. He gives it to who he wants. And if I walk in pride he's able to humble me.

That sounds scary. Well, it is kind of scary but verse 12 said, "Blessed is the man," that's our passage, Psalm 33, it's printed on your worksheet. "Blessed" is the man, happy "is the nation whose God is the Lord." When you recognize the superior power of the God who exists, that he can do anything with your life or anyone else's life anytime he wants, you can say how good it is when he's for me. How good it is when I recognize that. And how do you get that? "God is opposed to the proud, he gives grace to the humble."

Remember we read this about the Queen of Sheba coming to Solomon and as he stood there and presented his wisdom and his proverbs and his psalms and all his treasures he showed the Queen of Sheba, she said, "How blessed," there's our word, asher, how blessed, "how happy are those princes and counselors and servants who serve before you. How happy they continually see your face and hear your wisdom." And that's the point. But it's great when he's chosen us to be his servants. But servants need to remember they're servants.

"Blessed is the nation whose God is Yahweh." We're no longer a covenant nation before God. That's Old Testament Israel. But we are the people who God has chosen as his heritage. I recognize though he's watching, and he watches not just my behavior, he observes my deeds, but the "one who fashions my heart," he knows what's going on there. Please be humble before this God. Be thankful for his power. Be thankful for every good and perfect gift that comes from him.

Verse 16 Psalm 33, "The king is not saved by his great army." And that's hard for us, by the way, to understand because there are a lot of kings saved WITH a great army. But the Bible's very clear, they're not a king that's ever been saved BY a great army. Did you follow that? "A warrior is not delivered by his great strength." Well, that's confusing because there have been a lot of warriors who have been delivered with great strength. Right? And there is a correspondence, there seems, almost a cause and effect, that if you're strong you're going to win, and if you're weak you're going to lose. And that's what we think. But the Bible's very clear that's not the case.

Matter of fact, you can have, verse 17, "The war horse," and you can say that's a great thing. "I'm okay because I've got a war horse. I'm fine because I got a security system on my home. I'm great because I take my vitamins. I'm fantastic because I chose the right spouse." You can think all of those things. All of those things are a vain hope. They're not really what saves anything. By its great power, that big warhorse, which was the greatest fighting weapon of the ancient world, it can't rescue.



"Well, it seems to be." Well, no, that's not how it works though. A slingshot can take down the mightiest warrior of the Philistines. I mean you can have the nomadic tribes coming out of the desert in Joshua Chapter 6 and they don't even have to touch people in that city. They can march around it and play their trumpets and have the walls fall down. That's the kind of God that... You could take Gideon, and try to remind us of that, and have 300,000 troops and get it down to 300 and say, "Now you're ready to beat these Midianites, because I want you to know that it's about me, because a war horse is a false hope for salvation.

Well, who does he support? Verse 18. "Behold, the eye of Yahweh is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love," his hesed, his faithful, loyal love, that you know you have an undeserving love that has been given to you. "That while we were sinners Christ died for us that we don't deserve that." If you just hope in that. I just loved the fact that God loves me when I was unlovely. He loves me now when I don't deserve it.

That kind of hope, God loves to put his eye on those people, "That he made deliver their soul from death and keep them alive in famine. Our soul waits for that God; he is our help and our shield," and we trust in him in that regard. "Our soul waits for Yahweh; he's our help and our shield." And you know what? It should change our attitude. "Our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his," unique, transcendent, holy character and his, "holy name." Now here is a direct prayer. "Let your steadfast love," your hesed, your kind devoted love that we don't deserve "O Yahweh, be upon us, even as we" continue to joyfully, gladly, "hope in you."

That's the kind of God that condescends to give to his people. He gives grace to the humble. That's a provision that manifests itself in so many ways. It may be that you've been kept alive, so to speak, in your own famine. You've been rescued from death in the midst of a trial that God has given you when you shouldn't have been delivered and you were. That's the gracious provision of God.

Number three, we need to joyfully, that's the attitude, with a happy, glad heart, we should "Joyfully Thank God for His Provisions." We eagerly thank God for his perfection, we should humbly thank God for his power, but then let's get back to a positive, optimistic, joyful disposition and say, "Look at how God has provided, we're going to continue to trust with a glad heart waiting for his provision."

A lot of warriors are delivered with great strength. And we always point to David and Goliath, but David had a really good friend, the son of the king, Jonathan was his name, Saul was his dad. And he wasn't half bad in terms of an example for trusting in God just himself. Matter of fact, he was once there, there was an old Levitical town named Geba that was taken by the Philistines. And, you know, the Israeli flag was planted back in Gibeah and everyone was happy about it. And then the Philistines said, "Whoa, what are you doing? That was our stronghold." And so they went out and massed this huge army.

Jonathan was with his armor-bearer and he watched what's going on. If you read a little bit about what went on here you'll see the topography of that place where they were fighting near Gibeah was just a place that just was almost impossible to win a battle unless you had a massive force. Yet in this scene Jonathan knew, wait a minute, Geba is not going to fall again. This is God's city for the Levites, the Levites don't have any land inheritance. This is a place

that God gives them and provides for them. I mean, if there's ever a holy kind of righteous thing to fight for, it was that town against the Philistines.

And so one of my favorite lines in First Samuel comes from Jonathan who turns to his armor-bearer, as they say we're going to go and try and do what we can. Matter of fact, it's so audacious we're not even going to tell my dad. So he doesn't tell Saul, he's just going to go out there and do what he can do, and he takes his armor-bearer and he says this. He says, "Come let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised. That it may be that the Lord will work for us." I mean, maybe he will "if the Lord wills," as one commentator said and I love the way he said it, "All he had to lose was his life." Right? Really. I mean, nothing else to lose. He was going to die fighting for the honor of God.

As Jesus said, don't worry about the one who can kill the body because it's something much bigger than that. There's me. Trust in me, hope in me, fight for me. And even as Paul said it from a prison cell, "Even if I die in that prison, God's going to be glorified either by my life or my death. But I'm not going to stop trusting him." Jonathan said, "Let's go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised that it may be that the Lord will work for us, for nothing can hinder Yahweh by saving whether by many or by few." It really didn't matter.

It says in verse 14 later in that passage, they went out and fought, just the two of them now, and they struck down 20 men in a half an acre space near this topographical feature that was described. So in a very small space two guys killed 20 guys. Now that's not a bar fight you want to get in. Right? Twenty to two. That's a 1 to 10 ratio. That's not good. And yet God did exactly what Jonathan said God could do. He trusted in God with that optimistic trust. He didn't say, "Woe is me. I guess our back is against the wall. Let's go home." He didn't even say, "Well, let's try but we're probably going to lose." He said, "If it's the Lord's will he's going to work for us."

The text talks about "the eye of the Lord on those who fear him" in verse 18. Probably one of the most famous verses you think of, if you know anything about your Bible, in Second Chronicles 16, Asa was talking to a prophet Hanani and Hanani was saying to Asa, "Listen, the eyes of the Lord roam to and fro throughout the whole earth, looking for someone's heart that is fully his, looking to strongly supports someone that just has a heart that's fully his." And we quote that all the time, you'll see it in Dayspring cards and that's just a really inspiring verse, but do you know the context of that?

Asa, the third king of Judah, was really in a tough spot because this was when the rivalry was really hot between the northern tribes and the southern tribes and he was the king of the South, king in Jerusalem. And his brothers of the north, the 10 tribes decided to fight against them, and so they were really gearing up for a war. He was afraid that he was going to lose his kingdom. So he went and he made a covenant, a treaty, an alliance with the people who lived on the other side, way up north, above the northern tribes, in Syria. We already talked about Naaman this morning in Damascus. He was in charge, the king. Hadad, Ben-Hadad.

So Ben-Hadad is the king and Asa goes and sends messengers saying come fight with me. The problem with that is, you think what's wrong with that? They had ancient alliances all the time in that age. Well, that's true. But this alliance was one that he knew was breaking a treaty that he'd already made. He had given his word, Ben-Hadad, to the northern kingdom to be

allied support for them. So basically, Asa bribes them. Now here's the thing about the Bible, very clear from Moses day, bribes, God hates them. You don't bribe people to get what you want. You made a promise. I'm not going to say how much would it take for you to break your promise? That's exactly what Asa did.

Now Asa had a lot of good things on his resumé in terms of how he trusted the Lord, but he did not trust the Lord here. And so he goes and makes this deal and it displeases God very much. And he reminds Asa through the prophet Hanani, he says, "Listen, don't you know how I've delivered you in the past? Can't you trust me based on your past track record?" It's a lot like Belshazzar. Belshazzar, the son of Nabonidus. He's the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar. If anyone should know to be humble in their leadership it should be him. And he doesn't. God has to spell it out on the wall of the palace during his banquet. Remember that? "You've been weighed in the balances and found wanting."

And Daniel has to come on the scene and say, "You know why? Because you didn't learn the lesson from your grandpa." Didn't you see that? And here we have it. "Asa, didn't you learn your lesson? Trust me, hope in me, be confident in me." And he says this, "The eyes of the Lord are going to and fro throughout the whole world." He's just looking for someone to strongly support, someone whose heart is fully his. We know that part of the verse. But it said this: "You've done foolishly in this, from now on you will have wars." You didn't rely on the Lord. You didn't trust me. Those are the words of verse 8. You didn't rely on the Lord. God would like to strongly support us but it takes a humble, dependent, praise-filled Christian who recognizes God's provision. It comes from his hand.

There's a great verse in the proverbs that talks about..., here's how it's translated, "Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established." That Hebrew word "to commit" is the Hebrew word "to roll something over." And here's the idea. We make these plans and, like James would say, we better say, "If the Lord wills," but what we're doing with that when we say that, when we think that, we're saying, "Here, I'd like to start this business. I'd like to have a good family life. I'd like to have good health. Here are my plans, I'm going to roll them over to you." And that's really what we learned from the beginning of Proverbs, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart," Proverbs 3:5, "lean not on your understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him." Not in all your spiritual ways, not in all your, you know, difficult ways, not in all the painful ways or the scary ways, in all your ways acknowledge him. Have that in your mind. Take all those plans and roll them over to God, "and he will make your path straight."

You know the next verse in that passage? "Be not wise in your own eyes." Be not wise in your own eyes. What we need is a humble, joyful, dependence on the provision of God. This passage, as the outline tried to make clear, is about thanking God, it's about thanking him for his perfections, his power, and his provision. But I love that it ends with this joyful disposition. Verse 21, "Our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name." God, "let your steadfast love be upon us even as we hope in you." That's a positive, optimistic, even used that word.

Speaking of that, I had a hard preaching assignment this week. I've had some scary preaching assignments over the years. Some big auditoriums and things like that that have been scary but usually I'm pretty comfortable on this platform because this is our own church. But I was on this platform this week and it is really scary because I was preaching at the women's Bible study. Which is hard enough because the men weren't here to be my buffer, but I was asked to



give the man's perspective. I said, "On what?" The reply was, "You know, well, on all kinds of things."

Listen, I can't stand up behind the pulpit with a Bible and give you MAN'S PERSPECTIVE on these things. You want to talk about these things, I can sit down and give you my perspective. You want to talk about biblical passages and, you know, we talked about several things, but one thing we talked about, and some of you gals were here, we had hundreds of ladies here this week, was Proverbs 31. "Like, what's your perspective on that? Man, look at this tough passage for us. It's so hard. Women are supposed to be all these things."

And I zeroed in on that one passage that talked about, as the New International Version translates it, "the woman who smiles at the future." We talked about Mary and Martha, and the difference between Mary and Martha. Martha was worried and troubled about so many things. And so I made this pitch that listen, really what men would, I think, have at the top of their priorities, is to have a happy wife, that would be a really, really good thing. That optimistic, positive perspective.

And as it says even in that verse that "she smiles at the future" it says she wraps herself, she clothes herself in strength and dignity. And that strength is not in herself. The strength is in the fact that she has that godly perspective and she knows God is going to provide. She's going to work hard, but God is going to provide. She can have that positive attitude.

Now what a terrible thing it would be for me to send hundreds of women home to their houses to be joyful, optimistic mothers and wives and daughters, and the men in their lives never to get the memo. So this is good and providential that we're going to end here on this passage. Because how important is for you, men and women, to recognize that no matter how bad it may be, the Apostle Paul, when he speaks from prison to a bunch of people in Philippi, he says, "you need to rejoice in the Lord always. I'll say it again, rejoice," as he preaches this message from prison to them. He says, "Let your forbearing spirit, your reasonableness," as the English Standard Version translates it. Let's have that sense of an even-keel, I'm fine.

And hear how it ends. You want to explain that word, here it comes, "I know the secret of contentment. I know what it is to have a lot and a little." It's fine. It's fine, because "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." And that is not a verse for high school football teams, you understand. That's a verse for the fact that it doesn't matter. Because I have a relationship with God. I explore his perfections. I understand how great he is. I see what a powerful God he is and I cling to him with a the humble, dependent, joyful faith. I wait on the Lord.

And you know what? I can handle it, whether things are good or bad. That even keel, optimistic, joyful, glad heart is what God is looking for in his people. It's not going to happen without worship, it's not going to happen without praise. That's what this passage is all about. Thank God, thank God, thank God.

Hopefully, that will give you some direction here that will affect your attitude, eagerly, humbly, and joyfully. You can choose joy in your life today. Optimistic, biblical joy, gladness of heart, when your confidence is in the right place. You're not the giant. You're not God. But the God of the Bible is ready to condescend to love you even today.



Let's pray. God, help us attack our week this week with a kind of eager, humble, joyful thanksgiving that you're a perfect God who maintains all power that makes us very uncomfortable in many ways, the audacious power, that transcendent power of God. But God, let it leave us the way this passage leaves us, being very glad of heart that we hope in such a great and loving God. That even though your power should destroy us because of our sin, your steadfast love, your hesed love, your patient, devoted, loyal, selfless kind of love toward us has given us opportunity and access to come to you humbly.

God, our world's not filled with humble people. It's filled with a lot of folks like that deified astronaut who think this life is all about them. One day you will come over that horizon as the great God of the universe. We'll see our relative smallness and we'll need to give thanks to you. Let us do that now in our own hearts recognizing who we are in light of who you are. Help us keep our life in perspective this week.

In Jesus name, Amen.