

A National Day of Prayer

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[0 : 0 0] Well if we could, with the Lord's help, and for a short while, if we could turn back to that portion of scripture that we read, the book of Daniel, the book of Daniel in chapter 9, and if we read again in verse 17, Daniel 9 at verse 17, where Daniel prays, now therefore O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant, and to his pleas for mercy, and for your own sake O Lord, make your face to shine upon your sanctuary, which is desolate. O my God, incline your ear and hear, open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name, for we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness, but because of your great mercy. O Lord, hear. O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not for your own sake. O my God, because your city and your people are called by your name.

Now whenever I consider the book of Daniel, I'm always reminded of the well-known children's chorus. Dare to be a Daniel. Dare to stand alone. Dare to have a purpose firm. Dare to make it known.

And those words by the hymn writer Philip Bliss, they clearly summarise to us the book of Daniel. Because there are many times in this book where Daniel is left to stand alone on the side of the Lord. Whether it was at Belshazzar's feast with the writing on the wall, or it was in the lion's den, refusing to bow down and worship the king. Or even here, when it comes to praying for his people as a nation.

Daniel dared to stand alone. He dared to have a purpose firm. And he dared to make it known. And as we see time and time again throughout scripture, whether it was with Noah or Abraham or Moses or Elijah or Solomon, we see that one man with God is the majority. Because as the apostle Paul, he reminds us, if God is for us, who can be against us? And that's why we see Daniel praying for his nation, the nation of Israel. Because the Israelites at that time, as we know, they were in exile in Babylon. They were living in a foreign land under the rule of a foreign king. And they were being made to worship foreign gods. But in this chapter, we see that even though Daniel stood alone, he embarked on a national day of prayer. Daniel sought to pray for his nation and to intercede on behalf of his nation. And as you know, as we've mentioned, tomorrow is St. Andrew's Day.

It's Scotland's national day, you could say. It's a day in which many will celebrate the fact that they're Scottish. But last year, St. Andrew's Day, it was adopted, it was a day that was adopted by our denomination, in which the Free Church of Scotland would gather together and pray for the nation of Scotland and the wider church. And so St. Andrew's Day has become our national day of prayer.

[3 : 3 5] And we're being reminded here in this passage that as a people, we are to dare to be a Daniel. We are to dare to stand alone, dare to have a purpose firm and dare to make it known.

My friend, we're being urged as a denomination to be like Daniel and to pray for our nation and to intercede on behalf of our nation. Because like the nation of Israel, Scotland is in Babylon.

Scotland is under the rule of the King of Darkness. And Scotland worships the false gods of this age. And so we must take the opportunity to come together collectively and as a people to pray to the God who hears and who answers prayer. But as we consider this chapter about a national day of prayer, there are three things that I'd like us to take from it. Three things, the timing, the turning and the teaching. The timing, the turning and the teaching. So we look first of all at the timing.

Look at verse 1 of chapter 9. It says there, Now understanding the timing of this national day of prayer is crucial because it reminds us that nothing happens by chance. This national day of prayer, which Daniel engaged in, it wasn't a random event, but one that was perfectly and sovereignly timed by the Lord. Because as Daniel tells us, he says that it was the first year of the reign of King Darius the Mede. And this king, he was king over the Chaldeans. And this timing is crucial because it tells us that the year in which

Daniel engaged in the national day of prayer was the year 537 BC. That was the year that the Persian king Darius, he captured Babylon and he became king over the nation. And by this time, by 537 BC, Daniel is now an old man. He's about 82 years old. And he's been living in exile. He's been in Babylon since the age of about 14. Which means that Daniel, he has been in Babylon for 68 years.

[6 : 18] And he's been there ever since King Nebuchadnezzar invaded Israel and destroyed the city of Jerusalem and destroyed the temple and took many of the Israelites captive into Babylon. And there in Babylon, as we were just singing in Psalm 137, by Babel streams, the Israelites, they sat and wept.

They wept when they thought about Zion, the city of the great king, the city of Jerusalem. And the Israelites, they wept as the Babylonians, they mocked them and they commanded the Israelites to sing the songs of Zion. But they couldn't. Because with tears, they said, how can we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land? And that's where the Israelites were. They were in a foreign land. They were far away from Israel and they were made to serve a foreign king instead of Jehovah, the king of Israel. And they were made to worship foreign gods instead of worshiping the Lord, the living and through God. The Israelites were in exile and they had been in exile for 68 years.

But you know, we must remember that the Israelites were in exile in Babylon because they refused to listen to the prophets. The Israelites were in exile because they refused to turn away from worshipping idols and turn back to worshipping the Lord. The Israelites were in exile because of their disobedience and their waywardness and their idolatry. But even though the Israelites were an unfaithful people, Daniel dared to stand alone. And because Daniel continued to be faithful to the Lord in the midst of an unfaithful people, the Lord blessed him. The Lord blessed Daniel for his faith and his obedience and for making a stand in the name of the Lord. And you know, we see that throughout the book of Daniel, when you read through it, even in chapter one, Daniel's friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, they stood against Nebuchadnezzar. And even though they were thrown into the fiery furnace, we always see that fourth person there. The Lord was with them. Then in chapter two, Daniel, he interprets

Nebuchadnezzar's dreams and he's promoted to what you could say is the equivalent of prime minister in Babylon. Then in chapter five, you see Daniel, he's called for, he's not at the party where everybody's drinking from the vessels from the temple in Jerusalem. But when the party goes silent at Belshazzar's feast, it goes silent because there's a man's hand writing judgment on the wall.

And they call for Daniel to interpret the message because they knew that he was the Lord's servant. Daniel stood out among the rest. And even Daniel, he stood up to the king. The king who's mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, King Darius. Because when King Darius took the throne in Babylon, he set up a parliament to rule the nation. And you see that in chapter six. Because back in chapter six, the parliament decree that if anyone prays to any other God except the king, then they will be thrown into the den of lions. And as you know, Daniel, he dared to stand alone.

[9 : 42] He refused to pray to anyone except the Lord. And he prayed three times a day. And as a result, he was thrown into the den of lions. But it seems that because Daniel survived the den of lions, King Darius was willing to help him. And this is the context for this chapter and the context for Daniel's national day of prayer. Because Darius, he's on the throne in Babylon. And Daniel, at the age of 82, he is still standing on the Lord's side. And you know, Daniel, he's a great example to us of a faithful Christian witness. Because when we look at the occasions in Daniel's life, during those 68 years in Babylon, he's surrounded by the temptations of the world. He's surrounded by the idolatry of the Babylonians and the apathy of the Israelites. And yet Daniel stands firm.

Daniel dared to stand alone. And he dared to remain uncompromised in his witness. And he refused to be unfaithful to the Lord. Daniel is a great example to us as we live in a nation very similar to Babylon. And Daniel, he's a great encouragement to us to keep persevering, despite what the world says and despite what the world has to throw at us. And you know, what's remarkable about this old man, if I can say that, is that 68 years had passed since Daniel last saw Jerusalem. But Daniel's faith is as fresh as ever. The trial didn't break him. The promotion to Prime Minister, it didn't erode his faith at all. And the world and all the flesh and the devil, it didn't diminish his faith whatsoever. His faith is still as fresh as it ever was.

And you know, we have to ask why. Why did Daniel remain faithful? Why was Daniel's faith so strong? Why was Daniel willing to stand alone? My friend, it was because Daniel didn't stop reading his Bible.

And that's what we find Daniel doing here. We find him reading his Bible. He's reading, as it says, the books. He's reading the scrolls. And in particular, it says that he's reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah.

And we'll come to that in a moment. But what we have to see about Daniel's life is that he was a faithful and uncompromising witness for the Lord because he read his Bible.

[12 : 32] As one commentator says, Daniel was a great prophet and he had many remarkable visions and revelations, but he never outgrew the need to read his Bible.

And you know, if we want to be faithful to the Lord, if we want to be uncompromising in our witness, if we want assurance of our salvation day after day, if we want confidence in our Christianity, if we want to walk with the Lord more closely, then we need to read our Bible.

We need to spend more time looking into the mirror of God's Word. And you know, I always go back to that question in the Catechism.

I love that question in the Shorter Catechism. Where it speaks about the importance of reading your Bible. It says, how is the Word of God to be read and heard that it may become effectual to salvation?

And the Catechism says, that the Word of God may become effectual to salvation, we must attend thereunto with diligence, preparation and prayer.

[13 : 39] We must receive it with faith and love, lay it up in our hearts and practice it in our lives. That's how Daniel dared to stand alone. That's why Daniel continued to be a faithful witness for the Lord.

He read his Bible diligently and prayerfully. He received and rested upon the promises of God's Word by faith and with love.

And everything he read, he sought to practice it in his life. My friend, may we endeavour to do the same because we need Daniels today.

We need Daniels today in the Babylon that is our nation. We need Daniels who will dare to stand alone on the Lord's side.

But you know this Daniel, he not only dared to stand alone as a faithful witness. He also dared to stand alone and pray for his nation. And Daniel was led to pray for his nation because of what he read in the book of the prophet Jeremiah.

[14 : 44] Jeremiah. Now Jeremiah, he was the last prophet who pleaded with the Israelites to turn from their idolatry before they went into exile. Jeremiah, he's often known to us as the weeping prophet.

Because when he preached and when he pleaded with the Israelites to repent, he often did so with tears. He was the weeping prophet. But, you know, the Israelites, they refused to listen to Jeremiah.

And in the end, well, the Lord brought judgment and he exiled the Israelites into Babylon. But before the exile, before the exile happened, Jeremiah prophesied that the Lord's judgment would only last 70 years.

And, you know, you can imagine Daniel sitting there reading his Bible and just discovering this beautiful promise. Because it says in Jeremiah chapter 25, verse 8.

I'll just read it as it's written. Thus says the Lord of hosts. Because you have not obeyed my words, behold, I will send for all the tribes of the north, declares the Lord. And for Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant.

[15 : 55] And I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants and against all the surrounding nations. I will devote them to destruction and make them a horror, a hissing and an everlasting desolation.

Moreover, I will banish from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride. The grinding of the millstones and light of the lamp.

This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste. And these nations shall serve the king of Babylon 70 years. And when Daniel reads this, he can see that that's exactly what has happened.

But the timing of this is so perfect. He's been in Babylon for 68 years. And now he's reading it. Don't you just love that? When the Lord speaks to you through his word at the right time, when you need it most.

Or you have a daily reading that's so fitting to your situation that you think it's... The time is so perfect that you know it's the Lord speaking to you.

[17 : 03] And that's the experience Daniel has here. Because after 68 years in Babylon, he reads the words of Jeremiah. Words that say, after 70 years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon.

And that nation, the land of the Chaldeans for their iniquity, declares the Lord making an end. Making the land an everlasting waste. And you know, with that word from Jeremiah, Daniel realises not only that Babylon has been destroyed.

And is now under the rule of a Persian king, Darius. It's no longer under Nebuchadnezzar. But he not only realises that, he also realises that there are only two more years of captivity.

Two more years. And then the Israelites will be released. And they will return home. And as Daniel reads the book of Jeremiah, you know, if you were to read this after 68 years in captivity.

And you're reading this promise, 70 years and it's all over. You're going home. As Daniel reads this, you could see that there's excitement, there's joy, there's anticipation at the thought of returning home.

[18 : 15] And so Daniel, well, what would you do? You read on. What else does Jeremiah have to say? And if you carried on into chapter 29 in the book of Jeremiah. Jeremiah says, thus says the Lord.

When 70 years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfil my gracious promise to bring you back to this place. A verse that everybody knows. For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord.

Plans to prosper you and not to harm you. Plans to give you a hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me. And I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

And you know, the timing of Daniel's reading, it couldn't have been any more perfect. Because when he read those words. Call upon me and come and pray to me.

And I will listen to you. When he read those words. Daniel immediately turns to the Lord in prayer. And this is what I want us to see secondly.

[19 : 19] If considered the timing. The perfect timing. But secondly, the turning. The turning. Look at verse 3. It says, Then I turned my face to the Lord God.

Seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy. With fasting and sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession. Saying, O Lord, the great and awesome God.

Who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him. And keep his commandments. We have sinned and done wrong. And acted wickedly and rebelled. Turning aside from your commandments and rules.

We have not listened to your servants, the prophets. Who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes and our fathers. And to all the people of the land.

You know, Daniel's prayer. It's one of the most passionate and heartfelt prayers in all the Bible. Because it's a prayer that's full of confession. Full of contrition.

[20 : 16] It's full of repentance. It has this desire for restoration. It's full of sorrow for sin. But he's also seeking salvation. It's a beautiful prayer.

And it's beautiful because the basis and the foundation of Daniel's national day of prayer. Is God's covenant of grace. He says down in verse 4.

He says, The covenant of grace is the only hope and comfort that Daniel has.

It's the only hope and comfort that he has for a rebellious and an idolatrous nation. And you know, that's the only hope and comfort we have too. For our Babylon.

The covenant of grace in which God does not deal with us as we deserve. But according to his grace through Jesus Christ. That's our only comfort. That the Lord will hear us when we pray to him.

[21 : 23] The covenant of grace. And that's our only assurance that the Lord will do as he has promised. It's according to the covenant of grace. Because his promise is, Call upon me.

And come and pray to me. And I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. And that's what Daniel did.

He sought the Lord with all his heart. But you know, What we have to learn from Daniel's prayer. Is that he prayed according to God's will.

He prayed according to God's will. And praying according to God's will. It's a subject on which the New Testament often speaks. Even Jesus spoke of it.

He spoke of it in what we call the Lord's Prayer. When the disciples asked Jesus, Lord, teach us to pray. Jesus said to them, Pray in this manner. Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

[22 : 26] Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done. On earth as it is in heaven. My friend, Jesus has taught us to pray according to the will of God.

And the will of God, It's not something that is hidden from us. Because it has been revealed to us. God's will has been revealed. The Bible is the will of God.

The Bible is the revelation of God's will for our lives. And for our salvation. That's why Daniel has turned to the Lord in prayer. He was praying according to God's will.

He has read what God says in his word. He's reading from the book of Jeremiah about the exile. And in response to what he has read in God's revealed will, Daniel prays accordingly.

And you know, we have to do the same. We have to pray according to God's will. Because we're not to pray for something or about something if it's prohibited in God's word.

[23 : 29] We're not to enter into a relationship or move job or go to a certain place if God's word forbids it. And you know, you often hear people saying, Well, I'm praying about it.

But if they're praying about something that God specifically speaks against, then we're actually praying against God's will. Which is sin.

Because we're not putting God and his will first. My friend, when we pray, we have to pray according to God's will. And we do that by praying and pleading the promises of God's word.

Because, has the Lord called us to cast all our cares upon him? Because he cares for us. He has. Then we must do that.

Has the Lord said that he is the father of mercies and the God of all comfort, who will bind up our broken hearts? He has. Then we must seek his face.

[24 : 33] Has the Lord promised that if we confess our sin, he will forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness? He has. Then we must repent. Has the Lord promised that his word shall not return to him empty, but accomplish the purpose for which it was sent?

He has promised. Then let's plead the promise. Has the Lord reminded us that the harvest is plentiful and the laborers are few? He has. Then we're to pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest that he would send out more laborers into the harvest field.

Has the Lord promised that the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea? He has promised. Then let's plead the promise. Has the Lord promised to pour water and bless our nation?

Has the Lord promised that through the seed of Abraham, all the families of the earth will be blessed? Has the Lord promised that he will have witnesses in Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria to the uttermost parts of the earth?

Has the Lord promised to answer Habakkuk's prayer? O Lord, O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years. In the midst of the years, make known. In wrath, remember mercy.

[25 : 48] Has the Lord promised? He has, my friend. He has promised. The Lord has promised. And so we are to plead the promises of God's will.

We are to plead the promises of his word. We are to pray according to his will. But you know, in order to be like Daniel, and to pray according to God's will, we have to turn away from sin.

And we have to turn to the Lord. And that's the emphasis of Daniel's prayer. We don't have time to look at every verse here. But you know, there's one word in Daniel's prayer, which emphasizes his passion and his heartfelt desire for the Lord to hear him.

And the word is turn. Turn. Daniel tells us in verse three, then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy, with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.

Daniel turns toward the Lord, and he confesses that Israel has turned away from the Lord. Then he goes on to say in verse four, I pray to the Lord, my God, and made confession saying, Oh Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments.

[27 : 15] We have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules. We have not listened to your servants, the prophets who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

And then Daniel goes on to say that the reason the Israelites are in exile is because they've turned away from the commandments and refused to listen to the Lord's voice.

He says in verse 11, And then he goes on in verse 13, just walking you through this very quickly.

He says in verse 13, Daniel confesses the Lord's judgment is upon them, but blessing can come if they turn away from their sin and back to the word of God.

He says in verse 13, As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come upon us, yet we have not entreated the favor of the Lord our God, turning from our iniquities and gaining insight by your truth.

[28 : 31] And then once more, there's this plea in verse 16, that the Lord will turn away his wrath and anger from the Israelites and forgive them. But it says, And so all we have to see in Daniel's prayer is that it's a prayer of turning.

It's a prayer for repentance and conversion. Daniel repeatedly uses the word turn, in the sense of turning from sin and turning to the Lord.

And that's what repentance and conversion is all about. It's all about turning away from sin and turning to the Lord. Because sin, sin is to turn away from the Lord and to turn to idolatry, turn to idols.

But salvation is to turn from sin back to the Lord. And that's what we're doing when we repent and when we convert.

We turn from sin and we turn to the Lord. There's change. There's an act of turning away from sin and turning to the Lord. And you know, we have to see that repentance and conversion, they go hand in hand.

[30 : 02] Because repentance or to repent, it literally means to change your mind. It's a change of mindset. It's a change of desire.

It's a change of will. It's a change from the things that are sinful and unholy to the things that are godly and pure. Repentance is the change of mind.

But conversion is the change of character. Because to be converted is to turn around. It's to be turned from seeking idols and facing idols.

And it's to be turned to seeking the Lord and facing the Lord. It's to be turned from the vain help of the world to looking to the Lord for all your help and guidance.

It's to be turned from seeking the world and all the emptiness of it to seeking the Lord. And the fullness and satisfaction that can only be found in Jesus Christ. My friend, repentance is a change of mind.

[31 : 01] And conversion is a change of character. And when we repent and convert, we turn away from our sin and we turn to the Lord. But as someone once said, repentance is not only the first step of the Christian.

It is the daily step of the Christian. Because we have to keep repenting. And we have to keep converting. We have to keep turning away from sin and turning back to God.

Because every time we sin, we are turning away from the Lord to idolatry. And that idolatry, it's often not graven images, but ourselves.

Where we put self first. We seek our own gain, our own position. We put God to one side. That's what the Israelites did. That's what our nation is doing.

And that's what we are, as a church, in danger of doing. Putting God to one side. Putting self first. And you know, we need to repent of our sin. We need to convert from our worldliness to godliness.

[32 : 14] We need to have a change of mind. We need to have a change of character. And this is why Daniel is engaging in his national day of prayer. Because he could see that Israel was in Babylon because they had turned away from the Lord.

And you know, we need to engage in our national day of prayer because our nation is in Babylon. And Scotland has turned away from the Lord. And I don't need to highlight anything for you.

It's all there in the news. We see it every day. The mess our nation is in. And we need to dare to be like Daniel. And if need be, we need to dare to stand alone.

Because we need to pray that the Lord would forgive us as a nation. And turn us from our sin. And turn us to himself. We need to pray like the psalmist in Psalm 80.

We're going to sing it shortly. Turn us again. Lord God of hosts. And upon us vows save. To make thy countenance to shine. And so we shall be saved.

[33 : 20] My friend, we need to pray like Daniel. But he says in verse 17. Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant. And to his pleas for mercy.

And for your own sake, O Lord, make your face to shine upon your sanctuary. Which is desolate. O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations.

And the city that is called by your name. For we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness. But because of your great mercy. O Lord, hear. O Lord, forgive.

O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not for your own sake. O my God, because your city and your people are called by your name. And you know, I love those words.

O Lord, hear. O Lord, forgive. O Lord, listen and act. Do not delay.

[34 : 18] For your own sake. Your own sake. He's praying according to God's covenant. And he's praying for the sake and glory of God's great name. He prayed that the nation of Israel would turn from their sin and turn to the Lord.

That they would repent and be converted. And you know, the Lord answered his prayer. The Lord answered his prayer. And this is what I'd like us to consider thirdly and finally.

We've considered the timing and the turning. But lastly and briefly. The teaching. The teaching. Look at verse 20.

While I was speaking and praying. Confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel. And presenting my plea before the Lord my God for the holy hill of my God.

While I was speaking in prayer. The man Gabriel. Whom I had seen in the vision at the first. Came to me in swift flight. At the time of the evening sacrifice. He made me understand.

[35 : 21] Speaking with me and saying. O Daniel. I've now come out to give you insight and understanding. At the beginning of your pleas for mercy. A word went out. And I have come to tell it to you.

For you are greatly loved. Therefore consider the word and understand. The vision. You know I think these words are so beautiful. They remind us of Isaiah's promise.

It shall come to pass. That before they call. I will answer. And while they are yet speaking. I will hear. And that's what we see here.

While Daniel was speaking and praying. And confessing his sin. And the sins of Israel. And presenting his pleas before the Lord. The Lord sent the answer. Because the angel Gabriel appeared and said.

At the beginning of your pleas for mercy. A word went out. An order was sent from the king. And I have come to tell it to you.

[36 : 24] Why? I love this. Because you are greatly loved. Isn't that beautiful? It's beautiful. And it's beautiful to think. That as soon as Daniel began to pray. According to God's will.

The Lord was listening. And the Lord responded. And you know we have the same promise. Jesus said. My father will give you whatever you ask.

In my name. Whatever you ask according to my will. And you know I love that promise in Mark 11 24.

We were looking at it last night in Christianity Explored. When Jesus said. I tell you. Whatever you ask for in prayer. Believe that you have received it. And it will be yours.

But what we see here with the timing. And the turning. What we see is the teaching. Gabriel says to Daniel. Consider the word. And understand the vision. Seventy weeks are decreed about your people.

[37 : 25] And your holy city. To finish the transgression. To put an end to sin. And to atone for iniquity. To bring in an everlasting righteousness. To seal both vision and profit. And to anoint a most holy place.

Now. Yeah. I'm not going to go into this. And try and explain it. I'm not going to go into the 70 weeks. And try and explain it just now. It'll take far too long.

But you know. I'll say this in closing. The teaching given in Daniel's. National day of prayer. Well what I'll do is. We'll do this next week. The 70 weeks. We'll look at it next week.

And see what relevance it has for us. Because I think it's fascinating. But what I'll say in closing. The teaching given here. In Daniel's national day of prayer. It's.

A model for us to follow. A clear model. Because we are to pray. According to God's will. We're to read the Bible. And we're to pray according to the Bible.

[38 : 28] To pray according to God's will. And we're to turn to the Lord. We're to repent. We're to be converted. Again and again. Not just once.

But every day. And our prayer. Should be as Daniel says here. Oh Lord hear. Oh Lord forgive. Oh Lord pay attention.

And act. Do not delay. For your own sake. And so. On our national day of prayer tomorrow. If we are spared to see it.

Let us dare to be a Daniel. Dare to stand alone. Dare to have a purpose firm. And dare. To make it known. May the Lord bless these thoughts to us.

Let us pray. O Lord our gracious God. We. We give thanks to thee. For. The prayers of the saints. That we are able to read them.

[39 : 31] That we are able to learn from them. And that we are able to see the. The promises that they pleaded before thy throne. That we too would come like Daniel.

Saying. O Lord hear. O Lord forgive. O Lord hearken and do. Defer not. For thine own sake. Lord we plead with thee.

That. That thou wouldest hear us. As we gather tomorrow. As we gather. In. Small pockets. Throughout our island. And throughout our nation. That all those who gather together.

For prayer. As we meet together. Around that throne of grace. That thou wouldest hear us. That the one who continually. Makes intercession for us.

That he would stand on our behalf. For we know that without him. We can do nothing. But with him. All things are possible. For he is the advocate with the father.

[40 : 27] He is Jesus Christ the righteous. Help us then to come in his name. Not only tomorrow. But even tonight. To plead for our homes. To plead for our families.

To plead for our children. And even our children's children. And that even generations yet unborn. That they too would magnify. And praise the Lord. O Lord have mercy upon us we ask.

Turn us to thyself. For thou art the God who answers. And who does all things. According to thine own will. Bless us then we pray. Take away our iniquity. Receive us graciously.

For we ask it in Jesus name. And for his sake. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. We shall conclude. In singing the words of Psalm 80.

Psalm 80. In the Scottish Psalter. Page 334. I always find verse 17 of this psalm.

[41 : 32] Very very interesting. Psalm 80. We're singing from verse 17. Down to the end of the psalm. Where the psalmist says. O let thy hand be still upon. The man of thy right hand.

And the only person at the right hand of the father is Jesus. The son of man. Whom for thyself thou made a strong to stand. So henceforth we will not go back.

Nor turn from thee at all. O do thou quicken us. And we upon thy name will call. Turn us again Lord God of hosts. And upon us vows safe. To make thy countenance to shine.

And so we shall be safe. These verses of Psalm 80. To God's praise. O let thy hand be still upon.

The man of thy right hand. The man of thy right hand. The son of man whom forth I stand.

[42 : 38] The man of thy right hand. O let thy right hand. To stand. So henceforth we will not fall back.

Nor turn from thee at all. For do thou quicken us.

And we upon thy name will call. Turn us again Lord God of hosts.

And upon us vows safe. To make thy countenance to shine.

And so we shall be safe. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[43 : 48] The love of God the Father. And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. Be with you all. Now and forevermore. Amen.