

The Fall of Jericho

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[0 : 00] If you can turn back to Joshua chapter 6. The battle of Jericho is really one of the most well-known, certainly one of the well-known narratives in Scripture.

It's one of those narratives where you'll almost certainly see it in pretty much every children's Bible story book out there. It's also a narrative that's actually inspired quite a number of children's songs as well, a very well-known narrative from the pages of the Old Testament.

Now, there are many battles in the Old Testament, lots of them. In fact, there's many battles in the book of Joshua itself. The book of Joshua is in many ways a book all about battles, but the battle of Jericho is always the one that stands out more than any other.

And one of the reasons for that is that it's a very unusual battle. In some ways, I'll go on to this in a moment, but in some ways it's almost not a battle, but that's what we call it, it's the battle of Jericho. And it's very unusual in the sense that it's not a fighting scene as such. It involves this marching and the people of God with the Ark of the Covenant are marching round.

[1 : 18] They go round Jericho every day for six days, and after they've finished they sit down in the camp and they get up the next day, they do the same again until the seventh day, of course, when they go round seven times.

And then you have this, the trumpets sounding, the horns getting blown, and the people shouting, and then all of a sudden the walls come crumbling down. A well-known narrative, I think pretty much most people, I think, will know, even if they don't quote a church, probably they would know the narrative of Jericho.

So it is a very well-known and a very unusual narrative. But also it's a narrative that stands out because of its importance and significance, because this is the very first victory that the people of Israel actually partake of in the land of Canaan.

Remember, God has promised His people that He would give them the land of Canaan. I will give you victory, this is the promised land, I'm going to give you this land, but you have to go in and you have to take it, and that requires you to enter into battles, but I'm going to give you the victories.

And here they come, and this battle with Jericho, here, it's their first victory. So it is a highly significant moment indeed. So this passage here, it doesn't just stand out because it's a wee bit unusual, it stands out because of its significance.

[2 : 36] This is the first battle of many battles to come, the first battle in the land of Canaan during this conquest as they take the land to themselves.

And when you're younger and you're reading this particular narrative about Joshua here, you can read it and you can think that Joshua is the hero of the story.

Certainly when you're younger you can read it and you can think that. Joshua is the hero of the story. But that's absolutely not the case, and the passage makes it very clear. The Lord is very much the hero here in this narrative.

And that's the reason why this first battle with the Canaanites is so unusual. It's not like the other battles that would come after it. This battle is won in this particular way for a reason, so that it becomes absolutely clear that Israel haven't won this battle because of their military power.

They haven't won this battle because of the military strategy of Joshua himself. That's not the case at all. This battle has been won by God, and that is absolutely clear here.

[3 : 46] If the battle was won in another way, you might say, oh well Israel was involved, Joshua was involved. But because it's won like this, there's no doubt about it. This victory is absolutely the Lord's.

Before a weapon is even used, before a sword is even drawn, the walls. They come tumbling, and they come crumbling down. So I want to make our way through this unusual narrative and learn a

little from what the Lord is teaching us here.

So look at verse 1, first of all. In verse 1, we read there, now Jericho was shut up inside and outside because of the people of Israel.

Now, back in chapter 2, chapter 2, that's where you read about the conversion of Israel. That's about the conversion of Rahab. That's another well-known narrative as well, of course.

But back in chapter 2, Rahab actually tells us that the people of Jericho actually know something about the Lord. And she tells us that the people of Jericho, they have heard things about the Lord.

[4 : 48] They don't have the word of God, but they've heard things about the Lord. And Rahab tells us that the people of Jericho know that God has taken his people across the Red Sea on dry land.

We have heard how you gave the people of Israel victory over the Amorites. We have heard all of these things. And Rahab actually tells us that the people of Jericho are actually scared.

A fear has come amongst all the people of Jericho. But that fear that has come amongst the people of Jericho, it isn't a fear that leads them to seek the mercy of the Lord.

You know, sometimes you can get a good, a godly fear that leads you to the Lord. But the fear that the people of Jericho experienced wasn't that kind of fear. It's not a fear that led them to the Lord.

It's a fear that made them shut the gates in the face of the Lord and in the face of the people of Israel.

And that's what you have here at the beginning here. Jericho is shut up, it's securely shut up. And as though it's a sign that the people of Jericho are wanting nothing to do with the people of Israel, and they certainly want nothing to do with the God of Israel.

[5 : 55] They are rejecting any potential mercy at all. So the whole city here is completely shut off. If you looked at it, it would be shut off, apart from one window.

There's one window that you would see that was open. And of course that window was the window of the prostitute that we read in this passage, Rahab herself.

Because Rahab, as I mentioned back in chapter 2, she sought the mercy of the Lord. She was in the same situation as all the people of Jericho. She had a fear, but she actually came towards the Lord and she sought mercy and salvation.

And because she did that, and because she hid those spies, she was given that salvation. She was a receiver of the mercy of God and salvation itself. But she's the only one.

Out of the whole of Jericho, nobody else has sought that, only her. So there's just this one little window that's open. Remember she lived in the wall, so you would actually see that window open.

[6 : 54] And interestingly, as they would go round, as they would march round, they would have seen that open window. Every one of the people of Israel would have seen it. It's the only open window, the only thing that was open. Because she was to leave it open and she was to put a scarlet cord, a scarlet rope down the window, as a sign of her faith and her allegiance to the Lord.

And the spies told her to do that and that's exactly what she did. But other than Rahab, the rest of this city here is shut up to the Lord. And the Lord speaks to Joshua then in verse 2 and he gives his instructions.

And the Lord says, See, I have given Jericho into your hand. Now, bear in mind, I've just noted that Jericho is securely shut up, that it is barricaded in.

And the Lord is saying, look at Jericho, I'm giving you victory here. I've given Jericho into your hand. Now, if that was perhaps ourselves that were there listening to God saying, look, I've given you victory here.

I'm seeing how securely shut up Jericho was. We may well respond with something like, what are you talking about God? It looks like an impenetrable fortress. How are we in any way going to have victory over this place?

[8 : 08] But God is saying, look, I'm giving you the victory. Can you not see? And in a sense, Joshua couldn't see. Because Joshua had to look with the eye of faith. That's what he had to look with.

He had to believe that victory was there. It perhaps didn't look like it from seeing them securely shut up, seeing this fortress, these walls all around. Didn't look like it, but he had to believe that victory was there.

And we can apply that to ourselves as well. Because the same is true today in the spiritual battles that we find ourselves in. God tells us that the enemy of our souls is defeated.

He tells us that we find that in the pages of scripture. He turned to God's word and he says, the enemy of your souls is defeated. You have the victory. He tells us that the gates of hell will in no way prevail against the church of God.

We're told that explicitly in the word of God. But then we close our Bibles and we start to look around us. And it doesn't seem like that. Doesn't always look like that at all. It can look very different because when we look around us in society and the world that we're in, we can look and we can see that the enemy seems very strong.

[9 : 20] The enemy seems very strong indeed. And the enemy's fortress, much like Jericho, seems impenetrable. And it seems as though the forces of darkness and the devil himself, that he is triumphant, that he is victorious, that he is winning.

That's how it seems. That's how it can seem to us. Especially perhaps in current society and the way things are going. But no matter how things might seem to us, we must believe the words of God.

The victory is already ours. He tells us that. It is absolutely ours. And it's ours because of the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. His death and resurrection there on the cross has obtained that victory.

We're not waiting for the victory. It is already here in Christ. And whenever we look around us and think, wait a second, why is the devil seemingly raining here?

We need to remind ourselves that no, that's not the case. The victory is the Lord's already because of that blood that was shed at Calvary. So the Lord is telling Joshua here, you're victorious.

[10 : 27] I have given you Jericho into your hands and you need to trust me. But at the same time, Israel had to go out and claim that victory as well.

You see, the Lord is giving victory, but he also expects Israel to go out and actually claim that victory for themselves. Now, that is a constant theme that you see right throughout the book of Joshua and in many ways, right throughout the Bible as well.

God comes and he promises. He promises in this case, he's promising victory, but he comes with his promises and there's a certainty to God's promises.

But on the other hand, coupled with that is the responsibility on man's part. The responsibility of us to react with obedience to the Lord's commands and to lay hold of those promises.

The two things that they're so closely tied together that the promises of the Lord and the responsibility on the part of man as well. So, for example, you can think of the Gospel itself.

[11 : 35] The Lord promises today that he will save all those who put their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There's no other qualification around that. It's a promise from the Lord that all who put their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ will be saved.

But although that's a promise from the Lord, yet there's this responsibility on our part, isn't there, to go out and actually lay claim to that promise, to lay hold of Christ in faith. These two things work together. They're both present there. We can't elevate one at the expense of the other.

They're both true and we must bear those things in mind. And here in this passage, in order to gain this victory that's been promised, they have to go and take it, lay claim to this victory.

And to do that, they had to follow very strange instructions of the Lord here. And you see the instructions in verse 3 to 5. Now, I'm not sure what Joshua might have been expecting here.

When you think about it, and see the end of chapter 5 there, he's actually met with a commander of the Lord's army there. That's the divine commander. And he was there with a sword drawn.

[12 : 46] And now Joshua is receiving instructions from this divine military commander figure, the God-man himself. And you might think that this commander would give Joshua a plan that would involve weapons and warfare and some kind of military strategy of some kind of another.

But the plan that the Lord gives is one that involves marching and trumpets and the Ark of the Covenant. A very unusual method indeed. It's not what Joshua would have expected.

But that's a reminder to us that the Lord's ways are often far from what we might expect. And that's something that the Lord's people very quickly learn, isn't it? The Lord's ways sometimes can seem very, very strange to us indeed.

And Scripture reminds us of that. Isaiah chapter 55 tells us, speaking for the Lord, For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. And you know, how often, when you read through the pages of

Scripture, how often you find that to be so through the Lord working in ways that go completely against our expectations.

[14:08] And that's one thing that makes a Bible such a wonderful read. Of course, it's the word of God, the living word of God, but it's full of the Lord working in unexpected ways.

You know, he uses unexpected means. He works through servants who perhaps you wouldn't expect to be used. You wouldn't expect rehab, would you? Out of all the people in Jericho to be the one who's saved, he's always working in unexpected ways.

And that's exactly what we find here. And that's also what we find in our own lives. The Lord often works in our providence in strange and unexpected ways.

And we can find it confusing at times. We can wonder what the Lord is actually doing at certain occasions. But when we look back with hindsight, we can see, we can see how the Lord was using these things for good.

We can see how the Lord was using these things to bring about his purposes. Perhaps we didn't see it at the time, but eventually we see these things. And here the Lord is using a very strange method indeed.

[15:12] And you see those instructions in verse 3 to 5. And there aren't so much battle plans. In some ways, it's more like a ceremonial act of worship, isn't it?

If you had to say, this is a battle or an act of worship, it's more like a ceremonial act of worship here. So they have to march around the city walls in a particular order. Seven priests in front of the Ark of the Covenant with seven horns.

And the Ark was there. And then in front of the Ark, and in front of the priests, there was a crowd of soldiers. And then there was a rearguard behind them as well. And they would go round each day.

And of course then on the 7th, that's when they would go round the seven times.

And then blow the trumpet. And everyone would shout. And God said, when that happens, that the walls of Jericho will fall down. If you follow my instructions, the walls will come down.

And really what you have here then, this procession, it's more like an act of worship. You know, with the Ark of the Covenant there. It's more akin to that than any kind of battle strategy at all.

[16:19] And you see here, worship was the key to victory. Worship was the key to victory. They weren't going to win this battle through swords and shields and whatever other kind of military strategy they might use.

They weren't going to win this battle that way. But by reverential, obedient worship to the Lord as they take part in this ceremonial march, this procession, with the Ark of the Covenant itself in the very middle, at the very centre.

So in a sense, this wasn't a victory by warfare. It's a victory by worship. And worship is actually a key feature in these early chapters of Joshua. I can't go into the details, but worship is a key theme right the way through.

And here, this first battle, this first victory, it effectively comes through an act of worship. And there's a way in which the same is true today as well.

There's a way in which we actually inflict damage to the kingdom of Satan himself every time we gather for worship. Because when you think about it, every time we gather for worship, the Word of God is opened up.

[17:35] And that Word of God enables the Lord's people to be strengthened. That Word of God enables the Lord's people to grow in holiness. It enables us to modify the sin within.

Now, the devil does not like that. Devil doesn't like you receiving the Word of God and being built up. That damages his cause. That damages, as it were, his kingdom.

So in a sense, every time we are actually gathering in worship, it's almost like a break is falling from the kingdom of the devil himself. You see, it's a weapon almost, coming together, strengthening ourselves in the Lord, through the Lord, through his Spirit.

It's damaging to the cause of Satan. And here you have this ceremonial march with the Ark of the Covenant at the center stage. And of course, it's a reminder, the Lord always must be centered in worship.

That's crucial. His Word must be centered. He is absolutely centerpiece in every act of worship that is performed. And here, through this ceremonial marching, if the people would do this, then the walls were going to be destroyed.

[18 : 46] And the fact that the act was in the center, that was another sign that it's the Lord that is going to bring this about. It's another reminder. It's God who's doing this. It's God who's going to give the victory and God who's going to bring these walls, eventually tumbling down.

And once these instructions here, once they're given by the Lord, what happens after that? So the Lord tells them what to do, what happens from verse 6 onwards.

Well, you see there that the people do exactly as the Lord commands them to do. Now, the instructions of the Lord sound bizarre here. They do, they sound strange, but the Lord has given them so the people, they obey.

They obey exactly what the Lord has asked them to do, no matter how strange perhaps it might seem to them. They do exactly as the Lord asks of them. And that is key here, because the obedience of Israel.

That's another really important theme in the book of Joshua. The promises of God are an important theme, but so too are the obedience of the people. They need to obey.

[19 : 55] They obey God's instructions in order to receive the benefits of the promises of God. And here they do exactly that. They do exactly what the Lord has asked them to do. They don't add anything and they don't take anything away.

God has given them a reasonably detailed instruction here and they do it exactly. They carry out every single detail. And that is an important principle for us, even now in the New Testament. Church God is a God of detail. He is a God of order. And you see that, you see that in this very passage that we're studying here. And in God's word, the Lord has given us an incredibly detailed instruction manual.

This book tells us how to live, it tells us how to be, tells us how we should act towards others. It shows us how we ought to worship the Lord.

It shows us all of these things, detailed instructions. But you see, we face two temptations, two big temptations when it comes to the word of God.

[21 : 03] And there are two opposing temptations. The first temptation that we face is from the world around us. And the world around us wants us, more than anything, to loosen our grip of the word of God.

That's clear as day. The culture around us wants to loosen our grip of the word of God. And perhaps more specifically, what they want is, they want us to lose or to delete some of the laws and some of the particular instructions that we find in the word of God.

And they're wanting that because these things perhaps might not be compatible with the western progressive secularistic ideology that the world is pushing just now, or certainly our society is pushing.

The word of God doesn't fit it, so let's get rid of some of those things. That's one of the temptations we face to take out of the word of God. But on the other side, the flip side, there's a temptation as well to add to these instructions.

Now that temptation is more likely to come from within the church than without. And that's certainly something that happens to add to the word of God, to add all sorts of manmade traditions and manmade laws, and that's something the Lord himself dealt with throughout the gospel when it came to the Pharisees.

[22 : 24] And that's something that continues to happen. Present in the old, the new, and certainly today as well. So we have these two temptations, opposing ones, extreme ones, but two temptations. But we must follow the instructions of our Lord in everything.

We have the detail, let's not take away and let us not in any way add to it either in an unnecessary fashion. And here, the people, they do just that, they do exactly what the Lord asks them to do.

When they march seven times around the city on that seventh day, and when the trumpets sound, and when the people shout, we read there in verse 20, that the wall fell down flat.

Without even lifting a sword, Jericho has to follow. And there can be no doubt, like I said before, absolutely no doubt it is the Lord that has done this.

Because, you see, sometimes the Lord so ordains events to make sure that all the glory goes to himself.

[23 : 33] Now, what I mean by that is that ordinarily, the Lord works through his servants. That's the normal way that God works through his servants, through his people. But, see, very often, God's people take credit for things themselves.

We're prone to that. It's a pride issue. It happens a lot. And effectively, what we're doing when we do that is taking God's glory. We're stealing the glory of God. So, for that reason, from time to time, the Lord works in extra ordinary ways.

And when he does that, he works independently of his human servants, independently of earthly means. And he brings about a miraculous deliverance by himself and without the help of any man or any instrument or any servant.

And he does that to clearly show that all the glory is due to him and to him alone. And here, you see, the victory isn't Joshua's, it's not Israel's, it is the Lord.

And that is the thing that he wants to make absolutely clear in the pages of Scripture in this narrative here. So, the walls come down and it's the Lord who's taken them down.

[24 : 45] Now, perhaps you are here today and maybe you are a wee bit like the people of Jericho. Maybe like the people of Jericho, maybe you are shutting yourself up from the Lord.

Now, we're hearing a lot in the news today about building walls and things like that. Well, perhaps you are like that, building a wall of resistance to the Lord, to the Gospel, to the Word of God himself. And perhaps you think this wall that you're building, this wall of unbelief and this wall of hard-heartedness, perhaps you think that is a wall that is impenetrable and it isn't anyone, anything, any Christian, any minister, anyone, any word, any Gospel, any sermon, that will ever break that barrier down, that wall perhaps you think is very strong.

But the Lord who made these walls here in Jericho crumble, without even lifting a sword, he is the same God who's able to take the hardest of walls and the strongest of walls that you can build around yourself today.

And he's able to make it crumble. He's able to make it crumble. You see that in the pages of scripture time and time again. Think of Saul of Tarsus, Philippian Jailer. There's so many people who you think there must be a hard wall around them, but the Lord comes in and the Lord just takes it down and the Lord is still able to do that today because these walls in this passage, they crumbled because of the sound of a trumpet.

[26 : 17] The trumpet sound. Well, today, the sound that goes out, the trumpet sound that goes out is the sound of the Gospel. That's the sound that goes out. That message that reminds us that the Lord Jesus Christ has been sacrificed on that hill at Calvary on the cross there in order to die for the sins of his people. That is the wonderful sound of the Gospel.

That's the trumpet that gets sounded today. And that trumpet sound is able to bring down the hardest wall in here today. And perhaps that is the case. Maybe you've been feeling that wall maybe getting chipped away through the word of God or maybe even just destroyed in a one-horse. The Lord can do that as well. God's word does that.

That's why it's important to come under God's word and to come to God's house to hear it. You never know when that word will come in and tear down that wall that perhaps is around your soul. And once the walls fall down here, the people then they need to go in to the city. They need to go in. And they're given specific instructions here as well. And of course, one of the instructions in verse 17, they were told to protect Rahab and her family because she's found mercy and salvation. So they had to absolutely protect her. And interestingly, when they were protecting Rahab, they probably didn't realize how important that was because Rahab is massively important in the narrative of Scripture, in the redemptive history of Scripture. Because if you read Matthew 1 and the genealogy of Jesus, who appears there but Rahab? And little did the people of Israel know when they were going in to protect this prostitute.

[27 : 58] Little would they have known that the Messiah, the Savior Himself, was going to come through this woman. They wouldn't have known that. There's no way they would have known that. But in saving this woman and protecting this woman, they were effectively protecting one through whom the Lord Jesus Christ would eventually actually come into this world.

So that's one of the instructions. They were told to protect Rahab. But there's also specific instructions given there in verse 18 to 19 there. But you keep yourselves from things devoted to destruction. Lest, that's pagan objects. Lest, when you have devoted them, you take any of the devoted things and make the camp of Israel a thing for destruction and bring trouble upon it. But the silver and the gold and every vessel of bronze and iron, they are holy and they are to be taken into the treasury of the Lord. So here, the people are told by the Lord through Joshua, I don't want you to take any of the belongings from Jericho.

When you go in there, don't take any of their belongings, destroy it all. And if there's any precious metals and things like that, you can put that into the treasury of the Lord Himself. But do not keep any of these things to yourselves.

The Lord is effectively ordering here complete destruction, everyone and everything. Now, you have to pause there because that's hard to read and hard to hear sometimes. Is that unfair that the Lord would deal with the people of Jericho in this way?

[29 : 30] Well, you have to remember that the Canaanites, they were Jericho in Canaan, the Canaanites, they were not innocent people. See, if you read this and think they're innocent, then you think, oh God's terrible at what He's doing here.

They weren't innocent people. These were people who had committed quite grievous sins and they deserved judgment. They deserved the judgment of the Lord. That's sometimes quite hard for us to take, but sin deserves judgment.

Pages of scripture are clear on that. And here, God is absolutely just in judging where there is sin. Now, we're going to actually look at that in a bit more detail. Let me look at the next passage, God willing, this evening.

But had these people turned to God and sought mercy, they would have had it. Rahab was an example of that. The people of Nineveh, an example of that in the book of Jonah. Had they turned to the Lord, they would have been saved.

But they didn't. They closed the walls. They closed themselves off to the Lord. And as a result, now they face the judgment of God. And here, God requires complete annihilation.

[30 : 34] And one of the reasons for that is to ensure that Israel wouldn't be lured into false idolatry and false worship practices. Because God knew that if He allowed some of the Canaanites to live and if He allowed the people of Israel to take some of the pagan Canaanite objects, He knew that there would have been a temptation there. The possibility of Israel getting lured into this false worship and idolatry of these pagan Canaanite people.

The Lord knew that. And that was part of the reason behind this complete annihilation here. So it sounds terrible that everyone and everything had to be wiped out.

But it was in order to prevent the people of Israel falling into idolatry. And that is important. And I'll come on to that, God willing, tonight as well.

But as well as that, this is also a reminder to us of the coming judgment. And you're meant to read that into this. There's a judgment coming. Now, again, we don't like to think that one day and sin will be judged and sin will be punished.

Very unpopular thought in our day, even sadly in the church. But the Word of God is absolutely clear on that. Sin will be judged and it will absolutely be punished.

[31 : 52] And the solemn reality is, you might read this and think, how terrible for the people of Jericho who rejected the mercy of the Lord. But the reality is that there awaits an infinitely worse judgment for all those who reject the mercy of the Lord and who reject the salvation of the Lord.

And you can't lay that on God and say it's God's fault. It's not God's fault. If we reject the offer of the gospel and the mercy that's available, it is our responsibility.

And it is in no way something we can say that the Lord is unjust in doing. So these instructions here, they're not to take any of these accursed things from Jericho.

They are a reminder, a reminder of how the people need to preserve the right worship of God. So they don't get tainted with the idle worship of the people of Jericho and Canaan.

And that's a reminder to us as well, how careful we should be about the worship of God. I mean, you see that the lengths that God goes to here to protect the purity of his worship. The worship of God is no minor thing. It's no minor thing at all.

[33 : 02] The purity of worship is absolutely no minor thing at all. And you see that here in this passage. We need to take that warning. There are tremendous pressures on the church today.

Pressures on the church from the world outside for us to conform, even in not just in what we believe from the Bible, but even in how we approach God in worship. There's tremendous pressure for us to conform to the world's expectation of how these things should be.

Society's expectation of how these things should be, rather than conform to what God tells us in His word, the reverential nature of the worship of God that we find in His word.

We are surrounded by a pagan society, and that pagan society will do everything it can to influence our worship, to influence our faith, and to influence how we approach our Lord and our God.

And we must take great care that we don't allow that to happen. Let us take all our instruction from the word of God. He demands a purity of worship. And you see that here, even in how He's protecting His people from all these pagan objects of the people of Jericho.

[34 : 11] So, Israel are told not to take any of these pagan things. Now the question is, will they obey that or not? Do they take any of these accursed things?

Well, God willing, we'll see that question answered this evening. Let's come before God in prayer.

Heavenly Father, you are the God who saves and who saves to the uttermost.

And we see the wonderful picture of salvation there, even in Rahab herself, that prostitute who was perhaps the most unlikely candidate to come to faith, but yet, O Lord, you brought her to yourself.

But we also see there the tremendous picture of judgment as Jericho itself comes under destruction because of its hard-heartedness and its rejection of the Lord and rejection of the mercy which Rahab herself took part in.

And we see too the importance of following your instructions, having you lead us in every aspect of our lives from our daily walks to worship, to how we approach your word.

[35 : 26] Let us always be led by the Spirit and be led by the Lord who ultimately gives the victory at all times. And we give you thanks most of all for the victory that is ours in the Lord Jesus Christ, the one through whom secures all the blessings of the covenant that we might receive the wonderful benefits of these promises that we find in scripture.

So cleanse us now we pray. Continue with us throughout the rest of this day and enable us to gather once more this evening as we continue to look at the effects of sin and what sin does, not only in the face of the individual, but also in the face of family and even the whole of society.

Help us to learn from these things, for Jesus' sake. Amen. We'll bring out service to a close by singing to God's praise in Psalm 24.

Psalm 24 and we'll sing the last section there, verse 7 to 10. These are wonderful victory words, a picture of the Lord being exalted, having achieved the victory and then ascending and the angels as it were calling for the gates to be lifted up and to be opened up and to allow the King of glory in.

You ancient gates lift up your heads, your doors be opened wide, so may the King of glory come forever to abide. We'll sing verse 7 to the end to the praise of God.