

Looking to the Future: 2. Singing the Gospel Story

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[0 : 0 0] Well, we're going to turn now to our Bible reading. You'll find it in the book of Deuteronomy in the Old Testament, page 173, if you have a church visitor's Bible. And we've come to chapter 32, which is this great song of Moses that was introduced to us last week, its purpose, and now we have it all laid out for us.

And it's a song that's important for us to learn. Not only has it been preserved in the Scriptures for us, but if you read in Revelation chapter 15, you'll discover that this is the song that we shall be singing with all the Lord's people forever.

So we better start learning it now, I think, just to be in good time for eternity. But the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb is the song of Christ's people forever and ever in his glory.

So here it is. Moses, verse 30 of chapter 31, spoke the words of this song until they were finished in the ears of all the assembly of Israel.

The song of Moses and the word of Israel.

[1 : 3 4] He says, Remember the days of old.

Consider the years of many generations. Ask your father and he will show you your elders and they will tell you. When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance. When he divided mankind and fixed the borders of the peoples according to the numbers of the sons of God.

But the Lord's portion is his people. Jacob, his allotted heritage. He found him in a desert land. And in the howling wastes of the wilderness.

He encircled him. He cared for him. He kept him as the apple of his eye. Like an eagle that stirs up its nest. That flutters over its young. Spreading out its wings.

Catching them. Bearing them on its pinions. The Lord alone guided him. No foreign god was with him. He made him. He made him ride on the high places of the land.

[2 : 5 6] And he ate the produce of the field. And he suckled him with honey out of the rock. And oil out of the flinty rock. Curds from the herd. And milk from the flock. With fat of lambs.

Rams of Bashan. And goats. With the very finest of wheat. And you drank foaming wine. You made from the blood of the grape. But.

Jeshurun. It's a poetic name for Israel. Jeshurun grew fat. And kicked. He grew fat. Stout and sleek.

Then he forsook God who made him. And scoffed at the rock of his salvation. They stirred him to jealousy with strange gods. With abominations.

They provoked him to anger. They sacrificed to demons that were no gods. To gods they had never known. To new gods that had come recently. Whom your fathers had never dreaded. You were unmindful of the rock that bore you.

[3 : 5 5] And you forgot the God who gave you birth. The Lord saw it. And spurned them. Because of the provocation of his sons and daughters.

And then he said. I will hide my face from them. I will see what their end will be. For they are a perverse generation. Children in whom is no faithfulness. They have made me jealous with what is no God.

They have provoked me to anger with their idols. So I will make them jealous with those who are no people. I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation. For a fire is kindled by my anger.

And it burns to the depths of Sheol. Devours the earth and its increase. And sets on fire the foundations of the mountains. And I will heap disasters upon them.

I will spend my arrows on them. They shall be wasted with hunger. And devoured by plague and poisonous pestilence. I will send the teeth of beasts against them. With the venom of things that crawl in the dust.

[4 : 59] Outdoors the swords shall bereave. And indoors terror. For young man and woman alike. The nursing child with the man of grey hairs. I would have said.

I'll cut them to pieces. I will wipe them from human memory. Had I not feared provocation by the enemy. Lest their adversaries should misunderstand.

Lest they should say. Our hand is triumphant. It was not the Lord who did all this. For they, these adversaries. Are a nation void of counsel. There's no understanding in them.

If they were wise. They would understand this. They would discern their latter end. How could one have chased a thousand. Or two have put ten thousand to flight. Unless their rock had sold them.

And the Lord had given them up. But their rock is not as our rock. Our enemies are by themselves. For their vine comes from the vine of Sodom.

[5 : 59] And from the fields of Gomorrah. Their grapes are clusters of poison. Their clusters are bitter. Their wine is the poison of serpents. And the cruel venom of asps. Is not this laid up in me?

Sealed up in my treasures? Vengeance is mine. And recompense. For the time when their foot shall slip.

For the day of their calamity is at hand. And their doom comes swiftly. For the Lord will vindicate his people. And have compassion on his servants.

When he sees that their power is gone. And there is none remaining. Bond or free. Then he will say. Where are their gods? Their rock in which they took refuge.

Who ate the fat of their sacrifices. And drank the wine of their drink offering. Let them rise and help you. Let them be your protection. See now that I.

[7 : 02] Even I am here. There is no God beside me. I kill. And I make alive. I wound. And I heal. And there is none that can deliver out of my hand.

For I lift up my hand to heaven. And swear. As I live forever. If I sharpen my flashing sword. And my hand takes hold on judgment. I will take vengeance on my adversaries.

And will repay those who hate me. I'll make my arrows drunk with blood. And my sword shall devour flesh. With the blood of the slain. And the captives.

From the long haired heads of the enemy. Rejoice with him. O heavens. Bow down to him. O gods.

For he avenges the blood of his children. And takes vengeance on his adversaries. He repays those who hate him. And cleanses his people's land.

[8 : 04] Moses came and recited all the words of this song. In the hearing of the people. He and Joshua the son of Nun. And when Moses had finished speaking all these words. To all Israel.

He said to them. Take to heart. All the words by which I am warning you today. That you may command them to your children. That they may be careful to do all the words of this law.

For it is no empty word for you. But your very life. And by this word you shall live long in the land. You are going over Jordan to possess.

Amen. May God bless us. This is word. The Bible. The Bible. The Bible. The Bible. Well. Deuteronomy chapter 32.

Page 173 in the visitor's bible. All about looking to the future and singing the gospel story. When the apostle Paul wrote to equip the next generation of Christian leaders and the church.

[9 : 09] One of his constant refrains was this. Don't be ashamed of the gospel. Remember my gospel. And actually in 2nd Timothy chapter 2. He commends as trustworthy and very valuable.

What seems to be part of a gospel song. That they knew and they sang. If we died with him. We will also live with him. If we endure. We will also reign with him.

But if we deny him. We will. He will also deny us. If we are faithless. He will remain faithful. That is to his covenant. Because he cannot deny himself.

A powerful song of witness. To remember the true nature. Of God's gospel grace. To be rejoiced in. But also to be revered. Never treated. Presumptuously.

Well as we saw last time. Moses directed his people's eyes to the future. And their need was exactly the same. And the issues were exactly the same.

[10 : 08] God knew the power of their sin. The weakness of the human heart. All the temptation that his people would face. Just as Paul says. The church will face. And so he instructed Moses to teach Israel a song.

A song of witness for him. To his goodness and grace. His goodness and grace. In the face of their faithlessness and sin. To warn them against treating his gospel lightly.

Against stopping following him truly. And to encourage them to remember the wondrous story. Of his covenant grace and mercy. To which they were called.

And it's that song that he teaches here. To the whole assembly of Israel. In chapter 32. And if we're to take any kind of cue. I think for the sort of thing.

That God wants his people to sing about. From this song. Which I think we must do. Then we can see. I think can't we. That it's not anything ephemeral. It's not lightweight.

[11 : 10] It's not sentimental. It's substantial. It's solemn. It's deadly serious. And yet of course also. It is suffused. With great rejoicing.

Let's look at how he introduces it. In verses 1 to 3. He makes clear doesn't he. That these words are about something. And about someone. Indeed transcendent. The ears of heaven and earth.

Are called to hear. And to heed this word. Verse 1. And that's because. As verse 3 makes plain. He proclaims the name. Of the God of heaven and earth. For I will proclaim the name of the Lord.

Ascribe greatness to our God. The rock. His work is perfect. In all creation. For all his ways are justice. In all his rule over creation.

The God of faithfulness. Without iniquity. Just and upright is he. In all his dealings with mankind. And above all in his dealings with his chosen people. This is a transcendent word.

[12 : 11] A word to shake the heavens as well as the earth. Because it proclaims the glory of the creator. But notice verse 2. Do you see it's also a supremely tender word.

May my teaching drop as the rain. My speech distill as the dew. Like gentle rain upon the tender grass. Like showers upon the herb. It's a wonderful picture isn't it?

Of the tender. The so necessary life giving nourishment of the water of life. That brings forth life on all the earth.

A word of great transcendence. About the power of the God of heaven. But a word of great tenderness. About the personal God who comes down near to his people.

To bless them. To nourish them with life. And verses 1 to 3 really are a great prayer aren't they? For anyone who is about to speak the gospel of God.

[13 : 07] Because real gospel proclamation is always both of these things. It proclaims the great God of heaven. The most high as verse 8 calls him. The one who gives all the nations of the world their inheritance.

But it also proclaims the God who draws near to his own people. As verse 9 says. To Jacob. The people yes whose hearts were twisted and crooked just as Jacob's was.

It's the very language that's used in verse 5 here. But who still comes near. So to sing the gospel story is to sing of God's transcendent majesty.

And of God's tender mercy. As it is all the way through the story of man. All the way through the story of scripture. Right from the beginning. But of all of course coming to its climax.

In the majestic mercy that's revealed in our Lord Jesus Christ himself. Who came down from the glory of heaven. To bring his life-giving water of life.

[14 : 08] Of eternal life. To the parched grass of our human frailty. And the whole world. Heaven and earth says Moses.

Need to hear. The greatness of this gospel story. Sun. Allowed by his people. And God has proclaimed it you see. As public truth.

It's not hidden. It's revealed. All. In its fullness. Throughout the Bible. As it is here. There's nothing hidden. There's nothing. Concealed. God's grace reveals the whole truth.

For this world to know. For this world to respond to. And it's the whole truth isn't it? About God. And about man. In a way the whole crux of it is encapsulated just in verses 4 and 5.

Look at those verses. God is rock-like. He is perfect. He is just and faithful. He is sinless. He is upright. But man.

[15 : 06] Verse 5. Is corrupt. And blemished. And crooked. And twisted. Now of course here he's speaking. Specifically about Israel.

But in many ways this song transcends just the specifics of history. It does have a cosmic focus. It's describing the core realities about man and God. About sin and salvation.

About judgment and mercy. About life and death. And it does speak to all. Calls all the heavens and all the earth to hear this word. And notice by the way.

Notice something very striking. I hadn't noticed this before. The sin of God's people in verse 5. Their corruption. Their crookedness. Do you see in verse 6 how it's described?

It's described there principally as foolishness and senselessness. Do you see that? Stupidity. Turning away from God and following the ways of the world.

[16 : 07] Of the culture all around. Is doing. Well again in verse 28. It's following a nation that is void of counsel. People who have no understanding.

Isn't that striking? When God's church rebels against God's word. And turns instead to the wisdom of the world all about. The culture all about. It is not turning. From primitive stupidity to rationality.

And to intelligence. But away from that. To stupidity and irrationality. It's not being clever. It's being foolish.

Senseless. Now you young people. You grasp that. Understand that. You really need to know that. The way to sanity. The way to intelligence.

Is not the way. Of our secular culture all around about us. The way to sanity and intelligence. Is the way of God's scriptural culture. That we find in the Bible.

[17 : 06] Moses is just saying here exactly. What Paul lays out so clearly in Romans chapter 1. That when man turns against God. He exchanges truth for lies. God's revealed truth for the mere foolishness.

And falsehood of this world. And so says Paul. They turn away from worshipping the creator. And become slaves. Enthralled to mere created things. Worshipping them. Denying as Paul says there for example.

Denying the obvious truth about. Created sexual distinctiveness. Between men and women. Something he says is. Plainly perceived by all people. From the beginning of time.

But now being ignored. And twisted and rejected. Utter irrational folly. Says Paul. And that's increasingly around us today.

It's so obvious isn't it. In this sheer avalanche of senselessness. And foolish nonsense. Around the whole issue of gender and sexuality. It's barely believable sometimes.

[18 : 05] The degree of self-deception. The lies that are being propagated. The horrors. That are being propagated. On the bodies even of young children. Not rational.

Not scientific. But irrational. Senseless. Foolish. Similarly of course. Not just blurring those sexual boundaries.

But increasingly. Even blurring species boundaries. Between man and animals. I don't know if you saw the headlines in the papers this week. About many farmers. Who are living in fear of death threats. From radical vegans.

People who place pigs above people. Or chickens above children. So you see friends. The Bible does expose this world's sinfulness.

But it also exposes so clearly. It's madness. It's foolishness. The senseless absurdity. Of the human mind. When it turns away from God.

[19 : 03] In our collective response. To the God. Who as verse 6 says here. Who created us. Who made us. Who established us. Well that was so for Israel then.

And for all their generations of course. And this song was for them. They needed it. My goodness. But as we'll see. Its language does rise above. The specifics. Of Israel's story.

It's deliberately. General language. It's cosmic. In its focus. So that it can truly be. A song for all people. For all ages. To teach heaven and earth. Everyone who will listen.

The truth. About the true gospel story. Of our God. Which is the truth about this whole world story. Why it emerged. Where it's going. And above all. Where it most certainly.

Is going to end. God says here. His song was written. As a witness for him. Against Israel. And actually. It takes the form really. Of a lawsuit.

[20 : 01] All these witnesses. Are arrayed. Against God's people. And God. Is sitting as judge. But as we'll see. At the end of the song.

He reveals his judgment. In a way that is somehow different. Very surprising. From the verdict. That actually. We would expect. When we get to verse 25. Verse 25. But it's a song.

God wants to live. Unforgotten. In the mouths. Of the generations of Israel. So watch. What is this gospel song. To teach them. Well God is teaching them.

And teaching us. Something to remember. Something to recognize. Something to reflect on. And something to rejoice in. First of all. He wants us to remember.

God's goodness. And grace. Verse 7. Remember. The days of old. Consider. The history. Of what God has done. And verses 4 to 15. Focus so clearly.

[20 : 55] On that extraordinary. Grace of God. And his generosity. In the face. Of a graceless. Undeserving people. Focuses on all the Lord's. Overtures.

Of gentleness. And of strength. He's the rock. Verse 4. Of strength. And repeatedly. Through the song. That's an image you find. So often in the Bible. Isn't it? Especially in the Psalms.

Perfect. In justice. In faithfulness. Verse 15. He's the rock. Of salvation. He's enduring. He's a towering.

Protective fortress. Think of the Psalms. He only is my rock. And my salvation. My fortress. I will not be shaken. He is the transcendent. Towering strength.

Of the creator. Of the heavens. Of the earth. And yet also. As we saw already. He is. The one who has. Extraordinary tenderness. And gentleness. Look at verse 6.

[21 : 53] He's the father. Who makes. And establishes. His children. Yes. Verse 8. He is the most high. The mighty one. Who gives all the human nations.

Their places on earth. But his special love. Verse 9. Do you see? His special love. And favor. Is blessing. His own people. Israel. The sons of Jacob. He kept them.

With such deep. Tender. Father like affection. Verse 10. Rescuing them. From the howling wastes. Encircling them. With loving arms. Verse 11.

Spreading his wings. Of delicate protection. Around them. Verse 13. Making them ride high. Feeding them. With delight. Honey. And oil.

And rich fare. Foaming wine. All. Not from. Any foreign little godlet. But from God alone. Extraordinary picture.

[22 : 48] Isn't it? Of his abundant grace. In both creating his people. But also in sustaining them. In providing for them. In protecting them. In every way.

All through life. The eagle imagery there. In verse 11. Is very resonant. It's. It's the language. The language of. The fluttering wings. Brooding. It's the language of Genesis chapter 1.

The spirit of God himself. Fluttering over. The dark wastes. And bringing forth life. Out of nothing. And bearing them on eagles wings.

That's language that comes from Exodus 19. Where God says. I've borne you. Out of Egypt. On eagles wings. In redeeming. Grace. Towards Israel. And the gospel song says.

Stop. Look. Remember. God's grace. In his goodness. In creation. In his. In his care of this whole. A world. Of abundant life. But above all.

[23 : 45] In the rescue of his people. From slavery. Into. His everlasting life. One of the Bible's most frequent commands. Is to remember. Why do you think that is? Because we forget.

We so quickly forget. And we so quickly. In our minds. Pervert. The true vision of God. God. We suppress. The reality.

Of his goodness. His beauty. His faithfulness. His love. And what we do instead. Is we just start to. Concoct in our minds. A bloated image of ourselves.

Isn't that right? What a terrible thought. But as Phil was saying to us. Just the other week. God is not. Just a big. Big man. Praise him for that.

Look at these verses. This is our God. A God of. Of great gentleness. And a God of great strength. The rock. But who has wings. To surround his people.

[24 : 44] A rock. But a rock. That suckles his people. With milk. And wine. And honey. How perversely. We forget that truth. We picture him.

As something else. As a dark thing. Just as the world around us. Is so blind. To the real truth. So confused. As is all religion.

What was it. That Paul says to the. Philosophers in Athens. The Lord of heaven. Does not live in man-made temples. He does not need. Man-made sustenance.

He himself gives to man. Life and breath. And everything. Everything you see. He determined. Their boundaries. His in the dwelling places. Think about his abundant goodness.

And he did it. Says Paul. So that they would seek. God. And find him. And love him. And that's the first thing. That we've got to sing. To the world.

[25 : 44] And to ourselves. As we sing the gospel story. Remember. God's goodness. And his grace. See it. And show it. The very existence of creation.

Alone. Is testimony to it. Our life and breath. Every moment of every day. Is testimony to his. Sustaining goodness. And grace. Alone. And of all peoples.

His chosen ones. Who know him. His allotted heritage. His blessedness. So. So richly. And that of course.

Is what makes verses 15 to 18. Just so appalling. Isn't it? God. But Jeshurun. Grew fat. And kicked. He grew fat. And stout. And sleek.

With such abundant blessing. And then he forsook. The God who made him. And scoffed. At the rock of his salvation. And so God says.

[26 : 40] You must remember. And you must also. Recognize. Your rebellion. Even as you remember. God's grace. Recognize. The horror. Of what you have done.

In response to it. And these verses. Speak of Israel's appalling. Apostasy. It's written in the past tense. That's called. The prophetic.

Perfect. Still to happen. But. It's foreseen by God. As though it has already happened. And in fact. The pattern is already entrenched. Isn't it? All through the wilderness story.

And back in chapter 31. Remember God says. We saw it last week. I know. What their hearts. Are inclined to do. Even now. Even before. I've brought them into this land of blessing. Their hearts are inclined to evil.

To unfaithfulness. To idolatry. And they're not going to change. And so. Jeshurun. It's a poetic name. A loving nickname. For Israel. It means.

[27 : 35] The upright one. Jeshurun. My upright one. Will scoff. And deny. Everything. That he's called to be. Everything I've done for him.

And far from remembering. God's grace. Verse 18. He'll be unmindful. Of the very rock. Who fathered him. Forget. The God. Who gave him birth. You see how personal.

How relational. That language is. God is not just some distant. Creative force. The force. You know. Like in Star Wars. No.

No. No. No. No. No. That's what so many people think. That's the confusion. Of so many people. No. God is a father. Who begets his children. Who brings them to birth. Who knows them.

Who loves them. So that as Paul says. They should seek him. And feel their way towards him. And find him. And love him. As a father. But here's that father forgotten.

- [28 : 35] And abandoned. And scoffed at. Provoked to deep jealousy. To deep pain. By offspring. Who are callous.
- Who are corrupt. Who have turned their faces away. It's a terrible image that. Think of the sorrow. Think of the. The pain. Of an earthly father. Like that.
- His children. Turn their back. Abandon them. Want nothing to do with them. Shut them out. Forget them. Even hate them. It's a deeply agonizing thing.
- A devastating thing. But that's what we do to God. When we. Rebel against him. By worshiping rival gods. As Israel did.
- You might think that can't be us though. Because surely we. We don't worship idols. We don't. Have rival gods. Like that today. Well. Don't be too sure. Look at verse 15. What is it.
- [29 : 33] That drew his people away. It's materialism. Isn't it? Becoming fat. And stout. And sleek. With all the things in the world. That God has blessed them with.
- The cares of this world. And the deceitfulness of riches. Is how Jesus put it. Which. Choke. And kill off. The spiritual lives of God's people. Was that kind of idolatry.
- Confined to ancient Israel. Do you think? I don't think so. And. The abominations. Of these false gods. That verses 16 and 17. Speak of.
- They were almost all. Canaanite sex gods. Baals. Ashteras. And so on. It was their erotic lures. That so corrupted the minds.
- And the bodies of God's people. Is that confined to ancient Canaan? Isn't the goddess Eros. Reigning supreme. In our western world today.
- [30 : 28] And I think that the increasingly. Perverse manifestations. That we see so much around us today. With all the horrific.
- Twisted. Destructive. Sexual experimentation. There is. I think when you look at verse 17 here. It's hard not to agree. But ultimately behind that.
- Is something utterly demonic. They sacrificed to demons. Rebellion. Is what they were really doing. And the gospel song. That God wants us to sing.
- Is saying to us. Recognize. Your rebellion. See it for what it really is. It is. Faithlessness. It is utter rebellion. Against God. Your father. As well as foolishness.
- And utter ruin for yourselves. See this song is. Speaking about the story of all humanity. Isn't it? It's what Paul says. In plain prose. In Romans chapter 1.
- [31 : 26] That man. Pagan man. Has rejected. What has been plain. About God the creator. Since the very beginning. And so they rebel. And they are without excuse. Becoming futile.
- In their thinking. And foolish hearts. Being darkened. But lest we think. He's talking about people out there. Paul goes right on. Doesn't he? In Romans chapter 2.
- And he says. How much less excuse. And how much more responsibility. Lies with those. Who likewise rebel. But like Israel. Have been privileged. To have the light of God's word.
- All their lives. Your rebellion. He says. Is far worse. When God's name is blasphemed.
- Among the nations. Because of you. And not. Blessed. Among the nations. Because of you. And that was Israel here. That was God's. Ancient church.
- [32 : 21] And friends. If we think. We don't need to take heed. I'm sorry to tell you. We have to read the New Testament. And the apostle of Christ. Repeatedly. Gives exactly the same warnings. To the New Testament church.
- Read Hebrews chapter 6. To people. He says. Like us. Who are likewise. Are those who have tasted. The goodness of the word of God. Who have tasted. The power of the age to come. In the gospel. Don't you.

Hold the son of God himself. Up to contempt. He says. By turning away. Lured. By this world. So instead of bearing the fruit of grace. You bear merely the thorns. And the thistles of sinfulness.

You do that. Says the New Testament. Be very clear. The Lord will judge his people. It's a fearful thing. Says the apostle. To fall into the hands. Of the living God.

Our God. Is a consuming fire. Quite salutary. Isn't it? Especially when we read.

[33 : 18] The apostle Peter. Saying. Where does judgment begin? With the house of God. Because God's people. Have had such great privilege. And so.

When we rebel. We bear such. A very great responsibility. And that's why. In the next movement. Of the song here. Moses bids God's people.

To reflect. On God's judgment. Look at verses 19 to 33. You see. God is not blind. Verse 19. He sees. And so he spurns Israel.

As in the past. When. When a whole generation. Forfeited his blessing. Verse 20. He says. So it will be. I'm going to hide my face. From a people. Who are turning away from me. Hiding himself.

In privation. But also. Verse 21. In a very active judgment. As they make him jealous. With non-gods. Well. I'll make you jealous.

[34 : 15] With a no people. He says. Through a fierce. And fiery judgment. Verse 22. Look. Burning. Fire. Terrible disasters. Calamity. Read those verses.

And tremble. And if you find them disturbing. Then. Go home later on. And read Hebrews 12. Verse 25. To the end. And you'll tremble a lot more. I'm afraid. Because the apostle says.

See that you. New Testament Christians. Do not refuse him. Who is speaking. How much less. Will we escape. If we reject him. Who warns us from heaven.

But notice here. That God's judgment. Has both purpose. And restraint. And God wants us to reflect.

On these things. Verse 21. You see. Speaks of his clear purpose. To provoke jealousy. In his people. To woo them back to him. In repentance. And it's no accident.

[35 : 13] That Paul quotes. These very verses. In Romans 10. Verse 19. In his great discourse. About the mystery. Of Israel's rejection. And their hardening. And he uses it as evidence.

Not that God has rejected. His people forever. But that God's judgment. Is actually part of his purpose. To work his ultimate salvation. The judgment.

Will be real and fierce. Look at verses 22 to 25. Grim. But not total. There is restraint.

In God's judgment. Verse 26. I would have said. I will wipe them. From human memory. But no. He restrains.

From utter destruction. Notice. Not. For their sake. Do you see verse 27. But it's for God's own namesake. In the eyes of the world.

[36 : 09] And in the eyes of the people's enemies. That's what so many enemies. Of the church. And of Christ. Think today. Isn't it? The church is finished. The Christian gospel is passé. God is defeated. We have triumphed.

With our clever. Modern culture. No. No. No. Says God. I will not allow that. Because they. Verse 28. These adversaries. Who think like that. They're the ones.

With no understanding. If they were wise. He says in verse 29. They would understand. What is coming to them. Their final end. Because they're mere instruments. Of my judgment.

Upon my people. They do what I command. And I will. How could they have possibly done it otherwise? He says in verse 30. Unless it was Israel's God.

Their rock. Who had given them up into their hands. They don't have a rock like us. Their pagan gods are nothing. Our enemies. Are on their own. He says.

[37 : 03] They don't have a God to protect them. A real God. They're just poisonous snakes. Out of Sodom and Gomorrah. How can they possibly think. That they. Won't come. To a just end.

For their sins. You see. God will not let his enemies. Ultimately gloat. And triumph. As though they were really in charge of the world. Just because God's own people.

Seem so feeble. And so defeated. God will vindicate himself. He will vindicate his own name. And that is the primary reason. Why God will not allow his people.

To be utterly cut off. That's what Paul tells us. In Romans chapter 3. God put forth Jesus Christ. In the fullness of time. As a propitiation.

For our sins. To show. His righteousness. To vindicate himself. Because in his forbearance. He had passed over. Former sins of his people.

[38 : 00] And he laid himself open to injustice. For not utterly blotting out his people forever for their sins. It was to show his righteousness. At the present time. Says Paul. So that he might be just.

Seen to be just. And the justifier. Of those who have faith in Jesus Christ. And so here you see. We're called. To reflect on God's judgment.

Which has purpose. Even beyond that judgment. And so it shows restraint. From the utter abandonment. Of his people forever.

And verse 34. Reveals God. The judge. You see. Deliberating in his own mind. Wrestling with this great problem. Of his recalcitrant. Rebellious children.

And what it. What it poses to him. In terms of his burning justice. But also his burning love. For his people. And so he announces then.

[38 : 55] What the judge will do. And it's an extraordinary twist. And so God. Tells us. As singers of this gospel song. We're to rejoice. In this great reversal.

That he speaks about here. The reversal. That works both vengeance. But also vindication. You see. God promises a coming day. When there will be vengeance. Verse 35.

Vengeance is mine. And recompense. And all the enemies of God. And his people. Will meet the searing heat. Of his judgment. And far from exulting. In their apparent triumph.

They will at last. Discern their latter end. And they will be judged. Utterly. There will be vengeance. But also. Verse 36. Do you see. There will be vindication.

The Lord will vindicate. His people. He'll have compassion. On his servants. Notice. When he sees. Their power is gone. When they've been truly brought.

[39 : 52] To nothing. To another end of themselves. When they'll have to acknowledge. Their utter powerlessness. And the powerlessness. Of all these gods. That they had turned to.

And sought life. And salvation from. Where are they? Says God. Where are they? Let them help you. For the people. For the people. For the people. For the people. For the people. But there comes a time. Doesn't there? In every person's experience.

Just like in Israel's here. When we're forced to honesty. By the circumstances. And we see that. All these.

Man-made hopes. These self-made hopes. Are just empty and vain. And sometimes it does take. A mighty calamity. In our lives. To bring us to that point. To humble us. To begin to see the truth.

Of verse 39 here. That it is God alone. Who is Lord of creation. That he alone. Has the power of death. And life. That he alone. And his words. Can heal.

[40 : 47] And restore. And that means. Doesn't it? That the only thing. That ultimately matters. In the whole of our life. Is whether we find ourselves.

In the end. Opposed to him. And adversaries of his. Hating him. Or actually. As his servants. As his children. As his people. And if it's the former.

Look at verses 41 and 42. I will take vengeance. On my adversaries. I will repay. All who hate me. Terrifying prospect.

And yet verse 43. Just as surely. He says. I will avenge the blood. Of my children. Despite all their waverness.

All their rebellion. I will bring cleansing. To atone. For my land. And my people. Even from the shocking horror.

[41 : 46] Of all that they've done. Even though they were no better. Than the worst. Of God's enemies. How can that possibly be?

How can the eternal rock of righteousness. And justice. Without injustice. Without iniquity. Without sin. How can he. Show compassion.

On those. Who are just. Like. His enemies. Well. To understand that. You have to read. The whole of the story.

Of the scriptures. You have to read on. Through God's words. Accumulating. In the law. And in the psalms. And in the prophets. Read the prophet Isaiah. Who spoke in such similar words.

To Moses here. About Israel. When they were. Now judged. Powerless. Helpless. In exile. And he says to them. And to all the world. There is no God.

[42 : 41] Beside me. A righteous God. And Savior. Turn to me. And be saved. All the ends of the earth. I am the Lord. And all the seed of Israel. Shall be vindicated.

And shall glory. How? Well. Isaiah is speaking there. About his. Holy servant. Who at last. Will himself come.

God himself. The most high. Come down. To make. Atonement. For his land. And for his people. Taking their chastisement.

Upon him. To bring them peace. Taking. Their stripes. That they in fact. Might be healed. God's people. All. The seed of Israel.

Says Isaiah. And yet. Repeatedly. In those places. Isaiah says. Just as clearly. It will include people. From all the ends of the earth. He will sprinkle. Many nations. In his great.

[43 : 36] Forgiving grace. In that day. The root of Jesse. Shall stand. As a signal. For all the Gentile. Nations. There will be a great. Salvation. Encompassing. With God's blessing. All the families.

Of the earth. Just as God promised. At the start. To Abraham. But friends. That is proclaimed. Right here. In Moses gospel song. Look at verse 43.

You'll see in your Bibles. There's lots of footnotes here. That's because the original text. Is corrupted. It's very difficult. To decipher. And our ESV. In verse 43.

Follows the Greek Old Testament. Rejoice with him. Oh heavens. If you've got an NIV. It follows the Hebrew text. Rejoice. Oh nations. With his people. May very well be that both of those.

Are to be included. Some texts include both. And at any rate. In Romans chapter 15. Verse 10. Paul quotes. The Hebrew version. Rejoice. Oh Gentiles. With his people.

- [44 : 33] And he quotes that. Among a whole lot of others. Which so clearly foresee. Both Jews and Gentiles. Being brought together. Ultimately. In God's saving grace. Through at last. The day of God's great vengeance. On sin. And his great vindication. Justification. Of his people. Through. The cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Which he says. Shows God's truthfulness. In order to confirm. The promise. Given to the patriarchs. And in order that the Gentiles. Might glorify God also.
- For his mercy. As it's written. Rejoice. Oh Gentiles. With his people. But you see. It all goes back. To Moses gospel song. And the great reversal.
- You see. That God promises here. Will divide. Not. Not notice. Between Jew and Gentile. But between those. Who are shown to be. The real. Enemies of God.
- [45 : 29] And his people. And those who are. Shown to be. The true people. Of faith. The true children. The true servants. That he will vindicate. Who are they? Well it's not those. Who think they're something. It's not the proud. It's not those. Who are full of their own power. Look at verse 36. It's those who know. Their power is gone. Verse 38.
- It's those who see. The emptiness. And the powerlessness. Of everything. That they've trusted into. In up to now. Verse 39. It's those who know. That there is. Only one God.
- Who can deliver. From weakness. Into healing and health. Who can deliver. From death. Into life. And it's those who. Therefore throw down. Their weapons.
- Of opposition. To him. And say to that God. Let us become. Your servants. Your children. Bowing down to him. As all heaven does. For he avenges.
- [46 : 24] The blood of his children. His servants. But he does take vengeance. On his adversaries. And in the end. It's all about. Whether you are.
- On the side. Of the servants of God. Part of his true family. Seeking refuge. In him alone. The rock. And that does lead.
- To rejoicing. To great vindication. To salvation. Or. As he says. So clearly. If you cling. To falsehood. If you determine. To be an enemy. Hating him. Then it can lead only. To the response. Of God's judgment.
- And vengeance. So you see. Moses gospel song. Leads doesn't it. To the same place. As all his gospel preaching. I'm setting before you. Today. Life and death. Blessing and curse.
- [47 : 18] Jesus. So the last thing. He says. In these final words. In the last paragraph. Is you must respond. You must respond. To God's word.
- Of witness. You must take it to heart. You and your children. Don't disregard it. Do it. Don't just be hearers. Deceiving yourself. Be doers. Of this word. Make it real.
- In your life. It's no empty word. Says Moses. It is your very life. By this word. You will live. In the place of God's blessing.
- Take. Hold. Of his commandment. Of life. Moses gospel. Is just. The whole bible's gospel. It's Jesus gospel. Jesus said. Moses wrote about me. If you don't believe his words. You'll never. Believe my words. And in fact. In the Lord Jesus. Own the last words. Of public ministry.
- [48 : 11] In John chapter 12. He says. Virtually the same thing. Hear my words. And do them. Make it your own. The one greater than Moses. Came at last. To sing that same gospel song.
- To the whole world. The father has given me. A commandment. What to say. And what to speak. And his commandment. Is. Eternal life. Says the Lord Jesus. It's no empty word.

It is your life. If you respond. And make it your own. But Jesus says. Just the same as Moses. If you reject it.

If you reject me. The very word. That I have spoken. Will judge you. On the last day. I will take vengeance.

On my adversaries. I will. Repay those who persist. In. Hating me. And Moses is saying. And Jesus is saying.

[49 : 09] Don't let that be you. Not ever. Take to heart. All these words. That I'm warning you. With today. You need to keep singing.

This gospel song. Always. Every day of your life. Remembering. Remembering. God's great. Goodness and grace. His extraordinary. Overtures of tenderness. And strength. And recognizing.

The appalling. Reality. Of our ongoing. Rebellion. And sinfulness. And reflecting. On the judgment. That rightly. Comes to God's enemies. And rightly. Ought to come.

To every one of us. In this room. But rejoicing. With reverence. And awe. At the great reversal. That brings us. Not vengeance.

But vindication. In his great mercy. To us. In the Lord Jesus Christ. But we must respond. You must respond.

[50 : 05] Today. And every day. Always. To the word of life. That is our life. In the Lord Jesus Christ.

So friends. Let's keep singing. This gospel song. To the Lord. And to one another. And to all the world. Let's pray. For the Lord.

Will vindicate his people. And have compassion. On his servants. When he sees. Their power. Is gone. Oh Lord. Our God.

We thank you. That. It was indeed. In our weakness. When we were still. Sinners. When we were indeed. Still enemies. That. You reconciled us.

To yourself. By the death. By the death of your son. And so. We rejoice. In you. We rejoice. In the hope. Of glory to come. And so.

[51 : 01] Help us. We pray. To keep on. Rejoicing. In your grace. And mercy. And keep on. To your call. To your call. Of grace. Every day. Of our lives.

For the sake. Of your great love. For us. And to the praise. Of your. Glorious grace. For we ask it. In Jesus name.

Amen. Listen. ■■■ws.