

Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done. (v.1)

We have many songs that are only sung at certain times of the year – ‘Angels from the Realms of Glory’ and the like at Christmas; ‘Low in the Grave He Lay’ at Easter; ‘We Plough the Fields and Scatter’ at harvest. And they are great hymns of praise to God. We had a minister once who liked to sing the songs at various points of the year. It would be the middle of summer and we’d be singing ‘Hark the Herald Angels Sing’ or the middle of February and we’d launch into ‘We Plough the Fields and Scatter’. And we would sit and wonder what was going on. As I thought on it though, it reminded me that giving thanks to God for His goodness and provision is to be a continuing celebration for His people.

For a special occasion in the life of the people of Israel, the bringing of the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 16), David penned a song to guide his people in praising God on that day. ‘*Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of his wonderful acts.*’ (Psalm 105:1-2). The song endured though and made it into the nation’s songbook. The beginning of Psalm 105 is that song from 1 Chronicles. A reminder that we can sing praise to God all year round. A reminder that we can give thanks to God for his goodness and provision all year round. A reminder to regularly remember all that God has done in our lives.

Two centuries ago, Matthias Claudius wrote:

We thank Thee then, O Father, for all things bright and good;

The seedtime and the harvest, our life, our health, our food;

No gifts have we to offer, for all Thy love imparts

But that which Thou desirest, our humble, thankful hearts.

All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above;

Then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord for all His love.

We have so much to be thankful for every day. God continually provides for all our needs. Let’s keep praising him.

Pray: thanking God for all he has done.

Reflect: what good gifts have I received from God this week?

*But they soon forgot what he had done and did not wait for his counsel.
(v.13)*

We have all heard of the quick fix prayer. Indeed many of us have probably prayed like that in our lives. It's that moment when we are at our wit's end and don't know where to turn and what to do so we turn to God. Almost like the last resort. Worse than that we bargain with God in that moment. If you will but help me here I promise I'll be in church on Sunday. And our prayer is answered and so we go to church on Sunday...but it doesn't last and after a few weeks we forget what God has done in answering our prayer and we are never seen again in church.

The story is told of a young rich girl, accustomed to servants, who was afraid to climb a dark stairway alone. Her mother suggested that she overcome her fear by asking Jesus to go with her up the stairs. When the child reached the top, she was overheard saying, "Thank You, Jesus. You may go now."

We may smile at the story but Psalm 106 contains a serious warning against dismissing God from our lives - as if that were possible. The children of Israel '*gave no thought to your miracles*' (v.7) yet God saved them. He helped them cross the Red Sea as they escaped the clutches of Pharaoh. '*But they soon forgot what he had done and did not wait for his counsel.*'

Let us not make the same mistake in life. The stories of Scripture are recorded for us so we learn from the mistakes of our forefathers and follow God wholeheartedly. May we ask for God's help and seek his counsel always. Like the little rich girl, ask God to accompany you through life's dark passageways. But instead of dismissing Him when your special needs are met, cling to Him as if your life depended on it. It does!

Pray: asking God for his counsel in an area of life you are struggling with just now.

Reflect: do I turn to God in my need but then forget him when my prayers have been answered?

Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men. (v.21)

The sign outside Dave James' shop in Seattle, Washington, says more about getting your life repaired than it does about fixing your vacuum cleaner, but Dave is in business to do both. The top line of the sign is always the same: *Free Bibles Inside*. The second line changes and features thoughts such as: *Surrender Your Heart for a Brand-New Start*.

Over the past decade, Mr. James has repaired thousands of vacuum cleaners and given away thousands of Bibles to his customers. It's his way of saying thanks to the Lord for saving him from destruction. As a successful businessman, Dave James had slipped into a life of drug addiction. "If God hadn't taken cocaine away from me," he says, "I'd be dead." The Lord helped him get clean and find a new beginning.

We have all been on the receiving end of God's unfailing love. We have all been saved from a life of sin. Now our testimony may or may not be as dramatic as Dave James' but the end result is the same – God has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and placed us in the kingdom of his son; God has saved us from our sin and is preparing us for spending eternity with him. We have so much to be thankful for. Let us give thanks to God for his unfailing love.

And since we have so much to be thankful for, we ought to want to share that good news with others. There are many in this world heading for an eternity without God – they have not been rescued. Our job is not to rescue them – that's God's job; our role is to point them to the one who can save them.

Perhaps we need to take a leaf out of Dave James' book and start sharing our faith more often with others. '*Let the redeemed of the LORD say this...*' (v.2)

Pray: giving thanks to God for saving you.

Reflect: do I tell others about the saving work of Jesus?

Give us aid against the enemy for the help of man is worthless. (v.12)

This is the age of “How to” books. You can find “How to” books for almost anything – “How to bake” “How to get rich” “How to win friends and influence people” “How to be”. In fact a quick online search on one seller of books came up with 151,263 books with “How to” in the title. I find that incredible.

But what happens when you can’t find the “How To” you need most? What do you do when you want to know “How to get your children to live right”, or “How to make your spouse love you and respect you”, or “How to survive the death of a loved one”, but you simply cannot find an answer?

When the “How To” books of life don’t bring you what you are so desperately seeking, here’s how to make it when “How To’s” don’t work. Turn to life’s instruction manual; turn to the Bible. All we need to know for living life on this earth is contained within the pages of this book. That’s why God gave it to us – so we would know what to do. Now you can easily come up to me and say but it doesn’t tell me how to do this and I will have to agree that the exact question you are asking is not addressed. But the principles to answer every question are there - all written down. *‘All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness so that the man of God is thoroughly equipped for every good work.’* (2 Timothy 3:16).

The Psalmist knew that the ways of man were of no use to him, that’s why in verse 12 he calls for God’s help. Forget the “How to” books for living life and turn to God’s Word. Open up and read it so that you may be thoroughly equipped for living life.

Pray: giving thanks to God for His Word.

Reflect: do I listen to others for advice or do I first turn to God’s Word?

For he never thought of doing a kindness, but hounded to death the poor and the needy and the broken-hearted. (v.16)

A Detroit newspaper reported that a patient in a local hospital was shot and killed as he lay in his bed recovering from a previous gunshot wound. The victim had been listed in fair condition prior to the shooting and was looking forward to going home. Hospital patients and employees were stunned. A spokesperson said that nothing like this had happened in the 50 years of the hospital's existence.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could say the same for our churches? Wouldn't it be encouraging if we were able to say that in 50 years of meeting together for worship, fellowship, and spiritual healing, we had not had a single instance of a wounded member being cut down by the unkindness of a fellow Christian?

Many among us have experienced the pain that David expressed in Psalm 109. When he was hurt and vulnerable, insensitive people took advantage of him. It appears that they were accusing him, undermining his position and causing him much grief. Certainly, if he had sinned, he needed their loving correction. What he didn't need was their scorn, gossip, and selfish neglect.

The encouragement for us is to look out for one another and to care for one another and to love one another. We are called to build each other up and to spur one another on toward love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24)

And if you are on the receiving end of that hurt and pain what should you do? Well David didn't use his position to have his accuser suffer. He turned to God in prayer and asked for God to intercede and to make it right. The next time someone falsely accuses you or slanders you or ignores you, turn the matter over to God in prayer – and let him take care of it for you.

Pray: asking God to help you love and care for one another.

Reflect: how can I practically show my love for someone this week?

The LORD says to my LORD: 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.' (v.1)

Little Bobby was spending the weekend with his grandmother after a particularly trying week in nursery. His grandmother decided to take him to the park on Saturday morning. It had been snowing all night and everything was beautiful. His grandmother remarked, "Doesn't it look like an artist painted this scenery? Did you know God painted this just for you?" Bobby said, "Yes, God did it and He did it left handed." This confused his grandmother a bit, and she asked him "What makes you say God did this with His left hand?" "Well," said Bobby, "we learned at Sunday School last week that Jesus sits on God's right hand!"

Jesus doesn't sit on God's right hand but he does sit at God's right hand as verse 1 tells us. This verse is the most used and alluded to verse from a Psalm used in the New Testament. Jesus used verse 1 to prove his deity and silence the Pharisees in Matthew 22:41-46 and also to answer the high priest during his trial in Matthew 26:64.

This psalm presents three pictures of Jesus – as king, priest and conqueror. To sit at a ruler's right hand was a great honour (1 Kings 2:19; Matthew 20:21). When Jesus ascended to heaven the Father honoured him by placing him at his own right hand. Jesus is far above all others (Philippians 2:9-11). He is also our priest. Nowhere in the Old Testament do we find a priest on a throne, but Jesus in His majesty is both our King and our Priest. As our King, He tells us what to do. As our Priest, He gives us the strength to do it. And of course he is conqueror and as the psalm concludes we are given a picture of Jesus returning as the conquering king to establish his throne forever.

Let's praise Him for who He is – king, priest and conqueror.

Pray: praising God for Jesus our king and priest.

Reflect: on what it means for Jesus to be our priest and to sit at the Father's right hand interceding for us.

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise. (v.10)

We live in a world with a great deal of knowledge but not a great deal of wisdom. People spend years studying and yet they are no wiser than they were before they started. Yes they have the knowledge but they are not wise enough to know how to use it. So-called smart people do stupid things. David tells us the secret of wisdom and understanding in Psalm 111. *'The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise.'* (v.10). Here we have three secrets of wisdom, and a person doesn't have to go through a university to learn them. And it's all to do with knowing, loving and staying close to God.

Fear God. *'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.'* This is not the fear of a slave before an angry master. This is the reverence and respect of a loving child for a loving Father - showing respect for God, His Word, His presence and His will for our lives.

Obey Him. *'all who follow his precepts have good understanding.'* The Word of God is given to us not just to read and study but to obey. We are to be doers of the Word, not just auditors who sit in class and take notes. When we obey God, we begin to understand what He is doing. Obedience is the organ of spiritual understanding.

Praise Him. *'To him belongs eternal praise.'* Praise takes the selfishness out of our lives. It takes us away from idolatry, from living on substitutes. It turns our minds full to God whose deeds are *'glorious and majestic'* (v.3)

The more we fear Him, the more we obey Him. The more we obey Him, the more we praise Him. Wise people realise how little they know and how much they need the great wisdom of God.

Pray: asking God to help you fear, obey and praise Him.

Reflect: do I think I know it all or am I turning to God asking him to give me wisdom?

Even in darkness light dawns for the upright, for the gracious and compassionate and righteous man. (v.4)

A missionary in Peru went to visit a group of believers one evening. She knew that the house where they were meeting was located on a cliff and the path would be treacherous. She took a taxi as far as it could go, and then she began the hazardous ascent to the house on foot. The night was dark and the way was very difficult. As she rounded a bend, she suddenly came upon several believers carrying bright lanterns. They had come out to light the way. Her fears were relieved, and she ascended the path easily.

In a similar way, God lights our path. He does that through His Word – both the written Word and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. In Psalm 119:105 we read ‘*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.*’ God’s Word is there to guide us through life. It is the instruction manual if you like. God also sent us His son who said in John 8:12 ‘*I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.*’ Jesus came to shine light into darkness and to breathe life into deadness. He came to show us the way back to the Father.

The Psalmist knew that the one who feared the Lord and delighted in his commands would be blessed. He knew that light would shine upon them and help them see their way through life. This light continues to comfort us through times of sorrow. In the midst of sadness, trouble, illness, or disappointment, the Lord brightens the way and encourages His children by giving hope.

This may come through a word of encouragement from a fellow believer. It may be the illumination of God’s Word by the ministry of the Holy Spirit. It may be calm reassurance in response to heartfelt prayer. Or it may be the miraculous supply of a specific need. Whatever the case, God sends light when we are engulfed in darkness. Jesus gives light in the darkest night! Keep trusting him.

Pray: thanking God for sending us the light of the world.

Reflect: do I fear God and delight in his Word?

Let the name of the Lord be praised, both now and evermore. (v.2)

This Psalm begins by reminding us of one of our main responsibilities in life – to praise God. God made us and sustains us. We were created to bring praise to God. The Shorter Westminster catechism reminds us that the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. The psalmist also tells us to praise God all day long, ‘*from the rising of the sun to the place where it sets*’ (v. 3). Praise Him when you have to get up in the morning. Praise Him when you’re tired at the end of the day. Praise Him during the day for the good things that happen and for the difficult things. Give Him thanks for seeing you through every situation.

We are given three wonderful reasons for praising God in this psalm. Firstly God’s name is the greatest. Three times in the first three verses we are told to praise the name of the Lord. That’s how great the name of the Lord is. This word ‘name’ refers to the character of God and the revelation of who He is and what He does. God has a “good name” and that name should be magnified among those who have never trusted him so that they might hear of his mighty name and deeds.

We also learn in verses 4-6 that God’s throne is the highest which should draw us to praise as well. He is exalted over all and sits enthroned on high. And yet he is not so far detached from us that he will not stoop down to look upon us. For the believer God’s throne is not only a throne of glory and authority but it is also a throne of grace – a topic the psalmist picks up in the last three verses where he reminds us that God’s love is the kindest.

God cares for the poor and needy. He welcomes the outcast and the sinner. And remember the greatest demonstration of this is that Jesus Christ died on the cross to save a sinner like you. We have many reasons to praise God...these are just three to get you started. *Let the name of the Lord be praised, both now and evermore.*

Pray: praising God for his great name, his highest throne and his loving kindness.

Reflect: do I praise God throughout the day?

Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob. (v.7)

These current psalms (113-118) are commonly referred to as the Egyptian Hallel psalms – hallel meaning “praise” in Hebrew. These were sung at Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles, the main feasts of the Jews. They took on greatest significance at Passover which celebrated the Jews’ deliverance from Egypt. Psalm 113-114 would be sung before the meal, and then Psalm 115-118 afterwards.

Psalm 113 is really a call to worship and praise God. Psalm 114 details the main reasons for the praise from Israel’s history. Here we see how the creator controls his creation. The One who created the mighty oceans does with them what He wishes. Psalm 114 refers to the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and the parting of the Red Sea (Exodus 14:13-31) to describe God’s great power. The psalmist wrote, ‘*The sea looked and fled*’ (v.3). Then he asked ‘*Why was it, O sea, that you fled?*’ (v.5). The answer is implied: The seas were obeying the command of God. The psalmist also draws Israel’s attention back to the way the waters of the Jordan were turned back for the people to cross over into the Promised Land.

There is also reference to the earthquake and trembling of the mountain at Sinai as Moses prepared to ascend the hill of the Lord to receive the Ten Commandments (Exodus 19). And the psalm finishes with reference to their experience in the wilderness, when they were thirsty and God turned the rock into a pool of water.

All of this recorded down for the Israelites to remember the power of God. What he has done in the past he can do in the present and the future. Whatever the obstacles that lay before the Israelites, God overcame for them – he either removed the obstacle or overcame it, and he turned the obstacle into a blessing for the people. God still works like that today. Trust God with your obstacles. He can help you in the hopeless places, the high places and the hard places.

Pray: asking God for help with the obstacle you face just now.

Reflect: do I trust God with the obstacles in my life?

But their idols are silver and gold, made by the hands of men. (v.4)

A young woman teacher with obvious liberal tendencies explains to her class of small children that she is an atheist. She asks her class if they are atheists too. Not really knowing what atheism is but wanting to be like their teacher, their hands explode into the air like fleshy fireworks. There is, however, one exception. A beautiful girl named Lucy has not gone along with the crowd. The teacher asks her why she has decided to be different. "Because I'm not an atheist." Then, asks the teacher, what are you? "I'm a Christian." The teacher is a little perturbed now, her face slightly red. She asks Lucy why she is a Christian. "Well, I was brought up knowing and loving Jesus. My mum is a Christian, and my dad is a Christian, so I am a Christian." The teacher is now angry. "That's no reason," she says loudly. "What if your mum was a moron, and your dad was a moron. What would you be then?" A pause, and a smile.... "Then," says Lucy, "I'd be an atheist."

When people refuse the truth of God, they become foolish and do and believe foolish things. Psalm 115 begins with the wonderful refrain '*Not to us, O Lord, not to us but to your name be the glory because of your love and faithfulness.*' The Psalmist knows who is worthy of praise. He knows that his God is able to do all things. He and his people have experienced it.

He recognises though that many people are foolish. They ignore God and make for themselves idols out of silver and gold. He says that these idols cannot speak or see or hear. God hears our prayers, he sees what is happening in our lives, and he speaks to us through his Word and by His Spirit.

How foolish we would be if we put our trust in our idols: our money, our possessions, our power, our influence, our place in the world. Put your trust in God. '*Not to us, O Lord, not to us but to your name be the glory because of your love and faithfulness.*'

Pray: giving God the praise and glory for his love and faithfulness to you.

Reflect: do I make idols of my job, possessions and position?

Be at rest once more, O my soul, for the LORD has been good to you. (v.7)

Phillips Brooks, former minister of Boston's Trinity Episcopal Church, is perhaps best known as the author of "O Little Town of Bethlehem." He was a very busy pastor, yet he always seemed relaxed and unburdened, willing to take time for anyone in need. Shortly before Brooks died, a young friend wrote to him and asked the secret of his strength and serenity. In a heartfelt response, Brooks credited his still-growing relationship with Christ.

He wrote, "The more I have thought it over, the more sure it has seemed to me that these last years have had a peace and fullness which there did not used to be. It is a deeper knowledge and truer love of Christ...I cannot tell you how personal this grows to me. He is here. He knows me and I know Him. It is the most real thing in the world. And every day makes it more real. And one wonders with delight what it will grow to as the years go on."

The psalmist too knew something of that deep relationship with the LORD. He knew what it was to be still and at peace. No matter what was going on he knew the LORD was good and would look after him and care for him. He is gracious, righteous, and compassionate. He protects, saves, and delivers those who look to Him in "simplehearted" faith. What are the results of His actions in our lives? We can walk righteously, we can rejoice in Him, and our souls can rest in untroubled confidence in His love and power. We need not be afraid of anything or anybody, for our Father is watching out for us! Think of an impenetrable shield, a sheep lying down in green pastures, and the peace of Christ standing guard over our hearts (Psalm 3:3-5; 23:2; Philippians 4:7). No wonder David exclaimed, 'My soul finds rest in God alone' (Psalm 62:1).

We too can have that peace that passes all understanding when we cultivate a relationship with God. Spend time in His presence, meditate on His Word, and speak and listen in prayer.

Pray: thanking God for all his goodness to you.

Reflect: how can I have that peace in my life?

For great is his love toward us, and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever. Praise the LORD. (v.2)

Some children were asked in class one day what they thought were the present Seven Wonders of the World. Though there were some disagreements, the following received the most votes: 1. Egypt's Great Pyramids, 2. Taj Mahal, 3. Grand Canyon, 4. Panama Canal, 5. Empire State Building, 6. St. Peter's Basilica, 7. China's Great Wall.

While gathering the votes, the teacher noted that one student had not finished her paper yet. So she asked the girl if she was having trouble with her list. The girl replied, "Yes, a little. I couldn't quite make up my mind because there were so many."

The teacher said, "Well, tell us what you have, and maybe we can help." The girl hesitated, then read, "I think the 'Seven Wonders of the World' are: 1. To See, 2. To Hear, 3. To Touch, 4. To Taste, 5. To Feel, 6. To Laugh, 7. And to Love." The room was so quiet you could have heard a pin drop. The things we overlook as simple and ordinary and that we take for granted are truly wondrous!

Psalm 117 is the shortest Psalm. It may be short but it is so deep. In it the Psalmist calls for all people and nations to praise God and then he tells them why – his great love toward them and his faithfulness that endures for ever. We have so many things to give God thanks for. And yet sometimes we forget don't we. When I sit in a group and ask people to share a prayer of thanks they somehow struggle to think of something sometimes. And yet as the little girl reminds us in the story there are things we take for granted that we ought to thank God for – most of us have our five senses to one degree or another.

Let's take time to thank and praise God today for his great love and faithfulness toward us.

Pray: thanking God for his great love toward us.

Reflect: make a list of things to be thankful for and then thank God.

This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. (v.24)

A story is told about a man who sold bagels for 50 cents each at a street corner food stand. A jogger ran past and threw a couple of quarters into the bucket but didn't take a bagel. He did the same thing every day for months. One day, as the jogger was passing by, the man stopped him. The jogger asked, "You probably want to know why I always put money in but never take a bagel, don't you?" "No," said the man. "I just wanted to tell you that the bagels have gone up to 60 cents."

Too often, as believers, we treat God with that same kind of attitude. Not only are we ungrateful for what He's given us - but we want more. Somehow we feel that God owes us good health, a comfortable life, material blessings. Of course, God doesn't owe us anything, yet He gives us everything.

G.K. Chesterton wrote, "Here dies another day, during which I have had eyes, ears, hands, and the great world round me. And with tomorrow begins another. Why am I allowed two?" The psalmist said, '*This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.*' Each day is a precious gift from God and we ought to rejoice in it and be glad.

The Psalmist knew what it was to suffer and to face hardship and difficulty but he also knew God's presence and power in his life. He didn't expect more from God and was grateful for what God had given him. He begins Psalm 118 by saying give thanks to God for his love endures forever. The Lord's love for us is a great place to start in thanksgiving. He goes on to recall how the Lord answered prayer, how the Lord helped him, how the Lord was his strength and salvation.

It would do us well to remember God's goodness. Each day, whether good or bad, is one more gift from our God. Our grateful response should be to live to please Him.

Pray: thanking God for this new day.

Reflect: do I rejoice in every new day as a gift from God?

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. (v.105)

The late Bible teacher, H.A. Ironside, told of visiting a godly Irishman, Andrew Frazer, who had come to California to recover from tuberculosis. The old man could barely speak because his lungs were almost gone. But he opened his worn Bible and, until his strength was gone, he simply, sweetly opened up truth after truth in a way that Ironside had never heard before. Before he knew it, Ironside had tears running down his cheeks. He asked Frazer, “Where did you get all these things? Could you tell me where I could find a book that would open them up to me? Did you learn these things in some seminary or college?”

Frazer answered, “My dear young man, I learned these things on my knees on the mud floor of a little sod cottage in the north of Ireland. There with my Bible open before me, I used to kneel for hours at a time, and ask the Spirit of God to reveal Christ to my soul and to open the Word to my heart. He taught me more on my knees on that mud floor than I ever could have learned in all the seminaries or colleges in the world.”

Psalm 119 is the longest psalm and the longest chapter in the bible. It is an acrostic psalm which means it uses each of the 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet. Each letter covers 8 verses in the psalm. Some believe they used this to teach the alphabet. More importantly the teaching of Psalm 119 as a whole reminds us of the importance of reading, applying and obeying God’s Word. How do you walk blameless though life – by living according to the law of the Lord (v.1). How do you keep your way pure – by living according to the word of God (v.9). How do you keep from sinning – by hiding God’s Word in your heart (v.11).

God’s word is our instruction manual for living life here on earth. The Psalmist knew God’s Word was a lamp for his feet and a light for his path. Let us continually be captivated by it and encouraged by it. Let us love it, read it, study it, meditate on it, memorise it, obey it, trust it and declare it.

Pray: thanking God for His Word.

Reflect: do I regularly read and learn and obey God’s Word?

Save me, O LORD, from lying lips and from deceitful tongues. (v.2)

Tonto says to his son, “Son, you push-um outhouse off-um cliff?” The kid says, “No, me no push-um outhouse off-um cliff.” Tonto says, “Son, me tell-um you story of Great White Father, George Washington. Many moons ago, when Great White Father was young boy, him chop-um down cherry tree. Him father ask-um, ‘Georgie, you chop-um down cherry tree?’ George say-um, ‘Cannot tell lie, Father. Me chop-um down cherry tree.’ Him father say, ‘Georgie bad, but Georgie honest, so you no get-um punishment.’ Now I ask-um you again...you push-um outhouse off-um cliff?” The kid says, “Yes, Father, me push-um outhouse off-um cliff.” The Tonto grabs the kid and beats the tar out of him. The kid says, “Father, Great White Father tell truth and get-um off scott-free. I tell-um truth...why you beat-um tar out of me?” Tonto says, “George Washington’s father not in cherry tree when George chop-um down.”

Sometimes we get the idea that it’s safer not to tell the truth sometimes. Sometimes we prefer the “lying lips”. We often refer to a ‘little white lie’ and yet a lie is a lie. There are many ways of telling a lie. Some people who pride themselves on never speaking a falsehood would be amazed if they would begin to recount the number of lies they sing each Sunday in church. What do I mean? Well just think of some of the words of the songs we sing. ‘King of heaven I will answer the call’ and yet we leave church and don’t share our faith with anyone. ‘I have decided to follow Jesus’ yet it only lasts until we head out the church door and we forget all about living Jesus’ way.

The psalmist cries out that he be saved from lying lips and he does this because people were lying about him and slandering his name. Yet there is an important lesson in there for us and how we treat lies in our own lives. We ought to be crying out to God to save us from telling lies in our daily walk. Let us tell the truth. Let’s not accept ‘little white lies’.

Pray: asking God to save us from lying lips and deceitful tongues – especially our own.

Reflect: do I feel its ok to tell a ‘little white lie’?

Indeed he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. (v.4)

A number of years ago Captain D. commanded a vessel sailing from Liverpool to New York, and on one voyage he had all his family with him on board the ship. One night, when all were quietly asleep, there arose a sudden squall of wind, which came sweeping over the waters until it struck the vessel, and instantly threw her on her side, tumbling and crashing everything that was moveable, and awakening the passengers to a consciousness that they were in imminent peril. Everyone on board was alarmed and uneasy, and some sprang from their berths and began to dress, that they might be ready for the worst. Captain D. had a little girl on board, just eight years old, who, of course, awoke with the rest. "What's the matter?" said the frightened child. They told her a squall had struck the ship. "Is father on deck?" said she. "Yes; father's on deck." The little thing dropped herself on her pillow again without a fear, and in a few moments was sleeping sweetly in spite of winds or waves.

The little girl felt safe because her dad was awake and taking care of the situation. Sometimes we get problems or crises that happen in our lives and we can have a hard time sleeping because of all the fear and anxiety. Who's going to take care of this problem? God is. And He's always on duty. He never sleeps, and that means that you can find peace and sleep.

The psalmist knew this too which is why he wrote Psalm 121. As he lifted up his eyes from his current situation and predicament he recalled that his help comes from the Lord. The Lord it is who made the heavens and the earth so he knows how life works. The Lord it is who made us, so he knows how we function too and what we need when we need it. He also recognised that God watches over him all the time – he never sleeps. And he knew that the Lord would not let any harm come upon him that he could not handle. Next time you face a hard situation look up to the hills and remember where your help comes from.

Pray: thanking God for always watching over you.

Reflect: do I lift my eyes and see God as my helper or do I strive in my own weakness?

I rejoiced with those who said to me “Let us go to the house of the LORD.” (v.1)

The Nashville Banner reported that 81-year-old Ella Craig had perfect attendance in Sunday school for 20 years. That’s 1,040 Sundays! The article then raised these questions: Doesn’t Mrs. Craig ever have company on Sunday to keep her away from church? Doesn’t she ever have headaches, colds, nervous spells, or tired feelings? Doesn’t she ever take a weekend trip? Doesn’t she ever sleep late on Sunday morning? Doesn’t it ever rain or snow on Sunday morning? Doesn’t she ever get her feelings hurt by someone in the church?

The article concluded by asking, “What’s the matter with Mrs. Craig?” The answer? Nothing at all. But if we are not in church on Sunday when we can be, there is something wrong with us! We need to take a lesson from Mrs. Craig.

The Psalmist delighted in being in the Lord’s house. In Psalm 122, the psalmist rejoiced to be in Jerusalem and at the Temple, visible reminders of God’s presence and covenant. The streets were crowded with people who felt the same way. Psalms 120-136 are often referred to as the Great Hallel and the first fifteen of those are all titled ‘Songs of Ascent’. These are the songs the Jewish pilgrims would sing as they made their way up to Jerusalem on three prescribed annual festivals. For the Jew living outside Jerusalem attendance at the temple was not an every week occurrence. So the times when they went were special times. They loved to be there.

We have the privilege of being able to attend church every week. Church attendance is a privilege. We recognise that some people cannot attend because of physical problems or other legitimate reasons. But those who can be in church should be. The singing, prayers, fellowship, and teaching of God’s Word are just what we need for the week ahead. This week may our cry be that of the Psalmist here *‘I rejoiced with those who said to me “Let us go to the house of the LORD.”’*

Pray: rejoicing that we can worship together God each Sunday in church.

Reflect: do I treat it a joy to be in church each Sunday?

I lift up my eyes to you, to you whose throne is in heaven. (v.1)

So often in life we end up gloomy and down because of the circumstances of life that have come upon us. We keep looking at the problems we face and we are miserable. This psalm encourages us that when our outlook is disturbing to try the up look. The psalmist was feeling down because of the constant persecution of the people of Israel. They were being treated with scorn and contempt. So what does he do? He lifts his eyes up to heaven and sees the Lord seated on his throne. What should we do when find ourselves among the slandered, ridiculed and persecuted? Where do we turn for help? Well the psalm gives us three answers.

We look by faith to God's throne. To look towards God means to trust him and turn our problems over to him by faith. It means to acknowledge His sovereignty. We lift our eyes because He is higher than we are. It is to remember that he is the creator and sustainer of this world. He knows what is going on and he knows what lies ahead.

As well as that we look by faith for God's hand. In eastern countries masters of ten commanded their servants by means of hand signals, so the servants kept their eyes on the master's hand. This is what gave them direction for their work. But the master's hand was also the source of their provision, what they needed for their daily sustenance. And the master's hand protected them in times of danger. So it is with us today. Our direction, provision and protection all come from the master's hand and his hand never fails. That is why the psalmist looks by faith to God's hand to help him in his time of need.

And finally we look for God's mercy and grace. God's chosen people were being maligned, ridiculed and opposed but God gave them the grace they needed to keep going. The Psalmist cried out for God's mercy. May we remember that there is grace available at the throne of grace from the God of all grace, so lift your eyes of faith to him.

Pray: asking God for his grace and mercy in your life.

Reflect: do I look gloomily outwards or do I lift my eyes by faith upwards?

If the LORD had not been on our side... (v.1)

Psalm 124 is a look back at the goodness of the Lord in delivering and protecting His people. Angry pagan leaders were ready to swallow Israel alive, but the Lord intervened to rescue His chosen ones. Indeed the psalmist describes it as being swallowed up, engulfed, swept over and swept away if it had not been for the Lord's rescue. Twice the grateful psalmist proclaimed, '*If the LORD had not been on our side...*' (v.1-2).

And yet do we always recognise the Lord's hand in our lives; do we always remember what he has done? I'm sure you will recall the poem 'Footprints in the sand'. In the poem the man looks back at his life and as the scenes pass through he saw two sets of footprints – one belonging to him and the other to the Lord. At many points in his life, particularly tough times, he sees only one set. He gets all annoyed and asks the Lord why he was left alone. And to this the Lord replies "The times when you have seen only one set of footprints, is when I carried you."

The psalmist looks back and sees God's presence with him and protection of him. I'm sure as you look at your life you see the same. Times when you were particularly tempted and the Lord gave you the strength to say no. Times when you have been in a dark valley struggling with emotional pain, ill health, hopelessness and the Lord has walked with you and lifted you through these. Times when you could have been in a car accident but for some interruption earlier in the journey.

'If the LORD had not been on our side...' I've said it many times. I'm quite sure you have too. When new afflictions, hardships, doubts, or temptations arise, let's remember the Lord's grace in the past and say with the psalmist, '*Our help is in the name of the Lord*' (v.8).

Pray: thanking God for being on your side in times past and asking him to continue walking with you now.

Reflect: look back and write down some of the times you have seen God's help in times past; now praise and thank him for being there with you.

As the mountains surround Jerusalem so the LORD surrounds his people both now and forevermore. (v.2)

The story is told of a monastery in Portugal perched high on a 3,000 foot cliff accessible only by a terrifying ride in a swaying basket. The basket is pulled with a single rope by several strong men, sweating under the strain. One American tourist who visited the site got nervous halfway up the cliff when he noticed that the rope was old and frayed. Hoping to relieve his fear he asked, "How often do you change the rope?" The monk in charge replied, "Whenever it breaks!"

Well, in this life many of the things people turn to for security feel like one of those old and fraying ropes - and they're just waiting for it to break. For those who trust in the Lord our security is different – it's strong and secure and lasts forever. Psalm 125 is a song about security. And it likens the Lord to the mountains.

How is God like a mountain? First, a mountain has stability. When the psalmist was a little boy, he saw the mountains surrounding Jerusalem. When he became a young man, those mountains were still there. When he grew older, the mountains were there, and the mountains are still there today. Likewise with God. He is stable and dependable. He doesn't change. God is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8).

Second, a mountain offers security. God surrounds and guards us. He is like Mount Zion to us. Verse 1 says, *'Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion.'* In other words, God can make you to be like a mountain also - stable and secure because He is your Refuge and Strength. Therefore, we should trust Him. Those who trust in the Lord have stability and security. They have all they ever will need. *'Do good, O Lord, to those who are good, and to those who are upright in heart.'* (v.4) Keep your trust in God who surrounds you both now and forevermore.

Pray: thanking God for surrounding you always.

Reflect: in what or who do I put my security?

He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him. (v.6)

As a recently retired man was sitting on his porch his Social Security cheque was delivered. He went to the mailbox to retrieve it and thought to himself, “Is this all my life is going to be from this time on? Just sitting on the porch waiting for my next Social Security cheque to arrive?” It was a discouraging thought.

So he took a legal pad and began to write down all the gifts - all the blessings - all the talents - everything that he had going for him. He listed them all - even the small things. For example, he included the fact that he was the only one in the world who knew his mother’s recipe for fried chicken in which she used eleven different herbs and spices.

He went down to the local restaurant and asked if he could get a job cooking their chicken. Very soon the chicken became the most popular item on the menu. He opened his own restaurant in Kentucky. Then he opened a string of restaurants and eventually sold the Kentucky Fried Chicken franchise to a national organisation for millions of dollars.

The man did not simply give up; he kept going and rejoiced greatly in what he then achieved. Psalm 126 is a reminder to keep going. God turns tears to joy, but it comes to those who don’t stop sowing seed. We need to be careful that we don’t stop sowing seed, even if we’re weeping. The children of Israel had been taken captive to Babylon and were now returning to their homeland. They longed for the Lord to restore their fortunes. And they got on with what they always did – they sowed the seed even with tears in their eyes. And the Lord blessed them as their seed grew and flourished.

We are called to keep going; to keep sowing the seed. What is the seed we have to sow? The gospel of Jesus Christ. Let’s get out there and sow the seed.

Pray: asking God for strength and courage to keep sowing the seed.

Reflect: do I give up when times are hard or do I keep sowing?

Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from him. (v.3)

Someone wrote recently, “If we died tomorrow, the company that we are working for could easily replace us in a matter of days. But the family left behind would feel the loss for the rest of their lives. Why then do we invest so much in our work and so little in our children’s lives?”

Why do we sometimes exhaust ourselves rising up early and going late to bed, *‘toiling for food to eat’* (v.2), busying ourselves to make our mark on this world, and overlooking the one investment that matters beyond everything else - our children?

Solomon declared, *‘Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from him’* - an invaluable legacy He has bequeathed us. *‘Like arrows in the hands of a warrior, are sons born in one’s youth’* (v.4) is his striking simile. Nothing is more worthy of our energy and time.

When I was younger I often worked long hours leaving home early in the morning and coming home later in the day, before rushing down tea and going out to some church activity or other. Fortunately Morag was at home to invest time in the children. I have learned how important it is to be there for my children so have made a point in ministry now to be at home (as often as is possible) at 4pm when the kids come in from school. If I’m working in the study I’ll stop for a short time to find out how their day was and help with homework if required. And we regularly spend time as a family at points during the week. Why? Because time spent with your children is time wisely invested.

Don’t get caught in the trap of thinking that we have to toil from dawn to dusk just to make a living. As the psalmist notes there is no need for anxious toil for the Lord takes care of us. Trust God and invest time in your children.

Pray: thanking God for the gift of children.

Reflect: do I invest time wisely in my children?

Blessed are all who fear the LORD, who walk in his ways. (v.1)

Newspaper columnist and minister George Crane tells about an irate woman who came to his office. She was determined to get a divorce, but told Crane that first she wanted to hurt her husband as much as he had hurt her. Crane advised her to go home and start acting like she really loved her husband - praising him for his good traits, being kind and courteous, going out of her way to please him. "After you've done that," Crane said, "then drop the divorce bomb. That will really hurt him."

The woman did this, and came back two months later. "Get a divorce? Never! I discovered I really do love him."

Obviously, not every troubled marriage can be healed with two months of attentive, sacrificial love. But who would deny that two months, or even two weeks, of loving care could make a real impact on an ailing marriage? Because marriage is such an intense, intimate relationship, anything done for the benefit of the marriage can bring a huge payoff.

Psalm 128 is an example of this principle. The premise of the psalm is that if we will fear God and obey Him by living according to His Word, we will enjoy God's blessing. The writer could have stopped at verse 1, and we would have a valuable piece of biblical insight. But the rest of the psalm contains "for instances," examples of the ways this blessing will be realised. The centre of the psalm, the pivot around which all of it turns, is the blessing of a marriage and home in which God is honoured and obeyed.

God made us and knows us. He knows how life should be lived. That's why he gave us the Ten Commandments amongst others – guidelines for living life the way it was meant to be lived. When we live God's way, we enjoy the blessings of life as he intended.

Pray: asking God to help you walk in his ways.

Reflect: do I honour and obey God in my home life?

They have greatly oppressed me from my youth, but they have not gained the victory over me. (v.2)

I don't what kind of films you watch but one of the series of films I watched as a boy growing up was Rocky. Rocky Balboa was an ordinary man trying to make his way in life but struggling by. He got the opportunity to fight for the world boxing title and against all the odds nearly won. The second film shows him taking the title and then the films that follow show some of the tough battles he had. The two things that catch my attention always are the ordinary man coming good and also the determination he had to keep going. Many times he was getting beaten to a pulp but he persevered until the end often winning the bout.

In a way, Israel is like Rocky. Israel, as a chosen nation, has been through great hardship and suffering through its long history. Some of her troubles were caused by their own disobedience to God, while some were a result of being victims to more powerful neighbouring nations. But they kept going, looking to God for help. Here in Psalm 129 we get a glimpse of that. The psalmist says '*They have greatly oppressed me from my youth, but they have not gained the victory over me.*' He has felt under pressure again and again. His enemies have pursued him and battled against him but God has seen him through.

The first half of the Psalm is his cry for deliverance, remembering always that the LORD was there for him and but him free, while the second half is his prayer for judgement on his enemies. He is honest with how he feels.

And that ought to be an encouragement to us. Be honest before God. Let him know how you feel and how you are struggling. The second encouragement is to keep going. We may be knocked down several times with the circumstances of life, but we must hang in there and stick to Jesus.

Pray: asking God to help you develop the gift of perseverance.

Reflect: do I hang in there and stick at it, or am I tempted to walk away and give up?

I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I put my hope. (v.5)

In 2001, Premier Christian radio station started a Web site at which visitors confess their sins (and it is still there today). First, people read Scriptures about what sin is, its consequences, and how to repent. Next, they type in their confession, or they may choose a pre-prepared confessional statement. Personal confessions are confidential and are completely erased from memory as soon as visitors proceed to the next step. At the end, there are more Bible readings, an opportunity for reflection, and a final prayer. The site has had millions of visitors since its launch. Still, one wonders why people choose to talk to a computer rather than to God. Clicking on a forward arrow seems to skip entirely the intensity of waiting for forgiveness that's seen in today's psalm.

Psalm 130 is a "song of ascents" - a worship song intended for use on pilgrimages to Jerusalem. It can be divided into four couplets. The first is a cry for God's mercy. The second conveys that though we stand justly condemned, we can rely upon His forgiveness and love. The third couplet describes an intense period of waiting for forgiveness, and the fourth admonishes all Israel to trust in God in this same way.

By "waiting," we don't imply that God is toying with our emotions. "Waiting" in this case means waiting with eagerness and hope - not wishful hope but sure hope. God will answer, His mercy and forgiveness will arrive, and the joy of fellowship will return. The psalmist is like a watchman waiting for a certain sunrise (Isaiah 52:8; Lamentations 3:25-26).

It is important for all of us to spend time daily confessing our sins to God. I don't think you need to use a web site - simply make time, find a quiet room and kneel before the Lord with whom there is forgiveness (v.4). *'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.'* (1 John 1:9)

Pray: confessing your sin before God.

Reflect: in what ways have I sinned against God today? Confess them to him now.

My heart is not proud, O LORD, my eyes are not haughty. (v.1)

Sammy Morris is a devoted Christian from Africa who came to America to go to school. Although his pathway to service for Christ was not easy, his difficulties never deterred him. Perhaps this was because he had learned genuine humility. One incident that showed this occurred when he arrived at Taylor University in Upland, Indiana. He was asked by the school's president what room he wanted. Sammy replied, "If there is a room nobody wants, give it to me." Later the president commented, "I turned away, for my eyes were full of tears. I was asking myself whether I was willing to take what nobody else wanted."

In Psalm 131 we see David displaying the same kind of attitude: the attitude of humility instead of impatient arrogance. He says he is not proud or haughty; he is not interested in being seen, heard, or noticed. Indeed he wants Israel not to look to him but to look to the Lord – to put their hope in the Lord. This is David's response to the accusation of treason made by Saul's men and he stated that he didn't consider himself so important nor think of himself so highly as to have '*haughty*' eyes.

Instead, David learned to be like a '*weaned child*' in the Lord's arms (v.2). Like a baby who is completely dependent on his parents, he waited on God for His protection while he was a fugitive under King Saul's pursuit. In his darkest hour, David realised his need and then advised his people: '*Put your hope in the Lord both now and forevermore.*' (v.3)

The path to humility is twofold. It involves knowing who we are - having a proper self-esteem rather than thinking too highly of self. But most important, it requires knowing who God is - holding Him in highest esteem and trusting Him for His best in His time. Keep trusting God and keep humbly pointing others to him.

Pray: asking God to keep you humble.

Reflect: do I think too highly of myself or do I have proper self-esteem?

Let us go to his dwelling place; let us worship at his footstool. (v.7)

When we looked at Psalm 84 I gave the illustration of the pastor not wanting to go to church. As bad as not wanting to go to church, is going with the wrong attitude and for the wrong reasons. Many people go to church because their parents did. They go to church because it has become a habit. They go to church to look good and fit in with their circle of friends. They go out of a sense of duty. If someone were to ask you why you went to church on Sunday, what would you tell them? We want to be careful about getting into spiritual “ruts”, doing things just out of habit and not from the heart.

Psalm 132 which is one of those songs of ascent was sung as the children of Israel made their way up to Jerusalem to worship in the temple. It is clear to see they are not going out of habit or duty. They want to go and worship God just as David their great king did. The beginning of the Psalm is a reminder that David longed to build a permanent place of worship for God; he wanted to build a temple. We are reminded how important this was for David as the psalmist reminds us David made an oath and vowed not to enter his own house or sleep until he found the right place. David had the right desire.

After remember David’s deep rooted desire for the house of the Lord, the people of Israel then sang of their own desire to be in the temple. They were making their way there and were singing as they went. They longed to be in God’s house – not out of duty or habit, but because they simply longed to be in God’s presence singing his praise.

Oh that we would have that same desire week by week, longing to be in God’s house with God’s people singing God’s praise.

Pray: thanking God for the opportunity Sunday by Sunday to gather with God’s people in God’s house.

Reflect: why do you go to church week by week?

How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity. (v.1)

During Sunday School a class was interrupted when a new student was brought in. The little boy had one arm missing, and the teacher was very nervous that one of the other children might comment on his handicap and embarrass him. As the class time came to a close, she asked the class to join her in their usual closing ceremony. "Let's make our churches," she said. "Here's the church and here's the steeple, open the doors and..." The awful truth of her own actions struck her. The very thing she had feared that the children would do, she had done.

As she stood there speechless, the little girl sitting next to the boy reached over with her left hand and placed it up to his right hand and said, "Here, let's make the church together."

What a wonderful picture of what Psalm 133 is all about. It begins '*How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity.*' It says it is good and pleasant. And how true that is. One of the comments new people or visitors make about Cornton is that it is a friendly welcoming place where everyone welcomes one another and appears to get on well together. That is sadly not true of every church. I have been in churches where you know by the coldness that there is a problem amongst people the moment you walk in. However when you walk into a place like Cornton you feel the unity and love people have the moment you walk in. It's almost like a lady wearing a strong nice fragrance of perfume who walks into a small room; before long everyone smells the beautiful smell and smiles.

Unity requires work though as it does not just happen. At the centre of our unity is Jesus – we unite around him. Unity also requires maturity, accepting our differences, patience, love and effort. Let's keep working at that in the church and be a shining example to the outside world. '*By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.*' (John 13:35)

Pray: thanking God for the unity of your church.

Reflect: how can I show my love for others in the church this week?

Praise the LORD, all you servants of the LORD who minister by night in the house of the LORD. (v.1)

I have never worked nightshift but Morag has. And it can be lonely during the night. And yet during the night she could listen to the radio and sing along, or listen to her own music and sing along to some Christian tunes as she went. We travelled through the night as we went on holiday last month – and the whole journey we had our music playing and we were able to sing along to praise songs we listened to.

If you've ever had to work the night shift or travel through the night, you will appreciate Psalm 134. God never slumbers or sleeps. Therefore, we can serve and praise Him any time of day. The psalmist says there were priests who prayed and praised God in His temple at night. There was a constant repetition of praise and prayer from the temple. This is a song that seems to be one that would be sung to the priests and Levites who had the duty of watching over the Temple at night.

Who is this Psalm addressed to? Servants of the LORD – I think we qualify. What are they commanded to do? They are commanded to bless the Lord – to give Him praise. When are they commanded to bless the Lord? When they are standing at night in the house of the Lord. We can praise the Lord day or night.

As they praise God they are encouraged to lift up their hands. Now some of us find this easier than others depending upon which church tradition we have grown up in. There are no rights or wrongs about lifting our hands. However it is worth recognising that lifting hands can signify praise to God, surrender to God and even a child reaching out for his or father. The important part here is that we are called to lift up our praise to God at all times.

Pray: praising God for who He is.

Reflect: do I sing praise to God day and night?

Praise the LORD for the LORD is good. (v.3)

Morag convinced me two years ago to get rid of my fairly big filofax diary that I carried everywhere and to get a new mobile phone that had a diary on it. It works great. One of the things my phone diary does that my paper diary never could is give me reminders. Whenever I place an appointment in my diary, it is automatically programmed to give me a reminder of the appointment thirty minutes before it is due.

Psalm 135 is a reminder for the people of Israel to praise God. Indeed it is a reminder of some of the main reasons for praising God. They are called to praise God for he is good (v.3). We sometimes take God's goodness for granted. He is good, and His goodness is unsearchable. God shows us His goodness in both material and spiritual blessings.

We praise God too for his grace (v.4). Israel was not a treasure before God chose her. After He chose her, she became precious. God also chose us. Jesus said, '*You did not choose me, but I chose you*' (John 15:16). God showed His grace by choosing us to be His children.

We can also praise God because he is great (v.5). The psalmist recognises God is greater than all other gods. Why? Because he is the one who made the world and everything in it. He is the one who sustains the world.

And we can praise God for his government (v.6). The psalmist then describes God's sovereignty in creation and in history. These are all tied together as the psalmist recalls the escape from Egypt and how the goodness and grace of God rescued them, how the greatness of God was seen in all the signs and wonders, and how the government of God ruled over all as the children of Israel were given their inheritance.

We shouldn't need a reminder to praise God and what to praise God for...but if we ever do opening our bibles to psalms like this one point us in the right direction.

Pray: praising God for his goodness, grace, greatness and government.

Reflect: do I need a reminder to praise God?