

# Exodus Chapter 13 v 17 - Chapter 14 v 4

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[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning, welcome. I don't think we've got any holidaymakers with us this weekend, but we do welcome you if you're visiting us in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

All of us, of course, have been shocked and saddened by what's happened in Paris on Friday night and the ongoing fallout from that. And let's just spend a moment very quietly thinking about those things, praying for those people, and then I'm going to pray as well for them, even at the outset of our time together.

O Lord, our God, as we come here this morning in safety and without fear, we do remember, O Lord, those who are so full of grief and sorrow in Paris and France at this time.

And we pray for those who are severely wounded. We ask, O Lord, for great help for those who care for them, that they may be able to be pulled back, as it were, from death, may be able to be restored to measure of health and life. We pray, O Lord, for those who are fatherless, without children, without partners, those, O Lord, who are grieving so greatly. You are the God of all comfort.

In fact, you are the only one who can speak the words of comfort into these situations. We ask you again, O Lord, to have mercy upon that land of France. May this awful act of terror and wickedness show the people of France, their great need of you. We're on the main. They have rejected you and turned away from you. We ask, O Lord, that they might cry out to you and look to you, the only God, the only true God. And we pray again for those who are so deceived in their minds and thoughts that they would do these things. Others who are still perhaps planning to do such and think of these things as great. Stop them in their tracks. Show them, Lord, the evil, the wickedness, the depravity of what is going on, and turn them away from this false and empty and wicked religion that they may see that there is only one God, and he is not the God of violence, not the God of murder, the God of grace, and the God and Father, our Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 2 : 38 ] Lord, we ask that again you would protect and watch over our nation where we've known acts like this before. We ask again, O Lord, for those who keep our streets safe, the security services and others, that, Lord, they might be helped and that they might be led to foil and to thwart the plans of wicked men.

and women. Be with us now, Lord, we pray, and help us in this time of worship, that our thoughts and our minds and our hearts may be set upon you. For we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[ 4 : 13 ] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. That we who know your will, Where Savior is our King.

And whether our tomorrow Be filled with good or ill, We'll triumph through our sorrows And rise to the next to still.

To the mother, natural beauty And glory in your face And make a joyful duty The sacrifice of praise.

Well, let's turn together in our Bibles. And if you have one to hand, we're going to be reading from Exodus. Chapter 13, that's the second book in the Bible.

[ 5 : 28 ] So you've got Genesis and then Exodus in chapter 13. And we were there last Sunday morning, Remembrance Sunday, Thinking about the way in which God Had instructed His people to remember What He had done for them.

The wonderful thing He'd done for them In setting them free from slavery in Egypt. And we saw there, of course, That we too are to be daily Remembering what Christ has done for us.

And our acts of remembrance Are not to be Simply wearing a poppy Or going to church. Our acts of remembrance are That our lives are consecrated to God.

Every day, every moment of our lives, We're to live for Him. And that is our proper And right Act of worship. And so we're going to pick up from there What happens After that And getting on the way Towards that The next act of God In saving His people Which will be the Red Sea parting.

But we're not quite there yet. So we're in chapter 13 of Exodus Picking up from verse 17 And reading through Into chapter 14 and verse 4. So chapter 13 Beginning at verse 17.

[ 6 : 45 ] When Pharaoh let the people go God did not lead them On the road through the Philistine country Though it was shorter. For God said If they face war They might change their minds And return to Egypt.

So God led the people around By the desert road Towards the Red Sea. The Israelites went up Out of Egypt Armed for battle. Moses took the bones Of Joseph With him Because Joseph had made The sons of Israel Swear an oath.

He had said God will surely Come to your aid And then you must Carry my bones up With you from this place. After leaving Succoth They camped at Etham On the edge of the desert.

By day The Lord went ahead of them In a pillar of cloud To guide them on their way And by night In a pillar of fire To give them light So that they could travel By day Or night.

Neither the pillar of cloud By day Nor the pillar of fire By night Left its place In front of the people. Then the Lord said to Moses Tell the Israelites To turn back And camp near Pi-Hahiroth Between Migdal And the sea.

[ 8 : 01 ] They are to camp By the sea Directly opposite Baal-Zephon. Pharaoh will think The Israelites Are wandering around The land in confusion Hemmed in By the desert And I will harden Pharaoh's heart And he will pursue them But I will gain glory For myself Through Pharaoh And all his army And the Egyptians Will know That I am the Lord So the Israelites Did this.

I am the Lord A great year Lord Children Through this Star of night I am green That thou art fighting Only with thy power To earth Bread of heaven Bread of heaven In me Till I want to go In me Till I want to go To pray Somewhere Forward arrow hurting

The known bitch And he lies Love Who He■■■ anders The Thou newspapers Son Son moon And heplilled Held He Qu obrig Heal us still my strength and shield Heal us still my strength and shield When I tread the verge of Jordan In my anxious missile sight There not dead and hell's destruction God be safe on the aid of sight

Songs of praises, songs of praises I will ever give to thee I will ever give to thee If you have the Bible to hand then it would be helpful for you to turn back to Exodus 13 where we read just a little while ago as we again think about how God, the unchanging God, deals with us, his people.

That's the wonder of the Bible. It's not ancient history. In that sense it is ancient history but it is also a God's word that speaks to us of his character, his personality, his dealings with us, his love, his grace and so on.

- [ 11 : 26 ] Well, a few years ago, 1518 to be precise, nearly 500 years ago Hernan Cortes was sent out by the Spanish king to cross the Atlantic to explore the interior of what is now Mexico and to claim it for Spain.

He set off with 500 men, 13 horses and some cannons and landed on the Yucatan Peninsula That's that bit that sticks out into the Caribbean Sea in modern day Mexico.

As soon as Cortes and his men had landed and unloaded the ships all that they needed he did something very strange. He gave the order to set fire to every one of his 11 ships.

That wasn't an act of lunacy or mindless destruction. Cortes needed to be assured that the men were with him were devoted to the way ahead. By removing any means of retreat the army had one way to go that was forward into the Mexican interior.

Now as God leads his people out of Egypt as he's done these incredible things so there's plagues and delivered them and rescued them from 400 years he does something quite peculiar in leading them from Egypt to the promised land to Canaan where they were going to go.

- [ 12 : 54 ] It's there in verse 17 When Pharaoh let the people go God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country though that was shorter. God did not lead them in the most obvious way which was to head towards the Mediterranean coast follow it east and then up a bit into Canaan.

That would be the way that would get them there the quickest. Rather God sends them immediately in the opposite direction south towards the Red Sea.

And so strange does this appear so odd does this appear that God rightly assumes that Pharaoh will hear about it and think that the people are lost and confused.

There in chapter 14 Pharaoh will think the Israelites are wandering around the land in confusion hemmed in by the deserts. And as God knew the mind of Pharaoh he knew very well what he would do.

We're told later on which we'll look at God willing next week Pharaoh took 600 of the best chariots with him. He went back thinking that they were in confusion hoping to regain all these millions of people back under his cruel authority and dictatorship to be his slaves once again.

- [ 14 : 14 ] But God had a plan. God had a purpose in leading his people the way that he did. A way which they themselves would not understand until a little later.

The question that has always been a concern for the church and for God's people and for Christians is how does God lead us?

How does he lead us as a church? How does he lead us as individuals? How does he lead us as his people? It's a vital question. It's a question which has arisen and been sought to be answered by countless books and sermons discussions and so on.

And for those of us who are Christians here this morning it should be and must be a vital question that we ask ourselves constantly. Where is God leading me?

How can I know his guidance in my life? And in these verses which we have between the exit of the people from Egypt and the crossing of the Red Sea we have some very practical and helpful principles about how God does lead his people then and how he continues to lead us his people now.

- [ 15 : 29 ] That will I trust encourage us in our faith to trust him and to seek to be obedient to him. And as we see here there are three things that God does not do in his leading.

God's leading is not first of all direct. By that I mean God does not lead them in the most straight course as we mentioned. Any other human leader any other general of an army would look for the most direct way as we said up to the Mediterranean east along the coast into the promised land.

But that may be the shortest way but it isn't the right way and it isn't God's way. Slightly humorous illustration to that.

An elderly lady is standing at the side of the road waiting to cross. She was a bit hesitant because it was quite busy and as she was waiting a man approached her and he said may I cross over with you?

Relieved she took his arm and thanked him. The path that they took across the road was anything but direct more like a zigzag pattern. The man seemed to be confused as they dodged traffic but at last they reached the other side.

[ 16 : 44 ] You almost got us killed she said. You walk like you're blind. I am he said. That's why I asked you if I could cross with you. God doesn't lead us often in a straight line not because he's blind but quite the opposite because he sees all things.

He sees the dangers in front of us that we cannot see. He leads us in those ways that keep us safe from harm. That's why he doesn't take us the direct route and that's exactly what we understand here.

For God said verse 17 if they face war because they're going to go through the Philistine country if they face war they might change their minds and return to Egypt.

God could see and knew that along the coast were those hostile nations and armies that would not perhaps destroy them because we're told that they were a heavily armed army but be enough to frighten them to turn them around and then go back to Egypt and back to slavery to give up even before the journey had begun.

Now God knew that they would face battles they would come and they certainly did but not just yet. God knew they weren't ready to face those trials and troubles. Can any of us see the future?

[ 18 : 06 ] Can any of us see what's around the corner in the coming weeks or months? Many people of course sadly are deceived into thinking that going to a fortune teller or having their palm read or reading their horoscope will help them prepare for what's ahead but all these things are false rubbish.

The only one who knows and can see is our omniscient heavenly father the all knowing God that's what omniscient means. He's the one who sees ahead of us.

He's the one who sees the things that would turn us back. He sees what we're able to cope with and what we're not able to cope with. We may think that we can cope with those things. We may think that we could face those difficulties but God knows all about us.

He's the omniscient heavenly father. He sees that path as we showed with the children from the heavenly viewpoint. He surveys all of time and so he guides our steps away from danger, away from harmful things.

things. We may think, well, at times that's necessary as we shall see. Proverbs chapter 16 says, in his heart a man plans his course but the Lord determines his steps.

[ 19 : 30 ] That's a wonderful truth. We have a plan. We think we know what we're going to be doing in the next year. We plan our career. We plan our family. We plan our home life.

We plan all these things. Haven't we noticed that so often they don't work out as we plan? We wonder why. Sometimes we're disappointed, discouraged, feel perhaps quite the opposite, that God has not been with us.

The reality is that he determines our steps. He guides us and leads us. So it's not direct. God does not lead us directly in the shortest way, the straightest way.

But secondly as well that God does not lead us hastily. God doesn't lead us hastily. We see that again. So God led the people, verse 18, around by the desert road towards the Red Sea.

We knew that the shortest route was the quickest route. But God doesn't take them to the quickest route. The trouble is that more and more in our own generation we're in a hurry.

[ 20 : 37 ] We're living in a hurry, eating in a hurry. We want things done ASAP. We want faster broadband. We want faster communication. We want to go wherever we're going to go and get there before we've even left if possible.

And so in our sat-navs we have preferences by the shortest route or the quickest route. And almost certainly all of our sat-navs are set on the quickest route. How can I get there?

I don't want the scenic route. I want to get from A to B as quickly as possible. That's not God's way usually. Because God's not in a hurry.

Because he's eternal from everlasting to everlasting. Now there are times of course when God does act with immediacy. There are times when God has done, and we see that in the scriptures, where he takes people from A to B quickly, immediately.

There's a time when Jesus was with his disciples on the sea of Galilee. John 6 tells us, where it was rough and stormy and Jesus walked to them. We're told as soon as Jesus reached the boat, they reached the shore on the other side.

[ 21 : 47 ] We think of people like Philip, the evangelist, taken by the Spirit from one place to another. God can work as quickly. God made the world in seven days. It's no problem for him to do things immediately in the twinkling of an eye.

But more often than not, God deals with us at a slower pace. He deals with us not according to a stopwatch, but according to the perfect timing of eternity.

God is concerned about our eternal and spiritual well-being. And we need to, as Christians, particularly synchronize our watches, not to the world and its speed of doing things, but to synchronize our watches to God's clock, his timing.

We think about it when we look through the Bible, how God does not in a hurry. We think all the way back to the Garden of Eden, when God spoke to Adam and Eve after they had sinned, and God promised them that there would come a saviour who would overcome the evil one.

Thousands, several thousand years later, Christ arrives as the fulfilment of that promise and many other promises in between. Christ promised his disciples that he would return again while he was still on the earth.

[ 23 : 10 ] Yet here we are, two thousand years later, and Christ has not returned. Is it because he's forgotten? No. It's because he's not in a hurry. Here's what Peter writes about it in his second letter.

Do not forget this one thing, dear friends. With the Lord, a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness.

No, he is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But what takes us a thousand years, God can do in a day, and what we think should be done immediately, God takes a thousand years to do.

Why? Because he knows all about us. Because he knows what speed we can cope with. Because he knows how much we need to learn along the journey.

But it does mean this, that everything in our lives happens according to his perfect timing. A wonderful verse in Galatians 4 which speaks about the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 24 : 22 ] When the time had fully come, God sent his son. No matter how impatient you are, dear friends, it's not going to make God go quicker.

It's just going to make you frustrated. We may think we should be there by now at this stage in our lives with some financial security, or particular career position, or particular relationship, or whatever it may be.

But if God hasn't brought us to that place yet, it's because God doesn't want us in that place yet. And we need to trust him that he's not in a hurry, because he knows the way he takes.

And thirdly, we see as well here that the way that God leads his people is not only indirectly, but it also, not speedily, but we also see that it's not easy.

It's not easy. There in chapter 14 verse 2, tell the Israelites to turn back and camp near Pi-Hiroth. They had gone one way and they would turn back.

[ 25 : 34 ] And we know that the way they had to go was on the desert road, the wilderness road. Not up to the coast, on the med, into the desert.

Again, just as we like things to go quickly and we like things to be happening quickly, we also like things to run smoothly. We like lives which are without hassle.

We like things to be done without stress. We like to coast through life without problems. And whenever they come up, whenever snags, hurdles, difficulties come up, we immediately balk against them.

We immediately get annoyed by them, frustrated by them, angry by them. It hasn't gone our way. We want to go through with a minimum of fuss and bother. The trouble is that life is just not like that.

And we know that. We know that life is not free of problems and stress and difficulties. So why is it when they come, one, we act surprised, and two, we get miserable about it. But we know jolly well that that's the way it's always been.

[ 26 : 44 ] Life is tough. For all the advances in technology, for all the advances in medicine, for all the advances in everything else, life is still tough.

And life has always been tough. There always are trials, there always are handicaps, there always are problems that happen to us, all of us. And to think mistakenly that if we follow God and trust in him, somehow he's going to remove all the problems and all the hurdles is contrary to what he said in the Bible.

And for people, sadly, to say to others, become a Christian and your life will be without problems and troubles and fears. difficulties is a lie. Following Jesus has its own certain difficulties.

Thankfully, following Christ means that we are spared some of those problems which people without Christ have because they go my way rather than God's way, when they're led by their own sinful desires and pleasures and greed.

But every Christian who is led by God will be led by a difficult path. Why else did Jesus say to his disciples that we had to take up our cross to follow him?

[ 27 : 59 ] He didn't say take up your sofa or your bed, well he did say to the man who's paralyzed, take up your bed and walk, but not what he meant in that sense. He said take up the cross and follow me. And he said to his disciples, he made them a promise, in this world you will have tribulation, he said to them.

So why do we think that suddenly as Christians things are just going to swim past us and we're just going to with our slippers on walk to heaven?

We're not. God's people never have and never will. Partly because we live in a world which is broken and corrupt and sinful and we are part of that world because we are still sinful as well.

But also because God has a purpose in bringing us through those things to increase our faith, our holiness, our trust, our godliness, our usefulness.

Because ultimately though God's way is not direct and though it's not the quickest or the easiest yet by far it's the best way. The very best way. How do we know that?

[ 29 : 03 ] Because we can see it here and again elsewhere in scripture that God chooses the way very carefully for us. We see it there. It's verse 17. It's all there isn't it?

God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country though it was shorter. For God said if they faced war they might change their minds and return to Egypt. So God led the people round by the desert.

You see God thinks. God plans. God knows what he's doing. And every scheme that God has for you as a Christian, every purpose he has for you in your life comes from a heart of unconditional love.

Comes from the very heart of the one who gave his son to come into the world to suffer and to die. We know Peter rather as he's preaching on the day of Pentecost said this man was handed to you by God's predestined purpose, God's will.

Jesus came and died not because wicked men overwhelmed him because it was God's plan that he should suffer and die for us. God's plan. The love that God has for us in sending his son is the love that he continues to have for us and that continues to lead us because he knows us.

[ 30 : 20 ] He knew the weakness of the people. He knew that when they faced war that they would turn and run. He knows you and I. The psalmist tells us he knows how we are framed. In other words, he knows our composition, our character.

He knows our nature. He knows our weaknesses. And it says he remembers that we're dust. We're fragile people. No matter what face or mask we put on, no matter how we present ourselves as being tough and able to cope with life's difficulties, the reality is that we are all fragile, weak people we could easily break at any moment.

And God knows that. So the way he leads us and guides us is always because of his love for us. He knows the best way for us.

Why should we believe that? Why should we accept that as the case? Why should we trust that? Because we have encouragements again here.

First of all, we have the encouragement of the example of others who followed and trusted God. And those who have been led by God. And here we have Joseph popping up, don't we?

[ 31 : 32 ] Or at least his bones pop up anyway. in verse 19. Moses took the bones of Joseph with him because Joseph had made the sons of Israel swear an oath. He had said, God will surely come to your aid and then you must carry my bones up with you from this place.

The life of Joseph is a life of someone led and guided by God in exactly the way we've been talking. Indirectly, slowly, difficultly.

He was led from being a shepherd boy in one sense in Canaan to becoming the prime minister in Egypt and the savior of that nation. He was led there over the space of more than 20 years, not instantaneously, and along the way he was led through a less than easy route via the paths of his brother's hatred and jealousy of him, of being sold into slavery, of being accused falsely of crimes, of being in prison for many years, but eventually being brought out into a place of great blessing and a great usefulness.

And along the way he had learned to trust the promises of God and the faithfulness of God, even though he never ultimately saw them fulfilled himself. Back at Genesis, the very last words that are recorded of Joseph tell us that he had this incredible faith that God would come.

It's what's quoted here in Exodus. Joseph said to his brothers, I'm about to die, but God will surely come to your aid and take you up out of this land to the land he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

[ 33 : 15 ] Joseph made the sons of Israel swear an oath and said, God will surely come to your aid, then you must carry my bones up from this place. The promise that God had given to his forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, he believed that God would come to their aid.

He didn't see that in his life, but he'd learned to trust God. He'd learned to believe God. He'd learned that God did never, ever fail or let down his people.

So even at his death, he looked to the promise of what was to come. Didn't see it himself while he lived, but he knew that God was faithful. How? Because God had led him all his life and brought him through all these things.

To that place where God had purposed for him. We've got examples after examples after examples, not only in the scriptures, but throughout the lives of others, even in our own lives.

Where God has proved his faithfulness to us, where he has led us through hard, difficult times and brought us into pleasant places. Those of us who are Christians here this morning, we know that ultimately there are times when God led us, even before we were Christians, into positions and places where we could ultimately hear the gospel and be saved.

[ 34 : 27 ] And if those things hadn't happened, if we hadn't lost our job, or if we hadn't moved to that place, or if we hadn't got that place in university and we got the one that we'd wanted to have, and all these things, God was maneuvering and working in our lives to bring us to himself.

And even this morning, let me say to you, you may be here and you may say, well it just happens to be by chance that I'm here in church. It's just because of my parents, or it's just because of my work situation, or it's just because of something else, that I'm here on this Sunday, this morning.

Let me say to you, God has his hand upon you, and he's brought you here, and brought you under the sound of his word, because his desire is that you should know him and be saved.

That you should know the wonderful love that he has for you. That you should know the necessity to put your faith and trust in him, and to receive the forgiveness that Christ brings. You cannot be guaranteed, any of you, or any of us, that we have another day to decide or choose whether we're going to follow Christ.

We can't be guaranteed another week that we'll pass by before we die and stand before God in judgment. How can we misuse the opportunities God's given us?

[ 35 : 43 ] And some of us may say, well, as a Christian, I'm still waiting for God to lead me to a place where I can really serve him. I'm really waiting for an opportunity to do the things that God wants me to do, and to live for him.

Well, God has brought you to here. You're here now. Serve him now. Here. Don't wait for what may happen, or what you want to happen, or better circumstances, or better situations.

God has led you here for now. So get on with living for him here and now. You're not here by accident. You're not here by chance.

You're not here by a husband's will, if I can put it that way, or by a mother's decision. You're here because God has brought you to this place, and God is working in and through all that's happening now, that he might revive you, strengthen you, encourage you, use you, bless you.

There's one more encouragement here particularly why we should trust that the Lord has his hand upon our lives and is leading us, and that's found in the symbolic pillar of cloud and fire.



[ 36 : 53 ] There, verse 21, by day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and night, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light so they could travel by day or night.

But you notice the beginning of it. By day the Lord went ahead of them. In other words, the Lord was with them. The pillar of cloud and fire was the assurance to the people that God was present with them, that he wasn't in heaven, if I can put it that way, separate from them and unconcerned from them.

This miraculous provision was a symbol of the presence of God. We see it there, 21. We see it later on in chapter 14, verse 24. During the last watch of the night, the Lord looked down from the pillar of fire and cloud.

God dwelt within it, if I can put it that way, and therefore he dwelt amongst his people. That's going to be later symbolized by the tabernacle, which was in the middle of the camp, God's presence amongst them. The temple, God's presence amongst them.

God was giving them evidence of the fact that they should not fear but trust him, because where they went, he went. Where they were, he was. He was guiding them in the midst of them.

[ 38 : 06 ] And for us as Christians, dear friends, that's the confidence, that's the assurance we have again and again as Christians, that God does not call us to walk in paths that he does not walk himself with us.

When we think of Christmas, we're thinking about Jesus Christ, Emmanuel. What does the very phrase Emmanuel mean? God with us. God stepping down into the world with us.

And in one sense, this pillar of fire and cloud very much speaks of and represents to us the very person of Jesus Christ. Without going into great theology in that sense, we have something which is both cloud and fire.

We have in the Lord Jesus Christ, one who is both God and man. Not two pillars, one pillar, not two persons, one person. The Lord Jesus Christ.

And the Lord Jesus Christ came into this world. Why? He came in this world to go before us, the first fruits of resurrection. He went through hell for us on the cross, so we didn't need to go through it.

[ 39 : 12 ] He walked where we walk. He lived where we lived. And he went through the death into resurrection so that we know that when we pass through death, we shall live in the resurrection. He's the one who leads us through life and goes with us through life right up to the very gates of death itself.

We have that assurance again and again from the Lord Jesus. He says to his disciples at the end of Matthew 28, surely I am with you always, even to the very end of the age.

He gives them that promise, you shall not be left as orphans, I will come and be with you through the Holy Spirit. That's the great experience of the Christian, isn't it? That wherever we are, God by his spirit dwells with us and is in us.

We are never alone. We don't need fire and cloud to see. We've got something which is far more certain yet invisible to the human eye, but requiring that same amount of faith and trust.

Christ walks with us. Christ himself leads us. Christ never leaves us. Let me ask you, dear friends, several things.

[ 40 : 28 ] Do you know the Lord Jesus Christ is with you? Do you know him personally as your saviour and your king? Do you know him personally as the one who is in your life day by day?

And let me ask you this. Is it your intention and desire that you should be led by him? See, that's the big question, isn't it?

That's the acid test. Do I want to lead myself and go the way I want to go or do I want to go Christ's way? In my choices, in my decisions, in my future.

And thirdly and finally, do you trust him? Or rather, will you trust him for all that's ahead? Will you trust him to guide and lead you?

Will you trust him to lead you into the right way and the best way? Will you trust him that he knows better than you? And that even though he takes you through an indirect way, a difficult way, sometimes a slow way, that actually is for your good, for your blessing, and because he loves you.

[ 41 : 51 ] A verse that's been particularly important in my own life is Proverbs and chapter three. Proverbs and chapter three.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your paths clear.

Let's briefly pray together. Perhaps respond to God's word in our own way in prayer. Thanking him. Renewing our faith in him.

Perhaps for the first time committing our lives into his hands. And let's stand and sing our final hymn together.

Let's sing together. to him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his presence in glory without fault with great joy to the only God our Savior be glory and majesty power and authority through Jesus Christ our Lord before all of time today and forevermore Amen