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Preacher: Keith Plant

- [0 : 0 0] And with that in mind we come to our second reading and that is Luke 2. That's the second reading, it's Luke 22.
- Verses 39 to 46. That's Luke 22. Verses 39 to 46.
- Jesus prays in the garden. Verse 39.
- Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives and his disciples followed him. On reaching the place he said to them, pray that you will not fall into temptation.
- He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them and knelt down and prayed. Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me.
- [1 : 0 7] Yet not my will, but yours be done. An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And being in anguish he prayed more earnestly and his sweat was like drops of blood falling on the ground.
- When he arose from prayer, he went back to his disciples. He found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. Why are you sleeping?
- He asked them. Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. May the Lord bless the reading of his word to us.
- Would you like to turn in your Bibles to Deuteronomy chapter 9?
- Amen. And I'm going to pray now because we want to hear God speaking and then he entrusts his word to weak and fallible men.
- [2 : 1 4] So we pray, don't we, that we hear him speaking, not me. Let's pray. Amen. Amen.
- Gracious Lord, we pray as we look at this passage we would be struck by just how serious sin is. These are solemn words, but we need to understand them.
- We need to understand you are a holy God and that we are a sinful people. We pray, Lord, that we would have a new vision of you and a new vision of your grace and mercy shown to us as we look at this page.
- Lord, we pray that we would hear you speaking. Your Holy Spirit would be our teacher. You would take my words and, Lord, you would prepare them and make them fit to speak into the hearts of your servants and all who are here.
- Lord, we thank you that when your word is open, you speak to us in a unique way. We are needy people, so we pray you would do that now.
- [3 : 3 6] We pray this for your glory. Amen. If there's one word which might, I say might, sum up the book of Deuteronomy, because I think there are many other words that could, remember would be a good one.
- What's the situation here? Well, here are the people. They're on the edge of the promised land.
- But we actually have to remember one thing, and this is why I remember it's so important. They'd actually been there before. They'd been there about 38 years before. That's the background.

And the first part of Deuteronomy is basically a history lesson. It's recounting that. Why they were there again after such a long time.

Why had it taken all that time? The filmmaker and humorist, comedian Woody Allen once said this, and I think it's whatever you think of Woody Allen, he's hit the nail on the head here.

[4 : 58] History keeps repeating itself. It has to. No one learned anything the first time round. Well, there's an irony there, isn't there? That's true.

And Moses has these people, again, second chance to go into the promised land. And he wants them to learn from the mistakes of the past.

He doesn't want a repeat of history, if possible. He doesn't want history to repeat itself. He wants them to learn. He wants them to remember why it's taken so long.

And as I said, chapters 1 to 3 are all about that. Chapter 4 talks about God's nature.

Who is this God? Who is this God who has brought them out of slavery? How's he to be worshipped? And we get a slight insight, fascinating chapter, into God's nature.

[6 : 09] Who he is. And then, importantly, chapter 5, the law is given again.

We get the Ten Commandments, in a sense, brought to their attention again. Very important chapter. And really, after that, this section we're in now is teaching on the First Commandment.

Moses has laid out the commandments, ten of them. Right? He's now going to teach them. Let's get to the practical nitty-gritty of how they're going to work. Because it's no good if they have it up here, is it?

It's got to be practical. I mean, I hope you come here this morning, not to sort of go away with sort of a spiritual aura about you.

You get that in all sorts of peculiar ways. You come here because you're looking for something. Or perhaps you've found it in Christ. And you want to know how to live for him.

[7 : 15] Better. Be a better witness. Please him more each day. Tell others. So you want to know the practical stuff. And Moses is concerned in being very, very practical.

The Bible's a very practical book. And Deuteronomy's an extremely practical book. But perhaps before we look in detail at the passage, we just have to look back a bit to that bit we had read out at the start of the service.

Chapter 5, verses 6. And I'm going to read a teeny bit of verse 8 as well. Chapter 5, verse 6.

I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You are to have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol in any form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.

Now the bit I want to draw attention to, but all of that's important to what we'll be looking at. But that verse 6. I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

[8 : 29] Now, when I'm in Harold Hill, one of the things I do is I go out with a London City missionary and we knock on doors to chat to people. Now if people aren't in, a card goes through the door.

And if they are in, I introduce myself. But if they're not in, that card goes through and they can pick up the card. And it tells them some information. It tells them the pastor's called.

It tells them what we're about because it's got a bit about the gospel on it. It tells them where I'm from, which church.

So they can identify me, can't they? And next time they're either open the door because they want to chat or they'll be hiding behind the sofa when they see me coming down the dry. We pray it's the first, not the second.

But that introduces me, doesn't it? Now that verse introduced God. And note where it comes. It comes before he asks them to do anything.

[9 : 32] Before he asks them to obey any commandments. This is what God has done for them. He's brought them out of Egypt. He's brought them out of the land of slavery.

They were oppressed. There was genocide. There was genocide, wasn't there? Going on there. As the baby boys were killed.

It's a terrible thing. Brutal oppression. Unreasonable demands. Slavery of the worst sort.

And God had taken these people out. And God had taken these people out. From there. And has now given them the Ten Commandments.

Because he wants them to have fulfilled and happy lives. Freedom actually needs fences, doesn't it?

[10 : 27] Apparently some years ago psychologists found that children have far more contentment if they are within a area where they can see boundaries.

Then if they are left in a wide open space. They get a sort of panic. And God realises his people need fences.

You think about it with the commandments. You cross over. You disobey a commandment. What do you do? Well you're either disobeying God if it's first form. Or you're trampling on someone else's freedom, aren't you?

So when people say to me real freedom is doing exactly what I want. I say are you sure? Are you sure you want to apply that to other people?

So they can do whatever they want to you. Very quickly. The mood changes, doesn't it? Well that is the spirit in which the commandments are given.

[11 : 31] And that's actually important, isn't it? As we now look at chapter 9. To see what an affront this is. To a God who has done so much for his people.

And a God who is, we haven't got time to do it. It's a separate series of sermons I think, chapter 4. But if you want to know something about the holiness of God, look at chapter 4.

The danger you see with God's generosity was this. And Moses highlights it very, very clearly in the verse before the reading we had.

Chapter 9, verse 6. Understand then, it is not because of your righteousness that the Lord your God is giving you this good land to possess. For you are a stiff-necked people.

You see, once they got there and they got into this wonderful land and it was going to be a fantastic place, the danger was saying, we must be in God's good books because he's given this to us.

[12 : 32] Isn't this wonderful? Oh, we must be really good. No. That's not the case, Moses says. And now I'm going to give you something which will make, if you've got any doubts about this, if you think there's any goodness in you, if you think God owes you any favours at all, I'm going to prove to you he does not.

It's a sombre tone, isn't there, to verse 7. Remember this, and never forget how you provoke the Lord your God to anger in the desert.

From the day you left Egypt until you arrived here, you have been rebellious against the Lord. Verse 8, At Horeb, you aroused the Lord's wrath so that he was angry enough to destroy you.

Moses goes for the juggler here, doesn't he? This isn't just a few minor misdemeanours that can be overlooked. It's not like the speeding events where you get a few points on your licence or the parking ticket.

This is serious stuff. Where metaphorically, they were before the judge and they were found extremely guilty.

[13 : 59] Well, what do we learn about this? Well, firstly, if there was any doubt from that verse, they were thoroughly undeserving people, weren't they?

Verses 7 to 10. Remember, they've been rebellious, they've been distrustful of God. Actually, the first time they got to the borders of the promised land and the spies came back with a report which was really, to start with, was wonderful, wasn't it?

The land's great. The land's fantastic. But then there was a slight problem, wasn't it? They started to think about the people of the land.

The people were big, the people were powerful. What happened? Deuteronomy 1, 27. You grumbled in your tents and said, the Lord hates us so he brought us out of Egypt to deliver us into the hands of the Ammonites to destroy us.

God had delivered them miraculously from Egypt, hadn't he? He'd done extraordinary work. And yet at that time, wasn't it only Joshua and Caleb said, no, no, no, look, look, look, think back, the Lord's done all these things for us.

[15 : 14] He'd do it. So often in Deuteronomy, it talks about God going ahead of them. God was going to sort the battles. Yes, they were his instruments, but God was going to take care of it.

It's a warning to us, isn't it? When the fickle people, when we suddenly start to think, something goes wrong. Oh, the Lord doesn't like us very much today.

Oh, ridiculous. The Lord's love for his people is unending. And they should have understood that. And we need to understand that.

And here, it's interesting, isn't it? If we look at verses 9 and 10, what's happening? Well, Moses has been given the commandments, right?

There's a key word here, isn't there? that he's receiving, as it was, the covenant the Lord had made with you. And covenant's a good word in the sense of agreement, as we sort of said earlier.

[16 : 21] The Ten Commandments were God's agreement with the people. Right, you keep these, I'm going to look after you. And there's so much, read the rest of Deuteronomy, the way he was going to bless them if they were obedient to him.

There was so much there he would do for them. But as Moses is entering into an agreement with God on behalf of the people, the people are breaking the agreement already.

It's extraordinary, isn't it, that Moses is sustained on the mountain for all that time, those 40 days and 40 nights. And perhaps that helps us, you know, it helps to remember, doesn't it, Deuteronomy 8.3, where it talks about man does not live by bread alone, but by the words of God.

And God does that as Moses is on the mountain. But what are the people doing? Well, they're breaking the first commandment, they're breaking the second commandment.

What did Aaron say to them? These are the gods. They had made an image, a terrible thing to do. And while Moses is getting these very words from God, and let's get this clear, it's very interesting how often the words of God are portrayed.

[17 : 46] In 5.22, there's a very interesting little comment at the end of the giving of the Ten Commandments. And it's this. it talks about how the commandments were given and it adds, he added nothing more.

He didn't need to, did he? He's God. Again, when the commandments are re-given in 10.4, the Lord wrote on these tablets what he had written before.

You know, John Calvin, I think, is one of the greatest theologians, perhaps one of the greatest theologians other than perhaps Paul that the church has ever seen. And he wrote his institutes.

Now, amazingly, his doctrine never really changed, never changed. but they were comparatively short when he started with them. But he added to them over the years.

So, even the great John Calvin did that. That's what man needs to do, doesn't it? Because we don't get it all in one go. But God doesn't have to. So, Moses, when he goes there, is not sort of doing some getting in touch with the earth or doing some hippie trip where he goes out to India.

[19 : 09] It's not like that. No, it's not that he goes up and he meditates or he sits in some weird position and he comes up with a set of Ten Commandments.

These should do. No, they're given to him by God. He's not the instigator, Moses. God is the instigator and God's word never changes, does it? But these people are rebellious, they're undeserving and they're breaking two commandments, two things that are absolutely essential to the understanding of God.

And that's serious, isn't it? One of the things that I think this highlights is the seriousness of sin. Verse 13, the Lord said to me, I have seen these people, they are stiff-necked people indeed, let me alone that I may destroy them and blot out their name from under heaven and I will make you into a nation stronger and more numerous than are they.

Now, what's going on here? This is one of the areas of the Bible that causes huge problems, doesn't it? Is God serious?

Well, I think if we take this scripture in the light of the whole counsel of God, I think we've got to say, God, it was a serious threat.

[20 : 37] Sin is that serious. Why, what's going on here? Is this some sort of test of Moses? Because we know, don't we, that he doesn't destroy his people in the end.

And at this point, the atheists may be rubbing their hands with glee and saying, well, you know, you can't explain that, can you? You can't find that. But brothers and sisters, seriously, do you think we as human beings can understand the mind of God?

29, 29 of Deuteronomy, fantastic verse. The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law.

You see, God's given us what we need. Enough, redemption, we can know that. We can know what's required of him through the law. We can know what's required that is repentance because of Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

We have the offer of forgiveness and if we believe and accept that offer, it is given. We know enough, don't we? I love the end of Job. Job was a good man, wasn't he?

[21 : 58] But he'd said some things about God. He'd spoken in his grief, true. But then God answers him and really says, Job, you're out of your depth. Do you know how I made the world, to paraphrase?

Do you know the details of that? It's great, I used to be a builder and there's building illustrations there measuring it out. It's precise, it's precision. It didn't just happen by chance.

I made it with precision. Job, you know none of these things. Would you discredit my justice?

And when Job is taken into the realm of God, out of the realm of human reason, what's his response? Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me.

And in the correct response, I repent in dust and ashes. we may never understand everything about God, but actually I find that a comfort because I do not want a Keith Plant ruling the universe.

[23 : 15] In the Blitz, in the Second World War, two pastors had had a hard night after bombing and counselling distraught relatives, wives who'd lost their husband.

as they sat down at the end of this gruelling and emotionally draining night, one said to the other, what I would give to have ten minutes on the throne of the universe.

The other one had his wits about him and said, excuse me brother, I wouldn't want to live in that universe for those ten minutes. We can't know the mind of God, can we?

And that is a comfort. But we know enough don't we? And Moses acts as an intercessor in the most remarkable way for these people.

Verse 18, he falls prostrate, doesn't he? Before the Lord for another forty days and forty nights.

[24 : 19] Again, he doesn't eat, he doesn't drink and he says this is because of the sin they have committed. Doing what was evil in his sight and provoking him to anger.

Verse 19, I feared the anger and wrath of the Lord for he was angry enough with you to destroy you. But again, the Lord listened to me. Now, isn't that extraordinary?

Moses pleads on behalf of these people. I don't know, I'm trying to get my head around this and I think this is interesting because I think this has a reflection on what Moses did.

Moses knew something of God's nature, didn't he? He'd seen how God had been so caring and loving even when the people were rebellious in the past.

Even later on when they came to the borders of the land and because of their rebellion there was another time of wandering in the desert.

[25 : 38] What would be the human reaction? Oh, this isn't working out Moses. Look, I gave them a chance at horrible Sinai. This isn't working out.

We'll start again now. These people do not deserve the land, do they? And that people didn't. Actually, there was a consequence. A generation died out.

But Moses knows that God is a caring and gracious God. Slow to anger, abounding in mercy. Do you remember when he passes before Moses?

He talks of his love but he also talks doesn't he about his judgment against people as well. There is a cost. And the cost is considerable for Moses and Moses, although he is not the person who has sinned or done any wrongdoing against the Lord here, Moses is scared out of his wits.

As I said, I try to get my head around this. I think Moses must have understood something of the nature of God in his dealings with him because otherwise you would have said Moses was certifiable to try this.

[26 : 58] And I think actually as he was interceding, he was scared because he realised the rightness of God's anger. He realised the seriousness of sin.

Idolatry is an awful thing, isn't it? Isn't it terrible to think, again we're getting back to God and how much we can understand about it, isn't it terrible to think that we can put God in a bracket and say we can represent God like this?

I come across it every day on the doors. Well my view of God is, or I'd like to think of God as, that's idolatry, unless it is a view from the Bible.

I'd like to think we put our human understanding on it. And how can anything God's made represent him?

It can't. It's degrading to people, isn't it? I remember reading Brian Edwards' book on the Ten Commandments and he talks about when he was in a waiting room one day for an appointment and he picked up a magazine and he picked up, he turned to a page and there was a picture of some sort of ceremony probably in a place like India and the people were carrying this idol through the streets and they were well dressed people and he thought that guy could be a lawyer, that guy could be a doctor, that a professor.

[28 : 27] And these people had put themselves as subservient to an image which was only fashioned out of all that God had made and created.

And yet the danger is that we can be just as guilty of idolatry, can't we? We can make idols of our family, even the good things God's given us.

We can make idols of our work. Someone once said to me, he never heard anyone say, I wish I'd spent more time in the office, but we can be guilty, can't we?

We can make idols of all the things that are fashioned from what God has made. We can even make idols sometimes of our theology.

You see, theology and knowing God. Sometimes we can be a bit sniffy when we come across people who have the wrong ideas. Well, theology, good theology should always be about good relationship with God, shouldn't it?

[29 : 40] It shouldn't be about looking down on people. Good theology should always be reaching others for Christ. Christ. That's the key thing here.

And the state of the people you could read about in Exodus 34 was quite shocking. It talks about them running wild. This was rebeldy, this was sort of the worst pagan excess.

And these were people who'd known God, but had been affected by the idolatry around them. In Ezekiel 20 verse 7 it talks about God talking to them and saying give up the gods of Egypt.

Don't go back. There was a very, I think, a very strong sort of polytheist, that's a worship of a lot of polytheists, a worship of loads of gods, sort of strain which seems to have affected the people of Israel from time to time.

We can see how quickly they turned here, but we know if we go back in Deandre Joshua, Abraham's father had worshipped other gods. Some theologians think that Abraham may have been polytheist, we don't know.

[30 : 57] Could have been. Can't base theology on it. You know, Jacob, didn't he, told his household to give up their idols. So this was a trap for them, a huge trap.

And yet the saddest thing here was these people wanted to sort of revert and go back to the gods of Egypt. Go back to the slavery. Rather than sort of dwelling on the fact that the commandments and everything was to take them away from that and give them true freedom.

Do you ever look at those in the world and say, oh, it must be easier for them. I mean, being a Christian isn't easy, I know that.

it's easier, less worries, less things. They seem to have it good. Brothers and sisters don't. They're in slavery.

They're in the bondage of sin. We've been called to call them out of that, haven't we? God uses us. And the only way really was for Moses to destroy this idol.

[32 : 05] people. It's interesting, when he came down the mountain initially, he threw down the commandments. He didn't drop them, with shock.

He threw them down because in sense, the agreement between them and God was broken. But if there's going to be any repair, they have to get rid of this idolatry.

And we see that the golden calf is destroyed. And that's the key thing, isn't it?

That it needs to be destroyed. Sin needs to be eradicated. When you move into a new house, you probably just sort of take it as it is to start with, don't you?

And gradually, you start to think about what you're going to do. You don't like that golden wallpaper, which is a bit too safe for you in the bedroom. So you strip it off and you put some nice stuff up on it. I was in a flat once and someone, there was an enclosed hall.

[33 : 15] They painted it chocolate brown. You know, you want light colouring. It took me about four coats of magnolia to cover it. It was just awful.

Well, I had to change it, didn't I? Because it's terrible. Brothers and sisters, when the Holy Spirit comes into our lives, he doesn't want to stop in the lobby of our life. He wants to go into each room. He wants to go into the room that deals with our sexuality.

He wants to go into the room that deals with our work. He wants to go into the room that deals with our money. He wants to make it to his liking, so it is a place fit for him. to do it.

The question I ask myself and I ask you, are there any rooms that are locked? Because the Spirit wants to get in there. He don't want to stop. Invite him into your life, the whole of your life, and he will go through and he will spring clean it and he will dust it and he will decorate it and make it a place fit for God to dwell.

Wow, that's what we need to do and so often we stop short of that, don't we? Well, Moses intercesses for the people and the Lord listens to him.

[34 : 32] Moses represents the people. Some people wonder about where this prayer comes. Is it from sort of later in the book of Exodus?

I don't think that really matters. I think it's here. Moses includes it here, this prayer at the end of this chapter, because he wants to make a point.

It's what I call a histotheological point. It happened, whether it happened precisely at this time and chronologically, we don't know, but that doesn't really matter.

The point is it happened and Moses prays this prayer of intercession for the people. And it's a necessary one, isn't it? Because did you notice, after he goes through the whole business of the golden calf, verses 22 and 23 and 24 talk about the continued rebellion of the people.

And Moses actually acts as an intercessor. That was his role. Back in 5, the people came to him and said, it's amazing, we've seen you can stand before God. A man can stand before God, he can hear and speak and he doesn't die.

[35 : 46] Unbelievable. Moses, can you continue doing that? Because we understand that God is holy and we daren't come into his presence.

What privileges we have the other side of the cross, brothers and sisters, where we are invited into the holy of holies. We can come to the throne of grace. And Moses represents the people there.

I mean, this is incredible. You think about this. If Moses was putting the case to the jury that the Israelites were guilty, at this point they hear the case of the golden calf and he says, and by the way I've got a few other things I want to bring up.

They'd be throwing it at Moses, no you don't have to convince us anymore. They are guilty. They are thoroughly guilty. They deserve whatever God decides to put on them, whatever's fit for him to do.

He can do it. Please stop, we don't need to hear anymore. Yet Moses represents the people and people and God listens to him.

[36 : 54] It's extraordinary, isn't it? And the intercession was costly, wasn't it? Again, this time on the mountain without any food. And we think of the intercession of Christ for us.

We had that reading, didn't we, from Luke? And Christ, like Moses, and he was facing so much more, wasn't he?

Was in a position where he was not like Moses who feared God's wrath. He was going to experience it. And he pleaded for that cup to be taken from him.

which actually is a phrase, isn't it? It's found in Jeremiah, but Isaiah 51, verse 17, and there's that vivid picture, the cup that makes men stagger.

It's a nasty brew. It's something men can't handle, but Christ could handle it. Christ could handle our sin, and he could be the substitute for us.

[38 : 01] But he feared it, didn't he? As a human being, as the God, he was both God and he was both men, but his human side feared the wrath of God, as his divine side feared the separation from God.

And God listened. There's a wonderful picture, isn't there, of the uniqueness of Christ's intercession. We get a shadow of it with Moses.

Christ's was the perfect one. I don't know whether any of you are Star Trek fans, that Tracy and I, for our Christmas present, bought ourselves.

You know, these things come out, they're very expensive, and then a few DVDs come down in price, so that's when we buy them. And we bought the box set, and got it really cheap. And we were watching them just recently, and it was great, because we'd never seen them on the wide screen on TV, and we're watching.

But any of you who know that, know the end of Star Trek 2, where Spock sacrifices himself to save the Enterprise.

[39 : 10] There was once a trivial, a joke trivial pursuit question. I used to read Mad Magazine, and they had this, the mad version of trivial pursuit, and it said, which episode did Scotty save the Enterprise from certain destruction?

Answer all of them. But the key thing is here, that no one can do anything. Only Spock can go into the chamber, which is flooded with radiation, because he's alien and different.

And only he can sacrifice himself to put the engines back on line, and save the ship. Now that's a small example, isn't it, of what Christ has done.

Only Christ could take our sin. Only Christ could pay the price. Moses, in a sense, reconciles this people with God, and Christ has done it fully.

There's something incredible here, and perhaps this is something I want to encourage you. You may have been praying for people for years. You may have friends or family. You've been praying for them for years. You've seen nothing happen.

[40 : 17] God, I believe, this passage teaches, invites human intercession. It's interesting when God says, let me alone. He's going to destroy these people.

Did he have to say that to Moses? He could have said actually. It's in verse 14, isn't it? Oh, by the way, the people have really done a bad sin, and I've taken care of it.

Let me alone is almost an invitation for him. Moses to intercess on behalf of the people, and the Lord listened.

Now, I don't think any of us can fully understand this, what it is about God's counsel, how God takes our prayers into his counsel. The secret things belong to God, don't they?

But it seems, isn't it, that God invites it, and actually in other places in scripture, commands it that we intercess. We make prayers of intercession, we pray on behalf of people.

[41 : 25] Who's the person you're praying for? I know some who are dear to me, who do not know and love the Lord, and I read something like this, and it says don't give up, keep praying. Pray for that neighbour, pray for that friend, pray for that family member who just seems hardened to the gospel.

God can do it. God can do it. The mystery of intercession is a marvellous one, but the wonderful thing is God allows it. Well, Moses reconciles the people.

In a sense, he buys the people time with God, and Christ is in Christ's intercession on the cross, and Christ's substitute for us has acted in the most marvellous way.

Colossians 1, verse 21, puts it so clearly. Once you were alienated from God, you were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour, but now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight without blemish and free from accusation.

Brothers and sisters, there's a sermon there, we're not going to have it now, you'll be relieved, but the point is this, isn't it? You were alienated. There was a wall, there was a barrier there. You couldn't climb over it, you couldn't get round it, you were alienated.

[42 : 40] I was alienated. There was nothing we could do. Why? Because we're evil. Because the heart is deceitful above all things. But Christ has reconciled by his physical death, and now the sin that separates us, the barriers taken down if we ask for forgiveness and we believe on him and believe in Christ's name.

The barrier has been taken down and the point is this, we are now, God sees us differently, holy, pure in his sight and free from accusation.

He brings nothing, he can bring no accusation against us. We've been given that righteousness of God. Isn't that extraordinary? missionary? Well that's the message of the cross.

And that's the message of the work of Christ which we see in a very small way through Moses. So I just pray today that we will take away the seriousness of sin.

We will take away something of the great love and mercy of God. God. And we will never give up praying for those and never give up praying for the lost because God hears our prayers and in his grace and mercy as he answered Moses' prayer he can answer ours.

[44 : 11] Let's pray. Lord these are most extraordinary things. These people were guilty many times over.

They didn't deserve your grace or mercy. They didn't deserve love. They didn't deserve all you were going to give them and yet you gave it to them. And we thank you for this mysterious passage in a way we cannot fully understand it.

Why you listened to Moses but you did. And we cannot understand what one earth you should have such love for people who have offended you so greatly through their sin to send your son to reconcile us to you.

But you did. Oh gracious Lord we thank you. Lord we pray you take every bit of human pride when we perhaps feel we're doing rather well for you away from us.

And we would live in the light of what we were before we knew you. And what you're making us.

[45 : 22] And Lord we pray again if we don't know your wonderful forgiveness. If there's any here who do not know they would want to know that today is the day.

Lord we pray as you instructed your people. As he's instructed your word. If you hear his voice today do not harden your hearts. Lord we thank you for such wonderful words.

And such wonderful promises. And we thank you that because of the cross we can be part of your family and know and love you. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Move to Allah'cu'ala claims.