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Psalm Overview (Part 2)



Bible Book Overviews - Steve Gregg

In this overview, Steve Gregg explores the different categories of Psalms, including Messianic, penitential, and imprecatory Psalms. He discusses how imprecatory Psalms, while expressing a wish for harm or curse upon one's enemies, can be appropriate in the context of spiritual warfare and opposition to the kingdom of God. Gregg also emphasizes the significance of Psalms for Christians, as it contains promises, prophecies, and allusions to the Messiah, and serves as a valuable guide for prayer.

Transcript

We're talking about the Psalms, and we were talking about Messianic Psalms. As much as that would be enjoyable to go through some of them in detail, that just isn't going to be possible in an overview and introduction to the Psalms like we're having here, so we're just going to move along to see some other kinds of Psalms that are not Messianic Psalms. There are what we call penitential Psalms.

Now, penitence means repentance, being sorry. That's why prisons used to be called, maybe they still are, penitentiaries. Supposedly, the person who committed a crime goes there to be made sorry for what he did.

I'm not sure it usually works out that way, but whether it does or not, the word penitence means to be sorry, or to repent. Now, there are quite a few Psalms that are called penitential Psalms, because they are Psalms of repentance. The writer, often David, but not always, is repenting of something.

Those Psalms would include Psalm 6, so we come to one of them rather early on, Psalm 32, Psalm 38, Psalm 51, Psalm 102, Psalm 130, and Psalm 143. Now, of those, two should be very familiar to you, Psalm 32 and Psalm 51. Both among the penitential Psalms are well known because they were written by David with reference to his sin with Bathsheba.

It would appear that they are not in their correct order in the Psalm. We don't know why the Psalter was arranged the way it was, but Psalm 51 appears to be earlier written than Psalm 32, but they're both about the same sin. If you look at Psalm 51, we're not going

to read it because I'm hoping it's familiar enough and we just don't have time to read every Psalm that I'd like to talk about tonight.

I just want to show you the Psalm title. Psalm 51 has this Psalm title. Now, you remember when David impregnated his neighbor's wife and then had his neighbor killed so that David could marry her and conceal the fact that he'd had an affair with her.

She had a child and that child actually died. But before the child died, Nathan the prophet came to David and rebuked him for the sin and David repented. And this Psalm, we are told, was written on the occasion of David's repentance.

This Psalm 51 is the setting into words and into poetry, the grief that David felt for over his sin. This was his repenting Psalm. Now, when you turn to Psalm 32, it apparently was written later because David is again talking about this event, but he's talking about it as something in the past.

He's writing as one who has already experienced the joy of forgiveness. Now, when Psalm 51 was written, he was very grieved and seeking forgiveness. That's where he said, creating me a clean heart, O God, renew a right spirit within me.

Do not cast me away from your presence, O Lord. Do not take your Holy Spirit from me. He's grieved and he's fearful that God's going to abandon him because of his sin, but he's repenting.

But in Psalm 32, he's upbeat. He's been forgiven. He's rejoicing in his forgiveness.

And you can see the opening words of this Psalm 32. He says, Blessed is he which is happy. Happy is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

By the way, this is quoted by Paul in Romans chapter four to point out that David knew justification by faith apart from the works of the law, because David would never have been justified of adultery or murder under the law. There was no way a murderer or adulterer could be justified under the law. They had to be put to death.

But David unilaterally forgave him. And Paul quoting this very verse in Romans four is given as an example of the idea that people were justified apart from the law, even in the Old Testament. Abraham being the most notable example, where it says Abraham believed in the Lord and was counted him for righteousness.

David being a second example from this Psalm. He says in verse two, Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity and in whose spirit there is no deceit. Now notice he says, When I kept silent, that is when I this is before I repented, when it was my little secret and I wasn't talking about it before I opened up and confessed my sin.

When I kept silent, my bones grew old through my groaning all the day long for day and

night. Your hand was heavy upon me. My vitality was turned into drought of summer.

I acknowledged my sin to you and my iniquity. I have not hidden. And that action was in the writing of Psalm 51.

I said, I will confess my transgression to the Lord and you forgave the iniquity of my sin for this cause. Everyone who is godly shall pray to you at a time when you may be found in so forth. The Psalm goes on.

But this Psalm is apparently a sequel to Psalm 51. How they got arranged in reverse order in the collection of the Psalms is I don't think anyone can tell. But it's clear that these penitential Psalms are all penitential Psalms are the Psalms verbalizing his repentance over some sin.

And by the way, these Psalms, therefore, are prayers of repentance. Which often are very suitable for people to pray when they are have something to repent of and when they're repenting. That's one of the great things about the book of Psalms.

I didn't mention it, but it was the song book for Israel. It was like like churches used to have hymnals in their pews that they'd sing from the hymns. Psalms were the hymn book of Israel.

And they'd pray these Psalms. They'd memorize them and pray them on the occasions when they were appropriate, like when you needed to repent. Then there's imprecatory Psalms.

These are the ones that make us the most uneasy. What does imprecatory mean? What do these big words come from anyway? We don't use these words in modern English very much. An imprecation is a curse.

It's cursing somebody. It's wishing evil on somebody. And there are quite a few Psalms where the Psalmist very clearly wishes evil on the bad guys.

Now, the reason this makes us uncomfortable is because he gets very explicit sometimes about the bad things he really would like to see happen to certain people. And we think, but didn't Jesus say, love your enemies and bless those who curse you and do good to those who spitefully use you and persecute you? Yeah, Jesus did say that. David lived before that.

He wasn't very much aware of what Jesus said. He had no occasion. Jesus would come along a thousand years later.

But even after Jesus came, it did not end Christians praying imprecatory prayers. We find, for example, in 1 Corinthians 16. 22 Paul says, if anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema.

That means a curse. He's praying a curse on anyone who doesn't love Jesus. Now, I don't think it's just those who don't love Jesus because they never heard of him.

I think Paul has in mind some of his enemies who are trying to, you know, stifle the gospel, trying to stop Paul from preaching. We certainly, he certainly has that in mind in one of the imprecations we find in 2 Timothy 4. In verse 14, 2 Timothy 4.14, Paul says, Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm. May the Lord repay him according to his deeds.

Now that's wishing harm on him. This guy did bad. I hope God repays him according to what he did.

Hope God pays him back. In other words, for the wrong he did. That's not wishing good on him.

But look what he says. You also must beware of him for he has greatly resisted our words. Paul is angry at this guy because he's resisting the gospel.

Paul really didn't ever wish evil on people simply because they treated him badly and it was just a personal thing. It was those who opposed the gospel. And we can, we can see this even in this very place in 2 Timothy where Paul says this because in the very next verse, verse 16, he says, at my first defense, he's talking about the first time he stood before Nero on trial for his life.

At my first defense, no one stood with me. All my friends left me. All forsook me.

Then he says, may it not be charged against them. Now that's interesting. When Paul is on trial for his life and his friends should be backing him up.

They should be writing amicus briefs for him. You know, saying, hey, character witnesses, hey, this guy's a good guy. He's not guilty of anything.

Instead of that, they all ran away. All his friends abandoned him when he's on trial before Nero for his life. Is Paul angry at them? He says, may the Lord not charge them.

May he not lay that to their charge. A little bit like what he heard Stephen say before Paul was even converted. He heard Stephen say, Lord, do not lay this sin to their charge.

When they stoned him, Saul heard that. I think that informed his attitude. Those who hurt me, those who betray me, those that insult me.

I hope God doesn't punish him for that. But the guy who's opposing our words, I hope God gets him really good. May the Lord repay him according to his deeds because he's opposing our words.

And our words are the gospel. And, you know, Paul was wishing very much evil on those

who were opposing the gospel. Not just those who hadn't heard it or didn't know it, but those who were opposing it.

Now look over at Revelation chapter 6. Here's some imprecations. And these ones are uttered by people in heaven. The souls of the martyrs.

Now, these people are perfect. These people don't have any bad attitudes to cleanse. They're saints.

And in Revelation 6, verse 12. No, verse 9. When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony of which they held. And they cried with a loud voice saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, until you judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth? Now they're asking for vengeance.

Now, who are they asking vengeance against? Those who are killing Christians like them. They're martyrs. And they're saying, God, how long are you going to let the devil's people kill your people? When are you going to step in and avenge the blood of the martyrs? Now, is this a bad attitude? It is not actually.

In Romans chapter 12. Paul says, Brethren, do not avenge yourselves, but give place to God's wrath. For he has said, Vengeance is mine.

I will repay. Now, God has promised he will avenge wrongs done to his people. And we're not allowed to avenge ourselves.

These martyrs were not saying, God, let me at them. Now that I'm invulnerable, now that I'm immortal, let me go down there and haunt them. Let me, let me torment them.

No, God, when are you going to do something about this? It's an imprecation. When are you going to go on and put an end to the career of these people who are killing your people? Now, we have to realize that if you are hating somebody because they hate you, you've got the problem. I mean, they've got a problem too, but you've got a problem.

You're not like Christ. Christ, when he was crucified, said, Father, forgive them. They don't know what they're doing.

Stephen said, Father, don't lay this sin to their charge when they're stoning him. Even Paul said, you know, these people abandoned me when I was on trial for my life. May the Lord not hold it against them.

The Christian attitude is to absorb insult and injury and persecution without malice. But the Christian attitude is not to be uncaring about the fortunes of the kingdom of God, about the profit of the gospel being preached in the world and the well-being of the saints, because this is the kingdom of God. And there's a warfare here, and our warfare

includes prayer.

Prayer is one of the weapons of our warfare that's mighty through God to tear down strongholds and cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God and to bring every thought into the captivity of obedience of Jesus. Now, that's what our warfare is. It's praying against the kingdom of darkness, including saying, God, these people are wreaking havoc on your people, on your word, on innocent people.

The only time Jesus, we ever read about him getting angry is when innocent people were being exploited, in that case, by religious people. But the point is, he never got angry when people did things to him. But he got angry when people hurt other people.

When this man with a withered hand was in the synagogue, and Jesus was going to heal him. But the Pharisees didn't think it was okay to heal on the Sabbath, so they wanted to prevent Jesus from healing on the Sabbath. It says, Jesus looked on them with anger, being grieved at the hardness of their heart.

There's a place for righteous anger, but it's wrong to be provoked to anger by simply people who are doing things to you. That's self-centered. You should be willing to turn the other cheek.

You should be willing to go the second mile. You should be willing to even die for another person, to love your enemies. But the enemies of God, it's a different thing.

This is what you find in the Psalms, the imprecatory Psalms. David is praying that God will put an end to the career of those who are, usually, he says, they're breaking your laws, they're trying to overthrow your ways. Sometimes they were coming against David personally, but they're coming against him because he was the king of Israel, God's kingdom.

And they were trying to overthrow the kingdom. And David's concern was not for himself. We know this because we know his attitude toward people who are him.

What was his attitude toward Saul? Saul was trying to kill him, chase them around in the wilderness. Twice David had occasion to kill Saul. God had put Saul at his mercy, and David had mercy on him.

He said, I'm not going to kill him. Let God do that. If God wants to do it, let him do it, but I'm not going to do that.

And then when his own son Absalom tried to kill him and drove him out of his capital city and was sent the armies out to kill his own dad, David's general Joab killed Absalom. And when David heard about it, he was angry at Joab. And he wept over Absalom, who had tried to kill him.

When it came to people who are doing the worst kind of crimes against David personally, he wouldn't hurt them. He didn't wish them ill. He wept over Saul when Saul finally died, too.

But when people were opposing the kingdom of God, that was something that got David's blood to boil. And I think Christians sometimes, because we read the Sermon on the Mount as if, oh, we should never get angry at anything. We should never oppose anything.

We should just let the evil run, you know, without opposition. I think we're misreading the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus was teaching us how to relate with people who are hostile toward us.

We should love them. We should serve them. We should bless them.

But we should also recognize we're in a warfare, as David was, as there was a warfare in the Old Testament between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. There is now. And our prayers are among the most effective weapons we have.

And of course, we're praying for people to be converted. We'd much rather see enemies of the kingdom become converts to the kingdom. But we know very well some will not.

And if there's going to be people who are going to be killing Christians, deceiving people, intimidating people from becoming Christians, and that's going to be their whole lifelong career, for us to pray that that will be a short career is not out of line. And that's what David prayed about some of these wicked people. By the way, Jesus taught us to pray, apparently, whenever we pray, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Well, what's it going to take for God's will to be done on earth to the same extent as it is in heaven? It's going to have to mean everyone's either going to repent and start doing the will of God or those that don't going to have to be taken out. Not by us. That's the point.

The imprecatory prayers are not prayed by someone who's going to go out and do it themselves. There are people saying, and David could have. He was the king.

He could have done a lot more harm to people than he did, but instead he prayed to God, you do this. You vindicate your own name, your own interests. And this is something that we find in a lot of the Psalms.

Now, some people think these imprecatory Psalms reflect a sub-Christian attitude. And that David was just reflecting sort of a fleshly anger, which would be inappropriate, especially after anyone had heard the Sermon on the Mount. But David hadn't heard it.

And so we find this kind of sub-Christian attitude. Now, you see the same kind of prayers done by the apostles, even by the souls of the martyrs in heaven. There's nothing inappropriate about using prayer as a means of overcoming the enemies of God, whether it be by converting them or by God taking other measures if they won't be converted.

We say, come quickly, Lord Jesus, but what will it mean when he comes? What will happen then? Well, the Bible says he'll come in flaming fire, taking vengeance on those who don't know God and who don't obey the gospel. It says that in 2 Thessalonians 1.8. So is that what we're asking? That God will come and take vengeance on the wicked in flaming fire, burn them up? Well, then if we say, come quickly, Lord Jesus, and that's what's going to involve, how can it be wrong to pray for individual situations? For like those who are seeking to destroy this country? I mean, in this country, there may be things we can do besides pray, but nothing we can do is as effective as praying. I think Christians often, yeah, I think many times Christianity fails in certain societies and in history, some societies have failed.

Some of the churches in Revelation that, you know, the seven churches in Asia, Jesus wrote to them. They had problems in them. They needed to repent.

Those churches aren't there today. That's Turkey. That's Muslim country now.

The church often fails for lack of conducting its spiritual warfare and spiritual warfare is very largely prayer. And so imprecatory prayers are found in the Psalms. I'll give you a list of some of their in their in your notes, but some listening don't have the notes.

Psalms 5, Psalm 10. Psalm 17. Psalm 35.

Psalms 58 and 59. Psalm 69 and 70. Psalm 79.

83. 109. 129.

137. And 140. Those are all Psalms that are either entirely or if not entirely at least some verses in them are imprecatory.

One of the most difficult for Christians to read is Psalm 137, which is one of these imprecatory Psalms. This is an utterance by a Jew who's in Babylon. And he's grieving over what the Babylonians have done to Jerusalem because the Babylonians have come and they burned down the city, burned down the temple, slaughtered people, disemboweled pregnant women, put out the eyes of the king after they slew his sons before before the Lord.

His eyes. That's the last thing I see. His son's put to death and he's has his eyes out.

He's Babylonians, pretty nasty people. And now this Jew who's been taken away into

Babylon, he writes Psalm 137. And the most difficult passage in it is in verse 8. Oh, daughter of Babylon, who are to be destroyed.

Happy the one who repays you as you have served us. Happy the one who takes your and dashes your little ones against the rocks. Now, I don't know any Christian who likes that verse.

Happy is the person who comes and dashes your babies against the rocks. Now, this this Jew who wrote this had vivid memories of the Babylonians doing exactly that to Jewish babies. It's very quick in ancient times, barbarous armies.

That's a real quick way to kill babies. I just throw them against the rock, you know, and it's a horrible thing. And what he is saying is.

And when I say this is not a very Christian attitude, and maybe it's not. But he's saying, you know, someday the same thing is going to happen to you that you did to us. Including some of the most barbarous things you did to us, it's going to happen to you, too.

And I'm looking forward to that happening to you. I'll be happy. The person who does that has my blessing.

That's what he's saying. Now, we live in times where we've never seen such war calamities. But if we live, for example, in Syria or somewhere, and we watched ISIS cutting the heads off, you know, 50 Christian men from our village.

And then we heard that, you know, the troops are coming in and they're going to cut off ISIS's head. We might not wish to be participants in cutting off their heads. We're going to say, well, an eye for an eye, tooth for tooth.

I mean, you can't say they don't deserve it. You know, this is what this is what they think is appropriate behavior. They did it themselves.

I guess they should be able to take their own medicine. It's a hard thing. It's a very hard word.

But see, we live in such a protected, pampered society. Unless you are in Vietnam, you probably have never seen any atrocities unless you watch them on television. But we can always turn the TV off and get back to our watch.

We can always change the channel, watch sports instead or something instead of things that disturb us. When you live in these countries and these things happen before your eyes and your own children have been taken or your own nephews and nieces have been taken and been slaughtered before your eyes, to have these emotions, not so far-fetched. And I would say that most of us who have, who really object to a song like that,

to a certain degree, we're showing how protective we've been, how sheltered we've been, and how little of real atrocities we've seen of war.

I mean, these, the Babylonians and the Assyrians, they would skin people alive. They put hooks through their lips and their noses and drag them into captivity. They would, as I said, smash babies against stones.

These people were monsters of iniquity, just like ISIS. And we might say, well, as a Christian, I hope the men in ISIS get saved. That is entirely what I hope.

I actually pray for that. I pray for the people in ISIS and these other horrible terrorists to get saved. The ones who don't, I hope something happens to them to stop them from continuing what they're doing, even if it means they die.

I don't want anyone to die lost. But if these people are going to die lost anyway, frankly, sooner is better than later, before they kill more innocent victims. That's, I mean, maybe you don't feel that way, but that's, I do.

And I think the psalmists did. And I think, frankly, the Christians in the first century did too. They didn't have animosity toward people who had done them personal slights and personal injuries.

That would be unloving. But it is a loving thing to say, I hope those people who are going around killing innocent people, I hope they stop by whatever means necessary. If they repent and say, I'm a Christian, I won't do that.

That's the best. But how many of them really do that? The ones that don't, Lord, stop them. That's basically what these imprecatory prayers are.

And I think only people who've been in shelters we have really would find it entirely difficult to relate with them. Now, there's some psalms that simply recount Israel's history. Usually they're trying to make a point.

Like one of the psalms is going to be saying how good God was to them from the Exodus on to whatever period of time they bring it up to. How God delivered all their enemies in their hands, how he provided manna for them, how he delivered them across the Red Sea and across the Jordan. And how he exalted them so much and gave them a great King David.

And a psalm like that would be all positive. But then another psalm will be talking about the same history and saying, but they rebelled against him here. They rebelled against him here.

They murmured against him at the waters of Marah. They turned on Moses and Aaron. And so, I mean, one historical survey will just be talking about how all the good things

God has done for Israel.

Another survey taking the same material, same period of time, I should say, will simply point out how evil Israel historically was in responding to God's mercies. They didn't do well. Psalm 78 and Psalm 136 are historical psalms.

But Psalm 105 and 106 are like the two I just described. Psalm 105 just recalls all the good things God did for Israel through their history. Psalm 106 basically goes through the same history and talks about how bad Israel was in response to God.

There are 15 psalms called psalms of degrees. They're all psalms of degrees. They are all sequential.

It's Psalm 120 through 134. Each one of these, the song title says a song of degrees is what the King James says. I think the New King James says ascents.

Ascents like A-S-C-E-N-T-S, like ascending. There's different theories about what these psalms are for. Some believe they are songs of Hebrew pilgrims making their pilgrimage to Jerusalem three times a year at the festivals.

And they're singing these songs along the way. There are other theories. I don't have time to get into them.

It's not important enough to know, although it's interesting. But these are just a group of psalms, 15 of them. Some of our favorite psalms are actually within that group.

Some very well-known ones. They're called psalms of degrees or psalms of ascents. I can't say any more about them for the lack of time right now.

And then there's a group of psalms, six in a row. Psalm 113 through 118. And these are called the Hallel.

And the Hallel is sung traditionally at Passover. As I recall, I think they sing the first two of these psalms at the beginning of the Passover meal and the last four at the end. Either that or it's the other way around, the four at the beginning and the two at the end.

But all six of these psalms are sung at the Passover. Now what's interesting about this is that in Mark, when it tells about Jesus taking the Passover with his disciples in chapter 14, it says, after they sang a hymn, they went out to the Garden of Gethsemane. So at the end of the Passover meal with his disciples, Jesus and his disciples sang a hymn and went out to the Garden.

These psalms, Psalm 113 through 118 are the songs they sang at that ritual. Now it's really interesting too, because when you look at some of the contents, for example, the last of these, and it would be the last song sung by Jesus before his crucifixion, has some rather poignant things in it. If you look at Psalm 118, it's more poignant to think that

Jesus was singing it the night he knew he was going to be crucified.

In that particular Psalm, verse 22, it says, The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing. It's marvelous in our eyes.

Jesus actually quoted that Psalm to the Pharisees earlier that same week, but now he's singing it. It's about himself. And it says, This is the day the Lord has made.

This is verse 24. We will rejoice and be glad in it. What a thing for Jesus to be singing just before he's crucified.

This is the day the Lord has made. In other words, what I'm facing today is the Lord's doing. God, my Father, has prepared this cup for me to drink.

Remember when Jesus prayed, Father, if it's possible that this cup pass from me? But when the soldiers came and Peter took a sword to defend Jesus, Jesus said, Peter, put away your sword. The cup that my Father has given me, shall I not drink it? What he was going through, he saw it coming from his Father's hand. This is the day the Lord has made.

God has made this day what it is. I'm going to rejoice and be glad in it, even though I'm going to be crucified. This is the day the Lord has made.

Then the next verse, 25, Save now, which is Hosanna, which Jesus had heard the people say a week earlier. Now he's singing it. Hosanna, save now, I pray, O Lord.

O Lord, I pray, send now your prosperity. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. This verse was, of course, shouted out by the people on Palm Sunday when Jesus was riding into Jerusalem.

He had heard it in his ears a week earlier. Now he's singing it, remembering that and yet knowing he's going to the cross. But these Psalms, knowing that Jesus sang these Psalms just before he was crucified, Psalm 113 through 118, the Hallel, is really amazing.

And then there's another Psalm that by itself is called the Great Hallel. And that's Psalm 136. Now Hallel means praise.

Hallelujah means praise Yahweh. And Psalm 136 is called the Great Hallel. And I won't read it for you right now.

It's too long to do that. But these are, again, another kind of Psalms, praises to God. So we've got Messianic Psalms, we've got Penitential Psalms, we've got Imprecatory Psalms, we've got Historical Psalms, we've got Psalms of Degrees, and we've got the Hallel, the Great Hallel.

I just want to say that if you go through deep trials and you have been innocent and

people have betrayed you, persecuted you, abandoned you, slandered you, reading these Psalms as prayers will often, you know, hit the spot. I remember a time, it's been 15 or so years ago now, when a group of people I had loved and cared about just decided they were going to turn on me, and they did. And to this day I still don't know why.

Actually some of them repented since then, but some have not. But at the time it was one of the most hurtful things I went through. I've been through a few hurtful things in my life, but this is one of the more difficult times in my life.

I couldn't even sleep at night. I'd go to bed at night and fall asleep at midnight, but then I'd wake up at three and couldn't go back to bed. I'd just open the Psalms and I'd read them out loud as prayers.

And many times one Psalm after another would just speak directly as if it was written about my situation. And you'll find that to be true. God has inspired these Psalms to be suited prayers.

A lot of times you don't know what to pray for. You're so hollowed out from your grief that you can hardly put anything to words. And you read those Psalms out loud as prayers, they're powerful, very powerful.

Now I mentioned the Psalm titles. I'm not going to go into that anymore. The Psalm titles, we're not going to linger on that right now.

But they are early. That is the early manuscripts of the Psalms have them. They seem to be authentic as far as telling us who wrote them, what the circumstances were when they were written.

There's some words in those Psalm titles that are Hebrew words like shiginoth, you know, that, that, that, why is that? There's a whole bunch of strange Hebrew words in some of the Psalm titles. A lot of times the Hebrew word actually is referring to a certain kind of song. And other times it's referring to a certain kind of musical instrument.

And I won't go into them right now, but they, they are basically apparently instructions to the musicians. Okay, this one's intended to be played on this kind of instrument. This one's this kind of a song.

And sometimes they'll even say to the tune of, and they'll say something like, which is actually a song title. We don't know the song, but they did say in the Psalm title once in a while and say, do this to the tune of, you know, the, the nest of the dove or something, you know, some kind of a, I'd made that up as some kind of a title that is the name of a song that the, that they knew. And so it's kind of interesting, these Psalm titles.

I mentioned, it's not entirely clear whether the titles are really to go at the beginning of

the Psalm, which is where they appear now, or if they belong at the end of the Psalm. In other words, the Psalm title at the beginning of a Psalm is, does it belong at the end of the previous Psalm or at the beginning of the Psalm where it's presently located? The reason that's a question is sometimes the content of the previous Psalm seems more related. And because if you look at the book of Habakkuk, there's a prayer of Habakkuk in poetry.

Habakkuk chapter three is like a Psalm, the last chapter of the book of Habakkuk. And the first verse of Habakkuk three is a prayer of Habakkuk, the prophet on Shigionov. Okay.

Sounds very much like a Psalm title, but at the end of the chapter, it says, to the chief musician with my stringed instruments. Now, see some of the time, some of the Psalm titles will say, a Psalm of David upon such and such. And then the next thing will be to the chief musician on stringed instruments, or I'm sorry to say, it'll say to the chief musician on stringed instruments first.

That might belong at the end of the previous Psalm. In other words, the Psalm titles, this Habakkuk three raises questions about this, because if Habakkuk is using this kind of notation, the way the Psalmist used it, then at the beginning, he simply mentions who the writer is. And at the end, it says it's to the chief musician and talks about the instruments.

So in a Psalm that says, let me just find an example here. Yeah, Psalm 12. The Psalm title at 12 says, to the chief musician on an eight stringed harp.

The next line says, a Psalm of David. Now, if the way that Habakkuk used those notations is customary, then the statement to the chief musician on an eight stringed harp really is the end of Psalm 11. Then the next line, a Psalm of David would be the title to Psalm 12.

Now, both lines are used as a title to Psalm 12 as it's arranged in our Bible. But the first part of that is the part that seems like it goes at the end of a Psalm according to Habakkuk three. This is just something to point out.

It's not important to know, I suppose, but I didn't want to go into this in great detail. Okay, finally, well, not exactly finally, we're getting close to it. Next, the book of Psalms is really five books.

It's interesting because the law is also five books. You know, the Torah is Genesis through Deuteronomy, that's five books. The major prophets are five books.

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel. And the Psalms are five books. They're not one big book in our Bible, but they actually identify the five books as you read through them.

Book one is the first 41 chapters. Psalm one through 41 is book one of the Psalms. And if you'll notice, at the end of Psalm 41, then it says book two.

And book two is Psalms 42 through 72. And if you turn over to 72, after Psalm 72, you'll read book three, Psalm 73 through Psalm 89. So as one might predict, you come to the end of Psalm 89, and what you find is book four, Psalm 90 through Psalm 106.

And it's getting monotonous, I'm sure by now, but when you get to the end of chapter 106, you find this notation, book five, Psalms 107 through 150. Now there are five different books of the Psalms, and they're identified in their proper places. These are different collections, collected by different people at different times.

Mostly, the first book is mostly written by David. The second book is also mostly written by David, though the third book is mostly written by Asaph. And the fourth book is mostly written by Anonymous.

There's no authors identified for most of the Psalms in book four. And then book five is a combination of Davidic and Anonymous Psalms. So they're different collections, in some cases, apparently by different authors.

We know that Hezekiah collected Psalms of David, and some of these collections may have been put together by him. I won't go into more detail about those, just because of the lack of time, and because of the importance of our last section of the notes I want to go into. And that is the significance of the book of Psalms to the Christian.

It's Old Testament, obviously, so is that really significant for us as Christians? A lot of times we think, well, we live under the New Testament, we're not under the Old Testament, so we should just study the New Testament. What's the good of reading the Psalms? Well, maybe I can change your mind. I mentioned earlier, the book of Psalms is the Old Testament book most frequently quoted by New Testament authors.

Now, I assume you're familiar with the fact that the New Testament authors quote a lot of Old Testament scripture, and they do so in order to back up whatever point they're making. They're making a point, and they'll say, even as it is written, and they'll quote an Old Testament passage. So they're basically saying this Old Testament passage supports, confirms, maybe provides the whole basis for the statement that the New Testament writer is affirming.

And that they did this with Psalms more often than any other book means that there's a lot of New Testament ideas, a lot of New Testament truth in the Psalms, and that's something that we can't ignore. I mentioned earlier when we're talking about Messianic Psalms, there's a lot of types of Christ in there. David is a type of Christ.

You can see Jesus in the Psalms. Remember, we looked at Luke 24. It says, Jesus said, that which is written of me in the law and in the prophets and the Psalms had to be

fulfilled.

So you'll find actually prophecies of the Messiah as well as pictures of the Messiah in David. There's also promises. A lot of really great promises are in the Psalms.

I've listed some, but let me show you, you know, just a block of great promises here. In Psalm 34, for example, this is not in your notes. Psalm 34, verse seven says, the angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him and delivers them.

Now to me, that's a really valuable promise. The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear God and delivers us. Hey, that's good to know.

That's Psalm 34, eight. There's a similar promise in Psalm 91, verses 11, 12. He has given his angels charge over you to keep you in all your ways.

And in their hands, they'll bear you up lest you dash your foot against a stone. This Psalm also has in the next verse, actually nine and 10. Psalm 34, nine, 10.

Oh, fear the Lord, you his saints. There is no want, that means no lack, to those who fear him. The young lions lack and suffer hunger, but those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing.

Now that promise that those who fear God or seek God will not lack any good thing, that's a promise. You know, that's a very useful promise because we often feel the lack of certain things. And one thing we can say, if God says we will not lack any good thing if we fear the Lord, well then it seems to me that we can be sure that whatever a good thing is for us, we will not lack it.

And if something we want, we in fact end up lacking, we can be quite sure that wasn't a good thing. Remember, Jesus said, if you ask, you'll receive. If you knock, the door will be opened.

If you seek, you'll find. But then he said, which of you fathers, if his son asked for bread, will give him a stone. If he asked for a fish, will give him a serpent.

If he asked for an egg, will give him a scorpion. He said, if you earthly fathers know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more does your heavenly father give good gifts? To his children. When Jesus said, ask and it'll be given to you, he means good things.

You're not getting everything you ask for if you don't ask for good things. If you ask for bread, you're gonna get bread. You won't get a stone.

But if you're asking for a stone for a meal, he's not gonna give you that. You may think it's bread, might look like bread to you. God may say, that's a stone.

I'm not gonna answer that prayer. You want that thing? You think that's an egg, that's really a scorpion. I'm not gonna give you that.

You see, we pray for things that we think are good things, but a good father only gives good gifts to his children. We will not lack any good thing, but we may lack things. Things that we thought were good, things we wanted.

Things we worked for, things we prayed for. It didn't happen. But if we are lacking it, it's either gonna be provided or else it's not a good thing.

Psalms 37 has some great promises in it. In fact, we were talking about this. We were looking at that as an example of a chiasm.

But it says in verse three, trust in the Lord and do good. Dwell in the land and feed on his faithfulness. Delight yourself also in the Lord.

He'll give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord. Trust also in him.

He will bring it to pass. Commit your way to God and he'll bring his will to pass in your life. Delight in the Lord and he'll give you the desires of your heart.

You might say, you mean if I want a Maserati, all I have to do is delight in the Lord and he'll give me that? Well, no, if you delight in the Lord, you're not gonna be wanting a Maserati. If you delight in the Lord, you're gonna want the Lord. That's by definition.

If that's what you delight in is him, you'll have him. Remember it says in Hebrews chapter 11 that those who come to God must believe that he is the rewarder of those who diligently seek him. Okay, he rewards those who seek him.

That mean I'm gonna get rich if I seek God? You're gonna get him if you seek him. The reward of those who seek him is to find him. There are, you know, delight in the Lord.

He'll give you the desires of your heart. You're gonna be a happy person if you delight in the Lord. And so you're gonna find all kinds of promises in the Psalms.

Now, the thing is there's some general promises too. Like, you know, a good person, no harm will come to him. He'll live long, his enemies will run away.

You know, they'll fall in a pit and he'll live to see his grandchildren to the fifth generation or whatever. I mean, those are not exact promises. But you find, you know, this rosy view of the fortunes of the righteous in some of these Psalms.

But some of the Psalms make it clear that's not always the case. There are Psalms, I've listed them in your notes, like Psalm 44, Psalm 73, Psalm 79. They make it very clear that sometimes the righteous seem to prosper and the wicked seem to prosper.

So why are there promises of the opposite sort? Well, the promises of the opposite sort have got to be understood to be not promises in the sense of absolutes. They are what God normally will do. He honors those who honor him.

But he may also see it as good for you to go through trials. He will give you what is good for you. But it may be a trial.

He will never give you anything that's not going to be good for you. All things work together for good to those who love God and who are called according to his purpose. And when the Bible talks about God doing all these good things for people who are righteous, well, there's many examples of God doing exactly that thing.

That's his normal way of doing things. But there are exceptions. And this is why Job's friends had so much trouble understanding Job's problems.

They understood God does good things for good people and does bad things to bad people. And Job just happened to be an exception. And they just couldn't make sense of his situation.

So they accused him falsely. Psalms are kind of like Job in that way. Some of the Psalms sort of give this rosy picture of the righteous person, everything's going to go well for him.

And that's exactly what Job's friends were saying in thought. And it's true to a very large extent, but it's not absolutely true. As I said when we were actually studying Job, these promises that if you're righteous, you'll be well fed, you'll have many grandchildren, you'll have peace, you'll have your own vine or fig tree, it'll be a happy life.

Well, this is to be understood this way. This is the way it is, except when it isn't. It's the normal way that God rewards behavior, except when he doesn't.

Now, if he doesn't in this life, there's a reward in the next life. And that's what Jesus said to his disciples. Any of you who've left houses or lands or parents or wives or children for my sake, you'll have a hundredfold more, along with persecution in this life, but also in the next life, you'll have many times more.

The rewards aren't always in this life. And so the promises may not be realized always in this present world, although they often are, because God does answer prayers for the righteous. He does provide for the righteous.

He does look out for the righteous. His angel does encamp around the righteous. Those things are true, but occasionally it's time for the righteous man to be tested like Job, in which case all bets are off how things are going to go for you for a while.

But you'll know that God, who promises things, is capable of providing them. And if he's

not providing them right now, he must have another plan for you at this moment. Things will return to normal eventually.

Promises. Then, of course, we have in the Psalms a wonderful guide to prayer. I mentioned that I, how much the Psalms helped me just as prayers, to read out loud as prayers in times when they were applicable to my life.

One thing you'll find interesting in many of the Psalms is this idea, I think, I don't know, older Christians from other generations used to talk about praying through. I don't know if any of us were alive back when that was a common expression. Anyone come from a church where they talk about praying through? They're talking about praying long enough to get through the problem that led you to pray in the first place.

You've got a burden. You've got an issue, that burden has led you to pray. It's crushing on you.

It brings you to your knees. But eventually, you pray through and you get out on the other side and that burden's rolled off. You've prayed all the way through.

Some people pray, but they don't pray through. So they have the same problem, unrelieved in their spirit or in their soul, the same worries and anxieties until, well, they never get over it because they don't pray until they've got the victory. This is what we see in the Psalms many times the Psalm begins, God, everything's going wrong.

The people who hate me without a cause, they're more than the number of hairs on my head. I've done them no wrong, but they're seeking my life to slay me. These are the troubles I'm in.

And he goes on and on through this prayer. He's talking to God. And at the end he says, God is on the throne.

God will deliver his people. God's going to bless his people. You know, it's like, it's like his mood is totally changed by the end of the Psalm and not just once or twice, but in lots of them.

In your notes, I've given you quite a few, but let me just show you a couple of examples of what I mean by this. Psalm 3, Psalm 3 begins, Lord, how have they increased that trouble me? Many are they who rise up against me. Many are they who say of me, there is no help for him in God.

And then he prays and prays. And at the end, he says, in verse seven, arise, oh Lord, arise, oh my God, for you have struck down my enemies on the cheekbone. You have broken the teeth of the ungodly.

Salvation belongs to the Lord. Your blessing is upon your people. That's like a really

positive affirmation at the end of a Psalm that started rather depressed.

Psalm 4 would be another example of this. Hear me when I call, oh God of my righteousness. You have relieved me in my distress.

Have mercy on me and hear my prayer. How long, oh you sons of men, will you turn my glory into shame? How long will you love worthlessness and seek falsehood, et cetera, et cetera. And then at the end, he says, I will both lie down in peace and sleep for you alone, oh Lord, make me dwell in safety.

So he's agitated. It's bedtime, but he's saying in the bedtime version, he's all agitated about everyone who's doing the wrong thing. Finally, he says, I think I can sleep peacefully now.

I think I'll give you a nice sleep. I'll lay down and sleep peacefully because God's taking care of this. I've unloaded on him.

Basically, I've prayed through this issue. Look at Psalm 7. Begins, oh Lord, my God, in you I put my trust. Save me from all those who persecute me and deliver me, lest they tear me like a lion, rending me in pieces.

This guy's in fear of his life. How does he end the Psalm? Verse 17, I will praise the Lord according to his righteousness. I will sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High.

His mood has totally changed. I've given you a long list of some of the Psalms that are like this, Psalm 10, Psalm 13, Psalm 17, Psalm 28, 31, 42, 43, 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, and more. These are all examples of the guy's struggling.

He's got anxiety. He's got trials and he prays and he doesn't quit praying until he can say at the end, the Lord reigns. Salvation belongs to our God.

The Lord will deliver his people. He comes out happy. Starts out sad, comes out happy.

This is a guide for us to pray until we get the same results, until the burden is lifted, until there's a witness that God has heard and he's responding. There's also an interesting other model for us in our prayers, and that is that David talks to himself sometimes. In Psalm 42 and Psalm 43, in those two Psalms, three times he says, why are you cast down within me of my soul? Why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God.

He's basically saying to himself, what are you upset about? Snap out of it. Remember God, hope in him, trust God. Stupid.

I mean, it's like rebuking himself and reminding himself and exhorting himself to hope in God. There's no one talking to him. He's talking to himself.

He's addressing himself. In Psalm 103, verse 20, he says, bless the Lord, O my soul, and

all that is within me, bless his holy name. Forget not all his benefits, who redeems your life from corruption, who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies, who satisfies your mouth with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagles.

He names all these things that God has done for us. Listen, soul, bless God. Don't just receive these blessings and leave them unremembered or have no gratitude over it.

And then, of course, the final thing here is that we saw in the imprecatory Psalms that the Psalmist prayed against the fortunes of wicked people who are harming the cause of God. What I'm saying is that these prayers, we're told to sing these Psalms. We're told that they are the Christians' worship manual just as they are the Jews' worship manual.

And therefore, the Psalms are models of prayers. I mean, most Christians, I have to say, if I ask them, they admit their prayer life is not really all that great. Some would have to admit they don't really pray much at all.

And it's not that they don't want to. It's just whenever they do, it just seems so dull. It just seems they forget.

They plan to pray. They get up an hour early to pray and they can pray for about 30 seconds and then they can't think of anything else to pray for and they go back to sleep. I mean, Christians have real struggles in prayer and they forget.

It's war. It's warfare. And the devil puts you back to sleep or distract you or whatever.

He can. And a lot of times, we need all the help we can get in effective prayer. And the Psalms are actually models of effective and appropriate prayer.

They're inspired by the Holy Spirit. And we're supposed to pray in the Spirit, which at least means to be guided by the Holy Spirit. And we need inspired prayers.

And the Psalms are there for a reason to guide our devotional life and so forth. So, I mean, we can see Christ in there. We can get a guide for our own devotional life, our own prayer life.

And so I hope that, I hope that maybe you've learned a few things about the Psalms that'll make it more meaningful, more fruitful to you when you read the Psalms. You really ought to, you ought to read the Psalms regularly. You may have heard some people recommend going through the whole book of Psalms once a month.

There's 150 Psalms. If you read five a day, you get through it in a month. And then do it again the next month and the next.

Some people also add a chapter of Proverbs because there's 31 chapters of Proverbs. So you could read through the Proverbs and the Psalms every month if you read one chapter of Proverbs and five chapters of Psalms. I don't say that you have to do it that

way.

I don't think that there's any rules that the Bible gives about that. But I would say you can't help but profit spiritually if you meditate on the Psalms, if you read the Psalms, if you read them as prayers. And even when, you know, the specific Psalms aren't the prayers that are relevant to you, you'll just pick up from the Psalm as a spirit of prayer.

You'll get a sense of how an inspired man in prayer, you know, how he puts together his prayers. And I think it'll be very much enhancing your prayer life. And you'll also see Jesus there too, which is always to our advantage.

All right, so we're going to close. But, you know, it's in about 10 minutes, it'll be 8.30. Why don't we just give you a chance if you have questions for 10 minutes, we can do that, then we'll close. Dick? I'm glad you said that some of these promises were, they apply when they apply.

Yeah. Although they don't say that they do. What I said about the afterlife in the Old Testament is that the Old Testament does not reveal post-mortem realities.

It doesn't talk about heaven or hell as a destination after death. I'm not saying it doesn't, I'm not saying there's no hints of it, but it isn't a focus. The law of Moses doesn't mention it.

The Psalms might allude to it a few places, but it's not clear. But we know about the afterlife because of the New Testament, and we recognize, as you say, that some of the promises in the Psalms, if they don't seem to be applicable in this life, bringing our New Testament understanding of rewards in the next life, we can say, oh, well, that's when it'll happen. So there is perhaps legitimate application of things in the Old Testament, especially the Psalms and the promises elsewhere, legitimate application to the afterlife.

But the subject of post-mortem destinies, the next life after we die, is not really a discussion topic, even in Psalms. Even if we conclude, oh, these promises, well, I guess they'll have to happen in the next life because they didn't have in this life, that may be true. But that doesn't mean that Psalm told us specifically about another life.

It just told us about God. God rewards good behavior. It doesn't mention a reward in the next life, but we can conclude that a lot of those rewards probably will be in the next life.

Yeah, if the Bible says the Lord takes care of widows and orphans, there's at least a dozen times, probably, in the Bible that commands us to take care of the widows and orphans. And that's how God does it. We're his hands and his feet.

We're the body of Christ. And God takes care of the poor. He takes care of the needy.

He takes care of the marginalized through commissioning his people to do it. I mean, it's

not like he drops man out of heaven to give them food. But God commands us to do those things.

So God does take care of them in that way. Now, if we don't do it, then those people may not be taken care of as well as God intends for them to be. Or he might provide for them some other way.

Psalm 2, yeah. Well, Psalm 2 is, it starts out, why do the heathen rage in the nation of Israel? The heathens imagine a vain thing. The kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers against God and against his anointed, which is the Messiah.

This is actually quoted by the apostles in Acts chapter 4 as being about Jesus. And he says, when they quote it, they say that the heathen who are setting themselves against God, they mention Herod and Pilate and the Jews, that they all set themselves against Jesus. And they, of course, the song goes on.

God laughs at them. Why? Because they think they can get rid of him. They even crucify him, but God has the last laugh.

He raises Jesus from the dead. And then God says, yet I have set my king on my holy hill of Zion. In spite of your attempt to eliminate him, I've raised him up and I've enthroned him at the right hand of God.

And then, and then the Messiah speaks in verse 8 and says, I will declare the decree. The Lord said to me, you're my son. This day, it's actually verse 7. You're my son, this day I've begotten you.

Ask of me and I'll give you the heathen for your inheritance and the uttermost heart of you for your possession. This is a promise God makes to the Messiah as a result of raising him from the dead and enthroning him at his right hand. And then it's an exhortation.

Therefore, you know, fear God, basically all you kings. Bow down and kiss the son, lest he be angry and you be consumed by his anger. Anger is provoked just a little bit.

It says, blessed are those who put their trust in him. It says as it closes, but essentially it's about Jesus and it's a command to people to revere him and to kiss the son would be in an oriental world. You know, you kiss the king's hand, you kiss the king's ring, something like that.

I mean, it's basically to do homage to him, bowing down, kissing his hand. Those kinds of things would be ways of showing your submission. Well, yeah, and we don't even have to go by our instincts on that because the New Testament actually quotes it as being about Jesus, right? Yeah, it's a great psalm.

It's one of the four great kingdom psalms. Any other questions? Yes. Much like you, through my trials, like the Lord answered my prayers, am I missing something here? Because you're saying something I'm... Yeah, the psalms were collected at different times than they were written.

And therefore, but the people who collected them might have arranged them purposely for that kind of thing to be the case at times. You can't read through the psalms, the 150 chapters of the psalms the same way you read through the 16 chapters of Romans where Paul's developing a case from the beginning of the book and it's all logically following one another. The psalms are more like a collection of poems.

And the poems may be related to each other or may not be. But it's not unthinkable that people who are making a collection of poems would put some of them in an arrangement where one would naturally suitably follow another. You just won't find that to be always the case in the psalms.

But you might sometimes. And you know, I mentioned that so many of the psalms start out with him being kind of grumpy or afraid or anxious and then they end up with him being all happy. There's a few exceptions.

A few of the psalms, he starts out grumpy and he's grumpy to the end. He never gets better. But not very many.

I haven't found very many like that. Maybe two or three, but there's like dozens of them where as a result of his prayers he obviously gets the victory. But I wouldn't put too much stock in the arrangement of one psalm vis-a-vis another for the simple reason that there's no guarantee that they were written in the order that they're now appearing in this collection.

But any reasonable sequence that might actually appear could be deliberate. Could be that the collector actually arranged to put them in that for that very reason because they do work together. All right? Yes, sir.

Okay, for those who didn't hear that. In Job chapter one, where the sons of God present themselves before the Lord and Satan is among them. The question is, how did Satan manage to go back to heaven when he was banished from heaven? Okay, two parts to my answer.

One is the passage does not actually say that it took place in heaven. The gathering of the sons of God are sometimes assumed to be a gathering of angels. If so, then the meeting could have taken place in heaven or anywhere else.

But some people think the sons of God refer to the godly on earth, of whom Job was one. And that this was when godly men gathered together to present themselves before God just like we do on a Sunday morning when we come to church. The people of God come

to present themselves before the Lord.

The expression to present oneself before the Lord is found many times in the Old Testament and everywhere else other than there. It refers to being at the temple or the tabernacle. People present themselves to the Lord there.

So if this is not talking about a gathering on earth, it's the only case in the Bible where that expression does not refer to an earthly gathering. Now, there's two opinions. One cannot be sure which one is correct, but some believe it's a gathering of angels, possibly in heaven.

Others believe it's a reference to godly people gathering to worship God, and that would be on earth. Like at some altar where they're gathering to worship God in some old pattern of the Old Testament. Now, that Satan was among them would not be as much a problem in the second instance for you.

I mean, because, I mean, when people go to church, it's not hard to imagine the devil comes to church too. I mean, people have temptations at church just like they do everywhere else. I mean, the devil is not afraid to come to church.

And so when the sons of God gather together to present themselves before the Lord, it's not unthinkable that Satan might be there too to accuse them or do whatever he does to them. So that would resolve the problem. Now, let's say it's angels, and let's say it's in heaven.

How does Satan get to go there? And your question was premised by since he was expelled from heaven. The idea that Satan was expelled from heaven is part of a narrative that we have been taught which can't really be found in scripture. There is a reference to Satan being expelled from heaven in Revelation 12, but it's associated with the cross.

And Jesus himself in John 12, 31 said, now is the judgment of this world. Now shall the prince of this world be cast out, meaning out of heaven. And he's referring to the cross.

The narrative that you are alluding to probably is that Satan was once an angel who rebelled against God before Adam and Eve ever were created. And he was thrown out of heaven with a third of the angels. That's no doubt what you're thinking of.

How could he get back? The idea that the devil was an angel in heaven and that he rebelled with a third of the angels is not taught in scripture anywhere. There are some passages that people use which don't say that. And it's a longstanding tradition of the church.

I'm not saying it can't be true. It could be true, but the Bible does not affirm it. So we don't have the Bible affirming that Satan sometime prior to the cross was thrown out of

heaven.

Okay, it is, we're commonly taught that. Almost every preacher would preach that. But I just have you know, the Bible doesn't say that anywhere.

Now, even if that's true, even if Satan was cast out of heaven, it was no longer welcomed there as an angel. That doesn't mean that he wouldn't be able to be there as a tempter, as an accuser. Because we see in Zechariah chapter three, that Zechariah has a vision of apparently heaven.

And God is there, and the high priest Joshua is there wearing filthy garments, and Satan is there accusing the high priest before God. And God rebukes him. So this vision of Zechariah chapter three apparently depicts Satan as being in heaven, accusing the high priest who is, the high priest after the exile's return from Babylon.

Also, of course, you know, in Revelation 12, when Satan is cast out, it is said that he had been accusing the brethren before God day and night. So he'd been before God, accusing the brethren, just like we see him accusing Zechariah, Joshua in Zechariah chapter three. But he's cast out at the cross.

And we know that, because when it says he was cast out in Revelation 12, nine, the next verse, verse 10 says, then I heard a loud voice in heaven say, now has come salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ. For the accuser of the brethren has been cast out, who accused them before God day and night. So the casting out of Satan occurs at the same time that salvation comes and the kingdom of God and the power of Christ comes.

That's the announcement that is made in conjunction with the casting out of Satan. So that happened at the cross. And that agrees with what Jesus said.

Now is the judgment of this world. Now shall the prince of this world be cast out in John 12. So even if Satan is an angel who was expelled from heaven in the role of an angel and is now the devil, it does mean he couldn't make visits back to heaven to accuse because we do see him in that role after, I mean, during human history, both old and new Testament.

Likewise, in first Kings chapter 22, Micaiah, the prophet had a vision of the Lord in heaven with the hosts around him and saying, who will go and cause Ahab to fall at Ramoth Gilead and a spirit comes up and says, I'll be a lying spirit in the mouth of his prophets. And God says, yeah, go and do that. And so Micaiah says, therefore, know that the Lord has sent a lying spirit to be in the mouth of your prophets.

So you will go and die. So I mean, God has this council in heaven and there's even demonic spirits there, you know, asking permission to do things like the devil is asking God permission to do something to Joe. So it is not impossible to imagine Satan having

access to heaven for the purpose of this kind of thing.

Although in Job chapter one, it's not 100% obvious that this is taking place in heaven. It might be taking place on earth. All right.

And so we've run to the end of our time. And I'm going to close with that.