

Those Who Trust in the Lord Will Never Be Shaken

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[0:00] Take your Bibles with me once more and let's turn to the book of Psalms, chapter 125. Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken, but endures forever.

As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds His people, both now and forevermore. The scepter of the wicked will not remain over the land allotted to the righteous, for then the righteous might use their hands to do evil.

Do good, O Lord, to those who are good, to those who are upright in heart. But those who turn to crooked ways, the Lord will banish with the evildoers.

Peace be upon Israel. You all know that we live in an uncertain world. And in the midst of that uncertain world, we have a certain word from God.

Amen. Maybe you came here for different reasons today. But I hope you came to hear from God. Because that is what His word is.

[1:10] A message to us, His people. Many people today are listening for God to speak. Well, He speaks to us and He does it in His word. And so in the midst of that uncertain world, we come today to listen to the sure word of our God.

We live in a time when the whole country, it would seem, is in an economic downturn. People who made foolish decisions with regard to how they financed their homes are losing them to foreclosure. Others who didn't anticipate rising costs in other areas are losing homes as well. Rising gas and food prices cause us to tighten our budgets, reduce the miscellaneous category, and reduce our spending in other areas.

Some are wondering if they will have a job from one day to the next. Others have already lost their jobs. You add to all of this the media's spin of gloom and doom, which is not what I'm here to do today.

But you add their spin of gloom and doom and the sky falling. And things that admittedly aren't good seem much worse than they really are. And then we don't know who the next president will be.

[2:22] We don't know when the government will start using our tax dollars more wisely. We don't know when or if we will be hit by terrorist attacks again. Or a nation that hates us will attack us.

Maybe you have difficulties on top of all these with your health. Problems at school, at work, or at home. It seems as though you are surrounded by problems in the midst of those problems.

God has a word for you today. I'm here to tell you today that despite all of this and even more problems that we're not mentioning, the sky is not falling.

I'm not going to take the time, or nor is this the place, I think, to show the fallacy of some of the gloom and doom thinking from a purely practical or financial point of view. Maybe much of the housing crisis is self-inflicted.

Maybe our problems with our budget are self-inflicted by spending money that we don't have on things we can't afford. Even given this, some of the problems are legitimate.

[3:25] People that are financially wise and frugal feel the pinch of rising prices. And it's painful. And you do have struggles besides these in different areas of your life.

No, today I want to focus on giving comfort to God's struggling people in the midst of such uncertain times. And the comfort that I have to give you is nothing earth-shattering.

It is nothing new, at least for those who have heard it before. It is earth-shattering in some ways. Because the comfort that I have to give you today is simply God Himself. He is the one that is able to keep and sustain and protect you in the midst of this difficulty.

With problems all around us. I hope that as God's people, we're not losing hope. I hope you're not buying into the gloom and doom theories that people are spinning all around us. I hope that you aren't despairing.

I hope that you're not losing sight of everything that God has done for you and has promised to do for you and will do for you through the work of this Son, Jesus Christ.

[4:25] Instead of difficult times bringing discouragement and driving us farther from God into despair, what will we do? Where are you, Lord? It should draw us closer to God.

But though it seems that we're surrounded by problems and difficulty on every side, the reality is that we are surrounded by God on every side. And He is there to watch over, protect, and keep us. We want to see from the 125th Psalm these things very simply today. One that God guards or keeps His people. And secondly, that should fuel our worship.

It should drive us to worship. It should cause us to praise Him. It shouldn't make us despair. We should come ready to worship Him. So God, first of all, He keeps His people. We see that in this Psalm. We see permanence for His people or security.

And we see protection and provision and peace. Four things there. Let's start with permanence or security for God's people. It's there in verse 1. Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken, but endures forever.

[5:35] God's people, those who trust in the Lord. If you are one of His children today, these promises are for you. You are like Mount Zion. You cannot be shaken. Just how unmovable and unshakable is Mount Zion?

What's the comparison that the psalmist is drawing for us? There might have been a lot clearer to the Israelites that read this psalm what Mount Zion was, but what is it for us? Well, back then and today, Mount Zion is the mountain upon which the holy city of Jerusalem was built.

God's holy city in the Old Covenant. And so Zion becomes shorthand for Jerusalem itself. It's the place where the people go up three times a year to gather for their festivals and to worship.

It's where God meets with His people. It's the place of the temple. It's where the temple was built on Mount Zion. And the temple, of course, is where God manifested His presence.

It's the dwelling place of God. And so, Mount Zion becomes viewed as the dwelling place of God by the people of Israel. Psalm 132, 13 and 14. For the Lord has chosen Zion.

[6:34] He has desired it for His dwelling. This is my resting place forever and ever. And think about that for a minute. If Zion is the place where God dwells, is it going anywhere? No, God is forever.

He is from everlasting to everlasting. And if He is going to dwell in Zion, then Zion isn't going anywhere. It's sure. It's unmovable. It's unshakable. It will endure forever. You are as secure as that if you are trusting God.

Zion becomes even shorthand for the people of God. Psalm 48, Mount Zion rejoices. That's God's people rejoicing. The villages of Judah are glad because of your judgments.

We could stop right there and be fairly confident that Zion is unmovable. Just thinking in Old Testament, Old Covenant terms. But let's go further. As in the Old Covenant, Zion just didn't signify just a place.

It wasn't just the mountain. It was the dwelling place of God. So it is for us in the New Covenant. We're like Abraham. Abraham wasn't looking for a mountain with a temple built on it. He was looking for a city whose architect and builder is God.

[7:42] Something made without hand. Something far more glorious than a mountain or a temple upon it. Zion for us isn't just a physical place in Palestine. We're not looking for a new physical temple to be built in Jerusalem there.

As some are anticipating. We are anticipating something far greater. Revelation 21. In the new heavens and the new earth, I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride, beautifully dressed for her husband.

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, Now the dwelling of God is with men. Do you hear that Zion language? Zion's word, God dwells with His people. The dwelling of God is with men.

And He will live with them. They will be His people. And God Himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain for the old order of things has passed away.

That's how secure we are. That's what's anticipated. And it is coming. And glory. Nothing will be able to touch us. Every tear wiped from our eyes.

[8:48] We're that secure. That certain. Though things around us seem very uncertain. And the most glorious feature of that new Jerusalem, that new Zion, again in Revelation 21, I did not see a

temple in the city.

Why? Why was there no temple in the new Jerusalem? Because the Lord Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. Now I know this is future.

It's something we look forward to. But when Christ came the first time, didn't He bring these blessings with Him? At least in anticipation. We enjoy them. Not fully. Not completely as we will in glory. But we enjoy them now.

Is not God right now our hope and trust? Is He not now Emmanuel, God with us by His Spirit? Isn't Christ our sacrifice for sin? Even now.

Isn't Jesus right now enthroned on Zion? What does Psalm 2 say? I've installed my King on Zion. My holy hill. Jesus right now is enthroned on Zion.

[9:51] And if Jesus is on the throne, then nothing can touch you that He doesn't allow to come to you. I've installed my King on Zion. My holy hill. Kiss the Son.

Lest He be angry and you be destroyed in your way. For His wrath can flare up in a moment.

Blessed are all who take refuge in Him. Those are the people in verse 1. Those who trust in the Lord. Those who take refuge in the Son of God enthroned on Mount Zion.

And so when we read of Zion, we should think not just of a mountain, not just of Jerusalem or the temple that once stood there, but of the dwelling place of God, the people of God.

God meeting with His people. You in many ways. You are the people of Zion. And God is meeting with us here today. The security of Zion then must be Jesus Christ.

He's the one who's enthroned there. He was the one who was sacrificed. That our sins might be forgiven. That we might be considered the people of God. The one who rules over us and defends us from that throne in Zion.

[10:54] The one who gives us the Holy Spirit so that God is indeed always with us. Christ is our security. He is our hope. He is the one that reigns.

He's our sacrifice. The security that you read of in Psalm 125 in verse 1 is the same that Jesus talks about when He says in John 10, talking about His sheep.

His people. I give them eternal life and they shall never perish. No one can snatch them out of My hand. My Father who has given them to Me is greater than all.

No one can snatch them out of My Father's hand. We read that and we find comfort because we know that if we are the people of God, then nothing can change that. All of the troubles that you are facing in your life right now that are causing you discouragement and worry and fear, it can't change your status in Christ.

You can't be snatched out of His hand. And so we say with the psalmist, in Psalm 146, the Lord reigns forever. Your God, O Zion. Your God, O people of God.

[11:58] To all generations, praise the Lord. Lord, yet though sin and hell assail me, Jesus will not fail me. We just sang of the blessed truth of Jesus who will not fail us.

That's what the psalm speaks of. When you read the psalms, don't just see exactly the words on the page. See that, but look for Christ in the psalms. He's there. He's all over the pages of the psalms.

And make sure you see Him there when you read those psalms. You are God's people. You are the people of Zion. And in Christ, you can't be harmed. I'd say that's pretty unshakable.

We'll endure forever. And so, Psalm 46 says, Therefore we will not fear. Though the earth give way and the mountains fall, or shake, that's the word that's used here, in our psalm, though the mountains shake into the heart of the sea, we will not fear.

Isn't that a remarkable thing? It becomes clear to us that verse 1, it can't be talking about a physical mountain over in Palestine because mountains can shake into the heart of the sea. We've seen it with earthquakes.

[13:09] Mountains can disappear. Mount Zion can't because it's something far greater than a bunch of rocks and a pile over in Jerusalem. It is God dwelling with His people.

And so we could say, though the stock market plummets and the purchasing power of my dollar drops and the cost of gas and food go up and my job is uncertain or my job is gone and though a guy I don't want to be president is elected and though my health fails and everything in this world crumbles around me and shakes around me, I will not fear because I'm like Mount Zion, unshakable, unmovable, and will endure forever.

I am in Christ and God is with me and so I can't be troubled by these things. And most importantly, our position in Christ as the people of God means not just that all of our problems are solved with money and everything else, but most importantly, it means that our sins are forgiven.

Our greatest of all problems have been secured. We have a holy God who judges sin. He's angry at sin every day. He's too holy to look on sin and we're sinners.

And God will punish those sinners who do not run to Christ. And so in Christ, our sins are forgiven.

Christ is so glorious to us not just because He is our help when we're out of money, but because He's taken the wrath and punishment we deserve.

[14 : 36] He's suffered in our place. He's provided the way of escape. We are secure. Satan cannot steal us away from Him. The effects of a fallen, sinful world cannot remove us from Zion.

One old commentator says, and he's drawing on scriptural imagery, and you can go and look up the places where people are compared to this, but he says, some people are like the sand, ever shifting and treacherous.

Some are like the sea, restless and unsettled. Some are like the wind, uncertain and inconstant.

Believers are like a mountain, strong, stable, and secure.

We can't be moved if we are God's people. Do you believe that? Do you live like you believe it? And we will endure forever.

We abide forever just like God's holy city. Again, we see that that can't just be a physical location.

You know what's on physical Mount Zion right now? There's an Islamic mosque.

[15 : 40] The Al-Aqsa Mosque. The Dome of the Rock Shrine. There's an Islamic stronghold on Mount Zion right now. That's not our security.

The temple there didn't last forever. But in Christ, He is still enthroned in Zion. He's on the throne.

The dwelling place of God and the people of God will abide forever.

We'll enjoy that new heavens and new earth and new Jerusalem that we read of from Revelation 21. All of these things with Christ for eternity. It's a glorious thing to look forward to now even as we enjoy it in anticipation.

And so we are secure as God's people. We are permanent. We're fixed. We're not going anywhere.

But the second thing we see about God's keeping His people is that we are protected. It's in verses 2 and 3 as the mountains surround Jerusalem.

So the Lord surrounds His people both now and forevermore. The scepter of the wicked will not remain over the land allotted to the righteous. For then the righteous might use their hands to do evil.

[16 : 46] God protects us. We're fixed in our position as the people of God in Christ and we are surrounded by God with His power and protection. Just like mountains that surrounded Jerusalem.

We're surrounded by our God. Mount Zion isn't the highest mountain over there. There's other ones that are taller on the edge of Jerusalem. And so we are surrounded by our God.

Protected by Him from all attacks. Spurgeon's words here. He says we are established. That's verse 1. We're fixed. We're secure. And we are entrenched.

There's protection all around us. Or He says we are settled. Verse 1. We're fixed. Secure. And we are sentinelled. There's a guard. A sentinel standing all around us so that nothing can reach us.

You find comfort, don't you, in the four walls of your home when a storm comes. I do. Four walls and a roof over my head. I'm surrounded by my house. I'm very glad for that house. It protects me. It keeps me safe in storms.

[17 : 46] But you know what? Storms are way stronger than the four walls of my house. You've seen storms that destroy houses as though they were nothing. As though they were a little house of blocks like my children build that if I wanted to, I could just kick over without even thinking about.

You know, God could do that to your house with a massive storm. That's the kind of power we're talking about here. The power of God. We're not to trust in the four walls of a house or a building around us.

We're to trust in the God who's able to destroy that in a moment with His strength. If you want to know something about being outside in a storm without those comforting four walls and facing a powerful storm but finding comfort in the God who sent that storm and who is able to protect you, then you find Christine Wessner and you talk to her about what happened to her this summer.

About being outside when a storm hits and not having walls to trust in but a God who surrounds you and protects you. For you sports fans out there, maybe this comparison will help you get the

picture.

Mountains around the city are like an offensive line around a quarterback. If you like football, you get it immediately. Those huge guys are there to protect their quarterback from the onslaught of a defensive line, the occasional blitzing linebacker or safety.

[19:06] The quarterback has to trust his offensive line. It amazes me sometimes to watch a quarterback. I think watching sports can be sanctifying. You watch a quarterback sometime in more ways than one.

You learn to control your temper and your emotions and all sorts of things. But you watch a quarterback sometime and once the ball is snapped, if it's not a play where he's dropping way back or scrambling on purpose, but where he drops back three steps and then a pocket forms around him.

That's what they call it. The pocket. And that offensive line, it bends, but theoretically it shouldn't break. And it amazes me to watch a quarterback stand tall, almost oblivious to the battle that's going on, just inches from him.

He's able to focus on his receivers downfield because he trusts his offensive line. Now he does need to be aware because an offensive line isn't really like God. The offensive line breaks down sometimes.

And sometimes the defensive line gets through and it gets to the quarterback. We got a quarterback here. You ask him what it's like when that line breaks down and he gets sacked. Hurts. I guess. I don't know. I've never been a quarterback, but it looks like it hurts.

[20:14] But you know what? That's, you know, as a quarterback is surrounded by his offensive line, so God surrounds his people. But God's offensive line will never break down. It'll never collapse.

And you can focus on the things that God calls you to be unafraid because God is protecting you. I think the clearest illustration of this though is from the scriptures.

And it's when the Arameans were battling the Israelites. And the Arameans would set up their position. And every time that happened, the Israelites were able to avoid them.

They knew where the Arameans were and so they avoided that place. So much so that the king of Aram thought he had a traitor right in his own tent. He said, the words that I speak in my tent are being spoken in the king's chamber in Israel.

How is that happening? The intelligence that was coming into Israel was so good that any country today would love to have an asset like the prophet who?

[21:15] Elisha. Right. God was telling Elisha exactly what the Arameans were going to do. And Elisha told the king of Israel and the Israelites acted accordingly. And so you can bet that the Arameans were pretty upset.

The king's ready to string somebody up. The king of Arameans. He wants to know who the traitor is. Somebody says, there's no traitor. There's a prophet in Israel. And God's telling him. And he's telling the king.

He says, well, you go find Elisha for me then. As though God couldn't warn Elisha about that. But anyway, he says, you go find Elisha. And they find out Elisha. He's in the city of Dothan. And so he says, send the army and we're going to surround the city of Dothan and we're going to get this Elisha guy and then we can get Israel because they won't have that real-time intelligence coming in. And so they surround that city. And you know what happens. Elisha and his servant wake up and when the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city.

That's the air man. You ever feel like that? You wake up one morning, boy, just thing after thing hits. And you feel like an army has surrounded you. And all too often, I know that my response is like that of Elisha's servant.

[22:29] Oh, my Lord. Oh, my master. He says to Elijah. Oh, my Lord. What shall we do? You said that before? I've said that before. What are we going to do?

There's an army all around us. Don't be afraid. Oh, okay, Elisha. Don't be afraid. Have you looked at the army all around the city?

And maybe you've said that. You read a psalm that says, don't fear. Fear not. You think, Lord, you don't know what I'm facing.

He knows. Don't be afraid, the prophet answered. Those who are with us are more than those who are with them. And then the servant's going, what? That's not right.

And Elisha prayed, Oh, Lord, open his eyes so he may see. The Lord opened the servant's eyes and he looked and he saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

[23 : 35] Same word that's in our psalm, surrounding him. And God delivers that. Aramea and I, he strikes him with blindness and Elisha leads him around and then eventually lets them go and the raids against Israel stop and God delivers his people and it's easy for us to have a chuckle at Elisha's servant's expense.

There's just two of us and there's so many of them. But aren't we the same? Or maybe you all don't struggle like I do with these things. But we look at our problems and say, there's only one of me. Or maybe two.

Me and my spouse. What am I going to do? And we forget that the Lord surrounds us. Like the mountains surround Jerusalem. Like the chariots of fire surrounded the city of Dothan.

May we not say when troubles come, what shall we do? As though our problems are insurmountable, but rather remember that God is protecting and keeping us.

Now that doesn't mean that we're never going to face trouble. You know that. You're facing it right now. Elijah and his servant were facing real trouble. And the psalmist understands that.

[24 : 50] He says in verse 3, the scepter of the wicked will not remain over the allotment, the land allotted to the righteous. It doesn't say it won't ever come over the land allotted to the righteous.

It said it won't remain there. It won't stay there forever. The scepter of the wicked might come over your life. You might have trouble. You might have difficulty. In fact, you will.

We're not in the new heavens and the new earth yet. The new Jerusalem hasn't come down yet.

Every tear is not wiped away from our eyes yet. We haven't reached the pain of no suffering.

The point of no suffering and no pain yet. And so there will be trouble. Even as the Israelites came under the power of the Assyrians, the people of Judah under the Babylonians, but their rule didn't last forever.

God restored His people to their land. You see that cycle again and again in Israel. But the scepter of the wicked never remained over them forever. And neither will your troubles last forever.

[25 : 48] The power of the wicked will not endure forever. Wicked men will not always be the ones in power. And even in the midst of their reign, Christ is still on the throne.

Now, if we were to face unending trouble, the never-ending rule of the wicked, if the scepter of the wicked were to remain over the land of the righteous, then we might eventually turn away.

We might eventually use our hands to do evil, as verse 3 says. But God won't allow the scepter of the wicked to remain over us to the point where we stretch out our hands to do evil.

Sometimes He will allow Satan to tempt us. He will bring trouble into our life, but never so much that we'll be forced to use our hands for evil.

There's two promises very much like this in the New Testament. One is on a cosmic end times seal talking about the tribulation at the end of the age. Matthew 24, Jesus says, for then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now, and never to be equaled again.

[26 : 55] If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive. But for the sake of the elect, those days will be shortened so that we can survive. The scepter of the wicked won't remain forever.

And then on a daily basis, we find the words of our God through the Apostle Paul. 1 Corinthians 10.13 We find these to be true, don't we?

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful. He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear, but when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

The scepter of the wicked won't remain so that you have to turn aside and use your hands for evil. As Spurgeon reminds us, the saints abide forever, but their troubles will not.

And there's great comfort there, even as we find in this psalm. What a blessing to know that in the midst of those troubles, though they come, we are still surrounded by the Almighty God protecting us, keeping us.

[27 : 55] He won't let us be tempted beyond what we're able. He won't let us face trials beyond what we're able to bear. He keeps us. Those who are with us are greater than those who are with the enemy.

And so we see that He protects us, but also we see His provision in verse 4, and it's really a prayer for His provision. Do good, O Lord, to those who are good, to those who are upright in heart. Based on all of this truth that we see in these first three verses about God, who He is, what He's done for us in Christ, how secure we are, we can pray to Him and ask Him to do us good. God's people are those who are good and upright in heart.

More about that in just a minute. But we should be good and upright in heart, and we are by God's grace. And so then it's for us to pray with the psalmist that God would do us good.

That's not being selfish. Lord, do us good. It's being biblical. That's what the psalmist prayed for. It's what we pray for as well. So, are you in need?

[28 : 58] Are you suffering? Are you sick? Are you broke? Lord, do good to those who are good, to those who are upright in heart. Not that that goodness is of anything in me.

It's only of your work and the goodness of Christ. But come and do us good. Provide for my needs. We don't just despair and throw up our hands. We pray for God's provision. We don't worry that we have quiet confidence in our God and we express that confidence to Him in prayer, trusting Him to provide for us.

And finally, there is peace for God's people. It's at the end of verse 5. Peace be upon Israel. With God protecting us, being secure in Christ, Him providing for us, then who can touch us?

Well, no one can. And so we can have peace like a river attending our soul. We can have the peace that passes understanding.

We can have an inner calm and trust as well as peace with God, no longer fearing His wrath.

Peace. Perfect peace. The blessing that comes to the people of God through Christ.

[30 : 13] See, there's these four ways that God keeps and secures His people. We are permanent like Mount Zion. We are protected. We are provided for. And we enjoy peace.

I want to talk for a few minutes now about, again, who these blessings are for. I said it briefly at the beginning. They're for those who trust in the Lord. They're for the people of God. What does that mean?

Who are these people? Well, let's let the psalm tell us who they are. It's in verse 1. The promises are for those who trust in the Lord. One of the marks of God's people is faith in Christ.

And only those who have faith in Christ are God's people. It's the only way we can be the people in this psalm that are secure. It was as true for Israel as it is for us.

You know, the people of Israel weren't ultimately delivered home to heaven by being a Jew or by living in Zion. They were delivered safely home to heaven by believing in Jesus, by faith in Christ, looking forward to that Messiah who was to come.

[31 : 21] We've considered already the new Jerusalem. Christ is the center. He is the temple. He is the hope for His people. We can only be God's children if we are in Him. If we are in Christ, having had our serious sin problem that we spoke of with God, not just serious, our desperate sin problem, that problem that's going to send us to eternal punishment, only if that has been dealt with by the blood of Christ can we be those who enjoy these blessings.

We don't deserve these blessings, but Christ has earned them for us. And so Calvin says, whoever then desires to be sustained by the hand of God, you desire to be sustained by the hand, you want to be one of the people in this psalm?

Let Him constantly lean upon it. Lean on that hand. Trust in that Savior that God has provided.

These blessings sound good to you, God's smile instead of His wrath.

Security in the midst of an insecure world. Protection when attacks are flying all around you.

Provision when you are in need. Peace when others have no peace. They sound good to me and they are ours only through faith in Christ.

And you, if you're not believing in Christ, can come to Him today and enjoy these things. The people of God trust in Him.

[32 : 43] But secondly, they don't do injustice. It's there in verse 3. For then the hands of the righteous might use their hands to do evil, to do injustice.

God's people don't do these things. Even when trouble comes near us and affects us. Even when the scepter of the wicked is over us. Even when there's trouble on every side, we don't do evil.

Our confidence in God is not shaken. And so we should never stretch out our hands to do what is wrong. I wonder sometimes if we let ourselves get away with this. We blame our behavior on our circumstances.

Oh, you say, things are really bad. The scepter of the wicked is on us right now. And so we excuse our disobedience and our bad attitude and our lack of faith. And if the economy is so bad that it's affecting the way you interact with your family, then we're forgetting who God is.

If we come home grumpy and angry because we're not sure if this paycheck is going to stretch until the next one comes, and so we snap at our wife and yell at our children, then we're letting our circumstances dictate our behavior.

[33 : 52] We are stretching out our hands to do evil and we're forgetting that there's no temptation that's overcome us, that we can't endure by the grace of God. The people of God aren't going to let their circumstances dictate their attitude and their behavior.

I fear it's a little bit sometimes like going back to watching sports being sanctifying. It's like some of us when we watch our favorite team.

If they win, then we're happy. And everybody else in the house is happy because we're happy. And if they lose, we're not so happy.

And we're frustrated and we're angry and everybody in the house hides because they know that dad's team just lost. That's not right. We're letting our circumstances, something as insignificant as whether a team wins or loses, and I'm as big of a sports fan as anybody, but isn't it really insignificant?

After we lose, we always just like to say, well, it's just a game. When we win, we gloat and we cheer. We lose. It's just a game. It doesn't matter if you win or lose. In the long run, it's just a game.

[35 : 06] And we can't let that dictate our circumstances. That's trivial. Now, you take that and get something big like, you've lost your job or you're on the verge. You don't know. And there's not a way to make ends meet this month.

Even that is not reason for us to stretch out our hands to do evil. The uncertainty of these times cause us to begin to doubt God.

Our worry reflects our lack of faith. And dear people, it must not be this way. We cannot let the uncertain world we live in control our thought, word, and deed.

Rather, we come back to Psalm 125 or any of the rest of the glorious promises in Scripture and we remember that God is surrounding us with His power. And we let that control our thought and word and deed and so don't stress out our hands to do evil.

The people of God trust Him. They don't use their hands for evil. And they do good. Verse 4, Do good, O Lord, to those who are good.

[36 : 13] To those who are upright in heart. The first thing we have to understand is that goodness and uprightness of heart can only come through Christ. Our only goodness is not really good at all.

Which is why we so desperately need Christ. His goodness credited to our accounts. His sacrifice to pay for all of our badness, all of our sin. And I think we see Christ in verse 4.

Do good to those who are good. I can't pray that prayer because I'm not good. Accepting Christ. And so, He is good and our hope is His goodness.

And we see these truths again are only for us in Christ. He's earned these blessings for us. But that doesn't mean that once we trust in Christ, then we go and continue to live our own way and say, well, I'm not a good person.

Christ is my only hope for goodness. God, come and do me good anyway. No, once Christ has saved us from our sins, then we seek to be good. We seek to do that which is right in His eyes, to live with an upright heart.

[37 : 16] And so, our response to the fluctuating economy and poor health and political upheaval should be night and day different from unbelievers all around us. From people without Christ.

These are the things that are true of God's people. There are things that are true of those who are not as people. Listen and see if this describes you and if it does and understand that these blessings are not for you.

Those who are not children of God turn aside to crooked ways. You see it in verse 5. Those who turn to crooked ways. They're those who don't trust in the Lord and so they will be shaken.

They're those who go their own way instead of the straight and narrow path. They prefer the crooked way of whatever seems right to them. And what comes of these people? Well, when trouble comes, when trial comes, they have no rock on which to stand.

Their foundation is sand. They will be grumpy and snap at their families and despair upon the loss of income and uncertain future. They will resort to dishonest means to make ends meet.

[38:23] They will justify their sin. They have no hope. But worse than the uncertainties of this life, there is a certain future awaiting them. God will banish them with the evildoers.

What we see in verse 5 is the reason why we must have Christ. God will banish all who turn aside to their own crooked ways with the evildoers and punish them forever. Deuteronomy 32-35 It is mine to avenge.

I will repay in due time their foot will slip. That's our word from verse 1. It will be shaken. Their day of disaster is near and their doom rushes upon them.

If your hope is not in Christ and you think that you're unmovable, you're not. You'll be shaken like the chaff and will be banished with the evildoers.

Punished by God for eternity. I know you don't think that. You must not believe it really. Psalm 10 speaks from the perspective of the wicked man.

[39:27] And he says to himself, nothing will shake me. Isn't that ironic? The one who's without Christ, the one who's not really secure, he says, nothing will shake me.

He's so confident. I will always be happy and never have trouble. That's Psalm 10 and verse 6. That's what the wicked man thinks, but that's not the reality. He's deceived himself.

No, my friend, if you're telling yourself that today and you're without Christ, you will be shaken. You'll be banished with the evildoers. You'll be sent to punishment. The glorious new Jerusalem with no pain, no suffering, no tears will not be yours.

Eternal pain and suffering and tears will be. I think it's a bit ironic and sad. Many times Christians who have every reason for bold confidence are the ones that are shaking in their boots.

They're worried. They're wondering. They're doubting. They're questioning. We're not living the way we should be if that's the case. You see, we have every reason for security.

[40:33] So why are we afraid? We're like a tree planted by streams of water which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. Psalm 1, why don't we go and live like that?

But the wicked who have no ground for their proud confidence, they have no reason for it. They are sure and confident and secure. You see, it's opposite of what it should be.

Christians should be confident. the unbeliever should not be. The reality for them, not so the wicked. They are like chaff that the wind blows away.

Thank you, Mrs. Westner, for teaching my son Psalm 1. And whenever we get to that part, he loves the blowing away, but that's all it takes to blow chaff away. That's it.

The chaff that Pastor Bob spoke of a few weeks ago. That's it. That's as secure as the wicked are. And that's not secure at all. They're like the chaff that the wind blows away.

[41:38] Therefore, the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous. You hear that language of protection. He watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

If we were wise, we would be confident in Christ. And if the wicked were wise, they would run to Christ. because they have no confidence, no security, no surety.

Do you know this God and His Son today? Do you know Him? Have you cast yourself on Him? Is He your hope and your trust?

You can. And these great truths can be yours today. Understand that God is so much more than someone to fix our problems. our greatest problem is not financial.

It is eternal. It is our sin. But when we are made right with God through Christ, have our sins forgiven, then these other blessings do come.

[42:44] The worst thing that can harm us here are not the lack of money, but rather Satan and sin. Penalties from which we need the greatest defense are not loss of job or health, rather their loss of our eternal soul.

The wrath of God. That's why it's so important for you to understand today that the answer is found in Christ. And His perfect work, His atoning death, His powerful resurrection, and you can come today and trust in Him.

Have your sins forgiven and have a certain secure future as well as present. The alternative is devastating.

It's horrifying. The wicked will not stand in the day of judgment. They'll be banished with the evildoers. And so there's the first point.

God keeps His people. And now there's a second point. And don't worry, it's much shorter than the first. And that is that this should fuel our worship.

[43:53] This should make us want and long to and eager to and glad to come and worship our God. You say, where is that? Where is that in this psalm? It's in the heading, I think.

Psalms 125, A Song of Ascents. Now these titles, we don't believe that they're inspired, but they do appear to be reliable and accurate.

And I think they can help us sometimes interpret the psalms. And so this, along with all of the psalms from Psalm 120 through 134 is titled A Psalm of Ascent.

And it's believed that these psalms, we can't know this for certain, but it's believed that these psalms were sung by pilgrims going up to Jerusalem, ascending to Jerusalem because it's on Mount Zion, and so you go up to Jerusalem, ascend to it, sung by pilgrims going up for their three annual festivals.

Exodus 34 and verse 24, I will drive out nations before you and enlarge your territory and no one will covet your land when you go up. That's the word that's here in the heading of the psalm.

[45:05] When you ascend three times each year to appear before the Lord your God. And so you picture saints, Jews, three times a year leaving their homes and their land and their field and going up, ascending to Jerusalem and singing these psalms as they went.

And you can imagine that these high thoughts of God must have stirred the hearts of those going up to that holy city to praise and adore and thank and worship their great God. They're going up to acknowledge the gracious hand of God remembering the Passover when God so graciously brought them out of Egypt and the protection He afforded them in the wilderness as they wandered. His abundant provision for them upon the land. They're acknowledging God's goodness and as they go up they think on these marvelous truths like they're security because of God's protection all around them.

They think on these things on their way to Jerusalem to worship. What better way to prepare for worship than to think on the glory of God and His faithful protection and provision for us.

And so these truths about God protecting us should fuel our worship. They should stir us to worship. And so what about us? Do you prepare your heart to worship?

[46:22] Do you think on what a great God God is in those moments of quiet that we have before the service? That's why we have you sometimes or invite you to read a song.

Read something that makes you think on the greatness of God. When you get up in the morning are you preoccupied with all sorts of things? Scores and the newspaper and getting your clothes around and everything else so that you're distracted and you walk into church and you haven't even taken a moment to think on the glory of God that you're coming to worship.

Think on Psalm 125. Do you prepare your heart for worship? I fear that sometimes we just get up Sunday morning we drag our worrying complaining doubting selves into worship and then we go home and we say well I sure didn't get anything out of that today.

I didn't feel very moved in worship today. Pastor must not have worked very hard to prepare because man there sure wasn't anything in that message today. Maybe we need to take a little more time on our way up to church to prepare our hearts.

Now I know Bremen's not on a mountain. Northern Indiana is as flat as it gets. We don't go up to worship. We don't ascend a mountain. That's why Mount Zion isn't a physical place for us.

[47:51] It's where God meets with His people and so we can go across the flat plains to worship. But whatever road you travel however you get here on your way to worship prepare.

Take one of these Psalms of Ascent Psalms 120-134 and read one in the car on the way to worship unless you're single and driving alone in which case don't do that.

But if you've got somebody in your family that can read have them read one of the Psalms of Ascent on your way to worship and praise God for who He is and let it stir your hearts and let that fuel and fire your worship.

Let's go up to God's house each week not thinking on our changing world on our uncertain lives but thinking on our unchangeable God our unshakable God and our unshakable position in Him.

We are secure. We can't be moved. Praise God for what He has done for us in Christ and then let us come into His house and worship. Oh, sing His praise as those who believe it as those who have thought on it those who have been moved by it and receive His word as those that love to hear from their God who is so faithful to them.

[49:06] One of the ways He shows us His provision and protection is in His word and so we receive that word as those who love it and those who love the God who gives it. And so may we be moved today to true worship to thanks and praise and every time we gather together for worship.

Let's pray. Our Father, we thank You that You are with us, that You surround us even as the mountains surround Jerusalem. We thank You that we are as secure as Mount Zion, that we can neither be shaken nor moved, that we endure forever as Your people.

And we pray that You would comfort us with these things, cause us to worship You for these things, to give You glory, to give You praise because You are worthy. We thank You that You have done these things for us through Christ and through Him alone.

May our trust be in Him. And we pray that today some or many lost sinners might come and put their hope in this Christ, this One who is able to deliver them from their sins and to grant them this secure present and future.

May our hope and trust always be in You. Make us a people who don't use our hands for evil, but who do good, who are upright in heart, and so bring You honor and glory, praise, the worship that is to Your name.

[50:19] Help us. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.