

Audio Transcript of Sermon
July 26, 2025
With Gratitude

Hello. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Tom Laign with Sabbath Bible Study. How important is gratitude to you? Is gratitude something we only expect of others, or do we live our own lives with our own sense of gratitude? Is gratitude something we expect from the children in our lives and from those who are given things by us, or do we have gratitude for what we have in life? Do we have gratitude only in good times, or is gratitude something we have even when times are tough? It's much easier to have gratitude when everything is wonderful in life. When we have more than what we need and sense that a taste of prosperity has arrived for us, it's easy to look at what we have and have gratitude. When our home and life is secure and safety seems assured for our family, gratitude can be easy.

It can be more challenging to have gratitude when life is more challenging because we might not have that taste of prosperity and instead need to financially fight just to keep ahead. When our life and the life of our family is threatened, it can be hard to have gratitude under those circumstances. When natural disasters and the actions of man impact where and how we live, it can be hard to have gratitude. Instead of gratitude, we might find ourselves focused solely on the urgency of the situation to the point where gratitude is forgotten. Make no mistake, when life and property is threatened, we will focus on those immediate issues so that harm does not come, but as we focus on those imminent threats, can we ever do away with gratitude because we had to focus on those threats?

Towards the end of his ministry, Paul found himself a prisoner on a ship sailing to Rome, and that ship eventually wrecked because of the storm everyone found themselves in. It's easy for us to overlook with all the weather technology we have that it wasn't always this way. Today, ships will take care to plot a course to avoid weather which would threaten the ship, but back in Paul's day knowing what weather was coming was nothing compared to what we have today. Today's ships are engineered to withstand storm conditions that would have struck fear in the heart of sailors then, but there are still weather conditions that ships will do everything to avoid because some weather conditions still threaten ships.

Paul found himself on a ship headed to Rome with other prisoners under the supervision and care of a centurion named Julius. Instead of sailing directly to Rome, a coastal route was planned with multiple stops along the way. At Sidon, Julius allowed Paul to leave the ship unsupervised so that he could visit with people he knew there. After leaving Sidon, the ship sailed south of Cypress because of the winds. Soon, they arrived in the port of Myra where they changed ships taking one that was headed to Italy, and initially the sailing was slow because of the winds. Acts twenty-seven verse one.

Acts 27:1-38

- 1. And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band.**
- 2. And entering into a ship of Adramyttium, we launched, meaning to sail by the coasts of Asia; one Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us.**
- 3. And the next day we touched at Sidon. And Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself.**
- 4. And when we had launched from thence, we sailed under Cyprus, because the winds were contrary.**
- 5. And when we had sailed over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, a city of Lycia.**
- 6. And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing into Italy; and he put us therein.**
- 7. And when we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce were come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete, over against Salmone;**
- 8. And, hardly passing it, came unto a place which is called The fair havens; nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea.**

The journey was taking longer than expected and had taken them into the fall, past the Day of Atonement, where the weather became less stable and more dangerous for sailing. Paul cautioned them that sailing so late in the year could imperil not only the ship, but their very lives. The nearest ports which could have provided safety from the sea were rejected because they would not be able to accommodate the passengers and crew during the winter months. They decided to push towards Crete. Verse nine.

- 9. Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them,**
- 10. And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives.**
- 11. Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul.**
- 12. And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenice, and there to winter; which is an haven of Crete, and lieth toward the southwest and northwest.**
- 13. And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete.**

It didn't take long for a seasonal windstorm to arise, called a Euroclydon. That storm made sailing rough, and the sailors responded by trying to rig the ship in the best possible way to make it through the storm. Three days later the ship was still in the storm and even the passengers were helping the sailors to rig the ship. The storm was so widespread that the sun and stars could not be seen. When everything was looking bad for the ship, crew, and passengers, Paul told everybody that they should have listened to him, and that God would have mercy on them and spare the lives of everybody on board the ship, but they would be shipwrecked. Verse fourteen.

- 14. But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon.**
- 15. And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive.**
- 16. And running under a certain island which is called Clauda, we had much work to come by the boat:**
- 17. Which when they had taken up, they used helps, undergirding the ship; and, fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven.**
- 18. And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day they lightened the ship;**
- 19. And the third day we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship.**
- 20. And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.**

21. But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.

22. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship.

23. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,

24. Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.

25. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.

26. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island.

Two weeks into the storm, the sailors determined they were getting close to land because the water was becoming shallower. Fearing they might be getting close to rocks the anchors were deployed from the rear of the ship. Some of the sailors were planning to use the lifeboat to escape and Paul told them they needed to stay with the ship to be saved. It was with all of this commotion and the arrival of daylight on a stormy sea that Paul encouraged the people to eat telling them no harm would come to them. It was then that in a storm that any reasonable person would say was life-threatening, that Paul gave thanks to God for the food that they had. Verse twenty-seven.

27. But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country;

28. And sounded, and found it twenty fathoms: and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found it fifteen fathoms.

29. Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day.

30. And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship,

31. Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.

32. Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off.

33. And while the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing.

34. Wherefore I pray you to take some meat: for this is for your health: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you.

35. And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat.

36. Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat.

37. And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls.

38. And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea.

Paul and the others on the ship found themselves in a life-threatening situation. Paul had been there to help in the most intense times of their journey through the storm, but that situation did not take gratitude away from Paul. He remained grateful giving thanks to God for the food they had been given. Going back in time a family found themselves in an intense situation also involving water. Noah and his family were the only ones to survive the flood. Once they made it through the flood and were able to walk on ground again, one of the very first things Noah did was to build an altar and provide an offering to God. There is no indication of the reason for this offering, but it's not unreasonable to conclude that Noah was grateful that he and his family had survived the flood. Everything they knew had been destroyed by the flood, and an offering most likely in thanksgiving, was offered to God. The offering prompted God to affirm He would never again destroy so much life from the planet. Genesis eight verse fifteen.

Genesis 8:15-22

15. And God spake unto Noah, saying,

16. Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee.

17. Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee, of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.

18. And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him:

- 19. Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark.**
- 20. And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.**
- 21. And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done.**
- 22. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.**

Before the temple was built, David prepared a tent for the ark of the covenant. When it safely arrived, offerings were given to God, and David celebrated by giving the people, bread, meat, and wine. Some of the Levites were also selected to take care of the ark. David also delivered his first psalm to thank God. In a time of religious accomplishment and triumph, the people celebrated, and God was thanked, showing gratitude to God. First Chronicles sixteen verse one.

1 Chronicles 16:1-11

- 1. So they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it: and they offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings before God.**
- 2. And when David had made an end of offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord.**
- 3. And he dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, to everyone a loaf of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine.**
- 4. And he appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of the Lord, and to record, and to thank and praise the Lord God of Israel:**
- 5. Asaph the chief, and next to him Zechariah, Jeiel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Mattithiah, and Eliab, and Benaiah, and Obed—edom: and Jeiel with psalteries and with harps; but Asaph made a sound with cymbals;**
- 6. Benaiah also and Jahaziel the priests with trumpets continually before the ark of the covenant of God.**
- 7. Then on that day David delivered first this psalm to thank the Lord into the hand of Asaph and his brethren.**
- 8. Give thanks unto the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people.**

- 9. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works.**
- 10. Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.**
- 11. Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face continually.**

Paul urged the Thessalonians to be supportive of those in their congregation, and that included warning the unruly, comforting the feeble-minded, supporting the weak, and being patient to all. They were told not to repay evil for evil but to follow good both within the congregation and their community. They were to be continuously happy through prayer and by giving thanks. First Thessalonians five verse fourteen.

1 Thessalonians 5:14-18

- 14. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.**
- 15. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.**
- 16. Rejoice evermore.**
- 17. Pray without ceasing.**
- 18. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.**

It's interesting to see the connection between prayer, gratitude, and happiness. In times of loss and hardship, I have found that through prayer and by focusing on gratitude, eventually happiness and contentment will replace the loss and hardship. The pain that comes with loss and hardship is with all of us for a while, but when we focus on gratitude through prayer loss and hardship fades away. Instead of mourning a family member or friend who has died, I find myself focusing on the gratitude I have for having had that person in my life. Focusing on gratitude tends to focus on the good and pleasant memories, and those good and pleasant memories evoke memories of happiness. Prayer can help us remember and focus on those things for which we should be grateful.

My memories do recall loss and hardship, but my memories of loss and hardship are filed away in the deep recesses of my mind vastly overshadowed by what is happy and good. What is good and perfect in our life is something we can have gratitude to God for. Even with loss and hardship, when we focus on the good and pleasant memories that reflect what is good and perfect in our life, all of that

comes up far short of the glory that will one day come our way as we are kind of a first fruits of the plan of salvation for mankind. Jesus died and was resurrected so our sins and the sins of all mankind could be forgiven, and Jesus was the firstborn of many brethren. As those who are now called in the faith, at the return of Jesus, we will be part of the first resurrection. James one verse thirteen.

James 1:13-18

13. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

14. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

15. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

16. Do not err, my beloved brethren.

17. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

18. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

When we think of different ways we can have gratitude to God, we can look to Paul as an example. He understood that long before he was called to be part of the faith, when he persecuted the faith, that there were those who were then of the household of faith. Paul understood that Jesus was part of these people's lives when He was still on earth and interacted with them after His resurrection and before the ascension. It was well after all this that Jesus intervened in the life of Paul on the road to Damascus. As a retired teacher who sometimes would keep the student with behavior problems sitting close to me during class, it was like Jesus kept a person who was behaving badly towards the church close to Him. Paul considered that compared to the other apostles, he was less than they were because he had persecuted the church, and yet, Paul was thankful for the calling he had been given showing gratitude towards God. First Corinthians fifteen verse one.

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

1. Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

- 2. By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.**
- 3. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;**
- 4. And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:**
- 5. And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve:**
- 6. After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.**
- 7. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.**
- 8. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.**
- 9. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.**
- 10. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.**
- 11. Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.**

Paul was also grateful for the triumph we have through Jesus Christ. With Paul, he was charged with preaching the gospel to the gentiles and he felt as if through Christ he always triumphed in preaching about Jesus. That reminded him how to God we are a triumph in Christ because through Jesus we have the opportunity for salvation. Because it is through Jesus we have the hope of eternal life, we do not confuse the message about Jesus or what is in the Bible. Instead, we sincerely represent what is in the Bible as if we are speaking to God. Second Corinthians two verse twelve.

2 Corinthians 2:12-17

- 12. Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord,**
- 13. I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia.**
- 14. Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.**
- 15. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:**

16. To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?

17. For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

Paul added to his gratitude on the triumph we have through Jesus Christ showing how it was Jesus Christ who triumphed over the powers of this world. Knowing our sins have been forgiven in the process, we can be thankful for the mercy shown to us. Colossians two verse eleven.

Colossians 2:11-15

11. In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

12. Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

13. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

14. Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

15. And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

The Colossians were told to continue in prayer and vigilance with gratitude so that the gospel could continue to be preached. They were also told to use wisdom in their interactions with those not of the household of faith and to let their words be gracious bordering on gratitude. Colossians four verse two.

Colossians 4:2-6

2. Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;

3. Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:

4. That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.

5. Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.

6. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

The Romans were reminded to be thankful to God knowing that while they were still living a sinful lifestyle that God called them to the faith, that they heeded their calling and were now living a life focused on righteousness. Romans six verse fifteen.

Romans 6:15-18

15. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

16. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

17. But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

18. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

When Paul contemplated that the law was spiritual but that humanly he was carnal and sold under sin, he came face to face with the struggle we all face of pursuing what is righteous while still living as a human. Like Paul, we recognize we come short of the glory of God and at times it might seem like the only redeeming qualities we have are what we have been given through the Holy Spirit. With that struggle between spiritual and physical, we strive for what is righteous through the spirit. We are also thankful to God through Jesus Christ that we have awareness of this struggle we all face knowing that it is the death and resurrection of Jesus that provides forgiveness of sin that makes eternal life possible. Romans seven verse fourteen.

Romans 7:14-25

14. For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

15. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

16. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.

17. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

18. For I know that in me that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

19. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

20. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

- 21. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.**
- 22. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:**
- 23. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.**
- 24. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?**
- 25. I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.**

With the Philippians, Paul connected rejoicing and gratitude while rejecting worry and fear. He told them to always rejoice while rejecting worry and fear by having gratitude when praying to God. Philippians four verse four.

Philippians 4:4-7

- 4. Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.**
- 5. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.**
- 6. Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.**
- 7. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**

Beyond having gratitude towards God, are we thankful for other people in our life, all the other people? Paul encouraged Timothy that beyond pleas, prayers, and interventions that gratitude be shown to all people including those who have civil authority over us, so that we can lead a quiet and peaceable life reflecting the righteousness and honesty that God wants us to have. As Christians we don't seek fame and fortune, but we also won't shrink back from these things when they come our way. Instead of a focus on fame and fortune we align ourselves to the will of God which is that all people are saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. From the many passages in the Bible, we know how and when this happens for people will vary and that there will be an opportunity for all to be saved. First Timothy two verse one.

1 Timothy 2:1-6

- 1. I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;**

- 2. For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.**
- 3. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;**
- 4. Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.**
- 5. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;**
- 6. Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.**

Jesus knew that the knowledge and truth of God would be given to those chosen by God the Father, and Jesus thanked God for hiding this knowledge and truth from the wise and prudent and instead revealing it to those who Jesus called babes, meaning those who lacked wisdom and prudence. He explained that only those who the Father chooses can come to Jesus, and that it is only through Jesus that a person can hope to come to the Father. He explained that while there is yoke and burden in following Christ, the yoke is easy, and the burden is light. Matthew eleven verse twenty-five.

Matthew 11:25-30

- 25. At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.**
- 26. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.**
- 27. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.**
- 28. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.**
- 29. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.**
- 30. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.**

The psalms give us multiple references to showing gratitude towards God. Having gratitude for God's never-ending mercy is one theme we see and in one psalm we are reminded to praise God for his goodness and wonderful works. Psalm one hundred seven verse one.

Psalm 107:1-8

- 1. O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever.**
- 2. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy;**
- 3. And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south.**
- 4. They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in.**
- 5. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.**
- 6. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses.**
- 7. And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.**
- 8. Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!**

Another theme of gratitude found in the psalms is righteousness, the kind of righteousness that will be found in the Kingdom of God. We are shown how the righteous will enter into the gate of the Lord where Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone, and that in the Kingdom of God, all will understand that the Kingdom of God when we have eternal life is the pinnacle of the plan of salvation revealed to mankind at this time, and we will rejoice and be glad in it, and for that we can be thankful, because once again God's mercy is seen. Psalm one hundred eighteen verse nineteen.

Psalm 118:19-29

- 19. Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord:**
- 20. This gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter.**
- 21. I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation.**
- 22. The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.**
- 23. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.**
- 24. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.**
- 25. Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.**

26. Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord: we have blessed you out of the house of the Lord.

27. God is the Lord, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.

28. Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee.

29. O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever.

Other psalms show more of God's mercy as the basis for what God does, and links gratitude to God's mercy. Psalm one hundred thirty-six verse one.

Psalm 136:1-4

1. O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever.

2. O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy endureth forever.

3. O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth forever.

4. To him who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy endureth forever.

The Book of Hebrews reminds us that we seek the Kingdom of God, a kingdom unlike anything seen before. Sometimes thought of as the mountain of the Lord, this mountain is not a mountain that can be touched or that can be destroyed in a natural disaster. When others reject God, we embrace God and the Kingdom of God with gratitude and awe. Hebrews twelve verse eighteen.

Hebrews 12:18-29

18. For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,

19. And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them anymore:

20. For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:

21. And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:

22. But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

23. To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

24. And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

- 25. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:**
- 26. Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.**
- 27. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.**
- 28. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:**
- 29. For our God is a consuming fire.**

We know that the Kingdom of God is a kingdom that cannot be obtained while we remain human. We know we must first be changed from human to spirit and that this will happen at the return of Jesus Christ when our victory over sin will be confirmed, and for this we should have gratitude towards God. Knowing we have this future confirmation awaiting us, we need to remain spiritually engaged, strong in the faith, and doing what is expected of us. First Corinthians fifteen verse fifty.

1 Corinthians 15:50-58

- 50. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.**
- 51. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,**
- 52. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.**
- 53. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.**
- 54. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.**
- 55. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?**
- 56. The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.**
- 57. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

58. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Finally, Paul told the Colossians that mercy should define who they were, and that kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, tolerance, and forgiveness should also be present in their lives wrapped together almost like a package in love. Beyond this, Paul urged them to be thankful giving thanks to God the Father through Jesus Christ. Colossians three verse twelve.

Colossians 3:12-17

12. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

13. Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

14. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

15. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

16. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

17. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

We live in a world where life is challenging, and we also live in world that seems to lack happiness beyond what brings us momentary pleasure. We have been called from this world and because we are not living separate and apart in this world we see the challenges of life, and we see the pervasive unhappiness in this world. We are called not only to eternal life, but to live our life today full of mercy showing kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, tolerance, and forgiveness through the lens of love, and we live this way doing what God expects of us all while living life with gratitude towards God the Father through Jesus Christ which leads to happiness.

Thank you for joining us today. God-willing we'll get together next time on the Sabbath. Until then, thank you for joining us today.