

Stairway To Heaven

My Notes 2/13/2024 Tuesday Zoom Meeting

[Song Of Solomon 2 14 16 \(youtube.com\) Stairway To Heaven](#)

[So 2:14-16](#) O my dove, *that art* in the clefts of the rock, in the secret *places* of the stairs,
Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice;
For sweet *is* thy voice, and thy countenance *is* comely.

15 Take us the foxes, The little foxes, that spoil the vines: For our vines *have* tender grapes.

16 My beloved *is* mine, and I *am* his: He feedeth among the lilies.

Lord we ask your blessings here. There's lots to study here, I think. Some very intriguing thoughts. So give us your spirit, and help us to rightly divide the word of truth to the edification of all those who have assembled in Jesus name, Amen.

OK, hopefully you can find your places in Song of Solomon, sometimes called the Canticles, and others refer to as the Song of Songs. So there's kind of three titles for this book. You'll find [So 2:14](#) where we left off last week, and there are some intriguing thoughts here in the secret places of the stairs. Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice. So we're talking here of the bride anxiously waiting to ascend the stairs, and to see the countenance of her lover, and to hear his voice. So this is supercharged, symbolically, of Christ in the Church, and all of us who wish, and longed to dwell in this secret place with the Lord. Now I suppose that most of you right now are already thinking of a corollary in the scriptures, and that would be the famous [Psalm 91](#). Well, we talked about dwelling in the secret place of the most High. So the image begins there in [Psalm 31:20](#) Thou shalt hide them in this secret of thy presence from the pride of men: Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion. So again this is all high symbolism, but the presence of the Lord, that being in heaven itself, and seeing the countenance of the Lord. So I already cited here [Psalm 91](#), but [Psalm 91:1](#) I think all of you hopefully have it memorized. He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. So there are two images there in the Psalms as well as Song of Solomon, that speak of this secret place, and that we'll abide under the shadow of the Almighty, and we're going to sit together with Christ in these heavenly places. We see also in the Book of [Revelation 3:21](#) the same notion of sitting in this high place with the Lord. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and sat down with my Father in his throne. So remember that James and John at least we think it was their mother that came to Jesus with the request that my

sons would sit at your right hand, and at your left hand, and your glory. And you might recall that Jesus here gives what I have to consider a mild rebuke. This is not for them to have now, and then, of course, he said, can you drink of the cup that I drink? Can you be baptized with the baptism? Where will I baptize? I'm sure that the mother went away wondering what in the world that could mean, but it all had to do with the fact that they were expecting the Kingdom to come immediately, and hoping that James and John would have a high position in the cabinet of Christ, and Jesus knew that there had to be the cup of suffering at the cross. There had to be the baptism of the misery, and agony of Golgotha before He could enter into glory, at any rate. Ultimately for the believer, this is our position with Christ, and we'll come, and sit in the secret place, and we shall see His countless. And even they that are from the east and from the West, and from the north, and the South shall sit down in the Kingdom of God, Jesus said in [Luke 13:29](#). And then I think I already cited [Ephesians 2:6](#) right? Yeah. And he has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. So a little bit more, let's expound on this concept of the secret place of the stairs that the Shunamite here is referring to here in [So 2:14](#). So in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance. So pictorially here we're talking about a stairway that leads into heaven, and remember, last week I brought up the the ladder of Jacob, and I'd like to give you a little further account here of what Jacob experienced there when he was at this place called Luz. [Genesis 28:11](#) And he lighted upon certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. I am the Lord the God of Abraham your father, Isaac. I will give this land to you and your descendants. They will be as countless as the specks of dust on the ground, and you will spread far, and wide to West and East to North and South. All the families of the earth belong to be blessed as you and your descendants are blessed. I shall be with you to protect you wherever you go, and I shall bring you back to this land. I shall not leave you until I have done what I promised you. God will be with me. That he will protect me on my journey, and if I return safely to my father's house then the Lord shall be my God. Everything he gives me I will set aside a tenth for him. Alright, so last week remember I used these two terms, esoteric, and exoteric, so. In this particular passage, we we have to interpret what's going on. So there is an esoteric meaning there's something that's hidden behind the surface. When we think of the exoteric, that's the the obvious that the details of him arriving at this place called loves. Changing the name of that place to Bethel. All of us has significance esoterically, but we find in the narrative these elements, and these elements are not placed there by accident. Jacob does not arrive where he has arrived by accident. All of this is predetermined by God, and all of it has deep significance. So we explored the esoteric meanings here. So when we see that Jacob is in Luz, we look up and find the meanings of these words laws.

LUZ. The ancient name of *[BETHEL](#), which was so named by Jacob after he had dreamed of the ladder from heaven to earth after spending the night near to the city ([Gn. 28:19](#); [35:6](#); [48:3](#)). It was the site of Jacob's sojourn near to the city, rather than the city itself, that received the name Bethel ([Jos. 16:2](#)), but this site later became so important that the name was applied to the city as well ([Jos. 18:13](#); [Jdg. 1:23](#)). The city was, however, still known to the Canaanite inhabitants as Luz, because when the Israelites took the city at the time of the conquest a Canaanite whom they pressed to show them the entrance to it in return for his life escaped to the 'land of the Hittites' and founded another city of

that name ([Jdg. 1:24–26](#)).

What does it mean? And it means the place of separation. If we recall the circumstance of Jacob at this point, he has stolen the birthright from Esau. Esau is out to get him, and so Jacob has to flee to the wilderness. So he packs up, says goodbye to his mother, and on he goes into the wilderness by himself. He arrives at a place of separation, then separation from his household, from his family. Alright, and we find him in this splendid isolation again, he serves as a type of Christ in this, because Jesus left the Father's throne, he comes here to the wilderness of sin, and is separated unto God. And God visits him. We'll get to this esoteric meaning in just a bit. So Jacob, in a place of separation, is a type of the center, alienated from God, weary from his journey in a hostile world. So we can go back to the roots deeper root for the ladder that now appears. So we have that English word ladder here. Some translated a staircase, a stairway, and of course our text here, and [Song of Solomon 2:14](#) speaks of this, this stairs. The secret place of the stairs where we'll see his countenance. All of that certainly could be encompassed in the Hebrew word cula, and it has the concept of Highway, corridor, or pathway. You know, interestingly enough, there's probably a direct route into heaven. I don't doubt that the astrophysicists will never figure that out, but there's probably a secret place, and we will be raptured up. We'll be going straight through that, and as far as well, almost like a time tunnel, will be ushered through rather quickly to get to the 3rd heaven. So here we find Jacob now he's asleep, as it were, and he's on a rock. We established that, I think, last week. Esoterically, it's a symbol of the sinner resting in Jesus Christ, and that our salvation is totally dependent upon him. Remember now that Jacob has at least seen from his infancy, from his place in the womb, struggling, holding on, wanting the better things from God, wanting to strive for that first place., but he's born second, so automatically he has lost the birthright, but early on is the children Esau comes in fainting from his pursuits in the wild, and he says I'm going to die, and Jacob says here's a mess of pottage, if you'll sell me the birthright. Esau says what good is this birthright? I might as well sell it now, so you can see that he demeans the birthright. He sees no value in the things eternal, willing to sell it for a mess of pottage. And as [Hebrews 12:17](#) says later, he sought repentance with tears but could not find it. Then of course the latest event that caused Jacob to rush into the wilderness was his stealing of the blessing. As his father is dying, he blesses him, but Jacob has stolen the blessing. He's come in under the coats of goat skin, and Isaac transfers the blessing to him. So Jacob is indeed fulfilling his name, Supplanter, but now we see him in a different circumstance. Now he's forlorn. He's separated as a type of the saviour. He is resting now on Christ, and as a result, resting on Christ. Heaven opens, and we have the angels ascending, and descending upon this golden stairway. So these angels, ascending and descending, are ministering spirits. You'll find this in [Hebrews 1:14](#) And they're sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. Now that's a New Testament thought, but it certainly applies here. After all, this is what Jacob is inheriting. He's inherited the blessings of salvation, the generation of a seed of people that God would call his own. So these angels are here, and they often are when it comes to the witnessing, and administration of God's covenant, and so they're here for good reason, but all this is somewhat unknown as far as its meaning, and significance to Jacob. It will be much later that the meaning of this would be revealed in New Testament contexts, and just to add kind of an addendum to this, so in [Genesis 28:18](#), Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. Now again, we have the notion of a an esoteric

meaning. What can all this mean? Well, for Jacob, it was just simply saying I'm in a holy place here. This is no longer Luz. This is Bethel. I've met God in this place, and so it is a sacred place, and the oil demonstrates separation, sanctification, and of course, later will become the symbol of the Holy Spirit, the presence of God. So he anoints this rock that he had rested on, and then he erects the rock, and it becomes then a pillar. It becomes a reminder of a holy place, and Ebenezer, as it were. So he called the name of that place Bethel, but the name of that city was called Luz at the 1st. So we're finding meaning here. So the pillar raised. If indeed we find Christ is the rock of our salvation. The pillar raised is a representation of Christ risen from the dead. If we find the pillar anointed, we think of the power of the Holy Spirit that was sent after Christ is lifted up, If I, be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me, he says in [John 12:32](#). So we have the Holy Spirit sent thereafter. [John 14:18](#) I will not leave you comfortless Jesus said I will send the Spirit. So we see here in esoteric terms, the meaning significance of all this. So we have the notion of God's help in this expression even Eliezer was the helper of God, and the helper of Abraham specifically, but we see that expression, the helper, and the covenantal name of God. So Ebenezer. So throughout by the way, in some sense we still do this. When we bury a loved one, we erect a stone, and it was a a common way of identifying the grave site. The modern cemeteries do not let you put monuments upright. They want everything flat on the ground, and simply because it's easier for them to just to ride their mower over it. Whereas with the stones that are tombstones that are placed high, they have to trim around it, so it's much more work for them at any rate. All of it hails back to this concept. The Ebenezer, and then the Ebenezer was also used as a property boundary, and they would use it as this monument. In fact, surveyors to this day used the expression monument when they're speaking about setting pins in the ground, you know, and measuring off meets and bounds. When you buy a house, for instance, they'll put metal pins in maybe a flag, but it all falls back to this notion of an Ebenezer, and it was first used by [1 Samuel 7:12](#) here when he took this stone up, and he set it in place, and so that's exactly what Jacob is doing in our account. A remembrance the risen Stone. Even in Pagan we have to some degree Neolithic architecture or finds, we find these steels Steele as steel, and these steels. As you can see, in this case this is one of the famous steels of the Assyrians, and you'll find in the Syrian language below, the king that's seated upon his throne the inscriptions, and they would write the history of some great battle that was fought, or some wonderful edict that the king had made, and this became a monument. Again, we do these things similarly today. In fact, we honor our veterans, and often put monuments up, and then include their names and perhaps even the valor, and the things that they accomplished. In some cases, as in this very famous scroll that was found. This is a stone scroll, but they would etch in there, and you can see the cuneiform written across here, and these would be various edicts that were given. This happens to be Cyrus scroll, and this is the scroll where he indicates that the Jews could return to their Jerusalem, and rebuild. So good ideas that we see here in the concept of the stones. Let's move on though, about specifically what was Jacob receiving here? Perhaps unbeknownst to him, it would be a fulfillment of the Lord Jesus Christ. You'll remember now the first chapter of John and the discovery that Nathaniel makes Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him now how this works is that Phillip hears Jesus, and becomes converted. Phillip Rush rushes off to his friend Nathaniel, who's sitting under a fig tree, and that, of course, has significance as well. Fig tree being a symbol of the nation Israel, Jesus would later curse the fig tree because he found no faith in Israel. But here's a man sitting under the fig tree that's blossoming, and Philip comes to him and says, Nathaniel, we found the Christ Jesus of Nazareth and apparently Nathaniel is more scholastic, and he says how could this be? [John 1:46-49](#) You know he understands the Messiah has to hail from the tribe of Judah, and has to come out of

Bethlehem at his birth. He knows all of this, and so he brings contest against the claim, and Phillip doesn't understand the argument, just says come and see. And so he makes his way to Jesus, but Jesus sees him coming from a distance, and saith to him. And behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile. Nathaniel said unto him, whence knowest thou me? And Jesus answered, and said unto him, before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Now what you have here, of course, is a demonstration of Christ commissions. That he is able to see, and know Phillip. Before he even met or knew Nathaniel, before they even met, while Philip is still on the journey. So it's just one indicator, one many indicators we could see of the perspicacity, the omniscience. That's demonstrated in Christ. Well, this is enough for Nathaniel, and he says, Rabbi, thou art the son of God. Thou art the king of Israel. So he makes this claim. It's very early claim by the way. You might have to say that it well certainly predates Peter's discovery of it in [Matthew 16](#). But that he understands who Jesus is just from that, and [John 1:50](#) Jesus answered, and said unto him, Because I said unto thee I saw thee under the fig tree, Believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these. So Nathaniel becomes one of the 12, and we'll see greater things for that matter, and he said unto him, [John 1:51](#) Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. So, um this hails back to our perspective, what Jacob saw. Heaven opened, angels ascending and descending upon the ladder, Jacob's ladder or passageway into heaven. So now Jesus gives us a further definition of what that significance moment was, and that the angels were descended upon the Son of God. Well, again, angels testified as to who Jesus was, and that was right at his birth. But now we're at the resurrection, and we're at the ascension of Jesus that's recalled in [Acts 1:9-10](#) And the picture there is again angels coming from heaven, and bringing, and gathering Jesus up. And then they're rebuking the apostles and saying, why stand here gazing all day long. [Acts 1:11](#) This same Jesus which you see ascending into heaven shall come in like manner as you see him go up into heaven. So perhaps that brings us full circle on the vision of this staircase, this stair, the stairs, the secret place that leads into the countenance. So Nathaniel, and the others indeed saw angels ascending and descending on the Son of God.

So let's move on to some more teachings.

From the [Song of Solomon 2:15](#) . Take us the foxes, The little foxes that spoil the vines: For our vines have tender grapes. So we have a very practical teaching here. It's given to us, and remember, the Shunamite was sent out into the vineyard to work. Her siblings said you're consigned to do the work. You know it's a Cinderella story. She's doing all the work and the sisters are at home. They're polishing their nails, no doubt, but it afforded to her certain knowledge about life, agrarian life, and some of the hazards of husbandry, and what was involved in keeping vines, and part of the problem of keeping the vines is that you had predators, and little foxes. Now one could look at that little fox and say, well you know, cute little animal, and so on, but oh what destruction they bring to the vineyard. So we can, we can expand upon the teaching here. We understand her frustration with these foxes, and she refers to them as the little foxes, after all. So it's a little thing, isn't it? But a little thing that causes a great problem. They spoil the vine. So once they've gone in, and chewed up the the grapes, they then begin sucking at the vine itself, and as a result vitiating the entire foliage. So that nothing grows thereafter. So they do tremendous damage, but here it is just a little thing that does this. So the practical teaching of all this is what little things can happen. You know, of course, that a

little leaven leavens the whole lump. [Matthew 16:6](#) Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. You see it in [1 Corinthians 5:6-7](#) Your glorying is not good. No yea not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. Purge out there for that old leaven, that you may be as a new lump as you are unleavened. Of course, I just taught this recently at church. The lesson? [Matthew 16:11](#) And it always has a negative context in the Bible. In the case of Jesus teaching, he warned of the scribes and the Pharisees and the Sadducees. False doctrine. The doctrine that puffs people up, but really has no substance to it. Now I readily admit I know nothing about baking. So I'm here on some pretty strange ground for me. But I understand that it takes a little bit of Leaven. So I have it indicated by a spoonful, you know, not even a spoonful, just a quarter of a spoonful of leaven, and that that's enough to do the work, and if you have too much it, you know will ruin the entire loaf. So, a little leaven, and that's all it takes, and it puffs up the dough. Unleavened bread is matstzah, and it's like a cracker. Leaven bread, though has this the air that goes through it, and puffs it up, and makes it soft, and that's what we're used to as far as eating our bread. So all you ladies here that know how to bake you, you'd probably can easily identify with. But if we put it in the context of sin. We understand that little things can destroy the Christian life, and Jesus is divine after all, and the little fox is the devil, and he does all that he can to cut us off, and cut our relationship off from the vine, and to make us dried up and fruitless. So we all have to be keenly aware of these little things, little details. You know, as you read your Bible, you start to see how much detail is involved. I I'm in 2 Kings at this point, and I'm reading in first Kings, that is, and I'm reading. The details of the building of the temple, and all the various things that had to be done in a prescribed fashion, and the little details that were involved, the Bible gives there. You can get lost in all those details, but basically they're building plans, and the same certainly could be said about the various cleansing rights of the Book of Leviticus, and details that in some cases become rather tedious even to read, and one might say, well, what's the use, and why do we need all of this? And you know, how does this strengthen or edify? Well, it demonstrates that God takes particular attention to detail. Now that's certainly evident to all of us. The details of the creation itself, and the fine balance that is involved in making life happen on a daily basis. The human body. It's not until the body doesn't work that we start to realize how intricate the detail is, and how important the various chemical compounds are that are in our bodies, and how a little bit of it going in the wrong direction, a little chemical in the wrong direction, and so forth can throw us so far off. So, certainly we understand the principle here, the little foxes principle. Let's take a look at some little sins that people would say, you know all well, you know, they're peccadilloes, no big deal.

SELF RIGHTEOUS

How about the sin of self righteousness of all the sins that Christ condemns this he brings his most severe exhortations to the Pharisees. They were self-righteous. [Galatians 6:3](#) If a man thinks himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. This is something for all of us to keep in mind. No matter how far we advance in the Christian walk, and how studied we are, we don't know much. We need to walk humbly before God at all times, and recognize that we're really nothing, but people flatter themselves, and people love to be flattered by the way they love the people, noticing

how important they are, and how talented they are, and how beautiful they are, and how intelligent they are, and on and on it goes, and this is nothing, but parading the flesh. Rather disgusting. And it's a little sin, you might say, but it has terrible consequences. So let us mind what [Galatians 6:3](#) tells us. If a man thinks himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. We've all met people that ever know it all attitude just in case you're wondering, nobody knows it all. God is the only one that knows it all, and I'm sure that we're all gonna get straightened out when we stand before him. So, you'll hear people say it being very demanding about it though. You know they know their right, and there's like no contest, no argument can convince them otherwise. Now isn't it best to say look I think that this is correct. In my experience it shows me, and then you know I know what to say. Oh no, I'm right. You know you can't hear any other thing. I pray that God keeps us all teachable, at any rate, the Bible seems to address this peccadillo, this little fox, and if any man think that he knoweth anything. You know with nothing. Yet as he ought to know. Oh how the Bible brings us back to the reality of who we really are. Oh in [John 3:6](#) Jesus said it rather simply didn't. He said that which is flesh is flesh. Doesn't that say it all?

SLOTHFULNESS

Let's think about slothfulness for a bit here. Now we're talking about the the lazy attitude, and not slothful in business, [Romans 12:11](#) says, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. So this expression that I think everybody's familiar with the sloth, and what does a sloth do? Well, he just lounges about all day long, you know, he hangs from a branch. Yeah, he hardly even makes an effort to feed himself. His hope is that some insect might come in his direction. He doesn't have to get off of his branch, and move very far. God save us from becoming couch potatoes. We have things to do, and we ought to do them fervently., and certainly the business of the Lord in the context tells us, serving the Lord, it has to be done with diligence. We want to address all of God's doings, and the things that he has called us to do with alacrity. So, certainly we find many circumstances where we're tired, and we don't want to move, and we want to stay where we are, and then as you get older we get become very full of different pains, and troubles, and that tends to depress, and people then start to kind of retreating, and they don't do much, and they just kind of waste away. So let's not be slothful, let's not be lazy, let's get up, and do what we need to do, and that regenerates the body in many ways, the blood flowing, and so forth.

PROCRASTINATION

Well, another little fox that we might addressed is procrastination. So many folks are known for putting things off, and I don't wanna do this. I hope you don't either. It's a little fox, you might say, but we put it aside, especially things that we don't really want to do. We procrastinate, and we finally, you know, finally have to do it at the end. The Bible says in [Hebrews 3:15](#) While it is said, To day if you will hear his voice harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. The notion here, of course, is procrastinating with the most important decision of all, and that is knowing Christ. Putting that off can lead to the

jeopardy of the soul. Today, if you will hear his voice. Just spoke with a young couple yesterday, and they have not been to church since the pandemic, you know the pandemic came in, and people found new habits, different things to do on Sundays, and things were going so well, I can recall just before it that they were talking about serving the Lord, they wanted to be baptized as a symbol of that commitment, and then, that's all been put off now, and just two weeks ago they had come back to church, and I well of course was glad to see them, and I spoke to them yesterday about this matter. You know, the devil has all kinds of excuses for us, and when we put things off. And we're gonna get to that. You know, people say that. You know, they keep promising themselves. Oh, yeah, yeah, oh yeah. I'm gonna get to church. I'm gonna do this, and that, and they don't. It's just I don't know what a smokescreen whatever it is. The devil gives us all this spirit. He's the great procrastinator. He gets his opportunity he'll send everybody to hell that way. Oh, it's a little story that had been given. You know that there was a meeting in hell, and all the demons got together, and they were deciding how they could best temperament to damn their souls, and one demon raised his hand. He said, you know, we're going to tell everybody there's no heaven, and we'll take away their hope, and all the demons kind of thought that was a good idea. Oh, another demon said no, I've got a better thought. Tell them there's no hell. That way they won't be worried about getting their lives right, and repenting, and knowing the Lord, and they thought that is actually even a better idea. No heaven, no hell. We'll teach them that, and finally the the last demon stands up and says I've got it. Tell them there is a heaven, tell there is a hell. Just tell them there's no hurry. So procrastination put it off. What a terrible attribute that is. Let us be known for doing things, and doing them quickly.

TARDINESS

Well, here's another sin, tardiness. It's a little flops, you say, but in [Ephesians 5:14-16](#) Bible teaches us to redeem the time because the days are evil. So we ought to be given to that notion, and acting immediately, behold, now is the accepted time. [2 Corinthians 6:2](#) Behold, now is the day of salvation. So right along with procrastination is tardiness, oftentimes people being late, and you've heard the old expression, you know, he's late to everything. He'll be late to his own funeral. Well, I hope not. I hope it doesn't get to that level. So learn to keep an eye on the watch, and saying if I'm supposed to be somewhere, I'm going to be there on time or even a little bit before, and you want to learn to not to steal, because that in a sense, you're stealing it when somebody's waiting for you, and you're stealing time from them.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

I've mentioned this earlier, [Hebrews 10:25](#) Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another, and so much the more, as you see the day approaching. So it's a besetting thing. Now, as Catholics, we were taught that it's a mortal sin to miss Mass. So that was quite a pressure there. I mean, so you went no matter what because your soul depended on. Well, we don't want to use those kind of extortion's. The Bible doesn't say that, but the Bible certainly does

encourage the believers assembly. It's very important the assembling of the Saints, and what that means is the collective aggregation of believers that are praising God, loving the Lord, sharing the same doctrinal truths. It's a great encouragement, and believers encourage one another. They bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. As so much else that's involved, and of course attending to hear the word, and to be encouraged to be strengthened in the inner man, and to know your Bible. So all of these are facets. Well, there are many other facets worshipping you come into church now today people think that worship is singing songs, and that's certainly an aspect of worship, but that's not it alone. There's much more to it than that. You can worship God simply by hearing a certain truth, and that truth resonates within the bosom, and I don't know how so many people are able to contain the word Amen, but they won't say it, but inside their soul is basically bubbling up within them with excitement, and joy, and exclamation Amen. Or that is the truth or Hallelujah. All of that is also worship that's worshipping the Lord. Now that's all part of the assembly of the believers, and so this is something that people need to, well they need to be committed to it, and the next generation coming up is not known for commitments, and that's sad, but I think we make commitments, and I think that it is a good thing to exhort one another, and so much the more as you see the day approaching, and so we see the day approaching the day of the Lord. Do we see that Christ is on the horizon? Could come at any moment. That would mean we assemble as often as we can, and that that assembling will give us strength and confidence. I've said it so many times, I guess I'm tired of saying it, but you know, the world is all about getting you anxious, and worried. That's what the news is. The news is all bad. You got people all worried about the weather. They watched the weather, and everything. If I recall, today is an impact day, they said. They predicted snow, rain, ice, you know, stay in your house, that kind of thing. All of this is to gin up some kind of anxiety in people, and it doesn't happen. These things that people get all worried about, and believers are confident people. They're not living by our fears. We're living by faith, and that's important for us to exhort one another, and to be with people of like minded faith to strengthen them. Now everybody's got trials, and tribulations, and all the more reason for us to be with one another because we feel the confidence of their prayers. We feel that they are with us through the struggle. So, very much involved. Now there are people they can miss church, but they won't miss other things. If there's a party to be had, they'll make it. If there is a wedding, they'll make it. If there's a concert somewhere, they'll make it, but getting to church, you know, I guess I should had added a Super Bowl, they'll make it. They'll be there. I understand that an average ticket was \$9000 a seat to go to the Super Bowl, but it's incredible, isn't it? So little foxes.

THE LITTLE CITY OF ZOAR

Now you know. In [Genesis 19:16-20](#) you have the account of Lot escaping the fire and brimstone of Sodom and Gomorrah, but the Angels were in a hurry to get them out, but a Lot said, well, you know, we don't want to what we're used to living in the city with all of its comforts, and so on. We need to go somewhere else. We need to go to another city. We can't live in the wilderness like Abraham. So behold, now this city is near and Lot said to flee unto, and it is a little one. Well, let me escape thither is it not a little one, and my soul shall live. So by the way, the angels relent and say, yeah, ok, all right, we'll let you stay in a little city, but city life is a worldly life in most cases, and to live there? Well, look what happened to Lot. His own daughters mocked him, and his sons in law they

were citizens of Sodom. They were staying no matter what, and they were burned up in the fire, and this is what happens to folks that become too close to the world, and Abraham is a type of the separated believer living out in tents. His face is towards the wilderness, not towards the city. A little city Lot said. You know, it's just a little city. It's not Las Vegas. You know, it's big, this is a little city. Not much sin happening there in Zoar. Or so we think.

NOT READING THE BIBLE

I guess we could add, finally, not reading the Bible so vitally important to the believer to be nourished in the words of God. [1 Timothy 4:13](#) Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Vitally important stuff here. This is the stuff of which the believer is made. He is, rooted, and grounded. [Ephesians 4:14](#) He's not tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine. He knows his Bible, and he's not going to be confused by the heresies of the devil. [2 Peter 3:16-18](#) says a similar thing. They that are unlearned and unstable rest or wrestle, as they do also the other scriptures unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing you know these things before, beware, lest you, also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever.

So all right, we move on. We'll take one more thought. This [Song of Solomon 2:16](#). Oh, we know this first, don't we? My beloved is mine, and I am his. Well, some of you, if you're still in love, you might write that as a Valentine for tomorrow. My beloved is mine and I am his, but great confidence we have here. As the Shunamite speaks of her lover, and knows, and has confidence, and security. So you know, we're made one in Christ. The personal possession that's involved with this. I often speak in those terms. You know, when you use those possessive pronouns in the Bible, the Lord is my shepherd, and I think, well, wait a minute, can't we have the collective pronoun? The Lord is our shepherd. Well, he certainly is our shepherd collectively, but there's something to be said about seeing the Lord as your personal savior. I am his he is mine. We don't want to be sharing it with anybody else, as it were. Look how Paul addresses it in [Acts 20:28](#) Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. So personal possession. He purchased us. [1 Corinthians 6:19-20](#) You're not your own, he says to the Corinthians. Right. You're bought with a price. In Ephesians one it says, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, under the praise of his glory. So again, we belong to Jesus just sang it at Sunday night. Right now I belong to Jesus. So I am his and he is mine, and he purchased us, paid an awful price at the Cross. [First Corinthians 6:19](#). You're not your own. We are bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit. Which are gods? I like to use an illustration at this point. This has to do with a Puritan missionary who came in the early days of the colonies, and came to the colonies to convert the Indians savages. To bring them out of animism, and to teach them the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. When John Elliott arrived by ship to the ports in Virginia he saw an Indian up on the stage in slave blocks. They would set right up on the shores,

and as the slave boats would come in, and as the people were coming in from various areas they would see slaves, Indians in particular that would be captured, and put up on the slave blocks, and John Elliott saw this, and here he was hoping to convert Indians while these other profiteers were enslaving them, and selling them. It disgusted him, and so the bid went up, and purchasing this Indian in particular, when John Elliott saw it, he doubled the highest bid, and paid for the Indian, and they were all somewhat shocked that a clergyman would be buying a slave, and so John Elliott went over, took the keys, and unlocked the chains, and told the Indian and he motioned with his hand to go you're free, and the Indian followed John Elliott, and John Elliott tried to express again. No. Go, go. You're free. You're free. You're not a slave anymore. I purchased you so you could be free, and the Indian understood, and the Indian said no. He wanted to follow Elliott willingly. A man that would purchase his liberty was worth serving the rest of his life. So it's quite an illustration of what happens to believers in Christ. Were freed from the bondage of sin. Satan had us up on the slave block, and we would have known an eternity of hardship, and suffering, had it not been for our Redeemer who comes, and purchases our salvation, and sets us at liberty. [Luke 4:18-19](#) So the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, Jesus said. Because he had anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he had sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, and to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. That, and of course, coupled with what Jesus said, if the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed. So there's that in [John 8:36](#). So what great assurances we have were purchased. We belong to Jesus willingly. [Hebrews 10:22](#) Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Now we were slaves to sin, and now we willingly, having been liberated, follow Jesus a man that would purchase our redemption is worth serving the rest of your life freely. What assurances we have then, and what the Bible teaches about eternal destinies, and eternal security. There are those in the Church of Christ they claim that you can't have the eternal assurances. You don't know whether you're going to have it until you actually get there. You don't know that you're saved. You can lose your salvation, these various doctrines that are taught. They have their proof texts, and so forth, but so much of the Bible points in this direction. That we have full assurance of faith. Believers shouldn't be fretting as to whether they're going to have it or not. You hear them saying, well, I hope I get there. I hope I make it. Well then who are you depending on you must be depending on yourself to make it then. It must be, what the world was called Pelagianism, but or semi Pelagianism, the notion that you partake somehow in your salvation. The Roman Catholic doctrine that Christ died, yes, he opened the doors of paradise. Now you have to work your way in through various sacraments, and acts of penance, and even then you just go to Purgatory. The rest of the sins have to be burned off, and that's nothing more than a work salvation, and a person in that attitude cannot be sure of his salvation, has no certainty as to whether they're going to have it or not, but I'm his. That he is mine. You're Christ's, and Christ is God's. So that's the glorious assurance that we have, and of course [2 Timothy 2:19](#) Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal and that seal would be the seal of the Holy Spirit, and we're sealed, it says, and [Ephesians 1:13](#) until the day of salvation. Till we meet it. So nothing breaks that seal. The Lord knoweth them that are his, and let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

[Song of Solomon 3:1](#) Well I sought him, but I found him not. So we'll be talking about what this next week, and what happens to believers. That become complacent. So we'll

Speak to this next week. It's I think, an important lesson.

But for now, Lord we're glad to close with the assurance of eternal life, and for the fact that you redeemed, and purchased us, and set us at liberty. The fact that our salvation rests on you as certainly as Jacob rested his head upon the rock. We anoint that rock, we lift it up, and we are glad, Lord, to have found this stairway into the presence and countenance of the Almighty. There we shall hear His voice. There we shall see him as he is. Bring a blessing to us here today, Lord. Everybody here who's assembled has various afflictions, and issues, and problems, and upcoming surgeries, and disappointments. Family members, Lord, that are in trouble. I pray, Lord, that you help each one of us here. I pray that we'll be good witnesses before all of these, Lord. That will stand up for Jesus. That you'll strengthen our faith, and help us Lord in our afflictions. Lord, that you remove complaint from our lips, that you would help us, Father, to be patient in our sufferings, and to always recall what Jesus went through on that cross, and how the Scripture is clear that he endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest he be wearied, and faint in your minds, you have not resisted unto blood striving against sin, but I've forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto us is into children. My son despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. So, Lord, you help us with all of these struggles of life. May the joy of Jesus possess us in His name, we ask. Amen.