

Exod 04-01-25b

Let's resume our study this morning in the book of Exodus chapter 21. We spent our first session looking at scripture reading in Psalm 119. The first section there under Aleph talks about the law of God under several synonyms giving us different aspects of the truth of God's Word and we focused on why do I care? What is the meaning of the law for me? One of the reasons for that as we return now to our passage in Exodus chapter 21 is that this chapter begins after the Ten Commandments, after the reminder to the people of the importance of worship and the means of worship.

In chapter 21 these ordinances or these mishpatim, these judgments, applications of the law are to be set before the people. God tells Moses these are the ordinances, these are the judgments, mishpatim, which you shall set before them. Now judgments and ordinances, mishpat is the name of the judge.

You have, for example, remember jumping Jehoshaphat? Jumping Jehoshaphat? Jehoshaphat means Yaho or Jehovah, Yahweh is judge, Shaphat. Any of the names, and you'll find a few other names that have that portion included, is talking about the judging aspect. So this is the legal aspect.

This is what you can be taken to court for. These are the civil codes. These are things that dictate the way you treat fellow Israelites, the way you treat fellow sojourners, whether they are foreigners or Hebrews, Israelites, both on the journey, on the way in the wilderness, and once they enter the land.

These are the laws, the legal code, ordinances, judgments, which you shall set before them. And so we saw last time the ordinances or judgments pertaining to slaves. And we pick up in verse 7 this morning, if a man sells his daughter to be a female slave, we saw the pierced ear slave and the fact that this is not really a good thing.

This is a man who, it's sort of like the people who decide to be homeless and even when you try to give them job training and try to give them a home, they end up back out on the street because that is really their choice. They are homeless by choice, not by necessity in these cases. Same way with this slave.

He prefers to remain a slave. And we had an interesting observation, I can't remember if it was Dan or Joseph last week, that mentioned the fact that when you pierce the ear, who was it that brought that up? Was that you Joseph? Talking about piercing the ear of the slave on the door post and the blood ends up on the door post. I think Dan may have pointed that out or my brother Matt or someone.

I can't, it was just generated by God's spirit. Somebody voiced it. But it was a very good observation because if you think about the mark that set people free as they left Egypt, it was the blood on the door post.

And to say that you want to remain a slave and put your ear up against the door post and have it pierced, you are basically putting your own blood on the door post and remaining in slavery rather than having the blood of the lamb on the door post and walking out free. I thought that was an excellent point. Somebody besides me thought of that and I thought it was very apropos.

So I thought I would point that out. But here, as we begin in verse 7 now, after talking about the man who has decided because of what he, oh it was Paul, it was Mr. Stanton, that's who it was. Thank you Elizabeth.

Paul Stanton was here last week and that was his fertile brain that came up with that. But that's why I enjoy our discussions and our breaks so much because God can bring a lot of different things to mind and that was a good insight. So now in verse 7, if a man sells his daughter to be a female slave, well right away I'm thinking, whoa, wait a minute, this is the law of God to Israel and he's saying a man decides he's going to, I'm going to take Elizabeth down to the slave market and try to get the best price I can.

And I think what, you know, I would expect the next phrase after this to be, if a man sells his daughter to be a female slave, behold he shall be stoned. But that isn't what it says. If a man sells his daughter to be a female slave, here's the way she should be treated.

So how do we comprehend this? How do we cope with it? Let me offer you a couple of observations. First of all, we tend to think of slavery in its worst form as abuse and denigration. But as I pointed out last week and I think it's worth reminding ourselves, this not only toleration but creation of ordinances and statutes regulating slavery in Israel is actually an alternative to welfare.

It is an alternative to having indigency and having homeless and a great social problem because if someone reaches the point where they have to sell themselves or sell another family member into slavery, they've got financial problems. No one would do this just because they think it's a great way to promote their daughter. This is because you're in some sort of dire straits.

But think about this. God's law deals with the people of God optimistically in an ideal sense. It assumes that their heart is going to be right.

It assumes that they are going to be obedient and that they are going to quickly expunge anyone who is disobedient by levying the eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth penalty or life for life. And God sort of assumes for the sake of argument that people are going to have their heart in the right place when they perform these statutes. God isn't interested in external obedience.

He's interested in obedience from the heart. When he enjoins this behavior, when he issues these ordinances and statutes, he's expecting that there will be ready and willing hearts to try to seek to. Obviously if you're a disobedient person, you're not even going to bother with the

law.

Why would you care? So it's only the people who care who are going to try to follow these. So someone who purchases a slave is assumed in the law that they are going to be benevolent, is assumed to be someone who is not going to carry slavery to its abusive extremes. In the same way that much of the slavery in the South was not abusive, it wasn't anything other than a sort of very full employment where someone is not only employed but they are receiving their room and their board.

People who had good sense treated their slaves fairly because that was the way to run a successful plantation. You get more work out of happy people than out of oppressed people. You get better work.

You get suggestions. You have people coming in from the field saying, Masa, I think if we plowed the South 40 before the rain comes, we can get in an extra crop. There's going to be productivity from people who are happy and well adjusted.

Many of the slaves in the South did not want to leave when abolition came in and when the Emancipation Proclamation came out. They were ill prepared. It was premature in terms of the society and what are all of these people going to do who have no skills, can't start up a business, have no grub stake, don't have a way to get themselves instantly educated and instantly prepared for independent life.

The plantation owners couldn't say, well, we'll switch over to a cash basis and I'll pay you to stay because they weren't set up for that. They didn't have liquid cash. It was harbor, board, employment in exchange for that labor.

When you read about that post-Civil War era with the carpet baggers and the intense suffering that took place after emancipation, I'm not saying emancipation is a bad thing. I'm saying that inevitably there were great problems after that took place. In Israel, as in the rest of the ancient Near East, slavery was more like full-time employment that includes your room and board.

Even in the early days of the Industrial Revolution you had workers and of course you had the child labor laws coming in. You had people who were abusive, but the majority of factories and factory worker situations provided all of the needs. You had the company store that provided groceries and so on at a discount.

All of your needs were met by the company, by the employer. In many cases this was a good deal. It is subject to abuse, but in the nation of Israel that is the place of God and people who are supposed to be believers this isn't supposed to happen.

When it does it is a violation of the law. We should not be shocked when it says a man sells his daughter to be a female slave. What kind of female slave is this going to be? Why would someone sell their daughter? Why would someone buy a daughter? This is going to be a household slave.

Women didn't work out as well in the fields or shepherding flocks and so on. This was men's work. The women were going to be in domestic service, not just as maids, but also in home run businesses.

When you go over to Proverbs 34 where you have the virtuous woman and she has a flax business going out of the house, she may have female servants, female slaves who she oversees, who card wool, who engage in all the different activities for producing cloth. The husband has got his flocks of sheep. They shear the sheep.

Here comes the wool. Somebody has got to card it. Somebody has got to spin it.

Someone has got to make the thread. They can sell this product at a greater profit than they can the raw wool. They can make things.

They can make textiles. They can weave flax. They can make ropes.

They can get hemp. There are all kinds of things they can do. These home businesses were often overseen by the woman of the house while the man is overseeing the agriculture and the livestock where these raw materials will come from.

Here is a business where there are maybe 10, 15, 20 female slaves. Maybe someone needs a governess in the way that you have handmaids throughout the scripture who are going to mind the children while the woman is busy doing these other things. You could buy someone's daughter to be this governess, to be the nanny if you will.

There was a market, there was a need for this. There was also a lower form of marriage. This is the concubine status, the auxiliary wife mode into which these daughters could be sold.

This is a less formal and less acceptable way of contracting a marriage. In the normal marriage operation, you have a man who sees a daughter of someone else in his tribe preferably. He wants to marry her.

He contracts with the father and pays the bride price, pays the dowry. In exchange for so many oxen and so many goats and so much of this, that and the other, some cash was usually involved along with, here comes the daughter. Well, if you lower the standard a little bit and you are not amongst the highbrows and amongst the wealthy, instead of calling it a dowry, you just say, I am purchasing this gal.

It isn't a union of clans. There is not the same level of contractual obligation between the families as a result of the marriage. This is sort of a free and clear deal.

I will pay you this amount, which is roughly a bride price. The gal will come over here, but we are not tying our families together. We don't want all of the other obligations.

We don't want to see her in-laws coming over for Thanksgiving and this kind of thing. We just want the woman. I want to get her for myself or I want to get her for my son, but I don't want

all of the formalities of uniting our clans in this way.

So it was a more business-like form of marriage. You basically purchase her. In many cases, if there is multiple marriages, such as Abraham, then these purchased wives, these concubine wives, have a lesser amount of leverage in the household.

They are not going to be the first wife. They are not going to be the business runners and so on. They may have children.

They may do this and that, but their social status is less because they are a male-ordered bride, so to speak. They have been purchased out of the catalog. They come in and they would have relations.

They would have children and so on, but they don't have full wife status. This is just the way it was in the Middle East. The law allows for this, which is somewhat surprising.

A man sells his daughter to be a female slave. She shall not go out as the male slaves do. Now, what does this mean, she shall not go out as the male slaves do? This is the seventh year.

You don't get to undo the marriage or the concubine thing after seven years and go every seven years. You come back and then you have to be resold to somebody else. Why? Because God views this, for better or for worse, as a marriage and you don't undo the marriage every year of Jubilee.

And this is what is in view when the daughter is sold as a slave. Whether or not she is a concubine, whether or not the man or the son of the man sleeps with her, she is attached to this household permanently and doesn't come back in the year of Jubilee. Now, why is this? Well, there are practical reasons and there are spiritual application reasons.

Let's look at the practical reasons first. Obviously, in a marriage situation, you don't want her to be sort of a long-term prostitute. You buy her, use her for an X number of years and in the year of Jubilee she gets sent back and she's been in somebody's household and now what do you do? That's one aspect.

Secondly, think about the picture in Scripture of the umbrella of authority that is designed to shield and protect and provide for women. They grow up in a household under the authority and protection and provision of their father and they are to remain under that umbrella until such time as that authority is transferred normally to the husband. And the payment of the dowry, the bride price and so on are part of that ritual.

Why even today in a marriage does the father lead the girl down the aisle? He is the one giving away the daughter. And I don't want to hurt anybody's feelings but it's like fingernails on a chalkboard to me when you go to a wedding and the pastor, the presiding minister is standing up there and he says, who gives this woman? And somebody says, her mother and I do. Well, no.

In the Bible, the man has responsibility. He has the daughter. He has the authority.

He has the responsibility for provision and when a husband comes along and says, I'll take her off your hands, then the father says, I am transferring this authority. It's me. It's not her mother and me or it's not her mother or her uncle.

It's who has that authority, responsibility. That's who gives her away and it's the father. And any wedding that I ever do, if there's anybody going to stand up and give anybody away, it's the father.

Anyway, I don't mean to get worked up over that. But it's a biblical principle. So think about this now.

If a man sells his daughter to be a female slave, what has he done? Whether it is for marriage or whether it is for household service, he has transferred responsibility for that female person in Israel to the head of that household. And once that is transferred, it doesn't come back. It stays there.

That household, if she is not a concubine and not a wife and is going to get married, guess who gives her away? The household to whom she belongs. Remember earlier in the first section of this chapter and it said if a man takes in a slave and he marries in the household, the master gives him a wife, this could be one of these women, one of these daughters. It doesn't go back to the father.

It's the master who now has the giving away authority over this woman. God decrees that the woman never functions out from under that protective and providing umbrella. Now, why are women inferior and incapable of functioning independently? Obviously not.

And you can get hurt if you suggest that in our cultural society. And it's a wrong concept. There is no inferiority there.

There is no inability. It is a picture God ordained for reasons known only to himself that the males would be dominant and the females would be under their authority. 50-50 he could have picked it the other way and it would all be different.

But that's what he chose. And there is a spiritual analogy that God considers very important. The Apostle Paul talks about this, Christ and the church, as the husband loves his wife, it pictures Christ and the church.

Well, think about it. Is the church as the bride of Christ going to come over and then get sent back at some year of leave? Are we only temporarily the bride of Christ? It's a permanent transaction. We are no longer slaves to sin.

Again, the Apostle Paul in Romans talking about the law as the husband in the old economy. And then we have died to the law. We are no longer under its authority.

You are married until you die. And till death do us part. Well, guess what? Till death do us part.

And once the husband dies, the woman is free. She can remarry. She's a widow.

She's out from under his authority because he's gone. And so once that is finished and she goes under the authority of a new husband, and Paul uses the figure of leaving the authority of the law and coming under the authority of Christ, that's a permanent change. And so he says, if we have died to sin, why should we any longer live in it? Should we sin more so that grace may abound? He says, God forbid.

We don't go back under the old authority anymore. And that has its roots and a reflection here in this principle. It is the transfer.

This is the law providing security and providing authority and stability for women who in the ancient Near East were not running the world. It's just a fact. So God sets up protection, provision.

Man sells his daughter to be a female slave. She shall not go out as the male slaves do. That is a permanent transfer.

If she does not please her master who has betrothed her to himself, this is the concubine aspect. He didn't do the dowry and the social interaction that unites the families. He purchased her as more of a mail order bride and she just comes no strings attached.

He betrothed her to himself, but she does not please him. Then he shall let her be redeemed. Now notice they are betrothed.

They are not married. He brings her into his household, but they are not sleeping together. They are not generating children.

And then he says, well, you know, I'm sick of you. It's been four years now and I just find you not to be my ideal, so I'm going to send you back. If she does not please the master who has betrothed her to himself, this is the engagement period.

He sees her somewhere. He says, I want to purchase this daughter. He pays the father.

She comes to the household. There is a normal period of betrothal, a normal period of engagement like Mary and Joseph. They are dedicated to one another.

They are designated for one another. They are not yet man and wife in the sense of physical relationship. Betrothed to himself, he shall let her be redeemed.

What does this mean? You can reverse the transaction. This is like going back to Sears and getting your money back. Going back to Walmart or Target.

You bought the thing. You exchanged money. It didn't fit.

It didn't work out. The color is wrong for your drapes. You take it back.

You get your money back. Let her be redeemed. He shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people since he has dealt deceitfully with her.

You can't purchase her and then sell her to some third party. You have a right of return. You don't have a right of resale to a foreigner because you said I'm purchasing you to be my wife and now you've changed your mind.

This is deceitful. You said one thing and now you're doing something else. If he has, verse 9, betrothed her to his son, he shall deal with her according to the custom of daughters.

That means once he pays the contract price, he says she's coming in. I'm purchasing her mail order bride for my son. She is now treated as a daughter in his household.

It is as though she was born in his household. He has the rights and responsibilities of a father. He can sell her as a father would sell her with all of the same restrictions.

He can keep her and treat her as a daughter. He can betroth her in the formal marriage sense. He shall deal with her according to the custom of daughters.

If he takes another, now you see wife is in italics there. If he takes another, and this is multiple women in the household. This is multiple marriage.

It is provided for in the law of Moses. Don't ask me why. It's just there.

God does not forbid or proscribe multiple marriage in the patriarchal age. This is the transitional age from the patriarchal priesthood, the father head of household based priesthood into the time of the Mosaic Law. You have in existence, pre-existing, multiple wife households.

There is no such thing as one woman with multiple husbands. It is always a guy with multiple wives for some reason. Again, because of the man oriented society.

But if he brings in a second woman into the household, and 99% of the time people were not dealing in infatuation and romance. There is something about the agricultural economy and scratching your living out of the soil and trying to stay alive that makes you less prone to flights of fancy and infatuation. These were usually for practical reasons.

It wasn't so much in the interest of boy am I going to have a great sex life with multiple women. This was more I have a large household and I need more women here to run this thing. They need to have the leverage to buy and sell, to order the slaves around, to contract with outside help, to do this that and the other.

One woman is just running herself ragged. She needs some help. I'll buy this woman.

I'll buy this daughter of Israel. Bring her into my household. I will provide for her.

She will have the status of a wife. She'll have the authority of a wife. He had the option, it would appear, of sleeping with her or not, but he was required to provide for her.

If he took in a second, he couldn't cut the rations of the first. In other words, I'm not swapping out. I'm not just keeping you on the books and not divorcing you, but I'm going to treat you like dirt.

The first wife that he has, nothing is diminished when he brings the other one in. He's got to treat them equally. If he takes another, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing and her marriage rights.

Marriage rights, this includes the having of children with her. If he does not do these three for her, she shall go out free without money. Doesn't have to be redeemed.

If the man wrongs her in this situation, decides he sort of wants to trade her in for a newer model, she can pack up and leave and nobody owes any money over it. This is God's protection if someone does try to abuse the system. Unless she has all of her rights and privileges undiminished, another lady comes in the household and starts treating her like dirt, she can walk and he can't claim any monetary damage from the father or anyone else.

She is free. Well, of course, in our culture and in our modern view of marriage of monogamous marriage, which of course is solidified in the New Testament age and in the teaching of the Lord Jesus and the teaching of the apostles, we don't find any provision in the New Testament for multiple wives. But we do find it in the earlier age in the same way that back in the beginning we see brothers marrying sisters and half-sisters and later on we don't.

There is a gradual change. We have changes in diet. We have changes in the marriage order.

A lot of these provisions or allowances were for the fulfillment of God's command to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. When you don't have a whole lot of population and there is not a wide selection of spouses, you can have one husband and multiple wives and God did not forbid it. What is interesting is every biblical example of someone who breaks with the monogamy pattern and has more than one wife, you find that there is strife, there is discord and there is trouble from it.

You look just quickly at Abraham. He was doing fine with Sarah for a hundred years but then he ends up with Hagar and look at the mess we have. You can chalk up 9-11 to Abraham.

There wouldn't have been any Muslim extremists if there hadn't been Abraham and Hagar and Ishmael and all of his offspring and Keturah. Remember, Abraham after Hagar takes up with Keturah and you have the six princes there and all of those become mighty nations and rivals and opponents and thorns in the side of Israel. Jacob would have been doing fine with Leah but no, he goes back for Rachel because he thinks she is pretty.

He goes back and ends up with the handmaids Bilhah and Zilpah and you have all of the strife and discord that comes from that. David the king, multiple wives. He has Michael, he has Abigail, he has the wife of Uriah Bathsheba and a couple of others and the household of David is a mess.

So it does not appear that any good comes from it when you have multiple marriages but the Bible does not forbid it in the Old Testament. But the model is given way back in Genesis. It doesn't say they all shall be one flesh.

It says they too shall be one flesh. For this reason shall a man leave his father and mother, cleave unto his wife in the singular, they too shall be one flesh. And the accommodation that was made for multiple marriages here is not an endorsement.

In the same way Jesus talks about divorce. Divorce is an accommodation and Jesus says Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because of the hardness of your hearts. And divorce again is a protection and it is a provision not for the man but for the woman.

The woman can escape a lousy husband through divorce. She can quit cooking his meals and he'll get fed up with her and divorce her. But it is because of the hardness of their hearts that divorce came in.

It is an accommodation to the fact that we are sinful. So if he does not do these three for her, food, clothing and marriage rights. This is her authority in the home, her right to physical relationship with the husband and the opportunity to be the mother of children and to fulfill her role as an Israelite woman in procreation.

If those three are not met then she can walk. Well, what is the application of that when we start thinking about the lesson here on Tuesday or Wednesday and we think well I remember we talked about those women being sold into slavery. Think about this.

We have an umbrella of authority and a provision for us. We are the body and bride of Christ. We are the one bride.

There are no rivals. There is no need for accommodation. Israel is not going to come up as an alternate bride and have to worry about our rights and so on.

God has made provision for us and the Lord Jesus Christ as the groom, what is his obligation under the law of Moses figuratively speaking? Food, clothing and intimacy. Food, clothing and power in the household. Leverage.

The ability to do what needs to be done to fulfill responsibilities as a wife. A wife has the responsibility normally to be the mother of children. This is why they got so wrapped around the axle when they couldn't like Hannah and Rachel.

They have the responsibility and the right to supervise the slaves and dictate what they do and

organize the household. They need authority. They need opportunity in those areas.

Food and clothing. This is logistics. This is sustenance.

This is provision. What does clothing do by the way? It is not just another aspect of what is provided. Food is what you need to sustain you and keep you healthy and give you energy.

Clothing prepares you for going out and accomplishing things in the world. If you don't have proper clothing you can't go do what needs to be done. You are not presentable.

You are not acceptable. You can even be in violation of the law if you don't have the right kind of clothing because you are not properly covered or if you are wearing men's clothing you are violating the law. This is the ability to circulate and to move about in the world of people is to have proper clothing.

Not raggedy. Not unkempt. Not failing to cover you and so on.

All of these things come to us through Jesus Christ. He is our righteousness. He is our robe of righteousness that clothes us.

He is our peace. He is our sanctification. We are acceptable in the beloved.

We talked about acceptance and acceptability on Friday night. Our sustenance, the manna that sustains us, the nourishment that comes to us through God's word is all from Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit takes from Christ and gives to us.

That is His job. He doesn't speak from Himself. That is our food.

That is our clothing. Our marriage rites of intimacy, fellowship with God, access to God the Father through Christ, all of that comes through Him and it is never abrogated. It doesn't say unless she is a really bad wife then you can take away her food or if she is disobedient you can take away her clothing or if she is wayward and recalcitrant then you can take away her marriage rites.

There is no qualification on this requirement of the groom. These are things that God never takes away from us whether we are faithful or faithless. Paul says if we are faithless He remains faithful.

He cannot deny Himself. They too shall be one flesh. There are certain things that cannot be taken away from us.

This brings us to the subject that I mentioned before the break of the idea, there is this thing floating around now and Jack Van Impey and others are responding to some books that are getting sort of inflammatory as the protestant purgatory. What they are talking about is loss for believers. Some believers think that in Christ there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus that the judgment seat of Christ will basically be rewards only because

sin has been paid for.

Sin is off the table, separated as far as the east is from the west and so all that is left is there will be a quick little flash fire for our wood, hay and stubble and then it is all a matter of figuring out who is going to get what reward and how many crowns will we receive. Others of us recognize that sin is multi-dimensional. The work of Christ on the cross specifically applies to the penalty for sin which is paid for all whether believer or unbeliever, even those who will spend eternity in the lake of fire, have the penalty for their sins paid.

He is the propitiation for our sins, not for ours only, also for the sins of the whole world. That is what the Bible says which tells me that there is more to sin than just its penalty. We have studied this in the past in fundamentals.

We went through all of the bricks in the barrier that separate us from God. Identity as sinner, personal guilt, personal corruption, our fallen nature, interruption of relationship with God, inability to approach God, inability to please God, all of these other aspects that are not dealt with at the cross. They are dealt with post-salvation.

At the point of salvation some of them are dealt with and post-salvation, just because you are saved does not give you the ability to approach. What did we see at the beginning of chapter 21 and over in Psalm 119? Undefined in the way. You can be an Israelite, come out under the Passover blood, cross the Red Sea and be unable to approach the tabernacle because you are defiled and because you have not accomplished the ritual for cleansing.

That is a problem. You say, wait a minute, wasn't the blood of the Lamb sufficient? Wasn't the deliverance out of slavery sufficient? It is sufficient to solve the slavery problem. It is sufficient to get you out of Egypt.

It is not sufficient to carry you to the throne of grace and the presence of God if you have committed sin after that, you are defiled. That defilement, that uncleanness has to be addressed. That is just one of several aspects.

In talking about the quote-unquote Protestant purgatory, people are wrestling with the concept which is addressed in Scripture in many places of outer darkness, of loss at the judgment. Some people say any passage dealing with loss, any passage dealing with darkness, God is light and Him is no darkness at all. How can you go to heaven, quote-unquote, and then have this loss? Unfortunately, recognizing that there is teaching in the Word of God about judgment and about loss in the Millennial Kingdom, people have chosen to say, well, so you are going to suffer for a thousand years and then after the Millennial Kingdom all is made right and everybody will be happy over there.

This punishment is of one thousand years duration and it is a kind of purgatory. You pay for these omissions and failures during the time of the Millennial Kingdom and then when the Kingdom of the Father comes in, they go away. Hence the label purgatory.

We will have more to say about this in the future. We will do a quick review because the penalties that God stipulates in the Law of Moses picture and reflect these greater and more pertinent aspects of our judgment and our future in the Kingdom and beyond. But suffice it to say, yes, there is penalty for failure in this life even though we are saved, but it is not purgatory.

It is not a form of payment or revenge or working off of guilt. It is consequence. And those consequences should motivate us to walk undefiled in the way, to not worry about being ashamed at the judgment.

We have to look at the commandments, measure ourselves by those verses in Psalm 119. Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for showing us so clearly in your word that there are requirements for us.

We as the purchased bride, purchased with the blood of Christ, are shielded and protected and provided for, but we do have responsibilities. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will impress these truths in our hearts, help us to live in a way that is pleasing in your sight. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen.