

Prayer meeting success

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[0 : 00] Daniel chapter 2. Daniel chapter 3, looking at the part of the chapter that we read together.

Remember last week we let Daniel, as it were, having received of God an answer to his prayer for the dream of Nebuchadnezzar and his interpretation. We let them having gone to Ariok, whom Nebuchadnezzar had asked to destroy the wise men of Babylon. And Daniel is brought in by Ariok before the king.

And as he brought in before the king, he then reveals to the king, as we know, both the dream and its interpretation. Now remember we called the chapter as a whole, Pagan Insight versus Divine Wisdom.

And we continue to keep that title. Remember we saw last week how that insight was pitched again, this prayer meeting that had taken place. And under the same title we look at this part of the chapter with the subtitle that we take from one of these verses. In verse 28, there is a God in heaven.

Because as we'll see, everything that Daniel has to say can really be subsumed under that particular verse. There is a God in heaven that reveals secrets.

[1 : 42] This is really the God in heaven. And it divides itself up into three parts. There is, first of all, Daniel's introductory words to the king, which we'll call, the God behind the dream. And then from verse 31 onwards, there's Daniel's, both the dream and the interpretation are brought outside by the king.

Daniel's, so we'll call that the God within the dream. Because as we see, it's all about the kingdom of God, and the setting up by God of these other kingdoms also. The God behind the dream, the God within the dream.

And then finally, and just in closing, we'll look at how Daniel is promoted by a king who has now prostrated himself before him. And we'll call that the God who is to be honored and who honors.

The God, first of all, behind the dream. Now it's interesting that Daniel doesn't blot out, as it were, the dream and all its details and its interpretation.

He wants to gain the king's mind and the king's attention. And he does that by way of setting out the reason why these experts, so-called in Babylon, were not actually able to bring the dream or its interpretation before the king.

[3 : 28] And Daniel is quite convinced that there is one reason primarily why that is so. And what Daniel does is draw the king's mind to what we know to be the whole matter of revelation.

There is a God in heaven who reveals secrets. He says in verse 27, The secret which the king demanded, the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, they cannot show it to the king. And they cannot show it to the king because it's a matter of disclosure from the God who is in heaven. And the astrologers, the experts of Babylon, do not have access to that information.

Because it's a matter of God revealing it, not of men discovering it. It is a matter of the God of heaven who reveals secrets.

Disclosing the whole essence of the thing to those that he chooses. The wise men of Babylon cannot gain that information. The gods of Babylon don't have the facility of revelation within themselves.

Everything that you have concerning the wise men of Babylon, their declaration. It really comes down to this, their growth in the dark. It is speculation, not revelation.

[5 : 00] So you see, pagan insight versus divine wisdom really narrows itself or boils down to this. That it's a matter between speculation on the one hand and revelation on the other.

Something that is groping in the dark. Something that is groping in the dark on one hand and something that lives in the life that God has given on the other hand. There is a God in heaven who reveals secrets. The key to every event is in the hand of God.

The key to every single matter that happens individually or in empires and governments as we'll see. It's in the hand of God.

But you see, the glory of what Daniel brings before Nebuchadnezzar and us is that God has not kept it all to himself. There is a God in heaven who alone knows of these secrets.

who alone has the capacity to actually interpret these secrets, to bring out the meaning of all events. But the glory of it is, he has not kept it all to himself. He is the God who reveals secrets.

[6 : 15] Undoubtedly we do not know all that there is to know about God. All that there is to know about his purpose.

All that there is to know even about ourselves and what takes place around us. We see but in a fragmented way. And even then God has not given us all that there is to know about himself.

But the glory that we should actually dwell upon is that he is the God who reveals secrets. Who has given us revelation. Who has given us information that is certain, that is sure, that is unquestioned.

We are not left to speculate. We are not left to be under the regime of Babylon or the worldly wisdom of men. It is not speculation, it is revelation that Daniel wishes to bring before the king.

Now I want to dwell on this point for a little more time. Because it is something which we have to take into the New Testament.

[7 : 24] Take the New Testament light if you like and shine that upon us. Because you remember that in the New Testament there is such a thing as Paul especially calls the mystery of the gospel.

You remember that that word mystery is often used by him. But it is used by the Lord himself also. Because you remember he says to the disciples at the point when he begins to preach in parables.

And to you he says it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God. But to those that are without everything is in parables.

The parables are not actually designed in the Lord's usage of them. To make the matter easy for those who are without the kingdom. For those who are outside of the kingdom.

The parables are actually the revealed secrets of the kingdom to the disciples. But to those that are without they remain paradoxical. They remain enigmas.

[8 : 29] They remain things which they do not see the inner meaning of. There is a God in heaven who reveals secrets. It's revealed to disciples.

But then you see Paul as you remember also speaks in this way when he's writing for example to the Corinthians. You remember what he says in 1 Corinthians and chapter 2.

Where he's dealing about with this wisdom that the Greeks made so much of. But he says we actually speak wisdom.

Yet not the wisdom of this world nor of the princes of this world that come to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery.

Even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory. Which none of the princes of this world knew. For had they known it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

[9 : 30] But as it is written. I hath not seen nor ear heard. Neither has it entered into the heart of man. The things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

But God hath revealed them unto us. By his spirit. For the spirit searches all things. Yea the deep things of God.

Now you see we often use that verse. Verse 9. I hath not seen nor ear heard. And so on. To refer to heaven usually. Where we actually use it in a way that speaks of the mysteries of heaven.

As something which we cannot comprehend. Which still remain a mystery to us. I'm not saying there's anything wrong in that sentiment. But that's not how Paul uses these words.

What Paul is saying is. Here is a secret. That was hidden in God. That was largely undisclosed. Until the coming of Christ.

[10 : 30] Until the advent of the Son of God into the world. This whole matter of the gospel. And of the essence of the gospel in Christ. Is largely hidden with God.

Eye has not seen. Nor ear heard. The things which God hath revealed. Has prepared for them that love him. But God has revealed them unto us. He is the God who reveals secrets.

It is no longer hidden in himself. It is disclosed. And disclosed preeminently in Christ. You find the same thing in Ephesians.

Where he's speaking there. Of the mystery of God's will. In the opening chapter in verse 9. Where God has abounded to us in all wisdom and prudence.

Having made known unto us. The mystery of his will. According to his good pleasure. Which he hath purposed in himself. That in the dispensation of the fullness of times.

[11 : 33] Notice every word is full of meaning. That in the dispensation of the fullness of times. He might gather together in one.

All things in Christ. That is the mystery of his will. Which he has made known to us. And in the same epistle in chapter 3.

He speaks of him being made a minister. Of the mystery of this grace. He says the mystery. That was not made known to the sons of men.

As it is now revealed unto his holy prophets. And apostles by the spirit. That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs. And of the same body.

And partakers of his promise in Christ. By the gospel. Unto me who am least than the less. Less than the least of all saints. Is this grace given. That I should preach among the Gentiles.

[12 : 32] The unsearchable riches of Christ. And to make all men see. What is the fellowship of this mystery. Which from the beginning of the world.

Has been hidden God. Who created all things. By Jesus Christ. And so on. And finally in Colossians. In chapter 1 verse 25. He has the same thing in mind.

He speaks of him being made a minister. According to the dispensation of God. Which is given to me for you. To fulfill the word of God.

Even the mystery. Which has been hid from generations and ages. But now is made manifest to his saints. To whom God would make known.

What is the riches of this glory of the mystery among the Gentiles. Which is Christ in you. The hope of glory.

[13 : 33] And when Daniel says. There is a God in heaven that reveals secrets. And when we bring that with us into the New Testament. To all that it has to say regarding this mystery.

You can see the indication that that gives us. That it's not something that we don't know. But that it's a glorious thing that we do know. And that we do know especially in Christ.

The mystery of the gospel as Paul puts it. Is not something that God has kept to himself. But that God has revealed. In the person of Christ especially.

And that we have embodied also. In the word of God. Yes I know that you may be dazzled. That you may very well be frightened.

That you may very well find it plausible. To look at the dazzling oratory. And intellect and ability. Of Babylon. Or of Greek sophistry.

[14 : 35] Of the wisdom that is worldly wisdom. You may marvel at the intellect. You may marvel at the oratory. Of all that worldly wisdom has to offer. You may marvel at the way that worldly wisdom.

Will castigate the people of God. And this gospel. But Paul is convinced of one thing. That he is not to be ashamed of the gospel of Christ. Because remember this is the crux of the matter.

That the preaching of the gospel is foolishness. To them that perish. That it is to them who perish.

As Paul puts it. That the preaching of the gospel is foolishness. But unto us who are saved. He says. It is the power of God. Because it is firmly of the substance of the gospel.

That Christ is the wisdom of God. And the power of God. This mystery of the gospel.

[15 : 42] That which God. The God of heaven. Has revealed. As a now revealed secret. That crux of the matter. That comes down to this.

Our relation to that crux. How we view him. Is how we view his gospel. How we view him. Is how we view the revelation. That God has given to us.

And to those who are lost. At his foolishness. You may indeed. Be terrified. Persuaded in fact. By the plausibility of the world's arguments.

Don't be taken in by. Any of that. Because remember. God has said. That he has chosen. The best things of the world.

To confound the wise. And the things. That are weak. To confound the mighty. The foolishness of God.

[16 : 43] Is wiser than men. But now you see. That has made a great difference. To Nebuchadnezzar. Hasn't it? Because he is no longer.

In the situation. Of one that has to deal. With speculation. He's no longer. In the situation. Of one that has to. Grope in the dark. He's no longer. In the situation.

Where he has to rely. On his own expert. So called. He has been given. The truth. And the fact. That he's been given. The truth. Leaves him. Without a shred. Of excuse.

If he doesn't respond. To that truth. Truth. And if he doesn't. Respect that truth. How much more. Is it the case for you. And for me. How much more.

Is it the case for you. And I. More than it was. For Nebuchadnezzar. Or the saints. Of the old testament. Because you. Have the blaze. Of the sunlight. Of Christ.

- [17 : 37] You have the blaze. Of revelation. Not only in Christ's coming. But in Christ's accomplishing. Of redemption. You look back. Don't you. And you see that Christ. Has done all. That is necessary. For the salvation. Of your soul. You have the blaze. The daylight. Of that revelation. More to you.
- If you perish. With that advantage. More to you. If you do not actually. Obey this gospel of Christ.
- This mystery of God. As it has been revealed. In Christ. There is but woe. To them who would see it. As something that is not fully. To be lived by. There is woe.
- To those. Who would actually. Have that advantage. And that privilege. And despise it. It shall be more tolerable. For Sodom.
- [18 : 35] And Gomorrah. And the day of judgment. And for you. It shall be more tolerable. For those that God destroy. From of the face of the earth. Than for those who have the gospel.
- For those who have the revealed secrets. That you have in Christ. For those who have this bible. That you have in your hands. That you have freely available for you. And what else can it be.
- But woe. To those who perish. And who have had all that advantage. Remember. For those who have the truth. For those who have the truth. For those who have the truth. For those who have the truth. Remember that familiarity.
- Is not the principle. Of a true understanding. Of the word of God. Familiarity with it. Is not the principle.
- Of its true and abiding understanding. But reverency. Because we are dealing with God's word. With God's revealed secret. You cannot listen to it.
- [19 : 30] As you listen to any other word. You cannot read it. As you read it. As you read any other word. You listen to it. With the respect that is true. Because it is God that is speaking.
- Don't actually refuse. Anything that it offers you. Don't suppose. That any matter it has to tell you. Is anything other than sure. And certain.
- As Daniel said. Of this revelation. That he received. The thing is certain. The thing is sure. Make sure that that is your response. To the word. Make sure that you are actually using it.
- As you ought to use it. Make sure that it is something. That is so central in your life. That you must say. You would die without it. Yes.
- It is the unsearchable riches of Christ. That means we can never actually know them. In the fullness of their treasure.
- [20 : 25] In the fullness of his worth. They are unsearchable riches. But don't let them be in your case.
- Unsearched riches. Don't let the Bible be for you. As it is for so many. Something that is only meaningful.
- Now and again. There is a God in heaven who reveals secrets. And the fact that he has revealed this secret to us. In such a way.
- Not only does it leave us without excuse. But it makes it a much much more solemn. And responsible thing. To hear the gospel.
- It is in relation to that privilege. That your judgment and mine. Will ultimately be. And Daniel then says.
- [21 : 29] There is this God who reveals secrets. But as for me. He says. This secret is not revealed to me. For any wisdom that I have more than any. Living. But. So that the interpretation.

Might be made known to the king. Let's not imagine that we're. Actually advancing the gospel. By thinking great things about ourselves. By attributing to any man.

To any preacher. To any individual. The place that belongs to God. It is the God in heaven. Who reveals secrets. That Daniel is concerned. To bring before Nebuchadnezzar.

Not Daniel. Not Daniel's own mind. Not Daniel's ability. Let's remember that ability. Must always have a handmaid. And the handmaid of ability.

Is always humility. Whatever gifts we have. Let's remember their gifts. They're not gained. They're granted.

[22 : 27] They are freely bestowed. By the grace of God. We have nothing to boast of. Of ourselves. Let's boast. In the Lord.

God. Well there then is. The God behind the dream. The reason why. The wise men of Babylon. Couldn't find it out. It's a matter of.

Revelation. A revelation that leaves. You and I now. Both without excuse. And in a serious. And solemn position. As those who hear the gospel.

But then we find that. Daniel goes on to explain. Both the dream. And its meaning. And he explains it in a way. That shows. That God is within the dream also. That it's all about this God.

And he tells. Nebuchadnezzar. That it consisted of an image. Now we don't need to read. Through these verses again. You know the picture that was given. A great image. Composed of different materials.

[23 : 24] Gold. Silver. Brass. And then. Iron and clay. For the fourth part. And. We take it that.

These actually indicate. The different empires. That would be. From Daniel's time. Down to the coming of Christ. We know that. The Babylonian empire.

Is represented. By the head. The golden head. As Daniel says. To Nebuchadnezzar. And it seems. If we follow on. From that. That the rest.

Of this figure. Is made up. Consecutively. Of the. Persian empire. And then. The Grecian. Or the Alexandrian empire. Following on. And then finally.

The Roman empire. Which dissolves. Into different parts. And however much. As they did. Try to bring them together. The clay. Would not mix. With the iron. And it dissipated.

[24 : 20] And was conquered. And fell. Like every other empire. Before them. But you notice. All of these. Empires. Together. Compose the one. Figure.

It's not the case. That the kingdom. Of Christ. Comes. In the time. Of Nebuchadnezzar. It's not the case. That he comes. During the Persian empire. He comes. During the Roman empire.

During the fourth part. Of this figure. But the fact. Is that the whole. Figure. Is joined together. It's the one. Government. It's the one. Figure. It's the one.

Monster. But seen. In different. Empires. In different. Actual governments. As we mentioned before. It is the principle.

Of worldliness. The principle. Of anti-god. Government. Wherever you find it. In whatever age. Every single age. Has its own.

[25 : 13] Representative. And it all. Comes together. To form this. Massive. Monster. Monster. But it's a massive monster.

That is demolished. By one kingdom. By the kingdom. Of God. The kingdom. That he sets up. In Christ.

And when we're saying. That it's one monster. One figure. You notice. He tells us. In verse. 31. That the form.

Of this. Figure. Was terrible. It was a fearsome. Looking thing. It was a thing. That was frightening. A thing. That caused. Nebuchadnezzar himself.

To tremble. You remember. He couldn't remember. The dream. But he was actually. Trembling. In consequence. Of it. This is the monster. That is all out. To seek.

[26 : 05] To devour. The Christian. To seek. To actually. Gobble up. As it were. All that has to do. With faithfulness. To God. This is the monster. That goes about. In every age.

Seeking to eradicate. The vestiges. Of godliness. This is the figure. That is terrible. In its own intentions. That is terrible. In its policies. That is all out.

To get you. And to actually. Remove. From your mind. And from your heart. All trace of allegiance. To God. The form of it. Was terrible.

And indeed. Even for the people of God. It would be. An awesome thing. But for one. Crucial fact. The monster. Is not in control.

Of its own destiny. Or the destiny. Of the people of God. It is the God. Of the dream. Who stands above. The monster. It is the God. Of the dream. Who sets up kingdoms.

[27 : 03] And who pulls them down. And he does it. For his own glory. And he does it. For the good of his people. For the good of his church. For the establishing. Of his name. In his people. It's no different.

Whether we think of it. Embodied. In Nebuchadnezzar. Or in Caesar. Or in any other individual. Or empire. We put them all together. To make the one monster. And it's still the case.

God is in charge. That God is actually in control. And yet. We marvel. And should tremble indeed.

At the audacity of men. At the readiness of men. To oppose God. To oppose God's way.

To set themselves up as God. Just take that example. Of the bill that is to be debated. In Parliament tomorrow. The bill that has to do.

[27 : 59] With the sanctity of life. There are many reasons. Why we must oppose that bill. Many many things. That we have against it.

But there is one thing. I feel that is at the centre. Of it all. One thing which doesn't. Commonly come out. In the literature. But one thing. From which all other things.

Concerning it. Concerning the strategy. Of evil. Actually issue. And it is this. That man wants to be lord. Of his own destiny.

That unbelieving man. Wants to determine. Who has the right to live. And who doesn't. That unbelieving man. Wants to actually have a say.

And a say that amounts to lordship. Over his own destiny. And the destiny of his cow humans. The monster still lives. And he lives in a way.

[28 : 57] That still devours. Even in the devouring. Of the unborn. And the fact that God. Is in control.

Is not something. That makes us. Opt out of opposition. To it. We have to oppose it. In every way. That is legitimately possible. That's why we advocated. We're right to our MPs.

And so on. And you're still not too late. To do that. If you haven't done so. But we mustn't actually. See in opposing it. Any other basis. Of our opposition. But under the sovereignty of God.

Yes we oppose. The might of the monster. We oppose it in every detail. That we can. But we oppose it. Convinced of one thing. That ours is the victory in Christ.

That God's kingdom. Is a kingdom. That may be frustrated. But that will not be defeated. And it comes through. In this very passage. The stone that is cut without hands.

[29 : 55] Showing the supernatural origin. Of this kingdom that remains. The coming of Christ. The person of Christ. All that God does. In Christ.

In reconciling the world to himself. The very vision of it. As we have it there. Shows that it is not of human devising. That it is not of human discovery.

It is all of God. And when he sets it up. As he has. It is so that this. Very little stone. Which smashes the feet of the monster.

Actually sets itself up. In its place you notice. And becomes a great mountain. And fills the whole earth. The kingdom. That is an everlasting kingdom.

The kingdom of God. What God has done. And is doing in Christ. Let's not imagine that it's Christ himself. It's Christ. And his people. It's Christ.

[30 : 54] And his church. It's Christ. And his people. That come to fill the whole earth. Are we convinced of that? Are we defeatist.

In our attitude. In a way that sees. Well the stone is so small. How can we possibly smash this monster? How can we actually ever make any inroads.

Against the machinations. Of this monstrous regimen. That we find under. The whole government. Of worldliness and evil.

Well it's the principle. Of the mustard seed isn't it? It's the tiniest of all seeds. But it becomes a great tree.

So that the birds of the air are able to shelter in its branches. The kingdom of God is like a grain of mustard seed. Said Christ. You put it in the earth and you hardly notice it.

[31 : 54] Almost microscopic. And be assured of this. It will reach its full zenith. It will reach its full growth. It will actually come to its full formation.

And it will come to its full formation. In the place of the monster of worldliness. It will come to its full formation and fruition. In the casting out of this worldliness.

Whether it is in its damnation. Or in its conversion. The end is the same. God is king. And his kingdom lasts.

Through ages on. May appear to us as somewhat as an impossibility. That this great monster should be actually defeated. And defeated in such a conclusive way.

Because you notice that the stone actually smote the monster, this figure. And ground it to powder. It became like the chaff of the summer threshing floor.

[32 : 58] Which the wind takes away and scatters over the face of the field. It was ground that small. Although it was previously so frightening in its intensity.

And in its power. In all that it was as it stood in that vision. It was ground to powder.

And Isaiah in chapter 14 has a very graphic vision. Of the destruction of the king of Babylon. Isaiah sees forward to the time.

When the oppressor of God's people. That he sees embodied in the king of Babylon. Will be brought to destruction. This is what he says. Thou shall take up this proverb against the king of Babylon.

And say how hath the oppressor ceased. The golden city ceased. The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked. And the scepter of the rulers. Then he says.

[33 : 55] Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming. It stirreth up the dead for thee. Even all the chief ones of the earth. And all they shall speak and say unto thee.

Art thou also become weak as we. Art thou also become like unto us. Thy pomp is brought down to the grave. The worm is spread under thee.

And the worms cover thee. How art thou fallen from heaven. O Lucifer son of the morning. Now that doesn't actually indicate. The fall of Satan initially from heaven.

We hear of it used in that respect. It doesn't mean Satan's actual fall from heaven when he fell. But it does mean the fall of Satan's kingdom.

Even whether it is embodied in the king of Babylon. Or wherever else it is. The primary reference in Isaiah 14 is to the king of Babylon. But as we said he stands as the representative.

[34 : 54] Of this monster of worldliness. How art thou fallen he says. How art thou cut to the ground who did weaken the nations. For thou didst say in your heart.

I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will sit also in the mount of the congregation. In the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds.

I will be like the most high. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell to the sides of the pit.

And they that seek thee shall narrowly look upon thee. And consider thee saying. Is this the man that made the earth to tremble. That did shake the kingdoms.

We may find the millstone. Of God's government to grind exceedingly slowly. But we are persuaded of this.

[36 : 02] They grind exceedingly small. The monster. Is to be ground into powder. Whether you and I think of it now in those terms or not.

This is what Daniel says. The dream is certain. And the interpretation of it is sure. Babylon will be brought.

To be ground into dust. Yet we must oppose it. With all our might. The God within the dream.

Is the God. Who is the true king. We haven't time really to go into. Our third point. The God to be honoured. And the God who honours. In Daniel's own honouring.

By Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel is promoted. Not despite his godliness. But through his godliness. We mustn't imagine that godliness. Or faithfulness to God.

[37 : 05] Is a necessary barrier. Against promotion. Even in the government. Of such a place as Babylon. He sat in the king's gate. He was over the affairs of Babylon.

As Joseph before him. He is set up into the highest position. And indeed it appears. On the face of it.

That Nebuchadnezzar himself is converted. If we may so put it. But sadly. The following chapters show. That it was not a lasting impression. He made this confession.

In the next chapter. He is ordering idolatry. Beware of partial reformation.

Beware of a godliness. That has just formed. And denies the power. Beware of setting out. On the Christian path. And then giving up.

[38 : 03] Beware of coming to church. To please others. Beware of anything short. Of a full. Heart godliness. The king of Babylon.

Makes this confession. It contains the truth. Of a truth. He says. Your God is a God of gods. And a Lord of lords. And a revealer of secrets.

And Daniel is promoted. And Nebuchadnezzar goes back. To his idolatry. The message of the chapter. Is loud and clear.

Pagan insight. Versus divine wisdom. You have them both. Today. Set out for yourself. Before you. You have access. To both of them.

It is up to yourself. Which one. You want to choose. And you want to choose. To live under. Because you can only live. Under one. Or the other. And the message of the chapter.

[39 : 00] Is undoubtedly clear. Pagan insight. Deals with speculation. Deals with the lordship. Of man. As man would see himself. Is that what you want.

To be governed by. Or is it the divine insight. That you have in the gospel. The mystery. That God. Has revealed. To us. The message is.

God. Rules. Let the earth. Be glad. And let his people. Be faithful. Let us pray.

o'er. Blessed to us. Thy word. O'er. We ask of thee. O Lord. That thou would make us.

Thankful. That thou would make us. Submissive. To every precept. Of thy word. We seek that thou. Would continue. To apply it. To our hearts. And lives. Both this day.

[40 : 00] And each day. We live. That we may find it. More and more. to profoundly influence our whole outlook and that we may constantly give thee praise for that which thou hast revealed in the word that was made flesh and dwelt among us that we all also might say we beheld his glory glory of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth we pray that thou would bless to us this portion of it now to our soul take us out this evening we pray thee with a renewed desire to worship thee and to hear thy voice to be under that government that opposes everything that is to do with evil and to the government of Satan that we may find it our chiefest joy to set Jerusalem and its welfare before our minds here is for thy glory's sake

Amen Amen Amen