

Psalm 125: A Psalm for the insecure.

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[0 : 00] Good evening and a warm welcome to the service this evening.

We'll begin this time of worship by saying to God's praise in Psalm 125. Psalm 125. They in the Lord that firmly trust shall be like Zion Hill, which at no time can be removed, but standeth ever still, as round about Jerusalem.

The mountains stand all way, the Lord his folk doth compass so, from henceforth and foray. And we'll sing the whole of this psalm to God's praise. Then the Lord that firmly trust shall be like Zion Hill, which at no time can be removed, but standeth ever still.

As round about Jerusalem the mountains stand all way, The Lord his folk doth compass so, from henceforth and foray.

For ill men draw upon the lot of just men shall not lie, Lest righteous men stretch forth their hands unto iniquity.

[2 : 33] Do thou to all those that be good, thy goodness, Lord, impart.

And do thou good to those that are upright within their heart.

But as for such as turn aside after their crooked way, God shall lead forth with wicked men.

On Israel peace shall stay. Let's unite our hearts in prayer.

Let's pray. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you once more at the end of this day that we are able to come together in your presence and to draw near to you in prayer.

[3 : 58] We thank you for the gift that the Lord's day is to us, a day where we are reminded week by week that the Saviour died but rose again triumphant over the grave and pleads our cause at God's right hand, omnipotent to save.

We thank you for the fact that we gather together in Jesus' name. We thank you that he is our Saviour, that he is our God. We thank you that the work of salvation has been completed, that he laid down his life, that he shed his blood so that we could be forgiven.

Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sin. We thank you that the blood of Jesus is powerful to forgive. And we ask, Lord, that we would know the assurance of that forgiveness as we look in faith to Jesus and to confess our sin, looking for that forgiveness.

We thank you, Lord God, that Jesus not only died to save us, but he rose from the dead. And we praise you that we have eternal life, resurrection life, when we are trusting in Christ.

And enable us, each one we pray, to be trusting in Jesus and assured of that life which begins here and knows no end.

[5 : 23] We thank you that Jesus said, the thief comes only to steal and to kill and to destroy. I have come that they may have life and life in abundance.

And we ask, Lord, that you would give to us that abundant life, each one of us. We know that when we drift from you and when we pursue the things that the world tells us are life-giving, we just find that our souls are lean.

We find that our hearts are barren. But when we come and when we return to the Lord, he calls us to come and to return to him when we drift. We thank you that once more the life of Christ, that abundant life, floods back in.

And we are given that vitality, that thrill of our souls that comes only from the living water that Jesus is able to give. So help each one of us, we pray, to taste of that water, to know that life, to rest in your presence.

And we ask, Lord, that on this day, that we may find a rest in Jesus, that we may find a focus upon the Lord.

[6 : 40] And we pray that we would be in the Spirit as your word is opened and as we sing it and as we read it and as we meditate upon it. We pray, Lord, for a world just now that is so insecure.

We read there of the security that we have when we are trusting in you. But we see also, as we look around us, the insecurity that there is when we drift from you.

And we pray for a world that is so broken, a world that groans under the weight of sin. We pray especially for the United States of America at this time, as we see such instability, as we see riots, as we see unrest, as we see man's inhumanity to man.

We pray, Lord, that you would have mercy upon that country. We pray that you would enable each person to see that every one of us, we are made in the image of God.

And we pray, Lord, that the conflict and the tension that there is, the racial tension, Lord, that you would intervene and that you would break that, that you would bring peace.

[7 : 56] We ask, Lord, that you would give wisdom to those who are in leadership in that country. And we pray for your people there, that they would rise up, that they would pray, that they would call upon your name, because we thank you that when we humble ourselves and turn from our wicked ways and call upon the name of the Lord, you have promised that you will hear our prayers and that you will heal our land.

So we pray that for America. We pray that for our own country as well. Although we don't see rioting on the street, we know that we have drifted far from where we should be. And we ask that you would hear us, Lord, as we confess our sin.

We pray that you would give to us that repentance and that you would give to us a soul thirst that is found quenched only in Christ. We thank you that at this time of lockdown, there is an increased interest in the things of God.

We thank you that people are searching for the deep things of life, that they are thinking about what lies beyond. And we pray, Lord, that as broadcasts go out on radio, on television, on the internet, we pray that those who may be usually far from the doors of any church would hear the gospel message and would respond.

We pray for some that we've been praying for in past days who we see you at work in their lives, though some who appear to be to be warming to the gospel and who are close.

[9 : 32] We pray that they would that they would not be almost persuaded, but they would be fully persuaded of the salvation that there is in Jesus.

We pray that you would draw them into the kingdom. And we also pray, Lord, for those who are, as far as we can see, farthest away from the kingdom. We pray for some who may be far from us and some who may be close to us, even in their own communities, who are fiercely antagonistic to the gospel, who take any chance possible to discredit your name, Lord, and your people.

And we ask, Lord, that you'd be working in their lives. We see the Apostle Paul, how he was turned from hating Christ to worshipping Christ, to preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ.

And we know that you are the God who does not change. And so for those who may be antagonistic at this time, we bring them to you in prayer as we see them in our mind's eye. And we ask, Lord, that you would work in their hearts and their lives.

We pray for countries that we are in touch with as a congregation here even. We think of Nurse Marion as she goes out to Malawi year by year, that she's prevented from doing so this year.

[10 : 53] We ask that the work that she's involved with would continue and that your people would know your protection, your hand upon them.

And we ask that the gospel ministry that they have been part of and seen established there would continue and progress. We think of Romania as well, where some of us visited last year.

And we ask, Lord, that as these, as your people there seek to reach out with the gospel message, but are curtailed this year by coronavirus, we ask, Lord, that the gospel itself would not be curtailed.

Lord, that you would be on the move in that country and many would look in faith to you. And we pray, Father, for Asia as well. Some of our number go out there.

And we ask, Lord, that you would be at work in these places, some places that are close to the gospel in that official way. And yet we know that our underground churches, your people, are there.

[11 : 58] And we ask, Lord, that you would bless them and that you would build them up. So hear our prayers, take away our sin, and lead us and guide us in the power of your spirit. We pray these things in Jesus' name.

Amen. We'll turn now to God's word and we will read from Psalm 125.

Psalm 125, just a short psalm and we'll read the whole of the psalm. A psalm, a song of ascents. Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken, but endures forever.

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

Do good, O Lord, to those who are good, to those who are upright and hard, but those who turn to crooked ways, the Lord will banish with the evildoers.

[13 : 05] Peace be upon Israel. Amen. And may God bless that being of his word to us. Well, let's turn back to Psalm 125 and let's look at this passage for a short while this evening.

we live today in a very security conscious age and whether it's our homes, whether it's our cars or our bank details or our pension funds or our personal information or data, we want to be sure that these things that we attribute value to, we want to be sure that these things are secure.

And yet, at this point in time, as we try to navigate through a global pandemic that came out of nowhere that was so unpredictable, we probably feel less secure now than we have done for many generations.

Now, is that a bad thing? Well, in one sense, yes. Of course, it is a bad thing to feel insecure. When our jobs are in question, when our health is at stake, when our economy is struggling, when we have less cash in our pockets than we did before and we worry about our pension funds and our bank details and these things, when we feel the bite of these things, we say, well, of course, to feel insecure and, of course, to know that fragile state is a bad thing.

But then, if at times like these, when we feel insecurity, we are caused to reassess where our security lies, even times like this can be used for good.

[15 : 09] And Psalm 125 is a psalm for the person who feels insecure. And it's a psalm where we are, first of all, taught where we'll find protection.

And that's our first point as we go through the psalm. We are shown here where we will find protection. And that's verses 1 and 2.

Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever. As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people both now and forever more.

Now, if you're a parent, you'll almost certainly have experienced this at some point. Well, since we've all been children, if we think back far enough, we can probably remember this.

But think about it from the point of view of a parent. At 3 o'clock in the morning, you see one of your children coming into the room and they're wide-eyed and they've just woken up from a bad dream and they're scared of the dark and they're scared of what they saw in their dream.

[16 : 19] They're in a real state when they stagger into your room. Now, when you're in that situation and one of your children comes in that way, you want to calm them down.

But how do you calm them down? Well, you don't calm them down just by telling them to calm down. You need to explain why they can be calm. So you may take a minute or two to say, well, I can see you're scared.

I know you feel scared, but you're safe. You need to know you're safe. You might have seen a bogeyman in your dream, but be assured there is no bogeyman in the house.

The door is locked. It's just us. We're looking after you. No one can harm you. You're safe. So calm down, relax, and you can go back to your own bed and go back to sleep.

It's that assurance, that reassurance you want to give to the stressed out child that they're safe. And that actually is what God does through the psalmist here.

[17 : 28] The fears that God's people had struggled with, they weren't dreams. They were very much reality. The psalm, when was it written?

Well, we're not sure. There's various opinions from the scholars. It might have been written after God's people returned from Babylon from that period in exile and were being harassed by the nations around them after their return.

It may have been during the time of Nehemiah. We'll come to that in due course. It's not actually clear when the psalm was written, but what is clear is that God's people felt fearful, they felt insecure, they felt vulnerable, and so God through the psalmist assures them and reassures them that they, as his children, they were safe.

They were under his protection. And that would have come as a great comfort to them, and it should also come still as a great comfort to us.

Even as we read these verses, we are reminded of the fact that we are not alone. We are not fending for ourselves and exposed on this planet.

[18 : 52] If we are trusting in the Lord, we have the assurance here of his protection. Now, how does the Lord get that point across through this psalm and these first two verses?

Well, he uses a picture. Remember, this is a psalm that's within a group of psalms called the Psalms of Ascent. God's people, as I've said in past weeks, they were on route to Jerusalem.

Jerusalem. They may even be in Jerusalem in this context. And so, the Lord points them to Mount Zion, the mountain on which Jerusalem was built.

And he says to them, as he points them through the psalmist to this mountain, you see how secure, how solid, how unshakable that mountain is.

Well, that's a picture, he says through the psalmist, of how secure the person is who is trusting in the Lord. That's the picture that's given here in the first instance.

[20 : 01] And it's a picture that they could readily identify with, and it's a picture that we can readily identify with. We understand that in Harris. When we look out on a windy day, we see the trampoline in the garden, shaking and flexing in the wind.

The garden shed might be starting to rock back and forth. We see movement in the ferry as it's tied up at the harbour. Everything around us seems to be shaking.

And when we go out into the elements, we feel that we are shaking, but when we look to the hills, there's no movement. They're not shaking. They're standing firm.

And that's the picture of the person who is trusting in the Lord. Because the Lord himself is steady and firm always. Because he cannot be shaken, the person who is standing upon him in faith cannot be shaken.

Learspey, the commentator, says, the writer did not say that God's people should be like my desire, but that they are like my desire.

[21 : 19] Learspey says, the writer here doesn't say, there's my desire, be like that. It's a picture of what God's people are like when they're trusting in him.

Spurgeon says, the emphasis lies on the object of their trust, namely Jehovah, the Lord. And if we take this for a moment from the Old Testament to the New Testament, we probably think about the parable that Jesus told, Matthew chapter 7, verses 24 to 27.

Jesus said, therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, yet it did not fall because it had its foundation on the rock.

But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against the house, and it fell with a great crash.

[22 : 40] And again, the application from that picture, from that parable, is clear. If we're building our lives on, and if we're trusting in money, or our health, or our popularity, or our career, or ourself, that's like building on sand.

These things are not secure, as we well know just now. But if we're trusting in the Lord Jesus, the rock of our salvation, as we sang this morning from Psalm 95, then the assurance we have here is that we are as secure as mine is Zion.

we enjoy the protection of God. Now, moving from verse 1 to verse 2, we see this picture, and it's developed a little further.

Jerusalem, it was built on Mount Zion. It was secure as a city because of the foundation that the city was built on. But in terms of the geography of Jerusalem, around that city were other mountains that surround the city.

And again, the psalmist compares that to God and his people. And through the psalmist, God is saying, you see how these mountains around Jerusalem give such protection?

[24 : 11] And they did. Well, God is saying through the psalmist, that's a picture of the protection that I give to you. You, my people, are like Jerusalem.

And we know that that's a teaching that's developed through the Old Testament into the New Testament. And the Lord is saying through this picture, I surround you.

You, my people, I surround you like these mountains surround Jerusalem. And I do that both now and forevermore.

This is not some temporary state. This is a continual thing. You could say it's another version of Deuteronomy chapter 31 and verse 6 where God says, Be strong and courageous.

Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you. And that was the picture here. God was surrounding them.

[25 : 13] He would not leave them. He would not forsake them. He was continually giving them that protection. And I can hear echoes of this in the last words of Jesus to his disciples before he ascends into heaven.

In Matthew chapter 28, the Great Commission, verse 20, Jesus says, Surely I am with you always to the very end of the age.

We have firewalls on our computers. We're very dependent on our computers in these days. And we have firewalls in our computers, software that stops harmful viruses getting in and attacking the system.

And what God is saying here is that he himself will be like a wall of fire. giving protection to his people. So they were safe.

They were double safe. They were safe because of their foundation. And they were safe because of the Lord's surrounding presence.

[26 : 24] And if we are trusting the Lord, if we are those who have the Lord as our foundation, if we are those who have the assurance of the Lord as our firewall, to a wall of fire around us, we are safe.

We're double safe. So the application here for us is just to ensure that we are trusting in the Lord.

It's very simple. It's very straightforward. This is not a security. This is not a protection that we can build for ourselves. ourselves. This is not a position that we are to try and aspire to.

This is something that is offered to us and assured to us when we are trusting in the Lord. If we want to know this level of protection, we want this stability that's underlying our lives, if we want the assurance of God's presence around us always, then we are to be those who are trusting in Christ.

We are to be those who can sing sincerely from our hearts what we'll come to at the end in a few minutes. On Christ the solid rock I stand.

[27 : 46] All other ground is sinking sand. So that's the first point we see here, the protection that God's people had as the Lord undergirded them and surrounded them.

The second thing we see here is the reality of the problems that God's people face. Verse 3, the scepter of the wicked will not remain, or you might have in your translation, the rod of the wicked will not remain over the land allotted to the righteous, for then the righteous might use their hands to do evil.

the problems. In verses 1 and 2, as the psalm begins, the people of God are given encouragement, they are steadied. But now they must take that encouragement, they must take that assurance, they must take that courage itself and import it into the reality of the problems that they faced in their lives and their experience.

that's something which happened back then and it still happens today. Our faith, the faith that God gives us, it grows strong and steady.

It grows at the fastest rate and at the most steady pace, not in problem-free days, but in days when we are struggling struggling with real difficulties and problems.

[29 : 27] Faith is like a muscle. And muscles don't grow stronger when we are sitting having a snooze in the chair. Muscles grow stronger when they're put under strain, when they're, whilst we sweat and we struggle in a gym.

So, what were the problems that God's people faced in this particular psalm? Well, there were two problem areas. There was trouble that came from the outside and there was temptation that they were dealing with that was on the inside.

So, first of all, the trouble from the outside. The scepter, the rod of verse 3, that was a symbol, it's a word that was a symbol for power and rule.

And so, the scepter of the wicked, it's a kind of cryptic phrase for us, it speaks about the enemies, of God's people who sought to cause trouble for them.

And many of the scholars think that this psalm best fits Nehemiah's day. And Nehemiah, we studied Nehemiah some years back, and his calling was to rebuild the wall in Jerusalem.

[30 : 37] He was intent on building for God's glory, but as he sought to build for God's glory, he was always dealing with trouble that was coming from the outside.

Foreign nations, difficult characters, like Sanballat and Tobiah, they were always on his case, they were always seeking to oppose him.

You can read about that in Nehemiah 4 or Nehemiah 6. So there was trouble from the outside, and God's people were facing that, and the psalm speaks into this, but not only was there trouble from the outside, not only was there this scepter of the wicked, which came from the outside and attacked them, but there was also temptation from the inside.

Because in the second half of that verse, we see that there was the danger that the righteous might use their hands to do evil. And again, that's something that fits with the book of Nehemiah.

Not only was Nehemiah as he sought to do God's will, dealing with trouble from the outside, but sometimes the trouble that he was dealing with was in the inside, amongst his own people, the poor were being exploited.

[31 : 56] You see that in Nehemiah 5 or Nehemiah 4, we see how his own people were becoming fearful and becoming discouraged, and there was trouble inside, amongst them.

And so for the psalmist and for God's people through the ages, there always has been, and there always will be, problems. Sometimes the problems we face as God's people are external to us.

We feel like we've been attacked from the outside. And sometimes we are more conscious that the battles that we're having are on the inside. It's the Roman 7 scenario.

the apostle Paul speaks about the internal struggles, the problems that he was wrestling with in his inner being.

So there was problems in the psalm, that the psalm addresses. But the encouragement that we're given here is that the problems that they face, the problems that we face, the scepter of the wicked, will not remain.

[33 : 11] That's God's promise. There's an end point. One of the commentators, James Montgomery Boyce, he says that this is a promise that the problems that we face will not last, that God has not forgotten us, and that he will soon intervene to help us in our personal lives and our relationships with other people, in our work, or whatever it may be.

In the largest scheme of things, says Boyce, it's a reminder of Christ's return, when the wicked will be judged, their works destroyed, and the people of God be established in the heavenly city of God, which will endure forever.

So yes, there are problems. They had problems. God's people have always had problems. we have problems, but the encouragement is that they will not remain.

There is an end point. God will not stand far back. As we call upon him, he will intervene. And we have that ultimate picture of when Christ returns, and everything sad, everything problematic will be resolved.

Our problems will be chased, sin will be banished, Satan will be bound eternally. But also, until then, there's further encouragement.

[34 : 44] Because if we think about the broader span of scripture, although we do face and wrestle with problems, we can be encouraged by the fact that God is the all-seeing God, he's the sovereign God, and he never allows problems to come into our lives that he cannot use.

Every problem that he allows in, he is able to use for our good and for his glory if we are those who are trusting him.

And I could add, global pandemics are not excluded from that. God may actually do a lot of good things.

Hard as it is for us to see, at this time, God may do a lot of good things in this problematic time that we're trying to work our way through.

So, there's the protection that God's people were promised. It was the problems that they faced.

[36 : 01] The third thing here is there is the prayer that we hear God's people make. That's verses 4 and 5. Do good, O Lord, to those who are good, to those who are upright in heart, but those who turn to crooked ways, the Lord will banish with the evildoers.

So, what are we taught to do in these verses? Well, the obvious thing that we're taught to do here is we're to do what they do. When we're under pressure, when we're struggling, when we're dealing with problems, we're to pray.

How does the psalmist pray? Well, he asks that God would do good to those who are good, to those who are upright in heart.

And I think it's fair for us to ask the question, who are they? Who are they who are good and who are upright in heart? And the answer to that question is, they are those who are trusting in the Lord Jesus and in his death.

remember the words of the hymn that we often sing, there is a green hill far away, it says in that hymn, he died, Jesus died, that we might be forgiven.

[37 : 28] He died to make us good. That goodness is not something that's in us, it's not something that we work up, it's something that we are given when we are trusting in the Lord.

And so the psalmist calls upon the Lord, he's acknowledging here that God will deal in judgment with those who turn to crooked ways and who determine to do evil, verse 5, but he's asking that God would show grace and that he would do good to those who are trusting in him.

That's the prayer. It's interesting, as I said this morning, it's interesting to read reports of a huge spike that we're seeing in interest in prayer at this time.

I find a quote in the course of the week, which I'll just read out just now. It says, the rising interest in seeking information about prayer on Google skyrocketed during the month of March 2020 when COVID-19 went global, wrote Jeanette Sinding-Benzin, an associate professor in the Department of Economics at the University of Copenhagen.

She says, using Google trends data on internet searches for prayer for 75 countries, she said she found that search intensity for prayer doubles for every 80,000 new registered cases of COVID-19.

[39 : 14] But the point to make just simply there is that there's a huge interest just now, that there wasn't some months back in prayer and in the name of Jesus.

And that's something which makes perfect sense when we stand back from it. when we feel anxiety, the anxiety that our problems cause, and when we come to realize and feel our inability to manage the problems that sometimes are pressing in on us, and then when we see, as this psalm shows, that the power and the protection that is available to those who trust in God, then what do we do next?

Well, we call upon his name. We're driven to our knees to pray. And that's what we're taught in this psalm.

They pray as they struggle with problems, as they feel that need for a protection that they cannot find in themselves, they pray.

We look to God. And when they and when we pray in faith, when we come to the one true God, in and through the name of the Lord Jesus, when we come admitting our weakness and our sin, and when we come asking for God's strength and his grace and his protection, he hears us and he answers us and he grants us peace.

[41 : 10] And that's our final point, very briefly. The psalm ends with these four verses, peace be upon Israel.

peace be and so here we have a psalm that begins with that note of panic and fear and it's a psalm that ends in peace and blessing.

A psalm that begins with that feeling of insecurity and vulnerability and needing to be protected it. But it ends with the assurance of all these things, that protection, that peace and that blessing.

And that blessing and that peace which you read of in the final verse here, it wasn't just for them, for the nation of Israel a thousand or so years before Christ, it's for us, it's for us, the new Israel, the people of God who are trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We read it this morning actually in Romans 5, the chapter began in verse 1 with that statement, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

[42 : 40] So he is the answer to this psalm, he is the answer to this prayer, he is the answer, he is the fulfillment of all these psalms in every chapter, in every verse in scripture.

It focuses on him. we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

So you might have come here tonight or tuned in here tonight feeling fearful, I don't know, perhaps there are some who have tuned in tonight feeling anxious about the future, but I hope and pray that as we tune out, as we leave this short time of worship this evening, that we will together know God's peace and God's blessing.

Warren Wearsby, the commentator, has just a lovely little phrase that he uses in relation to this psalm. He says, the future is your friend when Jesus is your Lord.

That's a great line to take into this week and into the rest of our lives and into eternity. The future is your friend when Jesus is your Lord.

[44 : 11] Lord, of course we'll face problems as the psalmist did, but these problems should cause us to pray and seek the protection and the peace that God freely gives to those who trust in him.

So trust in him. We'll pray. Lord God, we thank you for these psalms and we thank you for this psalm. We thank you that you're our shield, that you're our protector.

We thank you that when our lives are built upon you, we are on steady, we are on solid ground. We thank you that you're the God who promises never to leave us or forsake us, but you surround us with your presence always.

And even when problems come into our lives, when they break in unexpectedly sometimes. And when we struggle and when we wrestle with them, we thank you that we can bring them to you in prayer.

We thank you that even through our problems, you are the God who is able to work for our good and for your glory. We struggle to see that in the midst of difficulties, but give us faith, we pray, that we would believe more than our eyes can see.

[45 : 36] we thank you for the peace of God that is our portion when we trust in Christ and we come to you in prayer and when we seek the salvation and the peace that Christ alone is able to give.

So help us, we pray, to be following the track marked doubt for us in this song and trusting in the Lord. And we pray these things in Jesus' name.

Amen. We'll sing to finish the words of that hymn, My Hope is Built on Nothing Less Than Jesus' Blood and Righteousness.

I Hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness.

I dare not trust the sweetest grain, but only lean on Jesus' name. On Christ the solid rock I stand, all of the ground is sinking sand, all of the ground is sinking sand.

[46 : 57] When darkness fails his lovely face, I rest on his unchanging grace. In every high and stormy gale, my anchor holds within the veil.

On Christ the solid rock I stand, all of the ground is sinking sand, all of the ground is sinking sand.

His oath is covered, and his blood support me in the well-known flood. When all around my soul gives way, he then is all my hope and stay.

On Christ the solid rock Christ the ground is sinking sand, all of the ground is sinking sand.

When he shall come with trumpet sound, oh may I then in him be found. In his righteousness alone, for blessed to stand before the throne.

[48 : 18] On Christ the solid rock I stand, all of the ground is sinking sand, all of the ground is sinking sand.

And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all, both now and forevermore. Amen.