

# Blessings and Curses in the Journey of Faith

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Date: 17 May 2026

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[ 0 : 00 ] Father, as we come to your word, your word is infallible. My words are not. And so we want to hear you. We want you to speak to us. God, help us to see what you want to see in your word.

And speak to us today. Speak to each one of us. And the various trials and struggles that we're going through, come and be near to us. In your presence and in your word.

We pray these things in your great and wonderful name. Amen. Amen. Today's scripture reading is taken from Numbers 22, verse 1 to 35.

Please follow along in your Bible. If you don't have one yet, please grab them from the front of the stage or near the door or at the back of the hall. Our passage is on page 121.

Hear then God's word to us today, starting in verse 1. Then the people of Israel set out and camped in the plains of Moab beyond the Jordan at Jericho.

[ 1 : 07 ] And Balak, the son of Zippor, saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. And Moab was in great dread of the people because there were many.

Moab was overcome with fear of the people of Israel. And Moab said to the elders of Median, This horde will now lick up all that is around us as the ox licks up the grass of the field.

So Balak, the son of Zippor, who was king of Moab at that time, sent messengers to Balaam, the son of Beor at Pethor, which is near the river in the land of the people of Amor, to call him, saying, Behold, a people has come out of Egypt.

They cover the face of the earth, and they are dwelling opposite me. Come now, curse this people for me, since they are too mighty for me. Perhaps I shall be able to defeat them and drive them from the land, for I know that he whom you bless is blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed.

So the elders of Moab and the elders of Median departed with the fees for divination in their hand. And they came to Balaam and gave him Balak's message.

[ 2 : 19 ] And he said to them, Lodge here tonight, and I will bring back word to you as the Lord speaks to me. So the princess of Moab stayed with Balaam. And God came to Balaam and said, Who are these men with you?

And Balaam said to God, Balaam, the son of Zippor, king of Moab, has sent me, saying, Behold, a people has come out of Egypt, and it covers the face of the earth.

Now come, curse them for me. Perhaps I shall be able to fight against them and drive them out.

God said to Balaam, You shall not go with them.

You shall not curse the people, for they are blessed. So Balaam rose in the morning and said to the princess of Moab, Go to your own land, for the Lord has refused to let me go with you.

So the princess of Moab rose and went to Balaam and said, Balaam refuses to come with us. Once again, Balaam sent princes more in number and more honorable than these.

[ 3 : 22 ] And they came to Balaam and said to him, Thus says Balaam, the son of Zippor, Let nothing hinder you from coming to me, for I will surely do you great honor.

And whatever you say to me, I will do. Come, curse these people for me. But Balaam answered and said to the servants of Balak, Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the command of the Lord my God to do less or more.

So you too, please stay here tonight that I may know what more the Lord will say to me. And God came to Balaam at night and said to him, If the men have come up to call you, rise, go with them, but only do what I tell you.

So Balaam rose in the morning and saddled his donkey and went with the princess of Moab. But God's anger was kindled because he went, and the angel of the Lord took his stand in the way as his adversary.

Now he was riding on the donkey, and his two servants were with him. And the donkey saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand. And the donkey turned aside out of the road and went into the field.

[ 4 : 38 ] And Balaam struck the donkey to turn her into the road. Then the angel of the Lord stood in a narrow path between the vineyards with a wall on either side.

And when the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, she pushed against the wall and pressed Balaam's foot against the wall. So he struck her again. And the angel of the Lord went ahead and stood in a narrow place where there was no way to turn either to the right or to the left.

When the donkey saw the angel of the Lord, she lay down under Balaam. And Balaam's anger was kindled, and he struck the donkey with his staff. Then the Lord opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, What have I done to you that you have struck me these three times?

And Balaam said to the donkey, Because you have made a fool of me, I wish I had a sword in my hand, for then I would kill you. And then the donkey said to Balaam, Am I not your donkey on which you have ridden all your life long to this day?

Is it my habit to treat you this way? And he said, No. Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way with his drawn sword in his hand.

[ 5 : 55 ] And he bowed down and fell on his face. And the angel of the Lord said to him, Why have you struck your donkey these three times? Behold, I have come out to oppose you because your way is perverse before me.

The donkey saw me and turned aside before me these three times. If she had not turned aside from me, surely just now I would have killed you and let her live.

Then Balaam said to the angel of the Lord, I have sinned, for I did not know that you stood in the road against me. Now therefore, if it is evil in your sight, I will turn back.

And the angel of the Lord said to Balaam, Go with the men, but speak only the word that I tell you. So Balaam went on with the princess of Balaam. Let us believe and respond to God's true and living word.

Okay. Thank you, Kristen. Friends, we live in a city and in a culture which is very obsessed with blessing and favor and fearful of evil and bad luck.

[ 7 : 03 ] Just think of the number or the names of the apartment blocks in which we live, right? We live in things like blessing court, heavenly mansions, royal gardens, tycoon villas, prosperity tower, and on and on and on.

Or think of what we say to one another at Chinese New Year. Gong Hei Fa Chui. Or congratulations, make money, be prosperous this year. Or think of the lion dances that happen, right?

At every Chinese New Year or maybe when a new building is opened, we get the lion dance to drive out bad luck and evil spirits. Or think about the tens of millions of dollars that is spent each year in our city to make sure that new buildings have good feng shui.

We are a city which works tirelessly, which hustles to make sure that we secure good fortune and do all we can to drive away bad luck and misfortune.

Now, many of us would say, well, we don't really believe in that stuff. We're not really superstitious. But culture is hard to shake off, isn't it? Culture runs deep within us.

[ 8 : 14 ] Friends, how many of us subtly soften our voice to a whisper when we talk about somebody dying? Almost as if we can't mention it. How many of us feel uncomfortable about moving onto the fourth floor of an apartment block?

Or maybe subtly feel a little bit happy if we get a new phone number and there's lots of eights in it. We're not superstitious, but there's a few things that just make us slightly feel better about ourselves and other things worse.

Ours is a city which is driven in equal parts by fear of misfortune and bad luck on the one hand, and yet unrelenting yearning or desire for favor and blessing.

But friends, what happens if you could come under the blessing of the sovereign, eternal God who is in control of all things? What would life look like if you could come into God's blessing in such a way that no amount of bad luck, no amount of evil spirits or misfortune could stop God's blessing for your life?

What would your life look like if you were so secure in God's favor and God being for you that you need not care a thing about all the evil powers in this world?

[ 9 : 33 ] If you're new to Watermark, we're going through the book of Numbers, and the book of Numbers is this wonderful book in the Old Testament, and it's the story of how God's people leave Egypt and they travel through the wilderness towards the promised land, and we've said that the book of Numbers is this apt analogy for the Christian life.

If you're a follower of Jesus, you too have been delivered out of slavery to sin and hell by God's grace, you're on a journey of faith, and God is taking you through to the new creation, to heaven itself.

And we've said that the journey of faith that the Israelites go on is an analogy for the life of faith for us as Christians. But this journey of faith is a perilous one. It's full of dangers and toils and snares. But in order to get through the journey of faith, we need to know and have clarity on where God's favor and blessing are found and what can and cannot stop us entering the promised land.

We need to know with clarity and certainty what it is where we can find God's favor and what will and will not stop us from coming under God's blessing. And so the main idea in this passage is that those of us that are followers of Jesus, those of us that have come under God himself, do not need to fear all the powers of hell or the evil spirits or malicious plots of man.

[ 10 : 54 ] We can be confident that if you belong to God, the sovereign God who rules over all things, your life is safe in his hands. And you do not need to fear the counterfeit gods and the fake counterfeit powers that are out there to bless you or to bring favor on you.

Friends, if you're a Christian this morning, God wants you to know that your life, both now in this world and in the life to come for all eternity are not in the hands of evil spirits, evil forces, wicked or self-serving man.

Your life is in the hands of the God that controls all things and therefore you can take confidence in him. And friends, if you're not a Christian this morning, I wonder what your life would look like if you could live so sure, so certain, so confident of God's favor and blessing resting upon you.

So, let's look at what happens here in this passage. Now the context as we said is God's people are moving through the wilderness and what's meant to take four weeks from Egypt to the promised land ends up taking 40 years.

Why? Because God asked him to trust him and to believe in him and to hope in him but believing in him and hoping in him and holding on to him is the one thing the Israelites do not do very well. And so God says that that generation will die off in the wilderness.

[ 12 : 15 ] And so for 40 years they're wandering around waiting for that generation to die off and for the new generation to emerge so that they can enter the promised land. And that's what we looked at last week six chapters of death and misery until that generation passes.

And now a new generation is emerging. And what will this happen to this generation? Will they enter the promised land? Will they get in? Will God's promises to Abraham and his descendants that they will inherit the promised land will they be fulfilled or will they too fail?

Because if God promises his covenant commitment to Abraham fails then the question is can we take anything God says seriously? God made this promise to Abraham I will be with you I will bless you your descendants will enter the land and if that promise fails can we take anything God says seriously?

How do we know that any of his words will be true to us? And so look what happens here. So the story is Kristen read it to us so well the new generation aren't perfect but in chapter 21 good things are starting to happen.

They engage in these two battles the king of Sihon and the king of Og and the Amorites and they defeat them and so now they move into the plains of Moab that are right across the river from the promised land they're right on the border and the king of Moab gets afraid he thinks he's heard the stories of these guys that have defeated the kings around him and he is afraid and so look at what he does verse 2 of chapter 22 Balak the son of Zippor saw all the Israelites had done to the Amorites and they were in great dread because of them because there were many Moab was overcome with fear because of the people of Israel and so what does he do?

[ 13 : 58 ] He decides I can't beat them militarily they're too big for me I don't have enough firepower but what I can do is I can bring a curse on them and so he goes and he finds a shaman a sorcerer the world's leading shaman of the time man of international repute his name was Balaam son of Beor and he's famous and well regarded and he brings him or he sends him a bunch of people in an entourage with a pile of money and he says to him verse 6 come now curse this people for me since they are too mighty for me perhaps I shall be able to defeat them and drive them from the

land for I know that he whom you bless is blessed and him who you curse is cursed well Balaam says okay sounds good let me go and ask God and so he goes and prays now one thing we need to be clear a couple of times here Balaam seems to talk about God as being his God he's like the Lord my God but Balaam is not a God fearing man he is a sorcerer he's a shaman in the ancient world you pray to whatever gods did you know the best favors for you and so Balaam is saying hey you want me to curse the Israelites let me go talk to the God of the Israelites and so he is soliciting the favor of whatever gods or spirits he needs at the time so Balaam goes off and God tells him not to go with Balak and do what Balak wants and so he sends the entourage back and says sorry no can do and Balak then sends him more princes and even more money and says please

I really need you and Balaam sees all the gold and silver and he says well you know it wouldn't harm to ask God again and so he goes again and he asks a second time and this time he hears God saying go with him go with his men and so he goes to the land of Moab to curse the Israelites but along the way something very strange happens Balaam's faithful steed also known as donkey doesn't do anything that Balaam wants him to do he keeps on going off on the other path he goes into a field and then he smashes his leg against a wall and then eventually he just sits down in the road and he won't move and Balaam's getting more and more agitated and frustrated and angry and he says verse 28 it says Balaam's anger was kindled and he struck the donkey with his staff for the third time he's hit his donkey and amazingly for only the second time in the Bible I don't know exactly how this works but it somehow works the God that can you know swallow cause a whale to swallow Jonah is the same God that opens the mouth of the snake in the garden of Eden and somehow opens the mouth of the donkey and for the second time in the Bible an animal speaks in a way that a human can understand and he says why are you beating me

I've only done this to save your life and God opens Balaam's eyes and he sees there's an angel with a drawn sword standing in front of him and that his foolish donkey has saved his life now friends I hope you can see here the whole story is dripping with irony right because here we have the most famous the most powerful shaman in the ancient world one who's made a control spiritual forces and evil forces and get them to do his bidding and yet see how powerless and impotent he is he can't even control the movements of his stupid donkey with a bit and a bridle he can threaten he can curse and he has got no power to get the donkey to do anything he wants he has a guy that's traveled all these hundreds of miles across the Middle East to curse a nation merely with his words and yet when his donkey doesn't listen to him he's reduced to beating his donkey with a stick because his words have no power whatsoever friends here is a seer one who's meant to see into the unknown spiritual world and see what's happening and he can't see the angel of death that's standing right in front of him but his donkey can't see it

Balak says to him I know that he whom you bless is blessed and he whom you curse is cursed absolutely not but Alam here has got no power whatsoever here is the big bad terrifying evil man who's supposed to derail God's plans and destroy God's covenant promises and he is more powerless more feeble more helpless and more hopeless than a senseless donkey and God here just as God uses the unlikely agent of a silly donkey to speak his words and reveal his plans to Balam God is going to use the unlikely agent of a silly shaman a sorcerer to speak God's blessing and God's reveal God's favor upon Israel and so look at what happens here in verse 36 this is kind of where Kristen ended the reading Balam eventually goes back with Balak and the Moabite king and they go up on a high mountain and they oversee a portion of the camp of Israel and Balam says okay let's offer some sacrifices they build seven altars they sacrifice goats and bulls and all sorts of animals and then Balak goes off and says let me pray to the God of Israel and he goes and prays and he comes back with a word and Balak has paid good money for Balak to come and curse you know the Israelites but what he says is not what Balak expects instead

Balam blesses them and speaks favor of them and speaks of God looking after them look what he says in 23 verse 7 from Aram Balak has brought me the king of Moab from the eastern mountains come curse Jacob for me come denounce Israel he said but how can I curse those whom God has not cursed how can I denounce the ones the Lord has not denounced and Balak goes on and he speaks blessing and favor of the strength of this nation and how blessed they are and Balak the king of Moab he is about a burst appendix I mean he is so frustrated I paid you good money what are you doing he says okay fine maybe you went to the wrong mountain let's go to this mountain he takes them on the other side and looks at another side of Israel's camp and Balak says okay let's build the altars and they build seven altars and they sacrifice goats and bulls and all sorts of things

and then he goes off and he prays and he comes back with the word and Balak is a bit he is a bit anxious and the same thing happens look at what happens here chapter 23 verse 18

[ 20 : 24 ] Balak blesses Israel again he says arise Balak here give word give ear to me son of Ezekiel God is not a man that he should lie a son of man that he should change his mind has he said and he will not do it has God spoken and he will not fulfill his word behold I received a command to bless he has blessed him I cannot provoke it he has not beheld misfortune for Jacob he has not seen trouble in Israel the Lord their God is with them there is no enchantment against Jacob there is no divination against Israel and Balak is losing his patience here he's paid good money for Balam the sorcerer the powerful magician to come and curse God's people and all he does is he speaks blessing over them so he takes them up to the one more mountain to the highest mountain and from here they can see the whole nation of Israel and he thinks if Balam can see just how vast this nation is how terrifying they are then finally he will curse them and so look at what happens

Balam they build the altars they sacrifice the animals Balam goes off he comes back and he speaks a third oracle 24 verse 5 how lovely are your tents so Jacob your encampments oh Israel like palm groves that stretch afar like gardens planted beside the rivers like aloes that the Lord has planted and cedar trees beside waters verse 7 his king will be higher than Agag his kingdom will be exalted he shall eat up the nations his adversaries he shall break their bones in pieces and pierce them with arrows just imagine this the king is standing next to him he's like you guys are going to destroy him right if you're a consultant you probably shouldn't speak to your you know your client like that verse 9 blessed are those who bless you and cursed are those who curse you and by now Balak has had enough every time he's paid Balam to curse Israel he ends up blessing them and he sends them on his way but notice in each of these three oracles the same thing happens

Balam enters echoes the same words that God had spoken to Abraham hundreds of years before three times he talks about his blessing 23 verse 8 how can I curse those whom God has blessed behold I receive a command to bless God has blessed him I cannot revoke it 24 verse 9 blessed are those who bless you cursed are those who curse you but friends 500 years before God had chosen a man called Abraham out of nowhere and he said Abraham blessed are those who bless you cursed are those who curse you God had spoken to Abraham and he said my blessing my favor will rest upon you you will multiply into many many people you will enter into the promised land and I will give you many descendants and through you all the nations of the world will be blessed those who bless you will be blessed and those who curse you will be cursed and the point of all this is that God is absolutely 100% undoubtedly faithful to his covenant promises despite all of Israel's rebellion despite all of their sin despite all the curses and the plagues and the death and the wandering and the wandering in the wilderness for 40 years despite everything that has gone wrong both internally and externally

God has promised to bring them into the promised land and he will do it despite all the curses and all the evil spirits and everything all the money that Belak has paid to curse these people nothing and no one can stop God's promises from being fulfilled and 500 years before God had said to Abraham I will bless you I will make your descendants more numerous than you can count I will give your people land in Canaan across the Jordan for them to enter into and through you Abraham will come a descendant a Messiah a Savior one who will not just bless my people but will actually reverse all the curses that came upon them as a consequence of Adam's sin in the garden I will send you a descendant who will be like a new Adam a perfect Adam one who's perfectly righteous and obedient one who will take upon himself the curse that fell on the world who will defeat the curse through his death and resurrection and will make all things new and I will bring my people home and here 500 years later despite all that's gone on and 400 years of slavery in Egypt and 40 years of wandering in the wilderness and plagues and disaster and snakes and death and rebellion despite all of that and curses

God says nothing will change my purposes for my people I have said it and I will do it and so look at 24 verse 10 here Belak's anger was kindled against Belam and he struck his hands together it's the exact same words that used earlier for Belam to describe the way he acted towards his donkey and Belak says to Belam I called you to curse my enemies behold you have blessed them three times and he sends him away empty handed no payment no reward no money because he didn't do what he was paid to do but Belam gives one final blessing one final oracle Belak is kind of stormed off in a temper but Belam says I'm not done yet I've got one more thing to say and he speaks one final

oracle and he speaks here of a ruler one who holds a royal scepter one who will come out of Israel's own people but he's not there at the moment he's not in the camp this is verse 17 he says I see him but not now

[ 26 : 14 ] I behold him but he's not near he's not in the camp he's a far way off there's a descendant that's coming out of Israel and he will finally bring them home friends of course he's talking about the same person that God spoke to Abraham about the Lord Jesus Christ the Messiah King and that's where the story ends now what does all that mean for us okay interesting story what does that mean for us in our lives well I think it means three things and one statement two questions okay so here's the statement the certainty of God's promises the absolute certainty of God's promises to his people we've been saying that for weeks now the story of numbers is the story of God's faithfulness to his people how he will bring his people through the wilderness and he will bring them home and it's an apt analogy for the Christian life God has delivered us from hell and he will bring us home but the point of the story is that God is absolutely faithful to his word and in many ways friends that is the story of the

Bible the Bible is not just good advice or good wisdom or how to make life work the Bible is the story of the wonderful works of God as Natalie led us in earlier to sing of his wonderful works it's the story of God speaking to his people thousands of years ago saying I will be faithful to my word and the storyline of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation is the story of God being faithful to his word and accomplishing what he said he would God said that he would send a savior to defeat sin and Satan and death and he has God said that he will come again and make all things new and he will speaking to another context in Isaiah 46 God says this I have spoken I will bring it to pass I have purposed and I will do it or as Balaam said in his second oracle he says this God is not a man that he should lie God is not a son of man that he should change his mind has he said and he will not do it has he spoken and he will not fulfill it and of course the answer is of course not when God speaks he is faithful to his word as we sometimes sing faithful he has been faithful he will be time and time again his words return complete to his truth we cling when the night is deep faithful he has been faithful he will be and friends if you notice that in the book of numbers we've been focusing on the nation of

Israel the people of God but in this story it's the first time in the book of numbers the people of God do not even feature where are Israel in the story nowhere to be found they are somewhere down in the valley completely oblivious totally ignorant about what's going the valley minding their own business completely ignorant as to what's going on God is looking after them protecting them sovereignly ruling over them turning curses into blessings and disaster into favor the words of William Cowper the famous hymn writer said you faithful saints fresh courage take the clouds you so much dread are big with mercy and shall break blessings on your head now friends nobody's saying that the journey of faith is easy that the road to glory will be paved with ice cream and marshmallows there are giants and obstacles there are enemies and people wanting to curse you friends there is sickness there is cancer there is job loss there is disappointment there is people passing away way too early like we celebrated

David's life this morning friends this life will be full of challenges and uncertainty but the one thing that is not uncertain is whether God is with you and he will be faithful to his word that is not uncertain how could it be otherwise friends if God is not faithful to his word he is not God at all and he would be no better than a powerless shaman he would be no better than a feeble donkey he would be no better than a fearful Balak the Moabite but that is not who our God is our God rules in the heavens the Bible holds out the God to us who speaks his promises and is faithful to his word who invites us to trust him on the journey of faith friends the God that we've come to worship and adore this morning is not like Balak or the donkey he is sovereign over every single atom in the universe every action in the world he is absolutely totally in control of everything it is he who knows the beginning from the end it is he who upholds the universe by the word of his power it is he who is faithful to his word friends the future of those who know the

Lord Jesus and who cause him to trust in him is absolutely certain and sure settled by the one who is unchangeable and sealed by his blood friends God cannot lie and he will not change his mind he has settled his blessing on his people with the promise and he has sealed it with his blood those who come to trust in him and believe in him and hope in him both now and forever nothing can separate you from the love of Christ not ages to come not demons nor Satan sin nor hope nor death nor life nothing can separate us from the hope and the confidence that God's people get to live with

so trust him hold on to him while you are oblivious to all that is happening around you the God is up in the heavens speaking favor over you trust him now friends if that is true and it is I think that leads us to two questions that we need to ask first question is are you hustling or are you wrestling for many of us we find it hard to trust

[ 32 : 23 ] God don't we and so that means our lives are far more like black remember the mobot king what is who is black black is a hustler he is somebody that makes things happen he is a schemer!

is not sitting around waiting for things to happen he sees a problem and he gets onto it he plots and schemes and he plans and he does what he can to make sure that prosperity and blessing and favor come his way and bad luck is averted and avoided and so black spends an absolute fortune securing blessing for his people just think about this he sends an entourage across the wilderness to go and call with a pile of money and themselves and they promise us the earth but in the end they turn out to be expensive uncertain utterly powerless friends who are the people that come out best in the story it's the people who are carried by

God who have no idea what's going on friends Hong Kong is a city full of blacks I don't know if you've ever seen the standard charted advert on YouTube that plays up every single time I you hustle to get your kids in the right school you hustle to get that promotion you hustle to secure a prosperous future and what is the result yeah financial blessing career blessing but at what cost broken families broken relationships broken hearts friends we are a city of great wealth and great loneliness fear insecurity uncertainty hopelessness friends are you like black trying to hustle your way to the blessed life consulting leading experts trying to be in on the latest information how to invest your money how to get your kids in the right school how to get ahead in your career where has it got you how are your relationships how is your family how is your heart numbers shows us that true blessing is not found in having the right inside information or getting your kids into the right school or knowing university degree friends being blessed is being in right relationship with the right God the one true God who leads everything and controls all things true favor isn't given to those who work the hardest or hustle the most or get ahead in the rat race true favor is found in the quiet confidence of those who knows who is totally in control of all things the God who rules the world friends favor is found by being blessed by him by being loved by the Lord Jesus Christ who went to the cross for us who bore the curse of sin in our place who died and rose again so that we can be vindicated friends Jesus Christ invites us to step out of the hustle and to embrace his rest and so here's the final question what is more dangerous to you internal unbelief throughout the book of numbers we've been looking at the people of Israel right and their journey through the wilderness as they struggle with belief and doubt and they don't trust God and things go wrong and leading to unbelief and rebellion and sin but in these chapters for the very first time the people of God face an external threat for the last 10 chapters the threat all been internal their sin and unbelief but for the first time there's an external threat the curse of the sorcerer but there's a contrast here which is going to be more difficult or dangerous for the people of God which of these two is going to stop them entering the promised land the unbelief within or the curses and the evil outside it's the unbelief within right and friends again if we were to ask most Hong what is a greater threat to your happiness joy or security the evil out there the bad luck out there or the evil within what are we going to say yeah of course it's the evil out there right it's all those people that mess my life around and what numbers shows us is that for the people of God the threat of black and his curses blom and his sorcery is no threat at all not least compared to the internal threat of unbelief and doubt and rebellion against God friends you see what this means as

[ 37 : 52 ] Natalie led us earlier no power of hell no scheme of man could ever pluck us from his hand till he returns or calls us home firm stead vast secure here in the power of Christ we stand friends the story of black and!

power of hell no scheme of man can stop the promises of God but it should also give us pause to remember there is a danger far more treacherous than the evil spirits the bad feng shui or the bad luck that so many of us seek to avoid it's the evil of unbelief it's the doubt in our hearts it's the cynicism that resides that questions God friends those of us who know and be confident that if you belong to God the God who knows you and cares for you if you trust in him you can be sure that he will be faithful to his covenant promises he will bring you through the wilderness and bring you home faithful he has been faithful he will be time and time again his word returns complete to his truth we cling when the night is deep faithful he Lord

Jesus we come before you now and God we confess that we find it hard this journey of faith is sometimes difficult and God we are full of doubts sometimes we God are like our city we are looking for the blessed life out there and we forget that it's found nowhere except in you and so help us God help us to believe!

in you help us to trust in you help us God to turn to you God I pray for each and every one of us God those of us that are fearful and afraid that live with a bound or slave to fear God break that fear in our hearts help us live confident that you the sovereign God are over all things before all things in control of all things in your great name we pray!

Amen Amen