

James 4:13 (Paul L Johnson) 217691

Glendale Conference: 1982, Our Life for the Lord (4:13)

Address—P.L. Johnson

I'll read first in the Epistle of James chapter 4, James chapter 4, and verse 13 through verse 15. Go to now ye that say today or tomorrow. We will go into such a city and continue there a year and buy and sell and get gain, whereas you know not what you'll be on the Morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time. And then vanish it away. For that ye ought to say, if the Lord will. We shall live and do this or that in turn to Deuteronomy chapter 31, Deuteronomy 31, and verse nine. And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests, the sons of Levi, which bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them, saying at the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release. In the Feast of Tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God. In the place which you shall choose, thou shall read this law before all Israel. In their hearing gather the people together, men and women and children, and by stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn and fear the Lord your God. And observe to do all the words of this law. And that their children, which have not known anything, may hear. And learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as you live in the land, whether you go over Jordan to possess it. Verse 24 And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, which bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness. Against thee and in verse 28. Gather unto me all the elders of your tribes and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears, and call heaven and earth to record against them. Verse 30. And Moses spake in the ears of all the congregation of Israel the words of this song, until they were ended now in chapter 32. Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain. My speech shall distill is the dew as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass. Because I will publish the name of the Lord. Ascribe your greatness to our God. He is the rock. His work is perfect, but all his ways are judgment, a God of truth and without iniquity. Just and right is he verse 7. Remember the days of old? Consider the years of many generations passed by Father, and He will show thee. My elders, and they will tell thee when the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance. When he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel, for the Lord's portion is his people. Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert. He found him in a desert land and in the waste howling wilderness. He led him about, He instructed him. He kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her neck flooded over her young. Spread of the broader wings ticketh them. Bury them on her wings. So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange God with him. He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields. And he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock, butter of kind and milk of sheep with fat of lamb, Rams of the breed of nations, and goats with a fat of kidneys a week. And thou tis drink the pure blood of the great. But Yeshurun waxed fat and kicked now at wax and fat. Thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness. Then he forsook God, which made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation. They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations, provoked they him to anger.

Verse 19 And when the Lord saw it, he abhorred them because of the provoking of his sons. And of his daughters. And he said, I will hide my face from them. I will see what their end shall be. For they are very forward generation children in whom is no faith. They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God. They have provoked me to anger with their vanities. And I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people. I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation. Verse 35. To me belongeth vengeance and recompense. Their foot shall slide in due time for the days of their calamities at hand. And the things that shall come upon them make haste, for the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants. When he sees that their power is gone and there is none, shut up or left, and he shall say, where are their gods? Their rock in whom they trusted, which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink offerings. Let them rise up and help you, and be your protection. See now that I even I am He, and there is no God with me. I kill and I make alive. I wound and I heal. Neither is there any that can deliver me out of my hand. Elvis 40. 42 I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my storage will devour flesh. That with the blood of the slain and of the captives from the beginnings of revenge upon the enemy, rejoice OU nations with his people, For he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land and to his people. And Moses came and spoke all the words of this song in the ears of the people. He. And Hoshiya, the son of Nun and Moses, made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel. And he said unto them, Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day. Which ye shall command your children to observe, to do all the words of this law. For it is not a vain thing for you, because it is your life, and through this thing you shall prolong your days in the land. Whether you go over Jordan to possess it, I just point out this expression that we just read in the last verse because it is your life we read in James. When James says what is your life, but he's talking there in reference to a life that is lived without regard to the will of God. You remember he had said go to ye that say we will go into a city and continue their year and buy and sell and get gain and then he reminds them that a life that is. Spent in that way. That is, lived without reference to the will of God. A life that is lived in self seeking. A life that is lived. With regard only to one's own desires. His lack of vapor says, What is your life? It is like a vapor that appears for a little while and vanishes away. Now I know that there is a sense in which that passage in James can be taken as indicating the brevity of life as far as. Mortals are concerned, for we know indeed that life, as we often seeing at best, is very brief. We know that even those who live to be a centenarians is really a very short time in relation to eternity. It's really brief and I'm sure that we can gain that thought from it. But I was thinking of of looking at that passage in James in the context. Now what he upgrades those to whom he is writing about, he have breeds them because. Of their attitude of going about their daily life and their business and their pursuits without regard to the will of God. Because when he says that you should rather say if the Lord will we shall do this or that, I'm sure that he means more than just using that expression that we often use. And I believe it's proper to use it. I use it. We notice others using it. We say if the Lord will, we will have.

Or if the Lord will, we will take a certain trip, or the Lord will we will do a certain thing. But I'm sure that God would have us to see something more than that, to see that. There should be every day of our life that exercise. To be living for the will of God, that is, to be living. In the way that the Lord would have us to live that particular day, every day. I know that one might say, well I have my, I have my. Pursuits, I have my employment, I have my housework, I have my schoolwork, whatever it is that one is engaged in that we do repeatedly day in and day out. But even in these things that seem to be very homely, I believe God would have us to be exercised. And I would encourage the young people to be exercised. That every day you seek the will of God for you that day, even though it's something that you do every day. It should be taken up in relationship to God to begin the day and seek the mind of the Lord and the will of the Lord that we would be doing that which is according to His mind and will every day. I mentioned that and I speak of this passage because I believe God would desire that His people. Live a life that you might say has substance to it. Now you know when you think of a vapor. There's no substance to a vapor. What is your life? It's a vapor. Well, God would not desire, does not desire, that His people have a life in which there is no substance. He would desire that there might be a life. Lived in which there is not only a joy and peace and happiness on our part, but that which is for his glory and for His honor, and that which is useful to Himself and to the Lord's people. And I would encourage young people this afternoon as we take up this subject. And I had the thought of taking up the subject of a life. That is, that is, you might say, filled with substance for God. A life, that is. That in which there is something for the Lord and not just for ourselves. We don't want to be like those that James is speaking about, that just say, well, we're going to do this. We're going to do that according to what we desire to do. Such a life is just like a vapor. There's no substance to it. We've heard it said, and I believe it's true that there is such a thing as one being. Are having a saved soul and a lost life. God would desire that we would be those who would have a life here that is filled with a substance for Himself and for His glory. Well, with that in mind, I wanted to take up in Deuteronomy what Moses brings before the people of God, the children of Israel. And we might say at the outset that what we have to say here this afternoon. Would be directed to those who are believers on the Lord Jesus Christ. We know that. The beginning. The beginning point for everyone as far as having any life for God is by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, those who have faith in Him as that one who was sent from God into this world and the cross of Calvary, suffering for sins, the just for the unjust, the one who gave himself a ransom for all to believe on Him. You passed out of death. Into life and I'm speaking to those who have life in the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who have believed to the saving of their souls, we can't speak about living life at all. Until one is brought out of the region of death. Until one is brought out of death. Into life. And if you're here this afternoon without the Savior, you may be very much alive as you are indeed in a physical sense, but you are you are in a condition of death. You are dead in trespasses and in sins. And it said, your life indeed is a vapor, because there is nothing for God. In the life of an unbeliever, there is nothing in the life of an unbeliever that God can take pleasure in.

We do not find in Scripture that those who reject the Lord Jesus and those who go on without the Savior. Bring any joy or delight to the heart of God. We know it's just the opposite. That even the plowing of the wicked is sin. Those who go on in their self will and rebellion. So we're speaking to those who know the Lord Jesus his Savior. And you may be just a young believer and a young person that God wants you to have a full life for his glory and for your joy and pleasure and happiness. In fact, that's if you look again in that 32nd chapter of Deuteronomy. And verse 47 he says it is not a vain thing. For you, he's talking about. This book, this book of the law that he delivered to them that was put into the ark, this book of the law that was to be read in the ears of all the people that they would observe to do what was written in it. And he's referring to this song that he delivered to them, that he might instruct them by means of this song. We have a book and we have a song, two things that are given to the people here. And he says it's not a vain thing because it's your life. And I trust that we might take it up in this way, that the Word of God, no part of the word of God is as it were, an empty or a vain thing. We know that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable, every bit of it. And in that regard I would encourage. Young believers to read all of the word of God. We do not want to be selective. I mean by that we don't want to say there are certain portions of the scripture. Oh, I enjoy so much. And others I get very little out of you say, well, I've said that. Well, I'm sure that many of us have said that and I'm sure it's true that there are certain portions of Scripture that we find difficulty in understanding. Other portions we can take in more easily. But none of the word of God is empty and vain. Even the genealogies, everything from Genesis right through Revelation, we. All and it's a good habit for young people to take up the reading of all the scriptures. And to take it up in such a way that you know that you're reading all of it, that is, rather than jumping around a chapter here and a chapter there, and perhaps you know that you have read certain chapters in the Bible or not. It's good to read it consecutively all the way through from Genesis to Revelation. And none of it is vain. It's your life. It's really for your life. You might say that in a sense, it's your life blood. It's that which is going to. Help you along in your. Christian life as you pass through this scene, that's what he says to the people here now, if you look back in the 31st chapter. And verse 13 he says, and that their children, which have not known anything, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God. As long as you live in the land now you see the thought of life is found there again. As long as you live in the land, that. Verse 13 of chapter 31. He has in view of their living in the land. Well, we know that the type here. The land that they were going to enter into, the land of Canaan, speaks of. That into which we have been brought now in the way of blessing as a result of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary. I'm thinking now of the type of Canaan, not as the future land that we'll enter into in the glory, but that in which we've been brought at the present time. And especially as we have in the official to the Ephesians, all of those spiritual and heavenly blessings into which we have been brought. And the book of Deuteronomy has in view the people of God dwelling in that land and enjoying that land, enjoying the fruits of that land, living there. So he delivers to them this book, this book of the law. And he delivers to them this song, teaching them in this way how they were to live in the land. So as to enjoy all the fruits of it. You know, remember when I was first saved, a verse that troubled me greatly was in John four. I heard people quoting it when the the Lord said to the woman, that the one who drinks of this water shall thirst again, but he that drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst.

And I have been saved only a short while, but I found that even after I was saved, the initial joy of being saved and delivered for my sins and in the in the enjoyment of that, that it waned a little. And I found that there were still some desires after the things of the world. And that verse bothered me because. I said I knew I had taken of the water that he gives, and yet I did thirst. Well, I believe that it's possible for those who know the Lord Jesus his Savior, and they have tasted of the grace of God. They know the goodness of God in saving their souls, but they are not really enjoying the good of the land into which they have been brought. They have that life and they have that eternal life as that vitality of life, you might say, imparted to every believer. But they are not in the enjoyment of it. They are not really living that life. They are living. The life, you might say, according to man in the flesh. And the result is we find that they are thirsting after the things of this world. I believe the Lord means this, that if we are really living in the enjoyment of that eternal life that we have and that we've received into which we've been brought because we've passed from death into life, we've been brought into that which is really life. And if we are. Drinking of that. Will never thirst. That's what will really keep us from hankering after the things of this world is in the enjoyment of what we have been brought into like here with the children of Israel to be enjoying the land. But in order to enjoy the land they had to take heed to this book and they had to learn what Moses would teach them in the song. And this is what I wanted to. Emphasize this afternoon the book and the song.

And what does the book bring before us? I was thinking of an expression in this 31st chapter in verse 24. And it came to pass when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law. In a book. Speaks of that which is written. You know, when we think of the book of the Law now, I don't want to, I don't want us to think of the of the 10 commandments. We're not thinking of it now as the law as a means of relationship with God or anything of this sort. But I want to think of this book of the law delivered them as being that which expresses the mind. And the will of God, if we are going to live for the will of God. As James says that we ought to say, if the Lord will, we are going to live for the will of God. We need to know what His will is. We need to know what his mind is. If we're going to enjoy living in the land, if we're going to enjoy that in which we've been brought, we are going to need to know what his mind and his will is. And this, this book that was written was for that very purpose. And notice earlier in this 31st chapter. Verse 11 Says, when all Israel has come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place. Which you shall choose, Thou shall read this law. Now I was speaking about reading the word of God. Now I was speaking more from the individual standpoint. And we want to do that. Read and meditate in the Word of God for ourselves. But here we see that it's connected with the gathering together of the people, and it's in the place. Which the Lord shall choose. That's a very common expression in the book of Deuteronomy, the place that the Lord would choose to place His name. And I believe that this is the last mention of that in the book of Deuteronomy. We know that there were certain things that were took place when they came together in that place. They brought their offerings, their worship and their Thanksgiving, their praise. But here we read of something that takes place. In that place, that has to do with instruction. And I would encourage young people to be in attendance at the meetings for ministry in the various gatherings where we would be found. Not only that we would read the Word of God for ourselves, but we would be found at the Bible readings, the ministry meetings, the opportunities that God gives us to be instructed from His precious Word, the place that the Lord has chosen to put His name there. Sometimes we are inclined to think that the only thing of importance in connection with the place is the breaking of bread.

But I believe that the other functions too of the assembly. Are important the reading of the word of God together and as I say, occasions when there might be addresses given ministry and in various in whatever ways that that God would allow ministry to be given in the place and we read in verse 12 That they were to gather the people together, the men, women and children, not just the brothers. And not just the mothers and fathers, but the children too. They were all gathered. This place and they were all there to hear the word and I do believe that it is important for young children to be in the place. Where the Word of God is read, where the Word of God is ministered, where the mind of God is brought out through this one or that one and the Bible readings, how important one might think that little children learned very little. Well, it may be that they're not able to take in all that is said, but you notice here it says here in the middle of the verse. That they may hear and that they may learn. And fear the Lord your God. I believe it has a great beneficial effect for children to be in the presence with the Saints, in the presence of the opening up of the word of God that they may hear. And I'm sure they learn more perhaps than we are inclined to think they learn. And I would say to young people. Do not neglect the meetings for the reading of the Word of God, and because we know that it is God's desire that His people be would be gathered together as we have it here in that place where He has chosen to put His name, that they might be instructed. According to the book, this precious book, and I would use the the book that we have the Bible as answering to this book of the law that Moses wrote. It's what God has written and isn't it wonderful that God has? Had you might say, consideration for his people that he has written? His mind, his faults, his will he has. Written these things that we might have them in the day in which we live, or I think it's a wonderful thing to realize that that God has made available to us. He's put it in a form that is accessible to us. If God had just spoken His word verbally and had not written it, where would we be today? How would we know what his mind and will and His thoughts are? But He's written them. How wonderful. And we think of I was thinking of some incidences in the word of God where we have writing brought before us that is writing in regard to to God. For instance, in Hebrews chapter 10 where they said there in the volume of the book, it is written of me. Isn't it wonderful that God has written? In the volume of the book, I believe that would speak of the purposes and counsels of God. All of God's purposes and counsels, and He has, He has recorded them in this precious book for us. Isn't it wonderful, young people, that we can be brought into the thoughts of God? What his purposes are, what his counsels are. You know, I'm sure that most of us would if we had an opportunity to have a personal and intimate visit interview with the president. President Reagan and. He would, he was willing to open up his thoughts and his minds and, and to make known to us what he really intends and purposes to do in he in the remainder of his administration. I'm not saying what he would just say in a public way, but to really open up what was in his heart and mind, what he intended to do or how interested one might be in that and how privileged you would feel. That he would open up his mind and tell you what he really thinks and what he is.

Purposing to do what his intentions are. This is what God has done. He has recorded in this precious book His purposes, his counsels, what he's doing and what he's going to do, what he has in mind. And it's wonderful. It's the things that are written that's in this, as it were, the book of the law. And I trust that as young people too, we would be interested. In the thoughts of God, I was thinking too of a verse in John, I think it's chapter the end of John 20 and John says that that Jesus did many signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book, but these are written that you might believe. Think of that that God has written in a book in order to you might say. Produce faith, and to nourish that faith, these things are written that you might believe. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. That's the way our faith is nourished. God has been thoughtful for us, and He's written these things in a book that our faith might be nourished, that we might believe. And this is what I would suggest. I think it's Romans 15. It says that the things that were written before time were written for our learning. Think of that written for our learning. And in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 10. In speaking in regard to the experiences of the children of Israel in the wilderness. Says all of these things happen unto them for in samples. That they happened as examples, but they are written for our admonition. Now those things could have happened and never been written. They actually happened, but God was careful to write them down. They are written. They are written for our learning. They are written for our admonition. They are written so that we might have light and direction as we pass through this world. It's God's provision for you and me, this book. Is his provision for you and me as his people passing through this scene that we might be brought? Into the understanding of his purposes and counsels that faith might be nourished and that we might have light and direction for our pathway by thinking of the Lord Jesus when he was here and I'm thinking now, especially in Luke's gospel. We know that that gospel presents him. In. Is humanity as the perfect man? And I'm thinking of him now as man here in this scene. And it's really touching to see how that he avails himself. He availed himself. Of that provision that God has made even for you and me, That is, He availed himself of that which was written. When he was there in the wilderness and tempted of Satan. And Satan suggested that he turned the stones into bread. He answered with it is written. Think of that the Lord Jesus taking up that provision because he's quoting from the book of Deuteronomy. He says it is written and we can take up the same attitude when we encounter anything in our pathway that would seek to turn us out of the will of God. That's what Satan was trying to do. You see, the Lord Jesus had come, he says. Come to do thy will, O gone. And he was living in reference to that will of God every moment. And Satan wanted to get him out of that pathway of the will of God. And what did he do? He didn't act as a divine person and smite Satan. He didn't act as a divine person and set him

down, but he availed himself of the scriptures. He says it is written, he took up the scriptures and he availed himself of that which. Is available to you and me. Even in our day, we can say it is written. And that's what should govern us in our pathway. You know, I believe the Lord Jesus. As he grew up in this scene, he became familiar with the Word of God through meditation. I believe he was that godly. One of whom, Hassam One speaks that his meditation was in. The law of God day and night and we read of him after he overcame Satan in the wilderness. When he returns back to his hometown of Nazareth and goes into the synagogue as his custom was, it says that when he had.

When he had found the book, or when he had opened the book rather, he found a place where it was written. Again, we have that thought of it being written the book when he. Took the book. He found the place. Well, I think it's interesting to note it doesn't say when he found the place, place he didn't have to search for it. Oh, you say, well, he's a divine person. I believe we have him viewed there as a man growing up here in this world, independence upon God and with the the law in his heart, the word of God in his heart. And he meditated in that that book. Day and night. So when he took the book, he found the place. He didn't have to hunt for it because he was familiar with the Word of God. Well, it's available to you and me. The book that God has given that which is written. But now in the 32nd chapter we have the song. In Chapter 31 we have the book, and the book is, you might say, if I can use the word more on the objective side, it gives us a certain amount of intelligence. And I don't hesitate to use that word intelligence. I'm not speaking about native intelligence. I'm not speaking about. Human intelligence, but spiritual intelligence, and even the youngest believer has spiritual understanding intelligence. When I think of that man in John 9, his eyes were opened by the Lord. All the intelligence he had, the understanding he had, he understood more than his parents, he understood more than the leaders of the nation. And he hadn't been converted along. You might say he was just a young believer, but he had intelligence and understanding well. It's the book that gives us that. But in connection with this song, I was thinking of it as being more on the subjective side, if I might use that expression. That is that which has to do with our with our state, with our condition, with our affections, and with our what is really produced in US. You see, there are things that we can. Look out to and the things that are true in themselves. But then the song, I believe, has to do with that which we have the consciousness of. Thinking of verse in Colossians 3. But he says, let the word of God dwell in you richly. In all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. So there is such a thing as being taught, you might say, by song. And in passing I might just make a comment in regard to songs. You know, I believe that it's important that the songs that we sing. Would be in accord with the truth of God. Otherwise, how can we teach and admonish one another? If they're not in accord with the truth of God. Sometimes. Songs have a way of becoming favorites to certain ones. And yet the words are unscriptural. The words do not really. Convey the truth of God at all, and I believe it's important. That we would teach and admonish in these songs and hymns and spiritual songs. That's the purpose of them. In First Chronicles chapter 23, there's a interesting incident noted. We read there about I believe the number was 4000 porters. And there were 4000 that were engaged in song, the service of song and music. But the number of porters were equal to the number of singers. You might say. Now a Porter is one who is watchful to see that nothing comes in. In connection with that which is of God, which would not be, would not be suitable. A Porter is one who watched at the door. And so I think we need to have porters in regard to songs and hymns to see that they are according to the mind of God. Well, this song here. And I'm not going into all of the details of it, but some of the features I want to bring before us. This song is that which will. You might say it will teach us.

Some important lessons. And it will, I believe, if we. Enter into it. It will have a decided effect upon us in our lives as we walk through this scene. First of all, and I think this is important, and before we can speak of anything as to our state or condition, because the song relates more to our subjective state, but first of all there is we have brought before us what God is for us. Nobody found that's brought out. In verse three, because I will publish the name of the Lord, ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the wrong but stability. His way is perfect, His work is perfect for all His ways are judgment you see before. He takes up anything as to the ways of the people of God. He brings before them the ways of God and the stability of God, the greatness of God. Because in the course of this song, why He points out the instability of the people, He points out their crooked ways, He points out how imperfect they are. But first of all, he would engage their hearts. And you know, a song has to do with the affections. Singing is has more to do with the affections than the intelligence. It should be intelligent, but it singing is attaches the heart to things. Singing about them has that effect of moving the affections in regard to that about which we're singing. That's why it's important to have truth there. But this song is going to take up the. Waywardness of the people, but first of all, God is presented to them. As to what He is and what He has been and is for them. All this is important, I believe young persons, we need to be established first of all in the truth of what God is for us, what He is for his people, not only what He has done, but what He is. He is the wrong. There is stability with Him. We've had it quoted in our reading. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever. And as we have sometimes in our hymns, that how that our. Our love is OFT times low and we wane and we wander, but He's the same. There is stability with Him. He is the rock and then His ways or His work is perfect and His ways are judgment and the truthful, just and right. How faithful He is. We want to be established in what God is and what He is for us. Because notice. In verse seven he begins to relate what God had done for them. What he was for them as his people. Why in verse eight he says that when he when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel? In other words, the center of his thoughts, but his people. And of course I know that this is a primary reference to his earthly people, Israel. But in the beginning of this chapter he says, Give ear, O ye heavens as well as the earth. I believe it can apply to His heavenly people, those of us who are believers at the present time. And the thought is that. God's interest. Was in his people, and He arranged everything as to the nations in this world in regard to them. Everything is, you might say, governed in relation to God's people, and I believe that's true today. God is moving in this world in relation to his people. In this country in which we live. We those of us who know the Lord Jesus as Savior, we know that it is God Himself who has maintained the liberty that we enjoy. It's God's goodness to us, his people. He has maintained that liberty. Someone might say, oh, it's the form of government we have. No, it is. It's because God has been behind it all, and he has. He governs everything with his eye upon his people. He arranges everything.

In relationship to them. And notice also verse nine. And this I would have emphasized. The Lord's portion is His people. Jacob is the lot. Of his inheritance. I fear sometimes that we are. Far too selfish in our thoughts, we think only of what is for us. We think of only what we receive, but here we see that there is something that the Lord has. He has a portion and He has an inheritance. And as we look about in this world, what is there in this world that you might say that the Lord has as His portion? Certainly He does not have a portion in the governments of this world. They're not governing in the in the fear of God. They're not governing according to the will of God. He certainly doesn't have a portion in the, in all of the institutions that man have set up, but He has his portion in His people. He has His portion in you and in me. And I would encourage young persons as you go about every day in your employment or in your school or wherever you are to go about in the sense that the Lord's portion is His people. That's all He has in this world. That's all he has. Everything else belongs to man in this world, but that which belongs to God is his people. At his portion and what is he getting out of you? What is he getting out of your life? Is he deriving pleasure in you? Is he finding delight? And the way you're going on or you say, well, I'm so concerned about my own problems, I never think of this. And I believe we should think of this. The Lord's portion is in his people. In Malachi says, Will a man rob God? That's what we are really

doing. We are robbing God of his delight and pleasure in his people. When we go on in our own way and without regard to His will. And what is according to his mind and his thoughts? Then we find that even though with all of this into which they've been brought through, verse 14, he speaks of the wonderful blessings that they enjoyed in the land. But verse 15, Joshuran waxed back. That's an unusual title, isn't it? You're sure? And it really means uprightness. And perhaps it's a reference, of course, to the people Israel. People of God, but they're called the upright ones. Upright ones, Well, they're not acting like it. Because if you read the verses that follow, they were anything but upright, but God still says they are upright. And you know, if we may not always act and walk as Saints, but that's what God says we are. We're Saints to the Saints. The apostle writes to the Saints, and that's the way he views us. And if, if our conduct is not in accord, that even makes it more serious. And I thought of this as I read this, that he is more or less reminding them of what God had made them to be, and yet they waxed back. Well, what does this mean? We learn in this song what God is and what He is for us. And we learn what we are for God. That is his portion. But now we learn something else. We learn what the flesh is. We learn what we have in Romans 7 when he says, I know that in me that is in my flesh. Dwelleth no good thing. This we have to learn. We have to learn that even though God is for us, and even though He's done wonderful things for us and we've been blessed and we are His portion, we are His inheritance, that there is nothing good in the flesh, that we still have that sinful nature, that it's there and there is a proneness to get away from the Lord. Sometimes young people think they're the only ones who have that. But you know, the flesh never leaves us as long as we're here. The oldest believer in this room. Has the same flesh, that same sinful nature that he or she had. All his life it never, it never diminishes. No, there's no diminishing of the flesh. It's always there.

It's always there and there is a proneness to get away from the Lord. That's what we see here. They got away from the Lord, they took up with idols, they took up with other things. Or there is that proneness. And so the result of it is that the government of God comes in. Notice verse 20. And he said, I will hide my faith from them. The government of God comes in because they gave way to the flesh. They went after other gods, they got away from the Lord. They found other things to pursue as objects, and then the government of God comes in. And he hides his face. Oh, perhaps there might be some young persons or others too who have gotten into a condition like this. And this song would instruct us that our losing our joy and not having that communion and fellowship, feeling that God is hitting his face. It's because perhaps we have gotten away from the Lord and have taken up with other objects and we've provoked him, as it were, to jealousy. And now he hides his face. This is. Government of God Peter says, if you love life and would see good days, Oh, he says, let him refrain his lips from evil and do good. In other words, the the government of God is favorable toward those who walk according to his mind and will. When the Lord Jesus was here, he could look up and John 11 and say, I knew it, that thou always hearest me. And why did he know that God always hurt him? Because he did those things that were pleasing in his sight. Oh, there was never a time. In the pathway of the Lord Jesus, that God hid his face from him except. When he was made sin on the cross of Calvary, the only time, and we know why that was it was because he was bearing in his own body our sins on the tree. Hiding of the face here is because of the getting away from the Lord and following other objects. That's the government of God. But you know God is good. We see how that he allows the people to come as it were to the end of themselves and I believe that in verses. 36 and 37 why there is an indication that they have come to see that all of these things they were going after were vanities, vexation of spirit, and they've turned back to the Lord. And the Lord says now you see all of the things that they were going after, they didn't, they were of no value to them. And so he comes in and His faithfulness and He delivers them. And I think that that is brought out in verse 43. He will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto His land and to His people, when we learn in this song. The faithfulness of God, how that he will undertake for the cause of his people and when there is a turning to him, even though maybe we have gotten away from the Lord and sometimes the Lord may allow that in order to that we might learn what the flesh really. Kids, and to learn that the flesh is still there, and we cannot trust ourselves, and we must be kept near unto Him, and that all of these things that the old nature of the flesh hankers after in this world are just vanities after all. And when we find that they're all empty, why then He restores and he undertakes, and He will, as it says here, He will be merciful unto his land, and unto. His people. So in this song we learn what God is. For us and to us, what he has done for us and what we are. To him as his portion in his inheritance. And then we learned the treachery of the sequelness of our hearts. Proneness of wandering away, and we learn of the government, governmental ways of God. With us and in His faithfulness in undertaking for us, even though we may have been unfaithful. The book and the Song. The book instructs us. The book gives us His mind, His thoughts, and His will, and the song brings before us that which He would produce in our souls, and all with a view that our lives might not be just as a vapor. But it might be lived to the will of God, and for the will of God. But these things are for our life.

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