

June 18/19, 2022

The Hope of a Deliverer
Messes. Choices. Faithful God Series
Judges 13:1-25
Pastor Ryan Harmon

Even as we sing that song, do you ever find yourself in a moment where you have to sing it more as a prayer than as a statement of what you're really feeling in that moment? "Lord, help me to believe You are good. Help me to believe You will never, ever give up on me." You go through moments where, cognitively, you know it is true, but you struggle maybe deep down in the depths of your heart; down in your gut you struggle to believe it. Do you ever find that question kind of lurking in your brain, wondering, Is there a limit? Is there a limit to God's mercy? Is there a point where He'll just say, "You know what? Enough is enough! We've been through this a few times now, and I think we're done. I think we're going to call it quits." Do you ever find yourself worrying that, or maybe questioning that? It's certainly a normal way to think, from a human point of view, isn't it? It seems like it's very common among kind of the normal course of human events to kind of decide, "You know what? We're just fed up; we're tired; we need to not give this person another chance." In fact, I think it's so common that you could almost say that there's a phrase that's become kind of a modern proverb. The phrase goes like this, "The best indicator, the best predictor of future performance, is past behavior, past performance." So, whether you're in HR circles, and you're looking to hire someone, or maybe you're considering, "Do I go into a restorative talk again with this person," that phrase is supposed to maybe cause you to pause and maybe think, "You know, a wise person wouldn't extend grace again in this way." That's what humans think like. That's how we operate. Is that the way our God operates? Is that who He is? Does He tire of rescuing us? Tire of delivering us? Is that who He is?

Well, as we continue our series in Judges this morning, that's what we want to consider together. If you have your Bibles, open with me to Judges, Chapter 13. We're going to cover the whole chapter this morning, and we're picking up, of course, as we always do, right where we left off last week. Last week, Bryan walked us through the story of Jephthah, and brought that story to an end. And then as chapter 12 closed, we learned about three judges, really briefly. We call them minor judges because we only know their names. But 25 years of history was spanned in those three judges—25 years—and all we get is 3 names. And then we come to chapter 13, and as we open chapter 13 in verse 1, we run across a very familiar phrase. Chapter 13, verse 1:

Now the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, so that the LORD gave them into the hands of the Philistines forty years. (*NASB, Judges 13:1)

There it is, that phrase, **Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord**. We've encountered this phrase—I doubt you've been counting—but as we've gone through Judges, this phrase has occurred seven times. Seven times! Once again, and that evil always has to do with them turning to the gods of the foreign lands, the foreign peoples that they've encountered. Israel once again did evil in the sight of the Lord, like a broken record, repeated over and over again. This is the cycle we've seen throughout Judges, right? God rescues. A judge is raised up. There is some semblance of peace and order and obedience for a time, but before long, it starts to dissipate; it starts to erode. And the

people once again start to flirt with foreign gods. Before long, they're in full blown relationships with these foreign gods, and God has to give the people over to their enemies.

In this case it's the Philistines, and these are a people that we are very familiar with. We've seen the Philistines often throughout Scripture. We know of them because David seemed to be in constant battle with the Philistines. It's one of Israel's perpetual foes. And of course, we know that great Philistine, Goliath, right? (The Pickle...if you watch VeggieTales...*laughter*) The Philistines were a warring people, probably a seafaring people. They are from the Aegean Sea area originally, so up around Greece and Turkey. In time they came down and made their way into that ancient Near East area, and they settled along the coast of the Mediterranean, southwest of where Jerusalem sits. They were kind of in that corridor between Egypt and Israel. And as Israel, over time, kind of eroded on the scene, in terms of being a power in the world, the Philistines were happy to fill the vacuum. And that's precisely what they did! They were in perpetual war with the Israelites...constantly battling the Philistines. So the text says, "*The Lord gave them over,*" gave Israel over, "*into the hands of the Philistines,*" which we've seen throughout Judges. God does this over and over again, when his people are so caught up in disobedience, He gives them over...lets His hand of protection drawback, so to speak. And the people suffer the consequences of their disobedience.

Now, I think a question we have to ask is, "Why would God do this? Why would He do this sort of thing?" And I think the obvious answer is in order to pull his people back. Certainly there's a consequence for disobedience, and there also is a level of punishment. But ultimately God's correction, God's allowing the people to come in, is intended to offer a course correction to Israel. It's intended to bring them back into fellowship, into relationship with Him. Discipline is intended to be corrective. And the hope is that as He disciplines them through the hands of the Philistines, they will once again recognize their need for Him, and they will turn to Him once again.

Now, before we continue in verse 2, there's one last thing we need to know about this opening of chapter 13. See, throughout Judges, whenever we read this phrase that *Israel once again did evil in the sight of the Lord*, every single time there is another phrase that follows that up, and the phrase goes something like this. "*And Israel cried out to their God. They lifted up their voice to their God.*" But we will not find that phrase in chapter 13. And in fact, throughout the rest of the book of Judges, we will not see Israel cry out in that way to their God. It's almost as if they have become so caught up in their sin, they are turned upside down. They can't even recognize that they need to cry out to their God, who is keen to rescue. So the question is, "When they don't cry out, how will God respond?" We're going to read a longer section here so we can catch the whole kind of narrative. Verse 2:

There was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren and had borne no *children*. Then the angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, "Behold now, you are barren and have borne no *children*, but you shall conceive and give birth to a son. Now therefore, be careful not to drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing. For behold, you shall conceive and give birth to a son, and no razor shall come upon his head, for the boy shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines." Then the woman came and

told her husband, saying, “A man of God came to me and his appearance was like the appearance of the angel of God, very awesome. And I did not ask him where he *came* from, nor did he tell me his name. But he said to me, ‘Behold, you shall conceive and give birth to a son, and now you shall not drink wine or strong drink nor eat any unclean thing, for the boy shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death.’” (Vs. 2-7)

Israel is given over to the Philistines. They do not cry out to God, but how does God respond? He responds by entering into the life of His people once again. He draws near to them. Even when Israel did not cry out, God knew they needed rescuing. See, while your and my compassion, while your and my mercy might know some limits, the compassion of God is at the core of His being. His compassion knows no limits and knows no bounds. It's fundamental to who He is. And we see that on display in His reaction to their disobedience. He enters in. He intervenes.

The first thing about this part of the story is it should draw up for us a bit of a recollection of other times God has done something like this. Anytime we come across a miraculous birth, or just an astounding announcement of a birth that is to come, it should put us on the edge of our seats. Because we know throughout biblical history, throughout the whole biblical story, when God does this, it means He is going to intervene in a particular way. He is going to do something special, and what He is about to do, is going to tell us what He is like. It's also supposed to stir up for us anticipation of exactly how He's going to bring this crooked situation straight once again.

So, as we look at the details of this birth announcement, what can we learn? Well, the first thing we learned is the name of the husband is Manoah. Manoah is of the tribe of Dan. Dan is just one of the tribes of Israel, but it's one of the smaller tribes of Israel. We're going to learn more about them in the weeks to come, because they'll be kind of big on the scene throughout the rest of Judges. But Dan's territory sat southwest of Jerusalem, and specifically this town of Zorah sat about 16 to 18 miles west of Jerusalem. It'd be like here to Pleasant Dale...about that far...not very much territory. The other thing we know about Dan and about Zorah itself is that it sat right on the border of the region that the Philistines occupied. And so the Danites, the people living in Zorah, and Manoah himself, would be very, very familiar with the warring ways of the Philistines. Now we don't learn the name of Manoah's wife. I so wish we did, but we do know that the birth that she is about to have, the pregnancy, is very, very unlikely. We know this because the author decides to add a little detail—two details—that tell us this is unlikely. Number one is she was barren. Number two, she had never given birth. So, it's not as if she had reached an age where she could no longer give birth. That detail is kind of an editorial comment by the author, letting us know that what is about to happen is only going to happen because God is going to intervene. This isn't going to be merely human interaction that brings this about. This will be a pregnancy that will be able to come about because God has graciously acted. God is going to bring something about.

So, with all we reviewed so far, this birth is one that should stir up anticipation for us, and I'm sure it did for Israel. But what was added next in the story certainly only heightened the tension. We learned that both mother and child are supposed to take on a vow, beginning the moment the announcement occurs, until the birth, and then for the child throughout his whole life. The mother is not supposed to take on any fermented drink, and she's also supposed to avoid unclean foods, as kind of described and proscribed in God's law. And likewise, her son is said to be a Nazirite from

birth. We learned about the Nazirites in Numbers, chapter 6. We're not going to turn there; you can read about it later. But the Nazirites were not a special class of people. It was more a special vow that any Israelite could take upon themselves. It was a vow of dedication to God, kind of setting yourself apart for God and for His service. Anyone could take it on.

When you took on the Nazirite vow, what you committed to do was, you're not going to take in any fermented drink, and you're not going to eat unclean foods. You're going to stay away from dead bodies and things that would make you unclean, according to Levitical law. But then there's also this other little detail about the Nazirites that's a little confusing to us. You can't cut your hair. Now I know a couple of people that, over time, have used this as an argument with their mothers and fathers to let them grow their hair out very long. "You know, the dedication to God." What was this about? With the ancient Near East, at this time, it was believed that in the blood and also in the hair, kind of the essence of life was contained. Somehow this was holy, sacred stuff. And so, to not cut it was a symbolic act of giving your life to God. And of course, it would also set you apart physically. People would know you've taken this vow.

So, the boy would be a Nazirite from birth, which means that he'd be set apart for the Lord for service to Him for life. And, specifically, we're told that he will bring about the beginning of the end of the Philistines. Now upon learning this, the woman runs and tells her husband, and as she tells him the details, she adds two important kinds of notes that we have to take a look at. The first thing she says is that this man of God appeared **awesome, almost like an angel of God**. And so you get the sense that she understands, at least a little bit, the gravity of the moment. She's not fully aware that an angel is standing before her, but she is aware there is something incredible going on here. And then she also says that the son, **the child will be a Nazirite until his death**, and this also is extremely rare. A Nazirite vow was always for a time period; it would have an ending. But this child will be a Nazirite from his birth until his death, his entire life dedicated to God. This is heady, heady stuff.

Before we continue in verse 8, I just want to pause for a moment and just consider the incredible faith of this woman. Her response is just astounding to me. An angel comes to her and says, "Hey, guess what, you're going to have a child." That's a shocker! We'd all be a little shocked if we knew that was physically impossible. But not just that. This child is going to deliver the nation of Israel. How do you even take that in? But what we see from her is just surrender. "Okay, God." What amazing faith! Oh, that we might have the faith of this unnamed woman. Well, so now she's told her husband, so both she and Manoah know what's going on. But we get to see now how Manoah is going to respond. Verse 8:

Then Manoah entreated the LORD and said, "O Lord, please let the man of God whom You have sent come to us again that he may teach us what to do for the boy who is to be born." God listened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again to the woman as she was sitting in the field, but Manoah her husband was not with her. So the woman ran quickly and told her husband, "Behold, the man who came the *other* day has appeared to me." Then Manoah arose and followed his wife, and when he came to the man he said to him, "Are you the man who spoke to the woman?" And he said, "I am." Manoah said, "Now when your words come *to pass*, what shall be the boy's mode of life and his vocation?" So the angel of

the LORD said to Manoah, “Let the woman pay attention to all that I said. She should not eat anything that comes from the vine nor drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing; let her observe all that I commanded.” (Vs. 8-14)

So, Manoah learns of this prophetic announcement, and he entreats the Lord. It basically means he offered up prayer to the Lord, and he's asking God, “Would you send this angel again that we might learn a few more details? Thank you very much.” And God answers his prayer and sends the angel once again to the woman. She grabs Manoah; then they're able to have this conversation, or at least what they hope will be a conversation about what this child is to become. As I think about this moment, it just strikes me as an incredibly human moment. This is a father and mother being given incredibly powerful information, but more importantly, they learn that their child is going to be incredibly important. And the question is, "How do you begin to deal with that psychologically as parents, right? How do you take that in?" Being a parent for the first time is always overwhelming. Let alone when you find out that, "Hey, this child is going to be a deliverer of Israel." How do you start to process that?

I remember when I brought my son home for the first time. Sam, he's 12 now. You know, you get in the car over there at St. Elizabeth's and you almost want to say to the hospital staff, "Are you sure I have the authority to do what I'm doing right now?" They check the car seat. Then you start driving, and everyone is going too fast because you're like, "Hey, slow down. I've got precious cargo here, okay?" I drive over railroad tracks about at a one mile per hour pace. Just don't want to disrupt anything. It's daunting! I think it's perfectly reasonable for Manoah to say, "Hey, could you give us a few more details, please?" If I were Manoah I would have been frustrated, then, at the angel's response, because the angel gives no new information. Nothing! "Hey, angel, should he do squats from birth? Right? He's going to be a warrior. How do we train this guy up? Do we give him a spear at his one-year-old birthday party or two years? When do we start kind of making sure that he becomes all that he's intended to be?" All these logical questions. "How do you raise a warrior?" The angel gives no response...no answers! The answer was essentially, "Set the boy apart for the Lord. Trust God with him. Give the boy to God." And sometimes that's all we get, isn't it? Sometimes we ask God, "Give us a bit more." But God says, "You've got to trust Me. You just have to trust Me."

So as Manoah gets that response, we see that he comes to terms with the fact that he's not going to get any new information, no details on a warrior-raising plan. But he still wants to get something or do something for this man of God. So, we pick it up in verse 15:

Then Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, “Please let us detain you so that we may prepare a young goat for you.” The angel of the LORD said to Manoah, “Though you detain me, I will not eat your food, but if you prepare a burnt offering, *then* offer it to the LORD.” For Manoah did not know that he was the angel of the LORD. Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, “What is your name, so that when your words come *to pass*, we may honor you?” But the angel of the LORD said to him, “Why do you ask my name, seeing it is wonderful?” So Manoah took the young goat with the grain offering and offered it on the rock to the LORD, and He performed wonders while Manoah and his wife looked on. For it came about when the flame went up from the

altar toward heaven, that the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar. When Manoah and his wife saw *this*, they fell on their faces to the ground. (Vs. 15-20)

These cultures of the ancient Near East put an incredibly high value on hospitality. When a guest visited, you needed to be hospitable to the guests, actually extravagantly hospitable would be a way to honor a guest. That's true of any guests, but it's particularly true of a guest that is bringing in an announcement like this. In fact, it might be that Manoah realized, "You know what? I probably should have offered a meal a bit sooner." This hospitality meal would be a chance for the visitor to rest and kind of get rejuvenated in this incredibly arid, difficult climate, get some restoration to his body, to his mind. And so, Manoah offers a meal of hospitality—and an extravagant meal includes a goat. This, by the way, is kind of the inspiration for the goat jerky that all of you fathers picked up today for Father's Day. I'm kidding; it's beef jerky, beef jerky.

But the angel says "No, I'm not going to eat it." And we don't need to go into the details of the physiology of the intestinal tract of an angel, but angels don't need food. Right? They don't need to eat. So, the angel says, "Just offer this up as a burnt offering; offer it as a sacrifice of worship to God." And so Manoah, still stumbling to find a way to honor this guest says, "*Can you tell me your name?*" Now part of the reason for this is that if this prophecy comes true, if it comes to pass, it's going to be good to be able to honor the prophet that made such an incredible prophecy. And if this was a traveling prophet, this would be an incredible boom to that prophet's career. But the angel's response also highlights just how in the dark Manoah still is about what exactly is going on here. The angel says, "**Why do you ask my name, seeing that it is wonderful.**" The Hebrew term פִּלְיָהּ (*pil'i*), translated "wonderful" in the NASB occurs as an adjective only here in Judges 13:18 and in Psalm 139:6 where it describes the marvelous works of God. In other places the noun form of this Hebrew word (פִּלְיָהּ / *pele*) is often used to describe God's acts (wonders) as well God's Messiah (Isaiah 9:6). Essentially, this angel is saying, "Who I am. Where I am from. The spiritual realm. It's all too amazing. It's too wonderful. It's incomprehensible. Your finite mind can't even conceive of it. It's too amazing."

And so, Manoah offers up the goat as a sacrifice, and as the sacrifice is burning, we learned that the Lord Himself does incredible wonders. And then the reality of the moment becomes visible to both Manoah and his wife as the angel ascends with the fire and the smoke of this burnt offering. Just an incredible, incredible scene! And of course, when Manoah and his wife realize what really is transpiring, they fall on their faces...they fall on their faces probably out of fear, out of awe, out of reverence. Continuing in verse 21:

Now the angel of the LORD did not appear to Manoah or his wife again. Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of the LORD. So Manoah said to his wife, "We will surely die, for we have seen God." But his wife said to him, "If the LORD had desired to kill us, He would not have accepted a burnt offering and a grain offering from our hands, nor would He have shown us all these things, nor would He have let us hear *things* like this at this time." (Vs. 21-23)

Don't you wish you knew the name of Manoah's wife? An incredible response from her. Manoah is rightly fearful. You know, whenever an angel shows up, most of the time when an angel shows up in the Bible, what they usually come and start to say right when they arrive is, "Don't be afraid."

When angels show up, it is a glorious thing. And so, Manoah isn't lying when he's terrified, right? We just experienced something that the people could die from. But his wife comes in with this calm, reassuring, thoughtful, faithful, surrendered response. She says, "I don't think God wants to kill us, He would have done it already. I think He wants to use us. I think He's calling us to participate in the very work that He's doing. Somehow, He has a plan for us." And that's exactly right. Well, the chapter comes to a close with these two verses:

Then the woman gave birth to a son and named him Samson; and the child grew up and the LORD blessed him. And the Spirit of the LORD began to stir him in Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol. (Vs. 24-25)

So, the anticipated child finally arrives. He's named Samson, an incredibly familiar figure. We all know about him, right? You grow up learning about him. Samson with the long-golden-locks, right? An amazing figure. A famous figure, but also an infamous figure...a tragic figure. This is the final judge we're going to read about in the book of Judges. This is the judge that Bryan mentioned last week—that we're about to encounter a judge whose story would be confusing and frustrating, and difficult to figure out. That makes sense, because as we follow Samson's career, we're going to see that it doesn't exactly live up to the incredible anticipatory hope that comes from his birth announcement. Because we have to say that what happens here, his introduction onto the scene, certainly stirs up hope for us. "Hey, maybe here. Maybe here a deliverer is coming who will be dedicated to God and will finally bring us ultimate victory. We'll finally be delivered. We'll finally be ultimately free from the oppression of our foes, from the Philistines." In this moment, if you are an Israelite, you are full of hope as you read this story. This is an incredible birth!

But we know the whole story, don't we? We know how the cycle goes, and from where we sit, we know how it's going to end, and that the cycle of sin will continue. And Samson's career ultimately is going to leave Israel longing for more. But aren't you so thankful that we live when we do? We know the whole story, don't we? We're fortunate because we see what all transpired, and yet we know that from this moment, about 1000 years later, there's going to be another birth. There's going to be a birth that is even more miraculous. And as confusing as Samson's story is, there is going to be a deliverer to come whose story is not confusing at all. The birth of Samson would have brought a flicker of hope, but we are privileged because of where we sit, to live in light of a birth that brings with it unfading hope.

Bryan mentioned last week that all of these judges are a type, a type to find its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Every judge delivered for a time, but Jesus Christ delivered once and for all. What God was doing on a small scale in each of these stories in Judges, He did on a grand scale, finally and ultimately through Jesus Christ. And it's because of Him, through faith in Him, by placing our trust and our confidence in Him alone, that we can enter into a life with God and have deliverance from sin forever. We can live a life to the very same God who works these wonders that we just read about in Judges 13—the God whose mercy never fails, the God who is always ready to deliver. That's the privilege of the position we stand in, knowing of the ultimate deliverer, Jesus Christ. What a blessing that is to us!

But as we close this chapter, and I think that each time we walk through a chapter in Judges, especially, I think we have to ask ourselves the question, "What are we supposed to do with this?"

Lord, what do You have for us?" So here is a question I'd like you to consider, as we close. "Do you believe, as we read the events of Judges 13, do you believe this is the world that you live in?" Does that make sense? "Do you believe that what we read about, that is reality? That is who God is? That is how He works?" See, I think it's tempting for us to approach this as really interesting history. But we cannot approach this as merely history. I know this is thousands and thousands of years removed from our moment. I know that we are thousands of miles away from where this occurred. But if I don't believe that this is the world we live in, then I have to say, "What am I doing? Can I really call myself a biblical Christian if I don't just know the facts, but I also believe that I'm living in this reality?"

Here's what I mean by that. Knowing the facts of Samson's birth might help us win a trivia game. "Hey, Manoah is Samson's dad." You know, two points. It doesn't get us points in heaven. The remarkable reality of this story is that we have a God that is like this. We have a God that intervenes in history. We have a God that can bring about life in a barren womb. We have a God that reaches out to redeem, even when we don't cry out to Him. His compassion is astounding! That is who our God is. That is the world we live in. A world where, because of God's power, barren wombs can bring about life. A world where, because of God's power, virgins can actually conceive. That's the world that we inhabit, because we are alive to a God that is like that. And do we believe that we live in this world? Do we walk in light of that reality? Do we believe we're living in a God-intervenes kind of world? A God who does not give up kind of world? A God who never tires of delivering kind of world? A God who can bring about something that to us seems impossible kind of world? Exactly what we see in the pages of Judges? We have a God that still lives, and He is unchanging. This is the world we live in. Do we believe that? See, I'll be honest with you. If I am not caught up in a God-sized story, I don't want to get out of bed. I need to be caught up in a story where there is more than what I just see, where there is a God at work, right around me. That He is good. That He won't give up. That He delivers. That He brings about the impossible. So do we live in light of that reality?

About a couple well, maybe a month ago, we are getting dinner ready, and I just was so overwhelmed, just so many things in my head and on my heart. So, I went for a walk and was just kind of processing all that. And as I was on that walk, the thought occurred to me, "I should just write all that down." So, when I got home, I wrote it all down, but not like as a therapeutic exercise. It was more a prayerful writing, "Lord, I'm just going to list out every single thing that's on my heart that's weighing down on my mind. Places where if You don't show up, we are in big trouble." Forty-five items later, written in the back of my Bible, so I won't forget them, I sat and looked at that list. And I thought, "Oh, Lord, how? How, unless You show up?" Some of that pertains to us, right? We're in this moment. We've all been through a tough three years. I think we can all agree on that. Habits of not gathering together have taken root for a number of our friends. And you say, "Lord, how, how will we start to regather again as the people of God? How, unless You bring that about?"

Last week we announced an end of the year giving goal, right? It's an audacious thing, and so like, "Lord, how? How, unless You show up? We need You!" I think about VBS coming up. I think about the next generation that we're raising right here, that we just so want to pour into and help them live rooted, and resilient in God's very truth. And you say, "How can we do that? Are we even up to the task?" And the answer is, "No! But God is." See, if any of the things we're aiming

at as a church, if any of the things we're aiming at in life are things that we can explain by our mere power, then we should just throw those things aside. We want to live God-sized dreams, and we need Him to show up. Do we live in light of a God that acts this way?

Each of us this morning, each of us carries a story of difficulties, struggles, and I know people in this room who are incredibly sick. Got to have God show up! Marriages and kids that have gone astray, marriages that are struggling. Got to have God show up! Jobs that just aren't working out. Bosses that are horrible. All these things, things that are just too big for us, things where we say, "Lord, I have to have You show up and help me to live in light of the reality that this is who You are." Are we living in light of this reality? Because I am confident of this: that is what each of us needs to hear. Each of us needs to hear and be constantly reminded that we have a God who draws near. We have a God who does not hold back when there is trouble. He is pleased to answer our cry. That is who He is. He is inclined to save. He is not distant. He is not ignorant of our situation. He is not holding back. He's not fed up with us. He's not tired of delivering us. That is not who He is. He is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. That is what God is like, and that is the world, through Jesus Christ, that we are invited to inhabit with Him. How would my life look different this week, today, if what you go through is seen in light of that reality? God is on the scene. It's the world we live in. This is who God is.

Israel hoped for a deliverer. We worship the ultimate deliver! No more waiting for the people of God, right? The ultimate deliverer has come and through faith in Him, we can live a life to God, our only source of hope...our only source of strength...our only source of peace. Our unfailing and merciful God—today—every day—let us live in light of that glorious reality!

Let's pray together.

Lord Jesus, You are the ultimate deliverer. You have saved us finally and ultimately from the power of sin and death. You have rescued us from the grave, transferred us to the kingdom, to Your very kingdom. And now, because of who You are, we get to live alive to You. And, Father, we praise You for sending Your Son and we praise You for never tiring of being merciful to us. We thank You for who You are. We thank You for allowing us to be caught up in the world that you inhabit, and in which You are working constantly. Help us, Lord. Help us to live in light of that reality today. We pray these things in the name of our deliverer, Jesus, Amen.

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