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Exodus chapter 24.

Our portion by God's help is verses one through 11. So, let us look to him for that help.

Her father in heaven. How we thank you, and praise. You even for our frailty that we make. Glory and weakness because your grace is sufficient for us. Your strength is made perfect in our weakness. And so we will boast in our weakness for is when we are weak. That we are strong with the strength of Christ but the Lord we know that weakness does not automatically make us strong with the strength of Christ.

And so we look to you O God for the the power, the mercy, the ministry of your Holy Spirit, applying Christ to us glorifying him in us. Help us. We come even in our best and sharpest. Condition is not as if we can reach by our minds up to the truth that you plainly state in your word.

And we come asking then that you would give light that you would give understanding that you would give belief and acceptance. You would give us to be. Grasped by that, we may have a grasp of your word. We thank you particularly for this passage It sets before us. Not only that you bring us near safely but that you do.

So without compromising or diminishing your glory. So we pray that you would, and grant to us that this portion of your word would be faithfully proclaimed, and believingly heard for, we ask it in Jesus name. Amen.

Exodus chapter 24 verses 1 through 11. These are God's words. Now he said to Moses, come up to Yahweh you and Aaron Nadap, and I buy you, and 70 of the elders of Israel and worship from afar and Moses alone shall come near Yahweh. But they shall not come near and nor shall the people go up with him.

So Moses came and told the people, all the words of Yahweh and all the judgments and all the people answered with one voice and said, all the words, which Yahweh has said, we will do. And Moses wrote all the words of Yahweh. He rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain and 12 pillars.

According to the 12 tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel who offered burnt offerings sacrificed, peace, offerings of oxen to Yahweh. And Moses took half the blood and put it in basins and half the blood. He sprinkled on the altar, Then he took the book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people and they said all that.

Yahweh has said, we will do and be obedient and Moses. Took the blood sprinkled it on the people and said, this is the blood of the covenant, what you always has made with you. According to all these words Then Moses went up. Also Aaron neither and to buy here and 70 of the elders of Israel and they saw the God of Israel and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of Sapphire stone.

And it was like the very heavens in its clarity but on the nobles of the children of Israel, He did not lay his hand. So they saw God and they ate and drank.

So far the reading of God's inspired inerrant worked.

As we read the scripture just now, Did you not find the beginning and the ending fairly surprising that after chapter 19 in which God said that none of them may come to the mountain that even if a beast touches the mountain, it will die that he says, come up to Yahweh you and Aaron Nadab and a bayou in 70 of the elders of Israel and worship from afar.

And then he talks about coming near and not coming near and you think oh well maybe I didn't. Maybe verse 1 isn't really that you know surprising maybe he's not talking about coming up and touching the mountain and we want to wriggle out of it as it were and then we get to verse 9 and it says then Moses went up.

Also, Aaron Nate app by who and 70 elders of Israel. And so we were not mistaken. God has actually commanded Moses is acting as covenant mediator here. And who is the prophet and Aaron and Nadab, and Abayu, 60% of the high priestly family as we were about to find out and the coming chapters representing Israel as a church which we've just been hearing and what he calls in this.

Passage the book of the Covenant laws that govern both Israel as a church and Israel as a state. And so they have their priests representing them and as a church and they have these 70 elders, we're presenting them as a state and they go up and touch the mountain.

And yet On the nobles of the children of Israel. He did not lay his hand. So they saw God and they ate, and they drank. Now, of course, the children just told us this morning, the youngest ones. God is a spirit and has not a body like men. So there is no particular appearance of God.

He makes himself to be seen by us and the does this in ways of varying degrees of the greatness of his glory and the greatness of the appearance of that glory. We're not too many chapters from where Moses will ask to see. God understanding that what he sees here is.

Not even all that. There is to see which is what makes Jesus so amazing. Isn't it When Philip asks, show us the Father and that will be enough. And Jesus says, Have I been with you so long and you do not know me, Philip, he who has seen me, has seen the Father and the the answer that Jesus gives Phillip as there's nothing more of God.

To see then a scene in Jesus Christ. Just as John begins near the beginning of his book, John 18, no one has seen God at any time, but the only begotten who's in the bosom of the Father, He has and different translations. Say declared him fully revealed him. If you're familiar with the Word it's actually the word.

Exegetated. Him Jesus is perfectly fully. Displayed the Father and yet in a few chapters, when Moses asks to see God in Exodus, God will say what? No one can see my face and live. So we're not actually, that surprised that they see God Because God has been making appearances of himself, 13 chapter 13, and verse 21.

God going before them just last week and not last week. Sorry.

Yes. Last week in chapter 23, and verse 21, The angel and whose name is the Lord will go before him. The, the angel of Yahweh who is Yahweh. And we remember that this same angel has gone before them since chapter 14. And and verse 18. So it really shouldn't surprise us that there are displays of God that he makes of himself.

What surprises us is that God as he displays himself in his glory and as Moses and Aaron and Nadab and a bai who in these 70 elders, come near that they come near or not only in safety that he did not lay his hands on them, but they also come and fellowship and joy, They see God and they eat.

And they drink is extraordinary that God's people are able to dwell safely near His glory, to have fellowship and joy with the Living. God who does not diminish His glory in order for us to become near. It's, it's difficult for us to think about that because every one of us knows that what we have seen of God's glory, thus far, even by faith is such a small glimpse.

And what we do, see in that small glimpse when we see it rightly, when the, when the Holy Spirit brings the knowledge of God to our hearts. We do like Isaiah does when he sees has a vision of the the glory of God and Isaiah chapter 6 and he hears the angels using their mouths the way our mouths were created.

Our lips were created to be used. Here's them saying. Holy holy holy is the Lord God Almighty and then maybe one of the the most terrifying parts of it for Isaiah. The whole earth is full of His glory that He has always been and the presence on earth of this God whose glory.

He's seen in this vision of the throne and of the temple and heard about the angels and he cries out woe is me for. I am undone for, I am a man of un clean lips and then dwell among the people of unclean lips. That's the response that we expect to see When someone sees the glory, when someone gets a glimpse of the glory Peter, got a glimpse of the glory, didn't he?

When the next filled with the fish and the boat started sinking And what has Peter do? He falls down and he worships in the boat. He cries depart from me. Lord for. I'm a sinful man.

But here, God gives them a view of his glory, to which they are able to respond with fellowship. Enjoy, they ate and they drain. We know that God here is making a great display of that glory because He describes the heavenliness of it and says, they saw the God of Israel verse 10.

And there was under his feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone. And it was like, the very heavens in its clarity. And, you know, we can start to try to talk about, you know, blue, sapphire stone and what like the heavens and its clarity means, but we really don't have a clue, you know, we can say transparent sapphire as well as we can say, transparent gold.

Or It's like the opening chapters of Ezekiel, isn't it? And the one that he sees and you run out of language. It's like John trying to describe the enthroned glory of the Lord Jesus. And what he looks like in the opening chapters of the Revelation, It's not there for us to, to explain and detail.

And certainly not there for us to try to paint to illustrate. It's there for us to understand that what they have seen. There's something that is beyond our experience, or our graspment was beyond theirs as well, even as they sought. So how can God's people come near to God in safety and even blessedness and joy?

And the answer in our passage is his covenant and particular. The book of the Covenant that God Himself makes terms upon which we are able to approach him and especially the the most important part of that the core of that not just the book of the Covenant but the great term upon which we come near is the blood of the Covenant.

So, those are the two things when you realize, where the spirits helping you that you are made to know God. That this is what you are saved for when you are safe and this is what we are

created for. This is what we have fallen from that. We have despised the glory of this God, and that is what we have fallen short of that is what we have sinned against.

This is why it had to be Christ to atone for us for he is the brightness of God's glory and he was offered as a propitiation that the one who endured all of the wrath for our sin. When we realize, this is what we were safe. When we long to behold and take in the glory of God, knowing even that we lack the capacity and desiring to be perfected in our souls and glorified.

In our minds, that God would increase our capacity more and more and yet we know ourselves a sinners. And so we are struck with this dread, How can someone upon whom the glory of God? Ought to express itself with wrath. How could I ever come near? How could we come near the answer in the passage is the book of the Covenant and the blood of the covenant.

Notice the Lord is the one who has given, what we're calling the book of the Covenant. The section of case law from Middle or so chapter 20 to middle. Or so of chapter 23 and Moses tells the people, all the words of Yahweh verse 3 And the people answer all the words which you always said we will do.

And then we see in verse 4, Moses wrote. All the words of Yahweh and then verse 7, he takes the book of the covenant. That's what he's now. Copied down and written and he reads it in the hearing of the people and they say all that Yahweh has said we will do and be obedient.

And as Moses applies to them the blood of the covenant. He says, this is the blood of the covenant, which you always made with you. According to all these words. And so the first reason, the first reason or way that we can come safely near God, is because it wasn't our idea, It's not so much that we draw near to God as He draws us near to himself.

He is the one who decides to do that. He is the innovator as it were. He's the one not only who determines that he will redeem for himself a people and bring them near, but he is the one who initiates the bringing of us near and he is the one who tells us.

And so we have not just this section. Now the that we're referring to as the book of book of the Covenant, but we have the whole of Scripture.

We have the words of God who is who is the one who has come up with the way of our coming near and he is initiated it and it's according to his words, What this means is we can't decide what we want coming near to God to be or to be like We may not initiate of ourselves.

We must respond to what he has done. The idea of of trying to come to God on our terms, as like saying, who will ascend into heaven. That is to bring Christ down You and I can know more come up with the way of coming near God. Then we could help Jesus with the incarnation Romans Tennessee saying there, or who will descend into the abyss That is to bring Christ up.

We can know more decide what coming near to God will how that can be and the way by which we are to do that. Then we can help with Jesus's resurrection but Jesus has come near. How does it say by His Word? Which he puts in our hearts and he puts it on our lips and he makes us to hear it preached, so that we will hear him and believe him and have that faith.

That comes by hearing. God Himself is the one who initiates relationship, he sets the terms. And so, there's a beautiful picture here of God initiating how to come near him. And those who are, who are making this, a participating in this covenant meal in which the Covenant is being established and confirmed.

And the Lord sets up an altar or sorry. The Lord has Moses set up. An altar representing the Lord himself and the 12 pillars representing the tribes of Israel and and he gives the terms and we'll get to the blood of the covenant in a moment and the application to both.

But God is the one who is making a way that they can come and they can draw near and they can see God and they can eat and they can drink, and they can be safe in the presence of the glory of God and joyful and the presence of the glory of God.

However Moses would fail. That's covenant mediator. He wouldn't even be able to enter the promised land and all of their priests would ultimately fail. In fact, Nadab and I buy you, two of the three priests that come here, they don't survive the day of their ordination because they offer strange fire to God, not that which God had commanded, but they come up with their own way of coming near and God's answer to that is by those who draw near to me, I will be revered.

God must be the one who designs, how we come to him, how we worship Him. And of course, Well maybe not of course We come to say oh of course it has to be that way when we get to who it is or who it is to the one to whom all of these sacrifices looked forward and the fire looked forward.

It's Jesus. God establishing the the way they were to worship was primarily because Jesus is the one in whom they come near. That's what the whole Bible teaches us. Even as we were joist Wednesday evening. The midway midweek meeting, what is Windsor? The fourth day evening, we shouldn't give the data voting in the midweek meeting this week to hear.

But now, the righteousness of God as a beat has been revealed apart from the law to which the law, and the prophets, testify, The whole Bible from cover to cover proclaims to us. That Jesus Christ is all the righteousness we can have and that we can come near to God in Him, not for the wrath.

That is revealed against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men. But for the blessedness, the salvation, the power of God to save us because in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed by faith that Jesus Christ.

But the priests of Israel would fail and the kings of Israel would fail and the church of Israel would fall and the nation of Israel would fall. Now the New Covenant, we have profit priest and king, who cannot fail. He who is perfectly true and who has once offered up himself as sacrifice and as seated on the throne in heaven and mediates and leads all of our worship.

He is the one who declares his father's name to his brethren and who sings his father's? Praise in the midst of the assembly, says Hebrews chapter 2 and he sits on the throne, His enemies being made of footstool for his feet. If you are citizens of his kingdom, it has an everlasting kingdom.

It's the little stone that that grows until it is the mighty mountain and the great, the great victory shout at the end that the kingdoms of this earth have become the kingdom of our Lord. Jesus Christ. So, members of the visible Church are taught by their membership by coming to God on his terms and being arranged in a visible church on earth.

Who had that has a priest in heaven that we are also citizens of a nation. That is I heavenly nation and neither that church nor that kingdom can never fall or can ever fail. And so even in this covenant meal, here We have something that is just a poor shadow compared to what Christians enjoy.

It is glorious in Exodus 24 verses one through 11, that Moses and Nadab and Abayahu and Aaron and the 70 elders can be there and see God and eat. And what we're tempted to do is come to a passage like this and say, oh, wouldn't that have been amazing?

If I could have been there with them on the mountain to see the, the paved work of Sapphire stone under his feet, that was like the very heavens in its clarity, But the church that was established and the nation that was established. And that covenant ceremony did not have Jesus as its priest From Jesus, as its king.

Those were promises to which they looked forward that you and I have now, we just saying and we almost sang it twice. Except for the requester graciously, let us off the hook and the very long crown him version of all hail the power of Jesus name. Had mercy on our throats but there's that stands up.

Oh that with yonder. Sacred throng. We at his feet may fall and I'm singing it and I'm thinking how can I put that and to past and present tense because we do with the under sacred throne fall at his feet. Lord's dead by Lord's Day, that's what Hebrews 12 is saying.

We are already seated with him, in the heavenly places. We already worship with the congregation of the firstborn. We haven't, We haven't gone there. Our souls have not been transported to glory, but we do participate by faith and fall at the same feet and are members of the same invisible church.

That's what you that's what you say. If you ever repeat the apostles creed and you say You believe in the Holy Catholic Church you're not you're not pledging anything to the Pope of Rome. You're saying you believe that there's not just this visible church on earth that the Lord has arranged into congregations.

But that there is that church of which you are a member through faith and Jesus Christ that has him as priest, and will never fall, and where you have come nearer already, then these 74 men were on the mountain and Exodus chapter 24 and and that he's not done with that yet.

We can sing it in the future tense. Absolutely. We're looking forward to being with Yonder, Sacred thong, and they are actually looking forward to being resurrected. And it is, It has God's will that we shall all enjoy that final fulfillment altogether at once that there will be any missing When we come into the final enjoyment of it.

But all of that is according to his word, You know, the regulative principle, you know that phrase used for coming to God. Only the way that he has said It is not some persnicketyness that hyper technical Presbyterians came up with to drive their friends crazy. Although some such Presbyterians do It is embracing the fact that God has made the way to come near and that we cannot add or take away from it.

Because ultimately everything that he has given us to do, is to come near him in Jesus and that brings us from book of the Covenant, that it's all the words, all the words, all the words, all the words, all the words to blood of the covenant, He sends the young men of the children of Israel verse 5 to offer the burn offerings and sacrifice, peace, offerings of oxygen to Yahweh.

And then he takes half the blood and puts it in basins while the other halfy sprinkles, and the word can mean, pour just as well as sprinkle. And if you're thinking about volume here, We're probably talking about one burnt offering and one ox worth of blood per tribe. It's it's probably pouring but the altar is drenched with the blood.

The altar representing God. And what's happening? Here is similar to remember when the Lord puts Abraham into a deep sleep. And he has him cut. The the animals in the in the covenant ceremony and and separate them and you would end up with the blood in between. And in that case it's a picture of actually the new covenant, the covenant between us and God in Jesus because Abraham doesn't walk between the two Abraham's in a deep sleep and it's the smoking oven and the flaming torch it's two different representations of God because God himself would become a man in order to secure that covenant with us In this case.

However, with Israel as church and state the, The blood is applied in the first place to the altar and then the other half of the blood is poured onto whom Moses supplies blood to the altar, He reads the book of the Covenant establishing the the terms of the Covenant, the according to what Yahweh has said, this isn't a negotiation.

He's the one who's that's the terms and then Moses takes the blood in meaning, the blood that was in the basins and pours it on. The people says, this is the blood of the covenant, what you always has made with you. According to all these words And some of your children, your ears.

Just perked up, didn't they? Because you hear language like that every week, this cup is the new covenant in my blood and the blood of the covenant is an identification between God and his people. But for us as a church, he identifies with a church that not only is it Christ's blood that has been spilled for us.

But Christ is the one who represents us. And so when he pours out his spirit upon us and he commands the water to be poured out upon us in baptism, His reminding us that it is. He who applies the cleansing of his own blood to us, this blood had come from an atonement for them and it obligated them to keep covenant, but it could not cleanse them from their sin.

And so the Lord Jesus says identified himself with us both by his baptism. Remember, John didn't want to baptize him and Jesus said, no, you do this in order to fulfill all righteousness because Jesus is identifying Himself with us. But then when he commands that we be baptized. He also identifies the members of his visible church with himself.

So God here is identifying himself, making visible. The Covenant relationship that he's establishing between himself and Israel. And yet it is not ultimately good news for them because that to which he obligated them, they did not keep. And it was the curses of the covenant that were ultimately kept upon Israel because God is faithful.

Even though man is not The New Covenant, however, is in Jesus' blood with Jesus's priest, and Jesus is King. And we have poured on us, not blood because his sacrifices, once for all but water, giving us the efficacy of his blood and our identity with him. You see what the Lord does here.

He says he is not minimized his glory by coming in the flesh as Jesus Christ but he has brought us near to himself. Identified us with himself, A turned for our sin washed away, our sin, by the pouring out of his spirit. It's one of the reasons why you.

And when you talk about circumcision being superseded or obsoleted by baptism, You need to be careful and not make it a one-to-one because New Testament, baptism, actually replaces several things among the Old Testament signs and ceremonies and ordinances. This ceremony here in which the blood is poured upon the altar and then the blood is poured upon.

The people is also a precursor something that looks forward to the Lord Jesus identifying himself with us and bringing us near to. God not only in safety but also enjoy. And when he announces to us weekly at the table, that the cop, as the cup of the New Covenant in his

blood, he reminds us that it's a cup for those who have been baptized, It's a cup for those who have been brought into covenant, with God.

Through Jesus Christ, to affirm to us that our covenant keeper is still the resurrected one who is returning for us and all that. He has died for all that he has won. He will accomplish How often you and I come to the table coming into a new week. Having made a disaster of the previous week.

Being reminded that we are under all of this covenant, obligation. Thank you. Our dear shorter. Catechism children for reminding us today that the third commandment forbids all profaning or abusing anything whereby God maketh himself known and we realize how much profaning and abusing of that, which by that whereby, God maketh himself and we come to the table and we're reminded that we are bound to God and obligated by the blood of Jesus.

But we also come and we have a firm to us that has blood has a toned for us and that it is impossible for those who believe in Jesus Christ to be lost as for Jesus's death and resurrection to be denied what he has earned and what he has won by his Father.

The new covenant is the new covenant that is and his blood. And so, he combats our tendencies either to minimize his glory or to come to God in a way that cowers with doubt, because of what we are rather than coming to God in a way that is confident and hopeful and joyous, because of what Jesus is, It is in Jesus that we have come to God and your baptism attests that to you.

Not that you have been saved, but it affirms to you. That when you believe in Jesus, It is in Jesus, that you have come to God, and that you are united to him through faith and that his blood has cleansed you and secured for you. The covenant that cannot be the covenant blessings.

That cannot be taken from you.

And so, This much is true of you. Every one of you, You will be in the immediate undiluted presence of the glory of God forever. And you will either be in His presence the way. Second Thessalonians 1 describes for those who know, not God and are not obedient to the gospel, and they receive from his presence.

And from his glory eternal destruction or You will be in the immediate undiluted presence of God and His glory for unending ages. And you will have from his glory fellowship and joy and blessedness. Which one of the two will you have when you were in the presence of God forever, Will you have the presence of God in his favor and blessedness as your joy or the presence of God in his fury upon you in his wrath?

How Can you be safely in the presence of the glory of God on his terms Book of the Covenant and his terms are in Jesus? Blood of the covenant, man. Let's pray.

O Lord, even now.

We've had difficulty Lord. Teaching and preaching this clearly and certainly many of us difficulty understanding. But you o God or the one who saves and the preaching of your word as your appointed instrument for faith. So we pray that you'd help us to understand increase our understanding. Thank you that it is Christ.

Who is our prophet and Christ, who is our priest? And Christ, who is our king and we pray that every one of us would know that we have been atoned for by his blood and bound to you and



that all the Blessedness which belongs to him belongs entirely to everyone who believes in him.

Give faith. We pray. O. God for, we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.