

# Monotheism Made Our World

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[ 0 : 00 ] 29 through 31, Exodus chapter 4, verses 29 through 31. A lot of kids today. Goodness gracious. Who's running his kids today?

Does anyone know? Just need to pray for them. Alyssa! Thank you. So last week we covered Moses' calling, though initially unwilling and argumentative, we got to the point where we saw that Moses ultimately obeys, and his obedience, as we saw last week, seemed to be prompted in large part by God's promises that he would not have to do it alone, and that God would be with him, but in addition to God being with him, his brother Aaron, his older brother Aaron, would be with him and join him in this important mission.

And that gets us to the end of chapter 4, where we see Moses and Aaron going to the elders of the Israelites and disclosing God's plan. Elders here just means the representative of the people, and so in verse 29 of Exodus chapter 4 we see, Then Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the people of Israel.

Aaron spoke all the words that the Lord had spoken to Moses and did the signs and the sight of the people, and the people believed. And when they heard that the Lord had visited the people of Israel and that he had seen their affliction, they bowed their heads and worshiped.

Today my aim is to sort of set the table for the next nine chapters where we will see over and over again God contending against Pharaoh. And I thought it would be good to understand, well, why do we have nine chapters worth of back and forth between God and Pharaoh?

[ 1 : 58 ] Now we're going to start looking at that by analyzing a phrase we just read in verse 31 where it says that God visited the people of Israel.

Visited the people of Israel. This is the same word that God uses in the previous chapter. In chapter 3, verses 16 and 17, God says, To Moses, go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has appeared to me saying, I have observed you and what has been done to you in Egypt.

And I promise that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey.

So note the difference. In that passage, it says that God observed the people. And then in Exodus 4, 31, it says that the people understood that God had visited him.

Now, in the Hebrew, the words are exactly the same, but which is the better term? Which is going on? There's a big difference in our minds between visited and observed.

[ 3 : 17 ] We see God differently than these folks saw God. That's a key point to this message. We see God differently than the way that these folks saw God.

We think of God as observing something. We think of God in his omniscience, looking down over all things and seeing and witnessing.

But in the Hebrew mind at the time, their understanding of God was far smaller than what our understanding of God is. And that brings us to our first point of today's message, and that is this idea of divine revelation and the development of monotheism.

Now, we're going to use the term monotheism a lot. I'm assuming that most of us know what that means, but monotheism simply is the idea that there is only one God and that he reigns over all things.

And as you know, at this particular point in history, there was not a large monotheistic understanding, even among the Hebrews. At this time, people tended to view gods in a regional way.

[ 4 : 25 ] They thought of God's ruling over particular territories, and they assumed that there were many gods that were in kind of a competition with one another.

And so when we see this idea of them rejoicing that God had visited them, there's something tied in there to their limited understanding of God at the time, as if God had to go to where they were. Or this was a way that they, this is the way they thought of all the gods, that you would go to Philista and you would have gods there, and you'd go to Egypt and you'd have gods there, and so on and so forth.

I think many of you probably already know this. The Jews at this particular time probably weren't exactly what we think of as monotheists.

The term that would have been, the term that you might use to describe the way they thought of God would be henotheism or henotheism or monolatry.

[ 5 : 29 ] Sorry, I always want to say monolality, monolatry. What is henotheism? What is monolatry? Well, it's this idea that there are many gods, but that there's like a god that you have chosen.

That's sort of the thing that they have in common. There are many gods, but probably because of your ancestry, your ethnicity, or your location, you're choosing a particular god.

The primary difference between monolatry and henotheism is this. In the former, in henotheism, there is still a reverence for all the gods while one is elevated above others.

And in monolatry, there is no such reverence for lesser gods. So the Hebrews weren't thinking about God the same way that we're thinking about God. They were tending to see God in a far more limited way.

Now, what you need to remember is that everything we know about God, if it's true, is revealed to us. God is so much higher than us. He's so much bigger than us.

[ 6 : 33 ] He's truly transcendent. And so for us to really know anything about God, God has to reveal that information to us through the word and through creation.

And what we see when we study that idea is that God's revelation of himself is progressive. You can see this as we stand here in a new covenant with a clear view of not only God but of Jesus Christ and the Trinity and so on and so forth, that really the story of the Bible in many respects is just God revealing himself progressively so that in some respects you might imagine that it's a camera lens that just keeps getting sharper and sharper and sharper until you could really, really see the full picture of God.

Now that's all because God has revealed himself to us over time progressively throughout scripture. But in the beginning where we find the Hebrews they don't have monotheism locked down.

They don't have this idea that there is only one true God fully locked down. Now we're going to see if we were to read through the first five books of the Old Testament that this is a major theme.

Even in Deuteronomy 6 the famous Shema passage Behold O Israel the Lord our God is one. The first commandment of the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20 is this idea of a monotheistic God.

[ 7 : 56 ] But this has to be taught to these folks. They don't automatically know it. Now why do I want to mention this to you? Well again we're asking why was it necessary for God to contend with Pharaoh over and over again for these nine chapters coming up?

Why not just smite him immediately or just kind of surreptitiously take everybody out of Egypt and have no conflict whatsoever? Why did God choose to do it this way?

And I want to suggest that it was God's purpose to reveal himself through the contest with Pharaoh so that he could introduce this great doctrine of monotheism into the world.

Now you think well why is it important that monotheism be introduced into the world? Well let me just let me just narrow down into one particular thing. There is a direct link between monotheism science and human flourishing.

There's a direct link between when the world finally sort of owned this idea that there is just one God and the advent of science and the increase of human flourishing.

[ 9 : 09 ] There's a profession I think that's kind of cool it's called essentially a historian of science and your job as a historian of science is just to sort of look back through scientific development and tell the story and then to kind of understand why did things develop the way that they did?

And one such man is a guy named John Headley Brooke and he wrote this the quest after the laws of nature can be seen as a quest to uncover the divine legislation that lies behind nature's regularities.

Many years before John Headley Brooke C.S. Lewis said it better in his book called Miracles he said it this way men became scientific because they expected law in nature and they expected law in nature because they believed in a legislature a legislator are you seeing why monotheism actually makes a real difference in the world?

The whole advent of science as we know it is built upon this expectation that the world is not governed by hundreds or thousands or in the case of the Hindu perspective millions of competing gods but that there is just one God who rules over all things and therefore his creation is interconnected and orderly so what God is doing here in exposing the Hebrews to the persecution of the Pharaoh of contending with Pharaoh in general what God is doing is he's introducing this most important doctrine into the world he's introducing he's moving from the concept that there are competing gods that are over particular regions and he's introducing this thing that we all take for granted upon which the world we now live in is built that being monotheism the idea that there is just one God if you want to understand why God is wrestling with Pharaoh in the way that he is we could turn to Exodus 9 16 where God says says explicitly why he's doing what he's doing he says this but for this purpose I have raised you up Pharaoh to show you my power so that my name may be proclaimed in Israel you know in in Midia no in all the earth we're done with the regionalism we're done with me being seen as a competitor amongst!

[ 11 : 42 ] other gods I am doing this thing with Pharaoh so that I can show my power and that my name will be proclaimed in all the earth and when it's all said and done when Egypt lies in ruins spoiler plot spoiler there when Egypt lies in ruins God says to his people in Exodus chapter 19 you yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I bore you on eagles wings and brought you to myself now therefore if you will indeed obey my voice you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples for all the earth is mine what's God doing in the next nine chapters of the book of Exodus he's picking a fight with at the time was the dominant world leader you guys have heard the joke you know if you ever get put into prison the first thing you want to do on day one is to find the biggest man in what

God is doing with Pharaoh that's actually a pretty good explanation of what we're going to see over the next nine chapters what what's his end game why is he doing this well on the one hand there's a personal purpose he wants to redeem a certain people but why the hardening of Pharaoh's heart why all the back and forth because God in this particular story in the Exodus story is picking on the strongest God of the time and he is showing that he is above all gods let's just talk for a moment about this there's a layer of the plague situation that most people don't know about and that is that for each plague that God sent on Egypt there was a God worshipped by Egypt that he was specifically picking on that he was specifically neutering I suppose you might with the lice he is attacking a God named Seb and with the flies he's attacking a God whose name I can't pronounce and when he afflicts the cattle there are four

Egyptian gods that the Egyptians worshipped related to cattle and when he brings boils upon the people he's confronting Imhotep and another god gods of healing when the hail comes he's attacking four other Egyptian deities including Isis and Seth and then he brings the locusts and the Egyptians worshipped the god Sarepa specifically so that the locusts would be kept away they had a problem with locusts and they worshipped the god just to keep that situation under control and then when we get to the climax of the near climax of the plagues the darkness plague comes and Yahweh is targeting the most important god to Egypt and that was Ra the sun god and so plague by plague you ever wonder why lice why boils god is systematically dismantling the authority claims of all of the Egyptian gods why is he doing that he didn't have to do that to free

Israel what's the bigger purpose he's introducing what we now think of as monotheism he's introducing the idea that there is but one god who rules over all other gods in fact again back in exodus 18 jethro moses is father-in-law is reunited with moses and he says this after hearing about all these he says now i know that the lord is greater than all gods so he's still in kind of a henotheistic space right he's now he's but his understanding of god has advanced he doesn't think of the world as a collection of competing gods and oh who will win he doesn't think of the world as like one giant UFC match or a royal rumble and well that outcome's already determined so that but he doesn't see this he doesn't see the world like he did before this this it's just hard because we see it this way it's hard to understand what a revolution monotheism is to the human mind and to the understanding of the way that the world works you know while

I was writing some of this sermon I will place! the! there in Lenexa City Center. And what a beautiful place that Lenexa City Center is shaping out to be.

[16:18] You know, I sat there in the air-conditioned room with jazz playing and the Bose speakers overhead, electricity, you know, at fingertip, not literally.

Beautiful buildings. You know, they have this lawn edging that's probably about three feet high and it's made out of aluminum and they milled it with a CNC machine so that it's got all these intricate cuts out of it.

And you just take a moment, like you'll be somewhere this week that is built on monotheism. You'll be a lot of places this week that's built on this connection between no longer do I view the world as this chaotic place of competition between gods I view the world as an orderly place ruled by one God therefore I will go discover the laws of nature and in understanding the laws of nature I will promote human flourishing.

So why is God picking on old Pharaoh? Because he wants you to have air conditioning and antibiotics or whatever. Now really, you have to see how big God's purposes are.

People didn't understand this. And how is he going to teach it to them? And he's going to pick on old Pharaoh time after time after time again in a very surgical way dismantling all of the gods of Egypt to show that he is indeed the one true God.

[17:49] Now, we can't look at this verse, Exodus 4.31 without thinking of something else. Look at it again. And the people believed and when they heard that the Lord had visited the people of Israel and that he had seen their affliction they bowed their heads and worshipped.

What else is there? What else is going on there? Well, remember, I think I mentioned this last week Paul talks about how the old covenant was glorious but the new covenant is much more glorious. And here we see kind of a whisper, kind of a foreshadowing of the visitation that really would change everything.

All right? This is a little whisper, a little foreshadowing of the incarnation of Jesus Christ. John 1.14 says, And the word became flesh and dwelt among us.

And the word became flesh and dwelt among us. And now we, now our understanding of monotheism is even richer because now we understand not only is there a God that's like really, really, really, ultimately, perfectly, completely, sovereignly in charge, but that he is so kind as to condescend and leave this perfect glory to put on flesh.

[19:19] The word became flesh and dwelt among us. And we have seen his glory, glory as the Son, as the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. Verse 16 of John 1.

For from his fullness we have all received grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

No one has ever seen God, the only God, who was at the Father's side. He has made him known. So what we have in the incarnation is a better visitation.

And friends, if the first visitation led the elders to rejoice, how much more so does the second visitation lead us to rejoice? God took on flesh, he dwelt among us.

He who knew no sin became sin so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. We're not only talking about deliverance out of, you know, intellectual darkness, which is a component of the introduction of monotheism and the deliverance of a kind of sense that the world is just a pure chaos, which is a component of monotheism.

[20:33] But now we're seeing like, no, no, no. He actually came not just to deliver us from darkness or slavery, but to deliver us from our actual sins. 1 Corinthians 15, Paul says in verse 3, for I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures and that he was buried and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

Then he appeared to more than 500 brothers at one time, most of whom were still alive, though some have fallen asleep. And then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. And really, this is really what caused monotheism to take hold in the world.

Because up until this time, it was located in one particular people. And even then, imperfectly. Even then, with a lot of variation. Even then, with a lot of reversion back to these other forms.

But this, the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, his taking on flesh, his dying for our sins, and then being risen on the third day before many witnesses, now monotheism spreads out of just this little Jewish community and into the whole world.

In fact, what's the very next target of the gospel after the Jews? First to the Jew and then to the system had they developed.

[ 22 : 04 ] Now, interestingly, I'm running a little ahead on time. So this is going to be a short sermon, but let me just take you down a bit of a rabbit trail real quickly. Aristotle had already sort of philosophized monotheism, though he never made the full connection, because he began to see that there was the necessity of the first mover.

And so there was already an intellectual category. God was already working in the Greeks to develop an intellectual category for a God above all the gods. And now Jesus comes after Aristotle. And he takes on flesh and he dies for our sins and he's risen on the third day. And now this idea that God really is in charge and that everybody has to report to him and that he runs the whole thing, well, that was kind of whispered a little bit in Aristotle.

But now, when Paul makes his appeal, say, to the Athenians or to any of the Greeks, typically, when we see him making appeal to the Greek, he uses first mover language. He uses Aristotelian language where he talks about the God in whom we move and have our being, the God of first cause.

And so all of this is happening according to God's perfect plan. And this development, though it would take time to work out into the world, the taking hold of monotheism in the whole world, well, almost the whole world, we've still got some work to do, that has been the fundamental change to the way of life we now enjoy.

[ 23 : 37 ] I really like to do biblical, theological history where we see that God has worked in not only salvation history but continues to work in the world.

So something God did way back, thousands of years ago with Pharaoh, was his way of introducing this truth to the world. And then he, like, highlighted it in red with Jesus.

And he made it possible for this truth to be not only for the Jews but also for the Gentiles. And it's this very truth that's been kind of percolating and growing for the last 2,000 years.

And it has shaped the world you live in now. Another science historian by the name of Dr. Mark Worthing, he wrote a book called *Unlikely Allies, Monotheism, and the Rise of Science*.

And this is what he says. If a single divine being was responsible for the whole of the created natural order, then all knowledge about the natural world must be fundamentally interconnected.

[ 24 : 44 ] If there's one person in charge of it all, that means that all of it's interconnected. There's not some rules over here or some rules over there. And not just in geographic sense, but the sciences are united.

That's why for the longest time, theology was considered the queen of the sciences. Because theology showed the interconnectivity of all the other sciences. And he says, then all knowledge about the natural world must be fundamentally interconnected.

Monotheistic thinkers not only tended to ask after natural causes and explanations without rejecting God as the ultimate cause of all them, but also to view these causes as fundamentally linked, having a common ground in the one creator.

So it seems obvious to us that you could use math to launch a rocket into space. But if you think more primitively, those two things don't appear to have anything in common.

Like one's an explosion and one's a chalkboard, right? Like the interconnectivity of reality is actually just a downstream thought from this idea that there is but one God and he's over all things.

[ 25 : 54 ] Pretty cool. Now, we do have a word of warning. I read a little bit from the C.S. Lewis quote. Let me read the whole quote to you from his book, *Miracles*. Men became scientific because they expected law and nature and they expected law and nature because they believed in a legislator.

But in most modern scientists, this belief has died. Now, if he's writing this, I don't actually know the date date but I would say early 50s if anyone knows when quantum physics, when Einstein had the debate over quantum, if anyone knows that date, it'd be around that time.

Because listen to what he says. Two significant developments have already appeared. The hypothesis of a lawless subnature, so he's already aware of this introduction of the quantum, a lawless subnature, and the surrender of the claim that science is true.

We may be living nearer than we suppose to the end of the scientific age. I actually believe that over the last 50 years, our science has been greatly hobbled by our lack of respect for the God of the universe.

I believe that when we surrendered that, we actually hobbled our science. I actually do believe we should all have jetpacks by now. In an alternate world, we would all have jetpacks if the scientists kept honoring God.

[ 27 : 25 ] So Lewis is issuing a warning. He says, we discovered science because we made a commitment. We discovered science because we discovered the unity of the universe around one cause, around the God of the universe.

He says, but what happens when we abandon that? What happens to science when we abandon that? Well, that's a bit of a historical take that I was just excited to share to you.

Not all of our application when we preach has to be about your latest struggle or my latest struggle. Sometimes it's good to take the 30,000 foot view and see the God who reigns and infer from that truth.

Well, then if he's got that figured out, then he's probably got me figured out as well. But let's talk about me. Let's talk about you. Let's talk about personal application from what we've just seen.

Firstly, now there are no slides for this. You can just put up a black slide for this. I wrote this after I sent in the slides. I think we need to have a category for why, from time to time, God allows evil to arise.

[ 28 : 30 ] Okay? That may be a very important category to develop in the next few years. We need to have a category for why, time to time, God allows evil to arise and why he may even decide to allow paganism to arise again.

So what would God be doing in that respect? What he's doing is he's allowing it to arise so that he can kill it in public view. It's exactly what he said of Pharaoh in Exodus 9.

For this purpose I raised you up to show that I have the power and that all the earth reports to me. Now that's going to be relevant next week because we're going to go into chapter 4 next week and what we're going to see is the very first time Moses and Aaron pick on Pharaoh he gets angry and begins to oppress the Jews even more.

And so while in our passage in Exodus 4 verse 31 we see the Jews rejoicing because God had visited them and they see a way out by the end of chapter 5 they're complaining Moses is even complaining why have you done this to us?

Why have you picked a fight with Pharaoh? Because they were suffering Pharaoh got even worse after God picked this fight. Well that could happen to us. That's a real possibility.

[ 29 : 51 ] This week I'll do a podcast on like the political angle of a lot of this that really could happen to you. You really could wind up finding yourself living in a world where the authorities are more provoked against you than they were even 10 short years ago and you need to understand what is God doing?

When God allows injustice to arise on the face of the earth he does that so that in public view he may smash it and remind the whole world that he is in charge.

It reminded me of that passage in Hebrews where it says no discipline seems pleasant at a time but in the end yields a peaceful harvest. No season of persecution seems pleasant at the time but the church always wins guys.

God always emerges the victor and when he emerges the victor there is a harvest of peace brought by that victory in which the whole world once again sees as Jethro said to Moses I now know that this God is stronger than all the other gods.

So that's one thing to think about. What's the personal application of this insight? One, if God allows a hardship to come to you even personally not politically just personally not even persecution what is God doing?

[ 31 : 12 ] He's going to show you that he's stronger than the thing. He's going to show you that he's stronger than the job loss. He's going to show you that he's stronger than the cancer.

He's going to show you that he's stronger than the thing. That's what God's doing. That's why he allows these things he allows them to come up raise up so that he can step on them. And you see the stepping and you're like I've learned a very important thing about God.

He really is in charge. Secondly Let's just get even more personal. We've been very macro in this conversation. Let's go smaller and let's talk about your heart. I know that all of you are intellectually monotheists.

But you know we're always creeping back toward penotheism or paganism. Not intellectually but all of the quiet conversations of our heart tend to point us to the worship of idols with God.

Tend to point us to trusting in and hoping in other things along with God. This is what God's talking about in Jeremiah 2 when he says, Be appalled, O heavens, at this.

[ 32 : 33 ] Be shocked. Be utterly desolate, declares the Lord, for my people have committed two evils. They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and have hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that hold no water.

This is the problem of the human heart. We can have the head of a monotheist but the heart of a pagan. We can have the head that says, Yes, of course there's only one God, Ducris, but the heart that says, I really think that trusting in this or that or this or leaning on my own understanding, that seems like a really good plan for this particular segment of my life.

You know how they used to worship, they used to think of gods as regional. I don't think we think that, but unless you count different areas of our life as regions, and I think we do think that.

Or days of the week, we're strict monotheists on Sunday, at least from 10 to 12, but then other gods do creep in, don't they?

Now, friends, we can see from the historical what it would do to the personal, and that would be that your life, when you are solely consolidated on the worship of the Lord, your life is peaceful.

[ 33 : 52 ] It's orderly. But when you start allowing the entrance of competing idols, even in one area of your life, that peace goes away.

Because that peace, just like the peace that we experience, the bounty of human flourishing in this world, that all goes away when you start introducing this inner competition.

That's what James talks about in James chapter four. He says, what causes quarrels and fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?

You desire and do not have, so you murder, you covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask, you ask and do not receive because you ask wrongly to spend it on your passions.

You adulterous people, do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?

Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

[ 34 : 54 ] So this is a good time for you to understand whether you are experiencing a lack of peace, whether your inner life is quite disordered. Well, this is why. you're not being a good monotheist.

You've allowed the introduction of various idols and various passions to come in and kind of hold sway and clutter up the sanctuary of your heart. And this is a good way to understand why homes sometimes get dysfunctional, why marriages sometimes get dysfunctional.

It's a competition when there is no competition. You're both supposed to be for the Lord. That's it.

You can see that whenever you want peace in something, the way you get peace in something is to consolidate all your hopes on God.

Isaiah 26 3, you keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you because he trusts in you.

So this is the thing I want to present to you after just seeing the goodness of God and his careful revelation of his own nature to us throughout history.

I want you to think about you for a minute and ask is the sanctuary of your heart cluttered? Are there areas of your life where you know, you're a good monotheist over here and over here and over here but when it comes to your sexual desires or your need for flattery or your need for control, when it comes to something else, you got another little regional mini-god you put to work here.

[ 36 : 26 ] I just want to leave you with this charge. From Joshua 24, now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness.

Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the river and in Egypt and serve the Lord. And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day who you will serve, whether the gods of your fathers, the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the river or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

It seems like the way to end this message is to see this huge historical development and God's careful revelation of himself throughout history and say, God, I want to make sure that I'm on the same page with you.

I want to make sure that all of my hope, all of my trust, all of my desires are submitted to you and that you are the only God that's reigning in my heart.

You're the only God that's reigning in my home. You're the only God that's reigning in my family. That choice is what leads to peace and human flourishing.

[ 37 : 40 ] And if you're here today and you're like, well, tell me more. This is, people get confused about what salvation is. Salvation is this.

And so far as you understand in your will, you do this. If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, Lord, he's in charge, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

And what will happen when you put your faith in Jesus as Lord, as the king and ruler over all things, is that he will bring a peace to you that passes all understanding, and you will live a consolidated life, a life that makes sense, a life where all the interconnectedness has the same reason, and the same purpose, and the same goal.

And that's what Jesus meant when he said, I've come to give you life, and to give it to you abundantly. So let me pray for us, and then I'll lead us through communion. Father God, I think the best thing to say is, wow, what an amazing God you are, that carefully, so many thousands of years ago, you would begin to teach the world to depart from the pagan darkness and chaos that, yeah, we do actually still see consume some, and reveal this simple fact that we often take for granted, there is just one God.

And then, Lord, for you to take it a step further, not content simply to say that at one moment in history, you revolutionized history itself, splitting things into A.D.

[ 39 : 17 ] in B.C., by taking on flesh and coming and visiting us and dwelling among us, taking on our sin, though you yourself were perfect and righteous, and dying for our sins so that we could be brought into freedom and forgiveness.

Those two words have been ringing in my ear for a whole week. The blood of Jesus buys our forgiveness and our freedom. them. Lord, if anyone's here today who doesn't have that, I pray that through your Holy Spirit, you would help them, God, to confess that Jesus is Lord.

And that, Lord, you would help them today to choose this day whom they will serve. And, Lord, may they choose to serve you with their whole life. Jesus says this is the summation of the whole law and prophets, to love God with all of us and to love our neighbor as ourself.

So, Lord, today would you, in the different levels that it needs to happen, make us monotheists all the way down from head to toe. We love you, Lord. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.