**Today is the Day of Salvation**
Psalm 95:6-7
**Introduction**

As we start, I'd like you to imagine that you were in interested in buying a plot of land, and you found an advert that really interested you; the land was in a good geographical location, was just the right size, well fenced, and the pictures on the advert listing looked really impressive.

The fertile soil could be taken advantage of to yield crops or to provide grazing for animals and livestock to live in order for you to make a
living, or the land tended to as a campsite or sports fields for customers to rent - there was so much potential.

So naturally you got in touch with the seller to express your interest, confirm the availability of the land and that it really was as advertised, and you arranged a date to view the land.

**But imagine on that day,** you were shocked upon arrival to find the land to be poorly looked after and barren, with the soil cracked, dry, and hardened; in no fit state to do anything practical with, unless significant work was undertaken to break up the hardened clumps of soil and water it.

**I'm sure you would agree** that whilst this
land initially seemed to have so much potential, in reality it would not be a good investment.

So with that in our minds, let us pick up our Bibles, and return to the passage we read earlier, **Psalm 95.**
Although the inspired penman of this Psalm is not named here, the letter to the Hebrews (4:7) in the New Testament attributes godly king David as the inspired penman of this Psalm, and as such would date back to around 1000BC (over 3000 years ago). This links to your Bible Reading sheets this week, which is based on David's experiences as seen in the Psalms.
**Now Psalm 95 was most likely used** as part of the worship service with the Israelites assembled in the Temple and is split into two parts: -

**A call to praise the Lord,**

**and then a call to faith**

**with a solemn warning.**

**The Call to Praise**
So let us first consider this first section of the Psalm - the call to praise the Lord; apt, relevant words for an anniversary service, in which we

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rejoice unto the Lord for His goodness over many years here at EDT.
**V1-2. So, the Psalm begins with singing**. Coming before the Lord's presence with thanksgiving and making a joyful noise, and the Lord here is pictured as the rock of salvation; the sure, firm, unchanging Saviour God, who called the Israelites out from bondage in Egypt, and who provided for all their needs throughout their journeys in the wilderness, and into the Promise Land.

**Similarly, with us**, whatever our spiritual state and condition is, we have each been showered with many common graces from the Lord throughout our lives.

We are each privileged to live in this country, to have family and friends who love us and care for us, to have easy access to education, job opportunities, and the list goes on.

**An anniversary service** is a wonderful time to stop and reflect - will you this day take some time to reflect on the countless blessings in your life, even in this past year?
**You are each especially provided for spiritually,** in that you have the opportunity to come to Sunday School/Bible/College Class each week free of charge, to hear the message of God's grace from the Bible, with teachers and collectors who care for your souls.

**Have you ever considered** that these things are not by chance or by fate, but are gracious provisions put in place by the sovereign Lord on high?

**What great blessings,** and the least we can each do is to humble thank Him for these things.

**He is the rock of our salvation**.

The One who has made every provision necessary to save His chosen people, from the punishment they deserve due to the sins.

**As you well know, salvation is only possible**because the eternal Son of God entered this world and took on flesh, lived a perfect life, and died on Calvary's cross, bearing His people's eternal punishment, and rose on the third day. **This is the One** who is often described in the Bible as the **Rock (1 Corinthians 10:4 etc.)**

Did you also catch here the highly personal perspective within this Psalm?

***Let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.***

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So, we see here that personal salvation is the primary reason for thanksgiving unto the Lord. **Dear young man, dear young woman,** have you come to know the Lord Jesus Christ as your own personal saviour; can you honestly say that He is the rock your salvation?
Now, with the scene set, let us briefly comment on the remainder of the verses in the first section of the Psalm.

**V3. He is King of kings**, and Lord of lords; there is no other true God.
**V4-5.** In all majestic things in this natural world, we see the awesomeness of our creator God, from the deepest ravine to the highest mountain, from the vast oceans to the masses of land.

These things are His handiwork, and manifest only a flicker of His greatness.
For all these things - V6-7a. Our maker is the true object of worship, and we are each privilege to be members of the human race, the pinnacle of creation, made in God's image.

**Yet, due to the sinful nature** which we each inherit from the fall and the multitude of sins that we each commit, the Bible teaches us
that we are cut off from God and have greatly offended Him.

We cannot truly call Him our God merely by virtue of our elevated position within the creative order, but only by the shed blood of Christ, **(Ephesians 2:12-13).**

**So again, where do you individually stand before the Creator God?**

**We each owe Him our praise**, but can you truly rejoice in Him, not only for physical life and provision, but also spiritual life, for the personal forgiveness of your sins and provision for all your need in Christ? He is your Creator.

**But is He the Lord of your life,**

**the rock of your salvation?**

**The Warning to Consider.**
So having briefly considered the Call to Praise, we move into the second part of the Psalm; the call to faith and obedience with a solemn warning.

**V7b-9.** These verses refer to Israel's history of rebellion in the wilderness, which began only three days after the miraculous parting of the Red Sea **(Exodus 15:22-27)**!

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Then just 1 month after their departure from Egypt, the children of Israel hungered and

murmured against Moses and Aaron, saying they would rather have died by the hand of the LORD in Egypt, than starve to death in the wilderness **(Exodus 16).**

**And so the LORD in His abundant mercy** sent the Israelites bread from heaven, manna, each morning for six days of the week with a double portion the day before the sabbath, until they entered the Promised Land, and also provided quails for meat in the evenings.

**But then very shortly after**, the people murmured again against Moses and were ready to stone him, this time saying that he had led them out of Egypt to die of thirst, thus tempting the Lord **(Exodus 17)**.

**But again, the Lord provided for their need,** and instructed Moses to strike the rock at Horeb, and water flowed out.

It was this very place which Moses renamed as Meribah and Massah, words in Hebrew which
literally mean provocation (contention), and temptation (testing), and these are the very same Hebrew words which the inspired Psalmist uses here in v8; ***as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation***
- direct references to the sad events.

**V10-11**. Again, as I'm sure you well know, these verses refer to the first time the Israelites reached the borders of the Promised Land, and 12 spies were sent to search out the land **(Numbers 13)**, who brought back good reports of the land, but all except Caleb and Joshua also gave evil reports of the fearsome
inhabitants of the land.

This caused the children of Israel to fear greatly and to murmur against Moses yet again, saying they would have rather died in the land of Egypt or in the wilderness (Numbers 14)!

They even sought to raise up another captain to take them back to Egypt and would have stoned Moses and Aaron if the LORD hadn't divinely intervened.

**This sorry lack of faith** and repeated complaining and hardness greatly provoked the wrath of the Lord especially after all His miraculous interventions, and so as a punishment, the Children of Israel were to
spend another 38 years of wandering in the wilderness, and all of that hardened generation

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would die in the wilderness.

Only their children who were under the age of 20 at the time of the spies' reports would later enter the Promised Land, alongside the two faithful spies - Caleb and Joshua.

**Sadly there are many other recorded examples of the Israelites complaining in the wilderness,** and so the Psalmist warns us here of the serious consequences that will certainly follow if we likewise test the Lord
and repeatedly harden our hearts against Him; we will not enter into the spiritual Promised Land, heaven.

**And so, similarly**, how many of you here have attended Sunday School here each week for months, perhaps years, and heard the way of salvation taught clearly, yet have still not come to Christ?

**You have heard of Him** **as the bread of life** **(John 6:33)**, like the manna,

God's gracious provision for your starving soul.

**You have heard of that Rock** who was stricken on Calvary's cross, from whom flows rivers of living water that will quench your thirsty soul **(John 4:13-14)**.

**Perhaps** you have even observed the work of the Lord here in recent times in converting those around you, and maybe you have witnessed baptisms and heard testimonies. **Perhaps** you even complain in your heart - why am I here, why am I forced to come to
Bible/College Class, seeing friends.

**Each time the Lord speaks to your soul,** and you resist it, and put off coming to Him, you get that little bit harder, eventually becoming just like that hardened ground we thought about earlier.

**Will another year go past without you trusting in the Lord?**

How many more opportunities will He graciously grant you to seek Him until He says enough; no more?

With great concern for the eternal state of your souls, you must be warned that you have no excuse, especially considering how much you have each heard and seen of the way of salvation and the goodness of the Lord.

So, take this warning seriously.

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**But at the heart of the Psalm**, there is this wonderful appeal as a lynchpin connecting the two parts, as seen in **V7-8**.

***“Today if you will hear his voice, harden not your heart.”***
**Will you hear the voice of the Lord calling you to Himself?**

Not

via a vision or a voice from heaven, but
rather His voice in His Word, calling you to turn unto Him, every time you read it or hear it explained.
**And will you hear Him calling you today? Dear young man, young woman, today is the day of salvation.
Not tomorrow, not next year,** not once you've "lived life" at college or uni., running after the empty pleasures of this world that will leave you harmed and hardened.

You must urgently see the desperate need for your soul to be right with God this very day. This is a promise also - God will save you today if you sincerely turn away from your sin in repentance and trust in the Saviour alone.

**So, we encourage you**, take the opportunity on this anniversary occasion to spend time reflecting and in prayer, thanking the Lord for His goodness in your lives, considering the serious consequences of any further hardening of heart, and ultimately crying out unto Him in repentance and faith.

***“Today if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your heart.”*Further Reading
Hebrews 3:12 - 4:16**