

# 19.5.24 pm

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 19 May 2024

Preacher: Reverend Ronnie Morrison

[ 0 : 0 0 ] let's say bow our heads in prayer let's pray we pray Lord that your name would be exalted above all else we know that so readily we take praise and honour to ourselves but you tell us you will not give your glory to another or your praise to graven images we know that so often in our hearts we make places for so much of that which is temporal and your word reminds us that we carry nothing hence when death our days do end but we thank you Lord for the promises of your word and for the preparation that has been made for us in Christ Jesus our Lord we thank you for your word that we can come to it at this evening hour that we can come to worship you may our thoughts and our desires be like the psalmist who said let us bow down with all and on our knees before the Lord our maker let us fall you are the one who has created us you made the earth and heavens high you made the swelling deep and all that is within the same who truth doth ever keep who is a God like to you we thank you that even in our sinful state you have made yourself known to us you remember this in our low state because your grace and mercy never fails so we want to come to you this evening we want that your word would speak to our hearts and to our minds and to our lives that all of us both speaker and listener alike would be captured by the wonder of Jesus that our hearts and minds would be brought into subjection to yourself and that we would see none other but Jesus we thank you for the gathering of your people here and the gathering of your people in different parts throughout our islands throughout our highlands and lowlands throughout our land we would want to go beyond our own land to other lands to other countries where your word is also preached where your day is in some areas has come to an end and they are entering into a new working week and yet it is the same word and it is the same God and it is the same message we pray that as it is proclaimed and as it has been proclaimed that we would see something of your wonder we pray that your spirit would work in our lives and in the lives of others that we would work in the lives of those who are still strangers to grace and to God perhaps who do not know their burden or their load and whom

Jehovah said can you as a stranger Lord we ask that you would turn such lives towards yourself perhaps even in the listening here tonight we pray that your spirit would work we need that we would see your spirit working you have worked in times past and today you are the same God the same yesterday today and forever so we pray that you would encourage your congregation of people here be with David and the elders as they bear witness to you here and as they go in and out amongst the people may this building even stand as a testimony to the wonder of God and the wonder of Christ and the operation of your Holy Spirit remember other congregations who are vacant we remember the Jewish particularly in the north and in the south remember other congregations that will soon become vacant and therefore those who have the burden of trying to arrange supply and bring different speakers to bring your word on your day to these communities we pray that you would bless those who are involved in planting churches we give thanks that your word goes forth in different places the same word and yet the response is so varied remember also your people who are persecuted we know that every single one of them is known to you because nothing is hidden from you we pray that you would help that you would continue to uphold no matter the nature of that suffering and we know it can take many different and very subtle forms we ask

Lord that you would help and that you would have mercy on those who persecute your word shows us that this is so has been the case at times past the persecutor in some respects has become the one persecuted as the testimony of Christ was proclaimed remember those who are unwell those who are in hospital or in care homes or who are at home with others caring for them we realise the fragility of our lives and the fragility sometimes of our health we ask that you would be near and that you would keep and help all we ask that you would bless the work amongst the young people we thank you for them we thank you that they come and hear your word and we know that there are many distractions many things that will come before them and present themselves to them as they do to ourselves also and they perhaps look so harmless and look so easy to succumb to and yet we know that so often these things are the ways in which

Satan comes and would want to keep us away from your word help them and help us all oh Lord to look to you bless us now as we continue in worship as we sing as we read and as we reflect on your word we pray it would be with blessing forgive us Lord for our sins for all we say and all we do the judgments that we make as we were reminded of this morning we pray that you would save us from these actions and give us to be more Christ like in your name we pray Amen we're going to sing down Psalm 21 and verses 1 through to 6 is it the old version that I've given you or yes okay the king and thy great strength oh Lord shall very joyful be and thy salvation rejoice how vehemently shall he and we'll sing down to the end of verse 6 and we'll stand to sing in your

God the king in thy grace and for our shall very joyful be if thy salvation rejoice!

[ 9 : 27 ] and thou from him didst not with corn or dare his lips sit clear for thou with blessings in pre-rest of goodness man for and thou hast set upon his head a crown of pure gold when he decided life life on thee thou like to him yet in such land of dead that he forever more should live!

in that salvation brought by thee his glory is made great honor and holy majesty!

thou hast! upon him set because!

evermore! most blessed hast him And thou hast with thy countenance Hit him exceeding glad I'm reading this in the New Testament and in the book of the Revelation, the last book in the Bible, and chapter 1.

So Revelation chapter 1. Verse 1.

[ 12 : 33 ] The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things which must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw.

Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy. Blessed are those who hear and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near. John to the seven churches that are in Asia.

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, from the seven spirits who are before his throne. From Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, the ruler of kings on earth.

To him who loved us and has freed us from our sins by his blood. It is a kingdom of peace to his God and Father. To him may glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Behold, he is coming with the clouds and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him.

[ 13 : 50 ] Even so. Amen. And the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, who is and was and who is to come, the Almighty, I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus.

I was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. I was in the spirit in the Lord's day.

They heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, Write what you see in a book. And send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna, to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia.

And to allow to see her. I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me. And turning I saw seven golden lampstands. In the midst of the lampstands, one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest.

His eyes were like a flame of fire. His feet were like burnished bronze you find in a furnace. His voice was like the roar of many waters.

[ 15 : 05 ] His right hand held seven stars from his mouth. It came a sharp two-edged sword. His face was like the sun, shining in full strength. When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead.

But he laid his hand on me saying, Fear not, I am the first and the last. And the living when I died, Behold, I am alive forevermore.

I have the keys of death and Hades. Why, therefore, the things that you have seen, those that are and those which are to take place after this. As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars of the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

And so on. We ask that God will bless to us our reading from his word. Let's sing this time in Psalm 125 to God's praise.

Again, we sing the whole psalm. Psalm 125. May the Lord that firmly trust shall be like Sire and Hill, which at no time can be removed, but standeth ever still.

[ 16 : 19 ] We'll stand to sing. May the Lord that firmly trust shall be like Sire and Hill, which at no time can be removed, but standeth ever still.

A throne of our own Jerusalem, the mountains stand away, The Lord is full, doth come but so, from henceforth and foray.

For humans rod upon the lot, all just men shall not die, lest righteous men stretch forth their hands unto iniquity.

Do thou to all those that be good, thy goodness Lord impart, and do their hurt to those that are upright, upright within their hearts.

The dust were such as turn aside, after the crooked way.

[ 18 : 47 ] God shall leap forth with wicked men, on Israel it shall stay.

Well, let's turn again to chapter one in the book of Revelation, and I want us to try and reflect a little bit on verse eight this evening.

I suppose some of you, like myself, are in many ways fascinated by this book. It gives us such a sheer variety of different viewpoints and visions, and sometimes, perhaps in my folly, I try and visualize what is being described by John.

But it becomes so, for want of a better word, mind-blowing, that it cannot be visualized except by your small minds.

We know that the writer here is John, the beloved disciple of the Lord. We are told, he tells us himself, that he is in a certain place, and he is there for a certain reason.

[ 20 : 21 ] I suppose you and I are in a certain place tonight, for a certain reason. But the reason that he is where he is, he is in an island, he tells us called Patmos.

It was a kind of, we are told, a barn kind of place. And he was sent there because of his witness and his testimony towards his Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

And as a consequence of that, the ruler at that time, a man called the mission, we believe, exiled him to this, I suppose, remote outpost.

And he is there. And yet, as we look at it, what we see is something quite remarkable. What we see is John, who had, for three years at least, worked and walked with the Lord on earth.

And here, John has been given a vision, or an insight into things that are yet to take place. Now John is writing with a certain knowledge of the background of what is being described here.

[ 21 : 47 ] Because some of what takes place here is what was forecast or spoken of by the Lord himself while he was on earth.

So perhaps in a way, John is, he is, I'm no doubt surprised, but not perhaps to the degree that you and I are, although we have a fuller revelation and we have the background of the earlier chapters of the Gospels to fill in much of, or a lot at least, of what is taking place here.

And so, in that respect, John is hearing fulfilled what Christ had said to him while he was on earth.

And, you know, when God's word, when it fulfills something perhaps you've thought of or anticipated, it's really a blessed experience for the individual.

And for John, it was likewise so. You see his different reactions at times to the way in which he hears the voice of the Lord speaking to him.

[ 23 : 04 ] And he's just astounded at it all. But I want us this evening to think of three phases or three stages that he speaks to us about here in verse 8.

He tells us in verse 8, first of all, there's an identity here. So maybe there's four things that we should say. There's an identity. He says, I am the Alpha and the Omega.

Now, we know that simply means, I am the beginning and I am the end. And yet, as if to fill out something of that, he tells us something else in that verse.

He says to us, he says to John, the Lord God Almighty. And he says, I am he who is and who was and is to come.

Now, there's something similar in these words in verse 4. If you just flick back to verse 4. So this is clearly a very defining description that the Lord is giving of himself.

[ 24 : 28 ] It's important because he tells us within a space of a couple of verses, something of his nature, something of his character. And I suppose if we wanted to coin a phrase to describe this, we would speak about the eternalness of the Godhead.

It sounds perhaps a bit of a mouthful. The eternalness of the Godhead. In other words, the Godhead is without beginning and without end. And John is wanting to be reminded, to remind the people, because the situation was difficult.

It was perhaps in some respects dire, because of the powers that governed were wanting to suppress and to lay aside any thought or any awareness of the wonder of Jesus.

Now, that's thousands of years ago. What does it make you think? It makes me think this thing at least. That there's no new thing under the sun.

That what was attempted there is still being attempted. They were wanting to blot out and to dismiss the whole idea, the whole belief in a living God and in a living Savior.

[ 25 : 56 ] But the great answer to man's need is that which the world tries to dismiss. That's what the world tries to ridicule, that which the world tries to mock.

And that very core message, that very core operation that can work so marvellously in the heart of an individual, that is attempted to be suppressed.

It was the same. Hence, John is in Patmos. But by way of encouragement, he gives these three pictures. And in many ways, you can remember these headings tonight.

Sometimes it's difficult to remember headings. I accept that. Because they become too long sometimes. They're not buzzwords. They're not something we... We like snappy things nowadays.

I mean, it's got to be short and snappy and all the rest of it. Some of us are a bit old for that. But you know, there are three things that you can say about this text. And it's simply this.

[ 27 : 01 ] It talks about the past. It talks about the present. And it's... What is it? Talking about the future. And, you know, when you think about it in that way.

And perhaps if you try and... Try and... Much as revelation can be tricky in some of its interpretations. If we come to it with these ideas, with these thoughts in our minds.

He's talking here about the past. But he's living in the present. But, you know, and this is what excites and what thrills or should excite and thrill the soul of the believer.

There is a future. There is something that eye has not seen. Nor ear heard. Nor has it entered the heart of any man.

What God has prepared. For who? For everybody? For every single person that lived in the world? No. It doesn't say that at all.

[ 28 : 07 ] He has prepared for those who love him. It's not marvelous. So for those who love the Lord. I wonder if you're one of these tonight.

Can you say in your heart of hearts. I love the Lord. Can you say from the very depth of your being.

That this Jesus has done something that has changed. Has transformed your life. And made you a new creation in Christ Jesus.

Now I don't know a lot of you. So I'm asking you. Are you aware of that change. That so transforms our whole being.

And makes us new creations in Christ. Well you know John. John. As he hears these words. About the one. Who was.

[ 29 : 06 ] He is able to verify. Because he has seen. As he walked. And talked with Jesus. On the roads.

And on the highways. He has seen. He has seen. The transforming power. That belonged to him. And that still belongs to him.

And enables you and I tonight. To go on in his strength. Knowing he is our sufficiency. Knowing he is our help. The Lord is my shield.

The Lord is my shade. On my right hand doth day. The moon by night. They shall not smite. Not yet the sun by day. So he is opening up this.

And he says. I am the Lord God. I am the Lord God. And he says. I am the one who is. And who was. Let's just. Swap them around for the moment.

[ 30 : 03 ] Because we want to work from the past. To the present. And to the future. How would John benefit. From thinking about the God who was.

Or the Christ who was. Well we have just touched on it. He could look back. The. Perhaps. I don't know what. The time scale was.

From the time of. Our Lord's ascension. To this. Maybe. 50 years. Somewhere maybe around about that. But you know. When grace works in our soul.

When not transforming grace. We heard about it this morning. When that works in our soul. It so changes the whole being. That there are certain things.

That we. We never really forget. And we can go back to these things of the past. Now I know fine. We can. We can glorify the past.

[ 31 : 02 ] You know. I say it myself. It used to be different. It used to be different. Well of course. Because nothing stays the same. There's a song that says. Time changes everything.

Maybe it's a hymn. It's a song. But it's an interesting phrase. Time changes everything. And. That is so true for us. And we cannot just live.

As it were. In the past. We can't go on thinking. That. As it was. When I was a kid. And that's quite a long time ago now. That it's going to be the same. In 2024.

But you know. What doesn't change. And this is so. So important. For us to grasp. What doesn't change. Is the hand of the Savior. Extended for.

To sinners like you. And like me. So I say. John. I am the one. Who governed. In the past. And notice what he says. At the end of the verse too. He gives. A brilliant description.

[ 32 : 03 ] Of himself. And it helps us to. To encapsulate. Just a couple of words. That are there. I am. The almighty. Now that was clearly significant.

In the experience. Of John. And the churches. That he was to write to. Because they were living. In. And as we've touched on. They were living.

In perilous times. They were living. In dangerous times. And. There were mighty powers. But here is the almighty.

The almighty. He's writing to him. And saying. John. I'm still. In charge. And you know.

If we could grasp that. How it would help us. Not just to be. Looking at the past. And think. Oh. It was so different. And things have changed.

[ 33 : 04 ] Kush. We often see this in Gaelic. Well of course they have. Because nothing stays the same. But it's the same God. The same almighty. The same powerful.

The psalmist tells us something about that. Thou hast an arm. And what does he say about the arm of the Lord? He says. It's full of power. And so he's saying.

John. He's writing to you. You think of how it was in the past. You think of how. How lives were changed. How. How the marvel of it all. Has.

Has left you. As a prisoner. But nevertheless. You're giving. You're being. You're being. Given. An insight. Into. The current situation.

And the past. And more gloriously. The future. And so he's saying to him. John. I am the almighty. I am the one. That's speaking to you.

[ 34 : 03 ] There are other forces at large. Other forces at large. And they're trying to. To. To. Block out. Obliterate.

The very thought. Of the one. Almighty. Living and true God. As I say. There's no new thing under the sun. Is there. And so he's saying. John. I want you to think about the past.

In that sense. And I want to think about it. In a sense. It will benefit you. I am the God of the past. Verse four. Also. The one who is.

And who was. And is to come. It's interesting. The way in which. The book itself. Develops. And how he says.

Again. I'd noted. Around about verse. Seventy. In the middle of verse seventeen. He's. He's taking up the same. Idea. But he's. He's elaborating on it.

[ 35 : 00 ] And bringing. A very crucial. Element. To bear upon it. See what he says. In verse seventeen. I am. He says. Well notice what he says. In the middle of the verse.

Fear not. Fear not. John. John. Don't be afraid. John. Don't be afraid. I know sometimes. He says.

To you. And to me. Don't be afraid. And he'll say. Perhaps. To. Many of us. In different contexts.

Don't be afraid. I am there with you. My goodness. And my mercy. Will follow you. All your days. That's the wonder. Of having the one.

Who is the almighty. From the past. And he's the almighty. To the present. And he'll be the almighty. Into the future. And he's saying. John. John. You hold on to that.

[ 35 : 59 ] You see. All was changing. Within the powers. Of these ruling nations. There was war. There was. Barbarity. There was corruption.

There was hostility. All kinds of things. Ah. But he says. I am the almighty. And I never change. Change.

And decay. And all around. I see. O thou. That changes not. Abide with me. So.

He's saying. To John. You hold on. You hold on. Because. As I. Kept you. And sustained you.

In the past. So I'm doing. Through today. And you know. When you think about that. John was amongst. The. A very elite group. Of people.

[ 36 : 57 ] The twelve. And he was. Amongst those. Who had. In many ways. Shown. Timidity. And failure. Yes. He's.

He's at the cross. And we. We don't know. Of any others. Any of the others. Were at the cross. But John. Was there. And he's there.

And he's. Reminding him. Just as I showed myself. In the past. And what's John. Seeing on the cross. He's saying. As he tells us. In this book. I am he.

That was dead. And I am alive. And I'm alive. Forevermore. He is the one. He's seeing now. And. In many ways.

In many ways. This is the wonder. Of the revolution. Although he's in captivity. He's giving. He's been given. A picture. Into the most. Glorious. Awaiting. Of the people.

[ 37 : 52 ] Of God. And he's reminding John. I am the almighty. So he was able. To look at the things. Of the past.

Then. Secondly. He looks. At the things. Of the present. Now. You and I. Might say to ourselves.

Well. It's hard. Looking at the things. Of the present. Because. We see apathy. And indifference. All around. Indifference.

All around us. But we still. Have to come back. To this. Word. That's in our text. The almighty. We have to come back. To.

Focus. On the reality. Of who he is. And what. He can do. In a moment. In the twinkling. Of an eye. That's the kind of God.

[ 38 : 48 ] In whom we trust. And you know. When you think about. The present situation. That John was in. At that moment. Remember. He tells us.

At the beginning. Of the chapter. It's a glorious state. To be in. I says. I was in the spirit. On the Lord's day.

He. He. Experienced. That sense. Of. Of the. Holy others. He was. As he is called. By some other. Of long ago.

He. The holy other. Coming close. To his heart. And to his life. And to. And to. And in that. Touching. Showing him.

John. In. In Patmos. I am with you. He is the God. Of the present. And you know. Perhaps. I was thinking about it. In this way.

- [ 39 : 44 ] Perhaps. You've heard. Many messages. Over. In the past. And you know. The interesting thing is. You might even remember. Some of them. You might remember. A sermon. So and so. Preached at a communion. Or something like that. Or some meeting. Or other. Or a text. That someone quoted. At a funeral service. Something that has stuck.
- In your head. In your mind. But perhaps. It tears. That the Lord has. In his own. Mysterious way. Nailed that. To your heart. And because.
- He is the God. Of the present. And we deal. With the present. And we're living. In the present. 2024. You're. You're. You're.
- You're being. As it were. Shown. Tonight. That the. Importance. The relevance. Of that word. That perhaps. You can't. Get rid of.
- [ 40 : 42 ] Has something. For you. Tonight. For you. On the Lord's day. Perhaps. There was something. In the service. This morning. Last week.
- And. You can't. Shrug it off. And yet. You haven't. Come to that. Again. Referring. What we heard. This morning. In a way.
- You haven't. Come to that. Place. And that point. Where you've. Where you've. Really. Asked. But. Not afraid. To ask.
- For some things. We can't. Get on the ferry. We're not. Afraid. To go. Ask. Ask. Well. Here is. Here is.
- Some might say. This is a big ask. It's not. It's the most wonderful. Ask. That. Could be presented. Ask. And you will receive. So that the God.
- [ 41 : 37 ] Of the present. Is still there. Asking you. Inviting you. Urging you. To come. To him. And you'll be like. Who said.
- I found. In him. A resting place. He has made me. Glad. Do you ever think that. Giving. In. To Christ.
- Would make your heart. You might think. To yourself. I've listened to these Christians. They're all old. And. Past. Their cell by date.
- And yet. They're keeping going. They're hanging in. How is that? Why is that? Why can a person. Because.
- To the natural mind. It seems irrational. Because. John is reminded here. Of the key to this. I am he. Who is dead. Past. And he says.
- [ 42 : 34 ] More than that. I am alive. Forevermore. The present. And the future combined. That's who I am. And that's the one.
- That speaks to us. Through his word. Be we. Whether we're believers. Believers. Or not believers. He comes to us. In his word. And he reminds us.
- Of. Of. The way. In which. That word. Has. Has transformed. Perhaps my life. Or challenged. My life. He says.
- John. I am the God. Of the present. And you know. In a way. I was thinking. Many of the commentators. Raised this. This. This. Comparison.
- Comparison. Because. You know. The picture he has. The imagery. That is created. Is very similar. To the imagery. On the Mount. Of Transfiguration. And I suppose.
- [ 43 : 30 ] John. Would. Perhaps. In his mind. At that point. Go back. To the past. And think. This is just like. When we saw. Jesus only.
- You remember. There's a great. Statement there. In the account. Of the Mount. Of Transfiguration. And it was. Quite simply. This. They saw.



No one. But Jesus. Wouldn't it be. Marvelous. If that was. Your experience. Tonight. If you haven't.

Tested. And seen. That God. Is good. That you would. See Jesus. As you've never. Seen him. Before. And what does. He say.

John. He says. I am healed. With all. Dead. And now. I am alive. Forevermore. And he says. Something else.

[ 44 : 25 ] I have the keys. Of death. And of hell. When you. When you read.

Through the book. You. You. You get these. Amazing. Changes of scenes. Just like that. Just as quickly. As you snap. Your fingers. He'll go.

From the glory. Of heaven. To the awfulness. Of lostness. And hell. That's the reality. Of the gospel. God. And that was.

That was. Why Christ. Came. To save. From going down. To the pit. And so. He says. John. I am with you. At the present.

And perhaps. In his mind. To his. His. Is thinking. About. The. The great. Of our Lord. And the. High priestly.

[ 45 : 21 ] The great. For there. Again. And again. He reminds them. Of who he is. And what he is to do. And how he is to do it. And why he is to do it.

And he is saying to him here. I am. The beginning and the end. The one who was. And who is.

The almighty. The almighty. What a comfort it is. For you as a believer. Tonight. To. To allow. These words. To sink into your heart.

And to sink into your mind. And to make you think. The almighty. Is speaking to me here. In Tarbert Harris. And he said to me. You belong to me.

I have bought you. With my own blood. He poured out his soul. To death. He was numbered. Amongst the transgressors.

[ 46 : 23 ] And yet. He is there. In all the glories of heaven. Sitting. At the father's right hand. And he says John.

You hold on. He says John. Soonness will be gone. Soonness will be gone. That takes us. In a few words.

To the future. And what is the future saying? Well. In my mind. I was thinking of.

The upper room. Those of you. Are familiar with. These chapters in John. You know. If you are not familiar. Go home and read them. John 14.

Through 17. Because there. Our Lord. Had spoken intimately. To the disciples. About. What his mission was.

[ 47 : 25 ] One of the. The keys. Words. I suppose. In relation to this. Is simply as. I'm going. To prepare. A place.

For you. For you. For you. In other words. It's what lies ahead. But then he says. If I go. I will come back.

So. He's looking into the future. And saying. My savior is coming back. Of course. John is long gone. Has joined the triumphant. Chorus of.

Of praise. In heaven. Awaiting. The general resurrection. And in his mind. I suppose. He's thinking. This all. Now begins.

To fit together. There were pieces. In the jigsaw. Of life. Sometimes. That he couldn't work out. He couldn't make heads. Nor tails. Of it.

- [ 48 : 24 ] Sometimes. He's in exile. It's beginning. To. Become a fool. You know. There's nothing. I'm not good at jigsaws. But. I. Some people.
- Who live with me. Near me. They'll stick at it. Until. Until it's finished. And you know. Perhaps. There's a lesson. In that for us. Because.
- We have to stick at. Following Jesus. All the way home. Because. There's a future ahead. And you know. This whole picture again.
- It. Stands out for us. In. In. In. In this book of Revelation. You know. He gives. He gives. Insight into the future.
- To my mind. It's really quite dramatic. For example. He tells us something about. The judgment. What does he say?
- [ 49 : 21 ] He says. I saw the dead. And. This is the part. That intrigues me. Small. And great.
- Isn't that interesting? The big folks. And the less important folks. But they're all there. Standing before the judgment seat of Christ.
- No. Respector of persons. And John. This is what's down the line. And for you. And for me. This is what's down the line. And you must stand there. And who's the judge? Is the judge that does all things right?
- And John, this is what's down the line. And for you and for me, this is what's down the line. I must stand there, and you must stand there.
- And who's the judge? He's the judge that does all things right. No miscarriages of justice. No court of appeal.
- [ 50 : 23 ] No European court of human rights. Nothing. Nothing but nothing. Only you and me confronting the Lamb of God.
- And John says, I saw them standing there before the throne. And he says, I saw some people. They're terrified out of their wools.
- It's really dramatic. And, you know, you try and paint the picture. And you say to yourself, what on earth is that going to be like? And he says, I saw them calling on the mountains and the hills to fall on them.
- You go out there to the other side of the road. I think there's quite, there's a lot of hills and rocky surfaces in Harris. And, you know, I was thinking about it in that respect. People would rather run to the rocks and run to the hills to cover them.
- Why? Because the Lamb has come. Because the Lamb has come. The Christ who died on Calvary has come. And some will be there because they were awakened, perhaps by the terrors of the law.
- [ 51 : 39 ] Or by some other means. And some will be there. Who knew something of the past in their lives. But they never made any effort to remedy that.
- Well, you see, the future is bleak for you if you die like that. It's an awful thing, the Bible tells them. It's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.
- And, you know, when you think about it. What options have we got here tonight? Well, let's just, and we'll try and finish with this.
- I know the student minister said two or three times this morning and finally I'm finished and so on. Maybe I'm learning from him a bit. But, you know, there is this. You're facing something that every single one of us is going to face.
- That's Judgment Day. Remember years ago. I'm not much of a boxing fan, but there was a big fight to be taking place.
- [ 52 : 54 ] I can't remember who it was, but heavyweight champions. And the headline on the back page of the paper was this. Judgment Day. And I thought to myself, over a boxing match.

How little people know about what Judgment Day will be like. How little we know ourselves of what Judgment Day will be like.

But John just touches on it. And he says, as I look into the future, I see something of this. The Almighty gives me a glimpse of the dead, small and great.

All, you know, many, many expositors of God's word, you know, will use very brilliant examples of the great.

Alexander the great, the conquerors, the men who thought they were invincible and are gone today. And yet those who never thought themselves important, they're all standing there.

[ 54 : 01 ] Just as you and I will stand there. And so he's getting this glimpse into the future. And we're reminding ourselves in our attempts to glimpse the future tonight.

We're reminding ourselves of what lies ahead. So we've digressed. But what lies ahead? Well, there's this day of reckoning.

And there's this reality. Come ye blessed of my Father. Who are these? Well, he tells us actually in one of the chapters, maybe it's chapter 7, I think.

It tells us something about, of those, yeah. They are before the throne of God. And they serve him day and night.

Before that. One of the, verse 13, one of the elders addressed me saying, Who are these clothed in white robes and whence have they come? And he said to me, So, you know, where have they come from?

[ 55 : 06 ] They might have been the little people in this life. These are the ages who have come out of great tribulation. Their past was full of tribulation.

But at some point they came to believe and to trust in the Lord. And they now are those, what a picture. They have washed their robes.

And you know, there's, there's, there's, there's, this dimension here that, that, that's, they have washed the robes in the blood of the lamb.

And they've been made white. Isn't it? There's almost an irony in it. Because blood makes a mess. But blood brings salvation.

This is, this is blood bought with a price. And so he says, there's this that waits you. If you go ahead and you continue in the faith, you have this to hold on to.

[ 56 : 04 ] You have this to believe in. That one day you will be amongst those of whom it will be said, Come ye blessed of my father. Inherit the kingdom.

I wonder, would that be said of you? I wonder, when you stand before the throne, will it be, come?

Or will it be, depart? You know, when you come to the end of this book, it's a marvelous way in which John is, is, is, is describing to us some of these events.

And, especially in the last chapter, on more than one occasion, there's this word, come. Come.

And, you know, it, it, it kind of reaches a crescendo where he says, Yea, come, Lord Jesus. that will be a great testimony for us to have when our time comes to depart this world, wouldn't it?

[ 57 : 25 ] Yea, come, Lord Jesus. And so he says, this is the reality, John. I am the one who was there before.

I am the one who is still with you today. And, you know, that's your encouragement. He is with you even when you don't realize it.

Isn't that amazing? Because, we're, we're, we're social creatures by nature. And, we like the company of, we like the social aspects of living.

And yet, he's saying there's something quite remarkable about this. Quite remarkable because he is there with me. He is with me as I walk through this life.

He is with me and he pulls me back. when, when, when, when I've made a mess. And we all make a mess. You, and me, and every other believer.

[ 58 : 33 ] There's failure written on our lives so often. But, you know, he pulls us back. And in the end, he will say, come, you blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.

And I say, he draws the book to our close and we'll, we'll definitely finish with this. Draws the book to our close. He tells us, first of all, in verse 7, I'm coming soon.

You know, that's quite a statement, isn't it? And you might say to you, well, the Bible tells us that again and again, I'm coming soon.

The Bible is saying, it's as if it's just around the corner. It's as if before the night is out, I'm coming soon. And it's, it's perhaps meant to instill that kind of thought into our hearts and minds so that we will be ready for when he comes.

So he says there in the last chapter, I'm coming soon. and then he goes on beyond that. Verse 12, I'm coming soon.

[ 59 : 50 ] Bring my recompense with me to repay each one for what he or she has done. I'm alpha and omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

And then he ends off in verse 17. He's putting the bride say come. Let him who hears say come. Let him who is thirsty come.

Let the one who decides take the water of life without price. And then he tells us in that great doxology in verse 20. he who testifies to these things.

And remember, John is hearing all this and writing it down. Surely I am coming soon. And then there's this great seal of anticipation. Amen, he says.

Come, Lord Jesus. What a great testimony for us to have if that is our testimony. That we live in the light of eternity.

[ 60 : 55 ] That we live in the light of moving on from this scene. Much as we might love and love our families and all these sorts of things. And there's nothing wrong with that.

But you know, there's a greater love and a greater anticipation that one day we will see our Lord and we will see him as the Almighty. And we will see him as he is.

You and I. you face to face with Jesus. Have you ever thought of it in that way? That you will actually see him face to face?

That I will see him face to face? It's a little poem I'm finishing. And it's talking about the pilgrim on the way.

I can't remember who wrote it. I checked it out the other day. And it's, in a way, sums up about yesterday and today and forever. And it goes like this.

[ 61 : 56 ] here in this body pent. Absent from him I roam. Yet nightly pitch my moving tent.

A day's march nearer home. Let's pray. We thank you, Lord, for the wonder of your word.

We pray that we would take it with us. That it would fill our hearts and sell our hearts at the thought of as being a day's march nearer home.

Bless us as we go into this new week. We don't know what it holds for us. But we go out in your strength. In your name we pray. Amen. We're going to sing in conclusion the hymn I'm waiting for it to come up on the screen.

Here we go. The Ancient of Days. I think I have to confess that I asked for this one the last time I was here too. I do know more hymns than that. But we're going to sing that one tonight.

[illegible]

None above him than before him, all of time in his hands, for his throne shall we be, not ever stand.

All the power, all the glory, I will trust in his name, for my God is the Ancient of Days.

Oh, the dead of night overwhelms my soul, he is here with me, I am not alone.

All his love is sure, and he knows my name, for my God is the Ancient of Days.

[ 64 : 51 ]    None above him than before him, all of time in his hands, for his throne it shall remain, not ever stand.

All the power, all the glory, I will trust in his name, for my God is the Ancient of Days.

Though I may not see what the future brings, I will watch and wait for the Saviour King.

Then my joy comes with me, standing face to face, in the presence of the Ancient of Days.

All the power, all the glory, I will trust in his name, for my God is the Ancient of Days. All the power, all the glory, I will trust in his name, for my God is the Ancient of Days.

[ 66 : 13 ] For my God is the Ancient of Days. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, the communion and fellowship of the Holy Spirit, rest on us and remain with us now and always. Amen.