

Three Great Things

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Date: 30 October 2022

Preacher: Rev Donald A MacDonald

[0 : 00] Thank you.

The committee next Tuesday, Tuesday the 1st of November, 7 p.m., followed by meetings of the deacon's court and Kirksession.

Let us worship God by singing to His praise from Psalm 91. Psalm 91. Psalm 91.

Psalm 91.

Psalm 91. Psalm 91. Psalm 91.

[2 : 27] Psalm 91. Psalm 91. Psalm 91. He is my prayer. He is my prayer. He is my prayer.

He is my fortress and my Lord, and who in the sky will.

As you will be, he shall be saved, and will give the rest.

■■■■ e Thank you.

Thank you. Let us engage in prayer. O Almighty God, help us to covet the shelter that is found with thee.

[4 : 13] O Almighty, under the shadow of the Almighty, we give thee thanks for the nature of the shelter that is provided by thee.

And we give thee thanks too for the security that is afforded by thee. So help us this evening, Anya, not only to covet the shelter that is found under the shadow of the Almighty, but to value the security that the Almighty provides, so that thy people are eternally secure in thee.

We give thee thanks for the nature of the protection that is afforded by thee, by the one who is ever vigilant, for he slumbers not nor sleeps.

O Lord, we bless thy name, that this is so, that thou art ever vigilant over the lives of those who have through thy grace entrusted themselves into thy keeping.

Grant most merciful God this evening, as we reflect on a part of thy truth, that thy words speak powerfully, mightily, with conviction to our hearts and minds, so that we may indeed know that we are in the presence of Almighty God, and that we hear the voice of the Lord addressing our souls, as one who speaks with authority, with power, as one who is able to break down the barriers that are erected by the human mind and heart, so that all barriers are swept aside, and the entrance of thy truth, giving light to sin-darkened minds and hearts, through the ministry of thy Holy Spirit.

[6 : 52] Grant most merciful God, that we be not left to ourselves, as we reflect on thy truth, but that we be guided by thy Holy Spirit, that we be led by thy Spirit, that we be illuminated by thy Spirit, in such a way, that we are given entrance into the truth, and the truth given entrance into our hearts and minds.

Bless, we pray thee, each person present here this evening, each home that is represented. Bless any unable to be present, through thy restraint and providence, those who may be elderly and frail, those who are confined to their own homes, due to failing health, or advancing years.

Minister to them where they are this evening, and bless them as they reflect on thy truth. For we believe where grace has entered into hearts and lives, they will ever reach out for thine own word.

They will be found reading it, reflecting upon it, as the teaching of thy truth has been made precious to them, as it gives them an insight into the one who has come and wooed their soul with his own everlasting love.

Grant thy blessing, we pray thee, those who are mourning the loss of loved ones. Grant that thou wouldst be near to them in their time of sorrow, in their time of grief.

[8 : 53] The voice of the messenger of death is never far away from our communities. And grant, O Lord, that thou wouldst be near to all who are mourning the loss of loved ones this evening, those whose hearts are heavy, whose hearts are sore.

Grant, O Lord, that they find a measure of peace and rest in thyself as they reflect upon the providence that is theirs.

Bless, we pray thee, thy truth wherever it is proclaimed this evening, throughout our highlands and islands, throughout our nation and to the ends of the earth.

There are so many, so many difficult experiences in our world. All can be traced to the fall of man.

Yet few seem to recognize the effect of the fall and the life of man. We remember that part of the world where there is no constant war and the threat of even more wars.

[10 : 18] O Lord, we recognize from thy truth that there will always be these things until the end of the world.

But that doesn't make it any more easy for those who are afflicted by the brutality and the atrocities of wars.

where the evil in the heart of man rises up to such incredible levels.

Grant, O Lord, that thou would suppress the forces of evil, the powers of darkness, that the kingdom of light may advance, that thy name might be glorified and thy will done on earth as it is in heaven.

Bring peace to these troubled areas, we pray thee. Comfort all who are mourning this night throughout the world.

[11 : 29] Bless this congregation at this time in their history and development. give guidance to the vacancy committee as they meet in coming days.

May they know the presence of the Lord and the leading of the Lord as they gather together. Grant them unanimity of heart and mind as they meet to reflect on the path that they should follow, O that they be led to one anointed from on high, one imbued with thy Holy Spirit who would indeed proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ in their midst as a congregation who would go in and out amongst the homes of the congregation as a true under-shepherd leading them into the pastures of thy truth.

Bless, we pray thee, those who are in the committee and the membership of the session and the deacon's court as they meet this week.

Thou knowest the responsibilities that devolve upon them. Bless the interim moderator whom thou hast placed over the congregation uphold them in the duties that devolve upon him in connection with all the responsibilities that belong to those who are interim moderators, shouldering the responsibility of their own congregations as well as the congregations that are placed in their care.

Help us now as we turn to thy truth. Oh, lead us and guide us we pray thee. Cleanse in the blood. In Jesus' name we ask it with forgiveness of sin.

[13 : 40] Amen. Amen. Let us now read from the New Testament from the last book of the New Testament, the book of Revelation and chapter 7.

Book of Revelation and chapter 7. After and after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth holding the four winds of the earth that the wind should not blow on the earth nor on the sea nor on any tree.

And I saw another angel ascending from the east having the seal of the living God and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea saying hurt not the earth neither the sea nor the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

And I heard the number of them which were sealed and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand for all the tribes of the children of Israel.

Of the tribe of Judah were sealed twelve thousand. The tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.

[15 : 27] The tribe of Assy were sealed twelve thousand. The tribe of Nephthillim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manassas were 12,000. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed 12,000.

Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed 12,000.

After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues, 12,000. And all the angels stood 12,000. Stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands, 13,000. And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb.

14,000. And all the angels stood round about the throne and about the elders and the four beasts, 15,000. And fell before the throne and their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen.

15,000. Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be unto our God forever and ever. Amen.

[17 : 13] 16,000. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes?

16,000. And whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. 17,000. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, 18,000. And the Lord have washed their robes, made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

18,000. Therefore are they before the throne of God. 19,000. Serve him day and night in his temple. 19,000. And he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

19,000. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more. 19,000. Neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Amen and may God bless to us that reading from his truth. Let us again sing to his praise from Psalm 121.

[18 : 35] Psalm 121 I to the hills will lift mine eyes from whence doth come mine aid my safety cometh from the Lord who heaven and earth hath made thy foot he'll not let slide nor will he slumber that thee keeps behold he that keeps Israel he slumbers not nor sleeps the Lord thee keeps the Lord thy shade on thy right hand doth stay the moon by night thee shall not smite nor yet the sun by day the Lord shall keep thy soul he shall preserve thee from all ill henceforth thy going out and in

God keep forever will let us sing the whole psalm I to the hills will lift mine eyes I to the hills will lift mine eyes from whence doth come mine as now may come heregl mayoría by good shout and praisejal Amen.

Thy fruit in all the side on earth eachINGING world of leaks.

Heugh only other pieces I am is ensemble The waters not far sleeps, the garlic keeps the Lord outshed on thy right hand astray.

Love and fire, he shall not smile, not yet a sunbider.

[21 : 25] The dark shall give thy soul, he shall be served from water.

And for thy will, and thou will, God ye forever will.

Let us now turn to the passage that we read, the book of Revelation, chapter 7. And we may read again at verse 1.

Revelation chapter 7, at verse 1. And after these things, I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

When you read this book, the book of Revelation, in my view you cannot but be struck by the repeated use of numbers in this book.

[23 : 03] The usage of numbers is mainly symbolic. For example, chapter 1 tells us that the recipients of John's letter were the seven churches that are in Asia.

The seven, I believe, representing the entirety of the church throughout the gospel age. In the amazing vision, John sees Christ standing among seven churches, to whom he dictated seven letters.

So there you have the repeated usage of the number seven, which, as you know, is the number in the Bible for completeness.

And as you turn the pages of the book, you find that John's gaze in chapter 4 is lifted up from the earth, the place of suffering and trials of the Christian church, to see a door in heaven.

There, through that open door, he is shown a throne, which is occupied by one whom he finds difficult to describe in words, such as the luster and the glory that belongs to the one who sits on the throne.

[24 : 35] It is a part of his vision that I find most comforting and reassuring personally to know that there is one seated on the throne of the universe.

Why do I find it comforting and reassuring? Because we live in an unstable world, where heads of state are sometimes unpredictable, and where they engage in actions that perhaps might not have been foreseen.

But here is the reassurance that our world is never out of the jurisdiction and the rule of the one who is seated on the throne.

And in the hand of this majestic ruler, John, in the vision, beholds a scroll sealed with seven seals. There you have the number seven again.

And John is shown how the lion of the tribe of Judah, the lamb, goes on to take the seals and to open them.

[25 : 58] Each of these seals are signs. The first four seals speak of the horsemen of judgment. You might say the four horsemen of the apocalypse.

However you view the horsemen, it is evident that they can only do what they are assigned and permitted to do according to the plan of God and the sovereign rule of Christ.

The fifth seal, when opened, reveals the security of the souls of the martyrs by their very location.

I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held or the witness which they had borne.

So here are the souls of martyrs, people who were rejected on earth by their fellow men, and yet they are close to God's presence in heaven.

[27 : 12] And then you have the opening in chapter 6 of the sixth seal which paints a picture of great darkness, speaks of the disintegration of the world and the final judgment.

And so given that the sixth seal has been opened, it, as it were, whets your appetite, builds your expectation and sense of anticipation as to what is to be contained in the seventh seal.

What will be unfolded when the seventh seal is opened or broken? But note the chapter that we read.

Chapter 7, from which we have taken our text this evening, doesn't mention the seventh seal. And that, I believe, gives you a clue as to how you ought to read this book.

It's not to be understood as following a certain chronological order from one chapter to the next. We read in verse 1 of our text, and after these things, John says, I saw.

[28 : 42] He saw something else. And then when you go to chapter 8, it speaks of the opening of the seventh seal.

Now, I don't think we should think of this part of the vision in chapter 7 as something that happens between the opening of the sixth seal and the seventh.

It's not some kind of interlude. It's as if, if I can put it this way, it's as if John sees a detail. In the tapestry of the vision that is revealed to him.

Something that he hasn't noticed until then. If I can put it like this, you know, sometimes if you go, I don't know if any of you are into looking at paintings or even looking at pictures of creation, some spectacular views.

You don't take it all in at once. You perhaps see something, then you go back to it, and you notice details that you didn't notice before. And that's something what we have here in this seventh chapter.

[30 : 07] It's more a vision to help John and us, the readership, understand what is happening in the six seals that have been opened. It is, if you like, a simultaneous event to the six open seals.

And that brings me to our text. And I'd like to put three thoughts before you to help us try to grasp what John saw and heard.

The first thought, he saw a sealing angel. The second thought, he saw a standing multitude.

And thirdly, he heard a searching question. First of all, a sealing angel. John tells us, after these things, he says, I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

Now, the imagery that is used there appears to be drawn from the Old Testament, with which the Apostle John would be very familiar.

[31 : 34] These angels closely related to the four horsemen that are spoken of in chapter 6. Not only four of both, but as I said, drawn from the Old Testament, and particularly from the prophecy of Zechariah, there you will find that God's horsemen closely related to the four winds, possibly because of their speed of movement.

Zechariah, chapter 6, the first chariot had red horses, the second black horses, the third white horses, and the fourth chariot dappled horses, all of them strong.

Then I answered and said to the angel who talked with me, What are these, my Lord? And the angel answered and said to me, These are going out to the four winds of heaven after presenting themselves before the Lord of all the earth.

Now, what I understand from this opening verse of what John saw in the vision is a picture of restraint. these angels are depicted as restraining God's judgments from utterly destroying the earth.

And if you ask, why is this necessary? Well, the appearance of the angel, the fifth angel, if you like, I saw another angel from the ascending from the east.

[33 : 17] That answers the question. The four angels are acting in this way until the sealing of God's servants take place.

Verse 2, I saw another angel ascending from the east having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Do hurt not the earth, neither the sea nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their four heads.

In the Bible, news of salvation often appears from the east. An example in the prophecy of Ezekiel, chapter 43, the Lord enters the temple from the east.

Behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the east and the sound of his coming was like the sound of many waters and the earth shone with his glory. Then do you remember the wise men who worshipped Christ?

They too came from the east. And so here we find an angel from the east bearing the seal of the living God. I'm sure if you read this chapter, then you have many more questions in your mind.

[34 : 48] We are told that the number of those sealed was 144,000 and they had a seal placed on their foreheads. What was this seal?

Who were this specific number of people? A seal that has just recently been in the media contains the letter CR intertwined with the three Roman numerals.

The letter I for one centered in the letters and the image of a small crown. Above it's the seal of our recently appointed monarch Charles III.

It was the practice where a seal was used to identify an object as belonging to its master or to authenticate a message as coming from him.

A common type of seal was that of a signet ring which bore the emblem of its owner and it sometimes could be placed into a warm wax to leave an imprint.

[36 : 04] In this chapter I believe that the imagery of the seal is again drawn from the Old Testament. Prophecy of Ezekiel chapter 9 the Lord said to the man clothed and linen pass through the city through Jerusalem put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed in it.

And there you find in that particular context the unmarked of the population were to experience devastating divine judgment. They were to be killed.

Only those with the mark on their foreheads were to be spared. Those who were marked represented a repentant remnant.

And some would even argue that the number was so low that it only required one angel to place the mark. The mark apparently shaped something similar to our capital letter X.

Well here in the vision John saw we have a similar scenario. Those who are sealed are the faithful people of God. They would not be harmed by the calamities of the four riders or the blowing of the winds.

[37 : 26] Doesn't mean that Christians do not suffer in this life. Anyone entertaining that notion can discount it immediately. The fifth seal shows plainly that believers suffered.

Many suffered death because they were witnesses to the truth. That's why they were martyred. Believers suffer in many other ways. They're not exempt from illness, poverty, oppression, slander, or death.

But what this sealing implies and accomplishes is that perseverance and faith will remain steadfast unto the end. Remember what Paul wrote in his second letter to Timothy, God's firm foundation stands bearing this seal.

The Lord knows those who are his. The seal then is a mark of ownership and you know where such a seal is found you can be sure the owner will collect.

You know some people lost property and it's never collected.

[38 : 42] Sometimes it's auctioned because people somehow don't go in search of what they've lost. But that's not the case here.

The owner will collect. Every person who's sealed by the Lord will be collected. It guarantees security.

If you ask me what are they sealed with? The Bible itself answers. The Bible states that they are sealed with the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Letter to the Ephesians in him you also when you heard the word of truth the gospel of your salvation and believed in him were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it to the praise of his glory.

So the church in the world although not yet home is secure and I use the term church as a broad term to cover those who are in Christ Jesus.

[39 : 51] The Holy Spirit identifies a true Christian by by the transforming effects that take place in his or her life.

Now that is borne out by part of the conversation Jesus himself had with a teacher of the Jews by the name of Nicodemus. Remember how Jesus compared the Spirit to the wind.

You hear its sound. You do not know where it comes from and where it goes. In other words, the Spirit is best known by his effects. Reminds me of a man I once met.

I met him on more than one occasion. He came from the Ness area of the island. And he was converted late in life.

And he maintained that even his dog noticed the profound change in his life. Well, I don't know about that.

[40 : 56] But I imagine that his language was tempered in such a way that perhaps even the dog took note of it.

So if the seal then is the Holy Spirit and it is if the Holy Spirit identifies a Christian by the transforming effects that take place in that person's life.

How do we know that we possess the Spirit? How can we be sure that our life is not just a counterfeit of the real thing?

There was a book written by the 18th century preacher Jonathan Edwards. The title he gave to the book was The Distinguishing Marks of a work of the Spirit of God.

And if my memory serves me right, he gave five marks that he considered as evidence of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

[41 : 59] And the reason he did this was because he feared that some might think that outward signs like strong emotions or even an enthusiastic response to the Word of God can occur without it being the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Well, the seal of the Spirit is not something we can earn but by faith can experience the mark of God's Spirit in our lives.

And as is written here, the indwelling of the Spirit is the seal of the living God. God states when he seals a person with his Holy Spirit, you are not only my child now but you belong to me forever.

So, let's ask ourselves if we see confirmation that our life bears the mark of this all important seal.

I come back to the other question I raised. Who are this 144,000? Does the actual list strike you as unusual?

[43 : 18] The reason I say that is that the tribe of Judah is listed first and yet Judah wasn't the oldest of the sons of Israel.

Is that because Jesus was of the tribe of Judah? Possibly but I can't be sure. And then you notice two tribes are omitted.

Dan and Ephraim are omitted. Is that because the golden calves that were erected by King Jeroboam were in Dan and Ephraim?

Well again I can't be certain. Some interpret this number literally the 144,000 notably Jehovah's Witness and also dispensationalists but however you view the number it is evident that they were sealed during the calamities of the first four seals.

And I think without getting into knots with this number if you take this number as being symbolic of the people of God both Jew and Gentile as representing the church militant in the world then you are close to understanding the significance of the 144,000 it's a figure that is used for completeness every member of the church militant is sealed and been prepared for glory when the heavenly roll call is taken not one will fail to answer to their name none will be missing now that is so different to other roll calls when they are taken I remember hearing a man speaking to the question many years ago

[45 : 24] I think if my memory serves me right he was from the point area and he spoke of how he was one of those who belonged to the generation where many saw military service either naval or in the army or in the navy during the second world war and he said at the end of the war when the roll call was taken there was a number who didn't answer to their name they had perished during the years of war but you see when the roll call is taken in glory none will be missing and that reminds me of an elder who was in my second congregation and he often used to say when the roll is called up yonder

I'll be there none will be missing because as Christ himself states of those whom you gave me I have lost not one remember they were given to him by the father as a gift yours they were says Jesus and you gave them to me the exact number that God purposed in the eternal councils will all be there as the son bids the father welcome the family well under this heading I ought to mention that once the sealed of God are in gathered then there will no longer be a reason for constraint the four angels will no longer hold back the four winds so John saw a sealing angel but then secondly he also saw a standing multitude now note the contrast between the end of chapter 6 and verses 7 to 9 of the chapter we read the end of chapter 6 depicts for us a people cowering in fear from the wrath of the

Lamb notice what it says kings of the earth great men rich men chief captains mighty men every bond man every free man hid themselves in the dens the rocks of the mountain said to the mountain fallen hide us from the face of him that sit on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb so a picture that speaks of all the different unbelieving social levels occupied by man in the world filled with abject terror at the glorious second coming of Jesus Christ the door of grace then has been slammed closed never to open again and so you have this catalog of those who are in power and authority as well with everyone else and you notice the concluding words of chapter 6 who shall be able to stand who shall be able to stand and the implication is this that no one is able to stand now

I don't think that John would be surprised by that information given his knowledge of the Old Testament Psalm 1 states therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment Psalm 130 of you O Lord who could stand but what I wish especially to underline is the contrast between what is disclosed in the sixth seal and what John sees in this new detail in chapter 7 he tells us he saw an innumerable international gathering and they are standing after this verse 9 I beheld and lo a great multitude which no man could number of all nations and kinberds and people and tongues stood before the throne and before the Lamb clothed with white robes and palms in their hands when the last judgment has fallen many many incapable of standing this is the contrast yet here is this vast diverse crowd they are standing before the throne and before the

Lamb in direct contrast to those who were seeking shelter in creation as they sought the impossible to hide from the face of him who sits on the throne from the wrath of the Lamb number this multitude are like ■us and italiano and these■ are like the load of Allah protected so Oh, this huge number, sealed by the blood of the true Passover lamb.

[51 : 06] They are standing before the throne. Nothing disqualifies them from his presence or bars them from drawing near. They are in a position of harmonious fellowship.

Christ has died for them. I think the fact that they are standing is also an indication of their activity.

Heaven is not a place of inactivity. It's not a place of leisure. It's a place of activity. They are depicted as bearing the symbol of victory, the palm branch.

They are clothed in white robes. Even the angels who never sinned and who did not require deliverance or salvation, they are caught up in the euphoric praise and joy that ascends there.

The angels, we are told, fall down and worship. No man able to count this vast international gathering.

[52 : 14] But God knows them all. Do you remember the promise that God gave to Abraham? Way back, I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth.

But if you can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted. I will make them as the stars of the sky. So long before John saw the fulfillment of promise, God gave it to Abraham.

I will surely bless you. I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven, as the sun that is on the seashore. The multitudes that John saw are the consummate fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise.

There is glorious unity in diversity. Despite the differing ethnic backgrounds of this international gathering, every tongue is joined in giving praise to Christ.

So you have the vastness, the diversity, and the harmony of the church portrayed. The church victorious through Christ.

[53 : 40] These have conquered. To quote the language of the Apostle Paul, they are more than conquerors through Jesus who loved them. In white robes, indicative of their perfect sanctification.

Cleansed from all defilement. And John tells them, This standing diverse multitude are singing.

They are occupied with the praise of the Lord. That's their main focus. They are occupied with the praise of the Lord.

Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb. And you know how encouraging that must have seemed to John.

There he was in lonely exile. On the barren island of Patmos for his face. Alone.

[54 : 52] In solitude. And here in the vision. He sees the whole united church of Christ. Engrossed in the praise of the Lamb.

What he is in fact seeing. In the vision. Is the fruit of the travail. Of the soul of Christ.

Because ultimately. That's what it is. The fruit of the travail of his soul. And you know this morning we were reflecting a little.

On the thief. Who prayed. At Calvary. Who wanted Christ. Who wanted to be with Christ. Well.

His soul. Is amongst this glorious gathering. We know that. We know that he is there. Because Christ.

[55 : 51] Gave him that blessed assurance. So. A standing multitude. A sealing angel. But finally he heard a searching question.

And. It's as if up until then. John appears to be just a spectator. And he is so caught up. In what he saw.

So. Now it's. It's as if. He himself is part of the vision. For he speaks of one of the elders. Coming up beside him. And speaking to him.

One of the elders answered. Saying unto me. What are these. Which are arrayed in white robes. And whence came they. And literally it is.

One of the elders. Answered me with a question. Now. You know. John hadn't asked a question. But it's as if the elder.

[56 : 53] Had read his mind. Who are these. And John speaks. With the acquired wisdom.

Of a mature believer. He gives the wisest possible answer. Sir. You know. He doesn't try to attempt.

To answer it himself. That's often the sign of immaturity. And. Here is the response.

These are they. Which came out of great tribulation. And washed their robes. And made them white. In the blood of the Lamb. By these words.

John has been shown. And taught. How the church. Arrived in this place. Whatever else. We may understand. From these words.

[57 : 48] They highlight for us. The great deliverance. Achieved. Through Christ. Now. They came out of great tribulation.

I don't believe. That this speaks. Of an end time. Tribulation. As some teach. But rather. What the psalmist teaches. When he writes. Many are the afflictions.

Of the righteous. Does I believe. Speaking. Of the all. Inclusive. Experience. Of the believers. In every age. Paul too.

In the New Testament. Writes. We must. Through many tribulations. Enter the kingdom of God. And you remember. What the psalmist. Went on. To write in the psalm. Where he speaks of.

Many are the afflictions. Of the righteous. But he says. The Lord delivers. Him out of them all. And here. John sees.

[58 : 44] The delivered church. And the other important. Strand of teaching. In this response. Is the emphasis. That those. Whom he sees. In this place.

Are those. Who have placed. Their trust. In the finished. Work of Christ. On earth. Cleansed. In the blood. Of the lamb. Remember.

John writes. In his first letter. If we walk. In the light. As he is in the light. We have fellowship. With one another. And the blood. Of Jesus Christ.

His son. Cleanses us. From all sin. The emphasis. Here then. Is on the efficacy. Of the atoning. Work of Christ.

He who sits. On the throne. Will dwell. Among them. In the sense. Of. Spreading. His presence. Like a tent.

[59 : 42] Over them. You know. How the. Old Testament. Speaks. Of the believer. Being taken. Into the. Banqueting house. And what we can.

Understand. From that. Is. They are given. Four tests. Of heaven. But what. John sees. Here. In the vision. Is the. Banqueting house.

In all. Its glorious. Fullness. Where the. Banner of love. Is clearly. Sin. Unfurling. Over.

The church. As. She is. Nothing. Can. Cause. Them harm. And you notice. How that is.

Emphasized. The sun. Neither. Shall the sun. Light on them. Nor any heat. They shall. Never know. Deprivation.

[60 : 39] Of any kind. You know. As we journey. Through life. We have good things. Spiritually. But are there not.

Many occasions. And you say. There is something. Missing. There is something. Missing. There will be nothing.

Missing. In the place. Of which. This chapter. Speaks. They shall. Neither. They shall. Hunger. No more. Neither.

Neither. Thirst. Any more. Eternally. Shepherded. By their Lord. Experiencing. Constant.

And continuous. Satiation. How wonderful. To be a citizen. Of heaven. And you know. Your citizenship.

[61 : 33] Is conferred. In this life. Not when. When. When you. Go out. Of this world. It's conferred. In this life. As you await.

The transformation. That must inevitably. Take place. When your body. Your lowly body. Will be like. His glorious body.

You remember. How. The apostle Paul. Writes. Our citizenship. Is in heaven. Heaven. His citizenship.

Was in heaven. But that citizenship. Was conferred. In this life. Well. I'm going to conclude. By. Quoting. A couple of verses.

What will it be. To dwell above. And with the Lord. Of glory reign. Since the earnest. Of his love.

[62 : 28] So brightens. All this dreary plain. No heart can think. No tongue explain. What joy it will be.

With Christ to reign. Where sin no more. Obstructs our sight. When sorrow's pain. The heart no more. When we shall see.

The prince of light. And all his works. Of grace. Of grace. Explore. What heights. And depths. Of love divine. Will there.

Through endless. Ages shine. A sealing angel. A standing multitude. A searching question.

Oh to be there. And you know. You will be there. If you but trust. In Jesus Christ. That's the assurance.

[63 : 27] Of God's word. And although. There is. Much in the description. Yet.

You cannot fully appreciate it. Until you arrive. And only then. Will you truly appreciate. The fullness.

The fullness. Of the blessing. That belongs. To those. Who belong. To this vast.
International gathering.

Of all tongues. And tribes. And nations. As they gather. And give voice.

To the praise. Of the one. Who is in the midst. Of the throne. You know. Sometimes. You
may have been.

[64 : 24] Where there have been. Many people gathered. And there's been singing. But it pales.
Into insignificance.

In comparison. To the sound. Of the many voices. That will be raised. In that gathering.
And the question. For you and me.

Is this. Will your voice. And mine. Be heard. In that. International gathering. Let us pray.
Oh.

Eternal God. There are great. Mysterious depths. In thy truth. There is much.

That we do not. Understand. Understand. And even. The little. That we do. Understand.
Or that we think. We understand. Even that.

[65 : 21] Is so deeply. Mysterious. Oh. Help us. To see. More and more. Of the glory. Of the lamb.
The attractiveness.

Of his personality. That we may be. Drawn to him. And drawn away. From everything
else. In this world.

And the glory. Shall be thine. In Jesus name. We ask it. Amen. Let us conclude. By
singing.

To God's praise. From Psalm 23. Psalm 23. The Lord's. My shepherd. I'll not want.

He makes me down. To lie. In pastures green. He leadeth me. The quiet waters. By. My
soul. He doth restore.

[66 : 18] Again. And me. To walk. Doth make. Within the paths. Of righteousness. Even for his
own. Name's sake. We'll sing the whole song.

The Lord's. My shepherd. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Center.

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His soul is still. Ye know I walk in death's dark air, Yet the light's hidden on him.

Forever be beyond my hope, And scouts be gone for still.

[68 : 14] My kingdom that has furnished In essence of my foes, My heaven is with all alone, And
my cup overflows.

Goodness and goodness, Ye all my life, Shall surely follow me, And in God's house
forevermore, Thy loving days shall be.

Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, The love of God the Father, Fellowship and
communion of the Holy Spirit, Rest on and abide with you all, Now and forever. Amen.

Amen.