

Who are these?

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[0 : 0 0] Welcome to our services today and we hope that as we come together around the Word of God that the Lord would bless his Word to us. Let us commence our service by joining together in prayer. O Lord our God, we pray that on this day that we would find ourselves in the frame of mind that the servant of old found himself when he penned these words. Bless the Lord, O my soul, O Lord my God.

O Lord, thou art very great, thou art clothed with honour and majesty, who covers thyself with light as with a garment, who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, who layeth the beams of his chamber in the waters, who maketh the clouds his chariot, who walketh upon the wings of the wind, who maketh his angel's spirits, his ministers of flaming fire, who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed forever.

O Lord, we pray that as we come together in this act of worship, that we would be always mindful of who thou art, that thou art the high and lofty one, that thou art the one that inhabiteth eternity, that thou art of purer eye than to look upon iniquity, that wherever sin is, that it must be punished.

And we give thee thanks, O Lord, that as we come before thee this day, as those who confess their sin, as those who acknowledge that they are sinners, as we come, O Lord, and confess and acknowledge our sinnership before thee, we give thanks that thou hast made provision for us in and through thy Son, who bore the punishment that was due to our sins in his own body upon the cross, giving us access into the very throne room of God, whereby we can come today with all boldness and with all confidence and to thy presence, and seek, O Lord, that in thy grace and mercy thou would grant to us that cleansing that we stand in need of.

And we give thee thanks, O Lord, for the efficacy of the blood of Christ, which is able to reconcile us to our God, which is able to forgive us our sins, which is able to give us a standing before a holy God, as those who are clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

[3 : 1 1] We ask, O Lord, that we would come today in humility of mind and of heart and of spirit into thine own presence, and seek that thou, O Lord, would show thy favour upon us this day, that thou would shine upon us with the light of thine own countenance, enlightening our minds and preparing our hearts as we come to thy word, as we come to read thy word, and as we come to meditate upon thy word together.

We pray, O Lord, that thou would bless all our loved ones, wherever they may be. We pray, O Lord, that thou would uphold them and be with them. We remember all those who are in hospital, those who are under the bed of affliction, and pray, O Lord, that it would please thee that thine healing hand would be upon them.

We especially remember, O Lord, those who have been touched with the coronavirus. We pray, O Lord, that thou would meet with them at their point of need.

We thank thee, O Lord, for those who have been healed, and those who have returned back to some sense of normality in their life. Remember the loved ones who are anxious regarding their own loved ones.

We pray for them, O Lord, and pray that thou would speak near to them. We ask, O Lord, that thou would bless our communities, that thou would bless every home and family that belongs to us here.

[4 : 53] We give thee thanks, O Lord, for thy goodness and thy kindness to us. We remember our nation, O Lord, and pray that it would please thee to turn us back in repentance to thyself, to seek the mercy of God in Jesus Christ.

Remember all those who are involved in the NHS, our care workers, our key workers, we pray for them and ask that thine own upholding hand, would be upon them.

Remember our children and our young people. Remember those who are lonely this day. O Lord, that thou wouldst draw near to them, that they may know thine own presence, and that they would come to know that in their loneliness there is one who has promised that for all those who will put their trust in him, that he will never leave them or forsake them.

We ask, O Lord, that thou would continue with us now. We seek that it would please thee to bless us and to bring us to that place where we would acknowledge thee as our God and as our Lord.

And all that we ask with the forgiveness of our sins, in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. Let us now turn to the word of God, and we'll take a reading today from the book of Revelation, and chapter 7.

[6 : 31] 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 a number of them which were sealed. There were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Judah were sealed 12,000.

Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Asher were sealed 12,000.

Of the tribe of Nephthilim were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Manasseh were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed 12,000.

[7 : 44] Of the tribe of Levi were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed 12,000. Of the tribe of Zebulun 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, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands, and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb.

And all the angels stood round about the throne and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces and worshipped God, saying, Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they? And I said, Unto him, Sir, thou knowest.

And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and I washed the robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple.

[9 : 10] And he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, 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 into living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

May the Lord bless unto us the reading of that portion of his word. And now seeking his blessing, we shall return back to that portion of Revelation, and chapter 7, reading at verse 13.

And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they? There is probably no book in the Bible that has led to so many opinions and interpretations among believers as the book of Revelation.

John Calvin declined to preach Revelation, and Martin Luther once argued for its removal from the canon. This book is full of symbolic images, and maybe that is one of the problems, or perhaps the greatest problem that we have with the book of Revelation.

For sometimes we can get so bogged down in the details, but it is important for us not to get lost in the details, but try to see the Revelation and all its details within the big picture of Scripture.

[10 : 54] What is the big picture of Scripture? So many people get caught up with the intricate details concerning future events that they miss the point that the Lord Jesus Christ is the chief subject of Scripture, and so he is the chief subject of this book.

From Genesis to Revelation, it is all about God's redemptive plan, that plan that began in eternity in the covenant of redemption, revealed in the promise of the garden, and embodied in Jesus Christ, and completed on his return.

If this last book of the Bible is about anything, it's about Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

It's about Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of sinners. The last book of the Bible connects us so suitably to the first book of the Bible, Genesis.

In Genesis, even the creation of heaven and earth was for redemption, as the stage upon which redemption for the sinner was to be accomplished.

[12 : 18] Here, in the book of Revelation, chapter 21, we have the consummation of heaven and earth. Genesis, chapter 3, we have the entrance of sin, and in chapter 21 of Revelation, we have the end of sin, the end of the curse.

In Genesis, chapter 3, we have the dawn of Satan and all his activities. In Revelation, chapter 20, we have the doom of Satan and all his adversaries.

In Genesis, chapter 2 and 3, we have the tree of life rejected, and then in Revelation, chapter 22, the tree of life is regained. In Genesis, chapter 2 and 5, death makes an entrance, but in Revelation 21, death makes an exit.

It is gone forever. In Genesis 3, sorrow begins, but in Revelation 21, sorrow is banished.

So we see the connection that there is between the last book of the Bible called Revelation and the first book of the Bible called Genesis.

[13 : 31] Now, as we come to chapter 7, we see the great contrast there is between chapter 7 and chapter 6.

In contrast to the doom and gloom of chapter 6, we come to chapter 7, which provides us with the answer to the question that ended chapter 6.

For at the end of chapter 6, we read, Well, here is the answer.

It is the whole body of the redeemed who have been sealed with the seal of God. They will be able to stand. We read, 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.

These four angels are holding back the winds which are ready to come upon the earth. And the winds represent God's judgment. So the angels are restraining God's judgment from destroying the earth.

[14 : 47] And then verse 2 explains why they are restraining judgment. 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.

Well, what is the seal of the living God? Well, if we come forward to chapter 14 of this book, we read, And I looked, and lo, a lamb stood on the Mount Sion, and with him an hundred, forty, and four thousand, having his father's name written in their foreheads.

To say that the father's name is written on someone's forehead is a figurative way of saying that that person belongs to him and that that person is protected by him.

In other words, the seal with which God's servants are sealed with in their foreheads is the father's name. The seal in ancient times marked ownership so that the seal sets the servants apart as belonging to the father.

[16 : 17] We are told here in the book of Revelation that they were the redeemed from the earth, that they were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the lamb.

Remember how Jesus said to the father, Thine they were, and thou gavest them me. They were given to the son in order to redeem them.

And here they are, having been redeemed by the lamb, and they appear with him on Mount Sion, all a hundred and forty-four thousand, which is to be taken as a symbolic figure rather than a literal figure.

But you may ask, how will I know that I have the seal of the living God? There are those who spend a lot of time quibbling about the doctrine of election.

How will I know that I am of the elect of God? But remember what the Bible tells me and you, and it requires of me and you, is to give evidence of my election by a living faith.

[17 : 29] We can look at one of the characteristics that belongs to those who are elect of God, those who have been sealed with the seal of the Father in relation to God's word.

In his prayer, as recorded for us in John 17, Jesus makes several references to his giving of God's word to those given to him by the Father.

that is mentioned several times, of course, in his prayer. And one of these references, Jesus says, For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

In other words, they receive Jesus as the sum and fulfilment of God's word. Having received God's word, it obviously directs them to Jesus himself.

They have believed that Jesus is the Christ of God, that in him the grace and the wisdom and the power of God is made manifest.

[18 : 48] They have put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. They are those who have been redeemed from sin by the precious blood of Jesus Christ. Paul reminds us that we have been bought with a price.

Now, to be sealed with a Father's name not only mean a mark of ownership, but it also marks our protection.

and Paul, writing to the Ephesians, says, in whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, and to the praise of his glory.

The sealing of the Spirit is not something which the Spirit gives. The seal is the Spirit himself. A person who enjoys the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is attested as belonging to the Father, belonging to Christ.

By the sealing of the Spirit, not only is our inheritance guaranteed for us, but we are also assured that he will protect us through the trials and the testings of life.

[20 : 24] When God sealed and guaranteed believers with his Holy Spirit, he had in you their full and final redemption. Those who are sealed with the Father's name are sealed with the Holy Spirit.

And having the seal of the Father's name upon us and having been sealed with the Holy Spirit and having been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb obviously means that we have to bear allegiance and commitment to both the Father and the Lamb.

That is really what defines the 144,000 who have received this sealing. What defines me and you as Christians is not our status in the world, it is not even our giftedness, but our standing with the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ.

That we have been reconciled to God through the Lord Jesus Christ. Our relationship with God through Christ, our commitment to him requires us to renounce our allegiance to the world and to sin.

That doesn't mean that we have to isolate ourselves from the world. Jesus in his prayer said, I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

[21 : 55] John says, Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof.

But he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. So that our standing with the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ not only defines us as Christians, but it also ensures us of our eternal destiny with him in glory.

Again, coming back to the prayer of Jesus where he says, Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world.

So those who have been sealed with the Father's name, been sealed with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit redeemed by the precious blood of Christ.

[23 : 19] Their salvation is sure. Whatever trials and testings will be their lot in this world, yet their salvation is sure.

For Jesus will present them before the Father. None of them will be lost. They are protected by the Father. No one is able to pluck them out of the Father's hand.

And they shall all be there when Jesus will say, Behold I and the children that thou didst give to me. John heard the number of the sealed, 144,000 sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel.

Israel. And as we have already noted, the figure of 144,000 is to be taken symbolically rather than literally. 12,000 from the tribes of Israel thus signify the entirety of the redeemed.

The whole church been together. This symbolic understanding is affirmed by the verse that follows. After this I beheld and lo, a great multitude which no man could number of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues stood before the throne and before the Lamb clothed with white robes and palms in their hands.

[24 : 56] Now before we come to consider the scene set before us in this vision, there is an omission in the numbering of the tribes that we can so easily pass over and I think that its omission is significant and perhaps serves as a warning to us.

You will observe that the tribe of Dan is not mentioned. And the probable reason for this is that Dan are very much associated with idolatry.

if we were to turn back to 1 Kings chapter 12 when Israel became divided and Jeroboam reigned over Israel or the ten northern tribes, we are told that he set up two golden calves, one in Bethel and one in Dan.

And he told the people to worship there instead of going to Jerusalem. this became known as the sin of Jeroboam which is often referred to in the history of Israel.

Idolaters do not belong to the sealed people of God. They do not enter into the kingdom of God and this tribe of Dan became very much associated with idolatry and so we find this omission here among the sealed people of God.

[26 : 30] We are here reminded of God's covenant promise to Abraham at the very beginning when we see this multitude that is before the throne when God said to Abraham and I will make of thee a great nation and I will bless thee and make thy name great and thou shalt be a blessing and I will bless them that bless thee and curse him that curse thee and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

This great multitude that John saw it was the fulfilment of that promise given to Abraham. Here as we look upon the vision that is set before us we have a vision of the redeemed church in its vastness.

a great multitude which no man could number. But we have also a vision of the diversity that makes up the body of the redeemed.

The multitude is made up of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues. And what we find in this vision is through unity.

In this world we find it so difficult to overcome barriers of race and culture and language. But here we have a vision of what heaven is like.

[27 : 54] All these barriers no longer exist. There is complete unity and unison and harmony before the throne of God.

But the church is revealed to John not only in its vastness and diversity and unity but also in its victory. For they are clothed with white robes and palms in their hands.

They are like conquerors receiving their triumphal parade wearing their white robes and having palm branches in their hands. The white robes are symbolic of purity.

Symbolic of the believer's justification through faith in Christ. Jesus told the church in Sardis that he that overcometh the shame shall be clothed in white raiment and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life but I will confess his name before my father and before his angels.

Paul writing to the church Ephesus says Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word that he might present to himself a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing but that it should be holy and without blemish.

[29 : 26] Writing to the Romans he says we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. All the victory over all the consequences of sin won by Jesus Christ through his perfect life and through his atoning death.

The church standing triumphant, the church standing sanctified and cleansed from all defilements, the church standing clothed with a right apparel of Christ's imputed righteousness.

What a glorious scene that is set before us here in this vision. But the church is revealed to John not only in its vastness and diversity and through unity and victory but he has shown what occupies them.

Have you ever wondered what occupies the triumphant church? What occupies the mind of those who have passed on from the scene of time and who are now set before the throne?

Have you ever wondered for those that you knew so well, perhaps members of your own family, those that we traverse this wilderness journey with them and they were received by the Lord Jesus.

[31 : 00] They are no longer in the journey with us here in this world and we wonder what occupies their minds, what occupies their thoughts? us. And John here sees in this vision what occupies them.

He says that they cried with a loud voice saying salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb. Oh as we wonder what occupies the minds of those who are in heaven, John here gets a glimpse of what occupies their minds.

it is the salvation of God, the sovereign grace of God, the saving work of Jesus Christ upon the cross.

When we think of the time when two heavenly visitors who came and met with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah, and as they spoke to Jesus we are told that their conversation was about the Exodus.

about the work of the cross, about the salvation of God. And we are told here that they cried with a loud voice.

[32 : 26] They are totally encapsulated with praise to God and the Lamb. God I recently watched a preview of a musical concert by a popular band within our own island and the people were delirious.

They were emotionally transported and all excited. They were ecstatic as they listened to this band. Well, that is how we should be.

That is how we should be now. We should not be strangers to the picture that is given to us here of the vast multitude in their praise to God and the Lamb as they cry with a loud voice.

praise. But not only does John see the triumphant church giving praise to God and the Lamb, but he sees that the angels respond with their own song of praise.

And all the angels stood round about the throne and about the elders and the four beasts and sailed before the throne on their faces and worshipped God saying Amen. Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be unto our God forever and ever.

[33 : 44] Amen. Of course there is that tone of experience in the praise of the church that cannot be true of the angels, but yet they respond in connection to the salvation of the church.

And this should not surprise us, for Peter informs us that the salvation of the church is something which things the angels desire to look unto.

Jesus said that, likewise I say unto you there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repented. So the angels and elders and four beasts fall before the throne on their faces and worship God.

They show reverence in their worship. they fell before the throne on their faces and they affirm with their amen what the redeemed church has just declared.

In their response of praise they emphasise that God has bestowed upon the church great blessing and salvation and in saving the church that God has made a display of his glory.

[34 : 58] he has displayed his nature and character as a gracious and as a compassionate God who delighteth in showing mercy and forgiveness.

He has exercised his great wisdom and his power and might. Paul says of Jesus that he is the power of God and the wisdom of God.

God has earned thanksgiving and honour in saving his people. How this should make us wonder that if the angels are praising the wisdom and power of God in saving me and you where is my praise and where is your praise?

one of the angels probes John's understanding of the scene that is set before him in this vision.

We read and one of the elders answered saying unto me what are these which are arrayed in white robes and whence came they? And I said unto him sir thou knowest and he said to me these are they which came out of great tribulation and I washed the robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb.

[36 : 23] There are two things here said about the redeemed church. First that they came out of great tribulation. Now there are some who would say that this reference to great tribulation points to just before the return of Jesus Christ.

For instance Jesus said for then shall be great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time nor ever shall be and except those days should be shortened there should no flesh be saved but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened making reference to his second coming.

Paul of course speaks of the man of perdition the great apostasy within the church before the end before Christ's return. However I think that the great tribulation spoken of here is a more general tribulation.

I think that it is a reference to tribulation that is true in the experience of every believer in every generation. Peter says Jesus said if he were of the world the world would love his own but because he are not of the world but I have chosen you out of the world therefore the world hateth you.

Remember the word that I said unto you the servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me they will also persecute you. If they have kept my saying they will keep yours also.

[38 : 12] But all these sent me. These things he says I have spoken unto you that in me you might have peace in the world you shall have tribulation but be of good cheer I have overcome the world.

And here they are having gone through tribulations they have now overcome these in Jesus Christ and they stand before the throne.

The second thing that is thrown to our attention is that they have washed the robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb. We are told that they have washed the robes.

Here is man's responsibility in reference to salvation. You may ask how will I receive the cleansing benefits of the death of Jesus and the answer is only through personal faith.

They washed the robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb. When you are going to be saved, you must come by personal faith, and here we see the efficacy of the blood of Christ.

[39 : 34] They washed the robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb. When we trust in Christ, our sins are forgiven, past, present, and future.

The blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanses us from all sin. We are justified before God, having the righteousness of Christ imputed to us.

In the words of the prophet who says, Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as galled, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple, and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

God said to Moses, and let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them.

[40 : 50] And God dwelt in glory between the cherubims that was on the mercy seat that was upon the ark of the covenant and placed in the holy of holies. However, there were restrictions.

Only the high priest of Israel could enter the holy of holies and that only on one day a year on the day of atonement. But in heaven there are no restrictions.

We stand before his throne continually and he dwells among us. There is a sense in which we can say that now we have no restrictions because by faith we can now enter into the holy of holies.

By faith we can now enter into the very throne room of God. But here it is by sight. It is by sight.

John John then is told of the blessing that attends Christ's people as they are before the throne of God.

[41 : 54] They shall hunger no more neither thirst any more neither shall the sun lighten them nor any hate no longer will they cry O God thou art my God early will I seek thee my soul thirst for thee my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land where no water is O they wondered in the wilderness in a solitary way they found no city to dwell in hunger and thirsty their soul fainted in them no longer will they cry out I stretch forth my hands unto them my soul thirst after thee as a thirsty land now their thirst after God will always be satisfied the shepherd who leads them is no other than one who became a lamb for us and he will shepherd us into the fullest experience of eternal life he will dwell among us as the lamb that was slain as the lamb that was

God's provision for us the shepherding of heaven for the lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and lead them into living fountains of waters the thirst for God that came into your experience into your heart the day that you put your trust in Christ and began to follow the shepherd will not cease when you go to heaven but it will continue in heaven they say it will thirst for God but that thirst will always be satisfied the shepherding is done by the lamb Christ and human nature but glorified human nature you will remember that Christ prayed before he entered into the garden of Gethsemane glorify thou me with thine own self he was asking glorify me as I now am me and human nature me as

I have not been before in glory take me as I am now with thine own self again with the glory I had with thee before the world was he's praying that his human nature will be exalted as to share as far as human nature can in the glory which is a divine person he had before the father before the world began oh he's returning to his father and in that returning he is not leaving his human nature behind but he is taking that human nature with him to the right hand of the majesty on high to the very center of the throne of God so he is saying glorify my human nature bring my human nature into the glory I had asked your son before the creation began that would involve obviously transformation of the body of

Christ in this world he had a body of humiliation a body that was limited that underwent flocking and bruising and death but God raised him from the dead and he raised him from the dead in glory and in power and when the prayer is answered as surely as it is answered the human nature of Christ is sharing in his pre-existent divine glory oh glorify thou me with thine own self John Duncan says the dust of the earth is at the right hand of the majesty on high and with that glorified human nature he is now shepherding his people he is dwelling in their midst and he is shepherding his redeemed people we shall for eternity be growing of our knowledge of him we shall see his face you remember that last week we spoke of

Moses and his request to behold the glory of God and the provision that God made for him but God said to him thou canst not see my face for there shall no man see me and live however Jesus said blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God John wrote beloved now are we the sons of God and it does not get appear what we shall be but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is Paul wrote of great expectation and anticipation of the church when he says we shall redeem we shall rather change our wild body that it may be fashioned like into his glorious body bringing us to the apex of our redeemer who shall change our wild body that it may be fashioned like into his glorious body according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself yes even our bodies will be transformed like into the body of

[47 : 11] Christ oh this is a blessing that awaits the child of God we shall see his face and we shall be like him the face expresses who a person is and to see God's face will be to know who God is we shall come to know who God is in his personal being that will be at the heart of our eternal joy and our eternal worship of God there are many tears shed by the Christian in this world it's like a valley of tears but the day is going to dawn and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes there will be no more tears no more sin to contend with we shall be free from its assaults we shall be free from its inner promptings no more shall we be beset by sin and harassed by the devil and agitated by restlessness and imperfection in chapter one of this book we read behold the tabernacle of

God is with men and he will dwell with them and they shall be his people and God himself shall be with men and be their God and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes and there shall be no more death neither sorrow nor crying neither shall be any more pain for the former things are passed away Isaiah foresaw this moment and he wrote these words and the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and signs shall flee away all my friends what prospect we have what great promise been given to us what expectation what anticipation that we have when we shall be encircled by God's love when we shall share in his blessedness and peace as adopted sons and joint heirs with

Christ Christ the psalmist puts it so eloquently when he writes he maketh the storm a calm so that the waves thereof are still then are the glad because they be quiet so he bringeth them into their desired heaven if you are not a Christian today what does death mean to you or will it be a launching out into the deep into a terrifying ocean of darkness for the Christian the prospect is different death is the chariot that brings them home we so often mourn the passing of loved ones the passing of brothers and sisters in

Christ those that we came to know on our polygamous journey those who used to come here and in this congregation and join with us in fellowship and communion and the Lord has received them yes death was a chariot that brought them home and death is a chariot that shall bring you into the house of many mansions that brings you before the throne we are told that Jacob when he saw the work which Joseph had sent to carry him the spirit of Jacob their father revived and Israel said it is enough Joseph my son is yet alive I will go and see him before I die it is an unbelievably beautiful scene but nothing in comparison to God's chariot sent to carry his own home the interchange of names here is significant it is

Israel that said it is enough the man of faith and so we today say it is enough our Joseph the Lord Jesus Christ is alive and we will go and see him through the chariot that he has provided but unlike Jacob whose presence with Joseph was only for a while we shall live forever with the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be glad because we have been brought into our desired heaven and as we think of the multitude before the throne of God and with their minds being occupied with continuous praise to God for his redemptive work they are before the throne of

[53 : 07] God day and night and they serve him in his temple and my dear friend although you may find the journey hard and although you may be weary with the journey and although the heat of the day may be leaving you weary with the journey oh my dear friend look by faith to what awaits you look by faith to what the saints that we knew here on earth and who have been received by the Lord Jesus Christ and who is before the throne look what occupies their mind there are no distractions there is no sin to contend with there is no struggles to contend with in the bliss of worship before the throne and that is what awaits you and me that awaits all who are in

Jesus Christ oh my dear friends what expectation what anticipation that we move here looking to that blessed hope the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ when we shall be ushered in body and soul into his very presence made all glorious and worshipping him before the throne well is that your own expectation today my dear friend I ask you I exhort you I prayerfully request of you that you will consider your relationship with God today and if you are outside this hope and this promise my friend make no rest until you are assured that you are within this promise that this will become your expectation may the

Lord bless these thoughts to us let us pray oh Lord we give thanks for the vision that thy word gives to us that unveiling that we have of the worship that there is at thine own right hand and we give thanks that our worship can be joined up with their worship as we worship the same object as we worship the same person as we want to serve the same person or the lamb in the midst of the throne our crucified saviour the Lord Jesus Christ and so we pray oh Lord that as they do so by sight that we would be enabled to do so by faith today and that we would be enabled by faith to enter into the very throne room of

God and seek to worship thee and give thee thanks for all thy goodness all thy kindness and for thy salvation oh Lord we pray that thou would be with us during this day that thou oh Lord would do for us far exceeding our desires we ask that thou would bless all families all homes and all communities that thou would bless our nation today and as the gospel has been proclaimed that it may go forth in the power and demonstration of thy spirit in convicting and converting sinners and in the building of thine own church here on earth may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship and communion of the

Holy Spirit be with you all now and forevermore Amen Amen