

The Lord reigns over all

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[0 : 00] Let strong, like perfect, righteousness Well let me say first of all what a pleasure it is for me to be here with you this evening.

I'm grateful to your minister for this kind and generous invitation. I've enjoyed in the recent past very much getting to know him and have benefited greatly from every time I've sat under his ministry.

And if I could make one plug it would be this. If you haven't yet heard Ian's addresses on the Sabbath at the Bander and Truth Ministers Conference in Leicester this past April then sell all that you need to sell to get hold of the CDs, of the addresses.

They were two masterly, monumental and profoundly spiritual addresses on the sanctity of the Lord's Day. And I found them just the richest of blessings.

So allow me to commend your minister's ministry outside of Point and encourage you to get those CDs. You will not regret that.

[1 : 23] It's 41 years since I first set foot on the island of Lewis. I stayed in Caldas for four days with no running water. I wondered what I'd come to.

But I only met just the most wonderful Christian people. I was a young Christian. I knew very little. And coming to Lewis I realised that the little I knew was very little compared to some of the seasoned saints that I met.

And since that time, 1969, I've come many times to the island and every time with thankfulness to God for the heritage of the Church of Christ here in the island.

And may the Lord not only preserve his heritage, but prosper it. And may it please him to bring better days for his kingdom and church to this island and to the rest of our needy land.

Well, please turn with me to the first chapter of the book of Daniel. If you're going to make any sensible sense of the book of Daniel, you will need to understand two things.

[2 : 40] First, and very obviously, you'll need to understand the context out of which this book was penned. Daniel and the cream of Israelite society and nobility have been carried off in the first wave of deportation by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon.

Babylon has become the great superpower of the day. In the year 605, Nebuchadnezzar had come with his army and had vanquished the great superpower of Egypt at the Battle of Kertesh.

And from that moment on, Israel was overwhelmed by the might of the superpower that was Babylon. And subsequently, in three waves of deportation, the greater part of Israel was carried off into exile.

Exile that not only Jeremiah had prophesied, of course, but that God had promised in the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy. You may remember how God promised that if his people proved wayward and disobedient and persisted in waywardness and disobedience, he would ultimately send them into exile.

They never thought God would go to such lengths, but to such lengths the Lord was pleased to go for the glory and honour of his name and for the preservation of the remnant of grace within Israel.

[4 : 16] And so Daniel, as a young lad, probably of about 14 years of age, finds himself uprooted from family, removed from friends and homeland and all that's familiar, and he's carried off with others like Hananiah, Azariah, Mishaël, carried off into the pagan heartland of the superpower of Babylon.

It was as if the world had come to an end. And therefore the book of Daniel is going to recount for us how this young man, Daniel, in particular, stood for God and for the truth of God in a godless and fallen world.

And it's a glorious story, is it not? We see Daniel resolving in his heart, not just as a young lad, barely out of adolescence, but as an old man, 66 years later, continuing to stand for God and for the truth of God and resolving in his heart to put truth before consequences.

And so the book of Daniel is a wonderful portrait of what God is able to accomplish even in a young lad for his glory in a fallen and godless world.

It's as if God is drawing us a picture of a man of faith who in himself typifies the ultimate man of faith, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

[5 : 53] And so in the immediate context of the book of Daniel, we see that God is planting a remnant of grace, perhaps surprisingly, but in fulfilment of his prophetic word.

God is planting a remnant of grace in the midst of godlessness and showing us what grace is able to accomplish in the youngest of lives.

even when circumstances are all against them. Samuel Rutherford wrote, it is hard to keep sight of God in a storm.

Daniel found himself in a storm, but he found that in the midst of the storm there was grace to help in time of the day. And so that's something of the immediate context and you need to know that if you're going to make any sensible sense of what follows in the book of Daniel.

But if we were to leave it there, we would be doing the book of Daniel a profound injustice. Because alongside the immediate historical context, we need to understand where Daniel finds itself within the history of God's redemptive purposes in the world.

[7 : 21] What I mean is this. The book of Daniel is a microcosm of a faster macrocosm.

Let me explain that. In the book of Daniel we see truth and error. We see faith and unbelief.

We see the people of God and the people of this world. But that is simply a local, historical exhibition of something that has been going on from the dawn of time.

And so if we're going to make true, biblical sense of Daniel, we need to go back to the book of Genesis. And in particular, Genesis chapter 3, verse 15, one of the great verses of scripture that programize for us all that is yet to have come in the history of God's redemptive purposes in the world.

You remember how God, the Lord, addresses Satan who has deceived Adam and Eve and in them brought the cosmos down from the heights to which God had raised it.

[8 : 47] And you remember how God addresses the serpent and says, I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed. He will bruise your head and you will bruise or strike at his heel.

And it seems to me that in that programmatic verse, God is setting before us the great reality that runs as a fault line through the whole of the Bible and through the whole of redemptive history.

I will put enmity, says God, between you and the woman, between your seed, Satan, and her seed. And her seed, of course, ultimately is the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

He will bruise your head. He will ultimately triumph and prevail. And all you will be able to do is strike at his heel, but he will gain the ascendancy.

He will overcome. He will triumph. And in that significant programmatic verse, God is announcing the great reality that runs as a fault line through the whole of human history.

[10 : 03] And that fault line is a division between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. this is the reality that Daniel in a microcosmic way, in an historical way, exemplifies for us.

This isn't simply a little local difficulty that Daniel finds himself in. He is being caught up in something cosmic.

And it is the cosmic battle between light and darkness. Between the people of God and the people of the devil.

It's been well put that the Bible as a whole is really a library of military history. That's what the Bible is. It is exhibiting for us in a multitude of ways, in multivalent ways, the great conflict between God the Lord and Satan, the creaturely pretender.

Between the church of God and the people of this passing fallen world. And what we see then in the book of Daniel is an exhibition of that cosmic battle that is going on.

[11 : 30] But what we need to understand lest we misunderstand the significance of Genesis 3.15 is that this fault line, this radical division between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent is not to be understood as a radical division between the visible church on the one hand and the world outside the church on the other.

Because this conflict between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, between the church of God in Jesus Christ and the world, is a conflict that can be found within the visible church.

I think it was Thomas Chalmers, I'm not certain, but I think it was Thomas Chalmers shortly prior to the destruction in 1843, who said in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, in this church there is one Bible, one confession of faith, but two religions.

I discovered that very strikingly when I went to my first charge in E. Mills and Ayrshire. I found that my great controversy was not with the world outside Loudoun Church of Scotland, it was with the world inside Loudoun Church of Scotland.

Now of course in the book of Daniel, the demarcation seems very clear and very obvious, and of course it is. But it is not always as clear and obvious as you see in the book of Daniel.

[13 : 17] Think of how it was with our Lord Jesus Christ, who were the great protagonists, the great antagonists of our Lord Jesus Christ, who opposed him, who hated him, who pursued him, who plotted against him.

It was the religious authorities, it was the Pharisees, the impeccably orthodox of the day. But they had sucked the marrow of grace out of the religion of God.

And what they had was a form of godliness that denied the power. They were the children of the serpent. And so when I say we need to see the conflict in the book of Daniel in the wider context of Holy Scripture, we must ever remember that this elemental conflict between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent is a conflict that can find its way into the church of Jesus Christ.

And none of us should think that we are beyond that conflict coming into our churches. Watch and pray, our Lord Jesus said, lest ye enter into temptation.

And so with that introduction, I want to look with you at this opening chapter. It's the year 605 BC and the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, king of Babylon, king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem, and beseeched it.

[14 : 59] He comes and he carries off the cream of the nobility and the offspring of royalty and takes them off to Babylon.

And God willing, tomorrow we will look in some more detail at this chapter. But what I want to notice with you this evening is the threefold refrain that runs throughout this chapter.

And it seems to me to set before us the great themes that will thereafter dominate the book of Daniel.

You find this triad in verse 2, again in verse 9, and then thirdly in verse 17, verse 2, and the Lord gave Jehoiakim, king of Judah, into his, that is Nebuchadnezzar's hand, the Lord gave Jehoiakim into his hand.

Verse 9, now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs. And I think actually the Hebrews should read that God gave Daniel favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.

[16 : 23] So the Lord gave Jehoiakim into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar. Secondly, verse 9, God gave Daniel favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.

And then in verse 17, and as for these four children, four youths actually, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom.

Do you see the triad of God, verse 2, the Lord gave, verse 9, the Lord gave Daniel favour and verse 17, the Lord gave them knowledge and skills.

So what is Daniel telling us as he skillfully, in a very skillfully, literate way, draws our attention to this triad?

What he's telling us, obviously, first and foremost, that God, not Daniel, is the great subject of the book of Daniel. He's right at the outset, setting before us the Lord as the prime mover.

[17 : 33] You know, one of the great dangers we have in reading the Bible is that we come to the Bible often times, first of all, looking to find ourselves.

Looking to find help and comfort and encouragement and strength. Now, you say, well, what's wrong with that? Well, in one sense, of course, nothing, but it's putting the cart before the horse.

We come to Scripture to find God. And in finding Him, we find ourselves. We discover that in Him are all the resources that we need.

I find this in pastoral life. People will come seeking guidance and wisdom and help and encouragement and I need it myself.

God, and the first thing you say is, well, do you know that all that we need is found in Jesus Christ? That in Him, in Him, God has deposited all the resources of His grace that we need for living a godly and a holy life?

[18 : 42] we need to come to Scripture, first of all, to find God, to meet with God, not with ourselves. And so clearly in this opening chapter and in this highly literate way, Daniel is saying to us, I am not the subject of this book.

It is God the Lord who is the one who dominates the horizon of all that follows. And that is very clear, I think, and very general and very obvious.

But I want to look at these three statements, each in turn, and see what Daniel wants us to understand by him. First of all, in verse 2, And the Lord gave Jehoiachin, king of Judah, into Nebuchadnezzar's hand.

Now, tomorrow morning, God willing, we will look a little more at the circumstances that brought this to pass, Israel's wickedness and waywardness and disobedience.

But the great note, do you see, that's being sundered right at the outset of this book, as tragedy has fallen upon Israel, as the unthinkable has happened, as the bottom has fallen out of Israel's world, and it's being carried off from the land of promise, the land that seemed to hold all of the promises of God in its bosom.

[20 : 12] What are we being told? It's the Lord who's behind it all. It is the Lord who is sovereignly overruling and overseeing. It is God, not Nebuchadnezzar, not the superpower of Babylon.

It's God, the Lord, Israel's God, Yahweh, the covenant God. He is the one who is engineering the events, who is overseeing and overruling.

He gave Jehoiakim into Nebuchadnezzar's hand. Now Nebuchadnezzar would have been preening himself. They are the new superpower in the world.

And they had might, and they had power, and they had strength. Look what we can do. And Daniel is announcing right at the outset, Nebuchadnezzar could do nothing.

Outside of the sovereign purposes of God, at bottom, it is the Lord who is dominating, directing, and engineering the events.

[21 : 22] It is God who has given over his people, because of their sin and waywardness, into the hands of this pagan king.

and right at the outset of the book, Daniel is placarding for us the unimpeachable sovereignty of God.

He is reminding us that the turbulences of this world, turbulences that can come and bring such confusion and at times devastation to the church of God, are turbulences that are directed by the law of God Almighty himself.

He is no passive bystander. He is not standing on the wings, watching as events unfold. He is masterfully directing the affairs of men, governing in the accordance of his own will and purpose.

and of course for Daniel, during his time in Babylon, was this not one of the great comforts that undergirded his soul?

[22 : 35] He has been carried off and captured. What is happening? How weak and pathetic and beleaguered the church of the living God must have seen in the world as the nations looked on and saw this little Israel that boasted so gloriously in their God?

And look at them now. Daniel anchors his soul and draws comfort from this.

The Lord gave Jehoiachin into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. All that is happening to us is happening in accordance with the wise and the holy and the just and the good decrees of our covenant king.

His ways are not our ways. They are higher than our ways. But he does as he pleases. It is a great sadness as it not that the doctrine of the sovereignty of God, the unabridged, unimpeachable sovereignty of God is a doctrine that has caused such division in the Christian church when God reveals it to us not to perplex us or puzzle us or cast us down but to encourage us.

It is a pillow to lie on, not a puzzle to solve. It is a glorious thing is it not to know that we live in a world with all its convulsions and that all of those convulsions are superintended, engineered, directed according to the wise, holy, righteous, perfect counsel of him who is our father in Jesus Christ.

[24 : 33] Isn't that how our Lord Jesus Christ lived his life? It seems to me that Daniel in many regards is a template, an earthly, sinful, analogical template of the man of faith, Jesus Christ.

Remember how Jesus stood before Pilate and Pilate said to him, do you not realize I have power? I have power to release you or crucify you? Jesus said, you would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above.

Where did our Lord draw succor and sustenance and comfort in his hour of trial, in the wise, holy, gracious, if in his humanity to him at that moment, unfathomable purposes of his heavenly father.

So right, this note's been struck and this note will run like a golden thread throughout the whole of the book of Daniel, the Lord God Almighty reigns.

Is it not a great thing in our individual and familial and congregational lives to know that? As we often find ourselves perplexed and bewildered even, confused, as things happen that we didn't expect and we wonder, Lord, how are we to proceed?

[26 : 11] What we need to do is pause and to cast ourselves afresh on the gracious, blessed sovereignty of our Father in Heaven, whose ways are higher than our ways.

And to allow that knowledge that the one who governs the cosmos and who rides on the heavens to the help of his people, is the God who directs and determines for his glory and listen to this, for his glory and for the ultimate blessings of his people, all things.

And then secondly, in verse 9, we have a second gave. The authorised version reads, now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love.

But I think it's a little better to read, now God gave Daniel favour and tender love with the prince of the universe. Now it's clear, I think, in this triad of gays that Daniel is signalling something to us.

Initially he's signalling the cosmic lordship of the Lord. But now he's showing us or highlighting to us that this cosmic lordship of the Lord is at work in individual circumstances and situations.

[27 : 46] God gave Daniel favour and tender love with the prince of the universe. God has heard us and it seems to me that this little phrase is intended to impress upon us that in our individual lives as Christian believers, if we are Christian believers, God no less superintends our ways and directs our paths.

God had purpose to elevate Daniel and to bring him into significance in Babylon and beyond Babylon. How was God going to do it? How was God going to realise his purpose to bring this captive from Judah into the prominence whereby he would influence nations?

God gave Daniel favour and tender love with the prince of the universe.

God wonderfully if mysteriously engineered the particular individual events of Daniel's own life to propel him into the way that the Lord God had ordained for him.

And it's a wonderful comfort to know that as the Lord calls his people into particular avenues of service, that he is able to engineer our situations and circumstances to the fulfilling of his purposes for us in those avenues of service.

[29 : 39] Perhaps humanly speaking it didn't seem possible that Daniel could find favour and tender love. The language is rich and it's almost extreme.

You think, how is this going to happen? How is it going to happen? God will do it. We've been told, God gave Daniel favour.

It wasn't that in himself, Daniel had rich resources that were so compelling that this prince of the eunuchs could only but be drawn to Daniel.

No, the Lord gave. You see, at the root of all of God's dealings with his people is the overflow of his grace.

God gives. We receive. That's why he gets all the glory. From him, through him, and to him are all things.

[30 : 43] To him be the glory. What do you have that you did not first receive? And if you've received it, why do you boast? you could almost miss this as you read through the narrative.

But I think Daniel is telling us something significant here. He's saying, God's use of me in the work of his kingdom was not because there were things needed in me that brought me to his attention.

All that I have, I have from him. Maybe you find yourselves in circumstances where you're wondering, how can I make an impact for my Lord Jesus Christ in my school classroom, in my office, in the factory, with my neighbor?

how can I, how can I? We need to pray, Lord, give me favor in their eyes. I was led to Christ by a boy at school, really, who was as different from me as chocolate is from Jesus.

I was in the academic stream, he wasn't. I was into sport, he wasn't. I was into girls, he couldn't care less. He was into music, didn't bother too much with me. We were so different.

[32 : 20] But the Lord gave him favor in my eyes. There was something about him that drew me to him. And you know what's interesting?

I remember years later talking to him and I said, you know, Albert, I don't ever remember you witnessing to me.

I just remember the attractiveness of your wife. And he said, Ian, I was always witnessing to you. I didn't remember that, but the Lord gave him favor in my eyes.

Maybe you're thinking, well, you know, there's nothing special about me. Well, I probably think Daniel would have said the same. that the Lord gave him favor and tender love with the Prince of Eurus.

And wasn't that how it was with the Lord Jesus Christ? He had no beauty, no comeliness that we should desire him, we're told in Isaiah 53.

[33 : 32] Well, how is it that some people were drawn to him? The Lord gave him favor in their eyes. the Lord was behind us.

The Samaritan woman, Nicodemus, the man born blind, the Lord gave Christ favor in their eyes. Daniel is underlining to us here once again, that the one who dominates the horizon of this because not Daniel, but Daniel's God.

And the third note that Daniel strikes is in verse 17. This is very striking for the whole of the book. As for these four children, these four youths, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

God had destined these young men, and Daniel in particular it was seen, for significant service. And God would provide them with all that they needed. They would lack nothing.

He would give them all that would be needed. My God will supply all your needs according to his riches and glory in Christ Jesus. services. And these young men found that as their calling was, so their graces and gifts were.

[35 : 13] When God calls a man or a woman into his service, he supplies them with all that they need. He gives them the grace that they need.

He supplies the gifts that they need. And this is wonderfully encouraging. Perhaps some of you young people here tonight, you're beginning to think in the mercy of God about serving the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And you look at yourself and you think, I've got nothing to give. You're the very man, the very woman, the very boy or girl that God can use.

That's where God starts. We come with empty hands, Lord, I have a heart to serve you, but Lord, I've got nothing to give you. The great Augustine put it beautifully, he said, Lord, give to me that I may give to others.

And wasn't that how it was in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ? As he was destined in the covenant of redemption to be the saviour of the world and the redeemer of the people of God, God, didn't the Father say to the Son, behold my servant, behold my servant, my chosen one in whom my soul delights, I will put my spirit upon you.

[36 : 47] And the Lord gave to him the spirit of wisdom and revelation, the spirit of knowledge, the spirit of the fear of the Lord, etc. the Lord equipped his son, provided his son with all that was needful for the task that he had commissioned his son to do.

He gave him his spirit. It's a glorious thing to think that in that heavenly covenant of redemption, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit together for what the one does, the others do, together in holy concert, the covenant to save a people.

The Father, as it were, sanctifies the son to that end and promises to give the son all that he will need of the spirit. And Jesus Christ is the great exemplar of the spirit-filled life.

He's the prototypical spiritual man. And what the spirit first produced in Christ, he comes to reproduce in the people of Christ. God gives us all that we need so that we might serve him and that we might fulfill our calling to be his people wherever he has placed us or sent us in this life.

But you know, I think there is a connection here between the third of these gates in verse 17 and what we read earlier. It seems to me somewhat significant in the flow of the narrative that the Lord gives to these four youths knowledge, skill, learning, wisdom, etc.

[38 : 34] that he gives them that after they have resolved in their hearts and taken a stand. Not that there's some kind of quid pro quo, you do your bit and I'll do my bit.

No, not that at all. But as the Lord sees their faithfulness, he comes now to honour their faithfulness. I often think that the Christian life is at heart an exceedingly simple life.

I don't mean an easy life, because it's not an easy life, is it? But you know, at heart it is exceedingly simple. If you love me, keep my commandments.

God loves to bless a faithful, obedient, believing people. And God provides these young men, 14 years of age probably, that's when the Babylonians began their indoctrination of young men for a life of usefulness in their civil service.

Here they are at 14, barely out of adolescence. And they're standing for God and for truth in the midst of a godless and pagan society.

[39 : 58] And God comes to them and gives to them knowledge, skill and all learning and wisdom that they might, as faithful men, young men become faithful older men, and like Daniel, faithful old men.

men. But how does God give his people the graces and the gifts that they need?

Well, he could give them spontaneously, couldn't he, immediately? He could simply zap understanding and knowledge and wisdom into our minds and hearts, but he doesn't.

How did he do it with the man of faith, Jesus Christ? He learned obedience by the things he suffered.

He grew in wisdom. God is pleased to grant us, to give us all that we need to serve him in this fallen sinful world, in the midst of daily faithful obedience.

[41 : 18] There are no shortcuts to usefulness in the kingdom of God. There are no shortcuts. There are no shortcuts to becoming the kind of young men and women and older men and women who can make a stand for God in this world.

There are no shortcuts to having the gifts and the qualities and the graces that we need. It wasn't so for the Son of God.

He learned obedience to the things that he suffered. God. I always find those words in the 190th psalm wryly amusing in one sense and I'll explain.

I have more understanding than all my teachers for I obey your precepts. And earlier in that psalm he talks about how through his sufferings God granted him understanding.

You see when I was studying theology and I would guess it would be the same in many semis. We're told about the principles of interpretation, how to rightly understand the word of God but no one ever told me that I would better understand the word of God as I gave myself to obedience.

[42 : 37] I'm more understanding than all my teachers for I obey the precepts. No one told me that suffering was one of the means that God uses to bring his people into a deeper understanding of his ways for that is wisdom.

So what is Daniel telling us then in this opening chapter? He's saying behold your God, he is the sovereign Lord of the heavens and the earth. Behold your God, he will smooth your way, he will open up the way that he would have you go for him.

Be of good cheer. He can overcome every obstacle, every barrier. He can give you favor where you would least expect it. And behold your God, he provides and supplies all that his children need that they might serve him resolutely, faithfully, faithfully, unyieldingly in a dying and dark world.

But let me ask you this just as I close. Let me ask you this. I said at the outset that this is all to do ultimately with this cosmic battle between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent.

This is the reality we engage with here in point towards the end of 2010. The same reality Daniel engaged with in the year 605 BC.

[44 : 24] So let me ask you as I close. What side of this conflict are you on? This is a conflict that doesn't simply run through the length and bread through the world with the church on one side and the world on the other.

It runs through families. It runs through congregations. It runs through communities. Yes, it runs through nations. There is an elemental conflict.

And one day God will bring that conflict to an end with the coming and glory of the Son Jesus Christ. He will return in power and great glory.

He will say to those in his right hand come you who are blessed of my Father into the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world. And he will say to those in his left hand depart from me.

Depart from me you curse. You children of the serpent depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. This is a great conflict and God willing we'll see tomorrow morning that there was a young lad of 14 or thereabouts who said whatever anyone else is going to do I am resolved to stand for my God and for the truth of my God though it costs me everything.

[46 : 02] That's the mark of a man who belongs to the seed of the Lord who sees that faithfulness to God in Jesus Christ is more to be prized than anything else.

May God help us to be like Daniel. Let us pray. Our God and Father we bless your holy name that you have given us in the book of Daniel a glorious illustration of faithfulness of a young lad who was resolute in his heart to stand and having done all to continue standing.

But we thank you even more for our Lord Jesus Christ who is obedient unto death even the death of a cross. And you have therefore highly exalted him and given him the name which is above every other name.

And Lord we come to you praying that you will have mercy upon us. Forgive us Lord that we often times forget how gloriously sovereign you are.

Forgive us Lord when we forget that you are the God who can do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask and imagine. Forgive us Lord that we forget that your blessings ordinarily come to those who walk in the way of your righteousness who seek in all things your glory and who make your commandments their happy choice.

[47 : 55] Lord remember us for good we pray. Look upon us Lord in great mercy. And we pray Father that on your day our hearts might rise to your praise.

That we might in a new way discover the joy of the Lord and the blessing of singing your praises and hearing your word.

Lord hear us we pray. Be glorified in all the earth. We ask it through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Amen. Our concluding praises from Psalm 96 and we sing verses 10 to 13.

Psalm 96 at verse 10. Among the heathen say God reigns the world shall steadfastly be fixed from the living.

[49 : 00] He shall judge the people righteously. let heaven be glad before the Lord and let the earth rejoice. Let seas and all that is fed in cry out and make a noise.

Psalm 96 at verse 10. God speaks. Now all the heavens say God reigns the world shall steadfastly be fixed from morning he shall judge people righteously.

let hence be glad before the Lord and let the earth rejoice that season all that reason spring King of all the earth, then wolves on every tree shall sing with madness and with birth.

Before the Lord, because He comes to judge the earth of seed, He'll judge the world with righteousness, the people they call me.

Now let me just once again encourage us, many of you as can, to join with us for some fellowship after the service. It's good to see people from other congregations with us and we trust that God will continue to bless these messages.

[52 : 03] And after the benediction, if you'll just allow us to humble upon ourselves and to go to visit. Now may grace, mercy and peace from God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit rest upon and remain with us all.

Amen.