

A Time For Everything

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Date: 12 November 2023

[0 : 00] We're going to begin our worship by singing to God's praise in Psalm 46 in the Scottish Psalter.

Psalm 46 in the Scottish Psalter, page 271 of the psalm book. We're going to sing from verse 1 down to verse 7.

Psalm 46, page 271. God is our refuge and our strength in straits a present deed. Therefore, although the earth remove, we will not be afraid.

Though hills amidst the seas be cast, the waters roaring make and troubled be. Yea, though the hills by swelling seas do shake. We'll sing verse 1 to 7 to God's praise and we stand to sing.

Amen. God is our refuge and our strength in straits a present day.

[1 : 10] Therefore, although the earth remove, we will not be afraid.

Though hills amidst the seas be cast, though waters roaring make and troubled be.

In all the hills by swelling seas do shake.

A river is whose streams to glad the city of our God.

God is our refuge and our strength in the city of God.

[2 : 50] God is our refuge and our strength in the city of God.

God is our refuge and our strength in the city of God.

God is our refuge and our strength in the city of God. The Lord of hosts upon our side doth constantly remain.

God is our strength in the city of our breve, Amen. The Holy God of hosts upon our prime Our gracious Father in heaven, we thank you for the privilege that is in coming to worship you today on such a glorious day, a beautiful day.

Outside, we pray to know the blessing of your peace inside here as well, that you will be with us, Lord, and with all who gather to worship you this day. We thank you that together we come to look to you and to praise your name, even as we have sung, that you are our refuge and our strength, our help in times of trouble.

[5 : 07] And today, as we remember, Lord, so much that goes on in our world and has gone on in the past, especially on this Remembrance Sunday, we thank you for the freedom we enjoy, especially for those who gave their lives that we might have that freedom.

And we pray that from the youngest to the oldest here, we will have a great sense of thankfulness for all that we have, all that is from your hand. And we pray today, Lord, that we will be still before you and just know that you are with us.

So bless us, we pray, Lord. Look down upon us. Bless the young ones as they will go through to the Sunday school in a few moments. Lord, be with them there and watch over us all as a people here, pardoning all our sins as we ask it all in Jesus' name.

Amen. Boys and girls, before you go through to the hall for Sunday school classes, I just want to say a few words to you. Today is Remembrance Sunday and yesterday was Remembrance Day, the 11th of November.

It was a significant date in our calendar because we look back over a number of years and to this day and we remember those who have given such a great sacrifice for our freedom.

[6 : 25] Many lost their lives in conflict in the past and today we remember too that around the world there are many conflicts going on. And we do look to God to help in these times and that he might give us peace.

But there's something that we see at this time that reminds us just to pause for a few moments in remembrance. And that is the poppy.

You'll see it, people wearing it today and you'll see it in different places. I'm sure you've seen it during this week. The poppy is seen at this time and it just reminds us of people who have given their lives.

I wanted to show you a poppy that was made for the church here. It was by someone who comes to the Friday at the Free. And a few weeks ago they gave us this.

And it's a number of poppies that have been knitted and then sewn together to make one big wreath. And then in the middle, maybe you can't see it, but this black strip has words on it that says, Lest we forget.

[7 : 33] We are to remember what many people did for us in the past. And that is really what the poppy is about. It's a reminder for us. It was first used in 1921.

Not long after the end of the First World War. And the poppy was significant because after the war ended, there was a number of fields, especially in France, where so much devastation was left.

It was just a place of mud. And they were thinking, could anything grow here once again after all these years of war? And the first thing that started to grow on the ground was the poppy.

And some of the fields ended up just full of poppies, red in color. And it's a powerful reminder to us, especially when you even think of the color red, when you think of sacrifices made, number of people who died in conflicts over many years.

And somebody said at the end of the First World War, when you go home, tell them of us and say, for your tomorrow, we give our today.

[8 : 46] And again, it's just a powerful reminder to us of the sacrifice that was made for us to enjoy freedom, to be able to come to church, to be able to live our lives, to be able to go to Sunday school, to enjoy our freedom.

But our greatest reminder today of our freedom is that another one gave his life, the Lord Jesus Christ. Our freedom from sin came at a price.

And again, the color red reminds us of that, that Jesus shed his blood on the cross, that we might have freedom from our sins.

So today, we do remember those who gave their lives and continue to give life for our freedom. But above all, we remember the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for our peace and for our salvation and our security, that through him we might have life and life eternal.

So may God bless us today as a people and as a nation and indeed as a world as we think of these things and pray for God's peace and presence for all his people.

[10 : 04] Well, we'll say the Lord's Prayer together now. Let's say the Lord's Prayer. Amen.

Well, there's again, sing to God's praise. This time we're singing in Psalm 139a. This is in the Sing Psalms version. Psalm 139a.

And we're going to sing from verse 13 down to verse 18. This is on page 181 of the psalm book. Psalm 139a and at verse 13.

A reminder to us that the Lord knows all about us and all his people. For you, O Lord, created me. You wove me on your loom. My inmost being you have formed within my mother's womb.

Because I'm wonderfully made, with all your praise I'll tell. Your workmanship is marvelous. And this I know full well. We'll sing from verse 13 to 18 to God's praise.

[11 : 29] For you, O Lord, created me.

You hold me on your loom. My inmost being you have formed within my mother's womb.

Because I'm wonderfully made, with all your praise I tell.

Your workmanship is marvelous. And this I know full well.

When in the secret place my frame was made before my birth.

[13 : 01] You saw my body yet conformed within the depths of earth.

And all the days that I should live, which you ordained for me, Were written in your book, O Lord, before they came to me.

O God, how precious are your thoughts.

I scarred them from afar. And as I seek to grasp them all, How numberless they are.

Were I to count them they would be, More than the grains of sand.

[14 : 48] When I awake, I am with you. Still safe within your hands.

Amen. Well, we'll turn together to read in God's word now in the Old Testament in the book of Ecclesiastes.

And we're reading in chapter 3. Ecclesiastes chapter 3. You know, the book of Psalms and Proverbs and then Ecclesiastes.

Ecclesiastes chapter 3. And we can read the whole of this chapter together. For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven.

A time to be born and a time to die. A time to plant and a time to pluck up what is planted. A time to kill and a time to heal. A time to break down and a time to build up.

[15 : 58] A time to weep and a time to laugh. A time to mourn and a time to dance. A time to cast away stones and a time to gather stones together.

A time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing. A time to seek and a time to lose. A time to keep and a time to cast away.

A time to tear and a time to sow. A time to keep silence and a time to speak. A time to love and a time to hate.

A time for war and a time for peace. What gain has the worker from his toil? I have seen the business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with.

He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also he has put enmity into eternity into man's heart. Yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

[17 : 00] I perceive that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live. Also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil.

This is God's gift to man. I perceive that whatever God does endures forever. Nothing can be added to it. Not anything taken from it. God has done it so that people fear before him.

That which is already has been. That which is to be already has been. And God seeks what has been driven away.

Moreover I saw under the sun that in the place of justice even there was wickedness. And in the place of righteousness even there was wickedness. I said in my heart God will judge the righteous and the wicked.

For there is a time for every matter and for every work. I said in my heart with regard to the children of man that God is testing them that they may see that they themselves are but beasts.

[18 : 07] For what happens to the children of man and what happens to the beasts is the same. As one dies so dies the other. They all have the same breath and man has no advantage over the beasts.

For all is vanity. All go to one place. All are from the dust and to dust all return. Who knows whether the spirit of man goes upwards and the spirit of the beast goes down into the earth.

So I saw there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his work. For that is his lot. Who can bring him to see what will be after him.

Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word. Let's again just bow our heads in a word of prayer. Let us pray. Lord our gracious God as we continue in your presence today.

We thank you that your promise is of your presence with your people. We have such great promises in your word that never will you leave us. Never will you forsake us.

[19 : 09] We have sung of these promises in Psalm 46 that God is our refuge and our strength. And all of these things remind us that we need you.

And where would we be without you? And even in times of trouble and conflict as we remember today. We thank you that you are the God of heaven and earth.

That you are the God who is sovereign over all things. That you are the one who rules on high and has plans and purposes even that we cannot comprehend at times.

We cannot see or understand. And yet we look to your word and we thank you that you remind us through it. That as we look to the things in this world from our own perspective that we seek, where we seek understanding we cannot find it.

But yet when we look above, when we look to you as God of heaven and earth, that you are able to help us. That you are able to give us a peace in the midst of trouble.

[20 : 11] A peace that passes all understanding. For your word is a word of life. You have made us for a purpose, Lord. You have formed us. You have marked our days.

And we pray, Lord, that you will help us even as we live and breathe in this earth. That we would seek to do all for your glory. That we would seek to draw near to you and come and offer up worship and praise to you.

That even today as you remind us through your word of a time for everything. That you will help us, Lord, to seek understanding and wisdom. Not in our own selves or in anything of this world.

But in you. That your spirit will minister to us and help us to have understanding. And we do pray today, Lord, for our world. And we pray, O Lord, in the midst of a day of remembrance.

That you will hear your praying people. That you will look down upon us and hear a people who cry. A people who weep. A people who mourn. And we pray, Lord, that you will come in your power. [21 : 19] That you will come to bring peace and to bring comfort. In the midst of such devastating situations. We do pray, Lord, that you will remember us as a people.

Even as you have done in the past. When you have brought times of conflict to an end as we remember today. We give thanks, O Lord, for the many occasions that you have brought nations and people.

Through such difficult days. Such dark days. But you are a God who has been able to bring peace when it seemed impossible. And even today, as we think of things that are impossible for ourselves. We thank you that all things are possible with you. And so, Lord, hear our prayers. Hear us, Lord, and look down upon us. And do us good, we ask. And we thank you that today is a day to rejoice. Today is a day when we are reminded of your great power. A power that is life and resurrection. That on this first day of the week we come to worship you as our Lord and as our God.

[22 : 26] Thankful for your Son, Christ Jesus. Who you sent into this world. That he would lay down his life for his people. And that he would take it up again.

And that he would ascend on high. And that there is a promise that he will come again. That he will come, O Lord, to fulfill all scripture.

That he will come to fulfill all promises of peace and life and life eternal. That he will come to bring his people together with him.

To wipe away all the tears. And to fill our mouths with joy and singing and gladness. And we thank you for the promise of hope that is in your word.

And we pray today that as your word is preached and proclaimed. Far and wide. That people will have ears to hear. And that your spirit will work in power among us.

[23 : 23] As a people here and throughout our nation and throughout the world. That your word will bear much fruit. And we do thank you, Lord, that in all our different needs. Our needs are there many.

That we can come to you in prayer. You are the one who hears. And you are the only one who can help. In so many different situations we find ourselves. We think of those who are mourning and grieving at this time.

And we commit them to you, O Lord. We ask your blessing, your comfort, your help towards them. We think of those who are unwell in hospital or homes.

Or at home, their own homes. Lord, we pray for your help towards them. It may not be that healing will come. But we pray, Lord, for your healing of the soul.

For you to bless as only you can. To give hope in the midst of such uncertain times. We pray for our people as a whole throughout our communities, Lord.

[24 : 25] That you will look down upon us. That you will bless us, Lord. That you will work in our midst. Bringing young and old. Boys and girls. Men and women.

To profess Christ Jesus as Lord. Again, O Lord, we pray that you will revive our hearts. That you will stir us up, O Lord. That you will hear our prayers.

And so we thank you, Lord, that you are the God who is with us. That you have not abandoned us. That even in moments of silence, Lord, you speak to us.

For there is power even in silence. But we thank you, Lord, that you have spoken from the very beginning. That you created all things by the word of your power.

And we thank you, too, that you have spoken to us and speak to us even now. Through your son, Christ Jesus. And we pray that as we hear your word even now.

[25 : 20] That you will speak to us all. That you will help us to hear. And repent and turn to you. And so we ask all these things acknowledging our sins.

We know, Lord, how far short we fall. And we seek forgiveness for all our sins. We sin daily in thought, word, and indeed in action as your word says.

And we just ask your forgiveness, Lord, that you will restore us. And that you will bless us. So be with us now and continue to go before us throughout this day. And throughout the days ahead, according to your will.

That you will direct us in your paths. And hear our prayers. And all we ask, we ask in Jesus' precious name. Amen. Let's again sing to God's praise.

Before we turn back to our reading in Ecclesiastes. We're singing in Psalm 76. In the Sing Psalms version, Psalm 76. Page 99 of the Psalm book.

[26 : 22] We can sing from verse 1 down to verse 9. Psalm 76 from verse 1 down to verse 9.

In Judah's land, God's name is known. In Israel, he is great. In Salem, he has pitched his tent. His home in Zion set.

He broke the fire. He broke the fire. He arrows there. The military might of those who with their swords and shields against us came to fight. We'll sing Psalm 76 verse 1 down to verse 9.

Psalm 76. In Judah's land, God's name is known. In Israel, he is great. In Salem, he has pitched his tent. His home in Zion set. He broke the fire. He has pitched his tent.

In Israel, he is great. He broke the fire. In Israel, he is great. In Israel, he is great. In Salem, he has pitched his tent. Salem, he has pitched his tent, his home in Zion set.

[27 : 35] He broke the fiery arrows there, the military might of those who with their swords and shields against us came to fight.

Your splendor is more glorious on hillsides rich with praise.

Brave men were stripped of hope, their spirit asleep in death they lay.

Not one of those great warriors could lift his hands to kill.

At your rebuke, O Jacob's God, ride there and heart lay still.

[29 : 01] For you alone are to be feared before you who can stand.

Who can injure your anger, Lord, the judgments you command.

From heaven your verdict was thrown out, and was hashed in awe.

When you arose to save the poor and vindicate your law.

Amen. Well, let's turn back to our reading in Ecclesiastes chapter 3.

[30 : 15] Ecclesiastes chapter 3, and it speaks here about a time for everything and how our times are in the hands of God. For everything there is a season and a time.

For every matter under heaven, a time to be born and a time to die. And so it goes on down to verse 8 where it speaks of a time to love and a time to hate.

A time for war and a time for peace. Newspaper headlines today are designed to catch your attention.

So as you're looking online or as you're looking in the shops, you'll see the front pages. And you'll be drawn to them by a headline that stands out.

And in order to do this nowadays, sometimes maybe truth is stretched. Or even at times maybe a downright lie is told in order to draw attention towards that.

[31 : 14] But there are times, however, when front page headlines do shock. And they shock us to the point where we maybe hope that it is a lie.

That it is not true. The headlines in newspapers at times of war are often such a time. A time when we hope this headline may not be true.

May the suffering that we're seeing not actually be happening. And today as we come on a day of remembrance, when we remember the sacrifices that have been made for us as a people, as we remember those who lost their lives and conflicts passed, and to this day who put their lives on the line so that we might enjoy peace.

Our thoughts go back. We reflect looking back perhaps over many years. And when you look at newspaper headlines over the years, there have been times when they have shocked this nation's and many nations in the world.

For example, the newspaper headline on the 5th of August 1914 was Great Britain at war with Germany. Germany. From that date until the end of the First World War, four years later, the suffering was immense and there was a horrendous loss of life that ensued.

[32 : 49] But then, just a few years later, 25 years later, on the 3rd of September 1939, the newspaper headline once again had these same words on the front.

Great Britain at war with Germany. And another conflict ensued over a long period of time, and again, many lives were lost.

And these are headlines that our nation has seen at different times. In 1982 with the Falklands War, in 2003, and 2014 with the Gulf War.

And they are headlines that we see in our news in this past year, and even in these days in which we live. These things cause us to pause.

And as we think of these things today, the Word of God speaks to us. It speaks into our situation today, as it always does, that even into the darkest of times, God's Word is able to give light, to give direction, and to give hope.

[34 : 05] And to give us a hope of a better future. To give us hope of a peaceful end. And above all, to give us hope for eternity.

The Word here in Ecclesiastes, as we're going to look at, reminds us of the realities and the truths of life. Things that we often cannot understand.

Things that we maybe see no reason for, and just don't have the answer to. God's Word helps us. Helps us in some measure to see that He has a plan and a purpose in all things.

And the opening words of Ecclesiastes, if you go back to chapter 1, they're a little like a newspaper headline that's there to shock us as well, when it says in verse 1, the words of the preacher, the son of David, king of Jerusalem.

Then verse 2, it just stands out to us. Vanity of vanities, says the preacher. Vanity of vanities. All is vanity. Another translation is meaningless, meaningless, all is meaningless.

[35 : 18] And surely you would expect something more from the Word of God than to say, meaningless, meaningless, all is meaningless. Well, there are two phrases that are used in these opening chapters of Ecclesiastes that help us to see a real contrast.

And one is, as it speaks here of under the sun, as it says in chapter 1, verse 3, what does man gain by all the toil at which he toils?

Under the sun. Under the sun is when we look at things in our own perspective, when we look at things, seeking to understand them by ourselves.

But then as you go into chapter 3, the first verse there says, for everything, there is a season, a time for every matter under heaven.

And there is the contrast for us. No longer are we looking at things under the sun, and seeking to look at things from our own perspective and our own understanding, but now we're beginning to see how the Lord gives us understanding and help, even to understand the difficult things in life.

[36 : 38] For everything, there is a season, there is a time, and a time for every matter under heaven. And this is under heaven, seeking to help us to understand things from God's perspective, to look to him in the things that we so often cannot understand, and to see that we can trust him.

So that is what we are looking at today. In chapter 3, we see that things under heaven, things that are in the light of God's providence and God's control, that everything that happens in our world, as it speaks here of a time for everything, a time to be born, a time to die, a time to love, a time to hate, a time for war, and a time for peace.

That we can see it as God is still in control, God is still sovereign, God is able to help. And so there's three things I want us to take from verse 1 to verse 15 in particular.

What we're looking at here is a time for everything. And that's our first thought, a time for everything. But the second thing slightly changes that it's everything in its time.

So we don't seek to rush things. Much as we would love things to change, that God has everything in its time. And then the third thing I want us to think about is a time to reflect, a time to think about these things.

[38 : 27] So first of all, we see a time for everything. The opening verses in chapter 3 remind us of the seasons of life that we go through.

Verse 2 through to verse 8, it just shows us the way our lives so often go. Although these words were written so long ago, they still speak to us.

Each of these phrases that you read, it still speaks to us to this very day. They're a reality of our lives in this world for every generation.

And the words open with the main events in our lives, a time to be born and a time to die. But then you'll go down to verse 8.

Everything else in between we have as well. But verse 8 ends with a time of war and a time for war and a time for peace.

[39 : 27] Now when we think of the wars we remember today and the lives that were lost, so many of them were just young men and young women.

And it's hard for us to understand. It's hard for us even as you go around cemeteries or you look at war memorials and you see every name inscribed there and you see their age beside it.

Some just teenagers are in their twenties. So many lost their lives so young. It's hard for us to understand. And if you think of our own contexts here in our islands, as you think of how many have gone away from our islands never to return.

It's hard for us to understand. Death is something that is always hard for us to understand no matter the context, no matter the situation.

And Ecclesiastes opens, as I've said, with the vanity of life as it seems when everything is meaningless, the futility of life when we give no thought to God.

[40 : 37] nothing makes sense. Nothing we can understand in this world at times. And if we look at life through our own wisdom, if we look at life seeking to find meaning by ourselves, where does it lead us to but so often just despair?

We just cannot understand. If you attempt to think of things apart from God, because we look at this world and we look at what has happened in our world in the past and we look at what's happening in our world today and there are so many, so many heartbreaking things that have happened and are happening and we struggle to have answers for them and it only leads us to grief and to despair.

There seems to be no meaning and no hope in it. and even as we come into chapter 3 and look at things as a matter under heaven, as we begin to see in the light of God's works of providence, as we begin to see that God is in control, still we can struggle to understand and that is where faith comes in, to believe in God and to trust him, to see that with him there is hope because God has appointed a season and a time for everything, for our lives and for the lives of all people.

Think of the words that we sang in Psalm 139. In verse 15 it says, you saw my body yet unformed within the depths of earth and all the days that I should live which you ordained for me were written in your book, O Lord, before they came to be.

You see there that God has everything in his hands. There is a time for everything. And so when it says there is a time to be born and a time to die, when it says there is a time for war and a time for peace, we see that some are born for a time of war, some are born for a time of peace, and some are born for both.

[43 : 08] Everyone's providence in life is different. And it can all seem meaningless, but here the only solution to meaningfulness in life is to see the sovereignty of God, that he is in control, that there is indeed a time for everything.

As I shared with the children before they went through, these words are often used at time of remembrance for our tomorrow. They gave their today a time for everything.

They sacrificed that we might have a freedom to live. We don't always understand this life, but God is in control.

The poem The Weaver's Shuttle speaks so powerfully into our sort of lack of understanding. As it says, not till the loom is silent and the shuttles cease to fly, shall God unroll the canvas and explain the reason why.

The dark threads are as needful in the weaver's skillful hand as the threads of gold and silver in the pattern he has planned.

[44 : 37] As we think of meaning that God gives to life, the things that we don't understand, ultimately it brings us to the cross and to see there even the darkest of days.

As there was darkness at midday as Jesus was crucified, nothing seemed to make sense even to God's people then, but God had a plan and a purpose.

He is the resurrection and the life. There is a time for everything. The second thing we see here is that everything is in its time.

Written 3,000 years ago, these words in Ecclesiastes still speak powerfully to us. What was happening then still happens to this day.

In chapter 1 verse 9 it says, there is nothing new under the sun. And even as we look in the world in which we live today, we say there is nothing new under the sun.

[45 : 47] As we think of man's inhumanity to man, there is nothing new under the sun. Still people live without any thought of God, just as they did in the days of the writer to the Ecclesiastes.

But when we see things as under God's sovereign rule, as under heaven, in light of who God is, God at work in every period of time, in every generation, moving things on by his will and his purpose, we see that he is in control.

In chapter 1 it speaks of the cycle of life almost in the sense of going round and round in a circle. When you look at verse 4 through to verse 9 of chapter 1, you can read it again in your own time, it says, a generation goes and a generation comes, but the earth remains forever.

And so it goes on to speak about our lives as almost this way the sun rises, the sun goes down and hastens to the place where it rises. There is this constant just going round and round in life.

It almost seems that there is no direction. But here in verse 11, we see that as we see things under heaven and in God's control, in chapter 3, verse 11, he says, he has made everything beautiful in its time.

[47 : 21] In its time. That God has time in his hands. That everything is in his time. His promise is that he will make everything beautiful in its time.

even the most difficult experiences of life. But it is in his appointed time. Things don't just happen. It isn't just a random sequence of events. We are looking at things here in light of God who has time and everything in his hands, who gives direction.

the Bible often speaks of things being at the right time. Romans 5, verse 6 says, for while we were still weak, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly.

We don't rush God. We don't make him move quicker even though we would want it at times, but at the right time. he will make things right.

[48 : 32] God is working. God will put things right. That is the promise of his word, even in times and situations that seem to make no sense to us.

There are numerous stories told of heroic actions during times of conflict. I'm sure you know many of them. One I have heard so often and recall so often is about a ship called the Jarvis Bay.

Back in 1940, in the early years of the Second World War, the Jarvis Bay was part of a convoy making its way across to the United Kingdom, across the Atlantic.

On the 5th of November 1940, they came under attack from a battleship called the Admiral Shear. convoy. The convoy was in great danger.

The battleship was too powerful for the convoy and one by one it was starting to take the ships out. But the Jarvis Bay, the captain of the Jarvis Bay, decided to take action and he turned the ship towards the battleship, the Admiral Shear.

[49 : 47] And although they only had small guns on board, they engaged in battle with this battleship, knowing it was hopeless, but hoping that it would give enough time for the convoy to get further ahead and further away.

And so it did. The convoy escaped, but it was at a great cost. The Jarvis Bay was sunk, and of the 255 on board, 187, were lost.

It was a great loss of life. They turned knowing it was futile, but in the hope of saving others. The reason I know this story so well is because I sailed on a ship in my own time at sea called the Jarvis Bay.

It was the third one to have been built. And on board was a memory towards the first Jarvis Bay, the story was told of the original Jarvis Bay that had made that sacrifice.

It was a powerful witness. Even though I wasn't a Christian at the time, it was a powerful witness. But there's nothing more powerful than the witness of the one who gave his life for us on the cross.

[51 : 10] But all of these things, they remind us of what it says here that the Lord has made everything beautiful in its time, but it says there in verse 11, he has put eternity into man's heart.

Eternity is before us all at such times as these. It's always before us. But on a day of remembrance, as we think of the lives given for our freedom, eternity becomes more powerful.

We all have eternity before us. And Thomas Watson, the Puritan, once said, eternity to the godly is a day that has no sunset, but eternity to the wicked is a night that has no sunrise.

And that is the difference. Eternity for the godly is a day that has no sunset. We will be in the light of the Lord for all eternity. But eternity to the wicked is a night that has no sunrise, no hope of light, darkness for all eternity.

The Lord has a time for everything and everything in its time. But where are we when we think of our freedom today, our freedom to worship, our freedom that is offered in Christ, the eternity before us.

[52 : 46] Where are we? The third thing we see here is a time to reflect. It's a time to pause and remember and it's a time to reflect for ourselves.

As we have stopped in silence for a moment today as we come under the word for a time, it brings to mind things that we can so easily forget.

We don't want to go away from here and just forget all that's been done for us. We don't want to go away from here today and forget all that the word of God is saying to us.

That there is a time for everything. That everything is in its time. God has put eternity into our hearts so we might reflect on these things. We don't forget our past, but let's not forget our future either.

We may not understand his time and his purpose as always. There are many things we can struggle to understand, but we remember that we will step out of time and into eternity.

[54 : 08] And what we do with our time now is what matters. There are times of war in this world. We are seeing such days in other parts of the world even today.

But we remember as the word says there is a time for peace. peace. And that is what we pray for today.

Peace. Peace from war. Peace from conflict. But above all, peace in Christ.

That we might know his peace that passes understanding. One of the most powerful images of wartime is at a time of ceasefire.

A time when peace comes. When you see armies marching back from battle. Often dirty, tired, carrying wounded.

[55 : 15] And their own wounds are obvious. And yet because of peace there may be joy. And for the Christian, that is the promise too.

That though there are many things that we suffer in this world, although there is a reality of a time to be born and a time to die, a time of war and a time of peace, there is a reality of a greater day as well.

A day spoken of in Isaiah 35, verse 8 through verse 10 where it says, a highway shall be there and it shall be called the way of holiness.

The unclean shall not pass over it, it shall belong to those who walk on the way. Even if they are fools, they shall not go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come upon it.

They shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Sion with singing. Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads.

[56 : 24] They shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. There we are reminded of a greater day for the Christian, a day that Isaiah prophesied, a day that the book of Revelation speaks of being fulfilled, a day when he will wipe away every tear.

Today, we remember those who served and who serve. We remember those who gave the ultimate sacrifice, who lay down their lives for our peace and our freedom.

But above all today, let us remember the one who gives us peace. The news headlines so often shock us.

A war, a time of war when a war has broken out. We see these headlines that shock us. We see the devastation it brings.

And we pray for peace. Today, that is our prayer for the world in which we live, that we may know days of peace, days of freedom.

[57 : 46] But above all, let us remember the Lord. There is a time for everything. But everything is in its time.

And God has put eternity into the heart of man. So let's not see things as under the sun, where we struggle to understand. Let's see things under heaven, that God rules, that he is with us, and that he will give joy and gladness to his people when he takes them to himself.

Let us pray. Our Father in heaven, we thank you for your word, a word that speaks in every situation and circumstance of life for us.

We thank you that it speaks not just for this day, but for eternity too, for you have put eternity in all our hearts. And we pray, Lord, that on this day of reflection, on this day of remembrance, that we will give thanks, O Lord, for the freedom that we enjoy, that we will realize too that the greatest price of all has been paid, that Christ came to lay down his life for his people.

So help us, Lord, to consider these things, to reflect upon them, to turn to you in prayer and cry out, O Lord, have mercy, have mercy on your world, have mercy upon your people.

[59 : 17] Come to us, Lord, we pray, and give us your peace, as we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. We're going to conclude by singing to God's praise in Psalm 72.

Psalm 72 in the Scottish Psalter, page 314. We sing from verse 17 to the end of the psalm, words we perhaps know well and often sing at times when we remember the Lord's death, but too we can sing them today knowing that his name will forever endure.

His name forever shall endure, last like the sun it shall, men shall be blessed in him and blessed all nations shall him call. We sing from verse 17 to the end of the psalm.

His name forever shall endure, last like the sun it shall, men shall be blessed in him and blessed all nations shall him call.

Now blessed be the Lord our God, the God God of Israel of Israel for he alone doth wondrous works in glory that excel and blessed and blessed be his glorious name to all eternity the whole earth let his glory glory fill amen so let it be after the benediction

[62 : 02] I'll go to the door to my left we'll close the benediction now may grace mercy and peace from God Father Son and Holy Spirit rest upon and abide with us all now and forevermore amen