

The Presence of the Lord

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[0 : 00] It comes from the book of Psalms, so if you would turn with me to Psalm 137. So Psalm 137, and together we'll read God's Word.

Now hear God's Word. By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion.

On the willows there we hung up our lyres, for there our captors required of us songs, and our tormentors mirth saying, sing us one of the songs of Zion.

How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land? If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its skill.

Let my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth, if I do not remember you. If I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy. Remember, O Lord, against the Edomites, the day of Jerusalem, how they said, Lay it bare, lay it bare, down to its foundations.

[1 : 31] O daughter of Babylon, doomed to be destroyed. Blessed shall he be who repays you with what you have done to us. Blessed shall he be who takes your little ones and dashes them against the rock.

Before John comes to speak, we're going to continue our worship. But preached from Psalm 3. This morning, I'm not preaching from Psalm 137. That's a springboard into the book of Ezekiel. It helps us understand the book of Ezekiel.

So we have a tall order this morning. I'm going to fly over like the cherubim in the book of Ezekiel.

And I'm going to preach the whole of the book of Ezekiel this morning.

So you have sword drilled. There will be various passages. We're just going to scan various passages to understand what the book of Ezekiel is all about.

[2 : 33] It's a very encouraging book. I don't know you people. I don't know whether your soul is in your boots. Or whether you're on the mountaintop and you're praising a way. Or whether you're somewhere in between. Maybe you're going up.

Maybe you're coming down. Maybe you've been down for a while. Maybe you've been up for a while. I do not know. Last week, I sought to encourage you from God's word. And I want to do the same again this morning. Not so much a challenge, but an encouragement from the word of God. That you would be encouraged in him. Encouraged in the Lord. And whatever you're facing. Not only today, but the week that lies ahead. So with Ezekiel chapter 8 open before us.

Let's come before God in prayer. Let's seek his help. A loving, heavenly father. We've just been singing. Be still. For the glory of the Lord is moving in this place.

Father, we would be still. And that we might know that you are God. Lord, we have been singing much. We have been praying. Lord, you have heard our voice. Lord, we come to this part in the service where we hear your voice.

[3 : 34] So, Father, give us ears to hear. Speak to us. Lord, all things are laid bare before you this morning. You know our names. You know our heart. You know everything about us. And, Father, we pray that you would meet us at our point of need.

Speak into our situation, we pray. Increase our faith in a wonderful God. And a wonderful Savior. Through the power of the Holy Spirit. Speak to us, we pray. And we ask these things in Jesus' name.

Amen. Every day you wake up, you face various challenges. Here's an image that might appear. A ball and chain. That ball and chain can be big or small.

It can be short-lived or long-lived. I don't know what you're going through. I don't know what your Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday of this week might look like. Maybe for the past number of months.

Maybe for years. You feel that life is a struggle. It's an uphill struggle. And you're dragging whatever it is. And you would love this ball and chain to be shrunk to a more manageable size.

[4 : 35] And life is a struggle. If you read systematically through the Bible. January wasn't long ago. You probably began at Genesis. As I was reading Genesis, the first chapters.

I was reminded that at the cuss, not only is childbearing painful and so forth, life is full of thorns and thistles. There's no escaping it.

Life is hard. You get older. You get aches and pains. You worry about your pension. You worry about many things. And every day, to a certain extent, is a struggle.

And you think, Lord, I wish you would do this. I wish you would work in a particular way. And I wonder this morning, if you had one prayer.

If the Lord said to you, come to me with one prayer. And I will certainly answer that prayer. I wonder what that prayer would be. Perhaps you could just mention it like that.

[5 : 32] You know it's always there. You're praying for this thing every single day. Maybe a loved one. Maybe your situation. Maybe a long-term thing. Maybe something you're anxious about the future.

For some of us, we think, well, if I've got one prayer and it's going to be answered, I'm going to give some thought to that. I'm going to make sure it's a beauty. I'm going to make sure it has long-lasting effect.

And it really works for me in my situation. I wonder what that prayer would be. We come before a God who's able to do exceedingly, abundantly, above all that we ask or think or imagine.

This is the God that we serve. And yet, he does not always answer our prayer immediately or in ways that we expect.

The truth is, sometimes what we need is not always a quick answer to prayer. But what we often need in life, whatever your ball and chain is, is not so much a quick solution to this.

[6 : 33] But in the midst of this, a fresh vision of God. A fresh vision of God will help you through Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, whether your ball and chain grows bigger by Wednesday into Thursday and so forth.

What God's people always need is a God who's bigger than their problem, than whatever they're going through. A view of the sovereignty of God makes so much difference.

I remember a number of years ago, I injured my back, and I was in Derbyshire at the time. And it was such a frustrating time. And I remember every physician that I met seemed to be more incompetent than the one before.

And so much so that the problem with my back wasn't the problem. The problem was getting nowhere with these guys. And I kept praying, Lord, just give me somebody competent who actually knows what they're doing.

And it just seemed to get worse and worse. And I remember at the time thinking, Lord, if only you would do that. Lord, my problems would be a lot easier. And what I needed at the time was that fresh vision of God.

[7 : 44] A God who's in control of even the mess. And even when the wheels seem to be coming off even more. Was this fresh vision of God. A high view of the sovereignty of God.

A God who's able to lead and to guide. And that's what I needed. I needed to know that God was in control. And he was on my case. He hadn't abandoned me.

And one of the greatest verses in the Bible that, as a pastor, I used to encourage folk with. That the Lord loves us. And not a sparrow falls to the ground apart from the will of your Father in heaven.

The very hairs of your head are numbered. To take comfort in those big verses. A God who knows us. And is on our case 24-7. He knows everything about us.

And the Psalms are good for showing us a God who's bigger than us. The Psalms of David and so forth. But so are the prophetic writings.

[8 : 45] The prophetic writings, whether it's Daniel or Ezekiel or the book of Revelation. You read those books and it just blows your switches. You think, what on earth are these books about?

But that's a good thing. A God who is other than us. A God who inhabits eternity. A God who's worshipped by angels and cherubim and seraphim.

Whereas we have the humdrum of potholes in the road in Edinburgh. And trying to get a parking space. And trying to get a doctor's appointment. We exist here.

But God, there is another realm. And I find that very exciting. And the book of Ezekiel is a very real book.

And yet it's a very surreal book. It's a way out there. And you try and get your head around what's happening. And I remember Don Carson, a sermon many years ago.

[9 : 42] Did what I'm about to do in some form. It gives us an overview. Flying over the book of Ezekiel. And I found it very encouraging. And I hope as we look at this together very quickly.

That you'll get something from this book. I've entitled this sermon, The Presence of the Lord. And really that is what the book of Ezekiel is all about.

It's about the presence of the Lord. So that's the title for this sermon. And we're going to whiz through that. Now let me set the background to this. The history of the book of Ezekiel.

In the Old Testament you remember. There was a time during David's life. When the plan of salvation is unfolding. There was a united kingdom. One people of God.

Living in one place. Under one king. And then you remember. That the kingdom was divided. The trade unions come in basically. And said oh it's not right that you do this.

[10 : 41] And more labor was put on. And they split. And it remained in that. North and south. And that is basically what happened.

And God sent to these two kingdoms. Prophets. Different prophets. Preaching to different people. Basically saying. Get your act together. Because if you don't. You will be taken into exile.

And different prophets in the Bible. Speak to different people. Either in the north. Or in the south. And basically you remember.

He gave many warnings to the northern kingdom. And he said to them. Unless they got their act together. This would happen. It did happen. The Assyrians came. And he took them into exile.

Under Sennacherib. Sennacherib also tried to destroy. The southern kingdom. But God protected them. And it was only the northern kingdom. That was taken into exile.

[11 : 41] And eventually. The Assyrians were overrun. By the Babylonians. There's a great way. If you can find it on the internet. Called Clarifying the Bible. By.

I can't remember. He's Mitch something. That's a great. If you ever get the time. Clarifying the Bible. Go on to YouTube. Have it for one hour. You can sort out the whole of the Old Testament. It's a great video.

I've did it in my church before. And we worked through it. Anyway. Those are the main things.

Northern kingdom. Taken into exile. Ezekiel. Preaches to that northern kingdom.

At a time when they're in exile. Life is not good. They wish they were in Jerusalem. By the rivers of Babylon. Where we sat down.

Where we wept. When we remember Zion. That is what that's about. Lord. We hate this place. We'd rather be back there. We've returned back to Scotland. We are glad to be back in our own homeland.

[12 : 38] After roaming around Derbyshire in North London. And we're back in Scotland. And that's what they wanted to be. Back where things were familiar. Where they were used to things.

They didn't like being where they were. And that's what they wanted. Ezekiel is in Babylon.

Ministering to the people in exile. And Jeremiah.

Is in Jerusalem. At the same time. Roughly the same age. Two young men. Ministering to the people in Jerusalem. And God has a message. And the situation in both of these areas.

Was very very different. Ezekiel is sent to the people. In the north. To basically. To encourage them.

That he wants to basically. The whole book of Ezekiel. Is to encourage them to say. Where you are. Is the best place. This is. Although it's hard. You're in the place of blessing.

[13 : 37] God is with you. He has his eye upon you. Whereas the people in Jerusalem. They thought. We are fine. We are okay. We are glad we're not up there. We are okay.

In Jerusalem. And Jeremiah sent to them. To tell them. You need to get your act together. You misjudged. The situation. Entirely.

And the grass. Is not greener. And basically. These two people. Ezekiel and Jeremiah. Minister to them. So let's look at. Ezekiel.

Chapter 8. First of all. We're just going to scan this. I'm just going to pick out verses. And you can have a wee. A wee look through them. Ezekiel. In chapter 8. Is showing the situation.

In Jerusalem. They want to be back in Jerusalem. By the rivers of Babylon. We want to be there. We remember that. And God. Comes to Ezekiel. In a series of visions.

[14:31] To show him. The situation. And he wants to basically. Show them. What life is like. In the place. That they want to be. And. Look at verse 1.

Of chapter 8. I was sitting. In my house. And the elders of Judah. Were sitting before me. The hand of the sovereign Lord. Came on me there. Verse 3. The spirit lifted me up. Between earth and heaven.

And in visions of God. He took me to Jerusalem. To the entrance. Of the north gate. Of the inner court. Where the idol. That provokes. To jealousy stood. And there before me.

Was the glory. Of the God. Of Israel. Verse 5. Son of man. Look towards the north. So I looked. And the entrance. North of the gate. Of the altar. I saw.

This idol. Of jealousy. Son of man. Verse 6. Do you see. What they are doing. The utterly detestable. Things that Israelites. Are doing here. Things that will drive me.

[15:26] Far from my sanctuary. But do you see. Things that are. Even more detestable. And he begins. To show them. What they are. Look at verse 9. Go in and see the wicked.

And detestable things. That they are doing here. Verse 12. Son of man. Have you seen. What the elders of Israel. Are doing. In the darkness. Each at the shrine. Of his own idol.

They say. The Lord does not see. The Lord has forsaken. The land. Again. He said. You will see them. Doing things. That are even more detestable. Verse 14. I saw women.

Sitting there. Mourning the God. Of Tammuz. And so. It goes on. Verse 16. Between the portico. And the altar. There were about 25 men.

With their backs. Towards the temple. Of the Lord. And their faces. Towards the east. The east. They were bowing down. To the sun. In the east.

[16:21] And then. Verse 18. Therefore. I will deal with them. In anger. I will not look on them. With pity. Or spare them. Though they shout. In my ears. I will not listen.

So basically. God comes to Ezekiel. And says. The life that you want. That you think. Will be better. For you. And you'd rather be there. You're better off.

Where you are. Because Jerusalem. Is not as good. In this. At this time. As you think. And then. Ezekiel 9. If you want to flick over. Bring near those.

Who are appointed. To execute judgment. On the city. And we are. Verse 3. The glory of the Lord. Went up from above. The cherubim. Where it had been. And moved. To the threshold.

Of the temple. Then the Lord. Called to the man. Clothed in linen. Who had the writing kit. In his side. Go throughout. The city of Jerusalem. Put a mark. On the foreheads.

[17:17] Of those who grieve. And lament. Over the detestable things. That are done in it. As I listened. He said to the others. Follow him through the city. Kill without showing pity.

Or compassion. Verse 6. Do not touch anyone. Who has the mark. Begin at my sanctuary. So they began. With the old men. Who were in front.

Of the temple. And basically. The Lord. Cleanses. Is going to cleanse Jerusalem. People who. Who lament. The situation.

In Jerusalem. Are spared. With a mark. But these other ones. So judgment. In chapters 10. And 11. Of Ezekiel. Now falls on Jerusalem. Who thought.

They were fine. Who thought. We are okay. And these visions. Must have been. A massive shock. To God's people. In exile. Through Ezekiel's ministry.

[18:12] It's a bit like. Me thinking. Scotland's fine. And the Lord says. Scotland's not fine. They're a pagan nation. And I'm going to destroy them. And I think they're fine. They would have thought. Jerusalem.

Has been spared. So many times. God loves Jerusalem. God's people are there. God will surely spare. And they'd lost sight. Of the sovereignty. And the holiness of God.

And God. Comes and says. No. What you desire. Is not the best thing. What you desire. What you should desire. Is where you are. So they were disliking.

Their situation. And they wished. That they were in. Jerusalem. Meanwhile. The people in Jerusalem. Thought. We're okay. We're glad.

We're not like them. God must really hate. These guys. They're in exile. And we're okay. And you see this. In Ezekiel 11. Verse 14 and 15. The word of the Lord.

[19 : 05] Came to me. Son of man. The people of Jerusalem. Have said. Of their fellow exiles. And all the other Israelites. They are far away. From the Lord. This land was given to us.

As our possession. You see what they're saying. They're thinking. God must really hate. These folk in exile. Whereas we're hunky dory. In other words. Both of these groups.

Were misjudging. The situation. They thought. They knew. What they. What was best for them. And how God. Was dealing with them. And the people in Jerusalem.

Thought God loved them. And hated. The exiles. They had misread. Their situation. So let's look at. This. As we. Whiz through this book.

Very quickly. I only have two points. First point. The longest. First of all. First point. God. Is here. That's what Ezekiel. The basic message.

[19 : 58] Of Ezekiel. In the first half. Of the book. He wants to show. The people. Who are struggling. That God. Is with them. That's the main.

Message. In the book. The first half. Of the book. Of Ezekiel. The people. In Babylon. Wished. That they were in. In Jerusalem. So God. Has to come. In a series of visions.

And remind them. You're in the best place. It's better. That you're here. If you're there. You might be destroyed. With the people there. You will be affected. By them. You will be led astray.

By them. Although this is hard. For you. You're better here. This is better. For you. To be here. So. Don't. Just be singing. By the rivers of Babylon.

There we wept. And it was great. And how can we sing. The Lord's song. In a strange land. That's what they're saying. If only we could sing. We can't sing. Unless it's there. And you may go through life.

[20 : 52] Thinking. If only I didn't have a sword back. Or my son. Or my daughter. Or life was a wee bit different. And this ball and chain. Wasn't here. Then I would sing. Lord you would hear me singing.

On a Sunday morning. But I can't sing. As well. Because I'm a wee bit downcast. If only this area of my life. Was sorted. When once again.

We need a fresh vision. Of God. And that is what. Ezekiel. Admonish. He comes to the people. In exile. When they're a very low ebb.

And gives them a fresh vision. Of God. The place of blessing. Is always where God. Wants you to be. Or an acknowledgement. That God is Lord of your life.

He's not just Savior. He is Lord. And when we submit to that. Then we can know joy. But it's when we keep saying. Lord. If only you would do this.

[21 : 46] Then I would sing. It's never. A safe place. To be. Unless. There's one of the songs of ascent. Unless the Lord. Builds the house.

And that's not just. This building. Christians. Relate that. The true sense of that word is. Your life. Unless the Lord. Builds your house. Your life.

You will labor. In vain. And it's. It's that fresh acknowledgement. Lord. You build my life. You build my house. You make the decisions. For me. And that's.

What's happening here. God does not leave his people. He's taken them into exile. He's the author of what's happened to them. But he doesn't leave them. He doesn't want to leave them in this downcast condition.

He wants to encourage them. And how best to encourage them. Is a fresh vision of God. If the Lord should remove this roof. And show you a vision. Of heaven. And angels.

[22 : 40] And cherubim. And seraphim. If one set. Cherubim. Could fly through this building. This morning. You'd be going. That's enough Lord. That's all I need. One cherubim. I don't need six.

Just show me one. A fresh vision of God. A vision of who he is. Bigger than you. Or I. And that's what happens. And the first thing God does.

He wants to. To remind God's people. Something very fundamental. That their God that they serve. Is not limited to location. They thought God was in Jerusalem.

He's not in Babylon. He's not in exile. There. It's blessing. Here is not blessing. God doesn't bless me. When life is hard. And that's.

So God has to remind them of that. He's not limited to location. Go way back to chapter one. If you will. The very first verse. Right at the very beginning. Of chapter one. Verse one.

[23 : 36] In my thirtieth year. The fourth month. And the fifth day. While I was among the exiles. By the river Kebar. The heavens were opened. And I saw visions of God.

That's how the book begins. It's what he needs. It's what the people of God need. And then from these 14 verses. We won't go through them. If you know anything of Ezekiel. It's all about these living creatures.

With wings. And eyes. And fire. And you go. Wow. What is that? I can't get my head around. What's happening here. And then. I'm on amongst these flying creatures.

With fire. And wings. And eyes. You have wheels. As if it wasn't complicated. It gets more complicated. There's wheels thrown into the picture. And verse 15 of chapter one.

As I looked at the living creatures. I saw a wheel on the ground. Beside each creature. With its four faces. Verse 19. When the living creatures moved. The wheels beside them moved.

[24 : 37] And when the living creatures rose from the ground. The wheels also rose. Verse 21.

When the creatures moved. They also moved. When the creatures stood still. They also stood still.

And when the creatures rose from the ground. The wheels rose along with them. Because the spirit of the living creatures. Was in the wheels. Verse 24.

When the creatures moved. I heard the sound of their wings. Like the roar of rushing waters. Like the voice of the almighty. Like the tumult of an army.

Verse 26. High above the throne. Was a figure like that of a man. I saw that from what appeared to be his waist up. He looked like glowing metal.

As if full of fire. And from there down. He looked like fire. And bright lights surrounded him. Now. What is happening here?

[25 : 33] You don't have to guess. He tells us verse 28. This was the appearance. Of the likeness. Of the glory. Of the Lord.

First chapter. You're getting this massive vision. Of the glory. Of the Lord. Don Carson. Described this. Here's an image. People have tried to.

To illustrate. What this is. If you can stick up the image. This is one image. That people. You've got this. Throne. And the rainbow. And the wheels.

Not just one disc. But two. So it can move this way. And that way. And then you've got these. Wind creatures. And. Don Carson. Called this. God's mobile.

Chariot. Throne. Throne. That's a great expression. This is not a God. Who is a throne. Here. In one place. Cemented to the ground. Siliconed in.

[26 : 29] Doesn't move anywhere. He wants to show them. That God is a God. Who's mobile. He is sovereign. And he moves. And he reacts. And he.

Is with. His people. And it's not just in Jerusalem. It is moved. To where. They are. And in verse. Chapter 11. After.

When God wants to. To do this. He wants to show them. That he. Is with them. Wherever they are. That's what that is. God is with them. Wherever they are. God has moved.

His chariot throne. To Babylon. He is there. He is with them. Whereas in Jerusalem. God is about to remove. His chariot throne.

Despite the fact. That they are singing. By the rivers. Of Babylon. Let's go there. And God. In visions. Says to. To the people. Of. In Ezekiel's day. You're better here.

[27 : 25] Because I have a mobile. Chariot throne. And I'm in your midst. If you go to Jerusalem. My chariot's about to leave there. And that is what you have. In. In chapter 11.

This is what the sovereign. Lord says. Although I sent them far away. From the nation. Scattered them. Yet for a little while. I have been. A sanctuary. And. But. In chapter 10.

The God that was with them. Is now about to depart. Ezekiel 10. Verse 4. Then the glory of the Lord. Rose from above the cherubim. And moved to the threshold of the temple.

The cloud filled the temple. This is in Jerusalem. And the court was full of the radiance. Of the glory of the Lord. God. The sound of the wings of the cherubim.

Could be heard as far away. As the outer court. Like the voice of God almighty. When he speaks. Verse 15. Then the cherubim rose upward. Where the living creatures.

[28 : 22] I had seen by the river. Kebar. Verse 18. Then the glory of the Lord. Departed. From over the threshold. Of the temple. And stood above. The cherubim.

God is removing himself. From that situation. When they thought they were fine. Into. To show them. That they had misjudged.

The situation. I don't know. If you look about that. Trying to make sense of that. I like it. I must confess. Revelation. I like a God.

That I can't draw. It's great when you ask a kid. And there's the sky. And it's blue. And. And draw God. And you think. We try to figure out God.

We may not sit with a pen. We know that's foolish. I'm not going to sit with a pen. And Monday. And draw God. Look. I drew God. Lucille. That's who God is. But we try and do it in our mind. We expect God to.

[29 : 19] To work according to. To our thinking. And. Ezekiel. Is about a God. That we cannot draw. A God that we cannot put in a box. A God that we cannot figure out completely.

We can't even figure out. Our own situation completely. How can we figure out God? And Ezekiel is an attempt to show us a God who's bigger than us. And a God who. Who knows our situation better than we know ourself.

And that is what's happening here. We have a mobile chariot throne. We have a God who's with us. But better than that. We have a God who's always on our case.

We have a Savior who never leaves us nor forsakes us. We have a God who ever. We have a Savior who ever lives to make intercession for us. Who prays for us. We have the Holy Spirit.

That this should blow your switches. When you become a Christian. I was saved in the Kelvin Hall. In 1980. When I was 20. You can work out the maths.

[30 : 19] How old I am now. I was 20 in 1980. I was born in 1960. And in one meeting I went to the Kelvin Hall. And I was saved. And I come out. And the green and yellow and orange buses.

Looked different. Glasgow looked different. And I had a future. And a hope. It really was quite something. It was just amazing.

And I was filled with the Holy Spirit. A wee guy who was born in Springburn. In Glasgow. That the Holy Spirit of the eternal God. Should come and reside in me.

And give me a peace that passes all understanding. And put my life on a different course. Although life is bumpy and so forth. And my life became very different.

I took about 300 LPs. And stuck them in a bin that night. I subsequently bought them a number of years later. Realising that. That was a bit extreme. But I remember thinking.

[31 : 20] Oh yeah. Wow. What's happened? And that's what happens. That we. If you're a Christian here. The Holy Spirit lives within you. I don't need to see an image like that on Wednesday.

I have the Holy Spirit. Who testifies to my spirit. That I am a child of God. Who might rebuke me. And discipline me. But he leads and he guides.

And he is everything that I need. But his ways are not my ways. They never will be. His thoughts are not my thoughts. And until we come as Christian. And bow the knee.

And think. Lord by the rivers of Babylon. Lord I want that. I want what I used to have. And I can't sing. While my situation is like this.

Ezekiel is a call for God's people to sing. Wherever you are. Because God is here. He is always with you. He never leaves you nor forsakes you.

[32 : 15] He loves you dearly. He sees you. Very hairs of your head are numbered. And if he takes care of a sparrow. He takes care of you. And we need to reaffirm this.

When the ball and chain becomes too much. And we have been dragging it for a long time. And we begin to become downcast. We need to consider. How God spoke to his people. In Babylon.

It is what he did. And the first 33 chapters of the book of Ezekiel. Are to encourage God's people. Do not be downcast. I am with you. I will never leave you nor forsake you.

You are my sanctuary. And it is quite something. The book does not end there. And very quickly. We will finish the last half. 36 right the way through. Or 34 through to the end. It is very exciting.

God is not only here with them. He is there. He is in the future. There is a God who is in our tomorrows as well.

[33 : 13] And that is the second half of the book. From chapters 40 to 48. Are very exciting. And look at verse 1 of chapter 40.

After the fall of the city on that very day. The hand of the Lord was on me. And he took me there. In visions of God. He took me to the land of Israel. He set me on a very high mountain.

On those south sides. Were some buildings. That looked like a city. In other words. He is seeing the city built up. But like London. These big skyscrapers. Verse 4.

Son of man. Look carefully. Listen closely. And pay attention to everything. I am going to show you. For that is why you have been brought here. Tell the people everything you see.

And in these great chapters. From 40 to 48. You see in chapter 43. The glory returning. The glory left. But it is returning.

[34 : 09] And that is what you have here. Verse 2 of 43. I saw the glory of the Lord of Israel. Coming from the east. His voice was like the roar of rushing waters.

And the land was radiant with his glory. Verse 4. The glory of the Lord. Entered the temple. It had left. But now it enters it again.

Facing east. Verse 5. The glory of the Lord. Filled the temple. Verse 7. Son of man. This is the place of my throne. And the place for the soles of my feet.

This is where I will live among the Israelites forever. The people of Israel will never again defile my holy temple. And so forth.

So from chapter 40. You get the dimensions of the temple. 42. The rooms for the priest. 43. The glory returns. The priesthood is restored. The people of Israel have restored.

[35 : 07] The land is divided up. And what those chapters are teaching us is this. The perfection of God. That God is always at work in.

He's doing something perfect. Something marvelous. Not just in the here and now. In the midst of aches and pains. But a time in the future. Maybe even your tomorrow.

But ultimately in heaven. And in glory. And you have great chapters. In these books. You have the valley of dry bones.

Speak to the bones. And they come alive. Things that are dead. God brings life. Maybe you have members of your family. And you think. Lord would you not do something amazing.

They are dead. And trespasses and sin. Maybe as a church lord. We remember good days in the church. When the place was packed. Our God is a God. Who can reverse these things.

[36 : 00] A God who can turn them round. Chapter 47. Remember the river. That flows out. I remember reading that for the first time. The water was trickling out.

It comes up to your ankles. And then. Later on. It goes up to your waist. And then you have to wade through. There shall be showers of blessing.

Or mercy drops round as they're falling. But for the showers we plead. And it's that. It's this God who's able to do. More than we can ask. Or think.

And the whole point of this. Is to show the blessing. Of the Lord. Chapter 48. The very last chapter. Is the gates of the city. And then you come to.

The best verse. The last verse. The best verse. In the whole book of Ezekiel. And it's talking about this new city. Where God is blessing. And the city's given a new name.

[36 : 57] And it's not called Jerusalem. It's called. The Lord. Is there. That is the most. That should excite you. The Lord is there.

He's in tomorrow. He's in next week. I'm 62. I don't know if I'll get three scored in 10. I hope. Most. Lucille's family lives forever. My family pop their clogs. When they're about 70.

So it doesn't bode well for me. I must confess. So. But the Lord knows these things. But the Lord is there. Whatever that is. And if you're hooked up to a monitor.

And you're about to flatline. The Lord is there. But he's beyond that. He's in eternity. And the best thing about heaven. I wonder if you.

Would acknowledge that. The best thing about heaven. Is not because your mum. Or your dad. Or your goldfish. Or your dog. Died. And somehow went there. And they're sitting in a harp. And a cloud playing a harp.

[37 : 52] The best thing about heaven. Is the Lord is there. That is the best thing. If he's not there. It is not heaven. It is not glory. And your faith is turned to sight.

And you want to see the saviour who died for you. And you want to praise. And to worship him. Along with his cherubim. And seraphim. Along. And this great vision. You want to see that.

The mundane. The humdrum. The cold weather. The cold arctic wind. That's coming down. Monday or Tuesday or Wednesday of this week. Which doesn't bode well. And the temperatures. Cranked up in your house.

All these things pass. No more tablets. And so forth. And that is how the book of Revelation finishes. It takes these themes of Ezekiel.

And it reminds us that God is not only there. But he's there. He's in glory. He's in heaven. So let me just finish by reading the last few chapters. Or verses from Revelation.

[38 : 49] And we'll stand and sing. Revelation 21. Verse 10.

Verse 10.

Is its lamp. Verse chapter 22. He showed me the river of the water of life. Clear as crystal. Flowing from the throne of God. This is Ezekiel.

Down in the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river. Stood the tree of life. Bearing twelve crops of fruit. Yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healings of the nations.

The throne of God. And of the lamb. Will be in the city. And his servants will serve him. They will see his face. There will be no more night.

[40 : 26] They do not need the light of a lamp. Or the light of the sun. For the Lord God will give them light. And he will reign forever and ever. These words are trustworthy and true.

The Lord. The God who inspires the prophets. Sent his angel. To show his servants. Things which must soon take place. And then we finish with chapter 2.

Verses 12 and 13. Luke. Luke. I am coming soon. My reward is with me. And I will give to each person. According to what he has done. I am the alpha and the omega.

The first and the last. The beginning and the end. He who testifies. Chapter verse 20. To these things says. Yes I am coming soon. Amen.

Come Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus. Be with his people. Whatever you are going through. As individuals. And as a church. Know this.

[41 : 20] The Lord is with you. He is here. He is in your life. Always. Ever. Only. But he is also there. He is in your tomorrows.

He is in your eternal destiny. In heaven. And in glory. Let's stand as we sing our closing song. Let's use it as a prayer. Holy Spirit.

Living breath. Of God. And we'll end our service together.