

The Day When the Lord Sits Down

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[0 : 00] Good, well let's turn now to our Bible reading, which is in the book of the prophet Joel. David Ely is our preacher and David is finishing the series of sermons that he's been running now for some time.

And we have the whole of chapter 3. If you're not quite sure where Joel is, he's towards the end of the Old Testament, about 20 or 30 pages before the end of the Old Testament. The Lord here is speaking and he's pronouncing judgment. So Joel chapter 3.

For behold, in those days and at that time when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all the nations and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat.

And I will enter into judgment with them there on behalf of my people and my heritage, Israel, because they have scattered them among the nations and have divided up my land and have cast lots for my people and have traded a boy for a prostitute and have sold a girl for wine and have drunk it.

What are you to me, O Tyre and Sidon and all the regions of Philistia? Are you paying me back for something? If you are paying me back, I will return your payment on your own head swiftly and speedily.

[1 : 28] For you have taken my silver and my gold and have carried my rich treasures into your temples. You have sold the people of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks in order to remove them far from their own border.

Behold, I will stir them up from the place to which you have sold them and I will return your payment on your own head. I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the people of Judah and they will sell them to the Sabaeans, to a nation far away.

For the Lord has spoken. Proclaim this among the nations. Consecrate for war. Stir up the mighty men. Let all the men of war draw near.

Let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears. And let the weak say, I am a warrior.

Hasten and come, all you surrounding nations, and gather yourselves there. Bring down your warriors, O Lord. Let the nations stir themselves up and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat.

[2 : 37] For there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Go in, tread, for the winepress is full.

The vats overflow, for their evil is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision. For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.

The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. The Lord roars from Zion and utters his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth quake.

But the Lord is a refuge to his people, a stronghold to the people of Israel. So you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who dwells in Zion, my holy mountain.

And Jerusalem shall be holy, and strangers shall never again pass through it. And in that day the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the stream beds of Judah shall flow with water.

[3 : 43] And a fountain shall come forth from the house of the Lord, and water the valley of Shittim. Egypt shall become a desolation, and Edom a desolate wilderness, for the violence done to the people of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land.

But Judah shall be inhabited forever, and Jerusalem to all generations. I will avenge their blood, blood I have not avenged, for the Lord dwells in Zion.

Well, this is the word of the Lord, and may it be a blessing to us. Well, good morning to you all.

It's wonderful to be back with you once more for a final look at the book of Joel. Hopefully not your final book ever at the book of Joel, but our final look together for now.

So let's turn back to Joel chapter 3. Now we've had a few gaps as we've looked at this book together.

[4 : 51] So let's just start with a brief recap of the book of Joel so far. The word of the Lord came to Joel, and it was a word for him to declare to the people of God.

God had just judged them. He poured out locusts to strip away every blessing that he had given them. And so Joel says to Judah, repent.

Turn back to God. He is slow to anger. He abounds in mercy. He is steadfast in his covenant love. So turn back to him. For who knows?

He may relent. He may leave a blessing in his path instead of a curse. And so that is what Judah did joyfully. That is what they did. And gloriously, the Lord relented.

And he left blessing behind him. Now repentance is a lowly and a humble path. And yet we saw last time that when repentance is placed into the hands of the true and living God, it is far from the gray and miserable path.

[6 : 08] It may be humble, but it is not miserable. Instead, in the hands of the living God, repentance is transformed into the untold riches of blessing that come from a God who is kind.

It is transformed into the restoration of true worship as man's relationship with God is restored. It is transformed into fruitfulness as man is remade once again into the image of God.

And it is transformed into true joy and contentment with all the gifts that our Father gives.

Repentance, when placed into the hand of the true and living God, though it does lead down to dust, turns out to be the path to life.

And so that's where we ended up last time. Whatever you have been given, whatever sliver of creation you have been given responsibility for, examine it against God's ways and humbly lay it down at his feet in repentance.

For the day of the Lord is coming. The day when the Lord takes his seat, brings all of these things before him and sorts it all out.

[7 : 26] And so that's where our eyes turn in this final passage in the book of Joel this morning. Where we see that our repentance, small though it might seem, has swept us and our little lives up into the greatest events.

Swept us up into the day of the Lord. And so with all of that said, let's turn now to chapter 3, where we see what happens on the day that the Lord sits down.

Now a throne is a seat for sorting things out. A throne is a seat for deciding cases, for hearing people's pleas, for help, for mercy, and for ruling, and ruling particularly by word, by decision, by making a judgment.

And the great day of the Lord in the book of Joel is the day that the Lord sits down on his throne and he gathers everyone together to sort it all out.

Chapter 1 was a foretaste of that day. The day when God decreed destruction for his people.

Chapter 2 was a foretaste of that day when God heard Judah coming to him, asking for mercy, and decreed blessing instead of judgment for his repentant people.

[8 : 48] And chapter 3 here is the day of the Lord. When God finally summons everyone, decides every case, and declares to the world his decision, his plan, and the fate of all his creatures.

Look at verse 12. Let the nations stir themselves up and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat. For there I will sit to judge the surrounding nations.

The great king, the emperor, comes to his throne and now he summons every nation to stand before him and to hear his completely binding, his completely inescapable decree, his final decision, his final word.

And so this morning we're going to see three things, three things that happen when the Lord takes his seat on his day.

Firstly, the enemies of God's people are defeated forever. Secondly, God establishes his holy city on the earth forever.

[9 : 55] And thirdly, renewal flows from his presence, blessing from his presence forever. Three things that happen when God takes his throne.

So firstly, when the Lord takes his seat, the enemies of God's people will be defeated. Now so far in Joel, Judah has faced locusts, billions of locusts.

That is a catastrophic enemy, an enemy beyond anything that we can imagine in our time and age. We don't face insects in quite the same way as they faced insects then.

But even those locusts were a stand-in. They were a symbol of other enemies that would scour God's people in response to their sin. As bad as they are, locusts are in the end only insects. And there are other far worse enemies out there. There are lords of the earth who have become children of the great and ancient serpent. In other words, men and women who do not belong to God.

[11:00] And verses 1 to 8, they tell us some of the things that these enemies have been up to. And it's not pretty reading. They have scattered God's people. They have stolen God's land.

Verse 3, they think that God's people are so worthless, they think so little of God's people that they don't put any thought into their future. They capture them in war, and instead of thinking carefully what should happen to this member of God's people, they'll make the decision by chance.

They'll cast lots. This doesn't warrant any more thought than that. And so they look at the young Judean boy there, and they think that he is worthless. So worthless that they will sell him for the sake of one night with a prostitute.

And then they've sold the young Christian girl that they've captured for even less. They've sold her just for a cup of wine that's gone in an instant. Why do the nations rage like this against God's people?

Because they hate God, because they hate their Lord. And so, on the day of the Lord, God summons them together, and he summons them essentially to put their money where their mouth is.

[12:14] By their actions they have declared war. They want war with God. Well, so be it. Let them come. Let them come to the valley of Jehoshaphat, and there they will have the war that they want.

Now, the valley of Jehoshaphat here, that's probably not an actual geographic place. It might be, but it probably isn't. Jehoshaphat, the word, the name Jehoshaphat means the Lord Judges.

And so this is probably a symbolic name. This is the valley of judgment, the valley of judgment by battle, where God will deal with his enemies. And reading through this, you probably recognize verse 10 from another part of the Bible, from Isaiah.

But here, it is flipped. Isaiah speaks about the time when God's people will have perfect peace. It is a wonderful vision for the future of God's people.

There will be no need for weapons because there's no need for war. But in Joel, for the people who are not God's people, there is no peace.

[13:21] They have raised their fists at the heavens in rage, and so God has summoned them to come and try it. Notice, all are summoned to the valley.

The mighty are summoned, the weak are summoned, everyone who can bring any sort of weapon are summoned against the Lord. There are multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision.

Now that's the Lord's decision, not the people's. It is his judgment seat, and he will decide. What these nations have done to God's people, they have done to him.

And so what they have done to God's people, God will now do to them. He will sell their children into slavery, just as they have done to God's people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Now, there are lots of Christian gift shops out there, lots of lovely shops. Next time you see one, go in and have a look around, you'll find lots of lovely cards with lovely verses on, some mugs there with some nice phrases from the Bible with some lovely pictures of flowers.

[14:37] Well, go in and I want you to see if you can find anything with verse 13 printed on it. I'd be surprised if the number of things, gift items with verse 13 printed on goes above single figures anywhere in the world.

It is a terrible, terrifying verse. Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. The harvest there is not corn, it is the enemies of God's people.

Go in, tread, for the winepress of God's wrath is full, and the vats overflow, for their evil is great.

Verse 13 is gruesome, it is violent, and it is entirely righteous.

More than that, it is not just righteous, it is part of the blessing that is given to God's people on the day of the Lord. Look at verse 2 again.

God's judgment here is for the sake of his people. It is because they have done things to them that God judges like this.

[15 : 50] When the Lord sits in judgment, the enemies of God's people are summoned to war, and they are utterly defeated. How could they be anything but defeated?

And so they will never do any harm to the church again. So that's the first thing that happens when God sits on his throne on the day of the Lord. Let's move on to the second as we look through this passage together.

When the Lord takes his seat, God will establish his holy city forever. Look at verse 1. The day of the Lord is the day when God restores the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem.

And as we read through this passage, it is Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Zion, Jerusalem. So what is the deal with Jerusalem here? Well, Jerusalem in the Bible is where God lives.

It is a holy garden on a holy hill where God walks with his people. In essence, it is where God has set up his throne on the earth, the center of his rule.

[17 : 08] Obviously, God is everywhere and can't be contained by houses built by human hands, but he has chosen to dwell in Zion in the Bible. Jerusalem is the shining city on a hill, and it is filled with holy royal priests.

The people who live there are supposed to be those who serve God the king who lives there. Or rather, that's the ideal. That's the ideal in the Old Testament. And in Joel's day, Jerusalem has nowhere near lived up to that ideal.

In fact, the priests and the ministers, those who should have seen this glory firsthand, the front-line servants of God in his temple, they have been mourning because there's nothing even to offer to God.

They can't serve him as they should. The people have not been holy. They've sinned against God. And the city, the holy city of God, has consequently been plundered by enemies, by these nations that we've read about.

It is meant to be the imperishable, holy dwelling place of God, and instead it has become the destitute, laughingstock of the nations. People look at Jerusalem as it is, and they go, really?

[18 : 21] Is that it? Are we supposed to respect that? And that is all because of the unholiness of the people who should have been gods. But, on the day of the Lord, when he sits on his throne, that is all going to change.

Look at verse 16. On that day, the thunder of the voice of the Lord will sound from Jerusalem again, and everything, everything will shake.

those who live in God's holy city will be safe again, like they haven't been for a long time, because God is with them again, and his presence is their refuge.

Verse 17. On the day of the Lord, Jerusalem will be made properly holy, really holy, like it hasn't been so far, and strangers, that is, unholy strangers, those from the nations who do not serve God, will never again pass through it as if they own the place.

They will never breach the walls, they won't get close. Jerusalem will be the safe and holy refuge, the great stronghold, like it hasn't been so far.

[19 : 40] In verses 19 and 20, they contrast this holy city that God will set up with the other nations that stand against God. Egypt will be desolate.

Edom will be a wilderness because of all of the evil things they've done against God and against his people because of the innocent blood they have spilled. Their heritage will run out.

There will come a time when the gods of these nations, when the rebellious impetus of their hearts will run dry because the fathers have run out of sons who will pick up their age.

There will be no one to carry this war on, but the holy city will not be like that. Judah and Jerusalem they will be inhabited forever, an eternal heritage, and so Jerusalem's glory will be undimmed and unfading and the people who live in it will be holy and beautiful in that holiness as they reflect the Lord of all things.

And all of this because God will live on his holy hill and because he has set up his throne on the earth. When the Lord sits on his throne, he will establish his holy city forever.

[21 : 06] That's the second thing. That brings us on to the third thing that will happen on the day of the Lord. When the Lord takes his seat, renewal, blessing, will flow from his presence.

Look at verse 18. And in that day the mountains shall drip sweet wine and the hills shall flow with milk and all the stream beds of Judah shall flow with water and a fountain shall come forth from the house of the Lord and water the valley of Shittim.

wine. Now you probably, if you've been with us as we look through Joel, you probably recognize this language of poured out blessings by now. The vineyards on the hills of Judah will be so abundant that the hills themselves might as well just flow with wine.

That's how much it is producing. And it's the same with the pastures and with the cows on the hills. They might as well flow with milk because it is just so abundant. And out from the house of the Lord, that is from where he is, from his presence, there is a fountain of water flowing that will water the valley of Shittim.

Now no one is quite sure what that valley is. Shittim is the Hebrew word for the acacia tree. That is a tree that grows in particularly dry places. So perhaps it's saying this fountain of the Lord will water even the really dry place, the place where the acacia tree grows.

[22 : 38] When the Lord takes his throne, even there will flourish. Another option is that Shittim was the last place that the Israelites camped before they crossed into the promised land.

So perhaps the valley that's being watered is sort of just beyond the promised land and so it's a symbol of everything plus more of the blessing of the Lord going out beyond the borders of the promised land.

Either way, the point is this, on the day of the Lord when he takes his throne, renewal and blessing that pours from his presence, it will be wholesale.

This is not a little drip from a tap, this is everything being renewed. The prophet Ezekiel uses this language as well. He says that this fountain of living water will become a river and then a great flood and then the whole sea will be filled with this water of life.

Wherever this stream of water goes from the presence of the Lord, life flourishes. And so when God takes his seat on the day of the Lord, his presence will pour out life, life to the full, life that can only be had when God has turned his face on his people to bless them.

[23 : 58] This is what the prophet Joel prophesies for the future of Judah. They have repented and so they have been swept up into the glories of the day of the Lord. They have turned back to him and so they're part of this now, this great day, in a good way.

In chapter one they were part of it in a really bad way, but now they're part of it in a really good way. And they're not just looking on as God does something cool, they're part of it.

It's for their sake. When that day dawns and the Lord takes his throne, it's their enemies who will be defeated, the ones who have wronged them and wronged the Lord. And God will establish his holy city forever and they will be the holy ones who live in it forever.

Renewal will flow from his presence and they will enjoy it forever. They, through this humble looking act of repentance, in whatever sliver of creation that they've been given responsibility for, they are the ones who have been swept up into the great things of the cosmos.

And so now they look forward, they look towards the horizon for the sun to rise and for this great day of the Lord to begin. That is where Judah has been left in Joel's day.

[25 : 20] Now perhaps you are struck sometimes by how small, how mundane your daily life appears to be. Most days are just normal. That's why they're normal.

The same routines, the same small patterns of things that you're used to. Well if you have taken the path of repentance, then things are not as small as they might seem.

If you have taken the same path of repentance that Joel has been encouraging God's people to take, then you and your life have been swept up into the same great cosmic events that Joel has been prophesying to Judah.

And so you read about these things and know you are part of them. You're not a casual observer. You're part of it all. Now of course many of us know that Jesus is coming again and so we read prophecies like these in Joel and we think, well that's wonderful, that's great.

These days are coming and one day I'll be able to leave all of this Monday and stuff behind and I'll be swept up into these amazing things. I'm looking forward to it. I look forward to it with deep joy and belief and it drives me on and that is excellent.

[26 : 37] But this morning as we finish looking at the book of Joel together, perhaps we need to refresh our perspective, not of the future, but of the days that we live in as well.

Joel and Judah were waiting for the sun to rise on the day of the Lord. They were waiting for the day when God would restore the fortunes of his people.

But now the sun has risen and that pun is massively intentional just in case anyone's missed it. The sun, Jesus Christ, has risen and so the dawn has come.

And so on the day of Pentecost we find the apostle Peter quoting this prophecy from Joel filled with the promised Holy Spirit that Joel also prophesied to Judah.

He told the crowd that was gathered around him that through Jesus Christ this day the day of the Lord has arrived. He said, let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus who you crucified.

[27 : 46] And so throughout the New Testament as we read we hear that Christ is the Lord that Jesus Christ has taken his seat that he has sat down on his throne and will rule now until all of his enemies are put under his feet.

Now this is all the same sort of language that we've been reading here in Joel. This day has come. And so when we read about these things here in Joel we should know that the beginning of them is already behind us.

We should always remember that the full glorious completion of them is still ahead of us. Still ahead of us. And these things are going on around us.

We are in the day of the Lord. We have been swept into these cosmic events and our lives now are part of them. These are the realities that shape our lives as Christians.

The day that the Lord sits on his throne has begun. And so as we look around us as we live as Christians what is the Lord Jesus Christ doing? Well let's take another brief look at these things that Joel prophesied to Judah.

[28 : 55] For these are the things that the Lord is doing. Firstly Jesus Christ has taken his throne and so he is judging the nations.

Now we as Christians we're dedicated to living as God's people, to declaring his word to the world, God's and this mission is the offer of mercy. Our lips, our lives declare that God forgives, that his love is poured out for lost sinners.

We often rightly think of our purpose that way and we should. But there is a double edge to our mission in the world. Have you noticed that not everyone likes to hear about Jesus?

Silly question, of course you've noticed. Have you noticed how the gospel message divides? Again, a silly question. It might feel like that is an accident to us but it is not an accident.

That is the hand of Christ at work separating, dividing, judging. This is written all over Jesus' ministry.

[30 : 08] I don't know what your mother said about you before you were born but Jesus' mother, before he was born, were singing songs about how his work would topple many who presumed to be kings in his place.

And now that the day of the Lord has begun, that carries on as the gospel is proclaimed, as people hear it and are either hardened to it or humbled before it.

Our gospel words and our gospel lives are not just good news, they are good news, but to some they are bad news. Remember what the apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians.

He said that the gospel is the fragrance of life and the stench of death. The gospel divides, it judges, it is the news that forces the choice of every rebel heart, the choice that forces everyone to either stumble and be crushed by Christ the cornerstone, or brings them to their knees to become part of his holy people.

It must do that because Christ is on his throne and the day of the Lord has begun. The gospel that we live and proclaim is Christ's weapon of war in the valley of decision and he is gathering the nations.

[31 : 24] Our repentance then sweeps us into this great battle of God's judgment and so in a way our worship together every week is warfare. Our Christian lives our warfare, our evangelism is warfare in a good way.

It means we are living for, we are fighting for, and yes we are dying for the glorious and righteous judgment of our Lord Jesus Christ and that is a privilege. What more could there be to live for than that?

And so I wonder what you expect your colleagues, your old school friends, your list of Instagram followers, I wonder what you think, you expect them to think of you as you live your Christian life or as you say your Christian things or perhaps I wonder what you expect them to think of other Christians.

It's easy to think, you know, I'm going to be embarrassed by my Christian testimony, but we also often look at other Christians and think why are they saying that thing? You know, people are going

to think that they're weirdos.

Well, you ought to expect some of them to think you are the weirdest person in the world. You ought to expect that. You ought to expect some of them to hate your Lord, no matter how winsome you might put it across, because the Lord is on his throne and he is judging the nations, and the day of the Lord has begun.

[32 : 48] We will be the stench of death to some, even whilst we are the fragrance of life, gloriously to many. Secondly, then, Christ has taken his throne, and so you are now part of his holy city.

Many of us here are from a variety of different places. Some of us are Glasgow born and bred, others of us are obviously not, myself included, and some of us won't be here for long.

But if you are a Christian, there is one place that you belong and will stay forever. If you are a Christian, these words of the Apostle Paul are about you. He said, the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother.

If you are a Christian, you are a citizen of that holy city, the true and heavenly Jerusalem. That is a city that is populated with royal priests, with the people of a holy nation, of glorious servants of the King of Kings, and so that is what you are.

After all, Christ, who has taken his throne, has poured his spirit out upon you, his holy spirit. So that is what you are, even now. It doesn't look like it yet, really.

[34 : 06] It doesn't look like it as you cook food for your family, or you go to the office again tomorrow, or as you visit your ill parent, or as you pray with a struggling friend, or even just refuse to give in to the lies that are told around you.

It doesn't always look like that is what you are. But as you do all things to the glory of God, as you live a full life of worship to God, you are doing that as a royal priest, a servant of the living God, a holy and glorious citizen of a holy city with the Holy Spirit of God in you.

Jesus Christ is establishing his true Jerusalem, and our hope is not that one day we will flee away to our city in the sky. The Christian hope is that the holy city is coming here.

And that's what the apostle John saw and wrote down in the book of Revelation. He saw the holy city coming out of heaven as a bride adorned for her husband and being established here on earth.

And that will happen. Joel also prophesies a great contrast between the lands of God's enemies and his holy city. The lands of his enemies would be left desolate with no lasting heritage.

[35 : 20] There would be no more sons to pick up their father's rage. Zion though will be filled with inhabitants forever. And has Christ not been doing this?

How many more Christians are there now than there were when the twelve apostles set out? Does it show any signs of slowing down? It might if you just look at Glasgow. But if you take a proper global perspective there are no signs of this slowing down.

And yet on the other hand how many sons does Zeus have these days? How lively is the worship of Horus or Osiris or of the Baals?

There might be a few weirdos here or there but it's not many. Not nations like it was. The heritage of these gods is desolate. Well let me take this chance to say that if you are here this morning and you have bound yourself to one of these gods to one of the gods of the world if you're an atheist if you're a Buddhist if you're a Muslim if you're anything else if you're just a normal person who doesn't do religion the day of the Lord has come know that Jesus Christ is sat on the throne and so the days of your God are numbered Jesus Christ today calls you to repent to be swept into these great events on the right side on the side of mercy and not on the side of destruction and so turn to him now while you still have a chance and whilst the day of his mercy is still here

Jesus Christ is establishing his holy city his church and the gates of hell will not stand against it thirdly then Jesus Christ has taken his throne and renewal flows from his presence and we can see this most clearly in the fact that when people believe the gospel it transforms their lives and we see that on an individual scale we see that on larger scales as well it transforms families it transforms societies as people come to believe the gospel things change as people come and pledge their allegiance to Jesus Christ and start listening to what he says listening to his work stuff happens and the word of God reaches into every corner of life and so it is unsurprising to see that Christ on his throne building his church has an impact on everything in some way or another now some

[38 : 09] Christians they get a little twitchy when you talk about the gospel transforming society they don't like to think about Christianity transforming anything other than perhaps the institution of the church or perhaps some individual lives here and there but that is to limit the lordship of Jesus in the day of the Lord that is to limit the authority of his words and those has to be said who like to

argue that way usually do it from within a culture that has already been transformed by Christianity but look through history look at the renewal that has flown from the presence of Christ with his church the transformation that has come because the day of the Lord has begun because Christ has taken his throne things have changed for the better for families for women for children for slaves for poor people for ill people and the list goes on and on all of this is simply to say that the spirit of God poured out on the people of God by the son of God changes things blessing renewal flows from the presence of God for the day of the

Lord has begun now the whole way through the book of Joel this book has been pushing us towards repentance always towards repentance first it was look around you see the shadows of the day of the Lord and wake up and if he's judged you there is one path to take repent and yet we've seen over and over again even though repentance looks and feels like a path down it is actually the path up that in the hands of God repentance is transformed into blessing as the Lord of every good gift pours out kindness and more than that through repentance we are swept up into events far greater than ourselves greater than anything we can imagine because the day of the Lord is here and he has called us to be part of it on his side because the son of God has taken his throne and yet as we leave the book of Joel it is only right to leave it looking forward because though these things have begun and they really have they surely are not finished yet

Christ is reigning and yet we don't yet see everything under his rule living for Christ still means facing enemies and sometimes being killed by them Christ is reigning the heavenly Jerusalem is being established and yet the church has not yet been revealed in all of her full and glorious holy beauty we her citizens we still fight with sin daily Christ is on the throne and renewal flows from his presence and yet we know that creation is still groaning still groaning for the freedom of full resurrection we still die we still get ill we still face all sorts of curse we still wait for the last enemy of all death to be overturned the day of the

Lord has begun but it hasn't finished yet and so we must leave this book looking forward with certain hope of things to come looking forward to the final day the final day when all of this is brought to a head a final cataclysmic transformative day the day when Christ's enemies are all destroyed forever entirely and no more to be seen enemies including death the day when the heavenly Jerusalem is here on earth in all of her glory and splendor the day when this whole cosmos in bondage to sin is transformed when the seeds sown in suffering are raised to life eternal Joel's message to us is that true repentance now in whatever arena we have been given will usher us into these great things and will be transformed into an inheritance of blessing for all of God's people forever and we know it will happen because it has already begun let's pray together heavenly father we praise you that you have set

Jesus Christ on the throne that you have exalted him above all rulers and nations and that he is the one who will judge all things thank you father that you have brought us to be your holy people to be on the right side of this great day so lord as we live lives here push us always towards repentance but push us towards repentance in hope knowing that you are a merciful God abounding in steadfast love bring us to our knees lord but bring us up again we pray in Jesus name amen