

The Time We Are In

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Date: 23 February 2020

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[0 : 00] We're going to turn now to our Bibles and to the passages that we're going to be looking at this morning. You'll see there's two passages there. Firstly, the prophet Joel. And if you have a church Bible, that's page 762.

If you don't, it's one of those tricky little books. It hides in between Hosea and Amos near the end of the Old Testament amongst all those little prophetic books. So we're going to be in Joel and then we're going to go to Acts chapter 2, where the passage that we read in Joel is in fact quoted by the Apostle Peter.

We're going to read on as to what else he speaks about as well. So Joel then, chapter 2 and verse 28, we're just reading this little section to the end of the chapter.

And Joel has been talking about in chapter 1 and the first half of chapter 2, a great judgment of God and then great mercy, restoration, following judgment.

And he says, And it shall come to pass afterwards that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.

[1 : 15] Even on the male and the female servants in those days I will pour out my spirit. And I'll show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke.

The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the Lord has said. And among the survivors shall be those whom the Lord calls.

Now turn over with me to the New Testament, to Acts chapter 2, where we're in the middle of Peter's great sermon on the day of Pentecost, the great beginning of the spread of the New Testament church.

And we're going to pick up at verse 22, just after Peter has quoted those very words from Joel that we've been reading. And then he says this, Men of Israel, hear these words.

[2 : 27] Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know, this Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. For, David says, concerning him, I saw the Lord always before me, for he's at my right hand, that I may not be shaken.

Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue rejoiced. My flesh also will dwell in hope, for you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption.

You have made known to me the pass of life. You will make me full of gladness with your presence. Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

Being there for a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ.

[4 : 05] That he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God raised up, and of that we are all witnesses.

Being there for exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this, that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.

That all the house of Israel therefore know for certain, that God has made him, both Lord and Christ.

This Jesus whom you crucified. Amen. And may God bless us his word. Hello. That's it.

[5 : 12] Great. You don't want to hear me sing, so it's probably good it was all turned off like that. And you don't want to hear me try and write a song for you to sing either, so I'm a little bit in awe that...

I thought William, you, PJ, Philip was some other person until this morning. I found out it was him. There you go. So, it's great to be here with you, and I do, I'm very conscious that we'll have some challenges in communication, because you've got an accent, very heavy accent, and I have none. And so that, it's very hard to listen to someone with a neutral accent, isn't it? So, that will be tricky for us. Let's see if we can manage that. But it has been great being with you. I've thoroughly enjoyed your welcome.

Be encouraged. God, it's just wonderful to see what God is doing amongst you, and it really has been a great honour and privilege to be amongst you, and so pray he does much more, but it is very encouraging.

Well, I've come to speak to you from a very long way away, and I don't know you well, and so it's hard to... How do I speak into your context without knowing your particular situation and circumstance?

[6 : 24] There's not much I can kind of grab in any detail. So what I've chosen to do is engage with a question that is a universal one, that's a question that deals with our issues everywhere across the planet, and it's the question of time.

I want to talk to you about the time. Time is one of those things that we are all immersed in. You can't get out of it. It's moving again and again and again, and you're all captured up in what's happening in time, and so many of you might be thinking about what's coming tomorrow and what's coming next weekend and what's happened in the past and your anniversaries, and you're kind of consumed with all the things that are happening, Brexit and Scottish independence.

Does anyone really still care about Scottish independence? I've never understood all this from a distance, but you're kind of thinking about all of these issues and the times and so on, and I want to talk to you about something that raises you above those aspects of time to see the larger frame within which you live your lives, within which you might understand the times we're in.

And I think it's deeply important. It's a powerful thing to engage with. I want to do it from a passage of Scripture that is one of the great moments in time, Acts chapter 2.

So grab your Bibles, turn up to Acts chapter 2. It is a great moment itself, but it speaks of the great moment that's just occurred, and I want to take you through it.

[7 : 55] But here's the thing. As we start doing this together, it won't be immediately obvious how this passage relates to us and speaks about time.

I want to go through the text and sort of work our way through the passage, spend a bit of time on that, and let the message of the text emerge over time, dare I say.

It'll come out towards the end, which means I want to ask you to do something quite special today. I want to invite you to suspend disinterest. Do you know when you go to a movie, one of those action movies, and if you ever sit next to someone who's into realism, they're very annoying in action because it's like, that can't happen.

That's rubbish. It never works like that. And you want to say, just suspend disbelief so we can enjoy this for it together, right? Well, I want to do something of that, not suspend disbelief. I want you to believe things, but I want you to suspend disinterest.

Basically, I'm saying I'm going to do a lot of work and it's going to be hard to get through it all, and I'm asking you to bear with me. If I was a better preacher, I wouldn't need to do that, but I'm doing it anyway, so there you are. Work with me this morning, all right.

[9 : 06] Acts chapter 2. Let's do all the effort and go through it. I think it is massively worth it, so bear with me. Acts chapter 2, verse 1, locates it in time.

It's the day of Pentecost, which, assuming Jesus' death and resurrection is AD 33, you're now 50 days after that. The festival of Pentecost was 50 days after the festival of Passover, which is when Jesus died.

And at the day of Pentecost, they were all together, about 120 of the disciples. Suddenly, a sound like a blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.

They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them, and all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

So you had this quite remarkable event where these people are touched by the Holy Spirit in quite a profound way. The tongues separates the fire, separates on each of them, rests, they're filled with the Spirit, they begin to speak in other languages.

[10:11] And I take it the other languages are unlearned languages that they're speaking. It is quite remarkable. And the particular experience of this is verse 5.

There was a group staying in Jerusalem. God-fearing Jews from every nation. So they've been dispersed and all over the world, and now they've come back for this festival, and they happen to be there.

And when, verse 6, they heard this sound, the crowd came together in bewilderment because each one heard their own language being spoken. I think it's a miracle of the speaking, not the hearing, but they each heard their own language being spoken.

You can see where they're all from there in verse 9, 10, all over the world with all their different language backgrounds. Verse 7, they're utterly amazed. Aren't all these speaking Galileans?

Then how is it each of us hears them in our native language? Remarkable. Now, this event kicks off the first sermon of the Christian period, if you like, the great first sermon of the Apostle Peter.

[11:16] And he stands up to explain this circumstance. Look at verse 14. Peter stood up with the eleven, raised his voice, addressed the crowd, fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you.

Listen carefully to what I'm about to say. Suspend disinterest. Ah, it's nice to see Peter having to do that as well, isn't it? Suspend disinterest.

Bear with me. Let me explain. Because this event is not very obvious. You might misunderstand what's happening here. It is easy to get distracted with all that was happening.

Back in the first century, back in that period, the first hearers easily got distracted and missed what was happening. The first crowd there, verse 13, thought they were drunk. They've had too much wine.

So this event of speaking could have easily seen as drunkenness because it would have sounded to one person with all the different languages being spoken, babble, just, you know, everyone babbling on.

[12:17] And so it could have sounded like drunkenness, you see. But they just dismissed it as that. That's what this event is. It's just kind of craziness. Interestingly today, many moderns can get distracted as they read this passage as well.

This is one of those passages that causes many modern Christians, particularly jaded Westerners who want a little bit more in their life, to get distracted in terms of thinking, gee, how can I have that experience?

How come I've not spoken in tongues? And is there something missing in my Christian life? And so on. And so you can kind of read this passage and get caught up all in the experience of the spirit coming down and so on and miss what's happening.

In fact, you might be aware that this is where the modern Pentecostal movement has its roots. In the Azusa Street Revival, back in the early 1900s, there was an experience, so-called, of a group of believers who gathered and had what they believed to be the same experience of the spirit coming down and they're more suddenly speaking in tongues.

And it kicked off this sense that a believer can be someone who's not yet full of the spirit and needs to go through a second baptism of the spirit, their own Pentecost, where they might too now be, Acts chapter 2, filled with the spirit and able to speak in tongues.

[13:31] And so hence Pentecostal movement is about each Christian having their own Pentecostal experience. Now, that also, I think, misunderstands the event and is a distraction, really.

So this passage can easily get lost. It is far more profound and far more complex than it immediately appears.

It's not actually about tongues and it's not even really about the spirit, though it is. And my aim is to try and get us into Peter's mind, to enter into his world and see what he sees in the event. Because if we can step back there and see the way he sees what's happening, it will change everything. It will change your whole life. And it really is worth pursuing.

You see, not all events give their own interpretation. Events happen and are generally ambiguous. [14:33] You need someone to explain them. I mean, the very immediate one that comes to mind for me was driving. I was driving on a road near my home and our speed limit is 40 miles an hour.

How good is that? They trust us more than you. Anyway, we can drive faster in our country. But I was driving along and a police car was coming the opposite direction and suddenly its siren went on.

And this is... I'm going to tell you my thinking process. Its siren went on and I thought, ah, there's someone back there who's in big trouble, right? But then he pulled around behind me and did a U-turn with his siren still going and drove up behind me.

And you know what my next thought was? There's someone in front of me who's in a lot of trouble. But then he pulled up behind me and pulled me over. And here's exactly what I thought.

And this is no... This is no lie. Not that I would ever lie, but this is no lie. My next thought was he saw how well I turned the corner and wants to congratulate him.

[15:34] I don't know. I'm an Australian. I just expect everything to go well. But he didn't want to do that. He got out of the car and he explained to me the speed limit's actually been dropped to 30 miles an hour, not 40.

And I said, no, it's not. It's still 40. And so we had a discussion about whether it is or not. And I said to him, look, whatever. Let's just agree to disagree. And that didn't go very well with him.

And so he won the argument and fined me. But my point in all of that, in my defence, the speed limit had changed within the last month in that particular area and I hadn't been aware of it. But the point of all of that is to say there are lots of events.

The siren doesn't tell you what's happening. You need someone to explain it. The person who beeps the horn. Is that, hi, it's great to see you or you're a rat bag, move out of the way.

I mean, you don't know what that actually means until someone explains it. You see what I'm saying? The event of Pentecost with the coming of the Spirit and the tongues spoken, what does that mean?

[16:36] What is that event? Do you see? It doesn't itself explain to you what's happening. And so verse 14, Peter stands up before the crowd to explain it.

And let me just give you the broad picture and I'll give you the details. The broad picture is that he goes to three Old Testament passages to explain it. Verse 17, he goes to Joel, the prophet, Joel chapter 2.

Then in verse 25, he goes to Psalm 16 to explain it. And then he goes to verse 34, Psalm 110. He goes to three different Old Testament passages to help his hearers make sense of this event. Notice how he's done that. An event has occurred.

How do you make sense of it? He goes back to the Bible. There is the way you make sense of life. If you want to make sense of life, go back to the Bible. And that's what Peter the Apostle does.

[17:40] Now my intention is to take you through those three passages. Because they're the means by which he explains Pentecost. Now he could assume that people knew those passages and so just speak them.

Most of us are unfamiliar with them so I'm going to take you through them. Here's the work that we're going to do. You see, I'm going to take you through a lot of work and you're going to go, what on earth is this all about? Suspend disinterest and bear with me.

Okay? Let's go first back to Joel 2. Actually, come back to Joel 1. I want to take you through the whole book of Joel to make sense of Joel 2.

Now Joel is a prophet we don't know a great deal about. We don't know where he was and when he was about the 8th, 9th century BC. But what we do, so a long time before Jesus, but what we do know is that he spoke, I'm going to summarise it like this, he speaks three things.

He speaks firstly about judgment and it's a terrible judgment. Look at verse 2, here you will, as listen you who live in the land, has anything like this ever happened in your days?

[18:49] What's happened? Verse 4, a locust swarm has left the great locusts. What the locust swarm has left, the great locusts have eaten, what the great locusts have left, the young locusts

Do you notice the heart of this passage? It's an awareness that we are at the mercy of God and our only hope is that he might relent. You have that there?

[24 : 47] Our only hope is that he might relent. And the wonderful news is that he is a compassionate and gracious God and he will relent. So the second thing, the first thing is judgment. The second thing is God does relent.

And then you get a beautiful description of the way God relents. He brings restoration. He brings blessing. Chapter 2, verse 18 and so on, he sends grain and new wine and brings blessing back again.

Second thing, first thing, judgment. Second thing, relents, bring blessing. The third thing, verse 28. And after that, afterward, after judgment, after blessing of restoration, I will pour out my spirit on all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Now don't get caught up on the prophecy and the dreams and the visions. The point here is that Joel is saying, that God is saying that after judgment and restoration will be coming a time of the spirit where God's spirit will dwell in all people, all of his people, young, old, male, female, servant, master, everybody.

Such is the blessing of God's presence that he'll come mercifully back to his people. It's a beautiful book and it's a wonderful set of message, the three things.

[26 : 07] Now I've put them up here on the slide for us to see. The spirit age will come, it's a new age and it will bring salvation for all. Verse 32, everyone who calls on the name of the Lord in this era, you see, judgment, restoration, then the age of the spirit where everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

It's a beautiful picture of the future. First passage. Second passage. Come with me to Psalm 16. Much quicker.

Psalm 16. It's a song of David. It's a prayer of David. And verse 7, he praises the Lord who counsels him every night. My heart instructs me.

Keep my eyes always on the Lord. Verse 9, he is glad and he rejoices. Look at verse 10. Why?

Psalm 16, verse 10. Why does he rejoice?

He rejoices because the Lord will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, to the grave. Nor will you let your faithful ones see decay. He rejoices because the Lord will not let him be abandoned to the realm of the dead, to decay.

[27 : 22] That's a wonderful hope. David rejoices in it. There's a small problem with it though. What's the problem? What's the problem with the hope of David in the Psalm, Psalm 16?

He's still dead. The one who rejoices that he won't see decay is actually rotting in a tomb, still. This was an issue the early Jews picked up. It wasn't hard to work out there's something wrong here. And they began to realise what began to emerge was that David was speaking about someone else, his greatest son, the one who would never die, who would be a great king, but be a great king who would never have his body decay, but would live forever, to be a lord of people forever, to be an eternal king.

So King David, his greatest son, an eternal ruler over all nations, is the picture that Psalm 16 paints for us. That one day there's that one going to come. Let's go to the third passage, Psalm 110.

Now this is a curious psalm. Verse 1.

[28 : 50] The Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet. Now it's a curious verse that Jesus himself picks up in Matthew 22 to draw on the curious character of it because who, the Lord, is the Lord Yahweh, who's speaking to the writer of the Psalms, Lord.

Who is that Lord? Who is the Lord that David has as Lord that God speaks of? It's a puzzle that sat there. Whoever this Lord is, verse 2, God will extend his kingdom, his scepter, his rule from Zion to be overall.

and his rule will be so powerful that his troops, verse 3, will be willing in battle. That wasn't typical in the ancient world. When you had armies, they didn't run into battle, they walked slowly, hoping the person next to them went a little bit faster.

No one really wanted to make, so, you know, but his army will be willing. And verse 4, he will be a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek, this one.

That is to say, now Melchizedek's a funny figure back in the Old Testament who appears and disappears, but he is a king, the king of Salem, the king of Jerusalem, who's also a priest. And to have a king and a priest in the one person is unusual.

[30 : 13] But what Psalm 110 says is that there's one one day coming that God himself will fight for and will establish his rule over all forever and will crush every enemy.

He will be such powerful king, that all the enemies will be crushed beneath him and he'll also be a priest. He'll also be a priest. Now, there are the three passages.

I want you to notice one thing, actually I want you to notice 20 things, but let me just pick one thing for the moment. I want you to notice this one thing. I'm going to leave those up there because I want to come back to them in a second. You cannot understand the Bible unless you understand movement.

the Bible functions with this movement of history towards a point. The Old Testament passages we've looked at are all anticipating something to come.

History for the Bible, time for the Bible doesn't just go around and around. It doesn't drift aimlessly. It's moving towards an appointed time place.

[31 : 26] That's important to appreciate. And that place that it's moving towards is a time when God will not just be Lord because he's always been Lord, but he will be Lord in a way that is uncontested.

He did rule the universe without any contest. He has always ruled the universe as the sovereign Lord with those that contest him. And it's moving back to the place where every contest will be destroyed and he will be the undisputed Lord of the universe, ruling over all.

Come back to Psalm 2, Acts chapter 2 now. There's your background. Acts chapter 2.

verse 14. This sermon is utterly profound. It's an announcement. It's actually an explanation to provide the basis for an announcement.

The spirit experience happens. That experience is itself ambiguous. It's not obvious what it is.

There's people suddenly speaking in other languages to the Jews who are all gathered from all the different countries.

[32 : 44] It's not obvious what that is. Peter has to explain its significance. Verse 14. He has to say, fellow Jews, all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you. Listen carefully.

You need to listen carefully. He then starts to put it in place. Verse 15. These people are not drunk as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning.

That's an argument that just would not work in Australia. Oh, okay. That's why that went anyway. It worked in the Jerusalem context.

This is not what's going on. You've misunderstood it. Your interpretation is not correct. This is what's happening. And he says, Joel 2, 28 has just happened.

That great promise of the age of the spirit has now begun. He goes to Joel 2 to tell them that the thing they've been longing for and waiting for has now been fulfilled.

[33 : 45] Followers of Jesus, young and old, men and women, will now receive the personal presence of God to be with them in a way that God had been waiting to bring about. And the evidence that that new time has come is this experience you've seen, which is complex if you think about it.

because think back with me to Joel. When did the coming of the spirit in Joel 2, verse 28 come? It came after a series of things.

What did it come after? Can you remember? It came after judgment and then restoration and after that I'll pour out my spirit and it'll be the age of salvation.

Do you remember that little movement? That's a complexity I want to come back to in a moment.

But Peter says this is that. This is that great moment we've been waiting for.

Can you imagine the power of that statement in the first century? The Jews read their prophecies, they were gathered together in Jerusalem having been the scattered ones and I appreciate this, they've been scattered because they've had a sense that God's judgment has been upon their nation.

[35 : 00] and they've been scattered into other nations because that's not the way it should be but God has been against them and judging them. But now they find themselves back in Jerusalem and look at verse 11, they're hearing the wonders of God proclaimed to them in their own tongues.

There's a taste and a touch that something new is happening. there's a reversal of the curse that's been upon us. The age we've been longing to see, Peter says, is now coming and the blessing of salvation is now upon us.

But then verse 22, he rushes on from that to talk about Jesus which is natural because Jesus is the key to this new age coming, that's his very point.

And so through verse 22 down to verse 33, he explains how Jesus is the key. Jesus was a man accredited to you by miracles, wonders and signs which God did among you through him as you yourselves know.

This is history, you know this is true. This is not something in a far flung mystery in another universe, you've seen this happen. Verse 23, but you killed him though it was according to God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge.

[36 : 17] It was purposed that he would die. The death of Jesus wasn't an accident, but verse 24, the big thing is God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

Now think again, why was it impossible for death to keep hold of Jesus? Verse 25, Psalm 16, Jesus is the Psalm 16 man, the one who could never be held in the grave.

He's the one that we've been waiting for, the one who would be the king, the greater son who would be the eternal ruler over all nations and his resurrection demonstrates him to be the Psalm 16 man.

Now, all of this comes after judgment, all of this, remember the Joel 2 quote, there's a complexity there about the spirit age and so on, I want to come back to that, but he comes having quoted Psalm 16 verse 29, he tells us, I can tell you confidently the patriarch David died and was buried in his tomb is here today, Psalm 16 was not about him, but he prophesied and knew that God had promised on oath he would place one on the descendants on his throne seeing what was to come, he spoke about the resurrection of the Messiah, that he would not be abandoned to the realm of the dead.

God raised this Jesus to life and we are all witnesses of it. We are now those that can declare plainly Jesus is the Psalm 16 man and because of his resurrection verse 33 and ascension he has received the promised Holy Spirit and poured out what you now see.

[38 : 05] He's the key to the Pentecost experience. because of his death and resurrection. He's the one we've been waiting for. God has raised him to life again. These things are extraordinary.

You think with me about the resurrection. When we talk about the resurrection to our friends, I hope you do, what are you trying to convince your friends of when you talk about the resurrection?

resurrection. In my experience, many of us are trying to do a couple of different things. We're trying to prove to our friends that there is a miraculous world out there. Jesus is the heart of the miracle.

Or we're trying to prove there's life after death. This world's not it. Or we're trying to prove perhaps that Jesus is God in some fashion because he's been raised from the dead. We're trying to show a number of things.

None of those things the Jews did with the resurrection because they believed there was life after death. They believed there's a miraculous thing. They didn't need any of those things. The resurrection didn't prove any of that for them. What did the resurrection prove according to Peter?

[39 : 07] What did the resurrection of Jesus prove according to Peter? Jesus is the Psalm 16 man. Jesus is the Psalm 110 man.

Jesus is the one we've been waiting for, the Lord of heaven and earth. He is the King of kings. He has been by his resurrection raised to the right hand of God the father who is fighting for him to bring every enemy under his feet.

Verse 34. And then the final great verse which needs cannons exploding around it when you say it. Verse 36. Therefore let all Israel be assured of this.

God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Messiah. Wow. Because of the resurrection from the grave.

He is the king and priest. He is the one, that man who walked the streets of Palestine, is the one now elevated to the right hand of God that every king on the planet will bow the knee to.

[40 : 22] He is the one before whom prime ministers and presidents and CEOs and powerful people will have to give an account to. He has been raised as that one.

It is an astonishing claim. The one you crucified is the one God has made both Lord and Christ. And verse 32. We are witnesses of this.

We saw it. This is not superstitious. This is not legend, myth. It is real. And Peter is deeply concerned to make clear that they did see it because the implications of Jesus' resurrection are so utterly profound.

Let me give you one that is not as evident to us. Do you know, when I went through Joel, I took some time to go through Joel because I wanted you to notice this.

Joel 1 talks about judgment. then restoration. Then after that, the pouring out of the spirit in the age of salvation.

[41 : 30] If Jesus' death and resurrection and the moment of Pentecost is the pouring out of the spirit, what does that assume has already come before it? Do you see?

Joel talked about judgment, restoration, then the pouring out of the spirit. If the pouring out of the spirit has occurred in fulfillment of Joel 2, what does that assume has already come before it? Judgment and restoration. Now, where did judgment and restoration happen? In the death of Jesus and his resurrection.

In the death of Jesus, there is the event of God's judgment being poured out on humanity.

In the death of Jesus, the sun no longer gave its light, the earth shook, the graves were broken open because this is the great and terrible day of the Lord.

[42 : 35] When God's judgment upon human sin on the powers above and the princes of earth were poured out on his son, in that one place. But then you go, that all sounded like it was the end of time.

How come we're still living in this period of time when there's rebellion and hostility and opposition to God and how come that's happening? Let me give you the illustration that does it.

I used to be an engineer back in the day and don't ask me to do any engineering now, it's 30 years ago, I can't remember any of it. But I do remember these occasions when buildings got blown up. I don't know if you've ever seen it on TV or in real life, but have you ever seen those occasions when a high-rise building needs to be demolished? explosion? They set the explosion around the foundations of the building and they then run back a long way and hide behind their range rover or something and get safe and get everyone away and then they push a button or turn a lever or something or other.

You see in the distance the explosions blow the bottom of the building out. Have you seen this kind of thing? Now have you noticed what happens next? Explosion. Watch the building and nothing happens.

[43 : 58] Just for a moment it pauses and you think it didn't work, but then momentum, gravity grabs and it starts to fall down.

You seen that? There's this little pause just before it drops to the ground. The death and resurrection of Jesus was the moment when God reached into the universe and poured out his judgment, his last day's judgment on the earth and tore the foundations out from the planet, tore the foundations out from under our history when the day of the Lord happened.

The last 2,000 years we've been living in the pause before the drop. We've been living in the pause before the drop.

The Lord God in his mercy, instead of bringing all that at the great end of time, brought that judgment into time and held it up.

Why? do you give us a chance to escape? Do you give us a chance to flee to the one place of mercy, Jesus?

[45 : 21] Do you see? Let me give you the four implications of all of this. Can you see how it now starts to land? Let me give you the four things that flow from this. First one is very quick. The first one is that if you're in touch with the Holy Spirit, you won't talk about the Spirit, you'll talk about Jesus.

Peter, filled with the Spirit, rushes immediately to talk about the Lord Jesus. A church that's captured by the Holy Spirit will be a Jesus church. Don't get jaded and disappointed with Jesus and want something more.

He is where it's all found. Second thing, this passage is a warning to us that you need to take care and grow in your wisdom about who you are.

what is man? We are utterly frail at the mercy of many forces and ultimately at the mercy of the Lord God.

Death will take us and you can't stop it. You will stand before God and you can't stop that and you can't plead your way out of that. You are at his mercy.

[46 : 34] Which means therefore thirdly, flee to the one who is merciful. Plead with the Lord God that he might be merciful, that he might bring you forgiveness.

And know this, he will because of the merits of Christ. Let me give you the next one along. Third, Christ has been raised and he does now rule.

He is the Lord. God. And that's not just superstitious myth. The apostle is very keen to tell you it's based in eyewitness history. Be strengthened in your convictions that Jesus is who he is.

He has died. He has been raised. He is ruling now. We are not just in touch with a special needs club. This is in touch with reality.

Our only hope is the Lord Jesus Christ. It's concrete. We don't believe that which is unbelievable. We believe that which has evidence to strengthen our hand in it.

[47 : 39] But let me give you the last thought. Time is not just drifting along. When you see the death and resurrection of Jesus, you realise what time we're in.

We're in the pause before the drop. That's the time we're living in. When you look back at the death and resurrection of Jesus, you realise that the whole God's purpose is to judge and destroy has taken place.

And we are simply awaiting his final timing when he will let it all be consummated. But in his kindness, he has given us these years to hold that building up for one reason only.

That you might escape and find mercy and help others escape and find mercy. This is not the time to renovate the flat.

This is not the time to live engrossed in the things of the world. This is the time to be aware of the times we're in. We're in the pause before the drop.

[48 : 56] These days are urgent days because the Lord God might let that fall at any moment. Can I urge you from a distance, from another country, with a different culture, future, to be about the things of Jesus, to look again closely at the things of Jesus, to see what time we're in and let that shape your lives.

May it be that you live consistently in light of that truth. We're in the pause before the drop. Make the most of every opportunity. How about I pray?

Heavenly Father, we do ask, please, that you might help us take to heart these great truths. We thank you for your extraordinary holiness and your extraordinary grace and mercy that's provided a place of safety.

We thank you that you have relented and sent the Lord Jesus. We thank you that you have relented and held off the end. Help us please appreciate that we live in that time, that we might make the most of these times, and we ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen. Good luck. God bless you, God bless you. God bless you, God bless you. God bless you, God bless you and may Allah keep the Kimicki because after you request you bye to■ on the school.

[50 : 16] God bless you, God bless you, God bless you, God bless you. It is family size. God bless you, God bless you, God bless you, God bless you, Amen, Go see you today.

God bless you, God bless you. God bless you.