

Death Reigns -- But Not Supreme!

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- [0 : 00] Well, we're going to turn to our Bible reading now, so please do pick up your Bibles and turn to Genesis chapter 5. A little later in the service, Willie will be preaching to us from this passage, in this section of Genesis, all about the beginning of hope.
- Genesis chapter 5, we're going to read the whole chapter together. So beginning at verse 1, hear the word of the Lord. This is the book of the generations of Adam.
- When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. Male and female, he created them, and blessed them, and named them man, when they were created.
- When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness. After his image, and named him Seth. The days of Adam, after he fathered Seth, were 800 years.
- And he had other sons and daughters. Thus, all the days that Adam lived were 930 years. And he died. When Seth had lived 105 years, he fathered Enosh.
- [1 : 24] Seth lived, after he fathered Enosh, 807 years, and had other sons and daughters. Thus, all the days of Seth were 912 years. And he died.
- When Enosh had lived 90 years, he fathered Kenan. Enosh lived, after he fathered Kenan, 815 years, and had other sons and daughters.
- Thus, all the days of Enosh were 905 years. And he died. When Kenan had lived 70 years, he fathered Mahalalel.
- Kenan lived, after he fathered Mahalalel, 840 years, and had other sons and daughters. Thus, all the days of Kenan were 910 years.
- And he died. When Mahalalel had lived 65 years, he fathered Jared. Mahalalel lived, after he fathered Jared, 830 years, and had other sons and daughters.
- [2 : 29] Thus, all the days of Mahalalel were 895 years. And he died. When Jared had lived 162 years, he fathered Enoch.
- Jared lived, after he fathered Enoch, 800 years, and had other sons and daughters. Thus, all the days of Jared were 962 years.
- And he died. When Enoch had lived 65 years, he fathered Methuselah. Enoch walked with God.
- After he fathered Methuselah, 300 years, and had other sons and daughters. Thus, all the days of Enoch were 365 years. Enoch walked with God.
- And he was not. For God took him. When Methuselah had lived 187 years, he fathered Lamech. Methuselah lived, after he fathered Lamech, 782 years, and had other sons and daughters.
- [3 : 36] Thus, all the days of Methuselah were 969 years. And he died. When Lamech had lived 182 years, he fathered a son and called his name Noah, saying, Out of the ground that the Lord has cursed, this one shall bring us relief.
- Literally, the Hebrew word is comfort. He shall bring us comfort from our work and from the painful toil of our hands. Lamech lived, after he fathered Noah, 595 years, and had other sons and daughters.

Thus, all the days of Lamech were 777 years. And he died. After Noah was 500 years old, Noah fathered Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Well, amen. And may God bless to us this, his holy word. We'll do turn to Genesis chapter 5 and the passage that we read together there.

Perhaps you assume that we would skip over chapter 5 and get on to the more exciting material in chapter 6 and the story of Noah and so on.

[4 : 54] I'm sure you may have thought we can't possibly spend a whole evening looking at a boring genealogy. But here's the thing. If we ignored biblical genealogies, we'd have to cut a lot of pages out of our Bibles.

First nine chapters of 1 Chronicles, for one thing. If we take the Bible seriously, we have to ask, why are all these genealogies here?

Paul tells us, doesn't he, that all Scripture is here to make us wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. In fact, the first chapter of the New Testament, Matthew's Gospel, is one long genealogy.

Matthew obviously thought it was very important to root his whole Gospel story in a story going all the way back to Abraham. In the book of Genesis. In fact, in Luke's third chapter, his genealogy goes all the way back to Adam.

So if we're going to take the Gospel of Jesus as seriously as they did, we can't ignore this genealogy or any others. But, having said that, we do need to approach a Bible genealogy the right way and not the wrong way.

[6 : 05] We also make all kinds of wrong and ignorant assumptions about their function, their purpose in biblical literature. So let me say, first of all, four things by way of introduction.

First, genealogies in the Bible are nearly always selective. Look at verse 3 here. It only mentions Seth, doesn't it, of Adam's many sons and daughters.

We know about Cain. We've had his line in chapter 4. But the point is, we're now moving on to the main story. And as Derek Kidner says, in the history of salvation, the family of Cain is an irrelevance.

So only key names are included here. And that's so with many other genealogies. And that means that there are very likely very significant gaps.

We can't assume a simple chronology from a genealogy. And that's also partly to do with the second thing. And that is that genealogies tend to be carefully shaped.

[7 : 06] So we're given 10 generations exactly here from Adam to Noah. Just as in chapter 11, we have 10 exactly between Noah and Abraham.

It's very tidy. It's very memorable. That's why it's been done that way. 10 and 10. Just as in Matthew chapter 1, in his genealogy, we get three sets of exactly 14 names.

From Abraham to David. From David to the exile. And from the exile to Christ. So he conveniently summarizes the whole of redemption's history in those three blocks of 14.

Now, if you delve into Old Testament history, it's very clear that Matthew has been very selective in order to shape that genealogy like that. That's not because he's being dishonest.

Nor does it mean that the Bible is unreliable. But it's because the Bible genealogies are not like the electoral roll. That's not what they're there for. They're not there to give us every single name and every single generation.

[8 : 07] And everybody knew that. What they're there to do is give a convenient way of linking present real people with past real history in a supremely personal way.

And that's what Moses is doing here. They show us the passing of time anchored in real history, but with an economy of words and details. We skip over a long, long period.

So we've got to be careful. Don't just go to a Bible genealogy. Add up all the numbers here between Adam and Noah and try and work out the number of years that have passed. That's not the way we're to do that. That's a dangerous thing to do.

Sometimes people have done that. But the Bible itself never, ever does that. Never uses a genealogy that way. Well, if there's clear selectivity and if there's clear shaping for a purpose, does that extend to the numbers that are involved here?

Are we to take these numbers, the ages, literally, as we would understand years? Or are they also part of the literary device that is a genealogy?

[9 : 15] Well, it's not impossible that they're literal. I don't consider that impossible at all. Some people have assumed that these are literal years of life and argued that, well, the lifespan of humans decreased with time as sins followed.

It became more and more severe in the world. And it's true that if you look at the lifespans and the genealogies before and after the flood, chapter 11, they tend to be smaller numbers.

But the problem there is that Genesis 6 verse 5 tells us very plainly that sin had reached its zenith long before the flood.

In fact, that was the reason for that judgment, because sin was so great. I think it seems much more likely that these numbers have a more formal symbolic significance.

There are lots of other long lists from the ancient world that we have and that we know of, and they use vast numbers like that. So, for example, the Sumerian king lists.

[10 : 19] They have lifespans of 25,000 years, 42,000 years, and so on. These are not legendary figures that have been talked about there. They're people for whom historical records exist.

And so it seems that they're at least, these huge numbers, are not speaking of literal years of life, but they're speaking of relative longevity, relative greatness in comparison with others.

And they're doing it using a conventional symbolism that everybody understood. And the truth is that at such a distance that we live, we just don't know enough about the language of their numerology.

So, if we assume that whatever they write means exactly what we mean when we write these things, that's a very dangerous assumption. Just for example, take this idea.

4,000 years from now, archaeologists dig up records in the desert, in Qatar, for something called the 2022 FIFA World Cup football.

[11 : 23] Now, let's just assume that football had then died out for at least 2,000 years. Nobody knows what that game is. Nobody knows anything about it. And they dig up this picture of a player with a banner underneath it saying 70 caps.

Will they know what that means? Well, very possibly not. It might be people writing PhDs about the number of hats.

Well, 70 hats obviously signified a man of very great wealth. He had a lot of wealth and money, and this was a very great person, probably a king. Somebody else had come along and said, no, no, no, it's nothing to do with that.

It's that it was very, very hot, and so you had to have sun hats so as not to get sunburned. And this person was obviously very sensitive to the sun. If, on the other hand, somebody then digs up a list with the names of a whole load of different players who were all apparently playing in whatever this football World Cup was, and they see that this person has 70 caps, and this person has 60, and another one has 120, and another one just has two, then they will very probably, even if they don't know what football is, be able to reckon that, well, compared with this one and this one, this is the ranking of where these people stood.

And certainly here, you see, in this kind of list, there does seem to be some very clear significance. What we're being shown is how people relate to one another. And there are two figures that stand out very, very greatly.

[12 : 49] Verse 23, there's Enoch. Do you notice he lived exactly 365 years? A perfect year of years. And then verse 31, there's Lamech, who lived for 777 years.

Three times seven, the perfect number. So I think it may well be better to read these ages in that way, rather than exactly literal numbers of years.

Because for one thing, the person who wrote Genesis, Moses as we believe, Moses himself in Psalm 90 tells us, doesn't he, that the normal lifespan of a human being is three score years and ten, or perhaps four score years.

And he's talking plainly there about normal lifespans of people. He's quite capable of doing that. But however we take the message of this passage, it is not dependent on the nature of those years.

Rather, in pointing to the shaping and the selectivity of the account, that draws our attention as we read it to the similarity that's all through the account.

[14 : 08] Did you notice that? Every single entry follows the same pattern. You have the person who lives, you have them fathering somebody, you're given the number of years of their life, and then we're told they're died.

Everyone has the same pattern, but that clearly draws our attention to two very key points in this genealogy where there are distinct differences. Two names stand out because they vary from that pattern that's all the way through.

Enoch and Lamech. And that's clearly very significant. So when we read this genealogy, when we pay attention to the shape, to the selectivity, to the similarity in the form, then, then I think we begin to see the significance that the writer wants us to see.

It's not just a meaninglessness at least. It's a list with a very clear message. It is, like all scripture, God's word to us and God's word for us. If you want this chapter and the first eight verses of chapter six, which belong to one section, this book of Genesis, the book of the generations of Adam, what does it say to us about God?

What does it say to us about mankind? What does it say to us about the world? That's always the question we ask of the scriptures. And the answer is that this chapter speaks a powerful message that contrasts all the way through the sin and the wickedness of man and the grace and the goodness of God.

[15 : 44] This second account, this book two of the Genesis accounts, the generations of Adam, it's all about the beginning of hope. It proclaims to us loudly that death reigns, yes, but not supreme.

Just as the first eight verses of chapter six tell us plainly, yes, sin reigns in the world, but not forever. Chapter five here tells us about man's death, but also about God's purpose.

About the inevitable death of man, yes, but despite that, the irrepressible purpose of God for man's life, for life as God meant it to be.

So let's dig in and look at this. First of all, we are faced very clearly, aren't we, with the painful reign of death. You can't have missed the power, the intensity of the main melody of this chapter.

It blasts its note again and again and again. That dark rhythm with terrible intensity. And he died. And he died. And he died.

[16 : 55] And he died. Paul says, doesn't he, death reigned from Adam to Moses. And here we're faced with the starkness of that fact.

Even through the line of Seth, the holy seed, death reigns. Despite all the hope that Genesis chapter 4 ended with, do you remember in verse 26 there, the fledgling church calling on the name of the Lord, a counterculture in the middle of this violent world of Cain and Lamech.

Even for them, the bell tolls. Even over them, the holy seed of God, death reigns.

And the tragedy of that is real and we're meant to feel that. The music of Genesis chapter 5 is a symphony pathétique, every bit as dark, every bit as haunting as Tchaikovsky 6.

And it reminds us of the horror of the curse of chapter 3. To dust you shall return. You shall surely die. It drives home to us, doesn't it, that God's word there was abundantly true.

[18 : 10] The serpent's word was abundantly false, saying you will not die. No, you will die. Adam lived, but he died. And Seth, the appointed seed, he lived, but he died.

And his son died, and his son, and his son, and his son. All the godly line, all those who called on the name of the Lord, they too must bear the judgment of Adam's sin.

And this chapter is written to help us to get a hold of that tragedy and its reality. And friends, that's something that we all have to come to terms with, isn't it?

Even as believers, we too, as long as we're in the world, we are not exempt from the curse. We are not exempt from the reign of death over our mortal bodies.

We also shall die. And more than that, we all inhabit a fallen world, so we too will suffer every aspect of that curse in this world alongside every other human being.

[19 : 24] Even the godliest people get sick, don't they? Even the godliest get cancer and strokes and depression and all manner of other things.

The household of faith will experience the travail that Lamech articulates here in verse 29, the curse of the ground, the painful toil of our hands.

That is human life after the great transgression, the fall of man. And it will be so right to the very end. Paul says, doesn't he, in 1 Corinthians 15, the last enemy, the last enemy to be destroyed is death.

And only when Christ himself comes to reign. and that's hard, isn't it? It's hard to get a hold of and to accept. You know, unless you do, you'll never be able to explain this world that we live in.

Never be able to explain our own lives, our own circumstances. And we'll never be at peace with God. Unless we grasp this, we'll be disappointed in God.

[20 : 36] We'll be angry with God. Because we'll be chasing expectations for our lives, for our Christian lives that are quite false. As many theologies in the church today encourage us to.

That's why Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15 that if in Christ we only have hope for this world, well, we're to be pitied more than all people.

Because this world is the place of the painful reign of death. Because of human rebellion against our God and our Creator.

Unless we come to terms with the inevitability of decay and death for our human bodies, we'll never be able to live the life that God wants us to live.

We have to absorb the real tragedy of the haunting music of this chapter. But although the main melody is of the tragedy of inevitable death, there's more to that in the music of this chapter.

[21 : 45] There's a quiet counterpoint that's there alongside the main melody. And there are hints of another tune that is just beginning to take shape. That points to something else.

That points to something more. Something that grows and develops and enlarges. And until it lasts, there will be a whole new movement breaking forth with a powerfully different motif altogether.

Because embedded within this grim chapter about the inevitability of man's death, there are bright hints about the irrepressible purpose of God for man's life. For life as God meant it to be, not life as marred by sin and death.

death. It's not just the painful reign of death. And that's what we mustn't miss. That's the second thing, the most important thing.

It's the powerful reminder of life that this chapter gives us. And Moses makes it obvious, doesn't he? Because of these two names that stand out so clearly from all the rest by the variation from the pattern of all the others.

[22 : 52] Enoch and Lamech. And it's even more obvious because these are the only two names, aren't they, which are identical to two names that we saw before in chapter 5.

Do you remember Cain's son Enoch and his descendant Lamech, the violent murderer? So Moses is saying here's another Enoch and here's another Lamech.

Have a look at these men by total contrast. And that will give you the message. So what about Enoch? Well look at verses 21 to 24. Enoch, we're told, walked with God.

It's a picture of intimate communion. It reminds us, doesn't it, of Genesis chapter 2 and God walking in the garden with man before all of that was ruined. But God's purpose is irrepressible.

Despite sin and death, here is a man, Enoch, who walked with God all his days. And verse 24 tells us that that is what characterized his life. He walked with God and then he was not because God took him.

[23 : 58] Well, where did God take him? Well, the obvious implication is that he took him from this earth to be with God without undergoing death in the normal way.

Hebrews 11 verse 5 tells us that very plainly. The only one other character in Scripture that I can think of who avoided who avoided a normal death like that was Elijah. But even way back here with Enoch, just a few generations from Adam, is the hope of a life that triumphs even over death itself.

Enoch walks with God and he goes on walking with God forever. And so Derek Kidna says, at least twice the gates of shale have not prevailed. Now contrast that with the other Enoch back in chapter 4 verse 17.

Let's call him Enoch McCain because we're in Scotland. Enoch son of Cain. What did Enoch McCain leave behind him? Well, he left behind him an enduring remembrance on earth.

Do you remember a city that was named after him? What about Enoch McSeth here? No enduring city for him. In fact, not even any enduring remains. Not even a body.

[25 : 12] He was not but he kept walking with God and God took him. In Hebrews 11 language we could say he was looking forward to the city with foundations whose designer and builder is God and God took him there in a unique way.

And so even though in this chapter's terms at least his life was relatively short only 365 years barely middle aged it's a clear quality and the nature of that life that matters isn't it?

Not the length of it. That may be a very great comfort to some of us mightn't it? Perhaps if we've mourned the loss of a godly loved one who seemed to die far far too young or far before their time.

It's not the length but it's the walk. See real life is all about walking with God. And so Enoch's life was perfectly rounded however short it was 365 a perfect year of years a year of years exactly.

That's what Moses messages you see. And he's saying to his readers saying to us you can face death with a steady eye. Of course we must accept that we all live with the reality of a fallen world in every age but there's more and Enoch is a clear pointer to that.

[26 : 45] Enoch's story shouts out to us look up and see that if God can do this for Enoch however unique that might be then somehow God is able to overcome this curse of death for his people and even if death does reign it doesn't reign supreme and there is hope for humankind.

Moreover faith you see calls us to look up doesn't it and to see that life above with God that overcomes death is just a continuation of that life now walking with God as Enoch did.

Walk with God he is saying and there is hope even to conquer death. That was Moses constant refrain that was his message all through his life to his people.

What does the Lord require of you? To fear the Lord to walk in his ways to love him and to serve him with all your heart and your soul. Walk with God like Enoch he is saying and you are walking the way of life that will conquer death through God's irrepressible purpose for those he loves.

And however unique Enoch's personal translation was that hope remains and that hope persists and grows all the way through the story of the Old Testament.

[28 : 07] Yes the Old Testament don't listen to people who try and tell you oh resurrection is an idea only in the New Testament. What nonsense. The Psalms are full of it. Psalm 73 the psalmist says Lord I'm continually with you.

You hold me with your right hand. You guide me with your counsel and afterward you will take me to your glory. Just like Enoch. Proverbs Paul was saying the other day was just full of it.

The same hope in the path of righteousness is life and in its pathway is no death. Because the righteous he says finds refuge in his death.

So Enoch's story shouts to us look up in faith. There's far more than this reign of death. There is an intimate life from God that begins now walking with God and it will continue forever walking in his presence.

And then you see in verse 28 Lamech's story shouts out to us look forward with hope. Look up with faith but look forward with hope and trust that God's purpose really shall come to pass in history to bring an end to this curse just as he promised way back in chapter 3 to Eve.

[29 : 27] Again what a contrast this Lamech is to Lamech McCain. Remember chapter 4 he was a violent killer. He was a proud boaster. Chapter 4 verse 23 I rule I take revenge I am independent of God and all men.

But this Lamech Lamech McSeth he's deeply humble. Look at verses 28 and 29 he's a man who knows he's laboring under the burden of sin the curse of painful toil and he knows that he can't do anything about that but he's dependent on God and all his hope is in the promise of God for the promised seed that God had given.

And that's why he says in verse 29 there this one will bring us relief will bring us comfort. He even names his son by faith in God's promise of a deliverer to come Noah who will bring Nacham Noah will bring us Nacham he'll bring us comfort rest in this cursed world.

So both Lamechs are remembered for their words aren't they? Lamech Mcain in chapter 4 verse 23 for his words of arrogance of autonomy but Lamech McSeth for his words of humble yearning for God's promised deliverer to bring comfort to the sin sick world under the curse.

And Noah his son in many ways was a deliverer wasn't he? But still the yearning grew and that hope in God's promise was irrepressible all down the generations and the centuries until at last do you remember an angel said to an unsuspecting father and mother you shall call this one Jesus for he shall at last save his people from their sins.

[31 : 27] and still then there were people of faith like Lamech weren't there trusting and waiting in that same promise like old Simeon who was waiting for the comfort for the consolation for the necham of Israel and when he saw the infant Jesus do you remember he said now let me depart in peace because my eyes have seen your salvation.

He saw up close what Lamech had only seen afar off from a distance but their faith was the same they were looking for the one to come through whom God's irrepressible purpose would at last come to full fruition.

and through whom would at last come comfort instead of curse and relief and rest in place of the relentless burden of the wages of sin.

You see their faith said yes death reigns but not supreme for God has promised. The curse remains yes but not forever for God has promised. See even here Moses is telling his readers he's telling us that here's the pattern of the life that overcomes the tragic reign of death.

It's the life that lives like Enoch walking in God's presence because like Lamech it's waiting for God's promise in the Christ in the seed to come.

[32 : 54] You can hear Moses' message can't you? It's his relentless unchanging gospel. Be walking in God's presence and be waiting for God's promise. That's the way of life in the shadow of death.

That's the way of blessing and fullness even now amid the burdens of this fallen world. And Enoch and Lamech both bear testimony to the reality of the possibility of life in all its fullness even in the midst of this godless world and of a mortal existence even for God's people who like everybody else have to live in the painful valley of the shadow of death itself.

Now wasn't that a word that Moses' people needed to hear? They knew all about the reign of death. They'd seen hadn't they a whole generation's bodies bones buried in the desert because of their rebellion their sin against God.

And they knew all about the painful toil of their hands didn't they in Egypt and throughout their wanderings in the wilderness. But there is a way of life that conquers even the terrible reign of death.

There is hope in the life that walks in God's presence looking up and seeing the real purpose of God in everything. In a life that is not all about longevity or posterity.

[34 : 23] It's not about having cities named after you. But it's about fellowship with God himself. Knowing and loving and serving him. And it's the life that waits eagerly for God's promise.

That longs for more. That longs for an end to all the constraints of our mortality and our sin. All of the things that keep us in the shadows of the life that is truly meant to be.

That's Moses' gospel. It never changes. Read it at the very end of Deuteronomy. He's saying the same thing. It's all about walking in God's presence. It's all about waiting for God's promise. At the end of his life he's still presenting exactly the same gospel.

Love the Lord your God. Walk in his ways and you will live. And that's what it means to have faith according to Moses' gospel in Genesis and Deuteronomy all through the Old Testament.

And of course the New Testament gospel is exactly the same. Yes indeed. The promise deliverer, the seed, the Christ himself has now come and he's brought comfort at last bearing away the curse of our sins setting us free.

[35 : 33] He's brought light immortality to light through the gospel in his great resurrection. We've seen death conquered at last. But we're still waiting aren't we for our full salvation.

Death is the last enemy to be destroyed. And only at his coming will we finally we'll be made alive with him. And so we also are saved in hope.

We have the first fruits of the Spirit says Paul and yet he says we also groan waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons. That is our redemption, our resurrection.

Because in this hope says Paul we're saved. And so we also are called to walk the same way aren't we? Walking now in God's presence and waiting patiently for God's promise as we live amidst death still in this world.

Just like Enoch, just like Lamech, just like all the great ones of the past, the people of faith. And that's hard, isn't it? Especially when we're faced with death and bereavements of loved ones as we have to face up to our own growing frailty and mortality.

[36 : 54] Some of us perhaps very conscious of death creeping up on us. I remember some years ago when a number of my parents' friends were beginning to die.

I remember my mother going to the funeral of the husband of one of our close friends and afterwards she said to me, every funeral I go to of one of my friend's husbands, I wonder, will the next one be my husband?

And then one day it was her husband. See, death is still a real and a terrible enemy, isn't it? And it always will be and we've been together in this place for many funerals, haven't we?

And there'll be many more still to come. We're going to stand at gravesides together until we ourselves are the one who's been laid to rest. Death is still a real enemy even for God's people.

And yet, you see, that is why this chapter can make us wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. Because even in the face of the relentless curse of death, we must all face in our families, in our friendships, and he died, and she died, and he died, and she died.

[38 : 25] Even in the midst of that, there is a faith that overcomes even the tragic reign of death. Death reigns but not supreme.

One writer says there's something very striking about these early patriarchs. One senses the pathos of the long list recording life and death, and yet at the same time one senses the nobility of a people caught up in and by the promise.

A people who had hope. They had the forward look. However dimly and partially they discerned it, they looked for a city with foundations whose architect and builder is God.

Friends, it's only that forward look of real faith that will help us to live with the tragedy of death and with all the struggles of life lived in a world of death under this curse and will help us to live it without despair but in great triumph as these men did.

They walked in God's presence and they waited for God's promise. And Hebrews tells us God therefore was not ashamed to be called their God and he prepared for them a city with foundations.

[39 : 47] Well, how much more then for us? How much more should we be able to live triumphantly in the face of frailty and weakness and death itself because we have so much better promises in the finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ?

We have the words of our risen Savior who says, I go to prepare a place for you, not just for Lamech, not just for Enoch, but for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself so that where I am you may be also walking with me for all eternity.

So if you think this is a dull genealogy, let me just say, it is not a dull genealogy for me. And it shouldn't be for you.

It's a gospel of hope. It's all about a hope that conquers death. Yes, death is real. Yes, it is terrible.

This chapter tells us unequivocally of the painful reality of death under the curse of sin. But it's also wonderful because it is a powerful reminder of life as God's glorious promise gives us for all who, like Enoch and Lamech, will walk in his presence now and will wait for his promise of the future.

[41 : 17] This chapter is just the opening movement in a great song of triumph that reaches its crescendo as Paul tells us when the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised. Incorruptible.

And death is swallowed up forever in victory. And on that day, friends, the refrain will not any longer be and he died and he died and he died and he died.

The refrain on that way will be, oh death, where is your victory? Oh death, where is your sting? But thanks be to God, he has given us the victory. See, this is a kind of Lamech and Enoch, it's just an overture.

The glorious denouement comes in the very last chapters of the Bible when the voice from the throne of God says, behold, the dwelling place of God is with man and he will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will be with them and will be their God and he will wipe away every tear from their eyes and death shall be no more.

Neither shall there be mourning or crying or pain anymore for all the former things have passed away. So friends, listen, if from the very beginning death could not reign supreme over these ancient ones who walked in God's presence as they waited for God's promise, how much more shall we who walk in a risen Savior, who await a sure and certain coming to transform our glory, our lowly bodies into his glorious bodies, how much more shall we, like Lamech, find comfort from the pain and from the toil of life and from the curse of death itself in that glorious hope into which our Lord Jesus Christ has already saved us.

[43 : 14] Thanks be to God, says Paul, who gives us the victory even over death itself through our Lord Jesus Christ. Death reigns, but not supreme for those who know and love our Lord Jesus.

Let's pray. By faith, Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death and he was not found because God had taken him. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself that where you are, I will be also.

Thank you, Lord, that not even the last enemy can separate us from the life that we have found in your Son, the Lord Jesus. to help us to be a people who grieve not as others who have no hope, but rather those who find abiding and solid comfort in your sovereign grace and your love which abounds forever over sin and over death and over hell itself.

And so may our souls dwell forever on the glories of that great song through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.