

CHRIST RETURNING TO JUDGE THE WICKED, REVELATION 1:7-8

Let's turn in our Bibles, please, to the book of Revelation chapter 1. We're going to be reading together today chapter 1, verses 4 through 8. Revelation chapter 1, verses 4:

“⁴ John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; ⁵ and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, ⁶ and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

“⁷ Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

“⁸ I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.”

Now as we have begun our study in the book of Revelation, we have looked at the prologue in verses 1 to 3, and more recently, we've been considering together the introduction to the book in verses 4 to 6. But the introduction of the book does not end at verse 6, though our messages have ended there. The introduction to the book continues on to include verses 7 and 8. The narrative of John's visions, which comprise the remainder and the body of the book of Revelation, actually begins at verse 9.

So then, verses 7 and 8 are really a continuation of the introduction to this book, which began at verse 4. Said another way, verses 4 to 8 comprise the introduction to the book and they are a single unit.

Now as we have looked at this introduction, we have seen that John has addressed this book to the universal Christian church, to all Christian local churches, represented by these seven churches in Asia. We have seen in verse 4a that he asks that grace and peace be given to them. However, we saw that this grace and peace does not arise out of a vacuum. It is provided to the churches by the Holy Trinity.

From verse 4b all the way to verse 8, John gives us a description of this Holy Trinity. In verse 4b, he speaks to us of the Father and of the Holy Spirit. But beginning with verse 5 and all the way through to verse 8, John tells us about Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ in His victory over Satan is the theme of this book, and therefore it's fitting that John should focus the vast bulk of what he has to say on Jesus Christ.

Now as we began to look at what John had to say about Jesus Christ, we saw that Christ is a glorious Lord, in verses 5 to 6. We saw that He is glorious in who He is. He is the faithful

witness who always tells the truth to us. We saw that He's the first begotten from the dead, who has conquered death for us. We saw that He is the Prince of the kings of the earth, who rules all things and all people for our good and for His glory.

Then we saw that Jesus is glorious not only in who He is, but in what He has done. He has loved us with the same love that the Father has for Him. He has washed us from our sins in His blood so that we may be forgiven and justified by God. He has made us kings and priests unto God, giving us the honor of both dominion and service in His kingdom.

So in light of who Jesus is to us, and in light of what Jesus has done for us, it is no wonder that we love to give Him glory, and it is no wonder that we love to submit to His rule over us. But as wonderful as this description is of Christ that John has given to us in verses 5 and 6, John is not done describing Jesus to us. In verses 5 and 6, we saw that Christ is a glorious Lord. In verses 7 and 8, we see that Christ is a returning Lord. He's a returning Lord.

In verse 7, John tells us about the second coming of Jesus and His triumph over all those who oppose Him. In verse 8, Jesus Himself speaks of His own eternity and of His own sovereignty. Foolish men think they can triumph over Christ. Foolish men think they can escape Christ. Foolish men think they can thwart Christ. But foolish men are wrong. These two verses, verses 7 and 8, summarize why the wicked will utterly fail in their war against Christ.

So then, while John represents Jesus Christ to *us*, in verses 5 and 6, as a tremendous source of joy and comfort, John presents Jesus Christ to the wicked as a tremendous source of terror and of dread in verses 7 and 8. Wicked men fail in their war against Christ because He is coming back in wrath and judgment. And wicked men fail in their war against Christ because that wrath that He brings is inescapable, because it is wrath of the almighty, eternal God.

Well, then, let us examine John's teaching as he turns from comforting the believers, in verses 5 to 6, to declaring the doom of the unbeliever in verses 7 and 8. In the first place then this morning, let us consider together that Jesus is the returning judge.

Notice, if you will, verse 7. It says, "Behold, he," and the clear antecedent of "he" is Jesus Christ of verse 5. "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."

One of the things that we have pointed out in our previous messages is the way the book of Revelation is rooted in the Old Testament, and how it is saturated with references to it. Verse 7 demonstrates this point very clearly, because verse 7 is made up of two Old Testament passages. It's made up of Daniel 7:13 and it's made up of Zachariah 12 and verse 10.

Notice verse 7 says, "Behold, he cometh with clouds." That's a statement straight out of the Old Testament. I'd like for you to turn with me in your Bibles, please, to the book of Daniel chapter 7. In Daniel chapter 7, Daniel has a vision. In this vision, he sees four great beasts.

Without reading that section, these four beasts represent the four successive kingdoms that are going to arise in the earth—the Babylonia, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman empires. At the conclusion of the rise of these human kingdoms, it leads us to the final judgment in verse 9. Notice if you will, verse 9: “I beheld till the thrones were cast down.” So all these human kingdoms have now been defeated.

“⁹I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. ¹⁰A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.”

So what we have here, very clearly, is a declaration of a vision of God sitting on His throne and the final judgment. Notice verse 11. It says, “I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.” This, of course, is a reference Revelation 19 and verse 20, whereupon the return of the Lord Jesus, He takes the beast and the false prophet and He casts them into the lake of fire.

Now notice verse 12: “As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time.” The point he’s making there is that when the Babylonian kingdom and the Medo-Persian kingdom and the Grecian kingdom were destroyed, the people that made them up were not annihilated; their generations were prolonged until the time of the end. Their dominance was taken away, but the people that were in those kingdoms continued to live on in their successive generations.

This brings us to verse 13: “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. ¹⁴And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”

Notice in verse 13, he says, “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven.” The Son of man came with the clouds of heaven. And Revelation chapter 1 and verse 7 says, “Behold, he cometh with clouds.” So Revelation 1 and verse 7 draws on the imagery of Daniel 7 and verse 13, and clearly, Daniel chapter 7, verses 13 and 14, describe the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

John, in Revelation 1 and verse 7 alludes to Daniel 7:13, which then gives us the context and the meaning of Revelation 1:7. When it says “he cometh with clouds,” it’s not talking about Him coming in some sort of a judgment at various times in various circumstances throughout the ages; rather, it’s talking about His second coming at the *end* of the ages, when the final judgment has been set and the books have been opened.

So we know that Revelation 1 and verse 7, based on Daniel 7:13, is a reference to the final visible, physical, second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ at the end of the age, at the time of the final judgment.

Now please turn back to Revelation 1:7. John then goes on to say, not only, “Behold He cometh with clouds,” but notice then the second thing he says, “and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.” Verse 7a talks about the fact of His coming; verse 7b talks about the response to His coming.

What is the response of His coming? The people who see Him coming are really, really, really unhappy and upset about His coming. Not only are they not welcoming Him, they are weeping and wailing over the fact that He is coming back. Why? Because they are of the class and category of people who pierced Him. Once again, this passage is rooted in the Old Testament, this time in Zechariah chapter 12. Turn please with me in your Bible to Zechariah chapter 12. We’ll start reading together at verse 9.

“⁹ And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. ¹⁰ And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. ¹¹ In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. ¹² And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; ¹³ the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; ¹⁴ all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.”

This, to say the least, is a very difficult passage, but I’m going to just give you a little overview of it. There was a favorable fulfillment of this passage at the first coming of Jesus. It says that they will look upon Him whom they have pierced. “They shall look upon me whom they have pierced.” Now Jehovah is clearly speaking, and Jehovah is saying, “They shall look upon me whom they have pierced.” So who is that person on the cross that got pierced? It was no one less than Jehovah God. Jesus was Jehovah.

But in John 19, verses 34 and 37, you remember they crucified Jesus. They pierced His hands and His feet, and then the soldier took his spear and he pierced Jesus’ side. And John, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, quotes this passage, “they shall look upon me whom they have pierced,” as applying to the Lord Jesus Christ when He died on the cross. And it says, regarding the house of Israel, that “they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him.”

So here's Israel piercing Christ, and after piercing Him, they start mourning over the fact that this is what they've done. This happened, of course, on the Day of Pentecost. You remember Peter preached his sermon. In Acts chapter 2:23, he says, This same Christ that God promised, you have taken and with wicked hands have crucified and slain. And it says in verse 37 that they were pricked in their hearts, and said, Men and brethren, what must we do? And then Peter said, in essence, Repent, believe in Christ, and be saved and be baptized. So we see in Acts chapter 2, verses 36 and 37, the apostle Peter indicting them for crucifying the Lord Jesus Christ, they mourn over doing that, and then of course, they become saved.

However, there is also a second, unfavorable fulfillment of this passage, and that is the fulfillment that takes place at the second coming. In the book of Revelation, John takes the passage in Zechariah chapter 12 and not only applies it to the first coming of Christ in his gospel, John:19:34-37, he also now applies it to the second coming of Christ in Revelation 1 and verse 7.

Now let's look at it from the point of view of the second coming of Christ. Zechariah 12, verse 9: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem." In Revelation 20, verses 7 to 9, when Satan is loosed for a little season, remember he gathers together all the nations, and it says that he is going to bring them against "the beloved city." The beloved city, which is Jerusalem, is a metaphor of course for all the people of God. We are the New Jerusalem. We are the City of God.

So Satan comes against the City of God, and of course, the Lord Jesus destroys him and He casts him into hell. So in Zechariah 12:9, "it shall come to pass in that day, that I," God, "will seek to destroy all the nations"—that's the transnational coalition of nations under the loosed Satan, which are going to gather together to wipe Christianity off the face of the earth. They're going to encompass the camp of the saints, which is "the beloved city," which is none other than what's spoken of here under the metaphor of Jerusalem, and seek to destroy them. And that's when Jesus is going to come back and destroy Satan and his people.

Zechariah 12, verse 10: "¹⁰ And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn."

Verse 10 is referring to the Jews who crucified Jesus. And what applied to Israel as a nation—Israel mourning over the fact that she crucified her Messiah—is now universalized and applied by John, by way of application, to all the peoples of the earth. And what he is saying in Revelation chapter 1:7 is that those who crucified Jesus and all the people of the earth that join them in spirit in their hostility and hatred to Jesus through the ages—when that entire body of people see Jesus coming back, the response is going to be terror and dread.

Turn back, please, to Revelation chapter 1 and verse 7. Notice it says, “Behold, he cometh with clouds;” this is the second coming, “and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.”

So when Jesus comes and sits on the throne of judgment, every eye is going to see Him. He will be visible to all of humanity when it is gathered before Him. Those who hated Him and sought to destroy Him, who stand in union with His crucifiers, too late will realize that they have hated and rejected the King of Glory, and they will wail and mourn over their fate. This is not a mourning of repentance, but a mourning of hopelessness.

Now what Daniel spoke of and what Zechariah spoke of, Jesus Himself also spoke of. Notice if you will, Matthew 24 and verse 30. Jesus is giving His Olivet Discourse, in which He’s describing His second coming. In Matthew 24 and verse 30, Jesus talks about His second coming and says, “and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”

What Jesus says in Matthew 24 and verse 30 is identical with what John says in Revelation 1 and verse 7. John says in Revelation 1 and verse 7, “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.” Jesus said in Matthew 24:30, “and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”

To come in the clouds, or with clouds, is a frequent metaphor in the Bible. Coming with clouds often refers to God coming in judgment. For example, in Isaiah 19 and verse 1, it says, “Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it.” It says in Zephaniah 1 and verse 15: “That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness.”

Often, not always, but often, when the metaphor of clouds is used, it’s used of God coming in wrath and judgment. The clouds are like the chariot in which He rides to come and to defeat His enemies. The whole point of Revelation 1:7 is simply this. Those who rejected Christ are going to bewail their hatred of Christ, they’re going to bewail their lost opportunity for salvation, and they’re going to cry out in terror when Jesus returns in the clouds of judgment to this earth at the end of the age.

This terror of the lost at the second coming is further pictured in Revelation chapter 6, verses 15 to 17, when it says: “¹⁵ And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; ¹⁶ and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and

hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: ¹⁷ for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

So Revelation 1 and verse 7 is saying, Jesus is coming back, and Jesus is going to bring His wrath and judgment to bear upon those who pierced Him, that is, His crucifiers, His haters. And you see, it is not just those who actually nailed Jesus to the cross, or moved the Roman government to do it by crying out, Crucify Him! Crucify Him! But every voice in every age, from then until now, who has rejected Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who has dismissed Him as being the incarnate God, who has said, Away with Him, out of my life! They are in the class and the category of those who persecuted Him and pierced Him.

Thus, this phrase in verse 7 that says "every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him," those who pierced Him are all those who have rejected Him throughout all of the ages, and it says of them that they will wail in terror and fear and dread because of His coming. The one whom they thought they had dismissed is now coming to be their judge.

And what is John's response to this weeping and this wailing and this terror that the ungodly, the Christrejectors, are going to have at the second coming? He says, "Even so. Amen." He says, So be it. And it's an affirmation of the righteousness of God's judgment on the wicked haters of Jesus Christ.

The overthrow of the wicked at the second coming is the triumph of Christ over them who pierced *Him*, and it is the vindication of the Christians who suffered so much at their hands as they were assaulted in the assaults of people against Christ. When Jesus met Saul on the road to Damascus, He said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" And what Jesus was saying is, I take your persecutions of my people as your persecutions of Me. Saul never persecuted Christ, but he did persecute Stephen. Saul was a Christpiercer. But he was also redeemed. And those who crucified Christ can be forgiven if they will repent and say, along with the centurion, "Truly, this man was the Son of God!"

But for those who persist in their hatred of Christ, for them, the second coming of Christ will be a time of terror and dread and weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. And when we see them in that condition, we're not going to be saying to them, Oh, I'm really so sorry for you! We're going to be saying, "Even so. Amen." The righteous wrath of God upon the wicked will be seen as entirely and completely just, and we will have nothing but affirmation for God when He casts the wicked into hell.

That leads us then to our second major point. Having seen that Jesus is the returning judge, notice secondly that Jesus is the inescapable God. Jesus is the inescapable God, verse 8. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."

Now in verse 7, we have seen Jesus returning in all of His glory to exercise His judgment upon those who hated Him. Those who hated and persecuted Christ are now before Him. They're all standing there before Him. They see Him. They are weeping and wailing because of Him and because of their impending doom. Verse 7 tells us these things. And as they are gathered before Him and they are weeping and wailing over their impending doom, in verse 8, Jesus now speaks to them and He identifies Himself to them. John is describing the scene in verse 7. In verse 8, Jesus speaks.

Now you recall that when Jesus came the first time, they dismissed Jesus as a deceiver; they called Him a glutton and a winebibber; they claimed He was born of fornication; they derided Him as a friend of sinners; they accused Him of being a traitor to Rome; and they said that He was demonpossessed. These and many more derogatory labels they applied to Jesus, and billions more people throughout the ages have called Him all of these things and worse. Some have been more diplomatic. They have condescendingly called Him a great man. They have said He was a great teacher, or that He was a man of peace.

But all of them, whether they were derogatory or whether they were condescending, thought that they could dismiss Jesus and His claims out of their lives by reducing Him to an object of contempt, or by reducing Him to merely being another man, one of many historical religious figures. Jesus was someone to give a tip of the hat to, or someone to contemptuously sneer at, but however the wicked veiled their scorn of Christ and His teaching and claims, they ultimately were identifying themselves with those who crucified Christ and with those who pierced His hands and His feet and His side.

And in the face of all of these lesser, lower, and even despicable things that they identified Christ as being, Jesus now tells them who He really is. He now tells them who He has been all along. And He now tells them who He forever will be. He is God. He is the eternal God. He is the almighty God. He is the inescapable God, from whom they can no longer hide and with whom they must now have dealings as their final judge.

Notice, then, what Jesus proclaims to them about Himself as they tremble before Him. The first thing Jesus tells them is that He is eternal and He is inescapable. He says, in verse 8a, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come." And what He is saying by this terminology in the first part of verse 8, is that everything starts with Him and everything ends with Him. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the start and the finish. Everything begins with Him and everything finishes with Him. He is the first and the last, He is the beginning and the ending.

This means that from start to finish, He always was there, He is there now, He will always be there. He is, He was, He is to come. So the multiplication of these terms—the Alpha, the Omega, the beginning and the ending, He which was and is and is to come—all of this says, No matter how far you go back, I was there. No matter how far you go forward, I will always be there, and I have always been in everything in between.

There never was, there is not now, and there never will be a time or a place where Jesus is not. His presence is inescapable. No matter how far you go back, He's there. No matter how far you go forward, He will always be there. And wherever you're at between those two end points, He has always been there. He is, He was, He is to come. He starts, He finishes, He begins, He ends. There is no time, there is no place where He is not. He is the eternal, inescapable God. This is what David was declaring in Psalm 139, verses 7 to 12, when the question was asked:

“⁷ Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? ⁸ If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. ⁹ If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; ¹⁰ even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. ¹¹ If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. ¹² Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.”

So what Jesus tells these weeping and wailing people who are assembled before Him, who had dismissed Him with the most pejorative of terms, He says to them, You must now face and understand who I really am. I am the eternal and inescapable God.

The second thing Jesus tells them is that not only is He the eternal and inescapable God, but secondly, He tells them that He sovereignly rules over all of history. In the last phrase of verse 8, Jesus says, I am the Almighty. This does not just mean that He is allpowerful, though it means that. It also means that nothing lies outside the scope of His sovereignty in the exercise of that power. Jesus isn't just strong, but there's nothing that lies outside the scope of the exercise of that strength.

So Jesus is not only all present throughout all of history from start to finish, Jesus is also all powerful throughout all of history from start to finish. You see, it doesn't matter if someone's there if they don't have any authority and they don't have any strength. But if someone is always there and they have all strength and all authority, then that person looms infinitely large in significance to those over whom He rules.

Who are these wicked men who pierced Christ facing on the Day of Judgment? Who is this person that they're facing on the Day of Judgment? They're facing the all present, all powerful Lord of Glory, whose presence and whose power is inescapable. You see, the reason they're weeping and wailing is because they have no place to go and they can't get away from this person who has all sovereign authority and power over them. Where will they flee, and where will they hide from this allpresent and this allpowerful Christ? There is nowhere to go, there is no ability to escape for all of eternity.

This proclamation of His identity both seals the doom of His enemies and it also secures the vindication and the deliverance of His servants, who were persecuted as Christ was. And so as we look at this scene that John unfolds before us about Christ, we rejoice in the fact that Jesus is

eternal and Jesus is inescapable, and that Jesus always has and always will sovereignly rule over all of us for all of eternity.

Now the book of Revelation might have just ended here, because here the story of the book is fully summarized. Here is who Jesus is to us—He is a glorious Lord, verses 4 to 6. He's glorious in who He is to us, and He's glorious in what He's done for us. Then here is who Jesus is to the wicked, in verses 7 and 8. He is the terrifying, inescapable, almighty judge who will damn to hell all those who pierced Him with their words, with their lives, with their actions.

So here we have in the introduction a summary of how it's all going to turn out. You know, I don't know if you've noticed this or not, but when you listen to my sermons, you could just listen to my introduction and go home, because my whole message is summarized in my introduction. But then in the body of my sermon, I develop and prove and expand, and then apply, right?

That's what John has done here. Like a good homilician, he's given us his introduction, and in his introduction, he's summarized the entire message of the rest of the book. He said, Here's who Jesus is to the believers. Have comfort, rejoice, have peace, have confidence, persevere. And here's who Jesus is to the wicked. Let them tremble. Let them feel dread and terror at the fact that they have resisted the eternal, inescapable, almighty, sovereign God.

And we look at how He deals with us, and we look at how He deals with them, and when we see how He deals with them, we say, "Even so. Amen." How many times have you longed for justice to be done and you saw it not being done? Well in this great day, you will see it done, and you will say, Amen. The piercers of Christ got what they had coming.

So we have a wonderful message of comfort, and we have a very sobering message of warning. Flee to Christ and find in Him a faithful witness, a firstborn from the dead, and a Prince of the kings of the earth. Find in Him someone who loves you and washes you from your sins, and elevates you to be kings and priests. Or, fight against Him, resist Him, attack His people, and find yourself weeping and wailing when He returns and sits on His throne and reveals Himself and declares Himself to be the eternal, inescapable, sovereign, almighty judge, who will damn to hell the souls of all of those who crucified Him, in their hearts and in their minds, with their lives and by their words.

This is the message of the book. It's all summarized in the introduction. And what do we see at the end? We see Jesus doing what is said in these opening verses, verses 6 to 8. We're brought into this glorious new heavens and the new earth, and the wicked are cast into the eternal lake of fire. Knowing all of this, why would we ever switch to their side, no matter how much they persecute us or shame us or slander us, no matter what enticements they offer us, what incentives they provide us with? No!

When you look at the piercers of Jesus versus the believers in Jesus, there is no question on whose side you belong. May we choose Jesus today. May we choose Him always. May we choose Him ever, so that when He returns, we will not be those on His left hand who are weeping and wailing, but those on His right hand to whom He says, Come ye blessed into the kingdom prepared for you by my Father from the foundation of the world. Shall we pray together.

Our Father, we are so grateful for the clarity with which you give to us the gospel and the blessings it contains and the warnings for rejecting it. Lord, be pleased to help us ever and always keep these perspectives in mind when the world comes with its persecutions, or when the world comes with its enticements. They really have nothing to offer us but death—death now, and the second death in eternity.

Thank you for the saving work of Jesus. We do believe and trust in Him and seek to serve Him, even in the midst of this great conflict in which we, too, are pierced by the words of wicked people and by the actions of wicked people. Father, help us then to endure the shame and to endure the cross, and to be in that great day sat down at the right hand of the Father. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.