

Kings Norton Baptist Church

Sunday 31st December 2023 10 am

The last Day

Welcome to all.

Opening Scripture and prayer

Hymn MP 428 Lord for the years

Scripture Psalm 92 (page 600)

Prayer of praise and thanksgiving.

Children's talk - Heaven

Chorus MP 795 You laid aside your majesty

MP 796 you shall go out with Joy

Notices Joyce Cooke, Thursday evening, Tonight 7pm at the Chapel,

Prayer and share time.

Reading John 6:32-44,54 (page 1070)

Hymn MP 498 O God our help in ages past

Sermon: The Last Day

Hymn mp 759 When the trumpet of the Lord shall sound

Closing Prayer - the Grace

[Sermon Index Database](#)

Prayer and Exordium

This sermon is entitled 'The Last Day'

Well it is the last day of the year. We have reached the end of 2023.

How has it been for you? Some surprises? Some challenges? Yes of course, the Lord would have it no other way, but He's kept you through them hasn't He? He has taught you new things through them, hasn't He?

Tonight we will have another chance to give thanks as we come to the last part - of the last day.

We will all have 'last days' - The last day of school, the last day of being single. The last day at work, the last day of driving, and then – inevitably - the last day of your life – and yes that is closer now than it was last time I saw you! There's something special about the first day and the last day.

The Bible speaks of the first day of the world, but also the last day of the world. Let's be clear: God started it, He will end it.

[Sermon overview](#)

As we look at 'The last day' I want to assure you *It will come* and to ask the question *Are you ready for it?* I want everyone to see that *Jesus came to make us ready for it*. But for some it will be *A dreadful Day*, for others *A shameful Day* and for others *A praiseful Day*. These then are the headings this morning.

The last day - It will come

Jesus in our passage in John 6 speaks about the 'last day' no less than four times. The Bible often refers to the 'Day'

Jesus will return on that Day which will be the 'last day'

How little we hear of Christ's return from the pulpits across Britain today. It's not a secondary issue, it's a key teaching, for everything is building up towards that last Day.

It is a Day that makes everything – makes every other day - make sense, for without it nothing makes sense, nothing matters.

- Just as to go through school with no exam or test or achievement or goal makes it all meaningless and pointless.

You and I may not see the last day of 2024, you may not see that last day of driving or walking or whatever, but we will all be there on that last day, the Day of the Lord.

That is either when will leave this world and are kept for that Day, or else you will still be alive when the Lord returns.

Jesus speaks of this in some detail in Matt 24, Luke 21, Mark 13.

These are the 'last days' the Gospel Age when the Lord's people are to be his witnesses, to carry out the message of Jesus. Some will come before kings and those in authority which is why some of the Lord's people are put in prison. All the various circumstances of our lives are pre-ordained to that end, that we meet people who we would never normally meet and be a witness to them.

- For example in the BCM Toylink project many families across the city are helped with toys for the children. That is the 'obvious' object of the project. Yet actually the Lord's purposes are much wider than that. He has made many companies sympathetic to the project such that we come into contact with literally hundreds of people from businesses who come into the BCM headquarters to wrap the presents and deliver the parcels.

⇒ This is the Lord's plan that many hear of God's Saviour Son.

The troubles, wars and catastrophes that take place Jesus says will be a mark of the Age we live in, and do not indicate that the end is nigh. What will be a sign of the end is the gospel going to all nations - and the heavenly bodies being shaken. Will there be an end time revival? No, the opposite, God's people across the world will be under attack to such a degree that it will appear that the enemies of God have won. The world will rejoice – until suddenly Christ will appear and the tables turned. The forces of evil will be conquered and **the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendour of his coming.** 2Th 2:8

1 Thess 4 adds more detail: **For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord for ever.** 1Th 4:16-17

Notice we never hear of him 'landing'. He appears, the end will be ushered in by his appearing and the gathering of His saved people out of the world to himself before the earth's destruction by fire. **Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. and each person was judged according to what he had done. The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."** Re 20:11-15

All who have loved this world will be condemned to eternal punishment in Hell a place prepared for the god of this world, the Devil, and for all who have followed his ways.

Then Christ's perfected people will descend into a renewed world untainted by sin that God will make, like the garden of Eden except it will be a city filled with people. And then there will be only one Kingdom, His. Are you part of it? Do you long for that day? We, the Lord's people long for Christ's appearing.

So in the meantime we are told to get on with it, to serve and speak and see the light of God's word come to the lost through the preaching of His word, that is all of our business. Paul gives that sober charge to Timothy **In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word;** 2Ti 4:1,2

So that every man, women, boy and girl may be ready for that day – a day that will come upon all who live in the world. So I ask you, are you ready for it?

Are you ready for it?

Jesus gives a series of parables to make the point that there will be many who are caught out, those who are not ready, those at the wedding but have no oil in their lamps when the master arrives, - or the man who took what the Lord gave him and buried it. Or the one who is found in the wedding banquet but was not dressed properly, he was unwilling to put on the wedding clothes presented to him. - No-one can come dressed in the filthy clothes of sin. We all need to be dressed in the righteousness of Christ.

Jesus makes us ready for it

That is why Christ came. Not to condemn you - but to save you. Not to rub your sin in - but to rub it out. He came to carry it away. God is love and showed this in the giving of his Son that you may not be condemned when that Day comes. The Day of wrath will come upon all who do wrong, whoever they are. There will be no escape – except *The* way of escape the Lord has provided. **On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided.** The Son has been sacrificed. The sin carrier has carried away the sins of His people. Through His righteousness anyone can be made fit for heaven as in 'Away in the manger'

Do you have it? **There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus**

That is the reason for the cross. Christ averts God's anger towards me – onto Himself. He, in giving up his sinless perfect life pays the ransom to free me. It

should have been me there, it should have been me suffering there. And if I do not look to Christ then one day I will be suffering as he suffered.

The Cross is 'that Day of wrath' - but Christ took it, so I am free, I am saved from it. That is what the gospel is all about.

A Holy Just God demands punishment for sin. How amazing it is that Christ should willingly come and stand in my place and He be punished, be judged.

⇒ **Has he stood in your place? Do you know it? are you sure of it?**

Can you see clearly who Jesus is? Are you looking for some supernatural sign? Is it only then you will believe that Jesus really is God's Saviour Son?

In John 6 the people said "Our forefathers ate the bread in the desert, what miracle will you do?" He had just feed the 5000, how short their memory was!

1. Bread came only from the clouds – Jesus is the true bread that came from heaven. so was Christ born at Bethlehem the *house of bread*, and typified by the *show bread on the table in the Temple*.
2. Food for the body only – Jesus brings food for the soul
3. The manna in the desert was temporary, they had to go back for more every day – Jesus said **whoever eats of this bread will never hunger again**
4. Those who had that bread died – but he who has this bread lives forever.

Joh 6:39 **And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.**

Here's the invitation for you: **For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.**" Joh 6:40

Has there been that divine enabling? Joh 6:44 **"No-one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.**

Have you had bread today? As you eat bread Jesus says get your teeth into me Joh 6:54 **Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.**

Jesus is our future hope – now, - eternal life start with Jesus now, a lesson Martha had to learn. Martha speaking of her brother Lazarus said, **"I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."** Joh 11:24.

Jesus is saying it is not just then - but now that your eternal position before God - and eternal destiny - is determined. He said to her, **"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"** x2 John 11:25-26. Martha said yes, how about you? have you said yes?

A dreadful Day

For some that day will be a dreadful day for it will come upon you and you will be found to be not ready. The time will come for you to leave this world and those last moments will be filled with nagging doubt and fear. Then suddenly it will all be clear, you are not washed. You are not ready.

For those who have not heeded the word of God and lived for self, Jesus says: **There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day.** Joh 12:48

You have heard the words of Jesus the Son of God today - as every Sunday – what have you done with them? Ignore them at your peril! It will be a dreadful day of final judgment pronounced – and banishment to everlasting punishment from which there is no return and there will be no let up.

I am amazed that there are so many who seem to think that coming to a church service once a week, most weeks – will make any difference. I am amazed that there are some who think Christianly is about being nice. No. On that day it will make no difference at all.

⇒ **If that is you - I plead with you – Make yourself ready for that Day.**

A wise man or woman, who knows something is ahead, will make themselves ready. Are you asking: "What should I do?" The answer is to forsake sin, deny yourself, take up your cross daily and follow Jesus Christ. Do that and you will be sure. Do not ignore what you hear from God's word - **how then shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him.** Heb 2:3

A shameful Day

Why do I say a shameful day? There are those whom Christ has saved, they've been declared not guilty, they've received Christ's Grace, Christ has suffered & bought a wonderful salvation for them. And they've been called to Holiness. But they are like Lot in the Bible. He was declared righteous in the sight of the Lord and yet never lived out his life in holiness. He is saved, For Christ finished work and God's honour demands it - but saved as one escaping through the flames. He had no good works to take with him. All he spent his time doing - is burned up. That is what I mean by it being a shameful Day.

⇒ **How important it is to be found about the master business when he returns.**

These are those who do not obey the Lord's words, who frankly have very few works, if any, to show for their faith. We are told that day will bring every deed

to light, all will be brought out to see what you have done with what the Lord has entrusted you with.

If a policeman was here with his notebook looking for evidence would he find any? How dishonouring it is to the Lord who bought you – and has done so much for you - when he sees little or no service for Him. Has there been little growing in Grace? Have the difficulties the Lord has put before you to make you strong been sidestepped? Have the temptations that have come your way not been resisted? Have the ways of the world have not been kept out??

A praiseful Day

But there are others who have lived faithfully and as our motto text said in 2023 they have been **Be dressed and ready for service and have keep their lamps burning** Luke 12:35 This does not just happen it requires the hard work of the Christian life. It means building daily disciplines, Seeking the Lord daily, dwelling with the Lord and constantly, continually drawing strength from Him. It means sacrifice - and effort, - and action. Here is someone who redeems the time, he or she makes the most of things – for the Lord.

▪ I have been reading about James Hervey a minister in Weston Favell who was ill for years, he could do less and less, but what he could do - he did. As his strength failed he took to the pen, he wrote and communicated and encouraged and built people up and the Lord used that powerfully.

Here is someone who has been about the Lord's business and will receive a due reward. For them it will be a wonderful day.

Can you say confidently with Paul - **Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.** 2Ti 4:8

Well done good and faithful servant – Oh how wonderful those words will be. **Come and share your master happiness**, what is better than that.

As we thought on Christmas day – there will be **fulness of Joy in His presence.**

Peroration – Let me draw things together...

So what about the last day? What will the last day be for you?

▪ The 'last day' can signal the end of something... like the last day of the holiday - soon it will be over and how you miss it and look back.

⇒ Like Lot's wife who looked back and became a pillar of salt, a reminder and warning to others.

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For them it will be a day of endless darkness and despair.

Or will it be a day you long for?

▪ The last day can equally be the beginning of something. Like the last day of a prison sentence – now you are free – it is forward looking.

So what will the last day be for you? a day of darkness and despair or a day of light? It will depend on what you have done with God's Son in this life.

When the Lord made the earth and the first day, **there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.** Ge 1:5 First the evening – this dark world – then the morning - the hope of Heaven the new world to come.

For those who love this world and see it as light then deep darkness will come.

For those who see this world to be a dark sinful world and have loved the Son of light - then you can look forward to the morning when the light will appear.

Peter speaking of Jesus says **“And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.”** 2Pe 1:19

Peter is thinking about the wonderful appearing as recorded in Malachi 4:... **Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and that day that is coming will set them on fire,"** says the **LORD Almighty.** - **But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings. And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall.** Mal 4:2

▪ Adoniram Judson 1788-1850, was an avowed atheist until the death of a close friend in 1803. He became a missionary to Myanmar and said when was has dying "I go with the joy of a boy bounding away from school"

For the Lord's people. Washed and sanctified and prepared for Heaven the Last Day will be a longed for Day – a day when **what is mortal will be swallowed up by life.** 2Co 5:4

▪ Dwight L. Moody, the famous preacher and founder of the Moody Bible Institute, while on his deathbed: "Can this be death? Why it is better than living! Earth is receding, heaven is opening. This is my coronation day"

Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him. ... It will be a unique day, without daytime or night-time—a day known to the LORD. When evening comes, there will be light.” Zec 14:5-7

⇒ Wow - to see Christ's Glory – and to share in that Glory – forever – there's something to rejoice in!

END

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