

The Gates of Jerusalem

Part 1

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[00:00:00] Hello, it's good to be with you. Thank you for your prayers. Perhaps we could begin the meeting with hymn 179, Brightness of the Eternal Glory, Shall thy praise unuttered lie, who would hush the heaven-sent story of the Lamb who came to die. 179. Shall thy praise unuttered lie, who would hush the heaven-sent story of the Lamb who [00:01:17] came to die.

Sing in honoured Father's throne, sing till men and earth surprise Him, [00:02:05] in his holy name, amen. Now, my excuse this afternoon is to speak about the the gates of Jerusalem, the sequence of the gates, the order of the gates and the names of the gates, but for context's sake, perhaps we could begin in chapter 2 of Nehemiah, beginning at verse 11. Nehemiah is narrating here, So I came to Jerusalem and was there three days, and I rose in the night, I and some few men with me. Neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem, neither was there any beast with me save the beast that I rode [00:03:03] upon. And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire. Then I went on to the gate of the fountain, and to the king's pool, but there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass. Then went I up in the night by the brook, and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by the gate of the valley, and so returned. And the rulers knew not whither I went or what I did, neither had I as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work. Then still I answer them, you see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire. Come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem that we be no [00:04:03] more a reproach. Then I told them at the hand of my God which was good upon me, as also the king's word that he had spoken unto me, and they said let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work. And if we could just read down chapter 3, just pick out the verses where the names of the gates are mentioned. Verse 1, Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests, and they builded the sheep gate. They sanctified it and set up the doors of it even unto the tower of Meir. They sanctified it unto the tower of Hananiel. Verse 3, But the fish gate did the sons of Hassanah build, who also laid the beams thereof, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof. Then down to verse 6, Moreover the old gate repaired Jehoiada the son of Passia, and Meshallam the son of Besodia. They laid the beams thereof, and set up the [00:05:05] doors thereof, and the locks thereof, and the bars thereof. And then down to verse 13, The valley gate repaired Hanan and the inhabitants of Zenoa. They built it and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof. And a thousand cubits on the wall unto the dung gate. But the

ding gate repaired Malchiah the son of Rechab, the ruler of part of Beth-Hasarim. He built it and set up the doors thereof, and put the locks thereof, and the bars thereof. But the gate of the fountain repaired Shallan the son of Col-Hosea, the ruler of part of Mizpah. He built it and covered it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof. And if we drop down to verse 26, Moreover the Nethanims dwelt in Ophel, unto the place over against the water [00:06:03] gate, toward the east, and the tower that lieth out. Verse 28, From above the horse gate repaired the priests, every one over against his house. Verse 29, And them repaired Zadok the son of Emma, over against his house. After him repaired also Shammiah the son of Shekiniah, the keeper of the east gate. And then verse 31, After him repaired Malchiah the goldsmith's son, unto the place of the Nethanims, and of the merchants, over against the gate Miphkad, and to the going up of the corner. And then finally we are found back at the sheep gate. And between the going up of the corner and the sheep gate repaired the goldsmiths and the merchants.

In Revelation chapter 21 and the end of Ezekiel, we read of the gates of [00:07:09] Jerusalem, the earthly Jerusalem in Ezekiel. It's a millennial picture because Ezekiel ends with the words, the Lord is there. And in Revelation chapter 21 again, we get the heavenly Jerusalem, 12 gates. And again a millennial picture because it says that the glory of God did lighten it and the Lamb is the lamp thereof. And we read there are 12 gates because we have a perfect administration under Christ. All is ordered after himself and 12 would speak of that perfect administration, a complete administration, nothing lacking. If we look up the number 12 in the scriptures, we can often see that 12 apostles on the [00:08:02] 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel. But here in this chapter we've read, we only read of 10 gates because here it's more a matter of what is required of man, what has been committed to man, man's responsibility in maintaining the order that was given to him by God. And if we look at the number 10 in scripture, we can see often it is linked with the thought of responsibility, 10 commandments. They had to give a tenth of their possessions, didn't they, the Israel, to the Levites. This was required of them, it was their responsibility. Ten virgins, again responsibility. Ten lepers, the Lord could say, were not ten cleansed but where are the nine? Only one had returned. What was required of man, what [00:09:01] his responsibility is often spoken of in the number 10. And so we have here the administration viewed as it is under man's responsibility and all is broken and in ruins. And perhaps we could liken that to our day. What began in power when the church was first established on this earth and in unity, now we see in weakness and brokenness. And perhaps we might look at what remains of that testimony, that beautiful testimony of Christ, the glory of Christ seen in his assembly here upon earth. And we might think to ourselves it is only stones and dust. And like Nehemiah in chapter 1, we would have to confess that this is not [00:10:09] the fault of God but rather our fault. Collectively and individually we'd have to confess that what has been committed to us has largely ended in this way. But nevertheless we should be encouraged by the mercy of God and that he will not leave himself without a testimony, however weak the day. And so his servants in Psalm 102, by faith they look on to what he will do. In chapter 102 of Psalms verse 13, thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion for the time to [00:11:02] favor her, yea the set time is come. And then it says for thy servants take pleasure in her stones and favor the dust thereof. Because even that which is weakest, the stones and the dust, they still would bear testimony to the truth. The stones of Jerusalem, they are of the character of the whole. And even in these conditions we find ourselves in today, there is still that which testifies of Christ and we are exalted to strengthen, to be watchful and strengthen the things that remain and are ready to die. And as we go through the gates of Jerusalem although they are ruined, yet we find in these gates a wonderful testimony to [00:12:04] what God has done, what he is doing to the glory of God, to the glory of Christ and what he's brought in for the blessing of man. And so first of all we turn to the Sheep Gate in verse 1. Now the Sheep Gate would speak of that which is for the glory of God in heaven. In these first three gates we really have the

purpose of God, the eternal purpose of God, which can be traced back to the Father. And so in the Sheep Gate we get that which is heavenly. And if we turn to John chapter 10, verse 2 we read, he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of [00:13:02] the sheep. To him the porter openeth and the sheep hear his voice and he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out. So in the Sheep Gate we see how God is calling a people, how the Lord is calling a people out from this earth for himself. First of all, out of Israel. The sheep hear his voice, he calleth his own sheep by name and he leadeth them out. His own sheep, Israel, and he would lead them out of Judaism into something new, that which is heavenly. He would lead them into the assembly, lead them to himself. And then as regard the nations, we read later on in John, verse 14, I am the Good Shepherd and know my sheep and [00:14:08] have known of mine as the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. So now we see how the Lord would take his sheep out from the nations, from the Gentiles. Even as Simeon said in Acts 15, even as James said in Acts 15, Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name. So we have in the Sheep Gate the thought of that which is taken out from the earth for Christ in heaven and that heavenly hope associated with that company, the assembly of which we are all [00:15:04] part if we have trusted in him and received him as our Lord and Saviour. The Lord said in my father's house are many mansions, if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there you may be also. So a heavenly company with a heavenly hope to be with the Lord eternally in heaven. But the Fish Gate would speak of that which is for God's glory upon earth. It really is associated with the kingdom and so the Lord would call his disciples to him. In Mark chapter 1 verse 14 we read now after [00:16:01] that John was put in prison Jesus came into Galilee preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God and saying the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent ye and believe the gospel. Now as he walked by the Sea of Galilee he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea for they were fishers and Jesus said unto them come ye after me and I will make you to become fishers of men. So with the Fish Gate first of all we have the gospel of the kingdom preached to Israel and out of Israel there will be as it were those fish. First the Jew and then the Gentile and in Matthew chapter 13 the kingdom of heaven is likened in verse 47 unto a net that was cast into the sea and gathered of every kind which when it was full they drew to shore and [00:17:02] sat down and gathered the good into vessels but cast the bad away. So the kingdom is likened there to a net which is cast into the sea which speaks of the nations and all kinds of fish are brought in but that which is good is brought into the kingdom because nothing which offends or spoils or mars is allowed into that kingdom which we set up on earth under Christ and the bad is cast away. There's a judgment before the kingdom is set up and so in the Fish Gate we get God's purpose as to that which is earthly and in the old gate we are reminded that we are talking of eternal purpose. In Ephesians chapter 1 [00:18:02] verse 9 having made known unto us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure which he has purposed in himself that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ both which are in heaven and which are on earth even in him in whom also we have obtained an inheritance being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. And so the eternal purpose is traced back in Ephesians to the father. But who will bring about this purpose? Who indeed is central to this purpose? We read in [00:19:06] Ephesians chapter 3 verse 11 it's according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. And if we turn to Micah chapter 5 verse 2 we read again of that which is old that which is eternal. Micah chapter 5 verse 2 but thou Bethlehem Ephratha though thou be little among the thousands of Judah yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel whose goings forth have been from of old from eternity. The one who would come forth out of Bethlehem who would be born in

Bethlehem of a woman who would [00:20:07] be born as a man. He is the one who we read of whose goings forth same word same root word as come forth in the first part of the verse whose goings forth or whose comings forth have been of old even from eternity. Because this one born of a woman is none other than the eternally the one who is eternally the only begotten son of the father. And so he is the one who will come forth in manhood to declare God. We read of him in John chapter 1 no man hath seen God at any time the only begotten son who is in the bosom of the [00:21:01] father he hath declared him. He would come forth in time the one who is central to the purpose and counsel of God and the one who will bring it about who will bring it to fruition. And so we think of his incarnation and this brings us to the valley gate the low place. And in Philippians chapter 2 we read of that low place that was taken by the Lord Jesus. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God but made himself of no reputation and took upon [00:22:04] him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself and became obedient unto death even the death of the cross. We read of him in the first line of this portion it says of him being in the form of God. What does this mean? The form of God would speak of all that which is true of God all that which belongs to God all that which is due to God on account of what he is. On account of the fact that he is in essence God and this is what belongs to him. And all that belong to God belong [00:23:05] to Christ because he subsisted in the form of God. The word subsisted it means that which has no interruption. It was true of him before the incarnation and it is true of him after the incarnation. It was there was never in any interruption in this that he is in the form of God. He was always God and always that which belonged to God on account of that belonged to him. There was no change there and yet we read that he made himself of no reputation. He thought it not robbery to be equal with God but made himself of no reputation. He took a place he took the form of a servant and in doing so took a [00:24:05] place infinitely less than the place that belongs to God than the place that belonged to him as God. He became a servant coming in the likeness of men. He took man's nature he himself became a man a true man. And none of the attributes of deity belong to that human nature because if they had it wouldn't have been human it wouldn't have been truly human it would have been a deified humanity. No the Lord took true humanity and in doing so he took a nature infinitely less than [00:25:02] the nature which belonged to him as God. He took a lowly place coming in the likeness of men a true man and yet true God. This is the mystery isn't it that we cannot understand never will be able to. How he could say in John chapter 14 verse 28 my father is greater than I. He's speaking personally here my father is greater than I. He truly became a man and he could say this as man my father is greater than I and yet at the same time John chapter 10 verse 30 he could say I and my father are one. Again he could personally say this that he was equal with his father that he [00:26:06] was one with his father one in substance. This is a mystery that we can't understand but there are not two eyes there are not two persons speaking here one person and yet he has two natures the nature of deity the nature of manhood. He is both God and man but he is one person and in this is the great mystery of the son and so he could say it could be said of him no man knoweth the son save the father. This is a mystery ever inscrutable to us but which we accept by faith because the word so clearly declares it and being found it says in fashion as a man he humbled himself [00:27:02] becoming obedient unto death even the death of the cross. What a low place he took as a bond slave a slave and yet he would humble himself still further and he would suffer death he would submit to death and a death of shame a death of dishonor and of reproach and that would bring us to the next gate which is the Dungate which is the place where all that was corrupt all that was unclean was taken out of that city the Dungate and the Lord Jesus upon that cross we read of [00:28:08] him in 1st Peter chapter 2 verse 24 who his own self bear our sins in his own body on the tree that we being dead to sin should live unto righteousness by whose stripes you were healed. Man would give him would number him with the transgressors in their unrighteousness in their hatred against God the reproaches that they

would reproach God with fell upon the Lord Jesus his son and they cast him out they gave him a transgressors death and he submitted to that death but there upon the cross he remained and he took our sins and he bore them he as it were [00:29:01] presented them to God and God poured out his judgment upon those sins and his judgment fell upon the Lord Jesus Christ he was there in our place he bore the guilt of those sins as if they were his own but we read of him again in 2nd Corinthians chapter 5 verse 21 for he hath made him that's God hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him the Lord Jesus took our place and yet it says of him Leviticus the sin offering it says it is a thing most holy the Lord Jesus was never in any way defiled by our [00:30:09] sins he died for us he bore our sins he took the terrible punishment for them and the wrath of God was poured out upon his head and that terrible load then was discharged before the face of God never to be taken up again for his wrath has been exhausted the penalty has been borne the Lord Jesus has borne it so now there is no no blame can be attached to those who belong to Christ all has been done all has sins have been cleared away from before the face of God and the Lord Jesus has been received up into heaven and is at the right hand of God there [00:31:05] in that is the declaration that God is satisfied he has been propitiated and he can reach out in grace and now we have the next gate which is the fountain gate this glorious administration of the Spirit which we can read of in John chapter 4 verse 14 the Lord says to the woman at the well whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into eternal life so we have this [00:32:06] glorious administration ushered in before it was the administration of law and that could only speak of death as we read in 2nd Corinthians 3 verse 6 the letter that's the law killeth but the spirit giveth life an administration of liberty whereas the law in the law was an administration of bondage because man could not fulfill the law all he was aware of under law was his sin and he could cry out as it were who shall deliver me from this body of death there was only bondage under the law but we read in 2nd Corinthians chapter 3 verse 17 where the spirit of the Lord is there is liberty [00:33:02] and so we have life and liberty and we have joy Paul says to the Thessalonian believers you became followers of us and of the Lord having received the word in much affliction with joy of the Holy Spirit and so this glorious administration in that's been ushered in in Christ it is a one of life and liberty and joy and it's compared to the spirit within us is compared to a fountain which springeth up into eternal life that glorious response of the living to God the Father and [00:34:04] here we have worship under the law there was a form of worship but it took ceremonial forms and it was a soul this worship the senses were evoked music for the ears incense for the smell glorious vestments and garments for the sight all these things evoked in the soul a sense of worship but that wasn't the true worship and we read here in John chapter 4 in verse 23 the Lord says the hour cometh and now is when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit that's in our spirits not soulish but spiritual and in truth for the Father seeketh such to worship him God is spirit [00:35:09] or God is a spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth so we worship God now in our spirits and we worship by the Holy Spirit as we read as the Apostle could say that so we are the true circumcision who worship by the Spirit of God and to have no confidence in the flesh so in this glorious administration the ministration of the Spirit we can worship God in the way that he seeks and through the Spirit's work in our souls we are brought into that into [00:36:05] the character of true worshipers we worship in spirit and in truth and then we have the Watergate in spirit and in truth because the Watergate would speak if the Fountain Gate would speak of the heights then the Watergate would speak of depths the deep things of God the Word of God and the Holy Spirit he would take of the things of Christ we read that don't we in John chapter 16 the Lord says in verse 13 how be it when he the Spirit of truth is come he will guide you into all truth for he will speak of him he will not speak of himself but whatsoever he [00:37:03] shall hear that shall he speak and he will show you things to come he shall glorify me for he shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you and in 1st Corinthians chapter 2

verse 9 as it written I hath not seen nor heard neither have entered into into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit for the Spirit searcheth all things yea the deep things of God and so in the Watergate we get the depths of revelation that God has given to us in Christ and it's a complete revelation there's nothing more to be added we really don't be the beginning of Hebrews that God that in in former times God spoke through the prophets but now hath he spoken in some in the Sun there is no more to [00:38:13] be said in him is the full revelation of God and so the Apostle Paul could say the Apostle of Christ he could say in fingers in Colossians that it was given to him to complete or to fulfill or fill up the Word of God there was nothing more to come although after Paul there would be other scriptures written but no further revelation was to be brought out the Apostle John he would speak of things already established already known but he would bring more detail out for our blessing for our understanding for our joy but the whole revelation was brought out there's nothing more [00:39:03] to add we have the Word of God the complete Word of God and in Ezekiel we get don't we those waters that river because these waters are living waters they're communicated to us from God himself it's not just a book that we read dry words on a page the Holy Spirit would take those words and he would he would minister them to our souls and so those two on the way on the road to Emmaus they were being spoken to by the Lord himself and they could speak of their hearts how their heart burned within them as he talked to us along the way and as he opened up these scriptures and [00:40:04] so Ezekiel in chapter 47 he would speak of these waters that flowed out from I think it's not for he could say and the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward he measured a thousand cubits and he brought me through the waters the waters were to the ankles again he measured a thousand and brought me through the waters the waters were to the knees again he measured a thousand and brought me through the waters the waters were to the loins afterward he measured a thousand and it was a river that I could not pass over for the waters were risen waters to swim in a river that could not be passed over the depths of the Word of God and we might just walk as it [00:41:06] were up to our ankles perhaps we haven't got much an appetite for the things of Christ but having done that surely our appetite will be increased and we will go in up to the up to the knees and then up to the loins and then waters to swim in and this is what the Lord would bring us into he would have us to be occupied with him in his Word and then we have the horse gate we have the ministration of the Spirit the revelation of God revealed in Christ and now we go on to the end and in the horse in these gates that follow these next three gates we have the appearing of Christ the horse gate and the East Gate they would give us two aspects of that appearing the [00:42:07] horse gate is judgment and the East Gate is blessing judgment for those who oppose God opposes Christ in the East Gate blessing for those who receive him and so we read in Revelation chapter 19 I saw heaven opened and behold a white horse and he that sat upon him was called faithful and true and in righteousness he doth judge and make war and there is an there is another work another work going on because we read that Satan worketh also and associated with his work we read of that [00:43:01] mystery the mystery of lawlessness and we read the climax of that mystery in second Thessalonians chapter 2 verse 7 for the mystery of iniquity doth already work only who he who now letteth will let until he be taken out of the way and then shall that wicked be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming even him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders because Satan has an object he will have the place for himself that belongs to Christ a complete contrast to the mind which is central to another mystery the mystery of godliness is the mind that [00:44:04] we find in this mystery the mystery of lawlessness because the Lord Jesus he would in obedience to God he would take a lower place Satan in rebelling against God he would desire a higher place than that that which belonged to him he would desire the place that belongs to God the Lord Jesus had that place it belonged to him yet he took a lower place and so Satan we've seen this in this scripture he will have his man upon the throne that belongs to Christ the

Antichrist the usurper of Christ but the Lord in the brightness of his coming he would destroy the Antichrist so we read don't we in [00:45:04] Revelation again verse 19 chapter 19 verse 19 and I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse and against his army and the beast was taken and with him the fourth prophet that's the Antichrist that miracles before him with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast and then that worshipped his image these both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone and so the Lord upon that white horse he shall judge and make war but the East Gate speaks of another aspect a lovely aspect of the Lord's coming his glorious appearing the Sun because [00:46:02] the East speaks of the rising of the Sun and in Malachi chapter 4 verse 2 we read but unto you that fear my name shall the son of righteousness arise with healing in his wings healing for his people Israel that remnant nation they will look upon him we read don't we in Zechariah look upon him whom they pierced and they will mourn because of him and all the kindred of the earth shall wail because of him even so amen Israel will be healed Israel we brought near to him and also the [00:47:08] nations too we read of a tree the leaves of that tree they are for the healing of the nations revelations 22 verse 1 and he showed me a pure river of water of life clear as crystal proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the midst of the street of it and on either side of the river was there the tree of life which bear 12 manner of fruits and yielded her fruit every month and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations and there shall be no more curse and finally the gate Mithcad Mithcad is a word meaning the appointed place we read [00:48:06] of the word is used in Ezekiel Ezekiel chapter 43 verse 21 thou shalt take the Bullock also of the sin offering and he shall burn it in the appointed place of the house outside the sanctuary there we have the appointed place of suffering that the Lord Jesus willingly took for himself but in Mithcad in in this gate Mithcad we get the appointed place of glory the Lord Jesus he would say to his not Christ to suffer these things and to enter into his glory first the sufferings and then the [00:49:04] glory and again in Ezekiel we read God saying I will overturn overturn overturn it and it shall be no more until he come who's right it is and I will give it to him the appointed place the place that God has appointed for him the place that he would not take himself but which he would only receive from the hand of his God and now on account of his faithfulness on account of the cleanness of his heart on account of the fact that God delights in him that he is his son as it says in Psalm 2 yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion I will declare the decree the Lord hath said unto [00:50:04] me thou art my son this day have I begotten thee and then finally we come back to the sheep gate and perhaps that would remind us of those words the Lord spoke to that those who were identified with him in his sufferings who were his who belong to him who believed on his name in a world that rejected him he would say fear not little flock it is the father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom and so beside the Lord Jesus upon his throne is that assembly that the bride we read of in Revelation chapter 21 just as Joseph ruling over Egypt beside him was a Gentile a Gentile wife [00:51:07] Asenath who had come from that idolatrous background she was the daughter of the priest taken out from Egypt for Joseph to be with him as he reigned over Egypt and so beside the Lord Jesus reigning with him over the earth is his bride his wife that which the spirit could speak of when he said to John come up I will show thee come hither I will show thee the bride the lamb's wife and he showed him that glorious city that glorious administration so we have that which is in earth which is for the glory of Christ and that which is in heaven united in glory to him [00:52:08] perhaps we could finish our meeting by singing hymn number 365 Oh the brightness of the glory shining in the Savior's face telling all the blessed story of the ways of God in grace lowly hated and rejected in the world he came to save by the glory of the Father raised triumphant from the grave 365 [00:53:07] of the ways of God in grace lowly hated and rejected in the world he came to save by the glory of the Father raised triumphant from the grave center of the Father's council people who of Israel [00:54:20] of the Father's pleasure who of the Father's name displayed O'er the Father's river come with tea today a meek and trod [00:55:04] Now in highest glory seated center of the throne of

God There we see thee crowned with glory glory in His humble face And in peace and rest before Him in that holy land of grace [00:56:09] Glory shineth in the visit of the one who for us died For us sins and all their judgment Jesus Christ their Crucified All to share the Father's pleasure in His well beloved Son [00:57:15] Seated on His throne in heaven O'er the world on earth well done We adore Him and are waiting to behold Him face to face In His presence praise the glory and the riches of His grace