

“Just Past Midnight” Music Video by Bill Cave

Why I Wrote “Just Past Midnight”

“Glorious will be the deliverance of those who have patiently waited for His coming and whose names are written in the book of life... It is at midnight that God manifests His power for the deliverance of His people. The sun appears, shining in its strength. Signs and wonders follow in quick succession. The wicked look with terror and amazement upon the scene, while the righteous behold with solemn joy the tokens of their deliverance.” Ellen White, *The Great Controversy*, page 634-636

When I first read this incredible passage I was still learning to play guitar, and I had begun to write songs. This statement inspired me to write a song with a unique Bible theme, one that would proclaim the Three Angels' Messages of Revelation 14. I wanted the song to bring conviction to my audience regarding their own spiritual condition in light of the judgment hour announced by the first angel. I also wanted it to embrace the statement of Christ that we should read and understand the prophecies: “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)” Matthew 24:15. Therefore I wrote, “the story was written down long ago, and if you will study you will know.” In the verses that follow, there is a description of the general climate of the earth when the plagues are falling upon mankind and Christ's return is imminent.

Toward the middle of the song I declare, “Unrepentant sinner what will you do? There's a day of judgment been appointed for you... You rejected His prophets and called His truth a lie, and now your time must come to die...” This warning of a coming judgment is found throughout the entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation and in all of the writings of the prophets.

“LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days...” Psalm 39:4. “A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.” “A prudent man foreseeeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.” Proverbs 14:16, 22:3.

Two “judgments” are spoken of in the scriptures. The first judgment occurs before the return of Christ. This judgment is the time when God decides the eternal destiny of every soul, and names are retained or removed from the book of life.

“I 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. A 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.” Daniel 7:9-10

“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels.” Revelation 3:5

“And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.” Revelation 21:27

“Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” Revelation 14:6-7

The second judgment occurs after Christ’s return, after the wicked have been destroyed by the brightness of His coming and the earth has laid desolate for a millennium. This judgment is the time when the wicked realize that their names are not written in the book of life, and when they are required to give an account before God.

“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. And 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. . . . But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever. . . . But the judgment shall sit... And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Daniel 7:13-27

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." Revelation 20:4-6

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Revelation 20:11-15

"But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet." I Corinthians 15:23-25.

“It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”
“...every one of us shall give account of himself to God.” Hebrews 9:27,
Romans 14:12.

“If that evil servant shall say in his heart, my lord delayeth His coming; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Matthew 24:48-51.

This second judgment is the time when all wickedness and hypocrisy will finally be done away with. No more will sinners flee accountability and hide from conscience.

In the world today, accountability and commitment have lost their importance to the vast majority; it has become easy to avoid keeping your word and escape punishment. The Bible tells us, “in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.” I Timothy 3:1-4. But this rebellious, dishonest, pleasure-loving generation will not be tolerated in the judgment.

Some may react to warnings with anger, but a patient does not get mad at the doctor who tells them that they have a life threatening illness. Instead they will do all they can to avert the consequences of it, or else prepare for the inevitable. The knowledge that we will all appear before the Ancient of Days and that we are very close to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, should arrest our attention. It should cause us all to beware lest we be found wanting and have no covering for our sins, and to examine ourselves, while there is still a time of probation.

Yet we need not fear; we all can be the Children of the Most High God. It was for this reason that the Father sent His Son to us. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all

spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved. In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Ephesians 1:3-7. Now is the time to take advantage of this great gift; now is the time to repent, that we might be found written in the book of life.