

The Last Laugh

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[0 : 0 0] Brilliant. Well, thank you so much, Danny and Neil, for leading us this far in our service. Folks, I hope you're well. Let me just invite you to stand, conscious that we've been sitting for a little bit and we'll be sitting for a little bit longer. So why don't we just stand and maybe do a little stretch, whatever you need to do to get yourself ready as we come to God's word.

And let me just read some words from Psalm 119. This is the prayer of our hearts as we come to God's word. So why don't we just still ourselves before his words, read a couple of verses and let us lead this, lead us into praying for ourselves as we come before his word tonight.

Psalm 119. Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes and I will observe it to the end. Give me understanding that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart.

Lead me in the path of your commandments, for I delight in it. Turn my heart to your decrees and not to selfish gain. Turn my eyes from looking at vanities.

Give me life in your ways. Confirm to your servant your promise, which is for those who fear you. Turn away the disgrace that I dread, for your ordinances are good.

[1 : 1 4] See, I have longed for your precepts. In your righteousness, give me life. And so, Heavenly Father, the giver of life, we pray, Lord, that you would help turn our hearts from vanities tonight.

Lord, would you help lift our eyes from ourselves and the concerns that so often dominate our hearts in this world and lift our eyes to who you are tonight and your glory and who you are.

So, Father, we pray that you would help lead us in the path of your commandments and help us to delight in it. Because we ask in Jesus' worthy name. Amen.

Well, folks, take a seat and let me invite you to turn to the book of Isaiah. I'll give you just a few moments to grab that. Don't feel embarrassed if you need to use the contents page.

That is absolutely fine to do that. We're in at chapter 13 tonight and we are picking up where we left off. Maybe some of you are here from about March to Easter time.

[2 : 1 7] We were in the first section of this book of Isaiah. This book that's often been called the Fifth Gospel, for it contains the most marvellous promises of God as we encounter him in his word, who he is.

So we took on the first section, kind of March to Easter. And between now, for the next number of weeks, in the kind of taking us through to, I think it's beginning in November, we're going to be in the second and the third big sections, which are going to take us up to chapter 39.

We're going to try and take it in kind of big chunks. This book that gives us this big view of who God is. And it's been a real thrill for my soul to fill my lungs with the God who is described here, as Neil kind of alluded to in his prayers, bang on, the God who is exalted and the Lord over the nations.

And it's a wonderful truth for us to remember. And so we're going to get a big piece of that tonight. But before we read our section, it's kind of chapter 13 and into 14 as well.

Try and get our bearings in what's going on in this little section. Now, the story goes that there was a famous play that was on down in England at some point in the 1600s, I think it was.

[3 : 30] And it was called The Christmas Prince. And it's a play that's famous for one line and one line only. And the line was from one of the central characters and it went like this.

It's the one line it was famous for.

He laugheth best that laugheth at the end. And from this famous play with the famous one line, we get our modern term, turn of phrase that we use all the time.

Having the last laugh. You heard that before? Use it all the time, don't we? Having the last laugh. Use it in the area of sports. I hear it all the time. We use it in business.

We use it in politics. So many areas of life. We talk about the person who has the last laugh. The person who in the end, even though it doesn't look like it now, the person who will win the day.

[4 : 28] The person who will have the final say. The person who will emerge victorious. And the person who will triumph over their enemies. The person who will have the last laugh. Chapter 13 and 14, what we're going to see tonight.

The big idea is that it's the Lord who will have the last laugh. The Lord will have the last laugh. Now we're in at chapter 13. Let me try and give us a really quick summary of what's going on in chapters 1 to 12.

Because you can't really understand what's coming 13 onwards if we don't understand what's happening in 1 to 12. We loved looking at this section together. Isaiah is talking to the nation of Judah. So God's generation of people who are living about 730 BC, give or take.

The big theme of 1 to 12 is that the Lord is king. Three quick themes if we want to recap on that first section. Number one, the Lord. Who is he?

He is the three times holy God that Isaiah encountered back in chapter 6. If you want to kind of just glance at it there. It's one of the most magnificent chapters of scripture where Isaiah encounters the holy God.

[5 : 38] Whose train of his robe fills the temple. Who is high and lifted up. Who the seraphim worship and declare holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. The whole earth is full of his glory.

And this is the God who calls Isaiah to come and be his prophet. And it's this view of God, the three times holy God, that kind of catapults Isaiah's prophetic ministry as he speaks to God's people.

Because he has this vision of who this God is in his lungs, in his heart, in his mind. The three times holy God. And I love it in that scene. You get Isaiah.

What he's struck by first of all, it's not just his smallness before God. It's his sinfulness. Woe am I. Woe are my people. And yet God says, I will atone for your sin.

And it's this vision of God that propels Isaiah's ministry. And of course, it's this vision of God which the people of Judah in this generation have lost completely. Who is this God?

[6 : 41] Takes us on to number two. He's the holy God. And his people, Judah number two, big theme, are failing spectacularly at being the holy people that he has called them to be.

It was all the way through the first section about how they have just lost the central understanding of who the Lord is. Right? What are they doing? They're exploiting the poor in the land.

God has called them to be a people of justice, reflecting his own heart. They're exploiting the poor and the alien amongst them. They are consulting mediums. Remember the Lord? The Lord our God is one.

It's meant to be him only. They're all over the shop. Syncretism everywhere. They are proud. And these things aren't just nominating a certain section. It's kind of through the height and the breadth of God's people.

The leaders, the elders, the men, the women, all of them have lost sight of who he is. And particularly we get this king called King Ahaz in the first section. And he's a bit of a kind of jelly man king.

[7 : 40] You kind of get the sense that he loves to talk the talk when it comes to following God. But he doesn't really walk the walk. And Isaiah makes that challenge in the first section. If you are not firm in faith, you will not be firm at all.

In other words, you need to trust and have a big view of who the Lord is and the promises that he's made to his king. Number three, the Lord is gracious and he's compassionate.

And he's full of steadfast love. And he's wooing his people to come back. Stop settling for idols. I'm going to give you life.

Come and find satisfaction in who I am and in my steadfast love. The Lord has been wooing his people to come back to him and find life with him. To put their trust in his big and unfailing plans for them and also for the nations of the world.

And that's been the mind-blowing truth that we see all the way through this book. That God's promises are not just for his people. His plans and his purposes are way bigger than just the nation of Israel.

[8 : 47] That somehow the Gentiles are going to come flooding to the Lord, to the light. And they're going to find life in his name. The Lord is king. That's the theme, the banner that runs over chapters 1 to 12.

And so the question naturally arises, where does his reign extend to? Now, you know, you get these folks who buy, I can't remember if it was in Australia or New Zealand last time I saw this.

They buy a little piece of land and they declare themselves to be king over this little bit of land. We always see this in our newspapers. You've seen little things like that. The question is, where does the Lord reign? Is he Lord just over Israel and Judah or does he reign elsewhere?

That's the big question. Where does his reign extend to? This little section answers that question. Because we get in chapters 13 to 20, we get a series of woes.

Now, we've got to feel the weight of that word. Right? They're always trying to think of a woe. There is serious trouble ahead of you. That's what a woe is, isn't it? There's trouble ahead because of what you're doing.

[9 : 55] And make no mistake, a woe, these woes here are signs. They are words of God's judgment on the nations. And who is subject to these words of woe from the Lord?

It's the nations of what we would call, I guess, the ancient Near East. Right? If you just want to flick it through, turn them over, you'll see. God's addressing Babylon. That's going to be our nation we're going to consider tonight.

Which is, I guess, it's kind of the headline one which kind of summarizes this whole section. Babylon, Assyria, we've got Moab, Damascus, and Egypt.

Right? And the significance of these nations is that at a time when Judah is not the force that it used to be, politically, spiritually, and perhaps even materially, these are the nations round about Judah that the people are tempted to look to for security in life.

So as their nation is going through a hard time, they're tempted to look at these big superpowers and think, if we can only kind of cozy up to them, that is where security of our nation is to be found.

[11 : 07] And of course, who have they neglected the whole time? They've neglected to look to the Lord. And that's why God pronounces how he feels about these nations and what they represent and what they do.

He wants his people to know that he is sovereign over them. Okay? He is the Lord of the nations. He is the one who knows the end from the beginning. And let me just say that is really good for us to know.

Really good for us to know. That God is the Lord of the nations. They are the puppet and he is the puppeteer. That's what he's saying. And he wants them to know how he feels about them.

And that's really good for us to know, how God feels about the nations. And what he sees. The God who is all seeing. What he sees is going on in these lands. As the people's hearts are drawn out to worship these things.

God is saying, no, no, no. This is what I'm seeing going on in these lands. Now let me just say that is really good for us to know. Let me tell you about a déjà vu I had recently. And see if this kind of connects with you to see how easy this is to do for God's people.

[12 : 12] Déjà vu I had recently. We spent a few days down in London when we were on holiday in July. We got the train to Paddington. From Paddington we got the tube to London Bridge.

From London Bridge we got the train to Blackheath. That was our journey. Okay. And if you've ever made that kind of journey, you'll know at London Bridge as you take the train out. The first thing you see as you pass it right there is the shard.

Huge thing. Couldn't get my head around. I've seen it from afar but I haven't seen it so up close before. My neck was sore just looking at this thing. And I'm looking at it and I can see the cleaners. I can see the office staff.

I can see presumably the lawyers, the investment bankers with the headsets doing their thing. I can see it all. And I'm looking at this thing, this almost idol of corporate success and fame.

That this is what this is. It almost screams at you, doesn't it? Worship me. Worship me. And my heart in that moment says that is where it's at. Right? Thought to myself I could dig off my old law degree and give it a shot.

[13 : 11] Because that is where security is to be found. That's what I want. And I came back here and I told a friend. And they said, do you realize you said the exact same thing two years ago?

When you saw the shard when you passed it. Probably just should stop going to London. Right? But that's what my heart said in that moment. And my heart said exactly the same thing two years ago.

Friends, do you not know it in your own life? Your heart so often looks for other things. For success and security and satisfaction. Believing the lie that they are going to be found in those places other than in Jesus.

And that is why I think this is so good for us to know. What God really thinks. The all seeing, the all knowing one. What he really thinks.

About the human heart that persists and it stands in rebellion against him. This is what he thinks about the sin of the world. And what it is in his sight.

[14 : 13] And first up in central to our reading tonight. Is the nation of Babylon. Which is significant politically. Right? This is a, these are a, this nation is a big superpower.

This is kind of what seven wonders of the ancient world. Babylon. This is Babylon. Maybe I'd imagine in history at this point. When Isaiah is speaking somewhat of a sleeping giant. You know that term?

I use it in football all the time. Sleeping giant. But give it just over a hundred years. And Babylon will be the ones who will conquer Judah and take them into exile. And this is God speaking through Isaiah about how he feels about Babylon.

And I'm assuming that that is the reason why Babylon are first up. They're significant politically. But I think more so they are significant spiritually. I think this is the big thing for us to see here.

Because they're a city. Tracing the roots all the way back to Genesis 11. And the Tower of Babel. This city that's very core DNA.

[15:19] Is everything that is anti-God. And God's kingdom. This city that says in the heart. I will, I want to build a name for myself.

I want to reach to the heavens. That's literally in Genesis 11 what's going on. And it's a city that at its very core is anti-God. Proud.

Arrogant. Self-promoting. In fact I think you can make a case. But one of the big themes of the book of Isaiah. Is the tale of two cities. Is the city of God. And the city of man. Which is Babylon.

And God is declaring in these chapters in particular. This is how I feel about Babylon. But the big idea. Babylon.

Everything that she represents politically. Everything that she represents spiritually. The Lord wants his people to know. That the Lord will have the last laugh.

[16:20] Three quick things to see. Chapter 13. Verses 1 to 22. Three quick things. First of all we get a graphic site. Just follow with me. Chapter 13 verses 1 to 22.

What is going to happen? Verse 2. God describes the army. That is going to come over the hill. To destroy the Babylonians.

Now interesting to see. Notice the repeated word my. In the first three verses of chapter 13. My, my, my. My consecrated ones.

My warriors. As they feel my anger. So. God whistles. And almost like a trained dog. The army comes running over the hill.

At his beckoning call. Now what's going on? Verse 4. The Lord of hosts. Which is the Lord of angel armies. Is rousing an army for battle.

[17:19] So this is no random moment in history. This is happening all according to God's specific command. And it's a terrifying description really. The people of Babylon.

Verse 7. Hands feeble. Hearts melting. Pangs and agony. Seizing them. Verse 8. I think we just need to feel this language. Here as well.

Houses plundered. People dying. As verse 19. Babylon is judged by God. And the end scene. I think at the end of chapter 13. It's like one of those abandoned cities.

In the desert. Sometimes we would see on films. And wild animals have taken up residence there. Because human life is gone a long time ago. This is what is going to happen to Babylon.

Says God. But why is it going to happen? Verse 11. I will punish the world for its evil. And the wicked for their iniquity.

[18:18] So here is a nation. Acutely facing God's wrath. That's a word that the Bible uses for talking about his right and righteous and just anger.

Against all the sin and rebellion against him. Against his ways and against his rule. And two days are in view here. If you think about it.

It's a bit like when you look at a mountain range way in the distance. And you can see in a couple of peaks. But you don't know the distance between the two. It's kind of what's going on here. There's two days which are in view here.

Now standing where we do in the story. We know that this is talking about a day that's already been. Okay. The army here. Verse 17. The physical army here are the Medes.

And history tells us that 539 BC. So that's less than 200 years after or so after Isaiah spoke this. The Medes in history did just this to Babylon.

[19 : 24] You can Google it. You can find descriptions of the account. This is what happened. And again see how crystal clear the word of the Lord is about what's going to happen in the future.

And this is what happened. 539. The Medes did this to Babylon. Which is an important detail for us to see and know. Right. Remember what God had said at the beginning of chapter 13.

What was the repeated word? My. My army. So the Medes army. This pagan nation who would know nothing of God. Who would look at you with a blank expression if you talked about the Lord.

These people are doing God's bidding for him. So sovereign is this God above the nations and the peoples of the world.

That even unbelieving nations do his work. And I think the message for the people of Judah is if God is this sovereign over the nations.

[20 : 21] Then why fear them? Why fear them? It doesn't make any logical sense. Surely you need to fear the one who is above them. This is a day that's already been.

And yet this is a day that's yet to come. Verses 6 and 9. Do you see the repetition? See the day of the Lord comes. The day that the Bible talks about at the end of time.

When God will pour out his wrath. And he will judge all who find themselves caught up. As it were. In the rebellion of spiritual Babylon.

Which evil and good is not just two circles. And some people are good. All of us friends by nature are in this evil category. All of our hearts by very nature are caught up in spiritual Babylon.

And by grace. If it were not for God's grace. This is where we would be. It's a graphic sight. But why is God doing it? Why is he pouring out his wrath?

[21 : 24] What's the purpose of this? Well have a look at the first two verses of chapter 14. And we get an astonishing scene. And it. It is absolutely mind blowing.

And take the sin. Take in the warning of God's wrath. And the seriousness of it. But take in the beauty of what he is offering. Why does God do this? He does it for the good and love of his people.

The Lord will have compassion on his people. Feel the warmth of that word. And again he will choose Jacob. I think that just means that he will accomplish the purposes.

Which he said he would do. Through them. As he plans for the nations of the world. And notice who is part of this people. This God.

Come with me to the text. This God. Verse 2. Who has just pronounced judgment on these nations. The people who find themselves caught up in spiritual Babylon. He declares here.

[22 : 26] That aliens will join his people. So people from outside. People from the nations of the world. By God's grace. Who deserve his judgment. Who deserve God's wrath to be poured out on them.

Will find themselves drawn to the Lord. Because of his irresistible grace. Oh friends. How good and how gracious is this God.

And here's what I want us to see. And it took me four days of studying this passage to see it. This is us. See yourself right here in Isaiah 14.

The God who had you in his mind. If you are Christ. He had you in his mind before the foundation of the world. And here we are a moment in history. God declaring that the nations of the world.

There's people there who I will draw to myself. It's us. We were in his mind right here.

[23 : 26] As God spoke this in 730 BC. Does that not blow your mind? The mercy of our God. Let me tell you my biggest fear for my life.

You know we talk about people who have asbestos fingers. You know that saying? You know those people in your life. You just get so used to touching hot things. That they cease to be hot.

Friends. Friends. My fear for my life. My fear for us. Is that we lose. Get numb to the touch.

Of just how holy this God is. And why does that matter? What are the implications of that? If we lose sight.

If we get numb to his holiness. Friends. We will lose the wonder of his mercy. That we would be caught up in this scene in Isaiah 14.

[24 : 25] Let us never lose the wonder of God's mercy. That he would have on people like us. As we trace the Bible story all the way through.

It's an incredible thought to think that we were in his mind as this all passed. Oh friends. Let us never develop asbestos fingers when it comes to God's holiness.

Because if we do. We will lose the wonder of his mercy. Listening in the car on the way up. Matt Redman. He's got a wonderful song. One of his newest albums. Goes like this. The chorus. May I never lose the wonder.

Oh the wonder of your mercy. May I sing your hallelujah. Hallelujah. Amen. Oh friends.

Let us never lose the wonder of his mercy. He acts for the good of his people. And God's people. Do you see at the end of the scene of verse 2.

[25 : 25] The tables are well and truly turned. Because the Lord will have the last laugh. As he wins for his people. And God's people will share in this victory that God has over evil.

As God's people. Verse 2. Rule over those who oppress them. That's what God is going to do. That is the promise that the nation. The people of Judah have to cling on to.

And stemming from that. Thirdly. Chapter 14. 3 to 23. The last little bit here. We get a jubilant song. And it's a song that God's people will sing.

As they revel in God's victory over evil. As holiness wins. As death and darkness is banished. As sin is dealt with.

This is good news for God's people. They celebrate this. Imagine put yourselves in the shoes of the people of Judah at this time. Looking at the nation of Babylon. And thinking we'll sing this about them.

[26 : 30] Yes you will says the Lord. The king of Babylon is in view here. I take it he's just representative of everything that Babylon stands for. Right. The one who has. Look at it there.

He is the one who dealt blows to the nations. And I take it it's not just God's people in view here. It's peoples of the world. I think. You are the one who dealt harshly with people.

You are the one who said in your heart. Verse 14. And I think this is the key to see. The heart of the king of Babylon. Representative of the spiritual Babylon. I will make myself like the most high.

Do you see the spirit of the Tower of Babel there? I want to be God. And God's people rejoice at his defeat. And you get this scene.

It's almost like. They're welcoming him into Sheol. It's the place of the dead in the Bible. This is victory for God's people. And the word at verse 4 is taunt.

[27 : 30] Make no mistake. This is no cheap gloating over an enemy who's fallen. This is the satisfaction and delight. Which God's people rightly feel.

At God's final victory over evil and his enemies. Friends the Lord will have the last laugh.

Now let me ask you. I wonder how you respond to that. You know there's a true story told of. Former American president Thomas Jefferson.

Who when he read the New Testament for himself. What he did. Is he just he took a pair of scissors. And he literally just cut out the bits. That for the New Testament that he didn't like.

The bits that challenged his way of understanding the world. The miracles. The healings. The words of judgment. The call to change. Nah I didn't like that.

[28 : 29] He took it all out. And he created a New Testament of his own. Which was a mere 84 pages long. Now let me ask you. If I was to give you a pair of scissors tonight.

And give you permission. To go. Have a go at your Bible. Would you cut out Isaiah 13 and 14? Because it's not PC is it to talk about any form of judgment.

Let alone the God of the Bible. And I was speaking to a former police officer recently. Who years of working in Scotland. He said he used to think there was something in this God stuff.

But 25 years or so in the beat. Taught him to see the evil in the human heart. His question in his mind. Why doesn't God do something about evil? Why does he allow it?

It's a really good and honest and raw question. And you know what? I've got other friends who would ask me. Why would a loving God send anyone to hell?

[29 : 29] And again that is a good and a raw and a right question to be asking. But what I often find friends is it's. Will God do anything about evil?

Why would a loving God send people to hell? Often it's the same people who make the same comments to me. To which my genuine loving question is. Which one is it? Which objection is it?

Is he right to be angry at evil? Is he unloving because he sends people. Which one is it? And this is the problem I think. Of making a God in our own image.

Because we would not come up with the God of the Bible. Left to our own devices. We would do a really poor job at coming up with a God. And history time and time again proves that is the case.

A God of perfect justice. A God of perfect love. Our minds cannot comprehend how those two things could be. And yet the God of the Bible. Is both.

[30 : 34] In perfection. And you say how is that? The ultimate proof of that is Jesus. You know somewhere where I've been spending a bit of time recently.

My own devotional life. Matthew 25. You know you wonder if you can get it there. You can maybe read it later. During his final days on earth. Jesus is talking to his disciples.

About what life will be like for them once he is gone. And they find themselves in this time. Between his first and his second coming. And he's telling them. We get these three parables.

Of the things that he wants them to know. And the things that he wants them to do. Right. Maybe these are familiar to you. If they're not. Look at them. They're wonderful passages. Right. The parable of the bridesmaids. Right.

Five ready. For the bridal party coming. Five not ready. The bridal party comes. The five who are ready go in. The five that are not ready miss out. The point is.

[31 : 31] Be ready. That's what I want you to be doing. Be alert. Be ready for my coming. Then we get the parable of the talents. Okay. The master gives the servants money to use.

Gifts to use. In his service. One goes on. Uses it. Makes a lot more. One also makes some money. The other one just puts it in the ground. And it's that slave.

That's the servant. That's condemned for having a really low view of God. And what is the point? The point is to get working for the master's return. Right. Live for those words.

Well done. Good and faithful servant. And then the third parable we get is the parable of the sheep and the goats. Jesus when he returns will put every single human being who has ever existed into one of two camps based on their acceptance or rejection of him as king.

One group to heaven. One group to the place of weeping and gnashing of teeth that he describes. A terrifying description of a place of eternal separation and punishment from God as evil is banished forever.

[32 : 41] Words from the most loving individual who has ever walked the face of the planet. Friends it seems to me as I read the gospels that Jesus has no problem with judgment.

That's what our heart longs would be true is it not in our favorite stories. We kind of thought about this this morning but it's been on my mind all week. Heart longs doesn't it for evil to be banished.

Does it not? Do you not look out in the world and you think. Come Lord Jesus. Make this right. Our best love stories. Do you know what. Gandalf and his friends they must defeat Saruman.

We get that. Right. Aslan must defeat the wicked witch. We get that. Simba must defeat Scar the beast. Beauty and the beast. Even watching this recently with the kids sacrificially triumphing over Gaston and the curse being lifted because of the sacrifice.

We get that light must defeat the darkness. Friends the creator and ruler of all things is absolutely right to judge the rebellion of his creatures against him.

[33 : 50] What kind of God would he be if he didn't? But let me just say that would be terrible news for every single one of us if Jesus stopped talking and acting in Matthew 25.

It would be terrible for all of us. And yet. Two verses later. In Matthew 26. What does Jesus say he's going to do?

Having delivered that. Those three parables. Talked about the future of the world. What does he say? As you know that Passover is two days away and the son of man will be handed over to be crucified.

Out of God's great love for a rebellious world who would find themselves by very nature in spiritual Babylon. Jesus goes to the cross.

He takes the wrath of God. This scene in Isaiah 13. Should rightly fall on me and on you. We should be experiencing this in the final day.

[34 : 55] And yet Jesus, because of our trust in what he has done for us, has bore the wrath reserved for me. Friends, are you growing tired of his, the wonder of his mercy this evening?

The call here, and I take it is the call to the nation of Judah, is to come back to the Lord. And know his compassion. And know that he's Lord over the nations.

And to know that he is the only place where satisfaction in life is to be found. And Jesus Christ. You know, let me just close by telling you about a story I was reading this week on the Open Doors website.

Right? The Open Doors do a lot of work with the persecuted church all over the world. You know, I was reading just because fellow pastor out in Bangladesh. Right?

And his church was reading this very recently. His church was destroyed by local Buddhist extremists. His church is destroyed.

[36 : 02] He goes to the local authorities to see what they could do about it. Do you know what they said? How about you just convert back to Buddhism? Twice in two weeks this happened. And he writes this on the website.

This is his quote. I can't go home and sleep in case I'm attacked. I hide every night and sleep somewhere else. I still feel that someone is about to chase after me.

You know, I was picturing this week that he was in my office. He comes in. And he gives me this account. What would I say? What do you say to someone who has gone through something like that?

What do you say after weeping with him? Listening to him? Loving him? Trying to practically see if there was any way that we could help? At the end of the day, what do you say to him?

Well, friends, Jesus will have the last laugh. What will not the God of all the world do right? That's why we can leave it with this perfect King Jesus Christ.

[37 : 08] And I was thinking on it this week as well. Stuart Townend, and we'll close with this. I can't think of a better way to put it than how he's put it. So I'm just going to read you what he says. In his wonderful hymn, Jesus is Lord.

And he's talking about this exact thing. And with this, we close. Jesus is Lord. A shout of joy, a cry of anguish. As he returns and every knee bows low.

Then every eye and every heart will see his glory. And the judge of all will take his children home. Friends, this is Jesus.

Let's pray. Oh, Father, we just praise you that you are the God of compassion.

You are the God who has plans for the nations of this world. You are the God who is sovereign over all things. And we just thank you for your precious word, Father.

[38 : 14] That the word of you who knows the end from the beginning. We thank you that we can look at moments like this and see predictions coming true. Oh, Father, I pray that you would give us a confidence in your word.

For those who haven't put their trust in your son, Jesus. May the warning of this passage, the seriousness of who you are. May your spirit bring a fresh awakening of it.

And Lord, for those of us tonight, perhaps, who have gone cold and are affections for you. Oh, Lord, would you rekindle a wonder at your mercy.

Father, we praise you for who you are tonight. Help us this week, Father, to live for your glory. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.