

# A vision of everything - especially the end

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Date: 15 July 2018

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[0:00] 24 and 25. We're going to look together this morning at this Bible.

! It's to shape our thinking, the way that the Bible shapes our thinking and therefore our approach to the whole of life.

If you don't have the Bible, then life is guided by the advice that you get from all sorts of things in this world.

I said fortune cookies. I've never consciously had a fortune cookie, but I believe there are such things. And they've got little mottos in them, don't they? I'd like you to just think of some of the mottos that this world has to help us through life.

So a friend of mine would tell me this one, what goes around comes around. What on earth does that mean? It's some sort of statement about the moral governance of the universe.

[1:22] That if you do bad things, they'll come back to you in a bad way or something like that. That's more or less the best this world can do. Thinking about the moral foundation of the universe.

And then this piece of advice, you'll find it in some shape or form in lots of places, particularly as you're coming towards retirement. You've got to make the most of life while you're here.

So you can have a list of things that you're going to do, like swimming with dolphins, which is not on my list, I can tell you. Going to as many foreign countries as you can.

And people say, that's what you've got to do. That's what life is about. You make the most of it while you're here. That's the best fortune cookie wisdom there is on the shortness of life. Because life is short, isn't it?

On death, he had a good innings and it was a lovely send-off. It's a comment on a funeral. He had a good innings and a lovely send-off.

[2:24] I mean, it's great to have a funeral where you can be grateful. I mean, it's a human thing to do. But in terms of an analysis of the meaning of death, that falls a long way short.

It's just a fortune cookie piece of advice. Or, this is a little bit more psychobabble, this one. The things that I sense and feel are the real and important things.

And you will have felt the power of that. The things that I sense and I feel are the real and important things.

That's the way of getting at truth. It's a sort of fortune cookie way of getting at truth. Of course, it's completely opposite to the Bible. Of course, the Bible says what God says is the way of getting at truth. No matter what you sense and no matter how you feel.

And there's many other such things. And I'm not going to take a lot of time. But I'm just trying to paint the picture of a world which is full of these sorts of sayings, limited as they are by what the fortune cookie writer knows about life.

[3:30] And I want to contrast it with what the Apostle Paul says to the Ephesians. And wonderfully, we're going to be looking at this Sunday evenings at some point as we go through this.

Where Paul says, I insist in the Lord that you no longer live as the Gentiles do in the futility of their thinking. He says, I insist that you don't live fortune cookie lives.

I insist that you don't think the way the world does about these important things. And that you don't have your life shaped by this sort of the commonly held wisdom.

And the antidote for this is, well, it's all sorts of things. But in particular, the Bible says, I can tell you where you came from and where you're going to.

The fortune cookie has no idea of that at all. It has to work with what you can see in the middle. But the Bible says, I can put that all into a context. I'll show you where you came from, where you're going to.

[4:34] And that makes all the difference to the way you think. And therefore, all the difference to the way you live. And I'd like to try and paint a picture of that. Which I believe is what Isaiah is doing in these two chapters this morning.

And that's what I'm going to try and do as we go through the chapters. I'll just set it into a context. So those of you who have been at the other talks on Isaiah will know that the geography is quite important.

This is where Jerusalem is, God's headquarters. This is the land of Israel. And she's sandwiched between big powers like Egypt, which offers help to Israel at various points in history.

And Assyria, this big power here, threatening. And then lately, after that, Babylon. And she's sandwiched.

Little Israel is sandwiched between these big powers as they threaten or tempt her. And in the real life of Israel, in their practical spiritual lives, they have to work this through.

[5:43] And Israel, you will remember, is chosen and redeemed by the Lord. She can look back in her history, in her diary of special events and say, This reminds us that the Lord took us out of Israel with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm.

This reminds us that the Lord loved us and brought us out and chose us to be his own people. And this brings them into what the Bible would call a covenantal relationship or a covenant, an agreement together where they're sort of hand in hand, the Lord and his people.

And this, on the one side, equips and bestows upon Israel promises that the Lord will protect her.

You are mine. I will look after you. And on the other hand, gives Israel responsibilities. And the Lord says, I look after you. I brought you to myself. Be faithful to me.

Love me. Follow as I lead. Do the things that I say you should do in love and in total service. And that's the position that Israel was in.

[6:55] And, of course, it's just like the position that Christians are in, isn't it? That we've been redeemed. And we can look back in our personal history and say, the Lord has redeemed me. And the Lord brings us into a covenantal relationship in which he says, I've got you.

I'm holding you. And you, in turn, look to me with love and gratitude and obedient childlike service.

Now, let's just think one example from the life of Israel. At one point, and some of you will remember this, it's around chapter 7.

Israel was told, your two next-door neighbors are ganging together and they want to knock you out and attack you. What are you going to do? Well, they could have thought, well, God has made us promises.

Let's go and look at the power and application of those promises. But what they actually did was to send messages to this big superpower and say, if you help us, we'll link up with you.

[8:01] And it was there in, it's in 2 Kings chapter 16, verse 8, where King Ahaz sought help from Assyria. And this is what he said to the Assyrians, not to the Lord, to the Assyrians.

I am your servant. You come and save me out of the hand of the king of Aram. And he took silver and gold from the temple of the Lord and handed it over to these foreigners for their help.

Now, how would you characterize that? Because I think one word that comes to mind is betrayal.

Lack of trust. In what way does this honor the Lord who brought them to himself if they say, oh, we're not going to ask you for help.

We're going to ask your enemy, Assyria. And we'll take some of the offerings that we had dedicated to the Lord and send them over as a sort of bribe to Assyria.

[9:07] Assyria, not trusting in the promises, not loving fear of the Lord. And I would say, but I don't have time to go into it just now, that this whole mindset would have spun off into the way they lived.

That's one thing, one episode in the life of Israel, which will help us understand these chapters.

So what I'm going to do now, I'm just going to go through the chapters. I'm afraid it's not very imaginative, but let's go through it together and hear what God says in chapters 24 and 25. Do you have your Bible there? Do you have your Bible there? Have a drink as well. So find chapter 24, if you would.

And looking out on this situation, Isaiah says, the way to understand this is to look, not so much at the beginning, but how it's all going to end up.

[10:17] How is it all going to end up? See, the Lord is going to lay waste the earth and devastate its face. He will ruin its face and scatter its inhabitants.

It will be the same for priests as for people, for master as for servant, for mistress as for maid, for seller as for buyer, for borrower as for lender, for debtor as for creditor.

The earth will be completely laid waste and totally plundered. The Lord has spoken this word. The earth dries up and withers. The world languishes and withers.

The exalted of the earth languish. The earth is defiled by its people. They have disobeyed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore, a curse consumes the earth. Its people must bear their guilt. The earth's inhabitants are burned up. Very few are left. It's all about the earth, you know, just repetition of the earth there. And in this, Isaiah has gone from specific countries and specific actions to the whole setup of the world.

[11:26] So instead of talking about the land and meaning just the land, he sort of spread his view out to the whole earth. And he says, this is what's going to happen. It'll be destroyed.

And in verse 4, he says, dried up. And he says, the reason for this is the people who have broken the forever covenant.

And it's significant that Isaiah doesn't say the reason for it drying up is the physics and science of clouds and water flow.

He says, the reason it dries up is the breaking of the relationship with God for the people who live there. They have disobeyed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant.

Therefore, a curse consumes the earth. It talks about their guilt. And it talks about their guilt. And it talks about their guilt. And it talks about their guilt.

[12:29] And it says, very few are left. So it gives us a picture of a sort of withered, dried up, scattered earth like that. I'm going to try and make some pace.

So let's go on to the next verses. And now he gives this vision as it respects human happiness. And he talks about the new wine drying up.

Verse 7, the vine withers, the merry-makers groan, the gaiety of the tambourines is stilled. The noise of the revelers is stopped. The joyful harp is silent. No longer do they drink wine with a song.

The beer is bitter to its drinkers. The ruined city lies desolate. The entrance to every house is barred. In the streets they cry out for wine. All joy turns to gloom.

All gaiety is banished from the earth. So the things that make life joyful characterize happiness like the wine, the beer, the music, he says, all gone, all stopped.

[13:37] The whole thing comes to an end. The city is ruined. And he paints this picture for us as a ruined city.

And once again he says there's few left. Verse 13. So he's painting a picture on the one hand of an end where those who have not trusted the Lord find that all the goodness that God had put into their lives is drained away.

And all the things that they had looked forward to dry up. And the future is depicted as a ruined city.

So that's one picture of the end which Isaiah is going to come back to in a moment.

And then he suddenly changes gear. Verse 14. But. Or. There isn't a but in the text is it? But he says.

They raise their voices. They shout for joy. From the west they acclaim the Lord's majesty.

Therefore in the east give glory to the Lord. Exalt the name of the Lord the God of Israel in the islands of the sea.

[14:50] From the ends of the earth we hear singing glory to the righteous one. And he paints us this other picture of the way the end can be. And here are the people of God.

And at last the tears are wiped away from their eyes. And at last there is no more sighing and sorrow. And at last there is nothing but singing and joy and triumph and glory. And it's a wonderful picture of I suppose if your team is winning in the World Cup. You get an idea of what it's like for people to be moved with joy and singing etc. And here it's the people of God who fulfill that. And because God has won. Because the Lord has triumphed. From the ends of the earth we hear singing glory to the righteous one. So you get that picture? He says that's that picture of the future. Majestic glory the righteous one. Let's move on. Because when we get to verse 16 we shift scene again.

[16:05] And here it sounds like it's Isaiah himself saying but I'm still stuck here on earth. I'm still in the place where everybody else is. I waste away.

I waste away. Verse 16. Woe to me. And he then has a sentence in which five times he uses the word treachery in different ways.

So if I were to do it in English you'd say the treacherous treacherify. With treachery the treacherous treacherify. He says this is what I'm seeing. Not trusting.

I see betrayal. I see the promises that God has made broken.

Not broken. The promises that God has made not trusted. I see promises that people make to one another broken. I just see this whole treachery thing going on all the way through.

[17:05] I see Assyria. We paid them good money to look after us and then they come and invade us. I see the army outside of Jerusalem and Hezekiah does the same thing.

He takes some money and gives it to them and they take it and then they attack anyway. And he says I see this all over the place. The people who are supposed to be God's people are treacherous.

The people who are not supposed to be God's people they're treacherous. You can't trust them at all. And I see this everywhere. I waste away. Woe to me. The treacherous betray. With treachery the treacherous betray.

Israel there's treachery there. The nations are false. And he says I'll tell you one thing. They won't get away with it. Terror and pit and snare await you O people of the earth.

Whoever flees at the sound of terror will fall into a pit. Whoever climbs out of the pit will be caught in a snare. And then as the poetry of this proceeds he goes back to the earth.

[18:07] And he started off with the earth and now he repeats lots of things about the earth. This time it's a bit like the flood. The floodgates of heaven are open. The foundations of the earth shake. The earth is broken up.

The earth is split asunder. The earth is thoroughly shaken. The earth reels like a drunkard. It sways like a hut in the wind. So heavy upon it is its rebellion. That it falls never to rise again.

So there's the earth. This time not dried up but flooded. As he paints this picture for us. And battered. Does it say like a hut? Like a hut in the wind.

Like a drunken person. So it's another way of painting the picture of the end. Where the treachery and the not believing leads to.

And then we get in verse 21. In that day.

[19:04] This time we're looking forward and it's a day coming. And in that day. Says Isaiah. The Lord will visit or punish.

The powers in heaven above. And the kings on earth below. And they'll be herded together like prisoners bound in a dungeon. They'll be shut up in a dungeon.

And punished after many days. He says. This is the way it's going to end. All those nations. That didn't trust me. All those nations that set themselves against me.

All those nations that just lived for themselves. And this world. And this creation. Instead of the creator. Will be as he says.

Herded together like prisoners. And on that day. Says Isaiah. It will be so glorious. Because the Lord will show who's boss.

[20:02] The moon will be abashed. The sun ashamed. For the Lord almighty. Will reign on Mount Zion. And in Jerusalem. And before its elders.

In glory. And he says. You're getting both sides of this picture. The kings of the earth. Disgraced as prisoners. But the Lord will reign. On Mount Zion.

And in the city of Jerusalem. And it will be so. Brilliant and glorious. That the sun will say. Oh dear. I can't compete with that. And the moon will say.

No. I can't compete with that. This is the glory of the Lord. There's a song that says. I've got a home in glory land.

That outshines the sun. And this is. It's all very pictorial. You have to capture it with your imagination. He says. That's what is ahead. The reign of the Lord.

[21:01] R-E-I-G-N. The reign of the Lord. And where does he reign? On the Mount Zion. That's his headquarters. And in Jerusalem. That's the city. Which we're invited to think of.

The community. Of the Lord. And he will reign there. And notice that word again. Glory. The song's about glory.

Aren't there? Glory. Glory. Dwelleth. In Emmanuel's land. And he's inviting us. To see beyond the confines. Of this world. Beyond anything.

That a fortune cookie. Can tell us. And say. There's going to be. Such glory. When the Lord reigns. On Mount Zion.

And in Jerusalem. The sun and moon. Will be ashamed of themselves. Of the glory. That's going to be revealed. It's a picture isn't it? But it's a fantastic. Wonderful. Inspiring picture.

[22:00] Let's move on into chapter 25. This. Is in the form of. Praise. Said out loud to God.

Oh Lord. You are my God. I will exalt you. And praise your name. In perfect faithfulness. You have done marvelous things. Things planned long ago.

Just pause to. Bring out. Some of those words. Isaiah. Was so. Moved.

And upset. By treachery. And now he says. When I look at God. I see the exact opposite. I see. I see. Perfect. Faithfulness. And the way Hebrew does this.

Is to repeat things. So it says something like. In faithful faithfulness. I see. In faithful faithfulness. You have done marvelous things.

[22:59] And if I remember correctly. That's the word. Pele. I always think of Pele. As the. Wonder working footballer. But this. You have done. Wonderful things.

He says. And he says. Things planned long ago. And he is just. Picking on the fact. That God is not taken by surprise. As he moves through his plan.

Towards the future. He says. All these things are planned. All these things are made to fit together. It's not out of control. And. From the point.

Looking. Where the. Where the. Prophet is. I will exalt you. And praise your name. In faithful faithfulness. You have done marvelous things. Planned long ago. And he comes back to.

His theme. About the end. This time he talks about the city. And he's. Moving from the idea of a particular city. Like Nineveh or Babylon.

[23:54] To all the cities of the world. The world city if you like. The world city that includes. Manhattan and Bangkok. And Paris and London.

And. All the cities of this world. And he says. You. Have made the city. A heap of rubble.

The fortified. Town a ruin. The foreigners. Stronghold. A city no longer. It will never. Be rebuilt. Because. As Augustine.

Saint Augustine. So rightly. Saw this. History. Is really. A story. A tale of two cities. The city of. Of God. Versus the city of this world.

And. He. Isaiah says. What will prevail. Is the city of God. And the city of this world. Will be. Brought. As he says here.

[24:50] He says. In one. One place. Verse two. A ruin. A city no longer. It will never be rebuilt. And then he says. That. The. People.

Of this city. Will be brought. To honor you. Verse three. Strong. Peoples. Will honor you. Cities. Of ruthless. Nations. Will revere.

You. And he's. Showing how. He uses this word. Ruthless. Several times. Meaning sort of. Intimidating. The powers. That intimidate. The cause of God.

And the people of God. Will on the one hand. Be brought low. And on the other hand. Be brought to serve him. Both those things. Are depicted. And then he gives this lovely picture.

To get glory and fear. From the ruthless. Peoples. And then he says. In verse four. How has the Lord been. For his people. Through. This.

[25:44] Long. Journey. And struggle. You have been a refuge. For the poor. You have been a refuge. For the needy. In his distress.

You have been a shelter. From the storm. And a shade. From the heat. From the breath. Of the ruthless. Sorry. For the breath. Of the ruthless. Is like a storm.

Driving against a wall. And like the heat. Of the desert. You silence. The uproar. Of foreigners. As heat. Is reduced. By the shadow. Of a cloud. So the song.

Of the ruthless. Is stilled. So there's a parasol. We didn't think. We needed parasols. But we do these days. Don't we? A shelter.

From the heat. A place. To be safe. From the intense. Aggression. Of the sun. As heat.

[26:41] Is reduced. By the shadow. Of a cloud. So the song. Of the ruthless. Is stilled. And Christians. Characteristically. Pick on.

That. Way of. Understanding. Their relationship. With the Lord. What's the one. The children sing. The name of the Lord. Is a strong tower. Something run into it.

Who runs into it. The righteous run into it. And they are saved. The same. The same idea. That of. Of finding. Refuge. In the Lord. That's what Christians.

Characteristically do. You are my anchor. My rock. And my salvation. Can't remember. How it goes after that. He says. This is what you've been.

To us. We've got these two. Sides. The aggressive. The. Treacherous. Who. Come to ruin. And the people of God.

[27:37] Who trust him. Even in their smallness. Even in their vulnerability. And they find him a shelter. And they're the people. Who. Find themselves at home.

In Zion. Where there's so much. Glory. And we're going to move us on to. Verse six. Yes. So we had. We had.

The statement of praise. And now we have a declaration. Of what's going to. Going to happen. It's in verse six. We had. In that day. Now we have. On this mountain.

And you'll be surprised at this. I think when you read it. You might have been surprised. You might have thought. Oh I thought. That was a bit out of the New Testament. And the answer is. That it's in the New Testament. Because first. It was in the Old Testament.

And listen to this. This is what's. Up ahead. This is where it's going. This is a right way. To think of it. In. On. This. Mountain.

[28:40] The Lord. Almighty. Will prepare. A feast. Of rich food. For. All. Peoples. You clock.

All of that. On this mountain. And the Lord. Almighty. Will. Prepare. A feast. Of rich food. A banquet. A. Celebration.

Barbecue. To end. All. Celebration. Barbecues. So. Even if we don't get to your. Celebration. Barbecue. Whenever it is on Friday.

We will be at this one. Won't we? A rich. Feast. Of. Food. For all. Peoples. All. Nations. That's the surprising thing.

Isn't it? It's not just for. Israel. But. It would include. Whoops. People from. All the different nations. Including Brazil. And.

[29:37] See what he says. I'm sure it's picture language. The reality is better than this. But. He says. If you want to think of it. This is the way to think of it. A feast of rich food.

A banquet of aged wine. The best of meats. And the finest of wines. It'll be absolutely brilliant. You will not want to miss this.

It will be such a reunion. Such a feast. It'll be so good. That God's prepared. The very very best. And he says.

On this mountain. Get this bit. He will destroy. The shroud. That enfolds. All peoples. Now what's this shroud. That covers them all.

Actually it's the same shroud. That stops fortune cookies. Seeing any further than. Than they. Than they. Currently count. The shroud is death. And he says.

[30:36] At that. Big barbecue. On that mountain. The. The. The sheet. That. Covers the nations. The shroud. That envelops them.

The thing that just. Blinds them. To seeing. Any further. Than. Just their own. Short lives. I'm going to. I'm going to. Take.

That. Shroud. Away. On this mountain. He will destroy. The shroud. That enfolds. All peoples. The sheet.

That covers. All nations. He will. Swallow. Up. Death. Forever. Isn't that. Brilliant. That. That. Great. Last. Enemy. Will. Be. Destroyed. Doesn't. He doesn't. Tell us here. How. We know. How. We can see.

[31:29] From our. Advantage. In the. New Testament. We can look back. And say. All those things. That he. He painted. In such. Vivid pictures. We can see. A bit more.

How that happens. Because. Death. Is swallowed up. In victory. Through. Our. Savior. Who. Took. Death. On. In single. Combat.

And. Defeated it. And he. Rose. Victoriously. From the grave. He paid. For our sins. And he rose. Victoriously. From the grave. And he defeated death. And shattered death.

And it's through him. That death is swallowed up forever. And one day. What happened to Jesus. Will be spread out. To all. All humanity.

In that sense. That there will be. His people. Who move. As he has moved. Into death. Less. Less. Ness.

[32:22] The place where there is no sin. No sorrow. No sighing. No tears. No death. I remember hearing of a very famous and august Scottish preacher.

Who having said lots of things about predestination and glorification and sanctification. Said when it comes to the resurrection.

Doesn't it like you want to say three cheers for Jesus. And it does. Doesn't it? A feast of food and wine.

He will destroy the covering over all the nations. That's death. And wipe away all tears. And the reproach from his people. It says he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The Lord has spoken.

And there is a reproach. There is a sense in which people say. Look at you. But you go to church. Do you? You should be doing lots of other things. It's a Sunday.

[33:22] Lots of other things you could be doing on a Sunday. Lots of things that this world has to offer. Stupid of you to be going to church. And what are you doing with your money? You're giving some of your money to the church.

You could be investing that on the stock market. You could be buying a big house with that. You could be taking the holiday of a lifetime. You're giving some of that to the church. You stupid foolish people. There is a reproach.

And God says I will take away that reproach. Because what those people did for me was the right thing. Because they could see beyond the fortune cookie world into the real world.

Verse 9. In that day they will say. Surely this is our God. We trusted in him.

He saved us. This is the Lord. We trusted in him. Let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation. We trusted.

[34:27] The word for trust is very closely linked to the idea of waiting. We waited for him. We didn't jump on the next bus that came along. Because we thought God wouldn't turn up.

We waited for him. And that was the right thing to do. He saved us. Let us rejoice. And be glad in his salvation.

Let us be glad. Because the hand of the Lord will rest on this mountain. This is the place where they waited for the Lord. And they put their trust in him.

This is the place where. On this mountain. Where that feast is going to be prepared. This is the city where the Lord will reign gloriously.

This is the city that one day will put the moon and the sun to shame. And this is a place to be blessed now. Even now. You have been a refuge for the poor.

[35:26] A refuge for the needy in his distress. A shelter from the storm. Now he's the shelter from the storm. And he promises us the final barbecue.

The final banquet where death's covering is cast aside. So it's very pictorial isn't it. But I hope it's meant to catch our imaginations.

And fire our imaginations. And to say to the people of God. Look. Don't live like the Gentiles do. Think it through. Think through. Think through.

How you are to live. Think through. How you are to invest your time. What you are to look forward to. Think that all through. Very very carefully. Living not by fortune cookies.

But as citizens of Zion. Looking forward to its glory. As Peter said. As I quoted at the beginning. What kind of people ought you to be. You ought to live holy lives.

[36:24] As you look forward to the day of God. And speed its coming. Because we're already citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem. We're just looking forward to that great day.

And are we? Yes. I hope we are. There's a footnote. And the footnote is about Moab. Verse 10. For the hand of the Lord will rest on this mountain. Yeah. But. Moab will be trampled under him. A straw is trampled down in the manure. I didn't do a visual of that. You have to use your imagination for that. How come it suddenly refers to Moab?

Moab was. Referred to in chapter 16. I don't know whether you remember it. Moab is the next door neighbor to Israel.

[37:24] And in many ways closely related. Ruth was a Moabitess. You might remember. They needed help. It was there in chapter 16. They were debating and asking for help.

And they knew that the help. Came from Israel. Where it says. It says. In love a throne will be established. In faithfulness a man will sit on it.

One from the house of David. Who in judging seeks justice. And speeds the cause of righteousness. And they. That's Jesus. And they knew that's where the help was to be found. And they were asking for help. But. They never got it. Because. In the end.

They said. No. No. No. If we've got to have this king. As our king. No. We can't be doing with that. We have heard of Moab's pride.

[38:26] Her pride. And her insolence. They were so close. And yet. They missed it. Because they were too proud.

To trust. To submit. To. Jesus. The king of kings. The one who sits on the throne of David. So near. So needy. And it says about Moab. In this. Chapter. God will bring down their pride. Despite the cleverness of their hands. He will bring down your high fortified walls. And lay them low. He will bring them down to the dust. To the very dust. Moab.

Moab. Here. Being just one example. Of the sort of pride. Which gets in the way. Of saying to the Lord Jesus. All that I have. And all that I am.

[39:33] Lord Jesus. I give it to you. And the pride said. I'm afraid. I just can't do that. And they missed it.

Pride. Pride. Prevented her. From bowing the knee. To the one. From the house of David. And the picture. Of these people.

Who missed it. Just by an inch. Really. Of them. Drowning. In manure. Or crashing down. Into the dust. So these.

These chapters. Give a really. Wonderful. Encouraging. Picture. Pictures of the people of God. Who find. Their. Refuge. In the Lord Jesus. But it also ends with this.

Really. Uncomfortable. Footnote. Which says. There are people who get. So close.

[40:32] But in the end. Miss out. And let me say. This morning. I don't know everybody here. I hope. That. You have.

Been getting. Closer. I hope. That you've. You've found. The Lord Jesus Christ. Definitely. Categorically. Certainly. For yourself. But there is such a thing.

As people who get close. But don't make it. Today. You have an opportunity. Because you've heard.

And you're thinking about it. And you have an opportunity. To say to the Lord Jesus. Yes. Absolutely. I want. Without any reservation. I really want to be. One of those people. The people of Zion. Today. You have an opportunity. To say that. To engage. With the Lord. On that. And.

[41:28] By God's grace. To clinch that. And you might say. Well. I'm not quite up. For that today. And let me simply say.

You won't always have. That opportunity. If you say to the Lord. Well. Not today. Maybe tomorrow. You don't know. Whether there'll be a tomorrow. Tomorrow. And if you say that.

Enough times. I can guarantee. There won't be a tomorrow. So. There have been people. Who've sat here. For some weeks. And thought. Maybe tomorrow. Maybe tomorrow. And then. Something's come up.

And they thought. Well. I don't think. I'll go to church anymore. And the opportunity's gone. So. Please.

Don't put the Lord. Off on this. Don't be the Moab. Be one of those people of God. Who are headed for the great barbecue.

[42:25] When death will be destroyed forever. We're going to sing a song. To close with. It's number 971.