

Babylon

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Preacher: Philip Wells

[0:00] Sherlock Holmes, Hercule Poirot, Morse, and Lewis, Lord Peter Whimsey, Midsummer Murders, I could go on.

! Detectives, criminal stories.! These are all fictional characters.

Possible exception of Midsummer Murders. They're all fictional characters and a crime is committed and Hercule Poirot or Sherlock Holmes amazingly works out who the criminal is so they can be brought to justice.

I've added some other ones. There's NCIS, NSI, Law and Order, all the popular TV programs all about criminals being brought to justice, all to do with crime and evil.

And in the last chapter of the Lord Peter Whimsey book or the last paragraph of the Sherlock Holmes story or the last five minutes of NCIS, the villain is caught and justice is done.

[1:18] That's what all those stories are about. The villain is caught and justice is done. And we love to read those stories and people love to watch those dramas on the television.

In the last chapter, the villain is caught and justice is done. And Dorothy L. Sayers, who was a Christian lady actually, wrote the Lord Peter Whimsey stories.

I hope I spelt Whimsey right. I didn't check it. She said, the detective story is the most moral form of fiction because in the end, evil is always punished.

That's the point of having a detective story. And she made a very, you might say it's a very immoral form of fiction because it's all about crime. But she says, actually, it's the most moral because the crime is always brought to justice.

Now think about the real world or our world. I don't need to tell you we live in a confusing world, don't we?

[2:23] We live in a world where evolutionism, evolution as a scientific theory brought into a philosophical theory, says all that goes on in the world is just random.

There's no such thing. How can there be such a thing as justice? What there is is survival. That's all it's about.

Experiences tell us that the world, well, it's all sorts of things. It's beautiful, but it's also painful. And some of it, if not all of it, is inexplicable.

Who can make sense of it all? It wouldn't be a strange thing for people to say, I don't listen to Radio 4 in the morning anymore because all I get told is so painful and inexplicable and frustrating.

Is that the sort of world we live in? Our consciences tell us that there is so much in the world that is wrong. And I think it's true that BBC News selects for items which your conscience will say that's wrong.

[3:39] So it won't tell you about people who have done nice things to each other. It will tell you almost always about people who have done nasty things to each other. And we're bombarded by this in our conscience to say, this is all wrong, wars, suffering, injustice.

Now, here's the question. Is our world, does it have a finale? Does it have a final episode that puts everything right?

Is there a last chapter in which all those things that have been inexplicable and confusing get solved? And in the chapters that we're looking at this morning, that's chapters 13 and 14, God says, You bet.

Our world does have a final chapter. It does have a finale. The villains are caught. The favoured righteous people are blessed.

That is what's going to happen. Babylon is doomed. And Jerusalem will be comforted. And that's all I've got to say this morning.

[4:57] Babylon is doomed. Jerusalem will be comforted. God says that is the way the story will end. And I'll enlarge on it by taking us through the chapters.

But that's the single point. Our world has a final chapter, a final ending, in which Babylon is doomed and Jerusalem is comforted.

So let's set ourselves up for that. And from the very helpful children's talk, we thought about Babylon. Babylon is, as we saw last week, the iconic city.

It's the city which represents humanity, defying God, using technology to do so. We should say that Babylon was famous for its wisdom.

And wisdom is not a bad thing. Daniel learned wisdom. Daniel learned wisdom when he was in Babylon. But there were some places where he drew the line. He said, now, this is okay, but I'm not going any further than that.

[6:02] I don't want to be taken in by the whole package. Babylon is famous for its arrogance and its pride and its defiance of God.

And we are shown something of how fiercely and strongly God is dead set against this anger and arrogance.

And we'll bring it down. And you might remember from last week that the final chapter of the Bible, or nearly the final chapter of the Bible, says, here it is.

Babylon is fallen. Fallen is Babylon the great. So that reminds us of Babylon. And in the chapters that we've got, I'd like us to consider Isaiah chapter 13 and 14.

There's Babylon, and it falls, splat, down. Chapter 13 is a description of Babylon's downfall.

[7:07] Beginning of chapter 14, sorry, it's an oracle. It says an oracle concerning Babylon. Chapter 14, verses 1 and 2 have got a very short little description of the comfort of Jerusalem.

The Lord will have compassion on his people. And then the rest of chapter 14, or at least up to verse 27, is a song describing Babylon's downfall.

It's a taunt. It's sarcastic. It expresses wonder and mockery. So my point this morning is Babylon is doomed.

Jerusalem is fallen. And let's just not do anything particularly adventurous. We'll just go through the text and see how the text makes that point. Because that's the point that it's making.

So let's walk through the text of chapter 13. As I was pointing out, we've got chapter 13, chapter 14, both about Babylon's dune.

[8:15] And the little bit in the middle of the sandwich, the little juicy bit in the middle, is the comfort of Jerusalem. So we can take all those things together. Chapter 13, an oracle concerning Babylon.

It's a speech, sometimes translated a burden, but something important to be said. Something sort of heavy to lift up.

This is the important thing about Babylon. And look what it says. Verse 2. Raise a banner on a bare hilltop.

Shout to them, beckon to them to enter the gates of the nobles. For I have commanded my holy ones. I have summoned my warriors to carry out my wrath.

Those who rejoice in my triumph. And God is saying, I am bringing people to smash Babylon. And even though they don't realize it, they're doing a holy work.

[9:13] And he calls them my holy ones. I am using these people to fulfill my holy purposes. Verse 4.

Listen. A noise on the mountains. A noise like a great multitude. Can you imagine the roaring and the noise of the soldiers massing up together?

Perhaps they've got cavalry. Perhaps they're shouting. Perhaps they're banging their spears.

Listen. An uproar among the nations. Like nations massing together. The Lord of hosts is mustering a host for war.

One of the ways that the Bible speaks about the finale of the world is the courtroom. It says a judgment day. But another way it talks is the last battle.

And here it's the imagery of a battle. God is stirring up for the last clash. And it will result in his purposes being fulfilled.

[10:21] That's where people get the idea of Armageddon. The battle of the mountain of Megiddo. The Lord Almighty is mustering an army for war.

They come from far away lands. From the ends of the heavens. The Lord and the weapons of his wrath. To destroy the whole country. Or the whole earth. Or the whole land.

Wail. For the day of the Lord is near. And he's going to talk about the day of the Lord. That's going to crop up several times. The day of the Lord is near.

It will come like destruction from the Almighty. Because of this all hands will go limp. Every man's heart will melt. Terror will seize them.

Pain and anguish will grip them. They will writhe like a woman in labor. They will look aghast at each other. Their face is aflame. It talks about the human angle of this.

[11:23] The human horror of this day. Babylon is doomed. Jerusalem will be comforted. He puts it in terms of the human horror of it. Verse 9.

See. A day of the Lord is coming. A cruel day with wrath and fierce anger. To make the land desolate and destroy the sinners within it.

The stars of heaven and their constellations will not show their light. The rising sun will be darkened. The moon will not give its light. I will punish the world for its evil.

The wicked for their sins. He emphasizes the cosmic shaking. The cosmic nature of this. He's put it in those cosmic terms of the stars are affected by this.

The moon is affected by it. The sun is affected by it. Cosmic terms are used for the doom of Babylon.

[12:22] Interestingly, Jesus uses these same words when he speaks. I think he is speaking about the doom of Jerusalem. Of the city that presided over his execution.

That that age which had been so great, so significant, comes to an end. And Jesus uses these terms of stars and constellations not showing their light.

For that particular instance of judgment. And what it looked like in historical terms was that in AD 70 Jerusalem was overrun by the Romans. And their temple was knocked down.

Oh dear. All my clicking's gone wrong. I shall just carry on. Verse 11.

I will punish the world for its evil. The wicked for their sins. I will put an end to the arrogance of the haughty. And humble the pride of the ruthless. Do you see that he's aiming for arrogance?

[13:26] Pride. And this will be humbled. I will make men scarcer than pure gold. More rare than the gold of Ophir. I will make their heavens tremble. The earth will shake from its place.

At the wrath of the Lord of hosts. In the day of his burning anger. Babylon is doomed. Jerusalem will be comforted.

Like a hunted gazelle. Like sheep without a shepherd. Each will return to his own people. Each will flee to his native land. Whoever is captured will be thrust through. All who are caught will fall by the sword.

Their infants will be dashed to pieces before their eyes. Their houses will be looted. Their wives ravished. I will stir up against them the meads. Who do not care for silver.

And who have no delight in gold. Their bows will dash to pieces the young men. It's the same word as with the infants. They will have no mercy on infants. Nor will they look with compassion on children.

[14:26] A doom. An awful doom. Babylon is doomed. It's put in terms of the horrors and brutality of ancient warfare.

With children being mutilated. And women being raped. And houses being knocked down. That's the brutality of ancient warfare.

I don't actually think warfare nowadays is particularly much better. Do you? But he's using that thought. It's an awful doom that Babylon is headed for.

He talks about the Medes. Who did in fact replace Babylon as the power. The Medo-Persian Empire.

Knocked out the Babylonian Empire. Didn't quite happen with the military conquest. So I think we can say that this reference to the Medes is really talking in iconic terms.

[15:27] Rather than one particular physical event that is being spoken of. But you notice in verse 18.

No mercy. No compassion. No compassion. This doom for Babylon is saying there is this city and there's no mercy.

There's no compassion. There's nothing that they can hope for. There's nothing to make it any softer or sweeter. It is just doom.

Verse 19. Babylon. The jewel of the kingdoms. The glory of the Babylonians pride. Will be overthrown by God. Like Sodom and Gomorrah.

Like those two immoral cities. He gives credit for the beauty of Babylon. It's sort of the flower of civilization.

[16:26] The jewel of the kingdoms. As Steve was reminding us last week. That Babylonian achieved things of 360 degrees in the circle. 360 days in a year.

And I'm sure there's more things than that. Good human achievements. And yet put in the service of arrogance against God.

And defiance of God. It goes on to say in verse 20. That the outcome will be a depopulation. Instead of a city that is thronged with people doing business.

And meeting one another. And enjoying things. And working together. None of that. She will never be inhabited or lived in through all generations. No Arab will pitch his tent there.

No shepherd will rest his flock there. But desert creatures will lie there. Jackals will fill her houses. The owls will dwell. The wild goats will leap about. Hyenas will howl in her strongholds.

[17:26] Jackals in her luxurious places. Her time is at hand. And her days will not be prolonged. Instead of the flowering of human society.

It becomes depopulated. And only filled with these sub-human creatures. Whether they're meant to be just wild animals. Or whether they're meant to be sort of demonic. I'm not really quite sure.

So I will click and see if any of the things I meant to put up actually come out. And the answer is no. I might even have to stop and make it work properly.

That's Babylon. That's the first look at Babylon. It's a doomed city. And the thing to say is don't belong to that city. That's the place to get out of.

The New Testament says to everybody flee from Babylon. Don't let that be your home. Don't let that be the place where your heart belongs.

[18:25] And Christians don't live as if it was your home. It isn't. You might be there sort of in a temporary way. But don't make that your home. Because Babylon is doomed.

And Jerusalem will be comforted. Now, would you like to just look away for a minute. Say hello to your next door neighbor. While I see if I can make this do what I'd like it to do.

Right.

Let's have another go, shall we? So, chapter 13 is this very severe description of, which just simply emphasizes that Babylon is doomed.

I think that's what it's saying. I don't think we can say a huge lot more about that. It's just saying that powerfully, powerfully, powerfully, Babylon is doomed. And then the juicy bit in the middle of this sandwich is what happens to Jerusalem.

[19:38] And that's in chapter 14. And it actually begins with the word for. For the Lord will have compassion on Jacob. And you see these two things in the Bible are always tied together.

The defeat of evil and the defeat of God's enemies. And the redemption of his people. Both those things happen. You can't have one without the other. God's people can never be truly free unless the enemy is destroyed.

And when the enemy is destroyed, God's people are set free. So, the two things go together. And hopefully it will work. And if it doesn't, I shall just talk about it anyway. So, 14.1 and 2 has got this most beautiful description of the comfort that God gives to Jerusalem.

And I'll pick out some of the rather lovely words here. The Lord will have compassion on Jacob. It's the word for, compassion is linked to the word for womb.

And it is like the compassion a mother has for her child. Was there a new royal baby recently? Was there?

[20:52] I'm not up with these things. And was there a picture of the royal baby being cuddled and snuggled? Because that's the instinct a woman has for her baby, isn't it?

To cuddle that baby, to snuggle that baby. And babies seem to be designed to be cute, to sort of draw that thought out. Oh, I'd like to cuddle that baby.

And the Lord, even though we're not cute, the Lord says, I will have compassion on Jacob. I will wrap my arms around my people like a mother would wrap her arms around her baby.

I will have compassion on Jacob. It says, once again, he will choose Israel. Once again, having sort of looked away, he'll say, yeah, I'm going to set my favor upon you.

I'm going to love you. I'm going to focus my attention on you. And there's some other words that go in here. I will settle them in their own land.

[21:58] And somewhere in there, and I think it might be the word settle, is a word which means rest and comfort. The name Noah is an Old Testament guy, isn't he?

And Noah is named after this word comfort. And when he was named, they were saying, now we'll have comfort.

So we'll call our son Noah. And in these verses, and I think it's the word settle, but I could be wrong. That word crops up. I will bring my people comfort.

They'll be settled. They won't be forever agitated and anxious and worried because I will settle them. And I will settle them in their own land.

And we'll just skip over the word land. But land in this context is a very rich thought. It's a place where God's people can call home.

[23:01] It's a place where they can be secure. You know what it's like to go home. You go home. You close the front door. And the world is outside.

You're in the comfort of your own home. You know you're not going to get mugged. Unless, well, unlikely to get mugged in your own home. You're with people that you trust.

You don't have to lock every single door in your house. And this is what it's saying. I will take my people home. And I think that's a beautiful thought.

I will settle them in their own land. And then these aliens, well, alien doesn't mean like extraterrestrial alien.

No, that's right. Thank you. It just means strangers, people who are foreigners. And this is foreigners compared with being a Jew.

[23:57] So most of us are foreigners. So if you're thinking, you're sitting there thinking, well, I'm English. I'm not a foreigner. Actually, you are. We're all foreigners, you see.

Foreigners will join them. So people from all the multiple other lands will be brought in. And united with the house of Jacob. I was just reading Ephesians these last couple of days.

And it seems to me that when Paul writes the Ephesians, he's just saying to them this. Now you're Christians. This is exactly what's happened to you. You've heard of my job, says Paul.

I go around to all the nations and tell them that they can join Jacob. I go around to all the nations and say, you too are inheritors in the commonwealth of Israel.

All the beautiful and wonderful things that are said here about Jacob and Jerusalem. You can join them by believing in Jesus Christ. He says, I feel it's a real privilege to do that, says Paul.

[25:01] That's the gift I've been given. And he says to his hearers, that's the privilege you have. That's what you are included in. And he says, isn't that a brilliant thing?

But it is, isn't it? And he goes on to say, and live like it. Live like you belonged to the inheritance of the Christ. Live like you belong to the people of the God of Israel.

Live with those high aspirations of faithfulness, truthfulness, holiness, love, forbearance, grace, all these things.

Foreigners will join the house of Jacob. And it says, nations will take them and bring them to their own place. This is repeating the idea of being at home.

And the house of Israel will possess the nations as men servants and maid servants in the Lord's land. So if you compare it with what the foreigners were doing before to Israel, they were bashing them and capturing them and enslaving them and brutalizing them.

[26:13] And he says, no longer. Foreigners will be part of your household. They won't brutalize you. They will serve you and serve along with you.

The nations are no longer their cruel masters, but their willing servants. And then there's a little bit in verse 3 which deserves our attention.

On that day, so we're thinking about this day again. The Lord will give you rest from your suffering. He'll give you rest from your suffering.

Rest is a very rich word in the Bible. The thought is a very rich thought. Jesus says, come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest for your souls. You no longer have to be suspended between various sorts of anxiety and insecurity.

You can find rest for your souls. And on that day, the Lord will give you rest from suffering. And from fear.

[27:23] So it's translated turmoil. You will no longer live in an environment of fear. And from sorrow. Not sure which word that's translated.

Maybe that's the word cruel. And from slavery. Cruel bondage. And he's looking forward, isn't he? Saying, previously life contained suffering and fear and sorrow and slavery.

But on that day, all those things will drop away. You could almost say there will be no more mourning or crying or tears.

And no more death. For the old things are passed away. The new has come. This beautiful, wonderful picture of Jerusalem being comforted.

Babylon is doomed. But Jerusalem is comforted. That's the promise that the Old Testament looks forward to.

[28:30] And as Paul would have said to his Ephesian readers, that's the promise we have in Jesus Christ. One day we shall be free.

One day we shall be home. Do you remember Martin Luther King saying, now he turned it into a sort of civil liberation thing.

I have seen the promised land. I have been to the mountaintop. And I have looked over. Well, he was talking about civil liberties.

Fair enough. But this is the real vision. We stand on this and we look over into the promised land. When there will be no more suffering. No more pain.

No more tears. No more mourning. No more sin. No more death. Babylon is doomed. Jerusalem shall be comforted.

[29:32] Isn't that a wonderful thing? We shall be home. One day we shall be home. And in the Lord Jesus all will be well.

Let's go on into chapter 14 then. Jerusalem is comforted. Babylon is doomed.

And chapter 14 says this by way of a taunt. So this now is verse 4. You will take up this taunt against the king of Babylon. It's a sort of, I think we're to understand it as a sort of song.

Making fun of the king of Babylon. Being sarcastic to the king of Babylon. And I think that the commentators say this is one of the greatest poems in the Hebrew language.

This is one of the classic great pieces of poetic literature in the Old Testament. And I think how on earth am I going to do any sort of justice to that?

[30:35] Because for a start we've got it in translation. But anyway, let's just go through it and see if we can just pick up a little bit of the power of this poetry.

Verse 4. You will take up this taunt against the king of Babylon. How the oppressor has come to an end. It's the word Shabbat which is Sabbath.

Everything's gone quiet. In the old days in England we used to have a Sunday which was a sort of Sabbath day. No shops open. No traffic on the road.

You open the window. It's all gone quiet. Not like a Saturday or a Friday. And the people singing this say, it used to be oppression. We used to have tanks rolling up and down.

And you open the window now and... It's all quiet. How the oppressor has come to an end. How his fury has ceased.

[31:36] Because the Lord has broken the rod of the wicked. Scepter of the rulers. And see how angry they used to be. In anger they struck down

peoples with unceasing blows.

In fury subdued nations with restless aggression. That was what Babylon did. It was the iron fist.

And now... Not like that.

But like... Like an old-fashioned Sunday morning. It's all quiet. And the lands are at rest and peace.

And they break into singing.

And I think the other lands are depicted as trees. Which used to get chopped down by Babylon. But they can grow again now. Even the pine trees and the seavers of Lebanon exult over you and say...

Now that you have been laid low. No woodsman comes to cut us down. And it's like a spring morning for the nations. All quiet and growing and lovely.

[32:32] Because Babylon is doomed. And then we shift the picture to Sheol. Which is not actually a grave. In the sense that you could visit a grave in a cemetery.

But it has that sort of burial idea. As you'll see in a moment. It's a place... This is saying that when... Even in the Old Testament.

When people died. They didn't stop living completely. There was something that carried on. And it's... Even in the Old Testament.

Didn't really understand all of that. Wasn't fully revealed. It is revealed in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. But as it's looked at here. It's a sort of rather misty picture.

Of the kings who had died in their place in Sheol. In the place where the dead are. And there we are.

[33:30] All the kings of these different powerful nations. They're all in their sort of dead. But still sort of alive state. And when they find out that the king of Babylon is coming.

Everybody is stirred. The grave below is all astir. To meet you at your coming. It rouses the spirits of the departed. They're called something like shadowy ones.

Or flimsy ones. To greet you. All those who are big top leaders in the world. And it makes them rise from their thrones. Those who are kings over the nations.

And they'll all speak. And they'll say to you. Look at you. You've become as weak as us. You've become like us. How amazing.

It's a sort of taunt thing isn't it? You. You are so strong. You're just as weak and dead as we are. All your pomp has been brought down to the grave.

[34:30] Along with the noise of your harps. Maggots are spread out beneath you. And worms cover you. I mean that's a picture from a grave isn't it? Of maggots eating away.

That's where you are now king of Babylon. You thought you were so great. And now you're just being eaten by worms. So that's a picture in Sheol. And then we have a statement about how high the Babylonian king used to be.

You have fallen from heaven. Oh bright one. Morning star. Son of the dawn. You have been cast down to the earth. You've been chopped down yourself.

You who once laid low the nations. And then here you get this description of what the spirit of Babylon is. What the idea of Babylon is. You said in your heart. I will ascend to heaven.

I will raise my throne above the stars of God. I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly. The utmost heights of the sacred mountain.

[35:35] The idea is of. It's almost a supernatural God thing. It's not just saying a piece of geography. I'll climb a high mountain. But the mountain is the place where the gods meet human beings.

And Babylon is saying. I'm up for that. I will be in that place. The mount of assembly. The sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds.

I will make myself like the most high. It's a very strong statement isn't it? I will make myself like the most high.

Make myself like God. And interesting the Bible says. There actually is no one like God. To whom will you compare me says the Lord.

That I should be equal to them. I am in a class of my own. There is no one. There can be no one who is like me. Says God. But Babylon says.

[36:38] No I'll do that. I will make myself like the most high. You see you get the pride. The blasphemous pride of Babylon.

I tell you brothers and sisters. Every human heart has a little bit of this. That says I'm the center of the world. I'm the most important person.

Everything revolves around me. That's what human sin is.

You who said you'll be like the most high. Are brought down to the grave. In the depths of the pit. So let's go back to the kings. As they look at this new arrival in Sheol.

Those who see you. Stare at you. They ponder your fate. Is this the man who shook the earth. And made the kingdoms tremble. The man who made the world a desert. Who overthrew its cities.

[37:45] And would not let his captives go home. All the kings and nations lie in state. In his own house or tomb. But you are cast out of your tomb.

Like a rejected branch. And even in death. It describes the disgrace of this king. Seems to be saying he's not given a proper dignified burial.

I think that's the picture that we're shown. You're cast out of your tomb. Like a rejected branch. The language of branch. The language of branch is used in.

For the king that comes from. Well actually the king that comes from the line of David. Is the branch. Who will shoot up.

And become a great kingdom. That's Jesus. But this king is a rejected branch. He's not going anywhere. He's not going to shoot up into anything. He's not going to become anything.

[38:40] He's a rejected branch. And the covering is just loads of bodies piled up. I mean think of some gory thing that you watched by accident. When you thought you were going to watch something else.

Gory bodies piled up. That's where you're going to be. You're covered with the same. With those pierced by the sword. Those who descend to the stones of the pit. Like a corpse trampled underfoot.

You will not join them in burial. For you destroyed your land and killed your people. Everybody's glad. When Babylon is got rid of like this. It didn't help anybody.

The offspring of the wicked will never be mentioned again. Prepare a place to sort his sons for the sins of their forefathers. They're not to rise to inherit the land and cover the earth with their cities. Jesus said who would inherit the land.

He said blessed are they. For they will inherit the earth. Meek. Blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth. Babylon won't. I will rise up against them declares the Lord.

[39:43] And cut off from Babylon her name and her remnant. Her survivors. See the difference. Babylon has no nothing going forward. But. Shear Yashub.

Shear Yashub meaning. Child's name. Obviously none of you have named your children this. Otherwise you'd remember. Shear Yashub means a remnant will return.

There's no remnant for Babylon. But for God's people. Yes. There will be a remnant that will return. And we. Let me just catch up with the clicking.

We get a little bit about Assyria here. And it might look as though it's out of place.

Because it's basically about Babylon. And he doesn't say this is another oracle. This is the same oracle as we're on at the moment. And I think what it's saying is. This Babylon thing.

[40:46] It has. A future. For. The readers here. Because Babylon would be the place that would. Capture them.

And then Babylon would be defeated. And they'd be able to come home. So it has that historical reference. But that's sort of ahead of them. But they've already seen Assyria defeated.

And that's the same thing. Just with a different name. And that's why we get this Assyria. Reference here. And God's saying. I've done it already. You can believe me on this.

Because I've done it already. You know I'm going to do this. Because you've seen me do it to Assyria. As I have planned. So will it be. As I have purposed. So will it stand. To crush the Assyrian in my land.

On my mountains. I will trample him down. His yoke will be taken from my people. His burden removed from their shoulders. And I'm going to carry on doing this same thing. For the whole world.

[41:45] This is the hand stretched out over all nations. For the Lord Almighty has purposed. Who can thwart him. And who can turn. Who can turn

it back.

Babylon's downfall. Babylon is doomed. Jerusalem will be comforted. Babylon's downfall has already happened to Assyria. And as we look at it in history.

Babylon's downfall has already happened to Babylon. And that's why we can look forward. And say. On the last day of judgment.

Everything Babylonish. Everything Babylonish. Will be doomed. We're not just guessing. We've seen it happen. And this chapter sort of stretches.

From that particular point in history. On into the future. And say. There is still a time to come. In which people will say. Fallen is Babylon the great.

[42:43] Babylon is doomed. And Jerusalem will be comforted. Is our world.

Going to have a final chapter. A final. Episode. Where. The villains are brought to justice.

And God says. Yes. There will be. And here's a question. Is it a good thing. For Babylon to be doomed.

Is it something. To rejoice over. And very cautiously. But very clearly. The Bible says yes. It's a good thing.

This is what ought to happen. There is such a thing as evil. Which deserves. To be punished. And that evil. Is found in people.

[43:48] Hell. Won't be empty. Hell isn't just an idea. That will never happen. There is such a thing. And Jesus teaches about that. I'm not going to go into the teaching of Jesus.

I'm going to stick with what's said here about Babylon. There will be. A final doom. And it's too awful to think about. Now we've gone.

Been through this. This description. And. I don't know whether you've got any sense. Of the power of these descriptions. But.

They ought to make us tremble. Because hell is far worse than this. And it's teaching us. That. Will. Happen. That is the case.

Babylon. Will be doomed. God. If you're still part of Babylon.

[44:45] Get out. If that's still your home. Ask Jesus. To set you free. From Babylon. And plant you in his city.

Which is Jerusalem. Who will be comforted. The people of God will be comforted.

Blessed. Are those people. If you're. A member of Zion. How blessed you are. What a privilege you have.

Don't really care. What your ups and downs are. At the moment. They might be multitudinous. But. Look up. For your redemption. Draws near. Blessed are the poor in spirit.

For theirs is the kingdom of God. Blessed are those who mourn. For they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek. For they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst.

[45:46] For righteousness. For they will be filled. Blessed are the people of God. For they will be set free. Blessed are the people of God. For they are going home. And will certainly get there.

What could be more important then. To belong to the city of God. And what greater blessing. Can there be. Than to look forward to that comfort.

That the Lord Jesus promises us. Let's sing together.

Thank you.