

Hope in Gloomy Times

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[0 : 00] Father, you are the God who is the Holy One of Israel, in whom there is light and there! is no darkness at all. We recognize this morning that you are the God who has purposed! and planned before the foundation of the earth that you would be glorified through your Son.

And it is your Son now we seek to magnify in the preaching of the Word and the proclamation of his work and the declaration of his person. And we pray this morning now with gratefulness that you have made clear in your Word who the Lord Jesus Christ is. And we ask that you would enable me as I would preach this morning to do so first with faithfulness to your Word and with a measure of fervency according to your Spirit and with wisdom to apply it to the hearts and minds and wills of your people and to their consciences. Lord, many come here this morning with real, real struggles. And we pray that the Word would minister to them and you would give them ears to hear, eyes to see, and lives to live out, that they might not only be hearers of the Word this morning, but doers of it to the praise of your glorious grace.

We pray especially also now for the unbelievers among us, those who do not know you in truth and in reality, that this mighty Spirit would come and raise the dead and make them alive in Christ, so that they might have a sure ground of hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. In his matchless name we pray, who has been raised from the dead for our justification, the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

For many of you, you believe that we are living in the worst of times and not the best of times.

It is an age of unbelief and not an age of belief. It is an era of foolishness and not an era of wisdom.

[2 : 26] We see it in so many of the activities and the things that people are doing. And then for others, they are convinced that we're living in a winter of darkness and not a spring of hope.

And as we look about, for many people, as they look about this nation in particular and throughout the world, they see us plunging further and further into a depth of darkness and in gloom.

And this is true whether you're old or whether you're young. You look about and you see in our nation the ravaged, devastating effects of violence. So much so now that when you hear of a murder in our country, practically speaking, few are probably deeply moved by it because the number has increased so much.

Then when we look around and we see the surging immorality in our land, the adultery, fornication, and homosexuality, which has become almost rampant and making intrudes into our society, many are growing in despair.

And then when we look at the brazen materialism in our land, we look at the number of gambling houses. We see the number of gospel preachers who are preaching a false gospel and rather a gospel of prosperity.

[3 : 53] Or we just look about and we see that so many are living beyond their means. And as a result, when we look about, we see a society in which we are living where there is so much that caused our hearts to sink and to droop and to sense gloom and despair.

And therefore, for many of you, you do not want to read the newspaper, listen to the news, or watch television, because it only plunges you into further despair and darkness.

Or for those who do read it, you perhaps have grown apathetic or even cynical. You notice it by the things that you speak and by the lack of hope that has genuinely been expressed in your own words.

And so all of this has brought about a response for many of you, in which you find that you are living, in many ways, in a time of real lack of hope.

And so the question then we must ask is, where can you and I find genuine hope, ultimate hope, real hope, in these gloomy days?

[5 : 08] Well, this is not just an issue, as I said, for older people, but also for the younger people. Because younger people nowadays, as many of you know, are not willing to return, because they sense, really, in our own nation, more and more, a sense of despair.

Now, this is not something that's uncommon. In fact, the prophet Isaiah wrote to the nation of Israel, and they knew what it was like to have real gloom and despair.

He was writing to a people in chapter 9, if you turn there to Isaiah chapter 9, and he seeks to answer this question, in the midst of their own darkness, and in the midst of their own gloom.

How do you have genuine hope? And the prophet there reveals, that despite the gloom and the darkness of his people, that God promises hope and joy, through the birth of a Davidic king.

And Isaiah, we'll pick up actually in verse, chapter 8, and begin verse 11. Isaiah chapter 8, beginning in verse 11.

[6 : 15] And we'll read through to verse 7. Let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.

And he will become a sanctuary, and a stone of offense, and a rock of stumbling to both houses of Israel, a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many shall stumble on it.

They shall fall and be broken. They shall be snared and taken. Bind of the testimony. Seal the teaching among my disciples. I will wait for the Lord, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob, and I will hope in him.

Behold, I and the children whom the Lord has given me are signs and portents in Israel from the Lord of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion. And when they say to you, inquire of the mediums and the necromancers who chirp and mutter, should not a people inquire of their God?

Should they inquire the dead on behalf of the living, to the teaching and to the testimony? If they will not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn.

[7 : 46] They will pass through the land greatly distressed and hungry. And when they are hungry, they will be enraged and will speak contemptuously against their king and their God and turn their faces upward.

And they will look to the earth. But behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish, and they will be thrust into thick darkness.

But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time, he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali. But in the latter time, he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. You have multiplied the nation.

You have increased its joy. They rejoice before you, as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken, as on the day of Midian.

[8 : 55] For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult, and every garment rolled in blood, will be burned as fuel for the fire. For to us, a child is born.

To us, a son is given. And the government shall be upon his shoulder. And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of his government and of peace, there will be no end on the throne of David and over his kingdom to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. So end God's reading of his word. Let's pray again. Father, Father, only by your spirit can the word be properly preached with any sense of authority and of power.

And I recognize that in myself I am incapable and unable to preach this word with any authority apart from your grace and your spirit. May it please you now to honor your son, to convert sinners and to edify your saints by the power of your spirit this morning.

[10 : 17] Magnify your name, we pray. In Christ's holy name. Amen. Well, I want us to see this morning this simple truth that despite the gloom and despair of God's people, despite the gloom and the despair of God's people, the Lord has promised hope and joy to his people through the birth of a Davidic king.

So in the midst of despair and gloom, the Lord himself, the Lord Almighty, the sovereign God has promised hope and joy through the birth of a Davidic king.

Now you notice that in verse 1 of chapter 9, the prophet there begins with the word but. And you'll notice that he is contrasting something. He's contrasting obviously in verse 22 there where he has spoken to the nation and has informed them of what's going to happen.

And the context is that Isaiah is writing in the book of Isaiah. He's writing about 740 B.C. His ministry took place in 740 B.C. So almost 7 centuries prior to the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And he's writing to primarily southern Judah. You'll remember that the nation of Israel had been divided between the 10 tribes of Israel which is in the north and then in the south is the 2 tribes of Judah.

[11 : 50] And so Isaiah is primarily ministering to the southern part of Israel which is Judah. And he's writing to them. And in the first 6 chapters he's warning them that they have forsaken the Lord.

They have departed from the ways of God. They have departed from the covenant that God has established with them and in doing so God has warned them that he is going to judge the nation.

And so Isaiah is informing the nation now that judgment is going to come because they have gone after idols. They have taken the way that they should not have gone.

But in the midst of that Isaiah has also informed them that the Lord will also show mercy and will provide hope to them. And so and then in verses chapter 7 and 8 we see sprinkled throughout this that God has spoken about the judgment that is to come and in chapter 7 and 8 the Lord tells that Assyria not Assyria Syria and Israel are going to come against the nation of Judah.

They are going to come together and they are going to ravage the land or seek to overcome it. But he warns the king that they ought not to fear because they will not overtake the land. So in chapter 7 and 8 yet also what God then says that because Judah is then going to align with Assyria in order to overcome Israel and Syria the Lord says that I am going to send Assyria down through Israel and it's going to attack Judah also.

[13 : 29] So Assyria comes down and actually attacks and takes over the two most northern territories of Israel Zebulun and Naphtali. They are the first areas or the first tribes that are attacked and the land is devastated and that's why you see there that in chapter 9 where it speaks about in the former time he brought contempt to the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali.

So what is happening is that here is Assyria coming against Israel attacking the land and the land is devastated and so the people are recognizing that they were formerly under the oppression of Syria and so the prophet is informing them that this is what their condition was then but now something is going to take place and so the prophet now begins to expound of the reason for their gloom.

He tells them that they had gloom because as I said previously that the Assyrians had attacked Zebulun and Naphtali and they were their first to be invaded and they were not spared by the engine of war by the Assyrians.

The people in Zebulun would have heard the noise of the whip the noise of rattling wheels and galloping horses and they would have seen the horsemen charging swords flashing and spears gleaming and when they looked around they would have seen a sea of blood they would have seen all the dead bodies and they were the first to be attacked and they would have seen a mass of corpses and a mountain of dead bodies and carnage all around and although the immediate reason for the people's gloom was the Assyrians the ultimate reason the ultimate reason for their gloom was that they had departed from the true and living God and so God had used Assyria to be his agent of oppression against these tribes and consequently God himself had brought them into contempt and had brought them into a low state now you remember that in Deuteronomy in chapter 28 when the

Lord entered into a covenant with his people he told them that if they obeyed him in his covenant if they did not forsake him if they had followed his ways that these blessings would take place but if they did not this would take place and now you see the Lord fulfilling his promise to the land in Deuteronomy 28 saying that when you disobeyed me I am going to bring upon you my judgment and my curse and this is what is taking place in chapter 8 but all that's going to be reversed now when we read in chapter 9 where the Lord now begins to promise to dispel the people's darkness and so although they were brought under the yoke under the oppression of Assyria the Lord says in verse 1 there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish now as one writer puts it the gloom is not final God will not be satisfied that his people have experienced the just results of their rebellion and so now the prophet promises that the same land that was humbled will now experience the opposite the land that has been brought low would now be made glorious we see that in verse 2 in verse 1 where he says in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea of the land beyond the

[17 : 08] Jordan Galilee of the nations now these three regions the way of the sea the land beyond the Jordan the Galilee of the nations it's been a bit of dispute exactly what is that referring to but it's more than likely referring to the three regions that represent the provinces that the Assyrians organized after the invasion but what is striking what is striking is that the Lord promised to honor the most unlikely area of Israel the ones who had been oppressed and most influenced by the pagans so if you were living if you and I were living in northern Israel in Zebulun and Naphtali at that time you and I would have had the most influence by the Gentiles and so for a Jew we have to keep in mind the Jews this would have been an abomination but this land had been overtaken by the Assyrians and now it had now become a land filled with Gentiles and so the Lord would dispel the darkness not from the most favored or the most likely area and so the prophet goes on to explain that how he would make the land glorious and how he would dispel this darkness and he says it there in verse 2 the people who walk in darkness have seen a great light those who dwell in a land of deep darkness on them as light shine and so here is the distinct and privileged that they will see and so the prophet is speaking now of a future time he's speaking of what is to take place in the future that there is going to come a time when this land that had been brought low that they will experience themselves a light that will arise which is described as a great light and a light that will shine upon them and he says there that they will have the nation multiplied and its joy will increase now in verse 2 you notice that it says the people who walked in darkness and it says those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness many of you are aware that in the bible when we speak of darkness that the bible often contrasts light and darkness in him there is no darkness the bible says referring to god that he is light and when it speaks about darkness it is speaking ultimately of darkness to signify sin so here is the land that is steeped in sin we remember that also when the lord jesus says in john chapter 3 that light has come into the world but men loved darkness and so here is this area this territory this land in which they are steeped and they are living in sin and in iniquity and it says the people who walked in darkness speaking about their spiritual blindness their spiritual darkness that they have seen a great light now now we're not left to guess what this great light is because we know that if you turn over to matthew chapter 4 in matthew chapter 4 at the coming of the lord jesus matthew actually speaks and makes reference to this this passage in the fulfillment of jesus christ in matthew chapter 4 in verse 13 speaking about the beginning of jesus ministry in verse 12 it says now when he heard that is jesus had heard john had been arrested he withdrew into galilee and leaving nazareth he went and lived in capernaum by the sea in the territory of zebulun and naphtali so that what was spoken by the prophet isaiah might be fulfilled the land of zebulun and the land of naphtali the way of the sea beyond the jordan galilee of the gentiles the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death on them a light has dawned says from that time jesus began

to preach saying repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand and so matthew was taking this passage ensuring that when isaiah was prophesying almost 700 years ago when he was foreshadowing that this two territories of zebulun and naphtali would see and hear that light would shine that they would have the distinct privilege as those who be the first to experience and to hear essentially the proclamation of the gospel of our lord jesus christ that they would be those who would be the first to experience and to see the one who would come from heaven and who would walk on earth among them and so matthew interprets the presence of the lord jesus as the fulfillment of this prophecy now although the prophet spoke with great certainty that a great light would shine upon the people who are sitting in darkness the fulfillment of this prophecy did not take place until 700 years later imagine you are living during this time when your territory had been ravaged and you hear a message that there would come a day when the territory would have a great light shine upon it and joy would be restored and their nation would be multiplied 700 years and many of those people in fact all would have not experienced that fulfillment of that promise and yet yet god was calling them to believe his promise even though it was not fulfilled in their time and so they were called to believe his word though they were exiled though they were under the dominion of a foreign power and therefore just as you and I who live in a microwave and internet generation that God's timing is far greater than ours his plans do not operate on our timetable you and I as we are living right now are called to believe not in the first coming but in the second coming of our

Lord Jesus we are called now that you and I may not live through the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ but the reality is just as God has promised in his word that there is coming the Lord Jesus again in righteousness and that he will come again with his angels that you and I are called to believe that promise will be fulfilled and so God desires that his people believe his word and be in one accord with his purpose over the centuries brethren we need to remember that we are called to trust God even when we are disappointed with our children going astray our health is breaking down our marriages are falling to pieces our employees are making work difficult our finances are growing worse each day and our desires are going unfulfilled all these things have its place but they should never eclipse believing all the promise of God will be fulfilled every single one of them and like the Old

Testament saints who believe that God will fulfill his promise in the coming of Christ so we too must wait for the fulfillment of God's promises in the second coming of Christ even if we pass away not seeing the fulfillment of it for heaven and earth may pass away but God's will will never pass away now you'll notice that it speaks about those who are walking in darkness who have seen a great light as many of you know that the Bible also teaches that we who are believers are called to be light in this dark age and we are to let our light shine before men and that we are to do so so that God may be glorified that we are to let our light of good works manifest itself so that men and women would praise God and that is a call for us that as we live in this age as we walk before men and women that we do let our light shine before them in order that men and women boys and girls may inquire ultimately why are you different why do you not walk in the way that others walk that they may ultimately have an opportunity to hear and see the true light that is in Jesus

Christ as we proclaim the gospel to them and this Christmas we have many many family and friends who are all around us who have not heard the true gospel and you and I have the opportunity to be light to them this Christmas may God give us the grace in the midst of that to let men and women know of the true life that is in Jesus Christ for God has dispelled the darkness and gloom from his people but not only has he dispel the gloom and darkness he has promised to bestow joy and hope to his people and we see that in the remaining portions of the text three through seven where God promises to bestow joy and hope to his people now the first thing to notice there is that Isaiah declares that God has increased the people's joy he says that in verse three he says you have multiplied the nation you have increased its joy they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest as they are glad when they divide the spoil and there the prophet is using a similitude where he's saying that if you can imagine that here is this sense of joy that's going to take place to the nation and he's saying that if you can imagine harvest time in agriculture that the time when there would be great rejoicing is a time of harvest and there would be a time of celebration and so he's saying that here is the joy and the level of it is going to be when you think about when you all gather together at harvest time and that is what he compares to joy to at harvest or think of it as when the enemy has been defeated and they plunder all of their goods and he says imagine that here you are sharing the goods among the people and he says that is the measure of the joy he says there in verse 3 as with joy the harvest as they are glad when they divide the spoil and so presumably the people would shout for joy and they would jump for gladness at the sight of a good harvest and they would rejoice at the hordes of goods the victorious army would bring home to the people but how does God actually bestow joy and hope to his people how does he fulfill that well notice in the text there are in verse 4 there's a word for in verse 5 there's a word for and in verse 6 it begins with the word for in verse 4 we see that he multiplies their joy by the deliverance from oppression for the yoke of his burden and the staff for his shoulder the rod of his oppressor you are broken as on the day of Midian and so the prophet informs us that the immediate cause of such joy is God's deliverance of his people from oppression and the people of

[28 : 23] God will rejoice because God has freed them and that deliverance is spoken not merely of a physical deliverance but ultimately of a spiritual deliverance it is when God has delivered the people not only out of Egypt but he's ultimately speaking that when the Messiah comes when this light has come and has shined upon them in the context that that one who will set them free the Lord Jesus will set them free and so the ultimate reason for joy the reason for joy is that first there will be deliverance from their oppression and that is oppression from Satan and sin and under the image of a yoke imposed upon the captives of the Assyrians the prophets looked to a day when one mightier the Assyrians would tear off and break the yoke of sin to pieces and just as the Lord displayed his mighty power to overthrow the Midianites you remember that when the Midianites God had called Gideon and in calling Gideon he had broke the oppression of the

Midianites and so he says that just as he did that that day he would do again and he would once again display his power to deliver his people from their oppressor but not only by the deliverance from oppression God promises to increase their joy but he also says by the end of war in verse 5 we see there for every boot of the trapping warrior and battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire and so here Isaiah speaks of God putting an end to war he states that the boot that was worn by the cavalry of the Assyrian army and shook the earth would be silenced and similarly the garment rolled in blood would be burned and thus signify the end of war so not only will God increase their joy by the deliverance from oppression not only by the end of war but ultimately and this is ultimately by the coming of a person and that's verse 6 and 7 and here's where we spend a bit more time the prophet remarkably speaks and astonishingly answers this by the coming of a person that the reason why that the people can have ultimate joy is in the coming of a person we see that in verse 6 he says for to us a child is born to us a son is given and so the first thing we notice that we are informed about his human nature it says for us a child is born now you remember that in chapter 7

Isaiah had already prophesied in verse 14 where it speaks about the Lord himself will give you a sign that the virgin will conceive a son and bear a son and shall call his name Emmanuel so the son had been prophesied but now it's a bit more clear saying that this same son for us a child is given and for us a son is given and so this is speaking of someone of an extraordinary nature and we see here that in Romans chapter 1 and verse 3 you remember that there the apostle Paul speaks about the Lord Jesus was descended from David according to the flesh and declared the son of God and the power according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead and so here you speak of one who is coming who has two natures he has a divine nature and he has a human nature he is a child born speaking about his human nature and the son is given and we'll see that also in the context that he's two natures you have a divine nature and a human nature in one person you have one who is fully man and fully

God in one person for to us a child is born and a son is given now a bit more is given about this son that is given we're not only informed about his human nature but we're also informed about his extraordinary names we see here it says his name shall be called wonderful counselor mighty God everlasting father prince of peace wonderful counselor there speaks about his unusual wisdom his extraordinary wisdom the word itself speaks of one who is normally associated with God so here is one who has an unusual amount of wisdom or you might say that is divine wisdom but not only is he wonderful counselor his name but he's called mighty God now that's important because the term mighty God is used in the next chapter in chapter 10 and verse 21 turn there and just look with this it's speaking about a return of a remnant it says here a remnant will return the remnant of

Jacob to the mighty God and in the context there it's speaking about the covenant God the God who made a covenant with his people and that's important because the name here in chapter 9 is associated with the unique name of God and I know that there are some who will teach you that there's a distinction or there's a difference between a mighty God and an almighty God but that's not true because the mighty God here attributed to the Lord Jesus Christ and to the Son is the same one who spoke in chapter 10 and verse 21 to be the mighty God and in Deuteronomy chapter 10 and verse 17 is also called mighty God and so when there are those who come knocking at your door and they come and tell you that there is a difference between a mighty God and an almighty God you need to point to them strips of passages which correct that notion because there is no difference the mighty God is the same God who created everything and the same

[34 : 34] God who was and is and will to come and it's the same God as some! call him Jehovah But not only is he called mighty!

God!! It's not speaking about the first person of the God head as we affirm that God the Father God the Son and the Holy Spirit in this context it's not saying that here the Son is God the Father that's not what it's saying when it speaks about everlasting father it's more referring to his father care over us and so when we think about it the Lord Jesus in his care over us and then fourth is called Prince of Peace and that he will establish and rule over us in peace you remember that Ephesians chapter 2 verse 14 Christ is called our peace and so here are these unique wonderful names that are attributed to this one who will be born who is given to us and in the context he is this one is being attributed titles of deity this is no normal son it's referring to the second person of the

Godhead who will come from heaven and take on human flesh and will be one who will ultimately go to the cross and will die so we are not only informed of his human nature and we are informed of his extraordinary names but we are also informed of his royal stature his royal stature we see that here also where it says the government shall be upon his shoulder the increase of his government and that on the throne of David and over his kingdom so here is one who is uniquely spoken of who will have the government upon his shoulder who is spoken of increase of his government that is the government will last forever!

and ever! Now why is that important? Why is he even mentioned David? Well David is significant because you remember that in 2 Samuel chapter 7 that God had made a promise to David that he would have someone to sit on his throne forever and so years would come past and years would go by that the Israelites would be longing and waiting for this one who would sit on the throne of David forever it wasn't Solomon because Solomon died and so there was this expectation of a promise that would be ultimately fulfilled in one who would come a Davidic king and we know that this is fulfilled ultimately in the Lord Jesus because when Matthew opens up his gospel in chapter 1 and verse 1 how and the son of David and later on we read that in chapter 21 and verse 9 it speaks about the promise of

David you remember that on the day when the Lord Jesus enters into Jerusalem and the people are shouting what are they shouting Hosanna to the son of David the people recognized and understood that here is this one who is to come here is this one who had been prophesied for many years ago that the government rests on his shoulder that the throne of David will be his and this is being fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ 700 years had been prophesied before but we're not only told of his royal stature but we're also informed about his reign of peace we see that again that he is the prince of peace and the increase of his government end of peace real peace many of you are aware that united nations was established in order that there would be international peace falling on from the league of nation and there is this desire within the human heart for genuine peace and there will be no peace brothers and sisters no matter how many nations come together until first and foremost there is peace with

[38 : 56] God until men and women are reconciled with God there will be no peace at all and that's why fundamentally when all the nations and people talk about peace in the world and even in our land when you talk about violence in our land trying to rid of it everyone seems to forget the most important thing and foundation and it is this you have no peace without peace with God first be peace first of all with God and the means by which men and women have genuine and ultimate peace is by God sending his son the prince of peace and it is trusting in him for the salvation of your soul so that you who were once enemies of God who were once apart from God may have peace with him through him the Lord Jesus Christ that is the only way that by faith we have peace with

God through our Lord Jesus Christ and so here is this one who will usher in peace but in the ages to come in the eons to come there will be a reign of peace and that is what all of us long for in this age of anarchy and violence that he will establish peace but not only will he establish!

peace it says that we inform that he will rule with righteousness that he will rule with righteousness you see that here also it says in verse 7 of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end on the throne of David and over his kingdom to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness this is one of the distinct and hopeful privileges of the believers that we are seems to be no righteousness whether it's people in government whether it's people in places of position and power whatever it is there seems to be no righteousness but the righteousness that is going to be ushered in is one in which the Lord Jesus Christ himself will sit on the throne and among them will be peace and he will be the one in which there will be no sin in his presence Satan will be defeated and there will be righteousness all the days of our lives and that's why the prophet says there will be joy not only will there be deliverance from the oppressor not only there will be an end to war but there will be the coming of a person who will reign on the throne of

David and he will usher in peace and righteousness now this is important because the Christian alone has a ground or basis for joy and hope the Christian alone has a ground and a basis for hope in this world no one else has it in this dark age because his joy and hope is ultimately not resting upon the world and the things in it but upon the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ the Christian basis for his hope is not in this world and circumstances or some situation but it's in the coming of a person in the Lord Jesus Christ so that when the world looks about and hopes for some hope it is ultimately resting on what something happening in this world but that is uncertain but we have a certainty the

Lord Jesus Christ and it is knowing that the greater David will establish righteous rule and there will be no more war but only peace no more oppression but only liberty and there will be no more injustice but only justice and so those who are mistreated who are exploited who are abused who are oppressed who trust in the Redeemer alone will no longer incur or endure such things in the age to come every pain will be wiped away every heartache taken away and every disappointment will be cast away as far as the east is from the west and so the true believer not merely the professing person the Christian the true believer not merely the professing Christian has a sure ground for their hope and joy because they believe in God's word even though many years may pass before the ultimate fulfillment of God's promise on the other hand the unbeliever cannot and does not have a ground or basis for such joy or hope that overcomes darkness despair and distress in this evil world let them talk and you hear all the time talk about their hopes which are false hopes they'll talk about their honors and their riches and their pleasures and their accomplishments and their achievements and success but such things are all vain hope in the day of trouble and as many of you hear and you see some even talk about hope

[44 : 16] There's a lot of chatter but delve into the ground and the basis of that hope and you will see that it is empty and so when you receive a phone call and the doctor tells you perhaps you have cancer or when you hear the news that your loved one has passed away or when you receive the wrenching news that your child has been found on drugs or parents have divorced or some other wrenching news or the death of a child whatever it may be or as one brother dear brother woke up the next morning wife had no indication that you sickness young woman and wakes up that next morning and his wife is dead in bed next to her you better have a hope that can explain that and find that in the midst of that that you yourself can have genuine hope and marveling to display to all of our eyes what it means to have hope in the

Lord Jesus Christ so to the unbeliever I ask you when that news hits you and it could be young or old it doesn't make a difference when the news hits you with your own health family member or some loss of a job or whatever it may be what ultimately!

are you hoping in when that tragedy hits you and you will discover very quickly how empty how meaningless and how vain it is to trust in money and riches and pleasure look into the grave and ask yourself what are you hoping in ultimately and I know the human heart is so deceitful that what!

what I have said is true but all the while the heart goes in search of other lovers or other confidence it will nod and think that all is well when all is not well but friend if you have as many did in the day of Isaiah put their confidence or trust in a political or military leader that is to lean upon a twig or a straw!

it will break it will break in the day of trouble and affliction and so what you need is a sure hope that can endure through trial trouble and even death and the question is do you have that?

[46 : 48] do you have that? do you really have that? do you have a hope beyond the grave? do you trust in anything else or anyone else than Christ is vanity of vanities dear ones if we were not talking about ultimately your hope and your joy then it would not make a difference but we are we are talking about ultimately where you are going to find your hope and joy in the midst of life's most difficult circumstances and as I prepared for this I thought about it received the news of my youngest daughter was ill and I thought about it how would I respond if my wife called and said to me God had taken her how would I respond how would I respond

I trust by God's grace that the ultimate hope would be in this message of a coming person in which the Lord Jesus Christ ultimately is our hope and our sure hope for all of us let's pray let's pray