

# The Terminus of the City of Man

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 29 January 2023

Preacher: William Philip

[ 0 : 00 ] And now we come to our Bible reading today, and today we're back in the book of Genesis, reading chapter 11, while also reading some verses from Isaiah chapter 13 and 14 too, which is, I believe it's on page 577 of the church Bibles.

If you could keep one open and a finger in the other, that would be very helpful as we go through this together. Willie Phillip, our senior minister, has been preaching through Genesis for some time now, and we'll be continuing that today as we consider the fate of the city of man, the city of Babylon.

So let's read firstly from Genesis chapter 11, verses 1 to 9. Now, the whole earth had one language and the same words.

And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there.

And they said to one another, come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly.

And they had brick for stone and bitumen for mortar. Then they said, come, let us build ourselves a city and make a tower with its top in the heavens. And let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.

[ 1 : 13 ] And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. And the Lord said, behold, they are one people and they have all one language.

And this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down. And they are confused their language so that they may not understand one another's speech.

So the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth. And they left off building the city. Therefore, its name was called Babel.

Because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth. And from there, the Lord dispersed them over the face of all the earth. And then moving over to Isaiah chapter 13.

We've got a selection of verses here. You might not need to follow them exactly. But please do listen well. And have chapter 13 and 14 open in your Bibles in front of you. So verse 1.

[ 2 : 17 ] From the oracle concerning Babylon, which Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saw. Behold, the day of the Lord comes, cruel with wrath and fierce anger, to make the land a desolation and to destroy its sinners from it.

For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light. The sun will be dark at its rising. And the moon will not shed its light.

I will punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their iniquity. I will put an end to the pomp of the arrogant and lay low the pompous pride of the ruthless.

Therefore, I will make the heavens tremble. And the earth will be shaken out of its place at the wrath of the Lord of hosts in the day of his fierce anger.

Then chapter 14, verse 4. You will take up this taunt against the king of Babylon. How you are fallen from heaven, O day star, son of dawn.

[ 3 : 33 ] How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low. You said in your heart, I will ascend to heaven above the stars of God.

I will set my throne on high. I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will make myself like the most high.

But you are brought down to Sheol. To the far reaches of the pit. I will rise up against them, declares the Lord of hosts.

And will cut off from Babylon name and remnant, descendants and posterity, declares the Lord. I will sweep it with the broom of destruction, declares the Lord of hosts.

This is the purpose that is purposed concerning the whole earth. And this is the hand that is stretched out over all the nations.

[ 4 : 34 ] For the Lord of hosts has purposed. And who will annul it? His hand is stretched out. And who will turn it back?

Amen. Amen. This is the word of the Lord. Well, thank you, Peter, for that fine hymn, which I'm sure we will get to know very well.

Well, we're back in Genesis 10 and 11. And last time we saw, I think, that these are watershed chapters in the Bible.

And they explain the beginning of the world as we know it to be. A world desperately seeking a name, seeking identity.

That's a big word today, isn't it? Identity. But doing so by rejecting God, our creator, and therefore finding only confusion.

[ 5 : 44 ] A world seeking belonging, seeking cohesion, relationship. But apart from God, and so reaping only loneliness.

Reaping isolation. A world desperately seeking society. Let's have a city for us. And yet in reality, finding only frustration and insecurity and anxiety.

And that is the world of Babel. It is our world. It is the tragedy of the city of man. It's a world and its humanity adrift from God and independent of God.

And in fact, resolutely against God and God's gracious rule. And that is the world that is made by man's sinful corruption.

Nevertheless, as we saw, it is still a world under God's sovereign control. It's under his care. And hence there is still great blessing, great beauty in our world.

[ 6 : 50 ] But it's also under his curse. It's under his necessary judgment because of human rebellion. God judges man's city.

He judges the world of humanity in order to preserve humanity from its innate flight into self-destruction. God's judgment is to preserve this world.

It's a merciful judgment. And God says here in Genesis 11 verse 6 that unless man's sinful propensity is curbed by his judgment, there is nothing that will be impossible for him.

That is, if man really were able to unite in concentrated and sustained evil, then this world will be far, far more dreadful, far, far more terrifying even than it is today.

Just think about that. It is God's restraining grace that keeps this world from utter destruction. That alone. But here's the question that we ended with last time.

[ 7 : 59 ] Will God, if he really is a sovereign God, will he always put up with a world like this? A world so far short of his created ideal.

A world that needs constant restraint or else it would erupt in a self-destructive conflagration of mutinous wickedness and rebellion.

Well, friends, the answer to that question is no. No, the world will not remain as it is forever.

Because God will not withhold ultimate judgment from the world forever.

God's merciful judgments in the world to preserve the world one day will come to an end. And then there will be a final judgment on the world to end the world.

And that is a clear teaching of the whole Bible. There is a terminus for the city of man. And chapters 10 and 11 of Genesis, therefore, tell us not only about the beginning of the world as we know it, but they also launch us into the story of the whole Bible.

[ 9 : 15 ] And therefore, they point us very clearly towards the end of the world as we know it. The city of man, with its unbridled defiance of God, will not last forever.

Now, in the end, every such pretension, every Babel, every Babylon, the world of rebellion and defiant humanity, it will come to an end, a terminus.

And in its place, there will be another city. A city that is lasting. A city that is no longer full of paradox and ambiguity.

A city with foundations in eternal righteousness. The city of God himself. And so, since with these chapters, we're at a real watershed, a real turning point in the whole storyline of the unfolding drama of God's plan of salvation, I want to step back a bit and make sure that we see the big picture of this story before we move on.

Sometimes before you start a journey, it's helpful, isn't it, to step back, to trace out the journey right to its end so you know where your destination is. That's what I want to do this week and also next

time before we get into the detail of what follows in Genesis 12 and the story of Abraham and so on. [10:46] I think not about the beginning of this world as we know it, we're going to spend two Sunday mornings thinking about the end of the world as we know it. In both senses of that word, end.

First of all today, the end in the sense of where it stops forever, the terminus of the city of man. And the next time, the end in terms of what is the goal in the triumph of the city of God.

In other words, we're going to trace the threads of both God's care and God's curse on this world right to the end.

We're going to trace and see where his judgment leads to in the end, but also where its blessing leads to in glorious fulfillment. So let's think then about where God's judgment on man's city reaches its fulfillment as the Bible story unfolds.

What is the terminus of the city of man? Where does the story of Babel all end? Well, since Babel's world is our world, that's a pretty important thing for us to know, isn't it?

[12:03] And to understand where this world is really going to end and how and why, we need to be very clear, not at all confused, on two things about God's judgment.

We need to understand, first, the many merciful judgments of God to preserve human history, but also, secondly, we need to be very, very clear about God's ultimate judgment to end human history and this world.

Let's think briefly, first of all, about the first of these because we've already seen that many times in these early chapters of Genesis. It's been a story, hasn't it, all the time of God's merciful judgments to preserve human history.

Genesis 1 began, didn't it, with God's perfect creation, with his purpose for human beings. Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and have dominion. God almost immediately came mankind's rebellion.

We'll do it our way, not your way. And God judges, doesn't he? Banishes human beings from Eden. Lest, we're told, having rebelled, they'll be able to re-usurp God, to rival God.

[13:18] And in the chapters that follow, we see that evil multiplying, don't we? Cain's murder of his brother Abel is just one example of it. And it gets worse and worse, and yet, God has not utterly abandoned his world.

Chapter 4, verse 26, at the end, people began to call on the name of the Lord. And yet, still, mankind's evil became so prolific that by chapter 6, we read this, God saw that every inclination of his heart was only evil all of the time.

And so, again, God must judge, destroying that society, the cataclysm of the flood. But still, God has not abandoned humankind altogether.

See? Again, it's a merciful judgment. And he starts again with Noah and his extended family. And once again, God commands the blessing, as he did in Genesis chapter 1, be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth.

And that's what begins to happen. But, still, man will rebel. He will not submit to God's way. And so, on the plains of Shinar, tyrants like Nimrod, whose name means we shall rebel.

[14:34] Well, they led the rebellion. They built cities like Babel, the city of man. Societies without God, societies against God. Come, let's build for ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens.

In other words, we will make ourselves divine and rule this world. We'll make a name for ourselves. We will not be dispersed over the earth as God has commanded us to do. We'll do it our way. Again, exactly the same phenomenon. Man asserting himself against God and transgressing the boundaries between the Creator and His creation.

That's exactly what Paul is talking about in Romans chapter 1. And so, again, as we've seen, chapter 11, verse 6, God must judge. Lest the united opposition of mankind to God becomes unstoppable and utterly destroys God's world.

And so, here in chapter 11, verses 7 to 9, tell us of God scattering humanity, putting human races and human cultures at odds with one another, confused in their language, not understanding one another, and clashing in their cultures, rivaling one another for power.

[15:56] And that's the way the world has been ever since and still is today. It's our world, isn't it? And it is because, says the Bible, the world is still under God's sovereign blessing.

He hasn't utterly destroyed it, but, he has judged it many times in mercy in order to preserve the world from destruction at the hands of man for the sake of his purpose for the world and in the world for human beings and their future.

But, as I've said, this is just as clearly the message of the whole Bible, but, these things will not stay this way forever. However, contrary to our Western secularist and humanist and atheistic view that the world has just always been this way and always will be this way forever and ever, the Bible says no.

There is a terminus for the city of man, for a world of history and humanity at odds with God and against God. nor is there some sort of a samsaric round of the world just going round and round in repeating circles of birth and rebirth and reincarnation forever and ever, as some Eastern philosophies would have us believe.

No. There shall come a time, says the Bible, when God's merciful judgments in history to preserve the world will give way at last to something else, to the second thing, to the ultimate judgment of God in history, to end this world forever.

[17:45] The city of man will not triumph forever. There will be an end, there will be a decisive end to Babel, to Babylon, as it comes to be known, to the world of mankind at odds with God.

And so, in the rest of our time this morning, I want to help you see clearly the thread of that big unfolding story as it unfolds throughout the pages of Scripture because Genesis chapter 11, as well as telling us about the beginning of the world as we know it, is already prophetic of the end of the world as we know it too.

For any Cornhill students here, this is just another instance of the law of Moses being prophetic. It's pointing us to Christ and his kingdom and in particular here to the final seed, to the consummation of that kingdom in Christ.

See, what we need to understand is that in the Bible, right from Genesis 11 onwards, Babel, or Babylon, as it comes to be known, it comes to typify, it comes to epitomize the whole world of mankind at war with God.

And that is the recurring story of human history. Of course, the literal history of Babylon is one of opposition to God's people right through the Bible story.

[19:19] We noted that back in chapter 10 verses 10 to 13. It speaks of the three great enemies of God's people Israel, Egypt, Babylon, and Assyria.

Those are the enemies at the two great crisis times in the story of Israel. In the time of the Exodus, where they escaped from the enemy Egypt.

And then later in the time of the exile, where the northern kingdom of Israel goes into exile in Assyria, and the southern kingdom Judah into exile in Babylon. Babylon. So right back here, Moses and his words foreshadow the continual opposition to God and his people from these historic enemies.

These tyrannical, oppressive, earthly regimes. But as you read on in the Bible, you find that Babylon in particular, but these others as well, but Babylon in particular, is taken up to typify everything that is in this world of humanity against God.

Babylon is the city of man, arrayed against God and against his city. So for example, in Isaiah 13 and 14 that we read from, you might want to look there, page 577, if you have one of the visitors' Bible.

[20:41] Here is Isaiah and he's prophesying in the 8th century BC when the Babylonian empire was a massive world power. But as we saw and as we heard, when he talks about Babylon here, it's obvious, isn't it, he's representing something much, much bigger.

Isaiah's words are also about much more than just the current history of the people of Israel. It's clear that he's looking forward to something ultimate, an ultimate intervention of God in this world, in salvation, but also in judgment.

Listen again, the oracle concerning Babylon which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw. The 13th verse 9, Behold, the day of the Lord comes, cruel with fierce anger and wrath to make the land a desolation and destroy its sinners from it.

Verse 11, I will punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their iniquity. I will put an end to the pomp of the arrogant and lay low the pompous pride of the ruthless.

Verse 13, Therefore I will make the heavens tremble and the earth will be shaken out of its place as the wrath of the Lord of hosts in the day of his fierce anger. And in chapter 14, he taunts against the king of Babylon.

[ 22 : 07 ] Verse 12, How you have fallen from heaven, O day star, son of the dawn. How you were cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low. You said in your heart, I will ascend to heaven.

Above the stars of God, I will set my throne on high. I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds.

I will make myself like the most high. But you are brought down to shale, to the far reaches of the pit.

You see how Babylon and Babylon's king are spoken of as the very personification of everything that is evil and anti-God in the whole world.

Think of the spirit of Babel. Well, it clearly describes that, doesn't it? The arrogance, the defiance. Isn't this the same arrogance, the same defiance that we see right through human history, the world over.

[ 23 : 17 ] And think of the rebellious defiance of the devil himself and his angels. Remember, Peter and Jude tell us they abandoned their God-given place and sought to usurp the throne of God himself.

It's the very spirit of anti-God. God is judged so often in history to preserve the world.

But look what's promised. Look what's promised for this judgment. Chapter 14 verse 22. I will rise up against them, declares the Lord of hosts, and will cut off from Babylon name and remnant, descendants, and posterity.

I will sweep it with the broom of destruction. destruction. That's not just a scattering, is it, like in Genesis 11.

That is total destruction. And again, do you see the tragic irony of it all? Everything that man has sought to have apart from God and without God and against God, everything that the builders of Babel thought that they would achieve for themselves, a name, descendants, posterity, verse 22 speaks of.

[ 24 : 38 ] And all of that is swept away by the broom of God's destruction. And just in case you haven't yet grasped the absolute finality of this, the scope of it, look at verse 26.

This is the purpose that is purposed concerning the whole earth. This is the hand that is stretched out over all the nations. The Lord has purposed it.

Who will annul it? His hand is stretched out. Who will turn it back? That is absolutely clear, isn't it? He is speaking about the ultimate judgment of the whole earth, the terminus of the city of man.

And if you read through the Old Testament prophets, you will find that that is the constant message, the day is coming, the day of the Lord, the day of his wrath, the day when Babylon, when man in his rebellion against God will be destroyed forever.

No longer the scattering of a merciful judgment, this is the shattering of God's ultimate judgment on this world. But in case you might think, well, that's just the railing of Old Testament prophets about political enemies and so on.

[ 26 : 03 ] Well, friends, let me show you that the New Testament scriptures not only confirm this, they emphasize it with extraordinary clarity. Babylon is still the image that epitomizes a world of God's enemies, wherever they are in history or in time, whatever manifestations of power they are at any particular and given place.

In 1 Peter 5, for example, verse 13, Peter uses Babylon as a code for Rome, which is the empire of the day arrayed against God's people then in the first century.

And when we come to the very last book of the Bible, Revelation, we find that it's constantly talking about Babylon, the city of man, that represents the great mass of humanity and the mass of evil that is arrayed against God, the one true God made known in Jesus Christ.

John's Revelation, as you know, is a vivid book. It's a colorful, visionary representation of the story of human history. And he uses all kinds of apocalyptic imagery, strange and vivid.

But it's just the same tale. It's the tale of two cities. The city of man at war with God and with his city.

[ 27 : 28 ] The city of man blighting God's world, opposing his truth. Revelation 14, verse 8, speaks of Babylon, who made the nations drink the maddening wine of her sexual immorality.

And John's vision, you see, it describes in florid ways, in vivid ways, something that the whole New Testament warns about in much plainer words. It describes a fearful climax of evil in the world when for a time God's merciful restraining hand is lifted.

And the last and greatest revolt of humankind against God is unleashed. I want to say, and this is important, I want to say very clearly that foolish speculation about the so-called end times, that is something that Jesus warns us quite clearly against.

Many Christians are far too taken up with these things. And there are millions of books, things like the Left Behind series and all these sorts of things make that clear.

Jesus tells us that's not only foolish, that's wrong. He tells us no one knows and no one can know the day and the hour of his coming.

[ 28 : 49 ] So foolish speculation is not what the Bible is asking us to engage in. But, there are some things that the New Testament seems to tell us very plainly.

In 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, Paul speaks about what seems to be a climax, a great rebellion, when God's restraint is lifted, before at last Jesus comes to destroy the man of lawlessness, whatever that might mean.

And elsewhere, the apostles likewise, they talk about a rising tide of terrible times, as they call it, in these last days, before Jesus comes again, alongside, let it be said, alongside, always, a great advance of the gospel bearing fruit all over the world.

Those two things are always together. Jesus himself talks about those things together so clearly in all those parables in Matthew chapter 13. But that is what we see vividly in the book of Revelation with all its strange and apocalyptic imagery.

It speaks of a last great attempt, if you like, to reunify the city of man against God and against his people. It's worth just looking together a little bit at Revelation chapter 20.

[ 30 : 05 ] Perhaps you'd turn there with me. Because what this describes is the nations coming from the four corners of the earth, once again, to one place, arrayed in one camp against God and his people, his city.

If you like, it's like a great resurrected Babel arising, a great global unity of deception to challenge God.

Look at Revelation 20 verse 7. Satan will be released from his prison and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle. Their number is like the sand of the sea. And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. A reenactment, if you like, of the great united city of Babel, arrayed against God.

But then do you see the rest of verse 9? But fire came down from heaven and consumed them. Not scattering, not a merciful, preserving judgment to maintain the world, but an end.

[ 31 : 30 ] It is the terminus of the rebellious city of man. At last, it is a just and right retribution, an eternal judgment.

Let there be no doubt about that. Read on in verse 9. But fire came down from heaven and consumed them, and the devil, who had deceived them, was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night, forever and ever.

you see, all the united evil and opposition of man, and the author of it all, the devil, who remember in Revelation chapter 12 is given his older Genesis name, that ancient serpent called the devil or Satan, they're judged in the lake of fire forever and ever.

It is the terminus, it is the eternal end of Babel, of Babylon. the city of man. It really is the end of this world as we know it.

Turn back a couple of pages to Revelation chapter 18, which gives another graphic picture of this same thing, of the fall of Babylon. Chapter 18, verses 2 and 3, fallen, fallen is Babylon the great.

[ 32 : 54 ] She's become a dwelling place for demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable beast. For all nations have drunk the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality.

And the kings of the earth have committed immorality with her. And the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the power of her luxurious living.

It's pretty unmistakable, isn't it? And you see, even then, here is the staggering thing, even then, there is not a hint of repentance by the world in its mass.

In fact, it's quite the opposite. There's only sorrow for the loss of this rebellious, godless world. Look at verse 15 to 19 of chapter 18. The merchants of these wares who gained wealth from her would stand far off in fear of her torment, weeping and mourning.

Alas! Alas for the great city that was clothed in fine linen, in purple and scarlet, adorned with gold, with jewels and with pearls. For in a single hour all this wealth has been laid waste.

[ 34 : 06 ] And all the shipmasters and seafaring men, sailors and all whose trade is on the sea, stood far off and cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning. What city was like this great city?

And they threw dust on their heads and they wept and mourned, crying out, alas! Alas! For the great city where all who had ships at sea grew rich by her wealth.

For in a single hour she's been laid waste. Isn't it shocking that from humankind in the mass there is only sorrow for the end of such sin and wickedness and rank evil.

But the heavens and all the citizens of God's city will rejoice. Look at verse 20. Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, for God has given judgment for you against her. God commands his people to rejoice at Babylon's destruction. Will the God of heaven let this world go on as it is forever in rebellion against him, scorning him, hating him, hating his son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who came to offer salvation?

[ 35 : 34 ] No. No, such a world, Babel's world, cannot go on forever.

Look at verse 21. Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, so will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence and will be found no more. The sound of harpists and musicians, the flute players, the trumpeters will be heard in you no more. And a craftsman of any craft will be found in you no more. And the sound of the mill will be heard in you no more.

And the light of a lamp will shine on you no more. And the voice of the bridegroom and bride will be heard in you no more. For your merchants were the great ones of the earth and all nations were deceived by your sorcery.

and in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who had been slain on the earth.

[ 36 : 47 ] The world that hated and mocked and murdered the Christ of God and the people of God shall at last be judged forever.

Nimrod's world of tyrants, of exploiters, of enslavers. This world of murderers, of rapists, of thieves. This world of hard-hearted men who abuse women and young girls. This world of injustice, of suffering, of squalor, of envy, of pride, of ruling elites who propagate their evil, who propagate vile ideologies that poison the minds of people, of youngsters, of children.

This world will be no more. It will end. And it will end in almighty judgment. And of that, friends, we have the assurance of the Lord Jesus Christ himself because it will be his voice, as he tells us, that says, on that day, depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

And on that day, all the heavens and all the earth will cry hallelujah.

[ 38 : 25 ] will see that at last justice has been done, that evil has been truly avenged, that God has shown himself to be just, to be righteous, and to be powerful, to judge evil, and to put this world at last to rights.

You know Handel's hallelujah chorus, don't you, from the Messiah? Well, this is it. This is what it's about. It's hallelujah for the end of the city of man. It's hallelujah for the terminus of Babylon.

Look at the words, they're right there, chapter 19, verses 1 to 3. After this I heard what seemed to be a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, crying out, hallelujah, salvation and glory and power belong to our gods, for his judgments are true and just, for he has judged the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her immorality, and he has avenged on her the blood of his servants.

And once more they cried out, hallelujah, the smoke from her goes up forever and ever. Salvation has come because ultimate judgment has come, justice has come.

Do you long for an end to the evil, to the injustices, to the wickedness, to the horrors of this world of ours?

[ 40 : 11 ] Well, friends, the Bible tells us that day is surely coming. And from the very start, it's clear that God will not withhold ultimate judgment forever.

His whole plan, his purpose from the beginning of Genesis is to remove the curse, to destroy the enemy, the serpent, and the seed of the serpent.

But, friends, the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead declares that future judgment is an absolute certainty. He, Jesus, is the one appointed to judge the living and the dead.

That is the gospel. Peter tells us the apostles were commanded by Jesus to go and proclaim to this world. Paul in Athens and everywhere else preached that gospel.

He has fixed the day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man he has appointed. [ 41 : 20 ] And of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead. Acts 17 verse 31. The terminus of the city of man, the end of this world as we knew it, has been fixed forever already.

in God's time table. It's a solemn thought, isn't it? For our whole world, for its rulers, but also for every one of us here today because the New Testament tells us, Hebrews 9 27, that for every living human being it has been appointed that we should die once.

and after that comes judgment. It's a solemn message, but friends, that is the consistent message of the apostolic gospel, the whole Bible, from Genesis all the way to Revelation as we've seen.

Of course, it's not the whole story. There is more because with God, his judgment is never the last word. It's never the dominant word.

God, I'll have to come back next time for more on that, but for today, for today, I want you to think about this.

[ 42 : 52 ] Which side do you want to be found on when God's merciful judgment is in this world to preserve it, to restrain it?

And that gives way to his ultimate judgment, on this world to end it? Of which city do you want to be found a citizen on that day?

Amen. Let's pray. Mark says, Jesus came proclaiming the gospel of God and saying the time is fulfilled.

The kingdom of God, the city of God is at hand. So repent and believe in the gospel. Lord, your kingdom and the final triumph of your city is nearer now than ever before.

So grant us, Lord, we who could never bear your wrath, but because of our sins would just crumple, collapse in your presence.

[ 44 : 09 ] Grant us that we might indeed run to the shelter of your cross so that we will, as you promised, find salvation there in your presence, in your city of salvation.

that we might greet that great day, not with horror, but with relief, and with great rejoicing.

Hear us, Lord, and help us, we pray, for we ask it in the name of Jesus Christ, your Son, and our Saviour. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.