

The Kingdom & its King

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[0 : 0 0] Now, we just finished Before the Retreat, a series on spiritual gifts, and now we're having a new series going up to Advent. We're looking at 2 Samuel. Actually, it's not a new series. We started 1 Samuel back in 2022, and then we kind of took a break, and we're continuing it.

The only thing is half of you weren't there, I think, so maybe you don't remember. We read the books in our reading plan over the summer. We looked at it a bit back in February when we did an overview of the Bible.

But Samuel is this really important book in a way. It's about God setting up his kingdom. God's people were waiting for life to get better, for God to set up a kingdom that they would live in a land where everything would be great.

They could live with God in peace and harmony. And when would that be? Well, it is finally going to happen in this book because they needed a king. And while the first king saw, he wasn't really great, but then came David.

I think all of us know about David, David and Goliath, right? He was God's chosen king, the man after God's heart. And under him, yeah, we will look at how great the kingdom was.

[1 : 1 5] And after many years, that was in one Samuel, he, you know, when he was a teenager, he was chosen. But then for many years, he was hunted down by the previous king, but he always escaped.

Finally, the old king died and he became the new king. So that's what we're going to look at. In a moment, Ja's going to read. Just to say, this is narrative and, you know, it's a pretty long book.

And so we're going to be reading a lot of scripture. We're not going to have like a one minute paragraph. The thing about that is that, of course, that is God's words, right? I'm just a preacher.

I'm no one. But, you know, I hope we will love to hear God's word rather than me. But even then, we're not going to read everything because it's just too long. And so can I encourage you during the series, maybe read along.

So when you get maybe the watermark post and it tells you that we'll look at, like next week, chapters 11 and 12. We're not going to read both chapters in the service.

[2 : 1 4] We don't have the time. But maybe read it through during the week, right? I mean, imagine reading a novel and you only read page one. And then the next day you read page five and then you read page 10.

The story is not going to make much sense to you, right? So, hey, let's dive into God's word and let me share we read all of it. So let me encourage you to do that. And with that out of the way, well, why don't I pray that God would speak to us before John will come up to read.

Father, thank you that you are the speaking God and that we have your word here. Thank you that this book from long ago is you speaking to us now, to our hearts, encouraging us with the gospel.

Pray that that would happen today. Please be with my words, with your spirit work in all of our hearts to make us see your glory, to see Jesus.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Today's passage is from 2 Samuel chapters 8 to 10.

[3 : 23] Feel free to follow along in the bulletin or on the screen behind me. Starting in chapter 8, we read, David also defeated Hadadizur, the son of Rahab, king of Zobah.

As he went to restore his power at the river Euphrates. And David took from him 1,700 horsemen and 20,000 foot soldiers.

And David hamstringed all the chariot's horses, but left enough for 100 chariots. And when the Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadadizur, king of Zobah, David struck down 22,000 men of the Syrians.

Then David put garrisons in Aram of Damascus. And the Syrians became servants to David and brought tribute. And the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went.

And David took the shields of gold that were carried by the servants of Hadadizur and brought them to Jerusalem. And from Beta and from Berotai, cities of Hadadizur, king of David, king David took very much bronze.

[4 : 55] When Toy, king of Hamath, heard that David had defeated the whole army of Hadadizur, Toy sent his son Joram to king David to ask about his health and to bless him.

Because he had fought against Hadadizur and defeated him. For Hadadizur had often been at war with Toy. And Joram brought with him articles of silver, of gold, and of bronze.

These also king David dedicated to the Lord. Together with the silver and gold that he dedicated from all the nations he subdued. From Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, Amalek, and from the spoil of Hadadizur, the son of Rahab, king of Zobah.

And David made a name for himself when he returned from striking down 18,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt. Then he put garrisons in Edom. Throughout all Edom he put garrisons.

And all the Edomites became David's servants. And the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went. So David reigned over all Israel.

[5 : 58] And David administered justice and equity to all his people. Joab, the son of Zeruiah, was over the army. And Jehoshaphat, the son of Ahalud, was recorder.

And Zadok, the son of Ahatub, and Ahamelech, the son of Abiathar, were priests. And Zeruiah was secretary. And Benaniah, the son of Jehoiada, was over the Cheritites and the Pelitites.

And David's sons were priests. And David said, Is there still anyone left of the house of Saul that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake? Now there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba.

And they called him to David. And the king said to him, Are you Ziba? And he said, I am your servant. And the king said, Is there not still someone of the house of Saul that I may show the kindness of God to him?

Ziba said to the king, There is still a son of Jonathan. He is crippled in his feet. The king said to him, Where is he? Ziba said to the king, He is in the house of Micar, the son of Amiel, at Lodabar.

[7 : 09] Then king David sent and brought him from the house of Micar, the son of Amiel, at Lodabar. And Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, son of Saul, came to David and fell on his face and paid homage.

And David said, And he answered, Behold, I am your servant. And David said to him, Do not fear, for I will show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan, and I will restore to you all the land of Saul your father.

You shall eat at my table always. And he paid homage and said, What is your servant, that you should show regard for a dead dog such as I? Then the king called Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, All that belong to Saul and to all his house I have given to your master's grandson.

And you and your sons and your servants shall till the land for him and shall bring in the produce, that your master's grandson may have bread to eat. But Mephibosheth, your master's grandson, shall always eat at my table.

Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants. Then Ziba said to the king, According to all that my lord the king commands his servants, so will your servant do.

[8 : 22] So Mephibosheth ate at David's table like one of the king's sons. And Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Micah. And all who lived in Ziba's house became Mephibosheth's servants.

So Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, for he ate always at the king's table. Now he was lame in both his feet. After this, the king of the Ammonites died and...

No? Okay. Just chapters eight? No. Okay. Eight and nine. Okay, great. And this is the word of God. Thanks. Thanks. Thanks.

Sorry, maybe that didn't come through. Again, we can't read everything. Hopefully these two chapters, you can read chapter ten on your own. Otherwise we don't have enough time. But, yeah.

Now, last week a lot of us were at our church family retreat. And I think everyone who went there had a great time. Now why did we have such a great time? Partly, it's just so much better and different from normal life, isn't it?

[9 : 26] From your work, from home, from all the things we normally have to do. That's why it's called a retreat. We kind of retreat from normal life. Actually, that's how we live, right?

Many of us, we live for the weekend. Or we live for the next holiday. Some of us, we live for retirement. Because basically life, normal life, just isn't what we want it to be.

Normal life is hard work. It's frustrating. You know, my kids, they've just had a full break. And then tomorrow they're going to go back to school. So they're all kind of like this. Because they just don't want to go back to their normal life, right?

Now, that shows something. Actually, we are made for something else, right? We know there's something wrong in the world. The world is not as good as we want it to be.

We want something better. We want something. Yeah. We want hope. And for some people, yeah, hope is the weekends and the holiday. Because I guess especially if you're here and you're not a Christian, what is your hope, right?

[10 : 27] If you're just going to live and then die, then basically the weekends and holidays, that's the best thing there is. And that is what you then have to live for. Yeah.

But for us as Christians, for those of us who are Christians, I guess the most wonderful thing about being a Christian is that we actually have hope. Right? No matter what life is like, no matter what happens, one day Jesus will come back.

And he will set up a glorious kingdom of love and joy and rest and peace. And that is what we're looking forward to. The end of suffering. The end of frustration.

The end of decay. The end of all the things that spoil this world. That is our great hope. It keeps us going in a broken, sinful, hostile world. It keeps us persevering.

That is what we want. And we need reminding often. That's why the Bible is full of reminders. I mean, we can't count the days. Maybe some of you, you're counting the days for the next holiday. Jesus didn't tell us when he would come back.

[11 : 30] But at the same time, yeah, we want to have a regular reminder that there is something good coming. So anyone here who is tired, struggling, overworked, these chapters are for you, for me.

Now, why is this so great? Well, this is basically the high point of the books of Samuel. Because chapters 5 to 8, and we read chapter 8, are these wonderful chapters of how great it was in David's kingdom.

For centuries, people had been waiting for God's king to set up the kingdom. And, well, here it was. And we get a picture of how good it was, right? That this is the kingdom worth waiting for because the chosen king was on the throne, finally.

It's a bit of a collage. Chapter 8 is not really a story. It's just all these little bits. You know, a collage, right? It gives this overall impression rather than having to go through it bit by bit.

But it should make you think, wow, what a wonderful kingdom. And not just something in the past. I mean, it's easy to read this and think, okay, yeah, that was back then.

[12 : 39] And maybe the first readers read it. Okay, that was back then, right? When was the book completed? Probably a few hundred years after David. When the people had lost everything and they were in exile.

And they were reading this. Okay, what did God do back then? Because God has said that he will do it again. And the thing about chapter 8 is that it comes after chapter 7.

Now, if you were here earlier in the year, we looked a lot at chapter 7. Because it has this really big promise of God. Because God promised to David, you know, one of your descendants will be deking.

So, what's on the screen? Chapter 7, verse 12. Verse 16.

Verse 16. David was promised that his kingdom would last forever.

[13 : 43] For the Israelites, David's kingdom would last forever. And so, when we're in exile and there's no kingdom, well, it must come back. And when it comes back, it will last forever.

That was their great hope. And actually, chapter 8, chronologically, I think it comes before chapter 7. But we get it now. After this promise, we get, hey, look at what David's kingdom is like.

You know? God has promised that David's kingdom would come. It would last forever. Look what it was like. And it's got fulfillment written all over it. Even for David himself.

And so, another verse in that promise, verse 9. God says to David, I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. I'll make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth.

And what do we see in chapter 8? Yeah. God has indeed cut off all David's enemies. And 8, verse 14. And David made a name for himself. Right? So, we see just fulfillment.

[14 : 43] We see that this is not a photo album from long ago. This is a commercial. This is kind of, this is what it's going to be like. Right? We always talk about, okay, God setting up his kingdom.

What is it going to be like? Look at this great chapter. And that's for us. Because, of course, who is the son of David? Well, that's Jesus. That descendant. But what do we see?

What do we see here in, well, God's promised glorious kingdom? And the first thing we see is, well, rest all around. Rest all around.

Most of the chapter is basically about David fighting battles and winning. And the key word is, and sometimes it says defeated. Sometimes it says struck down.

It's basically the same word. But it's there all the time. Verse 1. After this, David struck down the Philistines. Verse 2. And he struck down Moab. Verse 3. David also struck down Hanadezer.

[15 : 38] And he struck down. And he struck down. And he struck down. It's really all around. Right? You look on a map. And there's like the Philistines in the west. And on the south, there's the Amalekites. And the Edomites.

And on the east, there's the Moabites. And the Yemenites. And in the north, there's the Syrians. And basically, all those other nations that you read about in the Bible, all of them were kind of defeated.

They all became servants. They all paid tribute. They were all in subjection. Now, in some way, when you read this, it's sad that there's so much violence.

So much death. That's true. But actually, look at the result. Look at what this is supposed to achieve. And look back in, well, in chapter 7, in verse 10.

What did God promise for his people? And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more.

[16 : 37] And violent men shall afflict them no more as formerly from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. They were disturbed no more.

They were afflicted no more. Because, you know, back then you didn't have, like, fences and borders and guards and that kind of stuff, right? It was just desert.

And so what happens is that, you know, countries, they raid each other. And so you're a farmer and you finally have brought in all your harvest and you stored it up for the winter. And then the Moabites come and raid it and steal it all.

And there's your food for the winter is gone. Or the Edomites come and they steal your kids and sell them into slavery. That is what life was like. Things were not safe. These enemies around you, they come and attack you and they do things.

But now they're all defeated. So no more danger, right? Things are safe. Now, again, that doesn't really happen here in Hong Kong. Imagine living in Nigeria, right?

[17 : 41] And Boko Haram. Some Islamic militants, they come and they kidnap a whole school full of kids. And, you know, marry them and those kind of things. The fact that that won't happen anymore.

This would really speak to people. Even for us. I mean, what are enemies? In a way, they are just one of the curses of a broken world, right? Ever since God, you know, cursed the world because when we turned away from him, all the curses in a way will be gone.

That's the promise here, right? So imagine walking outside and you never have to feel afraid anymore. No muggings. I guess Hong Kong is still pretty safe.

Imagine the West, right? You don't have enemies. But in the West, you know, many women, they struggle to walk outside in the dark at night. It's just not safe. But then, you know, it would be safe, right?

No one cheating you. No one bullying you. No one hurting you. No unexpected diseases. No sudden bereavements. No sudden unemployment.

[18 : 46] No, what else? Not suddenly losing all your money because the store market crashes. Whatever. All those things that can happen, well, they wouldn't happen anymore.

You're safe, right? Don't you long for such a world? Wherever you are, no more uncertainty. Rest. No more affliction. Isn't that what we all want?

Not just that. We see all the nations under God. I mean, one thing you've noticed from the reading is all the gold and silver streaming in, right? David, he took a lot of gold and other people gave him gold.

But it's kind of, you know, that's partly how you show subjection, right? You pay taxes. You pay tribute to the nation that is the boss. But who is the real boss?

It's not really David, right? Because what does David do? In verse 11, these also King David dedicated to the Lord. So in a way, the Lord is now king over the whole ancient Near East.

[19 : 46] All the nations are subject to him, right? They may have their own gods, but the fact that they pay tribute to the God of Israel, actually, in a way, the whole Near East, the ancient Near East acknowledged God is the real God.

The Lord is the real God, which is how things should be, right? Ever since the fall, you know, everyone has been going their own way. And in a limited way, now finally everything is back under the rule of God.

Isn't that what we sometimes want, right? We see the world and it's a mess. And don't we think, man, I wish if everyone just knew God and followed God, wouldn't it be better?

Well, in a way, that was the case back then, just in language of 3,000 years ago. Or if that doesn't speak to you, at the end, we get this summary of, you know, what it was like.

Of course, we get a list of all the officials, the cabinet, right? Here's the army and the recorder and the secretary. But verse 15, so David reigned over all Israel and David administered justice and equity to all his people.

[20 : 55] And there was justice and fairness. There was a good government that cared about people that brought justice and uprightness. That's what people wanted.

They had lots of leaders before and most of them were corrupt. But they stole from the people, they just fattened themselves and the people suffered. But now finally here was a king who did justice and fairness.

Again, it doesn't maybe mean much for us. Hong Kong has a great history. There's plenty of countries where there's so much corruption, right? And it's so hard to just be an honest Christian because everyone is corrupt and you're so poor as a result.

There's so many countries where the people suffer because the leaders just make themselves rich, right? That would be no longer the case. That was not the case in Israel. It was so wonderful.

Right? Do you have that sometimes? Has your boss ever treated you unfairly? Ever had some legal decision that didn't go your way wrongly? You know, do you trust all those over you to take care of you?

[22 : 01] We don't, right? No. Back then there was a glorious kingdom. It was safe. It was secure. There was justice. There was fairness. There was a beautiful kingdom. There was a beautiful kingdom.

There was a beautiful kingdom. Right? Don't you long to be there? Whatever you're going through, man, wouldn't that be such a much better world? Right? And even if your life is pretty good now, aren't you afraid of maybe a letter from the bank?

A letter from the doctor? Those kind of things. It happens, right? No. Here is a beautiful kingdom. And again, it wasn't just back then.

It's going to come again. And it's not pie in the sky. It's absolutely certain. I mean, some people, they have hope in something really uncertain. Right? My hope is to win the lottery one day.

That's not really hope. Because it's probably not going to happen. No. Christian hope is certain. And not just because of something 3,000 years ago.

- [23 : 01] What is the name of God's kingdom in the Bible? There's various names. Right? The kingdom of God. Heaven. New creation. Sometimes it's called the resurrection. Right? And the future is called the resurrection. And will the resurrection happen? Well, yeah, of course. Because Jesus was raised from the dead. Right? Jesus, he died on the cross to make the kingdom possible, to pay for our sin.
- But then he rose from the dead. What does that mean? It's victory over death. Right? Victory over the curse. When you're raised from the dead, nothing. You're immune from all the curses and suffering.
- Right? That's what it symbolizes. That's what it means. One day, no more suffering. Everything will be right. And that's because, and we can see that because Jesus rose from the dead.
- I think it's a historical fact. Come and talk to me. If you disagree, we can talk about it. But if you're a Christian. When Jesus rose from the dead, you will rise from the dead. There will be this great kingdom.
- [23 : 58] How wonderful. Right? That's what keeps you going. Life is hard, but there's a future. Your misery won't last forever. But, but why?
- This is such a great kingdom. Right? And we want that. The thing is, I'm an engineer. I want to know how things work. I want to, I don't like random things because I can't predict them.
- Actually, God says there's a reason why the kingdom was so great. And that will really help us see where we can find hope. Right? Because why was this kingdom so great?
- It was because the kingdom came through his godly king. Through God's godly king. Because chapters 9 and 10 show us David as a godly king.
- He is this really different king from anyone else. He's the, well, he is the king of steadfast love. Right? Which is such a great Bible word. Steadfast love. And 9 verse 1. David said, is there still anyone left of the house of Saul that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?
- [25 : 03] The real word is steadfast love. Chapter 10. After this, the king of the Ammonites died. And Hanun, his son, reigned in his place. And David said, I will deal loyally with Hanun.
- Which again, I'll show steadfast love. Steadfast love. We know it from the Bible, hopefully. His steadfast love endures forever. That's like God's main characteristic.
- His steadfast love. His undeserved, unailing kindness. And we see that in these chapters. How amazing David is as king.
- So first, Mephibosheth. He's a grandson of Saul. And yeah, he asked, okay, is there still someone of Saul? For Jonathan's sake.
- Jonathan was Saul's son. He was David's best friend. And David had promised to Jonathan, okay, I'll take care of your family. And he really does that, right? He asked, is there still someone from Saul?
- [25 : 59] And there was this crippled guy called Mephibosheth. When he was five years old, his nurse dropped him and he broke his legs. Something like that. Disabled people.
- People didn't think much of it those days. They were excluded from lots of things. This guy was just a wretch, right? And then he came from the previous king's family. The family that the king who had tried to kill David.
- Now, back then, if you were the new king, you would basically kill everyone from the family of the previous king, right? That there's no one left with any claim to the throne. So you can imagine.

David calls for Mephibosheth. And he just comes trembling, right? 9 verse 6. And Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, son of Saul, came to David and fell on his face. And paid homage, right?

He just, what is David going to do? But look at David, verse 7. And David said to him, do not fear. For I will show you kindness for the sake of your father, Jonathan.

[27 : 00] And I will restore to you all the land of Saul, your father. And you shall eat at my table always. Right? And it's amazing.

This wretch, this disabled guy who would deserve to die. Actually, he could eat at a table. All the land of Saul will be his.

This guy, Teba, who was Saul's servant, now has to serve him. And he was a powerful guy. We'll meet him a few more times in the rest of the book. So much kindness, right?

This guy despised from the wrong background. And yet, David loved him with all the kindness of God, he said. With God's steadfast love. And the same in chapter 10.

Again, he wants to show steadfast love to the new king of the Ammonites. The only thing is that it goes a bit differently. The Ammonites don't accept it. They're suspicious. They do something wrong.

[27 : 58] They hire an army. They attack. There's a war. Note that David is never the aggressor. Right? If you read the chapter, David, you know, he doesn't do anything. They attack him.

And when they flee, he doesn't pursue them. It's really, you know, David is a really good king. No bloodthirsty killers. The details don't matter that much. Basically, this is the war where next week something happens.

But do you see David's character from these chapters? Right after this great kingdom, what do we get? We get David, the king of steadfast love. And that is why it's so good, right?

Why David's character? Well, that's the reason for the kingdom. The kingdom is so glorious because they have a godly king. If you have the right king, things are great.

And you have the wrong king, things are terrible. Just think about it, right? Chapter 8, why all the victories? Well, the Lord was with David wherever he went, right?

[28 : 58] All the time, the Lord gave David victory wherever he went. Why was the Lord with David? Well, because David was godly, right? He was a man after God's heart.

I mean, Saul, he didn't trust God. He just went his own way. He brought judgment on Israel. That's what you get if you have the wrong king. If you have a godly king, there's victory and there's rest.

Why was there justice and fairness for all the people? Because there was a godly king. If you have a greedy person who just likes power, things will be terrible.

Instead, there was a godly king. And because you had a king who loved justice and fairness, he made sure the country had justice and fairness. That's how it works, right? The king, he does it.

He stands between God and the people and he rules over the people. And in both ways, you need a godly king for life to be good. I mean, think about your workplace.

[29 : 57] Who has the most impact on your workplace? My guess is it's your boss, right? Or your CEO. He determines the working culture, whether that is actually support and kindness or whether that is just cutthroat.

And, right? That's your boss doing that. And your boss's decisions that influence the fate of the company, again, that will really impact your working life, right? Or bigger scale.

Think of a country. Yeah, think of North Korea. Terrible country, not just for Christians. But why? Isn't it just the leader's fault? It's got nothing to do with those people. It's just the leader who just exploits his people and who just, yeah, he falls out with the rest of the world, all the sanctions that mean so much poverty.

Those people can't do anything about it. It's just the leader who determines it. And that is exactly the same here, but in a good way. Why was life so good? They had a good king.

A king who, you know, made sure God was on their side. A king who did justice and righteousness and fairness. You know, David was just so godly, right?

[31 : 07] He wasn't sinless, but he was godly. David would just never take anything that didn't belong to him. David would never take someone's life unjustly. David would never do some gross sin like, you know, breaking some of the Ten Commandments, bringing God's judgment on his house.

He would never do that, right? He was such a godly king. And again, how much more is that true of the promised son of David?

What did God promise about David's descendants in chapter 7, verse 13? This new descendant, he shall build a house for my name.

He will build a house for God. And maybe you remember at the time God was living in a tent, which kind of shows he can move away. But no, he will build a house.

He will make sure God and the people are together forever. That is what David's son would do. And I will be to him a father. He will be to me a son.

[32 : 09] It's like father and son. It's the same character. This guy will be like me. He will have my character. And of course, that's Jesus, right? What is the New Testament word for steadfast love?

Grace. Jesus is our good and gracious king, right? And we see that. Again, look at the cross. Here is Jesus who died for his enemies and then welcomes us at the table.

There's this great worship song, The Mystery of the Cross. And we sing, once your enemy now seated at your table. Jesus, thank you. And that's really this chapter of Mephibosheth, right?

That's what Jesus did. He died for his enemies and welcomed us at the table. To eat with him. He's the king of glory and we're nothing. And yet, that's what he did for us.

Then you know Jesus will just never harm you, right? He will never do anything bad to you because he was willing to die for you. You know that. And also towards God, Jesus was absolutely perfect.

[33 : 11] Right? No sin whatsoever. That's why he rose from the dead. If you were here at Easter, why did Jesus rise from the dead? Well, because he had no sin. If he had sin, he should have stayed in his grave.

But he didn't. And so we know this is a king who is completely on God's side, right? Someone who will never fall out. Someone who will never endanger the kingdom. If we're in him, we're fully safe.

We're secure. God will always be on our side. Thanks to Jesus. And so that is the hope, right? We, you want a perfect kingdom. You need a perfect king.

And we have that in Jesus. And so that is the source of our hope. Why can we have hope? Well, because of Jesus. Because of this great king. Right?

If you're here, if we're here, we're not Christians. If we're not trusting Jesus. Well, where's our hope? Now, what expectation do we have for life to get better?

[34 : 09] Where can you find perfect peace? I hope we see that we can't do it ourselves, right? We can't do enough to actually make our life right. To make, to sort everything out.

Actually, it's too much influenced by others. Think of your life as a kingdom. And who is the king? Who rules? Is it your boss who just makes your life miserable? There's not much you can do about it, right?

Is it the country where you live? That's why so many people around the world, they're fleeing their country to go somewhere else. Because they know if they just stay in this country, there's nothing they can do. But would any of them give us hope?

Would any of them be able to sort it out? Now, if we want life to be as we want it to be, we need a good, perfect king.

And only Jesus can do that. So let me encourage us. We need Jesus, right? And if you don't know him yet, come and talk to me. I'd love to help you, you know, know him.

[35 : 09] And give your life to him. That he will be your king. And you will be with him forever. And if we have done that, if we are Christians, again, you have a reason for your hope.

Right? Life will be good. And you know that. Why? Because you have Jesus. You have the perfect king. It means you can have joy and peace when you get bad news, when things are hard.

You know it won't last forever. You know Jesus will come. Now, doesn't that give you peace? You know, this week at work, when you go back to your normal life, actually that's not your normal life.

It's only temporary. Your real forever life is coming. Isn't that a great hope to share as well? Look at this city.

This city, yeah, many people feel everyone's let them down. But there's hope in Jesus. And we can share that. We can, you know, work together as a church to bring the gospel.

[36 : 08] You know? No, it's... We're going to see what will happen to the kingdom. But what a great start, right? We have Jesus. We have the perfect king. He will bring a perfect kingdom.

And that is our great hope. So why don't we pray? Why don't we have a moment of reflection? I'll pray. The music team will come up. And then we're going to respond in song.

Our Father, thank you that we have hope. Thank you that you sent your son Jesus. He's our perfect king who died for our sins, who rose again into a new and indestructible life that will be ours.

Father, you know what we're going through. You know how life can get us down. Thank you that there is hope. We pray that we would see that, that would give us joy, that if we just have Jesus, we have everything we need to make it to that beautiful, perfect kingdom that will come.

Lord, you know how we can often look at other things that we think might make life better, that we think will solve everything. Make us see that's not the case. For anyone here who, you know, who's still looking in the wrong places, help us see our need for Jesus.

[37 : 44] And, yeah, and would you not disappoint us? Would Jesus come back soon when everyone is saved, who you want to be saved? Would we keep living for you? In Jesus' name.

Amen.