

Isaiah (Quality: very good)

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Date: 17 December 1961

Preacher: Dawson, Herbert (1890-1969)

[0 : 00] As the Lord shall be pleased to help me, I shall call your attention to a subject you will find in the book of Isaiah, chapter 26, and the 8th verse.

Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee. The desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.

Chapter 26, the book of Isaiah, and the 8th verse.

This is a word which sets forth a line of things that I do hope you and I might, by the grace of God, be led into in our souls' experience.

The way of thy judgments, the text tells us about. And it might be well, first of all, to make very plain that you must not think of the primary meaning, as you view it, of the word judgment, as it is recorded in this word before us.

[1 : 42] Not the dictionary rendering of the word judgment is to be considered, but you will find in the word of God that the word judgment sets forth the dealings of God with us, and then, as the outcome of God dealing with us, you and I dealing with us, and being led into the truth, that we might ultimately grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

And if you do know what it is to have dealings with God, then the outcome of your dealings is that you may be favoured to get some good for your soul, some help by the way, some gracious encouragement, and that you might participate in the favour that God bears unto his people.

And you find the psalmist uses this word judgments in the way that it is set forth in this word before us in the comprehensive interpretation of it.

The psalmist says, My soul breaketh with the longing that it hath for thy judgments at all times. And then he says, Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee, and let thy judgments help me.

And there his concern is that in the dealings of God, he may be helped to understand the why and wherefore, and realise what is the will of God, and by his grace, do the will of God willingly.

[4 : 04] Remembering what the word of God says, For ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

And now I want, as the Lord shall help me, to look then at this subject from two or three viewpoints.

And much could be said about the setting of the subject, and it may be a word or two ought to be said about the opening word.

In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah. We have a strong city.

Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.

[5 : 04] And now I often remind you about the Babylonish captivity of the children of Israel, and the lessons to be learned therefrom, and that this time, when this word was penned by Isaiah, inspired of God to do it, you must picture in your minds that the Babylonish captivity had just ended.

And Nehemiah and Ezra, and thousands, tens of thousands, of those who were Israelites indeed, had just arrived back in the land of promise, and were looking around at the desolation therein.

And Isaiah says in another chapter, and that is a very striking word, say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God.

And now, you can read in the books of Nehemiah and Ezra, and when they arrived in the land of promise, they surveyed the ruin that had been wrought.

In Jerusalem, was a stone heap. The gates had been burned with fire. The wall broken down. And the beautiful temple built by Solomon, no longer existed as a thing of beauty for the eyes of faith to look upon.

[6 : 49] And now, picture if you can, ask God to help you with a sanctified mind to do it. Picture if you can, that scene of desolation, ruin, waste, and then these godly Israelites return to their homeland, having to face the future from that viewpoint.

In that day, such a day, when all around, all the eyes can look upon is ruin, desolation, waste.

In that day, shall this song be sung in the land of Judah. We have a strong city, not like Jerusalem was at one time so well built and walled around, which was a beauty in the land of promise, and we delighted to walk in the streets thereof and worship God therein.

But there is yet another city, and that is the city of God. We have a strong city. Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.

Such walls as shall never be broken down. Such bulwarks as will not fail to give support in times of stress and strain.

[8 : 22] Salvation which is of the Lord and guaranteed to that number ordained to life eternal, appointed.

Well, might the Selmist say, walk about Zion, go round about her, tell the towers thereof, mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following.

Now, you see, the lesson you and I have to learn, each of us who desire to be taught of God, the lesson you and I have to learn, I say, is that just shall live by faith.

And Isaiah said, ordained by God to declare it, say ye to the cities of Judah, behold, not Jerusalem as you see it, with that which makes you so cast down to look upon, behold, your God.

And remember, is there anything too hard for the Lord? He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or even think.

[9 : 45] faith is the evidence of things not seen, the substance of things hoped for, the word of God tells us.

And you and I need to say, Lord, increase our faith. And then the prophet Isaiah goes on, open ye the gates.

What was the first thing that Nehemiah did when they did return from Babylonian captivity? The first thing was to reinstitute the worship of God.

And they got that going first of all before they started clearing the ruins and rubbish and rebuilding the walls and getting the city built up again as aforetime.

Open ye the gates, gates wherein the worship of God can be carried on. Set up the means of grace and use them aright.

[10 : 54] Open ye the gates that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in. And now the blessed outcome of all this, if grace is given to do it, will be thou will keep him in perfect peace, margin, peace, peace, whose mind, margin, whose thought, imagination, is stayed on thee because he trusteth in thee.

Trust ye in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength, margin, is where you get what is so familiar to you.

Trust ye in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is the rock of ages. And now coming to the subject, as grace is given to open it up a little, yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee.

Looking at this word judgments from each interpretation of it. When God deals with you, as he deals with his people, whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

And now, when something comes into your life, when trouble like a gloomy cloud gathers thick and thunders loud, when some affliction is laid on you or yours, how do you react to it?

[12 : 50] It may be, at the first onset of that affliction coming on you or yours, you may feel churned up within, you may have many searchings of heart, you may have many solemn reflections, and you might wonder, first of all, all these things are against me, and you might also have a deep down thought as to whether your religion, which you do hope is of God, is going to stand such a crucial test as this time of testing has come upon you to make manifest what you are and where you are in things divine.

It is the way of judgment that God is causing you to journey along. I read to you, I lead in the way of righteousness in the midst of the paths of judgment, that I may cause them that love me to inherit substance.

And now, that is the why and wherefore of the dealings of God with you as you journey on through life. And I might add also, in the way of judgment in which some of you may be going at the present time, even this Sabbath morn, you might be here before God and you might be feeling cast down because there is a way of judgment that you are treading step by step in some affliction laid on you or yours.

And now, what will you say if I tell you that this way that you are going along is in answer to prayer that you have sent up before God?

You have been asking, lead me into thy truth and teach me. You have been pleading that you might be confirmed in your soul that the way you go is the right way and heaven awaits you at the end of it.

[15 : 24] And now, God is dealing with you and he will answer your petitions and you will find in the ultimate issue, blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law, that thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity.

Yes, you will find in the dealings of God with you, in the way of judgment, as you go along it, it is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes.

Afflictions, though they seem severe, are often mercy sent, they stopped the prodigal's career and caused him to repent.

And my own experience as regards affliction, and I am no stranger to it, and it may be some of you can walk in agreement with the preacher in this line of things.

I say, my own experience has been, as a rule, when affliction has come upon me or mine, and I begin to weigh the matter up before God, I find, at least, I have been somewhat like the prodigal, not living just as near to God as I would desire to do, in a right mind, a right spirit, and whatever it is then that comes into our life, whether it be an affliction upon us or ours, it is to say, return unto me, and I will return unto you, and thus you find it is the way of judgment, whom the Lord loveth, he correcteth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth, and it is good if you can be helped to do this, yea, in the way of thy judgments,

[17 : 40] O Lord, have we waited for thee, and now, when you are called to go in such a way of judgment, whether it be affliction, as I have said, or it could be adversity, you might find your circumstances altogether changed from what they have been, and instead of it being the day of prosperity, you come into the day of adversity, as regards the things of everyday life, and to do with your income, and now, when you have to tread in that way, the way of judgment, when you wait on God therein, what do you wait for?

you do not wait that you might be delivered anyhow, and as soon as possible, you wait on God like Job, he will help you to understand it, show me wherefore thou contendest with me, and that is a good feeling to possess, Lord, I want to know the why and the wherefore of thy dealings with me, I have heard and strayed like a lost sheep, seek thy servant, for I do not forget thy commandments, and you weigh matters up like that, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee, and now following this line of thought, if in the way of judgment, the way of affliction, it comes on you, or else on yours, if it should come on yours, and you might be called to stand by a grave, and see one of the children laid therein, and that to you is the way of judgment, and you may have waited on the Lord, in that way of judgment, first of all, that God would give to your child, restoring mercies, if it could be his will, there you get down to bedrock, the will of the

Lord, the Spirit maketh intercession for us, according to the will of God, and now, as you wait on the Lord, in that way of judgment, and seeking, if it may be his will, to give restoring mercies to the child on whom affliction is laid, and then it becomes evident it is not the will of God to do it, you come then, to a very crucial test, in the dealings of God with your soul, and to then humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, in all his dealings with you, and say, it is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good, it is the Lord enthroned in life, whose claims are all divine, who has an undisputed right to govern me, and mine, in the way of judgment, that I'm trying to set out, as the

Lord shall help me, you have got to come to this, that the answer to prayer, whether it is yes or no, it is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good, thou art our potter, we are the clay, and when it comes about that the will of God is made manifest, to be not what your will would have been, if you could have had it worked out, go back to the illustration I am using, say you have to give up one of your children, and affliction lays them in the grave, oh that is a very crucial test for our religion, to have to stand up to, dear friends, and yet when you realise in the way of judgement, as you wait on God, that it is his will, and what he does is best, you will realise then the Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord.

I had no thought of working out that line of thought in this sermon, if it might be called by such a name, but that might be a help to some poor sinner before God.

[22 : 51] It is the way of judgement, and everything hinges on this, what the will of the Lord is, and to do it willingly.

I see that more and more in journeying on through life, and I want to abide here as grace is given. Let but my fainting heart be blessed with thy sweet spirit for its guest, O God, to thee I leave the rest, thy will be done.

What is more desirable? Thy will be done. Everything in earth and in heaven hinges on it, and the great thing is, in the way of judgment, to do the will of God willingly.

Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee. And whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord.

And then the way of thy judgments is not only to do, as I have hinted already, with chastening the hand of God upon us when thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest is beauty to fade away like a moth.

[24 : 31] Oh, very solemn it is, so to be dealt with by the God of all grace, and yet it is said, these are they which came out of great tribulation, therefore you have got to be in it, in some viewpoint of it, or another, either for it to come upon you as you journey on, or upon those whom God has given you, and that to come upon you like that, indirectly.

Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee. And now, the way of thy judgments is also the means of grace, that God has appointed.

And here, the word judgments has got the meaning of teaching. Go back to that word I quoted, that godly David said, let my soul live, and it shall praise thee, and let thy judgments help me.

And there, the meaning is, let thy dealings with me in everyday life, whatever their nature, be a means of my being taught by thee, and led into the truth, that thy word may be a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

And it is good to find in our hearts a concern to use the means of grace God has given. Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee.

[26 : 30] Mark that word in. Have we waited for thee. And now, when you come up to worship God, you're in the way of judgments.

You're in that place where God is pleased to make his presence known, and to make his gospel the power of God unto salvation to everyone which believeth.

But everything hinges on this. Thus, while we in the means are found, we still alone on thee depend to make the gospel's joyful sound effectual to the promised end.

And that means, yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.

And if you work out this line of thought as it is to do with the means of grace, it will mean that when you sing the songs of Zion, you will not be so much captivated by some sweet tune that appeals to you.

[28 : 00] Although it is good, and you must have sweet tunes whereby to sing the songs of Zion, but primarily it must be this, in the way of thy judgments O Lord, have we waited for thee.

And now the word of God speaks about making melody in your heart, and sing ye praises with understanding.

I'm sure of this, that there are tens of thousands of worshippers, supposed to be worshippers, I'm not making any reflections on any of you, I'm only making this point plain, supposed to be worshippers, who do sing the songs of Zion, and sing them very sweetly, but not with understanding, because when the hymn dies away, whatever it may be, when the service is concluded, they go on living just as they were born, and they do not have an understanding of the blessed truth, and the sweet gospel, that is sung about, whatever song of Zion it may be, and now here, this word is very applicable, yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee, so that when you sing the songs of

Zion, your concern is, out of the abundance of the heart, for the mouth to speak, not only so, when you read the word of God, it is not just to read a chapter every day, or it might be two chapters, one for the morning, one for the eve, although that is to be commended, and if you do it, keep it up, but whatever you do, don't you build your hope of heaven on it, you have got to come to this, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee, like Jeremiah, thy words were found, and I did eat them, and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.

I have sometimes been troubled in my ministerial life, because I have known some of my fellow laborers who have read the word of God through and through, through and through.

[30 : 35] I have never been able to do it in my ministerial life, although I have wanted to do it, set out to do it, but when I am helped to read the word of God, I cannot always read a chapter.

I begin to ponder in my heart and meditate, especially if I am in a right frame of mind, and there I am.

A few verses then will suffice for me to read and think upon before God, and I may not conclude the chapter because of having other things to do, but the great thing is in reading the word of God, not just to read the letterpress of it, no, divine instructor, gracious Lord, O be forever near, help me to read thy sacred word, and find my savior there.

In the volume of the book it is written of me, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, as we read the word of thy grace, have we waited for thee, or we want to get in touch with the incarnate word, through the written word, then it will be, did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way?

Not only so, when you try to pray, it is not enough to put words together, you may be troubled because you do put words together, you must put words together in family worship, and in the public prayer, but often there is a very sad, solemn feeling that there is very much repetition, although it is not vain repetition.

[32 : 26] You and I are in repeated experiences, and the Lord requireth the truth in the inward parts, and I like that woman in the gospel, falling down at Jesus' feet, she told him all the truth, and you and I must do that, if we are to wait in the way of the judgments of God, as they are set before us in this word, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee, and what you aim at is this, it is good for me to draw near unto God, and then that Christ is God, I can avouch, and for his people cares, since I have prayed to him as such, and he has heard my prayers.

Not only so, there is when you listen to the gospel, and the gospel is to be proclaimed that poor sinners might be built up in our most holy faith, but when you listen to it, as you come week in, week out, if you come a right, you come like this, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee, I seek and hope to find a portion for my soul.

Oh, you want something to do your soul good, you want a token for good, you want an intimation of your interest in the love of God, you want to know that when Jesus died on Calvary's cross, that it was for you, he hung and suffered there.

What do you really wait on the Lord for, as you are found in the attitude of worship? They that are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit.

And then this thought comes to my mind also, my meditation of him shall be sweet, I will be glad in the Lord.

[34 : 42] I sometimes think that meditation is a very, very scarce experience with most of us. And you know the age in which you and I are living is a spoon-fed age.

You can listen on the radio if you waste your time in doing it and hear this and that, you can read of all subjects beneath the sun what other folks have got to say about it.

And mankind is just spoon-fed. Only people taught of God as grace is given have got minds of their own to think before God and ponder in their hearts how matters really are between their souls and God.

It is a wonderful feeling to get when you can say with the seelmist in the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.

When you can meditate when you can say while I was musing the fire burned. God asked God to help you to wait on him in that way of his judgment.

[36 : 07] You will find it is good if you can look back along life's way and view his dealings in heaven's own light.

You will say with Manoah's wife, if the Lord were pleased to kill us, would he have showed us all these things, much might be said under that heading, yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee.

And it means this to sum it all up, that in the dealings of God with you in everyday life, you do want, as grace is given, to have dealings with God.

And if you are helped to do it, you will say with Jacob, God hath dealt graciously with me, and he cannot deal with you otherwise.

You may think his dealings at times are hard to be understood, but when in his life you see light, you will see he is too wise to err, and too good to be, unkind, and that you learn in the way of judgment, as you will help to go along it.

[37 : 38] For this word is to be fulfilled, and they shall be all taught of God. Then shall we know, we follow on to know the Lord, yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee.

We wait for thee, whom though we cannot comprehend, knowing thou art the sinner's friend, we love thee and adore. And then you find Isaiah goes on.

The desire of our soul is to thy name. What a beautiful, I was going to say, and I will, what a beautiful low level that is, in the gospel, to encourage poor sinners who wonder where they are, what they are, in things divine.

The desire of our soul is to thy name. I have been very glad at times that this religion that is of God is mostly set forth in desire.

You will remember the soul that with sincere desires seeks after Jesus' love, that soul the Holy Ghost inspires with breathings from above.

[39 : 14] And says David, all our desires are before thee, and our groaning is not hid from thee. And those feeble desires and wishes so weak tis Jesus inspires and bids you still see.

And mark how this is worded, the desire of our soul. God would make manifest it is well with our soul.

Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation. Yes, the desire of our soul.

where is my soul, can it be less than power divine which animates these strong desires.

The desire of our soul is to thy name. The name of the Lord is a strong tower, and the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.

[40 : 36] Thy name. And it means first of all, last of all, the name of Jesus. His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.

And there is that beautiful word in Solomon's song, Thy name is as ointment poured forth. And some of you do come inside the hymn writer's words, how sweet the name of Jesus sounds in the believer's ears.

It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds, and drives away his fears. And you will find this, I want you to think about it, if the Lord will help me another day, I will open it up in a sermon, as grace is given.

Whatever your trouble may be, or whatever your experience may be, whether it be to be cast down and sad, or to be lifted up and made glad in the things of God, you will find there is a name given to God that will exactly fit whatever your experience is.

If you walk in darkness and have no light, the desire of our soul is to thy name. He that followeth after me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

[42 : 10] I am the light of the world. And when you feel sin sick in soul, then it will be well to remember the name of Jehovah Rophi, the Lord which healeth.

And not to forget, this physician understandeth all disorders of the soul, and no payment he demandeth when he makes the wounded whole.

And wherever you may be, as you go along the way of judgments, which I have only just touched upon a little, the desire of our soul is to thy name.

And think of this name, Emmanuel, God with us. Whether it be affliction, in all our afflictions, he was afflicted.

Whether it be temptation, he can succor them that are tempted. Whether it be to be in the world, and trodden down, set at naught, and mocked by the world at large.

[43 : 20] What does he say? Be of good cheer. I have overcome the world. Yes. Emmanuel, God with us.

Whatever your pathway may be, Jesus Christ goes before you therein.

And Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow in his steps. Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee.

The desire of our soul is to thy name. Yes. And then Isaiah sums it up. And to the remembrance of thee.

Not to remember how many years her name has been on a church roll. But to look back along life's way and discern where the hand of our God has been upon us for good, thou shalt remember all the way the Lord thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness.

[44 : 41] The remembrance of thee. And it means I will remember who thou art. A God able to save to the uttermost them that come unto thee in Jesus' name.

I will remember thee a God ready to pardon. I will remember I will remember thee a God able to save able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or even think.

Not only so I will remember what thou hast done. And that is a door of mercy has been opened in heaven itself.

The door of thy mercy stands open all day to the poor and the needy who not by the way ought to remember it and remembering it to act upon it.

No sinner was ever yet empty sent back who came seeking mercy for Jesus' sake. And in this sweet remembrance do remember as grace is given what you humbly hope the Lord has been pleased to do for you.

[46 : 11] And think of that lovely word in the book of Revelation and that which ye have already hold fast till I come.

That which ye have already as you humbly hope though it may not be much as yet that God has wrought in your souls remember it treasure it hold it fast yes that which ye have already hold fast till I come.

Much might be said along that line of thought and as your help to do it you will see thy love in times past forbids me to think thou wilt leave me at last in trouble to sing.

You will be able to look on the dealings of God past and present and argue before God and you can do that.

Job said I will fill my mouth with arguments and here is an argument he hath delivered and he doth deliver and we trust he will yet deliver us having obtained help of God I continue unto this day and as you go on into the unknown future you will find Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever yea in the way of thy judgments O Lord have we waited for thee the desire of our soul is to thy name and to thee remembrance of thee and if you dear people young or old wherever you are in life's journey can appeal to God with whom you have to do this

[48 : 18] Sabbath morn the desire of our soul is to thy name I have only to conclude the sermon such as it is very scrappy and poor and tell you the desire of the righteous shall be granted Jesus will not your cry forget you shall obtain the blessing yet Amen Amen