

Isaiah (Quality: Good)

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Preacher: Farley, Raymond John (1939-2008)

[0 : 0 0] Isaiah chapter 12 I really want to consider the psalm, the chapter rather, in the whole of the contents of it we shall only be able to scratch the surface of the wonders of it but my dear friends, as we consider it, there are those first three verses particularly I'll read the first three verses and in that day they shall say, O Lord, I will praise thee though they were angry with me, thine anger is turned away and thou comfortest me Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song he also is become my salvation therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation the words particularly upon my mind are those though they were lost angry with me thine anger is turned away and they comforted me this portion of the word of God is something which was made very powerful to me in the beginning of my Christian experience and joining the church and I want to just give you an illustration here again to the answer of prayer that seems to be on my mind today the wonderful fact that the Lord is faithful to answer the prayers of his people in 1964

I was sitting in the chapel of Bethesden in the morning service and our late dear pastor there he spoke from the text the Lord has done great things for us whereof we are glad the psalm which we read was the subject of the hymn the closing hymn O bless the Lord my soul nor let his mercies lie forgotten in unthankfulness and with our praises die I was cut down with guilt at that particular verse of that hymn for I felt and I came in guilty before God I had forgotten his goodness to us for we had prayed for some long time for a son and he that year answered our prayer and granted us a son and his second name is Samuel well my dear friends

I felt so guilty and so cut down that I had to sit down and I was not normally at all weak in those days my strength drained away I knew that I must go to see the pastor regarding joining the church and telling the friends what a dear saviour I had found and so I did so in the interval and went into his study and saw him almost as soon as he arrived in his study and I was able to pour out a little of my heart to him and he said to me now my lad you go home he said and in the coming week he said you write the things down that the Lord has done for your soul and he bowed me goodbye and I went out the front door of that house and it seemed as if Satan came round the side of the house outdoors and put his clammy hand around me and said now you've done it you're never going to be able to say anything to the church because you've got nothing to say and he put me through it my friends terribly in that interval we went home the six miles journey had our meal returned and his text that afternoon was as I was with Moses so I will be with thee not fail thee nor forsake thee that encouraged me somewhat on the Monday night

I thought I've got to try and write something down and I've been troubled all day long I couldn't get on much that day at work I was troubled as to what I got to write and Satan again seemed to make an onslaught to me well I ventured up into what I used to call my little box room where I used to do paperwork and I thought hey whatever am I going to write and I knelt down with the little bench there and I asked the Lord to confirm me in it lest I should bring shame on his name and speak those things which were not really true and I don't say you should do this but I did at the time I took my Bible up on its back and let it open and it opened on this chapter and you'll note that in that day in that day shall you say praise the Lord call upon his name declare his doings among the people make mention that his name is exalted and friends

I picked up my pen and without having to stop hardly at all I had a flow of the things that came back to my mind the Holy Spirit I believe now looking back on I didn't realise at the time brought to my remembrance those things where I poured out my heart to the Lord and much of it was in that answers to prayer in many ways in things providence in things in providence and in other difficulties and problems where he'd undertaken for me through those years and so this word is a special word to me I preach from this word with a grateful spirit this evening to you dear friends because I believe I can go with it and I hope and trust that some of you will be able to join in these truths expressed here and perhaps look back and remember and if not pray that you may as I said about the singing of the hymns this morning if we have a hymn which sings so high in its language that we cannot obtain to it then let us sing it as a prayer that we may be able to enter into it and so in that day they shall say

[7 : 30] O Lord I will praise thee though thou was angry with me thine anger is turned away and thou comforted me my dear friends if we realise the just anger of a holy God against sin upon us we shall certainly be able to rejoice when the Lord at his appointed time comes and shows us that his anger is turned away and what a comfort that is in that experience of it and I would that all of you will know something of it in this life's journey some of you may not yet know it you dear young people may still be I hope you are searching for it searching for that confirmation that as you pray and seek the Lord that he may reveal himself to you that he may show himself to be your God and that you may realise that he is your God you see we see it so often in the

Psalms the Psalmist he comes to his God doesn't he the Lord is my shepherd I shall not want you see that's what we need dear friends young and old if we have the God of Jacob as our refuge we're safe but without that refuge we're not safe you know in a terrible storm there's no good knowing of a refuge and what a nice dry place it is and being outside of it the only joy of the refuge is to be in it isn't it and so my dear friends we all need a refuge for our souls and a refuge for sinners the gospel makes known and it's found in the merits of Jesus alone nowhere else as I said this morning there's one the one place the one sure place for the soul behold

God is my salvation salvation which is of God is salvation indeed salvation which is of God will be performed and each one whom this privilege is given will be found with him in glory why well for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross despising the shame and he sat down at the right hand of the father in heaven this very evening to make intercession for the prayers of his people to offer the prayers of his people and the father beholds those prayers in his beloved son in his perfection yes sinless and yet for sin he died behold God is my salvation you see I was only saying a week or so ago to my own people when we read that beautiful record of the

Lord's long suffering and mercy to Thomas Thomas had willingly decided that he would not believe that the Lord had risen he will not believe he said I will not believe it was a willing unbelief and accept and he laid his conditions down how the dear Lord must have felt as it were that how dishonouring that was and we're all guilty of it so let us not throw any stones at Thomas but I mean how that was as it were dishonouring to the Lord and to the other disciples and ten of them have witnessed to Thomas that the Lord was risen but all I wanted to come to was the mercy in the dear redeemer he appears and knowing all that's gone on the first words are words of peace peace peace it's a lovely scene isn't it there's

Peter there who's denied his Lord there's Thomas there who's doubting and what an awful sin unbelief is and yet first peace ah my dear friends what a privilege it is to be a Christian a real Christian washed in the redeemer's blood yes behold God is my salvation if you can say that if you know that that is the case those he loves he never leaves but loves them to the end him writer says doesn't he how true that is Jesus having loved his own he loved them to the end you see man starts something you see monuments to it around the country half finished various things some finished buildings and so on but the Lord what he begins he finishes he that has begun a good work in you will perform it to the end to the day of

[13 : 01] Jesus Christ poor sinner he will not leave the work half done all you might feel tonight to be apart from God you might desire in your heart to know that renewing where is that blessedness I knew when first I saw the Lord where is that soul refreshing view of Jesus and his word you long for it it's good keep praying for it instant in prayer that you might have that good hope rejoicing hope that we thought of this morning for that hope is in a place in a good place we spoke about a vain hope this morning that the world has but the hope of the Christian by the grace of God is a firm hope it's an expectation the reliance of the soul wholly on the promises of the

Saviour on the promises that he gives what are they he she that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out no wise cast out have you come to him is it a concern of yours do you oft times find your heart lifted up in prayer do you find at the end of the day that when the present duties of the day are finished that your heart turns upward I hope so that's the best way to start tonight my friends pour out our hearts before him oh ye people tell the Lord about all the troubles of the day seek his mercy his blessing his pardon for sin seek rest he giveth his beloved rest sleep actually he giveth his beloved sleep doesn't he read it it's not always so is it because we read in the scripture and we experience ourselves sometimes sleep leaves us we find

David resting on his bed at night in the night watches then he wrestles with his God in prayer what a mercy my friends if we know something of that wrestling when there's no other ear no other eye you come to God prayer oh my dear friends behold God is my salvation does God hear from you if God hears from you in prayer at the appointed time you will hear from him in consolation of your soul in confirming that you'll be brought to this that you will come in that day they shall say oh lord I will praise thee does any of you dear friends here met tonight have a little rising praise for the love of God to you in your heart in your soul

I do hope you do it's of God it's of God my dear friends you don't hear praise I mean real praise from an unbelieving heart I'm not speaking about noise and volume and superficialities I'm speaking of the deep solemn sacred praise which comes from the heart at the realisation of that overwhelming love that the saviour has shown to his people in that he so loved them that he laid down his life to redeem them to bring them unto himself eternally I think of Boaz Boaz was a man of a loving heart Boaz was a man who was a man of wealth position and ability he was a man who was an honourable man he would redeem all that was

Naomi's he would bring Ruth for his wife he would pay all things needful he didn't do it in a corner did he he met with them in the gate that was equivalent to the court where all the transactions of the day were attended to the elders of the city it was all done in the open the price was paid the contract fulfilled and he redeemed all that was in the armies and Ruth he took for his wife my friends now think of the dear saviour he was crucified in the front of all those multitudes there's a little gathering of women who could only stand afar off and they viewed the scene my dear friends that's the most we can do in the flesh

[18 : 39] I believe to view afar off the suffering of the dear saviour for sin was it was it was it your sin was it my sin that was there one hymn writer says my soul looks back to see the burdens they did bear when hanging on the accursed tree and hopes her guilt was there as not a vain hope as a hope of gracious expectation through the promises of Christ to your soul oh I do hope you all rest in those promises that he gives behold God is my salvation I will trust and not be afraid for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song he also has become my salvation you know we'd all be lost if salvation rested on ourselves in any way whatsoever you realise that you know there's an element of society that believes they do this and they do that and they do something else and therefore

God must accept them for their goodness my friends that is presumption in its height if you want to understand the word presumption I believe a simple way to try to remember it is this it's the prayer of the Pharisee it's the I'm this and I'm that that's presumption if you expect God to save your lost soul for all the good that you've got and done through good works no they're all as filthy rags before the holiness and the purity of the eye of almighty God we come back to that one way of salvation again we must be viewed in the beloved in his purity in his righteousness all my dear friends what a mercy it is that God has not left that veil that I spoke of this morning joined when the saviour gave up the ghost and expired on the cross the veil of the temple was rent making that way through his name that access to the father hence we're able to have the answers of prayer from time to time in accordance with his will

I want to just say one other thing that's come to my mind with regard to answers of prayer I believe that everyone won't agree with me about this maybe but I believe this that when a soul is called by grace and become a praying soul there is no such thing as unanswered prayer I know the terms used and I understand it's a way of expressing it but actually there's no such thing as unanswered prayer to a believer who prays in faith the answer might be no my child you're not yet mature enough to have what you rightfully ask for it's quite possible I believe in prayer to seek those things which are quite in accordance with scripture and yet we're not yet spiritually mature enough for the Lord to answer that prayer now but it may be wait a while my child until you're a little more matured in things divine sometimes the answer is no we don't like that that's human nature but my dear friends sometimes the answer is no to a child of

God for his or her own good I've used the illustration before but if you've got a young child who wanted to play with matches and petrol at the same time you wouldn't say yes would you but when that child is another 15 years older and wants to burn some rubbish up the garden he can have matches and a mower with petrol in it because there's maturity to know to keep the two apart and I believe it's very much like that the Lord leads his people and he teaches them he instructs them in the way and what might be no at this time will be yes when you are ready for it and I believe there's also regarding the matter of prayer I believe there is also something in each Christian's life which they are kept praying for and sometimes they pass away from this world and those who knew their prayer witnessed the answer of it in months afterwards

I've seen that one particular case I know of I went to see a dear age friend he was a minister and he said to me Ray I feel quite comfortable for my own soul but I'm so concerned that I've prayed all these years for my two offspring and there was no sign of it at all and within one year of his passing and his funeral the daughter was baptised friends the prayers of David maybe ended but they're not all answered in his wisdom they are stored as it were in the memory of God the tears of those prayers are put in his bottle yes not forgotten and so to you dear parents and grandparents you pray on whatever you do don't forget to pray you know the life of the church is in prayer when prayer is a burden and task no wonder we little receive oh Lord make us willing to ask since they are so ready to give my friends if ever we need anything in the churches today it's a revival of the spirit of prayer that there might be the blessing of the spirit for the scripture says I will be inquired of oh house of Israel of you to do these things he's willing to give but he will be asked he will be sought if we sit down complacently no wonder we little receive according to that which

[25 : 26] I just quoted therefore with joy shall he draw water out of the wells of salvation the saving grace of God is likened here to a well a well to the natural thirst is life isn't it there's water from that well you think of the children of Israel in the wilderness journey and they came to Elam it was a time where they were enabled to rest under the shade of the palm trees and be provided for with the water from the wells so it is that the Lord deals with his people through the journey of life spiritually we go on and sometimes we come to a place where we are so thirsty the world sin self satan in the world give us a dry throat spiritually I speak we feel far off from God hard as the seat we sit on cold as ice but then there comes a low point then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble we read that this morning in the psalm 107 when they are brought there then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble and he doesn't forget them he doesn't say once in that psalm of all that repetition of that same truth that he forgot them then he delivered them out of his distresses but they had to cry unto the

Lord first and that is what often the Lord brings us in me into trouble to bring us back to keep us in that pathway which he will have us to walk in we might rebel we might want to go that way like Jonah I know quite a bit about Jonah Jonah and I walk I walk a similar path to Jonah but my friends the Lord will have his way Jonah he thought he would rather not do what the Lord would have him do and we suffer for it so it is when we do not do what the Lord will have us to do and we know deep within what he will have us to do we think no I don't want to do that I can't do that don't think I could do that we could find a thousand and two excuses as to why we can't either our inability or all the other things which will assist us in putting in the way of obedience but my dear friends those who are obedient they draw water from the wells of salvation therefore with joy where's the joy how many places I go to preach and there seems to be no sign of any joy as if there's a permanent mourning loss in the midst of the people why is that my dear friends well it's because they look within too long and not up pour not on thyself too long good to examine yourself before God yes important vital in fact but pour not on thyself too long lest it sink thee lower look to

Jesus wise and kind and strong his mercy joined with power there will be the answer to all your problem in looking to him and then with joy when that experience is answered there are those times of joy is a not and it's an appointed joy and it's something we don't hear much of but I want to just give you scripture a moment you'll find in John chapter 16 bearing in mind the scene that the Lord is preparing his disciples for what they must need witness in his crucifixion and all that he must need suffer but he has said many things to them in the 14th and the 15th and the 16th chapter and when he comes to verse 24 of the 16th chapter he says hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name ask and ye shall receive why that your joy may be full do you know I think we look over that I'll speak for myself I'm not condemning anyone else but I think we overlook the vitality of the need of this matter hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name but now ask and you might receive perhaps no it doesn't say that does it you say and this is where it's our lack of faith and lack of obedience that bring us into these straits which we are in in the journey of life hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name ask and ye shall receive that your joy may be full have ye you know when a child or young person is away from home for many months perhaps in education perhaps in earlier days for the young men away from home for call up duties and so on what a joyful scene there is at their return what a joyful day there is that Christmas day when they return and all the family are there again and their joy as a family is full when our souls are estranged from

God through our own sin unconfessed sin and our own rebellious heart in continuing in disobedience we don't enjoy that fullness of joy which is to be known in sweet communion with the Lord in keeping short accounts with the Lord I used to wonder whatever the ministers meant when I was young when they said keep short accounts with God and whatever did they mean and it was explained on one occasion it means this that we have sin every day and every day we need to confess our sin of that day and if we come in humility and sincerity and confess that sin he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins then there's another thing that used to puzzle me how can the Lord be just in forgiving us our sins when we're so unworthy of forgiveness justice is in this my dear friends that payment cannot

God cannot twice demand first at the bleeding short his hand and then again at mine because the justice of God the father cannot in his justice punish twice for the same crime can I put it that way and so the Lord as Jesus has borne the sins of his people upon the tree in the garden he bore that weight of the souls of his people I believe when he said my soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death and on the cross and I'm not separating the two but in the unity of the whole covenant undertaking he paid the price of the sins of the bodies and minds of his people and as I said this morning in that darkest hour my God my God why has they forsaken me that time my friends was the darkest time in history in time or eternity yes oh my dear friends

[33 : 59] Jesus says hitherto you've asked nothing in my name ask and you shall receive that your joy may be full your joy my joy friends can only be full if it's in Christ Jesus there's no other place where joy of soul can be found except in Christ Jesus and that's by faith given of the Holy Spirit as he directs the soul to look to Calvary to remember the sufferings of the dear Redeemer what a wow this salvation is my dear friends may we have been able to draw mild past you say a thimble fall as a well of salvation for it's the size and the depth of an ocean without bottom brim or shore the grace the mercy and love of God it's eternity's work to praise him enough for the love the love of God the Father in sending his Son the love of God the Son in being obedient to the will of his

Father the love of God the Son in fulfilling his covenant undertaking as the second person of the Trinity who took upon him flesh was laid in the manger as an infant who lived that perfect life fulfilling every aspect every requirement of the law in perfection so much so that the voice came from glory this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased and the church is pleased in him as well the Father is pleased in the Son and every sinner saved by grace is pleased in the Son there's joy there's joy my friends may we know something of it from time to time with joy to draw water out of the wells of salvation and in that day shall you say praise the Lord my friends a safe soul will desire to praise the Lord and as I said this morning

I can't remember just how I worded it but words to the effect is my desire that every soul here connected with you may be in that bundle of life none may miss the blessing coming back a moment to Thomas Thomas went a whole week in unbelief and misery because he would not believe the witness of the other disciples pardon me who clearly told him that they seen the Lord you know unbelief is a painful thing and it is a great sin if not the greatest I would actually say unbelief really is the greatest sin against God unbelief we all have to struggle with it because we're born in unbelief if there's the grace of God in your heart if there's a desire to rejoice in the

Lord if there's a desire to come near to him in prayer and have sweet communion with him that's the gift of the spirit that's the answer of the prayer of the dear saviour to his father in his promise to the disciples that he would send another comforter in the living church I'm talking about buildings now or denominations I'm saying in the living church those who truly fear and love the Lord who are the covenant people of God they are those who are blessed they are those who are chosen and called and brought to obedience made willing in the day of his power they then can come here praise the Lord praise the Lord for his salvation the work of salvation is his nothing we can do we can't save ourselves as I've already said the work of salvation is his it's a perfect work it's a finished work blessed be his name yes the Lord

Jehovah is my strength and my song and he has become my salvation therefore with joy shall he draw all trade to the wells of salvation and in that day he shall say praise the Lord call upon his name declare his doings among the people make mention that his name is exalted it's the desire of the name of God of the name of God to exalt the name of the Father of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and especially to exalt the love of the Saviour our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to make his doings known among the people it also applies to those who know this joy to tell to sinners round what a dear Saviour they have found and point to his redeeming blood and say behold the way to God sing unto the Lord for he hath done excellent things this is known in all the earth you know sometimes when the people sing and we hear them singing beautiful truths of the gospel in the hymns we seem as if we get just a little glimpse just a tiny peep as it were of what the eternal song might be my old pastor used to say may we know the keynote of the heavenly song here below may we learn that we may be able to start as it were in the old days in the chapels we didn't have organs and there was just the keynote blown by the start lead singer and away would go the music the keynote just to know the keynote that we might be able to know that heavenly song when he by his grace brings his church to him eternally to know that keynote unto him who has loved us and washed us from our sin in his own blood the honour and glory and dominion and power forever and ever can't you hear heaven ringing with it dear friends oh what a mercy it'll be to be there what must it be to be there if you and I by the grace of God are there it'll be eternity's work to praise him for saving such poor wretched sinners as we are unto himself no help in self

[41 : 36] I find and yet have sought it well the native treasure of my mind is sin and death and hell that's where we start from but all glory and praise to his name through his work through his love through his mercy what mercy it is that the Lord God of heaven came to this earth to save sinners sing unto the Lord for he hath done excellent things in the earth this is known in all the earth there will be those in glory from every kindred nation tribe and tongue we read in the world cry out and shout their inhabitant of Zion for great is the holy one of Israel in the midst of them in the midst of your soul our bodies are the temple of the holy ghost which dwells within yes and then it extends to the collective church also you said cry out and shout their inhabitant of Zion here

I believe this refers to the collective church of souls saved by grace who great is the holy one of Israel in the midst of thee mighty strength is in the midst of Israel for their strength is not of themselves but it is in Christ Jesus strength sufficient for the day cry out and shout their inhabitant of Zion for great is the holy one of Israel in the midst of thee though they wast angry with me thine anger is turned away the anger my dear friend for your sin and mine if we be numbered in this number of the covenant of grace was laid upon the saviour you remember when Abraham and Isaac ascended the mount of God's command in that time of testing for

Abraham and Isaac said my father we have the wood for the sacrifice but where is the lamb for the sacrifice and Abraham said my son God will provide himself a lamb he did on that occasion provide himself a ram caught in a thicket how dear Abraham in that obedience to God's command when that voice came from heaven touch not the lamb vengeance was spared on Isaac the ram was put for the sacrifice in the place of

Isaac God will provide himself a lamb Jesus the lamb of God from before the foundation of the world but my dear friends when the sword of justice was raised against him there was no voice from heaven to say the consequence of the sword of justice which Jesus bore and after his resurrection and on that occasion we've already mentioned tonight we read and he showed them his hands and his side the cost of sin to the dear redeemer salvation is free to poor sinners may you be among that number may you be each one of you as I take my leave of you may you each be found praying souls

I've said before wrestling prayer can wonders do bring relief in deepest straits prayer can force a passage through iron bars and brazen gates and you can come in with this word tonight for the wonders he has ruled let us each our praises give and by sweet experience taught call upon him while we live may none of our dear friends gathered here tonight be left to be deceived by Satan or our own unbelieving heart there is one way of salvation Jesus said I am the way the truth and the life no man cometh unto the father but by me may he grant each one of you that enabling grace to be instant in prayer in coming unto him and may you in so doing prove the joy of the drawing the water from salvation as well spoken of here may the

[47 : 16] Lord add his blessing for his great name sake amen to the Lord's will Mr.

Ransbottom will speak here on Friday evening and Mr. Chapman is engaged to preach the next Lord's chair and disclose his M1000 and do It not ■