

What is the sign? (Quality: good, but cuts off at end)

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- [0 : 00] Let us turn to the prophecy of Isaiah chapter 38 and verse 22.
- The prophecy of Isaiah chapter 38 and verse 22. Now this afternoon we tried to speak a few things concerning verse 19 where you read the living.
- The living he shall praise thee as I do this day. The father to the children shall make known thy truth.
- And then he says the Lord was ready to save me. And therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord.
- And this evening I want to try and consider what Hezekiah also had to say.
- [1 : 35] What is the sign that I shall go up to the house of the Lord? We try to look at the experiences into which the Lord brought Hezekiah.
- So that he spoke those words and that with a deep and a personal understanding in such a way that he had never known previously.
- The living, the living. He shall praise thee as I do this day. And we notice that Hezekiah had been graciously led even as a young man.
- And had done that which was right in the sight of the Lord. And yet at 39 years of age the sentence of death was passed upon him.
- And he was much grieved and sorrowful. And all those things that he had done, those things that had occupied his mind and his heart and his attentions, could not comfort him in and under that sentence that the Lord had passed upon him.
- [3 : 02] And we notice that he turned away from all natural comforts, from all his fellows, turned his face to the wall and prayed unto God and wept sore.
- And the Lord heard his prayer and gave unto him 15 years. And the things that we have just read are those things that Hezekiah wrote after the Lord had brought him out of his sickness.
- If you turn to the 9th verse in that 38th chapter, he begins the writing of Hezekiah, king of Judah, when he had been sick and was recovered of his sickness.
- I believe that it is according to the purposes of Almighty God that every man's work shall be tried. We are reminded that whatsoever is built upon the foundation will be tried with fire.
- And that which is combustible, though it will be burnt up, the Lord does not bring these trials, these provings to destroy his people, but to bring them to rest upon the foundation that he has laid solely and completely.
- [4 : 47] And that whatsoever things are wrought in consequence of the divine life that he has imparted is even as he is of the spirit, spiritual, pure, holy.
- You know the apostle sets before us in the first two chapters of Ephesians such a glorious view of the foundations upon which the Lord's dear people rest and abide.

And one thing that seems to afford to me more comfort in some respects than anything else is that if you go through those chapters and note and write out the blessings and they are numerous so numerous and underline that word in Christ that's where they're all found that's where they all begin that's where they all consist that's where they shall ever endure for all the promises of God in him are ye and in him are men and therefore it is necessary at times to strip a man the Lord brings a man or a woman into those places where everything that is of nature and of self is taken away we mentioned this afternoon of Hezekiah being turned to the wall he's back upon everything that was natural every natural comfort and then in the meditations in the pleadings in the prayers in the considerations of those hours it's a question of my soul and the Lord the apostle in that chapter that we read together this evening begins with an exhortation seeing we are encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses let us dear friend if you and I are brought into these deep pathways where all the things of self and of nature of earthly comforts and earthly friends are taken away and our desires and our longings are fixed they will be fixed upon Christ and we shall desire only Him when

Hezekiah comes to praise God he comes with praises for His mercy you see what He has to say in the 17th verse behold for peace I had great bitterness but Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back there's nothing of what the creature has done it all consists in what God has done Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it it's a wondrous thing if the Lord brings us to know that great deliverance that He has wrought and I believe that when the Lord is pleased to show

His mercy and give unto us a hope like Hezekiah we shall ask for a sign dear friend you sometimes get down on your knees and have to say show me a token Lord for good some token of Thy special love generalities are forgotten the concerns of everyone and anything else are left out it's me and my soul the Lord's dealings with me my needs my anxieties my sins my griefs and God's mercy and God's grace His compassion and His love well

[10 : 12] Hezekiah also had said what is the sign that I shall go up to the house of the Lord I wonder whether there are any amongst us this evening whose chief concern rests in this what is the sign that I shall go up to the house of the Lord you see if the Lord deals with us He'll bring us to that very point what is the sign that I shall go we may read of the experiences of others we may read of the blessings that they have had the signs and the tokens that the Lord has given them but if we are among the living then like Hezekiah we shall be found in those places where we have to say what is the sign that I shall go up unto the house of the Lord

I pray that it might please almighty God if there's not those amongst us that He might stir up so as to move their hearts their souls and spirits to this consideration to this question and to pray unto Him concerning the matter you see sometimes we hear people say but I dare not presume to ask those things has God said a limit upon what we can ask I have proved and I trust as long as spared I shall continue to prove if He ask anything in my name anything He will do it the love of God is infinite there's no bound upon infinity the love of God is eternal there is no limit to eternity the sovereign grace and mercy of God is free and therefore there is no payment no demand ask and ye shall receive dear friend do you desire that the Lord might truly constrain your heart in all sincerity to ask for a sign a sign that you shall go up to the house of the Lord

Jesus when He was upon the earth He said unto His disciples and if I go away I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there ye may be also for in my Father's house are many mansions if it were not so I would have told you does faith view those mansions does that divine hope raised up in your heart look for and expect to come unto it the word speaks of those who died in faith they looked for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God well the Lord has been pleased to hear

Hezekiah's plea for a sign that the promise that was given unto him should be fulfilled and as we read concerning Hezekiah we know that the Lord gave him a sign in the heavens it was a sign by the sun and the sun went back ten degrees a most marvellous thing a miracle only that which the almighty power of God could accomplish and this sign was given at Hezekiah's pleading now if you and I have a desire wrought in our hearts for a sign that we shall go up unto the house of the

Lord do we expect that we'll be something in ourselves do we expect that it will be something that we shall be able to lay hold upon from the creature or from any other creature well our God has been pleased from the beginning so to set that sign whereby His people shall go up unto the house of the Lord to dwell throughout the never ending eternity with Him and in His presence that began with the promise to Adam and throughout the scripture there is a gradual unfolding of the beauty and the glory of God's purposes in grace to redeem

[16 : 24] His people from their sins and accompanying the unfoldings of these His glories most gracious promises are afforded so that the signs and the tokens are an encouragement that whereupon faith lays hold and the promises are held as divine realities in the souls of His people the Lord has said in one place I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions and He gave signs and tokens but in the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ the full and final revelation of His glories and His purposes is manifested for all the living to see it is a remarkable thing that when speaking of

Hezekiah who was the son of Ahaz and Ahaz was a wicked king he was not subject to the law of God he sought alliances with Syria he encouraged the idolatry and the worship of idols he closed up the temple and turned out the priests and Isaiah went unto him foretelling the destruction that should come upon Judah and then he said to him moreover the Lord spake again to Ahaz saying ask thee a sign of the

Lord thy God ask it either in the depth or in the height above but Ahaz said I will not ask neither will I tempt the Lord or the hypocrisy of the man it wasn't because he feared the law or was subject to the law of God he rather trusted in the strength of Assyria than in the Lord God of Israel and then the prophet says hear ye now O house of David is it a small thing for you to weary men but will ye weary my God also therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name

Emmanuel will it is perhaps the most wondrous expression of God's purposes that is conveyed unto Isaiah both there and subsequently for you know that he declares subsequently for unto us a child is born for unto us a son is given now Isaiah saw the sign together with the fathers our Lord himself declared concerning Abraham he saw my day and was glad we know that Job viewed the Redeemer and his confidence and his hope for standing in the presence of almighty

God to go up unto the house of the Lord was founded upon the redemption through Jesus precious blood for he speaks of what it is to be redeemed the psalmist was led into those deep wonders and glories containing Christ concerning Christ and we can go through and mention so many but I want to try and come to us ourselves and that which is set before us so that we may rest upon these unchanging immovable signs that our faith might be both steadfast and increased when

[22 : 00] Isaiah prophesied a virgin shall conceive and bring forth a son and his name shall be called Emmanuel God with us now I believe that if we look a little into those words God with us there we have the sign the ground of our hope that we shall go up unto the house of the Lord dear friend take him away and there's nothing where he is there all his people are and I believe one of the signs and when I speak of them

I'm not speaking necessarily of visual signs because the signs that God has given began in the word and we know that when Christ is come when God is with us it's not for 33 years upon the earth but by his coming and in his coming in those things that he reveals he is with us in the eternal covenant before the world was once in him in him forever thus the eternal covenant ran dear friend has the Lord shown you this sign is it spoken and sealed and confirmed by the holy ghost but it is

God's word spoken and sealed will raise a hope so that you'll have to plead it from time to time remember the word unto thy servant upon which thou has caused me to hope Beth early above cups your voice ye ■■■■■ he her sah let it go up And his expectation was to go up unto the house of the Lord to stand wholly in the presence of Almighty God.

If you come to the consideration of your state by nature, I believe we shall come to that place where Hezekiah came, when we shall find the sentence of death in ourselves, and we shall know what it is for righteous judgment to pass it upon us.

And if we receive this truth in our conscience, that's not in our head. We've all read those things hundreds of times. But if we receive it into our conscience, applied by the Holy Ghost, we shall turn our face to the wall as Hezekiah did, and we shall weep and we shall pray and we shall want a sign.

[26 : 16] Nothing less than that which comes from God's own mouth will satisfy us. When Christ came into the world by His coming, and as He came, there is a revealing of the covenant purposes of the Father before the world was.

and it is revealed that our persons and our cases were seen, even then.

Sometimes we tend to view according to natural understanding and thereby we miss and pass over the excellency of the glory of the God who loved us.

The Apostle Peter writing his epistle speaks of the elect according according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.

Now consider that tremendous view that is afforded unto him the sign that these the elect shall go up unto the house of the Lord.

[27 : 59] They were foreknown by the Father even before they were elected. dear friend there has never been a moment when they have been outside of His care and that He indeed cares and love them eternally is manifested in the eternal donation that He made unto His Son He gave them unto Him to keep and to bring you know there is a precious word that our Lord left for us when He was upon the earth and I believe that by these things is a sign of the eternal love of God unto His people in John's gospel in chapter 12 and the last verse and I know that His commandment is life everlasting almighty God has commanded everlasting life unto His people and Christ has come so to make it known to procure it and to administer it unto the elect vessels of mercy everything that we read and now concerning

Christ shows unto us those evident tokens of the eternal love of God when Christ came into the world and to reveal the covenant purposes of God it is demonstrated that the Father both knew our needs and determined to meet them and it is a precious word when the apostle Paul declares that he has predestinated their end and when you think of all the transactions of righteousness and justice all the bestowings of love and mercy and grace that are concerned in the predestination of the end of a people upon whom he'd set his love on before the foundation of the world truly our persons and our cases were seen and known and met in Christ

Jesus the Lord all the wisdom and the perfections of almighty God in sending his son and then when you read those words in Romans they're most familiar to all of us and I trust that we shan't pass them by and merely repeat them and draw no comfort from them he that spared not his own son but delivered him up for us all what a sign of the eternal love of God the eternal love of Christ and the love of the spirit also the father determined

Christ procured the spirit seals and without eternal love none of these things would have been accomplished well when we say God with us oh that we might see the signs in the covenant undertakings and purposes of God revealed in Christ's coming God wouldn't have sent him if there'd have been no covenant God wouldn't have sent him except he had been anointed to be the saviour of his people and sent forth even to that end and thus he is called Jesus Christ but when we consider this also in his flesh he is

God with us consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself lest ye be wearied and fainting your minds when you consider the humility of the Lord Jesus to take unto himself our nature to humble himself to that degree made of a woman made under the Lord to redeem them that were under the Lord but oh how the love of God shines in all of his appointments for when he came in his flesh it was to make an end of sin and surely when these things are opened up and applied unto our hearts and our consciences to perceive

[34 : 31] Christ in his sufferings in his death in his resurrection in his ascension into heaven all of these things are signs that sinners shall be redeemed justified and presented before the father's face for he says for where I am there shall ye be also but he speaks to the sinner whom he loves and for whom he died in the most beautiful language of love in the song of Solomon he addresses the church as my sister my spouse you know that the woman declares in the first chapter the king has brought me into his chambers and one of the consequences of the lord's dealings with us each one will be that his revealings his presence his nearness will never bring a sense of complacency upon us only a sense of humility and contrition

I am black dear friend I suppose that many of us have said in our lives at one time or another I am black I'm a sinner but you know she wasn't left there and I pray that none of us shall be left there either his presence and his nearness teaches reveals and then comforts and lifts up and she didn't say merely I am black she said look not upon me because I am black she was ashamed and she felt her natural state before him who is holy I believe Hezekiah was brought there

I believe the living are brought there and such is the manner of his love and such the nearness so that we know he is indeed God with us he comes and in his love he reaches out his hand both hands to lift her up from the dust of self abasement and he says my sister my spouse there is a peculiar beauty I believe in the addresses of the Lord the signs that he gives unto his people that they shall go up unto the house of the Lord first of all he addresses her as his sister the ties that bind them the love that is manifested in that he took her nature and humbled himself and he is not ashamed to call her sister dear friend has the

Lord ever drawn nigh to you and spoken words of love unto your soul made you feel close and nigh unto him didn't it lift up your soul and your spirit wasn't there a flowing out of love unto him we may feel within ourselves as she felt I am black look not upon me because I am black and he says thou art all fair my love there is no spot in thee and she knows that in herself she is black but in him and in his righteousness she is even as he has procured for her redemption salvation justification in the sight of a holy god and he takes her by her hands and he lifts her up and he says not only my sister but my spouse dear friend even in natural things if someone has a love unto you and they love you dearly and they come to you and say I have betrothed thee unto me isn't it a wonderful thing to know that someone loves so dearly that they desire to be betrothed unto you there is an undertaking there for marriage for a union of oneness well when the lord comes and speaks to the church and addresses her as my spouse it is because of the betrothing and there is a view of that eternal betrothing made known for it was appointed in the covenant of grace the father determined it the church the bride of his eternal son you know it's a wonderful thing if the lord shows us a sign of that eternal betrothing rise up my love and come away and isn't there a responding in the soul isn't there a desire to be with him well when our lord addresses the church his spouse surely he also shows this for when a man would be betrothed unto a woman he went unto her father and he went with a token a talent of silver a purchase price she had to be purchased from her father and when our lord comes and whispers in the souls of his dear people my sister my spouse he declares

I have paid the redemption price thou art mine but it isn't only a question of purchase such is the wonder and the beauty and the glory of that love that her heart is taken up with him and it is also a matter of the conquest of love that is made known and confirmed he by his words and his dealing and his doing and she made willing to leave the father's house wilt thou go with this man I will go well the time has gone and we hardly seem to have entered into those things that we would have spoken for surely we have in the atonement the sign that every vessel of mercy should go up unto the house of the lord we have by his sufferings his shed blood the sign for without the shedding of blood is no remission of sin but where sin is put away away is made by his death all the demands of the law are met and answered in him so that there is no more that can be required of those that are his payment justice cannot twice demand once from my bleeding short his hand and then again from mine isn't that a sign isn't that an evidence the impediments are removed out of the way the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom and by his rising again he is declared to be the son of God with power and sinners are justified now it is only as we are found justified clothed in his righteousness that we shall go up unto the house of the lord but all these things

[44 : 26] God hath determined Christ hath effected and the spirit reveals and seals and these things are not hidden from us God in his mercy and his grace even from our childhood has set all these things before us or that we might pray not to be left with a superficial and a light understanding in our natural judgment coming up you andede as good beings