

# The Lord was ready to save me (i). (Quality: Very good)

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[ 0 : 00 ] With the Lord's help this morning, I'll direct your attention to the prophecy of Isaiah chapter 38 and the 20th verse.

The prophecy of Isaiah chapter 38 and the 20th verse. The Lord was ready to save me.

Therefore, we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord.

The Lord was ready to save me. Therefore, we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord.

The experience of Hezekiah described to us in this chapter contains much.

[ 1 : 02 ] It was one of those occasions in a man's life which is never forgotten. Well, many experiences did Hezekiah have and some of those were outstanding.

Such as the occasion when having received a letter from the enemies of his land, he goes up and presents it before God in the house of the Lord.

But here, this particular experience brought him so face to face with reality. We are always brought face to face with reality when we are brought face to face with the prospect of death.

Even though death may not be imminent. Even though, as in this case, 15 years are to be added to one's life.

Now, we should not understand from this that the mind of God was suddenly changed. God is in one's life. God is in one's life. And who can turn him?

[ 2 : 21 ] And whatsoever his soul desireth, even that he doeth. God is immutable in every way. From the beginning of time to the end of it.

Yea, from eternity before time came. To eternity after time is completed. God will be absolutely intrinsically unchangeable.

We shall therefore not understand any of the things that took place here as reflecting a change of mind in God.

There was a change in his operations. A change in his providence. But these were known to God. For known unto God are the beginning of his ways.

The chapter is also remarkable for this. That it gives us the feelings that Hezekiah had immediately under his affliction.

[ 3 : 29 ] And then the reflections that he had subject, subsequent to the time of his affliction. As we read, the writing of Hezekiah, king of Judah, when he had been sick and was recovered of his sickness.

We might therefore consider this point in regard to our own lives. Does sickness come upon us? Does affliction come upon us?

What are the exercises that we may have under those afflictions? And is it God's good purpose and pleasure to deliver us from those afflictions then?

What are the reflections that ultimately are brought forth and about which we are able to speak, having been recovered of our sicknesses?

Well now, to come to the words that we have read as a text this morning. The Lord was ready to save me.

[ 4 : 36 ] It is clear from this that, despite all the many other points which are often considered and thought about in respect to these words of Hezekiah, that the Hezekiah in the midst of his trial and his sickness and his anxiety and his subsequent reflection upon the days of his affliction, he thought about the blessedness of gracious doctrine as it refers to the eternal God.

What is it that we hang on to? What is it that we cling to when all around our soul gives way? As we have already mentioned this morning, then Jesus is my help and stay.

We have the evidence of it in the scriptures, the assurance of the help of God. The Lord is my helper. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee and so on.

But to feel that in our experience is to feel the gracious doctrine of God's immovability, of God's eternal love, of God's continuity of everlasting favor.

Now, one of the things that was impressed evidently upon the soul of Hezekiah was that concerning salvation.

[ 6 : 06 ] The Lord was ready to save me. We have about to look at an earlier verse or two and observe that there were certainly times, testing times, when unbelief may be rode high in the heart of Hezekiah so that he came to a conclusion that he was cast off and cast out.

He says, As mine age is departed and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent, I have cut off like a weaver my life. He will cut me off with pining sickness.

From day even to night will they'll make an end of me. So fierce was the fire into which Jeremiah came, that he came to this conclusion, a wrong one indeed, that the Lord's anger was raised against him.

His affliction was acute. The prospect of his recovery was remote. And therefore he cries unto God.

And as he cries unto God, how his faith is tried, and he says, I have cut off like a weaver my life.

[ 7 : 30 ] He does not attribute the cutting off to God, but by reason of his sins, by reason of his iniquities, he had cut off like a weaver his life.

Now then, amidst all that, we find the stability of the covenant of God's grace, supporting him in this time of trial, in this period of affliction.

The Lord was ready to save me. On what basis could he make such a statement? It was not fanciful. It was not imagined.

We would verily believe that the strength of these words was as King Hezekiah had his eyes enlightened to observe the certainties of the covenant of grace and was enabled to believe therein and feel strength coming to him therefrom.

The Lord was ready to save me. In the first place, therefore, we will consider that the Lord was ready to save me because he, I, rather, was loved with an everlasting love.

[ 8 : 52 ] You know, we may indeed come sometimes under the chastening hand of God and sometimes his chastings may be very severe, but his love will never alter.

The love of the Father towards his chosen people will never alter. It is the same yesterday and today and forever.

And therefore, thinking upon this, the gracious man here, he says, the Lord was ready to save me because his love is exactly the same.

Oh, the Father's love that looked upon poor Hezekiah from eternity past, before there was any prospect hardly of time being brought about.

although there was a prospect of time being brought about, my meaning is that it was not brought into actual life, yet the Lord looked forward and he beheld Hezekiah.

[ 10 : 02 ] Is it a comfort and a consolation to us to think that if we are favored of God, to be the children of God, then his love was set upon us from before the world was made.

And he knew us. A great mystery this is. Oh, how great is God. We cannot conceive it. We cannot imagine that the thoughts of God are so many and so great and so capable of being thought together that the Lord could possibly look forward through the ages of time and see everyone of the church of God upon whom his love was to be fixed.

But so it was. The Lord was ready to save me. Now it will be a humbling consideration for you and for me if we are able in the midst of our trials and affections to look back and observe the unchangeable love of the Father and the readiness of the Father's love to save us, to save us in the Lord with an everlasting salvation.

The Lord was ready to save me. This is a sweet word that he uses.

He was ready to save me. Not reluctant, but ready to save me. He saw me ruined in the fall, yet loved me notwithstanding all.

[ 11 : 39 ] He saves me from my lost estate. His loving kindness. Oh, how great. And so, how good it is in the midst of Hezekiah's affliction that we find this trace of supporting grace as he meditated upon the verities of God, the things that are unchangeable.

We are subjected to constant change. Everything is subject to constant change apart from God Himself. Concerning God, it is written, I am the Lord, I change not.

Therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. Now, this will bear strength to us in the time of our changing scenes.

Changing scenes may have a profound effect upon us. They may have a comforting effect sometimes. At other times, they may have a demoralizing effect. The changing scenes, how well as one put it, and wonders where the scene will end.

Now, how shall we find some strength and consolation but to reflect upon God's unchangeability? The Lord was ready to save me.

[ 13 : 03 ] His love was not changed. His eye was not changed. His favor was not changed. His mercy was not changed. His grace was not changed.

Because the love was an everlasting love. Hence, we may remember those well-known yet precious words referred to in the prophecy of Jeremiah, I have loved thee with an everlasting love.

Therefore, with loving kindness have I drawn thee. The Lord was ready to save me. The Lord was ready to save me.

When we think of God the Eternal Son, and it is good for us sometimes to consider the Trinity itself, and to weigh up the glory of that Trinity, the Lord was ready to save me.

And then, in the time of Hezekiah's affliction, he may well have reflected upon the reason for all these things.

[ 14 : 21 ] Now, it is clear that one of the things that was upon his mind was the reason for his affliction, for his sins, because we find him sweetly thinking upon the importance and blessedness of these words.

For thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back. And earlier in the verse, behold, for peace I had great bitterness, but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption.

What evidence we have here of the feeling, sense of his own sinfulness, and those sins being brought to his attention.

But what certainty and security is eventually very safe towards him when he says, for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.

Now we come to look then, the Lord was ready to save me, and to cast all my sins behind my back, he was ready to save me. Even the Lord Jesus Christ, who came to die for the very worst of sinners, the very worst of sinners.

[ 15 : 45 ] sinners. And when we think about the very worst of sinners, it is not necessarily that which will take a man to a great extent of profligacy, but it is that which wherein a man is convinced, a woman is convinced, or even a child is convinced.

Are we being convinced of sins that we never even regarded before? It is true, reflections make us see what else would escape our sight, how very foul and dim are we, and God how pure and bright.

Now you'll see, there are sins which we do not see, which we do not recognize as sins, but if you put your life, and I put my life side by side with the Lord Jesus Christ, then what shall we see?

Will not a view of his life sometimes bring to our attention our lack, our sin, and if we should consider just one point, and that is sympathy to our neighbor, kindness to our neighbor, understanding to our neighbor, well now, have we not failed?

I have failed miserably, and I have been made conscious, more recently, of the dreadful sin, of lack of sympathy, the Lord was ready to save me.

[ 17 : 20 ] You see, we do not always think of the Lord dying for these kind of sins, to think that we should be unsympathetic, and that that should be sinful, well, it is sinful, surely, because he who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, well, what was he but continually sympathetic, continually understanding, continually lending an ear.

The Lord was ready to save me, and to die for those sins of which we were not aware, not to pass over them, but to blot them out, and the revelation that he was given to this good man when he said, thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.

The Lord was ready to save me. Now see myself a greater monster than ever, yet the Lord was still ready to save me.

His love in time pasts, forbids me to think he'll leave me at last, in trouble to sink. His sweet Ebenezer I have in review confirms his good pleasure to help me quite through.

The Lord was ready to save me. The affliction that was brought upon Hezekiah brought out some of those things in his heart, his heart sins about which he knew nothing.

[ 19 : 01 ] You see, the Lord says, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Oh, how many that are self-righteous and will never reach heaven, never reach heaven because they are so good in their own eyes.

But Hezekiah was brought into affliction and the affliction had a great benefit because it showed him that he was not good in his own eyes.

He thought he was. We only have to refer to the third verse here. Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart and have done that which is good in thy sight.

Oh, how many there are or may be walking in a pathway of such self-righteousness and they need affliction to open their eyes. And this was the love of God to Hezekiah in that he sent this affliction and opened the eyes of Hezekiah at the same time.

So, whilst not despising the goodness of living an upright life, yet when it came to salvation there was nothing to be found there.

[ 20 : 14 ] And Hezekiah wept sore and just think of it, the Lord was ready to save me in his love and in his pity. He looked down upon Hezekiah in the self-righteousness of his heart, in the unsympathising spirit that he may have sometimes evinced, and the Lord was still ready to save me.

And in this instance we notice the love of Christ is declared to us because the love of Christ is such that He died for all our sins.

Do we not therefore see the importance and the necessity of the unchangeability of God? I am the Lord, I change not, therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed.

Does this refer to the Father's love? Then it also refers to the love of the Son of God so that He died for every sin, sins that perhaps we have not seen, sins that we have never considered a sin, but the Lord has looked down upon us in his pity and upon the exercise of soul that came into the heart of Hezekiah, he makes this profound and wonderful statement, the Lord was ready to save me.

How convinced he was about it. He was ready to save me, ready to save a person so violent, so wretched, ready.

[ 21 : 52 ] readiness in the heart of man may vary in various people.

Some people's nature is more ready to help than another, but we do read in this same prophecy of those that were ready to perish.

Now there are very, very few people that are ready to perish. there are those that are ready to do this, ready to do that, ready to help their neighbor and so on, but how few there are by the power of the Spirit of God are brought to be ready to perish.

That is, to fall down upon their knees before God and say, God be merciful to me a sinner.

Or, maybe, in the words of Queen Esther, I will go in unto the king, and if I perish, I perish. The Lord was ready to save me, to get a glimpse of the glory of the and immovability of the God of love to our souls will be a strength to us in time of our distress and weakness.

[ 23 : 15 ] The Lord, even the Lord himself, Jesus, the Son of God, was ready to save me, to die for all my sins, completely, absolutely, and extensively.

And then the Lord, the Eternal Spirit, was ready to save me. What was required in this? You know, the Eternal Spirit brings into the soul a confession of sin.

Now, this is one of the most difficult things to accomplish. People may think it's easy to confess sin, but it's ever so difficult to confess one's sin.

And therefore, we may say in respect to this testimony, the Lord, the Spirit of God, was ready to save me by communicating to me the life of God in my soul, that opened my eyes to see my sins, and opened my mouth to confess my sins, and opened my heart with an earnest desire that I might depart from my sins.

The Lord was ready to save me. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to save us from, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

[ 24 : 55 ] Oh, the Lord, the Lord was ready to save me. Now, overall, we may observe from these words, this reflection of Hezekiah in respect to the affliction laid upon him after he had been recovered from his sickness, the unity of the Spirit between the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to save him.

A reflection upon the Trinity. It will be good if we first of all see the complete unity that there is between the Father and the Son and the Spirit of God.

We find it is wonderful when amongst men there is a unity, a complete agreement. And by the favor of God, this is so from time to time.

Well, to observe this, in all the glory of it, the Lord was ready to save me. There was a complete agreement in heaven in respect to my own salvation.

We find the psalmist asking this question, or rather presented this prayer, say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.

[ 26 : 24 ] And here was one who was in such a place that evidently needed to be assured that the Lord was ready to save him.

Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation. If our bodies are affected in afflictions, so are our souls.

we may come to some sad conclusions, as is often the case, that if the body is afflicted, the soul must be in health.

This does not necessarily follow, but it is good if there is a good outcome and the soul is subsequently benefited. If in our afflictions, the Lord has revealed himself in a peculiar, unexpected, and sovereign manner, so that without any hesitation, and yet without any bombast, we are able to say the Lord was ready to save me.

He told me that he was ready to save me. He showed me his love. He showed me his pity. He showed me his favor. He showed me that he was the same yesterday and today and forever.

[ 27 : 54 ] that he was ready to save me, save me from my sins, to save me from my foolishness, to save me from the pride of my heart, to save me walking in self-righteousness, to save me indeed from everything that would ultimately take me down into the pit itself.

the Lord was ready to save me. When we think of salvation, we may think of it from two view points.

First of all, and this we have already alluded to, the Lord was ready to save me from many things, from my sins, from myself, from going down into the pit.

But there is also this consideration, we are saved unto, now the Lord was ready to save me, unto, salvation, the knowledge of salvation.

Hezekiah, by making the glorious declaration here, he shows not only that the Lord had saved him from his sins, on the one hand, but he had saved him unto heaven, the other, and the Lord was ready to save me.

[ 29 : 22 ] The mind of Jehovah has never been altered, never will be altered, in respect to the people of God. We change ourselves, we may wonder whether we are saved after all, but let us be assured of this, when God has brought the sound of the covenant into our souls, and applied that covenant of his love and his mercy, it will never alter, never alter.

Do we not read in our 89th psalm, I will not alter the thing that has gone out of my mouth, that is not one iota? Did the Lord say at the beginning of your profession, when the life of God started in your soul, if it did, that the Lord was ready to save me?

Was this a remarkable revelation given unto you, when the Lord picked on you from amongst the ungodly, and drew you out of an ungodly world, a world perhaps of self-righteousness, by the cords of his love, and by the bands of a man, I say, can you see there that the Lord was ready to save me?

No ground could I ever come to of why he was ready to save me, I can only say that he was ready to save me. And now darkness has come, and the scene, perhaps, though wonderful at that time, has receded.

No, he sees you when you see not him, and always hears your cry. Once in him, in him forever, thus the eternal covenant stands.

[ 31 : 23 ] Too often we are cast down by reason of the darkness which may pervade, the mist which may come before our eyes. We cannot see, perhaps, as clearly, as at sometimes, that our names are written in heaven, that the Father's love is sure, that the Son's love is sure, that the Spirit's love is sure, but whether we see it or not, to our own soul's comfort and satisfaction, may we be assured of this, that it never alters.

And if once the love of Christ has been felt upon our heart impressed, the mark of that celestial seal can never be erased.

And it is all because the Lord was ready to save me. And these crystal clear lines may be written twenty years ago, thirty, forty years ago, and they are still crystal clear when God shines upon them at the present time, or if you should be spared forty years hence, yet these words will remain constant, the Lord was ready to save me, save me unto salvation, save me unto heaven itself, save me from my blindness, save me from my darkness, that I might see him, whom my soul loveth.

You know, in the Song of Solomon, we have these words, saw ye whom my soul loveth. Here was one that was greatly distressed, and greatly troubled, because she mourned as one whose comfort's gone.

She could not see her but of it. He had withdrawn himself, he was lost sight of, from her view, but the Lord was ready to save me, and how she desired to see that same Lord again.

[ 33 : 34 ] Well, now, the Lord was ready to save me from myself, but also in order that I might be saved, and this is the positive aspect of salvation, to be saved, to glorify him.

Now, do we come then to the positive side of salvation? Do we see the benefits that issue from God's salvation, in that he has brought us to thank him, and to praise him, and to worship him, for all the benefits bestowed upon us, we may see and remember the words of the psalmist, when he said, Oh, bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name, bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

Now, the very outbursting of such language is a clear evidence that the Lord was ready to save me. We have it in the positive experience of the saint of God.

We have it in the heart that has been renewed, the mind that has been renewed, and the faith that has been communicated, so that we rejoice, as Hezekiah did, in this word, the Lord was ready to save me, even when I could not see that he was ready to save me, even when I was convulsed by the dreadfulness of my affliction, and the darkened prospect that was before me, though I could not see him, yet he was ready to save me.

Cheer up, desponding soul, on Jesus' age we lie, he sees you, when you see not him, and always hears your cry, and constantly we have these words in front of us, the Lord was ready to save me.

[ 35 : 45 ] If we look at our day by day experiences, and salvation is needed every day, in one way or another, oh what a blessing, if we can see the evidence that the Lord was ready to save me, in his positive working out, where there is an evidence of the life of God in the soul.

You know this is a constant evidence that we have that the Lord was ready to save us, where he maintains the life of God in the soul. Hezekiah speaks in this chapter of the living, he says the living, the living, he shall praise thee as I do this day.

the Lord was ready to save me from death, and therefore he has brought me into life. Again, he has maintained life, and the manner of its maintenance is also spoken of.

Oh Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit, so will thou recover me, and make me to live.

Recover me, under one hand, from going down into the bed, and make me to live, unto thee, on the other hand. So then the Lord was ready to save me from death, and save me unto life.

[ 37 : 24 ] And the apostle Paul says, the life that I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Have we in our life, the evidence that the Lord was ready to save me? Because of the evidence that we have, little though it may be, but nevertheless something we cannot discard, that the Lord has given us life.

Life which enables us to live unto him. Life which enables us to depend upon him.

Life which enables us to look unto him, in accordance with that which is also written in this prophecy, look unto me, all the ends of the earth, and be ye saved, for I am God, the unchangeable God, and there is none else, none else.

It is good for us to have a clear faith, and to be established in the faith, in that faith, the Lord was ready to save me, when no other person was ready to save.

[ 38 : 49 ] Is this not true? Do you remember the psalmist's words? No man cared for my soul. In other words, no man was ready to save me, but the Lord was ready to save me.

If you should therefore be at your wits end, in your own feelings concerning the salvation of your soul, and you should look round at one another, the ungodly, or even the godly, and you should say, well, no man cared for my soul, and that may well be true, because if we are to care for one another's souls, we should need the grace of God communicated.

If we are to travel in Zion for souls, we should need the life of God to be communicated. It is all of God. Oh, how sad our state by nature is in respect to these things.

But should you be tempted to feel this, that no man cares for your soul, this remains constant. The Lord was ready to save me, and he cared for my soul, and therefore he was ready to save me.

he knew what it involved, but he was still ready to save me, because he cared for my soul. What a consolation then is discovered here.

[ 40 : 08 ] How do we come to a knowledge of these discoveries? Often in the day of adversity, we are called upon to consider. We may reflect upon those words in Ecclesiastes.

this. In the day of adversity, consider, consider this word, that the Lord was ready to save me. Adversity is a teaching element.

In the 30th chapter of this same prophecy, we read that though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner anymore, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers.

In Hezekiah's affliction, it is clear, surely, that he was taught. Thine eyes shall see thy teachers. And the bread of adversity and the water of affliction under God will often bring to our souls much teaching.

And if we should begin to wonder where the scene will end and what is happening, then for the strength and consolation of the souls under the days of affliction and years of evil, we find thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, this is the way, walking in it, when ye turn to the right hand and when ye turn to the left.

[ 41 : 52 ] This is the appointed way, this is the profitable way, this is the sanctified way, this is the way wherein you shall gain and enlarge your own soul's experience.

This is the way, walking in it, when ye turn to the right hand, when ye turn to the left, the Lord was ready to save me.

There is a great depth of truth in these words, and we shall need many lessons in order to learn it in any depth at all.

The Lord was ready. Can we understand the Lord's readiness to save us? Take it in the light of the words of Peter when he said, if my brother sin against me, how often shall I forgive him?

Seven times, and the Lord said unto him seventy times seven, and that is a good many times to forgive a brother that is offended against you, but so it is, so it is, and the Lord was ready to save me, and if this is the commendation of the Lord unto Peter, in respect to forgiveness, shall we not see it much more so?



[ 43 : 22 ] In the depth of these words, the Lord was ready to save me from my sins, and he showed it to me by his readiness to forgive.

His readiness to forgive. have you been favored to know that, a wonderful revelation of God's nature, that he is ready to forgive.

In respect to the children of Israel as a nation, when they repented, he was ready, ready to put his anger to one side, as it were, and to supply their needs again.

they turned, and he saw it, and he was ready. Now, this is not to, in any way, go against the unchangeability of God.

We should ever recognize those portions of the word of God, when we read, and God repented him of the thing that he should do.

[ 44 : 30 ] It does not in any way invalidate the unchangeable nature of God himself, because he declares the end from the beginning. He knew what he would do.

Jonah knew what he would do when he preached to the Ninevites, and this is what upset Jonah so much. Jonah knew that if he preached repentance, and these people at Nineveh repented, that they would, they would repent, and also that God would not carry out his threatened judgment.

It was an alteration of God's operation, an alteration of God's providence as men saw it, but not in the mind of God.

For the Lord was ready to save me. How wonderful then to have some indication forgiveness of the Lord's readiness, but his readiness to forgive.

And God's forgiveness is so very different from the forgiveness of men. I remember my old pastor making a distinction on one occasion in respect to the forgiveness of God and the forgiveness of men.

[ 45 : 57 ] he said, God, when he forgives, he forgives absolutely, and it is written, I will remember thy sins no more forever. But when men forgive, they say, yes, I forgive you, but in their hearts they say, but I shall keep an eye on you.

in other words, it is not full, in other words, it is not free, in other words, it is not absolute, but the Lord was ready to save me without any reservation.

Can we think upon the great love of God unto the souls of his chosen people that he should ever be ready to save them in spite of their weaknesses, in spite of their propensities, to turn again from him and to forget him, but he was ready to save me, and he showed me, gave me the evidence of this, because he was ready to forgive.

Now, you know, one of our hymns takes a glorious view of the Lord who is ready to save, and these are the lines whose anger was so slow to rise, so ready to abate.

Now, the Lord was ready to save me. In respect to Hezekiah, could he not say, whose anger was so slow to rise, so ready to abate.

[ 47 : 34 ] Have we found that glorious truth working itself into our lives? Not always realizing, by our own foolishness and blindness, how we would have incurred the Lord's anger to arise, because he cannot look upon sin favorably, but know how slow it was to rise, how slow it was to rise, and when we confess our sins, how ready was it to abate?

the Lord was ready to save me. He deferred his anger, as it were.

The psalmist catches a glimpse of this, when, having spoken of the Lord's benefits, he says, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies, who satisfied thy mouth with good things, so thy youth is renewed like the eagles.

He will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger forever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us, and all because the Lord was ready to save me.

[ 49 : 22 ] Amen.