

Isaiah (Quality Average)

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Preacher: Collier, Gilbert (1900-1984)

- [0 : 00] Prophecy of Isaiah, chapter 65, and works in the 24th verse.
- 65th chapter of Isaiah, verse 24. And it shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer.
- And while they are yet speaking, I will hear. This word indicates the immensity of the dimension of prayer.
- None of us really can fully grasp the enormity in the possibility of true prayer.
- Because if we could, we should then be capable of measuring the greatness of God.
- [1 : 29] But if we look at this word before us tonight, as the Lord may help us so to do, we may well see how great the possibility, and how wondrous the reality that open up to a believer.
- By way of prayer. Now, here is a declaration made by God to his people.
- That before they called, the Lord, God will answer. It is a consistency with the character of God himself.
- And it's what we believe. When we believe. When we believe that all things are possible with God, and when we believe that all things are possible with God, and when we believe that nothing is too hard for Him, and when we believe that nothing is too hard for Him, sometimes there may be even lurking in our poor hearts and minds of doubt whether there are not some things that are too great, even to the almighty God who does.
- And yet we repeat what his word tells us that there is nothing too hard for the Lord.
- [3 : 31] And therefore it is consistent with his nature and his character and also his goodness what he declares here as being capable and willing that even before his people ask he should ask.
- And while they are yet speaking he will hear. Now this declaration is practiced by a very important promise.
- It says, It shall come to pass. It shall come to pass. God prefaces this declaration with this promise in order to assure his people that this is not something that is unique or isolated that perhaps some outstanding character in the church or in the word of God should receive such a remarkable experience.
- But God specially prefaces the declaration with a promise that it shall come to pass.
- And in and behind and underneath that wide front there is gathered together all the experiences of all the saints of God from first to last before they call I will pass.
- [5 : 40] Now there are three things first of all that this word declares to us one I've already indicated tonight and that is the glorious character of our God.
- Prayer itself is a wonderful revelation of the character of God. God made man and man differs in his creation he differs from all other creatures by this one singular difference.
- There are other differences but there is one outstanding difference difference between man made by God and creatures made by him.

He gave to man the ability to speak to speak words and he said to one of the servants of the Lord who made man's mark when Moses complained that he was incapable of speech and making utterances God said to him who made man's mark and why did the maker make man's mark and put in the man's mark words words.

I believe it was for one and another reasons one was this that man should be capable of prayer unto God and as God ordained that man should use words for prayer he ordained prayer as a means of man's approach to God and therefore prayer itself is a wonderful revelation of the character of God that he has ordained it he has given the reality of it within the reach of men and it sets forth therefore the very gift of prayer the use that God makes of prayer the benefits that he bestows upon his praying people by way of prayer all these things were down to the glory of God and reveal the character of our

[8 : 55] God that's the first thing then secondly we can never engage in a consideration of prayer without coming to the very central truth concerning it and that is the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ and how that all real prayer must be addressed to him and through him to God the Father and also it must be influenced by the mediatorial opposite and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ so prayer has a special relationship to the

Lord Jesus Christ indeed he is the guide for his people in matters of prayer remember when the disciples asked him to teach them to pray he gave them the example of that prayer which is very often glibly repeated but with our perhaps always realizing the nature the wonderful significance of our Father which art in heaven hallowed be thy name if you look into that prayer you'll see how it is all the relationships that exist between God and his people beginning with the choices and the most blessed of those relationships a

Father and a Son our Father there can be no real prayer without that relationship and that is why the Lord Jesus undoubtedly puts it first and foremost in the prayer example of prayer that he gives our Father the child speaking to its parent coming into close affinity with its parent hallowed be thy name secondly there should be reverence between that subject and the Lord God hallowed be thy name when we come in prayer these things are very essential first of all we come to the Father through

Jesus Christ but we must come with reverence not glibly or addressing the almighty as if he were an equal with ourselves or indifferently trifling with words in using the form of prayer but two essential things are laid down by the Lord Jesus Christ in prayer one is essentially this relationship with God the child with the parent and essentially this reverence worship and all other parts of that breath flow into the same mold and pattern relationship between those that are on earth and the one that is in heaven then how can we come to

God the Father who dwelleth in light to which no man hath approached or no man can see how can we possibly draw near to that great infinite Jehovah except we do so by the one whom God hath appointed who is the only mediator between God and man the man Christ Jesus and it is so precious and has been to me and I feel sure it must be to you the recorded instances in the life of the Lord Jesus when he was here of how he prayed we might almost think for a moment perhaps that there was scarcely any need for him to pray because he was one with the

[14 : 16] Father and yet when he was here among men he humbled himself and trod apart of the suffering on behalf of his people and in that path he used in many wonderful ways the act and the exercise of prayer and we haven't recorded the striking words in the Hebrews we haven't recorded that he when on earth offered up prayers with crying strong crying and tears to him that was ready to hear that heard him and he speaks there in the Hebrews in that striking way it's worth finding it in the fifth chapter it's a wonderful word really

I'll turn to it and not rely on a faulty memory in quoting it or misquoting it who in the fifth chapter the seventh verse who in the days of his flesh when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong cries and tears unto him that was able to save him from death and was heard in that he feared that was written recorded of the dear son of God and then we read also in the gospels how he spent whole nights in prayer unto God his father and how he prayed at the tomb of

Lazarus and on many other occasions did he pray and show by his prayers how of the wondrous example to his people of the use of prayer when he comes into the garden of Gethsemane there we find him praying more earnestly it says being in agony he prayed more earnestly so we second thing then in regard to prayer is the glorious position of the Lord Jesus Christ and it is true with regard to him as this word is all to do with him as indeed with God the Father before they call

I will answer and while they are yet speaking I will hear now the third matter that we must think upon in regard to prayer is the Holy Spirit we read in the Romans that the Holy Spirit maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God and he makes this intercession with words that cannot be uttered that means to say the Holy Spirit has a function a holy function to perform on behalf of the saints of God which they could never perform themselves and he is the author of all true prayer and indeed it is the

Holy Spirit that plants real prayer in the hearts of all praying people he indicts all real prayer in every heart of those who really pray well now those who are three great outstanding factors in regard to prayer but I want to come now to the personal experience of it and in these words of our text especially before they call I will answer when you think of these words you think of the great preparation that they indicate that God carries out for his people and in his people which all lead up to this point when they call upon him before they call

[19 : 50] God has accomplished a whole measure of things to bring about that point where he declares and he shows to his people that he has answered their prayer you think of what it means before they call you bring it down into your own personal experience before you call perhaps some of you can look back to the time when you first realized the importance and the need of prayer you first began to pray it might have been and I think it is so with a great many of the people of God it might have been about a matter of great urgency in your providential condition and circumstance something very pressing some great difficulty that presented itself to you and may drove you as it were to the

Lord in prayer and he answered well now before that the Lord was working and appointing and arranging things to bring you to that point where you had to cry from all urgency and utter need for his health and for his deliverance of that time before they call we cannot see what goes on before but what one little thing go on before the child of God begins to call of wonder that he couched behind this word before they call then it comes down to a very precious part of our experience we see this we are so often behind the times in many many ways we realise that we ought to have prayed another thing and yet we did not do so and we feel abashed and set at nought because of our failing and yet we find after all and in all the Lord has been mindful and he has sovereignly and wonderfully worked out for our good and brought things to a pass that ultimately have been just what we have needed in spite of the fact that we fail to pray as soon as we ought to have prayed before they call

I will answer it takes into account all the prayers and all the forgetfulness of God's praying people this word that oh if we only have what we were in time to ask for and if we never had anything that we were a moment too late in asking for we shouldn't have very much but God provides and includes and takes in all our fourth trial experience and act and deal by this word when he said before they call I will answer yes and there's a wonderful teaching to hear you see we read the night of the case of Jehoshaphat and it is a very striking wonderful case indeed there that good man of God came to the

Lord in prayer because the enemy had already started invading his land people would say yes Jehoshaphat you're too late you should have been more alert and watchful and seen the prospect of your enemies gathering themselves together and you should have been in prayer long long before this time so no poor Jehoshaphat found these three great forces combining together and invading his land before he takes the matter to the Lord his God but listen if you remember in our reading how wonderfully the Lord answered his servant Jehoshaphat he said we need not fight in this battle this battle has all been already consigned and everything about it has been ordained without any aid physical or military aid on your part

Jehoshaphat this battle is already over it's over before it has begun and he need not do anything in this battle just stand still and see the salvation of the Lord now the Lord tells the Jehoshaphat where his enemies will be tomorrow he knew their plans yea God's almighty hand had already gone before and had brought about everything that eventually followed and was fulfilled and Jehoshaphat recognized the great goodness of the Lord and he said to his people believe the prophets of the Lord and we shall prosper believe the Lord and we shall be saved and when they came and saw him morrow just as the

[27 : 23] Lord had said would happen the enemies of the Israel were overthrown because the Lord before they called he had answered how wonderful this is my friends when we come to wake up what a God we have what a throne of grace has been lifted up and erected for sinners to call upon God the saints to seek to follow after the Lord and when you recognize this truth it is a wonderful truth it's a truth that we need verifying and stamping as it were upon our very hearts before we call God answers he knows everything about us he knows all that we want and all we need and we cannot see a moment in front of us we cannot see what tomorrow may bring to us but

God knows everything and God has already arranged for your tomorrow he's already planned where you will be and what you will experience and when tomorrow comes you may find some special reason or cause to pray for him he's already answered that prayer and so it goes on through the life of every saint this wonderful procedure of divine goodness and mercy and blessing before they call I will answer and then in the second part of it while they are yet speaking I will hear hear this is a precious promise a promise indeed this is a very special one while they are yet speaking

I will hear we read of the dear man of God Daniel who spoke and testified that while he was speaking to the Lord the angel Gabriel came with a swift flight and touched him at the time of the evening of Galatians and when he touched him while he was yet speaking he had strength put into him and he was made to stand on his feet and hear the words of the Lord while he was yet speaking it's a very sweet thing to realize that however poor in 30 our prayers may be if we are speaking to the Lord the

Lord is hearing I expect you've felt like I felt sometimes when you think of yourself as being just one individual very little insignificant and very unworthy and the almighty having all the world affairs and the church's interest in his hands how can he possibly take notice of our poor imperfect and frances to his throne of grave but listen at this while they are yet speaking I will hear this is condescension in its sweetest and most precious form and nature while they are yet speaking this again takes in everything you know takes in all your poor intermittent imperfect prayers those times when you are interrupted either by something that has diverted you for a moment or when you feel you've run out of all words and everything regarding prayer you feel to have emptied yourself out and while you're yet speaking says the

Lord I will hear this is a very sweet part and I'm so glad that the Lord has seen faith to put not only before they call I will answer but also to add to it this even sweeter portion of his word while they are yet speaking oh it's amazing to think of this that if we have really spoken to the Lord or tried to speak to the Lord if we told him something about our needs and our wants and our woes and our trials and troubles and how many difficulties we find in the way we may think we are complaining perhaps more unduly to Lord that while they are yet speaking I will hear the poet is right when he says in the hymn that we sang beginning where the breath rushed vaguely spent when they were he was speaking in the earlier verse about complaining about this matter and that matter and filling our fellow creatures here with many a tale of woe and care where the breath thus vainly spent to heaven in supplication sent then would our song more often be seen what the

[34 : 05] Lord has done for me I feel this word gives investment the subject of prayer with a very great glory and puts a vast importance upon it and I hope we may be led into the sanctuary as it were of prayer where we may find what a wide open way it is what possibilities there are and what great things can be done by way of true humble earnest prayer I feel you know we are but a little company on these week evening meetings but I think that from this little company there is a power derived for this church and for these people

I believe here is something that we cannot pass by or give up prayer is a wonderful weapon it's an instrument God has made and handed to his people let us use it let us seek more grace to be employed in the exercise of real prayer amen or let us mai let us hear all in the other let us know how are we great time good work now to give us a treatment what to ask