

# Isaiah (Quality: Good)

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Preacher: Mercer, Seth (1930-2017)

[ 0 : 00 ] With humility and love, I must venture in directing your thoughts this Lord's Day morning to the prophecy of Isaiah chapter 43, reading verses 1 and 2.

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But now, thus saith the Lord, that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, O Jacob, and he that created thee, O Jacob, and he that created thee, O Jacob, and he that thou art mine.

When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee.

When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

[ 1 : 34 ] These two verses are well known and have often been spoken from by God's servants throughout the generations.

And if we just begin by looking at the last clause in the preceding chapter, you will read this, yet he laid it not to heart.

That is our condition by nature. We are born in sin, and in sin did our mothers conceive us.

And that, as it commenced in the garden of Eden, when Adam and Eve fell in disobeying the command of God.

And through the fall of man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin.

[ 3 : 14 ] And death is passed upon all men, for all have sinned and have come short of the glory of God.

Death in itself is a very searching truth.

The very fact that we must all one day die is the effect of sin entering into the world.

And that is why we must die. Because sin entered into the world, and death by sin.

And death is passed upon all men, for all have sinned and have come short of the glory of God. The very fact that our dear friend Mrs. Phoebe Hill has passed away out of time into eternity is another evidence of the fall of man.

[ 4 : 34 ] Her hope through the grace of God was built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness.

And especially in her last years, she was made more and more aware of this truth.

Her hope through the grace of God was made to feel more than ever her lost condition, her need as a sinner of her Saviour.

Well, how true then these truths are concerning our condition and case by nature.

Yet, he laid it not to heart. We shall never really lay death to heart until it is borne home by the Holy Spirit upon our hearts.

- [ 5 : 43 ] I wonder how many of us here on this Lord's Day morning have had the truth regarding death, born and brought home upon our hearts.
- So that we have been compelled to pray about this. Have felt our great need of salvation. Have been brought as dying sinners to the feet of Jesus.
- Have been made aware that in the day of death and when we come to die, that we shall so need then a Saviour and a Great One to bear us through the river of death by his everlasting arms.
- Our late friend, Miss Hannah Dan, was visited, if memory serves me rightly, the day before she had her operation.
- And she had spoken of her recovery. She had spoken of her future life. And yet, underneath it all, there was great concern before God.
- [ 7 : 14 ] And one of God's servants visited her the day before her operation and what proved to be her death. And he found her in this place and condition through the mercy of God.
- She could say, The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms.
- Naturally speaking, we cling to life. We are living in a day when the medical profession will seem to do everything they can to keep people alive.
- And yet, death will come to every one of us. So I ask you, dear friends, how does this affect your hearts and mine?
- God, in his mercy, brought me personally to tremble in the prospect of death and eternity when I was about 20 years of age.
- [ 8 : 30 ] Before that, I'd lived in the close Isaiah 42. God is with us. We do not want to lay death to heart.
- We will put it on one side. And how many people have had thoughts like this regarding death.
- But that is not for me now. I have so many years before I shall die. But friends, we could be taken by death this very day.
- We may not live to see another Lord's Day. I've told you before that that happened in my own life.
- My brother, the age of 19. He came home on a certain Lord's Day in November 1945.
- [ 9 : 33 ] And it was to prove to be his last Lord's Day. And we cannot, of course, forget that. We remember it.
- We remember his leaving our home to return to the unit that he was attached to in the army. You see, that was on the Lord's Day.
- His last opportunity to be in the house of God. And through the mercy and the grace of God, his soul, we believe, was visited that last Lord's Day of his life.
- And then think of it. He returned to his unit on the Lord's Day evening. He lived on Monday.
- He lived on Tuesday. He lived on Wednesday. And he was alive on Thursday until the truck that he was in overturned down the side of a hill in Sussex.
- [ 10 : 42 ] And he passed away. His life was taken. You see, we have come on this Lord's Day morning under the shadow of death.
- And how we need these things to be born home from our hearts. If one thinks once more of our own brother, 19 years of age.
- And yet, you see, it was God's holy will that on that Thursday, the 29th of November, 1945, he was to die.

And there was that hope given regarding him that he was prepared to die. You see, in this truck overturning down the side of the hill, he was not unconscious.

And whilst unconscious, was sick. And that was how he died. But there was hope in his death. Well, I do hope that none here will be left to live and die in the sad and solemn condition that is spoken of in this last clause in Isaiah 42.

[ 12 : 06 ] Yet, he laid it not to heart. I'm sure with most of us here, we have lost loved ones, parents, brother, sister, or whoever it might be.

Death has visited our homes, whether it has been in time past, or whether it is in more recent days.

But the point that we must seek to convey to all of you, you dear children, dear young men, young women, dear friends, whatever part of life you're in, the thing that matters is that in the midst of life we are in death.

May none of us be left to put this great question on one side and forget about it. Because if we are left to do that, what an awful thing to die being unprepared for death, the most awful thing to be unprepared to die.

Our friend, Mrs. Hill, passed away on Friday morning, quarter to nine. The day before her death, she revived a little from what was more or less a semi-unconscious state.

[ 13 : 51 ] And her eldest daughter had the favour given to her by her mother's side to hear her speak of her hope in being in the arms of Jesus.

That was, as it were, her last testimony. Her daughter was favoured to hear it. And you see, this is the thing that matters.

None of us are too young to die. And whilst we would never seek to fill any poor sinner's heart with terror, and yet, you see, we have a hymn that speaks about death like this, and it says, death, awful sound, and the fruit of sin, the terror of the human race.

Who? Listen to this, dear friends. Who? except Jesus smile within can look the monster in the face.

Now that's the only way that we should ever look the monster death in the face. It's to have Jesus in our hearts. It's to have Jesus with us.

[ 15 : 18 ] I hope you'll never forget these few thoughts on this Lord's Day morning. I think of you, dear children, and I do desire that the Lord may speak to your young hearts.

I know he can, and I believe from time to time he does. May we never then put these things to one side, because we do not know.

We would not, in a wrong way, bring these things before you, but even during this year, and I believe I mentioned this last Lord's Day morning, but perhaps the Lord would have me mention it again, but we think of the two young men that have worshipped and do worship in this chapel, both of them on their motorcycles, both of them brought very near to death.

But in their cases, the Lord spared their lives. We can only hope that this has been borne home upon their young hearts, that God spared their lives, and they are still in the world.

We trust that God will use it in their hearts, and the hearts of others, that were so affected by this, brothers, or sisters, or whoever it might be.

[ 16 : 58 ] You see, I'm going to make an honest confession to you, and I can assure you as I began to speak, I didn't know how I was going to speak, although we have this subject, and I hope the Lord will help me to speak from it, but these thoughts have come.

Now, an honest confession, from the preacher, when my brother died, he was 19, and when he died, I was 15 years old, but I had no thought about my soul, and my brother's death, although it very much affected me, because he was my only living brother, and I did love him, but you see, I was unaffected in my soul, I never really gave it a thought, I was saddened, I wept, as it were, because of my brother's death, but it didn't affect me and my soul, never had any effect at all upon my soul, until the Lord's time came, I went on, you see, careless and indifferent, children, and really, you know, friends, if we are honest, before God, we tend to think that we're going to live forever, we think we're going to live forever, but you see, death will come, and I have a most solemn responsibility, as I stand here this

Lord's Day morning, regarding every one of your souls, souls, and then on the other hand, perhaps the Lord will use these thoughts, you well know what happened in the life of dear Mrs.

Anne Simmons, she entered into her daughter's car, to go shopping, did you see, it was the Lord's time to take her, we believe, to heaven, Josiah, God said concerning King Josiah, because thine heart was tender, thou shall be gathered into thy grave in peace, well how did King Josiah die, he died in battle, you might well, I know I have thought like this, well how could God's word have been true, and it would seem as though he put his own hand to a war, and he was told by an ungodly king not to meddle with it, but he insisted in doing it, and in his case he died, it doesn't mean, it didn't alter the word of God, although he died in battle, he died in peace, we cannot always understand these things, and our dear friend

Mrs. Simmons, the Lord came in that moment, in that way, and her life was taken, man, now these are things that have happened this year, and we need things to be born home from our hearts, we need grace to lay these things to heart, left to ourselves, from my own heartfelt experience, we just do not lay these things to heart, heart, I think of a dear man, a godly farmer, who attended, Jire attended him, and he used to speak to me in his old age, about his need of a saviour, and his feelings about death, he wanted to know whether he was right for eternity, and that's where we shall be brought, you see, we shall want to know whether I am right for eternity, it's a great mercy when we know that others are prepared for eternity, when we have the witness that it's been well with loved ones and others that we may be favoured to know of in the hour and article of death, and how strengthening it is to faith, when we know these things, and if there's life in our heart, you'll respond and you'll say, may my last end be like his.

[ 21 : 31 ] But just a thought about this dear godly farmer, the Lord touched his heart, he began to lay death to heart as he stood by his father's grave.

For the first time in his life, he stood by a grave, and there God met with him, made him aware that he had a soul, made him aware that he needed a saviour.

You see, dear friends, we can come and go to the house of God for a hundred years, and yet remain completely unaffected by these solemn truths.

And the thought that this should be so with any of you here, it just so affects my heart. I have been more and more burdened recently about your never-dying souls, and your need of a saviour, and your need to be found right when you come to die.

And it's very important. We can sit under the sound of truth all our life, and never be affected by it. Yet he laid it not to heart.

[ 22 : 51 ] And how solemn in these matters, if we are left to this, live and die without any concern about our never-dying souls.

May none of you here be left to such an awful thing. Because what will it mean? It will mean this, that we shall die without hope.

We shall die in our sins, and that will mean that we shall enter into a never-ending eternity.

Oh, if only the Lord would bring it home upon your heart and mine. Eternity, tremendous sound. Why is it tremendous? Because it's a state that will never, never, never end.

It's beyond my comprehension and yours. But faith will believe it to be true. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God.

[ 24 : 05 ] And by faith we shall believe and do believe that after death there is eternity. And it will never, never end.

And however we go out of this life will determine our eternal state. As the tree falls so it will lie. You see, it's so important.

And what will it be to be lost? lost, I cannot begin to convey what it means. But what does it mean? It means this, to be under the wrath of God forever, to be under the wrath of God forever, to have the wrath of God in our soul eternally, never to be free from it.

You see, dear friends, what is time to eternity? Time is like a bubble that bursts. Eternity will never end.

And you and I, we have a never dying soul that will leave our body at death. And it will either be to enter into heaven and glory, eternal happiness.

[ 25 : 27 ] Oh, may these truths be borne home upon our hearts. You see, I am aware of this, that you can leave the chapel this Lord's Day morning and forget what you've heard even before you go out of the door.

I am so aware that I can stand here and speak as I am, and yet, if the Lord doesn't send it home into our heart, we shall forget about it.

We shall put it all on one side. And you'll say, I'll leave that till the time comes. Well, dear friends, I have warned you and every one of you, I am clear before God regarding your never dying souls.

I am clear before God. I have warned you to flee from the wrath to come. God. I feel like sitting down and saying amen.

But you see, this word that closes Isaiah 42, yet he laid it not to heart. When my brother died, I didn't lay it to heart, I mean regarding myself.

[ 26 : 52 ] I went on for another five years until God brought me as it were to stand before him and made me feel and made me know that I have had a never dying soul.

Do you know that you have a never dying soul? Do you know that you have by the Spirit's teaching? Friends, this is very important truth.

What did Jesus say regarding our never dying soul? He said this, what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?

Or what shall he give in exchange for his soul? You see, eternity is bound up in all this. Time's going to end with us.

If you should live to be a hundred, time will end with you. Eternity will begin. I'm aware that I can speak and have spoken in a very solemn way, but unless the Lord touches our hearts, we should be unaffected by it.

[ 28 : 11 ] Let me just tell you this, that when God first spoke to my never dying soul, through his word, I left the house of God that Lord's Day evening with an awareness that I had a soul, an awareness commenced to be with me regarding the fact that I was a sinner in the sight of God.

And as I've said before, I could take you to the spot of ground where I commenced to cry for mercy. Well, I wonder how many of us here today have commenced to cry for mercy.

Mercy. Have you had to cry for mercy? Do you know what it is to cry for mercy? Do you need mercy? Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.  
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Conclude our service by singing hymn 1020. The castle of the human heart, strong in its native sin, is guarded well in every part by him who dwells within.

[ 29 : 48 ] 1020. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen.

Amen. Amen. O Lord, thou knowest that we have announced the day and yet have not really attempted to speak from it.

[ 33 : 27 ] But Lord, thou knowest what has been said and we can only pray that even today what we have just been singing might be fulfilled.

The gates of brass fly open wide and Jesus wins the heart. Oh, may it be so, Lord.

Oh, may the death of our friend Mrs. Phoebe Hill be set apart by thee to be the life of others.

Oh, how it would rejoice her heart and ours. Lord, we would not forget our friends who have so lovingly cared for her right through to the end and pray that thou wilt reward them, Lord, especially to bless them in their soul.

Lord, be with us now. Prepare us for thy holy will. We do ask, Lord, that much prayer might be squeezed out of hearts this afternoon regarding the evening service and that we open one's understanding that we may rightly understand the truths that we attempt to preach and that we might preach them with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

[ 35 : 05 ] Lord, we would linger in thy house a holy, solemn, sacred place. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God with the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Amen.