

Isaiah (Quality: Good)

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[0 : 00] The End The End As the Lord may be pleased to help me this afternoon, I direct you again to the words in the prophecy of Isaiah, chapter 43, verses 1 and 2.

But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, fear not.

For I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, 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 shall not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. Isaiah, chapter 43, the verses 1 and 2.

How this word reminds us, and especially as we consider the second verse as well, that although there are great blessings promised to God's dear people, and these precious words which the Lord is pleased to speak into the hearts of his dear people, yet over against this, surely each and every one will know something of what the second verse reminds us of, as regard to the journey here below, through this life, way, and those who are heaven-bound pilgrims, as it were, journey through this wilderness, to that heavenly rest.

[2 : 38] It is much to remind us that the path is not a flesh-pleasing path, and yet there is that blessed promise, coached in that word, and I will be with thee.

And so may the Lord help us now then, to try and consider this word a little further. And having considered a little with regard to how the Lord speaks, in that way which he alone could speak, with a thus saith the Lord.

And speaking to his dear people, described in this verse, Jacob and Israel, reminding us of how the Lord is pleased to deal with his dear people, and making them manifest as subjects of his grace.

And again, in our experience often being fearful-hearted people, the Lord speaks his word to them in this, fear not.

And then reminding us too, of this wonderful provision the Lord has made, for the eternal good of his dear people, that they are redeemed people.

[3 : 47] Redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. That full and complete redemption. In one of the psalms, the dear psalmist was gracefully directed to give a word of exhortation to the people of God.

And he adds this word, for with him is plenced redemption. And what a word that is, reminding us of the sufficiency of that redemption.

That that price was fully and completely paid by the Lord Jesus Christ in the fullness of time, when he shed his precious blood. And what a tremendous price it was.

How it should remind us of the terrible effect of the Adam fall, that needed no less than the Lord Jesus Christ to die upon the cross, to yield himself as that one great sacrifice, which alone could satisfy an offended God.

And yet the Lord Jesus Christ met all this. And such is the virtue of his precious blood. It is a blood that redeems.

[5 : 03] It is a blood that has purchased. It is a blood that cleanses from all sin. And I ought to know the virtue of that blood, dear friends. That blood of strength, you see, over the top of the hymn that you've just sung, how we're reminded of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, as it's applied to the consciousness of his dear people.

You see, it's not sufficient as it for us to, just as it were, in a detached way, to consider that blessed and precious theme, the blood of Christ.

But did not the Apostle Peter in the chapter which he read remind us of the preciousness of that blood? How precious it is, in the virtue of it, the sufficiency of it, and how precious it is as a blood of strength.

It may well be, for those of you this afternoon, who know what it is to realise your need of that blood to be applied, as the blood of sprinkling.

The redemption, then, which is precious. And it's secure, as you see, that every true child of God, the whole election of grace, not one exempted, even to the weakest.

[6 : 34] And one has well said in the hymn that that precious blood shall never lose its power, till all the ransomed, the church of God, be saved to sin no more.

Oh, how words will fail to set forth the preciousness of the blood of the dear Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. How vital it is.

Or may we know it, personally. Then our text reminded us how the Lord speaks here concerning his dear Jacob and Israel, Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name.

It does show to us, doesn't it, how the Lord does come down to his dear people in such a familiar way, as it were. I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine.

Oh, it's just this new name that you read of in the Revelation that God gives his dear people, a new name. A new name written. And we have those instances in the Scripture where the Lord does, and has called his people, and he's addressed them with their name.

[7 : 54] Thoughts go for a moment to Mary, as she lingered at the empty sabbucket. She had many fears.

And the Lord Jesus Christ revealed himself to her, and how he named her, didn't he? Mary. taught her by her name. And all how this brought blessings to her soul.

How her soul and spirit, as it were, responded to that, as her name was mentioned. How she must have felt she could embrace the dear Lord Jesus Christ as her Lord and Saviour.

the one she had mourned as lost, as it were. And yet now revealed himself to her, called her by name. And those many instances in the Scripture we have where the Lord has been pleased to come down to his people in that way.

And particularly in the Old Testament times, when the dear saints of old had not the complete, complete Scriptures as we have them, and God did speak to them personally and by name.

[9 : 16] And then this little sentence at the close of the verse, that thou art mine. Or words will indeed fall very short to set forth what is contained in those three words.

The Lord acknowledges his people, you see, as his. He is their God, they are his people. and it indicates that bond that exists between the Lord Jesus Christ and his dear people.

A cord that can never be severed. His dear people are covenant people. They have an interest in their covenant God.

He is to all eternity. Nothing can separate them. It sets before us the complete salvation of all God's dear people.

In spite of all they may be called upon to pass through in their journey here below. I want to try and consider with you a little this afternoon in the light of this second verse.

[10 : 25] and the promise of the Lord's presence with his people as they journey through these various sins and experiences. 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 they shall not be burned neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. Says the Lord I will be with thee.

But there are these things that his dear people are called to pass through. And notice the text very clearly shows to us isn't it that there is this experience of passing through these things not going round about them as it were but passing through them.

So then when thou passest through the waters and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee. I will be with thee. And how this was so demonstrated wasn't it in the way the Lord was pleased to deal with his ancient people.

That nation that sprung from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and when they were called out of Egypt and delivered from Egyptian bondage.

[11 : 44] What demonstrations they had of the Lord's presence with them. how it distinguished them from other nations didn't it? And even their deliverance from Egyptian bondage how soon the Lord made a way for his people even through the sea.

Those waters of the Red Sea. And how it was demonstrated to them the Lord was indeed with them in making a way for them through the sea.

so they went through a dry shod as it were. What a demonstration of God's almighty power in making a way for his people but there seemed to be no way.

And when they seemed to be hemmed in as it were on either side and the sea in front of them and the Egyptian house pursuing them yet God was with them.

it signifies doesn't it how the Lord is with his people even in those difficult situations. And they had the cloud which signified the Lord's presence.

[12 : 56] If you read the record it's very instructive isn't it? The cloud was a cloud to guide them in the way. A pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

But you read that instance how the cloud went round behind the Israelites as it were to separate them from the pursuing Egyptians so that one came not near the other all that memorable night when God sent that strong wind to separate the sea and make a way for Israel to pass through.

There was a cloud between. Yes it defended the Israelites it prevented the Egyptians from overtaking them nothing could pierce that cloud and it was darkness to the Egyptians wasn't it?

But light to Israel and then when the Egyptians essayed to follow Israel even to the sea it was to their destruction it was to their destruction what a demonstration of the Lord's presence for these ancient people and this reminds us doesn't it that while there may be the waters and what they signify and these rivers and having to pass through these things we might think of the waters and the rivers with regard to the difficulties the pathway the troubles that come and when perhaps there may be those things that seem to be to you there's no way through as it were and yet you know the word of God reminds us doesn't it with regard to this again that with God's ancient people they would stand still and see the salvation of God may not be always easy to stand still

God's word is be still and know that I am God and as they stood still they did see the salvation of God and then they could go forward for a demonstration of how the Lord makes his presence go with his people yes he goes with them through these things through these waters and these rivers that's not overflow they will not be to the destruction of those who pass through these things but God is with his people yes to preserve to protect to make a way for them I think the hymn writer refers to this in one hymn doesn't he about the rivers of woe and reminding us of something of the pathway of God's people at times when there are those things which may give rise to much concern yet God is with his people as they go through these things rivers and then we're reminded are we not of the

[16 : 26] Aaron article of death these rivers there's a great question you find it in the prophecy of Jeremiah how wilt thou do in the swellings of Jordan of course the swellings of Jordan signify death you see the time came when Israel of old came to Jordan didn't they it was a time when there were the swellings of Jordan it was the harvest time and we understand that some of the snow melting from the mountains Jordan expanded and there were the swellings of Jordan yet God made a way yes and his people went through dry shot as it were they're always with his people it signified wasn't it in the fact that the priests went into the river bearing the ark of the covenant which was significant of God's presence with them and they remained there until all

Israel were clean passed over yes till the last one passed clean over Jordan and this reminds us doesn't it of the wonderful fact of the truth of the matter that when his dear people come down even to the swellings of Jordan God is with them yes to make a way through when they pass us through the waters I'll be with thee and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee or how many a child of God has been very fearful in the anticipation of death and we do well to soberly consider these things because death awaits each one of us we must come to that solemn hour and article of death we have to face as it were the swellings of Jordan that sense but oh what a mercy dear friends if the Lord is our God if the

Lord is with us if he's with us as we journey on this wilderness way with all the sorrows of the way the difficulties of the way what a mercy the Lord is with us when we come down to the end of the journey God gave his ancient people then a safe and clean passage through the swellings of Jordan is not true they all passed through and the priests went through on to the other side that the water returned to their strength showing to us then the safety of God's people even in the face of death that last enemy when thou pass through the waters I'll be with thee and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee or it may be sometimes these waters may seem to be deep waters sometimes the troubles that come into

God's people's experiences are like deep waters but they're not too deep but what the Lord will bring each one through and what a mercy it is dear friends that you have a God to go to call upon me in the day of trouble I will deliver thee and glorify me you will notice with regard to the Lord's dealings with his ancient people it always redounded to his glory didn't it think of the passage of the it redounded to the glory of God as the God of Israel that the people could look on as it were and experience God's hand upon them in such a way whereby he demonstrates his power for the safety of his dear people it's a great word isn't it the promise of his presence

I will be with thee you may sometimes when you perhaps pass to a time and it seems as though the Lord has forsaken you perhaps when there seems to be as it were deep waters and you feel he has forsaken you and yet the truth of the matter is it could never be I will never leave thee nor forsake thee and even though those waters may be deep waters they're not waters to overwhelm no God brings his people safely through dear Jacob when he came down toward the end of life's journey had to acknowledge didn't he God's goodness toward him he'd been brought through many sorrows yes many difficulties many trials sad days Jacob had so sad that the poor man said all these things are against me yet God brought him through unfolded his purposes and at length

[21 : 42] Jacob would see the unfolding of all these things yes and for his good and the good of his people his family and that promise was so wonderfully fulfilled which God gave to Jacob when he first set out on his journey from home when the Lord said to him in the dream I'll be with thee in all places whither thou goest and this is true concerning all the spiritual Jacobs and Israel yes he will be with his people in all places and even those places where it seems as though the Lord hides his face yet he is with his people although it may be sometimes in these things and it brings them into the experience which is set forth in the chapter which we read where the apostle

Peter speaks about the trial of faith you see if everything was smooth and easy there would be no trial would there but God has seen fit in his wisdom that faith must be tried grace will be tried and it is in these experiences that faith is tried going to pass through these waters through these rivers faith is tried and yet it is a prophet yes and then again the text speaks about walking through the fire when they walk through the fire they shall not be burned and in a literal way how this was demonstrated wasn't it in what we read in the book of Daniel those dear Hebrews who would not yield to the king's command there was this furnace this fire heated seven times hotter and those three were bound and cast into the fire and the

Lord was with them wasn't he with them even in the fire and the king looked and he could see them walking in the fire as it were and God was with them there was the form of the fourth like unto the son of God said the king and they were at liberty you see their bonds were burned but when they were brought out of the there was not either the smell of fire on them such was the wonderful protection the Lord afforded to his faithful followers and there is instruction in it they're not called to be flung into a furnace literally no but there are the fiery temptations of the enemy yes and there are the fiery trials Satan is a cruel foe and he's permitted at times to come upon

God's dear people with fierce temptations and to them it is like as it were walking through a fire and yet there is safety how the Lord keeps his people they will not be overwhelmed in these temptations fiercely they are because the dear Lord Jesus Christ himself conquered for them he knew what it was to be tempted to a far greater degree than any of his dear people could possibly experience and yet the dear saviour stood so firm Satan could gain no advantage over the dear Lord Jesus Christ and how the word of God reminds us that the Lord Jesus Christ suffered being tempted one of the aspects of his sufferings here below that he was tempted of Satan and yet he conquered and it reminds us doesn't it the provision the Lord has made for his tempted ones as they may pass through sometimes this fire of temptation they shall not be burned no the

Lord is with his people even in these temptations and how the word of God reminds us that there are those wonderful words concerning the Lord Jesus Christ that he is able to succour them that are tempted he's gone before his people even in the way of temptation and here is a secret of their being made conquerors not in their own strength but by virtue of the fact they have an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ who is tempted in all points like as we are and yet without sin and he is the one who is able to succour all who are tempted and they come through safe they're conquerors through him one has well said in the hymn that he who for us conquered once will in us conquer too what a mercy friends if you have an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ who is the great conqueror the conquerer was his he won it but it means the safety of all his dear people when thou walk through the fire thou shalt not be burned neither shall the flame kindle upon thee and yet we have to remember this don't we in passing to the fire be they fiery trials there are those things that will be consumed and there is that aspect of truth to be considered in the light of this text you see the word of

[28 : 04] God tells us that the Lord has a fire in Zion and a furnace in Jerusalem and there is that furnace that fire which the Lord is pleased to cause his people to walk through for their profit now there are those things that will be consumed in the epistle to the Corinthians the apostle Paul refers to these things doesn't he he speaks about the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is and there's mention of the wood and the hound stubble and you see the fire will consume this yes it will consume it but there is the gold and the silver and the precious stones and so then there are those things will be consumed and we think of the fire with regard to purifying how necessary it is for the gold to be purified by the fire the dross has to be consumed doesn't it and you know dear friends there is much dross isn't there what we are by nature what we are ourselves there is that does need to be burned up and that that which is of the Lord be made manifest and what a mercy friends if we have a little religion which is like the gold yes so it is purified by the furnace it is not consumed but the dross is consumed and dear

Job as he passed through these things and he had a great trial to pass through he suffered great loss and Satan was permitted to come upon him to a great degree mercifully his life was spared Satan could not touch that but in the midst of the affliction the loss and the trouble that Job found himself in through what the Lord permitted to come into his life it was as though Job had a glimpse as it were of God's purpose in this and I think you'll read of it in chapter 23 though he speaks about looking this way and that to find God or that I knew where I might find him and yet it was as though there was a glimpse a beam of light from heaven as it were upon the situation and Job was helped to say this from his heart but he knoweth the way that I take he acknowledges you see the omniscience of God with regard to his particular and peculiar pathway he knoweth the way that I take source of comfort there to God's dear people especially when they are passed into the fire he knoweth the way that I take but then there was this and when he has tried me

I shall come forth as gold oh you begin to see yes how these things were permitted and yet to be overruled for Job's good and indeed there were those things that Job much loss he suffered in so many ways didn't he and the dear man was brought down very low and he was brought to that point where he had to acknowledge he was vile yes he says wherefore I pour myself and repent in dust and ashes or the fire done its work and how the Lord turned his captivity yes blessed the latter end of Job more than the beginning and indeed there is a prospect for all God's dear people the promise of that blessing at their latter end for we may fear sometimes that when you come to the

Aaron article of death that God will forsake you that can never be if you come within the compass of this text that can never be God is with his people right to the end and right through the Aaron article of death complete safety yes and for death to be the means as it were the passage into the promised inheritance heaven itself but see there are these things that God's dear people are called to pass through for their profit when the Lord demonstrates his great mercy yes the promise of his presence and these words of promise indeed they as it were become a foundation for hope don't they how good it is when perhaps a little faith is given to plead what

God has promised and indeed it is so suited isn't it to what one may feel to need when you think of the promise of his presence we think of the suppliant with the language of his heart leave me not not forsake me oh God of my salvation well he could plead upon the ground of God's promise couldn't he the Lord has promised to be with his people he may hide his face he never leaves them to perish no and so then there's a blessed foundation for faith and ground you see to plead before the Lord when perhaps you may feel to be cast down and there are castings down aren't there what a mercy it is if you're unable to realise that there is hope dear David he had to inquire him with regards this as to why he should be cast down and he is directed in this way hope there in

[34 : 32] God for I should yet praise him for many of the Lord's dear people along life's pathway at length have been brought to that point where they could praise him even for times of trouble even when having to pass through these waters and these rivers and sometimes experience this fire yet being brought safely through never suffering any real harm may suffer loss yes as I said the dross has to be consumed but there's still the gold and that which the Lord is pleased to perform in the hearts of his dear people it is like the gold isn't it it cannot perish yes and that word will be gracefully fulfilled he will give grace and glory that is a prospect for all

God's dear people yes grace here and glory hereafter may the Lord be pleased to make his word good we have to come back to this but now thus saith the Lord the Lord is speaking here dear friends and he is speaking concerning his dear people he is speaking to those who sometimes are the subject of many fears he is speaking to those who are journeying on through this wilderness wine and through the many dangers which may befall the pilgrim is a journey but the promise of his presence I will be with thee yes these exceeding great and precious promises really you know to realise the Lord's presence it means everything doesn't it there's a time in

Moses experience when he deeply needed this it was a solemn time Israel had sinned God had frowned upon those those idolaters and it was a very very solemn time it promoted a solemn exercise in the heart of Moses as Israel's leader that as he in the sanctuary as he conversed with God as he made known his request how God was gracious to him my presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest or how Moses could go on as it were upon the strength of that word my presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest and here in this text you see the Lord declares I will be with it it means everything doesn't it to have God's presence along thy way whatever the circumstances may be it means everything because God is in complete control of all circumstances is and the dear psalmist could acknowledge could they he said my times are in thy hand and surely he could see the safety of it surely he could draw a measure of comfort from this you know those sometimes were trying times yet they're in

God's hand and you see he controls all these things he controls the rivers he controls these waters yes he bounds them as it were by his word he controls the fire he's in control of everything and what a mercy it is poor sinner if sometimes you're helped in the light of this to commit your one to him and to cast your care upon him and then to prove what we read what follows in the reading casting all your care upon him for he careth for you and you see in this word before us it is as though the Lord reminds his dear people further in this way he says for I am the Lord thy God the Holy One of Israel thy Saviour yes the Lord

Jesus Christ the Saviour of his dear people that Saviour of whom you read elsewhere in that same prophecy he should send them a Saviour and a great one and in one place it is as though the Lord Jesus Christ speaks through the prophet in this way I that speak in righteousness mighty to save amen so so do I shall close by singing hymn number 139 the tune is Beatitudo, 97 hymn number 139 my shepherd will supply my need

[41 : 06] Jehovah is his name in pastures fresh he makes me fade beside the living stream 139 the tune is Beatitudo, 97 we lift him his vale by his way we lift him we lift him his duy

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[44 : 51] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. The communion and finish up of the Holy Spirit rest upon us and abide with us and with the people of God everywhere, now and forever. Amen.