

## Isaiah (Quality: Average)

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The End The End The End The End O glory, O Ki-Adi, owe you■■■■ ■■■■ correr  
batken, O Holy cob Ren.

And, depending upon the Lord, I ask your prayerful attention to the prophecy of Isaiah chapter 55, and I'll read verses 10 and 11.

Isaiah 55 verses 10 and 11. For, as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so, just like those parables, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth.

[ 4 : 06 ] It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent him.

That uneducated and yet gracious Lady Sukey Harley had a word which you will not find in a dictionary, but is very express when she spoke of being intoxicated.

And I have been much intoxicated concerning what to bring before you this evening. Before I retired, I would sometimes walk to the city centre of Cambridge past a General Baptist, and I would stop and look at the notice board and see what the text or subject was for the next month.

It would be put on the notice board. Well, that is not the way I have to walk, and I doubt if that's the way our servants present walk.

I can remember on one rare occasion being given a text a year in advance, when a deacon phoned me to ask if I would preach at that centenary service the following year.

[ 5 : 45 ]      And while he was still speaking, that word dropped into my mind. Shall a child be born to him that is a hundred years old?

And I had to speak from it a year later. But my thoughts seemed to settle upon these verses and the following connection.

Now friend, Mr. Mercer quoted part of the eleventh verse in his prayer. So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void.

I touched upon the encouragement for service. And your pastor spoke of the word of God, and it was also mentioned in the last hymn.

But just to touch upon the preceding verses, this chapter commences with a beautiful gospel invitation. But there is no free will in it.

[ 6 : 54 ] It is directed to living souls. Did a dead person ever thirst or hunger? No.

Only the living. And for that matter, only the healthy have a hunger. And such are invited to partake of this wine and milk without money and without price.

Then speaks prophetically concerning Christ. Then, for that solemn word, seek ye the Lord while he may be there.

As in the parable of the ten virgins, there will come a time when the door is shut. When it is too late.

How stands the case?

[ 8 : 16 ] My soul with thee. For heaven are thy credentials clear. Is Jesus' blood thine only plea? Is he thy grateful run of thee? But then especially in the context of our text, God says his thoughts are not our thoughts.

Neither are your ways my ways. Seth the Lord. My memory is right.

I heard our friend Mr. Mercer over thirty years ago preach from that word of Naam. And behold, I, he thought. Ah, how we need to beware of that.

He planned it all out how he was going to be healed. Surely the prophet will come out to me. Put his hand on the place where he covers the leper.

[ 9 : 19 ] Ah, not a barn when far the rivers of Damascus. Better than all the waters of Israel. Behold, I thought. But he was heath.

And now, coming to this tenth and eleventh verses. And as we consider them as the Lord enables, remember the two verses are connected.

As the rain cometh now, so shall my word be. And the snow from heaven, so shall my word be.

Returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, so shall my word be. To give seed to the sower, so shall my word be.

And bread to the eater. Now, this is a Sunday school anniversary. Though I always love a simple gospel.

[ 10 : 24 ] And we would desire to bring some of these things before you as parables of what the Lord sets before us in that eleventh verse concerning his word.

Our nature, or mine at least, would like sunshine all day, every day.

Remember in scripture, for the most part, clouds set forth trials and tribulations. If there were no clouds, there would be no rain.

There would be no snow. The earth would be a desert. The seed might be sown, but it would never grow or bring forth rain.

Do we not often have to say with the power, trials give new life to prayer.

[ 11 : 36 ] Lay us low and keep us there. In the chapter in Job, the thirty-seventh chapter, we read there of these clouds.

And there are so many questions asked in the scriptures, and especially in the book of John. Questions in scripture are not like a politician's rhetorical questions, when he doesn't want to expect an answer.

These require answers. Dost thou know the balancing of the scales? We read much in Proverbs condemning false balances, an abomination to the Lord.

You can be sure his balances are accurate. Our sorrows in the scales he weighs, and measures out our pains.

The wildest storm his word obeys his voice, its righteous strides. These trials are dealt by white and measure.

[ 13 : 03 ] Dost thou know them? We only really know a subject when we pass through that experience. The most experienced male gynecologist does not really understand what it's like to give birth to a baby.

As the mother does. Though he may know far more of the theory. We have to pass through an experience to really know it.

And then we read, men see not the bright light which is in the clouds, but the wind passeth and cleanseth them.

The first occasion I flew from Heathrow to Holland many years ago.

It was a July day, but such a thick cloud covered the sky. It was almost dusk at midnight. The plane took off, climbed for thousands of feet.

[ 14 : 19 ] I would think of these 20,000 feet. And then it broke through into gorgeous sunlight. And that thick, gloomy cloud through which we had passed, looking back upon it, with the light shining, how beautiful it looked.

The towering, cloudy castles in the air. But for us to see beauty in the cloud through which we had passed, we had to be alive.

We had to be awake. We had to have our eyes on it. And we had to have light. Four things essential.

To see the beauty of the cloud through which we had passed. But without worrying at length further upon that, let us remember God's sovereignty.

Where the rain and the snow shall fall. Especially, of course, we notice this in the time of thunderstorms.

[ 15 : 41 ] You may have passed through a torrential downpour, and then suddenly the road is quite dry. And the next village has had no rain at all.

In Amos we read, Also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest, when it was so needful for the swelling of the grain.

And I caused it to rain upon one setting, and caused it not to rain upon another setting.

One piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not wither.

God's sovereignty in the rain. And then we read of the small rain, and the great rain of history.

[ 16 : 52 ] Think of that great rain, as it were, that beat down Saul of Tarsus to the earth. Saul, Saul.

Why persecutest thou me? The Lord was in heaven. But he didn't say, Why persecutest thou my disciples?

Why persecutest thou me? Lord, Who art thou, Lord? What wilt thou have me to do?

The great rain of history. Then we read concerning Timothy, Who it would appear from a child, That the work of grace be gone in his heart, The gentle rain of the Lord.

But both as effect, Both as fulfilling his purpose, So shall my word be.

[ 18 : 04 ] And the snow from heaven. The snow from heaven. The first thing we usually associate with snow, Is its beautiful purity, And whiteness, When freshly fallen.

And do we not read in, That early chapter in Isaiah, Though your sins be as scull, They shall be as white as snow, So shall my word be.

Though they be red like crimson, They shall be as white. Is there one here longing, For such a word, As that?

Then, If we consider individual snowflakes, In their beauty, And it is said, No two snowflakes are identical, That we must leave.

But certainly you can see, The multiples of three, In the crystals, The six, Twelve, Twenty-four branches, And so on.

[ 19 : 34 ] The trinity, So shall my word be, In every word of God. Then the beauty, With the snow dress, When, They are driven with the wind, What beauty, With the snow collectively, Then what power, With the snow.

I'm sure younger friends, Will also have heard, Of the liner, Titanic, Over forty thousand tons, The largest vessel, Of its time, At the beginning of the, Twentieth century, And men said, It was unsinkable, Seven watertight, Compartments, I think three or four, Could be flooded, And it said, It wouldn't sink, But it is an iceberg, Which was only, After all, Frozen snow, More than, That number of compartments, Were flooded, And down it went, So shall my word be, God's word, Far more powerful, Than any word of man, And then consider, The iceberg itself, And in that connection, I remind you,

Of what we read in Ephesians, Where the apostle writes, To know the length, And breadth, And height, And depth, To know, The love of God, If we were describing, The dimensions, Of this chapel, We would say, So many feet, Or meters wide, So many high, So many long, But if you were describing, A iceberg, That snow, You'd have to use, Four dimensions, For the volume, Below the water line, Out of sight, Is about six times, As much, As that which you can see, How true is the word of God, It would be false modesty, If we did not, Acknowledge, We do know more of it, Than we knew, When the Lord,

First called us, By his grace, But we feel, Our ignorance, More now, The person, Who says, They know all about, Such and such a subject, You can be pretty sure, They're quite ignorant, When I was in the infant school, And could add, And subtract, And multiply, And divide, I thought I knew, All there was to know, About mathematics, But when I'd studied it, For another twenty years, I realised, How little I knew, To what there was to know, I did know more, But I felt my ignorance more, But I digress, And, The snow, From heaven, I think of David's words, In his psalm of repentance, Though I wash me, With snow, Wood, Job, Sorry,

David's words, Were, Wash me, And I shall be, Whiter than snow, Compare his words, With Job, While Job was still self-righteous, Though I wash me, Myself, With snow water, And make myself, Never so clean, Thou shalt plunge me, In the ditch, Till mine own clothes, Are poor me, Job spoke, Of washing himself, David, Please, Wash me, Those of us, Who've had to do, With small children, You can send them, To the bathroom, To wash, And they'll still, Come back grubby, Behind the ears, And round the neck, You have to take them, And wash them yourself, And they'll, And they'll, And they'll be, And they'll be, And your proud,

[ 24 : 09 ] And mine be like, David's, Wash, Me, Wash me, And the snow from heaven, And returneth not thither, As Solomon wisely remarks, All rivers run into the sea, Yet the sea is not full, whether the waters go thither they return again that is returneth not thither until after it has performed that for which God sent him so shall my word be but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and die William Cooper's hymn 320 speaks of this ye fearful signs fresh college type the clouds ye so much dread are big with mercy and shall bright in blessings on your head the bud may have a bitter taste but sweet will be the flower maketh it bring forth and bud firstly that it may give seed to the sun

I'm sure there are many who dwell in cities who without thinking assume that all the corn that is reaped in the field is ground into flour for bread if that were the case there would never be another harvest a tithe of it has to be retained to be sown again for another harvest the Lord's servants who have been so much used over the years were once children themselves no doubt often in Sunday's conversion and no doubt often the seed that was sown by servants in the past sown in their heart was then raised up again for them in their generation to sow it again and as I said this afternoon what encouragement there is for sowers in the morning sow thy seed in the evening withhold not thine hand thou knowest not whether shall prosper this or that or whether both alike shall be made good no mention whatever that neither will be made good but there is also instruction there for the Lord's servants and for those exercised about the matter as we read in an earlier verse he that observeth the wind shall not sow in those days of broadcasting seed by hand from a basket or bag slung around the neck the sower desired to direct the seed into good ground but if it was a windy day some would go where he had not intended it if we who minister waited for a time when we felt sufficient we would never sow we would never sow we have to go forth in our weakness and felt insufficiency to sow beside all waters and with that verse before it for us it continues he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap these days with combine harvest to sow cornfield can be reaped very quickly not so when I was young still less in the days of scripture and it was naturally disordered to reap before the rain came but they had to go forth though there were clouds having to reap even when clouds covered the sky so it is with those that sow and reap we have to go forth in our weakness and felt insufficiency indeed if any are exercised about the ministry here and I hope it is so

I pray it is so if you feel self sufficient you are not at least yet sending to the ministry when Moses came forth at the age of forty years from Pharaoh's daughter's household as Stephen makes clear Moses was quite ready in his own strength to bring the children of Israel out but when he was eighty years of age who am I that I should go into Pharaoh send I pray thee by him whom thou wilt send I am not eloquent neither heretofore nor since thou hast spoken unto thyself we have to go forth in our weakness and felt insufficiency and independence upon them that it might give seed to the in the second epistle to the

Corinthians we have a very solemn word he that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly he that soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully and don't confine sowers to ministers parents Sunday school teachers grandparents brothers sisters neighbors what do we sow do we sow good good say good say by their fruits ye shall know do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles give seed to the sow in the 126th psalm after our friend esteemed friend

Mr. Wood had preached at our harvest thanksgiving service in 1970 I felt I had to make my exercises known concerning the ministry his text was he that goeth forth weeping bearing precious seed shall doubtless come again rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him to give seed to the sow and bread to the eater I would like just to dwell here in John chapter 6 the Lord speaks of himself

[ 33 : 26 ] I am the bread that cometh down from heaven and except ye eat my flesh that is spiritually though it is set forth in the ordinance of the Lord service except ye eat my flesh which is bread indeed and drink my blood ye have no life in you we cannot eat grain as it comes from the harvest field if it were pure it would do our bodies no good and might indeed do us harm that grain has to be crushed in the mill and the resulting flour has to be heated in the furnace

Christ came into this world and set a pure and perfect example of how we ought to live but that never saved one soul his holy soul and we emphasize his soul his body suffering to a great the greater the pains of his mind his holy soul had to be crushed under the law that his people's sins had broken and he did in the fall that those sins deserved throughout eternity we often fear how short we come in speaking of the sufferings of Christ but one sinful thought deserves eternal flour and punishment what must the

Lord have suffered when he bore the punishment for all his people's sins and those sins that deserve punishment for eternity the punishment was compressed to a few arrows in the garden and especially upon the cross things mathematically it could not be done but faith believes it was done of his suffering so intense angels have no perfect sin if there is any expression of the world used as an expletive which causes me grief when I hear it and I hope it does you is when the world uses we tremble almost to say those words my

God when they were the cry of Christ upon the cross my God my God why hast thou forsaken me and what is the answer for the question his people you and I if we are numbered among them deserve to be separated from God forsaken forever and ever and he had to bear that punishment in our room and place in the garden he still felt union with his father father if it be possible let this cup pass from me initially upon the cross father forgive them for they know not what they do but now not my father my father my

God my God why hast thou forsaken me but he did not die in that forsaken condition it is finished father loving union restored father into thy hands I commend my spirit bread to the eater so shall my word be and then another figure from the parables of nature we have our children's heights at six month intervals from the time they could stand to the time they were fully grown we can now compare grandchildren with their father or mother how much has your soul grown since the last

[ 38 : 50 ] Sunday school anniversary but it does it well against the door mess Peter gives us that exhortation grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ but as we consider children or grandchildren where does their extra flesh and bone and sinew come from it didn't come out of the air it came from the food that they digested it became part of them we cannot say their legs grew from their breakfast and their arms and their mouths that the whole body grew from the food they digested and it is only as you and I feed upon Christ my faith that we shall grow in grace and in the knowledge of him though in our experience of it we are shorter than we were the year before the more thy glory strike my eye the humbler

I shall lie so shall my word be but just another few thoughts concerning Greg one of the first text I ever spoke from that Oakington was from the 6 of John there is a lad here with five barley loaves and a few small fishes that's how we felt then we feel a smaller lad now nearly 40 years later but you see the power was in the Lord's hands he took that little that the lad had he blessed it he broke it he gave it to the disciples to give to the multitude he could have fed the multitude himself he fed the two of Emmaus directly himself but for the most part uses his servants and

I've often been encouraged I cannot think those disciples went hungry when they distributed the bread to those that were set down surely they fed themselves as well and they the multitude was set down in ranks of fifties and hundreds no disorderly clambering or snatching one from another but there must have been the last one 4 4999 have been fed and the last one was still hungry have you sometimes felt to be that one when others have spoken of the feast their souls have had and you are still hungry if you are one of his people you too will be fed for they did all eat and were filled

I think of that dear woman who despite so much discouragement when the Lord said it is not me to take the children's bread and cast it unto dogs truth Lord yet dogs may eat of the crumbs that fall from anybody's table you look it up their master's table and it's when you're close to his feet that you will receive the crumbs I know we often feel like the three score and ten kings in the first chapter of judges they had their thumbs cut off and their great toes cut off you can't grasp very well without a thumb you can't walk very well without a great tongue but they did not starve they gathered their food under the king's table

David said as from Mephibosheth by him on both his feet he shall eat at my table soon shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth of his will only know God's revealed will not his secret will it was his revealed will to Adam and Eve that they should not eat as that tree of the knowledge of good and evil it was his secret will that they should be permitted to fall that the purposes of grace should fall it is for us to obey his revealed will to us the word that goeth forth out of my mouth it shall not return unto me void in the parable of the sower we are told in Mark the seed is the word of God the seed that fell by the wayside on stony ground and among the thorns was just as good as the seed that fell up in good ground you might say then how does that accord with this word not return unto me void but accomplish that which I please the seed was good but because no fruit was brought forth it then was a word of condemnation and proof that the ground was not good ground

[ 45 : 47 ] I trust we all read the scriptures at least night and morn but I often feel very solemnly concerning that seed that fell by the wayside which the birds came and caught a while we read the scripture and I think this applies especially to the morn and the post comes the newspaper arrives we telephone rings and we have to take up the duties of the day and an hour later we can't remember what we read there was no fault with the seed the seed was the word of God the birds of the air and we call it away and it has brought forth no fear perhaps less so in the evening when we may wake in the night and meditate again upon that which we read before retiring to bed it shall accomplish that which I praise and it shall prosper in the thing where to

I send just very briefly especially for younger friends in Psalm 119 longer than any other psalm or any other chapter divided into 22 sections of 8 verses each section with a Hebrew letter at the beginning and I understand in the original each verse began with that letter but more important almost every verse I think there are about 3 exceptions speaks of the word of God sometimes using commandments testimonies statutes and so on but just in conclusion to remind you one or two remember the word unto thy son that promise the Lord has given you whether concerning your own soul the souls of others this cause remember the word unto thy servant upon which thou hast caused me to hurt this is my comfort in my affliction for thy word has quickened me it has often seemed significant to me that the first words in scripture that Satan is recorded as having spoken were when he tried to cast doubt upon whether

God had spoken Satan's first words yea hath God said and if God has given you a word of promise commandment whatever it may be don't be surprised if Satan will say yea hath God said are you sure you didn't dream it was it not wishful thinking we're not ignorant of his devices again thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my palm to show us the snares that lie before our feet to show us the way wherein we should walk and then especially for younger their friends hear wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way by taking heed thereto according to thy word as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven and returneth not thither but watereth the earth that it may bring forth seed bud and to give seed to the sower and bread to the eater so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth it shall not return unto me but it shall accomplish that which

I please his thoughts are higher than our thoughts that which I please and prospering the thing whereto I send we leave it there may the lord forgive anything amiss after the service that is for the young ones the chocolate and fruit in the bestry after the benediction we will sing the doxology let us now sing together hymn 14 the 14th hymn to the tune bishop saw 104 begin my tongue some heavenly theme and speak some boundless thing the mighty works almighty name of our eternal king hymn 14 hymn 14 hymn 14 hymn 14 hymn 14 hymn 14 hymn 14 chyn z

Understand? Thank you.

[ 53 : 59 ] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

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

[ 57 : 41 ] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

May we have them expounded spiritually to our souls. We'll give anything amiss in our speaking or hearing. Be with us as we go our various ways.

And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of the Father, the communion of the Spirit be with us. Amen.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him, all creatures here below. Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts. Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts. Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts.

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