

# Isaiah

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] as the Lord may help this evening I will direct your attention to prophecy of Isaiah chapter 41 verse 9 the prophecy of Isaiah chapter 41 verse 9 thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth and called thee from the chief men thereof and said unto thee thou art my servant I have chosen thee and not cast thee away thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth and called thee from the chief men thereof and said unto thee thou art my servant I have chosen thee and not cast thee away real religion will have occasions when the people of God will hear the voice of God how clearly the Lord Jesus made this when he said my sheep hear my voice

I know them and they follow me there are many passages in the scriptures that the children of God may sometimes sometimes look at and wish that they were their own there is a sense in which all the words of the scripture belong to the family of God but on the other hand it is when God speaks with a gracious application and begins his speech with the word thou and gives us grace to listen to it that that word will do us good we have in the words of our text this evening those things which are important and which will help any poor soul that is anxious about the future because they are tempted by the devil to question as to whether they will not after all be a cast away now in this verse we have a composite description of God's work thou whom

I have taken from the ends of the earth there are not many that believe this truth absolutely and is there not a tendency with us all to think that if we are brought up under the sound of truth that in itself must surely have some make some contribution to our ultimately making a confession of faith some of us have had to learn that there is a deep meaning in that scripture by grace you are saved through faith and not that and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God the word here thou whom

I have taken from the ends of the earth makes it very clear that the church of the living God are those whom God has pulled out and in consequence we remember those words of the scripture thou shall be called a sought out a city not forsaken and then again is not this a brand plucked out of the fire now as we review our own personal experience this evening is that true of us are we brands plucked out of the fire now there will be perhaps two classes with us some that have been brought out of the world or have gone into the world and then been brought out again there are others that have never left their attendance at the house of God but it makes no difference the work of God is the same in every case we are brands plucked out of the burning out of the fire and only

God can pluck people out of the downward road to hell we should ever remember that whether we are brought up to attend a place of worship or brought up in a godly family the word of God tells us that we are conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity we have gone astray from the womb speaking lies and the word of God doesn't say anything about except mark you we have much to bless God for if it hath pleased him to cause us even in our early days to sit under the truth but sitting under the truth will not be the means of salvation unless God makes it so it is true by the foolishness of preaching God has been pleased to save those whom he has appointed unto eternal life but that work is a very powerful and clear work do you think that you have come to be a follower of the

[ 6 : 58 ] Lord because you have all your lifetime been at the house of God and been pleased to worship with the people of God or would you have to say like one of my former deacons told me when the Lord began to deal with him and to bring him to realize that he was a great sinner he said I knew nothing about Jesus Christ being a saviour I knew nothing about Jesus Christ being a saviour he had sat under the ministry of that good servant of Jesus Christ John Raven but he said I didn't know anything about Jesus Christ being a saviour and so therefore because of his extremity he will be amongst those that God plucked out and as we have it here thou whom

I have taken from the ends of the earth taken now the ends of the earth it is a strange expression and I know not exactly how to interpret it but we can say this the ends of the earth some people have felt to be at the ends of the earth when they have feared that they were dropping into hell itself and this may find some connection in your own Christian experience thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth well the word of God will bear us out on this in the 27th of Isaiah we read and it shall come to pass in that day that the great trumpet shall be blown and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of

Assyria and the outcast in the land of Egypt surely two situations which could well agree with the ends of the earth and what shall they do they shall worship the Lord in the holy mount of Jerusalem if it has ever been a case with you under the teaching of the spirit of God that you have felt that there was no hope for you that you were perishing in your sin and the prospect of you ever worshipping the Lord in the holy mount of Jerusalem was the remotest thing of all God but God said that this shall come to pass thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth why has God taken thou from the ends of the earth there's a blessed and very sweet word to my mind in the epistle to the

Galatians where Paul uses this expression when it please God to call me by his grace when it please God and that is the reason thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth when it please God and also because it please God no oh your house of Israel not for your sakes do I these things but for mine holy name sake and we should have these points comfortably settled in our own souls because when we touch upon these things we can feel the foundation under our feet and that we are not being shifted about on anything that is sandy thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth I will do all my pleasure an astonishing word do you consider as you look at

God's work upon your soul if you can trace that that it is absolutely the result of God's pleasure he looked up down from heaven and looked upon a certain person with pleasure he looked upon that person with love he looked upon that person with graciousness he looked upon that person with loving kindness thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth when you were ready to perish when you were amongst the outcasts of Israel thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth not because there was anything in you indeed we have the utterance of one who said what was there in me that could merit esteem or give the creator delight was even so father I ever must sing because it seemed good in thy sight but you know if we come to this place then we are on a sound foundation because we are not looking at our work but we are looking at

[ 12 : 27 ] God's work God's work in the very beginning thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth taken out of the multitudes that are on the way to destruction let us not think that there was a time that we were in the narrow way no we were all born in that way which leaded to destruction and we shall be well aware of it if we depart from that thinking then we shall immediately be taking glory from God we shall begin to say well of course I had the advantage here I had the advantage there and I'm thankful that I was not allowed to go as other people have into the depths of sin that they've gone to well if we begin along those thinking that kind of thinking then let us be aware because we're getting very close to the Pharisee when he stood up and prayed dust with himself and said

I thank God I'm not like other men are now that's a very sad situation isn't it thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth thou who will in due time come into the sanctuary and will lift up your though you cannot so much as lift up your eyes to heaven yet you will say God be merciful to me a sinner and it will not be hypocrisy it will be real and if you come into the house of God if anyone has come into the house of God this evening saying God be merciful to me a sinner you're not going to be satisfied just to sit through the service and go home you'll want God to speak to you and you'll want God to say thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth confessing his sins and pleading for mercy thou art the person that I speak to this evening thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth not for any other reason than for my holy name sake in the next place as we proceed through the text and called thee from the chief men thereof primarily this word may well apply to

Abraham himself Abraham was a man of some importance before he was called by God out of air of the Chaldees and he went out not knowing whether he went and it is so with the people of God when they are called by grace the future seems to be very questionable they cannot see clearly and even when through the preaching of the gospel they may be directed to keep yon shining light in view yet there's many difficulty before they reach the celestial city and Abraham found it so Abraham was led about there were some situations that it seemed a strange matter that Abraham should go there but he went according to what God commanded him to go how often may it be our case at times to say well this is what I want to do now the power of

God's grace in Abraham was such that he was made willing in the day of God's power to walk in that way which God had appointed him all because thou whom I have taken from the end of the earth and called thee from the chief men thereof whatever station in life may be ours yet the great thing is as to whether God has called us called us called us by his grace now what does that mean there are two sides to God's calling and we need to pay attention to that there is being called out of this world and all the emptiness of it and the waywardness of it but we need to remember the words in the first of Corinthians first chapter where the word the apostle says ye are called to have fellowship with

Jesus Christ now you see if we are amongst those to whom this word may address this evening then God has called us not just out of the world to live as it were on the edge of it but he has called us to have this fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ himself now if we have fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ himself that will mean separation people talk about separation and there are many that follow a legal separation but if God is faithful by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his son Jesus Christ our Lord then the separation will be a spiritual one it will not be a separation which is contained in come not thou nigh me for I am holier than thou but it will be a separation from those that hate

[18:15] Jesus Christ that's what the separation is it's not separation from any other reason basically we may put other reasons but we are reminded in the 15th chapter of John's gospel of the reason yea of what will happen as we become followers of Jesus Christ he says if you were of the world the world would love its own but because you are not of the world but I have chosen you out of the world therefore the world hateth you remember the word that I said unto you the servant is not greater than his Lord if they have persecuted me they will also persecute you if they have kept my saying they will keep yours also but all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake because they know not him that sent me so then

God's calling necessarily will mean separation and if there is no separation then we must say that there is no calling God will separate we shall not need to separate ourselves because if we are the friends of Jesus then the world will be at enmity with us I know it is so true and sadly true that we have a nature so fallen that is enmity against God and godliness and will continually oppose us so that we are persecuted not by the enemies of without so much as by the mightier enemies within but even so thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth and called thee from the chief men thereof called thee to have fellowship with my son

Jesus Christ and you know this is a great and blessed fellowship because it will affect our spirit sometimes we can see this on a much lower plane amongst people if there should be a man shall we say of a hasty temper comes into the presence and perhaps is closely associated one with one of a milder temper it has been seen that the quietness of the one has subdued the fierceness of the other now you see the I think it is the psalmist who says thy gentleness hath made me great now you see that gentleness could only make the psalmist great insofar that the very spirit of Christ was in him and the very example of

Christ was before him and therefore he was blessed with the humility of spirit in his very soul and if we are to walk with Jesus Christ you know we must listen to that admonition take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest to your souls and call thee from the chief men thereof and said unto thee so you see God does not leave us in our experience merely by his actions merely by his operations but he said unto thee and this is important because we cannot be sure where we stand unless God speaks and I fear that there are too many that are satisfied with something less than assurance well

God there is nothing really in the scriptures to tell us that God will not give us that assurance that we need it is true that this is under his sovereign prerogative but what a blessing if we have an exercise in our souls like the church did in the wilderness as mentioned in the song of Solomon tell me oh thou whom my soul loveth where thou feedest and where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon now can we find that God has spoken into our soul yea operated upon our soul that we desire to listen to what God will say and hope to follow that but in this particular instance what God has to say is something regarding thou and that that is spoken is clear and positive thou art my servant that's the first thing that is spoken

[ 23 : 49 ] I have chosen thee the second thing and thirdly and not cast thee away thou art my servant it may be that some wish that God had said to them thou art my son or my daughter but let it suffice this evening that this word come to some thou art my servant now it's a wonderful thing to be a servant of God this service is not restricted absolutely and entirely to the ministry of the word and the preaching of the gospel God calls his people to engage in all kinds of service and whilst some may fear that they're useless yet they can never be so because

God has called them to that service that he's appointed them we can listen to some of our aged friends and very afflicted friends and they may say well what is the use of God sparing me thou art my servant but what can I do well God will command what you are to do John Newton said in one of his letters if two angels were to ascend to the earth to perform certain service one was the ruler kingdom and the other to sweep a crossing there would be no argument how many people even amongst God's people would say I'm doing wonderful service for the Lord he's made me king he's made me ruler he's put me in a high place and I'm able to do this for him and that for him but is there not some person that is just called to do the most menial service that nobody notices and nobody recognizes if God says to you when you're feeling a bit troubled about this that nobody takes any notice of all that you're doing because you're out of sight as it were what will satisfy your soul what will make you willing to be where you are it will be when

God says thou art my servant and if God has called you to some menial task in the church of God amongst your fellow men and God says thou art my servant let it suffice oh let it suffice and it will suffice because what does it mean if God ever says to you thou art my servant even though you may be giving a cup of cold water or some person right out of sight and you're not getting any thanks for it nobody not even the person that receives it yet thou art my servant when we look at Jesus Christ he was the king but as he became the servant of his father what do we see he took a towel and girded himself and washed his disciples feet this of course under

Eastern care custom was the most menial task it was the kind of task that was given to a slave to wash the people's feet as they went by but the Lord took a towel and he did justice now then thou art my servant and if God causes us to be his servants then will he not give us that grace that will make us willing to do those things that he has appointed now let us remember this that if we are God's servants then God himself will reward us accordingly not with the rewards of men oh no but with those rewards which are in a way untangible let us consider it from that scripture godliness with contentment is great gain now then if God gives you the spirit of contentment willing to do that that he has laid upon you if it should seem to meet no reward from men and if perhaps sometimes people might call you very foolish to allow yourself to be so humiliated but if

God says thou art my servant and then you'll begin to think perhaps as the holy spirit might lead you and you'll begin to think that the lord Jesus christ made himself of no reputation humble himself and how many men his own creatures humiliated him but this was God's purpose what will thou have me to do you see this is a great point thou art my servant if God tells us this then what a blessing it is but shall we not be waiting upon God what will thou have me to do it would be well if this was our petition every day what wilt thou have me to do in our prayers in the morning do we find a trace of this do we find a desire to do the will of God oh how blessed it is if grace is given to us to say the will of the lord be done whatever projects we may have whatever plans we may produce yet if these are overturned may we say it is well it is well

[ 30 : 11 ] I am thy servant I am thy servant thou hast called me and not cast me away I think it says elsewhere but this is the word and remember the opening words of our text this evening thou whom I have taken from the end of the earth and called thee from the chief men thereof and said unto thee thou art my servant now just think of it friends whatever God has called you to do however insignificant he has taken you from the ungodly and he has taken you from the called you from the chief men of the earth to bring you to sit at the feet of Jesus to be clothed in your right mind do you ever consider that that is a gracious service to God to sit and to learn sometimes we think that if we are serving then we have got to be occupied when the Lord spoke to

Martha or rather Martha spoke to the Lord in the first place she wanted Mary to come and help her because she was serving alone but the Lord said Mary hath chose Martha there are trouble about many things but one thing is needful and Mary hath chosen that good part which will not be taken away from her and it was God's will that Mary should serve the Lord in that way sometimes you see people look upon service as demonstrated by a great deal of activity but to sit at the feet of Jesus oh well we may well be persecuted from within and from without if we want to learn of Jesus thou art my servant and it is my desire says the Lord that you should sit and listen and grow thereby my servant but then the next point

I have chosen thee now this will make the difference because though there may be many servants that God uses and I believe there is a hymn somewhere which says God has servants everywhere which of course is speaking in very general terms you may look at such servants and see sometimes whilst they are used by God to bring about his purposes yet they are not within the scope of this text so what is going to make the difference it is this word I have chosen thee many are called but few are chosen and it may be perhaps said that many might be called to be servants but there is the connection here thou art my servant

I have chosen thee now what is spoken concerning those whom God has chosen again referring to that 15th chapter of the gospel according to John we read these very powerful words ye have not chosen me but I have chosen you and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit and that your fruit should remain that whatsoever ye shall ask of the father in my name he will give it you so then does not this show to us that these words are addressed to those who are the children of God now if we have the experience mentioned in this verse we shall properly assent to this word from the

Lord himself ye have not chosen me are you satisfied about that but I have chosen you now this may be a question in your mind but may that question be put out of question this evening when the Lord speaks into your soul and says these words thou art my servant I have chosen you chosen you not only as a servant but I have chosen you as a son and daughter of the most high and therefore God may be said to say here thou a servant yet also a son there is a time as we read in the Galatians of a child being under tutors and governors but the time comes when he reaches that age where he is manifested as a true heir as a son indeed and something on the same lines may be directed to this word thou art my servant

[ 36 : 00 ] I have chosen thee first of all this choice will take us back to eternity before either had done any good or evil it was said unto her that is Rebecca Jacob I loved and Esau have I hated I have chosen thee from all eternity God's choice is in no way affected by what takes place on the earth today whatever you may do will not affect God he is the supreme God well you will find out if you attempt to come to some terms with God whereby he may choose you that instead of getting nearer to

God you are getting away from God your only thinking that can ever proceed from your natural mind is to make some demand upon God that he should call you that he should save you that he should put you amongst the children of God now if that spirit is in us it is not the spirit of life it is not the spirit of Christ the spirit of life and the spirit of Christ is an astonishment that we can ever be put amongst the children at all so to have this word of assurance I have chosen thee chosen thee before all time began I often feel it is good and profitable sometimes to look at that chain which is found in the 8th chapter to the Romans where we read and we know that all things work together for good to them who are the called who are good to them that love

God and to them who are called according to his purpose now the apostle then goes on from that well known verse to break down as it were those who are called and those that love God according to his purpose for whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son that he might be the first born among many brethren or over whom he did predestinate them he also called and whom he called them he also justified and whom he justified them he also glorified and when we come to this verse we see the relation in regard to its proper interpretation what shall we then say to these things if

God before us who can be against us and these are the things God's foreknowledge God's predestination God's calling God's justification and God's glorification what shall we then say to these things if God before us who can be against us and these are the things that will manifest that God is for us sometimes people have looked upon God's apparent favor in some providential matter and they say well God is for us but we are looking up to lower level when we look at things like that because the things that we need to look at is if these things should happen to us in our life we should say well now God is for us and if God is for us it is because he foreknew us it is because he has commanded that such should be predestinated to be conformed to the image of his son that he might be the first born among many brethren and then of course we go on to those whom he called he also justified and whom he justified them he also glorified

I have chosen thee so then a divine choice involved with God's foreknowledge but not this kind of foreknowledge as some people would say that God looked forward and he saw that certain people would be shall I say religiously inclined that's not the foreknowledge at all no it is a foreknowledge that God from the dregs of the fall would choose this and that went unto salvation and the names were written in the Lamb's book of life before the world began and if any of you should begin to say well that's finished it because there's no hope for me now I cannot alter what God's decree has set forth and therefore will you rebel against God's election you may say well it shuts me out let me tell you this it's the only thing that shuts you in because you have no desire after God and godliness and if you were to find out that God had not chosen you you know should know very well what rebellion would rise up in your heart but God who chooses his people he tells them that he has chosen them has he told you

[ 42 : 13 ] I have chosen thee is it not in the 43rd chapter 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 in other words I have chosen thee 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 I have chosen thee from all eternity but then this is not to be left as it were in oblivion a secret with God let us remember what is written in Psalm 25 the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him and he will show them his covenant and if he shows his people his covenant may he not show you that your name is recorded in that great volume the volume of the book of life which must contain all the terms of the covenant and all the blessings that are to be bestowed upon the people of

God resulting from all that Christ has done in order to make their own calling and election sure from that point of view I have chosen thee but there are indications in our lives whereby these things are sealed upon our spirit let us take another word from Isaiah prophecy I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction now that is not to be understood that because a person comes into the furnace of affliction that automatically that is an indication that God has chosen them often though it has been the case that when God's people have been afflicted whether it is in body or mind or circumstances or in spiritual exercise God has sealed upon their spirit

I have chosen thee to we find the good

Hezekiah saying oh what like a crane or a swallow so did I chatter but as morn as a dove mine eyes fail with looking upward oh Lord I am oppressed undertake for me and then he goes on to say this what shall I say he hath both spoken unto me and himself hath done it I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul O Lord by these things men live and in all these things is the life of my spirit so will they recover me and make me to live the living he shall praise thee as I do this day the father to the children shall make known thy truth there was a seal in the heart and soul of Hezekiah that God had chosen him it was in a furnace of affliction and that furnace of affliction it burnt up all his false fleshly religion and brought him to the place where he looked to God to God alone for his salvation has God sealed us in the furnace of affliction sometimes when in that affliction we've been brought down to nothing and said I must perish my hope is perish from the Lord and that you know was from the lips of Jeremiah and he begins that third chapter by saying

I am the man that has seen affliction by the rod of his rod but he goes on in the chapter to confess it is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed because his compassions fail not they are new every morning and what shall we say I am the Lord I change not therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed you see so you can tie up the scriptures to bring this point to bear upon this word I have chosen thee chosen thee effectively chosen thee with an everlasting love chosen thee indeed in the furnace of affliction but only to lead you a little into that conformity with the sufferings of Christ being conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ now would you be able to say in some humble measure that there has been an affliction when you felt that you were having some intimacy some revelation of what Christ suffered for your soul well you know

[ 48 : 47 ] Christ's sufferings are important because they identify him with being the father's first elect God had chosen him his father had chosen Jesus Christ to be the salvation of his people I have chosen thee and so if we are identified in some small measure with a suffering saviour may we not hear God's voice I have chosen thee and because I have chosen thee it is my good pleasure that you should understand a little why I have chosen thee and this is why I have chosen thee because it was my determination to save you in the Lord with an everlasting salvation it was my determination to reveal to you that your sins were laid upon my beloved son remember in the 53rd chapter of this same prophecy we read those words we have gone all we like sheep have gone astray we have turned everyone to his own way and the Lord hath laid on him are the iniquity of us all

I have chosen thee and not cast thee away and not cast thee away now this will link up with what I have already referred to in the from the 8th chapter to the Romans when we look at the children of Israel as a nation we cannot regard them as all having grace so that we must come to this conclusion that God had chosen them and yet he had cast them away and this is very solemnly set before us in the 40 years in the wilderness when many fell and died under the curse of God but

Paul in writing to the Romans he says this God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew he will not cast away his people whom he foreknew so you see if the Lord speaks to your soul this evening and says I have not chosen thee and not cast thee away it shows to you that God foreknew you and if he foreknew you he has predestinated you unto salvation your calling is effectual your justification is real and your ultimate glorification is assured I have chosen thee and not cast thee away and be assured friends it is not possible that God could ever cast a person described in our text away

I will not alter the word that has gone out of my lips you see in the 89th psalm we have the Lord speaking in wonderful terms to start with I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever then he comes down to this my mercy will I keep from him forevermore my covenant shall stand fast with him his seed also will I make to endure forever and his throne is the days of heaven if his children forsake my law and walk not in my judgments if they break my statutes and keep not my commandments then will I visit their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him nor suffer my faithfulness to fail my covenant will I not break nor alter the thing that has gone out of my lips once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto

David thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth and called thee from the cheap men thereof and said unto thee thou art my servant I have chosen thee and not cast thee away so you see there are five positive points here which if applied to your soul pointedly the word of the Lord came expressly to me then what an assurance you have given to you and you can on this promise live and on this promise die amen