

Isaiah

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[0 : 00] I'm seeking the Lord's help. I'd like your attention this evening to the prophecy of Isaiah, reading from chapter 27 and verse 5.

Prophecy of Isaiah, chapter 27 and verse 5. For let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me.

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Scripture uses many figures. It is full of figures. The whole of the pattern of worship in the Old Testament was but what the Apostle calls a figure of the true, or what he calls the patterns of things in the heaven.

The Lord has ever used the figures of Scripture for our teaching, for our instruction, and they give a great simplicity to the Scriptures.

[1 : 29] Let me come to look at this 27th chapter. We are dealing with the subject here of the vineyard of red wine, the vineyard of the Lord.

And we read in that fifth chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah, in the figure, what that vineyard is.

It is, as the Scripture says, the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel and the men of Judah, his pleasant plant.

And we see, and we look at the Scriptures, what the figure was. Vineyard was the figure of ancient Israel.

Ancient Israel is but a type of the whole election of graves, the whole of God's dear church. These Scriptures, which run through these prophecies of the Old Testament, continually have reference to the Gospel.

[2 : 41] And they point to Christ. This evening, as we come to this text before us, we see the Lord looking after his vineyard.

The whole election of grace. And he speaks of that vineyard and he says, I, the Lord, do keep it. I will water it every moment, lest any hurt it.

I will keep it night and day. His church. This is the truth that lies here. The whole of his church is in his hands.

We may see turmoil as we do in the churches, in the lightness, the great falling away, great darkness over the land, lack of the work of the Spirit within the churches.

And yet we see that the care of God for his dear church is not lost, is not withdrawn, it abides, it remains. There always has been and always will be in this earth a remnant and the Lord has promised a water his vineyard.

[3 : 58] we know and have done in recent weeks here in our own land what the absence of the world is. The barren deserts of the world where sometimes water has not been seen for several years, we see those famines in ancient Israel and Elijah's day but we do not see them like this in our land.

When I was out in America in 2001 and I went to preach at Chateau Mr. Bohmer told me they hadn't had any rain at Chateau for two years. They relied upon the melting snows of the Rocky Mountains to bring them their water but none had fallen from the sky and we see in our churches today the Lord has promised a water but oh what a great withholding there has been what a great barrenness and deadness and dryness there is how few have any hunger and thirst after God what little fellowship there is in the bonds of the gospel we truly live and there has been in my own ministry in the last forty years evident manifest signs of this great falling away and we learn this lesson what a solemn lesson it is without the work of God's spirit without that watering then there will be a falling away a withering a dying that we are turning their back upon the truth it's only by

God's spirit in the heart in the souls his dear people who are brought by his spirit to know him and have a hunger and thirst after his righteousness it is only by the work of the spirit that we have any thirst any hunger any feeding any desire any prayerful concern any longing any longing to feel his presence to know those arms of love and mercy underneath it is a solemn day in which we are living we see many and have done who have turned their back on Zion's ways gone away from the truth with no desire married into a godless world turned their back on everything oh how every member of God's dear church is going to say inwardly as taught by his spirit why me why was I kept one should be taken another left why was I why was my heart touched perhaps in my youth and I was kept well others turned their back had no hunger no desire the word of truth never reaps them never touched their souls well the truth abides the Lord has a vineyard he has a church he has a people and he will teach them he'll work by his spirit in their hearts and as we come to our text now here is a blessed exhortation let him take hold of my strength in the scriptures we read in the 25th here of the prophecy of Isaiah that beautiful verse there has been a strength to the poor a strength to the needy and his distress a refuge from the storm a shadow from the heat when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall oh let him take hold of my strength in what circumstances in what conditions will there be a desire to take hold of

God's strength well it's too obvious for words is it not in weakness in need weakness is not something we would choose yet dependence is the path the Lord has determined to bring his people through to himself to give them to feel their own weakness and the characters that are spoken of in this 25th chapter in the fourth verse who are speaking of what the Lord has done for them there has been a strength to the poor to the needy in his distress Christ in his own day spoke of blessed of the poor in spirit what does it mean by being poor in spirit well you see the thing that will make a man poor in spirit is a realisation under the light of God's spirit in his soul of his spiritual poverty realisation of his sin and filth and guilt condemnation known in his soul there is the weakness the solemn seeds of the falling

Adam that is the weakness of God's dear people sin oh their weakness myself they say I cannot say myself I cannot keep if we are to take hold of the strength of God oh it will come from a knowledge of our own weakness the avenue to it is prayer wrestling prayer oh how a man in his weakness will pray a man in his need the greater the need the greater the felt weakness the more urgent his prayer we look at Jacob opinion on what a place it was to him his need his weakness eternity stared him in the face the deep mysteries of the providence of God were in his heart the Lord had told him to go back return to his own land and to his own people he had obeyed the commandment and now he was to reap the seeds of what he sown in his youth his brother hated him deceit oh what a solemn thing it was and now he faced it his need his weakness had anything to stand upon he hadn't anything to take to his brother except as he did send carnal gifts but there was another way open to him and that was the mercy see and he took it and went alone to his God in his poverty in his guilt and he had something which he could tell his

[11 : 33] God and that was this thou saidst when and where did the Lord say it battle strength oh there's the strength all strength of God's dear church is divine what he's given them what he's said to them what he's done in them oh if they're brought to take hold of his strength they're brought in their weakness their need the Lord brings his dear people in that pathway the strength of the poor the strength of the needy in his distress a refuge from the storm a shadow from the heat that is condemnation and the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall the fiery darts of the wicked one Satan you read in that opening verse of the 27th chapter of Leviathan in that day that is

Satan the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword will punish Leviathan the piercing servant even Leviathan that cricket servant he shall slay the dragon and in that day fury is not in me says the Lord and if the thorns against me and briars rise up in battle I'll go through them I'll burn them he has a sacred authority and command Satan cannot destroy his dear church they come in their need they have broken God's holy law they come in their condemnation the Lord has mercy upon them he teaches them brings them to himself they cry to him Jacob did he could plead Bethel I'll be with thee in all places with us whoever thou goest I'll not leave thee I brought thee again to this place and he brought him to that place but he still needed him and all how much he needed him there and so we see the strength

I'll not let thee go except thou bless me the heart of a weary weak sinner condemned by his own sin and yet clinging to the promise of his God and coming to plead with him and wrestle with Christ as he did and we read so simply and he blessed him there what strain beautiful strain fears are gone enemy at bay Satan silence his brother at peace with him for the miracle of prayer strength wrestling prayer says the dear hymn writer can wonders do bring relief in deepest strains prayer can force a barrier through iron bars and brazen gates and in that moment

Jacob knew what Moses knew on Mount Pisgah as he approached eternity the feeling experience the felt experience of the eternal everlasting arms underneath the Lord said to him regarding his strength as a prince as thy power with guard and has prevailed he'd come in his poverty in his need in his weakness a great hour of fear and temptation and he'd known what it was to draw near to his guard well the hymn writer says he that is down he'd fear no fall he that is low no pride he that is humble never shall have God to be his guy it is the Lord's work to bring his people to need bring them in deep mysterious paths as he did

Abraham when he commanded him to take Isaac to Mount Moriah what a path it was his whole religion laid upon the altar of sacrifice and yet his guard was there it was a blessing spark as he left it with Isaac and seeing the miracle of the ram caught in the thicket a sweet response to his faith of his guard God will provide a sacrifice and he did as he left it what a precious moment it was to him the Lord drew near oh the path of weakness and temptation was to be the path of mighty strength and the Lord spoke that is strength and he spoke into Abraham's heart and what he said was this in blessing blessing that terrible trial to raise a knife over

[17 : 01] Isaac the child of promise apostle Paul has a beautiful view of it counting that God was able to raise him to the dead whereof he received him in a figure in blessing I will bless thee and the Lord strengthens his dear people with sweet answers to prayer manifestations of his presence those everlasting arms underneath and they can say truly with Moses who rideth upon the heaven in thy hell his excellency upon the sky there's no sweeter moment than when in our trial our tribulation our need our poverty we walk with him in our weakness it is the antithesis of strength and the two go together we must know our weakness to know his strength and we shall pray until we're brought down and the lower we brought down the more we shall wrestle in prayer and the

Lord knows that he hears the voice of his elect says the M right he hates to put him away and the Lord does and he brings his dear people into paths where he generates prayer in their heart through their need and they take hold of his strength it is the strength of faith that they're able to trust in him it is the blessed strength of his presence with them my presence shall go with thee and I'll give thee rest it is the strength of those exceeding great and precious promises but they are but the moment and the time of the Lord drawing near and speaking into the souls of his people that voice of our God strengthens us with all might in the inner man the Lord does not leave his dear people the vineyard is his own great Lord of the vineyard that he is waiting for fruit he is waiting for the fruits of the spirit to be manifested in the hearts of his people and he brings them into these great trials that they may lean hard upon him know his presence we don't have to behold to know these blessings in Providence in our youth the Lord deals and brings us to know something of the strength of faith in one answer of prayer

I wonder how many of you young ones have got an answer that you keep secretly locked up in your heart and yet you know that the Lord has answered prayer maybe in some examination you raised your eyes to him in heaven some pathway in Providence you sought his guidance you sought a door open and his hands supply your every need it's precious you should take hold of my strength it is bringing of a sinner near to his God to wrestle at his mercy seat with him and to have an answer to prayer whether it be in Providence or in Grace to have an answer to prayer in which he knows the Lord and she knows that the Lord has heard and answered prayer and the world knows nothing of this strength nothing whatsoever these things are hidden from the eyes of the wise and prudent and real to begs there's no age limit oh there isn't

David knew his God in his youth as he fought the lion and the bear when he stood before Goliath he could look back to the Lord answering his prayer and he could see the Lord would supply his need and so he didn't need the armour of Saul he went not to battle in his own strength I come to thee in the name of the God of Israel his eyes were up to heaven and so he chose his shepherd sling and his smooth stones and the brook and the Lord directed them and was with him that was his strength his strength was not his own wisdom his strength was to keep his eyes on his God his strength was his faith he took hold by faith of his

God that he would supply his every need he looked back to the lion and the bear as he wrestled with them in his youth and prayed and pleaded with his God to help him and he could turn back and see that it was the hand of his God the Lord that delivered me he saw the answer to his prayers and now he was willing to go a third time in the name of the God of Israel and rest in him in his youth in prayer the Lord called Samuel in his youth scripture manifests these things so beautifully some are called late in life others early but the blessed truth is the same all under the teaching of God's spirit learn what strength truly is and it is to turn to God take hold of his strength to plead with him wrestle with him one of the great avenues of strength the Lord uses in the church of

[23 : 33] God is this the giving of the exceeding great and precious promises oh what a strength they are it's in our weakness that these promises make sense to us when we feel lost and forsaken at a distance from God under great clouds of temptations unable to cope alone then take hold of his strength and to listen to the giving those exceeding great and precious promises and to hear his voice and to have the promise spoken to us in our hearts I never leave thee nor forsake thee and Joshua took over from Moses Moses' death how he needed a word from the Lord to take that great office and lead ancient Israel into Palestine and he took he was given that promise as I was with Moses so will I be with thee and not leave thee nor forsake thee oh the word of God unalterable unchangeable indelibly written in the hearts of his dear children given with a divine purpose to strengthen them and not once given to be pleaded when David looked back to the lion and the bear he was strengthened to remember that the

God who had helped him hitherto would help him all his journey through he had helped him thus far he would rely on him and it was the work of God's spirit that had taught him that in his youth he was to go through a long life and as we read in the last verse of the 72nd psalm the prayers of Jesse the son of David are ending many were his sorrows bitter were his falls deep was his darkness the Lord never left him we know the prayer that he put up to God though my hands be not so with God yet as he made with me an everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure though he make it not to grow chastening that was the work of the spirit in his heart humbling the Lord dealing to teach

Moses as he stood on Pisgah feeling those everlasting arms underneath yet there was a balancing the chastening hand of his God would not allow him to enter the promised land or have the Lord deal what a blessed mercy it is if we are in his hand being doubted by him and if we are profiting from his dealings with us but our text goes on let him take hold of my strength that he may make peace with me and you see the connection between these two words strength and peace oh how sin separates between a sinner and his God the antithesis of peace is fear condemnation darkness temptation but when the Lord comes over those mountains of sin and darkness and guilt and condemnation then we enter into the experience of what the apostle

Paul speaks of in his letter to the Romans there is therefore now another day has come there is therefore now there was there has been but there is therefore now no condemnation it's been a move peace and how blessed that is when God comes to his dear people and these two things go together when he brings peace into the soul through his precious blood and guilt and fear are removed then what peace flows in Christ's blood is spoken of in scripture as the peace speaking blood of Christ does it mean anything to you do you know anything of the peace you mystified by it him writer says the streams on earth

I've tasted what did he taste in I believe every visit of Christ to his soul every precious word blessed to his heart whether it be in the reading of the scriptures when the Lord applies the truth from time to time whether it be under the ministry of his holy word through the lips of his sent servants whether it be in the singing of the praises of the saints of God when the Lord draws near when he applies his word he comes himself as peace when his presence is known broken and a contrite heart for the apostle Peter was the avenue to peace peace the Lord

[29 : 44] Jesus Christ when here on earth spoke of this peace as he was to leave his disciples at the last supper he said to them my peace beautiful words my peace peace he was the God of peace it was his peace he was about to bring it to pass to his death upon the cross he was to bring peace between poor sinners and their God as he bore their sin fulfilled God's holy law on their behalf and imputed them his spotless righteousness and applied his precious blood to their hearts the strength of God's dear church is when she is brought out of all condemnation brought out of all fear and temptation and walks in the light of his countenance and knows something of his love and mercy his grace and enters into the peace of

God which passes all understanding and that peace the streams on earth I've tasted more deep I'll drink above that is the peace of heaven eternal peace but here we see through a glass dark we have sips and forties do anything about it there's something blessed about the visit of Christ to our soul a cry an answer that we can say there's none like unto God of Yeshua none like unto him who writheth upon the heaven in thy hell we've known it and it's by his excellency upon the sky shall we trust him in the future shall we trust him with that which we have said is impossible but with

God all things are possible what is that impossibility in your life well he will bring it to power he will indeed give you strength to go forward and to venture and in that venturing all to know peace because dear saints as they draw near their journey's end often all their lifetime subject to bondage through fear of death know the peace in the valley of the shadow of death yea though I walk said David through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil why for thou art with me I have thy presence I have thy approbation sin has been removed guilt has been taken away condemnation is gone and I walking in the peace of God we've seen it and all desire it for ourselves we might know this peace and the verse goes on very sweetly let him take hold of my strength that he may make peace with me and then this and he shall make peace with me oh has it all brought you into the sweet experience of what lies here peace with God through our

Lord Jesus Christ and the certainty of it he shall make peace with me the Lord brings his dear people to his mercy seat poor blind naked broken and they make peace with him and all there is peace between God and their soul him right he says when peace like a river flows over my soul then it is we can say it is well oh the peace of faith of a dear woman when Elisha asked her is it well with thee is it well with the child it is well peace faith was given to rest in Christ the Lord has eternal purposes he intends to bring his church to glory to be with him he will give them foretaste peace here below one day he will bring them into the peace of God they shall a certainty they will make peace with their

God through taking hold of strength of his dear son in his finished work and vicarious sacrifice on Calvary's cross and in the application of that precious blood there will be peace between their souls and their God and they will know it here below streams on earth and they'll be prepared and ready so I may speak very reverently to appreciate it above to enter into the full blessedness of it in glory who among you tonight knows what I'm preaching about who has known this peace who has known those everlasting arms underneath who has known this strength takes away all fear it takes away all weakness faith is given as James

[36 : 14] Montgomery wrote in his lovely hymn faith in the only sacrifice that did force sin at home to cast our eyes to fix our hopes on Christ on Christ alone and in that same hymn he says this though dust and ashes that's weakness in thy sight we may we must draw near there's his mercy to draw near to prayer hearing a prayer answering God we know that he hears us because he grants us those things we ask of him and the cry of his dear people is very simple lord help me you cried it have you known his presence to appear on your behalf to speak into your circumstances and needs into your soul spiritually and providentially oh then the simplicity of this truth it's in his vineyard in his church amongst his dear people that these things are sweetly known let him take hold of my strength that he may make peace with me and he shall make peace with me and he'll make peace with his

God in one way and one alone and that is in Christ the great intercessor mediator high priest of his dear church as the poor sinner is brought to be justified by faith in Jesus Christ and to know his imputed righteousness so they will be able to say I'm clean just God I'm clean and Jesus words to them will be this ear clean through the word that I have spoken unto you Amen