

# Isaiah (Quality: Average)

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Date: 24 July 1994

Preacher: Buss, Charles (1913-1997)

- [ 0 : 00 ] I am alive, and I am alive, and I am alive, and I am alive.  
I am alive, and I am alive, and I am alive.  
I will direct you to a word in the prophecy of Isaiah, chapter 54, and we read verses 7 and 8. For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee.  
In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.  
Chapter 54, the prophecy of Isaiah, and verses 7 and 8. How gracious the Lord is to his dear people, especially when sometimes they may feel to be as it were forsaken alone.
- [ 1 : 56 ] And the word is spoken to such as, fear to be forsaken. And sometimes it is the experience of God's dear people that they fear to be alone.  
But what gracious words these are, and I can but pray that the Lord will make his word good in the hearts of one another, if it be his will.  
Maybe perhaps for those here in this company this afternoon, who know something what it is to feel to be forsaken alone. And how often it is when in such an experience it seems as though Satan would seek to take advantage of it, and come with his fierce temptations, and come with his fierce temptations, suggesting you are out of the secret altogether.  
And yet rightly considered surely, some of these things the Lord permits to be, to be for the benefit of his dear people, even the strength of their faith ultimately, because there is the trial of faith.  
And one aspect of the trial of faith is when a child of God feels to be alone. And yet what gracious words we have in the scriptures concerning these who sometimes feel to be much cast down by the way, and sometimes troubled by various things.
- [ 3 : 29 ] And yet God is not unmindful of the afflictions of his dear people. And what gracious comfort there is in God's word to such.  
I know such in such circumstances do need the Lord to appear for them, and to speak his word to them. Whether it be through the means of the gospel preached, or in the written word, but the secret is when the Lord is pleased to apply his gracious word.  
Now the Lord speaks here in this text. And surely there are certain things we do well to consider in what is before us.  
Indeed, in one sense we have two great contrasts. There's a small moment. Great mercies.  
A little rose. Everlasting kindness. And something of this will be entered into by God's dear people sooner or later, to a greater or less degree.
- [ 4 : 41 ] And yet you see, the Lord is with his people. Whether sometimes they may fear to be forsaken, it does not mean that they've been forsaken utterly.  
Well, we have some precious words in the Psalms concerning this. And the dear Psalmist, he pleaded, didn't he? Oh, forsake me not utterly. So dear friend, if sometimes you feel to be forsaken in the path in which you go, you're not alone in it.

You're not alone in it. Though it may be and is a path of trial, it will be a path of trial. Yet the Lord controls these things.

A great word, isn't it, in the Psalm, where the Psalmist says, My times are in thy hand. And you see, these times when one may fear to be forsaken and alone.

And it seems as though God has hid his face. These times are in God's hand. And in all God's dealings with his dear people, may we help to remember that the Lord designs to bless.

[ 5 : 55 ] He designs to profit his people. He says, I am the Lord that teaches thee to profit and leadeth in the way in which thou shouldst go. And there are profitable teachings in God's dealings with the soul.

But there is this experience then, a feeling to be forsaken. We notice in the Scriptures there were those, in those far-off days, who knew something of this experience and feared that they'd been forsaken utterly.

Poor Jacob, in his distresses, he felt so forsaken, he even thought that he would be brought down to his end in sorrow. Things seemed to go against him in so many ways.

And the poor man had to, he did express his feelings, all these things are against me. And yet how he proved that the Lord had not forsaken him. How he proved the faithfulness of God in that promise that God gave him in his early experience when he first left home.

When he left home and ventured forth, not knowing the path before him. And how God appeared to him. In those far-off days, in the ladder set up upon the earth.

[ 7 : 15 ] And that precious promise that God gave to Jacob. But you see, there were times when this was sorely tried. And how this should remind us that God has a favour to all his dear people.

And nothing can separate them from that. But in his dealings with them, sometimes he may see fit to withdraw his favour, as it were, for the time being.

And with that purpose of trying faith, and at length to bring forth that which is so precious. You see, the trial is set forth in the scriptures like a furnace, isn't it?

And in that furnace, the dross has to be consumed. And the dear Lord sits as a refiner, as he refines his dear people.

And sometimes it may be in this way, that it seems to be a path where the Lord has forsaken. He hides his face. It is a dark and cloudy day, as it were.

[ 8 : 26 ] And yet, there is mercy in it. And it is good to notice, isn't it? Maybe as you read this, as we read this chapter down this afternoon, how the Lord does speak words of comfort to his sorrowing and grieving people.

And how he reveals himself as that covenant-keeping God. I would just remind you of those words which follow this text, just for a moment, where the Lord says this, for this is as the waters of Noah unto me.

For as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee, for the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed.

But my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, have mercy upon me. Reminded of the covenant God made it to Noah.

And the Lord uses this, as it were, if I may speak reverently, to remind his dear sorrowing people of his great goodness, his wondrous faithfulness. And that he's a covenant-keeping God.

[ 9 : 46 ] And that what he's promised, he's able and will perform. But there are then these times, these seasons, when a child of God may pass through some dark and cloudy experience.

But then, surely, we have to consider it in this way. Sometimes the Lord sees fit in his dealings with his dear people to administer his chastenings.

Because we have this word for a small moment have I forsaken thee. In a little wrath have I hid my face from thee for a moment. It may be sometimes the Lord sees fit in his wisdom to hide his face.

The hymn writer enters into the pith of the matter, doesn't he? About the clouds that come, God moving in a mysterious way. And to this purpose that his love and mercy may be better known.

And we go back for a moment to Noah and after the dreadful flood and how God spake to Noah and concerning the bow in the cloud.

[ 11 : 07 ] And he said, it shall come to pass when I bring a cloud over the earth, the bow shall be seen in the cloud. And really, dear friends, if it should be helped to rightly consider what is containing this text.

And we do need help in this. In a sense, there are the clouds. The experience of being forsaken. Some experience of God's little roles.

But oh, there is the bow in the cloud, isn't there? God's great promise. Yes, his infallible word of promise to his dear people.

You see, they may fear sometimes, you may fear sometimes, when you seem to be forsaken alone, that it will be to your destruction. Satan may suggest this.

But it is not so. It is not so. God is not designed to destroy his people. He never will. That, bound up in that covenant and ordered all things insure.

[ 12 : 16 ] And God is faithful to his word. But just for a few moments, let us consider this word. For a small moment have I forsaken thee.

In a little wrath, I hid my face from thee for a moment. Now let us think of this then, in God's dealings, in a way of chastening. The text speaks about a little wrath.

Now, of course, we know parents dealing with their children, sometimes to administer, as were, a little wrath. Yes, there is anger.

The rebellious child may need some stern reproof. And God deals with his dear people in that way. And yet, as it is with parents, where the homes are rightly run, if there be chastening, it's always in love.

Yes, it's in love. It is for the children's good. And with regard to God's chastings, in whatever form they may come, it is in love.

[ 13 : 30 ] It is in love. You see, there are expressions in this chapter, which do set forth that love which exists between the Lord and his dear people.

In a very special way, in one of the previous verses, where the Lord speaks as the maker of his dear people, he says, for thy maker is thine husband, the Lord of houses, his name, and thy redeemer, the holy one of Israel.

He is completely and directly reminded, you see, to that relationship which exists between the Lord and his dear people.

And although they may feel to be like the widow forsaken alone, sometimes the church is in that experience collectively and sometimes individually. But you see, the Lord is still the husband of his dear people.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the husband of the church. The church is his bride as it were. And such is that love that nothing can quench it, nothing can separate it.

[ 14 : 42 ] So then there is the dealings of God in a chastening way. But good it is if we help to think of these things and should we come into those paths at times to realise something of God's chastening, his little rules, his forsaking, yet to realise it is in love.

Really, you know, if you turn to one of the chapters in the epistle to the Hebrews, that truth is brought out very clearly, that the Lord chastens whom he loves.

Yes, if you endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons. For what son is he whom the father chasteth not? If you be without chastisement, the word says, then you bastards are not sons.

So then, when at times there may be God's chasing hands, good it is to be helped to view this matter in the light of God's truth, it is in love. It is in love.

And yet, of course, the experience is trying. Yes, to realise the hiding of God's face. Knowing something of his little wrath, as it were, but remember the text says, little wrath, and forsaken but for a small moment.

[ 16 : 08 ] You see, what it is to take a right view of these things. You see, we mentioned Jacob just now, when the poor man was brought so low, he couldn't see any deliverance at all.

But then, the Lord had designed to manifest his favour, and to bring about such a deliverance that Jacob was at order to get overwhelmed by it.

But there are these seasons. And then sometimes, surely, are we not made to realise this? Because of our sin, we do need chasing, don't we? We're sinners, we fail much.

Yes, we need instruction, we need correction. It may come this way sometimes. So, when you try to pray, it seems as though the Lord is his face.

Yes, you may come into that experience that Jeremy Morris speaks of when he said, I cry and shout, he shut it out my prayer. But you know, Jeremy was not shut out, was he?

[ 17 : 21 ] No. Rather, he was shut in, he was shut in with the love of God. God preserved Jeremy his life was given to him as a prize, it were, amongst his enemies.

And this sets forth the great mercy that surrounds God's dear people. So then, while there may be these small moments, there may be this little wroth, notice what the Lord says, but with great mercies will I gather thee, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer.

What precious words these are. God's great mercies, oh, how can we speak of them? He said, they're great mercies, they're great sinners, aren't they?

If the Lord has opened their eyes to see a little of what we are as guilty sinners before him and what we deserve, surely his mercy is great, isn't it? And his dealings, they're great mercies.

God is a God of mercy and his mercy is great as he is great. And here the Lord kindly gives this word to his sorrowful feelings forsaken ones.

[ 18 : 49 ] But with great mercies will I gather thee. There's something very beautiful about this word. Surely it indicates how the Lord embraces his dear people, doesn't he?

Yes, with his arms everlasting love. He embraces them, each one of them. Yes, the unworthiest one. But with great mercies will I gather thee.

You see, when you fear to be forsaken, maybe sometimes you fear you're out of the way altogether. But the Lord has said this, he will gather.

Yes, he gathers you in again. Not that of course you cannot fall out of his arms as it were, let's be quite clear about that. with regard to the experience, but with great mercies will I gather thee.

All the Lord does gather his dear people. He gathers them to himself. He gathers them to the throne of his grace. He gathers them to worship him.

[ 20 : 00 ] Yes, he gathers them to implore his mercy. There's a great word Jacob was inspired by the Holy Spirit to speak it, wasn't he?

And unto him shall the gathering the people be. They're thrown to Shiloh, the Lord Jesus Christ. Unto him shall the gathering the people be.

And God in great mercy gathers his dear people. You see, he has gathered them, hasn't he? Where there's been that new birth, where the Lord has begun a good work of grace in the poor sinner's heart.

He has gathered that one. Yes, he has gathered that one from nature's darkness and death, quicker into divine life. I want to realize something in some little measure of God's great mercy.

But you see, the Lord gathers. And how this is so beautifully set forth, isn't it? In how the Lord Jesus Christ was pleased to make known his mercy and his ability to poor people here upon earth.

[ 21 : 12 ] Yes, these cast away ones, the Lord Jesus Christ gathered them in. I think of the poor man who was greatly blessed, wasn't he? He was blessed with restored sight.

And it stirred the people quite a bit about this man, and they questioned him and cross questioned him. They couldn't beat him out of the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ opened his eyes, although as yet he did not know who it was that did it.

But it is so beautiful to notice, if you read that account, they cast him out. Yes, he had to be an outcast, as it were. He couldn't join in the worship of those who professed religion.

He would outcast, they cast him out. You see, he confessed the Lord Jesus Christ. And in those days, such as were, through the great mercy of God brought to confess the Lord Jesus Christ, they were cast out by the religious people.

But the point is this, isn't it? The Lord Jesus Christ didn't cast him out. No, how the Lord Jesus Christ indeed gathered him, didn't he?

[ 22 : 31 ] You read that little account in John's Gospel. And how the Lord Jesus Christ visited that dear man after he'd been cast out and revealed himself to him.

Yes, and there was a time of worship then. You read how that dear man worshipped. Yes, he was blessed with faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ revealed himself to.

I that speak unto thee am he? And he worshipped. But the point is this, you see, he was cast out by the religious people, but the Lord Jesus Christ didn't cast him out.

How it does remind us, doesn't it, that beautiful word, which fell from the Lord Jesus Christ's lips. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me. There's a gathering you see. And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

In no wise cast out. It may sometimes be in your own experience, you may fear that, especially when it seems as though the Lord has forsaken you.

[ 23 : 41 ] You fear you will be cast out. But God's word remains. The word of the Lord Jesus Christ is an everlasting word. Him that cometh I will in no wise cast out.

But with great mercies will I gather thee. Oh dear friends, what a great mercy the Lord does gather. He hates to put away.

He will not turn away these sorrowing ones, these tempted ones. These were made to realise something of their unworthiness and sometimes have to come confessing their many sins under his chastening hand.

He will cast them away. There is great mercies. Yes, there are great mercies. Great mercies to great sinners. And they spring from God's great salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ.

I think of the dear psalmist David, you know, sometimes he tend to make a mistake, he numbered the people. And he brought trouble on his head.

[ 24 : 56 ] And he was given three things to choose from. The prophet came as the Lord's messenger, a very solemn time for David. And the upshot of it was this.

David said, let me fall into the hands of the Lord. Not into the hands of man, but let me fall into the hands of the Lord, for very greater his mercies. Or how good it is if sometimes we have some realisation of God's mercy as being such great mercy.

If you feel sometimes indeed to be a great sinner, then you realise that any evidence of his favour springs from his great mercy. And so then there is this precious promise that God has left upon record in his word to his dear people for their comfort in the midst of their afflictions and their sorrows and their fierce temptations.

But with great mercy will I gather thee. And then again it's as though the Lord confirms his word, doesn't he? But with everlasting kindness when I have mercy on thee saith the Lord thy redeemer.

What wonderful words these are. You think of this everlasting kindness flowing from God's everlasting love. The kindness which far exceeds any kindness that can be shown from one creature to another.

[ 26 : 31 ] And indeed between the Lord's dear people together good it is when there's that kindness shown in one way and another and a loving forgiving spirit.

But think of this everlasting kindness. Flow of everlasting love. Yes. Flows from that covenant you see.

And dear David he realised something the sweetness of that didn't he? When he took stock of his life as it were and he looked back over his pathway and he had to come to this he said although my house be not so with God there were many things to remind dear David that there were the transgressions there were the chastings yes how David was chastening his family wasn't he?

But he said this although my house be not so with God yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant ordered in all things ensure well dear man had a taste you see of God's everlasting kindness that flowed from that covenant and he could see the ordering of it he could see the sureness of it there no ifs and maybes that covenant is a sure covenant and God is a covenant God and that kindness that flows in his grace toward his dear people is indeed everlasting kindness you see the effects of it will be everlasting doesn't mean that the poor pilgrims he journeys on always will enjoy the sweet experience of it felt in his heart but he doesn't overturn the truth good it is dear friends if sometimes you have just a sip of the

Lord's kindness towards you his great mercy his condescending love his wondrous forgiveness but then you have to journey on still in the battle as it were still having to run the race with patience but you see there is this wonderful fullness that dwells in the Lord Jesus Christ which flows to his dear people yes great mercy is everlasting kindness that's a beautiful word wasn't it God spoke to dear Jeremiah he said yea I love thee with everlasting love and therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee yes drawn thee I'll be thankful poor sinner if ever you felt little of that drawing upon your soul for the Lord to draw you and really you know we need drawing don't we we need much drawing we have to confess we are held fast by many things many earthly things many carnal things and we do need drawing therefore this kindness everlasting kindness this drawing is a powerful drawing because the Lord gathers he gathers his people to himself yes and it is through his great mercy well the Lord spoke this word through the prophet it's recorded in this book of the prophet Isaiah and it is to God's dear people down through the generations although it's given to Isaiah those many years ago yet still you see the

[ 30 : 31 ] Lord is the same God times change the world changes circumstances change we pass through changing experiences but with him there is no change there is no change although the Lord's dealings with you sometimes may seem to be diverse as it were there may be those and will be those things that reason can understand but we're not meant to understand what a good thing it is if we are given grace to humble ourselves under it it's a great word isn't it in the scripture in the light of God's dealings humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time over that grace to humble ourselves under him the promise you see of being exalted but meanwhile along the journey in the face of sometimes fierce temptations difficulties that come in the way maybe perhaps afflictions sometimes sorrows burdens griefs nothing can overturn this great fact in what the Lord is and how he is pleased to deal with his dear people his mercies are great yes great mercies or when you think of what the Lord

Jesus Christ has done for his dear people he through whom those mercies flow he being who he is that saviour and a great one he who is mighty to save his mercy is great it comes right down to a poor sinner in his low estate yes in his felt guiltiness his mercy is great yes you see pardoning mercies are great aren't they because of our many sins God's preserving mercy is great in spite of the dangers that may possess us in the way his shielding mercy is great in spite of the fact that Satan is a wily foe but you see such are the great mercies of God that there is shelter there is protection the Lord affords his dear people so then we have these two aspects of God's dealings these moments of forsaking this little wrath and how can it be like that well the dear

Lord Jesus Christ when he suffered for sinners upon the cross he endured the fierce wrath of divine justice his father as he stood in the place of his dear people and suffered for their sins you go back into the chapter before a wonderful setting forth of the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ and he experienced wrath for sin because he was made sin for his dear people although he knew no sin and when you think of forsaking dear friends you may feel troubled sometimes because it seems as though the Lord has forsaken you but it may well be that you have to follow in the steps of the Lord Jesus Christ he knew what it was to be forsaken far more than any of his dear people could ever experience you think of those piercing words uttered from the cross my God my God why has they forsaken me well

God the Father hid his face for those moments because the Lord Jesus Christ has made sin but then he paid the penalty paid the price made a way whereby this mercy this great mercy should flow to his dear people and seeing he endured that wrath of divine justice when the Lord deals with his dear people and there may be sometimes those reproofs and corrections it is in a little wrath just a little wrath much love a little wrath and it is alongside this great mercies everlasting kindness when I have mercy on the set the Lord thy redeemer how this clinches the matter doesn't it set the Lord thy redeemer

God speaks this word the Lord speaks this word as the redeemer of his dear people God revealed in the person of his dear son the Lord Jesus Christ he has a word he has a word to comfort a word to strengthen and what a mercy it is if sometimes you may be helped to plead God's word before him at the throne of grace it is one of those provisions the Lord has made for his dear people they can come before him and plead what he has promised and when perhaps you may feel to be forsaken you can plead his great mercy when it may perhaps you feel and you deserve a little wrath yet you can plead with regard to his everlasting kindness yes he is that one who sticketh closer than a brother a great word wasn't it isn't it in the Proverbs he that hath friends must show himself friendly and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother and the Lord Jesus

[ 36 : 32 ] Christ is that friend and he sticks close to his dear people and he will bring them close to him though sometimes they may stray in their waywardness yet he restores for a small moment have I forsaken thee but with great mercies will I gather thee in a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment but with a lasting kindness will I have mercy on thee said the Lord thy redeemer and it will need an eternity won't it to render praise for his great mercy amen unity amen and We conclude this service by singing hymn number 1108.

The tune is Albano 847. Hymn number 1108.

Breathe from the gentle south, O Lord, and cheer me from the north. Blow on the treasures of thy word, and call the spices forth.

I seem forsaken and alone, I hear the lion roar, and every door is shut but one, and that is mercy's door.

Hymn number 1108. Hymn number 1108. et puis uh offer s The Thank you.

[ 39 : 09 ] God bless you.

God bless you.

God bless you.

God bless you.