

Isaiah

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[0 : 0 0] seeking the Lord's help I direct your attention to the prophecy of Isaiah and the 45th chapter and the second and third verses the 45th chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah and the second and third verses I will go before thee and and make the crooked places straight I will break in pieces the gates of brass and cut in sunder the bars of iron and I will give thee the treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places thou mayest know that I the Lord which call thee by thy name and the God of Israel I will go before thee and make the crooked places straight I will break in pieces the gates of brass and cut in sunder the bars of iron and I will give thee the treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places thou mayest know that I the Lord which call thee by thy name and the God of Israel the Lord is speaking here as we said when we preached from this text last Wednesday of Cyrus but you know there is much gospel teaching lying here and this word has abode with us over the week and still abides with us our mind was led to the voice of him that cries in the wilderness prepare ye the way of the Lord make straight in the desert a highway for our God every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill shall be made low and the crooked shall be made straight and the rough places plain that that vested gospel message which John brought as he heralded the coming of Jesus here below he spoke of the mighty work of Christ in this world and the activity of God in the the finished work of his dear son in conforming his dear people to his image and we have such a parallel here that we do not need to comment the crooked shall be made straight and the rough places plain and our mind was led to that 107th psalm and the identical words that are used there the bars of iron those solemn bars of iron that bind the fallen and how the Lord would break their bands in sunder and those that are bound in affliction and iron and we read he has broken the

gates of brass and cut the gates of brass and cut the bars of iron in sunder and it is the same blessed word here and we would like to look tonight a little at the blessed work of God that is spoken of here our mind has rested upon this word and we spoke last Wednesday from the divine purposes of God in his everlasting covenant the incarnation of covenant the incarnation of Christ how he went before his dear people in this earth and the path that he walked but we would like to speak tonight somewhat of the nature of the work of God personally in going before his dear people in their peculiar path individually going ahead of them and as it were preparing the way speaking in their hearts speaking in their hearts precious promises which is what this word is we have our ordered steps the steps of God's dear people are ordered they have a cup it is put into their hands the contents are not known they are hidden and yet they are to be drunk there is a path which they are going to walk in that one hundred it is very blessedly of it they are taught and brought to be wilderness wanderer then the Lord will lead them forth by his right hand in those ordained steps in that cup there is a mixture they will drink it it will be those things which have been are bitter and there are bitter and there are bitter and there are those things which are sweet they are gloriously by God mingled together the writer speaks of it so sweetly regarding the sorrows of the child of God there is something secret sweetens all and so it is it lies in this beautiful word God in promise speaking remarkably to his poor fallen dust whom he has loved and for whom he came into this world to die he says regarding the steps of the flock that he's gone before them gone before them i will go before thee and he died he gives to his dear church sacred promises applied with heavenly power in their hearts and those promises are to be used there to be rested upon dear old Jacob when he came to the end of his days to bless

Ephraim and Manasseh he lent upon his star and oh the sacred nature of that star and oh the sacred nature of that star it was his God who had gone before him all his life and as he looked back over life's journey he could see did all his fallen condition all the ruins of his fallen nature sovereign grace everlasting loving kindness had attended his footsteps and the Lord had in going before him enabled him to stand he gone before him and prepared him to stand and prepared the way watched over him and kept him the way watched over him and kept him the way the way the way the way was full of sorrow there were times when he couldn't see that his God had gone before him he couldn't see in the bitter cup of the loss of Joseph that his God was going before him he passed very wrong judgment all these things are against me when Benjamin was touched when Benjamin was touched his heart bled and yet when the wagons came and he knew that Joseph was yet alive he had that blessed sight that his God had gone before him and that he had prepared the bounds of Egypt for his sustenance and all he could say was it's enough and you know dear Joseph what a sight we have that dear man of God and how he couldn't comprehend the path he walked out and he was a long path a bitter car a path which he couldn't see the beauty of these words

I thought in the vestry here tonight that word in the Psalms until the word of the Lord came that is openly in sight in its fulfillment the word of the Lord tried him oh it lay in his heart as the great trial of his faith I wonder what you are carrying tonight that the Lord has laid in your heart that has not yet come out into the fullness of it that you can see the fulfillment of it you are you are waiting you are waiting Joseph waited until the time that his word came the word of the Lord tried him it lay with weight upon his heart that he had such a sight that his brethren would bow down before him it was the divine revelation of his God in his soul written there and the Lord's words were sacredly true

I'll go before thee and here lay these crooked things and only God can make the crooked straight it is a divine work and he can and he did and he did in these dear men's lives there was so much they couldn't understand so much unbelief Joseph's feet were in iron why how he attempted to get the butler to remember him but he couldn't couldn't remember him couldn't remember him the hand of God was in it I'll go before thee the mystery of God going before his dear people why through darks and paths says the dear hymn writer we go we may know no reason yet beautiful word yet we shall hereafter know each in his due season and the Lord goes before his people in most solemn ways so definitely he does it in the makap is that solemn mixture there is a bitterness and yet he's in it he's in it he's there he's in control there is no chance with him and out of it he will bring that which is to his honour and to his glory and to the profit of the souls of his dear people his ways are past finding out

[13 : 32] I've long looked at dear Cooper's hymn when he wrote God moves there's so much truth in that God moves he does we cannot trace him in a mysterious way his wonders to perform he moved in the life of his dear servant Paul and gave him such a solemn thorn in the flesh and he moved to his honour and glory he did indeed and he laid affliction on his loins the dear man of God could not see it was the Lord going before him but it was to bring forth from his heart that sacred submission to his will to teach him in his soul to take up his cross and to follow his and to follow his redeemer and to bow under his weakness and to know the presence of his God in a way of faith which he could never have known without that come to come to come to that blessed place of divine sanctification most glory most gladly therefore will I glory in mine infirmity the power of Christ might rest upon me when I'm weak all the teaching the heavenly heavenly teaching when I'm weak the apostle was in the hands of his God he gone before him in his sovereign will in his footsteps in his life in his life and he brought him in the miracle of it to acquiesce wholeheartedly with the cross which the Lord had laid upon him the trial of your faith being much more precious than gold that perishes may be found unto honour and glory and praise at the appearing of Jesus Christ all have he the Lord will sovereignly bring his dear people as he goes before them to have precious fellowship with him in his sufferings and we would notice this

I will go before thee it is the will of God for the good of his dear church that he leads them in such paths to teach them and the bitterness of the pit into which Joseph was thrown and the crushing and the crushing sense of grief as he endured the hatred of his brethren and was sold as a slave into Egypt and the bitter path he walked and the grace of God that was manifest in him when he stood against part of his wife and went to prison for her and when he attempted to put his hand to his release and we read of those two full years oh how long they were they as it were lingered in his sorrows and sufferings their end was so distant and he waited and watched and the Lord had gone before him wasn't absent from him

I'll go before thee and here he endured the crooked all how crooked the way was and yet there was to be an end the work of sanctification was to be accomplished he was to be brought to that blessed place where he saw his brethren bow down before him and he had a sight of his God and the going before him the word that the Lord had so divinely spoken in his heart was brought to a precious fulfillment before his very eyes went out and went broken the goodness of his God flooded into his heart he saw him then he saw the beauty of this truth

I'll go before thee God moves dear Cooper after he penned those words within a very short while went into ten years of years of affliction darkness mourning the absence of his God yet how precious was the truth that he penned in the blessing it has been made to his dear people the clouds the clouds ye so much dread are big with mercy and shall break in blessings on your hair when the Lord speaks such a promise to the hearts of his dear people they may well have to wait wait as Joseph did many years to see its fulfillment until the time that his word came the word of the Lord tried him but oh how blessed every valley shall be exalted you have a valley in your life today and every hill shall be made low crooked there it is the crook in your lot which God has placed there shall be made straight and the rough place is plain and the glory of the Lord you will see that dear Joseph as he leant on his staff and he blessed Ephraim and Manasseh had a sight in his dying hours of the glory of the Lord revealed to him and he spoke so blessedly regarding the lads the Lord that fed me all my life long and so on and this the Lord that redeemed me from all evil bless the lads dear man in the feebleness of age and infirmity he had such a sight of those words he had given utterance to when he said it's enough he could see the good hand of his God that had attended his footsteps all his days and the precious fulfilment of the promise which God had given him at Bethel in which he had so had clouds come over him

I'll be with thee in the midst of his rebellion and sin all the Lord had to deal with him what a path he had to walk and yet I'll be with thee in all places whithersoever thou goest he had a precious battle never to be forgotten and when he came to the end of his days he could look back and he could see the beauty of the truth I go before thee the word of God tried and fulfilled in his life the promise pleaded and the promise fulfilled in all its strength as the word of God to him I'll go before thee and he could see how the Lord had made the crooked places straight and as we read in the words that were spoken regarding

[23 : 06] John the Baptist and Christ the rough places plain there was an end there was a fulfillment there was a glorying and a bowing down before the Lord there was true worship in the heart of Joseph when he went out and went he had such a sight of the glory of the Lord and so did his dear father when he said the Lord that redeemed me he could speak of the things that he had tasted of the good word of life he could look back to Jabbok where his God had heard his prayer and where he had blessed him and anointed him he had ever carried the mark of it the mark of it in his thigh as he halted yet the sacred savour of the presence and anointing of his God was nothing his weakness was nothing to be compared to the precious nature of the blessing which had come at the time that that thorn in the flesh had been given to him

I'll go before thee and make the crooked places straight and we would notice in our text here tonight the Lord speaking I'll go I'll make the crooked places straight I'll break in pieces the gates of brass and cutting under the bars of iron I will give thee the treasures and the hidden riches and then this what was the purpose of it that thou mayest know all that heavenly knowledge given by God in the solemn paths that are spoken of here in the paths of suffering and sorrow and temptation and weakness and infirmity and the cross thou mayest know all God's dear church have such a precious knowledge but it is acquired in most solemn paths paths paths of suffering paths of temptation paths which feel as though they are in prison shut up and cannot come forth there is in the dealings of his dear church with their redeemer there is a solemn path to be walked out it is a God ordained path we see it in God's dear people in the scriptures oh how they walked through such bitter sorrows bitter cuts were in their hands and yet out of it as we see with Jacob that thou mayest know he could speak a divine knowledge of his God that he had acquired his faithfulness his mercy his compassion ever present help in time of need he would never have could never have known him in any other way except in the path which the Lord had ordered for him ordered for him and he had gone before him why? that thou mayest know there was to be a precious knowledge of his God that thou mayest know that I the Lord which do what?

call thee all the activity the work of God in the hearts of his dear people it is to give them it is to give them a precious knowledge it is the very foundation of their hope they mayest know and the God of Israel the God of the whole Israel of God their God his dear church is to know him as she walks here below his everlasting arms underneath are to be feelingly known she has to come forth out of tribulation with this precious knowledge that there is none like unto the God of Jeshua who rideth upon the heaven in thy health and in his excellency upon the sky the eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms she has a terrible foe she has indeed a vile enemy that would mock her and torment her she listens to him but oh how her God watches over her he will not leave her nor forsake her he will move and work in her heart the furnace to soften to mellow to melt to subdue to bring into precious submission that his mercy seems it is the Lord said dear Eli let him do what seemeth in good and what has the Lord done almost solemn it is the Lord the fire did its work and we see it in the lives of the Lord's dear church there is so much solemn work that lies in the

Lord's purpose to conform his dear people to the image of his dear son they have to do what the apostle did learn well the truth when I'm weak then I'm strong they have to be empty from vessel to vessel their strength has to be taken away they have to pass through bitter furnaces and trials and in them they learn the blessed nature of the work of their God I'll go before thee they can speak of it they can see in looking back how their God did go before them how in the heat of their afflictions he spoke a word in their heart and strengthened them to stand they can see how he did make the crooked places straight and the rough places plain how he did go before them and do it on their behalf they could never have done it how could dear

Joseph have made his path straight he couldn't for God dear in a moment and what did he do why he remarkably raised him out of his presence he did indeed there was haste solemn haste when those two full years were over and the Lord's purposes were accomplished the clouds ye so much dread the Lord's people do dread the pathway but oh how they live to see they mercy big with mercy and what do they do they break in blessings on their head oh when his dear church is brought to look back over the way there is so much in that word thou shalt remember it is the goodness of the Lord in looking back to see his dear hand

[32 : 22] Jacob remembered as he leant upon his staff in his dying hour the good hand of his God which he hadn't seen in the heat of the furnace but when the Lord brought him to look back and to remember all how he could trace can you tonight perhaps you can't perhaps you're in the heat of it in the sick of it in my own pathway now there is a looking back and there is a sight of the sweetness of that word the cloudy so much dread a big with mercy there has been a sight of it and the breaking of them as they broke with Jacob and Joseph they broke in a sweet way as they met and they had such a sight and Jacob had such a sight that Joseph had been sent of God before them to be their saviour and Joseph is such a blessed type of Christ saviour of his dear church oh how the Lord Jesus has gone before his dear church beautiful words it is finished it is the work is done and oh how the Lord brings it to pass in each generation his finished work and we cannot comprehend in looking back each heart knowing its own bitterness and the stranger and how true this is intermedalist not their way they don't that cup is yours not mine mine is mine not yours and we drink it and we know it but oh what a blessed mercy if it in the hands of our God is the means of us entering in to this sacred truth to have a sight of him breaking in pieces those gates of brass those solemn bars of iron and giving us what is spoken of here as the treasures of darkness hidden these things from the eyes of the wise and prudent they are the treasures of darkness revealed to both they are indeed there is such a divine teaching in it and there is such a beauty in it here it is all of God

I will go I will break I will give this is his work that thou mayest know it is to know the God of Israel as our God and one day when the work of grace our grace is accomplished to worship him in heaven and to have something to worship him for unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood why how the cup that he puts into our hands is the very means of bringing us to a sight of our own heart that lovely hymn made so precious to me many years ago endless blessings on the lamb broken hearts repeat the same his dear heart was broken too when he bore the curse for you your dread crimes once pierced his heart sank his soul in fearful smart but his sin atoning blood now procures your peace with God this dear church in the heat of the furnace cannot comprehend cannot understand full of doubts and fears deep terrible fears shaken as a reed in the wind we see it in his dear people dear John the Baptist trace his footsteps trace the solemnity of it behold the lamb of God that take it away the sin of the world what a sight he had of what happened art thou he that should come will it be for another that was his dying hour all the glorious revelation of God the arms of love and mercy around a poor weak fallen man yet

Jesus said there was none greater than John the Baptist but look at him and the mercy of Christ as he dealt with him in his temptation and in his darkness and in his fear of death and in his deep waters yet never to leave him oh the teaching that lies here go before thee he did and make thee crooked places straight I'll break in pieces the gates of brass cutting sunder the bars of iron solemn bars of temptation and suffering we see it in all his dear saints the Lord does it who can do it except him but he does it and I'll give thee and I'll give thee precious treasure the hidden treasures of darkness the treasures of darkness and the hidden riches of secret places yes not to be known by any except his living family the hidden riches of secret places the hidden riches of secret places they're they're in the heart of his dear people kept there in secret what he has spoken what he has done what he has said in their souls they're theirs and the Lord has given it to them it's their special treasure never to be taken away never never it's given for eternity never to be taken from them but it's precious very precious the work of God in the souls of his dear church that thou mayest know that I the Lord which call thee by thy name am the God of Israel for Jacob my servant's sake and Israel mine elect

I have even called thee by thy name I have surnamed thee though thou hast not known me in that beautiful word my glory will I not give to another no he won't O may you be enabled to go forth as we read in the book of the Song of Solomon why should I be as one that turneth aside by thine handmaidens if thou knowest not go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock and feed thy kids beside these shepherds' tents the precious path the footsteps of the flock what I have preached tonight has been the footsteps of the flock in all generations go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock it is a path of the Lord's dealings called out to follow him in a path in which they walk solemnly ordained footsteps and in which they are brought into the possession of a most precious knowledge that thou mayest know dear Paul said I know in whom I have belief

I have belief oh but that doesn't reveal the solemn path he was called to walk in to come to that place the stoning at Antioch and all that he reveals in his letter to the church at Corinth what he suffered for Christ's sake and in it he came to what he said in his journey to Rome there stood beside me this night oh how he knew his God and he knew him to a dying hour and he came in the sweet enjoyment of it to say it's laid up for me it's the path of the flock a crown of righteousness Amen