

# Isaiah

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 19 January 1986

Preacher: Cornwell, Peter

[ 0 : 00 ] As the Lord may be pleased to help me, I would ask your direction to Isaiah 54, reading verses 7 and 8.

Isaiah 54, 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.

My friends, we have a wonderful word here.

[ 1 : 15 ] It is a word with authority and power. It is a pathway which is distressing, especially when we enter into the first part of it.

For a small moment have I forsaken thee. That's one of the most painful things that any child of God, or one who you may not like that expression, a child of God.

You may not feel you can come in with it. But my friends, maybe you are one that is trying to fear the Lord, that is trying to walk in his paths, is trying to obey him, that is one.

Are you one that is seeking him, waiting for him? My friends, one thing I know is that this speaks of those that know the Lord, those that have heard his voice.

I'm not setting any standard here. Any experience that must be reached. All I'm saying is, there must be, there will have been, a beginning.

[ 3 : 21 ] A beginning of the work of grace. Because, my friends, if the Lord hides his self, if he forsakes one for a moment, for a small moment have I forsaken thee, I say, when this comes about, there must have been some experience, some knowledge of the Lord in the heart.

If we have never seen a person, we don't know them, and we never miss them.

So it is, in spirit. If we do not know the Lord, if we have never heard his voice, then, my friends, we will not miss him.

But if he's begun the world, if he's begun to break down the strongholds of Satan, if he's begun to make his mercy attracted to us, then, my friends, we shall know something when the Lord withdraws.

If he's begun the work, there will be power. When we come to the word of God, when we come into the services of his house, there will be times, I don't say every time, there will be times when the blessed Lord's presence and power will be felt and known in your heart.

[ 5 : 32 ] That is where he has begun the work. And if we don't know anything of those times, if we have no spots and places where the Lord has appeared, where he has touched us, where he has pricked our hearts, I say, if we haven't any of these spots and places, we don't know anything of him.

And we won't miss him. We wouldn't know anything about his withdrawing. But when he has begun the work, when there's a little here and a little there that takes place, when there's a little of that divine power felt and known in the heart, when we are the substance of the effects, when we are broken down, when we are humbled, when we are touched by his word, then I say, my friends, we will know when the Lord withdraws.

We will know when we feel to be forsaken. And there will be many other things that will bring this about in our hearts in realising that the Lord has forsaken us.

not for good. That cannot be. If the Lord's begun his work in our hearts, my friends, he'll carry it on.

But there'll be times when he will forsake us. There'll be times when he hides his face from us.

[ 7 : 38 ] Sometimes it will be because he has grieved with us on account of our sin. But that is not always the case why he hides his face.

Sometimes he hides his face to prove us, to try us, to see whether we will still follow him, whether we will obey him, whether we will trust in him.

And so, my friends, this is the test. There will be these times when we are called to walk this way.

When the Lord declares himself that for a small moment have I forsaken thee. For a small moment.

Or you might say, and I can well understand, I'm with you. These small moments seem to be eternities.

[ 8 : 56 ] There's so many doubts. There's so many fears. There's so many evidences we find within. And not only that, Satan also will produce them as to why the Lord should not return.

Why he should never come to us again. But that isn't the Lord's way. The Lord is a merciful God.

And he will complete that which he has begun. Oh, what a mercy it is that the Lord is not as man.

Why? Every one of us have offended our God. My friends, there are many instances recorded in the word of God of those whom the Lord loved that grieved the Lord.

they had to pass under the rod for it. They were chastised for it.

[ 10 : 14 ] So will you and I be. And some of us know something about it, don't we? It is our sin that has caused us to be chastened.

And my friends, sometimes we are rebellious, we are kicking. Sometimes we are humbled under his mighty hand.

But my friends, the Lord will carry on that work. for a small moment have I forsaken thee.

For a small moment. We mustn't look at it literally as moments of time. These moments, my friends, are, could be hours, days, weeks, months, months, or even years.

But my friends, they are moments compared with eternity, absolutely moments. And you know as well as I do that an hour seems a very long time when we dearly are seeking for someone and cannot find them.

[ 12 : 00 ] Even naturally, but much more spiritually, when our case is desperate, when we are at the ends of the earth and are crying unto him, pleading with him, seeking him, and cannot find him.

why, the hours seem an eternity, but for a small moment have I forsaken thee.

Only a small moment. Why does the Lord do it, you might say? If he loves his children like he does, why does he forsake them for a small moment?

My friends, it is in his love. Yes it is, it's in his love. He is going to be the one thing needful.

He is going to be the altogether lovely. He is going to be the pearl of great price. And therefore, my friends, we've got to come to that place where we urgently need him, where we cannot take any denial, where we shall be found along with Jacob, wrestling.

[ 13 : 42 ] As he wrestled with the angel of the Lord, the Lord said, let me go. He said, I will not let thee go except thou bless me.

Ah, my friends, was he denied? No, he wasn't. Neither will you, me.

my friends, if we are found, along with Jacob, wrestling, waiting, waiting for the Lord's appearing, then I say, my friends, he will come.

It may not be when you and I think he'll come, but he'll come. He comes when he sees best. He waits to be gracious, but he knows the best time to come.

For a small moment have I forsaken thee. my friends, my friends, there's another thing, perhaps another way of looking at it.

[ 15 : 10 ] I hadn't thought of it, but looking at it from a different angle, we have the dying thief.

there were two dying thieves, but I speak now of the one that was a chosen vessel unto the Lord. As far as we know, he went through his life.

He came to that the end of the journey. He was suffering on the cross. He was in agony, dying, dying, because of his sin, and there was no repentance.

There could be no repentance until the Lord begun the work, and the Lord begun it.

yes, the Lord broke through the barriers. He humbled him. He brought him to repentance.

[ 16 : 29 ] He brought him to cry for mercy, and he found it. Now, for a small moment, have I forsaken thee.

there may have been others that knew him. There may have been others that knew the Lord, connected with him.

They may have looked upon him. Ah, for a small moment, have I forsaken thee.

in one sense, my friends, he'd been forsaken all his life until that time.

But, he was a chosen vessel unto the Lord, and the Lord must and will begin the work, and he will save, and he did.

[ 17 : 38 ] And so it applies to every one of his chosen people. There's no ifs.

There's no doubts. There's no ifs. Ah, but you, if you do this, if you believe, if you and so and so and so and so, my friends, there's no part for the flesh to play whatever.

It's the work of grace. By grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. God. And so the Lord must begin and the Lord will end the work of grace.

And every one of his chosen people will pass through this experience sooner or later in their life, even if it's at the end as it was with the dying thief.

Ah, my friends, there's not one that can be left behind. The Lord Jesus, I think, in his prayer in the 17th of John declared that not a hoof is left behind, and that was in reference to his chosen people.

[ 19 : 16 ] What a mercy it is. And, my friends, it can be no other way, because Jesus has suffered.

He has paid the price to redeem his dear children. He loves them with an everlasting love.

He watches over them. He sees them all through this life. He sees you and I, my friends. He's seen us from the day we were born.

I might even say this, that he saw us before we were born. Away in eternity. I know you and I can't understand that, but the Lord chose a people in eternity.

He knew them. He knew that the day would come when they would be born here. Ah, my friends, the Lord watches over his children.

[ 20 : 26 ] He sees them every day of their lives. He's seen you and I every day of our lives. My friends, when we consider it, what cause we have to repent, what cause we have to be ashamed, need we wonder, that there are those times when the Lord forsakes us for a small moment.

Have I forsaken thee? Oh, my friends, sometimes this is the treatment, this is necessary to bring you and I to our senses.

Let's be honest, my friends, you and I, left to ourselves, we want to go our own ways. We don't want one that is telling us what to do all the while.

My friends, I speak reverently. Of course, I refer to our blessed Lord, but that's how we are left to ourselves in our own, in our carnal hearts.

We're no different to the world. You might say, but I've never said that I don't want this man to reign over me.

[ 22 : 14 ] Perhaps you haven't in effect, in as many words, but in our behaviour, we have.

But my friends, this blessed Lord, he cares for his children. love, his love knows no change.

What you say, when he hides his face, when he's forsaken me, when he forsakes me, when he hides his face because of my sin, when I have grieved him, yes, my friends, our dear Jesus loves us still.

He doesn't love our sin. No, he doesn't love our sin. Oh, my friends, his love is past finding out.

It is evident in these verses, for a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee, with great mercies will I gather thee.

[ 23 : 41 ] My friends, I say again, it is all a grace. It is God's mercy from the beginning to end upon his children in the way he deals with them.

Or you might say, all the things that I've had to pass through and go into and suffer, I don't feel they're in mercy and love.

They are. Oh, they are, my friends. I know we need these things to be sanctified. I know we need the Lord to show us the purpose, and he does sometimes, oh, he does.

Make no mistake about that. And then, my friends, that makes all the difference in the world. Because then we can be submissive.

Then we can say, Lord, lead on, lead on. The way is right. It's not wrong after all.

[ 24 : 54 ] All you say, what? to be denied this and that, to be falsely accused there, to be trampled on there.

Oh, many things we might say. Many things we might say. Yes, yes, these are the things the Lord uses.

are, my friends, our way is not his way, and his way is not ours.

It's as simple as that. But, my friends, God's way is best. You and I will say and think, if only we could have our way, we would have done this and that, God's way is best.

My friends, if you and I had our way, we wouldn't be dependent on God. See, that's the difference. Now, the Lord works, he's going to bring you and I dependent upon him.

[ 26 : 12 ] And he does it with these ends in view, with that ending view, when he leads us into various paths, paths we haven't known, paths of trial, paths of tribulation.

His love and mercy is in it. Oh, but you say, I don't like being humbled, I don't like being sat upon, I don't like being walked over.

ah, my friends, the Lord will break down all that stubborn rejection of his ways, of his will, he will, God.

Yes, but I know this, my friends, I have a human nature the same as anyone else, but I do know this, a little in my pathway, the Lord knows how to deal with it, yes.

ah, my friends, the Lord is a gracious and a merciful God, for a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee, great mercies.

[ 27 : 46 ] Haven't some of you passed this way? Haven't you known what it is to be forsaken of the Lord? Haven't you known what it is to be found guilty before a holy God, looking and waiting for judgment, feeling condemned within, expecting condemnation, expecting judgment?

judgment? Ah, haven't some of you found the very opposite? My friends, one, I believe it's a poet, says, I looked for hell, he gave me heaven.

God, this is this God, my friends, that's this God, yes, that's the one that has forsaken us for a small moment, he didn't leave us there, did he?

Ah, you might say, I don't know yet, ah, my, you're through it, friend, you're proving, some of us have passed that way, and perhaps some have passed that way many times, when the Lord has forsaken us, but he's come again, yes, he has, he's come again with his loving kindness and his tender mercies, with great mercies will I gather these, condemnation, oh, can you not imagine how sweet and blessed it is when we have felt condemned before this great and holy God, and would have to justly accept his judgments, his condemnation, should it pass over us, but my friends, the Lord has mercy, he does, he has mercy, and those that he has forsaken for a small moment, he doesn't leave them there, he comes and he lifts them up, he lifts them up, oh, my friends, every one of the dear

Lord's children will be brought, yes, there are some that perhaps some of us have watched, we've seen them many years, we've seen them assemble in the house of God, and with some, my friends, we haven't really known how it's been with them at the end, there hasn't been any evidence, there hasn't been any witness, been anything spoken, sometimes, my friends, we're sure where they've gone, well, it doesn't alter the fact, my friends, we like to hear and see some evidences of the work of grace, not always granted, but one thing we do know, as the tree falleth, so it shall lie, but my friends,

[ 32 : 10 ] I think really, if there's been a work of grace, there'll be just a little evidence of it, just a little evidence, there are some, my friends, that have got much evidence of the work of grace in their hearts, and yet, they have never walked in the Lord's commands, they've never been obedient, they've never been baptized, baptized, we don't know why, but my friends, we have to leave it, as the tree falleth, so it shall lie, there are many things we don't understand, but my friends, don't think

I'm saying that one must be baptized to reach heaven, I'm not saying that at all, the dying thief was not baptized, but he went to heaven, but that doesn't alter the word of God, if you love me, keep my commands, there are many things that keeps one back, many things that one would stumble over, but my friends, it doesn't alter the commandment, and the Lord doesn't accept excuses, well, I don't know why I should go into those things, but they've come out of my mouth, may be a purpose, 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, says the Lord, thy Redeemer.

It seems a repeat of the seventh verse, only even in a stronger language. It is first, again, in a little wrath, I hid my face, you see, a little wrath.

wrath. I say again, my friends, when the Lord teaches, one, when he shows us our state and condition before him, and sometimes, my friends, we are determined to walk in a pathway of sin and sometimes the word of God, either read or preached, will show us that is wrong, we shouldn't go in that path, we put our fingers in our ears, we still pursue that pathway, we still go in it.

[ 35 : 59 ] Do you know anything about that? Or you might say, I'm not as bad as that. Well, some may know something of that pathway, I know something of it.

And my friends, you will find this, you will find that the Lord will forsake you.

For a small moment have I forsaken you. That's why, that's why the Lord forsakes us, because of our sin, because of our guilt, because we willfully sometimes walk in these paths of sin.

And all my friends, we have great fear sometimes that he'll never return. Have you had to plead with him?

Lord, have mercy upon me. Come again. Deliver me from this evil. Pardon mine iniquity. My friends, for a small moment has he forsaken thee.

[ 37 : 24 ] In a little wrath I hid my face. A little wrath. You see, you were pleading, you were crying unto him to have mercy, but he hid his face, in his wrath.

His wrath. That made us all the more urgent, our case all the more pressing. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee.

What a statement. The Lord speaks it. There is the evidence that he is not as man.

There is the evidence that he loves with an everlasting love. for but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy.

Not only kindness, but mercy. Mercy on thee. Yes, thee.

[ 38 : 47 ] Not someone else. Isn't that the important thing with you and I? Is it me? Is it me? Is the Lord speaking to me?

That's what matters. That's what concerns us if we are being taught of him. Oh, my friends, there is no God to compare.

There is no other God, no real God, only one, one living God, one God only, that can have mercy, that can deliver.

This is our God whom we profess to serve. With everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy redeemer.

Couldn't be any plainer, could it, my friends? Is there one here that has entered into this chapel this afternoon, feeling to be in this verse, forsaken?

[ 40 : 11 ] oh, my friends, I would, if there has been, you may go out of this chapel, feeling and rejoicing in Christ your Saviour, in what he has said here, that he has everlasting kindness, will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy redeemer, thy redeemer.

Why, my friends, if the dear Lord Jesus is your redeemer and mine, then all will be well, all will be well.

All those crooked things will be made straight, every one of them, and you may have some crooked things, you're sure to have some crooked things, and some of them you've perhaps had for years hanging over you, you can't straighten them, you can't get rid of them, you're walking in them.

Well, my friends, the day will come when the Lord will make them straight, yes he will. When the dear Lord comes, when he appears, when he blesses, that will put everything right.

Or if he comes and says to you and I that he that he will but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer, the Lord thy Redeemer.

[ 42 : 16 ] Oh, my friends, if the dear Lord is your Redeemer, if he is my Redeemer, then that will put everything right.

all our unworthiness, all our unfitness, our mountains of sin, all those crooked things, all those enemies, they'll all fade into nothing.

Oh, my friends, this is the God, this is our blessed Redeemer, this is the one that we seek for, this is the one that we're waiting for, this is the one, my friends, that forsakes, that forsakes his people for a small moment, or in a little wrath I hid my face, this is the one.

our blessed Redeemer, ah, my friends, do we know anything of this work?

Is this what we're waiting for? But this is the promise, this is God's promise, ah, if you're in that pathway to die, if you're walking in the pathway of feelingly, in your experience, feeling that you're forsaken, ah, my friends, you've got something here to wait for, to hope for, this is a reason why you should not give up.

[ 44 : 17 ] Can you give up? why you say, no, I can't give up, because if I give up, then I'm lost, I'm ruined.

That's it. Faith, my friends, if you and I have just a little faith, it will not give up. It will trust in him.

We should know just a little, though we might not be able to claim the same amount of faith that Job had, yet it will be the same, though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.

My friends, the Lord will not slay his dear people, no, he redeems them. May the Lord bless his word, may he seal it in our hearts, for his name's sake, amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[ 45 : 31 ] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.