

# The gracious attributes of God's people (Quality: Good)

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[ 0 : 00 ] Entirely on the Lord, for his help, I ask your attention to Isaiah's prophecy, chapter 33.

I will read verses 15 and 16. He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly, he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil, he shall dwell on high.

His place of defence shall be the munition of rocks. Bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure.

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[ 1 : 37 ] We can read here of the judgment of God against the enemies of God's people.

And bear in mind what we read here. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?

Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? But these people that are spoken of in this verse 15 and 16, won't.

I read too, the sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness has surprised the hypocrites. And I felt, my friends, that was a very solemn word, but it was to me a solemn word.

The Lord deliver us from being a hypocrite in Zion, for saying what we're not, doing what we say we do not do.

[ 2 : 55 ] How awful it would be in Zion if we should be left to be a hypocrite. But these two verses speak of the Lord's people. We read too in verse 10, And now will I rise, saith the Lord, now will I be exalted, and now will I lift up myself.

And in verse 13, Hear ye that are far off, what I have done. And ye that are near, acknowledge my might. How he has overthrown those who are opposers to the truth, and who are enemies to the people of God.

But at the same time, blessed be his name, he has a people that shall escape the fire, that shall be delivered from the everlasting burnings.

And that people are described very simply in what we read as we came down the chapter to verse 19, Thou shalt not see a fierce people, a people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive, of a stammering tongue, or a ridiculous tongue, that thou canst not understand.

Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnity. Thine eyes shall see Jerusalem, a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that should not be taken down.

[ 4 : 31 ] Not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the calls thereof be broken. That is the description of the church of Christ.

Not a fierce people, a people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive. But we have in this 15th verse then that description of this people.

And we might ask the question how it was that they became in this place and according to this righteousness and mercy.

What made the difference between this people and all people? He that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly, he that despiseth the gain of oppression, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil.

How descriptive, my friends, is that of God's people or it should be. But sadly, my friends, how solemn it is.

[ 5 : 45 ] It is also these things which this blessed people shall not be immersed in or the subject of there are people in the earth that are walking up unrighteously and not uprightly and so on.

But who made the difference? And who made the difference in you and me? What caused the difference to be found?

first of all, my friends, it's not an improvement on your old nature that you now walk righteously, that you now speak uprightly.

When did you learn, where did you learn to speak uprightly? When did you learn to speak of the things of God? When did you learn the conversation of Zion?

When did you learn that pure language which Zion speaks? A people of a deeper speech that thou canst perceive, you won't find such in Zion, a true born soul, a gracious person, a believer and follower of the Lord Jesus Christ will be seen in the simplicity of his walk and in the uprightness of his walk and the simplicity of his conversation.

[ 7 : 13 ] Even the most greatest and gifted of good men in their time were noted not for their big words but for their simplicity.

When the apostle who I suppose is an example of a remarkable call by grace and a remarkable deep teaching of the spirit of truth into the ways of righteousness and godliness he as it were brought his ministry down to these words I desire to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Well my friends it is grace that made the change. Some people seem to think they can improve their old nature. Some think by giving this up or that up and turning their mind to holy things and pursuing the path of attendance on the house of God and so on well this makes a difference to their old nature.

It does actually it makes them more proud. There's religious pride there and they go about like the Pharisees used to when they said give place to me for I am more holier than thou.

But who are these then that walketh righteously? Because the old nature is unrighteous because it's often self-righteous it's not therefore from the old nature.

[ 8 : 51 ] Who are they that speaketh who speaketh uprightly? Speaketh those things which are of God of holiness who knows the language of Zion not the old nature although how close it can come.

You can learn the language of Zion like children learn their pieces at Sunday's cultaries. My friends but this is those who speak from the heart who speak from the heart.

I think it's somewhere in the epistles where the apostle says something like this that he will no longer write with pen and ink that the day will dawn when they shall speak face to face and heart to heart.

He that despiseth the gain of oppression that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil.

All descriptions they are of the ungodly man but all descriptions of a gracious man. It was verse 16 which I hope the Lord gave me yesterday morning early he shall dwell on high.

[10:14] That seems to me to be such a wonderful word that they are not gracious because of merit they are gracious because of mercy that they are gracious because of God's eternal choice that they are gracious because they are chosen out of the ruins of the fall out of the posterity of Adam and are chosen unto salvation appointed to a day when they shall possess another nature and that other nature is that what walketh righteousness and that speaketh uprightly he that despiseth the gain of oppression this is the new nature of grace this is the fruit of that grace and this is what the child of God shall know and often have to mourn because it isn't so and often have to mourn because they go back to their old ways and their old language and their old pathway they don't go back to it literally but they go back to it in the way in which they conduct themselves through this world the blessed character it is oh may you and I look for the evidence of it in our hearts and in our walk and in our conversation and in our profession but then this we come to verse 16 he shall dwell on high you count the shells there he shall dwell on high his place of defence shall be the munition of rocks bread shall be given him and his waters shall be sure and that's God's eternal shell there's no overthrowing of what God decrees for his people nothing can overthrow it nothing can rightly hinder it nothing can bring it to naught God has put a shell in your heart those promises of God a yea and amen in Christ Jesus he shall dwell on high what does he need to dwell on high this is not at this time I cannot see at the moment that it is necessarily only a promise of an eternal habitation salvation it is indeed what the people of God shall be brought by grace to but what is it that shall be described as or what can it mean when it said he shall dwell on high he should be lifted above it he shall be preserved from what the world and the ungodly world and the religious world shall be the subject of what the

Lord will do to the ungodly and to the to the worldly and to the person who is nothing more than a hypocrite in Zion only he knows but the people of God the grace taught people and the grace led people and the grace influenced people these humble souls these poor and afflicted these needy ones that are constantly dependent on the grace of God he shall dwell on high the lot of the wicked will not be upon the judgment either upon the wicked shall not be upon the lot of the righteous they shall be held as it were in the preservation and care and mercy of their God he shall dwell on high the poet the the margin rather says high places they are places of security they are places of divine protection he shall guard his people from the judgments that are abroad in the earth he shall dwell on high we made mention recently of that blessed day in

Goshen when they killed the Passover lamb and they put the blood on the door post and lintel he shall dwell on high they dwelt safely because the blood was applied to that door post and lintel their safety was in that oh wonderful mercy what security to God's people what safety these are those who walk righteously and speak uprightly well I can hear you with me too and I have to say it too my friends it seems a picture that's not painted of me it's no I seem to show so little evidence of this I've got such a wicked nature and such a natural heart and such a rebellious spirit and such a doubtful mind over these things at times I sink under the very weight of the burdens of these things but it's dear

Lord what the Lord dear friends it's what the Lord has done that brings these evidences of the fruit of grace when we could sing we love the Lord with heart and voice his people and his ways that's not a natural love that's a spiritual love when we can sing I love to meet among them now and at his gracious feet to bow though vilest of them all that's not a natural love that's a spiritual love when you're taught by the blessed spirit the plague of your own heart one of the first things you won't do you won't do my friends is to pick up stones and stone another for their slips and falls oh they that walk righteously will not condemn the unrighteous because of their unrighteous ways and they won't condemn either those who have slips and falls david spoke of the people of god and he said though they fall not as so as if it would say well it isn't possible for them to fall he reminds us and surely he must remind all the church of christ in time that they left to themselves will fall not to rejoice into it my friends nothing of the salt though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down for the lord upholdeth him with his hand he that walketh righteously and they will be because the grace of god is influencing their walk he that speaketh uprightly as because of the grace of god in their soul they would speak of the things of god those upright things or as the margin said uprightness it will be a conversation which will speak of grace and it won't be in a proud nature either oh my friends one of the most telling evidences i was going to say of grace in the soul or the fruit of that grace in the soul is the way that it brings us to realize our nothingness our poverty our emptiness our dependency and at the end of it all you come to this conclusion you've nothing to boast of and that is the fruit of grace he that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly oh they have a store they have a most blessed store but so often it's not found in them they have experiences because of the lord's appearance and blessing of their soul of course they do if their lips were opened and they were so led of the spirit to acknowledge it so it would be to his honour and glory and praise and they would say with the psalmist not unto us not unto us but unto thy name give glory for thy mercy and for thy truth sake he that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly he that despiseth the gain of oppressions that shaketh his hands from the holding of bribes oh may the grace that was in Nehemiah's heart be in ours and he said so did not I not because

[ 19 : 25 ] I'm better than you so did not I not because I don't need their money that I'm well-off and I'm rich and so it wouldn't be any purpose in me increasing my wealth by mortgaging those who are our fellow men no it's because the fear of God he that despiseth the gain of oppressions that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil what a solemn view of the wicked what an awful view that power and high office can bring people into the higher you get you know in in this world of sin and woe the farther you got to fall and the greater possibility of falling but if the Lord brings you into an under gracious teaching my friends you'll have a lowly spirit and you'll have to complain of your need and your poverty and your destitution but I must come to this blessed place of promise which he has laid in the sixteenth verse he shall dwell on high his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks the blessed person this is what a gracious character he is what a

I was going to say what a favourite of God he is that all around us we see these opposites as it were and in the hearts of the natural man and in yours and mine it's there my friends but oh for this evidence of grace over this walk and pathway which is so blessedly and shall blessedly glorify the person of Jesus Christ that speaketh uprightly I sometimes wonder you know I look back on days past when next and mingled with the world and who can throw a stone at Peter who can throw a stone at Peter in the judgment hall and I said to him there's something you know about you Peter that gives us the reason to believe that you're a follower of Jesus Christ and you know what that something was his conversation his way of speaking your speech beneath thee so to save his own skin we read he answered with oaths and with curses oh to speak like the world rather than to be dealt with as the people of God ashamed of Jesus that dear man on whom my hope of heaven depends he that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly he that despiseth the gain of oppression he shall dwell on high you'll say well does he walk in that place always it's his dwelling place my friends he walks here below in the path of tribulation he may feel anything but walking on high when he walks in against oppression in his heart and in his pathway and sin and satan and self so ready to distress and trouble and to cast him down and if possibly to pull him down my friends he shall still dwell on high why is he therefore found in this high place how is it that he shall hold on his way it's not that he shall hold on his way he is bound by cords of love to the covenant of grace and he shall dwell on high his expectation by the grace of

God is that he shall eternally be on high he shall be freed from sin and satan and self one day but whilst he walks this wilderness way my friends he shall be indeed in such places of distress and trouble but how safe he is his safety doesn't rest in his walk but rather in his God his preservation from going into hell doesn't rest upon containing those natural elements of sin within but rather because he's preserved in Jesus blood and washed and he has a holy principle within he shall dwell on high you might say you that fear God you that made an open profession of his name we don't seem to often dwell on high my friends you are in principle dwelling on high when you're

Christ it may be in practice you don't feel to be so you may grovel here below amongst worldlings and amongst worldly atmospheres and worldly environments well my friends what does the Lord Jesus say or rather is it not the apostle but let me just quote the words set your affections on things above and not on things of this earth my friends that is how you come to dwell on high the Lord Jesus this is where I was mixing the names up but the Lord Jesus Christ in the Sermon on the Mount speaks of it in this way for where your treasure is there will your heart be also he shall dwell on high my friends because God shall put him there he shall dwell on high because he's eternally safe and sealed into that covenant of grace and mercy he shall not fall out of that covenant he has a place prepared in glory for him he has a blessed place in the heart of

Jesus Christ he's safe in that covenant he's safe in that dwelling place he shall dwell on high can you compare the dwelling place of the people of God to whatever attractions this world can offer you know there can it be anything more simple than to gather amongst the people of God in this sanctuary what's it to be compared with the cathedral up the road it's nothing in their estimation it's nothing but my friends it's a place where the Lord's people are found how charming is the place where my redeemer God unveils the beauties of his face and sheds his love abroad not the fair palaces to which the great resort are once to be compared to this where Jesus holds his court do you know that's what makes the high places that's what makes the high places where their heart and affections on Christ and Christ presence you know you might none of us live in in in places of squalor of course thank God we don't but I do know this you make the dwelling place where his people is as the kingdom of heaven oh don't look on the house of

[ 27 : 57 ] God as the only place where he blesses his people where his glorious presence is and where it's felt oh there's been some sweet seasons my friends to the people of God when they've been laid on beds of affliction it's because the Lord Jesus Christ was present he was holding court with them as it were he was speaking into the heart not all to bleed so that man could hear but into the heart he drew from them their love and affection they were near to him and he was near to them and they were dear to him and he was dear to them they were dear to him he shall dwell on high oh I do feel my friends the very dwelling place of the people of God it is so sweetly known by the presence of Christ and by the influence of the spirit of truth you may be in such low places at times and you wonder whether you can be found amongst

God's people you may feel so it is in such dark places you may wonder that could it be compared to the lot of the people of God when you read these 15 and 16 verses it may be that you wrote yourself off because there's no comparison you say to what I feel but when you know the place the spot of ground where Jesus did they meet my friends are high places they truly are one of the most blessed evidences you know of gathering in that place where Jesus is his presence is his communion to his people oh that will make a high place have you got such places here I raise my Ebenezer one said hither by thy help I come and I hope by thy good pleasure safely to arrive at home

Jesus sought me when a stranger wandering from the fold of God he to save my soul from danger interposed his precious blood there are high places my friends they surely are if you look at those if you look at pilgrim or Christian as his name is in the pilgrim's progress who carried the burden of his sin that weight upon his back but then he got to the foot of the cross and at the foot of the cross that burden rolled off was a blessed high place in his in his experience never to be forgotten never to be seen anymore those sins weren't oh not that he was not going to do anything wrong anymore because he went out of the way at other times and seasons but that was a high place you had communion with the Lord

Jesus when he spoke it may be in tribulations way it may not have been it may just a word in season that dropped in you may be as busy as that in this world of sin and woe and the Lord spoke and it brought you to not physically whole but to wonder at his mercy and his goodness high places he shall dwell my friends they won't lose their positions they will never find that in that great day that he'll say I never knew you oh he spoke once you are safe for glory but he will speak to his people I believe that dear dying thief was in a high place though he was condemned by his sin and justified the sentence that was passed upon him and though he had with different eyes now eyes of faith now saw the blessed Lord Jesus Christ as him who had done no wrong and that cry from his heart was Lord remember me how many times does that come out of your heart and mine but he was in a high place when he got the answer wasn't he assurance flowed into his heart the comfort of that and the promise of

Christ what was it my friends could you think of a better promise he shall dwell on high he shall be with me in glory thou shalt see my glory soon when the work of grace is done partner of my throne shall be say poor sinner love us they'll me but there are some high places here oh in this wretched world of sin and woe there are some high places my friends than they are when a sinner and a saviour draws near when he just drops a word and sees them into the heart when he comes and takes away your fear and speaks comfort to you when he draws your heart after him when your affections now are upon eternal matters and on eternal things on an eternal God oh he shall have all the heart not half of it and there are times when he has all the heart he shall dwell on high oh these things are not beyond him now grace has put them into indeed the place of possession grace has put him into the place of possession the fear of God that faith which rests in the soul my friends is that faith which draws these things after him and from him he shall dwell on high his place of defence shall be the munition of rocks what does it mean safety on earth and after death the plenitude of heaven his place of defence have you such a place oh hasten to it sinner death is now upon the road hasten to it because this it's a refuge for sinners oh the wounds of

[ 34 : 36 ] Jesus are a defence and he shall his place his place it is a pointed place by the divine covenant love and mercy of God he's got a place of defence oh as it were hasten to it in all your burdens and cares in all the times of trial when sin and satan is so busy in the natural heart when he comes in like a flood and he does as if to sweep away any comfort and hope you've ever had his place of defence my friends oh be ever thankful if you've got a place of defence it's more than anyone's got that's in false religion it's more than anyone's got in high office in a land and nation government or parliament whose heart is dead in trespasses and sins you've got a better blessing my friends than the

Archbishop of Canterbury if you've got a place of defence because by his conversation it's evident there's no grace in his soul by his so-called preaching morality my friends he's got no grace in his soul he shall dwell on high his place of defence shall be the munition of rocks that's why we're going to sing in a moment the blessed hymn of top lady rock of ages cleft for me let me hide myself in thee it will be the only place my friends but it is a sure place it's his place because grace has given it to him covenant love shall give it to them the covenant engagement of Christ in the sinner's room placed instead at Calvary has given them a place it's a place to hide in other refuge we just sang that didn't we other refuge have I not that's why we sang it hangs my helpless soul on thee and that is so isn't it you've got no other refuge where can you turn to when the enemy comes in like a flood where will you hide your poor soul from the wiles and temptations and the distresses and the ways of

Satan where can you turn my friends when the enemies arm themselves against the grace of God in your soul where will you turn to it is to this place of defense other refuge have I none hangs my helpless soul on thee leave me not alone still support and comfort me he shall dwell on high there is no uncertainty there is no uncertainty child of grace he shall dwell on high his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks well the poet said hide me oh thou oh my savior hide till the storms of life are past safe into the haven guide oh receive my soul at last how can he my friends ever turn a coming soul back how can he ever turn a seeking soul back how can those who have trusted him in time rested upon him as a refuge for them who has hastened to this place of defense because it's not only a place of hiding it's not just a place when you as it were are preserved and kept from the ways of

Satan and sin and self you know a place of defense not that you can raise your hand up against the enemy but the Lord will on your behalf it's place of defense it not only defends you but it will overcome your enemies all those words of of Jayazel echoes in one spirit you know you have no need to fight in this battle because they were in a place of defense because the Lord had taken up their case he was dealing with their enemies and he dealt with them and he overthrew them and they didn't lift a finger in their defense the Lord did it all he that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly he that despiseth the gain of oppressions that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil

I don't suppose there's ever been a time you know when so many things that are so attractive to nature are presented to us oh the easy way of obtaining money and such things as which the world call necessary my friends the mercy is if we are kept how often do you find in your post an easy way of making money if you only do this and they use the word chance or luck or something like that my friends how easy attractive it is to those who need it to as it were to be imbibed to enter into it to well try my friends what a mercy if you got the grace and the faith to rip it up and put it in the bin these are only one things the way that he attracts the natural heart of man but oh if the grace of

[ 41 : 11 ] God is there my friends they have a most glorious prospect then he shall dwell on high his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks bread shall be given him his waters shall be sure amen God willing there's a prayer meeting on Wednesday I hope to be here next Lord's day and God willing also there is a church meeting arranged for Saturday March the 31st shall close with hymn 143 rock of ages clef for me let me hide hide myself in thee let the water and the blood from thy river and side which flowed be of sin the double cure cleanse me from its guilt and power not the labour of my hands could fulfil thy laws demands could my zeal no respite no could my tears forever flow all for sin could not atone thou must save and thou alone hymn 143 where the come and just come for me let ■■ just come say

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[ 45 : 27 ] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. I, I draw this amazing breath.

When I strengthens my good death, when I saw through the dark side of my body, say to me an art that art shows my good, O Lord are ma'■■ed with joy.

[ 47 : 58 ] I ask thy blessing on thy word.

O Lord, and thy forgiveness of anything that's said amiss. Now be with us through the day. Give us strength according to our need.

Gather with us this evening, Lord, we pray. And grant thy presence and blessing. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship, communion of the Holy Spirit, remain with us each, both now and forever.

Amen. Amen. Thank you.