

# Isaiah (Quality: Good)

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Preacher: Collier, Gilbert (1900-1984)

- [ 0 : 00 ] I would draw attention this evening, as the Lord may help, to the 60th chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah, and words that are found in the 8th verse.
- The 60th of Isaiah's prophecy, and words found in verse 8. Who are these that fly as a cloud and as the doves to their windows?
- Who are these that fly as a cloud and as the doves to their windows?
- And this is a question that the Lord the Spirit asks in this part of the Word of God.
- And it is a question full of high importance and significance.
- [ 1 : 20 ] And like many other questions that are found in the Word of God, they are not asked by the Lord that he might receive information or knowledge.
- For he hath that knowledge that is infinite and all-comprehensive of all things, and needeth no counsellor.
- The Lord God needs no counsel and no counsellor. Therefore, the purposes of these questions that are asked in the Word of God are that those who the Lord intends shall receive benefit by them, shall be brought to sober, earnest, spiritual inquiry into them.
- There seems to be no doubt in my mind that the Lord has in view here in this Word, in this question, that wondrous work of His, the greatest of His works.
- That work of His grace whereby He has brought out of this world a people who belong to Him, people whom He loves, people whom He has united to Himself in bonds that are everlasting.
- [ 3 : 21 ] And a people that ever show forth the wonders of His grace. And in our text there are two views of these people, which is the Church of God.
- No doubt in my mind that we have here in this question and in these illustrations and figures that the text uses, we have that vast company of people whom the Lord everlastingly loved and will everlastingly possess.
- And there are two views of those people in our text. The first is, as God views them as a whole, that is the complete number or the complete body of these people, called by divine grace and united to the Lord Jesus as His bride.
- They are one, always, where and ever will be, one in God, one in the Lord.
- That is one view that we have here. The first part of this question relates to that whole company of believers who are brought out by the grace of God from the world, from the wreckage of humanity.
- [ 5 : 15 ] And the other view is of the individual member of that number. It is very wonderful, I feel, how the Lord brings side by side in many places in His Word these two views of His Church.
- He views His Church as a whole, but He also views every individual member and partaker of them.

So that He comes down in His wondrous condescension to address and deal with the individual.

There is another case that comes to my mind in the 45th Psalm where it speaks there in that Psalm of the Queen, the King's daughter, being brought unto the King in raiment of needlework.

It describes her character and case and condition so wonderfully. And then it says, and her companions shall be brought.

[ 6 : 36 ] We might wonder who those companions are. The Queen, we could well believe, is favoured beyond any to be in that sweet and glorious relationship with the King, her Lord.

But who are the companions if they are not the Queen? Whatever they may be, their portion can never be what hers is.

But I believe it's the word, the way the Lord has in His Word of considering even the least among His people, remembering them, remembering them, dealing with them, throwing a word out here and there in His Word to encourage them, and to give them a little hope that they are not left out of this blessed company that belongeth unto the Lord.

And here in our text we have those two things, you see, the great cloud, these doves flying as a cloud, the whole company, all in unison, wonderful comprehension.

And yet we have the individual, the dove, flying to the window. It is as if the Lord would never have, will never have His own people lose sight of their own case in a crowd of those whom He deals with.

[ 8 : 17 ] He will never have His own, forget their own personal need of individual favours.

We have to remember this, my friends, the work of salvation is an individual work. And there is never two completely alike in any part of God's church.

Every case the Lord deals with, He deals with it individually. And it is a sovereign, separate, wondrous work.

And only He knows the measure of it and the nature of it. But it is for that individual designed out of infinite love and from eternity that is past, but designed perfectly for them.

And so they can never really compare their experience fully with anyone else in the church.

[ 9 : 42 ] And yet, at the same time, there is much that can be compared. Much encouragement to be found in comparisons with those who fear the Lord and love His name.

It is good sometimes to realize that what they love, the people of God love, we love.

And what they look for and hope for are the hopes of our own souls. It is good when we find that is the case.

But as to our own individual experience, unfolding of divine grace in our own cases, there will only be one, and there will be never another one that is alike.

The Lord's grace, therefore, and the work of His grace, is an individual work, a sovereign, with blessed wondrous.

[ 10 : 55 ] It will do alone for those to whom it is applied and bestowed. So then we have here this question.

What a question it is. Who are these? And my dear friends, if there is any grace in you or me, we shall be greatly concerned as to who are the people of God.

Not merely to be able to identify them. Not merely to be able to recognize that God has a people in the world.

But far more important than all this, it is to know that we belong to them.

And that is why this question is placed in the word of God to create and to encourage in the hearts of the true believing people of God a real concern.

- [ 12 : 12 ] That they might be found numbered among the true children of the living God. Perhaps you have often, to yourself and to the Lord, repeated those words, numbered with them I will be, now and in eternity.

Well now the Lord says, who are these that fly as a cloud? Who are they? These are very solemn chapters in this 59th and 60th chapters of Isaiah are extremely solemn and very wonderful.

In the 59th chapter there is a solemn indictment of all human nature. It is almost too solemn to read in some parts of it.

Your sins and your iniquities have separated between you and your God. Your hands are defiled with blood and your fingers with iniquity.

Your lips have spoken lies. Your tongue hath muttered perverseness. None calleth for justice. None calleth for justice. Solemn indictment.

- [ 13 : 38 ] Both for the profane and for the professing. The professor. There is the indictment of God's word there.

Those who profess religion are no better than those who weave the spider's web or hatch a cockatrice's egg.

That which is purely the creature will end in death and will never save the soul.

This is in the 59th chapter of Isaiah. And then in the 60th we have the glory, the contrasting glory of the work of God's grace.

The triumphs of that grace. The victories of the atonement. The triumphs of the love of God and the love of Christ.

- [ 14 : 43 ] In bringing his people from all places of the earth unto himself. And then he asks this question, who are these that fly as a dove?

God would have us concern ourselves and behold the glories and wonders of his greatest of all his works.

The work of his grace. No work can compare with this. Whatever the Lord does in a sinner's heart. That effectually delivers that sinner from guilt.

And from the world and from Satan's power. Is a work of the highest glory. And the greatest magnitude.

Even creation cannot compare with the works of God's grace. God's grace. Who are these then that fly as a cloud?

- [ 15 : 58 ] I want tonight just briefly to take these figures a little. Try to extract something from them that might be of encouragement or help to some of you here.

First of all let us take this simple statement here in the word or this simple question. Who are these that fly?

What a wonderful thing is held in this figure before us. Who are these that fly?

What a wonderful thing. Is a miracle. It reminds one of the words of I think Mr. Berridge. He speaks of the law. Tells us very clearly and very truthfully that the law commands men to do great things.

To do much. To do everything that God requires. requires and will never let man off doing those things, not for one moment. But the law will never give power to do the things, never give power to the sinner to obey.

- [ 17 : 16 ] The law will condemn but it will give no strength to be obedient to God's commandments.

But Berridge in his quaint way, I think he says this, the law demands but gives me neither feet nor hands. And then he speaks of the gospel so sweet and precious that bids the sinner fly and gives them wings.

Bids them fly and gives them wings. These wings of grace, this figure which so beautifully describes the work of grace in the sinner's experience.

When the Lord gives grace and enables that poor sinner to leap up or fly from the depth of ruin to seek refuge, to find rest in the Lord, it's an amazing wonder.

The wings of faith are very wonderful, you know, friends. And what a blessed experience it is to have them and to use them.

[ 18 : 50 ] As the word in Isaiah says, they shall mount up with wings as eagles. Sweet word of promise, that is.

Surveying the whole work of God's grace and all those who are partakers of that grace. They shall mount up with wings. That means they shall fly.

The wings of faith. The wings of faith. Have you ever had any little uplifting of your soul, heaven-worn, Christ-worn?

Has there been a power that seems to take hold of you at times and gives that sweet ability to rise?

To go forth, to go forth, to fly, you hardly know how, but those wings of faith, how wonderful they are.

[ 19 : 56 ] When the soul is able to use them and feel that the Lord is commanding and giving strength to them to rise up above creature things, above even your own deficiency and despondency, and rise in hope, in faith and in love.

Who are these that fly? We could say with truth none but those to whom the Lord imparts his precious grace of faith.

We are dead. We are bound to the earth. We are held in iron bondage until the Lord imparts this saving faith.

Saving faith is a wonderful faith, isn't it? It comes from God. There's no question whatsoever of the creature either beginning it or continuing it.

People talk about duty faith today, but my friends, what a poor substitution that is at all times to that precious faith that God gives to a sinner.

[ 21 : 25 ] And when it gives to a sinner the faith, it rises in strength and hope and soars to the things of the Lord, to the realm of the Spirit, to the regions of the preciousness of Christ.

Who are these that fly? Then we have another figure also. Who are these that fly as a cloud?

I suppose the figure really is of a great flock of birds. I've often observed them with amazement.

There they are, multitudes of them on the wing. And they are so obviously in unison.

They move as one. There's no confusion. They all sweep and whirl and move in the heavens as if all controlled by some unseen guiding hand.

[ 22 : 47 ] It's one of the nature's marvels. To see a great flock of birds moving as if they were directed by one's almighty hand.

That's the figure of our text. And who are these, says the Lord, who fly as a cloud, who move in unison, who are all directed by an unseen yet unerring hand and guidance.

These who are one in unison. As Paul says in the Hebrews, Seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses.

All witnessing of the same precious things. All looking to the same blessed person. All running the same race.

Not a single one of them. But who runs that race that is set before them. Looking unto Jesus. The author and the finisher of their faith.

[ 24 : 08 ] And they are like a cloud. There's a wonderful figure, therefore, here before us. In this cloud.

Flying as a cloud. But what is a cloud, naturally speaking? I think we can see how suitable the figure is.

When in its application to the church of God. The church of Jesus Christ. You know, a cloud is something that has been drawn up out of the ocean by the sun.

Every cloud that we can see is drawn up from the sea by the heat of the sun. The sea. The sea.

Formed invisibly, but wonderfully. My dear friends. In the word of God, we are often found that the sea is spoken.

[ 25 : 20 ] Where it is spoken of, it often refers to the great mass of humanity. The multitudes of the sea. The multitudes of the people are sometimes spoken of in the word as the sea.

The multitudes of the sea. The church of Jesus Christ is drawn up out of the mass of humanity.

By the drawing power of the grace of the Son of God. The Son of Righteousness. And this cloud is drawn up out of the ocean.

Every one who is truly a partaker of the kingdom of God. The grace of the Son of God.

The grace of God. The grace of God. From among the children of man. Have you ever felt any drawing?

[ 26 : 33 ] You will feel the drawing of the Son of Righteousness in your whole soul. If you are a partaker of this grace.

And a member of this company. One of these most reliable and most precious influences.

And experiences of a real believer. Is the drawing of the love of Christ. We need it.

There is so much to draw us away from the Lord. Too much for ever us. Such as we are to find our way to his footstool.

Unless there is a mighty drawing of his love. And this my dear friends. The Lord so blessedly puts forth. When he draws his people.

[ 27 : 40 ] Draws them up unto himself. Then another thing that we could speak of a cloud is this.

It is visible. Perhaps nothing is more visible to the eyes of men than clouds. Though coming along this afternoon.

We could see great banks of majestic looking clouds. On the horizon. So visible.

Multitudes of eyes could have seen them. There is scarcely a day passes in our lives. If we only stop to think about it.

When we can see a cloud. Many things there will be that we shall never see. But we can never say. If we have sight.

[ 28 : 37 ] That we have never seen a cloud. One of the most visible signs. Church of God. Church of God. And the work of God's grace.

Is a visible. Wonder. Even those who know nothing of the grace of God. Recognize.

That God has done something. For those. Who are his people. They took account of them. That they had been with Jesus.

You see. There were those in the days of the apostles. Who recognized. They could not understand.

But they recognized. That there was something. Mighty. Wonderful. Going on in the hearts of these people. They hated them.

[ 29 : 33 ] Some sought to emulate them. Without the power. Without the grace. There will be either two things.

As a result of the manifestation. Of God's people in the earth. Either men will seek to emulate them. Put on the same profession.

Put on the same garb. And like Balaam say. Let me die the death of the righteous. Let my last days. Let my last days be like theirs.

Or they will oppose them. And persecute them. And hate them. And seek their destruction. Solemn thing to be left in either of those cases.

But how infinitely blessed. How infinitely blessed to be found among those. Who are made visible. Visible to the Lord of course.

[ 30 : 37 ] And visible to his own dear people. That we possess the life of God in our souls. And are partakers of his grace.

And the other things. And the other things. And the other things. Then. Another point. A cloud is unassailable. It cannot be destroyed by men.

It cannot be affected. Or in any way. Its course cannot be altered by men.

It is unassailable. Nought can touch a cloud. Nought can control it. Only God alone.

He said to Job. Canst thou. Dost thou know. The balancing of the clouds. Doubtless that has reference.

[ 31 : 40 ] To the clouds of. Dealing. The clouds of tribulation. Of adversity. Which come about. In the experience of the Lord's people.

Even the balances. Of the balancing of those clouds. We know but very little. But the balancing. The wonderful balancing.

Of the clouds. Of God's spiritual people. Of the work of his grace. Is beyond us. Just the same. As a natural cloud is.

Beyond our knowledge. And understanding. But it's unassailable. You know my friend. The least partaker.

Of God's grace. The least partaker. Of God's grace. Is inviolate. From all the attacks. Of the enemy.

[ 32 : 42 ] Once in Christ. In him forever. Thus the eternal covenant. In him forever. In him forever. In him forever. None shall pluck thee.

From the strength. Of Israel's hands. What a mercy. There is that. Blessed security.

In the covenant. Of God's grace. Though we are. So poor. So weak. So helpless. Feelingless.

So. We realize this. And yet. We shall stand. More. Blessed. But not more secure.

Are the glorified. Spirits. In heaven. So it's unassailable. Then. And. The last thing.

[ 33 : 43 ] I would say. On this part. Of the subject. Is this. It is controlled. By the wind. Driven. Where the wind.

Will drive it. And that. Blessed wind. The Holy Spirit. The Lord Jesus. Said to Nicomun. Demas. The wind.

Bloweth. Where it listeth. Thou. Hearest. The sound. Thereof. And canst not. Tell.  
Whence. It cometh. Or whither it goeth.

So. Is everyone. That is born. Of the spirit. Everyone. That is born. Of the spirit.

Is controlled. And directed. By the. Blessed. Wind. Wind. Of the spirit. How wonderful.

[ 34 : 38 ] That is. To be under. The kind. Gracious. Controlling. Hand.

Of God. Forming. As he alone. Can. The image. Of Christ. In the soul.

The soul. Bringing. The soul. To that. Destiny. That is. Designed. For every. True.  
Believer.

Who are these. Who are these. That fly. As a cloud. Well then. Let us come down.

To the second part. The individual. The Lord. The Lord comes. So graciously. Down. To  
the dove. The one. Single.

[ 35 : 31 ] Individual. Partaker. And member. Of this great cloud. That is. Attention.

Is called. To it. Now. Among them. There are the doves. Very sweet figure.

Is the dove. You know. The word of God. Uses it. In a very remarkable. And blessed way.  
In our reading.

Tonight. What a wonderful. Verse. That is. Though ye of lion. Amongst the pots.

Uses. Figure. I believe. Denotes. That which is. In the midst. Of all. The ruin.

[ 36 : 24 ] And wreckage. Discarded. Refuse. Of humanity. The Lord. Says. His people. Were lying.

Among. Such. Things. Discarded. Ruined. Useless. Though ye were there.

He says. Yet shall ye be. As the wings of a dove. Covered with silver. Covered with  
redemption. Silver. A beautiful figure.

Of redeeming work. And the feathers. With. Pure gold. With divine love. And divine  
provision.

Mercy. And grace. The ye shall be. All this. Says the Lord. What a wonderful change. Of  
dove.

[ 37 : 20 ] Love. I think. There is hardly. A figure. In the whole. Of the word. Of God. That. Denotes.  
Such. Humility.

And. Tenderness. And meekness. As the dove. The Lord. Describes.

This figure. To his people. To his people. And he tells us. In the text. Or at least. He asks  
this question.

Which indicates. What their character is. And what their actions. Will be. They fly. To the  
window.

Fly to the window. Windows. Of refuge. To fly away. From the.

[ 38 : 16 ] Attacking enemy. From the. Avenging foe. From. A pursuing.

Devil. From all. That is. Contrary. To them. To find refuge. They fly. Fly to the window.

To find refuge. Sweet. And. Precious. Are the. Refuges. That the. Lord. Provides. For his.  
Own. Doves. And. Perhaps. There is no. Voice. That is. Sweeter. You know. Than a.  
Dove. It is.

A herald. Of spring. The word. Tells us. In the. Song of Solomon. About. That. Spring.

[ 39 : 11 ] Like. Character. Or. Nature. That the. Work. Of grace. Produces. In the. Sinner's.  
Experience. The winter.

Is over. And gone. The rain. Is. Over. The winter. Is over. And gone. The time.

Of the singing. Of birds. Is come. The voice. Of the turtle. Is heard. In our land. The voice. Of the dove. Is heard.

And that's. The voice. Of prayer. You know. In the dove. Like. Character. Subject. Of the grace. Of God. And there's no.

Sweeter voice. There's no. Sweeter voice. Heard on high. And there's no. Sweeter voice. In the soul's. Experience.

[ 40 : 07 ] Than the voice. Of real. Humble. Prayer. Confession. Unto the Lord. And seeking.

Humbly. For his grace. They fly. To their windows. And there are.

Special windows. Too. For these doves. To fly into. Or fly to. Windows. Of the gospel. Where they may well.

Find some. Sweet rest. For their feet. When. Noah. Sent forth. That dove. Out of the ark. It was a wonderful. Act of faith.

Really. The dove. Returned. And he took it. Into the ark. Again. Beautiful figure. He saw.

[ 41 : 06 ] When that. Second. Time. That he. Sent forth. That dove. From the ark. It came back. With the. Leaf. In its mouth. Signifying.

God's. God's. God's. Blessing. The promise. Of his. Blessing. And. His. Peace.

They fly. As doves. To their. Windows. God's. God's. You know. If there's any. Grace. In us. My friends.

We shall be. Ready. To come. And eager. To come. Where the Lord's. Precious. Gospel. Is proclaimed. That will be like.

A window. To our souls. We shall not. Be able. To do. Without. The blessings. Of the ministry.

[ 42 : 06 ] Of God's grace. Truth. And. Mercy. Join. Together. In the wonderful.

Rich. Displays. That the Holy Spirit. Ordained. Will be. Essential. To our soul.

Essential. To our health. And to our life. And to our peace. And there will be. An eagerness.

For it. I was. Coming through. Lancashire. The other morning. In the train.

And I saw. Basket. Was. Brought out of the van. The guards van. And I took an interest.

[ 42 : 59 ] In this bus. I could see. There was something. Alive in it. And presently. The porter. Opened. The lid.

And away. Flew. Several. Birds. I thought. They were. Sure. As anything. To reach.

Their home. Their dwelling. In place. Wonderful. Instinct. You know. The birds. Of God's grace.

Those. Who have. The. Feathers. Of the dove. Clothed. With silver. And with pure gold. Those.

Who have. The nature. Of a dove. By the grace. Of God. Well. They will fly. To that one place. They know. The throne. Of grace.

[ 43 : 53 ] They love it. They know. The house. Of God. And they would often. Be found in it. They love. The word. Of God.

Because there. They find. Their health. Their life. Their hope. Their comfort. And above all. They find. Communion.

With their Lord. Who are these. That fly. That fly. As a cloud. And as doves. To their windows.



Have you discovered. Anything. In yourself. In your case. That corresponds. To these things. Can you more.

Answer the question. That the Lord. Answers. Asks in this word. In your own heart. That's the all important.

[ 44 : 53 ] Question. Am I one of them? Are these. Marks. And features. That the Lord.

Traces. For us. In his word. To be found. Upon us. All these. Are most.

Vital. Questions. I would. For myself. Desire. That the Lord. Might. Give me. An increasing.

Desire. To. Receive. The answer. To. And never. Be satisfied. For one. Moment.

Until we. Are satisfied. By his. Testimony. And the evidence. Of his. Grace. Who are these?

[ 45 : 49 ] We would be. With them. We would be. Of them. Numbered. With them. Would we be. Now. And in eternity.

Oh. May the Lord. Number us. Among his own. Cause the same. Gracious. Upliftings.

To be found. In our. Hearts. And the gracious. Desires. And aspirations. Also. To be found. And.

May we come. Where his. People come. Flying. With the. Wings. Of faith. Directed.

By the grace. Of God. To that. One. Place. That. One. Blessed. Person. Who is. The great.

[ 46 : 45 ] Object. Of all. Who truly. Seek. And all. Who truly. Find. Amen.