

Isaiah's Calling (Communion Service)

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Preacher: Prof. Bob Ackroyd

[0 : 00] Well, good morning and a very, very warm welcome to our service today as we gather at the beginning of a new week on a beautiful morning and as we celebrate the resurrection of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

And we welcome you warmly in his name. It's always such a joy for us to come together today because as we meet together at the beginning of a new week, we know that there are millions of people all across the globe also gathering in the name of Jesus today.

So although maybe sometimes when we meet, we feel like our numbers are small. We must never forget that we are part of a massive multitude all across the world praising the name of Jesus today.

So a very, very warm welcome to you. And I want to thank you all so much for being here today. And it's a particular delight, a joy to welcome Professor Bob Aykroyd, who is our preacher this weekend.

Bob, it's always a massive, massive privilege and joy to have you with us. And even already this weekend, we've been so blessed by your ministry and your company. And we're looking forward very much to having you meet the services this morning and this evening.

[1 : 07] So during the service this morning, we'll be sharing in the Lord's Supper together. And then the evening service tonight will be at the usual time of six o'clock. And then after the evening service, we're going to have a time of fellowship together through in the hall.

And it'll be an opportunity to hear a little bit more from Bob. And just a really warm invitation to you all to come along to that and to others, family, friends as well. Please invite them along.

We'd love to see you for the evening service tonight. We want to see this building full tonight. That would be wonderful. So please encourage folk along. And we'd love to see you for the fellowship as well.

In a moment, I'm going to hand over to Bob. But first of all, we're going to open our service by singing together in Gaelic from Psalm 103.

Sian is she na chown clear on here now. An saith salm a harish irin chieith agus sian is she na chown an hosach. Psalm 103, singing from the beginning.

[2 : 07] I'll read the words in English first. Psalm 103, the opening two verses. O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord, that all that in me is, be stirred up his holy name to magnify and bless.

Bless, O my soul, the Lord thy God, and not forgetful be of all his gracious benefits he hath bestowed on thee. O manam, be anach hús an ish, in Gia Jehovah Mour, molach gach ni in thyrs de gian, al am nöbe marrish cor.

O manam, be anach hén in ish, Jehovah Mour, do gian, na Gia chai lich, na Tsiolchon, eionich gyt en trion. O manam, be anach hús an ish, in Gia Jehovah Mour.

O manam, be anach hús an ish, in Gia Jehovah, Thank you.

Thank you.

[4 : 14] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Amen. Well, it's a great pleasure that I hand over to Bob.

Welcome. Thanks, Thomas. So we've just joined our voices in praise. Let's now unite our hearts in prayer. Let us pray. Our loving Heavenly Father, we indeed are filled with thanksgiving that you, O God, are great and good and that you have showered your blessings upon us, blessing upon blessing and grace upon grace.

[6 : 27] And our soul is stirred up. We want to magnify you. We want to declare that you are great, that you are powerful, that you are mighty, that you are mighty to save, that you are mighty to sustain, that you, the God who has created all things out of nothing, is the God who is able to recreate new life, new heart, new mind, to transform and to renew.

We thank you, Lord, that you are making all things new, that you are restoring that which has been lost, that you are fixing that which has been broken, and that you are giving to us joy and peace and happiness to the full.

We pray for this community. We pray for each one of us gathered here. We thank you, Lord, for each life, for each family, for this community. And we pray, Lord, that your blessing would rest upon us, that we would receive your goodness, and that we would be channels for that grace and for that mercy, that what we receive we would also share, what we have heard we would also tell, and that you, O God, might work in such a way as to demonstrate yet again that you are powerful to save, and that you are personal.

You look upon us with great affection, with great care. You are interested in us. You want to hear from us. And we are precious in your sight.

So, Heavenly Father, remember each of us, we pray. We thank you for the ability to gather in your name to praise, to pray, to hear your word, and to gather to remember the death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[8 : 14] We thank you that the Lord Jesus died, that he was buried, and on the third day, Easter Sunday, he rose triumphant from the grave.

So, as we gather together, we gather in the name of the risen, and of the living, and of the triumphant Lord Jesus Christ. And it's in his name we pray.

Amen. Well, I want to speak to the young people here. I can see there's a few youngsters. I want to just say a few words to you. One of my favorite verses occurs in Isaiah.

Isaiah is a big book in the Old Testament. And Isaiah says something, or God says something to Isaiah that describes each of us, youngest to the oldest.

And he uses three words. This is Isaiah chapter 43, and it's verse 4. And listen to these words. And this is God speaking.

[9 : 14] Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee. Three words. Precious, honored, and loved.

I just want to focus on one of those words, precious. And I'm sure the children here will have heard that word many times at home, that that would be a word that your parents would use to describe you, because you are precious.

Now, I don't wear much jewelry, but I do wear a ring, and this ring is a precious metal. It's gold. You can tell the color. My fingers are a bit...

There we go. So this is gold, and I can prove it to you, because when I look inside, I see a 14 and a K. So this is 14 karat gold, and it's a precious metal.

But it's precious for an even more important reason. You see, on the 20th of August, 1955, my mother put this ring on my father's finger.

[10 : 19] And then on the 24th of May, 1999, my wife put this ring on my finger. So it's precious not because it's gold, but it's precious because it's been given and received by one who loved me.

It was a gift from my father and a gift from my wife. Precious. God wants you, children, and God wants us, adults, to know that in His eyes, we are precious.

We are valuable. We are important. This ring is very important to me, and it never leaves my finger. I wouldn't put it down on the dresser.

I would never want to lose it because it means so much to me, and you mean so much to God. You are precious and valuable.

He loves you. He says it, and He shows it because He means it. So those three words, precious, honored, and loved.

[11 : 25] that's what God says about you and about me. as I say to my students, if God says something and you think something else, someone must be wrong, and I'll leave you to determine who's right and who's wrong.

you are precious because God says it, and He shows it because He means it. Amen. We're now going to sing a psalm.

This time, we're going to sing from the Scottish Psalter, and we're going to sing Psalm 22. And this psalm was very much in the mind of the Lord Jesus because it was on His lips.

When He was crucified on that Good Friday, these words were spoken by Him then, and this psalm describes His experience, what He did for us.

Psalm 22, and we're going to sing from verse 1 down to 6. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken? Why so far art thou from helping me and from my words that roaring are?

[12 : 38] The Lord Jesus took these words on His lips. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? And as we remember His death today, these words are very appropriate to have read and very appropriate to sing.

He is despised and rejected of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from him.

He was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. Yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, And with his stripes we are healed.

[18 : 51] All we, like sheep, have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way. And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted. Yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before her shearers is dumb.

So he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment. And who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off of the land of the living.

For the transgression of my people he was stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, And with the rich in his death. Because he had done no violence, Neither was any deceit in his mouth.

Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him. He hath put him to grief. When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin. He shall see his seed, He shall prolong his days, And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

[20 : 00] He shall see of the travail of his soul, And shall be satisfied. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many. For he shall bear their iniquities.

Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, And he shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because he hath poured out his soul unto death, And he was numbered with the transgressors, And he bare the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

Amen. And God add his own blessing to this reading from his word. Let's again join our hearts in prayer. Let us pray. Our Father in heaven, It's our prayer today, That you would accompany us, As we consider the life, And the death, And the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We hear in these words, A preview of what he experienced. The one who had no deceit. The one who had committed no crime.

The one who was pure, And spotless. Was the one who bore the reproach. Was the one who bore the punishment. Was the one who paid the penalty.

[21 : 19] For that which he did not deserve. Father, We look to these verses, And to this great truth. And we are amazed. We are amazed at what he has done.

We are amazed at what you have provided. We are amazed that you would look upon us, With such care, With such concern. That you would see our desperate plight.

And that you would send the Lord Jesus, On a rescue mission. He said that he came to seek, And he came to save. We thank you that the mission of Jesus, Is an ongoing mission.

And that he continues to seek. He continues to save. He finds people. He finds us where we are. But by his grace, He never leaves us where he finds us.

And I pray, Lord, That the Holy Spirit today, Would be at work. Opening eyes. Opening hearts. Transforming the individuals, From the inside out.

[22 : 20] Heavenly Father, We are weak. We are fragile. And we are flawed. But we thank you that we have in Jesus, A Savior. A Savior. Who is strong.

And who is resilient. And who is perfect. Yes, He was tempted in all ways, Just as we are. And yet, He, And He alone, Is without sin.

We ask, Lord, That you would speak to us. That you would speak, Powerfully and personally. That we would know, That you are not speaking about others, But that you are speaking to us.

That each one of us would lay a hold of Him. That we would see that He is mine, And that I am His. And that we belong to Him. Heavenly Father, The youngest of the oldest here today, May we know that you are the God of the living.

That He came to die, Not for the godly, And not for the strong, And not for the saint. But we are reminded in your word, That the Lord Jesus, Demonstrated His love.

[24 : 31] So we ask that you would hear our prayer. The prayer that is spoken, yes, But the silent prayer of each heart. And even when we can't formulate our thoughts, Even when we can't compose our words, The Spirit has a way, Of interpreting even the sighs, And the groans of the heart, In a way that you can clearly understand.

And not only do you hear, Not only do you understand, But you answer. And it's our prayer today, That you would exceed our asking, That you would exceed our expecting, And that you would exceed our imagining.

Because you are a great God, Who does all things well. So hear these our prayers we ask. In that precious name of Jesus we pray. Amen. Amen.

We're now going to sing the words of Psalm 121. Psalm 121, I to the hills will lift mine eyes. The familiar words that we find that our hope, And our health, Comes from the One who made the heaven, Made the earth, Made the hills, That when we see the beauty of the creation around us, We are reminded of the majesty of the Creator.

I to the hills will lift mine eyes. Let's sing together Psalm 121. Psalm 121, I to the hills will lift mine eyes.

[26 : 01] From when's have come my day, I save the heaven, I save the heaven from the Lord,
Who have the dirt of me.

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Son by day. The Lord shall keep thy soul each other.

Be there, be come all ill and for thy whole way.

Be there, be come all ill.

[28 : 21] Let's turn together to an earlier section of Isaiah. We're going to look at Isaiah chapter 6. And I'd like to read the first few verses there, verses 1 to 8.

Isaiah chapter 6, this is the call of Isaiah. Generally, the call of the prophet tends to occur at the very beginning of the book.

In this case, it occurs in chapter 6. But it's quite a significant encounter, if you're familiar with the passage. In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

Above it stood the seraphims. Each one had six wings. And with twain he covered his face. With twain he covered his feet. And with twain he did fly. And one cried to another and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.

The whole earth is full of his glory. And the post of the door moved at the voice of him that cried. And the house was filled with smoke.

[29 : 33] Then said I, Woe is me! For I am undone. Because I am a man of unclean lips. And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.

For mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from off the altar.

And he laid it upon my mouth and said, Lo, this has touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send?

And who will go for us? Then said I, Here I am I. Send me. We often underestimate.

We often underestimate people. We often underestimate projects. And we often underestimate God. I teach.

[30 : 41] I preach. But I'm not a joiner. I had a project at home in the States, and I wanted to replace a long set of decking. So I was able to measure how many planks I needed.

But I went to the hardware store because I needed nails. And I thought, Wow, I didn't figure out how many I needed. So you had one pound box, which was quite small, and five pound box of nails, which were quite big.

I thought, I don't need five pounds. I'll just get two smaller ones. Well, over the next several months, as this project stretched on, I would do it whenever I was back in the States.

And it was a regular pilgrimage back to the hardware store because I constantly underestimated how many nails I needed to complete this project. So rather than buying the right amount to start with, I would go back and go back and go back.

Now, that's just a small example, but it says something about ourselves because we can easily underestimate. We can easily underestimate the problem.

[31 : 44] Well, nobody's perfect. I'm not perfect, and neither are you perfect. Well, actually, God is perfect, and Jesus is perfect, so we can underestimate the problem. We can also underestimate the solution because if the problem isn't that big, then the solution doesn't need to be that big.

You know, maybe it's a matter of just kind of correcting certain habits. Maybe it's about changing certain behaviors. Maybe it's about increasing our knowledge.

you know, if we read more, or if we pray more, or, you know, so if you underestimate the problem, you might underestimate the solution. But the first and foremost problem that we have is that we underestimate God.

God is much bigger than we imagine. God is much greater, and God is much more holy. And you see, in this encounter, Isaiah sees the Lord, and he's far bigger than he ever could have imagined.

In the year that King Uzziah died, now, historians will tell us that this was the year 738 B.C. Now, Uzziah was a pretty big deal.

[32 : 57] This was a high watermark. Judah was having a good season. Economy was good. Military success was good. Place was secure.

The nation was going well. This was a golden age of Judah. But I don't know about you. I can go weeks, even months, without thinking of King Uzziah.

He's a distant footnote in a distant past. He's not all that important anymore. But he was important then. And that's what history is like. People that are important, at one point, are important no more.

But God isn't like that. God is of supreme importance now, and then, and tomorrow. Because in this year when the king died, Isaiah saw the king.

He saw the one who was in real control. And he's described in this way. What does he see? He sees the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up.

[33 : 57] And his train filled the temple. Quite literally, what's said here, it's not that the Lord filled the temple. It's not even that his robe filled the temple. But the hem of his robe.

You know, guys, if you've got trousers, there's a hem at the bottom of the trousers. Just that small bit of fabric that's stitched at the bottom. There's a tiny part.

So this tiny part of the robe fills the temple. Because God is showing something to Isaiah as to how great and how big and how awesome he really is.

So he's not just big in scale, but notice that he's also big in terms of his character. The seraphim, these creatures, we only read here, these six-wing creatures, this is the only time we see them in action.

And they're flying. But they're not just flying, they're crying. And they're crying, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is filled with his glory.

[35 : 02] God is holy. He is set apart from. He is not part of this world order. He's the creator. We are the creatures. He is the king.

We are the subjects. And his character is such is that he is completely separate from. Completely separate from sin. Completely separate from the creation.

Completely separate from the creature. And the reaction is quite obvious, isn't it? The huge vision that Isaiah gets. Then this verbal and overwhelming message from the seraphim.

And not only that, as if that wasn't enough for what he saw and what he heard, he now experienced a shaking. The temple is beginning to shake.

The post of the door moved the voice of him and cried and the house was filled with smoke. An awesome event. Audibly, visually, sensory.

[36 : 07] This is a life-changing encounter. And then the response is quite remarkable and quite understandable.

He says, woe is me. I'm in trouble here. I am undone. You see, if we see God for who he really is, if we see a glimpse of what he's really like, then we, like Isaiah, are undone.

our best, our greatest, our most noble moments no longer compare with the God who is so great and so big and so holy and so pure.

So he sees the Lord and he sees the exalted Lord high. He sees him lifted up and he's given honor. And why is he so concerned?

Now, maybe this is because Isaiah knows that he is being called to speak because he immediately identifies the problem of his lips.

[37 : 14] He says, I'm a man of unclean lips. The truth, what he speaks, he recognizes that he is not clean. He also recognizes that he dwells among a people who likewise are unclean.

They have unclean lips. And he's now seen the king. Remember the first time we hear king, it's King Uzziah. King Uzziah died. He's now in the past tense.

Isaiah sees the king who is present, who is eternal, who has no beginning, who has no end, who has no measure, who is greater than we think, who is mightier than we think, who is more holy than we realize, and Isaiah and us are likewise undone.

this is how we respond when we encounter the living God. But even more important than Isaiah's response is what God does. You see, it is important what you think of God.

It is important what you understand, and that's very significant. But it's even more important what God has to say about us, and what God has to do with us.

[38 : 27] Because, yes, the gospel, the message of Jesus requires a response on our part. But the most important response is the response of God to our plight, to our trouble, to our woe.

Because what happens? God takes the initiative. God does something. God does something to fix the problem. And that's the constant motion that we see in the Bible.

Human problem, divine, action. This is my problem, our problem, but this is what God does. It's not what we do to bridge this gap, but it's what God does.

Because when you come to the end of verse 5, there's not much good news here. There's fear, there's uncertainty, there's a sense of solemnity.

This is not a chapter of light, but a chapter of darkness, because here the prophet is in despair. He has no excuse, he has no case to argue, he simply says, I am undone.

[39 : 36] Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar.

Then he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this has touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. From the altar to the person, from God to us.

That's the motion of the gospel. The problem is ours, but the solution is God's. We might recognize that we're in trouble, but it's God who does what is necessary.

It's God who does what's required. The coal comes from the altar, touches the lips, and the sin is now atoned for. The separation between us and God is now brought together.

You see, sin creates a break in the relationship. Sin means that our relationship with God, our Creator, has been broken. We have broken that relationship, but only He can mend it.

[40 : 46] Only He can restore it. And that's exactly what's being done here, in very visual language. Isaiah says, I'm in trouble here. God acknowledges the trouble and provides the solution.

The lips are now touched, the iniquity is taken away, and sin is purged. Sin is removed. The barrier between God and us has been taken away by God, because only He can take it away.

We've created the barrier, only He has the power to remove the barrier. And then one of the most significant questions in the Bible occurs in verse 8.

Also, I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I, send me.

So the God who restores, and the God who removes, and the God who enables, is there then the God who calls. He calls this man into His service, because He is now a fit instrument to speak.

[41 : 58] He is now a suitable spokesman for God, because the sin has been taken away, the uncleanness has been dealt with, and He now has a message to proclaim.

And it's maybe not surprising that this prophecy, this book, is filled with hope, filled with that picture of good news, and full of Jesus.

Commentators have described Isaiah as the fifth gospel, because it is so rich in the teaching of Jesus, who He is, what He has come to do, and how we are to respond to Him.

It's an extended preview of what would occur six centuries later when the suffering servant did come, and He gave His life as a ransom for many.

So what the prophet sees, what then God does, and how He responds. We turn for just a moment to that first passage that we read, and we see something quite remarkable.

[43 : 09] We see the same language in chapter 52, verse 13, as we saw in chapter 6, verse 1. It's the same words. The one who in chapter 6, verse 1, high and exalted, in the year the king Uzziah died, I saw the Lord high and exalted.

Same words in verse 13 of chapter 52, behold, my servant shall deal prudently. He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high.

So the prophet is seeing a vision in chapter 6 of the Lord, and he's seeing a vision in chapter 52 and 53 of the suffering servant.

And both are exalted, both are lifted high, both are lifted and high and honored. But what two different pictures?

In chapter 6, we see a picture of God in his glory, God in his majesty, God in his greatness. But in chapters 52 and 53, the exalted vision that he is given is of a servant who is lifted up, but not lifted up to acclaim, not lifted up to praise, not lifted up to glory, but a servant who is lifted up to public ridicule, to despising, to rejection, to suffering, to being pierced, to being whipped, to being scourged, and yet the same language.

[44 : 43] You see, Jesus Christ is exalted. He's exalted in his glory and he's exalted in his suffering because we see that Jesus is the ruling and reigning king and he is the suffering servant.

And these two images come together, do they not? They come together in that great weekend which changed the world. Good Friday, crucified, ridiculed, rejected, despised, beaten, executed, dead, and buried.

But on Easter Sunday morning, billions of Christians today are celebrating the risen, living Lord Jesus. He's alive. He's victorious.

He's victorious over death. He's victorious over sin. He's victorious over evil. He is victorious and is majestic. And he now is exalted to the right hand of the majesty on I.

And he is praying. He's praying for us. Because he ever lives to make intercession. So we have these two images that are so distinct, and yet they're brought together in one person.

[45 : 58] Ruling and reigning king. Suffering servant. Sorrowful. And just notice some of the language here. That we're told that he was marred.

That his visage, that his appearance was marred in verse 14 more than that of any man. We're told in verse 3 of chapter 53 he was despised and rejected of men.

A man of sorrows acquainted with grief. We hid as it were our faces from him. He was despised and we esteemed him not. So this is what the prophet sees.

A very different picture. But notice in chapter 6 and in chapter 53 it's not only what he sees but what God does.

What God does. In chapter 6 God takes the coal from the altar touches the lips, atones for sin, purges, the guilt, takes away the uncleanness.

[47 : 03] What's God doing in chapter 53? What we see here is that the servant suffers. Not for no reason, not for no effect, but we're told that he bears our grief in verse 4, he carries our sorrow.

In verse 5 he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.

It's no longer a coal from the altar, but it's the servant who is suffering for his people to take away sin, to deal with guilt, to remove the barrier, to restore the relationship.

The subject that I teach is called systematic theology, and many one volume, systematic theologies, are a thousand pages, these are thick books, but I can explain to you Christian theology in nine words.

I'll give you those nine words. The first three words, God with us. Jesus Christ became a human being, and he came and dwelt among us.

[48 : 15] The word became flesh, made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the only begotten Son, the Father, full of grace and truth. That great title that he was given in Isaiah 7, Emmanuel, God with us.

The second set of three words is captured here. God for us. God is not against us. God is not indifferent. God is not removed.

God is for us. He says it, and he shows it because he means it. We are told here that this suffering was not in vain.

It was not without purpose. It was not without point. He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities.

What do we know about the audience here? Remember chapter 6? Isaiah, I'm a man of unclean lips. I dwell among a people of unclean lips. Isaiah recognized his individual sin and guilt, and he recognized the corporate guilt.

[49 : 17] You see, there's a problem in humankind that is universal. 8.5 billion people live on this planet, and they are very different. They live in very different places, very different climates, they look differently, they have different cultures, they speak different languages.

But one common fact unites the human race, that we have sinned and fallen short. We are made in the image of God, we are made for God, we are made by God, but by our actions we deny God.

We have removed ourselves from His presence. So this race of people are in desperate need because we are characterized by transgression, characterized by iniquity, characterized by sin, and the servant has come to deal with those problems.

Why? Because God is for us. If you believe that God is against you, then these words will fall on deaf ears. If you feel that God is indifferent towards you, these words will be of no effect.

But if you believe that God actually cares about you, He cares not just about your present well-being, He cares about your eternal well-being. So God is with us, He's come down.

[50 : 35] God is for us, He's not against us. He sent His Son not only to visit, He didn't send Him just to see what human life was like. He sent Him to seek and save the lost.

He sent Him so that He would give His life as a ransom for many. And the third set of three words is this, God in us. Because when God comes into your life, He literally does that.

He comes into your life. He comes into your heart. I don't know how it happens, but I know that it happens. When you believe in this suffering servant, when you believe in this ruling and reigning monarch, God is God in the Holy Spirit comes into our hearts, changing our hearts, transforming our minds, so it truly can be said that God is with us, and God is for us, and God is in us.

So God does what is needed to be done. He does everything that is required. He does not underestimate the problem. He does not undersupply, but everything that is needed is done.

And you notice here that the suffering servant, that the oppression ultimately gives way to death. He doesn't protest. He doesn't respond like a lamb taken to the slaughter, a sheep before its shearers is silent.

[52 : 02] He's taken from prison. He's cut off from the land of the living. Verse 9, He's made a grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death. No violence nor was any deceit in his mouth.

And we're told, though, that this suffering, we're told that this death, we're told that this one who was cut off, somehow, somehow, has been given a generation, has been given a people that are not few, but numerous, not limited, but many.

And I just want to highlight the final verse in chapter 53. We can't give any detail to this. But notice in verse 12, Therefore I will divide with him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors.

He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. as this chapter ends, we realize that death does not have the final word.

We realize that though he was assigned a grave with the wicked, with the rich in his death, yet now he's making intercession. Now he seems to be alive.

[53 : 26] Now it seems as if death could not keep its hold of him, and that there is a group of people who are continuing to receive his benefits, and his blessings, and his prayers, and his intercessions, that the grave somehow could not hold him.

Isaiah is giving us a picture, just a limited picture, but as we fill in the details from the New Testament, we see exactly what he's saying. We see that yes, on the cross, the Lord Jesus bore the sin, bore the reproach, paid the price, unto death, that he died, that he was buried, and as the apostle Paul tells us, and on the third day he was raised, according to the scriptures.

There's a famous question in chapter 6, who will go for us? Whom shall I send? You notice that there's no question here, but yet there is a question that this chapter prompts, and it's captured for us, not in the Old Testament, but it's captured for us in the New Testament.

You see, the apostle Paul, who experienced life on both sides, he was a persecutor, he looked upon Jesus as an enemy, he looked upon the people of Jesus as deceived, and he felt that it was his life calling to destroy the church.

That was, of course, until he met the last person he ever expected to meet. He met the risen, living Lord Jesus, and everything was changed. Isaiah meets the exalted king, everything has changed in chapter 6.

[55 : 07] In the book of Acts, the apostle Paul meets the risen, living Lord Jesus, and everything has changed. In chapter 8 of Romans, in verse 31, we read this question that captures verse chapter 53 of Isaiah so powerfully, and asks us what we think of what we have just seen.

what we think about what we have just heard. Chapter 8, verse 31, Paul says this, What shall we then say to these saints?

If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

We've seen the picture of the risen, exalted, majestic God in chapter 6. The one who was high and lifted up and the hem of his robe fills the temple.

We've seen the one who was exalted to ridicule and to scorn and to suffering and to shame and to death in chapter 53. But his death and his ridicule and his shame was not without cause and not without outcome.

[56 : 24] That he would bear the sin, that he would declare many to be righteous. And Paul says, what about you? What about me? What shall we say? What shall we say to these things?

What do you say about what you've just heard? What do you say about what you've seen? What do you say about these two scenes that have been brought together? The majestic, glorious God, the ruling king, and the suffering servant.

This is what God has done for us. If God be for us, who can be against us? That's the question that only you can answer.

I can answer it for me, but only you can answer it for you. What then shall we say to these things? The Lord Jesus lived, he died, and he rose again.

He died for those who have missed the mark, and those who have fallen short. Those who have tried their best but never succeeded to fulfill the law's commands.

[57 : 32] Those who have let themselves down and let others down. Those who are guilty and those who feel their guilt. This is what he has done, and this is how we are to respond.

God is for us, and if God is for us, if God is for you and for me, then no one can stand against us. So I pray that God might take his word, and that God by his Holy Spirit might powerfully apply that word to each of our hearts, and that we might know for certain this morning that God is with us, and that God is for us, and that God is in us, and that our response is, thank you God for Jesus.

Thank you for the life of Jesus. Thank you for the death of Jesus. Thank you for the resurrection of Jesus, and thank you that you have demonstrated that you are for me, because Jesus Christ lived and died to take away my sin, and to set me right with him, and to give me a place with his people here and now, and a place in the Father's house forever and ever.

Amen and Amen. Let's sing together, and as we sing, we will prepare our hearts as we prepare to sit at the Lord's table and receive the bread and the wine.

We often sing Psalm 118, which is very appropriate in its content. Psalm 118, we're going to sing from verse 15. In dwellings of the righteous is heard the melody of joy and health, the Lord's right hand, doth ever valiantly.

[59 : 20] We're going to sing down to verse 23. Notice the last stanza that we sing. That stone is made head cornerstone, which builders did despise.

This is the doing of the Lord and wondrous in our eyes. Let's sing together. Psalm 118, verses 15 to 23. Psalm 118, verses 15 to In dwellings of the highest, this is the melody of joy and health, the Lord's right hand, the heavenly heavenly The mighty Lord, exalted song high, the kingdom of the mighty Lord.

God ever liant thee, I shall not die, but in the hand shall the words of God discover.

The Lord hath made conscience soar, but not to death gives no man.

O set ye open unto thee, the gates of righteousness.

[61 : 57] Then will thy angel into death, and I the Lord will bless.

This is the gate of God's highest, the judge shall enter in.

Thee will thy place, for none he hurts, and God's might safety be.

That storm is made for her soul, which you thirst in the sight.

This is the giving of the Lord, and one does it arise.

[63 : 34] I just want to remind us of those words of the Apostle Paul at the beginning of chapter 15.

This is the great chapter of Resurrection, and he summarizes the Gospel very simply. Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which you also have received, and wherein ye stand, by which also ye are saved if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, for unless ye have believed in vain.

For I delivered unto you, for I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve.

And after that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that he was seen of James, then of all the Apostles, and last of all he was seen of me, also as one born out of due time.

For I am the least of the Apostles, that am not meek to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God. But by the grace of God, I am what I am.

[64 : 59] Paul says the Gospel is quite simple. It's quite straightforward. The Gospel is about what Jesus Christ has done. He's lived, he's died, he was buried, and he rose.

And Paul recognizes how far short he fell. I'm reminded of the words of John Newton. John Newton, in a prayer, once put it this way, and maybe we can identify with these sentences.

Lord, I am not what I want to be. And Lord, I'm not what I ought to be. And Lord, I'm not what I'm going to be. But thanks, Lord, I'm not what I used to be.

And what I am, I am by the grace of God. There is much in all of us that ought not to be. There is much in all of us that we do not wish was there.

There is much in all of us that will not one day be taken away. But what we are now, by the grace of Jesus, is by His goodness and His mercy.

[66 : 03] We read a few chapters earlier in Corinthians where the Apostle Paul puts it this way. He says, Let's follow the Lord's example by giving thanks.

Let's pray. Father in heaven, we thank you. We thank you for your word. We thank you for your truth. We thank you for your power. And we thank you for your grace.

We thank you, Lord, for the bread. And we thank you for the wine. We thank you for what they symbolize. We recognize the death of our Lord Jesus.

What He did. What He did for us. What He did in our place. What He did to set us free. To give us help. And to give us hope.

And we give you praise. And we give you thanks. We ask, Lord, that you would hear us now. And that we would truly be grateful. For all that you are. And for all that you have done.

[67 : 31] And for all that we have therefore received by faith. Because it's in the name of Jesus that we pray. Amen. So we're told that on the night that Jesus was betrayed, He took bread and broke it.

This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me. We're also told that after supper, He took the cup saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood.

Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink this wine, You proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

And that's when you drink it in remembrance of me.

Let's pray. voy voy voy voy voy Thank you.

[69 : 59] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[72 : 29] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[74 : 59] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[78 : 59] Thank you. Thank you. Bob, so, Bob said, thank you.

Thank you. We really, thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Let's close in a Let us pray. Let us pray. And now, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, rest upon, abide with us all this day and forevermore. Amen.

Thank you.