

# The Lord Swears by Himself

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Hello and welcome to the service this morning. It's good to come together to worship God and we pray as we do. Come that he would draw near to us and we would be made aware of his presence.

We are going to begin by singing from Psalm 50. Psalm 50, the second version of the psalm, singing from the beginning. Psalm 50, from the beginning.

Second version, the mighty God the Lord hath spoke and called the earth upon, even from the rising of the sun to his going down. From out of Zion, his own hill, where the perfection high of beauty is, from thence the Lord hath shined gloriously. Our God shall come and shall no more be silent, but speak out. Before him fire shall waste, great storms shall compass him about. He to the heavens from above and to the earth below shall call, that he his judgments made before his people show.

Let all my saints together be unto me gathered, those that by sacrifice with me a covenant have made. And then the heavens shall declare his righteousness abroad, because the Lord himself doth come, none else is judge, but God.

God. The mighty God the Lord hath spoke and called the earth upon.

[ 1 : 5 2 ] The mighty God the Lord has bowed and called the earth upon.

In from the rising of the sun unto his holy ground.

From the earth of Zion is over the earth where perfection lies.

Of unity is from the earth where perfection lies.

Our God shall come and shall know his high and ever give us.

[ 3 : 2 2 ] Before him finds a wisdom, shall come the earth.

He to the heavens from above. And to the earth in the earth shall come and ye his justness day.

Behold his given hope. Let all my saints together be.

And to be gathered. Those not by sacrifice will be our God of it.

And then the heavens shall be filled. His righteousness is the Lord.

[ 5 : 0 7 ] Because the Lord has found the earth. The earth shall come and ye his justness day.

Let's join together in prayer. Let's pray. O Lord, O God, as we meet together in your name, remind us afresh of who you are indeed.

Your word has so done. The mighty God and Lord is a God that is to be reckoned with.

A God who sits upon the heavenly throne. And who is surrounded with examples and illustrations of great power.

Of the earth. Simply speaking of. The awesome nature of the deity that Jehovah is.

- [ 6 : 26 ] a triune God, a God who is one but a God who is three. A God who is unlike the gods of this world which are man-made. They owe their origin entirely to the imagination of man and man worships his creature in the manner in which he chooses and when and if that worship is to be given to such a God. But you have decreed how we are to worship you. You have declared your name and set it forth amongst all the nations. You have told us that we are to worship you in spirit and in truth, that we come as the creature or to come before the creator. You have bestowed upon us in that divine act of creation, the capacity to worship God and to glorify your name.
- Even though the faculties that you bestowed upon our first parents have been greatly diminished by reason of sin, yet they still exist. That desire to worship is instilled within us, however corrupt it may be.
- That is why we would worship gods of our own making, because we need to worship God. God. We need to bow the knee before some deity and because of sin we have chosen these gods of our own.
- Help us to understand how we can only truly worship God by understanding the significance of your word, the gospel that you have given to us. The gospel that you have given to us that sets before us the peace of God through Christ Jesus.
- [ 8 : 57 ] That reminds us that you are a God who is unapproachable, a God who is without sin and whose holiness cries out to us, the gospel that you have given to us. Holy, holy, holy, holy is the Lord God on high.
- The heavens declare your glory. The myriad host of angels without number spirits who are met in the name of the Lord. The myriad host of angels who are met in your presence and who have not fallen worship you perfectly.
- And it is innate in them to bow the knee metaphorically in your presence and acknowledge your holiness, even though they themselves possess that created holiness that separates us from them because we have fallen and we have sinned against our God unlike them.
- We know that your word teaches us that there are fallen angels, that there are spirits that dwell in this world and who are experiencing the justice, pleasure of God ultimately to experience it for the endless ages of eternity.
- For you have prepared a place for them as you have prepared a place for them as you have prepared a place for that figure that has claimed for himself the authority that is not his to claim.
- [ 10 : 45 ] He is spoken of as a fallen angel, even Beelzebub and Satan as he is named within the scripture.
- But you have prepared a place for him and that is the place where he will abide, bound for the endless ages of eternity, the hosts that have failed to embrace salvation as it is set before us in the gospel.
- Help us to appreciate the truth that brings to our attention the perilous condition that we are found in by reason of sin. Open the eyes of our understanding that we would be uncomfortable where we are if we are not found in Christ.
- We pray for your blessing upon the gospel preached today in our own hearing in this place and beyond, wherever men and women, young and old, gather in your name.
- May those who proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, without embellishment and without anything taken from it, that that word would go forth with power and that those under it would be drawn to place their confidence in Christ.
- [ 12 : 17 ] For the arm of flesh will avail us nothing. We pray for your blessing upon those who do preach the gospel much against opposition in the world, because that opposition has always been there from the moment that the arch enemy manifested his enmity against his creator.

We pray, Lord, for your blessing upon those who labor in lands where it is a crime to preach the gospel.

We are not too far behind these countries in our own present situation, because the truth is offensive to many.

And if it is declared as it is contained within the scripture, there are those who would use it against your people and lay claim to their liberty because of the offense that they say it causes them.

The great word that we have as the truth reminds us that it is those who are blessed are those who are not offended in Christ or his word, and who stand foursquare upon what it sets before us as the path of life.

[ 13 : 51 ] Remember your people the world over. Remember those who are in need amongst them. We know of countries where the saints of God are in chains because of the fact that they belong to Christ, and they fearlessly lay claim to being one of his own.

We remember them to you and are thankful for them and would ask that you would speak into their need. We pray for our own nation, for those who govern over us, and we are required so to do however much we feel embarrassment and shame over their failure to give place to the truth of God.

And it is markedly so in how they behave in contradiction to what your truth states for us to live our lives by.

Remember the governments of the day. In Westminster, in Holyrood, remember our own council and those who would serve the people there.

May they serve God first, and may they remember that they are answerable to you before any. We pray for your people according to their needs and the needs of all of our society.

[ 15 : 29 ] We pray for the frail elderly. We pray for those who are bedridden, housebound, hospitalised, cared for by others in their homes or in homes appointed to that end.

Visit the sick in mercy, we pray. And may the vessels of mercy, ordained for their good, be truly sanctified.

Remember the grieving and the sorrowful. The voice of death frequently makes impression upon us, at least as far as reminding us of our own frailty of body.

But how quickly we neglect to bring to remembrance that we are but one short step behind those that are removed from the sin of time.

We elongate our years, foolishly determining that we will have time aplenty to make business with God if it is our intention so to do.

[ 16 : 34 ] But the time is upon us before we know it, when death will close our eyes, and we will open him on the shores of eternity, wherever that may be.

We pray for mercy for those who are grieving and sorrowful, and that you would sanctify such visitations to us as communities.

Remember us, each one, according to the needs that we have. Bless our gathering. Bless the Sunday school, the children that are instructed there, and those who give instruction.

May each and every one of us know that we are but weak and but earthen vessels, but you are able to fill it with the glory of your own passion.

And as they teach, may they remember for all their frailty that the God of heaven is their portion, and the word that comes from their mouth, even delivered to those in infancy and in youth, that it may make an impression that will last and secure their never-dying souls for Christ.

[ 17 : 56 ] Hear our prayers and forgive our sins. In Jesus' name. Amen. I'm going to read from the Scriptures of the Old Testament, the book of the prophet Isaiah, in chapter 45.

The book of the prophet Isaiah, chapter 45. Thus saith the Lord, who is anointed beside us, whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations before him.

I will loose the loins of kings to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut. I will go before thee and make the crooked places straight.

I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron. And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.

For Jacob, my servant's sake, and Israel, mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name. I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.

[ 19 : 17 ] I am the Lord, and there is none else. There is no God beside me. I gilded thee, though thou hast not known me, that they may know from the rising of the sun and from the west that there is none beside me.

I am the Lord, and there is none else. I fall in the light and create darkness. I make peace and create evil. I, the Lord, do all these things.

Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness. Let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation. And let righteousness spring up together.

I, the Lord, have created it. Woe unto him that striveth with his maker. Let the pot-shared strive with the pot-sharers of the earth.

Shall the clay say to him that fashioned it, What makest thou? For thy work he hath no hands. Woe unto him that saith unto his father, What begetteth thou?

[ 20 : 22 ] Or to the woman, what hast thou brought forth? Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, And concerning the work of my hands command ye me.

I have made the earth and created man upon it. I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, And all their hosts have I commanded. I have raised him up in righteousness, And I will direct all his ways.

He shall build my city. He shall let go my captives, Not for price nor reward, Saith the Lord of hosts. Thus saith the Lord, The labour of Egypt and merchandise of Ethiopia, And of the Sabaeans, men of stature, Shall come over unto thee, And they shall be thine.

They shall come after thee, In chains they shall come over, And they shall fall down unto thee. They shall make supplication unto thee, Saying, Surely God is in thee, And there is none else.

There is no God. Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel the Saviour. They shall be ashamed, And also confounded all of them.

[ 21 : 45 ] They shall go to confusion together, That are makers of idols. But Israel shall be saved in the Lord, With an everlasting salvation. He shall not be ashamed, Nor confounded world without end.

For thus saith the Lord, That created the heavens, God himself, That formed the earth and made it, He hath established it, He hath created it, Not in vain. He formed it to be inhabited.

I am the Lord, And there is none else. I have not spoken in secret, In a dark place of the earth. I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain.

I, the Lord, speak righteousness. I declare things that are right. Assemble yourselves and come, Draw near together, He that are escaped of the nations.

They have no knowledge, That set up the wood of their graven image, And pray unto a God that cannot save. Tell ye, and bring them near.

[ 22 : 50 ] Yea, let them take counsel together, Who hath declared this from ancient time. Who hath told it from that time? Have not I the Lord?

There is no God else beside me, A just God and a Saviour. There is none beside me. Look unto me, And be ye saved, All the ends of the earth.

For I am God, And there is none else. I have sworn by myself, The word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, And shall not return. But unto me every knee shall bow, Every tongue shall swear.

Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength. Even to him shall men come, And all that are incensed against him Shall be ashamed.

If in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel Be justified, And shall glory. Amen.

[ 23 : 53 ] And may the Lord add his blessing, To a reading of his word, And to his name be the praise. Boys and girls, I believe that you're continuing to look at The experiences of the children of Israel Before they took, They were taken out of The land of Egypt.

And I'm sure Many of you here Will know The story of what happened In Egypt Before The Israelites Were taken Out of There were There was a time Of Terrible Plagues That Assailed God's People And The People Of Egypt And There were Ten of them I took a note of them Before I left And They're sitting comfortably On my study table As often happens But there were Ten of them I'm trying to remember them As we As we Standing here As I'm standing here The The various Plagues There was The I can't remember them

In the exact Order We have them There was a Plague of Of Blood Filling the water There was a Plague Locusts Of Flies Of Of The dead Beasts All the Dead Animals That That God Caused To die A plague Of darkness A plague Of frogs And I'm sure There were Other ones But if you Go through Out of these Coming to the Last Most And Most Terrible And Most Terrible But Certainly When The angel Of death Passed over The land Of Egypt And The oldest Member Member of The first Born Was Cut

Down Killed By the Angel Of Death And that's The last Plague That came Upon Egypt Before Before Pharaoh Permitted Them To Leave If we Think of These Plagues I wonder Which one Would be The worst One And When you Think about It When you Work Through Every one Of these Plagues And you Think of Everything That Was Involved In Experiencing These Plagues You might Think that Well that One wasn't Too bad So this Plague Of flies Doesn't Doesn't Sound too Bad A plague Of flies And yet Many of Us know What it's Like In the Summer When the Medges Are out And

They're Out in Forch We Complain We find It very Difficult If not Impossible To be Outside When they're There And it's Something That we Cannot Overlook That when God Plagued Egypt With Flies They were Everywhere They were Everywhere They were Inside They were Outside They were On the Food They were In the Food Didn't Matter The flies Covered The whole Land And everybody Was affected By them But the People of God Who Lived In Goshen And You would Think That that One plague Would be Enough That one Thing would Be enough For The people To think Well God God has Done This And this

[ 28 : 27 ] God Must be A Powerful God And if He wants Us to Repent If He wants Us to Do what's Right Surely That's what We must Do But what We learn Is that The person Who was Sovereign The person Who was King Over Egypt Pharaoh What we Are told Is that He hardened His heart He determined Not to Do what God Wanted him To do And However Terrible The plague This was The response Of Pharaoh Ultimately He determined To harden His heart Against God And Plague After plague Whichever One You would Say Was the Worst One Even The grief And the Sadness Of losing The oldest Member Of the Family Every one

Of them Had the Same Result And you Say to Yourself When you Are looking At that From a Distance How How And why Could anyone Resist God Speaking To them In that Way Why Would anyone Harden Their heart When God Has said This is What I'm Going to Do And God Does it And when He does It And they Know that It is God That has Done it That they Still Harden Their heart And that's The way It is I'm afraid With every One of us When God speaks To us Maybe not Through plagues The way He spoke To Egypt But to Ourselves There may Be one Thing Or many Things And we Know In our Heart of Hearts That God Is speaking To us

Through that One thing Or through Many Things And what Do we Do We decide I'm Not going To listen I'm Not going To do What God Wants me To do And when We do That It is Always With Very Serious Consequences And Sometimes When we We Do that Very thing When our Parents Tell us To do Something And we Know We know Instantly What they've Said They've Said Don't do That And we Know Exactly What they're Saying And they'll Say Don't do That Or else And we Know Exactly What they're Saying And yet One by One Each one Of us Will take A course Of action Which May be Defiant Or may Be done Quietly

And Without Worrying About the Consequences I remember One of The elders He was a Deacon When I Was in Graver But I remember His sister Telling me That his Natural Inclination Was always And maybe This was just A sister Speaking That her Brother When Her parents Would tell Them to do Something She Would say I Won't Or I Can't But he Would say Nothing He would Say nothing He would Bite his Tongue And then Do What he Wanted to Do And he Said he Was always Like that He determined But he Never He never Argued He never Said I Won't He never For any

Occasion Said this Is what I'm Going to Do And some People are Like that By nature But Pharaoh You'll remember As you read The story He was Somebody And he Hardened His heart And it Says that It's God That hardened His heart Now that May make You think That That God Was responsible For Pharaoh's Unbelief Or for Pharaoh's Disobedience But what it Actually means Is God Allowed him To do What he Wanted to Do God Allowed him To do What he Wanted to Do Which was Exactly To go Against God And that As we Learn from The The telling Of the Story Was something That would Ultimately Bring him Under God's Judgement I hope you Know To listen To what God Is saying In his word

[ 33 : 31 ] To understand It To remember It And to Know the Wisdom Of always Trying With his Own help To do What he Says We're going To sing As we Go to Sunday This one From Psalm 9 Psalm 9 And we're Singing From Verse 7 God We're going To sing To sing To sing God God Shall Endure For He God N God

Thank you Ar And Could We should Ji Ultimately As we Land God's name to give it all.

God also will and refuge be for those that are oppressed.

I refuge well in the light of trouble, goodness.

And may the Lord have given thee their confidence will face.

[ 36 : 07 ] For thou who hast not forsaken them, not truly see my face.

O singing praises to the Lord that dwells inside your hill And all the nations of all Is his record in them When he inquired of the earth In every heaven Never forget

Never forget That all the heart is in Lord, pray thee Behold thy grave With thy rumbl And all the heart is in Lord, pray thee Behold thy grave If thy rumbl From the gates of the earth Does grace be all I am And Can we turn for a short while to Book of the prophet Isaiah chapter 45

And we can read from Verse 22 Look unto me and be ye saved All the ends of the earth For I am God And there is none else I have sworn by myself The word is gone out of my mouth In righteousness And shall not return That unto me Every knee shall bow Every tongue shall swear Surely Shall one say In the Lord Have I righteousness and strength Even to him Shall men come And all that are incensed Against them Shall be ashamed In the Lord For all the seed of Israel Be justified And shall be glory Shall glory Particularly the words that we have from Verse 23 I have sworn by myself The word is gone out of my mouth

In righteousness And shall not return The famous preacher and teacher The famous preacher and teacher I think if I remember correctly It was an American evangelist I can't remember the name exactly Exactly But he He said in the process of preaching Something that Many people will disagree with But the Lord's people I think are forced to agree with The Lord's people To agree with It was D.L. Moody D.L. Moody That's the name I was trying to remember Every Christian

[ 40 : 37 ] Have come to understand What he meant By what he said And he said This simple truth That Self-righteousness Righteousness Is the last idol That is rooted out of the human heart Self-righteousness Is the last idol That is rooted out of the human heart Now you might not think That that is a true statement A true statement But I think That most Christians If not all Christians Have discovered for themselves How deeply seated Self-righteousness is Self-righteousness Self-righteousness Basically is Where a person Is Establishing A foundation Upon which they are Prepared to stand And they think That it is sufficient To bear the scrutiny Of God in judgement Self-righteousness Self-righteousness Whereas Whereas the scripture teaches That the only righteousness That is capable Of being scrutinised By God And God being satisfied With it Is the righteousness That God himself supplies And the people of God Have been taken from A life of Initially I would imagine Struggling to establish a righteousness before God You know what?

Maybe those of you who are not Christians today You are not really persuaded that such a struggle exists That you have no interest or inclination towards establishing a righteousness to God That you have no interest or inclination towards establishing a righteousness to God That you have no interest or inclination to God That you have no interest or inclination to God No desire to do it because you are not thinking Because you are not thinking Well, it is not something I would be interested in doing anyway Or it is not something I think that God If I believe in God Would look for But even those of you who would say I believe in God Inverted commas Even those of you who are saying that At the heart of your religion

Is one where you are determined to say to God I am not really as bad as all these other people that are in the world That are in the world I am even better than many Christians I don't make myself out to be something that I am not I am not a hypocrite I know my feelings And I acknowledge my feelings I identify my feelings And I do it freely I don't cover it I don't pretend that I am something that I am not I am not And in that thought process What are you doing?

You are establishing A righteousness That you believe Will in some way satisfy This God That you acknowledge exists Even though it is nothing like the God of Scripture And a Christian is somebody who has that innate desire in his heart To begin with To present a righteousness to God And to have discovered that They are incapable of supplying it And they discovered God's righteousness in the person of Jesus Christ They have embraced him and they have accepted him And they believe in him And yet What is true?

[ 45 : 13 ] They live their life and this spectre arises again and again in their heart Of trying to Present this righteousness Alongside the only righteousness by which salvation is possible I am speaking to you Christian And I am saying to you Do you ever do that?

Have you ever at any moment thought to yourself Well Maybe I haven't lived up to scratch on this issue Or on this point But I have done I have done X, Y, Z, I am a good neighbour I am a good husband I am a good wife A good father A good mother I am honest I am scrupulously honest I would never in any way Seek to deceive anyone And You are there Mentally Subconsciously Even with full awareness Ticking the boxes Of your own Self conscious awareness Of some form of righteousness That you place alongside the righteousness That you really understand Is the one needed By which salvation Is yours Have you ever wondered about the first two commandments

There's ten commandments The first commandment is Thou shalt have no other gods before me That's the first one The second commandment Is very similar The second commandment is Thou shalt not make unto thee Any graven image Or any likeness of anything That is in heaven above Or that is in the earth beneath Or that is in the water under the earth Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them Nor serve them For I the Lord Thy God am a jealous God Etc, etc.

It's interesting These are the first two commandments And the first two commandments Are reminding us of the fact That God is conscious Is aware of the fact that Humanly speaking There is this desire to displace Him And to put in his place And to put in his place A God of our own making Or a God that we have in some way given our affection or attention to And he forbids it He warns against it He tells us that God And God alone is to be worshipped And what he is due in worship We must not give to any other God Many have been used by the opening passage

Opening verses of this passage Because it speaks to us about a person called Cyrus Thus saith the Lord who is anointed To Cyrus whose right hand I have holden To subdue nations before him And I will loose the loins of kings To open before him the two leaped gates And the gates shall not be shut And there is something said about Cyrus Before now and after this challenge And the Lord is to be able to do this And I will loose the loins of kings To open before him the two leaped gates And the gates shall not be shut And there is something said about Cyrus Before now and after this chapter But people struggle to understand who this Cyrus is They know who he is Historically he is a figure He is a king He is somebody who is extremely powerful But what is Brings consternation into their thinking Is the fact that this Cyrus Is not really A believer in God I say not really Because Cyrus is somebody

[ 49 : 31 ] Who is Who is a believer in a multitude of gods The chapter refers to him as the Lord's anointed But he is an idolater He is a polytheist And it may be that you understand by polytheism The fact that the person who is a polytheist Means that he has many gods So that as far as Cyrus is concerned As far as his polytheism is concerned Jehovah is but one God among many And he is a servant of Jehovah In the same way that he serves other gods Whoever they may be Now that just doesn't work Cyrus, whatever you think You are not a servant of Jehovah

Because Jehovah As we have already pointed out Is a God that demands The unique position of deity And he does not allow Any other God to usurp that place That is alone his No person can serve God And serve another God And serve another God alongside him But the thing is While there is confusion While there is consternation While there is a predicament in the mind of some Regarding who Cyrus was And what he really believes What we are to understand by him Is at least this That he was God's servant In the sense that God was to use Cyrus To fulfil his sovereign will In the world amongst his people



And for the good of his people In ways that Cyrus himself Probably didn't appreciate or understand Or understand Now at the end of the last chapter He says The prophet says That saith to the deep be dry And I will dry up the rivers That saith of Cyrus He is my shepherd And shall perform all my pleasure Even saying to Jerusalem Thou shalt be built And to the temple Thy foundation shall be laid And that is what The king Cyrus said about doing He was Not directly doing it But establishing the foundation By which that would ultimately come to pass Under God's hand Cyrus would be the instrument For good For God's people

Even though he himself Was not one of them Even though he himself Was not interested in doing What God wanted him to do In the sense that he was giving him Complete obedience Now this is essential for us to understand Because the words that we are looking at As our text today tell us Something about the God Who is the sovereign God And his will for mankind Is that all men be saved And that salvation be there Through the provision that he himself has made Not any other And that in order to bring that to fruition He is able to sovereignly determine the fate of his own people Even within the compass of their own doing Or even their misdoing

So I want us to have before our mind As we look at these words The sovereign might of God As it is seen in the compass of this chapter And these words perhaps would help us do that Where we read For Jacob my servant's sake And Israel mine elect I have even called thee by name I have surnamed thee Though thou hast not known me Though thou hast not known me Though thou hast not known me I am the Lord and there is none else There is no God beside me I girded thee Though thou hast not known me That they may know from the rising of the sun And from the west That there is none beside me I am the Lord and there is none else I form the light and create darkness I make peace and create evil I the Lord do all these things And so on So we have in this context

[ 54 : 43 ] In this context A picture of what God promises to do And a picture of the way in which he will do it That requires his sovereign authority over the world And all that is in it Who is able to conduct his affairs Within the lives of men and women in the world So that it encompasses the present But also is able by virtue of that same power To determine the end in the future And what lies beyond even in eternal realities So the first thing we need to remember Is that God who is sovereign Works minutely as well as at a grand scale With global significance With global significance as well as present And future implications for his actions

You know when we look at the prophet Isaiah He is no doubt concerned with his own day And the affairs of his day But God through him tells the people That not only is God able to deal with that predicament For the present But he is making a promise Concerning the future salvation of the lost That encompasses the need of Not just of those that they know Or are part of But beyond their even Their ability to reckon And the second thing This can only be true If God is who he says he is If God is what he says he is You will have noticed as we read through this chapter

How much God has to say About his uniqueness His sovereign identity I am God There is none else I am the one who will accomplish salvation No one else However many gods there are And there are plenty Redemption is my activity And for us to understand that If we are believers We are encouraged by it If we are believers We are encouraged by it If we are unbelievers We are encouraged to believe in it Because of the extent of his power And the ability that he possesses That no other has That impacts upon the life of all Regardless of need And the final thing The prophet is able to bear testimony to that In his own experience And it is interesting for you to remember I would hope How often the passage here is referred to in the New Testament

There are verses here that you recognise That are often in the mouth of the apostles When it comes to speaking about the passion of the Lord Jesus Christ So we have first of all Briefly a sovereign God A God who is in control And that doesn't mean that he mechanically Moves you and me The same way a person sitting at a chess board Moves about the chess pieces I can tell you that there is a mystery Surrounding the sovereign power of God But there are two sides to it There is the sovereignty of God And there is the responsibility of man Both work together And both are essential In the activity surrounding salvation

We cannot We cannot diminish the sovereignty of God In order to accommodate the responsibility of man Nor can we elevate the responsibility of man And diminish the sovereignty of God Which is what often happens Because when the gospel comes to you and tells you to come And you do come God who is sovereign Is the one who enables you to come When the gospel comes to you and says come And you say like Pharaoh, I won't come I won't come I won't do It is not God who is culpable or accountable for your disobedience You are responsible as God's creature to offer him perfect obedience

[ 60 : 05 ] And the fact that you don't Nobody is responsible for that disobedience but you Whether you understand that or not It may be inexplicable It may be something that many people will excuse their own spiritual lethargy or disobedience They will use it as an excuse But it is that, always an excuse There is an invitation given in verse 22 The words, I am sure, are familiar to you The words are familiar to many because If they know anything about one of the Prince of Preachers Or C.H. Spurgeon And it seems that this was the text that was used in the conversion of C.H. Spurgeon

And most people know C.H. Spurgeon Or have heard of him Maybe you have never read a sermon of his ever in your life But you have heard the name of someone who preached countless sermons And he was a Prince of Preachers And his preaching was greatly blessed to many people during his lifetime But the means by which he came to salvation We are told nothing about who the Preacher was Because it was purely by chance that he came to be in a church Where a sermon was preached And that text was the text that was preached on He wasn't meant to be there The Preacher was not meant to be the Preacher And there were very few people there But at some point in the preaching of that text He came to know God as his God

And you would have thought that Well the Preacher made that great gift to the cause of Christ Would be remembered But no, he's forgotten So we have to remember that God's work can sometimes be accomplished By people who are forgotten And people who mean nothing to many people But the thing that we have here These words of our text Are words that are quoted by the Apostle Paul To apply to the passion of the Lord Jesus Christ You know, he takes the words of the prophet And when he is thinking of the words of the prophet He is thinking of the passion of the Lord Jesus Christ As being the passion who is at the heart of it As I live, saith the Lord

Every knee shall bow to me And every tongue shall confess to the Lord And confess to God So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God And the context in which he quotes these words Is the context in Paul's application of it Where he is speaking of Not Isaiah's day Not even his own day But in the day that is yet to come The day of judgment The day where this prophecy That is speaking of God's sovereignty In God's sovereignty In God's provision of a redeemer Of God's provision of a righteousness That would be imputed And that a righteous that would be perfect And entire This righteousness Is to be found in the passion of Jesus Christ And Paul takes the words of this passage While there is a contemporary appreciation of it

Or application of it There is also a future one And perhaps even something that lies beyond our understanding of what the future is But the great deal of judgment that is at the heart of what the prophet is identifying there He is speaking about something that includes the salvation of the people of God and the damnation of the reprobate Those who will come to judgment amongst them will be those who are at that very moment the vicious opponents to the righteousness of God And they will be put to shame Notice that God binds himself to that by an oath It is not something he is saying Well maybe this will happen Maybe one of these days Events will come to a

[ 65 : 19 ] You know something will happen And things will get better Maybe they will get worse But the sovereign God is saying This is how it is going to be And it is going to be like this Because this is what I have determined This world will come to judgment Because I have decreed judgment for the world I will Chastise I will punish I will deal with the reprobate in the way that they are meant to be dealt with And I will Bring to myself those who are the righteous And he is not going to be deflected from doing what he promises Because he has bound himself to do that by an oath What has to be true about God before that can happen?

Well we know that Well we know that If I determine to do something tomorrow If I say that I am going to do something tomorrow The chances are that I might accomplish that I might achieve that A fair to middling chance anyway But that is only as far as it can go And we have all discovered that for ourselves The best laid plans of my son and man Theophagorai That is not the way it is with God What God has purposed His purposes will be fulfilled And that is what he is saying He is the source of all righteousness And he is the well head of all power And because he is righteous His word will not be impugned His word will not be found false

In verse 17 Israel shall be saved in the Lord With an everlasting salvation You shall not be confounded Not ashamed World without end God has said this God has parputed this It is certain It is certain And the saviour who will do the saving Is the creator God Remember he does that as well He tells us In this almost as if he is Just saying it as an aside He reminds us of the work of creation I did that I created the world I created the heavens The stars He is not saying that boastfully But he is saying it in a context Where he is saying The God who is saying he is going to do Has done great things And greater things yet will he do And he will not be deflected

From doing what he has promised Because he is impotent Or because he is inarticulate Because he is in some way Saying something that he cannot achieve No, he is speaking here Of his ability To do the very thing That he must do as God I have sworn by myself The word is gone out of my mouth In righteousness And shall not return And to me Every knee shall bow And every tongue shall swear This is what I have said This is what I have decreed This is how it will be And God has frequently said that In the prophecy of Jeremiah Jeremiah says Behold the days come Saith the Lord

That I will perform That good Which I have proposed Or promised And to the house of Israel And to the house of Judah I will perform I will do it in other words In those days And at that time Will it cause the branch Of righteousness To grow up into David I will do that And he shall execute judgment And righteousness in the land In those days Shall Judah be saved And Jerusalem shall dwell safely And this is the name Wherewith she shall be called The Lord of Righteousness Whose deed of salvation Is his As Lord God Omnipotent A holy and a just God

[ 70 : 26 ] Here in verse 24 The word righteousness We are told by Hebrew scholars In the plural forum Later on in the same prophecy You have these words Which are often Quoted All our righteousnesses Are as filthy rags In the sight of God Righteousnesses And God here uses that plural forum The righteousnesses of God To emphasize that everything That is essential for the salvation of sinners According to God's determined purposes Will come to fruition That will come to pass This work of salvation Is a perfect work He saves And his righteousness Will be the basis for it And those that he saves will be righteous They will possess righteousness And they will do righteousness By virtue of God And the righteousness of God

And the righteousness of God And the righteousness of God Will be the basis for it And those that he saves will be righteous They will possess righteousness And they will do righteousness By virtue of their ability That comes from their faith in Jesus Christ One of the older Christians As described faith in this way He has said that Faith is emptiness filled with Christ's fullness Impotence lying down on Christ's strength I think that's a great description Emptiness filled full of Christ's strength In Christ's fullness And the person who is a believer

When he believes in Christ When he trusts in Christ There This God-shaped void That they sought to fill with all other things Is now filled with Christ As God has provided him And they have By his Grace He has accepted him And trusted in him Now if we have to understand that That cannot but encourage us Too often the problem we have is our impotence That's my problem What must I do?

And then we think What do I have to do? And then we think I can't do it I do it It's beyond me It's too great It's something that's impossible for me to do But the thing about God's salvation is this He is the Saviour Christ is the Saviour His righteousness Is the means by which The need that we have as fallen sinners Is taken away And our needs are met in Him Nothing sort of immoralising for anyone of us to realise That we are incapable of saving ourselves You know I hope that if there is anybody in here today Who understands even the fragment of what it is To believe that you have a righteousness of your own

That you will satisfy God with That you will understand the absolute futility of doing that very thing And the moment you grasp that truth and understand the significance of it That you apply the teaching of this passage And understand that the righteousness that you need God alone will supply it And does supply it in the passion of Jesus Christ Your need My need as a fallen sinner Is not able to be dealt with by a sticking plaster treatment It's by God's provision And the answer that the prophet supplies Is God does what needs to be done He will have the glory And no one else And it's not Because he's boastful or proud But because he wants

[ 75 : 19 ] The place that is his as God To be restored to him That we have willfully given to idols of our own making In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified And glory we are told That is why the prophet is confident That is why the prophet is content Because he believes That God's purposes will be realized John L. Mackay says About what God is saying here He brings his people back From the consequences of their rebellion And confers on them The status of being righteous Accepted By him And Paul the apostle

Elaborates on that thought And brings it home to us In the context of the gospel Of his free grace Well may God Encourage you to think about About what God is declaring about himself His power And our need And his provision for it And may we Appreciate that The truth that we have here Surely shall one say In the Lord have I righteousness and strength Can you say that And can you believe that To be what is true Of yourself Let us pray Hear O Lord our prayers Open the truth To the eyes of our understanding Open the eyes of our understanding To thy truth To thy truth That it may Make an impression upon Hearts of stone That need to be fragmented And made into hearts of flesh

Help us And pardon us In Jesus name Amen The closing psalm is Psalm 106 Psalm 106  
At the beginning of the psalm Give praise and thanks unto the Lord For bountiful is he His  
tender mercy Doth endure unto eternity God's mighty works Who can express Or show  
forth all his praise Blessed are they that judgment keep And justly do always Sing to verse  
5 Give praise and thanks unto the Lord Give praise and thanks unto the Lord Give praise  
and thanks unto the Lord Give praise and thanks unto the Lord For bountiful is he His  
tender mercy His tender mercy In all the truth

Unto eternity God's mighty words To God's breath Our show Our show For Lord His  
praise Blessed are they that judgment keep And justly do always Remember the love of  
God And justly do always Remember the love of God And justly do always My name do  
always.

Remember me, Lord, with the love which Thou do find us, with Thy salvation, O my God,  
who will send me from the earth.

[ 79 : 43 ] The night Thy chosen good may see, and in their joy rejoice, and may with the inheritance  
triumph with your voice.

There may grace, mercy, and peace, who God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
rest and abide with you one and one and one. Amen.