

Hearken to Me

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- [0 : 00] We can resume our public worship of God by singing to his praise from Psalm 95. Psalm 95. We're going to sing from the beginning of the psalm.
- O come, let us sing to the Lord. Come, let us, everyone, a joyful noise make to the rock of our salvation. Let us before his presence come with praise and thankful voice.
- Let us sing psalms to him with grace and make a joyful noise. For God, a great God and great King, above all gods he is.
- Depths of the earth are in his hand. The strength of hills is his. To him the spacious sea belongs, for he the same did make.
- The dry land also from his hands, its forum at first to take. O come and let us worship him. Let us bow down with all.
- [1 : 06] And on our knees before the Lord our Maker, let us fall. For he is our God, the people we of his own pasture are, and of his hand the sheep. Today if ye his voice will hear.
- We can sing these verses, O come, let us sing to the Lord. Come, let us, everyone. O come, let us sing to the Lord.
- Come, let us, everyone. A joyful noise make to the rock of our salvation.
- Let us sing psalms to him with grace and thankful voice.
- Let us sing psalms to him with grace and make a joyful noise.
- [2 : 44] For God, the great King, above all gods he is.
- Gave us of the earth, and in his hand the strength of hills is his.
- To him the spirit of his hand the spirit of his hand. He belongs, but he has said, could make.
- The drive and drop so from his hand.
- Oh, come, let us worship him.
- [4 : 02] Worship Him. Let us forgive with all.
- And on our knees before the Lord. And make a lift of soul.
- For He is our God. The people we. Of His own pasture.
- And of His hand. The sheep today. If ye His voice will hear.
- Amen. Let us join together in prayer. Let us pray. Amen. Amen. Ever blessed God. As we come before you.
- [5 : 20] We give thanks. That we can praise your name. That we are entreated to do so. Invited to do so. Encouraged to do so. Come let us worship the Lord.
- And we bless your name. That you are worthy. To receive that worship. Unlike the myriad. Number of idols that.
- Occupy this world. There are many. Some have names. Some do not. And yet they occupy. The affections.

Of so many people. And they have displaced. The only living. And true God. As the God who. Is worthy. Of receiving.

All our affection. And attention. We pray that you would. Encourage us. To seek. You out. Even. In order to discover.

[6 : 19] More and more. About. All that is true. Of the God of. God's. The God of all grace. We pray that you would. Enlighten our minds.

In the knowledge. Of Christ Jesus. In him. We are given. A greater knowledge. Of the heavenly father.

And the God of all grace. We pray that you would. Allow the scriptures. To. Have free course. Amongst us. And that. We would.

Be. Encouraged. In the. In the. Reading of the word. To recognize. That it is a word. Like no other. Grant to us.

The help. That we need. To rightly divide. The word. That bears your name. To enter into. The truths. That are caught up. Within it.

[7 : 18] So much so. That. We despair. At times. Because of our. Own lack of. Understanding. And because.

Of our. Need for. A greater. Knowledge and. Insight. Into truths. That. Should be. At our disposal.

That they should. That they should be. At our. Fingertips. That we could. Have. The ability. To. Break up. This word.

So that. Even. The youngest. Of. The youngest. Of. Of. Our. Infants. Would be able. To understand. What that.

Truth is saying. We give. Thanks that. You are able. To do that. With us. Or without us. And that you are able. To speak. To each. According.

[8 : 14] To need. And that. Each one. Who hears. The voice. Of God. In the world. Would do well. To. Acknowledge it. As such.

And. Seek. Your grace. To act upon it. In. Our lives. We pray. Then your blessing. Upon. Our time together. At this evening.

Hour of worship. We give thanks. That. While our numbers. Are few. And it is. A cause for concern. That that is. So it is. That. Whether.

We will see it. Or not. That. We understand. That. There are. Peaks. And troughs. In the. In the kingdom.

Of heaven. Sometimes. These. Shores. That. That we. Are. Aware of. That. Are our home.

[9 : 08] Home lands. We can look back. Historically. At times. At times. Of great blessing. But equally. So. Times. Of death. Spiritual. Impoverishment.

And it is. Under your hand. That these things. Take place. And. While we are never. Able. To. Lay blame. At your. Door. For.

Our lack. Of faithfulness. Or. Our failure. To respond. To the truth. And. Nevertheless. We. Understand. That. You.

Bring. Death. Just as. Surely. As you. Bring. Plenty. You. Bring. Times. Of. Famine. Just as. Surely. As you. Did. Bring. Times.

When the. Storehouses. Are full. So. We. Pray. That. We. Would. Be. With. An eye. To. Your. Glory. And. That. We. Would. Be. Receptive. To. The.

- [10 : 03] Truth. That. Teaches. Us. Where. We. Are. At. With. Regard. To. Our. Ongoing. Relationship. With. Yourself. And. If. We. Have. Such.
- A. Relationship. May. We. Be. Mindful. Of. Many. Shortcomings. That. Marrow. Our. Fellowship. With. The. Most. High. God.
- That. Disturb. Our. Peace. That. Hide. From. You. The. Glories. That. Are. Ever. Yours. We. Pray. For. Your.
- Own. Voice. To. Be. Heard. Amongst. Us. Among. All. The. Voices. That. Are. Heard. Seeking. To. Distract. And. To. To. Disturb. The.
- Attention. Of. Your. People. We. Pray. That. You. Would. Encourage. Others. To. Be. Numbered. Amongst. Them. That. You. Would. Help. And. Understand.
- [10 : 58] That. There. Are. Reasons. Why. You. Hide. Your. Face. From. Us. And. That. That. Reason. May. Be. Found. Within. Our. Own. Heart.
- And. If. It. Is. Such. If. That. Is. How. We. Find. Ourselves. Do. Not. Allow. Us. To. Be. Complacent. To.
- To. Think. That. Better. Days. May. Come. But. Rather. To. Look. To. The. Heavens. And. To. Beat. Upon. The. Doors. Of. Heaven.
- That. You. May. Come. Down. And. That. You. May. Reveal. Yourself. To. Us. We. Fear. That. Too. Many. Of. Our. Generation. Are.
- Too. Content. To. Remain. As. They. Are. With. No. Knowledge. Of. God. And. No. Sense. Of. The. Realities. Of. This. World.
- [11 : 53] That. It. Is. But. A. Passing. Passing. A. Vapor. In. The. Sense. That. Life. All. Life. Is. That.
- Soon. It. Will. Disappear. From. Sight. And. Just. Like. The. Lives. Of. All. That. Occupy. The. Scene. From. For. What.
- Is. But. A. Moment. We. See. That. In. The. Light. Of. Eternity. With. Awe. And. With. Wonder. We.
- Pray. Lord. That. You. Would. Continue. To. Watch. Over. Us. That. You. Would. Watch. Over. Us. As. Homes. And. As. Families. As. A. Community. A. Congregation.
- That. You. Would. Remember. All. Amongst. Us. Who. May. Be. Hidden. From. View. To. The. Many. That.
- [12 : 47] Surround. Them. The. Needs. Of. Their. Soul. Perhaps. The. Needs. Of. Their. Lives. That. Are. Hidden. From. View. Where. They. Are. Dealing. With. Illness. Or.
- With. With. The. Terrors. That. Come. With. The. Night. We. Pray. For. Those. Bounded. By. Infirmary. And. Ask. Lord. That.
- You. Would. Minister. To. Them. And. Sustain. Them. In. Their. Weakness. We. Pray. For. The. Grieving. And. The. Sorrowful. Whatever. They. Are. To. Be. Found. They.
- Are. Always. With. Us. In. This. World. Because. This. But. A. Veil. Of. Tears. So. We. Pray. That. You. Would. Sanctify. Every. Voice. That. Calls.
- Us. To. All.
- [13 : 40] That. Make. Up. This. Nation. We. See. That. There. Are. So. Many. Souls. That. Are. Careless. And. Indifferent. To. The. Gospel. And.
- The. Good. News. Of. Salvation. Through. Christ. Jesus. Some. Are. Atheists. Some. Agnostic. Some. Apathetic. Some. Openly.
- Hostile. Some. Who. Live. Their. Lives. Here. In. This. World. Without. Any. Understanding. Of. Their. Own. Perilous. Condition.

So. We. Pray. For. Our. Nation. For. Those. Who. Govern. Us. In. Whatever. Capacity.
Pray. For. Our. King. And. His. Family. We. Pray. For. An. Outpouring.

Of. Your. Spirit. Upon. All. Echelance. Of. Power. That. You. May. Visit. In. Mercy. And.
Open. The. Blind. Eyes. That. They. May. See. With. Wonder.

[14 : 34] What. God. Is. Able. To. Do. Pray. For. The. Nations. Of. The. Earth. Every. Neighbouring.
Nation. Some. Embroiled. In. In.

All. Manner. Of. Iniquity. Because. Of. Their. Godlessness. And. Because. Of. Their.
Indifference. To. The. Things. That. Matter. We.

Remember. The. Nations. That. Are. Embroiled. In. War. And. We. Pray. For. Them.
Many. Though. They. Be. There. Is. Not. One. That. Is. Engaged.

In. Such. Troubles. Without. The. Eye. Of. God. Being. Upon. Them. So. We. Remember.
Grieving. And. The. Sorrowful.

We. Remember. Those. Who. Have. Been. Deprived. Of. All. Their. Possessions. Who.
Have. Been. Driven. From. Their. Homes. Their. Their.

[15 : 29] Houses. Their. Villages. Their. Towns. Reduced. To. Rubble. And. Their. Families.
Devastated. By. Young. And.

Old. Alike. Being. Taken. From. The. Scene. Of. Time. Before. Their. Time. But. You.
Have. Ordered. All. Things. You. Have. Foreordained. Whatsoever. Comes.

To. Pass. This. Is. The. Generation. That. Is. Our. Generation. Whatever. Went. Gone.
Before. Or. Whatever. Will. Go. On. After. This. Is. Where.

We. Are. And. We. Pray. For. Your. Grace. To. Help. Us. Live. Our. Lives. Through. It.
With. An. Eye. To. Your. Glory. So. Bless. The. Services. Of. Your.

House. Here. And. Every. Other. Place. That. People. Are. Met. In. Your. Name. Whether.
They. Be. Met. In. Twos. And. Threes. Or. In. Thousands. Upon.

[16 : 20] Thousands. And. We. Know. That. There. Are. Such. Mega. Churches. In. The. World.
There. Are. So. Many. Who. Make. An. Open. Profession. Of.

Knowing. The. Lord. And. Loving. The. Lord. And. Following. The. Lord. And. Yet. When.
We. Are. Confronted. With. These. Vast. Numbers. We.

Are. Perplexed. At. How. Little. Influence. The. Many. Have. Upon. This. World. When. It.
Takes. But. But. One. Or. Two. To. Speak.

Out. And. To. Live. Out. The. Gospel. In. Their. Lives. And. Influence. For. Good. Those.
That. They. Come. In. Touch. With. Your. Eyes. Upon. Us. Each. One. And.

We. Know. That. You. See. All. Things. And. There. Is. Nothing. Hidden. From. View. In.
Our. Own. Lives. Or. In. The. Lives. Of. Those. That. We. Live. Out. Our. Life.

[17 : 14] Here. In. This. World. With. Grant. Mercy. For. Our. Sins. And. Pardon. us. In. Jesus.
Name. Amen. Going. to. Sing.

Again. To. God's. Praise. This. Time. Sing. From. Psalm. 34. Psalm. 34. From. Verse 11.
To. Verse 18.

O. Children. Hither. Do. ye. Come. And. Unto. me. Give. ear. I. Shall. you. Teach. To.
Understand. How. Ye. The. Lord. Should. Fear. But.

Man. Is. He. That. Life. Desires. To. See. Good. Would. Live. Long. Thy. Lives. Refrain.
From. Speaking. Guile. And. From. Ill. Words. Thy. Tongue.

Depart. From. Ill. Do. Good. Seek. Peace. Pursue. Earnestly. God's. Eyes. Are. On. The.
Just. His. Ears. Are. Open. To. Their. Cry.

- [18 : 10] The. Face. Of. God. Is. Set. Against. Those. That. Do. Wickedly. That. He. May. Quiet. Out. From. The. Earth. Cut. Off. Their. Memory. The. Righteous. Cry.
- Into. The. Lord. He. Unto. Them. Gives. Ear. And. They. Out. Of. Their. Troubles. All. By. Him. Delivered. Are. The. Lord. Is.
- Ever. Nigh. To. Them. That. Be. Of. Broken. Spirit. To. Them. He. Safety. Doth. Afford. That. Are. In. Heart. Contrite. Let us sing these verses.
- Psalm 34. Verse 11 to 18. O children. Hither do ye come. And unto me. Give ear. O children.
- Hither do ye come. And unto me.
- [19 : 07] Give ear. How shall you teach to understand how ye the Lord should fear?
- What man is he at life he search to seek out?
- Who would live long? Thy lips refrain from seeking care.
- And from the words I tell. Depart from the wicked seek peace.
- Persuive earnestly. Persuive earnestly. God's eyes had on the trust.
- [20 : 21] His ears had open to their cry. The face of God is set against those that do wickedly.
- That he may be quiet. That he may quieten from the earth. Cut off the memory.
- The righteous cry unto the Lord. The righteous cry unto the Lord.
- He unto them guilty. The night guard... Am ■ whose special is the one we are fed down.
- And now stay within himself with mercy. For that you will be made to leave. You will nothing else That be all broken spirit.
- [21 : 55] Give them me safety. Turn the forth. That are in heart contrite.
- I'm going to read from the Old Testament Scriptures on the book of the prophet Isaiah. The book of the prophet Isaiah chapter 51.
- And we'll read from the beginning of the chapter. Isaiah chapter 51. Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness.
- Ye that seek the Lord. Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn. And to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father.
- And unto Sarah that bear you. For I called him alone. And blessed him. And increased him. For the Lord shall comfort Zion.
- [23 : 10] He will comfort all her waste places. And he will make her wilderness like Eden. And her desert like the garden of the Lord.
- Joy and gladness shall be found therein. Thanksgiving and the voice of melody. Hearken unto me, my people. And give ear unto me, O my nation.
- For a law shall proceed from me. And I will make my judgment to rest. For a light of the people. My righteousness is near.
- My salvation is gone forth. And mine arms shall judge the people. The isles shall wait upon me. And on mine arm shall they trust.
- Lift up your eyes to the heavens. And look upon the earth beneath. For the heavens shall vanish away like smoke. And the earth shall wax old like a garment.
- [24 : 11] And they that dwell therein shall die in like manner. But my salvation shall be forever. And my righteousness shall not be abolished.
- Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness. The people in whose heart is my law. Fear ye not the reproach of men.

Neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment. And the worm shall eat them like wool. But my righteousness shall be forever.

And my salvation from generation to generation. Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord.

Awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep, that hath made the depths of the sea away for the ransom to pass over?

[25 : 18] Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Zion. And everlasting joy shall be upon their head.

They shall obtain gladness and joy. And sorrow and mourning shall flee away. I, even I, am he that comforteth you.

Who art thou that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass? And forgettest the Lord thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth, and hast feared continually every day, because of the fury of the oppressor.

As if he were ready to destroy. And where is the fury of the oppressor? The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail.

But I am the Lord thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared. The Lord of hosts is his name. And I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people.

[26 : 48] Awake, awake! Stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury. Thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out.

There is none to guide her among all the sons whom she hath brought forth. Neither is there any that taketh her by the hand of all the sons that she hath brought up.

These two things have come unto thee, who shall be sorry for thee, desolation and destruction, and the famine and the sword.

By whom shall I comfort thee? Thy sons are fainted. They lie at the head of all the streets. As a wild bull in a net, they are full of the fury of the Lord, the rebuke of thy God.

Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted and drunken, but not with wine. Thus saith thy Lord the Lord, and thy God, that pleadeth the cause of his people.

[27 : 59] Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury. Thou shalt no more drink it again, but I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee, which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over, and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over.

Amen, and may the Lord add his blessing to this reading of his word, and to his name be all the praise. I'm going to sing now verses from Psalm 38, Psalm 38, and singing from verse 16, to the end of the psalm.

For I said, Hear me, lest they should rejoice over me with pride, and over me magnify themselves when as my foot of slide.

For I am near to halt, my grief is still before mine eye, for I'll declare my sin and grieve for mine iniquity. But yet mine enemies lively are and stronger they beside, and they that hate me wrongfully are greatly multiplied, and they for good that render ill as enemies me withstood, yea, even for this, because that I do follow what is good.

Forsake me not, O Lord my God, far from me never be, O Lord, thou my salvation art, hast to give help to me.

[29 : 52] You can sing these verses from Psalm 38, at verse 16, For I said, Hear me, lest they should rejoice over me with pride.

Lord, I said, Hear me, lest they should rejoice over me with pride, and over me magnify themselves when as my feet does die.

For I am near to halt, my grief is still before my night, for I will declare my sin and grief, for mine iniquity.

But yet my name is not enough, and strong are they beside, and they that take me wrongfully, and greatly multiply, and they forget the rest of the world, and they forget the rest of the world, as it makes me with shame.

For I am near to the Lord, and I am near to the Lord, and I am near to the Lord, For I am near to the Lord, my God, but from me never be.

[32 : 39] O Lord, Thou my salvation art is to give them to me.

We can turn to Isaiah chapter 51 and read at the beginning of the chapter. And so on.

I am going to look at the first eight verses of this chapter. At this point in the prophecy, the prophet Isaiah is shifting attention from those who are exposing themselves to God's displeasure.

And to God's condemnation. Because they have despised the word of the Lord. They have not listened to God.

They have not heard what God has to say to them. So God has promised that he will deal with them as a judge.

[34 : 26] But in this chapter, we see the word of the Lord come to those who are waiting for the Lord.

Those who are longing for salvation brought by the hand of the Lord. And in the chapter before us, the emphasis falls on the covenant faithfulness.

I suppose in the first instance of God, who is always faithful to his own covenant. And the people of God who diligently, with his help endeavour to follow him.

They have placed their trust in God. And the fact of the matter is that, while they have done that, and they understand that that is what is expected of them, their circumstances are such that they may call into question whether their position before God is as favourable as it could be or should be.

I think that might be the best way of understanding it. At the beginning of chapter 50, this question is asked, Thus saith the Lord, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away?

[36 : 10] Which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have you sold yourselves, and for your transgression is your mother put away.

It gives you a flavour of the accusing note that is in the mouth of those who have turned their back upon God and gone their own way.

And when you compare that to the words that we find in the following chapter, the vast difference there is between the two situations is all too apparent.

Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord. It's a different tone altogether, a different atmosphere if you like altogether.

When God is speaking to his own people, he speaks to them with compassion and with kindness and with an understanding of where they are at.

[37 : 28] Well, we are just simply going to look at these opening verses of chapter 51. And consider them in this sense, that he wants the people that he is speaking to, his own people, his own covenant people, those who are faithful to him, those who are expecting his salvation, and yet who have, by reason of their particular circumstances, cause to wonder whether they are right in doing so, in a measure anyway.

He wants them to look back, to have a sanctified retrospect on their own lives, and on the life of God's people in the world under God's favourable hand.

The second part is a look to the future. He wants them to look with anticipation to what God is yet to do.

And to do so with the security and the certainty that belief in God invites, that his word is binding and his promises are sure.

So, they are to look back on one side, to look forward on the other. But then, as a final part of this, he is dealing with their present, with their circumstances such as they are, and encouraging them, not just by reason of what has happened before and what he promises to do yet, but that they should in the here and now be comfortable with what is happening, that they should be secure in the knowledge that, regardless of what they see or what they experience, that God is their God and he is not remote from them in any sense of the word.

[39 : 54] Now, as you can see from these verses, God wants his people to listen to him. There are always in the world plenty of voices that are raised, and they want us to listen to them.

There may be the need to hear them because the voices are the voices of many people.

It is the voice of the majority. It is the voice that bays for a listening and a hearing, because of the fact that they are in the majority.

On other occasions, it is the voice of the person who, or the masses who think that if they shout loudest, then they will be heard.

But what God is saying to his people, regardless of the voices that they hear, regardless of they be the many or be the few, that they are to hear his voice.

[41 : 13] They are to recognize his voice and to heed what he has to say. In verse one, he says, Harken, listen to me.

In verse four again, Harken, in the sense of pay attention to me. And then in verse seven again, Harken unto me, ye that know righteousness.

God is saying to his people, I am the person, I am the one, I am your God. And whoever is speaking, you must hear my voice above all other voices.

And God is simply saying something which we do well to pay attention to. He is saying, listen to me.

Learn to recognize my voice. And learn to understand that it is what I say that must be heard.

[42 : 27] Regardless of who it is that supposes that their voice must be listened to or heard. And what we see so often is this, that in the world that we live in, particularly, I don't dare say at the time present, at the present time, that our society is different in a sense to many previous societies because of the pervasive influence of the media on the lives of men and women, young and old.

And, you know, I often say to you that we have to guard against saying that this generation is worse than previous generations by reason of the kind of sinful behavior that is evident in it.

Now, we can't say that with any conviction or certainty because if we delve into the past more closely than we do, we will see that there is nothing new under the sun.

There are always in the sun. There are always in the world all kinds of evils and vices and they surface from time to time and they are witnessed from time to time.

But one thing that is true about our society that was not true about previous societies is the influence that the media has on the lives of so many people.

[44 : 33] There are always in the influence of the influence of the influence of television and radio and film and especially through the incessant bombardment that comes our way through the medium of live streaming and other ways by which the computer accesses our home.

And all of that really cries out to us, listen to me. Hear what I have to say to you. What I have to say, I am saying it to many people.

They are hearing what I have to say. They are listening to what I have to say. They are doing what I am saying to them to do. And you see it. You see it. You see it in the way that men and women behave today, especially with regard to their moral behaviour.

It is as if there is an open door and the floodgates have insisted that anything goes. And it is as if what declares that it is worth doing or not doing is the fact that the dissemination of these things are so influential.

Now even if that is the case and it is, you have to understand that God is saying, listen to me. Listen to me.

[46 : 17] Not to the, not to the, not to your film, not to your television, not to your computer, whichever media or medium it is that is influential in your life.

Do not allow these things to dictate to you. How you think, what you think and what you're thinking makes you do. Because at the end of the day, what God is saying here is, you have to hear what I am saying.

And he is speaking to them as someone who has something to say to them. First of all, what he has to say is, remember your past.

Remember your past. And I think looking at the first couple of verses, three verses there, there is difficulty I think in the Hebrew translation of it.

It is certainly difficult to translate in the sense that the exact nature of what is being said by the prophet is not easily pinned down.

[47 : 36] But I think the most basic understanding, and it goes without saying almost is this, that at an individual level, any person can look back at their life if they are believers.

And remember, he is speaking here to those who are believers. He is speaking to those who are righteous, those who have belief in God, faith in God, who are waiting for God to fulfill whatever promise that they are laying hold of.

They can go back to their first experience of God and remember what God did in their life. And the same goes for any person here today who is of the number that have come to know God as their God.

That God took them from where they were and made them what they are. It wasn't something that took place by spontaneous combustion.

It wasn't something that became true of them with a certain inevitability of the passage of time. It was something that they became by reason of God's intervention in their life.

[49 : 00] And the two pictures that we have here. Look unto the rock whence you are hewn.

A lot of the commentators say the rock that is there, it's a pillar of rock. As if it's standing out of the ground.

And the image that is conveyed is they are taken out of that pillar of rock and formed and fashioned into something recognisable.

And the other image which is probably easier to understand, the whole of the pit whence you are digged. You can go to Psalm 40 just for example.

It reminds you of how the psalmist there uses words that the believer applies to himself. God found them in the pit.

[50 : 01] God took them out of the miry clay. God set our feet upon the rock and established our way. This is where the believer comes from.

Wherever they were at. Whatever kind of person they were. However extreme their views were. However desperate the situation was.

However much they were self-satisfied and smug with their own self-righteousness. All kinds of different backgrounds. All kinds of different experiences.

Out of which God took his people. And set them on a path where they bore the name of that God as those who followed in his way.

Those who follow after righteousness. And seek the Lord. And seek the Lord. Now he intensifies the image that is there.

[51 : 05] Asking them not just to look back to their own experience. But to look back to the experience of the church of God as a whole. And he points them in the direction of the father of the faithful Abraham.

And he says look unto Abraham your father. And unto Sarah that bear you. For I called him alone and blessed him and increased him. He is just drawing attention to alerting them to what God did in the experience of Abraham.

Abraham who was an individual. And God made him the father of the faithful. They are to look at the might of God in the experience of Abraham.

His promise to Abraham was look at the stars he said. Look at the heavens and count the stars.

And he says if you can number them so shall you your seed be. And you know the emphasis in I called him alone.

[52 : 18] In the original the emphasis falls upon the solitary person of Abraham. Who from that position of solitariness God took a people.

Who were his people. Without number. Without. Who cannot be numbered. Because God has decreed it so.

What could be plainer than that promise. The father of the faithful. The father of that great nation.

And then in verse 3. Again further encouragement is given to the believer. Looking back to this truth.

That is fulfilled in the experience of God's people. The Lord shall comfort Zion. He will comfort all her waste places. And he will make her wilderness like Eden.

[53 : 19] Her desert like the garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness shall be found therein. Thanksgiving in the voice of Melody. They can look back to what was once the case.

A garden. We spoke of it in the morning. That by reason of sin. God took his people out of the garden of the Lord.

And their wilderness experience. Since then. Suggests that. This is the way it must be. This is the way it will always be. But there is a prospect in store.

There is the future hope. That belongs to God's people. Which he will return to again. That joy and gladness shall be found therein. Thanksgiving in the voice of Melody.

It is a comparison. A contrast I suppose. Between what was once the case. And what will yet be the case.

- [54 : 21] Professor John L. Mackay. In his comments on. On the prophet Isaiah. He says. When God is speaking to Zion.
- He reminds. The church. He reminds the people of God. Of his commitment. To the church. His commitment.
- To the people of God. Of every generation. And it is. He says. He says. Not just a matter of conveying. A sympathy.
- To them. Saying that. Oh God understands. Your difficulty. God understands. Your grief. God understands. Your sorrow. But rather. He is intent upon.
- Bringing them. Through these things. And to. The prospect. Of the fullness. That is in store for them. For them. So he moves. Almost.
- [55 : 20] From. A retrospect. Through this bridge. Verse of verse three. To. Future. That lies in store. For them.
- Again. He says. Hearken unto me. My people. Give ear unto me. My nation. For a law shall proceed from me. And I will make my judgment. To rest for a light of the people.
- And so on. One. You can't read these verses. Without. Understanding. That what he is looking towards. There. Is.
- The fullness of the gospel. Blessing. That is. To be. Yet revealed. Remember. This is. The prophet Isaiah. The prophet.
- Who. Who is spoken of. As we see so. Say so often. The evangelical. Prophet. The. The gospel. Preaching.
- [56 : 15] Prophet. Whose. Heart. And mind. Is taken up. With the coming Lord. And here. There is. An inkling. On the part of the prophet.
- God is giving it to him. That's we have. What we have to. Understand. He is anticipating. What God is going to do. The word righteousness. As you can see. Appears in these. First eight.
- Verses. Five times. And. There is. I suppose. Questions. In the mind. Of those. Who are commentators. As to.
- The exact. Nature. Of this. Righteousness. That he is speaking. About. What is. The meaning. Of the word. How are we meant. To apply it.
- How are we meant. To understand it. Some say. The righteousness. That is on the mind. Of the. The righteousness. That belongs. To the. Men and women. Of faith.
- [57 : 10] That is theirs. Through Christ. Jesus. In other words. There may be. A breadth. Of. Meaning. To the word. It is.
- In the first instance. I would. Say that. It is a picture. Of the very. Character. Of God. There is none.
- Righteous. If not. God. And his. Righteousness. Is what. Determines. The way. His righteousness. Is to be. Witnessed.
- To. And to be. Experienced. In the world. And. He. Testifies. To it. Particularly. In. And through.
- His revelation. Of his son. Jesus Christ. It is. In Christ. What. He has. Promised. And the gospel. Is what. Declares.
- [58 : 05] That to us. So there is a sense. And I think. There are times. When we. Read. Prophecy. That we see. That. That prophecy. May be.
- Partially. Fulfilled. In the near future. Of the prophet. Sometimes. It goes. Beyond that. To. A time.

In the place. That has yet. To be. Arrived at. It is. An. Undertaken. Given. By God. Where. He is.

Stating. That. Everything. That he has. Promised. To. Fulfill. Will. Be. Fulfilled. Nothing. Will. Frustrate. That. My. Righteousness. Is. Near. He says. My. Salvation. Is.

[58 : 59] Gone. Forth. Mine. Arms. Shall. Judge. The people. The. Is. Shall. Watch.
The. Evidence. Given. By. That. The. Salvation. That. He. Has. Been.
The. The. Fullness. Of. Salvation. As. We. Understand. It. Not. Just.
The. But. What. Is. The. The. Salvation. That. God. Has. Promised.
And. Planned. By. The. Redeemer. That. Is. The. Is. Near. Because.

[59 : 54] God. Is. To. Do. That. That. They. Are. Longing. To. See.
Happen. And. God. Is. Wait. For. It. And. It. Is. Is.
Is. When. You. Read. Verse. Six. And. The. Heaven. Shall. Walk.
Sold. Like. A. Garment. And. They. That. Shall. Be. Abolished. There's.
More. Than. A. There. Of. The. Psalmist. In. Psalm 102. And. Understanding.

[60 : 49] That. There. Is. When. The. World. Will. Be. The. Judgment. Of.
God. Will. Be. To. Exist. Currently. So. There. Is. Even. The.
First. Coming. Of. Christ. To. What. The. Heavens. The. Righteousness. Of.
Everything. That. You. And. You. Think. About. You. Read. The. Those.
Who. Had. Dispute. With. God. Looked. The. The. The. The. The.

[61 : 44] The. The. The. The. The. The. The. The. The. The. The.
The. The. The.
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The. The. The. They. revilings for the moth will eat them up.

He's speaking about a situation maybe that you would be familiar with even today. And our current situation I suppose as far as the believing church is concerned, the believing church is considered to be an entity that belongs to the past.

[62 : 54] It has no relevance to the present. The Christian witness is spent and the word of God is something that has been disproved again and again.

Of course those who say that very seldom provide any evidence to support that allegation. It's easily said but very rarely do you find anyone who makes that remark flippantly.

They very very rarely are able to contradict the truth that they so easily seek to undermine.

But God is saying these enemies that revile you, these enemies of the present that pour scorn on your belief in God and your trust in God, that pour scorn on the promises that God has given to you, where will they be?

In but a short space of time. He says, the moth shall eat them up like a garment, the worm shall eat them like wool.

[64 : 05] These enemies who are so vocal and so desperate to be heard and so believable in their reasonings and in their arguments, they will disappear, they will disappear.

They will be no more whereas I will be the same. My righteousness shall be forever.

My salvation from generation to generation. A preacher, an Irishman by the name of Derek Bingham, used to preach quite a bit.

And he has a commentary, which is, I suppose, it's not much. The commentary of, on the book of the prophet Isaiah, it's a, I would say, a popular approach to the message of the prophet.

But in comments that he makes later on in the book, where he's speaking about the way God is and the way God's people are, he tells, he makes this observation from his own experience.

[65 : 39] He went to visit Romania. And in his visit to Romania, he was brought to a place that was a Christian, a Christian bookshop and in it was a Christian printing press, producing Bibles in the language of the people.

And he said, that place that I was taken to was a place that was built on the backs of the people by the communist dictator, Czesku.

I can't even pronounce his word, but some of you will remember his name before his dictatorship toppled.

But he built that palace. And it was in that people's palace or palace of the people that a Christian, Warren Brand, was taken to be tortured because of his proclamation of the gospel amongst the people.

And he says, there you had it, a place that was synonymous with suppression of the gospel truth. And the people responsible for it, they were dust.

[67 : 02] They were eaten by the moths. There's no sign of them. The printing press, he said, that was used to print the Bibles. Where had it come from?

It had come from East Germany. That was used to propagate the propaganda during the zenith of the communist era following the Second World War.

It was now being used for the printing of Bibles. Some people will think that their voice is the voice that must be heard.

Their activities are the activities that are going to prosper and to survive. That's not what God says. That's not what God is telling the people here.

Listen to me. Hear what I have to say. These people. Remind yourself where you are from. Remind yourself where God's people are from.

[68 : 05] Remind yourself of who their God is. What their God is doing. What their God has promised to do yet. Keep that before your mind. Listen to me.

Hear me. And this is something that we do well to do in our own generation and in the face of all the opposition that exists in the world against God's word and truth.

May he bless to us these few thoughts. Let us pray. O Lord our God we pray that your blessing would be upon your word. Upon every way in which that word is brought to our attention.

May it remind us of the fact that your arm has not, is not shortened in that it cannot save. Your work goes on and will go on until the day of Christ Jesus.

That day that has yet to come to fruition where he will bring all to account. Bless us in his name we pray.

[69 : 09] Forgive sin in him. Amen. I'm going to sing some verses in conclusion from Psalm 30. Psalm 30.

And we can read the last three verses of the psalm. What prophet is there in my blood when I go down to pit? Shall unto thee the dust give praise?

Thy truth declare, shall it? Hear, Lord, have mercy. Help me. Lord, thou turned hast my sadness to dancing. Gave my sackcloth loosed and girded me with gladness.

That sing thy praise, my glory may. And never silent be. O Lord, my God, forevermore I will give thanks to thee.

What prophet is there in my blood when I go down to pit? What prophet is there in my blood when I go down to pit?

[70 : 22] Shall unto thee the dust give praise? Thy truth declare, shall it?

Hear, Lord, have mercy. Help me. Help me, Lord. Thou turned hast my sadness to dancing in my sackcloth loosed And girded me with gladness.

That sing thy praise, my glory may. And never silent be.

O Lord, my God, forevermore I will give thanks to thee.

May grace, mercy and peace from God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit rest and abide with you all now and always. Amen.