

Feeling Crushed? Find Hope again

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[0:00] Talking along the theme of crushed, our Lord was crushed.! Isaiah 53 and verse 5 it reads, Isaiah 53 verse 5 it reads, But 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. So the word bruised here is elsewhere translated in our Bible in the King James as crushed.

So it's the same sense this word bruised can be put crushed as it's elsewhere translated. And have you ever felt crushed?

Here it's telling us that our Lord is crushed, he was bruised, he was crushed for our infirmities. Have you ever felt crushed? I think we've all had those moments when we get overwhelmed and we have weights on us.

And I've been there. Let me be authentic with you. Let me be authentic with you today. I have been crushed. I told some friends lately, just last week, I'm feeling crushed.

[1:11] I was grappling with some stuff, some tough decisions, feeling between a rock and a hard place. And I felt very pressed. You know, we can all identify with times like that, can't we?

That can happen, whether it be burdens, worries for loved ones, concerns about the future, crushing times. So we read here that our Lord was crushed, crushed.

I went out to the garden and I got one of these. It's an olive tree branch, an olive tree branch. I was looking for some olives, but it's not the season. But we think of olives, we think of being crushed, crushed like grapes in a wine press, crushed like olives in an olive press.

And we think of Gethsemane today. All right, if we can visit Gethsemane. Now, Julie and I on a trip of a lifetime, we did actually step into Gethsemane. Gethsemane, and we saw the olive trees there. And we think of Gethsemane this morning as we come to the Lord's table together. And our Lord was crushed. And Gethsemane is that place of the oil press, of the olives crushed.

[2:22] And here's a quote about Gethsemane. The word Gethsemane is derived from two Hebrew words, gat, which means a place of pressing oil or wine, and shamanim, which means oil.

So Gethsemane, the oil press. And during Christ's time, we know that heavy stone slabs were lowered onto the olives, that they crushed this mass of olives in this crusher.

And the slab's weight squeezed the olive oil out of the pulp, and the oil was collected. So the image of Gethsemane is the place of crushing, where our Lord spent that night before his crucifixion, just hours ahead of him.

And it provides that vivid picture of his suffering, his suffering for us. Amen. And the weight of the world was on his shoulders, pressing down upon him. The weight of the whole world, the sins of the whole world, like this heavy slab of an olive crusher.

And his sweat was like drops of blood falling down to the ground. It flowed from him like olive oil. Now, I don't know if you've got olive trees in your garden, but they're kind of unusual fruit, aren't they?

[3:31] You know, I tried one day to pick an olive and to chew it, and I realised straight away that's a silly thing to do. Because the olives have got to be prepared, all right? The olives have got to be prepared.

It's interesting that the garden is a place that our Lord went often. We read that in John 18, verses 1 through 2. Our Lord was familiar with this place.

He'd been there many times before. It reads there in John 18, that he went forth with his disciples over the brook Kedron, where was a garden into the which he entered and his disciples.

And verse 2, and Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place. For Jesus oft times, oft times, resorted thither with his disciples.

So he resorted there often. And a Lord often met his disciples under the shade of these olive trees, under that shadow of the olive, the olive trees.

[4:26] There he was. He knew this place. You imagine as he went there often, he would have known for that last time that he would go there. He already knew that was ahead of him. And here is Christ, friends.

Here is Christ in Gethsemane, the olive press. Maybe you've been there. You've been there in the olive press, haven't you? In that time of crushing, feeling crushed, someone you love closes their heart and turns their back on you.

The doctor calls and says, we need to talk in person about the results of the test. Feeling crushed when you're feeling unable, when you're feeling wounded, when your heart is overwhelmed, and being wounded in deep places, it's okay to have some crushing going on.

Because sometimes it's the making of us, isn't it? We know Paul talked about being crushed in trouble. We see 2 Corinthians 1, it talks about that. We'll come to that.

But here we see Christ in the garden. He says, my soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death. So he had this overwhelming sense of foreboding.

[5:35] He was exceeding sorrowful. And he says, watch, watch and pray. And we see if Paul, it reads that he tells how he would not have the brethren to be ignorant.

He says of our trouble, trouble, which came to us in Asia. But we were pressed, pressed out of measure, above strength, in so much that we despaired even of life. But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, which raised at the dead, who delivered us from so great a death and doth deliver, in whom we trust that he will yet deliver.

2 Corinthians 4, verse 8, he talks about trouble. Troubled on every side. Now we can have those moments when we feel troubled, we're feeling crushed. And Paul says here in 2 Corinthians 1, verse 8, he talks about being pressed or crushed, overwhelmed.

Verse 9, he says, we have learned to trust in God, to rely on God, not ourselves. Now when we're feeling crushed, when we have those crushing times, what should it make us do?

Have faith. When we're crushed, we learn to stop relying on ourselves. And we come to the end of our own strength. That's a good place to be, isn't it? When we're not trusting in ourselves, but we let go.

[6:51] And when we let go, our hands are free to hold on to God. And Paul says here he relies on God, the God who raises the dead. That's powerful. That's the God that we know, isn't it?

He's the God who raises the dead. And when you're crushed, your faith grows. When you're crushed, your faith grows. You can either depend on God or give up. And the crushing actually draws us closer to God.

It helps us to know God better. And it increases our faith. So the crushing actually becomes a blessing. Now think of that olive again. The crushing times are necessary times.

The crushing times for that olive. That olive will just be bitter unless it's crushed. Something's done to it. We think of the olive trees. The olive trees get stronger because of the wind.

It makes the tree stand fast and to grow and bear fruit. And when you think the crushing times are processing times. Again, take that olive off the tree.

[7:54] It's naturally bitter. For the olive to be useful, they have to go through a lengthy process. You know, we've got some olive trees, as I say. And I looked at it. And I looked at it.