

AM Isaiah 25:6-9

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Date: 25 April 2021

Preacher: Rev Ronnie Christie

[0 : 0 0] It's nice to be with you this morning, although in rather strange circumstances. I'm going to begin with the notices. We give you a very warm welcome to everybody here this morning, and especially to any visitors.

All being well, the evening service at 6pm, and on Wednesday at 7pm, the prayer meeting and Bible study, which will be led by David Kenyon.

Next Lord's Day, all being well, at 11am and 6pm, the Reverend Robert Dale. After the service, communicants can take the foil and cup and put them in the bin by the table on the right on the way out.

There's a retiring collection for the congregation's benevolent fund at the close of both services today. And then I've got the following special announcement to make.

Following the recent process to elect new elders, the following received the necessary votes from the congregation. Mr. David Kenyon, Mr. Jonathan Kenyon, and Mr. William Kenyon.

[1 : 1 0] The Kirk Session has subsequently judged that those elected are duly qualified for office, and all have now intimated their acceptance of the office.

Therefore, the Kirk Session agreed, and the order of the office of elder, Mr. David Kenyon, Mr. Jonathan Kenyon, and Mr. William Kenyon, will take place at the close of the morning service on Sunday, the 9th of May 2021.

If any member of the congregation has any objections to the life or doctrine of any of those appointed to the office of elder, he or she should give prior notice to the minister or the session clerk of their intention to raise such an objection.

A date will then be appointed for the Kirk Session to meet with such a person in order to hear their objection. Now, this is a communion service.

I don't know how many are familiar with the traditional pattern of a free church service, which was an action sermon, and then a fencing address where you constitute the Lord's Table, and then a pre-communion address, and then a post-communion address.

[2 : 3 0] Well, we're not doing it exactly according to that pattern, but we are going to have a sermon, and then a few words constituting the Lord's Table, and saying who may come and who may not, and a few words just before the Lord's Supper, but we'll not have any word after the Lord's Supper.

And really, if you think that's a bit long and a bit diverse, well, really, it's the one sermon that has been spaced out into three parts. So that's the way we're going to do it, all being well, this morning.

So let's worship God together, and we'll join in Psalm number 27, verses 2 to 4. That's what we'll be singing, and that's on page 31, if you're following in your book.

And I'm just going to read verse 1, although apparently we're not going to sing it. The Lord's my Saviour and my light, who will make me dismayed? The Lord's the stronghold of my life, why should I be afraid?

And then we'll sing verses 2 to 4, a psalm that speaks of strong confidence in God, especially in the midst of adversity. Psalm 27, verses 2 to 4.

[3 : 39] When evil through earth threaten me to take my life away, My answer to us when ■'s orders tell me to take my life away, My hands will trade me to take my life away, Psalm 27, verses 1 to 5.

O, I'm not repenting, my heart will fill no place.

O Lord, I'll bless you, through the rise I will lift up my head.

One day I'll be before the Lord, and this I'll sing always.

But I may not live in God's eyes and dwell there all my days.

[5 : 08] But for the beauty of the Lord, I constantly need.

And in His heart may see through all direction in His ways.

Amen. Now let's join together in prayer. Amen. Amen. We thank you, Lord, for these inspired words.

Amen. And pray that we may have been able to feel some stimulus from them in worship, even though we cannot join in an audible expression of praise to you.

And we ask, therefore, that we might indeed be seeking you this morning with all our heart. And that we may have a genuine desire, not just to be together, which is important, but especially to have a consciousness of your hand on us and your presence with us this morning.

[6 : 23] So we pray, Lord, that you would give to us a genuine spirit of worship, a desire to know and understand your word, a willingness to put it into practice, and that we may look forward to the Lord's Supper with confidence, that we will have a special sense of fellowship with one another as together we participate in outward things that speak of inward realities, and that remind us of the death of our Lord and of the fact that we look to Him and feed upon Him day by day.

And we pray that all this may contribute to our understanding of your will and purpose, that we may have a fresh experience of it, and that we may therefore be the better equipped to walk in your ways from day to day.

May this be a source of encouragement, our time together this morning. We pray that everything may go smoothly in a practical way, and that everything may go safely as well.

And we think of others throughout our land, and indeed throughout the world, who are similarly meeting together as we are. Or indeed those that are not yet able to meet together as we are, but in their homes are listening through Zoom or on YouTube or whatever.

And we ask, Lord, that whatever be the circumstances of people worshipping you today, there may be nonetheless a real awareness of your presence amongst them, and a sense of your blessing on them.

[7 : 58] We pray that the difficulties of the Covid restrictions may not impede people from worshipping you, but make worship the more precious and the more meaningful.

And we ask for those that have perhaps been stirred up to think about you a wee bit because of the Covid situation. And we pray that they may have a proper grasp of what the Gospel is, and be led to seek you with all their hearts.

We commit this congregation into your care. We thank you that it is still here, and that there is still a good attendance, and that there is prospect of the settlement of additional elders here.

And we recognise that this is your goodness and your provision for the congregation here. And we ask that you would continue to provide for them. And that those that preach the word from week to week may know that your good hand is on them in travel, and that they may be aware of your Spirit preparing them, and that they may be indeed an instrument in your hand for keeping the people together and instructing them while they have no settled pastorate.

And we ask for the future that you would guide in that respect also, so that there might be a full-time settled ministry here once again.

[9 : 21] And we ask therefore that you would be amongst your people, giving them a real awareness that your hand is on them, and that you have a good purpose for them.

We pray for any who have particular difficulties. We don't know the situation of folks. But we ask for any that are in any time of trouble, perhaps bereaved, perhaps suffering illness themselves, perhaps anxious over those that are unwell, or anxious indeed over the general Covid situation.

And we ask that where there is any time of trouble or anxiety, your good spirit would be at work giving a sense of peace and wellbeing. And we ask therefore that you would show folks indeed that all things are in your good hand, and will work out for good.

And we pray therefore that you would be at work to bring comfort in the midst of any distress that there is. We pray for the children, the youngsters, the barons in the congregation, and we ask Lord that you would be with them too.

And that as they grow up, they may grow up in the fear of the Lord. And that they may grow up indeed to know you, and to be conscious of you in their lives from day to day. And we ask that you would indeed show your promise to be valid.

[10 : 38] That you are our God, and the God of our descendants after us. We pray for the witness of the congregation here. In some ways, no doubt it is restricted at the present time.

But we pray that as restrictions are removed, the witness may be able to be conducted in a more obvious outward fashion. But we pray for the daily witness of your people, insofar as they come in contact with others, that you would still be with them, and using them for good.

And so we ask Lord, that this congregation might indeed know that your good hand is on them. And that you are prospering them from day to day. Now Lord, we ask you to accept these our prayers, and to continue with us now throughout our service.

Because we ask all this in our Saviour's name. Amen. Now our reading is from the book of Isaiah. And we are going to read in Isaiah chapter 1.

And some verses from the beginning of the chapter. Isaiah chapter 1. And reading from the beginning of the chapter. The vision of Isaiah, the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

[12 : 10] Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord has spoken. Children have I reared and brought up, but they have rebelled against me. The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib.

But Israel does not know. My people do not understand. Ah, sinful nation! A people laden with iniquity. Offspring of evildoers. Children who deal corruptly.

They have forsaken the Lord. They have despised the Holy One of Israel. They are utterly estranged. Why will you still be struck down? Why will you continue to rebel?

The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even to the head. There is no soundness in it. But bruises and sores and raw wounds.

They are not pressed out or bound up or softened with oil. Your country lies desolate. Your cities are burned with fire. In your very presence foreigners devour your land.

[13 : 13] It is desolate as overthrown by foreigners. And the daughter of Zion is left like a booth in a vineyard. Like a lodge in a cucumber field. Like a besieged city.

If the Lord of hosts had not left us a few survivors, we should have been like Sodom and become like Gomorrah. Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom.

Give ear to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorrah. What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices, says the Lord? I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of well-fed beasts.

I do not delight in the blood of bulls or of lambs or of goats. Would you come to appear before me? Who is required of you this trampling of my courts? Bring no more vain offerings.

Incense is an abomination to me. New moons and Sabbath and the calling of convocations. I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly.

[14 : 15] Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hates. They have become a burden to me. I am weary of bearing them. Would you spread out your hands?

I will hide my eyes from you. Even though you make many prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood. Wash yourselves. Make yourselves clean.

Remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes. Cease to do evil. Learn to do good. Seek justice. Correct oppression. Bring justice to the fatherless.

Plead the widow's cause. Come now. Let us reason together, says the Lord. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.

Though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land. But if you refuse and rebel, you shall be eaten by the sword.

[15 : 19] For the mouth of the Lord has spoken. We'll just read to there. And may God bless to us this reading. Our next psalm is Psalm number 16.

And we're going to sing in our hearts at least. We're going to sing verses 8 to 11. Psalm 16 at verse 8.

Before me constantly, I set the Lord alone. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be overthrown. And then it goes on to speak about resurrection.

And although it's referring particularly to the resurrection of the Holy One, which is Jesus, nonetheless, it gives the hope of bodily resurrection.

And that's what should be in our minds then. The hope that is set before us. Psalm 16 verses 8 to 11. Psalm 16 verses 8 to 11.

[16 : 18] For the Lord so deep, I said, the Lord our Lord, God bless to You, if you are among you.

Yeah. See it, start by my time, I'll walk thee over on.

Therefore my heart is done, my song with joy will sing.

I'll walk thee through the rest, Savior, in hope and wither in.

For you will not allow, my soul in debt to stay.

[17 : 51] For will you leave your holy one to see the truth he gave.

You are in love to me.

Let's pray, Lord, I'll walk thee over on. I'll walk thee by this love I know what you write.

I'll walk thee through the rest, Savior, in hope you face will shine.

Now we're going to look at Isaiah chapter 25. Isaiah chapter 25 and we're going to read a few verses from verse 6.

[19 : 14] Verses 6 to 9. The title of the chapter is God will swallow up death forever. Isaiah 25 at verse 6.

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.

And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations.

He will swallow up death forever and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces. And the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth.

For the Lord has spoken. It will be said on that day, behold, this is our God. We have waited for him that he might save us.

[20 : 19] This is the Lord. We have waited for him. Let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation. Now, I want to briefly set the scene for these sayings.

And then I want to open them up quite briefly using one sentence summing up the whole teaching here. And then I want to try and apply them to our circumstances today, especially in view of our participation in the Lord's Supper.

So first of all, just a wee bit about background. Isaiah, as we read in chapter 1, was living in troubled times.

And he foresaw greater trouble ahead of them. And many of his prophecies are connected with that. The people were disobedient to God.

Some followed idolatry. The others had an outward form of worship that wasn't pleasing to God because it was simply outward. They went through the motions, the right motions, but without any devotion in their hearts.

[21 : 38] Without any feeling. And that was an abomination to God. God, your new moons and your appointed feasts, my soul hates, he says.

They've become a burden to me. There was also widespread injustice. Bribery and corruption and oppression of the poor. Everyone loves a bribe, he says, and runs after gifts.

They do not bring justice to the fatherless. And the widow's cause does not come to them. And part of Isaiah's message is to convey God's displeasure at his people's disobedience.

Their empty worship and their social injustice. Their lack of concern for the poor and needy. And it's a pretty severe judgment that he talks about. There's going to be defeated by their enemies.

If you refuse and rebel, you shall be eaten by the sword. A very expressive term that. Eaten by the sword. There's going to be devastation of their towns and cities.

[22 : 43] And there's going to be exile. Your country lies desolate. Your cities are burned with fire. In your very presence, foreigners devour your land. It is desolate as overthrown by foreigners.

And this is a message that is taken up by other prophets as well. And Jeremiah has a phrase that I want to bring in here. He says, I will consume them by the sword, by famine and by pestilence.

The sword, famine and disease. That's what is facing them. And that's what the prophet is speaking about in his book.

But besides that message of judgment, there is of course the message of hope. There's going to be a return from exile. There's going to be a restoration. There's going to be blessings unimaginable.

And it's part of that message of hope that this passage contains. So what we're talking about here is a message to folks that are being told oppression and slavery and exile and captivity and pestilence and famine are ahead of you.

[23 : 58] But there's something else ahead of you as well. And you've got to fix your eye with hope upon that. So what is it then that he's talking about here?

What is the main message of the passage? As I say, I'm going to summarise it in a sentence. But I'm going to give out the sentence word by word or phrase by phrase at least.

And build it up little by little. First of all, death. He's speaking about death. This is not altogether clear depending which translation you're using.

But we're talking here about verse 7. He's speaking about the covering that is cast over all peoples. The veil that is spread over all nations.

So what he's speaking about is not the veil of ignorance. At least I don't think it is the veil of ignorance that he's speaking about. It's the coverings of the dead bodies that he's speaking about here.

[25 : 03] Some translations say a shroud, a sheet. That's the sort of idea that's in mind. He's speaking about death and the covering over of bodies in an appropriate fashion or something.

One of these references is to a mourning blanket that you put over your face when you were in deep distress and used for mourning. It's the presence of death he's speaking about.

It's the existence of this terrible enemy that he's got in mind here. So that's the thing that he's talking about. He's talking about death.

And you can see of course how anyone familiar with Isaiah's message up to this point would recognize, Aye, that fits in. That's what he's talking about so frequently.

The existence of death. But of course it's not just death. It's death removed that he's speaking about. The covering that is cast over all peoples is going to be removed.

[26 : 09] That's what he's talking about. But he will swallow up on this mountain the covering, the veil that is spread over all nations. And so he's saying the shroud is going to be at an end.

The sheet that you cover dead bodies with, don't think about it any longer. It's not going to be a big thing in your agenda. It's not going to be on your agenda at all. It's not going to be in the picture at all.

It's death removed that we're talking about here. And of course you can think immediately, I suspect, of what the people would think about in their situation.

Okay, wonderful. These threatening enemies are going to withdraw. And we're not going to feel the weight of God's anger and the sword of judgment bringing death and destruction to our communities.

Okay, God's hand is removed. And the plague that threatens is going to be restrained. And we're going to have the spectre of a terrible death removed from us.

[27 : 13] And that, I would suspect, is what they immediately thought on reading these words. But you see, there's much more to it than that. It's not death removed. It's death destroyed.

It's death destroyed completely, in fact. That's the third element. Death. Death destroyed. And death destroyed completely. And you can see this in various things that are spoken of here.

This isn't speaking about their immediate situation where they're threatened by outward enemies and the prospect of death is immediate. Or they're threatened by plague and famine and they expect a terrible suffering immediately.

It's not confined to that at all. It's something much broader and more general and much more wonderful than that. Because it says, he will swallow up death forever.

And there you see, there's no limit to the time. It's not going to be restricted to this time. It's something that is permanent. It's not a temporary removal, but a permanent removal of the threat of death.

[28 : 20] Death is going to be abolished. It's not going to exist any longer. That's what he's speaking about. It is forever. And it's not just for the Jewish people at all. As they might, I would have suspected, thought when they heard the message originally.

He's talking about the veil that is spread over all nations. That's what he's talking about here. Death in general is going to be removed. It's not going to come up at anyone.

Death is going to be abolished. Full stop. Not death abolished for the Israelites in those situations. But death completely and forever for everybody. It's the abolition of death.

The complete destruction of death that is in mind here. And that's what I like particularly in this phrase. He will swallow up death forever. Swallowing up death.

It's a picture of course. And actually, you know, you may think it's strange. But it reminds me of Pharaoh's dreams. Where he saw, what did he see? He saw seven fat cows.

[29 : 23] And then he saw seven thin cows. And the seven thin cows ate up the seven fat cows. They swallowed them up. And what that was meant to imply was, there would be seven years of plenty.

And then seven years of famine. But the seven years of famine would be so extreme that it would be as if the seven years of plenty had not existed. So the seven skinny cows swallowed up the seven fat cows.

Swallowed up. That's the point that I'm getting at. And that's what is going to happen. Death is here. It's a terrible specter. Its ravages are significant in the best of circumstances.

But it's going to be swallowed up by something else. It's going to be so completely overcome that it's as if it never existed. It's going to be overcome by something so great and so wonderful that the terrible memory of what death used to be like will be gone.

That's the sort of complete victory that he's speaking about here. The complete destruction of death for all people at all times. Well, that's pretty significant, that.

[30 : 34] Death destroyed completely. How is this going to come about? Now, we're going to interpret this, of course, in the light of the New Testament in due course.

Just add a word at the end about this, the New Testament outlook. But we're trying to say, what did this mean to them? And we're not really given here, we all know what the answer is, of course, but we're not given here much indication of how this is going to be brought about.

But we are told one thing that I could point out here. On the mountain of the Lord of hosts, this is going to happen. On this mountain, he will swallow up the covering.

On this mountain, he's going to deal with death. On the mountains of Jerusalem, this is going to be accomplished. And, of course, that was significant for the people at that time.

I reckon that they could look back on the past and they could remember wonderful things connected with these mountains. And they could say, well, as it was with Abraham, who brought up his son to sacrifice on this mountain, and God provided for them.

[31 : 47] So, on this mountain, God is going to provide life from the dead. Or they might say, just as David sacrificed oxen, made a sacrifice on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, because the plague had stopped.

So, something similar is going to be done in this vicinity. And death is going to be swallowed up in victory. As the priests, day by day, sacrifice, an atoning sacrifice, on the temple mount.

So, in this vicinity, something remarkable is going to happen, so that death itself, the wages of sin, is going to be destroyed. And, of course, in the New Testament, in the light of New Testament, we know what we're pointing at.

But all I'm saying is, they were given some sort of inkling, that something fantastic was going to happen, on the mountain, on the mountain of God, in the mountains of Jerusalem, that was going to bring an end to death, and everything associated with it.

That's what he's talking about. Death destroyed, completely, on this mountain. And the last thing is, with wonderful results.

[33 : 15] Now, there's a couple of great results, that are going to follow from this. And we're just dealing with this very briefly. But, verse 8 has one of them.

Two of them, in fact. The Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people, he will take away from all the earth.

So there's the first outcome, this wonderful result, of the destruction of death. God will wipe away tears from all faces.

Now, this is poetry, of course, and it simply means, that mourning and grief, are going to be at an end. And of course, that's not difficult to appreciate, if you can take in this big idea, that death itself is abolished.

If you think that death is no more, then those things, that are so closely associated with death, are no more either. And the most immediate things, that we think about, are grief and sorrow.

[34 : 22] The grief and sorrow, of seeing folks grow weaker and weaker, and going from us. The grief and sorrow, that is associated with illness, and pain.

The grief and sorrow, of loss. There'll be no more, because death will not be no more. And that's the first wonderful outcome, of what he's talking about here.

The second thing, that he's talking about, is the removal of disgrace. Now this may not seem, a big element, in our thinking. The reproach of his people, the disgrace of his people, he will take away.

But you see, the situation, that Isaiah is pointing out, is really, a pretty shameful situation, for people, that profess to be, the people of God.

how come, those that are God's chosen people, are going to come, to this terrible situation, where they're going to be, where people are going to, fight against them, and destroy their cities, and take them captives, and lead them away, from the promised land.

[35 : 31] It's a disgraceful situation, that they're facing here, and, and, any nation, would feel that sort of thing, in the light of this sort, of prophecy.

But I suspect, that certain nations, more so than others, would do so, and especially, at that stage in history, the Jewish people, would feel the disgrace, of their situation.

So, here they are, and they are in disgrace, and there's plenty of Psalms, of course, that speak about, that sort of thing, the disgrace, that come upon God's people, and it irks them, it hurts them terribly.

And now here's this great idea, that's associated, with the removal of death. The disgrace, obviously, is going to be removed as well. And death is swallowed up, so greatly, that the disgrace, of the situation, will not be evident, to them at all.

And that means, to see, that the glory, of what is to be, is going to be, so wonderful, and so far reaching, and so deeply felt, that the disgrace, that was involved, in their situation, will no longer, have a place, in their minds, to depress them, or to irk them, or to bring them, a sense, of failure.

- [36 : 53] It will be gone. He'll deal, with the mourning, and he'll deal, with the disgrace as well. That just shows, the wonderful results, that follow from this. And then there's a third, and the final, wonderful result, following from this.

And that's what, we're going to just, briefly mention, from verse 6. Now this, could be interpreted, as a separate saying, and indeed, it is a separate saying, but it's closely connected, with what we've been, talking about, because both of these, things happen, on this mountain, and they're set, side by side, as if they were, natural companions, and that's the way, that we're taking this.

Here is a natural, companion, that goes alongside, this idea, that we are going, to find the situation, where death is abolished, and what we've got, is a festive occasion, of the highest order.

On this mountain, the Lord of hosts, will make, for all peoples, a feast, of rich food. Well, there you see, for all peoples, that's significant.

This isn't for the Jewish people, who were used to this, sort of language, and expected it, to be applied to them. This is for all peoples. Just as death, is going to be abolished, this also has got, a universal, significance, attached to it.

- [38 : 15] Not limited, that is, to the Jewish people. He's going to make, a feast of rich food, and that is enlarged on, later in the verse, of rich food, full of marrow.

The marrow of the bones, was something, that was considered, a particular delicacy. And that's the sort of feast, that they're going to enjoy. It's not going to be, just routine food, that would itself, be something, appropriate, engaged in, in a festive spirit.

But it's going to be, the highest quality, of food, that you could imagine. The richest, and the most tasty, of food. That's what's in mind here. And the similar, similarly, it is, with the drink, that is provided.

A feast of, well aged wine. It's mature wine, that has been, growing better, as the years go by. That's, what is going to be used, in this feast.

And not only is it, aged wine, but it's been, well refined also. Because, aged wine, may grow more mature, but then, there are more dregs, connected with it.

- [39 : 19] But this wine, has been strained out, and the dregs, have been removed. And it is therefore, well refined. And therefore, it is the, the clearest, most sparkling, and, most mature wine, you could imagine.

And of course, that is simply, just a figure, of the wonderful, riches, of God's grace, that are provided. And it, it speaks, of, this time, associated, with the removal of death.

When peoples, will be gathered together, as a festive, on a festive occasion. And that will be, the mood that will prevail. That will be, the atmosphere, that they enjoy.

A festification, where all, is love, and light, and happiness, and rejoicing. That's what's associated, as we might well imagine, with the removal of death.

So that's what we've got here, as the people, at the time, understood it. Now for ourselves, of course, we can't just take, the Old Testament passage, and say that's what it meant for them.

- [40 : 22] Because, it's obvious, that this means, a bit more for us. And it's so obvious, that we don't have to, enlarge upon it. And I just want to state it. Here is a prophecy, of our Lord, who gave himself, on the cross, as an atonement, for the sins, of his people.

And there he is, dying for them. And so, removing, the basic, cause, that brought death, into being. He is dealing, with the problem of sin.

And he is dealing, fully, and completely, with it. For his people, who embrace, all nations. For his people, who come from, all nations.

That's, for, it's speaking about here. And therefore, through that death, and the resurrection, that was consequent, upon it. He is tasting death, for everyone.

And therefore, he has brought, life, and immortality, to light, through the gospel. Through his resurrection, from the dead, he has guaranteed, the resurrection, of his people.

[41 : 26] And therefore, we can look forward, to this time, that is portrayed, by Isaiah. When our Lord, will come again, and the curse, will be entirely, removed, from the universe.

The curse, that was placed, on it by sin. And, by God, on the consequence, of man's sin. That curse, will be, removed, in practice, because the price, for sin, has been paid, at Calvary.

And there'll be, a new heavens, and a new earth, without, the distortion, and the suffering, and the misery, that can be associated, with life, in this world. A new environment, completely freed, from disorder.

And, ourselves, raised from the dead, in glory, and splendor. So that we, can say, death, has been swallowed up, in victory. That's what he's, speaking about here.

And there's this idea, obviously, that on that occasion, nobody's going to, be mourning, and full of grief. God will wipe away, all tears, from their eyes.

[42 : 32] Because, everything will be made new, on the basis, of the work of our Lord. And, we will be, in the full enjoyment, of the privileges, of the sons, and daughters, of God.

And there's one, phrase from the, catechism, I don't like, quoting the catechism, rather than scripture, but it always, appeals to me. We'll be, openly raised up, we will be, vindicated, on the, is that right?

Maybe I'm making that up. Anyway, this idea, this is the idea, I want to get across. We are going to be, vindicated, on the day of judgment. Now, at the moment, God's people, are not vindicated.

In the eyes of the world, they're condemned. And, people say all sorts of things, about them unjustly. And, they may well not have their voice heard, if they try and defend themselves. And, it's obvious that, God's people, are not vindicated, in this life.

And, therefore, they're subject to this grace, and reproach. Unjustly, of course, but nonetheless, they are. But, the day is coming, when they will be, vindicated. Their reproach will be removed.

[43 : 33] As for Israel, in this passage, their reproach is going to be removed. God is going to say, these are mine. And, everybody's going to know, what their status is.

And, reproach will be removed. Disgrace will be removed. And, then, there's, the glory and splendor of heaven, represented, as a feast. Jesus spoke about this, many coming from east and west, and north and south, and sitting down, with Abraham and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom.

And, that sitting down, is actually, the sitting down, as at a table. And, so, there's the picture, that Jesus used, that is taken, from the old, that is, in agreement, with the Old Testament, way of looking at things.

And, it's a way, that we can think of, in pictorial terms, of course. This is one of the prospects, that we have of heaven, as being a wonderful place, of glory and splendor, like a wonderful, festive occasion, where we're all gathered together, and we sit down together, with the best of fear.

That's what we're going to enjoy. And, that's the New Testament perspective. So, that's what this verse, is speaking about. Death, destroyed, completely, on the mountain, with wonderful, side effects.

[44 : 45] That's the message, of the passage. Now, what does it say to us? Well, my line is simply, first of all this, that if anything, less than this, had been told them, it would have been received, with delight.

How much more, this message, should be received, with greater delight. What I mean is this, if these people, had simply applied that, to their immediate situation, if they had said, oh great, the Babylonians, aren't going to destroy us, after all.

Or, if they said, oh the threat of plague, is going to be removed, and we're going to be, freed from it. The enemies, that threatened, aren't going to be able, to touch us, and death isn't going, to take hold of us.

There'll be no more shrouds, like there's been in the past, or that's been threatened, for the future. You know, they would be jumping, with joy. They would be, full of hope. They would think, the best news, in the world.

And then, if they get, the message here, that we're not talking, about some temporary, deliverance, from the immediate, threat of death. We're talking, about, the full, deliverance, from the presence, of death itself.

[45 : 59] So much so, that death is abolished, and it's, going to be, swallowed up by life. You know, what then should we do? What then should they do? If they would rejoice, over a temporary, relief, that freedom, from the immediate, threat of death, how much more, should they rejoice, over this, that's promised here?

And that's what we can see, about ourselves. If the people of Syria, for example, were told, and good authority, there's going to be, no more, bloodshed, in this country.

There's going to be, peace and stability, what good news, that would be. There would be rejoicing, universally, rejoicing. A dictator removed, or warlords removed, and peace restored, happiness there, once again.

There would be rejoicing, over that, by the people in Syria, and there are many refugees, in other countries. Wonderful news, we'd say. And if this were repeated, in Myanmar, or in Yemen, and other places, that we can think of.

It would be, wonderful news, and everybody, would rejoice, over it. How much more, should we rejoice, in this news? But it isn't, a temporary cessation, of hostilities, that we're talking about.

[47 : 17] It isn't, physical peace, and stability, that we're talking about. It's the ultimate, abolition of death, itself. And that's what should fill us, with the utmost joy, and happiness, at the prospect, of what is said here.

Or to take another example, if suddenly, it's not going to happen this way, it's going to happen gradually. But suppose suddenly, there was this announcement, on Thursday night, at 8pm, the COVID restrictions are over.

No more COVID. It's abolished. It's at an end. And if that were repeated to us, if that were repeated, on good authority, the world over.

Most people would consider it, the happiest day, of the history of the world. And you could imagine, the rejoicing that there would be. The parties in the streets, and everybody hugging, and kissing, and so on.

And going about their business, and rejoicing in general. And if that was repeated, the world over, as I say, you'd say, oh, the wonderful news, the best we can imagine.

[48 : 22] Nothing like this. But here we've got something, more wonderful than that. Not just, a particular plague removed, but the plague of death, removed entirely.

So let's, take this at its face value, and rejoice in it. That's the first thing, that I want to say. The second thing, that I want to say, by way of application, is referring this, to the Lord's Supper.

Now, I'll try and be brief. We think of, the death of Christ, and the Lord's Supper. And the one particular thing, that we generally have in mind, is his atoning death.

And of course, that's right and proper. And we should never cease, to reflect, that that is the central, reason, why Jesus died, to make atonement, for his people.

But he also, tasted death, for everyone. And, there is, undoubtedly, this idea, that he did something, very decisive, about death, by dying.

[49 : 22] His purpose, was that through death, he might destroy the one, who has the power of death. That is the devil. And deliver all those, who through fear of death, were subject, to lifelong slavery.

And, and, we, by the death of Christ, are delivered, from the fear of death. We're ultimately, going to be delivered, from death itself. And that's something, that we should well, bear in mind, at the Lord's Supper.

Now, you see, the Lord's Supper, is so big a thing, that we cannot, take it all in at one time. But I'm suggesting, that amongst the things, that we should think about, is not simply, this death, that I'm remembering, was an atoning death.

We should also remember this. This death, was a death, that accomplished, the abolition of death. Let that be in our minds, as we take part, in the Lord's Supper.

And then, the last thing, this is, I think I've said lastly, three times already. This is really the last thing, that I'm going to say, at this stage. The third application, is firstly, we should be rejoicing in this.

[50 : 30] Secondly, we should remember this, as part of what Jesus died, to achieve. And thirdly, we should think of, the Lord's Supper, as a foretaste, of the new life, that there is to be.

This, verse 6, that we've talked about, this great feast, that's being made, isn't the Lord's Supper. But, the Lord's Supper, is a foretaste of it.

The Lord's Supper, is an anticipation of it. The Lord's Supper, is the same thing, but to a lesser degree. And I think, we've got good, good authority, for saying that.

We participate, in the Lord's Supper, until he comes. So, the Lord's Supper, isn't simply, looking back to the past, and remembering, what was done, or enjoying the present.

But it's also, looking to the future. And Jesus, had that in mind. We do this, until he comes. So, there's some aspect, of, an anticipation, of the future, in taking part, in the Lord's Supper.

[51 : 36] And that too, is indicated, in what Jesus said, I will not drink again, of this fruit of the vine, until that day, when I drink it, new with you, in my Father's kingdom.

He could go, from, the first, Lord's Supper. and he could go, from there, directly in his mind, to the great supper, that is to be.

And he looked forward, to the great feast, of rich things, and of the finest, of wines, in the kingdom of God. And he went straight, from the Lord's Supper, to that one, in his mind.

And I don't think, that we, could fail, to do otherwise, also. Okay, it's good to remember, the past, and think about the present. But, it's also got this future aspect, the Lord's Supper.

And that's something, also, that we should remember. So let's rejoice, in the fact, that death has been abolished. Let's remember it, as we take these elements, that speak, of the death of our Lord, which accomplished it.

[52 : 43] And let's use, the Lord's Supper, as a foretaste, of the greatest festival, that is yet to be. May God bless to us, his word. Now we're going to join together, in prayer.

We thank you Lord, for the word. The word, that although, from the Old Testament, speaks so clearly, about our Lord, and which displays, very fully, one of the great accomplishments, of the death, of our Saviour.

And even although, these things, are familiar to us, we pray that nonetheless, through your Spirit, they may come to us, with a vividness, that may have been lacking, at times.

And we ask therefore, that we may find, this reflection, in your word, a source of comfort, and of strength, to us, and of rejoicing, for us, as we go on, to participate, in the Lord's Supper, that is before us.

We pray that you, would keep our minds, concentrated, on you, and that you, would keep our minds, from straying, from other things, to other, and we ask therefore, that we may find, a full blessing, in the, sacrament, of the Lord's Supper, that you have prepared, for your people.

[54 : 09] May we indeed find it, a feast, of rich things, for ourselves today. We ask this, in Jesus name, Amen. Now I said, I would say a few words, which is generally, called the fencing of the table.

Now the fencing of the table, does not mean, erecting a fence, around something. It's not that at all. It's an old Scottish, legal word, that means constitution, and that's what we're doing. We're saying, we're now constituting, the Lord's Supper.

Up to this point, we get the means of grace, to the word. Now we're going to get, the means of grace, to another fashion. We're going to get it, through the bread and wine, of the Lord's Supper.

And this is what we're doing. We're constituting, the Lord's Supper, the Lord's table as it were. But the usual pattern, is to say something, about the qualifications, for coming to the Lord's Supper.

And I'm not going to say much, because I've always felt, it was pretty pointless. If you haven't got the idea, up till now, I don't think, that two minutes now, is going to make, too much difference. But I do want, just to complete, what I've been saying, from this passage.

[55 : 13] So I'm going to just say, a few words, about verse nine. It will be said, on that day, behold, this is our God. We have waited for him, that he might save us.

And all I'm going to say is, if you can say that, you take part, in the Lord's Supper. We have waited for him, that he might save us. Now, I like the word, waited, but the problem is, of course, that it's an old-fashioned word, and doesn't mean, to people brought up, in the faith, what it means, to the outsider.

Waiting, means, hanging around, doing nothing, until something happens. And that's certainly not, what the word, wait, means, in the Bible. It isn't even, something that implies, patience.

I waited for something, I waited for something to happen, might imply, patience. And I'm not saying, that this doesn't imply, patience. We wait for the Lord, and we do so, with patience.

But the big element, as I see it, in waiting, is the idea, of expectancy. It's the idea, of trust. It's the idea, of confidence. We are waiting, for God to be at work, means, we are thoroughly, expecting it to happen, and it's going to happen, we know it's going to happen, in due course.

[56 : 34] And we have waited, for the Lord, says the prophet here, which implies, we've looked to him, we've depended upon him, we've recognized, that his word, is valid and true, and it's trustworthy.

And we've looked to him, in that way, in confident expectation, that he will save us. Now, that's the experience, of God's people.

They were once in sin, or perhaps they were simply, in trouble of one kind, or another. And in their despair, they saw the end, of their own efforts, and the uselessness, of their own doing.

And they looked, outside themselves, and they said, if anybody's going to save us, it must be God. And in faith, they waited upon Christ, they looked to him, in expectation, that he might save them.

And he did. Now, that's what the prophet, anticipates, people will be able to see, in the light of such a message, as this. And that's why I think, that this is an appropriate thing, to reflect on.

[57 : 38] Let's, as we take part, in the Lord's Supper, say, something like this, in our hearts, we have waited for him, that he might save us. And, if we, are not as confident, about that, as we ought to be, let's renew, our devotion to him.

And if we feel, that we haven't, lived up to this, as we should, let's renew, our commitment to him. And say, I'm going to wait, upon him constantly. Look to him, as the only source of help.

Rest upon him, for everything. And in that way, we can come to the Lord's table, and we can come with blessing. Now, we're going to sing another psalm, or Psalm 118, this is the custom psalm, that we often sing, in the free church, in coming to the Lord's table.

We're not going to come literally, but nonetheless, we'll sing these same words. This is on page 398, if you're following in the book, and it's in the Scottish Psalter, Psalm 118, verses 17 to 20.

23. I shall not die, but live, and shall the works of God discover. And of course, discover doesn't mean find, it means uncover, it means reveal.

[58 : 48] Tell about. The Lord is me, just as it's sore, but not to death given over. O said ye, open unto me the gates of righteousness, then will I enter into them, and I, the Lord, will bless.

Psalm 118, verses 17 to 23. I shall not die, but live, and shall the works of God discover.

The Lord be for you, the Lord bes ■■■■■... and so what not to take it over.

O, set thee open unto thee against the righteousness Then will I enter into thee and I the Lord will rest.

This is the King of God On my hill the God shall enter there In your life is for the hear And of my safety peace The sword is made and cornered sword Which will thou take in sight This is the hearing of the Lord And one of us in our eyes

[61 : 10] Now we have the warrant for celebrating the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians chapter 11 at verse 23 For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread And when he had given thanks he broke it and said This is my body which is for you Do this in remembrance of me In the same way also he took the cup after supper saying this cup is a 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 the cup You proclaim the Lord's death until he comes Now just one word to finish off the passage we've been looking at in Isaiah This is the Lord We have waited for him Let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation

Communion That's what we're talking about here That's the favourite word in Scottish Presbyterianism to describe what we do And the way we do it has always strongly supported that element in it We have frequent meetings with visitors if possible and maybe fellowship in the homes and we have we generally speaking all sit together we generally speaking take one bread one cup and it all speaks of unity of fellowship of communion and that's the way it should be because that is the way in which the New Testament does speak about it The cup of blessing which we bless is it not the communion of the body of the blood of Christ The bread which we break is it not the communion of the body of Christ Communion is important And there's one word which other people use which I think Presbyterians are rather unhappy to use and it's the word

Eucharist We associate that with other traditions that are usually somewhat suspect That's our provincial way of looking at things But truly you know that's quite a useful way of looking at it as well Eucharist means simply Thanksgiving Thanksgiving That's all it is And that's what we've got in this verse What are we saying?

We're saying we've waited for him that we might save us And we're also saying let us rejoice in his salvation The Lord's Supper is not just communion It is that But it's also a Eucharist It's also a Thanksgiving It's not the cup of Thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ It's not the same word that actually the word Eucharist comes from but it's the same idea Thanksgiving was associated with the Lord's Supper This is the cup of Thanksgiving That's what he's talking about So let's put all that together and say this is in our opinion communion with one another communion with Christ Oh yes we're familiar with that But let's not leave out this element that it's Eucharist also It's Thanksgiving And it's a natural culmination of the thoughts that we've been thinking about of the passage that we've been thinking about This is the Lord We have waited for him

Let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation Now we're told that the Lord Jesus on the night in which he was betrayed took bread and gave thanks So we'll just briefly give thanks We thank you Lord for your great purpose of redemption We thank you for the way in which that was fulfilled in the work of our Lord and in all that he did in the name of his people And we thank you particularly for his death on the cross where he represented his own and did everything necessary that they might have access to you and enjoy your blessings blessings We thank you for the varied ways in which these blessings have been made real to us The witness of people around us The preaching of the word The prayers of our parents Other factors as well And in these different ways you have brought us to a knowledge of the Lord

[65 : 46] And we thank you for that And we thank you that you have brought us together this morning And although there are restrictions placed in us we can nevertheless remember what our Lord has done on our behalf and we can say we have trusted in him we are waiting for him and we are rejoicing together in him And we thank you for that And pray that you would therefore make your presence felt to us in a real way May we see this bread not as something that fortifies the body but as a symbol of our Lord who gave himself for us and the blood and the wine similarly We pray that everything may be done in a fitting way and it may go smoothly and that there might be nothing that would detract from an awareness of your presence amongst us We ask this in our Saviour's name Amen Now we've all got our bread so we can open it now And I'll just read the passage again

This is my body he said which is for you Do this in remembrance of me He broke it and said This is my body which is for you Do this in remembrance of me So let's each take our bread now Now we can take our wine In the same In the same way also he took the cup after supper saying This cup is a new covenant in my blood Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me So let's take this wine now This cup is a new covenant in my blood

Now we're going to sing in Psalm 72 This again in the Scottish Psalter and it's verses 17 to 19 on page 314 His name forever shall endure last like the sun it shall men shall be blessed in him and blessed all nations shall him call Now blessed be the Lord our God the God of Israel for he alone doth wondrous works in glory in glory that excel Psalm 72 verses 17 to 19 This name forever shall endure thus like the sun it shall men shall be blessed in heaven and blessed all nations shall him come

Now blessed be the Lord the Lord the God the Lord of Israel come now for Z■■■ per him the Lord the Father the Lord of Israel of Israel and His Lord the Lord of Israel And blessed be His glorious name to all eternity.

The whole earth let His glory fill. Amen. So let it be.

[70 : 45] Let's pray.

May we speak to each other outside for a while. And at your grant that we may know your good hand is on us in all that we do today. May we know your presence throughout it.

And if we're able to come together this evening, may we know your presence then too in a special way. And now may grace, mercy and peace from God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us all now and forevermore.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. worship.