

The Sight of Splendour

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[0 : 0 0] May we join together in a word of prayer. Let us pray. Our Father in heaven, that we would lift our eyes to you this day, that we would have a focus upon you and upon your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the one who was crucified on the cross in payment for our wrongdoings and our sinful nature, a sinful nature that so often tempts us and distracts us from the path that we desire to follow on, the things that we do we wish not to do, but that you would preserve us from all ill and that we would cling as a little child clings to his Father, trusting in the one who knows better than even our earthly father could give us.

You are the one who knows what is best for us, even in times when we are in deep distress, when times of turmoil, times when we question what is happening in our lives, that we would just cling to you, that we would have a focus upon you, that we would have a focus upon you, that we would have a focus upon you, and how powerful these words are, that they are the ones so precious to us that convict and convert the souls of men.

May we know the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior this day. May we have that thankfulness in our hearts for all that he has done for us in our lives, for what he has taken us from and what he promises to bring us unto, what wonders we cannot fully comprehend.

We are thankful for the provisions that you give us through our journey in the days of our lives, the food that sustains us, the shelter of our homes and the comforts that we enjoy in them, the protection of our nations, the safety of it.

We just thank you for your word and what a precious word it is to us, that it is a guide and a lamp to our feet, and that we are told to return to give thanks unto you.

[3 : 0 7] And we recall the story of the ten men that Jesus healed, and only one of them returned to give thanks.

That we would be as that one, acknowledging all that he has done for us in our lives. Maybe we have special cause for thanks this year.

Such a strange year for us in our experience. But you have protected us largely from the threat of the virus that is prevailing across the lands of the world, of which you are in control of.

And we wonder why. But you work all things for good. That it has been a different year for us. But still you have sustained us.

And still we have been protected by your hand. You have listened to our prayers. Prayers and groanings that we know not.

[4 : 1 9] Even what we have said ourselves in days of this year. And ways that maybe you have answered them in ways that we cannot or have not seen as of yet.

But we thank you that you are a God who listens to your prayers. You are a God who cares for his people. And what a God you are.

What a Savior we have in the Lord Jesus Christ. As we said, the one who commands the winds and the seas. And yet he listens to our pleas.

He listens to the voice that you are a love.

That you show a love that we do not see in this world. In such, we do enjoy a taste of love. But I don't believe we fully understand the love that you have for us.

[5 : 32] But one day we will. One day arise we will behold the beauty of the Lord. As we come and ponder for a moment upon the splendor of the Lord.

That he would reveal himself to us. That his spirit would guide our thoughts. That his spirit would be active amongst our people.

Even as we do not gather physically in church. That we are mindful of those that are unable to come out and gather. Those who are confined to their homes.

We pray a special comforting hand over them and encouraging hand for them this day. Be with us. Keep us from distractions. Guide our thoughts.

Protect our minds. that we would see the Lord Jesus Christ and the spirit who would open our eyes to behold this love and beauty shown unto us.

[6 : 40] So be with us in our reading. Be with us in our thoughts and meditations upon it. And that we are ultimately thankful that you have revealed your glory to us.

and have paid redemption on the cross for us. We pray that you would forgive us our sins. And all these things we ask God in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen. May we turn together to read the word of the Lord in Isaiah chapter 2.

We turn to the book of Isaiah chapter 2 and we'll take up a reading from verse 5. The book of Isaiah.

chapter 2 We begin a reading at verse 5. The beginning of the chapter is titled The Mountain of the Lord and that section the first section follows down to the end of verse 5.

[8 : 04] And then it begins the day of the Lord. But I felt that verse 5 was almost a join between the two. Between the glories of the Lord and then the rebuke that Isaiah had for his people following.

So we'll begin a reading at verse 5. Let us hear the word of God. O house of Jacob come let us walk in the light of the Lord.

For you have rejected your people the house of Jacob because they are full of things from the east and of fortune tellers like the Philistines and they strike hands with the children of foreigners.

Their land is filled with silver and gold and there is no end to their treasure. Their land is filled with horses and there is no end to their chariots.

Their land is filled with idols. they bow down to the work of their hands to what their own fingers have made. So man is humbled each one is brought low do not forgive them.

[9 : 19] Enter into the rock and hide in the dust from before the terror of the Lord and the splendor of his majesty. The haughty looks of man shall be brought low and the lofty pride of men shall be humbled and the Lord alone will be exalted in that day for the Lord of hosts has a day against all that is proud and lofty against all that is lifted up and it shall be brought low against all the cedars of Lebanon lofty and lifted up against all the oaks of Bashan against all the lofty mountains and against all the uplifted hills against every high tower and against every fortified wall against all the ships of Tarshish and against all the beautiful craft and the haughtiness of man shall be humbled and the lofty pride of men shall be brought low and the Lord alone will be exalted in that day and the idols shall utterly pass away and the people shall enter the caves of the rocks and the holes of the ground from before the terror of the Lord and the splendor of his majesty when he rises to terrify the earth in that day mankind will cast away their idols of silver and their idols of gold which they made for themselves to worship to the moles and to the bath to enter the caverns of the rocks and the clefts of the hills from before the terror of the Lord and the splendor of his majesty when he rises to terrify the earth stop regarding man in whose nostrils is breath for of what account is he may the reading of the Lord's word be blessed to us this day we will turn our mind to think upon it for a moment in the time that we have left together take in the text of the first line of verse 12 for the Lord of hosts has a day now Isaiah has many treasures written in his writings many sweet words and prophecies that you don't seem to find anywhere else that are intertwined with foresight admonishment and hope binding them together and we will look at one of these today though not as prominent as some of the texts of Isaiah

I pray that it will become challenging thoughts and stirring thoughts to us as we ponder upon it many chapters of Isaiah are dear to the Lord's people but Isaiah's words they were directed towards the people of Jerusalem and Judah referred to here as the house of Jacob for they had disobeyed God and they had wandered from worshipping the one true God fallen prey to the destruction of many things we find Isaiah prophesying against them and ultimately rebuking them to that day of judgment for the lifestyles that they had become accustomed to their judgment in their time was the destruction of Jerusalem and the ultimate exile into Babylon but what can we benefit from this ancient prophecy will the Lord not ultimately have his day act 17 verse 31 says because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness are these words today relevant for us well they should be and that we would dwell on them for a moment and that we would say together as in verse 5 come let us walk in the light of the

Lord what other ground is worth walking upon what other ground is worth walking through than that which the Lord illuminates for us can we apply this as an overruling thought as we look at the passage for the one that enables us to see according to his most gracious light revealed unto us and this passage doesn't make for likeable reading so often the passages of the Bible are found but there is no falsifying of the truth we are told straight we are told elsewhere that our sins are great and the word of God helps us to understand the weightiness of them through its enlightening truth revealed unto us the truth that teaches us of the Lord's day there is no surprise for you then at the coming of that day the day of the

Lord when Christ appears for that righteous judgment though it will come as a well-known words a thief in the night for many as we find it in first Thessalonians darkness for that day to surprise you like a thief the fact of its coming should not surprise you but you know I believe what will surprise us is the splendor of the

Lord on that day as he reveals himself to us for eyes will perceive that beauty of the Lord as never seen before and even had some been able to see the revealed beauty of the Lord supposing one had experience of it I don't believe they would be able to adequately describe it to us it would be an unspeakable splendor but that day when he reveals himself will be a day when every man every woman and every child will understand the splendor of the Lord in his heart for himself not just adequately but accurately for truly we see only through a glass dimly at the moment we know this revelation will be wondrous and glorious when that dim glass is removed of what we know only in part in this world that we will know fully on that day and we as Christians will we not be left in inexpressible awe exclaiming truly that the half was not told to me or will the sight of the splendor of the

[17 : 37] Lord for the soul that never trusted in Christ will it rob you of every comfort would it leave you calling to the mountains and the rocks fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne and from the wrath of the lamb as we find written in the words of revelation chapter 6 so I ask today what does this day mean for you which of the two responses will be found in your heart today let us walk in the light of the Lord a light that is entirely of grace for days of grace and we will briefly consider this chapter under the titles of me my house and my God so if we first look at me this who I say is prophesying to as the

Lord's people have taken their eye from him they have sought after other counsels forsaking the word of God as their authority and desiring to work out their lives according to the favour the favourable wishes of worldly wisdom we read that the people have rejected their ancestors teaching and privileges they are full of things from the east full of new things these people have become occupied with the unholy tempted with the flattery of fools and the deceptions of the devil inquiring of their fortune teller and striking deals with foreigners becoming unequally yoked one with another as with the philistines proudly associating themselves out with the promises of God in order most likely to line their pockets with paper but the land is rich they say there is an abundance throughout this land we read in verse 7 that it says it is filled with silver and gold there is no end to its treasure often nothing is more employed by the devil to tempt men by than that of money while we know it works if we admit it in our own hearts more often than not it is a temptation for us and many are preoccupied and darkened by the mindset of many lives which basically is make more money

John Wesley admitted its danger to her soul by saying when I have money I get rid of it as quickly as possible lest it find a way into my heart I wonder what Wesley would think if he landed in our homes would he see our hearts holding on to things that he would readily have gotten rid of but this wealth we read about reaches across the whole land there's no shortage of horses no shortage of chariots no shortage of things this land is filled with much of what is useful and much of what is useless for it speaks of idols and it is filled with them it seems like there is an abundance an idol for you an idol for every man's desire anything that will distract you from

God I wonder if there are any listening who have had the heritage of godly parents who have had the privileges of gospel teaching in their younger days but have become occupied and full of things as the land of idols impresses them as we walk through this world and as the world offers us every kind of idol under the sun have we taken our eye away from the heritage that has been given to us from our parents as our eyes are attracted to these things the light of the Lord increasingly dulls before us but he does come to us and and I find the same I had never heard it before says you can blot out the sun if you hold a penny close enough to your eye you can blot out the sun if you hold a penny close enough to your eye and so we ask ourselves well what is our focus on this day what is my heart focusing upon what are my eyes focused on if we look and carry on through the passage and look at verse nine it says so man is humbled and each one is brought low do not forgive them now

I looked at this version it sounds a bit funny but when the King James version says and the mean men bow down and the great man humbleth himself therefore forgive them not it's worded slightly differently there's a difference between the two men the mean man and the great man see the mean man will bow down in his worldly inclinations that's his heart his desire is for these things and the great man humbleth himself but this is not humbling before God it's as if a humbling away from God he's lowering himself that's what it says each one is brought low and it's that lowering of himself by being consumed with these things that he drags himself down away from that privilege that has been left to him away to these self created idols it's like these two men have considered one wise and one foolish one mean and one great but they both do the same thing they both follow their selfish desires and foolish though they are they are both found most likely worshipping differing idols but each one likewise is brought low according to their desires by these empty hopes and vain glories but they seem to want to hide from

[25 : 05] God the following verse they enter the rock and hide in the dust they seem to want the darkness you can imagine someone throwing dust in front of him not herself to hide not very effective for the dust will just disperse and reveal the sight of the person so when it says to hide in the dust you can imagine someone throwing dust and throwing dust and throwing dust continually having to throw to hide from the presence of the Lord great efforts to suppress any influencing light light that would be upon him I wonder is there any like that here with their hands full of the dust of the ground of what will return of all things will return to be the dust of the ground ready to hide from the convicting light of the

Lord as it is revealed to us is the Lord's voice been spoken to you but you wish not to hear it see many of us may admit before coming to Christ trying to hide ourselves from that conviction and having to throw that dust and distractions before that light in order that the convictions would be dulled before us and maybe it's an exhausting weariness to keep throwing in order to make that distraction in your soul but when God does not go away the person is left to submit to him to that divine presence and to give up fully in himself and let the light be clearly seen against all his wasted effort we pray that the Lord's light would shine upon each one of us here today that he would reveal himself to us our consciences and that we would fall before him humbly in our heart this point of me reveals to us the primary distraction of man money wealth and plenty so let us move on to my house very briefly looking at verse 13 to 17 see men often boast in buildings it seems like it has been that way since the beginning of time when you see the great pyramids of Egypt and we can even read further back in the

Bible to the Tower of Babel you see the great buildings that man is building even in this day look at what we can do always with the intent to be better I can do it better and even as you look around our island the houses that we thought were big years ago they don't seem so big anymore there seems to be this increasing display of greatness even in the houses that we build they seem to just get bigger and bigger essentially pride is very present in our outdoing of each other but can we look at what the Lord says to us we read in verse 13 through 16 against the cedars of Lebanon against the oaks of Bashan against the lofty mountains against all the uplifted hills against every high tower against every fortified wall against the ships of

Tarshish and against all the beautiful craft see the cedars of Lebanon were regarded as the best of the best used to construct the temple on both occasions as were the oaks of Bashan held in high regard Matthew Henry says that the cedars were the straightest and stateliest and the oaks the strongest and sturdiest and it's almost like we've been given a list here when you go through this list it reads like the things that have been lifted up in society will be brought low the cedars and oaks as the great things the land produces the lofty mountains and lifted up hills as the great countries and kingdoms of the land of this present world that seems to stand so firm and seem to be unmovable but none will be moved as the mountain of the

Lord from the beginning of the chapter in verse 2 you can read it yourselves the Lord is against these mountains that man makes they shall be brought low the high towers and fortified walls well they're as if the best armies and strongest defenses that man can use to defy their enemies the ships of Tarshish against and the beautiful crafts well that's just the well established trades of men the grandest and most influential and prominent businesses of our time what he's saying is all these things will fall all that we have built up in our land will fall before the splendor of the Lord on that day the idols shall utterly pass away entirely and completely as nothing utterly passing all that is well worldly renowned all that is worldly admired and all that is worldly desired will be swallowed by the splendor of the

[31 : 47] Lord for the Lord has built his house the Lord has his mountain that is unshakable so let us look at the last topic my God we follow through from verse 18 to 22 so what will you worship when all is gone really it should be the same as when all is here and as a matter of fact it has to be the same we are not to be consumed with the things of the world and we are to focus our worship upon the Lord Almighty verse 19 the people shall enter the caves of the rocks and the holes of the ground before the terror of the Lord and the splendor of his majesty see there seems to be an increased intensity to their hiding from what we read in verse 10 entered into the rock and hide in the dust the people now shall enter the caves of the rocks and the holes of the ground we cannot hide from

God though we try to you can imagine yourself just to portray a picture to you maybe trying to catch a centipede now if you wanted to catch a centipede where would you go more than likely you would go to a rock you would turn the rock over or lift the stone to reveal the light to the small creature and what would it do well it would instantly resolve to scurry away from the light that is revealed to it under another stone which you can similarly turn and so it goes on the creature will keep trying to hide itself in the darkness until you are able to catch the insect well is that not like the man that tries to run from God happily occupied with the dust of the ground until the light of the

Lord shone upon him and scurries away from it you may keep running and you may keep trying to hold on to your life as you know it but it is all darkness distracting yourself with all that is dust and hiding under the rocks but the Lord occasionally turns over and reveals his light to your soul and speaks to you but you know there's no getting away from it ultimately there'll be no getting away from God the Lord will pluck you one day from all that is familiar to you for verse 21 even further confirms that growing necessity to hide that they find in their hearts we had in 19 the people hide in the caves of the rocks and the holes of the ground 21 to enter the caverns or the crevices of the rocks and the cliffs of the cliffs it's almost as if the ones that we read of in

Revelation calling upon the mountains and rocks to hide upon them in that day when the splendor of the Lord is revealed hiding hiding hiding from what the terror of the Lord and the splendor of his majesty I don't know did you notice that it says that after every occasion where they seem to be hiding verse 10 from the terror of the Lord and the splendor of his majesty verse 19 from the terror of the Lord and the splendor of his majesty 21 from the terror of the Lord and the splendor of his majesty it's repeated so we do not forget what it will be like the day of the Lord will leave no stones unturned all will be revealed there will be nowhere to go but to face the splendor of the

Lord for which of those who spend a life hiding from that illuminating truth that is spoken to them will be of what is read complete terror as earlier I mentioned the indescribable aspects of the Lord presence if he had been revealed unto someone I believe likewise will be the terror experienced by those when the splendor of the Lord is revealed unto the one who does not trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as his savior there will be no words and it will be completely unspeakable of what we shall experience everything that was held dearly in your heart or hands maybe indeed like the centipede having every hand full of something too much to be actually of any use plenty and abundantly distracted like what you hold in your hands but very quickly all these things will become as worthless as the dust of the ground the dust will do you no good the most desired silver and gold thrown to the moles and the bats as we read in verse 20 moles and bats blind creatures that do not perceive the light of the

[38 : 24] Lord they are the only ones that will receive these worthless treasures they do not perceive and that speaks of an election of the Lord's people for if the Lord reveals himself unto you this day do not turn away from him let the light of the Lord be your guide let the light of the Lord shine upon your soul everything that was held dearly in your heart will become as worthless there in the last verse it says stop regarding man and whose nostrils is breath for of what account is he it seems just like a finishing part away from what he had been speaking of we often listen to men before

God it's often as if we are it's as if the men are listening to these things that are said before them stop regarding man in whose nostrils is breath for what account is he the breath of man claims love but the breath of God is love the breath of man claims wisdom but the breath of God is wisdom the breath of man claims life but the breath of God is life that we would not be conformed to the one that claims but the Christ that is would we be like Peter in the Acts of the Apostles when he was all before the councils and the men of his day exclaiming to them when they told them to be silent we must obey

God rather than men and even my words here today to you if they have even arisen a fear or an awe in your heart what are my words in comparison to the splendor of the Lord if there is a slight fear in your heart today well that's going to be nothing to the splendor of the Lord when he reveals himself to us but equally if our heart is in awe that splendor that is revealed even today as we think upon it that is a reassurance for us of the greater things that await those who trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and that obedience that

Peter found himself exclaiming we must obey God rather than men that was rooted in the works of Christ in the light of the Lord revealed to us today through the Lord Jesus Christ and through this gospel message that we have set before us in the Bible do we understand what Christ has done for us do we trust him to be our savior do you know his light guiding us as we walk through our lives this is our focus on him as that penny that takes away the light is our focus completely on him have we thrown that penny away and seen that all these things that we hold are worthless that we would throw them to the blind creatures that will take them that we would have our eyes focused entirely upon the light of the

Lord the one who is able to keep us from stumbling is the gospel your guide are the words of Christ your comfort and do his promises give you peace what is man before his splendor if you are convicted by the light of the Lord reveal to your soul fall before him confessing your sins give up hiding give up the darkness that you know so well and come and come as you are for his light is a grace a great grace you are not left in the darkness you are not a blind creature pray that your words would be Lord enlighten me Lord reveal yourself to me that

[43 : 55] I may see your glory that I may see and measure the splendor of the Lord Almighty in my heart will you will we understand and will we see we would listen to the voice of God though his words seem as chastisement to us in this passage they are a gracious warning his words are indirectly full of a hope let us walk in the light of the Lord not forgetting that the Lord of hosts has a day but will that sight of splendor be terror or will it be complete splendor of his majesty and to your soul will your eyes behold the king and his beauty as no man ever has will the

Lord of hosts in that day make up his treasured possessions with you being part of so it says in Malachi 3 they shall be mine says the Lord of hosts in the day when I make up my treasured possessions what I thought that we would be a treasure on that day that we would be as the lost sheep returned unto his owner return rightfully to the one who possesses us it is a thought that we would be treasured when we look at ourselves but he looks at us the son across for us the Lord Jesus Christ may the

Lord alone be glorified in our thoughts today and may we know the light of the Lord guiding us in our eyes as we part and continue in the week ahead may this be blessed to us