

Revealing the Hidden

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[0:00] Let's just briefly pray. May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to you, O my Lord and Redeemer. Amen.

! So folks, we're going to be turning our attention today to the passage that we read earlier, that I read to you earlier, with all the words that was revealed to us.

Now, to me, that passage is a passage of, it's full of promise, it's full of identity, and it's also, I would say, full of divine purpose.

It's a message not only for the Israelites that were in exile, but it's a message for each one of us. Each one of us who seeks to understand what it means to be called and chosen by God.

So in the text, we hear Isaiah speaking as God's servant. Okay, that's the tone that comes out. And he declares, So I want you to think about that quite closely just now.

[1:31] And it's quite, it's quite a profound reminder, I think, that our journey with God does not begin when we choose him.

It actually begins when he chooses us. And there's an important distinction there. Because his call precedes our awareness, as we know it just now.

It really calls us, he calls us long before we've even taken our first breath. The passage also tells us that the Israelites, much like the servant, has been hidden in God.

Hidden in God. So what does that mean? Well, try and imagine a sharp sword, for example. It's kept safely in its quiver, isn't it?

In its sheath. It's kept safely there. Imagine a polished arrow. The same thing. It's been crafted well, but it's kept in its quiver.

[2:53] Concealed. Now, these things are concealed, but they're not useless. They're preserved.

They've been perfected. They've been prepared for a particular moment in time. And sometimes, you know, we can feel a little bit like that ourselves.

We can feel unseen. We can feel set aside. Waiting for our time. But I can tell you, in those seasons, and you may think they're dry seasons, but in those seasons, God is at work.

He's refining us. He's sharpening us. He's perfecting our gifts. And he wants us to use those gifts for his purpose.

And God's promise is not merely for a personal blessing either. The servant was commissioned to restore Jacob Jacob and bring back Israel.

[4:17] That's what he was asked to do. But that vacation doesn't stop there. He also says, I will make you a light to the nations that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.

So he's bolting something on to the end of that. You know, God's love is so great.

His vision is so wide to be limited to one people or one place. I believe it's for the wider world.

And I believe we've got a role in that. And our calling is always a lot more than we can imagine sitting here. It has to be.

It's a lot more than that. We've got to be bearers of the light as well so that others that we know may see hope.

[5:28] They may see life. They may also see salvation. Now the Israelites at that time were very discouraged.

They were disheartened in their exile. But that passage that was written to them reminded them that their identity is actually rooted in being chosen by God.

God assured them of their worth. He promised that rulers will honor them because of his faithfulness.

Okay, not the personal glory. glory. So when we doubt our significance, I want you to remember that God chooses the unlikely, the overlooked, the broken, and he shapes them.

He shapes them for extraordinary purposes. And you've only got to read your Bible to understand that. and I'll ask you to think about Abraham, for example.

[6:50] Common farmer, went to great things. Think of Moses, a tiny baby, chosen by God to achieve great things in his life.

So what does that mean for us now then? What does it mean for us now? Well, I think that each word from Isaiah, and we saw them revealed to us, but I'll remind you of them again.

Called, named, sharp sword, polished arrow, servant, formed, restored, light, reach, chosen.

They could be seeing a mirror, or as being a mirror, to maybe our own spiritual journeys.

You have a think about your own spiritual journey. Do those words chime with you now? They certainly did with me. So we are called by name, formed for God's work.

[8:06] hidden at times, yet always prepared, always prepared to bring restoration and light to everyone around us.

So we may be thinking our reach is small, but God's promise is for the ends of the earth. So what does that mean?

It means that, okay, your reach might be small, but you've got to look at the big picture. You've got to be thinking of who else God is talking to just now.

And when you add those things up, collectively, collectively, with over two billion Christians in the world, that's quite a force to be thought about.

going to do. So during this season of epiphany, I want you to reflect on Jesus, Jesus being revealed to us.

[9:15] And in this, the reading that we had, although it's delivered to the Israelites, we also hear of the one to come.

That's Jesus, the light of the world, who really fulfilled God's ultimate plan of salvation that reaches all people.

Just like the Israelites, it would have been really easy for Jesus to hide away, wouldn't it? to mean to be safely hidden in God.

But that was never God's plan. Never was God's plan. God came to earth. He came as a human form.

He was revealed to us in flesh as Jesus. And in my book, that was the greatest reveal ever. So I ask you a question today as you're sitting there as we come to an end here.

[10:24] As you consider the Israelites' calling, and as you consider Jesus' calling, I want you to consider what your calling might be, and what you're doing with that calling.

Are you hidden away? are you being prepared for the big reveal? Or are you revealing who you are and God's calling in your lives?

I don't know. But you've got to remember that people in our communities and all around the world, they need to hear about God.

And maybe you're the one to tell them. Just think about it. Amen.