

18 - 43 21

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[0 : 00] The scripture reading for this morning is Isaiah 42, 18 through 43, 21.

! When I'm finished reading, please join me in responding to the gift of God's words! Hear you deaf, and look you blind, that you may see.

Who is blind but my servant, or deaf as my messenger whom I send? Who is blind as my dedicated one, or blind as the servant of the Lord?

He sees many things, but does not observe them. His ears are open, but he does not hear. The Lord was pleased for his righteousness' sake to magnify his law and make it glorious.

But this is a people plundered and looted. They are all of them trapped in holes and hidden in prisons. They have become plunder with none to rescue, spoil with none to say, restore.

[1 : 08] Who among you will give ear to this? Will attend and listen for the time to come? Who gave up Jacob to the looter, and Israel to the plunderers?

Was it not the Lord, against whom we have sinned? And whose ways they would not walk, and whose law they would not obey? So he poured out on him the heat of his anger, and the might of battle.

It set him on fire all around, but he did not understand. It burned him up, but he did not take it to heart. But now thus says the Lord, He who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel, fear not, for I have redeemed you.

I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you. When you walk through fire, you shall not be burned, and the flames shall not consume you.

For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I give Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Zeba, in exchange for you, because you are precious in my eyes, and honored, and I love you.

[2 : 16] I give men in return for you, peoples in exchange for your life. Remember not, for I am with you. I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you.

I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Do not withhold. Bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the end of the earth. Everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.

Bring out the people who are blind, yet have eyes, who are deaf, yet have ears. All the nations gather together, and all the peoples assemble. Who among them can declare this, and show us the former things?

Let them bring their witness to prove them right, and let them hear and say, It is true. You are my witnesses, declares the Lord, and my servant, whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me, and understand that I am he.

Before me no God was formed, nor shall there be any after me. I, I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Savior. I declared and saved and proclaimed, when there was no strange God among you.

[3 : 22] And you are my witnesses, declares the Lord, and I am God. Also, henceforth, I am he. There is none who can deliver from my hand. I work, and who can turn it back?

Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. For your sake I send to Babylon, and bring them all down as fugitives, even the Chaldeans, and the ships in which they rejoice.

I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King. Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters, who brings forth chariot and horse, army and warrior. They lie down, they cannot rise. They are extinguished, quenched like a wick. Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing.

Now it springs forth. Do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. The wild beasts will honor me, and the jackals, and the ostriches.

[4 : 21] For I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself, that they may declare my praise.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Heavenly Father, we come before you in need. God, as Jordan just prayed, we are in need of your spirit to understand these lofty words. We thank you for giving to us this word, which endures forever. Even though men fade like grass, your word endures forever.

Would you reveal to us its truth this morning, and affect change in our hearts for your glory, here we pray in Christ's name. Amen. Well, good morning, church.

My name is Mike. I'm one of the pastors here at Shoreline, and I'm so glad that you all have joined us this morning. If you don't have a Bible, there are Bibles on the back table. They're already bookmarked in today's passage, and you are welcome to take that as a gift to you.

[5 : 22] He loves me, because he loves me, because he loves me, just because he does. That's a chorus of a song released a few years ago called Just Because, and the first time I heard it, I thought, well, that's cute.

But as I've reflected upon this week's text in Isaiah, I've found that simple chorus not to be cute, but to be astounding and glorious.

God loves me, and he loves me for no other reason than that he chose to love me. You know, we see this principle at play in the early days of Israel's existence, when Moses says in Deuteronomy 7, See, God directed sovereign love and faithfulness at Israel due to no merit of her own, and this led him to redeem her from slavery in Egypt.

Well, fast forward several hundred years, and that brings us to today's passage in Isaiah. Now, we're in the fourth sermon in a 14-week series in Isaiah 40-55, entitled From Sighing to Singing. And I haven't mentioned this yet, but if you're wondering where this title comes from, go ahead and flip forward a few pages in your Bibles to chapter 51. Chapter 51, verse 11, which is actually a verbatim repeat of chapter 35, where Isaiah says this, Now, this is the effect of the redeeming love of God upon the world.

[7 : 30] It turns our sorrows and our sighing into joyful singing to the glory of his name. Now, in today's text, God's sure redemption is center stage.

God's sure redemption. That is the title of the sermon today, and the main point is this, that God ensures his people's redemption in spite of their failures.

God ensures his people's redemption in spite of their failures. And there's two parts to today's sermon. There is the scandal of redemption, that's part one, and the surety of redemption.

The scandal of redemption, the surety of redemption. And I just want to pause for a second, and I want to say, sometimes in sermons, I will turn and directly address those in this room that don't know the Lord.

Now, this sermon in particular, this text in particular, it's written for the people of God. It's written for the saints of God. If you're here this morning, and you don't know Christ, you've never put your faith and trust in Christ, and repented of your sins, I want you to listen in on this conversation, and to see the glories of what God has given to his people in Christ.

[8 : 42] And to be compelled. My prayer is that you would be compelled, as you listen into this conversation, this word of the Lord to his saints, his chosen ones, that you would be compelled to faith in Christ. All right, so the first point is this, the scandal of redemption.

And we see this in 42 verse 18 to 43 verse 7, and the first sub-point here is the failed servant, Israel's unyielding blindness.

In last week's text, if you remember, God through Isaiah declared the inability of the nations and their idols to be able to explain the past, present, and future of human history.

In other words, the inability to offer up an adequate worldview that explains all things. Now, on the other hand, God, who is Lord of creation and history, he will bring about worldwide salvation through his righteous servant.

And the passage ended in 42 verse 17 by reiterating the shamefulness, or as Dave said last week, the stupidity of idol worship. Now, this is where we pick up in today's text.

[9 : 49] Isaiah says, Now here, it would seem that God is calling the world to forsake their idols and turn to him in the context, but then this unexpected twist occurs in verse 19.

Who is blind but my servant, or deaf as my messenger whom I send? Who is blind as my dedicated one, or blind as the servant of the Lord?

Now, I thought that the servant of the Lord was faithful, righteous, and just. That's what we saw in last week's text in Isaiah 42, the beginning. Now, all of a sudden, the servant is spiritually blind and deaf.

Now, this servant is also a messenger, but what good is a messenger that can't even hear, right? Can't even see. This servant is also my dedicated one, or literally, it means one who is at peace with me, reconciled to me.

But apparently, such relationship with God has been scorned, broken. 4, verse 20. He sees many things, but does not observe them. His ears are open, but he does not hear.

[11:02] Now, what things does this failed servant see and hear, but disregard? Verse 21. The Lord was pleased for his righteousness' sake to magnify his law and make it glorious.

So this servant, by God's own pleasure and for his glory, had the glorious benefit of seeing and hearing God's law magnified or made great in his midst.

Now, before you think, oh, how great law. Wonderful. Remember that God's law, his teachings, his commandments, it represents its very character and nature.

God had revealed to this servant the glory of his nature, the perfection of his righteousness and character in giving the servant this law.

But in defiance against God, his servant did not hear or observe his glorious law. And what was the result? Verse 22. Not a glorious picture, is it?

[12:18] The glorious law should have created a glorious people, but they're plundered, looted, captured, imprisoned, in need of rescue.

Who among you, verse 23, will give ear to this, will attend and listen for the time to come? In other words, will the devastation that has come about cause you to finally hear what is being said?

Will it cause you to finally see? Now, I've intentionally refrained from identifying who this servant is, but I think most in this room already know, and Isaiah makes explicit in verse 24.

He says, Who gave up Jacob to the looter and Israel to the plunderers? The failed servant, the blind and deaf servant, is the nation of Israel.

And we see in Isaiah, this portion, the term servant is being used back and forth to refer to the servant, the true and faithful servant to come, and this failed servant, Israel.

[13:26] God had chosen Israel out of all the nations of the earth for the sake of his name and glory. And then he gave them his glorious law that they might know him and make him known to the nations.

But they have utterly failed in their purpose. And as a result, God has given them up to the looter and the plunderers, as it says here. And then God drops the sight and hearing metaphor.

And in the next verse, it says this, The spiritual deafness and blindness, it represents a refusal on the people's part to walk in the ways of the Lord, to obey his law.

And friends, this is at the core. This is at the core of what sin is. You know, sin means to miss the mark. And sin at its core is a refusal to obey the Lord.

Sin at its core is an ignoring of what God has declared, a turning from God's ways and to walk in our own ways instead. And so what was the result of Israel's sin, their refusal to follow the Lord?

[14:45] So he, God, poured on him, Israel, the heat of his anger and the might of battle. It set him on fire all around, but he did not understand. It burned him up, but he did not take it to heart.

Now here is a double tragedy. First, Israel's failure resulted in judgment. God poured out on Israel the heat of his anger and the might of battles.

Israel had provoked the Lord to anger, a righteous anger by her persistent rebellion against him.

And though he withheld judgment from her for generations in his patience, at last he brought upon her the judgment that she was due.

But second, perhaps the greater tragedy is that even still, she did not understand. Even still, she did not take it to heart. The discipline of the Lord upon Israel was meant, as it always is, to awaken her to her sin, to call her to repentance and faith.

Isn't this what the discipline of a parent is meant to be? It's an act of love, to teach your children what is good and right and to turn them away from what is wrong. But this discipline went unheeded.

[16:02] It's a tragedy. Now one really important implication from this verse right here is that Israel's destruction, Israel's exile, cannot be chalked up to a failure on God's part.

That's what the ancient religious beliefs would have said. Israel was destroyed, so the gods of Babylon are stronger than the gods of Israel because Israel was conquered and defeated. And God's saying, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no.

I'm still in control. Israel's devastation was an act that I brought about in my sovereignty, in my justice, in my love for Israel even.

God remains ever holy, ever powerful, ever faithful even. Israel, despite being the chosen people of God, despite possessing the glorious law and promises, she has wandered off into faithlessness. And Paul says something similar even in Romans 9 about Israel. Now perhaps you this morning feel like unfaithful Israel.

[17:07] Maybe even right now you are in the middle of rebelling against the Lord. And maybe it's even working out for you so far. This text is a warning.

It's a strong warning that you are in dangerous territory. Maybe you're in the midst of experiencing the discipline of the Lord in some way. This text here, it's a call to see that discipline in your life as an act of God's grace, beckoning you back to the place where true life and blessing is found, in Him.

Hebrews 12.10 says that God disciplines His children for our good that we may share in His holiness. You might be here this morning and not be either of those people.

You might feel like God has disciplined you for someone else's sin. You're suffering, but it seems to have nothing to do with your own sinful choices.

And if that third person is you, then you actually might relate best to Isaiah's audience. Because Isaiah's audience, the people that he's writing to in that future generation of exiles, that consists largely of Jewish children born in the midst of exile.

[18:20] They're experiencing the pain brought on by their parents and their previous generations of parents' sin. Now whether you're the first, second, or third person I just described, Isaiah has a word of comfort and hope for us, for all of God's children this morning.

And that brings us to the next part here, the faithful Savior, Israel's unmerited redemption. Faithful Savior. But now, thus says the Lord, He who created you, O Jacob, He who formed you, O Israel, fear not, for I have redeemed you.

I have called you. By name, you are mine. Here in Isaiah 43, verse 1, we have one of those great butts of the Bible.

Isaiah just got done chastising Israel for her spiritual blindness and deafness, for spurning God's law and turning her back on His ways. And in the very next breath, he is proclaiming God's unyielding faithfulness to her.

God is committed to redeem Israel despite her failure. Now, if you remember the word redeem, it carries the idea that one will take upon himself all the needs of a next of kin, of another, paying whatever price is required for their freedom.

[19:45] God is committing to do that for Israel. Now, we should immediately be asking ourselves, how is this possible? You know, King David says in Psalm 5, verse 4, For you are not a God who delights in wickedness.

Evil may not dwell with you. So if Israel is embroiled in her sinful ways, then what is God going to do about her sin?

How can God possibly redeem Israel? Now, for the answer to that first question, what's He going to do about her sin? You're going to have to come back next week because that becomes the main focus of Isaiah in the next text.

But in this passage, I want us to feel this tension here. In this passage, we see that God's answer to the second question, how can He redeem Israel? Right? How can He do that?

Is, well, I can and I will. That's basically God's answer here in this text. But God, we've sinned grievously against you. I know.

[20:51] It pains me. We've worshipped idols. We've forsaken your law. Yes, and that was wicked. You've warned us time and again, sending prophet after prophet to call us to repentance.

I did, and you didn't even listen to me. Even now, we're walking in our sinful ways. We don't deserve your favor. No, you don't, but I'm going to pour it out on you anyway.

I am bringing about your unmerited redemption. Friends, this is astounding. This is scandalous grace. God is showing His people in these first seven verses of chapter 43 that He is committed to redeem them in spite of their failure.

Now, notice from this verse how God roots that commitment in the identity that He has given them. They are created. And we see here these increasing levels of intimacy. They are created.

They are formed. Now, that language is like a potter forming a clay vessel. They're created. They're formed. They're redeemed. They're called by name. They belong to Him.

[22 : 03] And there is nothing, there is nothing that they or anyone can do to unbelong to Him. And if you're here this morning and you belong to Jesus Christ, then there is nothing that can separate you from the love of God in Christ.

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen? Not even your sin. God, by sheer grace, in never-ending faithfulness, will redeem His people.

And we see in the next few verses what else is entailed in God's commitment to Israel. God's commitment involves divine presence. He says, when you pass through the waters, I will be with you.

He says again down in verse 5, fear not, for I am with you. His commitment also involves divine protection. And through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you.

[23 : 11] When you walk through fire, you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. Passing through waters and rivers, it recalls to mind God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt as they pass through the Red Sea.

It recalls to mind their crossing of the Jordan River. In exile in Babylon, that third promise of walking through fire without being burned would come literally true when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego would be thrown into the fiery furnace and yet not consumed.

It's recorded in Daniel 3. Yet the promise of God's divine presence and divine protection through any and every trial stands for all of God's children.

Note, we're not promised the absence of trials. Indeed, the opposite is guaranteed. You read books like 1 Peter. What we're promised is that in the midst of our trials, God remains ever present with us, strengthening us, helping us, upholding us with his righteous right hand.

As he said in Isaiah 41, verse 10, God's commitment involves divine presence, divine protection, divine pleasure. I give Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in exchange for you because you are precious in my eyes and honored and I love you.

[24 : 39] I give men in return for you, peoples in exchange for your life. Can you even believe these words? Our hearts, they resist these lofty declarations of God's love for us.

God, but don't you know what I've done? I know everything and you're precious in my eyes. I've committed great acts of wickedness. I've seen them all and you are honored in my sight.

God, just look away and leave me be. I will not. I love you. Cush and Seba were in the south of Egypt and God literally gave up Egypt for the sake of his chosen people, Israel.

We were reading from Exodus 15 before that song of deliverance after the people crossed through the Red Sea and he will do it again. God will give up the nations for the sake of his children because it is his children in whom he delights.

Now don't mishear that as some sort of cosmic injustice. You know, like God sacrificing an innocent people for the sake of his chosen people. The nations of which God speaks here are wicked pagan nations who have rejected him as king and misused and abused his people.

[26 : 00] The point here is regarding God's love for and delight in his children and I might add as we keep walking through Isaiah, God is actually calling the nations into what he is doing.

He wants the nations, the world, to leave the world, the ways of the world and to become part of his chosen people. So don't mishear that. God delights in his children.

Divine presence, divine protection, divine pleasure, divine purpose. Fear not for I am with you. I will bring your offspring from the east and from the west I will gather you.

I will say to the north give up and to the south do not withhold. Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth. Everyone who is called by my name whom I created for my glory whom I formed and made.

God is here describing that future regathering of his people from the places to which they had been exiled, to which they had been scattered in his judgment. And for what purpose is this regathering taking place?

[27 : 08] For my glory. They were created for my glory. God is redeeming his people from their bondage and exile despite their sinfulness so that as his redeemed people they can fulfill their God-given purpose.

The purpose for which they were created. Namely, the glory of God. It always comes back to the glory of God because that is the great end of our existence.

The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. Right? That's the Westminster Catechism. the first answer. In our marriages, in our parenting, our purpose is to glorify God. In our careers, in all of our relationships, in our stewardship of home, in finances, in our ministries, our primary aim ought to be the glory of God.

God. And, saints, Christian doctrine drawn from scripture passages like this one, it affirms that our eternal joy and satisfaction is actually bound up in our glorifying of God.

[28 : 24] In other words, as we glorify God fulfilling the very purpose for which we were created, we find that our heart's deepest desires are satisfied.

God. Okay, now let's step back and take in the big picture here. God created and formed his people, calling them by name.

Yet they rebelled, right? They turned a blind eye and a deaf ear towards him and he disciplined them and they still did not listen and even after all of that, he will redeem them and he offers them still all the glorious benefits of being his chosen people.

But then, the doubts begin to arise. Like, is God really able to do this? Satan begins to whisper things like, do you really think God cares about you that much?

Like, seriously? And that's why the second half of this passage exists. We had the scandal of redemption and now the surety of redemption. The surety of redemption, the certainty of redemption.

[29 : 30] Redemption is sure because first, the Redeemer reigns supreme. Now, in verses 8-13, chapter 43, we return to the courtroom scene, right?

This has become a running motif in this portion of Isaiah and in each of these scenes, God has been challenging the nations with the help of their gods and idols to present, as we said, a worldview that adequately explains the past and future of human history.

Now, so far, they have been entirely unable to do this, right? Remaining absolutely silent before him. Now, God has proven his sole sovereignty over both creation and over history.

Now, it should be noted that we are meant to chuckle a little bit as we read through these satirical scenes. Like, God has a sense of humor and this is, this is really evident in the book of Isaiah. Isaiah is exposing the foolishness of men and the impotence of their idols before the God of all wisdom and power and it's funny. So, you're allowed to laugh when you read the Bible.

[30 : 37] Did you know that? Like, sometimes there's funny stuff going on. Now, of course, the humor, the comedy of it sort of ends when we do a little self-reflection and then the ha-has turn into ooh, ouch.

Now, this courtroom scene, it begins with God first calling his own servant, Israel, bring out the people, this is funny, bring out the people who are blind yet have eyes, who are deaf yet have ears. He's calling on his blind and deaf people to take their seats in the jury. Now, what's more, down in verse 10, if you look in verse 10, after calling the nations to again take their seats and present their witnesses, God calls on his blind and deaf people as witnesses.

Now, listen, this is actually what Israel was meant to be. his chosen servant bearing his holy likeness and bearing witness to the nations that he alone is God.

But we've already established at the end of chapter 42 that Israel is a failed servant. And now we see here that she is also a failed witness.

[31 : 46] So in this court session, God's people fail to speak. The pagan nations and their idols, they remain speechless. So God, again, speaks up and he provides his own witness.

And he says, down in verse 10, before me, no God was formed, nor shall there be any after me. I, I am the Lord and besides me there is no Savior.

I declared and saved and proclaimed when there was no strange God among you and you are my witnesses, declares the Lord, and I am God. Also, henceforth, I am he.

There is none who can deliver from my hand. I work and who can turn it back? So once again, God is proclaiming his exclusivity, his utter uniqueness, his almighty power, his supremacy over all of creation and all of history.

Israel has witnessed this over and over again in her own history and yet has failed to bear witness before the nations. But this imposes no restriction on God.

[32 : 58] Right? There is no restriction imposed on the supreme, everlasting God even when his own people fail. God will do what God wills. But the glorious thing that in this context, what that means for God's rebellious people astonishingly is that redemption is sure because God reigns supreme.

if God's desire is to redeem a sinful people, then redeem them he will and nothing and no one is going to stop him.

Amen. Like he is able to do it. But does he actually want to? Right? We haven't answered that question. Does God actually want to redeem his people?

And that leads us to the next point here. Redemption is sure because God remains steadfast. He remains faithful towards his people. Now for those who are super attentive or good note takers, you might note that these two points sound awfully familiar.

See, just two weeks ago from chapter 41, we said the main message was fear not for the God who reigns supreme over the nations also remains steadfast towards his people.

[34 : 13] Now I don't know about you, but I'm a pretty forgetful person. You can ask my wife. She can attest to this. Like I need lots of reminders.

That's why I use Google Tasks and my alarm on my phone. I need lots of reminders, especially when I'm in a place of foolishness or a place of frailty.

Now how kind of God to drive home these glorious truths with his people that he might drive out their fear and inspire deeper trust in him and his word.

Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, for your sake I send to Babylon and bring them all down as fugitives, even the Chaldeans and the ships in which they rejoice.

I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King. It's impossible not to notice these compounding titles for God.

[35 : 13] They wash over us like wave after wave. God is couching his promise of redemption in his unchanging nature and character, his eternity, his sovereignty, his might and power, his holiness, and in the fact that he is your Redeemer, your Holy One, your King.

God is able to redeem his people, amen, but does he actually want to? The answer is a resounding yes. Now for the first time in this portion of Isaiah, he now names the oppressor who will carry off his people or the people of Israel into exile, Babylon.

Remember, Isaiah is writing this like a hundred something years before this actually takes place.

God is showing the world that he truly knows the end from the beginning.

He names Babylon. God is promising that he will deliver his chosen beloved people, Israel, from the oppressor, Babylon, acting for the good of his people.

And remember, this is in spite of their failures, in spite of their sin. His people have been faithless, but God remains ever faithful, ever steadfast towards them.

[36 : 37] And God points back once again to the Exodus. We see this keep recurring in Isaiah. God is the one who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters.

Do you remember how Moses stretched out his hand over the Red Sea and it parted, right, allowing Israel to cross over safely on dry ground. God is the one who brings forth chariot and horse, army and warrior.

They lie down. They cannot rise. They are extinguished, quenched like a wick. Remember how the Egyptian army pursued Israel into the Red Sea, right in the dry ground, but then it was enclosed and engulfed around them.

The entire Egyptian army buried in the Red Sea. Yes, God in his sovereign power and by his sovereign love for his people, he had redeemed them from slavery in Egypt.

He had defeated the strong enemy. But his purpose in alluding back to the Exodus is not for exiled Israel and Babylon to say, wow, God did some great things back then.

[37 : 50] Remember not the former things nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing. Now it springs forth. Do you not perceive it?

I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The wild beasts will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches, for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praise. See, God wants his people to remember the Exodus so that they trust him when he says, I will redeem you. God is going to bring about a new Exodus, another redemption of his people. He will do it again. He's going to save his beloved people with his strong arm from the grasp of the oppressor and he's going to lead them through the wilderness back home and he's going to nourish and provide for them even through that wilderness, every step of the way and he will do it both for their sake and that they might declare my praise as he says. So you see the sighing, the sorrow of the people, it's turned into what? Into singing. Singing the praises of their Redeemer. And we see again the wedding of God's glory and the good of his people.

[39 : 18] And so we have both answers now. Is God able to redeem his people? Yes. Does God want to? Yes. Redemption will surely come.

Not because of any merit on the part of God's people but because the one who has declared it remains steadfast towards his people according to his own sovereign power and love, according to his scandalous grace.

saints. He reigns supreme over all creation. Now saints, nowhere are these truths more evident than in the gospel of Jesus Christ in which God through the death and resurrection of his own son purchased our redemption from bondage.

Not to Babylon but to sin and to Satan and to death. The gospel of Christ is the proof and the fulfillment of God's sure promise to redeem his people even in spite of their sin.

And even still, those of us who are in Christ by grace through faith, even still, we are so often deaf and blind to the ways of the Lord.

[40 : 35] Are we not? Are we not? But brothers and sisters in Christ who continually fail each and every day, God's promised redemption is not conditioned on our miserable resumes but on Christ's.

Right? See, at the top of our resume it reads weak, ungodly, sinner, enemy. That's our resume. Not very compelling.

But now, in Christ, we have his resume which reads precious in my eyes, honored, beloved. Paul says in Romans 5, verse 10 that if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his son, much more now that we are reconciled shall we be saved by his life.

In other words, if God chose to love you and redeem you by the shed blood of Christ on the cross even when you were in your sin and to make you his child by grace, how much more, how much more now that you belong to him while he ensure your complete and final redemption?

Behold, I am doing a new thing. Now it springs forth. Do you not perceive it? Saints, God is in the business of redemption.

[42 : 04] He's in the business of doing away with the old and ushering in the new even when we cannot perceive it, even when we can't see it. The work of redemption, it's going on all the time in us and through us and around us because the supreme and steadfast redeemer, he's advancing all of history for the sake of his people and the glory of his name.

In certain situations, we might not see the evidence of that redemption in this life. Like it's not promised that we're actually going to see it in certain situations, but we surely will in the next. God's preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison. Right? The futility of this world, it's not even worth comparing, Paul says in Romans 8, to that future glory.

But church, if we open up our eyes and we unclog our ears, I bet we'll see way more evidence of God's redeeming work in this broken life even.

Before we close, I want to ask one final question. What sort of people does this truth create? In other words, what do people look like who come to grasp at the heart level the truth that God ensures his people's redemption in spite of their failures?

[43 : 35] What sort of people does this truth create? It creates people that are worshipful. That's the first thing we see here. People that are constantly giving thanks and praise to the Lord.

It's singing people. People that are singing unto the Lord with both their lips and their lives. how could we not worship God who has saved us in spite of ourselves by his grace?

This creates a people that are joyful. Like this is every reason for joy. An inner delight of the soul that cannot be taken away.

We just walked through John. Remember what Jesus said? He says, you're not going to see me. And then you're going to see me again and you're going to have joy that cannot be taken from you. It's unshakable joy.

Worshipful, joyful. This creates people that are humble. If I did nothing to merit my redemption, like if my salvation is the result of sheer grace, then before God and others, I ought to carry myself with a profound sense of humility.

[44 : 49] I mean, what do I have? What does Mike Lusa have to boast in? What do I have to be prideful about? What, like the grades I got in school?

Or like my basketball skills, which are mediocre at best? My bank account? I mean, like, these things do not bring salvation from sin and death.

Only God's grace. If I've been saved by the grace of God, then the only thing that I have to boast in is the cross. It's the cross of Christ.

This creates a humble people, right, who look to the interest of others, not their own interest, who give deference to other people. In the midst of conflict and tension, we love, right?

We seek to reconcile, we extend the hand of forgiveness. People that are worshipful, joyful, humble. This creates people that are vocal.

[45 : 55] And what I mean by that, I'm just trying to get the alliteration here, what I mean by vocal is the people that are witnessing. That was Israel's job, right? A people that share the good news of what has been done.

We have a glorious message to share about a God who takes broken, failed sinners and purchases their freedom at his own expense. Saints, we are redeemed witnesses, heralds of the good news. Let's shout it from the mountaintops and the rooftops, the mountain and the rooftops. This creates a people that are vocal, ready to talk about the gospel of Jesus Christ, to be witnesses for him in this world.

Lastly, this creates, this is not an extensive and exhaustive list here. This creates people that have all sorts of characteristics. But the fifth one that I'll share today, this creates a people who are hopeful.

Hopeful. On Easter Sunday, we defined hope as the confident expectation and desire that all of God's promises will come to pass. If we believe this, that God is redeeming us in spite of our failures, and therefore, how much more is he going to save us from death in the age to come.

[47 : 15] This creates a people that are filled with hope, confidence, fearlessness, boldness, hope. We know that God's promises are going to come to pass, and so we can endure the trials of this world, because we're filled with a hope, like our joy, that can't be taken away.

Can't be taken away. Christ is the anchor of that hope, is he not? This creates a people who are worshipful, who are joyful, who are humble, who are vocal, who are hopeful.

Behold, I am doing a new thing. Now it springs forth. Do you not perceive it? Please go to the Lord with me in prayer.

Heavenly Father, it feels like we're just scratching the surface on the profound glory of the truth that we see here in Isaiah. And what we have beheld today compels us to worship, to give glory and praise to your name.

God, we are astounded by your grace. We're astounded by it. We're failed, sinful people, and yet you have chosen by grace.

[48 : 31] to pour out blessing and favor upon us. You have redeemed us, and you are redeeming us, and you will redeem us.

And so we thank you, Lord. God, would you work these truths into our hearts? Would you form us continually into the people of God you want us to be?

So that we can give you praise. And we can attest to the nations that you alone are God, and that you have saved us by the blood of Christ.

We pray this in his name. Amen. So we're not going to celebrate communion together or the Lord's Supper. Now towards the beginning of the sermon, I asked the question, if Israel is embroiled in her sinful ways, then what is God going to do about her sin?

How could he redeem her? And I told you to come back next week for the answer, but here's a sneak peek. You know, God says a few verses later in Isaiah 43, verse 25, he says this, I, I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins.

[49 : 55] God will solve the problem of Israel's sin by blotting it out, by forgiving her sin completely. But this creates another dilemma. how can a just and holy God forgive sin and remain just and holy?

And Christians, we know the answer to that question, right? The tension, the mystery of the Old Testament, the way that divine justice is satisfied and divine mercy is unleashed, it's through substitution.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Son of Man, in our place on the cross. for our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, that what?

That in him we might become the righteousness of God. Yes, Jesus, the perfectly faithful servant of the Lord.

He became the suffering servant bearing our sin upon himself so that we prisoners could be freed from the dungeon of sin and death.

[51 : 03] We are made righteous. We are reconciled to God and to all of the saints. We are redeemed now and forevermore. So as we partake of this fellowship meal, this is what we celebrate.

And in taking these elements, we not only celebrate God's faithfulness and love to us in Christ, we're also pledging our faithfulness and our love to Christ and to one another, to this body that he's joined us to.

And for those who have repented of their sin and put their faith in Jesus Christ, the Savior and Redeemer of our souls, we welcome you to receive the bread and the cup this morning.

Scripture warns us, though, that those who partake with unrepentant hearts eat and drink judgment upon themselves. This is true of both professing believers living in unrepentance and also of unbelievers who have not yet repented of their sins.

So if you're in either place this morning, we urge you to forego the elements and instead be reconciled to Christ. So let's each now go before the Lord in joy and in thanks and light of the gospel of Jesus Christ, in light of the scandalous grace in which God has redeemed us.

[52 : 22] When you're ready, you can get up to receive the elements on either side of the room and remember that as you receive these elements so you have received life and salvation as a free and unmerited gift of God's grace for you.

And return to your seats and we'll take the bread and the cup together. Amen.