

The Life of Faith and The Experience of God's Grace

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[0:00] Let's turn together to the prophecy of Isaiah and chapter number 12 and we can read at the beginning of that chapter. Isaiah 12 and at verse 1.

You will say in that day I will give thanks to you O Lord for though you were angry with me your anger turned away that you might comfort me.

And so on down to the verse number 3. Now the last time we were together on Sabbath morning we looked at chapter 6 in this prophecy and at that stage I indicated that I wanted to kind of plot a path through the first part of this prophecy.

In our times together not going through every chapter but looking at key passages in this section of the book of Isaiah to see something of the overall message that Isaiah has for us.

And I want to continue doing that from this chapter today. And we looked at the first chapter in this prophecy where God makes it clear that he is speaking to those who belong to the covenant community.

[1:11] To those who belong to the Old Testament church. And he is referencing them as those who were his children. But despite being his children that they rebelled against him and turned his back on them.

And that of course has consequences. And we saw in chapter number 6 the way in which Isaiah represents the people. The way in which Isaiah who has just died is represented of what's happening with the people.

And we saw that encounter with God in the temple. What must be at the very center of our worship of God.

Now as I read through this book there are many ways of looking at the book. But for this book for example we can say that there are books within the book. There are sections. And I hope that's not confusing.

But there are books within the book. And the section that we are looking at here from chapter 7 to chapter 12 is the book of Emmanuel. God with us who is mentioned in chapter 7.

[2:16] So it's focused on the person of Jesus. The person of Jesus Christ. The promised son of God coming into the world. And we can read about that in chapter 7.

And in chapter number 11. The previous chapter here. We see that Emmanuel is a king who is going to come. And he's going to reign. And he's going to rescue the people. And all of these elements that they apply to ourselves.

As those who belong to the church of Christ in the world. As those who respond to the gospel in different ways. And as those to whom God is reaching out through the gospel.

Which he now speaks after Jesus has done his work. And today I want us to think of this passage. And to think of the life of faith.

And the experience of God's grace. What happens when God comes for our salvation? There is the sense here of in that day.

[3:19] There is a day referred to in chapter 11. It's a day when the Messiah is going to come. It's a day when God is going to bring back the people. That have scattered across that part of the world.

God is going to work in that day. To bring about change. And now in that day. In verse 1 here. We see something of what that change will look like.

And we see the prophet. He's speaking to the people. He's giving his own testimony. And he is asking everyone to gather together. To rejoice in God's salvation.

And so we think of the life of faith. And the experience of God's grace. And the first thing we want to notice is. That we have in these verses. A proclamation.

God is proclaiming something to the people. That will happen in that day. And in the proclamation. [4:19] And in the proclamation. God is saying. And the priority is always given to what God does apart from us.

outside of us. What God has done in the person and work of his son. And we see here that in that day. I will give thanks to you. For though you were angry with me.

God we read down from the book of Exodus. Exodus and Deuteronomy. God is a God who is provoked to anger. By the sins of his people.

His wrath is stirred up against them. And in Exodus chapter 32. For example. God wants to let his wrath out. And destroy the people. Because they have rebelled against him.

Our sin offends God. God has moved in wrath against us. And then we become the objects of his wrath. And when we begin to understand.

[5:24] What God has done for us. In the passion and work of the Lord Jesus. Unless we understand the simple fact. That your sin and my sin. That we offend God.

And that there is no such thing as great sins or little sins. When we rebel against God. And break the law of God. We are provoking God's wrath. And we become the objects of God's wrath.

And here the prophet is saying that. In this day. Though you were angry with me. Your anger is turned away.

That's a major transformation. That. At a human level. Suggests to us. That God has changed his mind.

With regard to your sin and mine. But the reality is of course. That God does not change his mind. He does not change his character.

[6:30] He does not change his being. He is always what he is. As the holy God. Against our sin. So when the Bible is telling me that. There is a day.

When the wrath of God is turned away from me. Then it draws our attention to. The promise of God. And sending his son. To be the servant. In chapter 53.

Of this prophecy. The servant who will be. A substitute. Who will bear our sin. Who will carry it to the cross.

Who will be the sacrifice. For our sin. Who will experience the wrath of God. In the darkness of Calvary's cross. When he cries out. My God. My God.

Why have you forsaken me? It is because of the wrath of God. Against his son now. Who is bearing our sin. And who is suffering in our place.

[7:25] Why have you forsaken me? The darkness. Of the exile of the son of God. From a felt sense of God's delight in him.

To sense now that he is the object of God's wrath. And in that moment. And in that place. In that day.

The wrath of God is turned away. John tells us in the New Testament. In 1 John chapter 4. That this is.

Here is the love of God. This is where we find the love of God. That God sent his son into the world. To be the propitiation for our sins. That big word.

That can be confusing. But that can be understood. Simply as. Jesus. Suffering for our sin. And because God is satisfied. In the sacrifice that he gave.

[8:22] That God's wrath is turned away. And God is at peace with us. Our sins are covered. God's wrath is turned away. And God is at peace.

With us. And during that day. For us today. Becomes the day of the gospel. There is the proclamation. Of what God has done.

Outside of us. In the oppression of his son. On the cross of Calvary. Where he died for the sins. Of the world. And the psalmist can say.

In Psalm number 30. For example. That. But for a moment. Lasts your wrath. Life and your favor lies. For the son of God.

There were these hours. That the wrath of God. Lasted. As he suffered in our place. And then. The darkness was gone. And Jesus said. It is finished. The wrath.

[9:19] Of God. Is turned. Away. And if. As a Christian today.

We ever think. That the wrath has returned. Then we are so wrong. And we begin to think that.
 Because the devil is on our shoulder.
 And he wants to do everything that he can. To undermine our faith. To mask and to cover over. All
 that God has done in Christ. And even if he.
 Just removes something of the significance of that. He's got you thinking. He's got you doubting.
 He's got you questioning. But the reality is today.
 That Jesus Christ. Suffered for our sins. When he said. It is finished. The wrath of God. Is gone
 forever. God may be displeased.
 [10:14] With us. When we go wrong. But we are never again. The objects. Of his wrath. What
 God does. Outside of me. That's. The gospel.
 But unless. What God does. Outside of me. Affects me in here. Then the gospel. Is meaningless.
 It's a story.
 Of somebody suffering. But it doesn't change me. But the change. That. The prophet. Refers to
 here. Is. Your anger. Is turned away. That.
 You might. Comfort. Me. Comfort. In the Old Testament. Is.
 An interesting. Expression. On the part. Of God. The wrath of God. Speaks to me. Of. Of the.
 Breath of God. Breathing. Heavily.
 [11:08] Powerfully. Against me. But when I think. Of comfort. I think. Of God. Breathing. Gently.
 And quietly. Over me. So that.
 In his breathing. Gently. And quietly. Over me. He brings. About change. And God's. Comfort. Is.
 About changing. My experience.
 And rescuing. Me. From the very thing. That is troubling. Me. And in this case. What is troubling.
 Me. And what I need. To be rescued. From. Is the fact. That God. Is angry.
 With me. Personally. And the comfort. That. The prophet. Speaks of here. As he speaks of. In
 chapter number 40. Is a comfort. That goes.
 Way. And far beyond. Somebody. Placing their arms. Around me. And telling me. It's all right. It
 goes.
 [12:02] Beyond that. What is the comfort. What is the comfort. That God. Brings to me. He comes
 to me. With the comfort.
 Of his. Pardon. And we'll read. Chapter 40. At the beginning. And that's the way. In which. The
 comfort of God. Works. That God. That God. Has comforted.
 His people. That he has. Pardoned. Their iniquity. Because. God. Has received. Double. What their
 sins.
 Deserved. There is. Such an. Extravagance. And such a. Fullness. In what God. Has achieved. In
 Christ Jesus. When he died. For our sins.
 That there is. Much more. There is. A whole ocean. Of. Redeeming. Love. And grace. That comes.
 To pardon me. And. When I receive.
 [12:54] His pardon. I see. Much more. Than. The change. That takes place. Between me. And
 God. I see. The. Great. Reservoir.
 Fullness. Of God's love. In. Christ. Jesus. The comfort. Of God's.
 Forgiveness. I hear. The psalmist. Say. And I hear. Paul. Using the same words. In Romans.
 Chapter 4. Blessed. Is the man. Whose sins.
 Are. Forgiven. Hush. Quietness. Calm. The storm. Of the wrath. Of God. Has been removed. And
 there is.
 That sense. Of calm. We are justified. By his grace. We have. A standing. Before God. We are. We
 have the spirit. Of adoption.
 [13:49] We cry. Abba. Father. The comfort. Embraces. Everything. About our existence. And our
 being. And our relationship. With God. He takes us out of.
 The place. That we were in. And brings us. In. To the place. That he has. Prepared for us. In his
 kingdom. In our relationship.
 With Christ. Jesus. The proclamation. Do you. Today. Know the.
 Whispering. Pardoning. Voice of God. That comes. Through Jesus Christ. To take away. All of your.
 Guilty fears. And to give you. To be. Settled. Before God. That's what God. Says. Will happen. In
 this day. In the day of.

[14 : 42] Your salvation. And if you have that. Pardoning. Voice. Of God. Don't allow. The whispering. Voice. Of the devil.

Your enemy. Rob you. Of the peace. And calm. Of the place. To which God. Has taken you. The proclamation. Let's hear it.

Let's believe it. And let's live it. Secondly. There is. Following on. From the. Proclamation. There is. A profession.

This person. Has something. To say. Of course. They do. If I'm the child. Of God. Today. I have something. To say. About what God. Has done. In my life. And that's what I see. The prophet. Doing here. In the verse. Number two. And it seems. That he's. He's speaking. From his own experience. This is what will happen. To you. I know. I want to tell you. What it is like. Experiencing this.

[15 : 39] Behold. God. Is my salvation. I will trust. And will not be. Afraid. The Lord. Is my strength. And my song. He has become.

My. Salvation. The Lord. God. Is. My strength. And my song. It speaks.

About. What. What. The prophet. Is. In his heart. He has a song. To sing. And it's the song. Of God's. Forgiveness.

And that song. That he has. To sing. Fills him. With. Inner strength. The fear. That he. And the people. Had. With regard. To the wrath. Of God. That is gone.

The fear. That he. And the people. Had. With regard. To their enemies. That is gone. There's a strength. There's a fortitude. Because. God.

[16 : 35] Himself. Has. Become. His. Salvation. And there is. More.

To that statement. Than. Saying. That God. Has. Saved him. Such. Is. The nature. Of God's. Salvation. That it. Is. God. That it. Is. The Lord. Jesus. So. When he's. Coming. To. Express. The strength. That he has. And the song.

That he sings. It is. Because. He sees. His relationship. With God. Not just. Being reconciled. To him. But that God. Himself. In his character. In his being.

In his work. In his promises. All that God is. That's. His. Salvation. And there is. A significant. Step. In coming.

[17 : 31] From seeing. God's. Salvation. As something. That he gives. To me. To seeing. God himself. As my salvation. And to see. The Lord Jesus Christ. As my salvation.

That salvation. Is his passion. And if I have. Salvation. Today. Jesus Christ. Is mine. Because. All my salvation.

Is. In him. My strength. And my song. Because he. Has become. My salvation. And for that reason. Jesus Christ. Is the center. Of my. Experience. And my living. And. Paul says.

In Galatians chapter 2. That. For me to live. Is Christ. It's no longer. I that live. But Christ. Lives in me. My salvation. Is in God. In his passion.

[18 : 28] In the passion. Of his son. And the passion. Of his son. Is in me. And he's the one. Who lives in me. It's. More than. Realizing. My life. With God's purposes.

And his word. It's placing me. In this. Relationship. With God. That is intimate. And close. That he is mine. And I am his. And nothing.

Can ever. Undermine that. Or reverse that. Or change that. And it begs. The question.

What happens. In your heart. And in my heart. Today. If this. Is what God does. In that day. What goes on.

In my heart. And your heart. Now. Tells me. And tells you. Who we are. Can you take. The profession. Of the.

[19 : 24] Of the prophet. And say. That's my profession. I am. Like the prophet. Therefore. I can take. What the prophet. I said. And I can make it. My own. It's coming.

To align. Ourselves. With the people. Of God. Having the same. Faith. And trust. And confidence. In. God. Your strength. And your song.

There's a joy. That cannot be removed. And. There will be forces. That we want to. Remove that joy. But when. We realize. That our salvation.

Is the passion. Of God. And the passion. Of the son of God. The Lord Jesus. Then. Our joy. Is built. On. A sure. Foundation. The strings.

On which. I. I. I. Rejoice. And. Make music. In my heart. Before God. Are strings. That God. Has put in place. And they're never out of tune. If I recognize.

[20 : 24] And put my trust. And see. That he is. My strength. And now. My song. And that enables. The psalmist.

To trust. And not. Be. Afraid. Fear. Fear. Is a terrible thing.

You may have fears. In your heart. Today. That are. Private. And secret. To you. We fear. Our enemies. As they did. We fear. The wrath of God.

As they did. We fear. What might happen. In our lives. Tomorrow. Or the coming days. There are so many ways. In which. Fear. Comes into. Our hearts.

I feared. Coming. To stand here. To preach today. Because. It's something. That's. Scary. At a human level.

[21 : 21] Something that God. Calls us. To do. There's a fear. In doing anything. That God calls us. Do. To serve him. But we.

Should not. Be. Afraid. The. Child of God. That the Christian. The believer. It's not the kind of person. Who. Is scared of easily.

Because. There is. Trust. And the trust. That. Is spoken of here. Spoken of widely. In the Psalms. Is. A trust. That speaks to us.

Of a. A wired. Strong. Confidence. In God. And relationship. With him. And there is that. Sense of. Of living.

Vibrant. Relationship. That all the promises. Of God. Are secure. And sure. And in my. Relationship.

[22 : 16] With him. I. Trust him. Because. He has proved. That he. Fulfilled his promises. In the past. He has proved.

In the death. And resurrection. Of his son. That he is faithful. To all of his promises. And today. We can trust in him. Because of these. Evidences.

And Psalm 22. Speaks of the way. In which. The people of God. They trusted. And because of that. See the psalmist. They were not. Disowned.

They were not. Put to shame. Trust. Is transformational. It overcomes. Our fears. Church. And it gives to us.

That constant sense. Of having God. As our God. That constant sense. Of having him. On our side. That sense. Of knowing. That we are his.

[23 : 14] Never. To be disowned. The profession. The level. At which. Or to which. God wants. To take us.

One of the girls. At the. Sparkling conference. Said something like this. Yesterday. About her own experience. That she. Could not see. What she could be. Because.

She was so focused. On what she had become. And that's. The kind of thing. That traps us. In our Christian experience. We have to think.

Of the promises of God. We have to think. Of what we can become. Because of the faithful promises of God. And we have to believe that. We can become that.

Because. These promises are there. Full of. The mechanisms. And the. The things that are required. To undo. My past. Trust. And God wants us.

[24 : 17] Wants to bring us. To that place. Where we have that. Profession. Where we have that. Trust. And where we. Rely on him. And never feel.

We're disowned. But discovered. Daily. That we are. Precious. To him. And thirdly. There is.

In these verses. The idea of. Participation. That day. Has changed. The prophet. But now.

The prophet. Wants to speak. To the. To the whole. Of the community. In verse number three. And now. He wants to say. With joy. You will draw water. From the wells. Of salvation.

He returns. To the joy. That belongs. To the people. Of God. The joy. That we see. In the Psalms. As the people. Of God. Are on their way. To the house. Of God. To the tabernacle.

[25 : 12] To the temple. To celebrate their God. It's a God. Focused joy. As we have a Christ. Focused joy. Christ Jesus. Is on his throne. We come with joy.

In our hearts. Because that's. Where he is. And. With joy. We will. Draw water. From the wells. Of salvation.

Drawing. Water. Water. If you have ever. Drawn water. And I may remember. Occasional times. When I did. But if you have ever.

Drawn water. You need. To know. Where the well is. You need to make. An effort. In going there. And you need to make. A greater effort. In coming back.

From there. To draw water. With. The right vessel. Or utensil. It speaks. About energy. It speaks. About purpose.

[26 : 10] It speaks. About knowing. Where to find. The water. And giving myself. To going. To draw water. From the well. And that.

Reminds us. I think. Of the fact. That. The moment. We be. We come. To know the Lord Jesus. As our Savior. That is when. Our work begins.

That's when. Our energy. Is spent. We saw. In Psalm. Number 63. The way. In which the psalmist. Is thirsting. In a dry. Parched land. There is energy.

To be spent. There is a life. To be given. To draw water. From the wells. Of salvation. And.

If today. You have come. To put your trust. In the Lord Jesus. And think. That you have arrived. And that's it. You are so wrong. That is only.

[27 : 06] The beginning. Of your journey. And your journey. Will take you. Not just. On the Lord's day. To the public. Worship of God. With your vessel. To come. And take. And drink.

It will take you. In your own. Private life. In your own. Personal life. In so many. Areas of your life. It will take you. To places. Where you want. More of the salvation.

That you have. Experienced. Drawing. Water. From the. Well. Of. Salvation. And we can recall. The words. Of the woman. Of Samaria. When Jesus. Came. And sat. At the well. And he was looking. For a drink. And she said to him.

You don't have any vessel. To draw water. So how can you. Come for a drink. And there is. A lesson in that. For you. And for me. The vessel.

[28 : 07] Is our faith. Our trust. Our confidence. In the Lord Jesus. The vessel. Is the grace. In our hearts. That enable us. To trust. In the first place. And it's the vessel.

That needs to be. Refilled. And topped up. All of the time. Not because. The tasting. Of salvation. Didn't give us. Complete salvation. But we are.

Growing. In our understanding. Of the salvation. That we have. In Christ Jesus. And we are.

Growing. In understanding. I think.

In this way. That we come. To understand. The work. Of the spirit. Of God. In our hearts. Paul speaks. In Ephesians 1.

About God. Blessing us. With spiritual blessings. In heavenly places. In Christ Jesus. The salvation. That we have. They are the blessings. Of the Holy Spirit.

[29 : 01] Of God. And so. When I come. To draw water. From the wells. Of salvation. I'm coming. To drink. At the well. That Jesus has opened. And I'm coming.

To draw more and more. Of water. From that well. To be filled. With the spirit. Of God. And I think. Of Jesus. In another place.

And he's. At the feast. Of tabernacles. And there is water. Flowing everywhere. At this feast.

Especially around. The altar. And on the last.

Great day. Of the feast. Jesus stands up. In the midst. Of the people. And said to them. If anyone. Is thirsty. Let him. Come. To me. And drink.

It's all about him. He's telling them. The festivals. That you've observed. The feast of tabernacles.

The festival. That you've observed. It points to me. And I am standing here now.

[29 : 59] In the sense. Removing that. From the calendar. Of the church. And placing myself. At its center. And. He.

John. Was on. To say. That. Out of his heart. Will flow. River. Of living water. And then. They understood. What he said. When they received.

The Holy Spirit. That the Holy Spirit. Was not yet given. Because. Jesus. Was not yet. Glorified.

What is Jesus saying to them? Come to me.

And drink. Of the power. Of the Holy Spirit. That water. Of God. That flows. From the throne room.

Of God. And that I send out. Into the world.

That converted. The thousands of people. In Acts chapter 2. At the beginning. Of the New Testament church. And that works. In Stornoway.

[30 : 53] And everywhere else. In the world. As the gospel. Is preached. Drinking with joy. From. The wells. Of. Salvation.

You will know. And you should know. Today. That if you drink. Of any other well. You'll be thirsty again. There's no satisfaction. In anywhere else.

