

Isaiah 55:6-7

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Preacher: Rev Murdo Alex Macleod

[0 : 00] Let us turn now to resume our studies in the Old Testament in the prophecy of Isaiah, chapter 55, reading from verse 6.

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Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts.

And let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. Now in studying this chapter, we've noticed the last two weeks, dealing with the first five verses, that it brings before us the offer of life and satisfaction and fullness and blessing from God to all those who are invited in the terms in the verses before us, as those who are thirsty, those who are hungry looking for that which has eluded them.

[2 : 08] The blessings of the gospel are brought before us in the words that are used here, in the use of the word water, wine, and milk, and honey, that which satisfies that which is full of richness.

The verses also we saw brought before us, the uniqueness and the exclusiveness of the satisfaction available in God for man.

He emphasised that with the use of the words, listen to me, incline your ear and come unto me, here and your soul shall live. We notice also the certainty of the blessings which are available to us. If we come, I will make with you, he says, an everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David. The verses brought before us the credentials of the Savior who is the witness, the leader, and the commander of nations.

And the verses also brought before us the kingdom over which, the kingdoms over which he is to reign as Lord and Savior. Nations that he didn't know and nations that didn't know him will come to him.

[3 : 35] This is the gospel program. And this is an event which will surely be fulfilled when the gospel will be brought to all nations and people from all nations will be brought to the Savior.

Now the verses before us tonight begin with an exhortation based upon these thoughts. Therefore, seek ye the Lord while he may be found.

Call ye upon him while he is near. Then the next verse tells us what this seeking and this calling of the Lord must be accompanied by.

Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts and let him return unto the Lord.

And then we read thirdly in these verses, the great encouragement that is given to such. For I will abundantly pardon.

[4 : 49] And he goes on to illustrate this. My ways are not, my thoughts are not yours. Neither are your ways, my ways, saith the Lord. And then there is a further illustration.

Of the heavens and the earth, the distance between heaven and earth. So are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. These four thoughts before us here briefly this evening.

First of all, the exhortation that is based upon the foregoing verses. Therefore, seek ye the Lord while he may be found.

Call ye upon him while he is near. Now it may be that in the first instance, this is a call or a plea to the Jews. We saw last week in verse 5 here, that the gospel is eventually going to be brought before all nations.

Not just to the Jews, but to the Gentiles. And it could be that this verse is to be understood in that way. These words rather, while you have the opportunity, take it.

[6 : 02] Seek the Lord while he is to be found. Call upon him while he is near. Because in days to come, the gospel is going to be taken away from you. And brought to the heathen nations of the world.

Secondly, the exhortation can be understood to refer to us all. Because it is incumbent upon all men to seek the blessings of the gospel while they are available to them.

Just as in the days of Isaiah, Jews had little time to make their peace with God. So, the same applies to us.

The inference here is this. That the Lord is not always to be found. And that the Lord is not always near.

He is near now, says Isaiah to these people. You can call upon him now. But that situation will not always obtain.

[7 : 19] Now, you may put it like this. That these words emphasize that there is a limit to the offer of the gospel.

There is a limit to the day of grace. At the moment, and even as we gather in this church building tonight. The Lord is near.

And the Lord can be found as the gospel is proclaimed. Taking it down to your own level individually. There are times when your own thinking process, the situation in which you may find yourself.

Make it clear to me that the Lord is near. And that the Lord is to be found. There are times when the Lord speaks to us.

Not just through the gospel. But he speaks to us in his providence. As he said to the prophet of old. My voice at this time is to the city.

[8 : 24] It was a time of special dispensation. And so it is with us at certain seasons of our own life.

That there are times when the Lord makes his presence very real. And very, makes it, as it were, brings home to us our need to call upon him at that particular time.

There are times when we may be faced with providence which we find difficult to understand and to interpret. Times when we're confronted with great disappointments.

When our hopes are blasted. When things come upon us that we didn't expect. And that we didn't want. And at such times people's thoughts go to the Lord.

I suppose it would be true to say. That in such situations there are people who become so bitter that they push God out of their thinking altogether. And that they won't have him. Others may recognize that this is a time of opportunity.

[9 : 35] And who are they going to turn to? Unless they turn to the Lord. This is true also in times of spiritual blessing. Times of revival.

When the Lord's presence is very real and very near to people. And when his presence is felt. Not just by those who have committed their lives to him. But by those who haven't.

By people who are not converted. You've heard it said. You've got it recorded in all histories of revivals. That there were people there who felt.

As Hebrews 6 tells us. The powers of the world to come. The powers of heaven reality. The power of God speaking in the gospel.

The evidences. Of God what worked in the lives of men and women. Boys and girls. He was near. And that was a time of opportunity. But these times don't always last.

[10 : 36] They come. And they go. And unfortunately many people at these times slip by. And so God spoke at the very beginning of the Bible.

And said to man. And my spirit is said. Shall not always strive with man. And I think that's the way we are to understand these words.

Seek ye the Lord. While he may be found. Call ye upon him. While he is near. And as the gospel is preached.

This is the message of hope. That we bring to people. And this is our own encouragement. As we preach the gospel.

That in it. As Paul tells us in the letter to the Romans in chapter 10. The Lord is nigh unto thee. As near. As the word in your mouth.

[11 : 36] So at the present. The Lord is near. And the Lord can be found. The second thing that these verses bring before us is this.

That we are to seek him. And to call upon him. And we ask ourselves. What is it? To seek the Lord. And to call upon his name.

Seek ye the Lord. While he may be found. Call ye upon him. While he is near. What is it? To seek the Lord. And what is it?

To call on him. Well when the prophet says to these people. Seek ye the Lord. The inference is. That they didn't have the Lord.

And having the Lord. What does that mean? It means having his presence. It means having his protection. It means having his favor.

[12 : 38] It means having his. Having his. Having his say. Forgiveness. And it means having all the. Spiritual blessings. That are available to us. In him.

But notice how he puts it. Seek. Ye. The Lord. This brings us right back. To the beginning of this chapter. Isn't it true?

That concerning most people. They are looking for something. In the world tonight. I don't know what you may be looking for. It depends maybe. On the way you feel here tonight. You may be looking for peace.

You may be looking for forgiveness. You may be looking for satisfaction. The point is. That you're looking for something. And here.

The prophet. As the Bible does throughout. Direct these people. To seek the Lord. Knowing that.

[13 : 35] If they find him. They will find. All these things. You remember how Jesus put it. In the sermon. In the sermon amount. Seek ye first.

The kingdom of God. And his righteousness. And all these things. Shall be added unto you. You are not to seek the Lord. As a means to an end.

He is the end. In himself. And in him. Is our life. And our satisfaction. And our fulfillment. And our fulfillment. And our fulfillment to be found.

Call upon him. While he is near. That's just another word. Another word that the Bible uses for.

Going to him. Or coming to him. Pleading with him.

Speaking to him. Or. Praying to him. Praying to him. To confess our sins. Praying to him. To receive us.

[14 : 36] Freely. Praying and. Praying to him. And acknowledging. His sovereignty. His goodness. His power. His ability.

Crying to him. As the disciples. Crying to the Lord. Save us. Or. We perish. Here is a picture of a man. Who must.

Bow the knee. Before God. And there are times. I am sure. When you yourself. May have felt. That the Lord. Had brought you. To your knees.

You know. From time to time. There are people. Who make that acknowledgement. There are people. Who say. That there was circumstance. And situations. In life. Perhaps filled with fear. Or dread.

Or foreboding. When the only thing. They could think of. Was to call. Upon the Lord. God. And when they were taken out.

[15 : 34] Of these situations. They quickly forgot. That they had called upon him. And so there may be people. In this building tonight.

Who could say. As a. Pensioner. What said to me. Said to myself once. That she remembered. As an 11 year old girl.

At a time of revival. In her congregation. Feeling the presence. And the power of God. In the place. And she was moved.

To become involved. In these things. The time of opportunity. Seemed to be there. But she never made proper use of it. And the days passed. And the years went by.

And now the thought. Of seeking the Lord. And calling upon his name. Hardly ever. Entered. Her mind. Hence. So many other words here.

[16 : 32] While. Seek ye the Lord. While he may be found. Call ye upon him. While. He is near.

I might speak to someone here tonight. In whose life this may be true. That you have come to this point. In your experience. And you know. That the Lord is speaking to you.

You know and you feel. That the Lord is near. You have had experiences. Perhaps of late. That bring this home to you. Particular power.

Hour. And conviction. That's not whether a purpose. My friend. It's that you may seek him. And call. Upon him.

The third thing we have in these verses is. That this seeking and calling upon the Lord. Is accompanied. With something else. And must be. It's not just a case of.

[17 : 33] An off the shoulder remark to the Lord. It's not just a case of. It's not just a case of. Shrugging the shoulder and saying. Yes I'll seek him. And I'll call upon his name. No. There's far more to it than that.

And here. The prophet explains it to us. Let the wicked. Forsake his way. And the unrighteous man his thoughts. And let him return.

Unto. The Lord. There are three things here that he brings before us. We are to forsake our ways. We are to forsake our thoughts.

And we are to return. Unto. The Lord. Our renunciation of the old way of living.

Our renunciation of the old way of thinking. And not taking up to ourselves a new way. Returning. To the Lord. Right.

[18 : 31] The apostle Paul explains this to us in another way. If any man he says be in Christ Jesus. A new creature. A new creation.

The old has gone. The new has come. All things have passed away. All things have become new. Here's exactly the same thing. If a man is truly going to seek the Lord.

And if a man is truly calling upon his name. That must be proved. By a change. In his life.

And in his thinking. And in his relationship. To the Lord. Right throughout the word of God. You have the same example. And the same emphasis.

Brought. Before you. Let the wicked. Forsake. His way. Not the wicked. He is just another man. Another name for the unconverted sinner.

[19 : 31] The person who's. Who lives. In a particular way. And that's the meaning of the word. Way. Let the wicked. Forsake his way. Let the unconverted.

Change his life. That's another way of putting it. There must be a change of. Lifestyle. Now here one has to be very careful.

Renouncing the old way of living. Does not become the basis or the cause of our salvation. salvation. But. The result of it.

In other words. He is bringing before us here. The thought that you always have in the Bible. That it is salvation. From.

Sin. Someone else put it like this. Between sin. And holiness. Between God. And mammon.

[20 : 34] Man. Must. Choose. The refusal to choose. Is a choice. In itself. To refuse.

To choose God. Is in fact. To choose sin. In relation. To this question. There is no neutrality.

Because there can be none. Let the wicked. Forsake. His way. Now the way as I mentioned to you before.

Means quite simply the life that one leads. The outward life. That is determined. By the bent of a person's heart.

And a person's mind. And a person's will. So that. People go to certain places. And people do certain things.

[21 : 30] And associate themselves. With certain people. And have certain enjoyments. And enjoy certain freedoms.

Because that. Is what they want. To do. So you see. The way a person's live. The way a person lives.

Is determined. By the kind of person he is. What he is outwardly. Is determined by what he is inwardly.

So this way. That must change. Must change. From within. Out.

So you have got to remember this. That reformation. And renunciation. Of the old way.

[22 : 27] Outwardly. Is not. Enough. The life. Must be changed. As a result of the desires.

And the inclinations. And the affections. And the dispositions. And the will. Being. Being. Change. You know that there are people.

Who reform their lives. Outwardly. They have to. Unless they do it. They are in a course of disaster. Leading to destruction. There are people whose life.

Is ruined. For example. I am just going to cite one example. Because I suppose it is the one that we are more accustomed to. Not just here. But in many other places. People whose lives. Are ruined. By addiction. To drink. You could of course mention other things. But I want just to hold on this one. And people recognize.

[23 : 29] From those who live with them. And those who treat them. That they must. Change. Their lifestyle. So they give up.

What is destroying them. And their life. Outwardly. Is changed. But as you know. And there was no man.

Who laid his finger more clearly. And more firmly. On this point than Jesus. That. Is not enough. There must be an inward change.

As he said to Nicodemus. Unless a man is born again. He cannot see. The kingdom. Of God. So. Why commitment to God.

And a seeking of the Lord Jesus. And a coming to him. Must of necessity. Be accompanied. By an outward change. In man's. Lifestyle.

[24 : 30] That outward change. Is the fruit of. And the effect of. An inward. Change. An inward. Renunciation. Of the kind of will.

And heart. And mind. That he has. That drives him. Into that particular way. Into that particular way. Of living. You see. Let me put it like this. What the Bible says is this. That you can't break with the old.

And be the same person. If you are to come. To the Lord. You can't break with the old.

And remain the same person. Because you haven't come to the Lord. And that is possible. But what he insists on. Is this break with the old.

[25 : 31] That is a result of a changed. Person. The person. Who has come. To the Lord. I remember. Many years ago.

A young lady. Who was showing her interest. In the gospel. To all intents and purposes. Seemed to be showing her real interest. In things of God. I didn't know her very well. But. Someone.

I. I. I. I spoke to someone. Who knew her. Exceptionally well. And I never forgot. What he said about her. You know he said.

I think. She is the same today. As the day she was born. Into the world. He didn't believe. There was any. Saving change.

In the life. And you my friend. And let me say the same of myself. You whose life. Has been reformed. Outwardly. And lifestyle.

[26 : 30] Has been changed. And people have known it. And perhaps in many respects. It's as well for yourself. And for them. That it has been. At the same time.

Remember this. Never. Make an outward change. Salvation. In itself. Let the wicked. Forsake his way.

And he goes on. To enforce his point here. And. The unrighteous man. His thoughts. Now the unrighteous man.

In other words. Another word that the Bible uses for the unconverted. A person who. In whose life. There is no grace. A person for whom. As he stands at the moment.

God has brought no saving change into his life. And a person. And a person. In whose life. God is not working. By his spirit. Sanctifying him.

[27 : 28] And a person. Through whose life. God is not working. Drawing people. To himself. That's the. Unrighteous man. Now this unrighteous man.

Has a certain way of thinking. And if he's going to come to the Lord. If he's going to seek the Lord. He must give up. The way. In which. He thinks.

Now what kind of thoughts. Does this person have. Well. He may think for example. That the way he lives. And the kind of person he is.

Doesn't constitute. Any particular. Danger to himself. He lives. Day by day. And he doesn't realize. That the way he lives. Is a way. Which is leading. To everlasting destruction. He thinks. That he's all right.

[28 : 25] He thinks that. Come the day. And come the hour. He will change. And he will. Turn. To the Lord. Perhaps there are some people.

Who don't take kind. To the fact. That they. To the statement. And to the. To the count that it's given. To them. To turn to him. As though. They were. They had. They were missing nothing.

In their lives. At all. They take it badly. When they refer to. As sinners. Who are lost. In sin. Or as unconverted. Or as unbelievers.

On the road. And on the way. That leads to hell. They think. Like that. They may think.

That as I said earlier. A change of lifestyle. Is enough. Out of transformation. Is all that is required. Of them. Perhaps. Or other people.

[29 : 24] Who think. That. Because they are. Who they are. And because they come. From a certain place. And related to certain people. And did certain things. And heard certain things.

And were given certain things. That God is bound. Because of these things. To listen to them. And to have mercy. Upon them. There are other people.

Who think. That they will be saved. In a certain way. And they've got a preconceived idea. Of how they are to be saved.

And how they are to be converted. And how they are going to come to the Lord. And when they are going to come to the Lord. And what they will do. When they come to the Lord. Ah well he says.

You've got to give up. All that kind of thought. Of thinking. Let the wicked. Forsake. His thoughts.

[30 : 23] Perhaps this particular connection. The idea here is. The idea here is. That there are some people. Who when confronted. With the thought of God. With the need to seek the Lord.

And then to call upon the Lord. Who recognize. Yes. I must change. Who are then oppressed. With such thoughts. Are these. What's the point of my seeking the Lord.

I won't find him anyway. What's the point of my calling upon the Lord. He won't hear me. What's the point of my seeking forgiveness. He won't forgive me.

He won't come to me. And he won't receive me. Ah says the Lord to him. You've got to give up. That way of thinking.

And he tells us. Fourthly. Why? Because he said. The Lord will have mercy upon him.

[31 : 26] And our God. Will abundantly. Pardon. Before coming to think of these. Of that. Notice one other thing.

The root problem. In the life of man. Is this. That he has forsaken. The law. So. Together with giving up.

A certain way of life. Together with giving up. A certain way of thinking. We have to return. To the law. God. Now the problem.

With many people tonight. The problem. With the vast majority. Of people. Is that there is this.

Great distance. Between them. And God. The problem.

With the backslider. Tonight. Is that he has. Distanced himself. From. The law. That was a problem. With Peter. Thomas Goodwin.

[32 : 25] The Puritan. Says of Peter. That. The great problem. With Peter. Is what is highlight. For us. Concerning him. In the New Testament. That he followed. The Lord. Afar off.

And then. When he was put to the test. In the hall. Of the high priest. The night. Which our Lord. Was betrayed. He denied him. He was following.

Afar off. He allowed. That distance. To develop. Between himself. And Jesus Christ. And you know. There are people like that. Christian people.

People who are. Genuinely converted. Who fall into that. Trap. Of allowing this distance. To develop. Between them and God. Can happen so easily.

People stop reading. Their Bible regularly. They stop praying. The way they used to. They stop coming. To the means of grace. With the regularity.

[33 : 21] That used to be in their life. They stop listening. With attentiveness. They begin to think. About other things. Their minds stray. And before you know. Where you are. This distance is developed.

Between them and the Lord. And the Lord speaks to them. Constantly in the Bible. Turn. Return. To the Lord. And that's why you have so many prayers.

In the Bible. Where people cry to the Lord. Recognizing. That this has happened to them. Turn us again. Lord. God of hosts.

And cause thy face. And thy favor. To shine upon us. May there be a distance. Developing. Between you and your God. In your life. Are you not as zealous.

And as industrious. As a believer. As you should be. Well my friend. There's only one answer. To that problem. You've got to come back. To the one.

[34 : 20] That you have left. But as I said earlier. This is the great problem. With the vast majority of people. With all those who are unconverted.

This is why. They have sin. As distance. And from the Lord. It happened in the life of Adam. When he fell.

In the garden of Eden. And this was the result of his sin. He ran away from God. And when God spoke. To him. Adam said. I heard thy voice. And I hid myself.

Because I was afraid. There are many of you here tonight. And in many other places. Who are running away from the Lord. You don't want the Lord. You're afraid. That he may come into your life.

Perhaps you're dead scared. That he may be converted. That you may be converted. You don't want your lifestyle. Disturbed. Or upset. Or changed. Things are going well.

[35 : 16] It's great. You don't want him. So you push him out. And you know this. You will never.

Ever. Ever. No lasting. Meaningful satisfaction. Till you return. To the Lord. So the prophet.

As every other prophet. As every other New Testament writers. Emphasize. Time and time again. In answering the question.

What is wrong with me. This is it. I have distanced. Myself. From the Lord.

Perhaps the Lord isn't in your thinking. You're in your life. And as I said earlier. You don't want him. My friend. If you're ever going to make heaven of it.

[36 : 15] This is where you start. You come. To the Lord. Return to him. And now. Look.

At what is said here. You remember this. That as someone put it. An active being. Must have something to seek.

As well. As to avoid. An active person. Must have something to seek. As well as to avoid.

You see. When you're avoiding the Lord. You're seeking something else. There's something else you want to display. But the answer to your problem is. That you must give him priority in your life. And this is the point I was going to make earlier. When you give the Lord priority in your life. Other things go out.

[37 : 10] I mentioned some weeks ago. That the. The. That there are some people who may think.

That there has been too much of this kind of emphasis. In evangelical circles in years. And in days gone by. And perhaps the pendulum has begun to swing now. To this kind of thinking that.

Well of course you can be a Christian. But you don't have to give up these things. I wonder what people today would have made of Thomas Chalmers. If he was preaching to them. It was he remember who used these words. Which are so often quoted.

That. Christ coming into life. Remember the reference to how he put it. It is the expulsive power. Of a new affection. And so some people say.

Ah. Well it's only because you were brought up in Lewis. It's only because you were brought up on the west side. Or in Point. Or somewhere else. It's only because you come to that kind of environment. That.

[38 : 13] You feel now that these things have to go. In your life. Well I don't think Thomas Chalmers. From Point. Or from the west side. From Lewis. I don't think I say I even heard of it.

And certainly Paul didn't. If any man isn't Christ. The fact that Christ has come into his life. Means. That the old goes.

And the new. Comes. You young people. Who are leaving this island. Going off to college and universities. Who are going to be confronted. With the kind of thing.

Who would suggest to you. But you don't need to. Give up this. And give up that. My advice. To you.

Is this. Forget about Lewis. And Glasgow. And Aberdeen. And Edinburgh. And London. And Bristol. Or whoever you mean. Forget about these races.

[39 : 11] But never. Ever. Forget your Bible. Never ever. Forget God's. Claims upon you. Through his world.

And however you may. Want to live. And however others. May want you to live. You remember. How he. Wants you to live. And you live unto him.

Not unto them. Or unto. Yourself. And I'm afraid. That this is the problem. With many people today. You see.

Christianity is not just a negative thing. It's not just a case of giving up. Your way of life. And giving up your things. Your thinking. It's a case of. Coming to the Lord.

God. And when he constrains you. To give up. You do it.

[40 : 07] When he does it. Someone once said that. Maybe. Maybe. Maybe. He said.

Islam. And Hinduism. And secularism. Claim.

More followers. Than Jesus. But he said. A man can be a follower. Of these religions. And these systems. And not have to give up.

His sin. The reason. Why Jesus Christ. Has so few followers. Is that. Men. Are not willing.

To part. With their sin. If men. Would get. Into the kingdom of God. Without having to give up. Anything. They would.

[41 : 05] Push into it. By the thousands. Do you know. Who said it. D. L. Moody. In the last century. I wonder.

What he would say. Today. Towards the end. Of the 20th. Now. If you return. To the Lord. Here is encouragement. He will have mercy upon you.

And he will abundantly. Pardon. This word. Measure. Refers to our guilt. And to our misery. You see. Sin. Has so. Devastated. Our lives.

And our thinking. Not only. We're guilty. Before God. But we're miserable. Sinner. Miserable.

Sinner. Oh yes. It's the Bible. That tells us. That sin.

Has left. Us in misery. And what is the misery. Of our sin. This is it. That we can't. Save ourselves.

We can't. Deal with our own sins. We can't.

[41 : 59] Forgive our own sins. We haven't. Got the ability. Of the power. To do it. But he will have mercy upon us. We have failed to seek and to call.

We have failed to come to him. But he will enable us to come. He will strengthen you. You say to me tonight. I can't pray. I can't come.

I believe it my friend. I believe it. But he has power to enable you. That's one of the meanings of mercy in the Bible. God lifts up. And God strengthens you.

That you may call. And that you may seek. And that you may come. And that you may renounce the

things that stand between you and God. Oh you say to me tonight. I would love to be a Christian.

I wouldn't mind being a believer. I wouldn't mind being converted. I know that these people have something I don't have. But then I find it so difficult to think of giving up the things I have.

[42 : 57] I know. But God enables you. He will have mercy. He will have mercy. He will strengthen you. To do what he demands of you.

And he will enable you to come to himself. Isn't that a wonderful message of hope tonight? To the man and the woman and the boy and the girl. Who is miserable at sin.

He will have mercy. He will cover your sin. And to our God. For he will abundantly pardon. You see.

What does pardon suggest to you? In past years we've heard a lot about the miscarriage of justice in various criminal cases. And people have been convicted of murder and spent periods of years in prison.

And they've been appealed and people have taken up their case and they've discovered that the jury was misdirected and they were wrongly convicted. And so as a result of great and lengthy investigations they've discovered that these people are innocent after all and a free pardon is issued.

[44 : 07] They are pardoned freely. Because there was a miscarriage of justice. Now here's a sinner who comes to God and God says you come.

I will abundantly pardon. But I can't say to God. Lord. I'm not guilty. I didn't really do these things. I'm not a sinner.

No one can say that to God because all have sinned. And come short of the glory of God. So we say to the Lord. How can you pardon me? When I am guilty I've got no case to answer.

I have no one who will take up my case. And will fight this through the courts. I admit I'm a sinner.

Ah says the Lord. I know but I will pardon you.

How can he pardon? Because he himself has provided the ground upon which you will part.

Because he sent his son into the world of no nature. Who took our sins and who died our death.

[45 : 08] He has taken our sins. He has stood in our place. And now he pleads all cause in the courts of heaven. And God can wipe the slate clean.

Not because you deserve to be clean. Not because you plead that you are clean. No, no.

But because Jesus died for sinners. He will pardon. But wait a minute. He's not finished. He will abundantly pardon.

He will abundantly pardon. You see this pardon. It is so great. The idea of greatness. Vastness here. And he's going on to illicit in a minute.

It is so great. God himself thought of this way of forgiveness. It did not originate the mind of a man or a woman. No man ever thought of this way of salvation.

[46 : 06] This is God's doing. It is so great because Jesus' son came and he gave himself the cost of his own blood. And he purchased so many blessings through his blood.

That I could never number them, says the psalmist in Psalm 40. And he comes to us so often and so freely and so fully with it. And he says to you and to me, there is abundance of pardon for you. So that no matter what kind of sin you've committed. Or how many you've committed. Or how long you've been a sinner. Or how you have thought of this in the past. Or how you have disregarded God and dishonored the Lord and his day and his law and everything.

It doesn't matter my friend. He will abundantly pardon any who will come unto him. This is the gospel for any man, any woman, any boy, any girl.

What's your problem? The Lord will abundantly pardon. No matter how great your difficulty is. No matter how numerous. God is higher.

[47 : 14] And God is greater. And his pardon is more abundant. And he says to our God. Look at that. Look at the blessing and privilege you will have.

He will become you, God. This is a reiteration of what he said in the previous verse. I will enter into covenant with you. I will join you with myself. You come.

There is nothing on my part, he says, to keep you back. And no matter how many things are on your part. These things aren't as great as me.

I will abundantly pardon. For he says, my thoughts are not your thoughts. Neither are your ways my ways.

The Lord says, I don't think the way you think. Have you been asked to forgive someone? You know what it is. We all do this from time to time.

[48 : 10] We do something wrong. We say something wrong. And we have to admit that we're wrong. And we seek forgiveness. And people give us forgiveness. There are times, no doubt, when you may think of some things.

Or of some people. And you say, I could never, ever forgive them. For these things. I must say that my heart goes out to people who, for example, parents.

Whose children are murdered by men in bestial circumstances. And you say, well, I could never forgive what he did.

I'm sure you can identify yourself with that thing. And there are people who will say, I don't care what he say. I'll never forgive him.

Well, God says, I don't think like that. My thoughts are not yours. And the base upon which I will give, forgive is not the way in which you will forgive.

[49 : 14] I don't think the way you think. And I don't act the way you act. I, he said to Isaiah chapter 3, to Isaiah chapter 43. I, he says for mine own sake, will blot out thy transgressions as a thick crown.

And I will remember them. And I will remember them no more. God is higher than us. God is not man. His thoughts are higher than ours.

And his ways than ours. And he has provided, as I said earlier, a way of salvation. And this is the illustrate that he uses. And with this I close. For he says, as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways.

And my thoughts than your thoughts. What's the idea here? Well, in Isaiah's day, the heavens, whether it meant either the heavens as he could see them, the clouds of the sky above.

Or whether he was talking about heavens in terms of outer space. Or whether he was talking of the heavens as the place wherein God was just mother. But the idea at the back of his mind is this.

[50 : 26] You see, the distance between earth and heaven seemed to be impossible to bridge. These heavens were unattainable and unobtainable.

There was a great gulf between earth and heaven. It was impossible to get there. You know, he says, just as you think of the impossibility of getting from earth to heaven, you remember that I am able to bridge the gulf.

Because as you look at the heavens tonight, as you look at the earth, the heavens are someone put it on a straight line. The heavens are an arch. And they meet the earth.

