

The fear of the Lord

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[0 : 00] Can we turn now to the prophecy of Isaiah chapter 2? And we might read the words in verse 19.

Isaiah chapter 2, verse 19. And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.

We were preaching from this chapter in the morning. And we happen to mention that Isaiah was said to receive a vision from the Lord, and to receive words.

It says that he saw the word of the Lord. The Holy Spirit, not by night, at least, not just in dreams, or during sleep, but during the waking hours, gave him a vision of the future.

He showed him, among other things, the destruction of Judah and Jerusalem, showed him the kingdom of the Lord Jesus, and showed him the person of the Lord Jesus in our nature.

[2 : 02] He showed him many things through symbols, and accompanied all that with teaching. Teaching embedded in his memory, infallibly there, which he would write down as the infallible word of God, with no mistake, no need to correct anything, because God is the author of his own word.

He can use a man as his splintering pen, but still he uses a fallible man to produce his own infallible word.

And it's the word of life. And this is the way of salvation, reading God's word, believing God's word, what it says, coming to look to Christ, who is in it, and believing in him for salvation.

He was a prophet from the days of Isaiah right up to the days of Hezekiah, and the Jews themselves are of the opinion that he was put to death by Manasseh, and that he was sown to death.

We don't know. It may be that there is a reference to that in the letter to the Hebrews, where it speaks of some being sown asunder for the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[3 : 56] He saw the doors of the temple closed in the days of Ahaz the king. Things came to such a low pass as that.

And just think of it, friends, that such a day can easily come. There are places on the mainland where they once had large congregations.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon once went to Rothsey on the Clyde coast, and there he preached to about 4,000 people.

And that in the open air. But today in that place you would barely get a handful to worship the Lord. So we see that the door of the temple can easily be closed. But in the days of Hezekiah there was a kind of revival.

[5 : 10] But in any case he speaks in this chapter of the end times of the world.

And when he speaks of that he's speaking of the time of the Lord Jesus from then until the end. And he tells us in the beginning of the chapter of the foundation laid by Christ which was higher than any other foundation which was ever laid for any house.

But then when we come to our own verse we see that it is speaking of something entirely different. People fleeing to hide themselves in holes and dens and caves from the majesty of the Lord because he comes to shake the earth terribly.

And first of all looking at the context we should like to say a little about the pride of man. And then secondly a little about the refuge as we have it in this verse caves and holes and then thirdly a little about the true refuge the Lord Jesus Christ the rock of ages the pride of man man's refuge and then the true refuge.

Many and many a time the Lord came to shake the pride of the people of Israel they were so proud and all over the world people become so proud the pride is in the heart already and when he comes

at the end of the world he will find a world that is full of human pride and it is not just pride against fellow men it is pride against God they don't need God God has been voted out of existence and out of their lives they don't need him they can live as if he doesn't exist and they can be like gods small men and great men and so this chapter speaks of proud men it says in verse 11 the lofty looks of man shall be humbled and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down and the

[8 : 14] Lord alone shall be exalted in that day for the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon everyone that is proud and lofty and upon everyone that is lifted up and he shall be brought low remember this every single human being will be humbled before the Lord Jesus Christ every knee we are told is going to bow but in this world men and women are so proud when the day of judgment comes things will be different but somehow we come into this world as sinners and our hearts begin to swell with pride we begin to despise others and other ways and other methods we begin to think of ourselves even when we know our own sins as being lesser sinners than other people somehow we have good qualities and it's so easy to puff us up it's so easy to listen to flattery and to praise and to believe that we have special innate qualities and special moral and spiritual qualities when all the time we are but poor sinners and rebels with blackened hearts and thoughts in the presence of the

Lord but above all man doesn't need the Lord and he despises the strange thing is that he despises in a Christian country those who believe in the Lord they become a subject for laughter for jokes they become a subject for contempt as if they are soft in the head as if they are womanish as if they just don't have it something is lacking and because something is lacking they find it easier just to believe in the Lord and trust in the Lord and be Christians they are squeamish they are soft hearted they don't act as men and women should act and the world judges them because the world is so proud and the world is so haughty and this is found in every single human heart it has to be broken by the

Lord and only the Lord will break it there is pride behind the most pleasant demeanour you can find the nicest people whom we know have this pride in their hearts if we had no pride in our hearts we would bow down before God but you see we find it so difficult to bow down we have seen it at family worship we have seen people who may be in the home and maybe we go there or those in the family have worship and then as is our custom at the end of it all we get on our knees and we pray but there are some you see who come in and they sit there and they would never never never get on their knees not for anything let others do that but not them they don't do things like that I've seen me going to a house and suggesting a word of prayer and being told but we don't do that in this home we don't pray in this home and you see how it is the word of God is put away worship is put away all thoughts of God are put away and it's just the pride of the human heart they don't want to feel fear of God they'd rather forget he exists they don't want to hear about judgment they would rather forget that their lives are going to end men are so proud and if the Lord in his mercy and wisdom were to show each of us a photograph of the pride of our hearts tonight we would all be appalled

I'll tell you what would happen many would say but that's not true I'm not as proud as that maybe somebody else but not me you see we are so blind regarding these matters but God tells us he only tells the truth he analyzes us he tells us exactly how we are and if we die in our pride we perish forevermore and so he speaks of this pride and he speaks of judgment from verse 13 and upon all the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up and upon all the oaks of Bashan the things in which the pride of man lies and upon all the high mountains and upon all the hills that are lifted up and upon every high tower and upon every fenced wall and upon all the ships of

[14 : 53] Tarshish and upon all pleasant pictures and the loftiness of man shall be bowed down and the haughtiness of men shall be made low you see man takes pride in what he has done and what he is and it may be that when God speaks here of mountains and hills and fenced cities that he's actually speaking of the men themselves using it all as a figure of speech they are like the mountains they are like the hills they are like the fenced cities these tall walls they are like the ships of Tarshish they are like the pleasant pictures these things which have been made statues and ornaments which they have evolved and made and formed which feed the pride of man man's accomplishments they are that they are what they are self made people they have dragged themselves up by their bootstraps they have gone on they have progressed they have gone up the ladder up the stair and they have made themselves this and made themselves that they are men of accomplishments men of parts men to be admired men to be jealous of because they are great

men our friends the world is full of that but when he speaks of these pride these proud men he says the idols he shall utterly abolish he says that they all have idols every proud man has an idol or you say but surely an idol is something you bow down before and I cannot have an idol

I would never worship an idol I wouldn't look at these things but the devil is so subtle and the human heart is so twisted and we all have a place in the heart which is meant for worship every man worships every woman worships every child worships we are created by God as worshipping creatures and therefore everyone has a God the problem is to locate where or who our God is it can be a wife it can be the husband it can be the property it can be your car it can be your work it can be your child it can be your father it can be your nation it can be yourself you can come to that law of laws when you yourself are your

God I live for myself I live only for myself swallowed up by selfishness man centred self centred placing oneself above everyone else and whether we admit it or not I myself being my God I bow to myself I praise myself I adore myself I worship myself and because I do I will go to hell and be lost forever unless God in his mercy will change me and then secondly we are told of a refuge when the Lord will come whatever the pride of man was and whoever he worshipped in that pride he will need a refuge and worried they shall go into the but at the end of the world it will not be the enemies it will not be

Philistines or Moabites or Ammonites it will be the Lord and scripture tells us quite plainly that when he comes that every eye shall see him he will come in such a manner that every inhabitant in the world will be made cognizant of the fact that the Lord is approaching the earth you can find that in a few places in scripture in the book of revelation we always have the same words that we have here where it speaks of the lamb the one sitting on the throne of men and women great men and small men fleeing from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne and praying to the rocks and praying to the mountains to fall upon them they will seek a refuge everyone will seek a refuge now we don't know if we will be alive as we are now at the end of the world but listen friends at the end of the world when the

Lord Jesus approaches this earth there will be a general resurrection the dead will rise and the dead will see the Lord Jesus on their eyes yes the Lord will have destroyed his enemies with the brightness of his presence but then there will be a resurrection and then the world will be full of prayer just think of the world as a huge prayer meeting but God's people will not be praying God's people will not pray when they rise from the dead and those who are left alive at the end of the world will be changed body and soul into the likeness of the

[22 : 12] Lord Jesus and they will not pray and God's people will be together they will praise they will praise but the time for prayer will be over but still the world will have prayer the enemies of the Lord will pray but the time for prayer will be over and we are told to whom they will pray not to the Lord they will pray to the mountains and they always knew the mountains were dead but desperation the fear of eternal destruction the fear of the majesty of God will make them pray to the mountains to the rocks what for to save them no to destroy them to fall upon them and to hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the throne what a prayer to be hidden from the

Lord when you can never be hidden from the Lord when every one of us must stand before the judgment seat of Christ to receive according skin I remember during the last war that we had many shelters here and there.

They used to build shelters out in the middle of streets because of the bombs. And when the sirens went, we were supposed to leave the houses and go to these shelters.

And people who had gardens were told how to build an Anderson shelter. It was made largely of corrugated iron, bags full of earth and sunk into the ground.

And you were to run into your garden when the sirens went. And then I remember when the Cold War began and people were terrified at the idea of an atomic war.

[24 : 54] What would they do? Where would they go? And you would see here and there ideas put forward for shelters, atomic shelters, how to make them, how to stock them up with food and drink, which would last for a number of weeks.

To give radiation a time to settle and so on. But friends, this is not war. This is the end of the world. And it says that they shall go into the holes and into the caves for fear of the Lord. Not because of men. Not because of atomic bombs.

But for fear of the Lord. Did you ever fear the Lord?

Did you ever fear a man? Or an animal? Or an earthquake? Or a disease? Do you know what fear is?

[26 : 06] Surely we all know what fear is. And it has a place in our lives. It saves us time and time again. If you see a lion let loose in your village, you run because you're afraid.

But why doesn't the fear of God make us run to a shelter tonight? Because you see, we are being taught in the school of the devil.

And the devil is teaching us every day how to overcome the fear of God. And he says to you, begin by forgetting God.

And then say to yourself, there is no God. But then, if you've got to believe there is a God, say to yourself, God is a good God.

And therefore, he'll send nobody to hell. He'll save everybody. But if he's going to save everybody, why does Christ Jesus speak of souls going to hell?

[27 : 28] Why do the prophets speak of it? Why are we warned about hell? Hell is the place where the wrath of God is revealed against sin.

But the devil seeks to educate us. And he has many pupils in the world. And they join together. And they say, forget it. You're only a young fellow.

Let's go together to drink. Let's go together to enjoy ourselves. Let's take some ecstasy. Let's go dancing. Let's go into all the things we desire.

Indulge in all our lusts. And let us live just as we desire. We belong to ourselves, you see. My body is my body.

My tongue is my tongue. I can do what I like with what I own and what I have. But it was God who made us. And God owns us. And we are supposed to be obedient to God.

[28 : 30] But we break. I said, we're free from all that. But the fear of God, where is it? I said, I've quenched it.

That's what you think. There's only one way to quench this fear of God. And that is to come to know the Lord Jesus as your Savior.

Because the love of God casteth out fear. When you come to love the Lord Jesus, then this kind of slavish fear, the fear of an enemy, goes out.

But until then, whatever you do, and however you act, the fear is there. You're only bottling it. You're only putting a lid on it to keep it down.

But it's there all the time. And you know it. And you know that one day, unless you are saved through Christ, that it will break out in all its enormity.

[29 : 41] But when you die without Christ, where are you going to hide? And on the last day, when they see the Lord coming, where are they going to hide?

What's the sense of running to the holes in the rocks, into the caves, and plunging down into these deep and dark caves, going hundreds of feet, maybe going miles into some caves and catacombs to lose themselves.

But it can never be before the fear of the Lord. And that fear will follow these people.

They will come out of these caves. They will stand before the judgment seat. Every one of us will.

And before that seat of purest holiness, being judged by Christ, they will fear.

And they will go to hell in fear. And they will fear forevermore. Oh friends, it's the fear which is along with hatred.

[30 : 57] It's a fear which is along with a desire to destroy God, the all-holy God, if that could be done.

And they will go into the caves of the earth for fear of the Lord and for the glory of His majesty.

His majesty. You know what the glory of majesty is? When you meet kings who are crowned and they are on ornate thrones and they have glorious garments and they speak as sovereigns and they are surrounded by men and women who are courtiers, who are dressed in suitable apparel, who overhau you.

And you see the majesty. Ah, but what about the majesty of God who will appear in His holiness at the throne of judgment.

The all-holy God who hates sin with all His being, who hates the tiniest sin with all His being, the sin of thought as well as the sin of word and action.

[32 : 33] And we are accountable for the smallest sin and every sin. We must give account. Oh friends, we must meet the majesty of God, not the majesty of creaturehood, but the majesty of the

Godhead in all His power, in all His glory, in all His holiness.

We have to meet Him. That's why the judgment throne is called the great white throne. White is the colour of holiness.

And it's grey because it's the throne of God. And He will meet you. And He will meet me. But just think of a man on his deathbed, and he's on the way to eternity.

And he's been brought up under the Gospel. And he's despised it, and laughed at it, and put all of these things away from him.

But now, the Holy Spirit is no longer striving. And there He is. And He runs in His own way to any hole He can find.

[33 : 55] What will I do? What will I say? What will I trust in? Will I trust in the prayers of somebody who came in and stood by my bedside?

Will that be my cave and my hole? Or will I trust in the prayers of my father and mother who have passed on? Or will I just trust in myself?

I have been fairly good. I haven't been as bad as many other people. Will I trust in that? Friend, you can trust in nothing, but in the Lord Jesus Christ.

If you dare trust in anything, it is a sin against God. It is a sin to trust in the prayers of anyone, to trust in the goodness of anyone, as the Roman Catholics are taught, to trust in the merits of Mary. That is a sin, because Mary had no merits. Mary had to trust in the merits of the Savior. Paul had to trust in the merits of the Savior.

[35 : 00] Peter had to trust in the merits of the Savior. They were all sinners saved by the blood of Christ. And so we come to the true refuge.

And here they run for fear of the Lord, for the glory of His majesty, when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth. But friends, there is a rock.

And there is a shelter to which men and women can run. The Lord Jesus Christ is called the Rock of Israel.

He is the Rock. And He says in Scripture, I am the Rock. David on his deathbed said, that the Lord spoke to him.

The Rock of Israel, He said, spoke to me. The Savior spoke to me. And then he penned what he was told. But how can you find refuge in a rock?

[36 : 30] Now we remember, Samson went up into a rock when his enemies were after him. To the rock eat them. You remember the tribe of Benjamin when they were decimated.

That the remnant fled to the rocks in the mountains. But the Lord Jesus is the Rock of Refuge. God is our refuge and our strength in straits at present age. And they said, So, what about a cave. Hopefully, We will not be afraid. Though hills amidst the seas be cast. You see it all. The earth moving. The earth being broken up.

But the man of God says, We have God as our refuge. He is the rock of Israel. But what about a cave? What about a hole? Well in the Song of Solomon it speaks of the doves and in Isaiah too, fleeing to the rock, flying to the rock.

[37 : 57] In the song it says, as a dove in the cleft of the rock. A fissure in the rock, a cleft in the rock, a hole in the rock.

But how does a fissure or a hole come to be in a rock? How does a breaking come to be there? How did the rock in the wilderness break so that water came out? How did Moses get into the rock unless there was an opening?

How did Elijah get into the rock too at Horeb unless there was an opening? Something must happen to the rock. And the rock of Israel became a man. And he came into this world.

And he suffered in the room instead of sinners. And he died. He went through the greatest agony that creaturehood can ever know.

[39 : 21] So if you added all the agony that was ever endured by all men upon the earth and add to it all the agony that belongs to a lost eternity, all that would still be as nothing compared to what the Lord Jesus went through. As God-man, he had the capacity to suffer as no mere creature could.

And he did that gladly, willingly, in the room instead of his own people. He is the rock. And there is a fissure. There is a cave. There is a place.

And the Lord said to Moses, there is a place by me. Ah, friends, the Lord Jesus says, come unto me and be ye saved.

Look unto me. Look unto me. He calls the poor sinners to approach him. And when Paul speaks about Christ and those who believe in him, he says they are in him by faith.

Not that they are with him, beside him, but actually in him by faith. Now, take the dove that we spoke of. And the doves in scripture were rock doves.

[40 : 58] And the dove comes to the rock and it enters into the rock. And it's no longer seen. All you see is the rock.

And that is how the poor sinner is when he trusts to the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus has worked out a perfect righteousness.

And we all need that righteousness. He has kept the law and he has become a curse. And he has wasted the curse. He has done all that.

That's his righteousness. And when a sinner believes in him, he's like the dove that disappears inside the rock. When the judge, when God the judge looks for the sinner, he sees him in Christ. And when God the judge looks upon Christ, he sees the believing sinner hidden in Christ. He sees him as he sees Christ.

[42 : 07] He sees a curse. He sees the burial. He sees a crucify. There is a cave. There is a hole in the rock. There is salvation for those who come to the Lord Jesus for refuge.

Let us then be refugees. At the end of the war, and during the war they came from Europe. and they came to Britain and they came by ship and they came by air and they called themselves refugees fleeing from the Germans in Europe. Many Jews fleeing from the camps and from death. They were refugees and what happened? They were taken in. They were absorbed. They entered into the nation and that's how a poor sinner is when he's saved. He's absorbed. He's brought in. He comes to belong to the family of the Lord Jesus and then he can say to God the Father. He can say for himself Father and he can say to the Lord Jesus his eldest brother and he can have fellowship with Christ and he will know the love of Christ. He will have faith in Christ. His hope will be in Christ. This life will be a different life because he's a freed sinner saved from that terrible fear that we spoke of. The fear of hell will have gone to be replaced by another kind of fear. A reverential fear. A filial fear. The fear for a father when you seek to to give him reverence. The fear which is actually love.

The perfect love that casteth out that slavish fear. Do you know the love of Christ in your own heart? Have you come to trust in Christ as your Savior? Oh perhaps you say but all this is premature. Premature. You see I'm ill and hearty. I'm young. I'm young. I've got many years ahead of me. But that friend is not the question. The question is are you willing here and now to be under the wrath and curse of God?

We were meant for Christ. We were meant for Christ. We were meant for the Lord in this life. To spend this life in the Lord. Following the Lord. Loving the Lord. You see the last verse of this chapter says, cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils.

forget about men. Forget about men. What men are going to do. We are meant to come to the Lord.

[45 : 34] Yes, we know we have dreams. We have daydreams. And in our daydreams we imagine we are going to be this and we are going to be that. The young girl, the young boy, growing up, the young boy, growing up, they think of the work, the career, or it's not just work, it's a career. And they think that they'll strike it lucky. And they'll enter into a career with lots of money. And lots of fame.

lots of romance. lots of romance. lots of romance. marriage. home. wealth. wealth.

wealth. And they listen to the pop groups. And they see the stars of the cinema. And they see the papers and the magazines praising various people to the skies. And you see them laughing in these magazines. You see their physical beauty in the magazines. And you're you're told of their accomplishments. You are told that their accomplishments, you are told of their films. And you're told of their films. And they're■■■. And you're told of always, and you're told of the Strangerine. And you're told of the And they see the stars of the cinema.

And they see the papers and the magazines praising various people to the skies. And you see them laughing in these magazines.

You see their physical beauty in the magazines. And you're told of their accomplishments. You're told of their films. How they got to the top of the tree.

[47 : 03] But friends. Friends. If you could see the private lives of these people. Marriage after marriage after marriage.

Broken up. Destroyed. They are unable to maintain a marriage. This selfishness.

This self-worship. Worshipping myself. Destroys everything. Destroys all the relationships. They can't even be proper parents.

They can't relate properly to other people. They've destroyed themselves. And their happiness. Their laughter. It's so hollow. It's so empty. Now just think of young folk.

[48 : 10] And they go out for a good time. And they have that good time. And they've been brought up under the gospel. and then they come home in the early hours maybe 2 or 3 in the morning and there they are in their bedroom and they think of the whole evening all that they had all the laughing all the jokes all the good fun and then all of a sudden they break out weeping when they're by themselves they can't maintain it when they're with others oh yes but when they're by themselves they see it differently the reality is something else and many a young person is miserable when by themselves after such a good time you see friends our stars and so on many of them commit suicide many of them destroy themselves prematurely most of them die before their each old age what is their story going to a lost eternity going to hell going to the wrath of God forever are these the people are these the people we admire and as they're on their way they destroy other people they destroy the youth they set up false values no let us look to the word of God let us believe God let us seek the saviour let us run to Christ we have him here in scripture he is the rock and there's a cave in Christ and in Christ we are safe forevermore he's a person not just a mere rock he's one who lives who helps who conducts you and guides you who will never forsake you or leave you or reject you once you have believed in him and trusted to him as your own dear saviour where then are we going will we be in heaven will we be in hell well wherever you are wherever you go you will always have to say

I heard about Christ I heard about the saviour I was told about him I was told about salvation I was taught the word of God wherever you go however you finish you will know that but may we be found in Jesus the precious saviour let us pray O Lord bless us and keep us we pray thee and go before us in all our ways and in this thy sabbath evening grant to show thyself to our souls that we might adore thee that we might come to thy feet in the dust that our human pride our devilish pride might be broken down by thee that we might be humbled before thee that we might be made as nothing so that thou O Lord might be all and in all for our poor souls remember our young folk we pray thee we desire them so greatly for thyself remember our homes and families be with us this evening take away our sins for Christ's sake

Amen