

**Who Is This?
Isaiah 63: 1 – 14**

Our sermon text this morning will be Isaiah chapter 63. We're going to look at verses 1 to 14. Before we read that, we'll pray. Please join me in prayer.

Father in heaven, we pray that you would now indeed bless your word to us, that we would be given ears to hear, eyes to see, and hearts to understand and to obey. Please help me as I speak. May I speak words that are pleasing to you. Let me not be a pleaser of man, but a man who fears God and pleases you. Father, help us we pray, and ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Isaiah 63, starting at verse 1, reading to verse 14: “¹ Who is this who comes from Edom, in crimsoned garments from Bozrah, he who is splendid in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength? ‘It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save.’ ² Why is your apparel red, and your garments like his who treads in the winepress?

“³ ‘I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with me; I trod them in my anger and trampled them in my wrath; their lifeblood spattered on my garments, and stained all my apparel. ⁴ For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and my year of redemption had come. ⁵ I looked, but there was no one to help; I was appalled, but there was no one to uphold; so my own arm brought me salvation, and my wrath upheld me. ⁶ I trampled down the peoples in my anger; I made them drunk in my wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth.’

“⁷ I will recount the steadfast love of the LORD, the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has granted us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel that he has granted them according to his compassion, according to the abundance of his steadfast love. ⁸ For he said, ‘Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely.’ And he became their Savior. ⁹ In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

“¹⁰ But they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit; therefore he turned to be their enemy, and himself fought against them. ¹¹ Then he remembered the days of old, of Moses and his people. Where is he who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of his flock? Where is he who put in the midst of them his Holy Spirit, ¹² who caused his glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses, who divided the waters before them to make for himself an everlasting name, ¹³ who led them through the depths? Like a horse in the desert, they did not stumble. ¹⁴ Like livestock that go down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD gave them rest. So you led your people, to make for yourself a glorious name.” Amen. May God bless that word to us.

The first of part of Romans chapter 11, verse 22, reads: “Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God’s kindness to you.” Note then the kindness and severity of God.

There are people in the world these days, today, all over the world—Australia, you name it, wherever you go and wherever you’ll find churches established—there are people who would try to tell you that the God revealed to us in the Old Testament is not like the God revealed to us in the New Testament.

These people really struggle with God as revealed in the Old Testament, where He speaks, for example, of His desire for vengeance upon sin and upon wickedness. They really struggle with the fact that this God who is revealed to us in the Old Testament is a God who says that He will, and that He must, and that even now, He does judge the wickedness of the earth. And they seem to find this irreconcilable with the idea that we find in the New Testament, in John chapter 3, verse 16, for example: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.”

I remember listening to some recordings of sermons and messages from conferences, and I was listening to a Q&A session, and a person actually asked the question to the gathered PhD’s in Theology—and they were good preachers, I’m not trying to make fun of them—to the gathered teachers, How do you reconcile the God of Psalm 5 to the God of John chapter 3, verse 16?

Now if you don’t remember the God of Psalm 5, He’s the God who abhors the wicked. He’s the God who will destroy the bloodthirsty and the deceitful man. He’s the God with whom wickedness cannot dwell. And yet, as the man said, John chapter 3, verse 16, says that “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.” How do you reconcile those two Gods? How do you reconcile that description of God?

Well, the answer is that God who saves is not saving us from the world, He’s not saving us from ourselves, He’s not saving us from Satan. God who saves is saving us from His own judgment. God who saves is saving us from His own wrath.

Now in being delivered from God’s own wrath, and being delivered from God’s own judgment, we are delivered from sin, from the world, and from Satan. We are indeed saved from our great enemies in this world, but ultimately, what we’re being saved from is the final judgment of God, where the wicked are cast into eternal damnation, cast into eternal hell fire. That’s what we’re being saved from. God is, in effect, saving us from Himself. He’s saving us from Himself.

Why? Well, God is God. God is perfect. Everything that we know of God is perfect. Everything that we know of God is good. Love is good, mercy is good, grace is good—and so, my friend, is justice; and so, my friend, is God’s hatred of sin; and so, my friend, is God’s law. All of these things are good, and God’s purpose in creation and in all that He does is to display His goodness. He’s displaying all of His goodness—all of His goodness in grace, His goodness in mercy, His goodness in love, His goodness in judgment, His goodness in His hatred of sin, His goodness in His desire to pass judgment on the wicked, who are rebellious against Him. He’s displaying His goodness.

There are those who say that the Old Testament ought to be unhitched from the New Testament. Woe to them, I say. They don't know the true God. Those who say that are worshiping a god of their own invention. Jesus didn't come just to show us how to be nice and how to be gentle and loving and meek. And though a Christian man ought certainly to be a Christ-like man, there's no escaping the fact that we are to be like Jesus, for these are the things that please the Father. Yet a Christian man is still to be a man. And the God who is revealed to us in the New Testament, I'm saying to you, is no different to the God who is revealed to us in the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament, God was both a God of judgment and mercy. He was a God who punished wickedness, and even at the same time as He punished the wicked, He saved His own people. And those who were His own people, He transformed. He made them righteous. And those whom He did not make righteous, though they may have been part of the covenant community of Israel, were not His people. In the end, the faithful are those who have the faith of Abraham, and Abraham had a transforming faith. Abraham was counted righteous in the sight of God.

In the book of Revelation, our passage this morning is referenced. And who is treading the winepress of the wrath of the Almighty God? One person—the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternally begotten Son of God, the one who came and died for our sins. He bore our sins upon the cross—the one who was innocent, spotless. The greatest injustice in all of human history was Jesus being put to death on the cross. And God took that human injustice and turned it into justice, because there our sins were punished. There our sins were crucified.

The meek Lamb—remember the scene in the book of Revelation. The call goes out, “Who's worthy to open the scroll? Who's worthy to open this scroll that seems to represent the title deed to all of creation, the deeds to the authority of God? If you are worthy to open that scroll, you, indeed, are worthy of exercising all of the almighty power of God, the Holy One of Israel. Who is worthy to open the scroll?” And John weeps, for no one came forward. He weeps, and then he's told, “Weep no more. The Lion of the tribe of Judah, He can take hold of the scroll. He can break the seals.”

And what's the next thing that John sees? He turns to look. “The Lion of the tribe of Judah! I want to see Him!” And there, standing in the midst of the throne, he sees a Lamb, looking as though it had been slain. The Lion and the Lamb. Who is that, my friends? Our Saviour. That's our Saviour, Jesus, our Saviour.

In our passage this morning, Isaiah is given a vision—a vision of God Almighty, coming to save His people. And God who is coming to save His people, even as He is saving His people, is drenched in the blood of His enemies. He's been crushing His enemies like grapes in a wine press. And that's the God who comes to save. And this is in the prophecy of Isaiah, Isaiah who spoke to us of the suffering servant, the one whom, by His righteousness and by His wisdom, sprinkles many nations and causes many to be accounted righteous.

The one who saves, my friends, is the one who rules the universe, and He has the universe in His hands. The one who saves is the one who judges. We can't escape that. The God whom we are to love and to worship is also the God whom we are to fear. The Jesus whom we love and worship is God's almighty warrior, drenched in the blood of His enemies—drenched in the blood of His enemies.

And we live in this present evil age, and we preach this gospel of grace that God has given us, calling people to faith and repentance. And what does Scripture tell us? That it is God who calls them. And those whom He does not call, where does He leave them? He leaves them where they were—awaiting judgment, objects of His wrath, vessels prepared for destruction. The same gospel brings salvation to those being saved, and hardens the hearts of those who are rebellious. The same gospel. It's a two-edged sword. It cuts both ways.

Isaiah has this vision of God coming to save. Let's get into it, looking at Isaiah and just starting in chapter 63, looking at verse 1. The title of the sermon just comes from the first three words: "Who is this?" Who is this? And I'm saying, Who is this? Who is this, indeed? "Who is this who comes from Edom, in crimsoned garments from Bozrah, he who is splendid in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength? 'It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save.'" "It is I, speaking in righteousness." God Himself comes, in crimsoned garments, red garments, marching in the greatness of His strength.

Remember back into Isaiah 62, Isaiah says that he will not keep silent. He will pray for God's salvation. Looking at Isaiah 62, verse 1: "And for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness." And in Isaiah 62 and verses 6 and 7, God tells His people—looking from halfway through verse 6—"You who put the LORD in remembrance, take no rest, ⁷ and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it a praise in the earth."

Now I don't want to repeat last week's sermon, but remember we worked out the fact that this Zion, this heavenly Jerusalem—it's a theme picked up in the New Testament—basically this is Isaiah's vision of the coming church. And I shouldn't really just say the coming church—the church has been in the world from the beginning. But this is Isaiah's vision of the revealed church, let's put it that way—the church revealed to the world, the church where God dwells with His people. And God tells the people, "Put Him in remembrance. Pray. Pray for God to do this great work." So Isaiah puts himself to prayer. He says he will not keep silent, and according to the command of God, he will give Him no rest.

Well, here comes his answer, my friends. God comes. Isaiah gets a vision. God comes. Once again, Isaiah sees the living God. And every time he gives us a vision of the living God, he's wanting you to go back to Isaiah chapter 6. He's wanting you to remember that he has seen YAHWEH, high and lifted up, and that YAHWEH is holy, holy, holy, and that when he came and was given that vision of YAHWEH high and lifted up being worshiped, that he was there convicted of his sin. "Woe, woe is me, for I am a man of sinful lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of sinful lips." He always wants you to remember that.

Well now he's got a vision of God coming to him in crimsoned garments. But look—God is speaking, there at the end of verse 1 of Isaiah 63: "It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save." Speaking in righteous. Just turn back in your Bibles to Isaiah chapter 50, and I want to look at verses 4 to 10. This is the servant speaking. Isaiah 50, verse 4:

"The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with a word him who is weary. Morning by morning he awakens; he awakens my ear to hear as those who are taught. ⁵The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious; I turned not backward. ⁶I gave my back to those who strike, and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting."

Notice that the servant has been given the tongue of those who are taught that he may sustain with a word the one who is weary; that he may speak—that he may speak the words from God that sustain the people of God.

Stay in the book of Isaiah, and move on to Isaiah chapter 61. Look at verse 1: "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; ²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn." What's he doing? He's bringing good news. He's proclaiming—he's proclaiming. This is the servant who speaks for God.

Well now Isaiah's got this vision of God approaching him, clothed in crimson, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save. God speaks to His people. We're saved through the word of God. No one's saved apart from the word of God. No one's saved apart from God speaking, God calling, God enlivening.

The very same power which granted life to mankind in the first place, the very same power which says, "Let there be," and it was, that same power must speak to a dead sinner. Where there is death, let there be life. Where there is evil, let there be righteousness. Let this person be made one of mine.

So, Isaiah gets this vision: "It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save." Looking at the question in verse 2, Isaiah says, "You're the Savior. Why is your apparel red, and your garments like his who treads in the winepress?" You hear what he's saying? "This is a mystery to me. You've come to save—you're covered in blood." Now don't connect this one to the idea of the atonement, the blood of Jesus shed upon the cross. That's not what's been gotten at here. What's being gotten at here is that God who is sovereign rules over the nations. And let's read verses 3 to 6:

"³ I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with me; I trod them in my anger and trampled them in my wrath; their lifeblood spattered on my garments, and stained

all my apparel. ⁴For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and my year of redemption had come. ⁵I looked, but there was no one to help; I was appalled, but there was no one to uphold; so my own arm brought me salvation, and my wrath upheld me. ⁶I trampled down the peoples in my anger; I made them drunk in my wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth.”

This is the God who’s come to save. Isaiah speaks, and in his vision he sees this God coming to save. He comes from Edom, He comes from Bozrah, one of the cities of the nation of Edom, representative of the enemies of God—the peoples of the world in rebellion, the peoples who do not submit to the word of God.

There’s a chilling note in these verses. Now you might say that they’re chilling enough already, verses 3 to 6, but I just want to read to you an alternate translation that is legitimate: “I have trodden the wine press alone, and from the peoples no one was with me. Treading them in my anger and trampling them in my wrath, their lifeblood spattered on my garments and is staining all of my apparel. ⁴For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and my year of redemption had come. ⁵I looked, but there was no one to help; I was appalled, but there was no one to uphold; so my own arm brought me salvation, and my wrath upheld me. ⁶I trampled down peoples in my anger; I am making them drunk in my wrath, and pouring out their lifeblood on the earth.”

You notice the difference that I’ve given you there. Some of the verbs are brought into the present tense. Why? Because if you get into the language behind it, that’s actually in the language behind it. The tense of the verbs does change. What’s that telling us? It’s kind of like God is saying to Isaiah, “I am coming to you in mercy, even as I am judging the nations around you. I am coming to you, your merciful Savior, even as I tread the winepress of the wrath of God. I’m making them drunk in my wrath, and I’m pouring out their lifeblood on the earth.” Even as He is saving, God is judging.

Turn to Romans chapter 1. Have a look at Romans 1, verse 18. It reads in the ESV, “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.” It could legitimately simply read like this: “For the wrath of God is *being* revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.” Is *being* revealed.

The gospel that Paul preaches—which he calls in Romans chapter 1 “the gospel of God,” and in the final chapter of Romans, Romans chapter 16, he calls it his own gospel, “my gospel,” the gospel which he has received from God—is a gospel of salvation, being saved from the judgment of God, which is happening even now to the people who are not being saved. The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven. People, therefore, are being given up.

Dropping down to verse 21 of Romans chapter 1: “For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Claiming to be wise, they became fools, ²³ and exchanged the

glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

“²⁴ Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, ²⁵ because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

“²⁶ For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; ²⁷ and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. ²⁸ And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.”

Do you hear what Paul’s saying? Because they suppressed the truth, because they suppressed the revelation of God that all have—this whole world knows that there is a God. Why? Because this is God’s world. He created this earth. This is His world. These are His mountains, this is His sky. The stars that we see in the heavens at night, they’re His stars. “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims His handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, night to night reveals knowledge.”

So those who say that there is no God, those who refuse to acknowledge this God who is the Creator, are in the process of being given up—given up, handed over to their lusts. Notice what it says, “God gave them up,” and then it says, so “the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another.” God gives them up to their own lusts, and so they give up natural relations. God punishes them with their own lusts. God punishes the wicked with their own wickedness.

Now come back to Isaiah chapter 63 and look at verse 6 again. “I trampled down the peoples in my anger,” and I’m going to change the tense there so that we get it, “making them drunk in my wrath, and pouring out their lifeblood on the earth”—making them drunk in His wrath. In other words, handing them over to their own desires, that they would destroy themselves—that they would destroy themselves. And this is God’s harvest! This is the harvest of God’s righteous judgment.

And now I simply invite you, look at our world today. Look at our politics, look at our political policies, look at the people who are in power, look at the policies that are being put in place. Can you tell me they haven’t been given up? Can you tell me they haven’t been given up? Of course they’ve been given up. They’ve been handed over to their own unrighteousness. Why are they passing such evil and wicked laws, the end of which is death? They’ve been handed over, my friends. And they’re handing themselves over to their own lusts and desires. God is making them drunk in His wrath, and pouring out their lifeblood upon the earth.

You know, we often say, Judgment must come. Judgment must come. What we actually mean is that the judgment must be made visible to the point where no one can actually deny that the judgment is happening. Because the truth is, what's happening right now is the judgment. What's happening right now is the judgment.

It is only those who actually understand and study the word of God who realize that what's happening is, our world is being judged around us. And our societies, these nations of the West that could once call themselves Christian nations and have shaken their fist into the face of God and rejected His law and rejected His righteousness and rejected all that is good—they're being handed over, en masse, in great numbers.

My friends, this is the God who saves. This is the God who saves. This is the God who gave His only begotten Son. This is the God who imputes righteousness through justification. This is the God who loves His people. This is the God who purchased His church with His own blood. But understand something: This is the God who judges. This is the God who is just and who is good. This is the good who remembers every sin. Every sin must have its allotted punishment.

For those who are saved, our sins have been punished in Jesus Christ, and that is our salvation. For those who are unsaved, they bear the burden of their own sins. And that punishment will never wear out. They can't pay the price. The price of their sins—it's like out of control credit. You can't even make the minimum payment, and the bill just gets bigger and bigger.

And that's where they are. They're in a place of judgment, and that judgment will become inevitably final. And there will be no escape, lest they repent. Lest they repent. Lest God is merciful. It's the only hope for humanity, and it's the only hope for mankind.

Let's continue on in Isaiah chapter 63, looking now at verses 7 to 14. There are many echoes from the book of Exodus here. That's why I read us Psalm 78, which also speaks at length about what we're told in the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy—about God rescuing His people from slavery in Egypt, and leading them through the deserts.

What do I want us to see here? Well note first of all the words of Isaiah here. Verse 7: "I will recount the steadfast love of the LORD, the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has granted us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel that he has granted them according to his compassion, according to the abundance of his steadfast love."

My friends, we look upon this world, we look upon the work of God in this world, and we see that judgment goes on even now. And it's a fearsome thing. Imagine—imagine your vision of God. Coming towards you is God covered in the blood of His enemies. That's a God to fear. That's a God in whose presence you will tremble. If we don't tremble, we don't know Him. That's a God to fear.

Okay, what is your response? What is our response to be when we're confronted with this holy God, this awesome God? Remember His steadfast love. "I will recount the steadfast love of the LORD, the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has granted us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel that he has granted them according to his compassion, according to the abundance of his steadfast love."

Don't pretend that He's not God who judges. Don't pretend that He's not God who is just. Don't pretend that He's not God who will destroy the wicked. He is all of these things. But we who are His people, we are to recount, or remember, His steadfast love to us. We are to remember all the good that He does for His own people

That phrase, "steadfast love," behind it there's a Hebrew word, which I can't say very well, but it's sort of like "hesed"—covenant-keeping love, promise-keeping love, trustworthy love, unending love, love that you can build your life upon. "I will recount the covenant-keeping love of the Lord, the praises of the Lord."

When you're trembling and fearing in the presence of this almighty God, this Savior of ours who is also the judge of all, remember and recount His covenant love to *you*. He came to *you*. He made you His own. There was nothing in you, there was nothing in me that recommended us to Him. We fit in with the people of this world who are under His judgment. We belong out there with them, if truth were known. There was nothing in us that called out His mercy. He sent forth His mercy, He saved you! If He makes you fear Him, He does it for your good. He does it from love.

And so Isaiah teaches us how to respond. Remember the steadfast love of the Lord. Remember His praises. Remember that He gave His only begotten Son. Remember that there was a day when I, a sinner, was turned around, when the word of God was spoken to me with power, and I sought forgiveness, and I received it in Jesus' name. Remember this! Remember the praises of God.

Looking at verse 9, it tells us that "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old." My friends, we all know life in this world is not all that it should be. We know that life in this world is not great, that there are troubles, that there is suffering, that things go wrong. Things are done *to* us.

We suffer. We suffer in this world. If there's no suffering in this world, you might not actually be a Christian. The Apostle Paul said, All who want to live godly lives can expect to suffer persecution. We suffer. And look at what it says in verse 9: "In all their affliction he was afflicted." He was suffering with them. He was suffering on their part. In Acts chapter 9, verse 4, Jesus said to Saul, "Why are you persecuting me?" Now Saul couldn't lay a hand on Jesus. Jesus is enthroned at the right hand of God. But he was laying his hand on the church, and Jesus

says, “Why are you persecuting *me*? Why are you persecuting me?” In all of our affliction, He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them.

Isaiah continues to recount, as I said, the Exodus. Verse 10: “But they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit; therefore he turned to be their enemy, and himself fought against them. ¹¹ Then he remembered the days of old, of Moses and his people. Where is he who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of his flock? Where is he who put in the midst of them his Holy Spirit, ¹² who caused his glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses, who divided the waters before them to make for himself an everlasting name, ¹³ who led them through the depths? Like a horse in the desert, they did not stumble. ¹⁴ Like livestock that go down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD gave them rest. So you led your people, to make for yourself a glorious name.”

What’s he remembering? He’s remembering the works of God in saving the people. He’s remembering that this God who has come, coated in the blood of His enemies, is the same God who saves him and His people, who brings him and His people the gift of life.

Notice something very interesting here now. As I’ve said, I’ve called the title, “Who is this?” I’ve taken it from the first three words of chapter 63, “Who is this?” Well I want you to have a look at this, and I ask again the question, “Who is this?” Well, look at verse 7: “I will recount the steadfast love of YAHWEH, the praises of YAHWEH”—I use that word deliberately —“according to all that YAHWEH has granted us.”

Now have a look at verse 9: “In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them.” Verse 10: “But they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit.” Look at verse 12: “Who caused his glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses.”

Now let’s ask ourselves some questions. Who is this? We know that it’s YAHWEH, we know that Isaiah is speaking to us of YAHWEH. But notice when he speaks of God being in the midst of His people, verse 9, He speaks of the angel of His presence. Literally, he’s “the angel of his face,” the face of God. “The angel of his presence saved them.”

And then in verse 10, he speaks of the fact that the people rebelled, and this time he doesn’t say it’s the angel of the presence who was grieved, but who? “They grieved his Holy Spirit.”

“¹¹ Where is he who put in the midst of them,” at verse 11, “his Holy Spirit?” Yet in verse 12, we’re told that the one who was at the right hand of Moses working salvation, “who caused his glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses, who divided the waters before them to make for himself an everlasting name.”

Can you see where I’m going there? Can you see? Isaiah speaks of YAHWEH. I’m sure Isaiah would not have known what we were talking about if we repeated to Isaiah, for example, the Creed of Nicaea. “We believe in one God, the Father Almighty. We believe in the only Begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe in the Holy Spirit.” Isaiah wouldn’t have been able to repeat to us trinitarian doctrine, or formula. But notice he speaks of Yahweh. And then he

speaks of the angel of the face of Yahweh. And then he speaks of the Holy Spirit of Yahweh. Then he speaks of the arm of Yahweh. And all of these are in the midst of the people.

Why did he set these distinctions? I'm not sure he even knew why. Scripture tells us he was writing as he was carried along by the Holy Spirit. But why did he set these distinctions? Is he calling more than one person God here? It appears that way.

Go through your Old Testament. Who was at the right hand of Moses? Well it says God was a friend of Moses, spoke to him face to face. Who saw the glory of God revealed as He was hidden in the rock? Moses. Who was warned that the angel in whom is the name of God would be in the midst of the people, and that he must not be grieved? Moses.

But who was the angel who has within Him the name of God? And how does Isaiah 53 read? "To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? Three persons here are being spoken of as God. Three distinctions here are being made concerning the one true living God, who rescued His people out of Exodus.

Sure, it's not explicit trinitarian doctrine. It's not as deep into trinitarian teaching as John chapter 14 is, which we are looking at in the evenings. Yet, more than one person in our passage is being called God here—more than one person. Distinctions are being made. Yahweh—YAHWEH's Holy Spirit, the angel of the face of YAHWEH, the arm of YAHWEH—all spoken of as though they are God, redeeming His people Israel.

Once again, my friends, the God whom we worship is the God who has spoken from Genesis through to the book of Revelation. There's one living God revealed to us in Scripture—three persons spoken of as that one God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And that one God is the true living God. He's the Creator, He's the judge, He's the one we worship through Jesus Christ our Lord, He is our salvation. There is no other.

Those who do not worship God as revealed in Scripture do not worship God at all. They do not worship God at all. They have a god, and that god that they have is a god of man's invention. And Scripture tells us that the God whom we worship is not the god of man's invention—He's the God that a man would *not* invent. Think about it. Now some of you I know have been raised in a Christian context, and so you don't actually have this long period of your life where you were in your sins and you basically were openly wicked and rebellious. I do, okay? If I were inventing a god a year before I was converted, I'm telling you, I would not invent a god who comes towards me clothed in the blood of his enemies. That's not the god that I would invent.

If I were going to invent a god at that time, I would have invented a god who approved of everything that I was doing and said, "And what's more, don't worry about it. On the day you die, you receive eternal life anyway." I would have invented the god who was my best mate—like me, only a little bit better. Because of course, in my sins, I saw myself as a perfectly good

person. I saw myself as just a leading citizen, and the god I invented would have been a god that suited me.

Who would invent this God? Who would come up with the idea of three persons being the one true living God? Who would invent this God, this God who will not forgive sin unless the price of sin is paid; this God who hates all who break His law; this God who hates sin with a perfect, holy hatred, when you consider the fact that we all are sinners, and not one of us has any righteousness of our own? Who would invent this God? No one. This is not the God of man's invention. This is the God of divine revelation. No one invents God. God simply is God, from everlasting to everlasting, and outside of creation, and outside of time. God is God, full stop! You don't invent this God, He reveals Himself. Who would invent Him?

The world is filled with small "g" gods. They're nothing like our God—nothing! And though there are monotheistic religions that would claim to be worshipers of the same God, the god whom they worship is nothing like our God—nothing like our God. One, he's not revealed as three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; two, he's not merciful and gracious. The god of Islam, for example, does not promise to receive all who would repent and come to him, seeking the forgiveness of sins. It's a foreign concept in the religion of Islam. There's no guarantee of forgiveness. It's works, works, works. And even at the end, your works might just get you killed.

What about the god of the Jews? Well, here's the problem—under the old covenant economy, the Jews were worshipping the one true living God. But this person named Jesus took upon Himself flesh and He walked the earth, and He said things like, "Before Abraham was, I AM." He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life, and no one comes to the Father but through me." And He said so many other things. He said He was the Son of man, spoken of in Daniel chapter 7. He said that He was David's Lord, spoken of in Psalm 110. You see, once that happened, to reject the revelation we find in the New Testament is to reject the living God. So the Jews, in refusing to acknowledge that Jesus is the Son of God, are basically saying, as their forefathers said, "We have no king but Caesar." And they've rejected the one true living God.

Isaiah calls us to worship a God who is to be feared, a God of both judgment and grace; a God who both hates sin and saves sinners, according to His sovereign will; a God who dwells in the midst of His people, even as at the same time, He judges the peoples of the world, and He dwells in the highest heaven, and man cannot come anywhere near Him, and we must go through the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ—the God-man, the incarnate Son of God. Isaiah speaks to us of that God, and Him alone should we worship. Let's close in prayer.

Father in heaven, thank you for your word, thank you for the Holy Scriptures, thank you that you have spoken to your people. We pray, Father, that we would truly be your people, that we would be worshipers in spirit and truth, that we would be people, one people, in Christ. Father, help us to love you as we ought, and help us to love our neighbours as ourselves. We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.