

Isaiah 59

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[0 : 00] your Bibles, go with me to the book of Isaiah. As far as I know, the Lord's going to allow us to tarry in the book of Matthew for some time, and I will go ahead and tell you that, and some of you have probably heard it, Matthew chapter 1 is one of my favorite sections of Scripture in the New Testament to preach.

And if you read ahead and read in advance, some of you will, you'll say, well, Matthew 1 looks very kind of bland because it's the genealogy of Christ.

But there's so much richness there in the genealogy of Christ. And then, of course, we get into the beauty of the visit of the wise men in Matthew 2, and then we get into the wilderness temptations and the baptism and the sermon on.

Now, there's just so much richness in the gospel of Matthew. I'm super excited to get there, and I can't wait to see how the Lord opens that up for us. But we will introduce the book of Matthew this week in Isaiah chapter 59.

Before you stand and we read that chapter together because we will look at this entire chapter, I'll help you understand the context of why I feel like this is where we will be. The book of Matthew, the gospel of Matthew is introduced this way, the record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

[1 : 15] The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David. And one of the greatest themes found in the book of Matthew, Matthew 16. I'm not asking you to turn to these passages, by the way.

Matthew 16, where Jesus asked in verse 15, and he said to them, but who do you say that I am? Verse 16 says, Simon Peter answered, you are the Christ. That's the same word, the Messiah.

You are the Christ, the son of the living God. So we understand that one of the major themes, if not the major themes of the gospel of Matthew is the Messiah, Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

And we want to be sure, as always, to take every text we come to in context and to really set the context of the portion of scripture in which we're getting to is usually how we introduce these.

And we cannot set the context of the gospel of Matthew and subtract it from the author and the audience and all of those things. So we understand that Levi, also known as Matthew, the former tax collector of the Roman Empire, who was of Jewish descent, is writing this gospel, and he's writing it to his Jewish brethren.

[2 : 23] It's the most Jewish scripture, or the most Jewish gospel of the four. It's intended audience is that. And his major theme is, this is the son of David, the Messiah, the son of David, because this was the hope and the anticipation of the Jewish nation.

This is something. They were looking for a coming king. They were looking for the one who would set upon the throne of David, the one who would have authority and would liberate them and set them free.

Kind of ironic, isn't it, that he who used to work with the occupying forces, that is Levi, collecting taxes for them, is the one who writes of the one who came as the king, as the true king, as the liberator, the one who would set them free.

And the hope and the anticipation of the Jewish nation was, there is coming a king. Matthew writes and says, here's the king. In the gospel of Matthew, Jesus is king, right?

He is the king on the throne. He is the son of David. He is the one who has come with authority and with power. But for us to kind of get in the context of why there was such a longing, we have to take ourselves to where they were at, and that is the book of Isaiah.

[3 : 39] And I say where they were at because Isaiah is one of the major prophets who writes and just resonates throughout Jewish history and is speaking just emphatically to the Jewish nation about the time of their deportation and the fall of Jerusalem.

And he's talking to them about all their sin and their wrongdoing, the northern kingdom falling, the southern kingdom falling. And if you remember, Isaiah is the prophet of what?

The coming king. Isaiah is the prophet of the coming king. And Matthew introduces, here's the king. John the Baptist would proclaim the kingdom of heaven is near.

When Jesus began to preach, he proclaimed the kingdom of heaven is here. Right? When John the Baptist preached, it was near. When Jesus preached, it was here. And Isaiah proclaimed, there is a coming king.

And Matthew declared, that king has come. And we need to understand that for all of that time, for all of those centuries, for over 500 plus years, the nation of Israel was looking for a king.

[4 : 50] They were looking for someone who would fulfill these prophecies that are in Isaiah. And the need had been created within them. And they understood that, as we'll see, hopefully in Isaiah 59, because it will show us the need that resonates in the heart of every man.

But they had this longing. The sad reality is, is they missed it. Right? The king came and they denied him. They rejected him.

They rebelled him. The gospel of John says, he came to his own and his own received him not. Right? They turned him away because even though there was all this preparation and all this anticipation and all this prophetic utterance of, he is coming.

This is what he's going to look like. And this is what he's going to do. The first public message Jesus declared when he goes into the synagogue. And he takes from the scroll, from the book of Isaiah. Right?

And he reads from the scroll of the book of Isaiah that I have come to set the captives free, to heal the lame, to cause the blind to see, to cause the deaf to hear and the mute to speak. And he says, these things have been fulfilled in your sights.

[5 : 53] And he declared, this is happening right now. Now what's the rest of that passage that Jesus was proclaiming? Is that he would rule with a rod of iron at the government of the world to rest upon his shoulders, that he would shepherd his people and that he would lead the nations.

He didn't declare that when he first began to preach because he had to go to the cross, the grave, and then ascend to the Father before those things came to be. But I'm jumping ahead of myself. But what I want you to see is the intermingling here.

How Isaiah says a king is coming. And the people are being prepared. And the people are being prepared. And the people are being prepared. And then the king comes. And Matthew says, the king has come. And they say, no, we don't want anything to do with him. Sad reality is, is I can tell you and convince you and talk to you and write to you and move you all day long and all year long.

And we can understand these things. But until the heart is opened up to what has happened, then we do run the risk of rejecting the king who has come. But let's just set the stage.

Isaiah 59. By the way, Isaiah has within its pages some of the greatest passages of the suffering savior. Not only is he, I mean, the reality of that, he is the prophet of the coming king, but he is also declaring the suffering savior, right?

[7 : 08] But Isaiah 59, I think, will set the text for us or set the context of why we should be so excited getting into the gospel of Matthew. So if you are physically able and desire to do so, I'm asking you to join with me as we stand together and we read the word of God.

We're going to read the entire chapter of Isaiah 59. Isaiah 59 says this. Behold, the Lord's hand is not so short that it cannot save, nor is his ear so dull that it cannot hear.

But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood and your fingers with iniquity, and your lips have spoken falsehood, and your tongue mutters wickedness.

No one sues righteously and no one pleads honestly. They trust in confusion and speak lies. They conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity. They hatch adder's eggs and weave the spider's web.

He who eats of their eggs dies, and from that which is crushed a snake breaks forth. Their webs will not become clothing, nor will they cover themselves with their works. Their works are works of iniquity, and an act of violence is in their hands.

[8 : 16] Their feet run to evil, and they hasten to shed innocent blood. Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity. Devastation and destruction are in their highways. They do not know the way of peace, and there is no justice in their tracks.

They have made their paths crooked. Whoever treads on them does not know peace. Therefore, justice is far from us, and righteousness does not overtake us. We hope for light, but behold, darkness. For brightness, but we walk in gloom.

We grope along the wall like blind men. We grope like those who have no eyes. We stumble at midday as in the twilight. Among those who are vigorous, we are like dead men. All of us growl like bears and moan sadly like doves.

We hope for justice, but there is none for salvation, but it is far from us. For our transgressions are multiplied before you, and our sins testify against us. For our transgressions are with us, and we know our iniquities.

Transgressing and denying the Lord and turning away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving in and uttering from the heart lying words, justice is turned back, and righteousness stands far away.

[9 : 15] For truth has stumbled in the street, and uprightness cannot enter. Yes, truth is lacking, and he who turns aside from evil makes himself a prey. Now the Lord saw, and it was displeasing in his sight that there was no justice.

And he saw that there was no man, and was astonished that there was no one to intercede. Then his own arm brought salvation to him, and his righteousness upheld him.

He put on righteousness like a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on his head. And he put on garments of vengeance for clothing, and wrapped himself with zeal as a mantle.

According to their deeds, so he will repay wrath to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies. To the coastlands he will make recompense, so they will fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun.

For he will come like a rushing stream, which the wind of the Lord drives. A redeemer will come to Zion. And to those who turn from transgression to Jacob declares the Lord. As for me, this is my covenant with them, says the Lord.

[10 : 16] My spirit which is upon you, my words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of your offspring's offspring, says the Lord, from now on and forever.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for the opportunity which we have had to read your word and hear your word. And Lord, we pray as it has been read now, Lord, that it would be spoken to our hearts and minds.

We pray that the truth of it would captivate us, Lord, in a way like never before. That we would be gripped by the word of God so much so that our lives would have to be altered and changed. The course of direction would no longer be our plans and purposes, but Lord, it would be your places for us.

God, we ask that by the power and presence of your spirit, you would speak to each heart and every mind. And we ask you for your glory and yours alone. And we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated. I want you to see from the text this morning, as we have seen, Matthew opens up.

This is the record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Messiah. Jesus the Messiah. And our grand theme throughout the book of Matthew is going to be Jesus the Messiah.

[11 : 23] He validates himself. We have the Messiah's genealogy. We have the record of his birth. We have the Messiah's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. We have the Messiah's declaration of his word through his miraculous acts.

We have the Messiah's reign over all these things. We have all these wonderful things that happen throughout the book of Matthew. But before we get into that and we see who he is, we need to be where the people were that Matthew was writing this to.

And it is with an understanding of a need. So I want you to see from Isaiah 59, man's need of the coming Messiah. Man's need of the coming Messiah.

Because one thing that I have found that is wonderful in Scripture and one thing that I have found that is wonderful in my life is that God does not work haphazardly. He does not do things by chance. God is a God of order and he's a God of plans, right?

Because the Bible tells you that God has planned or foreknown or foreordained events that will happen. He understands things. God didn't come up with a plan B because man messed up plan A.

[12 : 27] No, this was God's plan from the very beginning. This is why Jesus is called the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. And it also is why God says that before the foundation of the world, he created good works for you to walk in.

God has purposes and plans and reasonings for everything he does. And even going all the way back to Adam in the Garden of Eden, we understand that before God ever presents a solution for the need, he always causes a feeling of need.

So before God gives the solution, he creates the problem, right? We see this with husbands and wives. Before God ever began the institution of marriage. By the way, marriage was God's idea. It was not man's idea.

Man didn't decide, hey, I think you know what would be fun. Let's be married because marriage is not always fun, right? It's good and it's glorious and it's fulfilling. It's not always fun. Sometimes it's a lot of work. Quite often it's a lot of work, especially if you're married to someone like me.

It's a whole lot of work. I understand that. But what we see here is that God creates a need before he ever gives a solution to that need. This is something when I do pre-marriage counseling, I take every couple through. And we go to the account of Adam and Eve in the garden.

[13 : 31] We have Adam here and we see God doing something wonderful. And God gives Adam rain, right? He says rule over creation, all of creation. And he has all this stuff to do. And then he says, okay, Adam, I'm going to bring all the animals before you.

And I want you to name these animals. Seems kind of tedious to us. But hey, if you have nothing else to do besides name animals, then you got time to name animals, right? And so all the animals are coming back. And the Bible says that whatever Adam called them, that's what their name was.

Now, we're not going to say he called them giraffe. But I mean, whatever Adam called them, that's what everybody else called them because Adam was everybody else. That makes sense to me. I don't know if it makes sense to you, but everybody in the world called them what Adam called them because Adam was the only body in the world, right?

So we see this. He names them. And then it says, everyone of them came before him. It says, but there was no helper found for Adam. So as Adam is sitting here doing all this work, he noticed, oh, there's a male lion and a female lion.

There's a male giraffe and a female giraffe. And there's all these things coming by. And there's all these things coming by. And all these things coming by. And Adam, what God is doing is creating a need in Adam.

[14 : 37] Because then God put Adam to sleep. And he met that need, right? He took from the bone, from the rib, literally bone of my bone, and he formed and fashioned and made this perfect helpmate, this completer, this awesome thing.

No, no, ladies, don't leave with a big head. That's just the original wording there, right? Made Adam something awesome and said, here you go. Adam would have overlooked that had he not known there was a need.

Right? God always creates the longing for before he ever provides in your life. When God's getting ready to do something supernaturally, by the way, anything God does in your life is supernatural, right?

I don't care if he uses natural means to do it. It is still supernatural because he's a pretty super God. So if he does things naturally, it's pretty super. I see sunsets all the time and every one of them supernatural because God's painting the sky, right?

And we understand this, but whenever God's about to do something, the very first thing he does in your life is create a longing for. He creates a need so that when that need is met, all of a sudden you say, wow, there it is.

[15 : 55] That's the one. That's it. That's what I needed. And God does this some 500 plus years before Christ comes.

He moves Isaiah the prophet to declare the coming of a king. And after he has declared the sufferings of the Savior, after he's declared in Isaiah 53 and 54 and following, I mean, Isaiah 54, I believe it is where it says, God was pleased to strike him for the sins of man.

I mean, just let your mind wrap around that for just a moment. God was pleased to strike him for the sins of man, that his face was marred beyond recognition, that he was lowly and meek like a sheep being led to slaughter.

That's all Isaiah, right? And then he comes here to Isaiah 59 and he shows us man's need for the coming Messiah. God created a need for a coming Messiah so that when the Messiah came, man would be prepared to receive that Messiah.

And he does that in each of our hearts and each of our lives, by the way, as God is drawing us to himself. For those of us who know Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, I mean, really know Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, not just know of Jesus, but those of us who have surrendered our lives to Jesus Christ, not only as Savior, but also as Lord.

[17 : 09] He is complete Lord of my life and Savior of my life. For me personally, I know what God did to me and he showed me that I needed something other than myself so that when Jesus was put before me, I could say, absolutely, this is what I need.

This is what I've been looking for this whole time. God creates this longing and this need and he shows us in Isaiah 59 exactly what is going to be fulfilled in the Gospel of Matthew.

Man needs the coming Messiah. And here is why man needs this coming Messiah. We see from this passage, number one, the condition of sin.

I mean, how dreadful some of these passages sound when we open up the Old Testament. And by the way, this is why we have to read such large portions of the Old Testament, because sometimes we despair when we read it and we look at it and we go, what in the world, this is so depressing.

And you have to go through the depressing stuff before you can get to the good stuff, because until we know how bad the condition is, we don't really know how good the Savior is, right? Because an okay condition leads to an okay Savior.

[18 : 17] A terrible condition leads to an awesome Savior. Really understanding how bad off I am and I was really exalts my Savior rather than belittling Him.

Because if He made me a little bit better, okay, that's good. But if He took me where I was and made me what I am, He is just awesome, for lack of a better term.

And we see the condition of sin. Look at this. It says, Now Isaiah is prophesying and declaring the Word of God to people who are really seeing their world fall apart around them, right?

I mean, literally. The southern kingdom, the northern kingdom has already fallen to the Assyrian Empire. The southern kingdom is about to fall to the Babylonian Empire. And God's people are being, I mean, if you really want to see, read Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, the book of Lamentations.

I mean, this is awful. People are starving to death. People are, you know, they result to cannibalism. Really, just not to go into any more detail, there's this lack of water.

[19 : 17] I mean, things are just terrible around them, right? And things seem to be bad. And Isaiah reminds them, it's not because God can't do anything. Right?

He says, Behold, the Lord's hand is not so short that it cannot save, nor is His ear so dull that it cannot hear. So he just starts out this passage and says, the problem going on around us, really, the fault does not lay at God's feet.

So that's not something that's an Old Testament issue. That's something that's applicable today in the church age, and it was there, and it also was in the New Testament. That is, the things that are falling apart around us, we don't lay that blame at God's feet.

Because the reality is, so many people say, well, if God is so good, and God is so kind, and God is so merciful, and if God is so powerful, and if God knows this, then why does blank happen?

And what they're doing is they're laying it at God's feet, right? They're saying, if God is God, then this wouldn't happen. So just stop right there, because what can the clay say back to the master, right?

[20 : 18] What can the pot say back to the one who forms it? And we resonate with this reality. It is not that God cannot. It is not that God cannot save. It's not that God cannot hear.

It's not that God is not able to do these things. The fault and the blame does not lay with God. The first thing we have to settle is that. Because man loves to blame God.

Because if we blame God, we remove guilt from ourselves. That's, I mean, let's just say it for what it is. If we can blame God or someone else, then we do not have to accept responsibility.

Because it's so much easier to say, well, they, or it, or him, or, you know, well, if God could, just stop. Just stop. Isaiah says, the blame doesn't lay with him.

He doesn't have a problem. God doesn't have a problem. Right? This condition doesn't affect God. It's not that God cannot. It's not that he cannot hear. It's not that his ears are dull. But look at what it says.

[21 : 16] But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God. And your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear. So here's the reality. The blame does not lay at the feet of God.

The blame lays at the feet of man. It's not that God cannot save. It's not that he's not able to save. It's not that God's ears are so dull that he cannot hear. He says, your, which inclusion here later on in this passage, he says, we.

So it includes every one of us. Isaiah evidently was not one that was blaming God. So he was speaking to those who were blaming God. And then he comes back and includes himself in the rest of it later on. But the reality is this, the blame does not lay with God, the blame lays with us.

It's not God's fault. The problem, the condition is our fault. Our iniquities, the greatest outcome of the condition of sin is that it has caused not that we do bad things.

Okay, let's just go ahead and settle this. We need to be at least biblically accurate in our understanding of sin. The worst thing about sin is not the bad things you do. Okay, it's not.

[22 : 20] You do bad things because of the worst thing about sin. We've got to have this wrong. Okay, the worst thing about sin is not that I do things that I shouldn't do. It's not that I mess up. The worst thing about the condition we call sin is that it creates a separation from God.

And when we are separated from God, we do bad things. The worst part of the condition which we have inherited from our fathers is that it creates a divide.

It separates us. It says our iniquities have created a separation between you and your God. And your sins have hidden his face because God is holy.

So that he does not hear. It's not that he cannot hear. It's that he chooses not to hear. So many things in scripture, so many times we find this reference of this condition causing this problem.

And it is God not hearing his people. It's not that he cannot. It's just that he will not. And when man regards iniquity in his heart, God will not hear him. When man is living in his sins and transgression, God turns his face and will not hear him.

[23 : 30] When a husband does not love his wife the way he should, God will not hear him. Verse Peter. If he does not live with her as a weaker vessel in all respect and honoring her and lifting her up, then God does not hear him.

Wow. And we see the fault does not lay with God. God, where are you at? God, why aren't you listening? God, can't you hear me? We never have the right to say that. We have to say, God, what in me is causing this problem?

It is that condition we call sin. And that condition, by the way, runs deep. Look at this. For your hands are defiled with blood and your fingers with iniquity.

Your lips have spoken falsehood. Your tongue mutters wickedness. No one sues righteously. No one pleads honestly. They trust in confusion and speak lies. They conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity. They hatch adder's eggs and weave spider's web.

He who eats of their eggs dies. And from that which is crushed, the snake breaks forth. Look, it just goes on and on and on. And it says in verse 7, by the way, this is descriptive not of what was going on in 500 B.C.

[24 : 26] Plus, this is a description of what's going on today. Their feet run to evil. They hasten to shed innocent blood. Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity and devastation and destruction are in their highways. They do not know the way of peace.

And there is no justice in their tracks. They have made their paths crooked. Whoever treads on them does not know peace. I don't know if we've caught on to that or not, but this is a clear description of the condition that man finds himself in.

And if, when Matthew wrote, which, by the way, was sometime between 50 and 60 A.D., most Bible scholars believe, if man should have stood in need of a Messiah then, how much more does man stand in need of the coming Messiah now?

Because of this condition which we call sin, it is just rapid. It affects man to his very core. And it's something that we understand and we proclaim and we need to know.

And I hope you can wrap your mind around this. Man is not getting better. Okay? The reason I love studying the book of Judges is the book of Judges shows us really just the history of man.

[25 : 40] In the book of Judges it starts out pretty good. Man was okay. You know, there was Joshua and those who were there with Joshua and those who knew Joshua and knew the God of Joshua in Judges chapter 1. And then it just goes down and down and down and down.

And there's this spiraling down after judge, after judge, after judge, after judge, until you finally end in the book of Judges with civil war and they're almost like one of the tribes of the nation of Israel out.

And there's this repeated phrase, for those days there was no king in Israel and every man did what was right in his own eyes. What it means the further they got away, the worse they got. By the way, man fools himself if we think that we are progressing because we are actually digressing.

Man is not getting closer to perfection. We're getting further from it. Because the things that are norm in society now were unspoken or even unheard of just a few years ago.

And what will it be like in a few more years? Why? Because of this condition of sin. The Bible is very clear and tells us that this condition, listen, it's lethal and it will overtake all of mankind.

[26 : 44] It has already overtaken all of mankind because we are born with this. This is something we did not catch from somebody. This is something we inherited. This is the condition of sin.

Secondly, we see the consequences of that sin. Because we have this condition, it will be manifested in a number of ways. And since we have this thing we are born with, it just will display itself over and over again.

And it will show itself. There's this joke around our family. Finally, my two oldest boys kind of get on to me a lot. And they're like, Dad, you know it's your fault that we're short and have bad backs. And I say, well, I can't help it, son.

Genetics is against you. Right? It's not like I ever dunked or even touched the bottom of the net. So none of you are really ever going to be tall. We're not dunking on anybody. And as far as the back goes, I'm sorry. That just happened.

I picked that up from Gene Poole elsewhere. But anyway, we understand that when we inherit something from our forefathers, just like we inherited the condition of sin, then we will inevitably have things show itself.

[27 : 41] Or it will be manifested and it will be on display in different ways. And here we see the consequences of it. Therefore, it says in verse 9, justice is far from us and righteousness does not overtake us.

We hope for light, but behold darkness. For brightness, but we walk in gloom. Man tries to do right. Man hopes for light. But every time he hopes for light, it seems like there's nothing but darkness. He wants brightness, but it's always gloom.

And no matter how much we try and how much effort we put into it, it just doesn't come about the way we think it should. Things seem to fall flat. It says that we grope along the wall like blind men.

We grope like those who have no eyes. We stumble at midday as in the twilight. And among those who are vigorous, we're like dead men. This is the condition of sin. This is what sin leads us to, to this hopelessness, this disparity.

Look at verse 12. For our transgressions are multiplied before you, and our sins testify against us. I don't know. Maybe this is not your testimony. As a matter of fact, let me not say that. I don't want to say that because I want to be accurate.

[28 : 41] This is your testimony. Maybe you just don't own it. Okay? Because it's my testimony. It's the testimony of every man in the scripture. No matter how hard we try to do right, we keep falling flat.

And no matter how hard we push and push towards brightness and light, and I'm talking about in ourselves, in our own works, right? On our own. I'm going to clean my life up.

I'm going to get things together. I'm going to get my act straight. I'm going to do this. I'm going to do this. I'm going to do this. And before too long, we're like dead men. We fall. And it's because these are the natural results of the condition we have.

Our sins will testify against us. That thing called the conscience. We're transgressing and denying the Lord and turning away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving in and uttering from the heart lying words.

Have you ever been so mad? You say, man, where do these things come from? But the heart of man is desperately wicked. The heart of every man. Do we understand intellectually, just as Paul does in Romans chapter 7, the things that I want to do, I don't do, the things that I don't want to do, I find myself doing.

[29 : 47] And see, by the way, this lines up perfectly with the text we have before us. And Paul says, I'm wrestling internally, right? There's all this problem. And Paul was describing himself in his natural state there. And in his natural state, Paul was saying, I'm trying to do right.

He was a Pharisee of the Pharisees. He understood. He said it to best school in Old Testament literature. He said it to feet of Gamaliel. He understood these things. He was, as far as the law, perfect. He kept a notebook down, literally, of everything that he would do and wouldn't do.

And Paul says, I'm trying my best. But even when I try my best, out of my heart comes things I don't know where it comes from. That's why Paul would say, the heart of man is desperately wicked. Conceiving in and uttering from the heart lying words, justice is turned back, righteousness stands far away, though we seek it.

Paul says in Romans chapter 9, I believe it is, that they are seeking righteousness through the works of the law, but they would never attain to it. Because righteousness stands far away.

For truth is stumbled in the street, and uprightness cannot enter. Yes, truth is lacking, and he who turns aside from evil makes himself a prey. Here are the consequences of sin. We cannot save ourselves. Because we have this condition, we cannot redeem ourselves.

[30 : 56] Though we push, though we strain, though we put all the effort into it, though we try, and we even have a longing for it, we can't do it. The book of Psalms says, no man can pay the ransom for his own redemption, let alone the ransom of his brother.

That's a very poetic way of saying, you can't save yourself, let alone save anybody else. That same psalm, by the way, says later on, but the Lord has ransomed.

See, the reality is, is because of the condition we have, which is sin, the great state of existence is we are living separated from God.

But in that condition, one of the most terrible consequences is there's nothing you can do about it. Nothing. You're hopeless and helpless.

As much as you would love to save yourself and to save others, you can't. Because this is the natural outcome of our condition. We have it.

[31 : 59] We can't get away from it. But just as I said, don't stop short in the Old Testament. Because now we come to man's need of the coming Messiah.

The third thing. The conqueror of sin. And this is what Matthew writes up. This is what Isaiah is pointing to.

Showing us our condition and the things that come about as a result of that condition. So that when we come to verse 15. Verse 15, part B. The second half of verse 15.

We are ready to hear this, right? When we understand, man, this is bad. Man looks bad. It's not that God cannot save. It's not that God cannot hear. It's just that the things we're doing, it creates this divide.

And we can't save ourselves. And we can never bridge the gap. And by the time we get to verse 15, we're ready for just a breath of fresh air. And it goes like this. Now the Lord saw. Now the Lord saw.

[33 : 00] Just stop. Aren't you glad God doesn't look away when man looks so bad? In Scripture, we find one that God turns his face from.

And that is Jesus on the cross. We find Abraham, known as Abram at that time, living in the earth, the Chaldeans.

Well, actually, let's go before that. We see Adam in his sin, hiding behind a tree. And God looking for him and seeing him in all of his sin. We see Noah living among a people of desperate wickedness and God seeing Noah.

We say Abram living in the land of the Erechaldeans, probably in idolatrous worship because they worship so many idolatrous idols there in that land of Ur.

And God seeing Abram and calling him. We see over and over and over and over again. We see Joseph in his conniving. Or not Joseph. We see Joseph in the pit. We see Joseph in the dungeon. We see Joseph in the courts of Pharaoh.

[34 : 09] We see all these people. God sees them and God sees them and God sees them. No matter where they're at, no matter how ugly it is, it says, Now the Lord saw. It also tells us in the New Testament that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

He saw us in our problem. He saw us in our filth and our ugliness. Man has this tendency to look away from that which is despising to him, right? We see something that I'm not very becoming and we'd rather not look at it.

Because if we look at it, we have to be at least identified with it, right? We don't want to look upon it. Like, maybe if I don't look at that person or look at that situation, maybe I won't feel anything for it. Or I won't have any connection to it.

Or I won't have to identify myself with that desperate condition. So the best thing is just to look away, right? But God sees us in that desperate condition and he looks at us. He sees us.

And he always looks for a purpose. Now the Lord saw and it was displeasing in his sight that there was no justice. By the way, just in case we think God is a big mean God, it says it is displeasing in his sight that there was no justice.

[35 : 18] Justice for who? Justice for man. Look at verse 16 because we're looking at the conqueror of sin. And he saw that there was no man and was astonished that there was no one to intercede.

By the way, there is no one to intercede. I cannot intercede on my own behalf, let alone intercede on your behalf. My sin, my condition has created a separation between me and a holy God.

And I cannot approach a holy God because of my sin. So how can I intercede for you on behalf of your sin? We can't. And your sin has created a separation between you and a holy God so you cannot intercede for me.

This isn't God saw that and he was astonished that there was no one to intercede. But look at this. I have a habit of underlining, not in this Bible that I preach out on Sunday mornings because of my squirrel tendency.

I tend to get caught off guard. But in the Bible that I read every day, I have things highlighted and underlined. And I hope that you have this one underlined. It says, and he saw that there was no man and it was astonished there was no one to intercede.

[36 : 17] Then his own arm brought salvation to him. And his righteousness upheld him. He put on righteousness like a breastplate.

By the way, it sounds like the armor of God, right? Because Paul quotes it as the armor of God. He put on righteousness like a breastplate. And a helmet of salvation on his head. And he put on garments of vengeance for clothing.

And he wrapped himself with zeal as a mantle. And according to their deeds, so he will repay. What does it say? God looked down and he saw that there was no one to intercede for man. He looked down and he was astonished.

No one could do it. He understood this reality. It says, so God did it himself. He wrapped himself in this clothing. He shot himself in this armor and he was ready to go. And it says, according to their deeds, so he will repay.

Literally means every mess up, every mistake, every fault, every failure, God's paid the penalty of. That beautiful word called ransom. That he has paid the ransom.

[37 : 12] He has paid the ransom. He has paid the ransom. When you go back to the book of Leviticus and you read of what the price of ransom was. Helps us to understand this.

Because if I faulted you or did you wrong. And I had to give you a ransom. Right? So, say I took something. I borrowed something from you. I borrowed an ox from you.

I took that ox home and that ox died in my care. And all of a sudden, I am liable for your ox. I mean, you can't work your fields because I, you know, your ox died in my care. So, I have to pay a ransom to you.

I have to pay you back. The price of repayment was 120%. You didn't pay back 100% of what was lost. You paid 100% and then 20% more.

120%. The Bible tells us that Jesus has paid the ransom for our sins. He's paid above and beyond what our sins require. He's paid 120% according to their deeds.

[38 : 10] So, he will pay. He is the conqueror of sin. It says, wrath to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies. To the coastlands, he will make recompense.

So, they will fear the name of the Lord from the west and his glory from the rising of the sun. For he will come like a rushing stream which the wind of the Lord drives. A redeemer will come to Zion. Zion is an Old Testament picture of Jerusalem.

Anybody know where Jesus was standing? In Jerusalem, right? He's there. He's the redeemer. He has come. He is there. He's waiting. This is what Matthew is going to show us. He is there. He is held up before them.

In Zion, a redeemer will come. And to those who turn from their transgressions. And Jacob declares the Lord. He doesn't come to all. But he comes to those who turn. Say, there's the Messiah I needed.

There's the conqueror of my sin. No longer will I trust in myself. No longer will I keep moving along a wall. Groping like a blind man. Desperate in the midday. There's the one who conquered it all.

[39 : 10] Oh, there's the redeemer. It says that he did this. Why? So that he would be glorified from the west to the east. That his name would be feared.

That his glories would be declared. He says, this is the covenant that I give with you. See, man stands in desperate need of the coming Messiah. The good news is that we find in the book of Matthew, as we open it up, is the Messiah has come.

But man's need for that Messiah has not changed. And the reason that Jesus Christ runs in to conquer sin is not so that man could have a better life.

But so that his name could be glorified from the east to the west. That the goodness and greatness of his name would be proclaimed. That his glory would resonate throughout the world.

That people would fear him with awe and wonder and splendor. And look and behold and say, oh, what a Savior. Friend, my prayer is that our life would be that which declares all around us, whoever comes into contact with us, what a Savior.

[40 : 21] What a Savior. Look at the condition that man was in. Look at how far that condition had taken him.

But look at how high the Savior has lifted him. What a Savior. What a Savior. What a Savior. This is why Levi, who used to sit at the tables collecting coins for the Roman Empire, now declares, what a king.

What a king. Let me tell you about my king. Let's pray. Lord, I thank you. Thank you for this day, God.

And I thank you for your word. Lord, we pray that the truth of your word would resonate within our hearts and minds. Lord, it is we get ready to leave here in just a few moments that it would not end with us.

Lord, that it would be on display to a watching and waiting world. That those who come into contact with us would have to declare what a Savior, what a Savior. And may it be for your glory and yours alone.

[41 : 27] We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen.