

The prophets - Ezekiel

Part 1

Speaker	Allan Retallick
Duration	00:44:32
Online version	https://www.audioteaching.org/en/sermons/are006/the-prophets-ezekiel

Note: This text is a computer generated transcript of the sermon. In some cases it may contain errors.

[00:00:00] To see that Just One, to see that Righteous One, what a wonderful privilege it was, when we possibly fall, to look up into heaven and see the One, whose glory was brighter than the sun, and to praise God, our Lord, and hear that Word, the striking of the Word of Joseph's brothers, which I am Joseph, and demons from their perspectives. But we must begin with him, that he was going to see that Just One, know it will, to see that Just One. And the servant of God must have a vision of Christ, he must have a vision, he must have seen by faith, the One who he is going to serve. Very important to read earlier on. Isaiah, he had a vision in the temple of the Lord, the Lord was on that couch.

[00:01:07] Jeremiah, similar, had a commission, and the Lord devoted himself, and he was given a vision of the Lord. Daniel, too, had a wonderful vision of God, we know. And Ezekiel, who comes between these, he also is the first captain we know today, had a wonderful vision. He described it in that last verse, it was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. Almost as though he could hardly find words to describe what he saw. The appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. The Apostle Paul can say, we, with open faith, beholding the glory of the Lord that came from glory in glory. We behold, not the appearance, not the likeness of the appearance, but the glory itself. The glory of the Lord in the [00:02:02] face of Jesus Christ. We must have this vision of Christ before we can serve him. Paul says, I was not disobedient. Have we all had this vision of Christ? First of all, as our sin bearer, we can't go on to serve, we can't serve unless we know him, of course, as our saviour, as followers, as service followers, the knowledge that our sins are forgiven, knowledge that we are one with Christ, and of course the following of the service. And Ezekiel here had this vision, wonderful vision, in the first chapter, and later in the third chapter again, the vision of the one, the righteous judge. Remember Abraham said, shall not the judge of all the earth be right? Sometimes we don't follow the ways of God, and people [00:03:02] say, I can't understand if God is righteous, how can you allow this to happen, that to happen. Forget him, of any sense that we have of justice, of righteousness, we learn from God, we learn it very partially, very seemingly. And we must lead judgment with the one who is just. Shall not the judge of all the earth be right? Remember we read that in chapter 11, it's all very strongly how God says, you fear the sword, the sword is going to reach you. Many divine mischief in their own hearts, which are the descriptions. Chapter 7, he says, by our judgment according to their deserves. Is God's judgment according to what we deserve? Well, if he's a promiser, the Lord allows it, therefore the iniquity of God, who can stand? How wonderful, this righteous judge, as he says in the book of Isaiah, [00:04:05] our God, our Lord and our Saviour, a just God, our Lord and our Saviour. A just God, right as God can, he also has justice, fire, as in the great and easy. Wonderful isn't it? Because he, the judge, died for us, the ender, in the likeness of God. And so, we must never forget, that when God judges, he cannot do otherwise than judge righteously.

God has appointed a day, or a day, it happens, in the week he will judge this world in righteousness. He cannot do otherwise. Earthly judges can be corrupt, they can be bought, not God. God has judged this world in righteousness by a fat man. Fat man, yes, Lord Jesus Christ, the one who he raised from the dead, that has been appointed, the judge appointed to, [00:05:06] Jesus Christ the righteous. And so he had a vision, of one who was the righteous judge. And in this chapter we read together, the people here were expecting that God would relax his righteousness on their behalf. They thought it didn't matter very much, it hadn't changed, as men have called it. Twenty and five men, the son of Abraham, the leader, the prince of the people, who kept their hateful signs, they were leading the idolatry of the people. The signs, they were following abominations of the heathen, every [00:06:01] man in his own house. And God, in righteous judgment, holds all this. They said, Lord see if it's not. Do we know that? Do we imagine that? Do we think, because we do the things in darkness, do we imagine that God cannot see what we're doing? Just because these things have not come out of our mouth, they just remain as intent and thought, as God doesn't judge your thought, he's going to judge the secrets of man. He is the righteous judge. And we find it in this book, chapter 13, for example, we find here, the word of the Lord coming to him again, verse 13, chapter 13, therefore that says to Lord God, I will rend this, the city, with a stormy wind in my fury, there shall be no drop down in the shower of my anger, but it helps pay off the burden of my fury to consume it. I will break down [00:07:02] the wall which is stored behind him with water, and bring it down to the ground, so the foundation now shall be covered, and he shall fall, he shall be consumed in the midst thereof, and he shall know that I am the Lord. That's how I accomplished my God upon the wall. This wall, Henry Williams, the head of Jerusalem, he said to the city, that they hadn't looked after, they hadn't gone up into the gaps, they hadn't amended the wall, but it was a picture of what they were building. What are we building? These old buildings, so different with various materials, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, shovels, and here they were building a wall with untimbered mortar, so they were going to bring the whole lot down, and they were going to uncover the foundation and show how worthless your building is. You've got to go on and watch this film. You see this, it is plainly, based on the same [00:08:04] chapter, refining the importance of profit and end. Of course, this is in the wake of a girl who was looking at the wall, questioning about some of these practices of people who are determined to change the mind of God. God said to her, people are going to die.

They said, no, they're not going to die, they're going to get better. And we've seen examples of people trying to convince God that he made a mistake. Oh no, this person is going to get better. There's one particular case, a terrible example, and what I'm saying is she's got to be proficient in these practices. And when he said he's going to get better now, he said, well he died of something else, not of the disease, he was cured of the disease. I laid my hand on him, he was cured, he died of something else. And he had the audacity [00:09:01] to weep and cry over the coffin until his spinal was buried, saying God is going to raise him again. And God didn't raise him, God said that man was going to die. We see what it says here, these four prophets. It says here, in verse 19 of chapter 13, Jesus said unto me among my people a handful of garlic and a piece of bread, that a slave of souls should not die, and a slave of souls that dies should not live, while you are dying to my people in your lives. You know the one example I'm quoting here, a false prophet today, telling ungodly people it doesn't matter how you live, it doesn't matter what you do with your life, if your name's on the church registry, you'll go to heaven. There are others who are taking away the assurance of Christians, taking away their certainty of salvation, those whom God has set to receive. He's calling them to die as far as their testimony [00:10:06] is concerned, because they're false prophets. I'm against you, these false prophets, I'm going to destroy them. We saw what happened to the prophet Sarge, while he was actually prophesying, the man was dead at his feet. That's how rich we are. And he had to praise the Holy Lord God that I'll make an end to those people. God said I'm going to carry out my judgment,

I'm going to take them away, I'm going to put them into captivity, because they're not following my way. God is a just God, a righteous judge. And we see here in the verse before that, verse 18 of chapter 13, God says to Lord God, woe to the woman whose pillow is in all her armholes, who made churches from the head of this cattle, to hunt hordes. The devil's got a cushion to fit every head. The devil's got a coat to [00:11:11] fit every man, woman, and child. The devil's got his servants in this world to fit these things onto every person, everywhere. God says woe to these who make these pillows of all sizes, all men of sizes. God is going to judge all the false prophets, all the false preachers, all those that misrepresent him in this world. Pillows fit all arms, cushions God has bonnets to fit all heads, so that people's minds are blinded, blinded by the God of this world, and they can't listen to the word God. Woe to them God says, woe, I'm [00:12:01] going to destroy them, I'm going to judge them. And in verse 21, we find here, your churches lie bare, and the devil might use up your hands. They shall know more of your hands than the countries, and you shall know that I am the Lord. You shall know that I am the Lord. It keeps on, this is a recurring chorus, I think it comes 80 times in the book of Ezekiel, you shall know, they shall know, that I am Jehovah. God wants us to know who Jehovah is. He is the righteous judge. In chapter 14, we find there, four kinds of judgment.

Chapter 14, verse 13, we find there, breaking the staff of bread, it's famine. Then in verse 15, I've caused no beasts to pass through the land, spoil it. Then we find, verse 17, [00:13:07] I bring sword upon the land, say sword go to the land. In verse 19, I send a pedigree into that land, and pour out my fury upon it in blood. Because in verse 21, it sums up so much more. When I send my four sword judgments upon Jerusalem, the sword, the famine, the noise from the beasts, and the pestilence, the cacophony of man and beast. We read in Revelation, we see in the sixth chapter onwards, the terrible judgment, when God's judgment is in the world, as I have said, then shall the nations learn righteousness. It will be too late. Too late to learn righteousness then. We want them to learn righteousness now, with their growth. In chapter 15, we find Joseph saying, are we a divine after [00:14:06] all? God's chosen us to be divine. What does God say about it? Chapter 15, the word of the Lord cannot be failed. And then, what is a divine tree more than any tree, or than a branch which is among the trees of the forest? Shall we be taken off to any work, or will men take a pin of it to hang any better than ours? The odds is cast into the fire of fuel. The fire of the above is both the end of it, and the misery is theirs. Is it good for any work? The whole weight of the whole is made for no work. How much less should it be to get for any work, when the fire has deserted and burned? Therefore I say to you, O God, as the divine tree among the trees of the forest which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and I will set my face against them. As you go out from one fire, another fire shall desert them, and you shall know that I am the Lord. [00:15:03] And I will set my face against them. Divine is valueless unless it bears fruit. Remember the story of Israel. God says in the book of Isaiah, what more could I have done to my people than I have done? What more could God do? But there was no fruit. No fruit for God. In the book of Christendom, even when we look at the true Church of God today, we wonder, how much fruit is there for God? How much is there for any real fruit for God?

What do we say about the vine? Well, the Lord did the same thing. The branches that are in the vine are no good. They are cast into the fire and burn. What use is the vine? You can't make anything out of the vine. The wood is not useful for anything. It's a fruit that [00:16:02] God wanted. And there was no fruit. Cut it down. Cut it down. That's a picture of him being terrible. Cut it down. Cumber it around. And God said, that's what I'm going to do to Jerusalem. When I set my face against them, they shall know that I am the Lord. And then we see God is the righteous judge around you. Israel, as we noticed yesterday again, God has his will, his purpose for the nations. If you have a look down here, from 25 to 32, you find Moab, Ammon, the Phinistines, Tyre, Sidon, Egypt, all mentioned, and then

finally you get to 38 and 39, and God's judgement against the king of them all in the coming days. God must judge the world in righteousness. It cannot be otherwise. God was revealed to [00:17:05] Ezekiel as the righteous judge. It's good to know this, isn't it? It's good because we have found it often, turns to this. God is a righteous judge, so he commits himself to God who is the righteous judge. Lord Jesus did this. He committed himself to him who judges righteously. And the believer can do this too. The believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is God's. The judgement is passed. Christ's death was my death. That was the end of myself after the flesh. Judgement is passed for me. I can leave my cause with a God who deals justice. This in particular because there are so many believers, and I have limited time, not only in Lent where there is active persecution, but we keep on coming to God's cases of minor persecution. People are losing their positions. People are being exploited [00:18:10] because they are Christians. So many people have to leave their employment because they are squeezed out, simply because they were honest and sought to serve God. These happen all the time. But what a good thing to ask is if you are able to look to see the just one, the righteous one, and know that his cause was faith in the hands of a God who was going to judge this world righteously, who is the blood of the martyrs. Lord Jesus spoke about him. But now all those righteous people that have been murdered, unable to judge the world, have gone through history. He concluded with Zechariah. We know of him in the Revelation. But now all the martyrs are seen by God, and God is going to bring [00:19:02] into judgement those that dealt falsely with them. He is going to vindicate all those that dealt unjustly. God will vindicate them. It's good to see that, isn't it, that this is the one who is the just, the righteous just. So then he also views him as the glorious one. We notice in the first chapter how we saw the revelation of one who was all glorious.

That very description of the almost the same sort of vision that Moses had in the mount when the glory of the Lord went past him. And it's all this brightness. When he went there with the elders of Israel, the seventy elders, and they, it's all again the appearance of the glory of the Lord, the bright shining of the Lord. What a privilege this was. In chapter 1 we find it then. We find, we notice there, the brightness of the appearance of [00:20:07] the glory of the Lord. And then he goes on through his experience. Interesting again going back to chapter 1, verse 23. We find those cherubim, and then verse 24 we find the sound of the noise of their wings. And then verse 26 of chapter 1, a bump of a permanent that was over their head was the likeness of a throne as the appearance of a sapphire stone. And upon the likeness of a throne there was the likeness as the appearance of a man. What a wonderful vision this was. He's seen this glory, transcendent glory. He's seen the brightness [00:21:02] like a sapphire stone. He's seen the cherubim with their wheels and their wings, and all the glory, it's hard to describe it. But above it all there was a throne, a permanent glory, and on the throne the likeness as the appearance of a man sitting. What a wonderful thing it is to know there's a man on the throne, a man on the throne of glory. And then second chapter, Hebrews, we see not yet all things were done with him, but we see demons crowned with glory and honour. By faith we can look up and see a man upon the throne, a man, a man in Christ Jesus. What a wonderful thing. Ezekiel had this glorious revelation of a man on the throne. When we come to the final section, from the 48th down to the 48th chapter we find there the wonderful description of the new temple and the division of the land. [00:22:07] And in chapter 43, I'll give you an example of that. Chapter 43, I'm sorry to run you back and forth, I'm not really sorry, it's good exercise. Chapter 43, verse 13. I'm sorry, let's start with chapter 43, verse 1.

And afterwards he brought me to the gate, and in the gate looking towards me, and behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the well of the eagle. And he voiced about the noise of many waters. And verse 3, according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to the vision I saw when I came to this point of the city. And the vision was like the vision which I saw when I was at

Sheba. And I fell upon my face. And the [00:23:02] glory of the Lord came into my house by the well of the gate, which prostrated toward me. So the Spirit took me up and brought me into the inner court. And behold the glory of the Lord filled my house. All the wonder of seeing the glory of the Lord in the vision of the future temple, and the description which is so accurate, the brother has made plan and elevation of it, so that we can carry all these measurements, we all tally in a wonderful way. In the vision of the Lord there comes an appearance in the gate looking towards the east. Remember the cherubim in the temple, Solomon's temple, not the cherubim over the arch, the olive wood cherubim. They look out to the east. They look towards the hand of the Lord. They look towards the rising of the sun. They look towards that morning [00:24:04] with that cloud. They look to the glorious day of the appearance of the Son of Man, the town of great glory. And here, all over the country as it goes, Nebuchadnezzar was able to catch his glimpse of the glory of God. It was an important part of his training, to see the glory of God. It was the first meeting that Saul had with the Saul title. The glory, the flight of that glory, the flight of the noonday sun, the vision of the glory. It was, the man upon the throne, it was all his triumph. But the glory of it, he never forgot. He could speak of it a year later. But the glory of that vision, he says again, it was not disobedience under a heavenly vision. And so here, we find here the description [00:25:04] of it, the glory of the Lord filled the house. He was able to view this, able to look upon it. But another thing was, after all this time, when he gets this final vision, he says of the vision, I had the beginning. It was the same vision that I had at the beginning. It was the vision that I had when I had that vision of judgment of the city. It was the same as I had in the first chapter, which we read about it, the vision of the likeness of the appearance of the glory of the Lord. It's the same one. We think of Paul, the end of his life. I think of his last letter to Timothy. I fought and got a title. I finished my course. Henceforth there is made up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me in that day. It's the same one. It was the same one that appeared to him in glory, the righteous judge, who is going to give him the crown [00:26:01] of righteousness in that day. We always live in view of that day, do we? We shall never be able to serve unless we have that day in view. Unless we have that day in view, we shall never serve perfectly. Paul always spoke of that day. He went on the other day, didn't he say which day? That day, the day of the Lord, the day of his appearance. Do we have that day in view, the day of the Lord, the glorious appearance of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ? It was the same vision as I had in the beginning. It's carried more the way through. I've seen the face of Jesus. Tell me not of all, but of none. There's nothing else can keep us going in the service of God. If we look down at our brethren, sorry to say, it's truly known, I should be discouraged. If I look at myself, I should be discouraged. If I look at the world, I should be discouraged. There's only one thing that can keep us. It's that same glorious vision that we had in the beginning that can keep us. At the [00:27:04] end, almost, of this book, he says, it's the same vision, the same person that I had at the beginning. His glory fills the house. His glory fills the whole house. He doesn't forget this, as we come together all day morning. Tomorrow morning he'll see a film left here. As we come together to have intercourse, communion with our blessed Lord at his table.

He'll never forget it. His glory fills the house. Remember how the box of olives was broken? The owner of that olive filled the house. So should our worship indeed. And if we occupy with him, the men of glory, the glory of the Lord will indeed be present here. And wherever these people gather, where the Lord is in the midst, it cannot be otherwise. That glorious one is in the midst. The glory of the Lord fills the house. And when we come [00:28:04] to 7th verse here, God says, He said unto me, Son of man, the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I was bread in the midst of the children of Israel forever, and my holy name shall the house of Israel no more defile. Now it's coming a day when they are defiled any more. It's coming a day when we shan't spoil our worship by inappropriate thoughts, by inappropriate words, when we shan't offend each other any

more by using unfortunate expressions. We sometimes do, I'm afraid, even giving thanks. It's coming a day when we shall worship perfectly. We've been in the last book of the Bible. His servants shall serve him. That's real service there. It's not the service of activity, it's the service of worship. His servants will serve him and they shall see his face. They will have the privilege to be there. They will [00:29:05] just see him, just see the one he was serving. And if we come to see him, we shan't really be able to serve him. The one who is the glorious one, the all-glorious one. We come to the very last verse of the book. We know what it says there. The name of the phrase in that statue is in it. The Lord is there. Jehovah Shabbat. The Lord is there.

What better description of heaven itself? The Lord is there. There would be no heaven if the Lord were not there. The Glorious One, whose vision began out of heavenly pathway, the path that leads upward, the way that will still where life and glory are, the vision that keeps us going, serving him and giving us, that Glorious One is there. Jehovah Shabbat. The Lord is there. And then we find also not only the righteous judge and the Glorious [00:30:02] One, but also there's another sign that we catch and we notice as we keep on coming up here. He is the God of all grace. To see that just one. He's the God of all grace.

And who should describe, who should use that expression of Peter? Of course Peter. Wasn't it Peter who knew what grace was? Poor Peter. I don't know why people blame him so much because he did things that none of the other disciples were ever there to do. He was always so ready to serve. All he made mistakes. We all do, don't we? We think so much of ourselves in Peter. It was Peter who knew the weight of the grace, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. He understood that. I think when he was in the midst of raising his voice, he denied it with oaths and curses as he knew them. The Lord turned and looked [00:31:01] on Peter. The Lord turned and looked on him. The Lord knew him. The Lord was there. He read his book on him. His grace, we know, melted Peter's heart and went out of the way. We know he called him the God of grace. In chapter 20 of this book of Ezekiel, verse 33, God links his name with the deliverance of his people. Ezekiel 20, verse 33, As I did, said the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand and with a stretched-out arm, and with fury poured out, I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries where you were scattered, with a mighty hand and with a stretched-out arm, and with fury poured out, and I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, [00:32:02] and there will I plead with you face to face. All the wonderful grace of God. These people who defiled his name among the heathen, these people who brought a disgrace upon his holy name, these heirs, I will plead with you face to face. The God of grace. And he said in verse 36, and I will plead with your father in the wilderness of the land of Egypt. So will I plead with you, said the Lord God. And of course, if you ask unto the Lord, now I will bring you into the bond of the covenant, and I will hold you up from under the levels, and then the trumpets against me. Then again, you shall know that I am the Lord. You shall know that I am the Lord. One of the wonderful things is the knowledge of who he is. The God of grace. Verse 41, I will accept you with your sweet fail, and I will bring you [00:33:03] up from the people, and gather you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will respectify you before the heathen. And you shall know that I am the Lord when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for which I lift up my hand, and give you a promise. And there shall you remember your ways, all your doings, when you have been defiled. And you shall know yourselves in every sight before all the angels that you have committed. And you shall know that I am the Lord when I have walked with you for my name's sake, not according to your wicked ways, nor according to your craft doings, O ye house of Israel, except the Lord. This is the answer unto what we read. God did not deal with them according to their doings, their wicked ways, their disobedience, their defilement, or his sanctuary. We know much of what we are reading, except for a little bit. He said I will put you in a little sanctuary, in these little places [00:34:02] where they are scattered. I will be

there for them, a little sanctuary, even in those places. But God was not content with that. He is not content to give us a portion here below, to bring it up to date. He wants to have us with him there. He says here, I will bring you back into this land. I lift up my hand. He promised, he swore, to give to your fathers. Has he said and shall he not perform? Yes. He is the God of all grace, not according to your doings, but for my name's sake. His name was bound up with his people. He was going to redeem them for his name's sake. As John said, your sins are forgiven for his name's sake. Yes, not because of anything we could deserve. He is the God of all grace. So we go on to chapter 28, again, and see this developed.

[00:35:06] Chapter 28, verse 25.

Thus says the Lord God, When I shall have gathered the house of Israel, and the people among them that are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them, in the sight of the heathen, then shall they dwell in their land, that I have given to my servant Jacob. And they shall dwell safely therein, and shall build houses, and shall have vineyards. Yea, they shall dwell with confidence. Then I will execute judgment upon all those who despise the man of God. And they shall know that I am the Lord, their God. God has purposes of blessing upon them. This is still true. God has a purpose for Israel. He is the God of all grace. He informs this nation that is scattered through the whole world. He is going to bring them back eventually. And here, when I shall have gathered you, he says, when I shall be sanctified in you, in the sight of all the heathen, by the Jews [00:36:09] of Enoch, and his grace to God, and I'm sorry, so have we. Just think of us, candle, Christians, calling on each other. Christians bring each other to court. Christians, fame is yet kind as one another. Even this grace we have brought from that precious name is there. Yet, so adorbs, as now he has told, they will go to the men, and they are not going to be sanctified in there, and they shall dwell safely. They'll be there for good, for good, but only for perpetuity, that's for good. And so God's purpose stands. And then we know in the later chapters, chapter 33, the promise there, the blessing divine there, God says, I have no [00:37:02] pleasure in the death of the witches. God has no pleasure in the death of the witches. He wants the witch to turn to himself. Chapter 34 too, the promise is there. And we know again, the famous expression, verse 26, I'll make them, the places round about my hill, a blessing. I'll make them a blessing, and I'll cause the shouts to come down in the ceiling. There'll be shouts of blessing, shouts of blessing, downpours of blessing. Nothing else could satisfy the heart of God. Not just mercy doctrines, and mercy doctrines before him, but the very shouts we breathe. God's waiting to give them. Open the windows of heaven and pour out your blessing. There's not been room enough to receive it. He's waiting to do that, for his people Israel. He's waiting to do it for us too, if we prove him. If we're faithful and willing to do his will. And then we come to the 36th chapter again, the fine [00:38:07] here. God says, I will bring you, that's 36, verse 24, I will take you from non-believers and gather you out of all countries. I will bring you into your own land. It's become their own land now. As you said, when I hear the news, people try to divide this land and see the solemn warnings. I spoke about yesterday, the solemn warnings about those that divide the land that God's given to Israel. Woe to that land, God says. Woe to those that seek to divide the land of Israel. God says here, I will take you and I will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all filthiness. From all your idols I will cleanse you. A new heart also will I give [00:39:02] you, a new spirit will I put within you. I will take away the stone heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you shall keep my judgments and do them. Verse 29, I will also save you from all your unpleasing. I will call forth corn, and increase it, and lay no famine upon you. We saw earlier on how God had to bring famine upon them, and war, and pestilence, and evil beasts. But now he says, no more. He says, I'm going to bring you back, for my name's sake. What a glorious thing it is to be bound up to

the same bundle of life as this blessed Lord. To be called by his name, so that bearing his name, for his name's sake, he came to other lives and blessed the poor. And we know in the next chapter, in the well-known vision of the Valley of Divergence, God speaks of [00:40:03] what he's going to do to his people of Israel. How he's going to restore them in his own time, in his own way, for his glory. They're going to be a glory for him. And finally, in chapter 43, again, we notice, I'll bring you back to the verse we were just now.

And the face of my throne, and the face of the soles of my feet, for I will bring the bits to the children of Israel forever. And my holy name shall have no more defilement.

God's dear right, in the beginning, when he made men out of the dust, when he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, was to have communion with that man whom he had [00:41:01] made. We know sin broke that communion. What a glorious thing it is, that through the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, communion is being restored. God can have fellowship with his creatures, those in our churches, redeemed in the precious blood of Christ. Just as God can have communion with his people, the place where the soles of his feet are going to be placed. He's going to put himself there in their midst. We don't have to wait for that, do we? As we gather in his name, we are assured the Lord is in our midst. Are we conscious of this? The servant of God particularly, all of us, I trust, seek to serve him, must be conscious of this. The Lord, who we serve, is holy. He is the righteous judge. He is also the glorious one. He is also the God of all grace. And he delights to be in the [00:42:08] midst of his gathered people. What a wonderful thing it is to be able to sit in his presence on a great night, sit under his shadow on a great night, find his Spirit speak to our face. As we have communion with him, it was God's delight from the beginning. He came down in the cool of the evening to commune with the man of his mind. You know that tragedy from an evening when there was no response. The man hid himself behind the prison guard. I don't know what the other time is. Each of us knows this experience, don't we? There are times when we have put ourselves temporarily, by thinking our own thoughts, by going our own way, out of communion, out of being joyous about communion with him. The Lord is the [00:43:01] same. The Lord came down to walk in the garden and bring the dead in. It was man who put the dead in the bag. It was man who sought to hide himself from God. What a wonderful thing it is. He restored my soul. God has made provision that we, even though it is a tragic picture, sometimes we have served God, we have served Satan for many years, and then seems to lose the freshness, seems to lose his enjoyment of God's company. Various things come in. Maybe unconfessed sin. Maybe occupation with something that is different and not the will of God. Sometimes quite small things break the enjoyment, snap his tender flesh. What a wonderful thing. He has made this provision to restore my soul. It is individual.

[00:44:02] What a joyous thing to see one. Sometimes we do it. Wonderful thing to come back, see these people again restored. Not only to communion with God's people, also again the service of the Lord in their life. He is able to do it. May we each know more of this, following him, serving him while we are waiting for our Lord to come.