



Sermon, Sunday July 11, 2021, “You are still our Father!”

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 63:7-19 ⁷ I will recount the gracious deeds of the LORD, the praiseworthy acts of the LORD, because of all that the LORD has done for us, and the great favor to the house of Israel that he has shown them according to his mercy, 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 distress. It was no messenger or angel but his presence that 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 became their enemy; he himself fought against them. ¹¹ Then they remembered the days of old, of Moses his servant. Where is the one who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of his flock? Where is the one who put within them his holy spirit, ¹² who caused his glorious arm to march 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 cattle that go down into the valley, the spirit of the LORD gave them rest. Thus you led your people, to make for yourself a glorious name. ¹⁵ Look down from heaven and see, from your holy and glorious habitation. Where are your zeal and your might? The yearning of your heart and your compassion? They are withheld from me. ¹⁶ For you are our father, though Abraham does not know us and Israel does not acknowledge us; you, O LORD, are our father; our Redeemer from of old is your name. ¹⁷ Why, O LORD, do you make us stray from your ways and harden our heart, so that we do not fear you? Turn back for the sake of your servants, for the sake of the tribes that are your heritage. ¹⁸ Your holy people took possession for a little while; but now our adversaries have trampled down your sanctuary. ¹⁹ We have long been like those whom you do not rule, like those not called by your name.

Introduction: The Lord who walks with us.

Isaiah chapter 63 contains God's judgment on Israel's enemies, Isaiah's prayer for the people of Judah, and the message of restoration for Israel. And the prayer of the prophet Isaiah in today's text appears from chapter 63:7 to 64.

In today's text, Isaiah looks back on God's grace and mercy to Israel. The prophet Isaiah confesses that God was always with Israel during their tribulations.

This fact gives us confidence that God will walk with us. The Lord is with us when we are lonely and in need. Also, the Lord wants us to turn to Him from the path of sin.

But why is the Lord with us and guiding us? As for the reason, today's text says that the Lord is our Father. We must not forget that Jesus taught the Lord's Prayer to His disciples and made us confess God as our Father.

Regarding our calling on God as Father, **the Westminster Shorter Catechism teaches: “As children go to their fathers, we must come with holy reverence and confidence to a God who can and is willing to help us, and we must pray with others for others.”**

Through Isaiah's prayer in today's text, we discover the amazing faith that overcomes the world. We hope that our life of faith will bear these abundant fruits through the power of prayer.

Body: The Prayer of the Prophet Isaiah

Isaiah 63:7 says: “I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord, the praiseworthy acts of the Lord, because of all that the Lord has done for us, and the great favor to the house of Israel that



he has shown them according to his mercy, according to the abundance of his steadfast love." And Isaiah 63:14 says, "Thus you led your people, to make for yourself a glorious name."

These verses speak of God's grace and love for the people of Israel. However, the reason God gives these graces to the people of Israel is not because the people of Israel are good or obey God's Word, but rather it is only because of the covenant made between God and the people of Israel and God's love and mercy for them.

Still, the people of Israel resisted God. **"But they rebelled and grieved his holy spirit; therefore, he became their enemy; he himself fought against them."** (Isaiah 63:10)

What was the result of the Israelites' rebellion against God? It meant that God is no longer with the people of Israel. The book of Romans describes the condition in which God is not with His children: **"Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another."** (Romans 1:24)

The Israelites thought that they would be happy if they lived according to their lusts without God. But a life without God is an empty and alienated life. As a result, the Israelites come to realize the value of walking with God. So they pray to God. The prayer of the prophet Isaiah shown in today's text is a prayer that represents the heart of the Israelites.

We must not forget that our prayers to God the Father help us keep our faith and overcome the world. What prayer did the prophet Isaiah offer to God?

1) Isaiah prays for God's presence.

Isaiah 63:15 says: "Look down from heaven and see, from your holy and glorious habitation."

Isaiah prays that God will look into the hardships and shame that the people of Israel are facing. In fact, the Israelites did not want God to interfere in their lives, because they wanted to live according to their lusts. But when things became difficult, they realized how important it is to be with God.

The first prayer we should do in our lives is to seek the presence of the Lord in our lives. Prayer without His presence is empty prayer. So after praying for God's presence, Isaiah prays for God's guidance for Israel.

2) Isaiah prays for God's guidance.

Isaiah 63:17 says: "Why, O Lord, do you make us stray from your ways and harden our heart, so that we do not fear you?"

Isaiah prays for the people of Israel to follow the path of God's word. Isaiah 59:8 says that the people of Israel do not know the way of peace. We cannot walk the path of peace without the guidance of the Lord. Therefore, we should pray for the Lord's guidance even in the smallest areas of our lives. Also, after Isaiah prays for God's guidance, he prays for the humility of the people of Israel.

3) Isaiah prays for the people of Israel to have a humble heart.

Look at Isaiah 63:17. "Why, O Lord, do you make us stray from your ways and harden our heart, so that we do not fear you?" We lack wisdom and do not understand why hardened hearts have such bad consequences for our lives. So, even when we see people in need, we do not feel pity. When we praise the Lord, we are not moved, and even when we read the words of the Bible, there is no change. So Isaiah prays that the hearts of the people of Israel will be humble before God. Before we pray for our needs, we should also pray that our hearts will be humbled before the word of the Lord.

Finally, after Isaiah prays for the humility of the people of Israel, he prays for the people of Israel to come under God's rule.



4) Isaiah prays for Israel to be ruled by God.

Isaiah 63:19 says: “We have long been like those whom you do not rule, like those not called by your name.”

We are the ones who hated the rule of God. For the sake of our lusts, we wanted to be as far as possible from the rule and interference of God. But without God's rule, anxiety, worry, stress, and sin reign over us. We must not forget that whether we live under the rule of the world's sins or the Lord's rule is a matter of death and life. Therefore, we need the wisdom to choose the reign of the Lord who can give us eternal life. We must not choose the reign of the world that will disappear after a while.

Conclusion: O LORD, you are our Father.

Now let's summarize today's sermon. The prophet Isaiah confesses in prayer, “**The Lord is our Father.**” Let's look at **Isaiah 63:16**. “**For you are our father, though Abraham does not know us and Israel does not acknowledge us; you, O Lord, are our father; our Redeemer from of old is your name.**”

Furthermore, in **Isaiah 64:8**, he confesses that **God is the Father**. “**Yet, O LORD, you are our Father. We are the clay; you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.**”

Even if we are weak and make mistakes, we are children of the Lord. We live in the world with many people, but we often experience disconnection and alienation from them. But in our suffering, God the Father is with us. Isaiah communicated and united with God who walked with the people of Israel through prayer. May our prayers communicate deeply with our Heavenly Father so that we experience abundant grace through our prayers.

