

BOOK OF ISAIAH

Tuesday Night Lessons

Taught by Bro. Giuseppe Petrelli

TO THE READER

Tuesday night lessons were taught by Bro. Giuseppe Petrelli. This group of lessons from the Book of Isaiah was a continuation of the lessons begun in the World War II period.

Many of those who attended Tuesday night lessons went to serve in the Armed Forces during World War II . So that those in the Armed Forces could continue enjoying these lessons, Joseph Garippa transcribed these lessons in shorthand, typed them and distributed the lessons to those in the military services. It is because of his commitment to the work of the Lord that these lessons were preserved and are made available to us.

For Biblical references, the King James Version of the Bible was used. In several instances the New Revised Standard Version was used.

PREFACE

You desire the world to be a better place? This is what you must do: keep yourself in the strict line of following Jesus Christ.

Only in this way will you be free of selfish motives. Only thus will your thoughts and actions be pure. Then the place where you are will be a little paradise.

The world should be more wise? Very well. Begin to put yourself in the school of the Wise One. Ask Him to give you an understanding heart to discern. That's the way to banish foolishness. That is how you will help others to desire to draw from the same fountain of wisdom.

You desire others to be more faithful? Then remember each day to seize the opportunity He offers you to do something in His name. Continually scatter seeds of gentleness in Him and through Him. You be a sweet-smelling fragrance (of rest) unto God. That will cause you to spread the sweet presence of the Lord wherever you go.

You're alone? No matter. The one who plants a tree is alone. Though you do not see them, other hands and other hearts, like yours, also are moved by Him. They, too, work and pray for the good of many. You do your part. Leave the care of the Universe to the Lord.

Giuseppe Petrelli

Lesson 1

Isaiah 8:5-16; 36:1-11; 37:1-7

The words in Isaiah 8:5-16 were written many years before those in Isaiah 36. In chapter 8, the Prophet gave a warning to the people, not to make an alliance with the Assyrians, but to depend only on the Lord. Judah was an extremely small territory, and the Lord had a plan for Judah; they should have no army and should depend entirely upon the Lord. When they began to lean on others, they fell into ruin.

Isaiah 8:5-7: “The Lord spake also unto me again, saying, Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah’s son; Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks.” Jerusalem had a little water. The people despised its poverty and looked to the mighty rivers of Assyria. Blessed are the people who are satisfied in their poverty.

Verse 8: “And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.” The waters shall reach to the neck but shall not overflow because of the mercy of God. When the prophecy was fulfilled, Isaiah did not say, “I told you so,” but cried unto the Lord, and prayed for the people. When the people said they wanted Assyria, the Lord said, “I will give it to you, but there is a big price to pay.” The people thought that the prophet spoke foolishly, because, at that time, the Assyrians were helping them. Don’t ask help of big people because they have many buildings and are rich. Assyria will

go over all your country and will almost drown you. It is not buildings that we need; it is ministries. When we become proud and independent, we will destroy ourselves.

Verses 11 & 12: “For thus spake the Lord to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not, A confederacy to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid.” When you say something when there is prosperity, and it does not happen immediately, you begin to become tempted. Isaiah must have been tempted. He may have felt that he was too hard with the people. He might have thought that it was not the voice of the Lord. This reveals the condition of the prophet. It isn't easy to serve the Lord and please the people. While Isaiah was fearing, and so many “ifs” came to his mind, the Lord stepped in “with a strong hand” and said, “Be faithful; keep speaking; don't look to the people.” The people thought that the prophet was lying, for everything seemed to be good. But this is a temptation of the devil. We must love the people but not be swayed by them. The good people will stay with you. You need to be very strong not to be controlled by the emotions of others. Keep looking to the Lord.

Verses 13-16 “Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. And He shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel, for a trap and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken. Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.” The Lord said, “Instead of being afraid of the future, fear the Lord. Sanctify the Lord and let Him be your fear.” Instead of fearing people, fear God and you will be free of the fear of men. You will have a refuge in God. To

those who do not obey, God Himself will become a "stumbling block." The mass rejected those words; but in every movement there is a remnant. "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples." This is for the few who listened. The testimony was sealed in their hearts and they remembered.

Isaiah 36:1,2: "Now it came to pass in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah, that Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah, and took them. And the king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem unto king Hezekiah with a great army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field." This was written twenty years later. Hezekiah, a good king, reigned at this time. He restored and cleansed the temple. The Assyrians began to take one city after another until they reached near Jerusalem. Then the king of Assyria acted in a very sly manner and sent a messenger to caress the people of Jerusalem. But, no one can destroy a man who trusts in the Lord.

Verses 4-7: "And Rabshakeh said unto them, Say ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou trustest? I say, sayest thou, (but they are but vain words) I have counsel and strength for war: now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me? Lo, thou trustest in the staff of this broken reed, on Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust in him. But if thou say to me, We trust in the Lord our God: is it not he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and said to Judah and to Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar?" These verses show the boldness of man. Man is arrogant. Man, without fear of God, is capable of everything mean and terrible. This messenger began to insult the officers of King Hezekiah,

thinking that they were so powerful that no one could resist them. Verse 7 speaks of the religion of Hezekiah. Even enemies know. He was a faithful king, worshipping the Lord. He destroyed all the other altars and built only one altar to the Lord. The messenger knew this and was trying to get around the king by telling him how good and holy he was. He was keen and clever. Then he told the king that if he had two thousand soldiers, the king of Assyria would give him two thousand horses. It was as if to say, "If you can't produce this, how can you resist the great Assyrian army?" The poor ambassador of Judah said, "Don't speak in the language of the people because they will understand and become terrified."

Verse 20: "Who are they among all the gods of these lands, that have delivered their land out of my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?" The ambassador continued to caress and frighten the people at the same time. Very cleverly, he told the people to pay his demands and they should be brought to another country. He wanted them to put themselves in his hands. They held their peace and answered not a word to all of his speeches. Many times, Jesus never answered a word. Let them boast!

Isaiah 37:1-7: This is the people of the remnant. They rent their clothes and covered themselves with sackcloth. Then they sent word to Isaiah...the one who said, "This certain thing will happen." Isaiah did not say, "I told you so." He offered up prayer and the "waters did not go above the neck." The Lord remembered the remnant; God can save a nation for a few people who are faithful in that nation. The people were penitent. The prophets had great responsibilities. When they sent messengers to Isaiah, he was ready for the message.

Verses 6,7: “And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say unto your master, Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. Behold, I myself will put a spirit in him, and he shall hear a rumor, and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.” We fear man because we do not fear God. If we fear God, we will not fear man. If we are faithful to the Lord, God will become the enemy of our enemies. Exodus 23:22: “But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries.” You have to do nothing; don’t run around asking protection from man. Psalm 110:1: “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”

Lesson 2

Isaiah 11:1-10

Verse 2: "And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." *REST* is the conclusion, the consequence; of having a balanced life. Quick understanding; a Christian will become alert, sensitive. Don't look with your eyes or hear with your ears; we need different eyes and ears. "Wisdom and fear".. Job 33:33: "If not, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom." Hold thy peace...be quiet...be humble. If you have wisdom, you must have the fear to keep you humble.

Verse 4: "But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." He shall judge the poor, that is, the poor in spirit...those who are crushed. Will the Lord judge crushed people with severity? The righteousness of God is an inward one. When the poor must be judged, the Lord will not look to the outward aspect. Even the poor in spirit need to be judged once in a while, but the Lord will judge them with His righteousness, in His measure. God weighs the spirits. It is very different from the way we judge.

The Lord will not strike the "meek" but will reprove him with "equity." In a courtroom, many times the lawyers will tell the judge to judge with equity, not strictly according to law, but considering circumstances. The Lord knows how to reprove people. We may see only the mistakes in people but not the many tears of repentance. We do not possess the data

to judge an individual. That is why the Lord judges according to the inward state. One of the stations we must reach is: God is judge of all. He will judge the poor in spirit with a sense of affection. Judgment is good. David often says, "Judge me, O Lord." The poor and meek go to that Judge often. In the second part of this verse there are two classes of people: the earthly and the wicked. Esau was earthly. The earthly want nothing of the Lord. He will be judged according to his way. There is somebody worse than Esau; he is the "wicked." Psalm 50:15-21: "And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee. When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers. Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son. These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes."

The first verse refers to the Church. The rest is a picture of the "wicked." The Lord says to the wicked, "What is your babbling?" These wicked men are those who seem to be religious, often very important in church. These wicked men do not walk sincerely according to what they profess. But the Lord tells the wicked to keep quiet. The wicked one declared His statutes but does not keep them. The wicked mentioned here may be very religious—a good singer, preacher, someone important. He takes the name of the Lord in his mouth. The Lord says, "What have you to do with mentioning my Name with your dirty mouth." The wicked will not hear instructions; he wants you to speak always of churchism; he doesn't like instruction, patiently learning line

after line. He also wants to compromise. Then he says, "The Lord will bless me just the same." But the Lord says, "because I am silent, you think that I do not know you."

"With the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked" Genesis 15:11: "And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away." These birds were demons, which came to destroy the sacrifice of Abraham. In Italian, a better word for "drove" is "blew." Many times, you may be oppressed by the enemy who tries to crush you, and you have to take a deep breath. It is the heavy breath of God that drives the enemy away. 2nd Thes. 2:3-8: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now, ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

The wicked will be discovered by the Holy Ghost; the false religionist shall be discovered. Everything in God's realm must reach a measure: sin upon sin, prayer upon prayer—then the measure comes. If you lift up Christ, the day will come when the wicked either bend or run away. They cannot remain in the consuming fire of the Lord. Psalm 1:6: "For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish." The iniquity must reach a measure; God has a measure in everything. The "breath" will fix everything; the wicked shall disappear.

Verse 5: "And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." "Righteousness" is the holy living in the presence of God. "Faithfulness" is the condition of our spirit; it is something which *creates* righteousness. Be faithful to your commission. If Isaiah wanted to please the people, he would be unfaithful to God. The man who has gone through the seven operations of the Holy Spirit will be faithful; it is then that we mean what we say, and say what we mean. That will be righteousness. "Loins" represent strength. When you live justice and righteousness, you will be strong; you can face the enemy, the world. "Reins" in the Old Testament mean "affection, feelings, human tenderness." A Christian must be strong and gentle at the same time. Gentleness comes by being faithful. Let God control our "reins."

Lesson 3

Isaiah 33:1-14

Isaiah preaches to several classes of people at the same time.

Verse 1: "Woe to thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! When thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; and when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee." This is a statement of God's judgment. People who do evil and seem never to suffer, should not be glad. We have to pay sometime. If the thing is not judged, don't think that the Lord will never judge; it is impossible for a thing to escape God. It is a great misfortune to do evil and not pay back something. Psalm 119:67, 71, 75: "Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word. It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes. I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me."

God, in His faithfulness afflicted David and he was not unhappy about it. David was glad to be able to suffer something. It was like a medicine, a balm, to his conscience. The Lord has mercy on some things, but we must suffer something. Judgment for the Church begins here, in this life. 1st Peter 4:17: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" We must be glad. If we have been envious today, someone will envy us tomorrow. It is divine justice. We can never pay justly, but we have to taste some fruit of our own actions. The time will come when we will stop doing things against others, but others will act against us; we must have patience. Verse 2: "O Lord, be gracious unto us; we have

waited for thee: be thou their arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble." The prophet preaches and some of the people listen. They hear and utter a prayer. There is much calm and meditation between one verse and another. They pray: "unto US...WE...OUR" and at a certain point, they speak of "their". They prayed for the people who were not in their midst, but they still loved the Lord. "Our salvation." Salvation is a continuous process and never stops this side of heaven.

Verses 3 & 4: "At the noise of the tumult the people fled; at the lifting up of thyself the nations were scattered. And your spoil shall be gathered like the gathering of the caterpillar: as the running to and fro of locusts shall he run upon them." Note the change in pronoun; Isaiah is speaking to a different class of people. He is telling the enemies that they will profit nothing from the things they stole.

Verse 5: "The Lord is exalted; for he dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness." The Lord, not man, is exalted. Zion was a fortress in Jerusalem. The Lord begins with a few people. "Judgment and righteousness." Judgment is examining our own lives; we must love judgment. Judgment means to judge ourselves. Examine yourself thoroughly in God's presence. Job 34:31-37: "Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend anymore: That which I see not teach thou me: if I have done iniquity, I will do no more. Should it be according to thy mind? He will recompense it, whether thou refuse, or whether thou choose; and not I: therefore speak what thou knowest. Let men of understanding tell me, and let a wise man hearken unto me. Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words were without wisdom. My desire is that Job may be tried unto the end because of his answers for wicked men, for he addeth

rebellion unto his sin, he clappeth his hands among us, and multiplieth his words against God.”

Examine to judge yourself in God’s presence and then see what courage you have. We are very courageous when we compare ourselves to other people, but when we are in God’s presence it is different. In Job 34, Elihu did not say that the beating of Job would stop; he said that the beatings should continue because he was judging and answering himself. In secret, where no man looks, there, we must love judgment and righteousness. Jeremiah 18:4 “And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.” Even though we are in His own hands, we make mistakes; He allows that. But some people try to make others believe that they are perfect; they preach that they *have* the kingdom instead of preaching that we have to *receive* the kingdom; they say that we *have* the mind of Christ instead of praying for it. We do not have it! Do not be deceived. People can become scandalized and wonder if such things as schemes, backbiting, etc. can be of the kingdom of God or of His mind. Do not take these things for granted. Acts 14:22: “Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.”

The baptism is only the beginning. “Much tribulation” is necessary for us to enter into the kingdom of God. God knows that we are deficient; let us extend ourselves toward perfection. We go through “much tribulation” for the humbling of our nature. God loves the dust of Jerusalem. When we have become dust, He picks up the broken vessel and builds us again. Those who are willing to be down are the Church; don’t be afraid. Isaiah 57:15: “For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that

is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” He abides with the lowly. Although we want to be on a pedestal, He dwelt with the lowly in order to revive them. We have to go through that grinding process; if we refuse, we will remain like the Scribes and Pharisees.

Verse 6: “And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the Lord is his treasure.” It doesn’t make any difference how many years we went to school because we have the greatest Teacher of the universe. We don’t want to remain ignorant. 1st Peter 5:10: “But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.” This is something “solid.” You are not uncertain anymore; God gives stability; you know where you are. Our “No” will be “no;” our “Yes” will be “yes.”

Verse 7: “Behold, their valiant ones shall cry without: the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly.” The “ambassadors” will not succeed. Did you ever try to arrange things and be a peacemaker and not succeed? Isaiah 32:17: “And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever.” Righteousness first, then peace comes. Give God the place that belongs to Him; it is God’s government, His commands, not man’s. The ambassadors weep bitterly and have no peace. We are faulty; we must take our place in the dust; then it is easy to be in peace. Ambassadors who wash the outside of the cups will never have peace except when the inside is clean. They work hard but weep bitterly.

Lesson 4

Isaiah 33:13-24

Verse 7: "Behold, their valiant ones shall cry without: the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly." It isn't easy to be a peacemaker; you are beaten by both parties.. But it is good to be a peacemaker. You must be courageous; don't spare either party; don't pay attention to all the words because they may be said in sorrow.

Verse 13: "Hear, ye that are *far off*, what *I have done*; and, *ye that are near*, acknowledge *my might*." Some people must see the works because they have no capacity to understand Christ; others have to see deeper than the works. Psalm 103:7: "He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel." He revealed facts to some people and secrets to others. "Ways" means secrets that He revealed to Moses. To Moses, He revealed more; to Isaiah, He revealed only facts. Those who are near the Lord see beyond the facts. Facts are good and have their place in the church, but some desire to know the heart of the Father. Facts are for those who don't understand the Lord. "Believe on my words; if not, believe on my acts." "Word" is character, Christ Himself. Those who have seen Him are steadfast. Many who saw His acts went their own ways.

Verse 14: "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with the everlasting burnings?" Sinners walk easy in Jerusalem. Zion is a fortress within Jerusalem and it makes the sinners uneasy. We must have the desire to become Zion. It would be foolish to say that the "devouring fire" and the "everlasting burnings" refer to hell. Let us see what the next verse says.

Verse 15: "He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil." These are the people who will dwell with fire and burnings; they remain under the searching eyes of God. They suffer, but remain under the beatings; it is discipline. God, in His faithfulness, afflicts us. Even when we listen to a message, the Lord can be burning us. It will not be a lost meeting. The old man must lose something and the new man must gain something every time. When Christ speaks, there is fire. The disciples said that when He was speaking, their hearts burned within them. Our God is a consuming fire; He desires to consume what is bad in us. People who do not like the fire run out of Zion; others dwell in the fire and will not go away. These people realize that we must go through much burning before we are righteous. It is not easy. Righteousness must begin in our own homes. Do not be afraid to tell your children when they are wrong. Also defend people when you have a chance. Do not be afraid to tell of the good you know about others.

Prov. 31:8: "Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction." That is, "Open your mouth for those who are unable to speak for themselves." You will make enemies if you love justice, but you will make God your friend. Others will trust you. Righteousness begins with being severe in our own churches. It costs, but you will have order in your church and in your family. It is easy to be forgiven, but it is not easy to be a Christian. Exodus 32:26 & 27: "Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his

side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.” Moses commanded them to kill those nearest them. It is very easy to scold or criticize others. It is very easy to be severe with Catholics and other churches, but we are partial with our own groups. This makes us guilty before God. Those who are for the Lord are commanded to use the sword against their own people. Begin with the closest friends; begin with ourselves; then we will learn righteousness. Our arms won't be strong to beat others when we beat our own. Be impartial. 1st Timothy 5:21: “I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.” We must have no prejudices, no bias, or anything that closes our reasoning.

The Lord works to make us become real Christians. We need a conversion after many years. When a talebearer brings you news of someone, say that you don't want to hear it. Pray for others. If you harden your face, the talebearer will not come a second time. Proverbs says that the hardening of the face makes the talebearer silent. Charity covers.

Lesson 5

Isaiah 33:17-22

Verse 17: "Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off." The people who are consecrated to the Lord are blind people; they don't see. They shut their eyes from seeing...to "behold" the land that is very far off. We have much beauty around us and yet, people do not see it. You will see Christ everywhere when you are converted. To "behold" means to look with intensity, desire and admiration. How can you behold a thing when it is far off? Many Christians have a distant Christianity; they think that this verse is for the distant future; but these people see in the present, now! Our spirits are beholding. Hebrews 12:9: "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" The more we go near the Lord, the more we become "spirits."

Verse 18: "Thine heart shall meditate terror. Where is the scribe? Where is the receiver? Where is he that counted the towers?" In the past they were always trembling. God wants to release us from fear, "Towers" were fortresses, places of watching and of defense. They represent fear and dependence on man; the Lord took them away.

Verse 19: "Thou shalt not see a fierce people, a people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive; of a stammering tongue, that thou canst not understand." Many times you feel like you are in a different world, like a stranger. "People of a deeper speech." There are people who are very scheming and subtle. They do not speak clearly and we cannot understand them. Verse 20: "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem, a

quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.” Look upon Zion; don’t look at evil anymore; don’t receive discouraging reports anymore. This is a command to the real church. When everything went wrong, God said to Elijah, “Don’t look at the dark side of things; keep looking at Zion and you will see the real church”. Zion is the city of our solemnities; it is a quiet habitation. Quietness is the mark of perfection. Rest is the terminal point of the Christian. We have spiritual feasts. Everything will be “taken down” in this life except for God. Heb. 12:26-29: “Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire.”

Never fix anything permanently. Many times, we fight God; He wants to destroy something in order to build and we want to keep things in the same condition and place. We think we are doing God a service. God bears patiently for a while. Accept God’s dealings; never fix on anything; never cling on any one person or place. We must cling only to Christ; when you cling to Christ, you will have a great company. After we stop looking at a “fierce people”, we will see Zion. Rev. 19:1: “And after these things, I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleliua; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God.” John had been looking at the destruction of Babylon, but “...after these things...” he heard a different people. You have nothing to do with Babylon anymore; then you will hear another people; you will never remain alone. You will “hear” much

people in heaven. Heaven is not only a place; it is a condition. How “quiet” a Christian becomes! He has no more agitation but enters into rest. Rest is perfection.

Verse 21: “But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby.” “...broad rivers...” Deep—you don’t have to have many testimonies, etc., but you do have to lift up Christ. Not every boat can go into these broad rivers—“no galley with oars shall go in”. This is the force of man. He is always running, trying to save the universe; he is never at rest. Enter into rest; God will show you your work. Eph. 2:10: “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” The Lord has prepared our work. Be yourself; don’t try to imitate anyone; He created YOU. Don’t listen to man. Day after day, we have work to do for the Lord without our knowing it. Do not despise the little things that He puts before us throughout the day, no matter where you may be. “Gallant ships”—big names—those waters will not permit those ships to enter. Only those who depend on the Lord and not on their own work, will be permitted to enter. Those who sail with the strength of God will not be tired, but will have rest. God knows the big ships will judge you for not doing the same things that they do.

Verse 22: “For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; He will save us,” Others will “oar” you in different directions, but you stop them and say, “The Lord is my judge; I have to give account to Him.” While traveling from Egypt to Canaan, you encounter many stations; you don’t judge anyone and no one judges you. Each “and” is a station. The Lord is our lawgiver; He commands day by day what we have to do. He will “save us”, day by day.

Lesson 6

Isaiah 33:13-19

Verse 13: "Hear, ye that are far off, what I have done; and, ye that are near, acknowledge my might." The Lord reveals facts to one class of people and secrets to another. Those who are near Him speak of something invisible; we don't see the power of God; we see the results.

Verse 14: "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Zion is a fortress of Jerusalem; it represents the church in general. Among it are obstinate ones who will not remain for long; they are afraid and run from the fire. The saints present that great question; they are in the fire and are shaken. It is not a carnival to be in the presence of God. Saints won't always have blessings but will have something which makes them tremble; it is a burning fire.

Verse 15: "He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil." Hearing of "blood" refers to hate, jealousy, envy and pride. How do we know if it is Satan or God speaking to us? "Thou shalt become great..." said Satan; but God said to Adam that he should become dust. The speech of Satan is pride. Satan speaks well of you and evil of someone else. Christ wants us to become as dust. Satan is a liar and will tell you that you are doing good things and that others are picking on you. A Christian realizes that it is Satan speaking and closes his ears to such words.

Verse 16: "He shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him;

his waters shall be sure.” This is the consequence of the life of sacrifice in the fire. Psalm 91:1: “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” When you dwell on high, you cannot see anything around you; people disappear. Isaiah 2:10: “Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty.” According to the world, there is no protection for the Christian in this world. He has no defense. There is trouble everywhere; but, we must enter into the Rock. Enter into Christ and stay there. The Israelites were commanded to enter their houses and remain under the blood. The more enemies pursue you, the more you enter into Christ. Song of Solomon 2:14: “O my dove, thou art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.” Her enemies accused her of many things; then, she went into the Rock. A dove is a very modest bird of love that Christ calls the Church. She said, “I hate my own voice, my countenance, myself.” She retired herself in solitude, contemplating the wounds of Jesus. She felt as though others were worthy to serve the Lord; but the Lord calls her to come out, and tells her that she has a nice voice and that she is beautiful. When we hate ourselves, God steps out and calls us. The Lord knows when to comfort.

“Bread shall be given him.” When people are hungry, they know how to find bread. Others are more occupied in the temple of Jerusalem. The Lord will feed us with inner manna. Rev. 2:17: “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.” He will feed us in a mysterious way. Verse 17: “Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.”

In verse 15, the individual closes his eyes and shuts his ears. We are almost blind and deaf. But while he becomes blind to some things, he gets a telescope from God and looks to a land that is far off. He will not see hatred or hear evil reports because he is contemplating the King in His beauty. He becomes blind to this world but receives eyesight for the next. You lose in one realm to gain in another. Close your eyes and ears to man in order to hear and see God.

Verse 18: "Thine heart shall meditate terror. Where is the scribe? Where is the receiver? Where is he that counteth the towers?" "Weigher" is another word for "receiver"—it is someone weighing you and spying on you. The man who lives in God's presence becomes fearless. The time must come when we must become fearless; fear God and not man. There is a special salvation from fear. Many children of God are under fear; they are afraid of enemies, afraid of people who weigh us.

The day will come when the Lord will make you fearless. Hebrews 2:15: "And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." It is a terrible life to always be fearful. Many of the things we fear never come to pass and yet, we suffer them. Isaiah 8:13: "Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread." Make a sanctuary in your heart for Him and say "Goodbye" to all your fears. Be firm and steadfast. When we mingle in, and become entangled in this world, we have fear. The man who lives in the presence of God, in the fire, doesn't go away; he is fearless although gentle.

Lesson 7

Isaiah 33:23-24

Verse 13: "Hear, ye that are far off, what I have done; and, ye that are near, acknowledge my might." Psalm 103:7: "He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel." John 14:11: "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very work's sake." There are two kinds of believers. There are those who love Jesus for His beauty, character, personality and word. There are others who come after Him out of curiosity, and few remain; but those who love Jesus remain forever.

Verse 23: "Your riggings hang loose; it cannot hold the mast firm in its place, or keep the sail spread out. Then is the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame take the prey." The first portion of the verse is a negative portion; it is not a description of people who have been established. They are people who boast of blessings; they are unstable. The Prophet tells them of their condition. They are strong in themselves and boast, but the Prophet separates them in the message. "You think you are strong, but you are weak", says the Prophet. When these people repent, the Lord will make them stable. "Then" they will receive the promise: the lame take the prey. 1st Peter 5:10: "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." It takes time to reach this stability. For a long time, people are shaken. Shaken Christians are rare; the majority of the people are not deep in Christ. A Christian is beaten. God knows, we are like a pendulum swinging back and forth and we need conversion. It takes great discipline, sorrow, suffering, to become established. God is a God of patience. Some are too sure of themselves and need to be corrected. They have illusions

that their “riggings” are strong and their “mast” is strengthened. Then, the people who are not sure of themselves, speak. 2nd Cor. 12:7-9: “And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” The Lord refused to make Paul a giant. Very few servants of the Lord are giants. The Lord did not say, “my strength is made perfect in a strong man who walks like a giant and is sure of himself.” Rather, He said, “my strength is made perfect in a weak body.”

Genesis 32:27 & 28: “And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.” Who will “get the prey”; who will “overcome?” This is a picture of a man who thought that he was strong and could defend himself. The Lord almost abandoned him. “Tell me thy name, confess.” NAME is a confession; NAME is our history. He confessed his name and the Lord made him lame. He could not run here and there. The Lord said, “You are no more Jacob (Schemer), but Prince of God; thou hast prevailed with God and man.” He did prevail when he met up with Esau who was a hunter. Jacob was a weak, lame man; he could not defend himself from that warrior. He *did* prevail, however, because the heart of Esau was melted by God. A poor, crippled, old man prevailed. The ways of God are different from the ways of man. We look too much to appearances; we have to go to reality: “The lame get the prey.” Verse 24: “And the inhabitant shall not say, I am

sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.” The scriptures do not say that the people will not get sick. The inhabitants of “that City” accept everything; they say everything is fine. They thank God for their weak heart, asthma, etc. Romans 8:28: “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” They shall not complain; this is the Church. 1st Thes. 5:18: “In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” Never complain; give thanks in everything; in suffering, afflictions, poverty and troubles. There is no complaining in real Christians. If people speak evil of you, it is a chance to pray for them. If we are sick, we have a chance to praise God. The inhabitants of that City will not lament. “The people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.” Trespass is the actual sin; to covet is iniquity, inner sin. Jesus bore our iniquities—our inner tendencies to do evil.

Psalm 25:11: “For thy name’s sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great.” David did not ask forgiveness for trespasses. Psalm 51:16: “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.” This man knew himself very well: “mine iniquity is immense.” Do we know ourselves? What is the trouble with every religious movement? It is the lack of penitence; it is the abundance of churchism and the lack of tears. People are

not penitent; they boast. They may have no sin in the exterior and they boast, and are proud. Let us examine ourselves inwardly. Face the situation and confess. Plead the blood when evil thoughts come; rebuke them in the name of Christ. Very few are desirous to know themselves. The closer we go to the Lord, the more sin we see. The people of the New Jerusalem are forgiven their iniquity. Psalm 66:18: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." It does not say, "If I kill somebody, the Lord will not hear me." To "regard iniquity" means to "defend" iniquity. "If I excuse myself." We are always defending the evil that is within us. The Lord says, "You defend your iniquity instead of pleading mercy for me to cleanse you; so you will remain there in your own condition, and I will not hear you." Many say, "I am a good person, just a little temperamental." That is defending iniquity. We should say that we are terrible—hate yourself! We trust God as much as we distrust ourselves, our way of thinking, our temper, our wishes, our personality. We must hate and loathe; then, the iniquity is forgiven. We all have iniquity; some have more, some have less. Isaiah 11 speaks of the beasts which, are in us; but when we understand iniquity, we can tell these beasts to keep their place. The new nature in us will keep the animals in their place; they are there, but will never be strong. When you live on top of the Holy Mountain, even though those beasts are still there, they have no power. We have iniquity; we are still in this body; but the Lord knows we hate ourselves and that we don't want to think evil anymore. Then, He will forgive our iniquity.

Lesson 8

Isaiah 35:1-10

Verse 1: "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." This is a chapter of restoration after a great ruin and chastisement. It speaks of the remnant. The remnant goes through three stages: optimistic aspect, despair, and redemption. We were optimistic when we thought we were better than those who did not go to our church or did not believe as we. We saw great prosperity around us; everything was charming and rosy. Then the Lord sends chastisement and we are almost in despair. The Lord destroyed all of our many dreams within us. A remnant in us means that we had one hundred dreams, but little by little, we will be reduced in our measure.

A remnant is found in the "wilderness." Hosea 2:14-15: "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her vineyards to her from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt." We have to go through some stations. "I will allure her in the wilderness." We all have to go in this "wilderness." There, in the wilderness, something will be given to this woman; the Lord will speak comfort to her by the Holy Spirit. Comfort is the first office of the Holy Spirit. When a person is in sorrow, you cannot comfort them with many verses.

In the wilderness, the Lord gives the gifts; not when we are in the crowds in prosperity. Hosea speaks of the "valley of Achor," his valley of trouble and affliction, and is the entrance of a beautiful territory; it is the door. When you

have great affliction, be glad; something grand is coming through this valley of trouble. "She shall sing again." This is a song after a trial, a song of redemption. What is the difference between first being saved and then redeemed? A redeemer steps in when everything else is lost. At first we thought we were angels but then, we saw differently. The Lord brings us in the wilderness. Then we sing the real song of redemption. It is the opposite of man's doings and dreams. Stay in the desert; don't go out before God's time. John was really a man of the desert; his schooling was in the desert; John remained in the desert. Luke 1:80: "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the desert till the day of his showing unto Israel." Many want to become preachers at once. We all have to go through some deserts. The Lord has His own time; He will come in the desert.

Verse 2: "It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." Lebanon and Carmel were very beautiful forests. First the desert and the beautiful forests. "Joy." There are some joys that attract you. It is a peaceful joy full of healings. There is healing in the joy of the Lord. It is health and strength to the people—a tonic to them. It is not created or artificial. Nehemiah 8:10: "Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength." This joy is not upsetting, but many times, is quiet.

Verse 3: "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees." In the remnant there are still some people who are in some affliction, some fear. Paul thanked the Lord for the comfort he had received so as to help others, not to

use it selfishly. The people who have the joy of the Lord will help the others who are crushed by affliction or wrong preaching. It is a joy to help someone walk steadily and better than before.

Verse 4: "Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you." When Jesus arose from the dead, He sent a message to tell His disciples and Peter. Jesus knew that Peter was feeble at the moment because he was recalling how he had denied his Lord. He may have thought that he was no longer a disciple. The Lord does not forget the weak people. "He will come and save you." We need this salvation today as much as we did the first day we accepted the Lord.

Verses 5 & 6: "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert." The mature one must encourage the weak ones and those who are fearful among the remnant. "The eyes and the ears shall be opened." In Isaiah 22:15, these people had their eyes and ears closed to this world so as to have them fully opened to hear and see spiritual things. These people refused to see and hear evil. They became blind and deaf voluntarily. If someone comes to you with evil reports, he will not talk if you stop him. An ear can hear evil; if we do not listen to evil reports and shun the person who speaks evil, he will stop. Isaiah stopped his ears and shut his eyes, but his eyes and ears will be opened for something else. Faith comes by hearing; hearing the word of God. You will hear the words of the Good Shepherd only. John 9:39: "And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind." Those who say, "I know; I understand," are

the ones who become stupid, and the Lord abandons them. Let us not be too clever, because we will fall into our own trap.

Verse 6 refers to waters and streams. We cannot create rivers and waters. We try, but we make big mistakes. They must come from the throne of God.

Verse 8: "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." Jesus said, "I am the Way." The way to Jesus is Jesus Himself. "...the Way of Holiness..." is purity and separation. Before we get any holiness, we need someone to inhabit us with His holiness. 1st Corinthians 1:30: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." First, He must become sanctified within us with His holiness; then, little by little, we will become holy ourselves. When you have such a person in your house, you will try to fix your house the best you can.

Verse 9: "No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there." Everyone carries a type of zoo in them. If we are living on high, those animals cannot harm us; the "lion" cannot go there. We carry them within us, but there shall be no beast "there."

Verse 10: "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." We have to taste something of heaven before we get there. The spies carried some grapes from the Promised Land. Do not wait only for the future and

fail to see some of it today. We have to have a foretaste of heavenly powers.

“And the ransomed of the Lord.” We had fallen into captivity, trapped by the devil. Someone had to pay for our trouble and ransomed us. He pays the price and frees the captives. The Lord goes about adjusting many things in secret for us. Many times, He stops the hand of the persecutor against us. Psalm 126:1: “When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like them that dream.” These people came out of captivity singing. Those who are honest will not remain in Babylon, the city of confusion; they will go to the fortress of David; they will sing, and will enter a condition of something permanent. It is not the plan of God that we must have uncertainties. 1 Peter 5:10: “But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.” We have to be established; we have to enter a certain realm of tranquility. Deep within us, there must be peace and rest. We have to enter into a condition which is settled; we have to reach that condition. “The ransomed shall return.” Many times, this word was spoken to the Shulamite. This “joy” is not a superficial joy; it is a deep joy in the spirit. Deep sorrow shall say “Goodbye” forever. You have to go through troubles and then, you will enter a realm of peace and joy after affliction.

Lesson 9

Isaiah 37:1-16

The ambassador of Assyria spoke with great arrogance, but the people held their peace. The king commanded them not to answer. Instead of answering back, these men rent their clothes and went to Isaiah and told him everything. The king covered himself with sackcloth; we need a covering. The head is the seat of imagination; we need to be covered by Jesus. Covering himself with sackcloth was a great humiliation for the king but he did so, in the presence of the people and was not ashamed.

Verses 2 & 3: “And he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, unto Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz. And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth.” The king sent priests, not high officials. Not only did he send priests, but also elders of the priests who were also covered with sackcloth. These men made a confession. They used to pray; they were like a people pulling a heavy weight, trying and trying. When they do not succeed, they call for someone’s help. Prayer is agonizing; it is suffering. They were praying and crying, but there was no answer. There was a good beginning, but there were no results. There was no birth; they did not produce anything definite. They realized that they needed someone else to finish the prayer. They were the priests and the king, but they needed the prophet. The prophet is the mouthpiece of God. Hosea 12:13: “And by a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved.” The ministry of prophecy is immense. Is it enough to come out of Egypt? No! We need to be “preserved”—to be kept. The

prophet was the only one who could bring birth to their prayers.

Verse 4: "It may be the Lord thy God will hear the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God, and will reprove the words which the Lord thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left." This is a call for help. We have to help each other; no one is independent; we must be independent and dependent at the same time. This request was presented very humbly; we need humility. He did not say, "My God." Hezekiah loved God; he knew that he did not have the communion that Isaiah possessed. Something was lacking; he knew and recognized this. "lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left" It was as though Hezekiah said, "We have tried to pray but we don't succeed; consequently, we need someone whose prayers go higher." *LIFT UP.* Your prayers reach heaven like an arrow. The majority of people have blasphemed God and have neglected Him. We don't deserve anything, but there is a remnant. We must not dare to call ourselves the remnant; we must be humble.

Isaiah 8:11-14: "For the Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. And He shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem." The Lord spoke "with a strong hand." The prophet is a man and he fears. He did not want to act strangely and disturb the majority of the people by his strange words; but the Lord led him with a strong hand. The Lord must put His hand on us so that we

may stop looking to man, and that we may forever stop looking to the majority of the people. The true Church is not ruled by the majority of the people.

Hezekiah heard this message and remembered it; he went to the right place and asked in the right way. The Lord does many good things for the sake of a few people.

Verse 6: “And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall you say unto your master, Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.” Those who knew how to pray had already prayed. Isaiah had already prayed; he did not have to “pray through” for many days. Many times, throughout the book of Isaiah, appear the words, “fear not; be not afraid.” We are sick with fear; the greatest sickness in humanity is fear.

Verse 7: “Behold, I myself will put a spirit in him, and he shall hear a rumor, and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.” God makes people run away. “...he shall hear a rumor...” 1st Samuel 23:26: “And Saul went on this side of the mountain, and David and his men on that side of the mountain: and David made haste to get away for fear of Saul; for Saul and his men compassed David and his men round about to take them. But there came a messenger unto Saul, saying, Haste thee, and come; for the Philistines have invaded the land. Wherefore Saul returned from pursuing after David, and went against the Philistines: therefore they called that place Selahammahlekoth. And David went up from thence, and dwelt in strongholds at Engedi.” A rumor saved David; God knows how to deal at the last moment. At this particular time, David was pursued by Saul; he had only a few men and was in terrible danger. Saul’s men were all around the mountain; no one could save David. The Lord sent the

messenger to Saul, and immediately, Saul left, and David was safe. This is the plan of God.

Verses 10 & 11: “Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God, in whom thou trustest, deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by destroying them utterly; and shalt thou be delivered?” There is arrogance in this letter from the Assyrians to King Hezekiah. They said that God was deceiving them, and that the prophet, also, was deceiving them. They said to look at what the Assyrians did to the other nations; they destroyed them utterly and said that they would do the same to Jerusalem. This was blaspheming against God. This is why the Lord always told them not to fear what man could do to them. They were to fear God, and God would take care of the enemy.

Verses 14-16: “And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up unto the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord. And Hezekiah prayed unto the Lord, saying, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel that dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth.” Hezekiah did something very noble. With this awful letter, he went into the temple and presented it to the Lord. We must do this! Sometimes, you don’t know how to answer a letter or request; the Lord will answer for you. Those who trust the Lord will experience this. Hezekiah prayed that great prayer.

Lesson 10

Isaiah 37:21-36

Verse 21: “Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib, king of Assyria...” Isaiah is writing this; you don’t find the word “prophet.” Isaiah answered to the name “Son of Amoz” as if to say, “I am a poor man like you.” This is the humility of the prophet. The great honor shown him by the priests and the great men sent to him by the king did not influence him. The Lord said, “Thou hast prayed to me.” They did not look to man for help, but prayed to the Lord. In such an emergency and in such terror, they prayed only to the Lord; the Lord sees our circumstances. The Lord was their lawyer, friend and physician. “...to me...” There is the joy of God in these words; He was very pleased. It was a great thing that Hezekiah did when he entered the temple and spread the letter before God. Isaiah did not honor himself, but, he was honored by others.

Verse 22: “This is the word which the Lord hath spoken concerning him; the virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.” This is to King Sennacherib, that those who fear the Lord will not fear him; he could talk as much as he would like. If you apply your heart to God, you will smile while others are in fear and terror.

Verses 23-25: “Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? And against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? Even against the Holy One of Israel. By thy servants hast thou reproached the Lord, and hast said, By the multitude of my chariots am I come up to

the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon; and I will cut down the tall cedars thereof, and the choice fir trees thereof: and I will enter into the height of his border, and the forest of Carmel. I have digged, and drunk water; and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of the besieged places.” This is the language of Sennacherib. He blasphemed against God and tried in his words to dethrone Him. He was arrogant against the Jews, boasted of chariots and spread terror wherever he went. We need something great when we are in trouble like this. We have to see God greater. We cannot make God greater than He is, but we can see Him bigger than we saw Him yesterday. The religion of yesterday is strong enough against a little affliction—a little trouble; but when Assyria comes, something tremendous, then, the religion of yesterday is engulfed by the rivers of Assyria. No one could resist Assyria. When a small enemy comes, it is different. The little religion cannot stand, and we have to go to something else to protect ourselves. The father of Hezekiah said, “I will help myself.” Do we do that? But Hezekiah had a greater religion in that terrible moment. He did something he had not done before; he humbled himself to the prophet and entered into the temple with the letter. The enemy was great, but the penitence and the religion were greater yet. God grows in us in proportion to our enemies and afflictions. God is superior to any emergency; when difficulties grow, God grows. Don’t be afraid of difficulties, grow with them. We discover God when “Assyria” comes against us. These difficulties became the means of Hezekiah’s getting closer to the Lord.

Verses 28 & 29: “But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me. Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.” The Lord knew the “rage” of Sennacherib and said,

“I will put my hook in your nose.” This man had to go back the same way he came; it was a retreat of shame. The Lord gives His children “another” way; not the same way or things of the past, a different way. God has pity on His people.

Verses 30 & 31: “And this shall be a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year such as groweth of itself; and the second year that which springeth of the same: and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof. And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward.” There was no famine because God stepped in; He provides. We have so many fears. God commanded a raven to carry meat; He takes care of small things and great things. Isaiah is the prophet of the remnant, and this remnant escaped. Every movement fails but the Lord saves a remnant from the movement. It was not easy for the prophet to preach these words because they are strange to the majority of the people. It requires courage and sacrifice. The hand of the Lord moved the prophet to preach. This little remnant is exiled by the larger movement. We have to escape; wait on the Lord. The majority crucified the heart of Isaiah by resisting his message. This remnant will “take root downward and bear fruit upward.” We grow heavenward as much as we go downward. Jesus had been exalted because He came down. We bring fruit upward when we are in the dust of humility.

Verse 32: “For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of Mount Zion: the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this.” We go from the earthly Jerusalem to the invisible realm without realizing it. Prophecies are being realized before our eyes and we don’t know it. The prophecy was being fulfilled before the eyes of the Samaritan woman and she did not know it. We expect some marvelous way, and the Lord surprises us. We have to come

out of "Jerusalem." Why does the Lord do this? Because we are nice people? No! The zeal of the Lord shall do this—not because we deserve or are better than others.

Verses 33 & 34: "Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord." The Lord saved Jerusalem for the sake of the remnant. The Lord said: "I will defend this city and save it for my own sake and for the sake of my servant, David." David, the man after God's heart, the great penitent. He always looked to the Lord in his trouble and sin. He never said, "Don't chastise me." For one man, many are saved.

Verse 36: "Then the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses." God uses what He wills, when He wills, and how He wills. Not many miles from Jerusalem, the army of Sennacherib became an immense cemetery. Then the king had to return in shame, but he did not die, yet. His arrogance was kept for something else—for worshipping his statues. Two of his sons killed him while he was worshipping his gods. Everything terrible passes, but God remains.

Lesson 11

Isaiah 38:1-16

Verse 1: “In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live.” It is never safe to ask for a long life. God prepares a saintly man for death. The death of a saint is precious before the sight of God. The Lord sent the message to Hezekiah to prepare himself for death. The death of people at a certain time is a grace, not a disgrace, but the king did not accept the message. We have to set our affairs in order. It is a grace to die in order; we should all covet such a grace.

Verses 2 & 3: “Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, and said, Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.” The king began to pray, but there was something lacking in his prayer. Jesus prayed, “Thy will be done.” Surrender to the will of the Father. Hezekiah was a religious man, but in this case, we cannot approve of everything. He wished not to die yet. Does the Lord answer all our prayers? There is grace in unanswered prayer. We would be ruined if the Lord answered all of our prayers of many years ago. It was the sovereign will of the Lord that Hezekiah should die. It was His permissive will that extended Hezekiah’s life.

Verses 4-6: “Then came the word of the Lord to Isaiah, saying, Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years. And I will deliver this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria:

and I will defend this city.” This was the answer of the Lord; the prophet was sent again to this man. There is a price in everything; look out for the answer of the Lord. “...the God of David...” Would David have asked such a prayer? No! But, for the sake of David, God heard the prayer of the king, and saw his tears.

Verses 7 & 8: “And this shall be a sign unto thee from the Lord, that the Lord will do this thing that he hath spoken; behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down.” This sign was asked for by Hezekiah in verse 22, and the Lord condescended even to giving a sign.

Verse 9: “The writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness...” Hezekiah recovered and wrote a song with a promise to the Lord. He failed in that promise. He made a vow unto the Lord; he said many beautiful things, but there were doubts.

Verse 10: “I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years.” This is what Hezekiah said when Isaiah told him to get ready to die. He said he was still a little too young. He thought that he was not old enough to die; but even old people have the same trouble. Death is death for everybody. “Residue of my years...” Hezekiah did not know how many years he had to live; therefore, he did not know the number of years he was deprived of, or if there were any more years for him to live. Exodus 23:25-27: “And ye shall serve the Lord your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee. There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren, in thy land: the number of thy days I will fulfill. I will send my fear before thee, and I will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt

come, and I will make all thine enemies turn their backs unto thee.” This is a promise of our life: “The number of thy days I will fulfill.” Some of the prophets lived very long. Others, like Stephen, died very young. But yet, they died full of years in the sight of the Lord; they had finished their years. It is in the plan of God. But Hezekiah felt deprived of something. It is a mistake to say these words; we have to die in God’s time, and not our own time.

Verse 13: “I reckoned till morning, that, as a lion, so will he break all my bones: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me.” He began to consider God as a lion who was trying to break him. He was not sure of the Beyond; the real Christian should not fear death. The last enemy is death, but the Lord promised to make our enemies a footstool for us. Psalm 110:1: “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” For a Christian, an enemy is a footstool for the purpose of going higher. Death is the last enemy; it is also the last step before we reach heaven; it is a rung in the ladder. The message the Lord gave to Hezekiah was a beautiful message. The Lord was willing to give him time to fix his affairs for his wife and children. We have to go, because we are not necessary. Instead of considering these points, the king began to grumble and murmur, and feel sorry for himself.

Verses 14 & 15: “Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail for looking upward: O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me. What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it: I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul.” The Lord *did* “undertake” for him. The king made a vow in verse 15. We make so many promises to the Lord. Remember the Lord in the time of your youth; don’t think you will remember the Lord in the time of gray hair—youth is the time of enthusiasm. Hezekiah said, “From now on, I

will walk with dignity, with modesty, softly. I will speak quietly and with humility.” Learn to be quiet, restful—not to be in a hurry. This gives a glance into the king’s life; up to now, he had been ready to speak readily—to judge hastily; but now, after he arose from the deathbed, he was ready to wait on the Lord. Every Christian is a penitent when he has received something great from the Lord; then is the time to be penitent. The fifteen years must be years of penitence for Hezekiah. Whenever the Lord touches our body, He must also touch our soul. These fifteen years were not for him to enjoy himself, but to walk like a penitent man who goes in procession; it would be bitterness, mourning, crying unto the Lord; he made this promise.

Verse 16: “O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live.” Hezekiah said, “Now that I am a penitent, I begin to walk very slowly in the presence of the Lord.” After forty years, Moses lost the ability to speak too fast. Blessed are those who mourn and suffer in silence. Psalm 51:17: “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” When we have a broken heart and a contrite spirit, we will walk softly.

Lesson 12

Isaiah 39:1-8
2nd Chronicles 32:24-37

A new power appears on the horizon: Babylon. First, it was Assyria which was strong. Babylon was looking for friends and alliances to make a league against Assyria; one enemy disappears and another sneaks in quietly and smoothly. This enemy came in quietly but more dangerously than the first one. Assyria represents brute force; Babylon represents civilization, commerce, astuteness, and confusion.

Verses 1 & 2: “At that time Merodachbaladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah: for he had heard that he had been sick, and had recovered. And Hezekiah was glad of them, and showed them the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armor, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah showed them not.” It was as though the king of Babylon was congratulating Hezekiah for beating Assyria. Did Hezekiah mention the name of the Lord to those ambassadors? Those ambassadors did not believe in the Lord; it was not politic to mention the Lord. Hezekiah accepted the gifts and showed them everything he had. The main use of the “precious ointment” was to burn it before God in the temple; all of these things were shown to the ambassadors; but then, Isaiah appeared, although he was not called for by the king.

Verse 3: “Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, what said these men? And from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country unto me, even from Babylon.” Isaiah was

old and had been a prophet under many kings, and wanted to know, "What said these men?" Jeremiah 17:5: "Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord." The courageous prophet, who, at times, was a troublemaker for Hezekiah, came without introduction. He wanted to know where the ambassadors had come from and Hezekiah told him that they had come from a far country—from "Confusion." But, Isaiah was not satisfied with the answer.

Verse 4: "Then said he, What have they seen in thy house? And Hezekiah answered, All that is in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not showed them." In 2nd Chronicles 32:25-31 we can read of Hezekiah's riches and public works, and of his death. This was a different Hezekiah from the one who was weeping before God. The secret of the trouble is that man is never so much in danger as when he is in prosperity; that is when he is really in danger. Babylon had heard that Sennacherib's army had been lost and they were very glad.

It is never safe to ask for a long life; let us be satisfied with the life that the Lord appoints to us. The king endangered his soul.

2nd Chronicles 32:31: "Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart." There are many surprises in our lives, but one of the greatest is to discover how mean we are. The more we live, the worse we become. Hezekiah's heart was lifted up in prosperity. Assyria had been fought by the hand of the Lord, not by Hezekiah. Although he knew this, he accepted the praise which belonged to the Lord. "God left him so that he might discover his own heart..." Hezekiah, like many of us,

did not know what was in his own heart. Did he keep his vow? His vow was that he would walk softly, prudently, humbly before the Lord all the days of his life. No; his prosperity turned his head. If you don't feel well, thank God for that. If you have some affliction, thank God. It is better to be crippled and to enter the kingdom of God than to be strong and lose our souls. Bitter medicines are the best!

These people don't come to you because they need you; but they will try to arrange things to their benefit. Babylon was one of Assyria's enemies. Up to now, Babylon could not move against Assyria because Sennacherib was too powerful; but now he was dead. Now Assyria tried to open some new plan by which she would benefit. Babylon took the place of Assyria, but Babylon needed friends and alliances. Who could be a better friend than Hezekiah whom the Lord had protected? So, without any fear of God and without penitence, they came pretending that they were interested in Hezekiah's health. These people are vagabonds; they want to plot something and need a place. Hezekiah was saved in one place and fell into a trap in another. Never make an alliance with people. Isaiah had been like a father to Hezekiah. Hezekiah's duty was to send for the prophet. Did he remember Isaiah now? When he was trembling with fear, he sent for the prophet; where was Isaiah now? Now that Hezekiah was prosperous, he did not need the prophet anymore. If Hezekiah had looked at the character of these people, he would have discovered that they were false.

Don't build on false characters; today they betray you, and tomorrow, they will betray another. It is in the human heart. We need to be new creatures. Babylon was a terrible place, religiously speaking; it was worse than Assyria. Hezekiah must have known of the tower of Babel. He should have called for the prophet again and asked, "What shall I do with

these ambassadors? I want to depend on the Lord now even more than before, for I have made a vow unto Him to walk softly.” 2nd Kings 4 tells of the multiplication of the widow’s oil. She returned to the prophet when she was in abundance. She went to him before and after the abundance: God in the beginning; God in the end. Let us fear God when we are sick and when we are in good health—when we are poor or rich. Let us trust in God, not in man.

Verses 5-7: “Then said Isaiah to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the Lord of hosts: Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.” Isaiah appears without being called for: “...hear now the word of the Lord of hosts...chief of all armies...” Isaiah said, “...do you think that these ambassadors came for you? No! They have a plan...” He proceeded to tell Hezekiah all that would happen. From that day, began the fall of Jerusalem.

Verse 8: “Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken. He said moreover, For there shall be peace and truth in my days.” This was a half-humiliation. Hezekiah said, “...this will not happen in my days; this will not happen immediately...” But, it *did* happen. From this moment on, you do not see Isaiah in the courts of the king anymore. The curtain falls on the life of the country and of the king, and the prophet does not appear anymore in the palace. Things went from bad to worse. From this moment on, you have a different picture of Isaiah. The difference in the prophecy and teaching is so great that some think that it is a different man, but it is Isaiah. The old man said GOODBYE to the palace and focused his attention on the remnant. The nation disappears from the message of

the prophet. He must have left the palace sorrowfully; he was the spiritual father to Hezekiah; Hezekiah was under the protection of the old prophet. But, Isaiah lost confidence in earthly kingdoms and began to look to the heavenly Jerusalem—to the remnant.

The time will come when the same individual will go through different stages, according to the needs of a different people.

Lesson 13

Isaiah 40:1-8

Isaiah now speaks very little or nothing of earthly things; he delivers no more messages against disobedient Jerusalem and against kings who were running here and there. It is of higher ground that he now speaks. The prophet withdrew and began another ministry; he turns to the remnant.

Verse 1: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." What does "comfort" mean? Does it mean not disliking people...or agreeing with them? These things do not always give comfort. Jesus was the first comforter, but he said, "I will send you another." St. Luke 2:25: "And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him." Simeon waited for the consolation of Israel. The first office of the Holy Spirit is to comfort; the Holy Spirit rules in the church and comforts by preaching to our hearts. Psalm 23:4: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." "Comfort" does not mean caressing. "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Weakness is not love. The Lord begins with severity but leaves you feeling fine—in peace and joy. In the beginning it is a little hard. You can comfort by presenting Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, correcting in love. Tenderness with firmness is comfort. "...my people..." is the church. Many times, we beat the good people in order to correct the tares. Touch the other side too. There are some people in your midst who need a comforting. Nagging and taking sides in preaching is not good preaching. We have to comfort the people. Be very cautious in handling the word of God; it must be handled with tenderness. When they go

out, they must say, "Thank God; I came afflicted and go home with peace." They must not come with joy and return with affliction. Have a word for "my people." Don't give only herbs, give something of the Lamb. "My people, your God." "Your God tells me to comfort you", says Isaiah. Jesus said to Peter, "Feed my sheep."

Verse 2: "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." To the people who have gone through, and will continue to go through suffering, the Lord appears with a word of cheer. "Speak to the heart...appeal not to the mind, but go to the heart..." The Lord aims at the heart...not at the mind. Many think that it is easy to give the heart to the Lord, but have we really given the heart? "...she hath received double for all her sins..." The Lord does not say, "I did not chastise you as much as you deserve." He said, "you have suffered enough and have received double for your sins." How gentle is our God; in His school, we become gentle.

Verse 3: "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." This is a prophecy of John the Baptist, pronounced 713 years before Christ. Everything needs a preparation. A way was prepared in the desert for the Lord

Verse 4: "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain. When the preparation is made, the Lord will do some kind of work. A "valley" is affliction...a person who is down...discouraged. Every "valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain shall be made low. Sometimes we are "mountains" and sometimes we are

“valleys.” But the valley shall come to the surface, and the mountain must come down. “Rough places shall be made plain...” Can a man remain with Christ for many years and remain in a “rough” condition? We may blame our roughness on temperament, but Christ is superior to our temperament; He can change us; He will teach us His gentleness.

Verse 5: “And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” When all of these preparations have been carried through, then the Lord will manifest Himself. We shall be able to make a distinction between the flesh and the Spirit. When the mouth of the Lord speaks, our flesh will keep silent.

Verses 6-8: “The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, and the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people are grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever.” There is a change here in the message of the Lord. Look out when the Lord begins by caressing; little by little He will tighten. He is not weak; love is power; but the terminal point is that we must feel good in the latter end.

God’s voice said, “Cry.” “Voice” means more than words. “...What shall I cry...what shall I preach...?” The Lord speaks strongly, not halfway, but with power. These words are addressed to His people. “Cry...” Don’t give halfway messages; speak clearly. “Flesh is grass.” Religious flesh is subtle; it makes devices to excuse itself. How difficult it is to separate soul and spirit; it needs a special preparation. Hebrews 4:12: “For the word of God is quick, and powerful,

and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." When we cease from our works and enter into His works, His rest and trust in Him, then the word of God begins to penetrate deeper and deeper in our inner life to separate spirit from soul. We say such nice words, but are they sincere? That is what this deep sword penetrates; it cuts us until we remain just a little bone, and all of our pretenses are finished. When we say a word, we will mean it. Say less and mean more. Give a little, but that "little" must be clear. Jesus went slowly; He said, "I have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them."

"Flesh" is the accumulation of activities. When the church began to lose the primitive simplicity, they began to multiply their activities. There are so many things which must be separated. We must go back to primitive simplicity. Acts 2:47: "Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." The Lord adds, not we. Do not be afraid that the church will lose people if you return to simplicity. It is not our running here and there that will add people to the church. You can fill places with flesh, but not with the spirit. Only what God directs will remain.

Lesson 14

Isaiah 40:1-11

Verse 1: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." The method of comforting people is to preach Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 2: "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Ruth 2:13: "Then she said, Let me find favor in thy sight, my Lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens." "...thou hast comforted me..." which means, "Thou hast spoken to my heart." Only God can speak to the heart of the people.

Verses 6-8: "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people are grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever." Along with comfort, teaching and chastisement are needed too. This "cry" is not weeping; it means preaching with authority and clarity. This message was to the church. Why was it necessary to preach to the church in this manner? It is not easy to preach to the church. There are many reasons why we do not listen easily. We like to listen when it does not hurt us; but when you go digging, it is hard. Many times, the church thinks that the preaching is for sinners and fails to apply it personally. Many of these people have theories and illusions and the prophet has to speak this way to destroy the illusions. There were no outsiders present, but Isaiah has to

speak this way; he said to the church, "...all flesh is grass...what shall I say...shall I preach about the future?" He was not told to preach about the future, but about the present. Why did he tell the church people that all flesh is grass? There is a continuous conflict between the flesh and spirit. Many times, we are deceived by the religious "flesh." The spirit cannot be deceived. We understand the "grass flesh" but we do not understand the "religious flesh." The religious flesh, like grass, has a beautiful appearance, but it is not lasting.

"...the grass withereth...because the spirit of the Lord bloweth on it..." Do the people like to hear this? No! It requires special grace to put down. There is vanity everywhere; there is a religious vanity in every human being. The spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it. When are the assemblies more carnal? When there is *not* the spirit of the Lord blowing upon it. When the spirit blows, they either run away and say, "That church is not for me" or they accept their condition and say, "all flesh is grass."

"...the word of God shall stand forever..." Jesus preached the word. The knowledge of many verses cannot give you Christ; it is dangerous; it is better to know very little and well and to practice it. There is the written word—the Bible; and the incarnate word—Christ. The incarnate word is the continuous word of Revelation. Jesus did not have the book to preach from, but He and the disciples preached the word. We should portray the Lord; preach and describe Christ. That is the word that has power on people. The scriptures are secondary. The main point is to preach God the Father who loves us and Christ whom our God did send. False religions are full of scriptures. Satan does not fear the scriptures; his hatred is against Jesus because the Father put everything in the hands of the Son. Many religions oppose the name of Jesus indirectly; they quote so many verses

thinking that by knowing the scriptures, they have Christ. Verse 9: "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid: say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!" When you have to do something, don't depend on crowds. God begins with one individual; He says, "...If anyone hears my voice..." The Lord calls people one by one; from one group of people, the message extends to many individuals: 1. The prophet was commanded to comfort the people and say that they were as grass. 2. Zion was a fortress in Jerusalem—the wall of the church; it stands for strong characters, mature Christians. In order to preach, "...Zion must get up into the high mountain." Three disciples went up into the high mountain with Jesus; it was high and separated from the earth. We ourselves must go into the "high mountain" with our minds. Don't look to the people, for you will lose courage. 3. Jerusalem. 4. The cities of Judah. The word of the Lord began with the prophet, but went out to many individuals. The Lord commanded them, "...Behold your God..." It is time for restoration; every movement gets corrupted—there are gradual changes without our realizing it, and we find ourselves in another territory. No movement remains the same; every movement was good—little by little, man becomes corrupt and begins to put in something of his own. In every movement, there is a return to the beginning, a return to simplicity. We are too high; we know too much; let us go back to God!

Verse 10: "Behold, the Lord God will come with a strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." "Lord" means our "Boss." "God" means "strength." Isaiah says, "...your God is your boss; He will come and fix things with His strength—not the strength of man..." Verse 11: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm,

and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." He shall take care of His flock; the Lord takes care of all, with tenderness. There are two dangers in Christianity. One is to go to idols, and the other is to go into despair. 1st John 5:21: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen." It seems out of place for John to say this; but John knew what he wrote. At the end of such a grand letter, he concludes by correcting the big preachers and by calling them "little children." Why does John call us "little children?" We know very little; after so much teaching, John goes back to something elementary. The great preachers could have said, "We don't need this, John!" What kinds of idols? A building can be an idol; our running here and there for the Lord can be an idol if we boast of it. Let other people praise you; don't do it yourself. Everything may become an "idol." Perhaps even going to some other religion. Many times you seem to be in a desert; you have no joy and it seems that you have lost the presence of the Lord. Then you hear news from others with many reports which tempt you to go with them; it is natural to man. There is so much in the human heart; if we do not keep our minds on the Lord, we are easily led astray. Someone may say to you, "The other people are better than we are; let us go to them..." It is dangerous to mix religion with something of our own because we see that others prosper. The real church is always persecuted when they do not compromise with anyone.

It is also dangerous to become indifferent entirely. You say that you will not persecute anyone, but you will stay away from everyone. Examine your life and see if these two dangers are not real. God has a word for both of these dangers: Don't trust yourself; you are grass. Distrust your own mind; you need the mind of the Lord. Go to the "top of the mountain" and come down and encourage "Jerusalem" and "Jerusalem" will encourage the "cities of Judah."

Lesson 15

Isaiah 40:6-31

Verse 6: "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field." Isaiah was commanded to speak with authority that all flesh is grass, and the good of the flesh is as the flower of the field. Man, in us, must be reduced to nothing: "by the Spirit of the Lord blowing upon it." Galatians 5:16 & 17: "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Gross flesh is easy to understand, but this flesh is deeper than the skin. The Holy Spirit is the weapon against the flesh.

Verse 9: "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!" "Zion" is the cream of the remnant. The invitation was made to Zion, but it extended to Jerusalem and Judah. In those times, they were afraid of the greater nations that surrounded them. We may be afraid of something else today, but God steps in to protect this small tribe of poor people.

Verses 10 & 11: "Behold, the Lord God will come with a strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." Here, God is seen in two aspects—facing the enemies and, at the same time, caring for His own. In verse 10, He is a strong God. In verse 11, He takes care

of His own—the remnant; He begins to appear as the Redeemer, the Shepherd. It shows Jesus as the Good Shepherd. In one verse you see the creator of the universe. In the other you see a man feeding and tending his flock. Something else creeps in; fear creeps into the people. We suffer under fear; we are always full of fear. The Lord will save His people from fear. Most sicknesses are only fear; fear is a terrible disease. Hebrews 2:15: “And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” The Lord came to save us not only from evil, but from fear. God does not want us to live in such a condition. Let us ask for such a deliverance. The Jews were afraid. Why is man afraid? They were small and the nations were powerful. They were few and the nations were many. We see men as being great and God as being small. When we see God as great and men small, we are fearless. If we have a small God, we are always full of fear. It all depends on our conception of God, and our conception of God is small.

Verses 12-15: “Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counselor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.” Why those great questions about the power of God and the smallness of the nations by comparison? Because, once again, fear crept into Judah. Again they were trying to make an alliance with the nations. We are human and are tempted. The Lord wants us to go to Him in time of trouble, not to

man. The nations are a “drop in the bucket.” That is the calculation of the nations before God.

Verse 19: “The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains.” An idol is something which hides the face of God. Something between you and God is an idol. St. John says to keep yourselves from things which appear important to you. Can this “graven image” help the people? The people must carry the statue, but it does not carry them. Many of us carry our religion; our religion should carry us. Rest! A little good is remembered if it is of God. Many run here and there, carrying their religions. Rest in God; when He moves, then you will be moved. Many try to carry too many burdens and are crushed.

Zechariah 12:3: “And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.” If we try to carry Jerusalem on our backs, it will crush us. Don't take any burden unless it is God-given. Only the burden that God gives, can we carry. We are limited; we cannot run and feed all the hungry, clothe the poor, visit all the hospitals. You will be crushed; you have to see what God wants from you individually. He will give you both burden and grace sufficient for the day. Let us trust and walk softly. Go easy and you will walk a long distance. Don't be agitated. The work that God gives you is easy, because He also gives you the strength. What we take ourselves becomes heavy and disastrous. Idol and carrier of the idol will fall. Ahaz contaminated the temple of Jerusalem with idols brought from Assyria. He tried to imitate the Assyrians. It is possible in our lives; we try to imitate others because they seem more successful than we are. God knows what success is. Sometimes you may see only one convert, but you don't

see the result in Eternity. Be faithful in the small commission; before God, it is a big commission. Don't look to man; be yourself. Don't try to imitate others. There is danger in imitating people who seem to be more successful than we are. There is danger when we mingle something in our worship to the Lord. Our relationship with people will be built on their relationship with Christ. In Christ, there is unity. Without Christ, there is nothing. The first danger of a Christian is to imitate others; as did Ahaz...when he brought idols from Assyria. The next danger is to be in despair. You hear some say, "I will worship God in my own home; what is the use of going to church. It is all crooked business..." When people talk like this, they are in despair. We may be in this realm sometimes. Confidence in God will take us out.

Verse 27 tells us of a people in despair. Verse 27: "Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest thou, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?" It begins with a question to the people and there are two names: Jacob, a Christian who has not yet been crippled. There is still pride in him; he is too strong. The second name is Israel, the prince of the Lord. Even Israel comes to despair. Even the best Christians are tempted. Even Israel has many limitations. He may have said many times, "I am in trouble and the Lord does not hear me." He says, "...My way is hid from the Lord..." He thinks that the Lord does not see him or hear him any more. Israel was grown up and could not have just candy at all times; there would be times when he would have hard bread.

Verse 28: "Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding." The answer! We are tired, but the Lord answers, "I am never tired." If the Lord gives you a work to do, He will also give you the strength. God comes down into

the creature and imparts His strength. We are weary but He is not. Let us be finished with man and begin with God once and for all. If He is good for heaven, He is good for this life. David said, "There is none on earth or heaven whom I desire more than Thee." When you felt like a rag, you were blessed more because you trusted more in the Lord. When we are weak, we trust in the strength of the Lord.

Verse 30 & 31: "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." How many "youths" have failed! If God is not for us, who can help us? They shall fail because they trust in themselves. Wait on the Lord. You have not a word to answer the enemy; keep still! Don't fabricate the message. Send God your enemies. He will send His strength. We have to walk slowly and steadily. Abraham was 99 years old when he had to learn to slow his pace. Genesis 17:1: "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect." They that wait on the Lord will fly heavenward—up to the holy mountain. Psalm 119:32: "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart." When the Lord gives a command, He will make you do it with pleasure. It is difficult to "walk." Some people want to "fly." It took Abraham a long time to enter into God's rest; it is perfection. In spite of all that Abraham went through, yet, he needed this lesson. "Walk in my presence; be perfect by walking in my presence." It is impossible to do any wrong if you walk in God's presence. In His presence is REST, and REST is PERFECTION.

Lesson 16

Isaiah 41:1-14

Verse 1: "Keep silence before me, O islands; and let the people renew their strength: let them come near; then let them speak: let us come near together to judgment." Isaiah 23:2: "Be still, ye inhabitants of the isle; thou whom the merchants of Zidon, that pass over the sea, have replenished." Tyre and Zidon lent money to kings; they were small islands but were very wealthy and capable. The Lord says a word about the people of commerce, the people of influence. There are people in the church like this; they want to control the church; they have a little money, a little influence. The Lord's church must be independent of wealth; it must look to the Lord. These islands tried to dominate religious affairs of the world. The Lord's advice to the people was to come near. "Keep silence", He says to the islands. They talk too much among themselves, but the Lord steps in. "Let them come near." The people are brought face to face with the Lord. That is the secret of victory—to see God in our presence.

Verse 2: "Who raised up the righteous man from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings? He gave them as the dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow." From "the east" come the extremes—good and bad. "East" stood for vanities and luxuries. Isaiah 2:6: "Therefore hast thou forsaken thy people the house of Jacob, because they be replenished from the east, and are soothsayers like the Philistines, and they please themselves in the children of strangers." But, from the same territory came John, and then Jesus. St. Luke 1:78: "Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us." "Dayspring" means sunrise from the east: it is Jesus from the realm of light.

1st Timothy 6:14-16: "That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: Which in his time he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen." The appearing of Jesus will reveal the only King, "dwelling in the light/" What kind of light is this? It is the light growing in your mind and heart, helping you to know Him better. John 1:4: "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." Life and light go together. Genesis 1:3: "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." Light is the first thing that God brought to man. 1st John 1:5 & 6: "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not do what is true." The more we know of Jesus, the more we enter into the realm of light; the more we will see things clearer.

Verse 5: "The isles saw it, and feared; the ends of the earth were afraid, drew near, and came." Those who love the truth come to the light. Let the light come and reveal to us what we are. Be not afraid of the light; darkness is of the devil. Do the Isles remain indifferent? Something happened among the islands. "The ends of the earth" is not a place, but a condition of people who are finished with themselves and have come to an end. These people "draw near."

Verses 6 & 7: "They helped every one his neighbor; and every one said to his brother, "Be of good courage." So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer, him that smote the anvil, saying, it is ready for the soldering; and he fastened it with nails, that it should not be moved." There are combinations that are evil and

others which are good. These verses speak of the harmony among the people of idols. They all help each other; the powers of evil were in more accord than the Christians seemed to be. They say, "Be of good courage." They try to think that everything is fine and that there is nothing to worry about.

Verse 8: "But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend." If the Lord approved of this cooperation among the idolaters, this verse would not have been written. "But"; now God steps in again. These people could have been trapped by the idolaters, but the Lord reminds them that they are His people. The Lord admonishes them not to sell their liberty to the idolaters. There are two forces, one against the other. Something comes to the people and they begin to tremble; but the Lord steps in.

Verses 9 & 10: "Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away. Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Would the Lord say all that to a handful of people if there were no need? "You few people are my servants. Remember, I have called you from despair; you were in distress and you promised me something; now you tremble when you see some trouble; but you are my servant, a servant with a scope." Can any man destroy a servant of God? If God has a plan in your life, no one can destroy you. The Lord says, "You are children of a dear friend of mine." How encouraging is the Lord! "I have not cast you away notwithstanding your fears." The church of Christ is a servant of the King of kings. The Lord would not have given this encouragement unless it was needed. Every word has a

meaning. These people might have obeyed the laws of the idolaters. We must obey the law when that law does not offend the higher law. God's law says, "I am thy God." He never said that you will not suffer; the church must suffer. When there is a conflict between the eternal law and man's law, we must say, "God's law, not man's."

"I will strengthen thee." He never said you will not suffer. Fear not; those who kill the body cannot kill the soul. We have to suffer. If we don't want to suffer, we will be respected by the world. Let us be converted. Jesus suffered. Are we better than Jesus, in that we expect not to suffer?

Verses 11 & 12: "Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish. Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, even them that contended with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of naught." It is impossible to fight Christ. His enemies shall be brought to naught.

Verse 13: "For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee." "Fear not"; these words of comfort are spoken many times to the remnant. "Lord thy God" stands for our Boss, our strength. The "right hand" means power. This verse is a picture of a giant holding a child by the hand in the midst of trouble. The people began to say, "But I am poor Jacob." But the Lord says, "I know that you consider yourself to be a worm, but fear not." Jesus paid the price even of that "fear not." Hebrews 2:15: "And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." If we say to people, "Fear not", we have no power; but if God holds your hand and says, "Fear not", there is power. He gives freedom

to those who are in bondage of fear. If we are under fear, there is grace to be released from that monster.

Verse 14: "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel." He takes care of many as individuals; He takes care of individuals as He does a great nation. "Fear not, I know you are a little worm." One individual becomes like many individuals. The influence of one extends to many. The Lord says, "I will help you, one by one." When everything is lost and hope is gone, then the Redeemer steps in. Job 19:25: "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." Job said these words when everything else failed him; it was his final and complete help.

"The Holy One of Israel", meaning: "Separated, God, different from anyone else." In Psalm 42, the Psalmist remembered the time of feasting and of crowds. He had lost all that, and remained alone. This was a new experience for him. All of that melts away. The Psalmist tells himself to hope in God. He thought that God had abandoned him. The Lord narrows our view of the many and forces us to look only to Him.

Lesson 17

Isaiah 41:8-17

Kings had failed and the Lord pointed to another king. When the majority of the people fail, the Lord points to a remnant. The power of Assyria had been broken, but another danger came. Isaiah 23:2: "Be still, ye inhabitants of the isle; thou whom the merchants of Zidon, that pass over the sea, have replenished." These were rich merchants who tried to control others.

Verses 8 & 9: "But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend. Thou whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, Thou art my servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away." Nothing will take the place of the simplicity of the Gospel. We have to go back to the simplicity of Christ; He is the same Christ. The real church is the "servant." Here, the Lord speaks with such tenderness and, at the same time, with severity and clarity. Are the people of the islands the servants of Christ? No! God says, "Be silent." There is a time when God tells the babblers—the pretenders—to be silent. The word "but" shows contrast. Light comes by contrast. The islands had many plans and schemes about how to make money, and the Lord says, "Be silent, now; I must have my own way—it is enough." ISRAEL is the promise of God. MY SERVANT. Be servants of Christ and not of committees. It isn't easy to be a servant of Christ and please the people at the same time. The group in the visible church tries to command you. Be slaves only of Christ; harden your face. Never try to enslave anyone to your methods. The servants of God must serve Christ. Revelation 22:3,4: "And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his

servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.” The character (name) of God will be written on the forehead of His servant. From now on, His servants will serve Him. When that spiritual condition will be reached, the servant will stand his ground and say, “From now on, I will serve Him.” Serve God and don’t desire to have people after you. The Lord said, “When I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto Me.” The servant must do the lifting up; God will do the adding to the church. The Lord here encourages Jacob and Israel by telling them that they are servants. Forget the things of the past and strive for the things that are yet before us.

Verse 9 speaks of the “ends of the earth.” This means man’s extremities...man’s ruins. The Lord has taken His servants away from these awful conditions. “...I had mercy on you and cast you not away...” Do we ever feel that we should have been cast away? These servants needed and received encouragement.

Verse 10: “Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.” Isaiah goes by the first principle: God in the beginning, God in the end. To be dismayed is to lose courage through that awful enemy: fear.

Verse 11: “Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish.” There is a danger that you may be entangled in something in your life that will cripple your usefulness for the Lord; but if you are sincere, the Lord says, “Serve Me and forget your enemies.” He will take care of them. Proverbs 16:7: “When a man’s ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.” The Lord says, “Try to please Me; I will adjust

the other things.” These “enemies” are the ones we have made—the mistakes we have made. We must acknowledge that. We must start anew. Woe to the obstinate. Sinner means obstinate—one who refuses to be persuaded.

Verse 12: “Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, even them that contended with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of naught.” Our enemies melt away. God knows how to protect His servants. The enemies are defeated one by one. He will protect you as the pupil of His eye. If you give just a look to the enemy and a look to Jesus, you will fail. Keep serving Him only.

Verse 13: “For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.” Here is a picture of the Lord as a giant gripping the hand of a child in fear. There is a difference between our holding His hand and *His* holding *our* hand. There is a difference between our abiding in Christ and Christ abiding in us. It must be a mutual abiding; both must be friends.

Verse 14: “Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.” You feel unworthy...like a worm; the accuser comes into your life and says that you don’t deserve anything. But, the Lord says, “Jacob...worm...fear not; the Lord loves you...God is faithful to His word...I know that you are a little worm, but I am your Redeemer.” Redeemer is the title of Jesus. When everything fails and all physicians give up, and you become like dust, you will say, “My Redeemer.” The Lord takes care of other people through you.

Verses 15 & 16: “Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as

chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel.” The sword of the spirit is God’s weapon; it is so powerful that it can beat the mountains small. Only in preaching Christ is there this kind of power. There is power in the word of God. Isaiah made kings tremble; the word of God makes even arrogant people tremble.

Verse 17: “When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.” Don’t believe it when people say, “Come, we need you.” When the disciples are ready, the Master is near. When we are desirous of God and are really in need, He will come and satisfy. He will find a way out, even of the wilderness. There was no “water”—no preaching in this wilderness. God is just; He will hear them and not forsake them.

Lesson 18

Isaiah 42:1-12

Verse 1: "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." *Behold* means to look with intensity. This verse portrays Jesus as the servant; He is the perfect servant of God. We become servants if we understand *this* servant. Why must we understand Jesus as a servant? Why not understand Him in glory, in power? Because real greatness begins by serving. Real greatness is not in commanding, but in obeying. No one is able to command unless he knows how to obey. In order to understand Jesus in glory, we must understand the servant. Everyone becomes a servant before he becomes a boss. We must learn to serve and do the most insignificant things; gradually, we rise. "...consider my servant; He upholds." If you are a real servant of God, no one can destroy you; no one can hinder your work; no one can stop you if you serve God. "...my soul delights..." You take a delight in that person. You rejoice to see him; it gives you delight. If we delight in God, He will delight in us. "...put my spirit upon him..." Although He was born of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit was also upon Him, controlling Him. We must have God in us, but also controlling us.

"...he shall bring forth judgment..." *Judgment* is light in our conscience. Gentiles stand for the outsiders. Every work begins with some individual. Now, He extends His mercy outside and goes to the Gentiles. To the Jews, Gentiles were outcasts. However, the Lord also worked among the Gentiles many times. It was a Gentile woman who lodged and fed the prophet; the leper was cleansed; the widow's oil was multiplied. How did they like this? People like to hear only what pleases them, and ignore other things. The Jews were jealous of the Gentiles. St. Luke 4:24-29: "And he said, Verily I say unto

you, No prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; But unto none of these was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian. And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong." No one is allowed to have God only to oneself. Here they became filled with wrath and threw Jesus out. They probably said, "...You are not patriotic; you protect the strangers who are not for our religion..." They would have killed Him, but Jesus passed through their midst.

Verse 2: "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street." This verse portrays the carriage of Jesus—His demeanor. Is this the portrait of a very proud man, a popular orator, a portrait of big words promising big things and never doing anything? "...nor cause his voice to be heard..." Did Jesus have no voice? Was He speechless? It means that the people did not hear *His* voice but that of God the Father. The true servant desires that his voice be not heard, but his Master's voice speaking through him. Word and voice must go in harmony.

Verse 3: "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth." This is a work of compassion. He is the Savior to the utmost. Hebrews 7:25 "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." He can save to the uttermost. We must come to God by Jesus, not by depending on anything else, trusting only in the merits of Jesus. Appeal to

God in the name of Jesus; there is no limit. If you are looking to the Lord, you are not dead. You find no limit in this verse. There is only one condition: to go to God in the name of Jesus and He is able to save to the last limit, hopeless cases. The reed was bruised; it was almost broken. He will not finish breaking it, but will medicate it. The "smoking flax" will not be quenched; He will revive it. "...He will bring judgment unto truth..." People don't like to be discovered in themselves. We are ashamed; we are self-defenders. The patience of Christ leads us unto truth. This judgment will be in truth...not accusing anyone.

Verse 4: "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law." Was Jesus killed a defeated man...a failure? On the cross, He uttered, "...It is finished; My job has been done." St. John 17:4: "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." It seemed as though everything was lost; disaster was all around; His disciples were scattered, His enemies were triumphing, and yet He said, "I have finished; I have done the work God has given me to do." You must say the words the Lord puts in your mouth. If you go away a defeated man, you can still say, "I have done my work." The work of Jesus seemed imperfect; it seemed to have been hindered by the power of the enemies; but He did everything that the Father gave Him to do, and He left the consequences to God. God is not looking for results; He is looking for your faithfulness. You are not defeated in the sight of God even though you will be defeated according to man. In God's sight, Jesus' work was accomplished perfectly. Now, after presenting the servant in such an extreme condition, God presents Himself.

Verse 5: "Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein." This is a portrait

of God, the Creator. It is good, once in a while, to go back to the first principles and understand God as Creator of heaven and earth; to understand that everything is in His hands. In general, the people have the “breath” but those who “walk” have Spirit. It is a different kind of walk. To those who are ready to walk after God, He gives Spirit.

Verse 6: “I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles.” What kind of “righteousness” is this? It is not man’s righteousness, but God’s dealing with man. Here the Lord says, “I have created you; now I have to protect you; I am under an obligation to protect you...” He created; consequently, He must feed you. Life is more than food and clothing. Many people are poor because they have a poor God. The richer your God is, the richer you are. He created; consequently, He sustains. It is a logical consequence of creation. Let us go back to the first principles; if you see the first principles in every branch of knowledge, you are a master. Don’t accumulate all the contents in your mind. Have the first principles clear; know that God is your Creator and it is impossible that He would deny you bread and raiment. God wants to come near to man and has created a bridge between heaven and earth: Christ! We have not a distant God, but a present God. A “covenant” is a deed...a pact...a contract between man and God. Christ is the assurance that God loves us; it is a document to us that Christ died on the cross.

Verse 7: “To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.” The Lord opened the eyes of many blind people, but here is a different blindness. St. John 9:39: “And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.” How smart we were before meeting Christ! We thought that we

knew everything. What has become of that cleverness now? The light of Christ has destroyed our pride and we have to confess that we know nothing. He came in with "judgment" and we became blind. He came in with the full light of God; then we say, "I never knew that I was blind...ignorant...a nobody." Then, He will give you His light; He gives light only to the blind...those who confess that they are blind. When Saul of Tarsus saw that light which was brighter than the noonday sun, he became blind and someone had to take him by the hand for three days.

Verse 8: "I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." "...I am your owner...your boss...you belong to me...that is my name" We have a jealous God; we must praise only Him.

Verse 9: "Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them." The Lord says, "...Remember your past, when you were ignorant and full of fear." Those are the former things. He will do the things that still have to be done in our lives. He is the God of the past and will be the God of the future. That is assurance.

Verse 10: "Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof." Sing only to the Lord.

Verse 11: "Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains." "Kedar" is Arabia. A people who seem to be obstinate, some day will bend to the Lord. Wherever you move, God is there.

Verse 12: "Let them give glory unto the Lord, and declare his praise in the islands." Declare His praise even when you are not in your own country. You are like a little island; don't forget that the Lord is there.

Lesson 19

Isaiah 42:13-17

Before the lesson for this week, let us review by giving a description of God's special servant. Before a commander becomes the boss, he is a servant. The Lord will uphold His elected servant. The Spirit upon you controls and leads. He is a modest person; he does not want his own voice to be heard. What about the voice? Song of Solomon 2:14: "O my dove, thou art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." These words are spoken to a bride who is a type of the church. The voice is sweet. Why does the Lord say these words to the bride? "...don't be discouraged; thy voice and countenance are beautiful..."

There comes a time of discouragement during which you wish to appear no more. Here the bride is hiding herself and says, "I will not speak anymore; I have shown my face too much; now I will hide myself." She hides in the clefts of the "rock"...in the wounds of Jesus. He calls her to "...come out, my dove..." A dove is the opposite of the proud peacock; it is quiet and modest. Why does the Lord tell her that her countenance is comely and her voice is sweet? She is too timid and too modest, but she must work for the Master. Have you come to the point where you hate to see your own face...hate to hear the sound of your own voice? We must come to this point. What about Jesus? Was He boisterous...a popular preacher...a man after the people's heart? People go after the voice; they are attracted by the voice; voice stands for the heart. Jesus was desirous that His voice might not be heard; He wanted only the voice of the Father to be heard. For a description of the Servant, refer to Philippians 2:5-9: "Let this mind be in you, which was also

in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." The highest became the lowest.

Now for the current lesson: Verse 13: "The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies." The Lamb of God is so meek, and yet, He becomes a warrior. He is a Lamb and He is a lion. When He has to defend others, He is a lion. When they insulted Him, He was a Lamb. What about ourselves? If someone touches one of *our* hairs, we are a lion; if they crush an innocent one, we become a lamb. About the truth, we must be a lion. Many people are cowards and when you touch others, they remain quiet.

Verse 14: "For a long time I have held my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself: now will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and devour at once." The Lord acts suddenly. You wait, and there is no answer; but all at once, He comes like an earthquake. "Refrained" means to control human energy. You control yourself and are patient when you see something wrong. We must imitate God's patience. When the time comes, the patient one becomes impatient. When a patient man becomes impatient, beware! "Now," the Lord says, "I am suffering in seeing my people crushed." No one can touch a creature without offending Christ. Those who touch you, touch Christ. At times, He seems indifferent because He refrains Himself; but when He steps in, He will work quickly.

Verse 15: "I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools." The mountains and hills of this verse stand for pride—something important. He shakes the powers of heaven. The herbs withered and the pools are dried up. The Lord acts quickly.

Verse 16: "And I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." There are many kinds of blindness, but this is the good kind of blindness. John 9:39: "And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind." Be not too smart and clever; be not overly wise—it is dangerous. People who are too smart will be fooled in the end. The Lord gave sight to a blind man; the way it was done was so simple and so innocent. The man did not object. The man did not receive his sight as soon as the plaster was placed on his eyes; the poor beggar said nothing, but he obeyed. He was ignorant, but he answered simply. How much wisdom there is in simplicity. He confessed his own ignorance. John 9:25: "He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." He began by affirming what he knew. Don't talk if you do not feel something throbbing in you. You cannot convince people unless you have something personal in order to be a witness of Christ; otherwise, keep still, or you will become ridiculous. The world is tired of arguments. Did this man remain ignorant? No. One answer after the other to the Jews became more pointed. He became a preacher. "If this man were not of God, He could do nothing..." The man who begins with humility and simplicity, learns in the school of Christ. He became a preacher and they cast him out; he was an outcast.

Another Excommunicated One went to meet him. The church is an outcast if she preaches Christ. The same Spirit, which led those to the cross and to the Baby Jesus, will lead us. Our business is to lift Christ. His work is to save. The Lord asked the blind beggar, "Do you believe in the Son of God?" The blind beggar had never seen the face of Jesus, but now, the voice and the countenance were united. This was the church in the street.

When Jesus arrives and enters your life, you will confess that you are ignorant and blind. You make a funeral to your smartness...the sooner, the better. Those who confess their blindness will receive sight. It pays to be simple and confess our ignorance and to confess that we are blind. St. Paul was a great scholar, but when the Lord sent His great light, Paul was prostrated to the ground and became blind. He lost all his smartness and returned like a beggar. Scales fell from his eyes. Do we still have scales on our eyes?

The more we premeditate, the more mistakes we make. Abandon yourself like a blind man in the hands of the Lord. Everything is unknown. We live in a life of surprises and disappointments because we premeditate too much. But, if we are blind people, He will lead us in paths we never saw before. The Lord says, "I will fix everything for them if they abandon themselves in my hands..." Don't try half with the Lord and half by yourself. Make a complete surrender to Jesus; He will lead us by a way we ignored before. Darkness, something terrible, will be light. Many snares are in the way, but He will go ahead and clear the way. Micah 2:13: "The breaker is come up before them: they have broken up, and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it: and their king shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them." You will never see one soul converted unless Someone has gone ahead to break the resistance. The "king" is going before us and He makes the way. If people

don't fall before Jesus, you can preach but you will never accomplish anything.

Verse 17: "They shall be turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images, that say to the molten images, Ye are our gods." Some people are "graven images." There are many individuals who are only figures; there is no divine life in them, but yet, we trust in these people.

Lesson 20

Isaiah 43:1-3

Verse 1: “But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.” Jacob and Israel are names of an individual but they are applied to a nation. Isaiah 42:24 & 25: “Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? Did not the Lord, he against whom we have sinned? For they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law. Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle: and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.” This tells of the condition of Jacob; it is a condition of chastisement. Jacob did not realize this was the hand of the Lord, and “laid it not to heart.” People think that things come by accident, but God is in back of every event. It was the will of God that Jacob should be in the hands of the enemies for a time...in order to be purged. But did Jacob discover the real cause of his troubles? It pays to ask the Lord why certain things come in our lives. We are not in the hands of the blind government of the universe; we are in the hands of a wise and loving God. In back of every misfortune, is God. Did Jacob understand that? He was “burned.” He did not like this thing; it hurt. But, he was stubborn; he never said, “God, forgive me.” How stubborn is man! God is severe, but He is a Father too.

Verse 1 begins with the word “but” and, therefore, shows love. In spite of all these things, the Lord still loves Jacob. Real love is severe. After chastising Jacob, the Lord goes near him and says tenderly, “Thus saith thy Creator, the One who formed thee; thou art mine and not of the enemy. Your chastisements are for a purpose...” Why so much of this

word "Creator?" Why do we need to go back to this name of God? Too often we are full of fears and forget that God is our Creator; we forget that He is behind every event in our lives. In some terrible storm in our lives, we felt the ocean was a monster and that we had no control over the waves. People are crushed under a tremendous machinery in which they have no power. We are insignificant in a storm, but God is above the storm. He wants that storm, and He sends it for a purpose. We need, in that moment, to remember our Creator. Psalm 100:3: "Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture." We must go back to the first principles: God has created us and will care for us.

Isaiah 1:2 & 3: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." Let us learn to have reverence for the Creator. We are under God's control in everything if we acknowledge Him and give Him the place that is due Him. We have to enter a covenant with the Creator and say, "I am not my own." But, we forget the Creator; we tremble for everything. If He created, does He not have the power to sustain? It is a logical inference that the One who created, will sustain. Matthew 6:25 & 26: "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" "Israel" does not consider that the Creator creates for a purpose. Jesus goes to first principles: God gave you life; will He deny you a little food in order to sustain life? He is more interested in our lives than we

ourselves! How simple is Christian religion; and we make it so complicated. Do we consider Him as our Creator?

LORD stands for absolute owner. Give to God the place of Lord, and fear not. Don't be afraid of this and that; put God in His proper place and "fear not." We are full of fears because we do not look to our Creator. We look to the forces of nature, but we do not look to Him who is above everything. He chastises us, but does not forsake us. He did not leave us with the name of Jacob. Name stands for "character"; our name carries our history. Once, Jacob was full of arguments—he was a self-defender. But the time comes when the Lord says, "It is enough." We enter a new life—a new beginning. From that moment, Jacob became Israel, indeed. He was formed of God! Many times, the shaping causes sorrow. We must become clay in His hands. "...Fear not, for I have redeemed thee...I have brought thee back..." He came as a Redeemer; it is the last title of Jesus Christ. 1st Corinthians 1:30: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Redemption is the culminating act of our Lord. When everything is lost, in steps the Redeemer! Job saw the Redeemer when everyone else abandoned him. Job 19:25-27: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." Worms were eating his body, but he said, "...My Redeemer will come to my ashes..."

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The question was asked: "What is the condition in which we must be in order to be a recipient of the Holy Spirit?"

St. John 14:18: "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." The disciples were in one condition; they were sad; they were orphans; they were looking for the One whom their soul loved. That is the condition! The plan of God has not changed. The Lord will fill that sad condition. We accumulate many doctrines that cloud the face of Christ. Rather than study the face of Christ, some occupy themselves with studying anti-Christ. The Lord changes this. We must enter into His rest. Stop meditating anything in the future; leave it to the Lord. Love Jesus and desire to have Him fill your heart—not for what you will be—but for Jesus. Any other condition is false and is deceiving. Love Jesus and fear nothing; that is the key! As did the Shulamite, seek the one whom your soul loves.

Lesson 21

Isaiah 43:1-11

Verse 1: "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." The Lord says, "So far, you have done this...but *now*, you must listen to me." There is a change for the better in this chapter. Isaiah 42: 24 & 25: "Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? Did not the Lord, he against whom we have sinned? For they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law. Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle: and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart." These people were being chastised for a reason, but they did not acknowledge it. In chastisement, Jacob did not turn to the Lord. But there is a limit to sufferings; the Lord steps in with a new beginning; the Lord steps in with mercy. We make so many burials in the wilderness. There are always some new beginnings in our lives; we reach the end of ourselves, but never the end of God!

LORD, CREATOR, REDEEMER. No one can say *LORD*, unless one is moved by the Holy Spirit. The language of the Spirit is not the language of the tongue. There is a danger that the church may forget the name *CREATOR*. This title links us to every creature...to the universe. We have to have reverence for His creatures and His creation. He created; consequently, He will sustain. If He gave the most He had, He will not deny the least. But, we must acknowledge Him with reverence as our Creator. He created Jacob; but it was not His plan to let him remain Jacob, but to become the prince of God: Israel. We are continually molded and fashioned. The Lord works in us. The Lord says, "Fear

not.” It is not because you are a nice man or a nice woman, or because you never made a mistake. It is because in your extremity, in ruin, He came to your rescue. Job said, “I know that my Redeemer liveth.” It is when no one can help you. Job had no tenderness from earth; but a flash from heaven came to him. Boaz is a type of the Redeemer. Ruth was a stranger, not an Israelite; there was also a curse on the land of Moab, so that for ten generations they could not enter the congregation of the children of God. Ruth belonged to a despised people and was a widow. Boaz stepped in.

Verse 2: “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.” The Lord said, “Fear not, for I have called thee by thy name...” What will happen to you now: waters...rivers...fire... Does it say that we will not go through waters, rivers and fire? We will be in such a predicament some day, but the Lord says, “I will be with thee.” He will be nearer when the need becomes greater. Psalm 23:4: “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” In the first three verses of this Psalm, the Lord is referred to as HE; but when David goes in the shadow of death, instead of saying, “The Lord,” he says, “Thou.” The Lord was even closer to him.

Verse 3: “For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.” The more we know God, the holier we become, and the stronger we become. Why is this? Because we are very precious? “Precious in *My* sight.” Does this mean that we are precious in our own worth? He considered us jewels in His sight and, consequently, He made us honorable and loved us.

Verses 4 & 5: “Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west.” Again, “Fear not.” Israel seems to be scattered. It takes a long time to become one in ourselves. We are scattered. Our minds and opinions are scattered. We alter between many opinions and many places; but the time comes when the Lord concentrates us in one condition and in one place. As individuals, we have many epochs in our lives. The Lord will call the various parts within our human beings; He will bring them into one and will enter our territory. We all become one.

Verse 6: “I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth.” There are some people who have a mortgage on you. Can you save yourself from these entanglements? Here, the Lord gives a command to the various territories. Can we give such a command to the North and to the South to bring back the portions of our dissipated lives? “...Give me back my children...from the ends of the earth...” These are our extreme circumstances in our lives. It is then that we see the greatness of our redemption. The righteous is scarcely saved, not because the Lord is not able to save, but because we go through many things and we feel that we are lost.

Verses 7 & 8: “Even every one is called by thy name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him. Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears.” It seems that the Lord is partial to one people; but through these people, He reaches other people. Through us, He will reach other people. What kind of people will you bring into the schoolroom? Wise people? Proud people? Bring the blind people who have eyes and the

deaf who have ears. We try to proselytize too much. It is a strange language, but it is God's language. Bring people who are blind to the sights of this world but who have inner life...those who have eyes to see the things of God and ears to hear His voice. Bring those who don't depend on their eyes and ears; consequently, their inner senses are developed continually. Isaiah 33:15: "He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil." We have to close our eyes to evil and not use our ears for evil reports. Then, you will see the King in His beauty and will hear the voice of the Lord. Those who do not see, will see; and those who think that they see, will become blind.

Verse 9: "Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and show us former things? Let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, It is truth." This is a challenge to the outsiders. The Lord says, "Let them give you some proof that they have something to offer to you, something real"; but they cannot. In turn, they will ask you who your witnesses are.

Verse 10: "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am He: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me." This is the answer. Witnesses are for outsiders. The Lord produces two witnesses before humanity. If you can present these two witnesses, you stand on holy ground. You can never accomplish anything by presenting great theological explanations. The Lord gives us two facts, which adversaries cannot contradict. The Jewish people and the person of Christ are the two witnesses. All people of history have failed. The Hebrews keep their face. Throughout the

ages, so many races and ethnic groups have been dispersed...mingled with other nations. The Jews are a unique people; there are no other people like them. The history of this people is a witness. Consider them. Hosea prophesied that for many days, they would be without prophet, priest, or king.

Christ is the other witness...in every age. No age can outgrow Christ. His words are living today. Make a comparison between Christ and the greatest man who ever lived. Could these men, with all their greatness, ever say as Jesus did, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." People would laugh at those men. Let us stop with theological arguments, and present these two witnesses.

Verse 11: "I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no savior." Only Christ can say, "I." The less we say "I"...the better it is for us.

Lesson 22

Isaiah 43:10-28

God presents two facts: the existence of the Jewish people and of Jesus Christ. These are the only two witnesses with whom you can face adversaries; these witnesses cannot be destroyed. Jesus cannot be reasoned out of the universe; He is a fact. Let us not be too wise by attempting to present our own arguments; stand by these two witnesses; no man can contradict you on these two points.

Isaiah 41:14: "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel." You hear, so often, the words *FEAR NOT*. John 14:1: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." In order to *FEAR NOT*, we must believe in God. By believing in God, automatically, we believe in the Son of God; automatically, we will believe in a present, continuous assistance that comes by the Holy Spirit. Isaiah presents God under a special title: *CREATOR*. He made us, not we, ourselves. Since He created, He will take care of His own creatures. Matthew 6:25: "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" This shows the simplicity of Christ. The church has left the primitive simplicity. Simplicity is wisdom; complication is ignorance!

Verses 15 & 16: "I am the Lord, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your King." "Lord" means *OWNER*. Holy One is *SEPARATE*. Since He is Lord, He makes a promise that seems strange. "Thus saith the Lord, which maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters." He makes a way in the "sea" which is trouble or disturbances.

Verse 18: "Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old." We have to remember God's benefits. We are like being imprisoned by our mind and memories.

Verse 19: "Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert." He continues to promise something, and it will be "new." Every day there is something new; there is no such thing as stale benefits. The Holy Spirit renews things in our lives. We cannot go on yesterday's grace.

Verse 21: "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." God begins with few people, but He continues to work. He uses the church for a purpose. What is the duty of the firstborn? That he may crush the little children? His duty is to help the father. What is the duty of the firstborn of God? They must become co-workers of God. Instead of helping others, we criticize them, call them bad, and crush many. The spirit of the Pharisees remains. We must remember that we are their brothers. God expects something from us. There is a difference between His creating and forming. He created, and then, He began to mold. We must become Israel. What for...? So that we may show how beautiful we are...? He formed for Himself! By seeing you, people see God. Those who see you, must see Christ.

Verse 22: "But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel." God is complaining; He makes accusations, but is so tender. He pleads with such tenderness. It is our great God pleading tenderly with man. He says, "I have done so much for you and what has been your answer?" We leave God for the last. God laments with

His people because they have not called upon Him. He delights that we call upon Him; He rejoices; He is never tired or sleepy. "...but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel..." We get tired of God; we want something new. We don't want manna every day. The Israelites said, "Every day we must have this insipid food." The people of today say, "Preach something else to us..." People get annoyed with God.

Verse 25: "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Not because you deserve it, but "for mine own sake..." In the midst of the indictment, there is a spot of light here: "I will not remember thy sin."

Verse 26: "Put me in remembrance: Let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified." The Lord says, "...Tell me what you have to say against me..." This is God Almighty speaking to a "worm." But the Lord speaks tenderly...not in a sarcastic way. It is like a father talking to a cross child. "Put me in remembrance..." It is impossible for God to forget! "...let us plead together." This is insistence. Isaiah 1:18: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." God invites you to litigate with Him. He says, "Defend yourself; accuse me..." Don't litigate with man, or you will pay the price. But litigate with God; bring the case to a conclusion...a close. It has been too long now; have you reasoned with God? It is good to do so! He will not fight you; plead with Him; put Him in remembrance. And why should you do this? Is it so that He may crush you? "...to plead that thou mayest be justified..." Discuss your case with Him. The Lord is weary with the people because they have become indifferent. Now there is little or no religious persecution; there is tolerance; but when you

lose some friend, he doesn't argue with you anymore. He ignores you entirely. This indifference is worse than hatred. This is like the people who don't care to litigate with God. They say, "You are right; every religion is the same." This is regression...not progression. They say, "I don't care..." But God calls the people and says, "Plead with Me...don't be indifferent...Say what you have to say." Don't be wishy-washy Christians—neither cold nor hot. The Lord says, "Don't be indifferent...come to Me." In the end, we will finish well. If you begin to plead, there is hope. When people are sincere, there is hope. There are those who say, "I am not against any religion." The one who talks that way, means nothing; it is indifference; it is the sin of today. People will not fight or argue. It is good when people reason with us. God wants us to ask questions.

Verses 27 & 28: "Thy first father hath sinned, and thy teachers have transgressed against me. Therefore I have profaned the princes of the sanctuary, and have given Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches." Religion has been profaned even in the sanctuary; in order to raise a little money, they have affairs, etc.

Isaiah 41:14: "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel." What is the condition required for this "Fear not...?" Is Jacob an elegant man...a beautiful prince...a giant...a perfect man...a specimen of beauty? "Fear not, thou worm..." In what condition must we be in order to appropriate to ourselves this "fear not?" It is an immense promise. The promises of the Lord are conditional; they are a contract between two parties. He is faithful to His part; we have to be faithful to our part. Is a worm beautiful, a noble animal? You must know yourself to be a worm; you must know who you are! Must we know that we are only a worm? Is it God's will that we say, "I am Jacob...a worm."

Or is it God's will that we say, "I am Israel, the Prince of God?" Neither one of the two; you may keep crying all your life: "I am a worm..." You may say, "I am Israel..." It means nothing. You must unite the two knowledges; one reveals what we are, and the other reveals what God has made us. You say, "I am a worm, but He made me Israel!" A worm is of negative value; it is despised. We must see ourselves as a poor nobody who must depend entirely on the power of the Lord. Keep your picture before you; never forget what you are. The Lord revealed to Adam his real value: "Thou art dust." God had never said this before, but now, Adam needed to know this. We must be bold and courageous to present Jesus, but when they touch *us*, we must say, "I am a worm." When Satan comes to you and says, "You are a good person...a genius..." Say, "Get out, liar!" If he tells you that you are a worm, say, "You are right; but God's grace has been upon me to make me His prince." The two knowledges must be united. In order to accept God's "Fear not" we must know: 1. What we are: a worm. 2. What we have done: Jacob, and 3. What Christ has done: Israel. I am a worm, but God has made me Israel. Then you will truly say, "I fear not." No mother could plead with such tenderness as does God. "...Call after me..." Psalm 51 is David's confession of sin and humble prayer for forgiveness. He went so deep in humility, that he went so high. He pictured himself as a criminal, but was asking for the highest things. If we have this boldness with humility, we will be real Christians. There is much teaching and suffering between "Jacob" and the formation of "Israel."

Lesson 23

Isaiah 43:22-28; 44:1-4

God's complaining and His restoration:

Verse 22: "But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel." The Lord accuses His own people: "Thou hast not called upon Me, .thou hast been tired." In our troubles, we call upon many people, and finally, we call also upon God. How jealous is God! People think that they have made great sacrifices for God; we think that we have worked hard for God and now we are tired...tired of the simplicity of the word of God. We want something appetizing; we don't relish plain food anymore. The human heart is corrupt; it does not like to live in simplicity. We want to beautify the gospel; to hide the cross of Christ with flowers. Simplicity is the mark of truthfulness. The Israelites were tired of manna. It was a healthy food; no one died from it; but they remembered something of Egypt, which was more appetizing. Paul says that they will not endure sound doctrine.

Verse 23: "Thou hast not brought me the small cattle of thy burnt offerings; neither hast thou honored me with thy sacrifices. I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense." "Small cattle" - how many times do we neglect small things? We don't pay attention to the small things and despise them!

Verse 28: "Therefore I have profaned the princes of the sanctuary, and have given Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches." Consequently, the Lord has done these things: He has profaned the princes of the sanctuary...the servants of God. He gives foolish shepherds. The people have the government they deserve. God, Himself, profaned the

princes of the sanctuary. He chastises the people through the elders and the elders through the people. When the people are faithful, the Lord gives faithful shepherds. If the servants are *not* faithful and the people *are* faithful, the Lord removes those shepherds.

Isaiah 44:1: “Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen.” God changes His tune; He corrects, but He loves. He begins with a woe; but then, He concludes with great tenderness, with “come unto Me.” There is a contrast in this chapter from verse 28 of the previous chapter. It is the Father speaking in tears. There is no one who humbles himself so much as God does. Even an earthly father will not do this. From extreme rigor, He passes to extreme tenderness. While He is beating them, at the same time He is crying for them to return to the Father. There is no one so condescending as the Father, the Almighty. Leave pride to the useless man. “Hear now, it is not too late; although you are a “worm”, you can become Israel.” Isaiah 41:14: “Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.” In Psalm 22:6, Jesus Christ is called a worm. Yet, God takes a worm to thrash a mountain. It is a prophecy of Jesus and it applies to us also. If He says, “I am a worm”...what about us? It seems impossible. Why did God forsake Him on the cross? 2nd Corinthians 5:21: “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” Was Jesus only a sin *bearer*? He was *made* sin! God hates sin, but He loves the sinner. Jesus was made sin itself. Although we do not understand all things, we leave those things to the Beyond.

Psalm 22:4 & 5: “Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.”

This also applies to Christ and the church. No man could humble himself as much as Christ did for us. He says, "Our fathers trusted in thee and were delivered...but I am a worm and beyond compassion..." Now, "...Fear not, thou worm...thou art a worm but I have made you into Israel—a crowd of people."

Verses 2 & 3: "Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." "Made and formed." He shaped; God created; God made and He formed, and is shaping continually. "Fear not, my servant and thou Jesurun." Jesurun is a caressing word. God becomes like a mother who gives a nickname to a child. It is as though the Lord says, "My righteous one; I love thee." Was Israel a good child...was Jacob righteous? Gideon was trembling, but the Lord called him a "valiant man." Gideon felt that he was the minimum. The Lord says, "Go in this thy strength", which means "without any strength." God calls you by a name and makes you that name. He creates what He speaks. Isaiah 57:19: "I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord; and I will heal him." He creates what He speaks. If He calls you by a name, He will make you that name. Jesurun: good child; it is a name of tenderness. The Father calls the boy with a name of tenderness. The Lord makes you Good. "Fear not, for I have chosen thee." Can anyone fight God when He chooses something? Never touch God's chosen. Haggai 2:23: "In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the Lord, and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the Lord of hosts." Men and women who are really chosen will be miserable if they do not obey

the Lord. A "signet." There is trouble all around, but the chosen will be a signet. Man has to believe in his destiny. Although he has to go through sufferings, he will go through. "Jesurun." Give encouraging words as the Lord does; walk worthy of your name. Fear not! Although you have been walking on your own strength, He will step in with His strength.

Verses 3 & 4: "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon the seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses." This is the basis of the "Fear not." He will pour water upon those who are thirsty...not on those who are full. God is looking to see if there is anyone who is thirsty. Be thirsty; He knows who is thirsty. John 4:14: "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." When you drink enough, you will have an abundance for others. "Come, Abide, Go." That is real missionary work. When you are filled with the Holy Spirit, out of your system shall flow rivers for others. If people are not thirsty, it is useless. There is a plan in your life, and He will fulfill this plan.

Lesson 24

Isaiah 44:18-28

Verses 18 & 19: “They have not known or understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts that they cannot understand. And none considereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge or understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten it: and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? Shall I fall down to the stock of a tree?” Why do people go after foolish things? People become stupid about things of religion. They go after something that is useless; they “do not see or understand.” They do not “consider” the things of God, and He abandons them.

Verse 20: “He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?” This is a terrible condition; these people feed on ashes. When they open their mouths to be fed, they find their mouths full of ashes. It is something which appears to be good, but when taken into the mouth, it is only ashes. Why? A “deceived heart.” These people want to be deceived. The Lord turns to His own people:

Verses 21 & 22: “Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant. I have formed thee, thou art my servant. O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.” There is a contrast in these verses from the previous ones; we learn by contrast. The Lord speaks to Jacob and Israel. “Remember these...” He says to look at the faces of those people who feed on ashes. They do not know the Lord and seem to be creatures of another world...alone...with no heavenly light

in their eyes. Why must you remember? "Thou art my servant." A servant must always remember the good things of the Master and the bad things of the enemy. "I will never forget thee." Many times, we think the Lord has forgotten us, but it is a mistake. We are engraved on the palms of Jesus Christ. "I have formed thee..." It costs to be formed. It is painful to constrain our minds, our words and our imaginations. It is not easy, but the result is glorious. The work of the Lord is long and painful because we must be princes. A prince must be under great control: how to walk, how to eat, how to sit... This is for an *earthly* kingdom...imagine for the *heavenly* kingdom. He forms us, Israel, Prince of the Lord. The Lord waited many years for Jacob, and he went through sorrows. It pays to be in the school of Christ. Everything in this life costs something if it is worthwhile. We must be ready to undergo the discipline of the Holy Spirit. In verse 22, the Lord says that He has blotted out the transgressions and sins of the past. Why does the Lord come to this servant with such encouraging words? Is it necessary to hear these words? The Lord never says anything useless. The words of the Lord are precious; they are few. There is a need to say these words because poor Jacob, although he has become Israel, feels crushed. He feels ashamed of himself; he had been looking at his past. The enemy brings the past to memory in order to crush. He felt that he was not worthy to be a servant of the Lord; and the Lord steps in with words of cheer, tenderness, and courage.

"Return to Me for I have redeemed thee..." Why doesn't the Lord say, "I have forgiven thee?" Redemption is stronger than forgiveness. A poor sinner goes to the Lord and is forgiven. Then he falls into many troubles and is almost lost. His case becomes hopeless, and he is afflicted by those who say that he has committed the sin unto death. Then the Head Physician steps in: the Lord comes to this hopeless case and

says, "I have redeemed thee. I will pay everything. I forgave you many years ago, but now, I will redeem you." Job 19:25-26: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Job was dying; he was a mass of worms without friends. By a visitation from on high, he uttered these words: "...The worms will eat me up; I will become ashes, but my Redeemer will come on my dust and raise me up..." It is the ultimate remedy.

The Lord says, "Don't be crushed by your past..." We cannot alter the past. "Return unto me..." Don't run away from the Lord. They run away from the Lord because they are ashamed of themselves, and are afraid that they are imposing too much on the Lord. When Peter saw the miracle that Jesus performed, he said, "Depart from me, O Lord...find somebody else. Depart from me for I am a sinner." These are not the words of one who does not love the Lord, but of one who feels unworthy. He was crushed by the sense of his own unworthiness. The Lord says, "...Fear not, for I have paid all of your damages..." The Lord pays in secret for our mistakes. How many times there have been when people of the world received some benefit which they did not deserve! The Lord pays. The Lord says, "...My children did some damage to you..." He has paid all of this.

Verse 23: "Sing, O ye heavens: for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified Himself in Israel." This is a word of glory after this encouragement. After speaking to the church, the blessing is extended to the outsiders. The more you are blessed, the more your neighbors will receive something good. The blessing doesn't remain only in you and with you, but it is contagious and touches others too.

Verse 24: “Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer, and He that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself.” The Lord encourages again and again. Again, the Creator is portrayed. Go back always to God, the Creator. “I am He.” Depend only on the Lord.

Verse 25: “That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish.” Only God knows everything. Wise people and liars think that they can arrange something for you; the Lord says, “I will destroy.” Do not depend on anything except God. While encouraging His people, the Lord discovers these other people, and discourages them.

Verse 26: “That confirmeth the word of His servant, and performeth the counsel of His messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof.” Now the Lord speaks of some other people. The Lord “confirms” the words of the trembling Jacob. The man who has been redeemed has been encouraged. The Lord will not abandon him and make him ashamed, but He confirms the word after His servant says it. “Counsel...” In heaven, there is a counsel. Heaven commands...not earth. God has an army; God is a restorer of ruins. “Ye shall be built...” He delights in restoring things.

Verse 28: “That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.” Cyrus was a heathen. God used a stranger to protect His people. Cyrus allowed the Jews to return and build their temple. The Lord says, “He is my servant.” Presidents and

kings are servants of the Lord, whether they are willing or unwilling. The Lord says, "He shall perform all my pleasure without knowing it..." Cyrus did everything in favor of the Jews because God commanded him. God forgets our sins but He never forgets our needs. God commands everything. Cyrus did not know God, but God knew him. When you are in God's will, He will make all the universe serve you. Everything will become your servant.

Lesson 25

Isaiah 45:1-15

Cyrus was a great emperor of antiquity. He conquered Babylon; he was a heathen and did not know the real God. The Lord calls him His “anointed.” Was there ever a time when a stranger—other than church people—helped you? God has many servants. The Lord led this emperor to serve His people, Israel; he released the Jews and bade them to go and build their temple. No one physically went to anoint Cyrus but, yet, God says, “I have anointed thee...” He gave a special command without this man’s knowing it. He served the Lord without knowing that he was doing so. Many times, people serve the Lord without knowing it. In order to protect His people, the Lord did so many things.

Verses 1 & 2: “Thus saith the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron.” The Lord did so many things for this emperor in order to carry out the plan of the Lord for Israel.

Verse 3: “And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.” Why will the Lord give these “hidden riches?” That he may come “...to know that I am the Lord...” Many receive benefits in order to serve the church. Blessed are those who serve the people; God will reward them.

Verse 4: “For Jacob my servant’s sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed

thee, though thou hast not known me.” Why did the Lord call this man? God has a plan. In order to bring you to your destiny, He will use many people. The prophet wrote clearly of this emperor when he was not even upon the earth. There is a ministry in the realm of the spirit. You speak and the word reaches out. The spirit of God moves everywhere. Colossians 1:23: “If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister.” “...preached to every creature which is under heaven...” Paul had not gone to every nation. Is it possible? This knocks down the pretensions of many missionaries. St. Paul said the good news had been spoken to everyone under heaven. There are many secrets in the universe. Let us not judge others. The Holy Spirit is everywhere. The greatest missionary is the Holy Spirit. The Lord spoke to the heart of this heathen emperor and he called the Jews and told them to go back to Jerusalem and build the temple.

Verse 5: “I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me.” He did not know God, but God knew him.

Verse 6: “That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else.” “...that they may know that I am the Lord...” The Jewish people in exile imagined that a Jewish man would free them; but the Lord wanted to show them that He can use everyone. Sometimes we look for salvation from one place and it comes from a place we never imagined. The life of a Christian is a life of surprises. We do not know what is next. Psalm 121:1 & 2: I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.” After many disappointments, David found no help in the

mountains, but in the Creator of the mountains. He looked to the big men who had power, but then he says, "...I will look to the One who created the mountains..." Isaiah always hammers on the Creator in order to distract our minds from the things of time so that we may focus on things of eternity. Let us fall back again on God. "...In the beginning...God." We must go back to the beginning.

Verse 7: "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all things." Sometimes you hear people say, "It would have been a good meeting, but Satan..." Satan is not more powerful than God; he is a tremendous enemy but he is under control. He could not kill Job but could only afflict under permission. We are surrounded by Satanic powers which would kill us, but those enemies cannot touch us for everything is under God's command. We must understand this point clearly; otherwise, our faith wavers. Amos 3:6: "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?" Everything comes from that hand. Many things seem evil, yet there is no evil; it is what man considers to be evil that he calls evil. Job's three friends thought his sickness came of some evil. When he spoke to them, they were confused but not persuaded. The enemies of Jesus remained speechless but never said that they were wrong. There are those who have not the ability to contradict, but in their hearts, they remain the same. Spare your words; do not reply; call upon God. Job 39:14-17: "Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks? Or wings and feathers unto the ostrich? Which leaveth her eggs in the earth and warmeth them in the dust, and forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them. She is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers: her labor is in vain without fear; because God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath He imparted to her understanding." Why did the Lord speak to Job about this

beast? If a friend does not understand you, the Lord does not want you to litigate with man. In back of everything is God. We have to throw everything on the shoulders of God. The Lord said, "Don't accuse your three friends; I sent them...litigate with Me...you could speak for years but they would not understand...they are deprived of wisdom..."

Verse 13: "I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts." St. Luke 7 tells of another stranger who built a synagogue for the Jews. "...this stranger shall build my city..." We stumble at the ways of the Lord. The Lord wants His people to recognize His hand that protects even through a stranger.

Verse 15: "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior." The prophet speaks to God in the name of the people. Sometimes you don't see God at all. It happened to Job; he was looking for God but he saw no one. Yet, God was always near him. There are two things: feelings and reality...emotions and truth. God disappears from our emotions. If you serve the Lord, He will you draw you more and more. He disappears, but not from your life. He directs your life. Our sight does not touch God as in the beginning, because we grow in the Lord. God does not abandon; He withdraws. You don't feel His presence, but He is there. In the beginning, we had so many emotions but, little by little, He withdraws...not from your presence or from your heart, but from your senses...your emotions. You don't feel good anymore; you feel as though you have been abandoned. You enter the condition of ashes, sorrow, and anguish. It is an experience. He is the Lord who hides Himself, but He is there; He is the God of His people...the Savior. We have to reach that condition in which the greatest work that the Lord does in us is the work that we

don't even understand. He hides Himself from us and we don't know our own importance. We come to the verge of despair; but then, the Lord steps in again and calls us the bride. Solomon 2:14: "O my dove, thou art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." We are led in the realm of faith. What happened to this woman? In the beginning, she was a little proud...she loved her own voice and wanted to see her own beautiful face. She went through many disappointments and felt that the Lord would not appear to her anymore. When she hides herself in the wounds of Christ, the Lord calls her. Does He say these words to a proud people? No...they do not need encouragement. Those who are humbled and crushed need uplifting.

God hides Himself. We go through this experience. You lose the face of the Lord, seemingly, but He will never abandon you. You enter a wilderness experience, but when it is over, you will find yourself richer because He will give vineyards in the wilderness. Hosea 2:14 & 15: "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the days when she came up out of the land of Egypt." The Lord will allure the church into the wilderness; it is desolate, without flowers or green trees. There...away from the importance of men, He will speak. Where we seem more desolate, there our riches will be accumulated. Achor, the valley of trouble, will turn out to be a door of hope. It is better than the beginning.

Lesson 26

Isaiah 45:15

Verse 15: "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior." The Lord hides Himself and hides us from ourselves. When people are no longer children, they do not have many visitations from the Lord and are tempted. God has a reason; He has a different experience for these people.

Psalm 10:1: "Why standest thou afar off, O Lord? Why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?" This is David's lamentation. He is a man of God and not an outsider. He complains to the Lord; he has no manifestations of God at all; he sees himself as having been abandoned. Job was also in the same condition, looking for the Lord and could not find Him; yet He was always near him.

Colossians 3:3: "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Do we see our own life? We are hidden. Why do we not discover our unworthiness all at once...our black spots all in a moment? We could not stand it; we would go into despair. If a man could see himself as he is in the Adamic nature, he would go into despair. We do not see this immediately, but the light shines more and more, and we discover the dark spots. We receive enough grace to tolerate ourselves; otherwise we would plunge into despair.

Psalm 139:15 & 16: "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all the days that were formed for me were written, when as yet there was none of them." The church needs such encouragement. It is true that we are all this and more, too. What does the Lord teach? He

knew our “substance” before we were created. He knows everything in us and is acquainted with our movements; we are not. We discover little by little, the dark spots in our hidden life, and are tempted to run away. Then the Lord comes to comfort with these words. The Lord says, “All these things in your inner life that you are now discovering, I knew before, but I never abandoned you...” The enemy tries to crush. A once proud minister began to discover so many things in his life that he never imagined could be in him. He told the Lord that he was not worthy to be His servant. But the Lord answered, “After so many years to bring you to discover yourself, must I abandon you now?” It is a big work to come to our nothingness and discover our own unworthiness; it is not easy. The Lord knew all of our faults before; we discover now, but the Lord knew these traits before; yet, He took us. It is a grand comfort to the church - “I knew before”.

Exodus 33:17-23: “And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name. And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me and live. And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: And it will come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with mine hand while I pass by and I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back: but my face shall not be seen.” Moses requested to see God’s glory; he wanted to see something grand. “Show me Thy glory...Thy power...Thy greatness...” For a long time, new converts want to see something spectacular. Glory is crucifixion and suffering.

Jesus is the revealer of the Father; He revealed the Father of love so that we will not be afraid of the Father of power. God has many titles, but Jesus revealed Him as the Father. John 1:18: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." We see the effects of the Holy Spirit...the fruit...the works; but we do not see the Holy Spirit. We don't see Christ in fullness yet. John was very familiar with Jesus. Rev. 1:17: "And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not: I am the first and the last." John was an old man here; he was not the same. Now when he looked at the countenance of Jesus, he fell as dead. When we have the full picture of God, we fall like dead people because we see ourselves in contrast. We feel ashamed of ourselves and we die; but we do not remain dead because we fall at His feet where there is life. No one can stand before the splendor of God and remain standing. God said unto Moses, "...There is a place by Me and you shall stand upon a rock..." Christ is the Rock. But, do not move your feet from the Rock; the glory without Christ kills people. Intellect, knowledge, and gifts of the church, without the grace of God, will kill people. Pride kills a person. Satan has tremendous gifts but, without grace. What can you do with miracles and many other things if you have no grace. It would be our destruction. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies. We should not be looking for glory without a humble spirit. The more you see God working in people, the more you have to teach humility.

The Lord continues speaking to Moses, "...When My glory passes by, I have to do something for you...While I bless you, I have to protect you..." The power of the sun will kill you. It is brighter than the noonday sun. Saul of Tarsus saw this great light and was blinded. "...I will hide thee in the cleft of the Rock...in the wounds of Christ..." The Lord

says, "...In order that you, yourself, will not run from that cleft, I will put my hand on you" We must be hidden. A great saint used to say, "Love to be unknown." We ourselves, should not know if we have anything good. God hides good qualities in you so that you do *not* see them while others *do* see them. Some have splendid qualities but the Lord does not tell you because you will become proud. When we are crushed, a word of encouragement is due; but not unless it is necessary. When you have some good things happen in your life, immediately some disturbance will come to counteract them. We are easily led to pride; pride is around until death. Isaiah 2:10: "Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of the majesty." In times of trouble and in good times: Enter into the Rock and hide in the dust; love to be unknown.

The Lord continues to Moses: "...after I pass by, I will take away my hand..." Many times, after things have passed, then we understand. We don't see things in the face, but we see them afterward. When the thing is already passed, then we will see the mistake or the obedience we experienced. We must obey even though, at the time, we do not fully understand.

So, the Lord hides Himself and also hides us from ourselves. A baby is beautiful without knowing it. It isn't the things to which we give importance but, rather, the things that we ignore; these are the things which the Lord uses. Simplicity prospers...nothing put on. God hates artificiality. God hides Himself; you pray but you don't feel anything. He is a "savior" and hides Himself for a purpose. When we are not in terrible need, then the Lord hides Himself.

"God created" Isaiah speaks so much about the Creator. There is a reason: If He created you, He will feed and clothe you. He has a scope. How did He create the earth? He did

not create waste. In Hebrews we read that the earth had become a ruin. The Lord did not create a ruin; it became a ruin. It is possible that this earth was the realm of Lucifer. Then the earth went into ruin. But He did not abandon the earth. God moved on the ruins; He had compassion. Have you seen that when you are in trouble, or when you do something wrong, something moves in your heart immediately? It is God moving on the ruins. The plan of God was that the earth must be inhabited. So there began a work of restoration. This earthly tabernacle must become a temple of the Holy Spirit to be inhabited by the Trinity of God.

Lesson 27

Isaiah 45:16-24

In these verses we have two classes of people. We have one class that will be ashamed, and the other that will be established in the Lord. The makers of idols will be ashamed. Anything that puts itself between God and us is an idol; anything that we make more important than, or just equal to the Lord, is an idol. 1st John 5:21: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen." This is addressed to the church and to the Christian people. It is possible that Christian people may have idols; only the Lord can tell us what they are and the ones that can trap us into some snare.

Verses 16 & 17: "They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them: they shall go to confusion together that are makers of idols. But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded to all eternity."

Verse 20: "Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a God that cannot save." We have two places where the word "together" appears. Verse 16 is the coming together of idolators. Verse 20 is a coming together of adorers. One will end in confusion, and the other in praise.

Verse 19: "I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right." If a "Jacob" obeys the word of the Lord, he becomes "Israel." No one was so active and full of resources as Jacob. But the vessel was marred in the hands of the Potter, thrown to the ground and taken up again. Our life must have

a renewal in God. Jacob always tried to fix things himself. When everything failed, God did not fail. We must fail; our plans, our schemes, our makings, must fail and God steps in. He doesn't fail. All the people who are "Israel" must be "together." Galatians 6:16: "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." You will find a unity without your speaking. It comes in the Spirit. The mind does not create oneness; it is in the Spirit. We must be willing to be made one. Ephesians 4:11 & 12: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." The body of Christ is built through His ministries. Unity must always be by the power of the Spirit and not by consent of bodies...not by a vote of the majority. The majority of the people are babies. They have not the mind of Christ and are easily swayed by people of more influence and ability. We have to have things by the movement of the Holy Spirit. When the Lord sent ministers from Antioch, they were fasting and praying and waiting on the Lord for the next step. This is the method of the primitive church and should be ours today.

Who are the people who must assemble together? "Ye that are escaped of the nations." The Lord will have pity on fugitives only. What do we mean by "fugitives?" People who have to run for their life. There are many religious nations from which we must run and be fugitives. If you reason a little too much, you will not leave. You have to run for your life; you have to escape and get out quickly. Life is a continuous escape. If we don't want to escape, we are not in that class. "Draw near together." The escaped ones must be together. The church is composed of prodigals who returned to the Father of lost sheep. We must be made and re-made of the Lord. The Lord works the stones of the

temple in the quarries and then, silently, sets them in the temple. Among those who are escaped, you can feel oneness; spirits join with spirits. Nothing can destroy this. The fugitives have gone through the same disappointments, the same troubles, and the same distress, but they desire to worship God.

Verse 22: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." A word of encouragement to the escaped people: "Look unto Me." For many years, we look a little to God and a little to man. We expect something from God and also something from man. For a long time, we are in the condition of the Psalmist (Psalm 121) who looked to the mountains for help; but no help came from the mountains; it came only from Mount Zion. Help comes only from the Lord. We have to come to that conclusion: that we become helpless and cannot be helped by anyone but the Lord. The Lord can use a man to help you as He used Cyrus to help Israel.

What is meant by the "ends of the earth?" The earth is a globe; where are the corners? Everywhere and nowhere! It is an extreme condition. In extremity, look to the Lord. Who are the people who surrender fully to the Lord? Not those who are satisfied with themselves or those who are applauded by man. Only outcasts...those who have lost confidence even in themselves.

Verses 23 & 24: "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed." We must come to the point where we lose our righteousness and say, "Only in the Lord have we righteousness." God had compassion on

Jacob. He met him in mercy and tenderness. He had to bend and become Israel; his righteousness died forever.

These people shall not be ashamed. All those who are willing to become Israel shall not be ashamed; *we* must be willing. Was Jacob really willing that night to become Israel? No; he fought for a long time. He surrendered only when the angel was going to leave him. The angel said, "...Suit yourself; I leave you to yourself..." The prophet felt that he was missing something important and pleaded, "Don't go unless you bless me." First he had to give a confession and tell his name...his character...his history. Everyone has a name. That name must be changed. We've had enough of "Jacob." God has forgiven and He forgets; but from now on, you will have to be the Prince of God. Then the angel blessed him and left. The angel was needed no more. When the sun was risen, he discovered that he was crippled. Now he is an old man, crippled and alone. When he met Esau, he took all the guilt and gave no excuses; he humbled himself. From that moment, Israel was a great prophet. When he stood before kings, he was fearless. He was the real king.

Let us stop our scheming and our dependence on man. Look to the Lord from your extreme condition. When everything fails, God remains and you have everything, if you have Him. Depend entirely on God.

Lesson 28

Isaiah 48

The previous two chapters speak of Babylon, the religion of human activities...a religion full of idols and human wisdom, human construction. The Babylonians were like the descendants of Cain. Cain was not without religion; he offered something to the Lord, but in his own way...the way of the world, with the fruit of the earth. There was no sacrifice...no blood. The descendants of Cain were magnificent builders and architects and had many other skills. It is like the progress of the world without Christ. Look around and you will see this religion in the churches. Get away from Babylon and depend on the Lord.

Verse 1: "Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, which swear by the name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth, nor in righteousness." This is God speaking to a religious people who called themselves "Israel." He says, "Your name is Jacob, but you call yourselves Israel. You are a little backslidden now, Jacob, but you call yourself Israel. You make mention of the God of Israel but not in truth." We have to be careful; if we have the name, we must live up to it.

Verse 2: "For they call themselves of the holy city, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel; the Lord of hosts is His name." Isaiah turns to other people: "they" is addressed to those who were listening. After addressing Jacob, he turns to the others. "...they call themselves Israel..." He speaks to the addressed and to the witnesses. Who are these witnesses? Ephesians 3:10: "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known

by the church the manifold wisdom of God.” Principalities and powers in heavenly places...the witnesses are angels.

Verses 3 & 4: “I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I showed them; I did them suddenly, and they came to pass. Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass.” He speaks again to Jacob. The Lord announces things from the beginning and they come quickly. You wait and wait; but when it appears, it appears suddenly. An “obstinate” person is one who loves his own opinion. Many may seem to you to be very humble but they are really obstinate...unwilling to be persuaded.

Verses 5 & 6: “I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it come to pass I showed it thee: lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them. Thou hast heard, now see all this; and will not ye declare it? I have showed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them.” “...that you will not say that my idol did this...” Many times we have a revelation that the Lord will do something for us, but when it comes to pass, we lean on some friend. That is mixing God and the “idols.”

Verses 9-11: “For my name’s sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? And I will not give my glory to another.” The people deserve a great chastisement from God; they deserve even to be abandoned. Jacob deserved destruction. The Lord informs that He will not destroy. It is not because we have fully repented, but He gives a reason: “For my own

sake...I will not crush you with beatings. I will ignore, for a time, and have a little more patience...I will refrain myself. I have refined thee but not with silver.” The refining of silver is very painful. We have not been refined with silver. Has anyone been chastised fully by the Lord? No...just a little.

Verses 12-15: “Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am He; I am the first, I also am the last. Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together. All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear; which among them hath declared these things? The Lord hath loved him: He will do His pleasure on Babylon, and his arm shall be on the Chaldeans. I, even I, have spoken; yea, I have called him: I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous.” “Hearken unto Me...” The Lord appeals to the people to listen. Now He begins to caress them...to pet them a little. To Israel, He says, “Fear not, you are still Israel. I am the first and the last. I begin and I finish. I create the earth and span the heavens. I am the One who sent Cyrus to help you...”

Verse 16: “Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: and now the Lord God, and His Spirit hath sent me.” Isaiah personifies someone greater than himself. This is the Trinity in the Old Testament. Christ, the real prophet of God, speaks. First man speaks, and then God Himself speaks. “...come near...” The Lord always has spoken. “Lord God” and “Holy Spirit” are one. These two individuals who act like one, have sent each other. The verb “hath” is singular; they are like one.

Verses 17 & 18: “Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord thy God which teacheth

thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go. O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." The Lord teaches and the Lord leads. He is a teacher and a leader. We teach people, but we don't lead them. He not only teaches, but He takes you by the hand and leads you. First the Lord says that He wants to teach and to lead, and then He pauses. "O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments...it would have been good for you...if you had listened to My commandments, you would have peace like a river..." If we had always hearkened to the voice of the Holy Spirit, how many mistakes would have been avoided! Look back in your life and count the costs of disobedience to the voice of the Holy Spirit. People deny what is due to the Lord. Never be stingy with God; rather, do a little more. You gain by giving to God.

Verse 20: "Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, The Lord hath redeemed His servant Jacob." The people felt fine in Babylon but the Lord says, "Get away from Babylon." Some people do this with a long face, but the Lord wants a cheerful giver. "...go *singing* out of Babylon." When we have to do something for the Lord, we must do it with singing. Say that the Lord has redeemed you. Get away from the condition of Babylon with singing. Lose something for the Lord with singing.

Verse 21: "And they thirsted not when He led them through the desert: He caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: he clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out." This is a backward look to what the Lord had done for them. It is a desert full of sand and wind, miles of wilderness, a long way full of difficulties. How can we go singing? God

gave them water out of the rock and will do the same for you if you need it.

Verse 22: "There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked." The prophet continues. "Who are the wicked...those who have never heard the word?" The responsibility is with the people who know the word of the Lord. Psalm 50:16 & 17: "But unto the wicked, God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee." This describes a religious hypocrite...one who says beautiful words, but does not obey the Holy Spirit. So the prophet pleads with them to flee out of Babylon but only a few left; the others were satisfied. Don't come complaining out of Babylon, but come with singing. The Lord was willing to guide them safely into Jerusalem. There is no peace for righteous people who are false...those who have a superficial religion made of words, but no reality. What is the use of palaces if there is no peace? In the beginning they were displeased with Babylon. Little by little, they became wealthy and married. They felt fine there. Very few went when Cyrus gave the command that they could return to Jerusalem. The human heart is the same in any century; the old nature is the same. This nature in us must be discovered. We must discover how terrible we are. You have to come to the end of yourself; you have to realize that there is nothing good in yourself. The old nature must be destroyed entirely.

Lesson 29

Isaiah 49:1-8

Most of the people were a failure. Kings failed. The Lord turns to a heavenly kingdom and to a heavenly people. The people failed, and the Lord prepared another people. The Old Testament covenant is a contrast between two parties. The Lord would do *this* provided you will do *that*. But man has always been a failure; then God steps in and says, "I will do everything, but you must believe." We must meet the "I will" of God with "I believe." When the Lord says, "I will make you holy..." you must believe His promise is faithful. The Lord says, "I will fill your heart with charity." Don't try to do it yourself; depend on the Lord and say, "I believe." It is hard for people to believe in so much good.

Verses 1-3: "Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; the Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath He made mention of my name. And He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of His hand hath He hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in His quiver hath He hid me; and said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified." The Lord presents Himself through the prophet. Jesus is the real Prophet, Priest, King. His mouth was like a sharp sword...not a soft tongue, deceiving people, caressing people, pleasing each other. "...thou art my servant in whom I will be glorified..." The Lord wants to show His work through the church. Man thinks that glory is what appeals to the visible or human greatness. God's glory is manifesting His work and His plan. Glory has a different meaning in God's dictionary.

Verse 4: "Then I said, I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for naught, and in vain: yet surely my judgment

is with the Lord, and my work with my God.” This is an inverted language. What the church says is put into the mouth of the Son of God. “...I have spent my strength for nothing...” Did you ever say that in your life? You feel that you are paid with ingratitude, indifference. We do not understand God’s plan. Elijah said this, but it wasn’t in vain. Why did he say this? Because he looked to the visible; but God informed him that He had seven thousand who had not bowed to the visible Baal or kissed his mouth. Anything that you do for Christ is never in vain. Verse 4 is separated by the word “yet.” The first part says, “I have worked in vain.” We are tempted and the devil says, “Go and rest; you see, your work is in vain.” For a time, we believe that voice. But, the verse says, “My judgment is with the Lord.” He will judge your work as to whether or not it is in vain. It is not fair according to your judgment and according to what people say. Because you do not have a thousand listeners or advertisements in papers, or mass meetings, people think that you are a failure and not a worker of God at all. The worker must say, “My judgment is with God...I do not work for the eyes of man, I work for the Lord; my duty is to be faithful. About success, I will leave that to the Lord.” You never know the results of your work. Let us entrust our work to the Lord; He will take care of it.

Verses 5 & 6: “And now, saith the Lord that formed me from the womb to be His servant, to bring Jacob again to Him, though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength. And He said, it is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribe of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.” The Lord says, “Although Israel will not be all gathered...it is only a remnant...you are not a failure; you are glorious in my eyes.” There are those who say that the body of Christ is

one, and if you do not unite, then you are not a servant. It is impossible to make those twelve tribes of Israel of one mind and of one accord; they are only a remnant. Because unity doesn't happen, people call this movement a failure and say that you are not a worker of the Lord. It is the "together" of man, which is not the "together" of God. He says, "Although these people are not united, don't be disheartened." God's work will go on just the same. The Lord says that we should not underestimate or overestimate our ministry; both are wrong. Despising the gift of God is not right. Don't underestimate your ministry; don't think that it is a thing of nothing. "...to restore the remnant..." He will also do something else for you: "I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles (outsiders)." The people you have despised...these people will be enlightened. Don't fix your mind only on those assemblies who are the people of God. Look in the distance and you will be a light to the outsiders. Don't fix your thinking only on one people; He has many people. You will be a salvation to the ends of the earth...to the extremities. Many people are in despair. Do not underestimate your ministry. Cling to nobody; cling to nothing. Don't say, "This is my place; these are my people." Move as God moves, and you will never be disappointed. Many people had left the assemblies where St. John was. St. John said, "Don't say that you have lost them; they were never converted." In time, only those who are of one spirit will be united. 1st John 2:19: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." They never belonged to you. What is yours, no man can take away from you. Christianity was born and preached in Palestine and rejected there. It was accepted by the outsiders where it was least expected.

Verse 7: "Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the

nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.” Again the Father encourages the Son and also the church. “...to whom man despiseth...” Jesus was hated...despised. Things will change because the Lord is faithful and because He “has chosen thee.” If God has chosen you, they will try to crush you but will not succeed. Haggai 2:22 & 23: “And I will overthrow the throne of the kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the Lord, and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the Lord of hosts.” This is a picture of ruin everywhere; everything was destroyed. In those ruins, the Lord looks to the “chosen.” Zerubbabel will be like a signet; demons and man cannot touch; it is impossible. All the powers of the world could not break the body of Jesus. “...you will succeed because I have chosen thee...in the beginning, you will be hated; but be patient...kings will worship you.”

Verse 8: “Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages.” “...desolate heritages...despised by man...” God looks at those things. The people failed in the covenant. We must say to the Lord, “Your Son is my contract; He represents You. Hear me because I present to You, Thy Son...” Present yourself through Jesus; you must have someone to represent you. You have no courage to speak to the Lord, but say, “I embrace Thy Son.” Come to the Lord in the name of Jesus.

Lesson 30

Isaiah 49:9-16

John 2:14, 16, 17: "And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting. And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. And His disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." The Lord was intense, and we must be intense. Whatsoever you do, do it with might! Jesus did not speak very much at this time, but what He did say was intense...deep. Don't take things too easy or take things for granted. It is not the way to serve the Lord. You have to lay down your life, for life comes from life. People must see reality in your words and reality is intense.

Verse 9: "That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places." This begins with the most needy people. There are two classes: "prisoners" and "those that are in darkness." We may be prisoners of our own mind, or circumstances have imprisoned you; you cannot move right or left. You are in distress; there is no freedom. What is life without freedom? We have to begin to be free inside. The Lord says, "...go forth from your prisons..." The Lord wants to give people freedom. Real freedom is something grand. John 8:31, 32, 36: "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." "...if you continue in my word..." Everything needs a preparation. This is the preparation for freedom: to continue in His word. He speaks continually; He wants to

speak to us. You shall be real disciples if you continue in His word. "...you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free...if the Son makes you free, you are free indeed..." We need freedom; people are afraid. If you fear God, you fear nothing. When you fear God, you are saved from any other fear; fear goes away. It is a grand day when you have no more fear. We are slaves of fear, but the Lord wants to free us. Come out of the "darkness" and you will have the "light" of Christ.

Verse 10: "They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for He that had mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall He guide them." This promise is not only for the future; it is for today. You will not be hungry or thirsty because the food and water are there; you will always be satisfied.

Verses 11 & 12: "And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted. Behold, these shall come from far: and lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim." The people were in a terrible condition; yet, the Lord speaks of liberty to the captives, riches to the poor. The promise is that crowds of people shall come from a distant land to praise the Name of the Lord.

Verse 14: "But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me." What is "Zion?" Zion is a fortress in Jerusalem. Zion is not the outsiders...not the church in general...it is the best Christians. If *they* said that the Lord had forsaken them, imagine what the others said. In the first part of the verse, Zion says "...the Lord..." In the latter part of the verse, Zion says "...my Lord..." There must be a reason. The best Christians said, "...The Lord has forsaken me. I pray, but there is no answer..." They say..."Yes, He is my Lord but, nevertheless, He has forsaken

me...,” The second part is an emphatic repetition of the first part. It is a deep lament; there are tears in this lament...almost despair: “I call Him MY LORD, but it is of no use...”

Verse 15: “Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.” This is the answer to the above lament. What a verse to believe! Can a woman forget a little child? The human answer to this is “No.” There may be tragic exceptions but the Lord says, “I will not forget thee.” He compares His love to the greatest human love and tenderness, but He says that His love is even greater. To believe this is victory. We must meet God’s “I will” with “I believe.” When you are powerless...without any strength...you cannot see God, remember that He cannot forget you. We do not see God; we have to “see” Him with the eyes of faith. We have to keep on believing. You can say, “These are nice words but we don’t know anything about it; we need some proof.” The Lord gives a document; but does the Lord need a reminder? Impossible! And yet, He has something...not to remind Himself, but, rather, to assure us that He doesn’t forget. He doesn’t need any reminder, but we are weak and need some document that it is impossible for God to forget. Let us go to the next verse:

Verse 16: “Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.” This is the document God has given to man. There is a difference between “graven” and “written.” In order to destroy the engraving, you must destroy the object. You cannot scratch and take the surface off. This is a mutual engraving. He engraves His name in us, and our name is engraved in Him. The Song of Solomon 8:6 & 7: “Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of

fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would be utterly scorned." When is it possible for a person to say, "It is impossible for me to abandon the Lord...I cannot abandon the Lord even if I wanted to do so." Why? Because the name of the Lord is "set in his heart as a seal...penetrating in the arm and in the heart..." You cannot forget the Lord anymore.

"Thy walls are continually before me..." What are the walls in the church? They are a few people who stand around the children...not to oppress the children, but to say, "Before reaching the children, you must go by me." They are people who are ready to die for others. We need walls in the church, people who can withstand sufferings, punishment and meet the enemy. The walls are always before the face of Jesus.

"I have graven *thee* upon the palms of my hands." "I have graven, *not something of you*, but you, yourself, in your entirety." John 20:19-21: "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when He had so said, He showed unto them His hands and His side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." It was not enough of a document of proof that Jesus came in through closed doors. That was something, but it was not everything. It was not enough that He said, "Peace." Even a false prophet can say "Peace to you." But, He showed His hands and His side. That was the document: the pierced hands; it was enough. "...when they saw Jesus, they were glad..." Had they not seen Jesus

before? When they saw all that...when they saw the hands and the side...*then* they saw Jesus. We can repeat words, but if people do not see those hands, they will not see Jesus. Jesus was not sent only by words; His pierced hands and side are His credentials to us; and we must have these credentials to present to others - not just words.

Lesson 31

Isaiah 49:16-26

Those who really trust in the love of God will see great things in their lives and in the lives of their families. If you believe in God's love, you will have everything in life. It is hard to believe God's love. The real church begins by trusting God and forsaking everything else. Without the trust in God, even if you have the universe, you have nothing. In believing God's love, you have everything. When you see how little you are in comparison to the thousands of worlds, you doubt that God loves you; that is why we must believe. We are "children" to the Lord. The new generation entered the land of promise. It is always the new in us which enters; we must make a funeral to the old.

Verse 18: "Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on thee, as a bride doeth." "...Lift up thine eyes and behold...consider..." What must the real church consider? He speaks to the invisible church like a mother. Some people, without your going after them, get together and come to you. It happens; God knows how to unite His own people. You don't need to promise them anything; if they hunger and thirst, they will get together automatically.

Verse 20: "The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell." "...after thou hast lost the other..." It is the newcomers...the new people coming in. We are surprised because we built on the others. Many people disappeared through the years; a new group of people come in whom you

never expected. The people you trust to be your comforters...your helpers, will not be. Those whom you don't think will help you, will be there. God surprises you. It is a territory of surprises. Look around; see the new people. These people go to seek their friends; they find each other. It is of no use to spend your energies. God is the great unifier in man. Do God's will and He will take care of your work.

God separates people. You must come from the old places. If you are thirsty for something, you will come out. God speaks of separation. There are problems that we can never solve unless we separate. This verse is a lamentation of a good Christian; but it is a little foolish...it is clinging to something of the past. Her children are looking for a place but the mother looks around to those she has lost. Abraham did not want to send Ishmael away; he cried for Ishmael and the Egyptian woman. We must lose in order to gain; lose our own friends, imaginations, character...but this will make room for a better, truer life. This church was still sorrowing for the past because she had built too much on the past. She looked around and heard her children crying for a place. But, instead of taking care of them, she looks for the others who have gone. The Lord says, Take care of the people I send to you; don't lose time with those you have to keep by force." The people whom the Lord sends to you, are the real church. You have to lose one in order to get the other; we want to keep both. The children say, "The place is too strait for me." Take care of the children the Lord sends to you. Don't lose your head about the others who don't want to stay with you. We have lost plenty of people. Life has both words: lost and gained. In order to gain, we must lose. If we don't lose, we cannot gain. We also have to lose the old Adam in order to gain the new...lose the friendship of the world in order to receive the children whom the Lord has sent you. Open your eyes; look around and see

opportunities. Don't continue to cry for "Ishmael." They are not your company.

Verse 21: "Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? And who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been?" Many times we thought that we were abandoned. You will always be better when those who have not been given to you will be separated from you. You will be richer and richer. Wait awhile, and you will see people coming together.

Verses 22 & 23: "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy foster fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me." If we wait for people, we will be destroyed. The Lord makes a promise for the children who are captives in the hands of other people who have enslaved them. The Lord will command "kings" to liberate these children. He will find a way to liberate these children. Stay where you are, and He will send these children to you; don't go after people; people will come to you. Don't try to fix things, because we spoil things. The "kings" and "queens" shall carry the children on their shoulders. The Shulamite could not remain with the children of the mother any more...not children of the father, but of the mother. The churches have their own children. This woman separated herself and was persecuted. If you belong to somebody else, you cannot remain where you are. Some time you will see these children coming to you and you will be surprised. Who are

the kings and queens? They are people who enslave the churches; they run after people trying to make them come to their churches. They have something like a mortgage on the people; but the Lord said, "I will free you...give you liberty." The kings and queens who have become so imposing, some day will carry them out on their shoulders. The child is afraid to come out. Some day, the queen and king will carry the child out, willing or not willing. It is impossible to defeat God. For a time, it seems that man can dethrone heaven; but, wait! Heaven is always heaven. The children will become a thorn in the flesh and they will desire to send them away. They that wait on the Lord shall not be ashamed.

Verse 25: "But thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children." How powerful is the visible church; it has a hand in government and can move even the law! The poor people who depend on God seemed abandoned; but the Lord says, "I will contend with him that contendeth with thee." They will litigate with the Lord; we must wait. The Lord is strong; He will litigate for you. Let us remain on this old path of faith and simplicity; trust in God.

Verse 26: "And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine: and all flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Savior and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob." There are good people in every church. The bosses of the church made a mortgage on them; they made themselves kings and queens. The Lord said, "Some day you will pay a price and carry them out on your shoulders." The Shulamite was alone, like a desolate woman, just taking care of some stray child, but in the end, she had many people. "...all flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Savior and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob..."

Lesson 32

Isaiah 50:1-4

For a long time, the Prophet had been busy with the people, the temple, the earthly Jerusalem and kings; but now, he turns heavenward more and more. Everything has been a failure. Around him, kings and people failed; but then, he looks from earth to heaven and sees another king...another city...another priesthood...a new Jerusalem. He sees Jesus Christ as the Servant of the Father. The church, in Jesus...through Jesus...must learn how to serve the Lord.

Verse 1: "Thus saith the Lord, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? Or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away." The people thought that the Lord had abandoned them and many went into despair. The Prophet says that the Lord had not abandoned them and the Lord admonished the people that He has not abandoned them. But, they are "divorcing" themselves, they separate themselves from the Lord. It is never God who does the abandoning, but it is the individual who abandons God. After the individual has committed sin and repented of it, the Lord will never abandon him; it is man who abandons God.

Verse 2: "Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? When I called, was there none to answer? Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? Or have I no power to deliver? Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness: their fish stink for lack of water, and die of thirst." Again, He says, "...I have not abandoned you; I plead with you...calling you..." No man on earth can plead so much. No man on earth can be so optimistic. We get

discouraged but the Lord insists with the people. "...when I came, no man answered" The Lord begins with one individual. "...is my hand shortened that it cannot redeem?" Remember that redeeming is more than saving. Savior is the first title; Redeemer is the last. In the beginning, He saves us; then, He waits patiently. We come to a conclusion that we have no help at all. At this point, we need more than a Savior; we need the Redeemer. The Redeemer comes for a people who have been saved, but almost lost.

Verse 3: "I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering." This is the mourning of God. Sometimes the heavens are like a funeral; during the agony of Jesus, the heavens were like a funeral for a few hours. The Lord speaks to the people to call them back; He insists with people. There is no mother so condescending as God. We do not know God; we are afraid of God. To know God means much; it means everything. St. John 17:26: "And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." If we understand this verse, it means everything. Here, Jesus speaks to the Father. He became voluntarily inferior to the Father. In the report, He says, "I have declared..." *DECLARED* means more than just saying mere words. *NAME* stands for character. Jesus has revealed to us the character of God leaving nothing hidden. Do we know God? Is there anymore need to continue this declaration of God? People are afraid because they do not know God; they tremble. Jesus continues declaring through the Body of Christ. He continues to proclaim His Father. Let us go to the first principles and be simple in our religion. "...He will continue declaring His Name..." By knowing His Name, the people will come to a certain condition. The Love of God for the Son may penetrate in our lives, and Christ may penetrate in our lives. You don't need anything else. The word of God is simple. Man has made it so complicated.

Dig well on one verse. This verse can change your life if you meditate on it. The Lord wants to fill us with the same love He had for the Son. He will enter and be King of your life. This is a consequence of knowing God. John 17:3: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." To really know God is life eternal!

Why don't people insist very much on elementary principles in the churches? One reason is that the teachers will never have a very large audience. Few people are desirous to go very deep in God. If you don't amuse the people, you will not have many people. We think that we have to be like the merchants in the market; even in church, we can cheat each other. Declare the Name of God so that His love will come in us. We go around the bush when we have such a gold mine near us. The people think that God is indifferent...that He does not care for them anymore. You say, "Who am I in the presence of the Almighty God?" The Lord says, "I have not divorced you. I call but there is no answer. You think you have gone too far, but have you exhausted My compassion?" We can never measure God's love. Imagine God mourning...crying about human miseries! Who would dare say these words if they were not in the word of God?

Verse 4: "The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned." This is the preparation of the servant. It is not the knowledge of the mind; it must come from experience. The prophets were schooled in the school of suffering. We must mean business with God. He has given His servants tremendous responsibilities. Be honest. Let the people abandon you. There will be one here and one there; but that is the church! Are we ready to enter such a school? *LORD GOD* means your boss...your

owner...your employer. The real servant no longer belongs to himself. *GOD* means *ALMIGHTY*. The Almighty is your Commander. The servant says, "My Commander, who is Almighty, has given me the tongue of the instructor..." You can never instruct another if you have not been instructed yourself. Why has the Lord given him this tongue...so that he may offend people...to mortify them...to make them feel cheap? "so that he should know how to speak a word to the weary" Christians who have been in the church many years need a tender touch. They are familiar with the words and the many doctrines, and they are weary. We must know how to speak to them, to redeem. Go easy; ponder your words. You are dealing with jewels. A word can do so much harm and it can do so much good.

"Morning by morning" we get the training. In order to speak, we have to learn to listen; we have to become good listeners. When did the Lord call Adam? He called him at the dawn of the day. Psalm 46:5: "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early." Proverbs 6:22: "When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee." Jesus is called the *MORNING STAR*. The servant of the Lord is awakened morning by morning. In the morning, there is no agitation of the mind. You go to bed agitated, but awake with a blessing..

Lesson 33

Isaiah 50:4-11

Verse 4: "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned." The title LORD assumes a personal relationship; it means COMMANDER, ABSOLUTE OWNER. GOD is a general term meaning ALMIGHTY, STRONG. It is not sufficient to use one without the other. "The tongue of the learned" is the conclusion of listening. The secret of becoming a good servant is to become a good listener. It takes the full grace of the Lord to learn to listen. In some convents, the monks are silent for years. It is only in the Protestant work that all have become speakers and teachers overnight. In every department of life, we must listen in order to learn. "He wakeneth morning by morning" Most of the time, the Lord speaks in the morning, when our minds are at rest.

Verse 5: "The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back." We have veils over our eyes and veils over our ears. The Lord takes away one veil at a time. Many times we say one thing and the people hear another because their hearts are confused. We learn that the spiritual man has senses even more than the material man. Psalm 34:8: "O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him." He opened the ear of His Son and He was not rebellious. Why could we be rebellious? Because when He unveils our hearing, we might hear something that is not in accord with our plans. Things never happen according to our plans or as we desire them to happen. Consequently, we are in danger of becoming rebellious. We fabricate a religion...a false

religion, and then we must destroy it. It requires that we obey the Lord blindly.

Verse 6: "I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I did not hide my face from insult and spitting." Of course, this happened in the life of Christ, but it also applies in the life of the Church. "I gave." We may suffer unwillingly, at times, but in these words, we see a joyful sufferer. Every sacrifice is a willing one for the one who loves.

Verse 7: "For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." This is a prophecy of Christ and also of His Church. It personifies a body of people. We are easily confused. "set my face like a flint" Luke 9:51: "And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem." We never accomplish anything worthwhile if we are not determined to suffer. Psalm 23:5: "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." If we expect to be blessed and to eat when no enemies are present, we shall never eat, for there are always enemies around us. If we consider the enemies, we should never serve the Lord. When we are determined, we have victory. Consequently, since we are determined, there comes an assurance; there is no doubt in these words. The faith of today becomes the knowledge of tomorrow. When Abraham asked the Lord how he could know that he should inherit the land, the Lord answered, "Take several animals and offer sacrifices to the Lord." How do we know that our sufferings are not in vain? We are sure only of the things for which we suffer something. If you obey, you will know. Obedience gives us a certainty of things of God. When we do something for the Lord, then we know; and the harder the

task, the more precious it is with the Lord. Humanity goes after cheap things, but the things of God are sufferings and blood.

In Genesis 15, the animals are significant of ourselves. Genesis 15:11: "And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away." In certain parts of Asia, the birds are ferocious, with a wingspan of more than forty feet. These birds are not afraid of man. Many birds began to fly quickly down upon the sacrifices and Abraham had no material weapons to fight off these demon-possessed birds. If he had run away, he would not have been blessed, and he would not have known the answer. Imagine frightening off wild animals by his breath; but God was in that breath. Even animals understand when we are determined. How did Abraham know? By a sacrifice!

Verse 8: "He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? Let us stand together: who is mine adversary? Let him come near to me." A connecting verse is Romans 8:31: "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" Who will succeed in destroying us? Impossible! Many will try but they will not succeed. On the other hand, if God is not for us, who can help us?

Verse 9: "Behold, the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn me? Lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up." Continuing in Romans 8:32-34: "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Paul was very learned in the Old Testament. They will try to condemn, but will not succeed because God says, "This

person is under My protection.” Balaam tried to curse the people of God. He built on the knowledge of their sins. Although there are many sins in God’s people, He says not to judge because the Lord overlooks many mistakes for a time. Balaam tried to curse the people and please the King of Moab, but the Lord changed the cursing into a blessing. If we had more reverence toward the Lord, we would be more careful not to judge. If we think evil, we become evil; if we think good, we become good. So we must set our affections on things above. Many times, the Lord allows something to remain in our life in order to avoid something worse. Exodus 23: 29 & 30: “I will not drive them out from before thee in one year; lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field multiply against thee. By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land.” If people would pay more attention to these verses, they would be more prudent and less scandalized. Some enemies will remain in the land - “lest the land become desolate.” Why are there so many failures in the churches? Saints are created like mushrooms—don’t believe that! They praise themselves and judge others; but which is the worst sin? It is pride...religious pride. Do you think that humility comes easily in our lives? Don’t be deceived; for real humility comes from sorrow. The Lord overlooks many things because too much correction destroys, and because it keeps Satan from entering with a worse sin. Therefore, there is always something in Christians that the Lord ignores for a time because He works slowly; but only for a time. It is not a progress by jumping. Exodus 20:25 & 26: “And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it. Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon.” Begin today, but begin slowly, for we need grace at each step. When the progress is slow and continuous, you go a long way.

Verse 10: “Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.” This speaks of a people who are in a period of trial but who really fear the Lord and obey, even though they walk in darkness. They must trust in the Lord and “stay” (or rest) upon their God. To believe and to trust are different. To *believe* is to know something; but *trust* is a deeper knowledge. You believe ten people to be honest; but of the ten, you would choose only one to trust with your valuables. We need to trust the Lord. Trust is practicing what we believe; it is taking all of our affairs to the Lord.

Verse 11: “Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.” These people are those who cannot stay in a period of darkness for a time, so they create some strange fire. They excite themselves. But these people cannot go very far, and they fall; for in the end, they receive only trouble and sorrow.

Lesson 34

Isaiah 51:1-8

First, let us review the last two verses of the previous chapter. Isaiah 50:10,11: "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow." There are two classes of people mentioned in these two verses. "Who is among you that feareth the Lord." This is a small class of people, the remnant; a few individuals here and there. In verse 11, you see a crowd, a mass of people. In verse 10 there is no material guidance. The remnant must "trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God." It is the life of faith. In verse 11, the people who "kindle a fire" are artists in revivals. They know how to attract people and to enlarge the ranks. People are easily deceived. Very few people have discernment of spirits. This mass of people kindles a fire. When you leave without a spirit of penitence—not crushed in yourself—that is kindling a fire...manufacturing some sparks and walking in the light of your own fire. What is the influence of the few people when they hear so much boasting and propaganda? We are human; we are tempted to be discouraged. We begin to doubt; we say that we have no enthusiasm, etc. Then the prophet gives the next message:

Isaiah 51:1: "Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." To hearken is stronger than to listen. The Lord says this to the few people, "Hearken to Me. You are

listening to so many voices...to so many charlatans. Don't listen to people, but hearken to Me." Who are the ones that should hearken? "Ye that follow after righteousness." We must meet that condition. We must follow after God's righteousness. He makes us righteous, not we ourselves. We should not seek man's approval, but that of the Lord. Don't listen to others; "hearken to Me." "Look unto the rock." Look back to the past; who were you, some holy person? No. You were under a rock, in a pit like an animal. Now you have been excavated from the ruin. Remember your past; don't forget who you were.

Verse 2: "Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bore you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him." The remnant says, "We are few." Why don't we try to imitate others? We are more numerous than Abraham was when he left Mesopotamia. Remember, Abraham was one individual. God begins always with one individual. No man is really converted who has not desired to remain alone. The Lord has a plan. God is never a failure; He raised a remnant. The majority of the people remains a denomination. The Lord raises another group that says, "We are few." The Lord answers, "You are more than Abraham." A man alone is not powerful. He must look to God for help; no one else is around.

Verse 3: "For the Lord shall comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." At every new start, the Lord gives a divine joy. He comforts Zion, the fortress of Jerusalem. He will comfort her waste places. These few people will have gladness, thanksgiving and music - "the voice of melody" - The songs they sing will come from the heart.

Verse 4: "Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me, and I

will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people.” “...a law shall proceed from me...” Moses came before Isaiah. Is this law the same as Moses’ laws? It is the law of the Holy Spirit. You cannot clothe and feed all the needy or preach to all the lands. You would get lost. You need a commander...someone to tell you where to go and what to do. You need the law of the Holy Spirit, which commands step by step. It dictates moment by moment.

Verse 5: “My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust.” “My righteousness...” Suppose it was man’s righteousness...man tries to establish his own righteousness. We cannot meet God with our righteousness. We need the superior righteousness of God, which is accepted by few. His righteousness works in us, and we become righteous. There are two kinds of righteousness: a poor sinner comes to the Lord trembling, and the Holy Spirit tells him that Someone has paid the price for his sin; if he believes that, he becomes righteous. This righteousness is by faith; but the Lord does not stop there. You keep believing. He comes in your life with His finger and begins to work in your inner life...touching chords; and you see a change in your life. You begin to be righteous by faith and you will become righteous, in fact, some day. “...the isles shall wait upon me...” The ISLES—not the CONTINENTS—will wait on the Lord. The Book of Revelation was given on a dreary isle to a prisoner. The isles are surrounded by a sea of trouble and affliction, but they wait upon the Lord...they wait with expectation. “...on mine arm shall they trust...” There is a difference between belief and trust. Many people believe God, but TRUST is what counts. Entrust your life into His hands. The isles wait on the Lord and trust in His strength.

Verse 6: “Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like

smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be forever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.” There are forces of nature that confuse us. Things look eternal, but they are not. There is something that will not change: “My salvation shall be forever, and My righteousness shall not be abolished.” Matthew 24:35: “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” How many words of great emperors and dictators have passed away? They seemed so great; but now, their words have vanished and have no power.

Verse 7: “Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.” Imagine a trembling little child...this little child always needs to be encouraged with persevering patience and love. “Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law.” The law is written in his innermost parts. These people fear the reproach of man and their revilings. Has He promised that no one will revile or reproach you? No...they *will* do this; but be courageous. Fear not; He came to save from fear. We fear many things: diseases, depression, enemies, revilings, reproaches; but He came to save us from all fears. Hebrews 2:15: “And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” This is a picture of people who were slaves of fear. We have to accept these promises, one by one. Accept the deliverance. We must ask to be made fearless.

Verse 8: “For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be forever, and my salvation from generation to generation.” Don’t be crushed in the spirit. Wait a little, and you will see where their boastings will finish. They will perish! Think back ten years...where are those giants who made you tremble? They were so arrogant then; where are they now?

Lesson 35

Isaiah 51:7-15

Verse 7: "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings." The Lord appeals to a people who know righteousness. There are two types of righteousness in the book of Isaiah. One is man's; the other is God's...God's righteousness toward man. When someone promises something to you, you expect him to keep his promise. God's promise fulfilled is His righteousness. Who created you? God. Then, will God abandon His creation? Since He created, He took upon Himself an obligation, which is to support His creation. Psalm 100:3: "Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture." Even a worm has a right to something. We did not make ourselves. He created us; and since He created, He will sustain. Man's righteousness toward God is that He will pay all of our obligations, but we could never pay our many debts. Since Christ paid our obligations for us, He becomes our righteousness. If we would appear before the Lord with our goodness, we would still be refused; but if we present Christ as our righteousness, then Christ cannot be refused. 1st Corinthians 1:30: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Many people repeat this verse with only the mouth; but we should be more centered in Christ and use the Bible. Then, little by little, we realize this as a truth.

The Lord speaks to a people "in whose heart is my law." Which is "my law?" This is not Moses' law, which was only temporal, but God's law which is eternal; it is written in the heart. When you have something written in your heart, they

must destroy you in order to destroy what is in you. Why are many people confused and are moved to the right and to the left by the many doctrines? It is because God's law is not engraved in their hearts. To His people, the Lord gives a command: FEAR NOT. Psychology is founded on releasing man from fear. It works only for a moment, but then man fears again. The asylums are filled with people who are victims of fear. There is only one freedom from fear, and it has been paid for by Christ on the cross. Hebrews 2:15: "And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." He will free us if we ask Him to, and if we believe that He is able. We are surrounded by fears but there is a remedy: CHRIST.

"...the reproach of man..." This is a kind of criticism, but it goes further: "...neither be afraid of their revilings." Why? Verse 8 says: "For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be forever, and my salvation from generation to generation." Why? Because the power of the enemies is limited. They cannot go further than God permits. Psalm 23:4: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Did the Lord say that we would have no enemies? Never! We *have* enemies; but they are benefactors. It is not easy to eat in the presence of enemies, but we must. Some say, "I cannot preach, for there are enemies..." Then, they will never preach; for the enemies are always around us. Yet, these enemies are our footstools under our feet. As rungs on a ladder, they bring us nearer to the Lord. Psalm 110:1,2: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." Be tranquil while God makes your enemies a blessing. Our enemies are the unpaid watchmen

of our souls. Thank God for our enemies, for without them, we would become indifferent. They constrain us to get closer to the Lord.

Verses 9 & 10: "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Was it not you that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon? Was it not you that hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?" Up to this verse, the Lord has spoken; but now, the prophet is the speaker for his people. The Lord promises protection from enemies, but we are surrounded by persecutors. The prophet speaks to the Lord in the name of the people, reminding Him of past blessings: the destruction of Egypt (Rahab), and Pharoah (the dragon)...as if He needed to be reminded! But the people need the Lord because they are in another "sea." They were not in Egypt anymore, but in Babylon, which was worse.

Verse 11: "Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." REDEEMED. There is a difference between a person who has been SAVED and a person who has been REDEEMED. Hebrews 7:25: "Wherefore, he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Salvation is the first act of the Lord; redemption is the last. When everyone is against us...when we are dust...then, the Redeemer steps in. When did Job see the Redeemer? When he was left by everyone else. Job 19:25,26: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Job had no hope for his life; there remained only one hope: the Lord...the hope of the hopeless. Does the work in

the Pentecostal Church need a Redeemer rather than a Savior? It needs a Redeemer because it has traveled to Babylon...Confusion. But the "redeemed of the Lord" shall return to Zion. After wavering for a long time, they will be settled and established in God. 1st Peter 5:10: "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." Before a person becomes established, he will take many beatings; but once he is settled, he can be invited and proselytized, but he will not move.

Verses 12 & 13: "I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of a human being who fades as grass; and forgettest the Lord thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? And where is the fury of the oppressor?" The Lord speaks; why does He say "I am He that comforts you?" Because we look to *others* for comfort. Do you remember the case of Job? He was looking for comfort from his friends, but he did not receive any. Man, for a long time, looks for comfort from other men; but only the Lord, through the Holy Spirit, can comfort us. Some have lists of verses...canned food...to read when they are troubled; but this does not comfort. "...and forgettest the Lord thy maker..." Again, MAKER. Do you think it is a light thing to mistreat a person who has been made in the likeness of God? We offend God if we do this. We must be careful how we treat people. "...and hast feared continually..." You know that God has created you; then, fear not. Where are the oppressors of the past? As he preserved from those of the past, so will he do in the future. Psalm 37 gives a comparison between the conditions of the righteous and those of the wicked. Without God's permission, not one hair

of your head will fall. We must believe in our destiny; we must stand firm because God has created us.

Verse 14: "The oppressed shall speedily be released, and they shall not die and go down in the Pit, nor shall they lack bread." Those in prison prepare themselves for liberation. If we are in some "pit", the Lord will liberate us.

Verse 15: "But I am the Lord thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared: The Lord of hosts is His name." This is the sea of persecution. What is His name? He is THE LORD OF HOSTS: He has all at His command...He is the All-Powerful...the Help of His people!

Lesson 36

Isaiah 52:14,15; 53:1-6

In the first verse of chapter 52, the Lord continues to speak to the church. He calls them to “awake! Put on thy strength. There are conditions which we have to face.” Many times, we have to take the initiative.

This is the climax of the book of Isaiah; it is the portrait of Christ. It was written more than seven hundred years before the birth of Christ. Chapter 52 is a key chapter.

Verse 14: “As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.” Is this a picture of greatness, of people admiring Him for His beauty and His power? It is a picture of degradation. His face was so ill-treated that people would not recognize Him as a human being. What did the people think when they looked at this sight? They were astonished; they began to ridicule Him and to insult Him. The scum of unredeemed man is there at Calvary.

Verse 15: “So shall he startle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.” One maximum leads to another maximum. The maximum of humiliation brings to the maximum of glory. Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy. Is there any name greater than that Name? Is there any humiliation greater than that? No. He will cause the powerful people to keep silent. Everything has a price. There are people who want much for nothing; they want a great holiness without suffering; imaginations without considerations. Imagine the prophet speaking to the people: “His visage was so marred

more than any man” He did not look like a man; and yet, on account of the same man, kings will be astonished; people will be blessed.

How would the people react? Who would believe? Nevertheless, the prophet obeyed. Isaiah 53:1: “Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?” Did the people accept this message? Did they pay attention? They thought the prophet was crazy. He did not litigate with them, but went back to the Lord. Isaiah looked into the faces of the people when he told them. They said in their hearts, “This man is crazy.” Isaiah went to the Lord and said, “Who hath believed our reports? My speech has been lost, no one cares for the words.” But, did the Lord stop him from preaching? No. Rather, He gave him a commission to continue to speak.

Verse 2: “For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.” Isaiah continues to portray Christ. He tells of Christ’s humble beginning. Adam did not have a humble beginning; he was a grown man when we meet him. He had no limitations except for the tree. It is different with Christ. “He shall grow as a tender plant, a very small beginning, just a tender plant.” “A root out of dry ground”: an insignificant place. “He hath no form nor comeliness.” There are many kinds of beauty: the beauty of Satan; of Saul; of Absalom; of Moses; of Stephen; of Jesus. The beauty of Satan, Saul and Absalom is a beauty that calls attention at the first meeting. It attracts at first appearances; but the more we examine, the more it becomes repulsive. Divine beauty does not show much, because it is hidden. The more you penetrate, the more beautiful it becomes. It is so in life. When there is real value, there is modesty. You have to discover it little by little. Jesus did not impress

people; He was modest, not boastful. He did not impose Himself. Real power is silent, not noisy. It does not force itself upon the attention of others; false beauty does. Real beauty is simple. God has given divine beauty to His children. Don't conform to the world. They did not like the beauty of Jesus; they saw no attraction; their eyes were not opened to see His divine beauty.

Verse 3: "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not." "WE hid our faces." The prophet identifies himself with humanity. Before we were converted, when we were earthly, we did not find much in Jesus. They found nothing in Jesus; He is despised of earthly man. God's men appreciate and love Him. "A man of sorrow and acquainted with grief". You can tell your affairs to Jesus, not only your sins. At times there is an oppressive atmosphere; you are depressed; you have grief and sorrow; but He has gone through all of that. He was experienced in grief. "We hid our faces from Him." Peter used the fire of the enemy. You have to pay a price for the fire of the enemy.

Verse 4: "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." The prophet comments that He carried *OUR* sorrows, not His own. When Jesus uttered those words, "My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?", people thought that God had forsaken Him. It is the cry of the sinners. It represents the cry of humanity without forgiveness. What would man be if God did not forgive? He would be worse than a beast! Imagine a man without forgiveness, with no redemption!

Verse 5: "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

Transgression and iniquity: a *desire* to steal something is iniquity. The *actual* stealing is transgression. Both have been paid for by Christ. "The chastisement of our peace..." Is there any peace in this world? Peace was the first message. Pilate and Herod, those wicked people were enemies, one against the other. They shook hands and became friends before Jesus was sentenced. The poison of these two snakes was given to the Innocent One and they remained in peace. Someone else paid the price. If you want to be a peacemaker, you have to pay a price.

Verse 6: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." This is a picture of sheep without a shepherd. There is no unity, no direction. They say, "I will do what I please." The great Shepherd comes and unites them in one way. He unites people who could never be united. He made Himself food for many so that those who eat of Him will become of one mind. There is only one way to become one: Eat of Christ. When we eat of Christ, contemplate on Jesus and forget ourselves; without thinking, we will become one in Christ.

Lesson 37

Isaiah 53:1-9

Isaiah had been preaching about Someone to come. He began with the cross and ended with glory. The people did not believe, but sneered at him.

Verse 2: "For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." People usually go after big things. It takes a long time for people to be satisfied with humble things, to become humble and to see God in small, insignificant things. We want to see the Lord in big temples, rejoicing, large crowds, etc.; but the spectacular came with Satan in this world. Vanity has been introduced by Satan. What is vanity? It is like a glass, which magnifies everything, even the low, insignificant things. Man walks in a vain show; he is vanity. Satan says, "You will become big; you will know everything." But God works against our vanity to make us nothing. Vanity is the last thing to abandon man; only the grace of God will make us see how empty vanity is.

"He shall grow up before God." He walked before the Father. He did not care about what others had to say. If we grow and remain before the Father, we don't care about vanity; but if we begin to look right and left, we will be tempted. Carnal man does not see the beauty in Jesus. This world wants to be deceived. People want to see something spectacular. "Blessed are the poor in spirit." This teaching was altogether contrary to them. In those times, the greatest man was not the man who could take a beating and say, "God bless you." Brute force was the ideal of the day. Now there appears a Man teaching: "Blessed are the poor in

spirit.” To themselves, they said, “This man is weak; we need someone who is powerful, someone to fight our enemies.” Only the church sees beauty in the Lord. Psalm 45:2: “Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee forever.” The psalmist says that He is more beautiful than the children of men; but, in general, man saw no beauty in Christ. The really important things in life are hidden. Deceit comes from a big show. Real knowledge and real beauty are modest.

Verse 4: “Surely he hath borne our grief, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.” Some think that the passion of Jesus covers only the sins. There is something else. There are times when we are depressed, oppressed or agitated. There are so many conditions in our lives including grief and sorrow. Many of these conditions are not real suffering, but they are sad conditions. In His sacrifice, even these conditions have been included. Some depression that we cannot express, Jesus carried that also.

Verse 6: “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” When sheep are lost, they are stupid animals. Lost sheep have many heads and many ways; there is such confusion. No two individuals think the same thing; everyone goes his own way and remains stubborn. The Lord has made all of these ways into one. Jesus is the Way. Follow those footsteps of sorrow. We expect justice from man. We tremble before one of this world. Let us tremble if we have done something amiss. We tremble because we have two ways. All of the ways must become one. Can we be a way to others? What Christ has become to us, we must become to others. “Iniquity” is inner malice. Flesh is the human mind, human tendencies. Man,

without grace, is flesh. Satan knows where we are weakest. We are tempted in some envy, some jealousy, some avarice. Study your temptations; know your weak spots, and you will see where you are tempted. Satan will not tempt you to rob a bank. Try to discover your weak spots; it isn't easy to know yourself. We are easily deceived. We think that we are ready to give our fortune to the Lord. People boast of many things, but it is one thing to *say* that you are ready to make some sacrifice and another thing to *do* it. We never know until something serious comes in our lives and we are tested and tried. Life is full of surprises. Don't be too sure. When the tests come, you will see many heroes and also many cowards.

Verse 7: "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." We are ready to defend ourselves but not others. Jesus was a lion in defending others and in rebuking Satan; but when they slapped His face, He was like a lamb for His own defense. What about us? We are lions when they touch us, and when they speak evil of somebody else, we keep quiet. We have to be lions in defending the oppressed. Acts 8:32: "The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth." The eunuch was impressed when reading about a certain individual who died like a lamb. Why was he so impressed? Because it was so contrary to human nature to suffer without lamentation. If we cannot fight back, we can at least murmur and cry.

Verse 9: "And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth." Jesus experienced many deaths. The life of a Christian involves several

funerals. When Jesus went to His glory, he was surrounded by ignorant people, enemies, and by His disciples. Who can count the deaths of Jesus? We are killed inch by inch. Our lives are composed of many individuals. We die to a particular thing when this "thing" goes away from us and we go away from it.

Jesus did not prepare a monument for Himself when He died; He was ready for any kind of grave. When He passed away, He committed Himself to the Father. The body of a crucified individual was often thrown into a precipice. The enemies had prepared such a grave, a place of desolation. But, He was buried in a virgin tomb, which was given by a man who, up to that moment, had been a coward. He had been a disciple, but in disguise. He took courage when Jesus died. When Jesus died, Joseph gathered courage and pleaded for the body of Jesus. He gave Jesus a royal burial. Such tenderness! The Lord permitted the enemies to have their way up to the day He died; but when He expired, no wicked hand touched the body. It was touched only by tender hands.

There are two ways in which we can commit a crime against society: either by violence or guile. Those who are weak and are unable to be evil by violence will be evil with their mouths: guile! But Jesus was without both. There are people who are not violent, but they are malicious. Let us follow Christ's example.

Lesson 38

Isaiah 53:10-12

First, a return to the first two verses: "Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." Here is a two-fold question, or demand of the Lord: "Who hath believed our report?" and "To whom is the arm of the Lord, or strength, revealed?" Try to put something on the market which is strange to the mentality of the people; it will fail. Why is this? Why do so few people appreciate something very high? People are interested only in the things that appeal to their character. Be led by the Holy Spirit. People must be attracted to you and to your ministry; not by schemes, but by the Holy Spirit. "Who hath believed our report?" Isaiah was a severe preacher. He spoke of the Servant of the Lord in His humiliation; he did not say things to amuse the people. Were the people prepared to listen to such a message? The minds of people shrink from sufferings and humiliation. For every message, we need a preparation in the hearts of the people. It is difficult for an honest preacher to have a congregation. The people, in general, want to be deceived; they want to be flattered. They don't like humility.

When you speak of strength, the human mind thinks of violence, earthly power; but the real strength of God was in a crucified Individual. It is the opposite of the human mind. His ideals of virtue, of strength, of wisdom, are contrary to the ideals of the people. Man's mind is in another direction. Jesus did not come with a parade, a big band or a sword. He did not please everybody. His acts and His carriage were not in accord with the ideals of the people. His manner was

irksome to them. They despised the fountain of Shiloh, the quiet place. They were thinking of the mighty rivers of Assyria. People were not satisfied with Samuel; they wanted something big. It is not easy to have a congregation that savors quietness.

The man who suffers is stronger than the man who makes others suffer. In the last temptation of Jesus, Satan said: "I have money and power; you have a few servants but you need money. Make an alliance with me." Is Satan away, or is he still around with these words? We think that we need a big "this and that" but "to whom is the strength of the Lord revealed?" Do we understand God in sufferings, sickness, and quietness? Do we see His footsteps in the high waters, in the storm? Carnal man does not understand the things of God. In order to understand God, we must be spiritual. We must be born from above, and then we begin to understand a little of His methods. It is a different mentality. Man does not understand that the Redeemer should grow like an insignificant plant, with nothing appealing to the human pride. The elect ones see inner beauty. Beauty is linked with goodness. There is no beauty when the heart is wicked.

Now to verse 10: "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." There was no special reason why Jesus had to suffer: "It pleased God." That is enough for us. "It pleased my Lord." Tomorrow you will understand; the faith of today becomes the knowledge of tomorrow. Let us follow Him even in darkness. "He hath put him to grief." Jesus was surrounded by an atmosphere of grief. Jesus was slain in the spirit. What about the soul? You go around and people mistreat you, and you feel angry. You must sacrifice your emotions and your mentality; you crush your soul and offer it on the

altar of sacrifice. It is a tremendous passion. Jesus underwent this crucifixion all His life. Great sorrow can be felt in those words that Jesus spoke to His parents: "Why did you seek me; why did you lose me?" They sought Jesus in the market places, in some inn, with friends; but there was only one place: in the place of adoration. The boy was not among the crowds of those singing songs; the crowds did not care for the boy; they had the songs. He was found in the temple. What is the consequence when we suffer in the soul? "The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." What is most pleasing to the noble heart of Jesus? It is a companion, in the divine sense. The bride, the elect ones, shall prosper. The bride of the Lord shall prosper if she remains in the mighty hand of the Shepherd. It is impossible for anyone to destroy you if you remain in His hands. The One who seemed to be very weak is very powerful!

Verse 11: "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." "The travail of his soul." The deep sighs! Who can measure the temptations of Jesus? He groaned in the Spirit, but was silent. It was a deep, inner suffering; but He shall see the fruit of this travail. When He sees that those tears and those sighs and sufferings have created a heavenly people, He will be satisfied. Psalm 126:5,6: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Don't try to have an easy life; don't try to become rich without work. It costs to be a Christian. You have to sow in tears and sufferings. The time of reaping will come, and we will reap in joy. The more tears we shed, the more joys we will find in heaven.

Lesson 39

Isaiah 53:10-12

Verse 10: "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." People do not understand the reason for the sacrifice of Jesus; they do not see why the Son of God had to be crucified. It is a mystery to the mind to imagine the strong One becoming weak...wisdom being mocked. God puts a limit, and we must respect that limit. It is impossible to understand everything of God; we know very little. Can a finite mind grasp infinity? We are in the school of Christ; mystery is everywhere in life. "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him." Matthew 11:25,26: "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Don't reason too much; people ask many things about the Beyond. "It seemed good in Thy sight." It pleased the Father and that was enough for Jesus to know.

Job was offended at the methods of God. Elihu reproved him, saying, "You are scandalized because God does not give to man all of His reasons." There are many passages in the Bible that are mysteries. Little by little we enter into the mind of God. John 9:39: "And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind." The people who see become more blind every day. Those who are humble and have the judgment of Christ in their hearts, confess that they are blind and the Lord gives them light—not all at once, but little by little, increasing the light until the noon of the day. He leads the blind by a way that they know

not. Go and reason with God! Man is tormented by doubts and reasonings. Satan brought reasoning into the world. Man has lost the primitive simplicity and has become scientists and philosophers.

Isaiah 42:16: “And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.” What do you do when you have no spiritual light, or when you are in a meeting and you don’t feel any blessing or joy of the Lord? What should we do? Should we try to create something ourselves? Isaiah 50:10,11: “Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.”

The *who* in verse 50 is the minority that “has no light.” But against the minority is the “all ye”, a crowd of people. This represents two classes of people. One may be very few individuals without light and guidance. They are blind and do not know what to do. They feel that God has abandoned them. Must they create something – move some souls with enthusiasm? They must *trust in the name of the Lord*. They have no guidance, no light, but they must do nothing but *trust*. It is a big mistake to try to run meetings always on a shouting proposition; it creates confusion. You must grow in the realm of faith; faith is not demonstration. You stretch your hand and you are led. You do not know where, but you will reach just the place where He wants you to reach. Don’t reason too much because you will become a victim of despair. A man of faith delights the heart of God. When you

trust Him without miracles, without seeing anything, just because you love Him and are attracted by His beauty, you become a friend of God. Abraham obeyed without reasoning and received a great blessing in his life. "The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." Which is the dearest object that delights the heart of God after the Trinity? It is the bride of the Lamb – the church. The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper, not when we do what we want to do, but when we remain in His hands.

Verse 11: "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy. He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." When is a man satisfied? He is satisfied, when, through sufferings, he has served others and has seen some results. He sees that his tears, sufferings and sacrifices have not been lost. The travail of his soul was something that he had to carry alone. He was crucified in the Spirit, Soul and Body. It is a mistake to say that the passion of Christ is only the crucifixion of the Body. His was a life of sorrows, misunderstandings and afflictions. Who can measure this passion? He had not one death, but many deaths. Also, in our lives there are many funerals; you will see that you will have many crucifixions and many deaths.

The *righteous servant* is Jesus and the church, through Him. "By His knowledge." Who are the people who accept Jesus' work and the crucifixion? Who are those who become united with Jesus? It is those who are willing to know Him; those who know the Lord and put their trust in Him. By accepting His knowledge, many will be justified by the Lord. The Lord shall bear their iniquities. He will carry us, and our iniquities together.

Verse 12: "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." This is the Father speaking of the Son. The bride enters into all of the riches of the bridegroom and all of His sufferings. If we partake of all of the sufferings, we will partake of the kingdom. Who are "the great" in this verse? Are they the dictators, or the great men of renown? The greatest among you must become the servants. The poor in the spirit are "the great , the strong ones." When Jacob became crippled and could not walk straight, then he was called a strong and valiant man. God takes the weak things to confound the strong; it is another mind. In the measure that you enter that mind, you become a citizen of another country. By becoming a citizen of another country, you will lose the friends of this world. They will not see the things you see. The supernatural becomes the natural in your life. You become a stranger more and more. Why such a final victory in Jesus Christ? Four reasons: He poured out His soul unto death; He numbered with the transgressors; He bore the sins of many, and, He made intercession for the transgressors. The highest peak in that ministry is the ministry of intercession. Jesus stands between us, and the Almighty.

What is the plan of God for the church? The plan of God for the church is to be a royal priesthood, an intercessor to stand between man and God. Hebrews 8:1,2: "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Also Hebrews 7:25: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." What is He doing in

heaven? Is He having a good time? “He is able to save to the uttermost that come unto God by him.” *The uttermost – extreme despair – hopeless cases.* He lives to make intercession. He can save people to the extreme, provided they approach God in the name of Jesus. There is no other way of acceptance at the throne. How did He reach such generalship? How did He reach that stage? There are sub-stages. He had to accomplish the three steps mentioned above in order to become **THE INTERCESSOR**. He reached the pinnacle by the three-fold preparation. As He has been in this world, so must we be. He carried the sins of many; he was the paymaster of all of our troubles. 2nd Corinthians 5:21: “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” Which is stronger – that He *bore* the sins of many, or that He Himself *became* sin? He himself became a mass of sin!

They laid hands on Him. Why? He had no weapons and they were powerful. They acted ignorantly, but there was a need; it was a type of prophecy. In the law, when the people sinned, they were to lay hands on an animal and sacrifice it. By such laying on of the hands, their sins were transferred to the animal. Jesus suffered outside of the city because He had become sin. Their sins were amassed on Jesus. It is not easy to be an intercessor; don’t delude yourself. To babble prayer is easy, but to agonize prayer, to suffer for the people you pray for, is the greatest ministry under the sun. There were priests with the High Priest. Jesus is the High Priest and the church acts as the priests. Joel 2:17,18: “Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God? Then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people.” Jesus doesn’t need us, but He condescends

to use poor man. We are a royal priesthood. Here, the priests were invited to “weep between the porch and the altar.” They stood between two: man and Christ.

Ezekiel 9:4: “And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.” Emphasis is placed on the men who sigh and cry.

Lesson 40

Isaiah 53:10

Verse 10: "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." IT PLEASED THE LORD. Although we don't know it, everything that He does in our lives, He does for a purpose. It takes time to realize that in back of every event, there is infinite love and wisdom. It takes a long time in life to understand that everything that happens to us is in God's providence and is for our own good. Matthew 11:26: "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." We reason too much in this life. We must become simple. God is simple, and the people of God must be simple. We want to philosophize; we want to give reasons. The Lord just presents the truth. It is not good to reason too much.

Some parables seem unreasonable to the human mind. You ask why this is; you gather no information. The Lord gives no satisfaction to the human curiosity. The Lord never lends Himself to give satisfaction to human curiosity. Don't read the Bible to pride yourself on biblical knowledge. Our life's goal must be the intense desire to lift up Jesus Christ.

Why was Job so perplexed? He could not persuade himself that God had abandoned him. Is there anything arbitrary in God? Does He do things just because He is almighty? The devil insinuated that thought to Eve in the Garden. He wants people to believe that God is capricious, that He crushes people just because He is almighty. This thought perplexed Job. The things that happened to him seemed unreasonable; yet, behind everything, God does have a reason. Job received one misfortune after another. He did not

understand. His friends told him to be patient and to accept the sufferings for it was his destiny. Job 33:13: "Why dost thou strive against him? For he giveth not account of any of his matters." They told him that he did not have to know everything. But this is a misjudgment of God; it is as though He afflicts people without a cause just because He is almighty and man is very weak. God kept silent and, for a time, did not explain. Job thought that God was using His almightiness without any regard to the poor creature. It was a lament. But it was not the almightiness of a dictator or of a cruel power; rather, it was that of a benevolent power. We will never become real Christians until we understand that. In His time, He will show His reasons but, until then, we must trust. Many cannot accept the God of Christians because He is presented in a way that causes people to hate God. They say that He likes to do what He wants; He is mighty and crushes people. When we realize that He is benevolent and that His power is used for a good purpose, then we get near God; we understand God and trust Him. If you are convinced that a person loves you, that person has won your heart. Are we convinced that God loves us? There is a reason in everything, although He does not express His reasons. "It pleased the Lord." All during His life, Jesus delighted in doing the will of the Father. A man can do God's will in two ways: either as a slave who is obliged to obey because God can kill him, or as a lover. Jesus did not take pleasure in God's will as a slave, but as a lover.

Is it true that God *never* reveals His reasons? No. Proverbs 25:2: "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honor of kings is to search out a matter." Give the Lord time, and He will tell you His reasons. "To you is given to know the secrets of God." Not all the secrets, but some things in our affairs, we may learn. We must begin by obeying blindly; we will not remain blind if we accept the Lord by faith. John 9:39: "And Jesus said, For judgment I

am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.” To those who confess that they do not see the way, the Lord will give light. Some of the words of Jesus seem exaggerated and arbitrary, but under a scrutiny of the Spirit, you see a great reasoning in back of those words. Matthew 10:40-42: “He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.” This seems exaggerated and extravagant. “He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward.” The reason is not given. Man would say, “I am not a prophet but the Lord will consider me like a prophet, so it is better for me not to be a prophet.” It seems arbitrary. The word RECEIVE is much more than opening the door of your house. It is making that prophet like your child; you would do anything for him; share difficulties with him; love him and appreciate him. You say, “I am not a prophet; I am ignorant, but I must protect that individual and share his troubles, and do everything for him.” It is not easy to consider yourself to be nothing and to esteem another to be very high. It is a reason that is not visible on the surface. The Lord reveals to those who scrutinize the scriptures. It is not easy to say that that woman is better than I, or that that man is just; it is not easy to live for others. The man who appreciates the good in others will be sharing the same good tomorrow. There is a measure in heaven, which is different from the measure of man.

Matthew 23:38,39: “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth,

till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Even if no one comes to you in the name of the Lord, you say, "O Lord, send me someone who may speak only of Jesus." Where there are two or three gathered in His name, there is the church. What you need is not a building, but you need to desire that someone will come to you in the name of Jesus. Are there many church people who desire that? They may desire to fix their church, to arrange the preachers, or to see things adjusted; but how many desire to have someone come to them in the name of Jesus? If you desire that, even if you are in a wilderness, Jesus will appear to you!

Luke 12:13-15: "And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Some say that the Lord spoke too severely with this man. "Who made me a judge or a divider over you?" What would be your judgment of one who answered you in this manner? Is it a very courteous answer? A few verses back, Jesus was speaking tenderly to the people when this man interrupted, as if to say, "I have some business; you can help me." He wanted to have a lawyer without paying. Imagine someone speaking on some tender subject, some matters which should make you cry; and then, someone brings in earthly things! What a contrast between the two speeches! This man paid no attention to the spiritual things but thought only of how Jesus' speaking could help him in earthly matters. In every movement of Jesus, there is something deep and far-reaching. In very step, there is a reason. God makes no mistakes. Let us trust and accept His providence, whether something is pleasing or displeasing. There is infinite love and wisdom in back of everything. We must delight in doing God's will. Let us reach that station; not the station of

resignation because we are crushed and cannot fight God, but rather, the station of love and willingness to do God's will. 2nd Corinthians 12:9,10: "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." "I will take pleasure." He did not say, "I resign myself; I cannot help it." We make a long face. St. Paul had reached the condition of taking pleasure in doing God's will; it pleased the Father and him too. What pleases God must be pleasing to us; it must not be accepted as cruel destiny. The Lord went, with pleasure, to the cross. When the prophets were beaten, they went out rejoicing. Acts 5:41: "And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." Did the Lord have the power to save His disciples from the suffering and shame? Yes; but he wanted to do good for them. Psalm 37:4: "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." Delight in God's will. God loves a cheerful giver. If we suffer with sighs and groans, it is not pleasing to the Father. People have to be moved by love, not by the fear of Moses. Be moved only by love through Jesus Christ.

Lesson 41

Isaiah 54:1-7

The Jews make much of the 54th chapter, but in a material way. The 53rd chapter speaks of the Chief Servant of God. The maximum in the ministry of Jesus is Intercessor for the transgressors. Who are the transgressors? They are those who offend the law of the Holy Spirit. He can save to the utmost, to the extreme limits, when everything is lost. It is then that the Redeemer steps in. This ministry of intercession comes about by suffering, and prayer is suffering.

The 54th chapter speaks of the new Jerusalem, the people of God. In the previous chapter, the Redeemer was not presented as a great warrior in splendor, but as a tender plant in a dry ground, despised and not recognized. This chapter speaks of the bride of such an individual. You begin to see almost the same thing. As is the Lord, so is the church. The method of Christ is the method of the elect ones. Christ means "anointed." The church is composed of anointed people. Did she appear like a beautiful queen - like some woman of importance? It says that she was "barren." A Jewish woman who was barren was despised; she was considered to be a woman of no importance, forsaken and abandoned, almost in despair. We make big mistakes when we forget God's method in His work. Things that seem insignificant to the human eye are not seen that way by the Lord.

Isaiah 53:1-3: "Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and

acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.” Is the church above this Master? Is the servant above the Lord? The church must go through the same evolution that the Lord went through. He was discovered by the Holy Spirit. As was Christ, so must we be in this world. It is a parallel.

Isaiah 54:1: “Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord.” The Lord starts at once with a word of encouragement. “Sing” - it speaks of a people who do not have any visible success. They may work, pray, cry; but it seems that there is no result to their efforts. The work of God goes very slowly. In the beginning, it seems to be a failure. All the life of Jesus seemed to be a failure. Caiaphas seemed to be the winner. Jesus, not the high priest, was cast out. But, in the realm of the Spirit, it was victory. It is different from the ways of man. This woman is a portrait of a failure. The Lord starts to speak to her with a word of encouragement. She is discouraged; she is hiding herself in a corner, thinking that she is useless. The Shulamite was not willing to show her face anymore. She was hiding in the clefts of the Rock. Solomon 2:14: “O my dove, thou art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.” Are these words addressed to a vain woman...one who thinks that she is successful in life? Or are they addressed to some timid, discouraged one? They are not addressed to one who is ready to sing and to speak, but to one who thinks that she is ugly and despised. She is despised and is tired of showing herself. She wants to disappear from society; she wants to be silent. She says, “People don’t care for me; my voice does not reach the heart of the people. Others will do something more showy.” Does

any man comfort this woman? No. Only the One who is above. He says, "Come out; don't hide thyself; you are beautiful; thy voice is sweet" A dove is a simple, modest bird; it is not like a peacock. The Lord speaks words of encouragement only when they are needed. It does not seem logical that she is a desolate woman and yet, has many children. She desired, but did not have any children. The children of the desolate will be more than the children of the married wife. This desolate woman could not imitate others who tried to manufacture religion, to create enthusiasm, to show something important or to make such propaganda that people say they will have a big success. She comes to a point of sincerity and simplicity. She says, "I am a failure; let other people preach, let other people have churches. I have no success." She remembers her past. She has no following and has reached the extreme of discouragement. In such a moment, the Lord steps in: "Sing" to a Christian in despair who says, "I cannot succeed. What shall I do? I will do nothing; I will hide myself in the clefts of the Rock...I will have no followers." If we want to be honest workers for Christ, we will go through this experience. People want to be deceived. You read so many big reports from here and there. You are afflicted because you cannot do anything. You withdraw yourself, almost in despair. The Lord has a plan in your life. The Shulamite went through this experience. She remained alone, forsaken and abandoned; then, the Lord stepped in.

Things that seem a failure to us are a victory with God. The Lord has strange methods; we must penetrate God's way. In a moment of failure and desolation, it is a time to honor God with faith. Arise from thy condition, and begin to sing. That is the starting point. From the desert, from a moment of solitude, of failure, arise from that condition, and begin to sing. "Married wife." If the Lord exhorts the desolate woman about the other woman, she must be a pretender; she only

pretends that she is married to the Lord. She has much visible success; but the desolate woman will have more children than the married one.

Verses 2 & 3: "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes. For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited." "Break forth into singing." She wants to hide herself but the Lord tells her to come out. She wants to cry but the Lord says to sing. Although she does not see any followers, the Lord wants her to "enlarge the place of thy tent" for the many who will come. The Lord is enlarging His work. Years ago, we were running away from this work. We never thought that the Lord would start a work. There is an immense work in our hands for us now. The Lord is enlarging our tents. "Strengthen thy stakes; thy seed shall take possession and make the desolate cities to be inhabited."

Verse 4: "Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more." But there is an enemy to be fought. Luke 15 speaks of the prodigal son who became important when he expected nothing. He was crushed by memories. He was humbled and lost all of his pride. Now, the enemy tries to insinuate something against this barren woman; but the Lord says, "Fear not." It is a new beginning. What about the experiences of the past? The Lord says, "Forget them!" It proves that the church is made up of crushed people. The real church of Christ is made up of people who have been crushed by sorrows and misfortunes. They have lost any human courage and pride. The Lord has to take them again and revive them. The publicans and sinners came to Jesus in

a crushed condition. The religious Pharisees ran away from them. They are those who were too busy to come to the dinner that the Lord had prepared; then the poor in spirit received the invitation. Zephaniah 3:11 & 12: "In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain. I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." No more boasting of "my holy mountain." In that day, you will speak no more of the mightiness of the Pentecostal work. People will say, "What about this or that scandal?" You will speak only of Christ. In that day, no more reports; you will be almost ashamed; you will invite people to Jesus Christ. He will separate you from the people who make reports and from those who boast of "my holy mountain." "I will leave in thy midst a people who have been humbled." This humbled woman and others like her, hope only in the name of the Lord. This is the church. She goes through so many experiences, which make her maimed, blind and lame. The other class of people was too busy trying to save the world to hear the invitation of Jesus. There is a multitude coming to the Lord from the many nations through the kind of ministry that this barren woman had.

Verses 5-7: "For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called. For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God. For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee." How much love the Lord had for this barren woman! The eyes of the tender Master are on her. If the Lord is for you, who can be against you?

Lesson 42

Isaiah 54:8-13

The Lord gives encouragement to a crushed people. Those who are not crushed, He puts them to the dust. When we are crushed, the Holy Spirit comes to our assistance and reminds us that we are princes. It is one of the laws in the Kingdom: The Lord encourages those who are discouraged. When we consider ourselves to be dust, then it is another proposition. This is the main thought of this chapter.

Verse 8: "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." "A LITTLE wrath, and a MOMENT." This is not much and not for a long time. It is like a mother's anger; she becomes irritated, but her anger soon vanishes. His wrath lasts but a moment, but His love is eternal. Does He hate, abandon, cast us out, or cancel our name? Does He refuse to see us anymore? No. It is more tender than a mother's wrath. Did you ever miss the face of the Lord? God is still there, but He hides Himself. It is a trial which we need. "Everlasting love." There is a difference between love and kindness. Kindness is a gentle way of manifesting love. The Lord is very kind and gentle. There is a difference between mercy and justice. Do you want to appear before God based on your justice rather than His mercy? His mercy is to our benefit. It is very criminal to pretend to use mercy when the other person does not need it. But, we *are* in need of mercy. "Saith the Lord thy REDEEMER." 1st Corinthians 1:30: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Redemption is the last act. What is redemption? Redemption is buying back something you have lost, and you don't have the money to buy it back. Redemption is

freedom from a desperate condition. Boaz is a type of the Redeemer. When we go from one experience to another and we reach our extremities, then the Lord steps in. It is then that the Lord says "sing." He redeems us even from our own despair; He has to defend us against ourselves.

Verse 9: "For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee nor rebuke thee." Is the "barren woman" a new person in the church...in the first zeal of confession? No; she is a prodigal. You will discover that the church is made up of prodigals. Luke 15 does not speak of outsiders. The church was in the flock; the son had been in the house. The Lord was angry and chastised the barren woman. The judge punishes; the Father chastises. When an enemy gives you a slap in the face, is God unaware of it? God permits that slap; we need that! The Lord raised enemies against His own people. They have gone over the head of this woman. The Lord said that the flood comes only once; the flood was for then, but there would be no more floods of that type. You have been in some tremendous circumstances and He says, "No more, My child. I allowed it in the past, but it is past now." But, it must come. You have no more courage to boast about your denomination. You will remain a small people, humbled and chastised. Accept chastisement; recognize your nothingness. Then, the Lord will say, "No more; you have come to your senses."

Verse 10: "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." "Mountains shall depart, hills be removed." Have you seen people removed from your friendship, someone in whom you trusted more than you trusted in God, removed? How many mountains and hills

have been removed? The Lord removed mountains and hills around us, but He will never remove His kindness. "Covenant of My peace." The Lord said, "We made a contract, but you failed. You need a new contract. This time, I will do everything; you must only believe that everything is in My hands and that I am your righteousness." Jesus is the covenant. Our documents are in Christ. It is the covenant of peace. "Saith the Lord that hath MERCY on thee." Mercy is a great word; it means giving consideration to someone who deserves nothing. This woman is still doubting; it is too good for her to believe. She needs a little comfort once again, in the next verse.

Verse 11: "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires." You may hear people say, "Don't talk to that brother; he is a backslider. He has committed a sin unto death; he divided the body of Christ." You have no comfort; you may read of so many miracles and you say, "Poor me; I am nobody." You have no comfort; you have doubts and afflictions. You have torments within yourself; and the Lord steps in: "O thou." This is the tenderness of the Lord. The more that people ill-treat you, the more God will caress you. Many times people whom we despise, are protected by the Lord. Don't despise anyone. The Lord not only gives a *strong* foundation, but a *beautiful* one also. He will lay a foundation with fair colors and with sapphires—solidity and beauty. What a promise He has given!

Verse 12: "And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones." These are the "windows" through which we may look at what is near us and in the distance. We do have our limits; we cannot go to preach in every place; but our limits are blessed limits.

Verse 13: "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." The church is a mother; this mother has many children. This barren woman will have many children, although she is not recognized as a church. We cannot say that we are the church. When we say something is beautiful, we must never say that we are that beautiful object. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, they shall have great peace." What about other children, the children of the married woman? Those who are not her children will be taught by man. The children of the mother will go through so many things, but finally, they will come to the point where they will be taught of the Lord. The day will come when they will know which is the voice of the shepherd and which is the voice of the hireling. God is just; He protects His own. If you give yourself into the hands of Jesus, you will never be trapped by the enemy. You may be puzzled; but the light will come. This woman received discernment of spirit. We must be very careful about bread which lasts for eternal life. There are so many places where bread is sold, but the Lord points out to you the bread which is given only by One.

The children of the barren woman will know the Lord. They will hear you preach, but they will know that it is not your preaching but the Lord speaking through man. They will not see the preacher, but will see the Lord. Only what God confirms to you, remains. "They will have great peace." There is peace only in God; there is peace only in truth.

Lesson 43

Isaiah 54:11-17

The barren woman had everything against her, according to the visible. No one saw any good in her except for the Lord. She received comfort from no one; but the Lord stepped in with comfort.

Verse 11: "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires." The more storms, the more tempests, the more will be the comfort of the Lord. The more sorrow and oppression, the more oil of joy. The Christian has the peace of the Lord. No man can give His peace; no man can take it away. "Afflicted" means a person who has been crushed, oppressed, humbled. "Tossed" means that there is no place to rest your head. Wherever you turn, you have billows upon billows of afflictions. You look for comfort but find none. "Stones" are types of Christians. Every one of us is to be used in a building by the Lord. We must be built by the Lord. This beauty is a beauty of holiness. Don't trust human beauty without Christ. The beauty of Absalom and Saul was a worldly beauty. Moses and David possessed a divine beauty. The brothers of David were beautiful. David was the most insignificant of the family. His first brother moved about like a prince, and the prophet thought that this one was God's choice. But finally came David, without even a change of apparel, but he was beautiful unto the Lord. The Lord's beauty was hidden, not discovered at first glance.

Verse 13: "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." The word of the Lord is both inclusive and exclusive; it includes and excludes. The Lord promised many children to the barren

woman, more than the woman who had pretensions; the one who praises herself. "Thy children shall be taught of the Lord." By the law of logic, other children are taught by man. The words are there without being written. Isaiah 6:10: "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed." This speaks of a people who always listen but never learn. They look but do not consider. They are attracted here and there, having no stability in doctrine. They are very easily deceived; they have no backbone. But the children of this barren woman shall be taught of the Lord. In order to be taught of the Lord, we must know the voice, and accept all the means which the Lord uses. A Christian is always learning; he does not despise anything. He listens to everything, but waits on the Lord to be confirmed. Wisdom comes from God.

Ephesians 4:11-16: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." This is the ministry for the barren woman. The Lord teaches us through these ministries. A church sends the missionaries and evangelists, but there are no certificates and no

guarantees from governments. Some people may say that we are all the body of Christ; but here it says that the Body is being formed. We are all the children of God, but some of us are not yet the BODY OF CHRIST. We are the BODY when we can say that another person is like your own body, when you feel the same need, the same sorrow, the same joy, no divided interests; to help when in need. The Lord is working toward making us the Body of Christ. We are brothers, but while we are "each for himself" we will remain just brothers. Let us not deceive ourselves; to be the Body of Christ is to be much more than brothers. It takes the work of the Holy Spirit to make the Body, to make people into one. We make things too easy. We say that we are this and that and, since we think that we *are*, we don't seek to *be*. We are self-deceivers in many things. If one member is sick, the entire body suffers. Never deceive yourself. Call things by their names. We must be the Body. You will notice in your life, little by little, the Lord will give you some brother as a friend. What is a friend? Friend is a big word; Abraham: a friend of God; The Bride: friend of the bridegroom. A friend is one to whom you unburden your miseries; you are not ashamed to tell him anything. A friend is more than a brother. Let us confess that we are not friends in this sense. If we say that we *are*, then we will never *become*. Don't deceive yourself with vain words. Use few words, but mean what you say. The Lord uses the ministries to teach, to build, and to make unity.

Verse 14: "In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee." RIGHTEOUSNESS is one of the biggest words in the Bible. There are two kinds of righteousness; the first righteousness is given to you without your being righteous. We first believe in the Lord and He considers us to be righteous even though we are not yet righteous. We are righteous by faith.

Still, we keep believing, and He keeps working with His finger, one correction after another, cleansing, revealing step by step; and we climb the mountain of righteousness. We are working in all righteousness; inner and outer righteousness. "If your righteousness shall not abound, more than the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter the Kingdom of God." They had righteousness; they paid so much to the church; they performed some duties; they were honest people in a sense; but they could think evil and have no remorse. The Lord requires of us an inner righteousness. Outer righteousness comes automatically. There is never a limit to our perfection; we must strive to be perfect. The people of God need to be "established." They will no longer be "wishy-washy." They will no more go after appearances, but they will go after reality.

1st Peter 5:10: "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." Don't be scandalized when you see some people in the church who are unstable. The old Adamic nature is tricky. Little by little, we discover ourselves. After we have suffered a little, we will be rooted, grounded, and established. No one will move us anymore. It takes a little time. Let us have patience with those who are not yet established. "Thou shalt be far from oppression." You will not like to oppress anymore. You will prefer to suffer rather than making others suffer. Don't be afraid of enemies. Think good for your enemies; they are your unpaid watchmen; they watch for your soul. Bless your enemies; they are your friends because they oblige you to pray and to examine yourselves. Enemies are footstools under our feet; not that we may step on them, but that we may rise higher and higher. We go from disappointment to disappointment; from enemies to enemies. "Thou shalt not fear." Most sicknesses come from fear. "And deliver them who through

fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” Many are in bondage to fear. The Lord shed His innocent blood so that we may be released from the demon fear.

Verse 15: “Behold, they shall surely gather together, but not by me: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake.” You may say, “The Lord promised me so much and yet, I have so many troubles and enemies.” This verse covers that observation. They will “gather together against thee,” but that unity will not last. Have a little patience and your enemies will be divided among themselves like the enemies of Israel who killed themselves. There is a gathering, but it will not last. Have patience; stand still and see the work of the Lord. Psalm 46:10: “Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted in the earth.” Don’t agitate yourself; don’t try to fight your own battles. The more they unite against you, the more they will fall.

Verse 16: “Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy.” His “work” for a time, will cause suffering and persecution to His people, but He has also created someone to destroy the destroyer.

Verse 17: “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.” The Lord defends those who do not defend themselves. “The servants of the Lord.” Revelation 22:3: “And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him.” “His servants shall serve Him.” Is it easy to be a servant of the Lord? The servant must reach the highest peak, the temple. You will live in the presence of the Lord

when you reach that condition. His servants will serve only Him. We must reach that condition. We are His temple, right here. We dream of being in some high position in heaven, but we are a little mixed up. Real servants of the Lord will begin right here to serve only Him. St. John 12:26: "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him, will my Father honor." "My Father will honor him." Don't expect any honor from man. You want to serve Christ; follow Him. The enemy will tempt you and tell you that you don't deserve anything that you don't pray enough; he will try to confuse and crush you. But our "righteousness" is not of our own efforts; it is only from God. Be in peace; He fills the lacking measure. "Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."

Lesson 44

Isaiah 55:1-6

Verse 1: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Everyone that thirsteth is a class of people who have been prepared by the Holy Spirit. John 11:51 & 52: "And this spake he not of himself; but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." This will upset all the missionary programs. The secret of missionary work is that only the people who have been prepared by God will listen to you; you will waste your time with the rest. "To gather the scattered children." He prepares those children to listen to you. You can kill yourself, but the others will not listen to you. Only the people who are in the heart of God will be made into oneness. The Lord sends His spiritual detectives to discover these children. Outside of this, there is no missionary work. There is plenty of work for you to do. God works through you, only with those who are thirsty. Only these people will listen to your invitation. The Lord refreshes these thirsty ones with water. "He that hath no money, come, buy and eat." Many people come to the Lord with their own money. They are satisfied with their own prayers, with their own energies, trying to save the universe by knocking at every door. That is man's money. There are others who have no such money. They have no work; they cannot even pray. They have no money, but they are thirsty. They have nothing to offer the Lord except their tears and sighs. They have no pretensions, no fasting like the Pharisees, but the Lord makes an appeal to poor people who

have nothing to offer except their thirst, tears and sorrow. It takes a long time to understand pure grace; pure love and simplicity, nothing mixed. Which work must we do to inherit eternal life? Not your work, but the work of God. Believe and accept Him whom He did send!

There are two classes of people here: those who had money and no thirst, and those who had thirst and no money. Those who had money were satisfied. They have their own religious ceremony and hard work, and their many words that the Lord is coming. Let us have few words. We live too much in the realm of material things. In God's economy, there is no space and no time. He is here, *now*. There is no limit with God, no future time. We wait for Him *now*. The thirsty ones have no money. What condition makes people thirsty? Matthew 5:4-6: "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." See how this thirst is created in us? There is a process that leads people to becoming thirsty. One condition leads to the next condition. The first is POOR IN SPIRIT. This person feels that he deserves nothing; he is of no importance. He feels like a sinner who is unworthy of the Lord. Consequently, he becomes hungry and thirsty for Christ's righteousness. These thirsty people do not lean on their works or their own righteousness. They are a praying people, a humble people, and they do not even know that they have these qualities. They see their deficiencies, not their attainments.

"Buy wine and milk without money and without price." Gold is the form of exchange used in this world. Faith is the base of exchange in the spiritual world. We can buy only with faith. Peter compares faith with gold. 1st Peter 1:7: "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be

found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” Without gold there is no commerce. Without faith it is impossible to please God. We go from faith to faith. We believed last year for something; keep believing, keep buying. That is the only pay that God wants from you. Without faith there is no commerce with the infinite God. Hebrews 11:6 “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” Enoch pleased God by faith; he believed in God. It is not an oracular belief. BELIEVE is a tremendous word. The one who believes in God puts a seal affirming that God is true. Come and buy wine; it is blood; it is the Holy Spirit. You may buy something and keep working. But no, you have to buy and eat; make it your own. The bill will not be sent next month.

Verse 2: “Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? And your labor for that which satisfieth not? Harken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.” This is an appeal to those who are still anxious about something although they thirst. The Lord asks, “Why do you spend your efforts in things which do not feed you?” Amos 6:13: “Ye which rejoice in a thing of naught, which say, Have we not taken to us horns by our own strength?” “Ye who rejoice in things of nothing.” This seems to be contradictory to Zechariah 4:10: “For who hath despised the day of small things? For they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth.” There are two conditions in church people. We may despise the day of small things and rejoice in things which seem big, but are of no importance. Even in religious movements, we despise things, which seem small but are not small in God’s sight. We may be crazy about things which seem big, but are

nothing in God's sight. God uses things of nothing, things which seem to be of no importance; but man goes after extravagances, religious vanity, doing something which is of no importance to God. Many run here and there, having mass meetings. Trying to impress people is religious vanity. Don't judge others, for we are no better; but the truth is the truth. Instead in rejoicing in things of nothing, things of no satisfaction, the Lord says, "Hearken diligently unto Me." Hearken to the voice of God within us. Eat what is really good, pure milk and pure honey. "Let your soul delight itself in fatness." Psalm 37:4: "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." Delight yourself in the Lord, not in the building, not in the music or speakers. Delight only in the Lord. Is it easy for the people of the Lord to come to that conclusion in their lives and to be free of ceremonies? What attracts and feeds our souls? It is not easy to preach to religious people; they build too much on the letter. We do not appreciate spiritual realities.

Verse 3: "Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live: and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." INCLINE; our neck is a little stiff. We have to come to the Lord. Instead of coming to the Lord, many times we come to man. You give a little something for people to do and you can have a large congregation. It is a kind of pride. People want to do something, to have some special importance. Human pride wants to reach heaven with its own energies. Many say, "We have prayed through", or "My knees are sore from praying." When the spiritual in you becomes natural, you fulfill God's will without even knowing it. You move with kindness; you pray without even knowing it. You acquire a second nature. When Christianity in you becomes a second nature, you do not even know that you are doing good. You move with love and kindness and when people thank you, you are surprised. We obey the law of God without knowing

it. By identifying ourselves with Christ, we become new creatures. What about David, who is mentioned in this verse? Acts 13:22: "And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will." What specialty is found in David, which called for such approval in God? "A man after the heart of God." Do you think it is easy to define that? We know too many verses without excavating the meaning. David is a portrait of a man who is always desiring to please his lover. This man entered into a covenant with the Lord. David desired to build the temple. 2nd Samuel 7:11 & 12: "And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the Lord telleth thee that he will make thee an house. And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom." The Lord made a promise to David. He was to have a descendant according to the flesh, who would be King forever. The promises of the Lord are conditional. Ponder the condition. Buy without money, but buy with faith. Incline your ear; delight in Me; come again to Me and remain in My company. I promise you something everlasting which will never fail. Remember David. Many were not destroyed because the Lord remembered David.

Verse 4: "Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people." David became a witness. Psalm 78:70-72: "He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds: From following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance. So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands." He loved and protected the

people; he was a shepherd of the people. He had been trained in the school of suffering for a long time; he did not become a leader overnight. Beware of those who come up too quickly. He fed them according to the integrity of his heart and ability of his fingers. The Lord did not take David from a palace, but from the "sheepfolds."

Verse 5: "Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee." This speaks of the work of the Church. Man's work is to make nice invitations to the people. Why will people whom you never knew, come after you? The Holy One, the Separated One has "glorified you." The church may have the beauty of holiness even now. God has adorned the Bride with the spiritual beauty of holiness, which makes her attractive and people come to her.

Verse 6: "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." Many say, "We are waiting for His coming." What about *now*? SEEK. Is this something which is discovered easily, something which we stumble on? Call while He is near. He can be found any time; but there are special seasons. The Shulamite was resting; she had retired from a nice day with the Lord. She did not listen to the gentle tap of the Lord. She did not understand; the Lord comes to you when you least expect Him. It seems to be nothing, but we may miss much. We must have a quick sense. We do not understand the moving of the Spirit. He disappears. He knocks at the door, and we are not alert enough. Grab Him when He is near. Jacob said, "Bless me *now*." We must have the second nature to discern the movements of the Spirit.

Lesson 45

Isaiah 55:6-13

The Lord appeals to those who spend money for that which is not bread and cannot satisfy. Isaiah insists with the people to depend only on the Lord. They were leaning on other forces, alliances, politics and schemes.

Verse 6: "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." Psalm 32:6: "For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him." "In a time when thou mayest be found." The critics will say, "He is everywhere." But we are not always open to the Lord. Our times are not in our hands, but in God's. There is a special time of grace for everyone.

Verse 7: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." We have to forsake our own way and enter another "way." Christ is the other Way. "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Light." What has the "wicked" to do here in a religious people among the Jews? Psalm 50:16: "But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?" This refers to the man who considers himself to be religious, but he is wicked. He shows himself to be very religious. This wicked man does two things: he declares God's statutes and takes the name of the Lord in his mouth. His heart hides iniquities and secrets. He must return to the Lord. The reason for this is in verse 8: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord."

Verse 9: "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." The wicked and unrighteous have some plan in their minds, which seems to be very logical. They reason with the logical mind. With the logical mind, they are right; but the Lord says something here, which puts the axe to the root. The Christian must have a different mind entirely. The mind of the Lord is different from that of man. We must be converted to the mind of the Lord. What is the basis of this conversion to the mind of the Lord? When we forsake something else entirely, we are converted. We must abandon our own mind and make a funeral to it. It is not easy. There are two different realms. Man reasons in his own way; God has a different method of reasoning. The mind of the people did not understand the mind of Christ. We must be converted in the mind. Conversion begins in the heart, and then in the mind.

Verses 10 & 11: "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." It is not the word that goeth from from *our* mouths or something that *we* read. It must be not only *His* word, but it must proceed from *His* mouth. St. John 6:63: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." The Spirit gives life. Man speaks, even if he is repeating the words of Jesus, but without force. The words that have power are the words which *He* speaks. They are spirit—producing life. Ecclesiastes 3:14: "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, not anything taken

from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.” Whatsoever God doeth is not uncertain. Word is ACT with God. It possesses reality and stands. Man cannot convert people or make the church. Man tries to manipulate the word of God with religious schemes. The Lord says that He must do the work. The word coming from His mouth shall be forever. After the treasurer in the Book of Acts was evangelized and baptized, did the evangelist procure some other minister? He did nothing. The power of God took him away from the face of man. Only God must remain with man and in man. The treasurer was not abandoned. He went on his way full of joy. We have no doubt that he was saved, because he received a word from the mouth of the Lord, and that word is forever. You may say a few words in the Spirit, and those words are eternal. We may speak and speak and accomplish nothing; that is, our own words. 1st Kings 8:15: “And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which spake with his mouth unto David my father, and hath with his hand fulfilled it.” “Spake and fulfilled.” He accomplished the things which He spoke; the word will not remain void. It shall accomplish what the Lord pleases. Are all the people who hear the word of the Lord converted? Some are converted and some are condemned by the same words. When a prophet was seen in olden times, people trembled; they trembled when they saw Samuel in Bethlehem. Prophets were the spokesmen of God; when they said something by the mouth of the Lord, that something happened. If the Lord sends you to deliver a message to a church, something will happen, one way or another.

Verse 12: “For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.” “Ye shall go out with joy.” This is the class of people who go to the Lord with faith and buy wine and milk. They do not depend on their own words of

persuasion, preaching their own words; but they will trust the word of the Lord, which comes from the mouth of the Lord. Others will say, "You will have no people in your church." But the Lord encourages them here. These people who speak only by the mouth of God, begin with sufferings; but they will enter into rest. They will have no agitation. They will have no religious schemes. People say, "You will accomplish nothing." The Lord says, "Ye shall go out with joy, the joy of the Lord." When you have the word of the Lord in your mouth, it produces joy. Many "mountains and hills", that is many difficulties and obstacles, will disappear.

Verse 13: "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." There are two kinds of people and two kinds of fruit. The wicked are full of devices and plans. The two kinds of fruit are the fir and myrtle instead of the thorn and brier. They are those who have received the word from the mouth of the Lord; the power of the Lord will cast the others out if they are tares. When the Spirit of the Lord is in a church, the tares cannot remain for long. Some day, they will have to go away. Psalm 1:5 & 6: "Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish." They shall not remain under the hammer of God's word. They may persecute you and win the building, but in the sight of the Lord, they are the losers.

Zephaniah 3:11 & 12: "In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain. I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." God makes the separation. God makes the separation of one class of people from the

other class. The “religious” people have their own money. They are proud of the “holy mountain.” They are always speaking of their own attainments, of how much work they do; they preach more about work than about Christ. These people will boast. The Lord will make a separation from these people; He will take out the boastful people; He will take from thy midst the boastful. It does not mean that we will win the places. According to man, you will be losers. In the realm of the Spirit, the one who “loses” is the winner. “I will also leave in the midst of thee, an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord.” They are an afflicted and humble people who don’t boast anymore; they trust only in the name of the Lord. They will have the joy of the Holy Spirit, not a false joy.

What of the thorn and brier? Can you fix the brier and thorns? Don’t touch! 2nd Samuel 23:7: “But the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands: but the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear; and they shall utterly be burned with fire in the same place.” One mightier than you is needed; you cannot fix the thorns and briars. There are plenty of thorns in the works where man dominates. Don’t touch if the Lord doesn’t give authority. The briars shall be taken out, but not by appeasement or compromise. The Lord will separate; He will use someone with iron, with a special stick. If you go about it in a peaceful way, you will accomplish nothing. You need authority, not man’s authority, but God’s authority.

Instead of the brier and thorn, shall come the fir and myrtle trees. These are modest trees. “And it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.”

Lesson 46

Isaiah 57:13-21

Verse 13: "When you cry out, let your companies deliver you! The wind will carry them off, a breath will take them away. But he that putteth his trust in me shall possess the land, and shall inherit my holy mountain." The one who shall take his refuge in the Lord shall possess the land and inherit "my holy mountain." Two kinds of people are contemplated in this verse: one who puts his trust in the Lord and the other who puts his trust elsewhere. "Let your companies deliver thee, the wind will carry them away." They have big programs but, at the conclusion, you are empty. You get nothing; you expected much but you got little. There are those who trust in companies, and those who trust in the Lord. They fortify themselves in companies but will get nothing. The wind and vanity shall take them away.

Remember the difference between belief and trust. You believe a group of people to be honest people. But if you would go far away and had some goods to entrust to someone, you would think twice before you would select the individual to whom you could confide entirely. Belief without trust is not complete. We believe in God, but do we put our trust in Him? We believe that He is powerful but do we trust in His power? We believe He has wisdom but do we look for it when we need it? Trust also is a refuge, some shelter where the enemy cannot touch you. Enter into the Rock! Trust not in numbers. Each one of us must know the Lord for himself - face to face. It is good to be in company, but we must know the Lord.

Verse 14: "And shall say, Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumbling block out of the way of my people." Three things are recommended: Cast ye up; Prepare the way; and take up the stumbling block. Throw

superfluous things out of your life; clear the way of my people; cast out the things that we have accumulated and unload our lives of burdens, which we have taken without God's command.

Verse 15: "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." "High and Lofty One." God is everywhere, but can you think of God and look downward? It is impossible. Raise your head high; lofty is grand; it has character. He inhabits eternity. HOLY means "separated, pure." We have to separate from our hearts and minds anything which is unclean. With whom does He dwell? Does He dwell with the proud? He dwells with those of a humble and contrite spirit. Contrite means ground fine, like dust. They become nothing in their own estimation; the Lord delights in the dust. Genesis 3:14 & 19: "And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." What relationship is there between eating that bread and becoming dust? SWEAT is applied spiritually; the more we eat of that bread, the less we become in our own estimation. John 3:30: "He must increase, but I must decrease." The more we know Jesus, the less we become in our estimation until we reach the condition of dust. Job 42:6: "Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Just imagine a machine that grinds us. A humble spirit is a crushed, suppressed spirit. "To revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." While we go through the process of becoming humble, there is a danger. We may become too depressed; we hide ourselves and refuse to face the Lord; we

run away. Then, the Lord has to call us again. The Shulamite was crushed, prostrated. Song of Solomon 2:14: "O my dove, thou art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." We are in danger of being too low, too discouraged. The Lord does not leave us in that condition. This verse is a reviving of the spirit of the humble ones. He revives the heart of those who have been ground. This woman was hiding herself; the Lord touches on two points: comely countenance and sweet voice. Why does the Lord say that? The Lord never flatters people. Did church people encourage this woman? She was like a solitary person who left the company of the children of the mother. They began to persecute and crush her. She hid herself and would appear no more. The Lord stepped in: "Come out; they say that you are not comely; that your voice is harsh, but let me see your countenance, for it *is* attractive and your voice *is* sweet." The Lord wants to hear and see. We don't see the Lord in person. The woman appears to a new company, a new people. "Go out and testify and preach," saith the Lord, "for I have a people who will appreciate you."

Verse 16: "For I will not contend forever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made." He will chastise, but in a measure; He will not contend forever. Why doesn't man receive the full measure of chastisement? "The spirits would fail and the souls which I have made."

Verses 17 & 20: "For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on forwardly in the way of his heart. But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." Who are the wicked; not the wicked of the world, but the wicked of the Bible? Psalm 50:16: "But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy

mouth?" This is a religious people; they seem to be very religious; they have the name of the Lord in their mouth but their heart is far from the Lord; it is full of malice and iniquity. They are a church-going people who have peace in their mouth but not in their life. The wicked are always troubled and cannot rest. They don't tremble at the name of the Lord, although they use His name. They say many beautiful words, but they are wicked. They are agitated like the sea that casts up mire and dirt. There is no peace for the religious people who do not tremble at the name of the Lord. 2nd Timothy 2:19: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." The Lord puts His seal on His own. You are under the control of the Holy Spirit. The seal is proof that the foundation of the Lord is sure. We have a seal on our mind and imagination. "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Iniquity is something inside; it is a terrible thing, inner malice. Depart from iniquity; depart from your own iniquity if you mention that Name. The wicked person caresses his iniquity and, at the same time, gives glory to God. The Lord will heal the people who bend and surrender.

Verse 19: "I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord; and I will heal him." Whose lips? The words which come out of His mouth, produce life. Isaiah 55:11: "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Which words will be effectual? The word that goes out in the power of the Holy Spirit. Only that word will produce results. This word has power. When people miss a meeting, if the meeting has been in God; do they miss a spiritual blessing or a creation? The Lord "creates" what He speaks. Genesis 1:3: "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." That is God's

method. He did not move anything, He just spoke. People do not give importance to the word. When the Lord said, "This is My Body and My Blood", it is no longer bread and wine because whatever He says, He creates. Any message that comes from God creates something in you. That is the reason for a meeting; not to be blessed, to have a little joy; it is something substantial coming into your life. Why did the Lord call Gideon a valiant man? His word created strength in Gideon. He creates whatever He says!

Acts 22:14: "And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth." "To know His will, to see His face, to hear a word from His mouth." God creates the fruit of His lips. John 6:63: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." The words that Jesus speaks to us are spirit, creating life. "Peace to him that is far off." Why to him that is far off? There is a ministry in the spirit by which you can reach people at a distance, not the people who do not want to come. By the Holy Spirit, you can reach people at a distance. Colossians 1:23: "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister." He reaches people near and far when He speaks. He will heal the backsliding of the people. "The word preached to every creature under heaven." The word of the Lord travels more than radio.

"Peace" was the first message the angels gave. Peace is a condition of rest and tranquility.

Lesson 47

Isaiah 58:1-10

Verse 1: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins." The Lord speaks to the Prophet and the Prophet speaks to the church. It is a prophetic ministry, and not an easy one; it creates enemies. Cry out loud. Cry with the throat, with the inner man. Sometimes we speak only with the surface of our tongue. Speak deeply and truthfully; spare not. Don't spare your friends or your relations. "Lift up thy voice like a trumpet." It must be deep and it must go a distance. "Show my people their transgressions and the house of Jacob their sins."

Verses 2 & 3: "Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinance of justice; they take delight in approaching God. Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? Wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labors." People do not want to listen. They lean on something; they are satisfied with their religion. The Prophet seems too severe with the people. They turn to him and give an answer. They say they don't deserve such a severe preaching. Why? They have some pretensions. These people are very religious in a superficial sense. They "seek the Lord daily", but superficially. "They delight to know my ways." The emphasis is on the words TO KNOW, but not TO DO. It is like accumulating verses and knowledge only for knowledge but not to do what is read or learned. It is better to know little and to DO, than to know much

and NOT TO DO. Verse 3 is a record of the words of the people and the answer of the Lord. They may never say this, but they think it. They have been in the church; they have done their duty; they fasted much. They felt that the Lord did not consider these things; but this was not the type of fasting that was pleasing unto God.

Verses 4-6: "Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? A day for a man to afflict his soul: Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?" This is a comparison of the fasting of the people and the type of fast which is pleasing to God. There is a command: "Ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high." In other words, "You shall have a different fast; this fast is useless." The Lord would not accept such a fast where the people wanted to attract attention by their actions. Sometimes you want to say something, but you curb your thoughts. This is a kind of fasting. Keep your mind and tongue fasting. What is the fast in which the Lord delights? "To loose the bands of wickedness." We tie something. Loosen it. "To undo the heavy burdens." Let the oppressed go free. Break every yoke; let people be free.

Verse 7: "Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" The Lord delights in such a fast. It is material help. "Hide not

thyself from thine own self.” When you see a needy person, you clothe that person. What is this hiding from your own self? Some people say that they have a very good heart; they don’t want to see others suffer; they don’t want to see anything repulsive. They don’t want to hear troubles. They think that they are very gentle. They hide themselves from the poor and their own flesh. What is one of the names of Christ? SON OF MAN: the humility of Christ. We have the same flesh as the other man; that is humility. It is more than charity; when you help the poor and clothe the needy, you clothe and feed yourself.

Verse 8: “Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.” When will this happen? When you oppress nobody and help everyone; then something grand will happen. “THY light”; why not THE light? Do you expect to know everything and to have light on everything? The light you need will come forth as the morning; you will have light on your problems.

Verse 9: “Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity.” You will pray and the Lord will answer; you will cry and the Lord will come very near and say, “I am right here.” Psalm 23:4: “Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” When does the Lord become the THOU of this verse? When we are in trouble, in distress; it is then that the Lord comes near, very near. “Take away from the midst of thee the yoke.” Don’t put a bondage on anyone; let people be free. “Putting forth of the finger.” We must take away accusations; don’t point to anyone. “Speaking vanity.” Do we ever speak vanity?

Perhaps we don't speak evil very much; but what is vanity? It is man's emptiness; you gain no profit. Matthew 12:36: "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." Do we always speak of serious things? Do we use our time wisely? Do we ever say useless words?

Verse 10: "And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day." "Draw out thy soul to the hungry." There are people who are hungry in the soul. What does it mean to "draw out?" You have to dig deeply in your own life and help others in the soul. Satisfy the afflicted soul, please the afflicted ones. Don't be indifferent to their troubles. If you do this, some result will come out greater than before. You will find people who need friendship. We close ourselves. "Draw out thy soul and give to others." "Thy light shall rise in obscurity." 2nd Corinthians 1:3 & 9: "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; but we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead." People who suffer much, must not close themselves in their sufferings and say, "I don't want to hear anyone's troubles; I have enough of my own." The soul wants to be alone; it doesn't want to hear the afflictions of others; but the Lord says, "Draw out thy soul." Paul says that people who suffer have the ability and power to comfort others. When you forget your own troubles, your own darkness, and begin to console others, something grand will happen. "Draw out." Force yourself. Try to please and to satisfy others, and your darkness will rise and be as the noonday.

Lesson 48

Isaiah 58:10-14

Verse 10: "And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day." "Draw out thy soul." It is not a matter of material food; we are surrounded by many people who are almost in despair, and we pass them by indifferently. We just give a look and pass on without tenderness or compassion. Jesus is very human and very divine. He loved the name: SON OF MAN. He drew out his soul to man. Don't be indifferent to the sorrows of others. Don't give an easy consolation, saying, "It is nothing." Rather, be full of tenderness and sympathy; there are many needs around us. Forget our own affairs and troubles, and try to help others. "Then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day."

Verse 11: "And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." When we comfort others, we are comforted ourselves. The Lord will guide thee continually and feed you in dry places. Many times, we are in "dry places." The Lord will be your consolation. You shall be like a spring of water whose waters fail not. What a promise to those who draw out their soul! But what about: "they that shall be of thee," your spiritual children?

Verse 12: "And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in." Your spiritual children are called to a work of restoration. The most difficult work is not missionary work, but the work within

the church: "restoring ruins, the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in." Isaiah 61:3,4: "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified. And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations." This is the most difficult work of the church. They shall build the old wastes. Do many people believe in restoring ruins? Churches go after new people all the time. These people were in the church but now are in ruins, and need to be restored. It is a great ministry!

Verse 13: "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and shall call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord." The Seventh Day Adventists and many others point to this verse about the Sabbath. Hebrews 4:3-8: "For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest on the seventh day from all his works. And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest. Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief: Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, Today, after so long a time; as it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day." The real Sabbath in the realm of Grace, is a spiritual rest, man resting from his

own works. Did the people of old enjoy spiritual rest? No. They observed the material Sabbath but did not have any spiritual rest. Consequently, the Lord spoke of another day. Psalm 95:7 & 8: "For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. Today if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness." TODAY, "if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart." TODAY is the Sabbath. TODAY means every day in the New Testament. The Lord changed the day, Himself. Call Sabbath TODAY. "Turn away thy foot from today." The foot of man sometimes goes where he pleases, not following in the footsteps of Jesus. We cannot choose our way TODAY. Every day is TODAY. It is an eternal Sabbath in Christ. You will say, "I like this", but the Lord will answer, "Don't do your own pleasure." You will say, "I need some kind of enjoyment, a distraction, a delight." The Lord says, "Call TODAY a delight." Enjoy the presence of the Lord TODAY; pray TODAY; do something good TODAY, not tomorrow. Yesterday has past; tomorrow has not come; we have only TODAY!

Psalm 90:12: "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." Don't make a long counting of months or years, but count the *days*. We have a responsibility before the Lord each day. Have we done the will of the Lord today? Have we prayed today; have we been gentle today? Count our days, one day at a time. Genesis 47:8,9: "And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou? And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage." Jacob counted one day at a time. A day is separate in the realm of the Spirit. The word TODAY is sacred in the realm of the Spirit.

Matthew 6:33 & 34: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." One day at a time, one service at a time. The consecration of tonight will not be the consecration of tomorrow. Live holy today and you will not fear tomorrow. Every day is a Sabbath. Rest in Christ. We have only one feast in the New Testament: Today, rest in Christ; trust in Him; abandon your life in His mighty hands; depend on Him; delight in Today. "Call today honorable." We take the promises very easily; but there is also a condition to be met: "Honor the Lord." It is not flattering each other, not doing our own ways. Forget yourself! "Not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words." The promise is beautiful, but see the condition. It is not easy to call today "honorable" when it seems as though everything is wrong. But God has a plan for TODAY. Count your days, one day after another; then something will happen in your life.

Verse 14: "Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." You have only TODAY before you. Delight in TODAY; appreciate TODAY; take delight in the Author of TODAY; feast in the Lord! Do we know how to feast in the Lord? Psalm 37:4: "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." You will not desire to be a millionaire or to have big palaces. A saint has said, "Love the Lord and do whatsoever you are pleased to do." Love the Lord with intensity and you don't desire anything. You are conquered by that love! Delight in the Lord. We must ask the Lord to teach us how we may delight in Him and delight in TODAY. Turn your foot from today; from doing your own pleasures. Call today a delight.

Honor the Lord, not doing your own ways, nor speaking your own words. Then the Lord will cause you to ride upon high places of the earth. You are not able to ride on such troubles, but you will just pass over and above difficulties. You will conquer difficulties. The Lord never forgot Jacob. Where is the guarantee? Where is the document of assurance? "The mouth of the Lord has spoken it." What is the mouth of the Lord? Isaiah 55:11: "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." God takes care of one individual as if he were the whole humanity, and many individuals as one. The word is to a multitude as to one individual.

When the Holy Spirit has found confirmation in your heart and you say AMEN to that word, that word is yours. John 6:63: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." It is the Holy Spirit which gives life; the flesh profits nothing. You read the Bible - it is nothing if the Holy Spirit does not read it. Spirit creates life. The breath of God creates life in us. When the Lord speaks to you, those words are spirit, creating life!

Lesson 49

Isaiah 59:15-21

Verse 15: "Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment." Here is a picture of one individual in a crowd of religious but wicked people; they are not sincere. Among these people you find one individual. "Truth faileth." How many people desire to know the truth about themselves? The Holy Spirit is the preacher of the truth, but there is not much of the Holy Spirit, or Christ, in these people. Their feastings or assemblies do not fail to go on. They continue their religious ceremonies. The one who departs from this evil makes himself a "prey." They will call this person crazy, a backslider, when he stands and says NO to the things they have voted upon. They will call him a rebel. "The Lord saw it and was displeased." There was no judgment or wisdom in the mass of people. They persecute the only person who is right. The Lord was displeased; God has feelings. He created the heart and is not heartless; He created the ear and is not deaf to the prayers of His children.

Verse 16: "And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him." He was like an excommunicated man. No one in the crowd said, "This man is right; I want to be in his company." These people were slaves of man instead of being slaves of God. The Lord did not abandon this individual; He "sustained him." He was a crushed individual. He may have thought, "Perhaps I am wrong after all, and they are right." Then the Lord steps in and says, "Courage!"

Verses 17-18: "For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak. According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies; to the islands he will repay recompense." The Lord will do something to those who seem righteous but are not. Islands are not continents; they are surrounded by water, troubles all over. How did the Lord sustain that one individual? Dare to stand alone! No man is really converted until he is ready to stand alone. If God is for us, who will be against us? The enemy will try, but will never succeed in destroying our soul. Romans 8:31: "What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" But if God is *not* for us, who can help us? The Lord clothed this man with righteousness and put on his head, the helmet of salvation. If God did not come to the rescue, the old Jerusalem would kill all the prophets. "He will repay recompense to the islands."

Verse 19: "So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." By fortifying one individual, the name of the Lord will be proclaimed from the west and from the east. Be courageous. The Lord will work something through you. When the enemy comes "like a flood" *we* cannot raise the standard; the Lord must do it. The enemy comes rushing in like a flood, unexpectedly, suddenly; sometimes you cannot open your mouth. You must keep the beatings; you can do nothing. Don't try anything with your own strength; the enemy will defeat you. Keep the beatings and the Lord will raise the standard. Don't do anything against the enemy yourself; he will beat you. Only the Spirit of the Lord will lift up the standard against him. You will be invincible in the Name of Christ. Accept malediction; stand your ground; don't run away, but

don't try to fight. All at once, the Lord will give you power. The Spirit of the Lord lifts a standard.

Verse 20: "And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord." You will not remain alone. The Shulamite started alone; but then, you go from a people to a people, from a land to a land. Abraham did this. He became a crowd of people. The one individual who suffers malediction and is called crazy, becomes a crowd.

Verse 21: "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever." He speaks to one individual, but the promise is to many. The Lord enters a contract with this man who dares to remain alone. It is a great promise that the Lord will never abandon him. He will put His words into his mouth. Covet to speak only of Christ. There are many conversations that are full of vanity. This individual may get discouraged and say, "but I am alone." The Lord says, "Sing, thou barren." The Lord also gave a promise to the children. The Lord will bless you in many generations. Exodus 20:5&6: "Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments." The Lord will send chastisement to four generations of those who do not love Him. This does not mean the children. The Lord never chastises the children for the parents. It means in *our own* life. The consequence of our mistakes persecutes us three and four times. But, when you love the Lord, you will have a thousand generations of blessings. Who can count the

blessings of the Lord? His blessings are far more than His chastisements.

Let others do what they please. Let others curse and persecute. Pay no attention to those. "But as for Me, this is my covenant to those who are faithful: My spirit is upon thee and My words which I have put in thy mouth shall not depart out of thy mouth nor out of the mouths of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed." Such is the great love of God!

Lesson 50

Isaiah 60:1-3, 22; 61:1-4

Isaiah 60:1-3: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." There are certain relations between the Church and the world. Romans 8:19: "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." The Lord will use the Church for a purpose: to bless the outsiders. There is a minor key in the universe. The world waits for something and their expectations are fulfilled through the sons of God. Let us try to love the people of the world, not the spirit of the world, but the people, because they belong to God. The plan of the Church is not to create a group of selfish people, but to bless humanity through her.

Isaiah 60:22: "A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time." "In his time." It seems the Lord delays many times, but He will come in His time. "Behold, I come quickly." This applies not only to His second coming, but also to all of our relations with God. It does not mean that He will come in the near future, but it means that when He does act He will act speedily.

Isaiah 61:1: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." These words were spoken by

Jesus, at the beginning of His ministry. See St. Luke 4:16-22. On that occasion, He spoke only of the acceptable year of the Lord and not of vengeance. It was the inauguration of the dispensation of Grace. These verses are a prophecy of the Lord and, by implication, of the Church.

“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me.” There is a difference between having the Holy Spirit *IN* you and *UPON* you. Ezekiel spoke of “the Hand of the Lord” being upon him. It means absolute, divine control. It is not only the Holy Spirit *in* a person, but also *controlling* that person. There was never another individual in the universe, who was so much dependent upon another as was Jesus upon the Father. In everything, He was continually under His control. “The Lord hath anointed me.” He was anointed in order to serve others. Christ lived for others, so we must live for others. The moment we stop serving, we lose. That is the plan of God for the Son and for the sons. “To preach good tidings unto the meek.” This does not mean to amuse the people with mixed preaching, but to preach the good tidings of Christ. “Unto the meek.” The word is preached to all, but only the poor in spirit accept it. Meekness is the counterpart of humility. Humility refers to the interior condition, while meekness refers to our outward dealings with others. It is impossible to have true meekness without first having humility. “He hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted.” There is a difference between preaching, and being sent to the brokenhearted. When you are sent to the brokenhearted, you deal with only one individual. Let us ask the Lord to give us such a tender ministry. “To proclaim liberty to the captives.” Are we in America, free within ourselves? The Jews were offended when Jesus said that they should be free. John 8:31, 32, 36: “Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. If the Son therefore shall make you free,

ye shall be free indeed.” We shall have freedom with humility. In order to be free, we must go through a certain progression. We must continue hearing the word of God. These people already had believed, but they were told that they must continue in the word in order to become disciples. The Word is Jesus, Himself. WORD means expression. God talked to man through the person of Christ. Without saying one word, He speaks. We must keep ourselves in the condition of listening to God speak. If we do this, we shall become real disciples of Christ; then, we shall know the truth, and the truth shall make us free. One of the points of the truth is that we are nothing.

Isaiah 61:2: “To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn.” Mourning is a crying of penitence; this mourning does not come easily. There is also a way to *become* the people who mourn. God has His own way of action. Who are these people who mourn? They are the poor in spirit. Matthew 5:3 & 4: “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.” Mourning comes second. We must go through the other first; we must become poor in spirit. There is a false humility, but the real “poor in spirit” person is always a penitent because he compares himself with Christ. The more he sees of Christ, the more he sees of his own poverty and deficiencies. Our churches lack a spirit of penitence. What is the foundation of the revival? In the Old Testament, they began by cleansing the temple; then they had the feast. We should begin with penitence; then, the revivals will come automatically.

Isaiah 61:3: “To appoint unto to them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the

Lord, that he might be glorified.” To “appoint” means to make a proposal. The Lord makes a proposal to those who mourn. It is as though He says, “I have a plan in your life. I need a builder of wastes.” This is a spiritual ministry. You will receive three gifts: Beauty, the Oil of Joy, and the Garment of Praise. You will be called a “Tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord.” But, for these things, you have to undergo ashes, mourning, and the spirit of heaviness. Let us make an exchange: ashes first, then beauty. It is a tremendous discipline. Then you will become a builder, not of new constructions, but of ruins. It is not easy to repair a falling wall, but in the spirit, it is the most glorious work. It is not given in the list because it is a spiritual ministry.

Verse 4: “And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.” “The old wastes”. People go after new converts and abandon those who have fallen; but the Lord does not abandon them. This ministry of rebuilding comes secretly by the Holy Spirit, and there is no danger that these builders shall become proud.

Lesson 51

Isaiah 61:1-3

Verse 1: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." LORD GOD - God means power; Lord means master. Verses 1 & 2 speak of one individual. Verse 3 speaks of many individuals.

Verse 3: "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." What does "appoint" mean? It is like a foreman who appoints a person to some particular place. Zion mourns. The Church, the real church, mourns. The Lord promises them three things in exchange for three things: Beauty for ashes, oil of joy for mourning, garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Who are the people who mourn, cry and experience inner penitence? Not the proud, a proud man cannot mourn. Matthew 5:3 & 4: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." First we must be poor in spirit, and then we mourn. What is heaviness? You cannot pray; you feel that God has abandoned you; you feel crushed. It is almost despair. You don't see Christ any more; everything is dark. What kind of beauty is this? It is a divine beauty. Don't try to improve on this beauty. Moses, Joseph, and David were beautiful. The beauty of Satan, Saul and Absalom terminated in despair.

What is meant by "ashes?" It is something destroyed by fire. You can make no fire with ashes. Genesis 3:19: "In the

sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” Everything must be consumed. Anything in our life that is displeasing to Him must be reduced to ashes. We are stubborn but God is strong. What food is meant by this verse - what is bread? How must it be eaten? This bread is Jesus Christ and we must eat of Jesus, not in feasting and clapping of hands, but with bitter herbs, in great anguish and sorrow...in disappointments; that is how we eat of this bread. What will happen? Something very strange will happen contrary to our expectations. We eat in order to die! How many lives are there in each one of us? There are two: the earthly and the divine. While eating of Jesus, something will happen; you will go back to the ground from which you were taken and shall become dust. Why? Why did the Lord say this to Adam? When we are mourning, when we become dust, then the Lord will not crush us but will encourage us. If not, the Lord will point the finger and say, “Thou art the man.” When we think ourselves to be important, then the Lord will come and crush us. The Lord says, “By eating My bread, you will know your real condition until you become dust.” We need a new creation. The old nature is faulty in everything. By eating this bread, you will destroy what is earthly. You will destroy the first life in order to create the second life. If the old nature is important in us, it means that the new nature is not important. When one rises, the other descends. The human must go down. You go up as much as you go down. Mortified in the flesh, we are revived in the Spirit.

“For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” Job 42:1-6: Job says, “Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.” The Lord gives power when we become ashes. In Job 1:1 it says, “that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.” Suppose we

had only this verse about Job? Here we meet a good man, a religious man who feared the Lord. The fear of God is only the beginning of wisdom. It is just a starting point. It is only a beginning. Job 33:30-33: "To bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living. Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I will speak. If thou hast anything to say, answer me: speak, for I desire to justify thee. If not, hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom." Elihu just puts Job down. Job was full of arguments. A real friend will not caress you. Job was a great man but he needed something: wisdom. We would have been offended if someone told us this. We would have said, "I am wise." But we have just a little wisdom. "Hearken unto me and hold thy peace; listen with attention, don't talk." Was Job speaking? Indirectly, he was speaking, bubbling with talk. "Keep still", said Elihu, "learn to listen." 1st John 4:5,6: "They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." St. John speaks of listening and of not listening. Those who are of God listen to you. When does the discrimination come? You must be sent of God and give God's message.

Elihu beat Job very hard. "Don't talk within your soul; don't speak, listen." Elihu said, "I desire to justify you. I don't want to confuse you with words." Many people try to win others by a dishonest philosophy. Elihu said, "I speak to help you, not to confuse you." Until we are converted, we are not good listeners. Elihu began harsh and severe, but the conclusion was good.

In Job 42, Job answers God: "You are God; I am a poor man and cannot litigate with you; so I will keep still." Was this very humble? Did God stop beating him? Despair is never

humility! Job 42:4-6: "Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." The Holy Spirit checks him; it is not easy to give in. "I only heard of thee; I did know anything, but now, I have seen thee with my eye. In my ruin, now I have seen thee; consequently, I abhor myself, my speech, everything. I repent in dust and ashes. One thing I know is that I know nothing." That is the summation of all philosophy; that is wisdom. When we reach our nothingness, then we are wise. You remain with two things: man is nothing; God is everything. Job had become ashes, but the Lord beautified Job again and gave him beauty for ashes.

Psalm 51:19: "Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar." The offering shall be burned in its entirety. It means that it must become ashes upon the altar: Jesus. Psalm 46:10: "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." "Be still, don't talk; listen and you will learn wisdom." People who go through this procedure will be builders of ruins; this is the greatest ministry under heaven. These people cannot become proud, because they are ashes. We don't succeed with people because we lack the approach to those who have gone through many things in the churches. Those who have become ashes know and understand the condition of these people for they, too, have gone through the same experiences and are now ashes.

Lesson 52

Isaiah 61:5,6

Does the person who has become ashes see his own beauty? Song of Solomon 2:14: "O my dove, thou art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice and thy countenance is comely." The Lord calls the Shulamite woman a "dove," not a peacock. The one who has become ashes is meek and becomes a builder and restorer of ruins. She succeeds, whereas others do not succeed. When we are too full of ourselves, and approach people as though we are holier, we do not attract them nor help them.

Verses 5,6: "And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers. But ye shall be named the priests of the Lord: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves." The people spoken of here are the church, and the Gentiles are the outsiders who, some day, may become the Church. We must apply the people to our condition today. The Lord speaks to His church. He makes a promise. To be a servant of the Lord is a great sacrifice. The Lord has many servants. The Lord is served by many people, even "strangers." "Priests of the Lord." Jesus is Prophet, Priest, and King. Jesus is King; He commands; He has authority. A prophet speaks with authority. A priest presents you to the throne of the Father. Are we priests in the highest sense? Do we carry to the Lord the burdens of others? You must intercede for others. Melchisidek was the first high priest. Did he speak of himself or present his own history? He was not occupied of himself, nor did he pronounce his own name. He appeared and disappeared; but he left an eternal imprint in the history of the Church. Aaron, another high priest,

stood between the dying and the living, when the Lord sent the plague. A priest is one who puts himself in the gap; he gives his life. Christ is everything; but we are not everything. There are Christians who are more of a prophetic ministry; there are Christians who are people with authority; there are Christians who are priests. There are Christians who may not be great preachers, nor do they have great authority, but they are great sufferers. A priest is a sufferer.

“Ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles.” Does this have an earthly meaning? Isaiah speaks of a suffering Messiah. “Ye” refers to the people of suffering who have become ashes. “Ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles.” Genesis 15:13,14: “And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.” The things which are adversaries to you, will be bread in your life. The prophecy to Abraham is that they will afflict the people for a long time, but the day of judgment will come, and they will come out of this affliction with great substance. The Lord will use these things for your blessing. We will go through tremendous sorrow; “Pharaoh” will afflict us; for a long time, it seems that the Lord doesn’t hear your cries; but, in a second, God will come, and you will go out of that affliction with great riches. Look back in your life - do you find any great riches that have come about through the things which were ruins in your life? Numbers 14:6-9: “And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes: And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it

to us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defense is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not." These were the giants who were in the land of Canaan. The two spies comforted the people by saying that the giants were "bread" for them; they are food for us. Thank God for that bread; thank God for the enemies. Don't be afraid of giants; God is feeding you through enemies. Psalm 23:5: "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." We would never have a long face if we would understand God's plan. Just the very trouble that we're complaining about is "bread." Keep eating that bread. If you want a little more bread, you will have a few more enemies. "My cup runneth over." What is the condition in order to eat? We need a table in the presence of our enemies; we must eat there. They may criticize you, they may trouble and afflict you, but keep eating; they are bread. Then the Lord will anoint our heads with the Holy Spirit, which is control of the mind, the imagination. What about serving others? When we eat in the presence of our enemies and the Lord anoints our head, the cup runs over to refresh other people. Without knowing it, we serve the Lord.

Psalm 110:1: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." How many kinds of enemies does a man have in his life? There are two kinds; don't confuse enemies. There are some enemies whom we have provoked, and those who hate us on account of Christ. Those who hate us for the Christ that is in us, are the real enemies. The others, we are responsible for. We must distinguish between the two enemies. Proverbs 16:7: "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." He will fix our enemies. He will pacify them and calm them, when we

adjust our relations with God. If we fix our affairs with God first, He will fix our affairs with others. Jacob was trembling when he had to meet his warrior brother, Esau. God stepped in through an individual who appeared to him as a man. Jacob had to confess his name, his character. Jesus knows the name, the character and the make-up of each one of us. A physician cannot give the same medicine to each person. We must know the character of each person. Each individual must be dealt with personally, according to his character. We must not remain "Jacob" all of our lives. The day will come that we must make a clear decision. We must have a new name: "Israel, Prince of God." Jacob asked something in return: "What is thy name? I want to know thee." The angel answered, "Why askest thou my name?" It is as if to say, "Why do you read the Bible - to become a great preacher? What is the motive of your religion? Why do you want to know me? Just to accumulate knowledge, or to love me better?" Jacob settled his affairs with God, and God took care of his enemies. If you have offended your enemy even one per cent, you must do your part. The heart of Esau was melted by the Lord, and he ran and embraced his brother.

Psalm 110:1: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." The higher we have to go, the more steps we need. We have to reach heaven by enemies. You grow from an enemy to another enemy. Death is the last enemy we must rise on. Romans 8:28: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to the will of God." "All things work TOGETHER." Each thing, in itself, is not good. You lose a house, a friend, a child; it is not good. But wait! Each thing, in itself, is not good; but it becomes good when it works in combination with other things. All things work together; it fits in God's plan. Don't look at an isolated incident. God makes no mistakes; He needs you for a plan - you will see it

in the Beyond. We must reach the condition in this life that we want what God wants. Don't envy anyone; God wants you in that condition. That is the condition that you have to be in so that you may fit into the plan that God has for your life.

1st Thessalonians 5:18: "In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." This seems to be a strange command. "In EVERYTHING, for this is God's will concerning you, my people. I have a plan for you and I need that incident, that trouble in your life. It fits into My plan." Behind God's providence is infinite wisdom and infinite love.

Lesson 53

Isaiah 62:1-12

Verses 1 & 2: “For Zion’s sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name.” Isaiah loved Zion and Jerusalem. No one can serve the people if he does not love the people. It is not easy to be a prophet of the Lord; he will not hold his peace or rest until he will see some change in the people. “The Gentiles (outsiders) shall see thy righteousness.” We will never convince others if we are wishy-washy; God has no use for wishy-washy people. If it is a superficial righteousness, you will not move people. “Until thy righteousness go forth as brightness, and thy salvation as a lamp that burneth.” Salvation shall be like something that burns. John the Baptist was a burning and a shining light. He gave a light to others. While this is being done, the candle is consumed. While shining and burning, you give light to others, but you, yourself, are consumed. Don’t expect to serve Christ in a wishy-washy way; the people will not listen. Put your heart in what you do for God; something will happen around you. The Gentiles will see something in you and the Lord will give you a new name. Romans 8:19: “For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.” What kind of manifestation? The world is looking for something. The world must know a little love. The world is hungry for divine tenderness and divine consideration even if they don’t come to your assemblies.

Verse 3: “Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.” These

heavenly people shall be a crown of glory. You don't see that crown; it is kept up there.

Verse 4: "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married." He will put an assurance in your heart. The day will come when you will doubt no more; you will stand on solid ground. This day must come; it is God's plan. Will people say to you that you are Beulah? What is the use if people say that you are Beulah and you don't know it yourself? People comfort you and you have doubts. "Thy land shall be married." Joined to the Lord. Hephzibah, the Lord delights to speak to you. The Holy Spirit will smile and you will know something in yourself, that you are Beulah and Hephzibah. 1st Peter 5:10: "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." It is not the plan of God that we should always be like a pendulum; someday you will stand on solid ground. You know whom you have believed. Peter was established. What was the condition of the people to whom the letter was written? They were not yet established. You must suffer something for a time, but the day will come that you will be settled. Would the Lord say something that was an impossibility? "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Job was sure. David was sure. Paul said, "I know whom I have believed." When we reach that condition, we, too, will know; we will be established.

Verse 6: "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence." What did the Lord do? He "set watchmen." The word of the Lord is not wishy-washy, not halfway. What is the meaning of

“watchmen?” Their purpose is to spy on the arrival of an enemy. They are on the walls. The walls are around Jerusalem. A wall is for protection. In order to invade the city, the enemy must first destroy the walls. David prayed for the walls. What is the use of having thousands of people gathered in assemblies without walls? There is nothing less than trouble and scandal. We need walls! Psalm 51:18,19: “Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem. Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.” “Build thou.” Christ said, “I will build my church.” He is the architect and builder. “Build thou the walls.” It is a challenge to the Lord. Be afraid of men, not of God. God is good. David says, “First you must build the walls; then everything will be on the altar.” Lamentations 2:18,19: “Their heart cried unto the Lord, O wall of the daughter of Zion, let tears run down like a river day and night: give thyself no rest; let not the apple of thine eye cease. Arise, cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children, that faint for hunger in the top of every street.” The walls are already built and the Lord appeals to the walls about something; He pleads with the walls to cry and to shed tears. Psalm 50:5: “Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.” “Those that have made a covenant by sacrifice.” Not those whom *we* call saints. Gathering begins here in the Spirit. This covenant is built upon sacrifice of ourselves. Daniel speaks of construction of the walls. Daniel 9:25: “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.” Joel 2:17: “Let the priests, the ministers

of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?" The builder is Christ; the priests are intercessors; they must weep. Revival begins with repentance. When we surrender our hearts to the Lord, the revival will come automatically. Weep between "the porch and the altar." The Lord loves a penitent people. When you are joined to God, you enter into the interests of the Lord; you pray "between the porch and the altar," that is the wall; and the Lord has some people above the wall to awaken the wall. They remind the wall by saying, "You are not crying now." How many people does the Lord speak to? To two people. First to Jerusalem: "Church, be courageous, be faithful; don't be dismayed. I have set watchmen upon thy walls." Then He turns to the watchmen: "Look out, watchmen, I have spoken of you as faithful people. Keep not silent, O ye watchmen, preach the Lord; mention the Lord continuously."

Verse 7: "And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth." God exhorts us to keep asking and to ask much. Never limit the Almighty. He exhorts us not to give Him rest. One of the laws of the kingdom is that He delights in giving. He delights in mercy. Keep asking; He wants to give to you. Give Him no rest. Keep praying; keep lamenting with God until He will establish Jerusalem.

Verse 8: "The Lord hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for which thou hast labored." CORN is for bread. WINE represents the blood of Christ and also the Holy Spirit. We have to enjoy the food, the bread.

Verse 10: "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people." "Go through,

go through." It is not easy to serve the Lord. Who are the "stones?" Elijah gathered together the stones on the mountain and restored the altar. Jesus is the standard. The church must lift up Christ.

Verse 11: "Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." The Lord has promised and proclaimed this.

Verse 12: "And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken." "They shall call them." We have to show a little difference from others. We should not boast of the difference, but people must see a difference in us. In all humility, stand your ground. Say, "I cannot do this because I know the Lord; I am responsible." We must be a separated people, "the redeemed of the Lord." Redemption is like a man who has become bankrupt and the Lord has restored him from the ruins. The Church is made up of prodigals. We have to come to ourselves some day. He came to "seek." The Lord has been seeking for the people in their condition. Jerusalem lamented that she has been forsaken. Isaiah 49:15,16: "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." "The Lord hath forsaken me; my Lord hath forgotten me." It is not true! It may seem so to you, but He has not forsaken you. He leads you through some experience, but His eye is continually upon you, although you do not see the eye of the Lord. "I have graven thee upon my hands; thy walls are continually before me." Satan cannot imitate the prints in the hands of Jesus. "Thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken."

Lesson 54

Isaiah 64:1-8

Verse 1: "Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence." Many people do not believe in the Trinity, but we have the Trinity in the Old Testament. Isaiah 48:16: "Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: and now the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me." Jesus spoke. God and His Spirit have sent Him. All of the Old Testament points to one Individual. The Lord had sent down many things: prophets, priests, kings, sacrifices, and blessings. These helped a little, but the prophet makes the cry to rend the heavens and to come down Himself, to dwell among the people. There is no other remedy. Job 23 is the lament of Job. He could not find God. He looked in every direction but could not find God. "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him." Matthew 11:26,27: "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." We can find nothing without Jesus Christ. Without Jesus, man is lost. The key of knowing is in One Individual. He takes us by the hand and says, "Be in peace; I will take care of your future."

Job said that he needed something. He was a just man and knew many things, but he needed Someone. God is distant; he needed a man, one like himself of flesh and blood in order that he might litigate with this man; that he might reason with him; someone to discourse with. The lament of the Old Testament is for someone to come down and represent God.

John 14:1: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." This was Jesus' farewell to the disciples. There are those who believe only in God and say that they believe in Jesus Christ. Do you think they do? God is Creator, but where is God? He created you and then He disappeared. Do we have any bridge to reach Him? Is it possible that He created and then abandoned us? He created us and sent a Messenger, a bridge between heaven and earth. He is distant and He is near. Consequently, Jesus said, "You believe in God and you must believe that God has not abandoned you." Since God has created you, He has also created a way to approach you. John 14:26: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Everyone who really believes in the Creator, believes in the bridge between man and God. Jesus is the bridge, the Way. Did Jesus describe God or heaven? What is the message? Abandon yourself to the Captain of the boat. Do we know the way to God? It is to abandon ourselves in the hands of Jesus Christ. There is a need to know Christ. Without Christ, we know nothing. Those who believe in God, believe in the bridge between man and God. Those who believe in God, believe in the Ambassador of God. It is impossible for someone to accept God and reject Jesus, or to accept Jesus and reject the Holy Spirit. Salvation is of the Three.

"Rend the heavens." It is a tearing open. "Rend and come down, mountains might flow down at thy presence." The powers of heaven must be shaken and one power must remain. Acts 3:21: "Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Who is Christ? He must come down. Suppose we need him tonight? We must ask Him to rend the heavens and to come down continuously. His presence will destroy any opposition to Him. The mountains will flow away.

Verse 6: "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." This verse is a portrait of what God is to find when He comes down. Do we deserve His presence? Does the prophet promise anything? He does not say, "Come, Lord Jesus, we are clean." What do you do in order to welcome this King? "Come, Lord, but you will find nothing good in us; our condition is as filthy rags." God is seen in righteousness. There must be some kind of adjustment between man and God. Isaiah says that our righteousness is nothing. But God stands on righteousness. One need calls for the next. "Jesus, come down; but in coming down, we have nothing to offer; our righteousness is as filthy rags." It means that He must find a way to create righteousness in us, because we must be righteous in order to see God. Therefore: "Come down and MAKE us righteous." That is the cry of the Old Testament. "Our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." There is one misery after the other.

Verse 7: "And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities." "We are guilty, we are impure; but at least we call upon thy Name and seek Thy face." No one was able to say even this. They said, "there is none that calleth upon thy name." We are so indifferent that there is no one who called upon the Name of the Lord; there is no one who has prayed in the Name of the Lord. John 16:23,24: "And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." What is the prior condition necessary to call on the Name of the Lord? We must enter a spirit of sacrifice. On that day, when we have

been crucified inside, then we learn the secret to pray in the Name of Jesus. “Stirreth himself.” The Lord invites us to litigate with Him, to stir ourselves and take hold on Him.

Verse 8: “But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.” Does the prophet lose courage when he sees the miseries of the people? Since Jesus has come, we, through Jesus, become children of God. “We don’t know how to pray,” we say to Him, “but we are Thy children and Thou art our Father. Rend the heaven and come down. Don’t expect anything from us. You must manage us, you must manipulate us. Rend the heaven and come down. You will find a dirty house; we cannot pray; we don’t know how to pray. We are lazy people, abandoned to ourselves. You must mold again from this clay a new creature.”

We offer nothing. We are impure. We have no courage to approach the Throne. We don’t stir ourselves. “But now, O Lord, thou art our father, and we are only a little clay, dust. We need a new creation.”

Lesson 55

Isaiah 66:1-3

Review: Luke 7:1: "Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum." When Jesus had ended His work, He left. We must not try to persuade people. Micah 2:13: "The breaker is come up before them: they have broken up, and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it: and their king shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them." Leave it to the Holy Spirit to persuade others. If people do not fall before Christ, spare your breath; man will not listen to another man. Tell them of their duty, and then trust God. Man depends ultimately on his Creator. We must not boss people. Preach with authority, but leave the rest to God. In the scriptures we read: "Jesus marveled." In the realm of the spirit, we go from marvel to marvel.

Isaiah 66:1: "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? And where is the place of my rest?" Psalm 115:16: "The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men." Some people become confused with this verse and deny that the saints go to heaven. They build a theory on this verse. It does not mean that we remain on earth. The heavens belong to God, but we are His children. Ephesians 3:15: "Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." There is a family in heaven; those who have gone before us.

"Where is the house that ye build unto me?" People are great builders. The first builder was Cain. (Genesis 4:17). We find more builders in Hosea 8:14. Israel had forgotten the Lord; so, in order to escape in its own conscience, they built temples; but these constructions are but loss. In order

to keep the people, they formulate a creed; that is the plan of man. The Lord asks a question, "Where is the house that ye build for me?" The Lord is looking for a house. In Jeremiah, the prophet cries, "Why do you not stop in our midst?" It is because the Lord does not find rest there. Where was the house of Jesus? He had none! The house of the Lord is in the hearts of his saints, in His Church. In the Song of Solomon, the bride admonishes the daughters of Jerusalem not to awaken her Beloved. When a friend comes into your house, everything is kept under control.

Verse 2: "For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Who is the builder of this house? Jesus said, "I will build My church." A promise accompanies the building: "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." If we build, everything will go to pieces. Abraham did not build. He lived in tents because he did not find a city here. Hebrews 11:10: "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Man builds to keep the people in their fingers. There are many places where people are united, not by the Lord, but by buildings. Psalm 127:1: "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." The Lord is the builder and He also uses servants who are under His supervision. Where is our house? Ps. 90:1: "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations." It is an exchange of homes. God is our home, and we must become the home of God. Imagine God looking for a place of rest. The Lord is not looking for things - He wants *us*. What kind of people is the Lord looking for? The poor and of a contrite spirit. We are too important; we must come down in our own estimation. We must become dust; then, God will build again and make the new Jerusalem out of the dust. "And trembleth at my word"

Many people tremble at the word of man. The only way not to tremble before man is to tremble before God. "MY WORD." We must try to discover the spirit behind the letter. Luke 10:25, 26: "And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? How readest thou?" The Lord asked the doctor of the law two questions: "What is written?" and "How readest thou?" There is the word, and there is the spirit behind the word. The more you grow, the more the word gives you some meaning you had not discovered the day before. It is the living fountain. Christ is the incarnate word. Isaiah 57:15: "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." The Lord dwells with the poor; He becomes their guest.

Verse 3: "He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations." There are some people who seem to be very actively working for the Lord. In Isaiah, there are two classes: those who are poor and seek to live according to the word of God; and now, another class. To sacrifice an ox seems a great thing, but their hearts were distant. If you have no religion in your heart, do not try to manufacture something. It is better to have nothing than to have something artificial. In James 3:14 we see people who have some wickedness in their hearts, but they speak fine. It is better to say nothing. Suppose you don't love someone; don't try to cover it up with flowery words. It is a downward

tendency; it begins as earthly but ends as satanic. Pray; wait on the Lord; keep still.

The Lord was looking for a home and found it in those of contrite hearts and spirits. The others thought they were doing too much for the Lord. To these people the Lord answers, "Stop!" Do not make a bad thing worse. If we do nothing, it is sinful; but it is better to have nothing than to have an artificial religion, for then, the Lord will count our sacrifices as murder, idolatry and abominations.

Lesson 56

Isaiah 66:1-13

The earthly Jerusalem will end in destruction. Each Christian must have a revelation of the higher City. We remain for a time in the earthly Jerusalem. The time must come, if we must belong to that Kingdom, that we must learn from our past experiences and mistakes, and come to a real conversion. God is patient. Victory is with God, not with man. No one will belong to that Kingdom unless he has a vision of that heavenly Jerusalem. There are two Jerusalems described in the Bible: one is full of murder, noise, and pretensions; the other is the heavenly Jerusalem.

St. John 9 speaks of a man who was born blind and was cured by Jesus. Who sinned in this case...was it the man himself or was it his parents? Jesus answered that neither had sinned, but that he had been born blind. There is a tendency in the human mind to misjudge every afflicted person. It is common in human nature to suspect and accuse. This man was born blind in order that God should be made manifest in him. Did this man sin? When? Some may say that he sinned in a previous existence; they teach that today. It is a false doctrine. God is Father of the Spirits. There is only one judgment - one life in this body. Why didn't the Lord make a speech on the subject or lecture on it at this time? The disciples once asked Him, "Master, are there any who shall be saved?" He answered that it was not for them to know, but to strive to enter by the narrow gate. The Lord never answered many other questions. He insisted on few points. The other Comforter will teach you in all the truth. Jesus touched the problems, but left them for the Holy Spirit to expound. Does the Bible say everything? The Holy Spirit

in the Church will answer. As the need arises, the Teacher will explain.

How can a person regain his former zeal and enthusiasm? This person may not feel like singing or praying anymore. What are the three things that keep a man standing before God? They are faith, hope and charity. How can you strengthen this faith? If it is based on emotions, your faith will not be very strong. Abraham proved that he was a friend of God by obedience and sacrifice. We cannot say that we believe and do as we please. It is a mistake to say, "*Increase* my faith." The Lord did not answer the disciples when they said this. The Lord said, "If you have just a little." Use the little faith that you have. Begin using that little, and while using, it comes automatically. It is more than mere talking. The lepers began walking while they were still lepers, and while they walked, they were healed. Begin to move. Faith comes by hearing the word of God. You may know the Book by memory and be nobody. By work, we become strong in faith. You may say, "Send a revival." The Holy Spirit will say, "Do something." The rest will come automatically.

Faith leads to hope. What about charity? What was the command of the risen Christ to the church at Ephesus? He found a lack of interest. What was the discovery of the great Lord? Rev. 2:4: "I have this against thee that thou hast left thy first love." Do the first works. Have we lost any interest in Christianity; have we become lukewarm? Keep working, do some good. Help somebody. Enlarge your hands, and charity will come automatically; faith will come by itself. It is no magical secret. Go back to the former works, and you will go back to the former charity. Keep working and you will become a man of faith because you open to Him and He will open to you.

Verse 1: "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? And where is the place of my rest?" The Church is the house of God, but Christ is the Builder. Salvation is from God. "I will build My church." Psalm 127:1 "Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it." He is the Master Builder.

Verse 2: "For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." The man who is poor and of a contrite spirit has been smitten and humbled. Circumstances humble and smite us. Misfortune, loss of money, health, and friends are tools in God's hands. Those who love the Lord, are improved by these things. They become grounded in the Spirit. What do they do? They tremble at the word of the Lord. He becomes an investigator of the word of the Lord. He desires to know the mind and the person of Jesus. This man who has been a sufferer cares much for Jesus and His name.

Verse 5: "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." Did you ever hear anyone persecuting you and using the name of the Lord? The religious Pharisees did this to Jesus. They tried to trap the blind man who received his sight. They said something, which seemed to be very religious. They said for him not to glorify Jesus but to give God the praise. At the same time, they cast him out. "They shall be ashamed." They cast him out, but Jesus met him and gave him joy.

Verses 7-9: "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath

heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth fruit in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? Saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? Saith thy God." The city is full of confusion but a little child is coming to life. John 16:21-24: "A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." The Christ will be formed in you through suffering. Paul said that the Christ shall be formed in you. "In that day ye shall ask me nothing." You cannot ask as you did years ago. It is not always a backsliding condition. You cannot make the same prayers. You scarcely remember yourself in your prayers. In that day you shall ask nothing. No human prayers any more, but "you shall ask in My name." Christ in us shall ask. When our Christianity has produced a new creature, then you know that you cannot be lost any more. There is a time when we must be settled.

Verse 4: "But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you." The Lord says, "I will give them their delusions because I called. I spoke, but they did not listen to Me." Isaiah 55:6: "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near." When is the time to give our hearts to Jesus? Is it when we are old, when it is

convenient for us? If we disobey the call of the Holy Spirit, we will enter the realm of delusions.

Verse 13: "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem." The earthly city will persecute the prophets in every age. The people of God must be martyred. You may be suffering among so many enemies, but the Lord says that you shall be comforted in Jerusalem. Fly upward; go in the company of angels; forget earth; and the time will come when the Lord will reveal to you the New Jerusalem. Revelation 3:12: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name." He that overcomes will finally enter into the realm of the Spirit. You will be made a pillar in the temple of my God, a PILLAR to help others. The Lord will write your name with ink that cannot be cancelled. The name of God will be engraved on our hearts. Where is this New Jerusalem? It is one life in two worlds. You will walk here, but be living up there like citizens in the New Jerusalem. He will write on our hearts the personality of Jesus Christ.

THE END