

FORTY MOUNTAIN PEAKS

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INTRODUCTION

IF YOU WANT TO SEE the glory of the mountains, you will have to go from range to range, and from peak to peak. By merely looking at one peak from one side, no one can see its real beauty. Even on a small mountain much climbing and circling is necessary to see its full beauty.

The salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ can be compared to a high mountain range, with peaks higher than the highest mountain peaks in India or anywhere else in the world.

As we study the Word of God we see how the Lord has used mountains throughout the Scriptures to reveal Himself to men. God brought Abraham to the top of Mount Moriah to test his faith. Moses was taken to the mountain top to give him the pattern of the tabernacle. Elijah was taken to the mountain top to help him to hear the still small voice of God. Our Lord Himself was transfigured on the mountain before His disciples, so that they might see His full glory.

In Deut. 32:7-14; and Isa. 58:14 we have promises of God in His Word to take us high above the earth; to a place where we can enjoy all His goodness, which He has for us. All the best things are found on the mountain tops. The best trees and fruits, and even the best coffee and tea, are grown on high mountain tops. Such will not grow on the plain. Every time you drink coffee or tea think of the high mountains and thank the Lord for them. Because of the mountains, rivers flow constantly, for because of the melting of the snow there is water in the rivers. If there are no mountains, there will be no rivers, and the earth will be barren. Mountains speak of the abundance of God which He offers freely to mankind.

If there are mountains the clouds are sent back. They travel long distances from the peak of the mountain and do not stop on the way. The mountains send them back again, and we get

rain and the fields are watered by that rain from the mountains.

The best honey like Kashmir honey, is obtained from high rocks. Oil from the flinty rocks is the best. The oil spoken of here is not petrol, but the oil needed for cooking and the passage is a tribute to the fertility of even the mountains of the promised land. In the same way the best sheep are found on high mountains (v. 14). The best calves are found on the high mountains of Switzerland. and the best milk and butter are from Switzerland, because there is good pasture on the high mountain ranges, and the best bulls and cows are kept there. AH these things speak of how the Lord is offering in abundance all the best things for His children.

Though we are so unworthy of His love, yet it is only that love which makes us worthy. Because we are His purchased possession. He is showering upon us His good things. God does not regard the sun, moon and the stars as His purchased possession (cf. Exod. 15:16; Eph. 1:14) though they belong to Him. Whatever we see on this earth will pass away. The stars which we see arc only for a short while and will disappear. The whole earth is His, but He does not speak of it as His portion, but you and I are His portion, for the Lord says: 'You are my portion, my purchased possession.' *Not* even the angels does He call by that name. This is a mystery indeed! We are unworthy people and before Him we are like filthy rags, but have become righteous because of His righteousness.

Now Jacob (v. 9) means deceiver. We are all like Jacob, deceivers, yet the Lord has made us His portion as He made Jacob His portion (Eph. 1:14).

"He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness" (v. 10). That was our condition, absolutely worthless and useless. If you go to a desert you will see only dry bushes fit to be burnt. Those who fly over Australia, will see that the central parts of it are nothing but sand. For miles and

miles there is no sign of vegetation or buildings—just a "howling wilderness." This was our condition!—nobody to love us or care for us. There are people who are like that. Recently I heard of a young girl who committed suicide by dropping herself into a well. She wrote a note before doing so. She came from a wealthy family, but she wrote that nobody loved her or cared for her, and that her family did not want her. We were like that, but God loved us! He leads us, instructs us, helps us and protects us as the apple of His eye. He wants us to become His inheritance, and when we put ourselves in His hands He leads us step by step. For a believer every trial is a training for higher education. Sickness and poverty are not punishments. They are training for higher education. "He kept him as an apple of His eye". The eye-lids are made to protect the eye. The head is not protected; nor the ears, and even though there is hair in the nose it is not protected; the mosquitoes can get in sometimes. But not into the eye, because it blinks when danger approaches. That is God's provision to protect the eyes from even the least particle of dust. God's Word says, that just as eye-lids protect the eyeball! from danger our Lord has promised to protect us. He is a living God. He says that whosoever touches us touches the apple of His eye, and once we are His purchased possession, purchased by His precious blood. He will protect us as the apple of His eye.

As the eagle cares for her young ones, so the Lord alone did lead His people (vs. 11-12). The eagle finds the highest place to lay her young ones. Among the birds the eagle is the only bird that builds its nest on a rocky peak. Sparrows and other birds lay their eggs in nests in trees or houses. But the eagle goes on wandering till it finds the highest place. Why is this? Because it wants its young ones to learn to fly high. While the birds are still young the mother-bird gives the nest a good shake *and the birds fall out*. They start crying as if to say to their mother: "Mother, don't be so cruel to us! have mercy upon us!" But the mother-eagle will not hear. After a few shakes, when she finds the young ones lying on the ground, she spreads her wings and

takes them up higher and again drops them. She does this again and again, and that is how the young birds learn to fly very high and their wings become very strong. They can also fly long distances, but to learn to do this the birds have to go through hard tests.

The Lord is saying to us: "I want you to come with me to high places, and therefore I must shake your nest. You have to go through earthly trials to be able to fly very high". If you have become a child of God then be prepared for the shaking of God. If you want to fly high, you must have strong wings. Then you will enjoy the beauty of the high mountain peaks of salvation. Isaiah 58:14 "I will cause thee to ride upon high places of the earth."

From the mountain peaks we can see things afar off. That is how we discover many truths. In God's Word we see a great many of God's servants in high places. Or! Mount Moriah. Abraham passed his last test of faith. God" appeared to him ten times, and in the last test he came out victoriously as a man of faith, which made him righteous before God. It was there he understood the full meaning of resurrection, and believed it even though it meant slaying *Isaac*, *tor* he knew God was able to raise him up (Heb. 11:19). There he saw a lamb caught in a thicket, and God thus assured him: "Just as the ram is caught in the thicket so am I bound to you". We have to be carried to (he high places of the mountains to know fully the purpose which God has for us.

In the same way. the Lord took Moses to a high mountain and gave him the law, the pattern and plan of the Tabernacle. Exod. 24 : 1, 12, 18. If you want God's purpose or heavenly plan to be fully revealed for your own life and for full salvation, you, too, must be carried to a high mountain spiritually.

It was the same in 1 Kings 19:11, 12. Elijah was God's prophet. He prayed and fire came down and burned up the

offering on the altar. But the same prophet was discouraged and down-hearted in chapter 19 because he failed to understand the ways of God. God's ways are not our ways. The scripture says so in Isaiah 55:8, and when we cannot understand God's ways we are downcast. Without God we remain limited human beings, and cannot understand all things. That is why many of us feel discouraged, dejected, and lonely sometimes. Like Elijah, we feel downcast because all around us things are happening contrary to, and beyond our understanding and apprehension. We find our burden *too* heavy, our sorrows unbearable, and our problems very complicated. It is at that time we need to go to the mountain top. God purposely took Elijah to a high mountain, far away from other surroundings, and there he heard the still small voice of God. He could see clearly what was going to happen in the immediate future. That mountain-top experience took away all depression and burden from his heart. When you too, are discouraged, depressed and dejected, the best thing to do is to go to some spiritual mountain, climbing very high, and there you will be able to see God's plan for you, and the work given to you to do.

In the same way in Matt. 17:1 Peter, James and John were brought up into a high mountain. Now in Matt. 16: 21-23 the Lord Jesus told His disciples in a very plain way that the time had come when He must suffer and be mocked, scourged, spat upon and killed and they could not understand it at all. They said to themselves, "Why should our Lord, with so much authority and power, suffer like (his)". With human zeal Peter rebuked the Lord Jesus in Matt. 16:22. "Be it far from Thee, Lord", he said, "this shall not be unto Thee". Peter was saying these words with great respect and love, but he did not know that he was being used as the enemy's tool. Peter was carried away with human zeal. He thought he was showing his love by seeking to prevent the Lord Jesus from being crucified. But he did not realize that he was being used by the devil.

The Lord had to say, "Get thee behind me, Satan." It is possible for us to be like that sometimes in our human zeal, when we interfere in the work of God. For example, in Acts 21. when Paul was on the way to Jerusalem, Agabus prophesied (verses 10-14) that Paul would be bound. When his companions heard these words they began to weep and say that they would not allow him to go to Jerusalem, but Paul knew God's will and *said*, "What mean you by these words? Do you want to break my heart? I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die for the Lord Jesus" Then they said. "'The Lord's will be done". They thought that being the friends of Paul, and to show their love and respect for him. they could keep him back from going to Jerusalem. Without knowing, they were interfering with God's plan, because they did not know whether the Lord had told Paul the Apostle to go to Jerusalem. Many parents, friends and others prevent their loved ones from doing God's will in this way. They are carried away by their own zeal and human affection and do not allow their children or loved ones to obey God.

We are told that six days after Jesus had spoken to His disciples, He took Peter, James and John to a high mountain. The Lord knew they could not understand these things down below, so they had to be carried to the high mountain, and there (he Lord was transfigured before them They saw Moses and Elijah and these said thc same thing again, that Jesus must suffer (Luke 9:31),

It is on the high mountain that we see our great salvation revealed fully and for that reason the prophet Isaiah says, in chanter 58:14, "I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth". You will have to go to the mountain peak to discover what that means!

If people want to see the glory of the Himalaya mountains, they cannot see that glory from one small point on the plain. They must be able to go from peak to peak to see something of

the grandeur of the mountains. and this would take many centuries! Then how can we climb the spiritual mountain peaks by ourselves? For this reason God has given us His Word, and by the help of the Holy Spirit we are lifted up from earthly plains, to spiritual high places. We need to spend more time in worship, in quiet time and in prayer to be lifted above the earth and earthly surroundings, where our mind is filled with earthly things. What we hear around distracts us, and we are not able to understand or concentrate, because our thoughts are wandering. Singing and worship help to lift us up to the high mountains spiritually.

Isaiah, the prophet gives us details of the birth, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. The book of Isaiah is a description of salvation at different angles. We need to go from peak to peak as we read the Word of God. As we read chapters 24 to 66 of Isaiah. i.e. 40 chapters, we have a description of the great mountain peaks of salvation and if we are made to jump from mountain peak to mountain peak or from one chapter to another in these 40 chapters, then we are made to rise upon high places and see what a great and glorious salvation we have in the Lord Jesus Christ.

FIRST MOUNTAIN PEAK

"Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him.

The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the Lord hath spoken this word." "O Lord, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth."
Isaiah 24:1-3; 25:1

THE WHOLE OF Isa. 24 tells us of the coming judgement which will fall upon all nations of the earth and all people, because of sin. That shows us what great punishment our sins deserve, (verses 19-22). Judgment is surely coming upon the earth, and to save us from that wrath to come, and the coming judgment, the Lord Jesus Christ took the punishment upon Himself, He gave His own feet to be pierced, His face to be spat upon and His body to be broken. Even though we speak about the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ again and again, we can never fully realize *how much He suffered, and what a high price He had to pay*. to redeem us and to forgive us. That is the first great mountain peak.

In the beginning we do not understand, but as we grow spiritually older and begin to know God's mind clearly, and after many years of experience we will say: "Now I know what a high price the Lord paid to redeem me". It is the same with our children. They do not realise how much suffering their fathers and mothers have had in order to educate them and bring them up. It is only when they grow older that they begin to say: "Now I know what my father and mother went through to give me this high position in the world". It is when we are lifted up spiritually, that we realize how much our Lord suffered for us.

SECOND MOUNTAIN PEAK

"He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces: and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it."
Isaiah 25:8

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST has given us *complete victory over death*, and now we can say, "Oh death, where is thy sting? Oh grave, where is thy victory?" But those who have no hope of salvation throughout their lifetime, have to spend it in tears and sorrows. They do not know what is going to happen when they

die. Only those who know the Lord by experience can say those words of challenge to death and the grace. To them death is only a temporary parting. When anyone is promoted to a high job, such as an ordinary clerk becoming the President of Hyderabad State, and he has to be transferred far from home when he gets the promotion, does he start weeping? Of course not!—on the other hand he rejoices!

Similarly only a true believer can say "Oh death, where is thy sting, where is thy victory?" With perfect peace he can face death. When our loved ones are taken away there comes the thought again and again, that we shall meet them again, never to part, in glorified immortal bodies.

The strongest man in the whole world cannot be delivered from the fear of death. The wound caused by death cannot be healed by any human words. Many may come and console and condole but nobody can heal the wound. But the believer knows by experience that this is only a temporary separation. The person who dies, can depart with perfect peace, saying: "I come to Thee". Many saints of God have said such words and departed to glory. On the faces of those who sleep in Jesus, is a peaceful expression, while on the faces of others there is nothing but fear and terror. We can tell that the former has gone to be with the Lord, and that we shall meet again. We can ascend a mountain peak and go to Him under all circumstances even in the face of death, and thus have a foretaste of heaven' upon earth. Such can say indeed: "Oh death, where is thy sting? oh grave, where is thy victory?"

THIRD MOUNTAIN PEAK

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." Isaiah 26:3

THIS IS THE MOUNTAIN PEAK OF *inward peace*. "Thou will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee".

In *prosperity or adversity*, in sickness or in health, among many friends or no friends, in lonely places or among relations, wherever you may be, you will find that peace continues day by day. As long as you do God's will and try to do what He tells you, then nothing on this earth can keep you away from that peace, neither sickness, nor suffering, nor hardship. Even the enemy cannot take this peace away. It is a perfect peace, (Is. 26:3).

Those who do not know the Lord Jesus Christ, in spite of all their worldly advantages, have *no peace*. *They are* full of fears and unhappiness. This peace is only the portion of those who know the Lord Jesus Christ by experience. It is peace like a river. As in a river water increases, so this peace increases day by day.

FOURTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

" I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: iesi any hurt it. I will keep it night and day." Isaiah 27:3

THIS MOUNTAIN PEAK IS *the inward assurance that myLord will look after me*. God's promise is: "I will keep it". Let there be earthquake, famine, many persecutions or wars, the Lord will protect. The Lord Himself says, "I (he Lord will keep it and water it every *moment*." i.e. He will keep us fresh and green and fruitful. He will make special provision for our spiritual growth and fruitfulness. He may send us anywhere or keep us anywhere, but He will protect us.

But if someone does not know the Lord, when he goes to a new place, he may be full of fear of his neighbours and look upon them as enemies. "Who will help me? I am among strangers" he may say. But for those who know the Lord Jesus Christ is this promise: "I will keep it.—I will keep it under the shelter of my mighty wings." He also says, "I will water you". He will keep His own green and fresh and fruitful because of His grace and love.

FIFTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working." Isaiah 28:29

ALL OF US are in need of advice sometimes. We have to make many decisions, regarding many plans and in many matters. At such a time we want the advice of some man of experience and go to him for advice; but for believers *the Lord Jesus Christ is their Counsellor*. For every hard situation and problem you can go to Him for advice and He will give the solution. Those who are in big business, before they can consult great men, have to pay a very high fee to those men of experience to get their advice. They know that, if they get such advice, they can earn more money. The Lord Jesus is our Advisor. For all our personal problems, future problems, marriage problems. or any other problems, we have only to go and consult Him, and the advice He will give is the very best advice. Whatever advice we get from uncle, aunt, friends or relations, it cannot be wholly reliable, but He is to be trusted (v. 29). He offers His full power to help and we can claim the power of His resurrection for every need.

SIXTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"They also that erred in spirit shall come to under standing, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine." Isaiah 29:24

EVEN THOUGH YOU MAY BE extremely learned in worldly things, yet according to Matt. 33:17, you can be taught many deep heavenly mysteries. As you wait upon Him and call upon Him by faith saying: "Lord, teach me Thy ways". He will lead you into all truth.

SEVENTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." Isaiah 30:21

THIS IS A GREAT mountain peak which we need to climb day by day. and step by step, listening to hear the voice of God behind us saying: 'This is the way, walk ye in it'. We can easily take a wrong step, but by this means the Lord saves us from many dangers unknown to us. He knows there are many dangers on our path and He speaks in a still small voice: "Don't go that side, but go this way". That is how a child of God can be led everyday and be saved from pit-falls. Worldly people have so many advantages of education and knowledge. yet they live a life of misery and sorrow. They have never learned that lesson of hearing the voice of God. saying; 'This is the way, walk ye in it.' As we walk in that way we can have the same experience every day for any situation. So long as we keep our ears attentive, and keep saying: "Lord teach me the right path". He will direct us. Thus we are made to ride on high places, and to go on jumping from peak to peak, in our enjoyment of this great salvation.

EIGHTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"As the birds Hying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem: defending also he will deliver it; and passing over he will preserve it." Isaiah 31:5

The Lord will protect us from unseen danger. I met a friend in Holland who told me he was driving his car after dark one night and he suddenly saw another car coming forward. To save that man from accident, he turned his car round, and doing so it hit against a tree. The whole car was smashed but he was thrown out without any injury. If you had seen the damaged car you would never have imagined that any man could come out alive from that wreckage! God's Word if, true. We are continually being protected from many seen and unseen distresses and dangers around.

NINTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"And a man shall be an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, and the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Isaiah 32:2

IF YOU ARE CAUGHT in the rain or storm or wind, you will run here and there to find shelter! If you see any shop or hut, you will go and take shelter because of the storm. But the Lord says. 'After I have saved you, / *will be your hiding place*'. What a privilege! Many in danger will come to you and seek your help and will say: 'Please pray for me! Many in calamity and sorrow will come to you. and it is your privilege to be a source of comfort and strength to all those who are in great need. Like a river in a dry country provides water, so you will be like a river of water in a dry land. When you go to a lonely place you will bring life by your testimony, souls will be won, and you will be a great rock in a weary land. When you are saved by His grace He becomes your shelter, and makes you a shelter to others.

TENTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off" Isaiah 33:17

OUR HOPE IS THAT *we will see our Lord in His glory*,— that our eyes shall see the King of glory. Our Lord Jesus Christ is called 'King of Kings and Lord of Lords' in three places. When He comes the second time, with His mighty angels and with His saints, then we will see His full glory. That is our hope. Our eyes shall see the King of *glory* in His beauty, and shall behold the land that is afar 06*. and be partakers of it.

ELEVENTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree." Isaiah 34:4

WE ARE REMINDED HERE HOW *the Lord has made us His possession*. The sun, moon and stars are His. but He has not made them His portion. They will pass away (Psa. 102:28). just as we throw away a dirty piece of garment after using it. When we buy a garment we are careful with it for two or three months, but. however good the garment may be, one day it becomes old. and when garments are torn after much wearing or after they are used for other purposes, we throw them away.

Before God however, we are very precious. By receiving the Lord Jesus Christ we can say truthfully, joyfully and boldly, we shall live forever with glorified, immortal bodies in a heavenly kingdom which will not pass away. This is another peak of salvation. Very dry leaves do not require much wind to make them fall. They will fall of themselves without shaking. Just as dry leaves fall easily without wind, so a day is coming when what we see now will all fall down and disappear. Then there will be a new creation which will speak of God's glory Rev. 21:1. We are being prepared now for that new creation, for something which is eternal and which will not pass away. and our Lord Jesus uses His own way and methods to prepare us for that new creation.

TWELFTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad (or them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. 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." Isaiah 35 :1. 2.

FOR YOUR OWN ENJOYMENT and profit read on to the end of the chapter, for we shall discover great truths in all the verses. Among all the flowers the rose plant needs much care to make it grow. You will not see many gardens in Hyderabad with nice roses, because they require much care, attention, watchfulness and knowledge. Otherwise insects may eat away the plant, and it will not blossom. Yet among all the flowers the rose is the best, provided it is properly cared for. God says "*the wilderness and the desert . . . shall blossom as the rose.*"

I have seen in gardens beautiful roses which everyone admires. Before we came to the Lord Jesus Christ we were like a desert with not the least hope of bringing forth fruit. There are no flowers in a desert, not even ordinary flowers. The Lord is saying *here* that even though you have become so barren and worthless, yet I will make you to blossom one day like a rose garden. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself is our Gardener as we have seen in Isa. 27:3. God says; "With my own hands I will water you and will look after you." Even a small insect can spoil the flower and its branches, and plant diseases can destroy the flower, so the gardener has to protect the leaves and the flowers, and at the same time protect the plant from extreme heat and cold. As the gardener protects the plant, so our Lord protects us spiritually from extreme cold, heat and other dangers which come to His children. Roses also require watering at least three times a day, but the Lord says of His own: "I will water it every moment." Not only three times a day, but *every moment*. That is how we are going to become like a rose garden full of blossoms.

In London there is Kew garden, which is supposed to be the best garden in the world. There are more than seventy kinds of roses there, large and small roses of different colours, and each plant requires many hours of attention. As a result the whole garden is full of a very sweet fragrance.

Our whole life can become a beautiful garden, if the Lord Jesus is continually with us. Sin has ruined us and left an ugly mark on us, and nobody can remove that mark of sin except the Lord Jesus.

When people want to give flowers as a gift, either for a wedding or on some other occasion, they usually give roses. If they want to wish God-speed or a blessing, they give roses. So when our life blossoms like a rose, it will become a blessing and like a heavenly song. There will certainly be singing in heaven, perhaps the whole time, as our joy increases, for there will be no sigh or sorrow or disappointment there. Even on earth there are some people who sing all the time, but we often find that though in the daytime they are cheerful, yet in the night they start weeping or crying, because they feel sorry for themselves. In heaven however, all sighing will disappear, and there will be a heavenly song to sing *all the time* because life there will be so full of joy that it must overflow, and even all the painful experiences of earth will then have become joy to us. But even here on earth our lives can be full of song when we remember that God is using our earthly trials to make us more fruitful and worthy of the heavenly kingdom.

On the mountains of Lebanon there are beautiful trees growing very tall and majestic, which speak of beauty and glory. Like these trees, God is going to give us dignity and authority. Do not go to Him with fear, but walk with boldness as His co-worker and a king. It is a wonderful sight to see Mount Carmel. The scenery is very beautiful all around. Similarly, when the work of salvation is completed we will be made partakers of His glory and beauty and majesty, and all ugly patches will be removed.

In Government offices files are provided and the officer in charge of the section has to keep the records of the clerks under him for promotion in the office. They are very confidential. Someday when promotion is to be given the file is brought forward and if there are 12 bad marks, the man cannot be promoted. Many clerks do not know how many black marks

are put in the "no promotion" file. Because of anger and jealousy against a person, many are not promoted and those marks put in the file will not be taken away till the time of their retirement. The Lord knows our private life, *and* how much we have grieved Him, by thought and word and deed. But by the precious blood we can be cleansed as we go to Him again and again.

In heaven none of these things will be remembered, but God's glory alone. We believers are weak upon this earth and when we are tired and lonely we cry out, "Lord how long am I going to be like this? I find in my life many failures and short comings and weaknesses but in heaven we will overcome these weaknesses, as His very life will be given to us. Even now weak believers can be strengthened by being filled with the life of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Isa. 35.4 is our only hope as we keep ourselves ready for His coming. Do not let us remain weak. Let us acknowledge our weakness and thank Him for dying for our sins and thus put away the old man saying: "My Lord, now you fill me with yourself". As we keep looking to Him we know His recompense for the days of weariness and struggle, and to keep our eyes on Him is one reason why we take part in the Lord's Table Sunday after Sunday (v. 5). There the ears of the deaf are opened and the eyes of [he blind see, and we are able to see God's glory. One day all of us will be able to see clearly and fully the heavenly things, but now we require heavenly light and heavenly eyes to see God's glory clearly and spiritual ears to hear the voice of God speaking clearly. As we listen to what He says, we will hear and understand, and by hearing His voice and gazing on His glory, we are made partakers of that glory, v. 6; Whatever a man's handicap may be on this earth, by so meeting our Lord face to face, he will be able to overcome this handicap. Many of us on this earth cannot speak even one word, and that is why many of us do not open our mouths to worship Him. You may say. "I will take part next Sunday," but many years pass, and even if you try to speak, not one word will come out of your

mouth. On the day we meet Him face to face, whether here or when He comes, the dumb shall sing, and we will be praising the Lord with all our heart. singing heavenly songs. v. 7: The most barren ground can become fruitful. Nowadays, in the Persian Gulf can be seen trees and stretches of green grass, which forty years ago were not there. In previous years, I have not seen a single tree there, but only a sea of sand. Now that area has become very wealthy. There is plenty of money and they are bringing soil from other place and spending much money in order to grow trees and grass.

As verse 6 tells us. when heavenly waters break out, there will be streams in the desert. All kind of barrenness can be overcome, if we claim the life of the Lord Jesus Christ day by day. Do not depend upon self for fruitfulness. but go on claiming the divine life, for that is how the desert can become fruitful.

In verse 8 we read of the highway of holiness. This holiness is not a human qualification, but the holiness which we have in the Lord Jesus Christ. He Himself is our righteousness. He Himself is our sanctification. It is not our Bible knowledge or prayer; it is only the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, the living Person who rose again, and whom we have received as our Saviour, that can make us holy. He is our holiness. The more we receive

Him, the more holiness we have. When we first begin to pray, we go to Him on our own merits, saying: "I pay my tithes regularly. I do not quarrel with others"; but that will not do for us when we go into the presence of God. When we pray, we should say by faith: "Lord! I am not worthy to come into thy presence, but by grace I am what I am. Thou art my righteousness. I come to thee". Then we can enjoy holiness in His presence, and we will be able to talk to Him standing on the merits of that holiness. v. 9 "No lion shall be there." How many men boast of their human strength, saying: "We are like lions; who can stand before us?" Strong and healthy men are proud of their strength and health, but that will not give them an entrance into heaven. Only those who are redeemed by the

precious blood can find entrance into God's presence. No human strength can qualify us. "No lion shall be there .. . but the redeemed shall wait there." These who are not redeemed cannot enter there. v. 10 All who are washed and purchased by the precious blood of Christ have the privilege of entering God's kingdom with joy and gladness. Even though we may have many human handicaps and are very foolish, weak and stupid in the eyes of men, yet all these human limitations can be overcome by His precious blood. Whatever they may be, we can enter into God's kingdom boldly with all the saints.

THIRTEENTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"But they held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the kings commandment was, saying, Answer him not." Isaiah 36:21

THE KING OF ASSYRIA, had come with a large army and weapons of war against the defenced cities of Judah (v. 1). He came with great army, and had taken many defenced cities. He boasted with much assurance and pride (v. 8) and he was so sure, of victory, that he would give two thousand horses to Israel if they on their part could put riders upon them! The enemy comes up against us also like a threatening flood. When we feel self-assured we are bound to fall into temptation or sin. The devil goes about, sometimes like a roaring lion, sometimes as an angel of light, and deceives God's people. We think there is no hope of any victory and we fall. But King Hezekiah said: *"Don't speak a word"* (ch. 21:14-18).

Worldly people, try to tease us when we are in difficulty. When we put our trust in the Saviour the devil tempts us many times to fear that the world will make fun of us. They may say: "You are talking about your Saviour now, but we will see if He can help you!" Many have lost their faith and joy when they have been ridiculed by worldly people. We know, however, through God's Word, that the enemy will surely come like a flood to deceive us and tempt us, but our King says: "Answer him not". That is our weapon! We do not need worldly weapons

to defeat the enemy. Many are deceived by trying to defeat the devil with worldly weapons (2 Cor. 10:4). Instead, very quietly wait upon the Lord and get the answer. Remember how Israel overcame Jericho at the time of Joshua (Josh. 6:1 to 6); the walls of Jericho were high and strong, and when they saw them they were frightened, for the enemy was far too strong for them, in weapons and military strength. But God told them clearly they could conquer the enemy by the weapon He was giving them. They had only to listen to the instructions and obey. The Lord asked them simply to walk around the walls of Jericho paying no attention to the men who were mocking them. On the seventh day they were to blow the trumpets and shout. They could have said: "How can the walls fall down just by shouting?". It is a mystery, but when they obeyed the Lord, the walls did fall flat. When there is an earthquake some stones fall on the right and some on the left. I remember, when there was an earthquake in Quetta, many houses and walls fell down, and there were heaps of rubbish everywhere which made it difficult to walk. At Jericho, however, the Scripture says, the walls fell flat, so flat that they could easily walk over it.

The Lord is telling us here: "Do not use worldly weapons to conquer the devil. It is only by hearing the voice of God. going upon your knees, that He will tell you what to do, and you will be able to defeat the enemy day by day." No matter how the enemy may rise up against you, pray with faith and say: "Lord! I am depending upon your strength and victory. Now tell me Lord, how to use my weapon". Somehow God will give you Scripture verses to encourage you and strengthen you, and it is a wonderful thing how the devil can be defeated by a few verses.

I remember many years ago when I came back to India, my father and my mother met me at Bombay. My mother was weeping very much and said, "Why don't you come home for a few days?" but I refused, because they asked me to keep it secret that I was a Christian, though I could read the Bible and pray. When frightened, for the enemy was far too strong for

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I'll come," when I heard a still small voice: "No man, having put his hand to plough and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God". That verse saved me from what was a great temptation. Then again I said to my mother: "I am sorry, but I cannot come. The Lord Jesus Christ must be given the first place. He is my Creator and My Saviour." Later on the Lord began to work in my whole family because of my obedience. You will find when you go through serious temptation that either a small verse comes to your memory, or while you are reading the Bible, He speaks. Take heed, for the devil can deceive you into using worldly weapons. Maintain your peace, for it is peace only that can defeat the devil. (Rom. 16: 20) Inward peace is given by hearing the voice of God, and we will be able to defeat the devil when he comes Upon us either like a flood, or as a roaring lion, or as an angel of light.

FOURTEENTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"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. For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. 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." Isaiah 37:14. 35-36

HERE THE KING OF ASSYRIA is seen threatening and warning God's people. At the same time he sent a letter to Hezekiah. After reading it, Hezekiah went-up into the temple. (v. 15:17) He and his people were in extreme difficulty, but they knew that God would answer. Even though humanly speaking there was no hope of deliverance because the Assyrian king had come with a very strong army to threaten them with defeat as he had defeated other nations, Hezekiah was confident in the Lord, and went to the temple and the Lord answered and delivered him,

A few years ago when we were having a campaign in Nagercoil in the open field, a swarm of insects came like a storm

upon us. There were about 7000 people gathered for the evening meeting. We had begun with songs and had sung about three songs when suddenly this happened. This swarm of insects came as a storm which is not usual in North India. Such storms conic up like a thick wall, and these insects came upon us like that, covering our hands, feet, head and neck and made us restless. We could not even give the Word as when doing so, the insects went into our mouths, We thought we could not go on with our meeting because nobody could withstand the insects, and many were going into our mouths and noses. The people were about to disperse, so I said: "Kindly wait, we will pray". We prayed: "Lord in thy Name we rebuke these insects, which the devil has brought to disturb our meeting", and as, by faith we took hold of the Lord, the insects fled.

Similarly, Hezekiah prayed, and though he did not *know* what *was going* to happen, God knew. See Isa. 37: 36. In the morning the great Assyrian army were all dead bodies. From this we learn that when the enemy attacks us in different ways we have a weapon, and that is. to go upon our knees. Alas! We often use our tongue and no; our knees. Knees are *more* helpful than the tongue. If only we knew how to use our knees sufficiently, we would find heaven opened, and the storms that come up against us from the enemy would be confounded.

FIFTEENTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wail, and prayed unto the Lord. And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria: and I will defend this city."

Isaiah 38:2, 6

THERE ARE OCCASIONS when we may have some serious complicated sickness. As long as we are in this body of clay we will be subject to all kinds of diseases. But we can claim God's protection and His healing touch. *X* know of *many* occasions when the Lord came with His healing touch. He has His own

power, but we have to call upon Him with simple faith as Hezekiah called upon Him and the Lord hearkened to his voice.

Once in North India I promised to take a meeting for British soldiers. That evening I suddenly had a very high temperature, and could not get-up. I wanted to write and say, "I cannot come. I have high fever," but God would not give me liberty. I tried four or five times, had but no liberty to stay back. God said, "You have to go." Judging by the high temperature, *it* was foolish of me to go, but by God's Word and promise I could trust Him fully to undertake. In spite of high fever I went to the meeting and was shivering there. They sang one song, than another, yet my fever continued. Then the time came to speak, and as I stood up. suddenly the fever left me. I have seen this on many occasions. When we call upon Him with child-like faith. He answers. All these trials are to strengthen us, so that we may take hold of Him. He helped Hezekiah and I am sure many of us have been helped thus. It requires strong faith to walk with God, for the enemy can bring doubts into our minds. In Isa. 38, Hezekiah's faith became stronger because of what the Lord had done for him in chapter 37. So every experience which we pass through gives us a stronger faith. Throughout our lifetime we prove Him to be faithful by taking hold of Him in simple faith. God can teach us when we take hold of Him.

SIXTEENTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"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" Isaiah 40:11.

THE SHEPHERD will stay with his flock night and day. Sometimes he is away from his family for many months. As a matter of fact he loves his sheep more than his family. It is not like those who look after buffaloes or cows or other animals. Such animals can be kept in stables, but not sheep. They need looking after, night and day. Because shepherds have many

sheep and because they have no place to keep them, they put them all together at night-time and birth of the Lord Jesus Christ at Bethlehem many shepherds were watching their flocks outside at night. when the angel appeared to them. The shepherd leads the sheep to different pastures. Just as we want different food for breakfast, lunch, tea and dinner, so the sheep want different food at different times. The Lord Jesus Christ says: "I will be like a shepherd watching over you day and night." He is a loving Saviour, and watches over us to protect us from enemies and dangers, whether seen or unseen. Many can testify, how they have been saved from earthquake, flood and other dangers.

Every morning the shepherd takes his sheep out to different pastures. The sheep will not eat dirty or dry tough grass It wants tender, green grass. Psa. 23. Shepherds lead their sheep to good pastures, where there is nice tender green grass, and go to different places in the morning, afternoon and the evening.

Again, the sheep requires clean water. They will not drink dirty water like pigs do. The Lord Jesus Christ knows exactly what kind of food we need to satisfy our hunger and thirst. His words are our pasture. Every morning He gives us His Word, at midday and in the evening. In the morning we are given the heavenly plan for the day. In the afternoon we are given strength for the remaining part of the day. In the evening we are searched by God before we go to bed. Thus we get refreshed every day and are protected from every danger seen and unseen. He is our loving and faithful Shepherd, and is with us all the time. Sheep have the gift of recognizing the voice of the Shepherd. Even though they are so stupid in many ways, yet they can recognise the voice of their own master. Sometimes when many flocks are brought together and the shepherds take turns in watching the flocks by night, in the morning the first shepherd whistles to his sheep. He may use a whistle of silver or any metal, or he may use two fingers in his mouth, but when he whistles only his own sheep will come out

and gather together; then the second shepherd and the third shepherd begin to whistle. The sheep will never go to another shepherd, for they know the voice of their own. Sometimes there may come a strange shepherd and whistle, but the sheep will not follow him. The Lord Jesus Christ says "they will not follow strangers", because their ears are sensitive to the voice of their own master. It is our privilege to hear the voice of God. Even though we may not know subjects like history, geography or science we can recognise the voice of God. It is the privilege of a believer to hear the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ and follow Him. Wherever He goes we should follow without question. We should follow our Lord Jesus Christ with perfect confidence for we know we are perfectly safe in Him and we need not worry about dangers of any kind. One of the high mountain peaks is to hear the Voice of the Shepherd every day and follow Him, fully trusting Him. Isaiah 40:29, 31. Upon the earth we may have to face many trials and hardships and many sufferings. There will be times when we will be discouraged but the promise is that He will give power to face it, vs. 29, 30. Young people who depend upon their own strength are sure to fall, but those who wait upon the Lord will get new strength v. 31. They shall mount up with wings like the eagles. Their very trials will become a means of flying high just as young eagles are taught to fly high because the mother eagle breaks the nests, and shakes out the young ones over the cliff-edge. If they are allowed to remain comfortable in their nest they would be like sparrows that cannot fly high.

So, for a believer every trial is the means of learning to fly high, and of seeing things from a higher plane. "They shall run and not be weary" means that in every situation we are given strength and grace to continue.

SEVENTEENTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"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" Isaiah 41:11.

As HUMAN BEINGS, we are full of fears and have to face many hard obstacles in our Christian path. Every fear or difficulty appears like a mountain, whether we receive it as a temptation, a trial or a suffering, but the promise is in v. 16. "Thou shall fan them, and the wind shall carry them away." Every obstacle, however hard, can be fully overcome by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Weak believers become mighty, and by claiming God's promises they go on conquering every obstacle in their life.

You find that thought is made clear in the Acts of the Apostles. The disciples were threatened by the High priest and high powers, but as they prayed, the place was shaken (Acts 4 : 31. 33). In the beginning they had been threatened and opposed by the authorities (Acts 4: 18, 21). They were few in number, but as they depended upon God to help them, and prayed, that prayer shook the whole world and they began to thresh the mountain. By their appearance they were ordinary men, but they knew how to take hold of God. That is how every believer can become as a new sharp threshing instrument and can rejoice in the victory the Lord gives in every trial. Isa. 41:19, 20 In our condition as sinners we cannot produce even ordinary graces. We are barren, and have nothing, but the Lord is saying: I will make you like the cedar, myrtle and pine trees. They are the best trees to provide the best timber. You will not find them in desert places. They remind us of all virtues of Christ. His love, joy, long suffering, patience can be seen in us by seeing Him. All the beauty and glory of Jesus can be seen in a believer who is prepared to be possessed by God. Isa. 42:16 Now the blind cannot find their way. They can find their way for a short distance for their food and tea at the table, but not long

distances. I saw a blind man in France, a very clever man, and he said to me: "You are my guest. I want to show you all the things in the house". He showed me the bathroom, and even the smallest thing, as the switch. One man came to see me and said to me. "Would you like to walk, or will you come in a taxi?" I said "I cannot walk because I do not know the way." Then immediately the blind man said, "I will show you the way." Even a blind man can lead when he knows the way, but here the Lord is saying. to those who are blind spiritually, "I will lead you by a way you do not know. Let me lead you and you will find your way". It is a wonderful experience to be able to hold God's hand and walk safely everywhere. In life there are many experiences in which God shows you the way in a wonderful way.

Some years ago we were having a Gospel meeting in a village, after open air meetings in the City. It became dark and we had to walk ten miles to the meeting place and nobody in the party knew the way. There was no road or footpath and we had no light in our hand to direct us. We only prayed: "O Lord, take us to the other place". Somehow we found the place, and how it happened I do not know, but an unknown hand led us.

In your life there may be many hard situations and you feel puzzled. You don't know what to decide. Call upon (the Lord and say: "Lord, *you promised to lead me and show me the way*", and suddenly you will find light shining on your path. By simple faith take hold of Him.

EIGHTEENTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"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. 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. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel,

thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee." (Read the full chapter) Isaiah 43:1-3.

HFRE. YOU HAVE a glimpse of two mountain peaks. When we accept the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour He has a double claim upon *us*. First the Lord is our Creator, and secondly our Saviour.

He has made us. He is our Creator, but He has also paid a very high price to redeem us and to forgive us our sins. He is doubly precious to us, because He is our Creator and also our Saviour and Redeemer. He undertakes to protect us from every harm and danger. Though we may have to go through many hardships, sufferings, temptations and difficulties, for, without exception, every one of us must go through some hardships, trial; and sufferings of some kind. Here the Lord says in v, 2 "when you walk in the fire you will not be burned". The Lord shows His power among His people at different times and in different ways. When Israel came out of Egypt they had to go through the Red Sea. Exodus 14 : 6 to 29, tells us how the Lord brought them safely through the Red Sea. It does not matter, how the enemy may pursue after us, finally. his devices will be brought to naught. We as believers must be prepared to be hated and despised and persecuted by those in the world. The Lord reminds us (John 15:19) that we must expect to be hated whether in school or hospital or neighbourhood. We are bound to be hated by those in darkness, and they will try to take away our rights, and will go on pursuing us with bitter opposition. But one day you will see the enemy swallowed up by the power of God Himself.

In Daniel 3:25 we read of three men who were cast into a burning furnace, but not a single hair was singed. The hair of the-body catches fire more easily than anything else in the body, but in this case not a single hair was even singed by the fire. God's promise to believers is that even though enemies come up against us to deceive us spiritually, they will not succeed in doing any harm. They may do some harm materially

sometimes, .but they cannot succeed in doing spiritual harm to believers. In due course all will be compensated. and this promise can be fulfilled in all of us all the time,

Isa. 43:4 "Since thou wast precious in my sight". Here is the other mountain peak of Salvation. We are unto Him very precious, extremely so, even though before our fellowmen we are ordinary weak and foolish human beings. We are so weak that when people get angry with us they call us fools. Wives call their husbands fools, if they don't do what they tell them; but our Lord will not call us by that name. We remain precious before God.

v. 4 "Since thou wast precious..." The Lord Jesus Christ paid a very high price to redeem us. In Matt. 13:44-46, to buy us as His treasure He sold all that He had. In the same way to make us a pearl of great price, He gave all that He had. So it does not matter how many mistakes we make, we are yet, in His sight, very precious. His love is great for us and He will never change. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself paid the price to redeem us, to cleanse us and to purchase us. He gave all that He had and that is why. to Him. we are precious.

Now upon earth, we are bound to make mistakes because of our poor wisdom, but the Lord is saying to us, "Unto me you are very precious", and He will make every possible provision to help us to overcome our follies. "I have loved thee therefore I will give men for thee" v. 4 He will be sending messengers and servants to help us whenever we require help. It is wonderful how He sends us messengers from many parts of the world. How many servants of God have been sent to us from many parts to encourage us. to warn us. and to keep us from going away from the Lord. They have been prepared for this through many trials and sufferings and we are now profiting and benefiting by their lives and ministry.

In the same way, people are now praying for us in many parts of the world, I found it very surprising to find people in many countries which I visited saying to me: "We have been praying for you for a long time and for your work". We are being upheld

in prayer by God's people everywhere, and Thus protected from many dangers, because we are precious to Him. When a baby looks very dirty, the mother will immediately pick up the child and wash it again and again. An aunt will not do that. She may do it once or twice at the most, but after that she will tell the mother of the child that she will not take the responsibility. Only the mother can bear it. The Lord says to us "Thou art precious to me".

For example, Lazarus was in the grave. When the Lord Jesus came. Martha and Mary were weeping for Lazarus, and said to Jesus: "Lord if you had been here my brother would not have died". When Jesus came to the grave. He said "Take away the stone", but Martha said: "Lord, by this time he stinketh". While the Lord was standing near the grave, the sisters stood at a distance. They could not bear the smell, but the Lord Jesus still loved Lazarus though his body was stinking, and though his own sisters were saying: "Lord, he stinketh by now, please don't ask them to roll away the stone". Only the Lord Jesus can bear with our folly; our friends cannot. They may mock at us. but unto Him we are very precious, and He has made every provision to help us to recover.

NINETEENTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

'For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and . floods upon the dry ground: / will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring : And they shall spiring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses"Isaiah44:3, 4.

WHEN HE FOUND us in the wilderness (Deut. 32:10), we were like a desert land, very very barren and with not the least hope of becoming fruitful. If you try to pour water in a wilderness, it will never improve. It will remain a desert.

Here the Lord is saying in vs. 3 and 4, that like a flood He wants to give us the Holy Spirit. This is God's desire to make our lives abundantly fruitful. Even though we have been extremely barren for years, by receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit by

simple faith our barren life can become abundantly fruitful. We have seen, how thieves and murderers after being born again become mighty men of God. Before that their lives were full of curse. Wherever they went, they brought unhappiness, shame and sin. But through love, ministry and prayer many lives are being transformed because of the promise that those who believe on Him, from their lives will flow rivers of living water (John 7:37. 38). Through simple faith rivers of living waters can flow from us to others, and through our transformed lives many may be blessed and their lives transformed. We are seeing people who once lived such a shameful life everywhere, yet who have now become mighty men of God. We can see from their prayer life and ministry and testimony that they are filled with the Holy Spirit. That is the experience of many. That is how the Lord is pouring out His Spirit even to-day. in many parts of the world. Through a simple man. He can do great things (1 Cor. 1:26-28, 29). God uses even foolish men, and despised men to do great things, and through a few changed lives. He changes many lives.

In North India, in a small village there was a poor illiterate man, who heard the gospel, and was born again. The missionaries said to him, "You are in danger now. come and stay with us in our compound and you will be protected." But he replied, "God has not saved me for safety, but to be His witness. Let them hate me, I want to be God's witness". The village people all hated him and took away his things and would not allow him to take water from their well. He had to go to a neighbouring village and drink dirty water. But he began to pray for them. and one by one, the villagers came to him, and asked him to pray for them in their troubles. They knew that he was a man of God and asked his forgiveness, requesting him to come back to their village. God can change the foolish, illiterate and despised and fill them with His Spirit, that through their ministry many lives may be changed.

TWENTIETH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the pates of brass. and cut in sunder the bars of iron: 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." Isaiah 45:2, 3.

HERE AGAIN are two mountain peaks. God promises to go before us. First, when He commands us to go anywhere in His name. He says, "I will go before thee and make the crooked paths straight". In many cases, our Mighty God has broken many barriers before His servants. Today the Gospel is taken to people speaking 1,055 languages. As God's servants obey God's word the mountains before them roll away. When they obey Him, the mountains flow, the gates of brass are broken and the bars of iron are cut asunder. This happened in the case of Peter, (Acts 12.8, 10) and God has opened many other strong doors before His servants in many parts of the world. It is only by faith that we can see mountains melt away before us.

The other mountain peak is in v. 4. We can command God. see for example Gen. 22:17. Abraham's faith in God was tested. In obedience to God he offered his only son on Mount Moriah. He was about to slay his son. when God spoke to him. v. 12. "Abraham turned around and he saw a ram caught in a thicket," and the Lord asked him to offer that ram instead of his son. It was brought by God. and there was no fear of it running away, for it was caught in a bush. God was thus saying. "Now Abraham you have fully obeyed me. You have not withheld your sort from me. Now I am bound to you; just as the ram. I am bound to you. Now you command me and I will obey you. Ask me of things to come". That is our privilege. We believers can command God. If you obey Him whole heartedly. without questioning or murmuring or doubting, you can command God and your prayer will be fully answered. John 14:13, 14, Jesus

said: "If ye ask anything in my name I will do it." We can command Him for anything. That is a mystery! We have a right to command God, but we must first learn to offer what He wants whole-heartedly. Then we can command, and can enjoy all things of God in abundance and fullness (Col. 2:9, 10). We are complete in Him, so we can enjoy His fullness.

TWENTY-FIRST MOUNTAIN PEAK.

"Even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you." Isaiah 46:4

HERE IS ANOTHER mountain peak of salvation by which our Lord is assuring us very strongly, through the prophet Isaiah, that throughout our life-time He will carry us through. We as human beings are full of fears. Even (hough we have enjoyed God's goodness in abundance for many years, and have seen Him working on our behalf mightily on many occasions, and have seen answers to our prayers, yet we find we are full of fears and keep saying: "What about this, and what about that?" "What about tomorrow, or next month, or next year?" Our minds are full of fear and anxiety and we are always worrying about the future, about our health, about our old age, about our children or something even less important. When you have no children, you long to have children, and when you *have* children *you* begin *to* worry, how to feed them, clothe them, educate them; how to get them married; and if the children are rebellious, how to face this problem, correct them, rebuke them. Every human being has *some* worry of some kind or other. But one verse is sufficient to take away worry and anxiety of every kind. They are not the words of men, but the words of the living and loving God saying to us who have become His heavenly possession: "Even to old age I will carry you." When He saves us, he undertakes for our full responsibilities, for the whole span of life, whether it is 70, 90, 200 or 500 years. God is not limited by age, so He says to you. "Even to your hoar hairs, I will carry

you through." In other words "I am responsible till you die. Don't worry whatever your need may be, spiritual, physical or material, and don't think I will care for only a few of your needs, but rather for all your needs and burdens."

When we are very very old, we require somebody to lift us up, for when we lie down, we cannot get up again. Some old people are very heavy and need four or five people to lift them up. They say pathetically: "Please come and lift me." But the Lord Jesus says: "I will help you for I have made you. you are my own possession and my property, so I undertake to bear the burden of you and your whole responsibility." As mothers gladly carry their children, so even the Lord Jesus Christ will carry you safely. When men carry us they hurt OUT limbs and bones because they don't know how to carry us. They handle us roughly, though perhaps they do so with-good intentions, and we are thus very uncomfortable, but the Lord says: "I will carry you, I will make you as comfortable as possible, and deliver you from every trial of every kind".

He assures us in Job 5 : 19-26 that He will undertake for us. He says He will deliver us from seven troubles. v. 19. The number 7 in scripture stands for *completion*, which means that whatever our troubles or trials or sufferings or afflictions may be He will deliver us. He will deliver us from hardships and sufferings, v. 19 and 20. In war and famine He will supply our need. When the Lord's people thank God for their food, they find that even the poorest kind of food becomes tasty. When the Lord Jesus Christ fed the multitude. He did not feed them with rich food. Hindus tell us that the Lord fed them with *biryani*, but our Lord Jesus Christ used barley loaves. This is the poor mart's food. In extreme scarcity and famine people use barley, otherwise they use wheat, rice and other grains. I have eaten all kinds of bread but barley-bread. I have never seen barley bread, and I have heard it is not tasty. The Lord Jesus Christ chose barley bread and multiplied it and when He blessed it, it became so tasty. In conditions of extreme famine, when many are starving for lack of food, we know that whatever the Lord gives

us at that time. He will bless it and make it more tasty. We have found this true by experience. Sometimes we have gone to some homes and food has been set before us, and the very sight of it was repulsive. The stomach would say: "Don't touch it. Don't touch it." But the Lord would say: "Pray and eat it!" Sure enough, when we have said: "Lord bless the food," it has become very tasty. That is God's promise, and it has been our experience. In the same way, people have been protected from bombs in the time of war. Job 3:21. is our daily experience. "The scourge of the tongue" comes from friends and relations, neighbours and others. When men get angry, they use very hurtful words. Husbands quarrel with their wives, and wives with their husbands, and their words are like weapons at such times. But the Lord promises to protect us from the scourge of the tongue of relations and friends and neighbours, when they use cruel words to hurt our feelings. It is hard to forget when someone hurts us with angry words, but the Lord uses the Balm of Gilead to heal these wounds. He has undertaken to deliver us from all such dangers.

v. 22 Men can behave like bulls and lions (Acts 20:29). They will come upon you as wolves because of strife, in order to rob you of your joy and happiness. But the Lord promises to protect us from beasts and from all lions (1 Peter 5:8). The enemy can use someone who is like a beast, but if we really keep our trust in the Lord and are not anxious or afraid, the Lord Himself protects us from all these. However if we lose our sleep and start worrying we will not be protected. Let us say by faith: "Lord, I claim Isa. 46:4", and refuse to worry about old age, a pension, or a good house for children or grand-children. Some start worrying and begin to try to save money. They walk long distances to save five naye paise. They forgo their breakfast to save money. If they have no money in the bank, they somehow manage to go on educating their children, as a provision against old age. But soon after their education is finished those children get married and no longer care for you. Some depend upon insurance policy and provident funds. But the best assurance is

Isa. 46.4. Here we have a perfect assurance for every need and situation of every kind throughout our life-time. But we have got to have faith. It is not Just by repeating these words, that we will have this experience. It is only by faith. Let us say from our hearts: "Lord, I believe these words are for me. I do not want to trust in money or friends or children. I want to depend upon you alone, I fully believe you will not forsake me. Lord. I cast all my burden upon you". Then, without our knowledge. He will make every provision for our need. This is a wonderful mountain peak of salvation.

TWENTY-SECOND MOUNTAIN PEAK

"Behold i have refined thee, but not with silver; 1 have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." Isaiah 48:10

THIS VERSE IS nobody likes to go through affliction. The Lord says: "I will refine thee" because He wants us to be holy, as He is holy. The highest aim of God is to make us partakers of His own holiness. Alas, we want to become holy like somebody else. That is why we have to go through many refining fires. It happens everywhere. When men want to have the best steel, the iron ore has to go through many fires. First, they take iron ore, which looks like ordinary earth, it is so full of sand and mud. It is first melted by a fiercely hot fire, and the iron goes to bottom, while the other things come to the top. Once again the iron is melted by very high temperature. Only then does the iron become steel, which is used for watch springs, and other purposes, Gold can only be refined by fire. It cannot be refined by soap and water. What is more, the fire must be beneath and above.

In the same way fire is used to purify petrol and other material. Whenever petrol is taken from the earth it looks dirty and filthy, and no one will think that the stuff has any real value. It must go first through a big furnace, and through strong heat the petrol is brought to the top. In the same way, silk,

pearls and diamonds, have all to go through much pressure and suffering to make them what they are. So when God chooses us. He sets us a very high standard because He wants us to be holy and without spot, or blemish of any kind. He wants us to be far more glorious than even the angels, so He takes us through a furnace of affliction. How often we say: "God has forgotten us." When sickness increases and other trials come, we say: "O Lord, why You are keeping me in this condition for so long. I have done nothing wrong; I have attended every meeting and yet You are punishing me." It is not punishment, but a refining fire, so that we may attain the highest standard of holiness.

When once our sins are forgiven. He forgives them for ever. Let us overcome unnecessary self-condemnation, if we have done wrong. Let us confess, and be washed in His precious Blood, and our sins will be forgiven for ever. But trials, sufferings and afflictions are refining fires, to make us spotlessly holy and without blemish. That is how David was prepared by God. He did not rebel against God, but realized he was being prepared for a high position (Psa. 18:16-19). He came to a large and wealthy place (Psa. 16:10-12). Such is God's way of preparing us for our high vocation. You cannot learn that lesson from books, teachers or preachers. You may have the best of teachers to teach you the Word of God, but they will not refine you. Without exception we all have to go through that refining. God uses different ways and different limes to refine each of us, but all of us must be refined in God's way only, and only thus can we attain to God's standard of holiness. All these refining fires remind us of His high standard, but we are satisfied only with other things. In case of Job, even though he offered sacrifices all the time, he did not know how to pray. It was only through affliction that he learned how to pray. Job 42:8. The friends of Job knew all about God, and they spake of Him in beautiful and wonderful terms. But they also did not know how to pray. God said to them, "You are foolish people. You don't know how to pray. I won't accept your prayers. You go to Job

and he will pray for you. His prayer will be answered". How did Job learn to pray?. It was only through affliction. Nobody has ever gone through such refining fire as did Job, till his faith was strong in the Lord. All our refining fires are intended to increase our Faith and to bring us to a high standard of holiness in order that we may be without spot or blemish. So we must thank God for our affliction.

In the same way the Apostle Paul had to go through forty afflictions, as we read in 2 Cor. 6:4, 5, 8-10 and 2 Cor. 11:23-28. If we put both the lists together, they are more than forty afflictions. It was through afflictions that Paul became a mighty vessel. I don't think God used anybody as He used this man of God. The Lord accomplished a very deep work in Paul and it was through all (those refining fires, that the Lord refined him and taught him many deep truths. First the Lord took him to a desert, and then through refining fires, and through these things He was able to pour into him divine revelations and mysteries.

TWENTY-THIRD MOUNTAIN PEAK

"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." Isaiah 49:2,3

THE LORD HAS CALLED you and me from our mother's womb and we are chosen by Him. v. 1, Jer. 1:5, Gal. 1:5. It does not matter whether we are born into a rich or poor family. As children of God. we are chosen before we are born. My mother had two daughters before I was born. She wanted a son. She made many vows to have a son. One day before my birth, a man came from a village in north India, and told my mother she was going to have a son, but that he would not live with her. She was afraid when she heard that, but it was true. In my childhood days, I was in boarding schools and hostels, and then in England. I never stayed at home in my childhood. I knew God had a plan for me in all that but never knew what it was. Any plan of His is a perfect plan. God wants us to be His *servants*,

and these words are not meant only for preachers but for every believer. Every man or woman should be God's servant, because we have been chosen to do something for Him, Some people think of salvation as merely having their sins forgiven, and they are satisfied to be at last in a corner in heaven, like some people who come regularly for meetings and occupy their own favourite corner. They don't have any interest in sharing in the work of God. But Scripture is very clear. Every believer has some job to do. Howsoever foolish or weak or whatever may be the age, it does not matter. God wants every believer to be His servant. Every believer has his handicap, but he has a work in the house of God. What a privilege. All of us can do something to build up the house of God.

v. 2. All of us have mouths and so can be used of God. Those who have no mouth cannot of course, be used. If you have no mouth, you cannot eat, and even a dumb person must have a mouth for eating. Every one of us can be used in giving God's word, if we believe that God can use us as His mouth-piece to help someone in difficulty, to encourage them, or to save them. We may, use the Word in prayer if we cannot say anything of ourselves. When we find somebody *lonely* and dejected we should take him aside and pray with him and thus encourage him. Many need to be encouraged and strengthened even if already saved. In some instances we can pass on a verse from the Bible as instruction or warning, and thus everybody can be benefitted.

There was a poor illiterate man in a village. One day I was preaching about giving the word of God to others. He said to me. How can I give the word of God, when I cannot read, I said "Supposing you get a letter. What will you do"? He said "I will go to somebody and get it read". "This is God's letter to you. Go to somebody and get it read". This man was a very poor man and had a *torn shirt*. He had one goat and lived by it. He sold it for four rupees and bought a big Bible. He went to his village carrying the Bible and on the way he met a man and asked him to read the Bible, the man asked him "Is it a Christian book?" and when he was told it was, the man scolded him and went

away. A small school boy passed that way. This Christian asked him to read a passage from the Bible. The boy wanted to show off that he could read and he read. The man who rebuked him came back. When he overheard what the boy was reading he came back and said: "Are such words indeed written in this Book? Then forgive me, I never knew that." In this way this Christian went on asking others to read while he marked the passages of warning, instruction, encouragement, salvation etc. One day I went to the same village and I saw the same man with a clean shirt, and he got up and asked me if he could give his testimony when I was taking the meeting. I wondered how he would be able to give his testimony but he did, and told us how the Lord was using him among Hindus and Muslims just by his paying heed to the message he had heard! and he also said the more he testified the more he prospered. So in the same way you also can be used among your friends by passing on a few words from the Bible which will benefit somebody in sorrow, tears and distress. Tell the Lord to give you a message for somebody and ask Him to use you as His mouth-piece. v. 2. He will hide you. People will try to harm, but they will not succeed if you are in His service. We are well protected like the polished shaft. The polished shaft refers to arrows. The shaft of the arrow is carefully polished so that it can fly through the air with the least resistance. The words of a believer, in the hands of God, are like polished shafts, striking home to the mark. Our words must be like that, and let us not use idle words. When we go here and there, we must pass on God's words as a testimony. By these simple means many homes have been blessed and there is a real change. Every believer, however handicapped, can be used thus as God's witness. v. 3. The promise is: "Thou art my servant". This helps us to realize our claim on Him and to talk to Him. whenever we go into His presence, saying: "I am thy servant. Lord teach me, so that I may be used to pray or to witness for Thee, and to help others by encouraging and strengthening them.

TWENTY-FOURTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"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," Isaiah 50:4

Is IT POSSIBLE that, however foolish we are, we can have the tongue of the learned? I remember one man, who was born again in North India. He was an illiterate man, and some of the young men made fun of him saying: "You foolish man! you are illiterate!" He said to them: "In your sight I am foolish, but I know one thing. Suppose you take a little curd and put it in milk the whole thing becomes curds. But suppose you put a large quantity of curds into milk, the latter will be spoiled. Even so your much learning and knowledge of Geography and History and Science will not be useful for spiritual things. But on the other hand human wisdom is foolishness before God." Many used to come to this illiterate man for prayer. Though outwardly foolish, he was given the tongue of the learned. When you pray say this, "Lord, give me the tongue of the learned" and He will do so. Say to Him "Lord, give me a message for somebody". Matt. 10:20, Luke 12:12; 12:16, Acts 6:10. By faith claim these promises and He will give you the right word for your friends or enemies.

Isa. 50 : 4 "He awakens me morning after morning," — without the alarm the Lord wakes us up. Say to Him, "Lord, wake me up at 5 o'clock *and* give *me* a message for the day". You will be surprised how the Lord wakes us up and prepares us for the whole day. That is our privilege. You can tell Him "Lord. I have no alarm to get up early in the morning, and thus find time to prepare *me* for the day". All of us can and should speak to Him early in the morning and enjoy His presence and that will keep us fresh for the whole day. Many people do not attend early morning prayer. They waste their time. Go upon your knees early in the morning, and get the Lord's message and say, "Lord, teach me and speak to me, and give Thy word for my enemies, friends, teachers and co-workers." That is how we

enjoy our salvation and become more useful to God.

TWENTY-FIFTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"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; Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him. 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." Isaiah 51:1-3

THE LORD JESUS is that Rock (1 Cor. 10:4). When we repent of our sins and accept the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour, we become partakers of His very nature (2 Peter 1:4). By nature we were sinners, and God could not see in us any goodness as Paul testifies in Rom. 7:18. There is "no good thing" in our nature as human beings, and in the eyes of God there is also nothing good in us spiritually. There is nothing in our life which God can accept for His use.—it is like a rosy apple looking very nice, but when it is cut open it is rotten inside.

I was deceived like that once. While travelling, a fellow believer gave me a large costly apple, so nice to look at, red and with a nice smell too. When I cut the apple, I found it rotten. Because the apple was costly. I did not want to throw it away, so I began to scrape the apple to see if I could find a piece which could be eaten, but to my disappointment the whole apple was entirely rotten. and there was nothing good that I could eat. That is the condition of a sinner before God. By our standards of life and by the Word of God, our nature is full of evil. But the moment we accept the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour and believe that He died in our stead, and rose again for our justification. His very life is poured into us and we are made partakers of His nature. The Prophet tells us: "Let us not look at

ourselves, but at the Rock that has been hewn for us", because He Himself has become our righteousness. It is not Bible knowledge or simple clothes or fasting that make us righteous. None of these things can make us righteous. The Lord Jesus Christ coming into us can alone make us righteous, as in 1 Cor. 1:30. He rose again for our justification and He comes into us to be our righteousness. Do not look at yourself or your spiritual growth, for if you look at yourself you are going to fail, or with human qualifications only, you will surely fail. Look at the Rock from which you have been cut (Isa. 51:1). Now if you take a liny rock out of a big one and compare it with the big rock, all the qualifications are found in the tiny rock that are in the big rock:. In the same way, all the virtues of the Lord Jesus Christ and His qualifications are poured into us day by day. as we keep on looking unto Jesus. He is our example and our life. When we look to man as our guide and help and example, we are disappointed and offended. But we must constantly look unto Him as our life and righteousness, and He will bring into us the virtues which are His. If you want to be like Him. you have to say by faith: "Oh Lord! pour your life into me". If you want to be humble, say to Him. "Lord make me meek and lowly like yourself". If you want to love your enemies, say to Him, "Lord give me the same love with which you loved your enemies, when you said, Forgive them," they know not what they do". In the same way we turn to Him when we are reproached, and it is by that means that we receive divine virtues.

A Mohmedan once came to me and told me he wanted to become a Christian. It was a surprise to me and I asked him the reason for his desire. He told me how he was once visiting a *big city* and had to cross a narrow verandah. There was a Christian sweeper, who had his basket in one corner, while with a broom he was sweeping. Then a bania in a white dhoti came along, and the basket touched his clean clothes and dirtied his dhoti. He got very angry with the sweeper and beat him, not once but twice. The Mohmedan said to the sweeper: "It was not your fault, why did you allow him to beat you," whereupon the sweeper replied, "Sir, the Lord who saved me. my Saviour, was spat upon and

forgave those who spat upon Him. Then should not I? I do not want to wound him by hurtful words." The words and action of the sweeper made me wish to become a Christian. All these virtues and grace and long suffering are not by our own efforts. If you say "I will humble myself", you will become very proud, and similarly if you say, "I won't be angry", you will lose your temper all the more. You can never succeed in getting any virtues by yourself. So by faith say to Him: "O Lord you are my righteousness. You have given me your nature. Now I find myself falling into temptation. Give me your own life and make me an overcomer". By that means, you will be victorious, and when we do not turn to Him, we fail.

In v. 2 the prophet says, "Look unto Abraham". Now Abraham was very old, about 99 years old, and at that time Sarah was very old also, yet the Lord promised to give them a son and Abraham believed, and his faith made him righteous. These old people did not become righteous by their own efforts. It was by faith, and Abraham's new strength and power continued. As a result, Abraham had six sons besides Isaac in his old age, as we see in Gen. 25:1 -2. He knew by experience that the Lord had poured into him a new power, which was not his own power. When the prophet says, "Look unto Abraham", we realize that the same power which the Lord poured into Abraham, can be poured into us. It is available for us, for all our daily weakness and shortcomings, and we can appropriate this power by faith; but remember, nobody becomes perfect in one day.

We see that animals, the very day they are born are able to walk, like buffaloes, goats, or lambs. But human children, let them be from China, Japan, England, or Europe are all born with the same weakness. It takes at least ten months for them to crawl, and they have to go through many stages of development. In the same way you cannot become perfect spiritually, in one day. You have to grow slowly. All of us have troubles, difficulties and temptations, but we have this privilege of going on claiming daily the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, of

which we are reminded in Col. 3:4—"Christ, Who is our life". Now we upon earth have the privilege to receive into us the very nature, life and character of the Lord Jesus Christ, every day, and not only on Sunday. We can ask Him to give us His love, longsuffering, patience, and joy. Tell Him, "Lord, now I see this temptation before me and I have decided to overcome it", and with that longing you go on claiming His strength and victory by faith. Then one day, we shall be like Him. With that life we will be given immortal, glorified bodies (1 John 3:2). If you want to look like Him, go on appropriating the very life of the Lord Jesus. It does not matter, what may be your weakness or shortcoming, one day you will become spiritually strong. It is a slow process, as by faith you appropriate His life. Don't let the enemy deceive you. We may fall many times, but He is always ready to forgive us. *The Lord* expects us to forgive our neighbours four hundred and ninety times. Matt. 18:21. If, I as a man, can forgive my neighbour four hundred and ninety times, then how much more will God forgive us. We find that, though we make many mistakes, if we go on claiming His life again and again saying: "Lord. I know one day I will be like thee, by the same life which is being poured into me. Oh Lord, give me a greater measure of Thy life to overcome my failures and shortcomings," in that way we shall become overcomers.

v. 3. When the earth was created the whole world looked like the Garden of Eden, fertile and well watered, and that is how you and I can become, if we fully appropriate the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. Like the Garden of Eden we will become beautiful and fruitful.

TWENTY-SIXTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that sailh unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" Isaiah 52:7

WHAT A PRIVILEGE it is to have beautiful feet! Of all the members of the body, our feet are the least beautiful. When we

compare our feet with our hands, or ears, we find our feet are dirty. We may wash them several times, but they still look dirty. But we can get beautiful feet, as we convey the message of salvation to our friends and neighbours. Every believer should be a witness of the Lord Jesus Christ. We need not be trained as a speaker or a teacher to give the Word. A few words to somebody by His help can bring salvation.

One day, after the meeting was over, a preacher appealed that if any wanted to be saved they should raise their hands. A good number raised their hands, but one man looked very sad and unhappy. A small girl, not more 12 years old, went up to him and said: "Sir do not you want to be saved. You are looking so unhappy. Why don't you accept the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour now?" He said, "I am a professor of the New Testament in a Bible College". Then she said, "The Lord can save even a professor. You come to Him", The little girl witnessed to him about the Lord Jesus Christ, and she meant what she said. She was not joking, because she knew the Lord Jesus Christ by experience. She was bold enough to say: "You have no peace, but I know that my Lord can forgive you and give peace". A few words are sufficient to show the way of salvation, and by proclaiming the good news everyone can have beautiful feet. It is indeed an honour to convey the good news to many people in many places, and the Lord often uses foolish and weak vessels to convey His message and to save souls.

We had a procession in North India some years ago. A small boy offered a gospel to an Aryasamajist, and the man tore it up into pieces, but the boy said, "Sir, you have torn the paper, but you cannot tear the gospel or its message." A Mohammedan passing by overheard these words. He said to the Aryasamajist, "The small boy has more wisdom than you have", the man apologised and bought a gospel. The Lord can use little children and illiterate people to give the gospel. Only a few words given and the hearer is able to see his sins and ask the Lord for forgiveness and become the witness of the Lord Jesus. Do you

have beautiful feet? Then ask the Lord to give you some. We can give the message of the living and true God to all those who are round about us, who are going through trials, sufferings and hardships. Nobody can wipe the tears of those who are going through suffering, but we can go to them and say, "Trust in the Lord Jesus. He will wipe your tears. He will heal you if you are sick. He will give you all you want and protect you". Thus you find many have become the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ. We can give the message of the living God, to all people with all power for all their need. It does not need much knowledge and wisdom to do that.

A man was looking for peace and went to pastors and preachers in search of it, but nobody could help him. One day while walking in the street, one poor man going in the same direction saw this man looking miserable and offered him a tract saying, "Sir, the Lord Jesus by His precious Blood, can wash away your sins and forgive you" and went away. The man who received the tract could not forget the words of the poor man who gave the tract to him. So he went into his room, knelt down and prayed: "Lord forgive me *all* my sins and give me peace". Then he went to the pastor and said, "I have found peace". The Pastor said. "At last my labours have been rewarded". The man said. "It is not by you. Sir, but by a poor man". He had been transformed by *someone* having the courage to give a few words of testimony or a message, and himself became a witness of the Lord Jesus Christ. What about you? Have you ugly or beautiful feet? Are you ashamed of your feet? God says, that ugly feet can become beautiful by giving the word of *salvation* to others.

TWENTY-SEVENTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 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.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

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 openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken."
Isaiah 53:4-8

THE PROPHET ISAIAH prophesied in detail how the Lord Jesus Christ would bear our judgement and sin. v. 4 He bore the griefs caused by our sinful thoughts, words and deeds. He had to pay the full price. Because of our sinful thoughts our Lord Jesus Christ suffered for our sakes. In a court, sometimes they cannot find a witness against the person who commits a crime. A man may commit a murder, but if there is no witness against him, the judge can set him free. In fact, there must be two or three witnesses against him. In many cases the police cannot get proper witnesses, and the case is a failure. In the case of the Lord Jesus Christ, He took it upon Himself to suffer for our thoughts, words and deeds, because we commit sin in the three-fold area of thought, word and deed. The Lord Jesus Christ has borne the punishment for our three-fold sin. For our sinful thoughts He was spat upon; for our sinful words. He was reviled; and for our sinful deeds. His hands and His feet were nailed and His side pierced and His body scourged. He bore this for our sake, that we might be absolutely righteous and just before God. This gives us liberty and boldness in God's presence, and takes away the memory of our past sins. The devil tries to make us remember past sin. but we can say: "Lord, the devil is reminding me of my sin, but Lord, for my sake, you have been scourged, pierced and spat upon and have removed my condemnation, and made me righteous in your righteousness." This gives us perfect liberty and boldness to go

into His presence and encouragement to get up again and again when we fall. (Ps. 37:24; Micah 7:8; 2Cor. 4:9). Though we may fail because of some trial or temptation. yet the Lord's hand is there. How often we say, when we go on failing and failing, "How long will I remain like this?" But His hand is sufficient to raise us up. We find there are many who have failed for years and years, but who are now restored by the mighty hand of the Lord, and have overcome their weakness. No matter how deeply we have fallen into some sin. He is ever ready to forgive us and lift us up by His mighty hand, because the Lord has paid the full and complete price to redeem us from all our sins. It does not matter how shameful and humbling our sin may be. we can claim the atoning Blood for washing and cleansing by simple faith, and enjoy full liberty in God's presence.

TWENTY-EIGHTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"No weapon that it formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Isaiah 54:17

WHAT A PRECIOUS PROMISE we have in this passage of God's Word and what a wonderful peak of salvation. How many of us have suffered and are unhappy because of somebody standing against us. Sometimes the weapons are from our own family, our own mother, brother, sister or neighbour. They try to bring many things against us. Again sometimes our relations, neighbours or co-workers become our enemies. In our school or college or workshop, they say things against us. Many ungodly and worldly officers take revenge, if we do not do what they want us to do. For example, in every school they have to maintain attendance. They have to present the Register to the Inspector, but to please the Inspector, they give a false report. If we do not agree with the Head Master or Principal, he will be

against us. In the same way, if we refuse to give a false account, others will work against us. Because of enmity, jealousy and hatred, somebody will rise up against us, whoever we may be, somebody, somewhere will surely work against us. Others will speak ill and do damage against those who want to grow spiritually and obey God's word. John 15 : 19 and 2 Tim. 3 : 12 tell us that we are going to be hated and persecuted. Matt. 5:11, tells us we are going to be falsely accused, but we have a promise in Isa. 54:17. It does not matter what kind of weapon the enemy uses, whether letters, false stories, scandals (which are a special ministry with some people, and a pleasure to them), God in His Word says: "No weapon that is formed against you, shall prosper". Yes. even the tongue weapon—it will be condemned. This is the inheritance of the servants of the Lord, those who have become righteous in the sight of God and whose sins are forgiven and who have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their righteousness. Such need have no fear—no need to lose their sleep or appetite. If we do lose our sleep or appetite, this weapon cannot help us. From now onwards, do not lose your sleep,—go home and have a good sleep, nor do you require any sleeping pills. This is the best "pill", so let us claim it . Isa. 54:17. It is the same way with your appetite. There are some people who have no appetite because the enemy is against them. They come to Hebron and overhear something against them, and lose their appetite! They have no inclination for food or tea and decide not to go to Hebron, again. If that is your condition, then take this pill, Isa. 54:17, and see for yourself how effective it is! It does not matter how bitter or strong the enemy may be, let them say what they like, and do not take any notice. Keep on saying, "I believe in Isa. 54:17." Say it by faith, for this is God's treatment for you; He is the living God and whatsoever He says He will do, Num. 11:23: 23:19. It is our duty to believe Him and abide by His condition if we must be righteous before God. Not our righteousness but His righteousness, believing that the Lord Jesus Christ has died and risen again to come into us. He will not come into us if our sins are not forgiven. He will come only when we believe that He

died in our stead for our sins. Such a faith comes when we are truly sorry for our sins. Then we know that these words in Isa. 54:17 are true. I have had many such experiences.

There was an old pastor many years ago who wrote a long article against me in a Christian Magazine in North India, with every kind of filthy and dirty thing he could imagine, and sent it to many places. Somehow I found out what he did. After many months when I saw him, without losing my sleep or appetite, I claimed the same promise in Isa. 54:17. After a few months that man fell very sick. His tongue and lips and his whole mouth was blistered. I went to see him and as I held his hands he began to weep and said to me "Brother, because of my sins I am suffering", I had told nobody about him, but the Lord has a way of defending His children. There is no need for us to defend ourselves, but only to believe in the promise of Isa. 54:17.

In Job 5:19 we find seven troubles, and seven means perfection! It does not matter how many troubles you have, *no harm will come to you v. 20, 24*. The *enemy* may try to use some weapon, but he will not succeed. Psa. 27:5 says, that in the time of trouble. God will hide me in His pavilion, in the secret of His tabernacle. This reminds us of a kind of nest built by some birds. There are some very clever birds who build nests for their young ones in a way that protects them from other birds, or animals, or snakes. So, skilfully are the nests woven, that the enemy cannot even see the nests. Though the nest looks strong it is weak, and built of only ordinary straw, but it is skilfully and cleverly made, and the young ones are protected. God wants to protect *us* like that. However clever and cunning others may be in their attempts to harm us, if we know how to trust in the living God and His promise, and do not use our own weapons, then we will be defended and protected.

Psa. 31:20 tells us: "Thou shall hide them in the secret place from the strife of (ungues". To do this the Lord often warns us beforehand of coming trouble. When we started our work in

Madras City in the month of June 1941, 29 years ago, we went upon a hill to spend the whole night in prayer. As we began to light the lamp on the hill, many insects from a Mohammedan tomb came towards the light. Among them were scorpions and centipedes not a few. The whole night we were killing them. Every time we knelt to pray, the scorpions and centipedes would come out, and it was a miracle that none of us were bitten. By these the Lord spoke to us telling us to be prepared for scorpions and centipedes i.e. people who would come up against us, and the Lord promised they could not harm us. He revealed beforehand that we would be despised, persecuted and hated by all around us, and it was true. When we began, our testimony in baptism and breaking of bread, all the leading men came-up against us and adopted many kinds of worldly methods to stop the work. But we took no notice. In God's own time. He began to defeat them, and we did not speak a single word against them or try to defend ourselves. We fully believe the wonderful promise in Isa. 54:17. As long as we are in Him, He will defend us. We found this true down the many past years, in many parts of the world. In many parts of God's Word such assurances are given to us. Zech. 2:8 "He that toucheth you. toucheth the apple of His eye". The eye is very delicate, and if a little smoke gets into it, it begins to blink and water. thus washing away the particle of dust. That is how God will keep us. He will not allow any weapon of any kind to prosper against us provided we go on praising and trusting Him and claiming His promises.

TWENTY-NINTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"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. 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. 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." Isaiah 55:11–13

"M Y WORD SHALL not return unto me void" v.]]. Whatever God has spoken to any one of us. will one day be fulfilled. If you have received the word of God by faith, though it may take many years for its fulfilment, yet a day will come when it will bring forth fruit. For example we see trees growing on the mountains which we never saw when we first visited that area. How did they come there? The birds of the air while flying dropped the seed picked up on the mountain side, into the mountain cracks, and as the water found its way down the mountain side, the life in the seed enabled it to sprout and the ever-expanding cracks gave more space for the tree to grow. The word of God is like this. and when it enters a man's heart, it will one day surely bring forth fruit and this word gives us strength to hope even after many years. Whether in school or college or anywhere else, we will be strengthened by remembering that word. This has been true in the lives of many. v. 12 "For ye shall go out with joy". When we receive the Word of God by faith we not only rejoice ourselves but we are able to share that joy with others. We go out with joy because of the word we have received. We take the same word to those who are rejected or discouraged and say to them, "When I was discouraged the Word spoke to me through these few words and I have been strengthened and encouraged". Thus wherever we go we will be spreading the joy and happiness which God has given us. and more souls will be brought to the Lord.

Isa. 55:13, When the people of God came to Canaan. the whole land was very beautiful, but again they rebelled against God and disobeyed Him and the land became barren and remained such for 1900 years. According to the Lord's promise the Jews recently began to return to Palestine, from ninety different countries. In the second world war Hitler killed more than 6,000,000 Jews in Germany. In Palestine today thousands of trees are being planted, for the Jews have decided to plant

trees in memory of the six million Jews that were killed. Thus the promises of God have been literally fulfilled v. 13. Palestine was barren and the land was full of thorn bushes and briars, but the Jews who returned to Palestine from the scattered countries have already planted 4,000,000 trees beside myrtle trees and fig trees. Foreigners visiting the country from America, Europe etc. Often buy a tree for Rs. 50/- or 100/- to be planted in their memory.

Spiritually we look full of thorns and briars in our thoughts, words and deeds. We have been doing harm and damage to ourselves and our life has been full of filth, enmity, hatred, jealousy, pride and impurity. But here God promises that all these can be taken away and replaced by the myrtle tree and fig tree, making our lives fruitful, and full of the graces and virtues of the Lord Jesus Christ, that one day we may be like Him. Upon the earth we can live a life of victory by refusing to give way to thorns and briars, and by speaking words of comfort, joy and happiness, to help others.

THIRTIETH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying. The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, fie hold, I am a dry tree. For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people. The Lord God which gathereth the

outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him. All ye beasts of the field, come to devour, yea, all ye beasts in the forest." Isaiah 56:3-9

ALL CLASSES of people with any handicaps are welcomed into the house of God. We read in v. 3 that even eunuchs can enter into God's house. In the olden days they were not even allowed into the Jewish temple. Similarly the Amorites and the Amalekites could not enter into the Jewish temple. But God says in this passage that everybody will be there (vs. 3, 57). It does not matter who you are, or what may be your shortcomings and failures or handicaps, you may come from any country, from any family or any walk of life, whether illiterate or literate, rich or poor, civilised or uncivilised; all with no exception, will be welcomed into the house of God. They can have the same privilege of sins forgiven and can become the members in the house of God. To be in the house of God is important. But it is not meant for those who have not "joined themselves to the Lord", (v. 5) Even though there may be handicaps because of past sins, and one is ruined completely with the habit of sin, yet he can be transformed, and can enter the House of God and become useful.

We read about Onesimus who became so useful to Paul (Philemon 10 and 13). Paul was staying in the house of Philemon and that boy Onesimus was a servant there. Evidently, Onesimus robbed a large amount of money, or something very valuable, because he left their home with his loot, for Rome, which was far away from that place, and he needed a large amount of money to go to Rome. At that time Paul was in the prison for the sake of the Gospel in Rome and was living in a hired house. When Onesimus had spent all the money he had robbed from his master he thought of Paul the apostle. This happens to many young people they rob their parents, run away from home and after spending the money, return home having no place or home to go to. When Onesimus was in Philemon's house he was well dressed, but now he was poorly clad with torn

shoes. So in this state, he went to Paul, and said to him: "Sir, have mercy upon me and use me as a servant,"¹ Paul agreed and in a short time he was born again through Paul. Through many hardships and troubles he was born again like many people, who, when they are in trouble and difficulties, go to the Lord.

Onesimus' heart was softened, when he was born again. He began to look after Paul as a servant, cooking his food, washing his clothes and while so doing he received the Word of God through Paul in a short time, and was wonderfully transformed. God's word began to work in him, like the little seed which springs up into a large tree. He had wonderful understanding in the Word of God. At that time Paul was writing his epistles to Ephesians and Colossians and he wanted someone to take an epistle or letter to Philemon. In these two wonderful books only are the mysteries of salvation mentioned. There were no books of commentary in those days. Paul had only two men, who were properly trained by him. One was his cousin and the other was Onesimus. These were the only two, who understood all the teachings in the epistles, so Paul had a purpose in sending Onesimus to Philemon, first of all to apologise to Philemon for robbing him, as Paul writes in v. 16. "not now as a servant but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee". In other words he is saying "Don't receive him as a servant". Again Paul continues to write "If he has wronged you, put it to my account. I will repay it" (v. 18). Paul had no money at that time, but promised to pay later on. He wanted Onesimus to be received as Philemon would receive Paul.

Imagine Onesimus coming back to Philemon's house, the same robber who had robbed him. When they saw him there must have been fear in their hearts, as they whispered. "There comes the thief, let us be careful". But when he came inside and Philemon received the letter and read Paul's account of him, their views changed. He prayed with the whole family, and when

he prayed the heaven was opened. They thought to themselves. "Is he the thief? What a wonderful transformation". In prayer Onesimus must have mentioned how the Lord saved him through Paul, and how he had been taught by him. After prayer he may have handed over the Epistles of Ephesians and Colossians. As they read, they may have said: "It is beyond our understanding. Can you explain the meaning?" We find in these days that even great scholars find it too difficult to explain these two epistles. But here was a thief who, learning from Paul, could explain the mysteries of his teachings. In the house of God many can be changed like Onesimus from living a life of sin and shame, to a deep understanding of God's will and purpose.

I was in Karachi in 1933. I prayed that the Lord would give me educated co-workers that we might go out together and preach the gospel. But instead the Lord gave me illiterate sweepers. It was not my choice but His choice. One day while we were having a meeting there, about five hundred people gathered. There were many sweepers among them who were drunkards and gamblers. One of them brought a young man with high fever on the cot. Though he had high fever he was still brought to the meeting. After a few days I went to the same locality to enquire about the young man. With tears I was told he had passed away. I felt very sad. and went to see his father Lalaya who was sitting on a cot and I told him how sorry I was about the death of his son. Then I took my Bible, read a few words, and prayed. After prayer he said: "I feel better, please come again". Just a few words comforted him. I went to him again several times and that's how the Lord began to save souls one by one. I began to have prayer meetings early in the morning with the sweepers who brought their baskets and brooms because they usually start their work at 4 o'clock. After prayer they would all go to their respective places to sweep. Thus they became co-workers. None of them were graduates. I had a blind man who used to play the music for which I used to

give him a cup of lea. and I was able to take the gospel throughout the whole area by the help of these people. It was a barren place full of thorns and briars, but it soon became spiritually fruitful, Everybody in the locality could see the change in these sweepers. Through their singing and prayer, they knew they were men of God. In the house of God there is no question of caste or creed, educated or uneducated or of handicaps.

You may have any handicap or come from any walk of life, but one: you are transformed, you become useful to other people '1 Cor. :26-28). "Things that are despised hath God chosen". Throughout the world, God has chosen men of that kind, despised, murderers, and thieves who in the end become great men of God. God can pick up such human beings and transform them into saints of God.

THIRTY-FIRST MOUNTAIN PEAK

"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." Isaiah 57:15

MEN OF ALL CLASSES through many hardships and sufferings have tried to find God, but could not, for it is not by knowledge, ritual or ceremony that one can find God. Many nuns and monks have spent all their lifetime in lonely places. They even slept on the floor, and ate ordinary food in order to find God, but were disappointed. One cannot see God that way. Only those who are humble and have a contrite heart can see God or receive Him. God dwells in a high and holy place and also with him who has a contrite and humble spirit. That is the secret. It does not require much knowledge, but a true inward humble spirit. Some people look so quiet and meek, but in their heart of hearts they are proud. Some ladies look very gentle outside, but in their homes they are full of anger, and for every small thing will get upset. They are so sweet outside, that we cannot imagine that they are so full of bad temper, and that many strong men tremble before them. It is inward humility that is required of God. Note. what Paul says about himself in Gal. 2:20; "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live". That is

true humility. In every circumstance such can say: "Lord not my will but thine; not my desire but thine; not my way but thy way." Even for small things, they will pray like this. It is such humility that makes a man the dwelling place of God. It is not miracles, signs or knowledge that make him God's dwelling place. Some people think that by having some super-natural experience they have got some special power, and therefore become proud and haughty. Humility comes by dying daily. Then you can say truthfully and honestly: "Not my way but your way; not my will but your will." For this we need to appropriate the power of Christ, for nobody of himself can die to himself. Paul was able to say "I am crucified with Christ," for he had learned to die daily (I Cor. 15:31; 2Cor. 4:10 and 12). So by faith we have to say sincerely and honestly. "Lord, I am prepared to have all my plans broken; all my thoughts and desires taken away. I take by faith the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. Come and live with me. Carry out Your thoughts and desires in my life". Such an experience will make you God's dwelling place, and you will be conscious of His presence night and day. Wherever you go you will find God's presence going with you working and living in you. How can this happen? It seems so difficult, but the answer is the daily dying to self. That is how we can enjoy our salvation, as God has promised, "I will cause you to ride upon high places of the earth". Do not live a life of barrenness and defeat.

THIRTY-SECOND MOUNTAIN PEAK

"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." Isaiah 58:11

THIS IS A very precious promise of our loving and living God. Though we fail and make many mistakes, when we look into His face activities. He helps and guides us. We think we are clever enough to make our own plans, but however perfect these may be, they will fail one day. Parents have made wrong plans for their children's future education because they thought they knew better than God's word. We ignore the Word of God and make our own plans for our children as if that were best for them. It is the same with unhappy marriages. The fault

often lies with the parents. I am talking about believing parents who use the Word of God, but do not honour it. They consult uncles, aunts, friends and strangers rather than the word of God. They are governed by worldly qualifications. They do not seek God's face nor hear His voice nor seek to find God's plan, with the result that their children are unhappy, but cannot undo what has been done. It is an oft-repeated story. When we seek to do things on our own we fail, but here is God's promise: "And the Lord shall guide you continually" Isa. 58:11. He undertakes to guide us at every step, and even in the smallest thing. Before you go shopping, ask Him and He will direct you. Say in faith: "Lord. I have no time to go shopping, and shop keepers are very dishonest. Save me, Lord, from being deceived by them and take me to the right shop and enable me to buy the best quality". Then wait patiently and do not go till you have real peace. The Lord will save you from many losses, even in small things. If you do not want to be guided by Him. He will not force you. Only if we ask Him to guide, will He do so, and sometimes we are too proud to ask, so we miss the way. I remember before my conversion, when I was in a big city in England where I was having training in a workshop, I used to come home for lunch. One day I somehow missed the road. I walked two miles away from my place and I knew I had missed the way because the things around were so different to what I was accustomed. yet I was so proud that I would not ask. In fact I was afraid that others would take me for a fool. When I had gone too far I asked a policeman to show me the way, and he said: "You have gone two miles out of your way". I had to break my pride to ask him; I was a fool indeed. When somebody calls us a fool we are angry, but it is by mistakes that we learn. We need God's mighty hand to lead us. and we should be willing to be led by Him at every step, and in every matter, even though it may be a small thing like salt in the food, "Lord, tell me how much salt to use" we can pray. Younger sisters are often too proud to take the advice of older sisters and thus there will be too much salt in the food and the food is spoiled. When we consult somebody we can avoid mistakes. God's promise is to guide us continually,

and to satisfy our soul in drought. Even though there may be lack of food due to famine. God's people have no need to starve. He will bless every kind of food He gives you. There was a famine in south India some time ago. The people could not get rice but wheat and they disliked the very sight of wheat. As believers however, some of them began to pray: "O Lord will you give me a taste for wheat? and, after few days, the wheat became tasty! When I came to South India I could not eat rice. It used to give me stomach pain, so I started praying: "Lord, give me a taste for rice". The Lord is saying here in Isa. 58: 11. that even though there may be physical or spiritual drought the Lord will not make us starve. Any kind of food can be enjoyed. I once visited twenty countries and I had to eat different kinds of food, but I enjoyed my food very much, and had a good appetite. You can enjoy any kind of food by prayer. Even crumbs can become tasty if you pray and say: "Lord, bless my food and multiply it". He will keep His promise. There was a wealthy man in Bombay, who went to a missionary many years ago and said to him: "If I see one good Christian, I will become a Christian. He took him to a poor locality in Bombay about the middle of the day. where a Christian sweeper was having his food and that which he ate was nothing but a few crumbs given by somebody. There was no mutton, no curry or anything good. Before taking his food the man closed his eyes and began to pray. He thanked God for the food He had provided, and both could see from his shining face that he was thanking God for His care for him and the provision He had made. The wealthy man became a Christian, when he began to see what the love of the Lord Jesus could do. Other people, no matter what you give them, are not satisfied and mostly those who do not do hard work, are the ones that grumble and murmur most. Learn to be thankful for whatever is given to you. Similarly, though you may have to live in lonely places because of business, or for some other reason you may have to go to *for away places* where there is nobody to talk to you. be thankful to the Lord.

In my early days, I had nobody to talk to or pray with for many weeks and even though the Lord made some provision to

satisfy me, yet I would go to some quiet place and stay in the Lord's presence and say: "Now Lord, *you* speak to me and help me to enjoy your presence" and He did. In this way He satisfies the soul in drought and makes the bones fat. Bones are part of the body which become weak in old age. They become so weak that you cannot walk much, but here God's promise is that He will make fat your bones. He will give you extra strength in old age, spiritually, by reading God's word and by waiting upon the Lord.

"Thou shalt be like a watered garden". A garden has to be watered every day the whole year round, if it is to be always beautiful. The garden needs attention. It is not like a field which requires watering only in season. A garden has to be watered once or twice a day, every day in order that it may bear fruit or vegetables or flowers. If there is no rain the gardener brings water from far-off places. If there is no well he may have to go to far-off wells to draw water. In the middle East like Bahrain which was once a very barren place where nothing grew, good soil was brought many many miles, sometimes from as far as one thousand miles,. Many people were employed to water the place, and they had to draw water for the garden from far-off places to keep the grass green the whole year round. Now it is a very blessed sight to see such a garden in the desert. In Dohar Qatar my friend has such a garden, and it is a wonderful sight, because that place was formerly full of sand for miles and miles around. With much labour They brought soil from different places and planted beautiful flower seeds, and now the whole year round here is a beautiful garden where many people go for walks

The whole world is compared to a desert (Deut. 32:10) a waste, howling desert. Because people around us are living a life of defeat, sin and darkness, and idol worship it is very very barren. There is nothing but sin; no peace, no joy; yet God is keeping a few believers here and there, and they are like a watered garden. Just as people come from far-off places to refresh themselves in (he desert gardens, so believers can be

gardens in the barren desert. God can keep you as a witness in a city. and people Will come from far-off places saying: "Brother, please pray for me. I am in trouble, distress and in great need," and you can thus be able to give the word to those who come to you and yourself remain fresh and healthy spiritually. God Himself waters us by His living Word, and through prayer and meditation thereon we learn how to comfort those around us.

The same verse mentions "Springs of water whose water fail not." These springs are flowing the whole year round, and never dry up. There are some springs that dry up at summer time. In Khedgaon they have eight or ten wells, but only one or two wells have full water the whole year around, and many people go to those wells to get water. That is how our spiritual life can become; like a spring whose water never dries up. Under all conditions, whether with friends or with enemies, or in lonely places, whether in time of war or earthquake or other trial we can have the living water of the Holy Spirit *to keep us fresh*. But the secret is that we have to delight ourselves in the Lord. Only then shall we find springs coming out of us constantly for ourselves, our neighbours, enemies or strangers.

Now there are hot and cold springs. In cold weather you can get hot water, and in the hot weather cold water according to your need. That is how believers can be to others.

In the next verse we have an answer to (he many homes that are ruined because of sin, and brothers, husbands and wives who are not living together and fail in their business. Here is a promise: "And thou shall be called: the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in". Those whose names are ruined by family quarrels or bad habits, can be restored by prayer and fellowship and will be built-up in the Lord, like Onesimus who came to Paul and was transformed to be a teacher of the Word. That is how many broken families can be built-up. It must be our burden to pray for them. Many come to me every day asking for prayer for family, neighbours and children. Then they come after some time and say: "The Lord heard that prayer and we

live in peace", I knew a couple who was not at peace with each other for ten years. We prayed and prayed, and when we met them again they said that Lord had mercy and had reconciled them. At first they had been so hard-hearted, that there was no effect. But this time when we visited them the wife came to me and said. "Thank God we are reconciled after ten years of quarreling. Please come home for thanksgiving and food". They were happy. They had been married ten years and had no children, but now they are getting a child. Thus we can build waste places.

Many have lost their way for many centuries. Many Christians have heard the Gospel, but they do not know what (he Church is. because their eyes are upon buildings, ritual, and ceremony and they have no idea of salvation and what forms the foundation of the Church. But when we come on a strong foundation, we can say in a simple and a living way, that this is God's order, Thus the waste place can be built up and we can show to other people what the living Church is.

THIRTY-THIRD MOUNTAIN PEAK

"As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which J 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 seeds seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever." Isaiah 59:21

WHATEVER THE LORD has given to us is for eternity, and He will never take it away from us. He may rebuke us. chastise us and punish us when we fail Him, but He is not going to take away that which He gave us. like some people, who when you are friendly give you a saree, but when they quarrel with you take it away again. The Lord will never take away that which He has given us, and He says: "I have given you my Spirit which is upon you". How many times are you spoken to by the Spirit? Those who are truly born again, often begin to backslide due to worldly friendships, and attractions and yet constantly hear a voice saying "Come my daughter, my son, come back to me,

come back to Me". That is how the Spirit strives with us. Remember, this is God's promise, "My spirit will not depart from you". What you learn in school, college or university will one day be forgotten, and when we go to heaven there is no memory of Geography, History, or Science. But what you learn in the meeting or in your quiet time, that becomes your everlasting possession. Even though we may forget many friends, yet we find these things are engraved in the spirit. When we are given glorified bodies we shall be given perfect knowledge and when we see our Lord face to face then shall we know, even also as we are known (1 Cor. 13:12). Because of that perfect knowledge we shall be able to understand what is going on in the whole heaven, but while upon the earth our knowledge remains imperfect.

If you go to a factory you don't understand all the things that are being done there. Perhaps you may understand something as to how things are manufactured. But in heaven we shall have perfect knowledge and shall know everybody by name. We shall know every part of heaven and wherever we want to walk in heaven we shall walk. There is no question of how to find the way. I have been so many years in Hyderabad, but I do not know the way to every place. If I want to visit somebody I have to take someone with me. In heaven there is no need to take anybody. You can travel yourself, because you will know the way and your knowledge will be perfect. Now God uses many ways and many means to pour knowledge into us, and by His Spirit that knowledge becomes real to us, and by the same Spirit's power we make use of it. God has to use many many ways to deposit in us the spiritual ability which we require.

For example, if you want to be an engineer you must learn Mathematics. Without this you cannot be an engineer. You may know all about History, Philosophy, Geography etc. You may say I scored 90% in History or Geography and the examiner will say: So you want to be an engineer because of the *marks* you have scored; then what about mathematics and physics? To be an engineer that is the most important qualification. What you

learn in Maths, will be forgotten in heaven. But what you are now learning on earth through suffering and trial is a preparation for (he ministry in heaven. Then our knowledge will be perfect about the heavenly angels and heavenly power.

THIRTY-FOURTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"A tittle one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time." Isaiah 60:22

IT DOES NOT mater how weak and poor we are physically or intellectually, we can become spiritually strong in heaven. In one meeting, there was one boy very stupid, always giggling, and with hardly the understanding of a normal child, yet he was coming to the meetings regularly, and in every meeting he would raise his hand. God's Word truly entered that boy's heart. His father had a liquor shop and was earning good money. One day the boy went home and began to pack his things, so his mother asked him where he was going. He replied: "God has come into my heart and I don't want to stay in this wicked home. Because you are making liquor to get money, I would rather live in the street than in this wicked home". Then the mother said: "It is for you we are earning the money. We don't want the money for ourselves. We shall die very soon and all the money will be yours". The boy said: "I don't want it". Then the mother told the father and he began to beg his son to stay. He refused at first. but finally told them that he would stay, only if they would throw away the barrels of liquor. The father said "What a waste! But we won't do this, we will sell it. But give us time and we shall go to a new house". The The boy said: "These things are sinful. The liquor must be thrown away. Why ruin others by selling it. Unless you throw it away I won't stay" He was so strong, and being the only .son whom they loved so much, the father threw the barrels of liquor away, till it was flowing like a river. Then there was revival in their heart. That is how God can use even foolish people. The Lord may

chastise or rebuke us, but He can use us, however foolish we may be. He does not always use great men or educated men, but often through even the foolish and the weak He does great things (1 Cor. 1:31). It is through the despised vessel that He turns the world upside down.

We had a meeting in a certain place in North India many years ago. There was a boarding school for girls nearby and the girls were attending the meetings. But I told the lady in-charge that little girls cannot sit too long in meetings that go on for five to six hours, so the children were sent out. After the meeting the old lady, Mrs. Lal, said: "Give me a few minutes, I want to say a few words. I am the Head Mistress of the school, and I went around to the hostel for a few minutes to see whether things were all going on well. But to my surprise I saw all the small children from the age of 13 to 14 having a prayer meeting. They were on their knees and praying with tears one by one: "Lord, forgive me; I am a great sinner," I asked them why they were weeping and they said: 'Because of sin'. You can imagine the sins little children can do—robbing powder and sweets or telling lies. One by one they were born again at that young age. and Sister Lal testified how she came to the meeting and said to the Lord: "Lord, I am a Head Mistress, and a graduate, and yet not born again. These small children are far better than I. I also want to be born again." And she was born again and testified in the meeting, and one by one her whole staff were also born again. The school was closed and we had day and night prayer-meetings and Bible studies. It began with the simple faith of children. That is God's promise. It is a wonderful mountain peak. With all our handicaps and folly the Lord can make us vessels of glory provided we are willing to be possessed by Him, and willing to be used by Him and thus we can enjoy great blessing.

THIRTY-FIFTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"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. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers.

Rut ye shall he 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." Isaiah 61:4-6

YE SHALL REMAIN as Priests of God. Now a priest has a double privilege. The liberty to call upon God in any need; and then to convey God's message to the people. The priest could come into God presence to find God's message for other people according to their need. Now believers are the priests of God. Every believer has the right and privilege to enter into the presence of God at any time for any need. We do not require another mediator for the Lord Jesus Christ is our Mediator. Wherever we are we can kneel down and call upon God for our needs, our friends' needs, and even our enemies* need, and can seek God's face for an answer to our questions or to enable us to find God's will. The liberty is given to us as God's priests. We can enter into the presence of God at all times (Heb. 10:10). We as priests of God have liberty and boldness to enter into His Holy Presence at any time, for any matter, and for any problem. Verse 4 says that "they shall build the old wastes". This is being literally fulfilled. When the Jews come back as a nation to Palestine. they came after being scattered in different countries for more than 1900 years. When they came back the country was full of ruined places and old waste cities and in a short time they were transformed into such wonderful cities, even an old inhabitant could hardly recognise them. Spiritually we, as priests of God. have the same privilege on behalf of those who are in sin. First, we are saved by God's grace and then we can pray for unconverted friends, whether father, mother, brother sister,

husband, wife or children, and God will wonderfully change their lives.

We had an all night prayer-meeting in Jamshedpur and God was working mightily in that prayer meeting. A nurse began to pray for her American Lady Doctor. She prayed for more than half an hour saying: "Lord, You can change so and so". She went on praying earnestly. and when she had finished a small voice behind her said: "Nurse, thank God, I have been born again this evening." She never knew that the Doctor was in the meeting and behind her. While the nurse was praying she was kneeling down at the back, and with all humility she came and testified "I am the Doctor, and I have confessed my sins, and am born again" and she was wonderfully transformed. After many years I met the same Doctor in West Pakistan. She was very humble, and gathered a big crowd for a meeting. That is how God works. As we begin to pray all the ruined places become very fruitful. We can pray for our friends, strangers, those who are ruined by sin. Because of sin we become like a ruined building. It is a very pathetic sight to see a wall fall down. It takes so much time to build up again. Because of sin and hardening of heart, you are like a ruined building, wasting your time, and your money; and a misery wherever you go. Remember, somewhere, your mother or somebody is praying for you.

I went to a meeting in Canada. I went on praying, for I had no message for a long time. When I turned to my Bible I came across these words: "I am poor and needy". After the meeting I appealed. One man came to me and said "I want to be born again this evening" After I had prayed for him, his sister came and said: "You don't know, but I have been praying for him for many years. I have been asking him to come to the meetings but he has always refused. But this evening it began to rain very heavily. I wanted to come to the meeting and as it was raining heavily, my brother said to me, I will take you to the meeting. But I won't come inside. Only on that condition I will come. So I

agreed and he brought me here but went away and I never knew where he was". Then the young man said how he was wandering in the street, and had no desire to come in. It was only to take shelter that he came inside, and having done so he felt the power of God and broke down. When i went to Canada again, he met me at the Harbour and testified how the Lord had changed him. Many ruined lives are changed by persistent prayer. Many who were living in sin, with no happiness, because of somebody's prayer have been changed. When you are born again your life will be changed and all these ruined places will become wonderful places,

THIRTY-SIXTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. 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. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee." Isaiah 62:3—5

WHAT A WONDERFUL mountain peak of salvation. In our sinful condition we brought reproach and shame. How many would have said about us: "Look at that Christian. She says she is a Christian, Look at her conduct and behaviour, and look at her life". That is how we bring reproach to His name, telling lies and doing shameful things, and yet God says: "Thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord",

Even though we grieve Him so often, by His precious blood we can be forgiven and cleansed. Though we may sin many times He will be willing to forgive (Matt. 18: 32). The Lord asks us to forgive 490 times, and if God expects us to forgive so many times, how many times will He Forgive us when we go to Him and tell Him how we have sinned by thought, word and deed. His precious blood is powerful to wash all our defilement completely away, and to transform us and make us a crown of glory. God's glory can be seen through us. We will be so trans-

formed that the angels will wonder at our beauty and glory. When the work of salvation is complete, the Lord Himself will present us to all the angels (Jude 24) and will question the angels! "Do you see any blemish in this man?" "No. Lord" they will reply, "he is more glorious than we are. In fact, far more glorious". That is how God's glory is going to be revealed before the angels Eph. 3:10. This "manifold wisdom of God" will not be revealed by the angels but by us. If you take a piece of ivory you can make many articles, but the work can only be done by those who know the value of ivory. These articles cannot be made by professors, masons or others, but only by a worker in ivory. One day God will make us such that can reveal His full glory.

A diadem shows authority, A king's sceptre shows the authority of a King. In heaven this authority will be revealed, the authority God gave to man in the new creation. Our authority will be manifested through us in heaven when we judge the angels Our Lord wants us to be like a bride and bridegroom. If they are joined together by the Lord, they must be entirely cast on the Lord and must learn to love each other under all circumstances and as they do so they develop a mutual likeness to each other. Before marriage there may be some difference but if they live in love and oneness and unity, you will see much likeness in their features and resemblance on their faces because of their relationship and oneness. Similarly when we come to God in our sinful condition we are completely defiled by sin and others can see in our faces ugly patches of sin. but as we begin to obey God, we find how all the marks disappear and the beauty of the Lord Jesus Christ slowly comes upon our faces. There is a peculiar light upon the faces of those who are truly born again. We can see the beauty of Jesus on their faces, and we are told that when we see our Lord Jesus we shall be like Him when He comes again a second time in His full glory as promised 1 Jn. 3:2 "We shall be like Him when we shall see Him as He is". At that time He will make us a crown of glory in His hand, and all our shortcomings and failures will be removed, and

we will see upon our faces the glory, beauty and love of God.

God is saying "I will make you a crown of glory in My hand". Generally a crown is worn by Kings to indicate authority. Every King has a special crown and there is a special design in each crown. All kinds of jewels and precious stones from the design in the crown. If a King has a small Kingdom he will not have many diamonds. He may have some diamonds in his treasury but he cannot use them in his crown. Diamonds and jewels and precious stones are set according to the greatness of the kingdom and its largeness. If it is a vast kingdom, they use many precious jewels, stones and diamonds. If it is small kingdom, they will not use many diamonds. By looking at the crown one can see how great is the king. God is saying to us "I will make you a crown in My hand." We will never understand God's great kingdom. The greatness will not be shown through mighty or great angels. God does not want to show His glory and greatness and kingdom through angels. He wants *us* to be His crown, and to fit into His heavenly plan.

How clever the Artists and the Goldsmiths are. They prepare the design very skillfully with precious stones. So by coming into His heavenly plan we become part of the crown of the Lord Jesus Christ and the crown will be seen and admired by all the heavenly angels.

The Royal diadem is like a crown, a crown which is for beauty. Here the thought is that the glory and beauty of Jesus which has not been seen by angels will be seen in that day. We are being fully prepared by the Lord Jesus for that glory. We are also called the signet of the Lord Jesus. Hagg. 2:23. Just as a crown is worn by the King to show greatness of the king, and the kingdom, so also do great Princes have signet rings on their hand. A ring may be made of many diamonds and precious stones of different colours brought from many parts of the world. There is some cement in the ring and some design of some kind. However a signet ring has a different design which like the crown speaks of glory. The diadem speaks of beauty, and the signet speaks of authority. God is saying "I will make

you my signet, I will show by you my authority", because we will judge the angels (1 Cor. 6:3). God's authority is to be finally revealed to those who are now being saved by Him, and not by angels. We shall become His crown, His diadem and His signet: a crown to show His glory, a diadem His beauty, and a signet His authority. Jer. 51:20-23 speaks of God's judgement which will be executed on all nations and people. First He judges the nations at His first coming. Then He will come after the Millennium to judge all nations, v. 20 to break them and to spoil them. His authority and dominion will be fully manifested, and of that day He says. "I will make you a crown of glory, a diadem and a signet", that His glory, beauty, power, and authority may be revealed. This high place of salvation is to be revealed to us in God's hand. I do not doubt what the Lord has said. These are not fables. Parents when they want to put their children to sleep may sing either lullaby songs, or tell them stories, or say that the bogey man is coming when it is not true, and so the child goes to sleep. But what the Lord says is not fable or story. They are eternal facts and God's message has to be brought to us again and again, for God is trying to show us that we are very precious to Him, and that He wants us to be His crown, diadem, and signet, that His glory, beauty, power and authority may be shown through us.

THIRTY - SEVENTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old."
Isaiah 63:9

"IN ALL THEIR afflictions He was afflicted". This is another high peak of salvation. Whatever our afflictions, hardships, sorrow and sufferings are. our Lord suffers with us. As believers if we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him and He also shares and bears our burden. That is why He said: "You bear my yoke upon you", as in Matt. 11:29. "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me" Generally two bullocks are used to drag a cart, and the bull

on the right hand side has to carry the weight, and bear the burden, which is a great strain. When a field is to be ploughed the bull that has to bear the weight and strain is put on the right side. Likewise with our Lord Jesus Christ, the weight of our burden is borne by Him, so we are yoked together to bear the yoke. Whenever we suffer the Lord suffers. Whenever you are sorrowful, He bears your sorrow. When you are weeping He weeps, whenever you are hungry, He is hungry. What a ministry! Our Lord says "In all their afflictions He was afflicted". For the very same reason our Lord Jesus refused to take part in the heavenly feast unless we were with Him.

Imagine that first Easter morning when the Lord Jesus went to heaven after conquering death, sin and the devil. and there He was welcomed by angels as the Lord of Hosts and the King of glory. Psalm 24:7 shows us how the angels received Him in heaven. They acclaimed: "The Lord is strong and mighty: the Lord mighty in battle and the King of glory".

When a King conquers in battle, he is given a great feast by the people. Here the Lord Jesus Christ is being invited by the angels to their heavenly feast, and they say to Him "You are the Mighty King, and you have won a very great battle and conquered Satan single-handed; come. Lord Jesus, to our Feast." But the Lord Jesus says: "No, thank you. I won't take part in the feast until my children come with me to heaven, then we will rejoice together". With love and longing He is waiting for that day. A good mother saves good things for her children who are in a hostel and are expected for Easter or Christmas. Thank God for such good mothers. Here the Lord says: "I will wait for you and I will suffer with you; do not think you are suffering alone." Because of this, while upon the earth we can bear any suffering or trouble joyfully- Our Lord is on our side and bears our trials and difficulties and burdens. Thus in extreme suffering, God's presence is felt all the more. I have found it so again and again. When there are difficult problems to solve and when we go to pray, I find a peculiar joy in God's presence. He is very very near at that time, saying: "Yes. My son, I am going to

share your burdens. Don't worry, let Me share your burdens and problems" (Isa. 63:9). His unseen angels protect us from many unseen attacks of the enemy.

So many of God's people have been saved from serious accidents. Last year I was in Holland staying with a friend of mine, and he had a serious car accident. He was travelling at high speed, at about fifty miles per hour. In order to save a man in front, he turned round, and turned too much, so that he was thrown out and the car was smashed; but there was no fracture, and no serious wounds. He should have had many bones broken, and all who came on that spot. and even the doctor said that it was the Lord who saved him. Such has been the case with many. God's angels are there to protect them from seen and unseen accidents. This is a wonderful peak of salvation.

THIRTY-EIGHTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"For since the beginning of she world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear. neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him."
Isaiah 64:4

HERE IS ANOTHER PEAK of salvation. These "things prepared" include all those heavenly mysteries which you can imagine are going to be revealed to you in due course, some upon earth and some in heaven. Upon the earth the Lord is giving us some knowledge, but when we go to heaven we will be given perfect knowledge (1 Cor. 13:12) and we will know everybody by name. Here we may hardly know ten or twelve persons, by name, but when we go to heaven we will know everybody by name from the first person Adam down to the last person. There will be no strangers in heaven. You will not say then: "I am afraid I don't know who you are or where I have met you." for you will have perfect knowledge in heaven. We do not know now what the names of the trees are. We know the name of just a few, as mango trees, and papaya trees. But there are many trees which we don't know. Whatever we shall see in

heaven we shall know by name immediately. We will have perfect knowledge to know many heavenly mysteries, when the work of God in us on earth is complete.

THIRTY-NINTH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord." Isaiah 65:24, 25

THIS SPEAKS of the Millennium reign of the Lord Jesus Christ, when thorns and thistles and poison will be removed. Because of sin, the curse came into the world. Before that day there were no poisonous snakes and scorpions had no poison in them. All this will be removed in the Millennium. There will be no sickness and no sorrow. The wolf and the lamb will eat together; the lion shall eat straw like the cow. There will be no sign of the curse anywhere. We are being prepared now for that kingdom. We will live in the heavenly places, and shall be able to go any distance, and no car will be needed. We shall be able to go wherever we like, for we shall have heavenly bodies which can go anywhere.

Then He says •"Before you call I will answer, and while you are speaking I will hear". What a privilege! When His work is completed you will be talking with God so freely and so boldly. While you are speaking He will come to you in person.

FORTIETH MOUNTAIN PEAK

"For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace O her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb: and the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies."
Isaiah 66:12—14

FINALLY with the last mountain peak our peace and joy will be completed. All our sufferings will be forgotten and we shall be given abundant reward for all past sufferings and hardship. Our peace shall be like a river and the glory of God will be flowing as a stream.

As a mother comforteth her child so shall we forget all our sorrows and every suffering will be fully compensated at that time (Rom. 8:17, 18). Surely then, even upon the earth we may ride upon heavenly places, for we are formed to be His everlasting possession, and all these glorious purposes will be fully accomplished as we accept and obey Him.