

A God Who Hides Himself—the Hidden God

Monday 6/19**Related Verses****Isa. 45:15**

15 Surely You are a God who hides Himself, O God of Israel, the Savior.

John 1:18

18 No one has ever seen God; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

Job 23:3

3 Oh that I knew where I might find Him, That I might come to His seat!

Psa. 17:6-8

6 I call on You, for You will answer me, O God; Incline Your ear to me; hear my speaking.

7 Wondrously display Your lovingkindness, You who save by Your right hand Those who take refuge in You from them who rise up against them.

8 Guard me like the pupil of Your eye; In the shadow of Your wings hide me

Heb. 1:1-3

1 God, having spoken of old in many portions and in many ways to the fathers in the prophets,

2 Has at the last of these days spoken to us in the Son, whom He appointed Heir of all things, through whom also He made the universe;

3 Who, being the effulgence of His glory and the impress of His substance and upholding and bearing all things by the word of His power, having made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Related Reading

The Bible uses many different titles to refer to God, and through these many different titles God reveals Himself to us...God's children know nearly all His titles, but in the Bible there is one special title of God that has been neglected by many of God's children...Hardly any of God's children know that the Bible speaks of God as a God who hides Himself. This proves that God's children do not have an adequate knowledge of God as the One who hides Himself. We know God as the almighty God, as the righteous God, and as the God who is full of grace and lovingkindness. However, we do not know God as the God who hides Himself. (CWWL, 1956, vol. 3, p. 15)

We need to pay attention to Isaiah's utterance of this thought. He said, "Surely You are a God who hides Himself" (Isa. 45:15). His statement is most emphatic. Moreover, Isaiah did not say this out of his own imagination. Rather, his utterance was based on a realization produced by an accumulation of facts. After he looked at those facts and studied them, he arrived at this conclusion: God is a God who hides Himself. As this prophet considered what God had done, observed what the Israelites had gone through under God's hand, and beheld what God's people had experienced, he could not but acknowledge that God is a God who hides Himself.

Why would Isaiah come to this conclusion? Based on this conclusion, how could he have such an utterance? If we read through the book of Isaiah, we will discover the reason. It was because God had done many things in the midst of the children of Israel as well as in them personally, yet He had concealed Himself, hiding beside and behind the children of Israel. On the one hand, He was always working, but on the other hand, He was always hiding Himself. A great deal of things were done by Him, yet the Israelites could not tell who the doer was. Therefore, when the prophet Isaiah discovered this, he exclaimed, "Surely You are a God who hides Himself."

If we carefully examine the history of the universe, the history of mankind, the history of the Old Testament, and the history of the New Testament, we will arrive at the same conclusion: God is a God who hides Himself. The universe was created by God; the heavens are His work, and the earth is His product. There are many things and many stories in the universe, yet in six thousand years no one has seen God. John 1:18 clearly says that during the Old Testament times no one had ever seen God. In the New Testament times, although the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, came to declare God, this declaration was also hidden. Although the only begotten Son came for the very purpose of declaring God, God was hidden inside a man, even an unbecoming man. This man's visage and form were marred; He had no attracting form nor beautiful appearance (Isa. 53:2)...He grew up in the small town of Nazareth in an insignificant province of Galilee. The Jews recognized that no prophet or person of repute had

ever come from Nazareth (John 1:46). Therefore, when Jesus the Nazarene appeared, very few thought that He could be a prophet, let alone that God was in Him. Yet God was hidden within Him.

How wondrous it is that God would hide Himself from man for four thousand years. From Genesis all the way to the end of the Old Testament, He was hidden from man. Then, at the time of the New Testament, He came from heaven to earth for the purpose of manifesting Himself to man so that man would know Him, yet He hid Himself inside a man. He appeared and then hid again, and He hid Himself so secretly that no one could recognize Him. It seems as though He likes to act this way. (CWWL, 1956, vol. 3, pp. 15-17)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1956, vol. 3, pp. 15-35

Tuesday 6/20**Matt. 6:1-6, 16-18**

1 But take care not to do your righteousness before men in order to be gazed at by them; otherwise, you have no reward with your Father who is in the heavens.

2 Therefore when you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be glorified by men. Truly I say to you, They have their reward in full.

3 But you, when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,

4 So that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

5 And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners, so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, They have their reward in full.

6 But you, when you pray, enter into your private room, and shut your door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

16 And when you fast, do not be like the sullen-faced hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so that they may appear to men to be fasting. Truly I say to you, They have their reward in full.

17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face,

18 So that you may not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

Related Reading

Our God never makes a display. He is too great. He is too glorious. He is too majestic. But the marvel is that He is also very hidden. The whole universe is a mystery, human life is a mystery, and every person is also a mystery. These things are mysteries because they all come from God, and God is hidden. God created the universe, yet He is hidden from the universe; God created human beings, yet He is hidden from mankind. He has a purpose for man, yet He has hidden Himself from man. He is the meaning of human life, yet He is hidden from human life...God exists in the universe, yet He is hidden. It seems that He manifests Himself for a moment, only to conceal Himself once again. (CWWL, 1956, vol. 3, pp. 17-18)

God is exceedingly and indescribably great, yet He "shrank" to such an extent that He could be in Jesus of Nazareth. This Nazarene grew up in a poor home, like a root out of dry ground (Isa. 53:2)...For thirty years people could not see any work of His except that He was a carpenter of a poor family...Who could have known that the great, glorious, and infinite God was hidden in this small and finite man?

God's character is that He likes to keep Himself hidden...He is constantly doing wonderful things, but He never likes to manifest Himself...He rules the universe, but no one can see Him. He has been with the church for the past two thousand years, but no one has been able to see this ever-present God. We also know from our experience that He is present with us all the time and everywhere. He works within us, speaking to us and giving us revelation. He comforts us, encourages us, supports us, and leads us. He also rebukes us, forbids us, and stops us. However, we have never seen Him. He is hidden. He hides Himself to such an extent that even when He is working and operating within us and causing us to sense certain things, we have doubts...His constant hiding of Himself is His temperament by which He does things; this is one of His divine characteristics.

The more real His work is, the more hidden it is; the more definite His work is, the less obvious, or manifest, it is. This is an important principle. Due to this principle

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we often experience trials, and due to this principle we are often tested. Even Satan uses this principle to tempt us. Our character is diametrically opposed to God's character. God likes to hide; we like to display. God is satisfied when everything is unseen; we are not satisfied until everything is seen. (CWWL, 1956, vol. 3, pp. 18, 27-28)

Our personalities are diametrically opposed to God's personality. He likes concealment; we like display. He does not crave outward manifestations; we cannot be content without them. This divine disposition constitutes a great trial and test to us.

If you study the Scriptures carefully, you will see that God has the kind of temperament that dislikes ostentation. He likes to work secretly rather than openly.

Do not expect anything outward, for the God who hides Himself is at work within your life, and He is working mightily. Your responsibility is to cooperate with Him by responding to His voice within—that "gentle, quiet voice," that voice that seems so much a part of your own feelings that you scarcely recognize it as a voice at all. To that voice, registered in the deepest depths of your being, you must say Amen, for there, secretly and ceaselessly, the God who hides Himself is working. (CWWL, 1956, vol. 2, "A God Who Hides Himself," pp. 3, 6, 11)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1956, vol. 2, "A God Who Hides Himself," pp. 3-11; CWWL, 1957, vol. 3, "The Living God and the God of Resurrection," chs. 1, 4

Wednesday 6/21

Related Verses**Esth. 4:14, 16**

14 For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from some other place, and you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

16 Go; assemble all the Jews who are to be found in Susa, and fast for me; and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day; I also and my maids will fast in the same way. And so will I go in to the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish.

Zech. 1:8-13, 16-17

8 I saw during the night, and behold, a man was riding upon a red horse; and He was standing among the myrtle trees that were in the bottoms; and behind Him there were red, reddish-brown, and white horses.

9 Then I said, What are these, sir? And the angel who spoke with me said to me, I will show you what these are.

10 And the man who stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These are those whom Jehovah has sent to go to and fro on the earth.

11 And they answered the Angel of Jehovah, who was standing among the myrtle trees, and they said, We have gone to and fro on the earth, and indeed all the earth sits still and is quiet.

12 Then the Angel of Jehovah answered and said, O Jehovah of hosts, how long will You not have

compassion on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, with which You have been indignant for these seventy years?

13 And Jehovah answered the angel who spoke with me with good words, with comforting words.

16 Therefore thus says Jehovah, I return to Jerusalem with compassions; My house will be built in it, declares Jehovah of hosts, and a measuring line will be stretched over Jerusalem.

17 Cry out again, saying, Thus says Jehovah of hosts, My cities will again overflow with good, and Jehovah will again comfort Zion and will again choose Jerusalem.

Related Reading

The people of Israel had been scattered, dispersed, in their captivity. They probably told the Gentiles among whom they were living that their God was Jehovah. Gentiles, especially the rulers, might have said to the Israelites, "Where is your Jehovah? Is your Jehovah real and living? If He is, why are you here in captivity as slaves?" During the years of the captivity, God was hiding, and He is still hiding. Even today, in the church age, God is hiding Himself. Both for the children of Israel and for us today, it seems that there is no God in this universe. We need to realize that God is living and real, but He is hiding. He is a God who hides Himself (Isa. 45:15). (Life-study of Esther, p. 1)

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Because God's people became degraded and rotten, God disciplined and punished them by handing them over as slaves to the Gentile nations. Yet in His severity there is mercy (Rom. 11:22). While the people of Israel were in dispersion and captivity, God was taking care of them in a hidden way, and at the right time He came in openly to save them. Even when the captives of Israel were in the lowest situation, at the bottom, Christ was among them, suffering with them (Zech. 1:7-17).

On the one hand, God used the Gentile nations as tools to discipline His people. On the other hand, the hiding God was with the people of Israel, caring for them. Eventually, God used the Medo-Persian Empire to overthrow the Babylonian Empire. Cyrus, the king of Persia, was even called God's shepherd, one who would fulfill His desire (Isa. 44:28), and His anointed, one who would serve God's purpose (45:1-4). From this we see that the hiding God did many things for Israel in a secret way.

The book of Esther gives us a vivid record of how the hiding God of Israel took care secretly of His oppressed elect in their dispersion and saved openly His persecuted elect in their captivity.

The crucial point of Esther is that the very God who chose Israel, the descendants of Abraham, as His elect, after He gave them into captivity to the Gentile nations, became a hidden God to them to take care of them secretly and save them openly in secrecy (Isa. 45:15). This is the reason that this book does not mention the name of God even at occasions when the name of God should be mentioned (Esth. 4:3, 16).

[In His secret care for His oppressed elect], first, the hiding God established a top king in the Gentile world in prosperity, power, and glory over a great empire extending from India to Ethiopia (Africa)—1:1-2.

Next, the hiding God caused the top king to depose his queen because of her disobedience to his word at his great banquet with his high officials (vv. 3-22). The king commanded that the queen come before him wearing the royal crown in order that he might present her to those attending the banquet. However, the queen refused to come at the king's command. As a result of her disobedience, the queen was deposed, and the position of

queen became vacant. Finally, in His secret care the hiding God raised up Esther, a Jewish orphan virgin, to be crowned by the top king as his queen (2:1-18).

Today we need to realize that the omnipotent God whom we are serving is still hiding Himself, especially when He is helping us. We cannot see Him, and apparently He is not doing anything for us. Actually, He is with us all the time and, in a hidden way, He is doing many things for us. (*Life-study of Esther*, pp. 1-3, 5)

Further Reading: *Life-study of Esther*, msgs. 1-2

Thursday 6/22**Luke 18:1-6**

- 1 And He told them a parable to the end that they ought always to pray and not lose heart,
- 2 Saying, There was a certain judge in a certain city who did not fear God and did not regard man.
- 3 And there was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, Avenge me of my opponent.
- 4 And for a time he would not; but afterward he said within himself, Even though I do not fear God nor regard man,
- 5 Yet because this widow causes me trouble, I will avenge her, lest by continually coming she wear me out.
- 6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unrighteous judge says.

Rom. 12:12

12 Rejoice in hope; endure in tribulation; persevere in prayer.

Eph. 6:18

18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

Col. 4:2

2 Persevere in prayer, watching in it with thanksgiving,

1 Thes. 5:17

17 Unceasingly pray,

Related Reading

The widow in Luke 18:3 signifies the believers. In a sense, the believers in Christ are a widow in the present age because their Husband, Christ (2 Cor. 11:2), is absent from them.

The widow asked the judge to avenge her of her opponent. The Greek word rendered "avenge" may also be translated "procure justice for."

In this parable the Lord indicates that the believers in Christ have an opponent. This opponent is Satan the devil, concerning whom we need God's avenging. We ought to pray persistently for this avenging (see Rev. 6:9-10) and not lose heart. (*Life-study of Luke*, p. 347)

The judge for a time would not avenge the widow of her opponent [Luke 18:4]. Then he said within himself, "Even though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet because this widow causes me trouble, I will avenge her, lest by continually coming she wear me out" (vv. 4-5). Following this, the Lord went on to say, "Hear what the unrighteous judge says. And will not God by all means carry out the avenging of His chosen ones, who cry to Him day and night, though He is long-suffering over them? I tell you that He will carry out their avenging quickly. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?" (vv. 6-8). The Lord's word in verse 8 indicates that God's avenging of our enemy will be at the Savior's coming back.

Today's evil generation can distract us from the enjoyment of Christ. This generation seeks to stupefy us, to drug us, so that we have no sense about what is happening. The entire world has become stupefied, and, having been drugged, the worldly people have no sense, no consciousness, of the fact that they have been carried away from the enjoyable Triune God.

The Triune God is for man's enjoyment. Nevertheless, the fallen human race has no concept of this whatever; it has no sense concerning it at all. The people of the world are busy with marrying and giving in marriage, with buying and selling, with planting and building (17:27-28). They have no thought concerning God being their enjoyment, for they all have been drugged, stupefied. Therefore, in His long journey from Galilee to Jerusalem the Lord touched this matter a few times. For example, in chapter 14 He told His disciples that they must hate the things of this generation. They even need to hate their own soul life, for they should hate anything that distracts them from the enjoyment of Christ. In chapter 17 the

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Lord comes to this point again when He speaks about the stupefied generation, which keeps God's people away from their enjoyment of the divine inheritance. Before He touches this matter again in chapter 18, He unveils to us something else that concerns our enjoyment..., and this is the persecution that comes from our opponent.

We need to realize that as God's people in this stupefied and stupefying generation, we are like a widow. In a sense, our Husband, the Lord, is absent. Furthermore, we have an opponent who is constantly persecuting us.

The Lord also reveals to His disciples that while we are seeking Him, we need to hate any thing and any matter that frustrate us from our enjoyment of Him. Furthermore, as we are enjoying Him, we shall suffer persecution. This persecution comes from our opponent, the one who is the enemy of God and who has become our enemy because we take sides with God.

The parable in Luke 18:1-8 indicates the suffering we have from our opponent during the Lord's apparent absence. Actually, the Lord is not absent; He is present. But during His apparent absence, we are a widow whose opposer is troubling her all the time. (*Life-study of Luke*, pp. 347-349)

Further Reading: *Life-study of Luke*, msg. 40

Friday 6/23

Related Verses**Luke 18:7-8**

7 And will not God by all means carry out the avenging of His chosen ones, who cry to Him day and night, though He is long-suffering over them?

8 I tell you that He will carry out their avenging quickly. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?

Rev. 2:8-11

8 And to the messenger of the church in Smyrna write: These things says the First and the Last, who became dead and lived again:

9 I know your tribulation and poverty (but you are rich) and the slander from those who call themselves Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

10 Do not fear the things that you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison that you may be tried, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.

11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall by no means be hurt of the second death.

Eph. 3:16-17

16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

Related Reading

While our opposer is persecuting us, it seems that our God is not righteous, for He allows His children to be unrighteously persecuted. For example, John the Baptist was beheaded, Peter was martyred, Paul was imprisoned, and John was exiled. Throughout the centuries, thousands upon thousands of honest and faithful followers of the Man-Savior have suffered unrighteous persecution. Even today we are still undergoing unrighteous mistreatment. Our God seems to be unjust, since He does not come in to judge and vindicate.

Where is the living, righteous God? Why does He tolerate this situation? Why would He not judge those who persecute us? Because of this situation, the Man-Savior in Luke 18:1-8 uses an unjust judge to signify God who does not seem to do anything on behalf of His persecuted people.

From this parable we learn to be a bothering widow, one who prays to God persistently. (*Life-study of Luke*, pp. 349-350)

Many times I have become tired of praying for the Lord to vindicate His recovery. It seems that the more I pray for the Lord to vindicate, the less vindication there is...Nevertheless, I have learned that we need to bother God in prayer, that we should pray to Him persistently without losing heart.

In Luke 18:1-8 we see the prayer from the visible realm. This kind of prayer is related to our enjoyment of the jubilee.

Often the children of those who are faithful followers of the Lord ask their parents why they are suffering persecution. They may ask, "Since we love the Lord Jesus so much, why must we suffer?"...It seems to the children that the Lord whom their parents follow is not righteous. We also may wonder why we suffer, since we love the Lord and follow Him. The parable in 18:1-8 answers our question.

When our Husband is apparently absent and we are left on earth as a widow, temporarily our God seems to be an unrighteous judge. Although He appears to be unrighteous, we still must appeal to Him, pray persistently, and bother Him again and again.

On the one hand, this parable indicates that the Judge is sovereign. This means that whether or not He judges is up to Him. Seemingly without reason, He may either listen to the widow or not listen to her. This parable reveals that He is the sovereign Lord and that He judges whenever He chooses.

On the other hand, this parable indicates that we need to bother the Lord by praying persistently. We need to say to Him, "Lord, praying is up to me, not up to You. You never told me that I should not pray. On the contrary, You charged me to pray. Therefore, Lord, I am praying now for Your vindication."

The significance of this parable is profound, and we all need to know God as He is revealed here. (*Life-study of Luke*, pp. 350-352)

The Bible also says that God is a judging God...He has been the judging God since the first fall of man...Anything that is incompatible with His nature will not last and will be shaken, destroyed by fire. Only that which is of God is compatible with His nature and will not be shaken but will remain.

He wants us to know Him as the God who hides Himself. He seems to turn a deaf ear to the corruption and evil on earth and to the things that contradict and offend Him, but He tries those who fear Him.

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[In Luke 18:8] literally, the Greek words rendered “faith” mean “the faith.” This denotes the persistent faith for our persistent prayer, like that of the widow [in verse 3]. Hence, the faith here is the subjective faith, not the objective faith.

In Revelation 6:9 and 10 we see that this kind of persistent prayer is carried out by the souls of the martyred saints...In figure, the altar is in the outer court of the tabernacle and the temple, and the outer court signifies the earth. Hence, “underneath the altar” is underneath the earth, where the souls of the martyred saints are. This is in the Paradise where the Lord Jesus went after His death (Luke 23:43). It is the comfortable section of Hades (Acts 2:27), where Abraham is (Luke 16:22-26). Here we see that the souls of the martyred saints...seem to be saying, “Lord, how long will You be silent? How long will You apparently be unjust? You are the righteous Judge. How can You tolerate the unrighteous persecution that is still taking place on earth?” (*Life-study of Luke*, pp. 348, 350-351)

The linking faith is the divine requirement for the overcomers to meet Christ in His triumphant return. This is based upon Luke 18:8...Today the entire world is unbelieving. Where is faith today among not only the Gentiles, the pagans, but also among the Jews, the Catholics, the Protestants, and the Pentecostal people? If the Lord came today, where could He find faith? Nearly no one on this earth is believing. But by His mercy, in the past years, through Brother Nee’s leadership, we have been brought into a situation of learning not to trust in ourselves for anything, but to believe that our God is everything.

I hope that when the Lord comes back, He can find you and me as the believing ones, who always trust in Him, not in ourselves, and who always have no assurance in ourselves. Our full assurance is in Him. This is the linking faith. This faith qualifies the overcomers. It is the divine requirement for you and me as the overcomers to meet Christ in His triumphant return.

Eventually, the Lord will find some, a small number of overcomers, who are living by the linking faith when

He returns...Christ expects to find us as His hidden overcomers.

The believers who live an overcoming and exulting life by the linking faith will be found by Christ at His return as the treasures ready to receive the salvation of their souls as the end (result) of their faith (1 Pet. 1:8-9). In a sense, we do not know anything or do anything. We only know how to overcome and how to exult by the linking faith. Those who live by faith today will eventually receive the end of their faith, that is, the salvation of their souls. We have received a salvation, but this is just the initial salvation. The progressing stage of salvation is the stage of transformation. The completing stage of salvation is the stage of glorification. If we live by the linking faith in the progressing stage to be transformed, we will be kings with Christ in the millennial kingdom.

The linking faith...is the living God moving in us to link us to all His unsearchable riches...This overcoming faith qualifies the Lord’s overcomers, who are waiting for and eagerly expecting the coming back of the Lord, who will find them at His coming as men of His linking faith (Luke 18:8), as treasures for His kingdom in the thousand years of His reign. (*CWWL, 1994–1997*, vol. 1, “Crystallization-study of the Epistle to the Romans,” pp. 322-325)

Further Reading: *CWWL, 1994–1997*, vol. 1, “Crystallization-study of the Epistle to the Romans,” ch. 11; *CWWL, 1985*, vol. 5, “Vessels Useful to the Lord,” ch. 1

Lord’s Day 6/25**Related Verses****Esth. 9:15-19, 21-22, 27-32**

15 And the Jews who were in Susa assembled also on the fourteenth day of the month Adar and slew three hundred men in Susa, but they did not lay their hand on the spoil. **16** And the rest of the Jews who were in the king’s provinces assembled and stood for their lives, and they had rest from their enemies. And they slew seventy-five thousand of those who hated them; but they did not lay their hand on the spoil.

At the end of the age He will be the judging God sitting on the throne of judgment (Rev. 4:2; 6:16). “Each one of us will give an account concerning himself to God” (Rom. 14:12). (*CWWL, 1957*, vol. 3, “The Living God and the God of Resurrection,” pp. 34-35)

Further Reading: *The Conclusion of the New Testament*, msg. 6; *CWWL, 1957*, vol. 3, “The Living God and the God of Resurrection,” ch. 5

Saturday 6/24**Related Verses****Luke 18:8**

8 I tell you that He will carry out their avenging quickly. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?

Rev. 6:9-11

9 And when He opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and because of the testimony which they had.

10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Master, holy and true, will You not judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?

11 And to each of them was given a white robe; and it was said to them that they should rest yet a little while, until also the number of their fellow slaves and their brothers who were about to be killed, even as they were, is completed.

Rev. 8:1-6

1 And when He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

2 And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.

3 And another Angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and much incense was given to Him to offer with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

4 And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the Angel before God.

5 And the Angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar and cast it to the earth; and there were thunders and voices and lightnings and an earthquake.

6 And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to trumpet.

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Further Reading: *CWWL, 1956*, vol. 2, “A God Who Hides Himself”

17 This happened on the thirteenth day of the month Adar; and on the fourteenth day of the same they rested and made it a day of feasting and rejoicing.

18 But the Jews who were in Susa assembled on the thirteenth day of the month and on the fourteenth of the month; and on the fifteenth day of the same they rested and made it a day of feasting and rejoicing.

19 Therefore the Jews of the villages, who dwell in towns in the open, make the fourteenth day of the month Adar a day of rejoicing and feasting, and a good day, and a day of sending portions to one another.

21 Enjoining them that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar and the fifteenth day of the same, year by year,

22 As the days on which the Jews had rest from their enemies, and as the month which was turned for them from sorrow to rejoicing and from mourning into a good day; that they should make them days of feasting and rejoicing, and of sending portions to one another and gifts to the poor.

27 The Jews established and made a custom for themselves and their seed and all who joined themselves to them, that they would not fail to keep these two days according to what has been written about them and according to the appointed time for them, year by year;

28 And that these days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city; and that these days of Purim should not fail from among the Jews, nor the remembrance of them fade from their seed.

29 Then Esther the queen, the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew wrote with all authority to confirm this second letter of Purim.

30 And he sent letters to all the Jews, to the one hundred twenty-seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, that is, words of peace and truth,

31 Establishing these days of Purim at their appointed times, as Mordecai the Jew and Esther the queen had established for them and as they had established for themselves and for their seed in the matter of the fastings and their cry.

32 And the commandment of Esther confirmed these matters of Purim; and it was written in the book.

Hymns, #501

1 O glorious Christ, Savior mine,
Thou art truly radiance divine;
God infinite, in eternity,
Yet man in time, finite to be.

Oh! Christ, expression of God, the Great,
Inexhaustible, rich, and sweet!
God mingled with humanity
Lives in me my all to be.

2 The fulness of God dwells in Thee;
Thou dost manifest God's glory;
In flesh Thou hast redemption wrought;
As Spirit, oneness with me sought.

3 All things of the Father are Thine;
All Thou art in Spirit is mine;
The Spirit makes Thee real to me,
That Thou experienced might be.

4 The Spirit of life causes Thee
By Thy Word to transfer to me.
Thy Spirit touched, Thy word received,
Thy life in me is thus conceived.

5 In spirit while gazing on Thee,
As a glass reflecting Thy glory,
Like to Thyself transformed I'll be,
That Thou might be expressed thru me.

6 In no other way could we be
Sanctified and share Thy vict'ry;
Thus only spiritual we'll be
And touch the life of glory.

7 Thy Spirit will me saturate
Every part will God permeate,
Deliv'ring me from the old man,
With all saints building for His plan.

Churchwide Truth Pursuit of Romans**Level 1—Romans Sequential Study**

Scripture: Rom. 11:1-36

Assigned Reading: *Life-study of Romans*, msg. 24

Level 2—Romans Topical Study

Crucial Point: Knowing, Reckoning, and Presenting unto Sanctification

Scripture: Rom. 6-7

Assigned Reading: *Life-study of Romans*, msg. 17; *The Normal Christian Life*, chs. 3-4

Supplemental Reading: None

Hymn: 692

For study questions and additional materials, please visit the church website at churchinnyc.org/bible-study