

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Prophesying Message Twelve : A God Who Hides Himself—the Hidden God

I. Overview:

Hardly any of God's children know that the God as a God who hides Himself. Although our God is omnipresent and full of forgiveness, He is also the hiding God, as the book of Esther indicates. We need to realize that the God whom we are serving is still hiding Himself, especially when He is helping us. Whenever we sense God living and acting within us, we should say Amen, for there, in the depths of our being, secretly and ceaselessly the God who hides Himself is working. The book of Esther reveals that after the Israelites being captured to the Gentile nations, God became a hidden God to them to take care of them secretly and to save them openly. During the years of the captivity, God was hiding; He is still hiding today in this church age. The significance of the parable in Luke 18:1-8 is profound, which told us that God is a hidden God. The widow signifies the believers, who has an opponent, Satan, so that we need God's avenging. While our opponent is persecuting us, it seems that our God is not righteous; however, we still must pray persistently, and bother Him again and again, for He will carry out quickly the avenging of His chosen ones. Linking faith is the faith of the believers who is always trusting in God. When the Lord Jesus returns, He will find a number of overcomers who are living by the linking faith.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Expound that God is a hidden God.

The Bible uses many different titles to refer to God. 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.

B. Explain the spiritual significance of the words in Isaiah 45:15.

If we read through the book of Isaiah, we will discover that 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. Therefore, when the prophet Isaiah discovered this, he exclaimed, "Surely You are a God who hides Himself."

Day 2 —

A. Explain God having done many things, yet He is hidden from the universe.

Our God 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 all come from God, but God is hidden. He has a purpose for man, yet He has hidden Himself from man.

B. Expound God's character is that He likes to keep Himself hidden.

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. We also know from our experience that He is present with us all the time and His constant hiding of Himself is His temperament by which He does things; this is one of His divine characteristics.

Day 3 —

A. Expound that God is living and real, but He is hiding.

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.

B. Explain disciplining God's people, God still took care of them in a hidden way.

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. 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, Christ was among them, suffering with them.

Day 4 —

A. Expound the significance of the widow in Luke 18:3.

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, is absent from them. The widow asked the judge to avenge her of her opponent. 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.

B. Explain that God would avenge us by our causing Him trouble and wearing Him out.

The judge for a time would not avenge the widow. Then he said within himself, "Because this widow causes me trouble, I will avenge her, lest by continually coming she wear me out". Following this, the Lord went on to say, 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.

Day 5 —

A. Explain to be treated unrighteously, we should pray to Him persistently.

While our opposer is persecuting us, it seems that our God is not righteous, for He allows His children to be unrighteously persecuted. Our God seems to be unjust, since He does not come in to judge and vindicate. God also 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.

B. Expound that the more we face adversity, the more we need to pray to Him persistently without losing heart. 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. The significance of this parable is profound, and we all need to know God as He is revealed here.

Day 6 —

A. Explain the faith in Luke 18:8.

In Luke 18:8, "faith" means "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 we see that this kind of persistent prayer is carried out by the souls of the martyred saints. Here we see that they seem to be saying, "Lord, how long will You be silent? How long will You apparently be unjust?"

B. Expound that the linking faith is the requirement for the overcomers.

The linking faith is the divine requirement for the overcomers to meet Christ in His triumphant return. Today the entire world is unbelieving. 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.

III. Conclusion:

The most genuine spiritual experiences are not much sense. What you feel is not the reality. It seems that it is unaware and invisible, but inexplicably there is that story, that is out of the Lord, and it is real. For everything we do and serve is from a hidden God, and it is in a hidden God. Therefore, in all things, we should do as the apostles said, "For we walk by faith, not by appearance." We are preparing ourselves today for that day, preparing ourselves to become overcomers, and always united to the Triune God by living faith. We are to imitate Paul as vessels that are completely open to the Lord, love Him and open to Him, stop ourselves to let Him dispense Himself into us freely, give Him the space to do what He wants to do, so that we will enjoy Him in doing everything.