

GOD WANTS TO USE MAN TO DEFEAT THE ENEMY

Isaiah 43:10—Ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I [am] HE: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.

Let us pray:

Dear Lord, we want to thank Thee for gathering us together. We know that Thou art here among us because Thou hast promised it. Lord, what hast Thou to say to us? Thy servants heareth. We commit this time into Thy hand and trust Thy Holy Spirit to do His work. We ask in Thy precious name. Amen.

Come, Lord Jesus

We want to thank the Lord for gathering us together. Every time we are able to gather together it is the mercy of God. I suppose we all know that our Lord is coming soon. As a matter of fact, we are waiting for Him every day. He can come at any time now, for all the prophecies preceding His coming have been fulfilled. Indeed, there are still some prophecies to be fulfilled but they concern His coming and afterwards. So we are not waiting for any prophecy to be fulfilled now. The next thing that will happen is the coming of our dear Lord Jesus. We are waiting for Him every day. It is a very exciting time even though it is a most difficult time. Are we ready for His coming? Are we going to be that welcoming party to receive Him? We thank God for giving us another chance that we may be better prepared for His return. I suppose every brother and sister here is expecting our Lord Jesus to return. Therefore, our prayer is, "Come, Lord Jesus." Thank God we believe that His coming is imminent!

On the other hand, we want to thank God for His long patience. He does not want anyone to miss that opportunity. So He still gives us another chance to be prepared for Him. So let our hearts be open to Him and allow His Word to prepare us that at His coming we may see Him with joy.

Does God Need Witnesses?

Our theme for this time is found in Isaiah 43:10, "Ye are My witnesses." Now does God need any witnesses? Who can be His witness? He is the beginning and He is the end; He is the first and He is the last. Nobody was there when He existed. So when you read the Scripture, "You are My witnesses," it is something for us to meditate upon and that is what we will do this morning.

God is the beginning. He is the self-existing God. There was nobody else there. So then, why do the Scriptures say, “You are My witnesses”? We will like to find out the reason why.

Genesis 1:1 says, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” This is not the beginning of God; this is the beginning of creation. When God created the heavens and the earth, He did it alone. Can you imagine that when God wanted to create, He had to spend a long time doing that? I do not think so because He just said a word and it was done. So we believe in Genesis 1:1 when God created the heavens and the earth, it was done.

You remember when Job, his three friends and the young man Elihu were arguing together about God, after all their conversations God said in Job 38: “And Jehovah answered Job out of the whirlwind and said, ‘Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?’”

God is the Self-existing God

In spite of all the arguments among Job, his friends and Elihu, God said, “Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?” So nobody is fit to talk about God. The more we talk about Him, the more we utter words without knowledge because He is self-existent and He is before all. God challenged Job with His creation. He challenged Job as to where he was when this was done, and Job had to be silent. Our God is the self-existing God. He said, “I AM THAT I AM.” This is what He is.

Lucifer, the Brilliant Star

But let us remember, when God first created the heavens and the earth, He did not create man. The highest of His creation were angels who are spirits. They do not have a body. They may take up a body, but basically they are spirits. Among all the angels that He had created, the best and the highest of them was Lucifer, the brilliant star. At the first creation, God created Lucifer in such a way that he was called the brilliant star. And we know this because it is in the Bible. There are two places in the Old Testament that tell us something about this archangel. One is in Isaiah 14:12-15, and even though God is talking about the king of Babylon, suddenly He begins to say things that cannot be applied to any person because He is talking about Lucifer, the brilliant star, the masterpiece of God in the first creation.

Also in Ezekiel 28:11-19 he is talking about the king of Tyre, but suddenly the Bible describes someone which cannot be applied to any man. He was talking about the brilliant star. The Bible tells us that when God created Lucifer, the brilliant star, he was created almost perfect. There is a ten-fold description of the stones that adorn this archangel. He was given great wisdom and talent; he became the anointed, covering angel. In other words, he covered the ark, the throne of God. He was most gifted, and one of those gifts was that he was very musical. I believe probably at that time he led the angels in worshipping God. The Bible tells us that when he was created, he was perfect, and he seemed to serve God in that way. But gradually because of his much commerce, he began to look into himself.

Lucifer Wanted the Place of the Son of God

It is always dangerous to look into yourself. In the beginning Lucifer was faithful to God, leading the angels in worshipping God, but gradually he began to look into himself. When we look into ourselves, we will either be proud or we will be sad. But commerce Lucifer, though in the beginning he was faithful to God, yet because of his beauty and traffic he began to desire something beyond what he was. In Isaiah 14:12, Lucifer, the brilliant star, began to turn into himself. As we said, it is always dangerous to look into yourself because it will either make you proud or disappointed. When Lucifer looked into himself, he began to want something more than what God had created him for. Five times in Isaiah 14, he talked about himself: "I will ascend into the heavens; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit upon the mount of assembly, in the recesses of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High." As a matter of fact, in Philippians, we discover what Lucifer really wanted was to be equal with God. To put it another way, he wanted the place of the Son of God. And because of his pride, because of the abundance of his commerce, because of his sin, he was banished from heaven.

The Earth Became Empty and Void

Most likely, the earth that we know of was at that time under Lucifer's control. So when judgment came upon him, then the earth entered into emptiness and void (see Genesis 1:2). There is a great gap between these two verses. Genesis 1:1 is the creation but in verse 2 we find that the earth had become empty and void. In other words, the earth that was created by God in such perfection entered into emptiness and void. Empty means it had lost its purpose, and void means it had been ruined and was surrounded with water. It had lost its purpose and the reason for which it had been created; and it entered into the ice age. It was surrounded by water and everything was dead. We do not know how long this continued. Did God give up? No. God had His plan.

I often think that for God to destroy Satan it would be so easy. God could blow His breath upon Satan to put him to death; but that would not give God glory. Why did God not destroy Satan? He drove him out, but He did not destroy him. Why is it so? Humanly speaking, it is for God's glory because when you think of a grown-up person beating a little child, is there any glory in it? No; but God had a plan. He wanted someone lower than the angels to destroy that archangel, and this will bring glory to God.

God Restored the Earth to be Habitable in Six Days

Even though we do not know how long the ice age continued on, we know that God began to restore this earth to be habitable. So the six days that we find in Genesis 1 do not refer to the beginning of the creation of the earth. Actually the earth had already been created, but unfortunately because of the sin of Lucifer it was covered with water; it was under judgment. But

God is love and He had His own plan. So the Bible tells us that the Spirit of God brooded over the face of the deep. God's love began to turn to the earth, and in six days God restored the earth to be habitable.

Man was Created to Destroy the Enemy

Why did God do this? He wanted to create a creation lower than the angels that would be used by Him as His witness to defeat His enemy, Lucifer. That is why man was created. So let us remember why man was created. What is God's purpose concerning man? Did He create man for his own sake? We know that was not His purpose. We were not created for our own sake; man was created for God's sake. Man was created to perform God's purpose. Man was created to defeat God's enemy and to bring back God's glory. That is why man was created.

Unfortunately, we forget why we are here. We think we were created for ourselves instead of knowing God's purpose for man. So it is most important for us to understand in the first place why man was created. We are not created for our own glory; therefore, we are not supposed to live for ourselves. We are created for God with a definite purpose. He wants to fill us with Himself. He wants to use us to defeat His enemy. He wants to use man to fulfill all that He has ordained. This is why you and I were created. So we find in the Bible on the sixth day, after everything on earth had been restored, God created man.

God Created Man in His Own Image

He created man in His own image according to His likeness. Image here does not speak of outward form but of inner quality. So man was created according to God's inner quality because He breathed His breath into the nostril of the body of man who had been made of earth. Something of God Himself had entered into man. With that something, God made it possible for man to receive God into himself. There is no other creation that can receive God into itself. All creation manifests the glory of God, but none can receive God into itself. Man is the only creature that God has created which the life of God can come into in order for man to be united to God in Christ Jesus. That is the marvel of man. So Psalm 139 tells us that man was marvelously and wonderfully created. For what purpose? For God's purpose. So it is but right for man to live for God's purpose and not be selfish and live for themselves.

The Tree of Life or the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

After God created man, He put him in the garden of Eden which was a beautiful garden. It was full of fruit trees that were good for man's food. In the *midst* of the garden, God planted the tree of life which represented God's life. If anyone should eat the fruit of the tree of life, he would have the life of God in him. And by the side of the tree of life was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Now do you think God would put a bad tree in that garden? I believe not. As a

matter of fact, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is the next best tree to the tree of life. What knowledge can be compared with the knowledge of good and evil? Ethical knowledge is the highest of all knowledge. So the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is not a bad tree. It is a good tree, better than all the other trees except the tree of life, because it gives man knowledge, and what knowledge can be compared with ethical knowledge? To know good and evil is the highest of all knowledge. God planted this tree by the side of the tree of life. In other words, God wanted man to choose.

Man was Put Under God's Control

Man has a free will. You might think that if we did not have free will, it would be better. If God would make man obey Him and nothing else, that would save us from lots of problems, but that is like a robot. God wants man to have a free will just as He is the free will. God said, "Of all the trees in the garden you can freely eat, but the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you should not eat because if you eat it you will surely die" (see Genesis 2:16-17). God put man under His control. He was created above all creatures but under God. God did not say, "Do not eat the tree of life." As a matter of fact, that tree was in the midst of the garden, and it must have been a wonderful, beautiful tree. So when God told Adam he should not eat the tree of the knowledge of good and evil it would automatically draw him to the tree of life. This is the love of God.

Man was to Till and Guard the Garden

God put man in the garden of Eden and gave him a command: "Till and guard." God wanted man to improve upon what He had made; in other words, to make the fruit trees more fruitful. That was the task of man. On the other hand, God said, "You guard." That garden did not have a wall, so God wanted man to be that wall because He knew the enemy was outside the garden. Man had a two-fold labor; one was to till or to improve the ground, and the other was to guard the garden as the wall of the garden.

Adam and Eve were to be the Wall of the Garden

Think of the power with which God had endued Adam. In this huge garden God made Adam the wall to keep the enemy out. But unfortunately, we know what happened. Eve and Adam were two in one; they were to be together working and guarding the garden. It was a tremendous work to be done. But somehow, man was at leisure and Eve began to depart from Adam. And because of this, Adam and Eve were careless and did not fulfill God's command. They left the garden unguarded and the enemy slipped in.

Satan Deceives Eve

The serpent at that time was the most clever animal and Satan took on the form of the serpent. He began to tempt Eve who was supposed to be with Adam. If they were together, they could have overcome the enemy. But because they were separated Eve was tempted by the tempter. She took fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and gave it to her husband. Eve was deceived, but Adam was not. He knew exactly what would happen. He knew God's command, but he loved his wife more than God, and he too ate.

Man Sinned and Discovered They were Naked

They found themselves naked. When God created the animals, He give them skin as their clothing. I often wonder, when God created man, what would have been his created clothing? Man was not naked in the beginning, so God must have clothed them with something. I feel that when God created man, He gave him glory to be his clothing. Before man sinned, they did not know they were naked because they were clothed with glory. But when man sinned, the glory left them, and they discovered that they were naked.

It is a sad story. God wanted man to be used by Him, filling him with Himself. Instead, man failed God and failed themselves. This is the sad story of the garden of Eden. Do you think God will give up? Man may fail but God never fails. He has His way. God willing, we will continue if He should tarry.

Let us pray:

Dear Lord, as we relate Thy purpose and how man failed Thee, we thank Thee because Thou didst not give up. Even with man's failure, Thou hast manifested Thy glory in a greater way. Dear Lord, we come together to relate Thy salvation and to see what great work Thou hast done. Thou hast turned the failure of man to become a testimony of Jesus. It is wonderful in our hearts. Do open our understanding and see what great things Thou hast done for us that we may always bow before Thee and worship Thee. We ask in Thy precious name. Amen.