

Your Eyes Shall See Your Teachers

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I'd like to start the sermon today with a scripture that I can almost guarantee that every one that is listening or will listen has either read it or heard it in the last month and a half, probably multiple times. And let me modify that—from today in the last month and a half, I know some of this gets delayed. I think about some of the writers of the Bible saying, "Well, this happened and it's here to this day." Well, they didn't mean till the day we read it. They meant the day that they wrote it. So, the caveat is the last month and a half from today that I'm giving the sermon. Maybe not from the day you listen to it.

So, with that, turn over to Isaiah chapter 30. And again, a very familiar, I think a very encouraging prophecy we all read and gain a lot of comfort from it. I'd like to start in Isaiah 30 and verse 18. And if you have a marker, set that in here because we're going to be coming back to this. Hopefully, you have a couple of markers. If you're short, just see Tania. She has these little *bookworms* and she usually brings a purse full of them in every time she comes. So, today is going to be at least a two-marker day. Anyway, set your marker here because we're going to be coming back to this. Let me read the entire scripture we're going to cover. It says:

Isaiah 30:18. *Therefore the LORD will wait, that He may be gracious to you; and therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you. For the LORD is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for Him.*

19) For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem; you shall weep no more. He will be very gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you.

20) And though the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your teachers will not be moved into a corner anymore, but your eyes shall see your teachers.

21) Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left. (NKJ)

And again, no matter where you attended the Feast, I dare say that at every Feast site during the Feast, this scripture was read probably multiple times. Also, I'm sure in your own personal studies leading up to the Feast and even after the Feast this was read. I can also guarantee you at least three times today we'll be going through this. So, I want this to be a very encouraging and motivating scripture as God's firstfruits, because it gives us a glimpse into what we as spirit beings, the Bride of Christ, the kings and priests, will be doing in the very near future.

The question I think is fair is we just went over this at the Feast. Why do it again?

I could go back to Nehemiah where they stretched out the Feast and they had a double Feast and everybody was happy, but let me just give you perhaps a different reason.

We live in a very discouraging, very disheartening dark period of man's existence. The path that put man in His rejection of God, the rejection of His Laws and allowed that to be a governing force has put us on a journey that literally there is no recovering from it. We're going to go down this path. We are standing, I thoroughly believe, we're standing right at the precipice of oblivion was it not for God's intervention. There is just no turning back. I really believe that this world is broken beyond man's ability to fix it. We've unleashed forces with our military, our financial, our agricultural, our medical, our civil, our cultural. Whatever aspect of our lives, we've unleashed forces that have led to a broken system. And I just don't think that it's fixable.

Steve, in his last sermon that he gave, referred to this time as Satan's time. We've kept the Feast. We've pictured God. We come back to the world and we're facing this long dark period where these are Satan's days. We have Halloween. And I'm going to add another one—Black Friday. We have Christmas. We have New Year's. We have all of the stress associated with that. And it is a period of time when it's obvious that the god of this world, Satan, is in control of it.

And, frankly, for us to come back from the Feast very encouraged with vision and then to be faced with this, it can become very disheartening to us. We kept the fall holy days. We celebrated God's plan and then we come home to financial hardship, political acrimony. And I will tell you the political wrangling, physical catastrophes—and not just here.

Of course, we had Sandy hit the coast. If you look back at this year and last year, there have just been unprecedented catastrophes all over the world. I think back even in this country to the tornadoes that hit and just wiped out Joplin, Missouri; down along the coast, Mississippi and Alabama and those things. We look at wildfires. Look at drought. This area right here had one of the worst droughts. We literally had crop failure here with the corn crop. You can look anywhere in the world with the volcanic activity that's happened, even up in Iceland and some of the earthquakes around the world. Right now the flooding in Italy and it's been going on for days. It's not just us, but everything in this world. And these are unprecedented in our history. Yes, there are more people. We're more concentrated. Those disasters tend to affect more people because we've built up, but, nevertheless, unprecedented in their toll in dollars and lives and all of that. It truly is a dark time of Satan's rule.

In this country, we watched the leadership and the two parties attack one another and accuse one another and belittle one another. And all of that to raise themselves up in the people's eyes so that the people would favor them. Now, it's over. But do

we really think that now that it's over all of those cuts and all those deep wounds and those scars that were left by all of that—and I'm not just talking at a national level, even the local politics and all of that. Does that just go away? Is all of that just kind of forgotten and swept under the carpet? Maybe like you see two children playing with their toys and they get called to dinner. They just put them away and they go away. Is that the way it is?

I've personally, and I know you have too, watched over the years as these attacks have become more vicious and more personal and more acrimonious to one another. And they divide us. They divide the nation. I've also seen that once it's over the political parties, both of them, now have to work together. It becomes more and more difficult. There are agendas and there are wounds and there is this memory of what has happened. And anyone that thinks that we can engage in all of that and then just put it away and everything is going to be happy, we're not living in the real world. I think the next few months with all of the legislation that is going to be needed for this country to continue with budgets and taxes and all of those things, we're going to see just how deep those wounds went.

The financial underbelly of this—the north, including New York City and Sandy—and not only Sandy hitting, but then the Nor'easter coming in, it was almost a double whammy. And I've already mentioned Halloween and Black Friday and Christmas and New Year's. It is definitely, brethren, a time of darkness. My purpose of going over this—yes, we covered it at the Feast—but as we go forward, I hope that this sermon will encourage you and give you something positive to think about and to meditate on in the very dark days ahead.

I'd like to today—let's examine these verses, this scripture, Isaiah 30:18-21 and look at some of the gems that are contained in these verses. I think you will find it very encouraging, but I also think that you will find it will help us have a clearer vision of what we're going to be doing in the time ahead of us as the Bride of Christ.

Again, Isaiah 30 and 18, it says:

Isaiah 30:18. *Therefore the LORD will wait, that He may be gracious to you; and therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you. For the LORD is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for Him. (NKJ)*

If we take the entire prophecy—and for sake of time we're not going to do it—that Isaiah wrote including chapter 30, it takes and we see Israel from one extreme to the other. It shows Israel as a very stubborn, stiff-necked, self-indulgent people and they've moved God off into a corner. They've gone after their own interests. What they wanted to do became more important. Then, it shows them the penalty of their ways—the death and the destruction and the hurt that follows. Then, it shows God returning and setting up His government and leading the people and their positive reaction to that.

But knowing that, let's personalize it. Before we get into some of the other aspects, let's personalize this to ourselves so that we can see ourselves in this because there are lessons that we can learn and apply, not just to encourage us, but also in our outlook and in our Christian walk.

I dare say not one of us listening to this has not wondered "What's God waiting on? Why are we still here?" 1972 came and went and I could go through all the dates. We're still here—2012. We're still here. What is God waiting on? Is God just enjoying seeing man squirm, like kind of pulling the wings off of a fly and watching them just suffer so much? Why hasn't it all ended?

Could it be... And I'm going to ask the question and then I'm going to give some support. Could it be that God continues to wait and not act because He's being merciful and patient with us, His people, those that He's working with, the Firstfruits? Could it be that what we see going on all around us is because of God's mercy and His patience with us?

I want you to consider something. First, as I said, set a marker there and turn over to Genesis 18. And we'll start in verse 20. This is an account you're very familiar with. Genesis 18:20.

Genesis 18:20. *And the LORD said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave,
21) "I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against [Me] that has come to Me; and if not, I will know."
22) Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the LORD. (NKJ)*

He literally stood in His way.

Genesis 18:23. *And Abraham came near and said, "Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?
24) "Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous that were in it?
25) "Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"
26) So the LORD said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes." (NKJ)*

"I'm not going to destroy all that wickedness for the sake of those fifty righteous." God agreed to wait on the destruction of Sodom for the righteous' sake.

You all know the rest of the story. Abraham continued to whittle down the number of the righteous until... And just skip down to verse 32.

Genesis 18:32. *Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?" And He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of ten."*

33) *So the LORD went His way as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place. (NKJ)*

And you know how the story ends. But the point is the city, that society, was allowed to continue based solely on the righteous that were in it.

God went with a, if you will, a census. And He said, "Go count the number of righteous that are in the city." And He's going to make His decision—He made that promise to Abraham.

We know that God has allocated six thousand years for man to set up his governments, to try his own rule, to allow the record of death and sorrow and oppression to be written. There is not a one of us that hasn't spent countless hours trying to figure out "When is that six thousand years going to end?" Because, when it ends, Christ is going to return. So, all we have to do is be able to figure out when it's going to end. And we have come up with so many algorithms. And, "Well, was this really on the day of creation or did the calendar start?" We've gone through many, many machinations because if we could figure that out, then we know.

Now, understand I'm not stating there is no timeline. I'm not saying that, but these events we have no control over. But what I'm saying is "Could God be allowing us, who are poor and blind and miserable and naked, time to get our relationships with Him on a proper track? Could it be out of mercy and love for us that God is allowing this to go on?" Because, brethren, that we do have control over.

Go over to Matthew chapter 5. We know from Revelation, and I'm just filling in as we turn, there is a time that God is telling His people that they have become disgusting to Him to the point it's time to fish or cut bait and He's going to vomit them out of His mouth because they haven't responded to that. Matthew 5:11.

Matthew 5:11. *"Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.*

12) *"Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. (NK)*

And here is an interesting....

Matthew 5:13. *"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, (NKJ)*

Or "its savor" as it says in the King James.

Matthew 5:13b. ...how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot... (NKJ)

Christ is telling them this earth, mankind is savory to God because of the salt, because of those that He is dealing with. And it is His people that make the earth savory, but as they diminish or as mankind's evils increase in number, there is a tipping point that just like Sodom, enough is enough. The earth has lost its savor. I don't want this to sound...

Yesterday, Freda made this wonderful roast that she had cooked. We sat down to the table, put a fork in it, and put it in our mouth. And she put hers and she goes, "I forgot to salt this." Yeah, we did. And it's interesting how just a few grains of salt makes all the difference in the world. And when it's not there, you know it's not there.

And what Christ is saying here is it is God's people that savor, that add that savor to the earth. And at some point, it's going to be over.

The angels went to Sodom to take a census of the righteous that were in Sodom. God had already set the number at which He would spare the city. He said, "For ten, I'm not going to do it." But, again, there was not enough savor in Sodom and God destroyed it.

Look over in Ezekiel chapter 9. This idea of taking a census is one that is going to happen again in the future. Notice this, Ezekiel 9 and we'll just start in verse 1.

Ezekiel 9:1. Then He called out in my hearing with a loud voice, saying, "Let those who have charge over the city draw near, each with a deadly weapon in his hand." (NKJ)

And this was talking to the angelic beings.

Ezekiel 9:2. And suddenly six men came from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, each with his battle-ax in his hand. One man among them was clothed with linen and had a writer's inkhorn at his side. They went in and stood beside the bronze altar.

3) Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub, where it had been, to the threshold of the temple. And He called to the man clothed with linen, who had the writer's inkhorn at his side;

4) and the LORD said to him, "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it."

5) To the others He said in my hearing, "Go after him through the city and kill; do not let your eye spare, nor have any pity.

6) "Utterly slay old and young men, maidens and little children and women; but do not come near anyone on whom is the mark; ... (NKJ)

Notice!

Ezekiel 9:6b. *...and begin at My sanctuary.” So they began with the elders who were before the temple. (NKJ)*

For the sake of time, I won't go there—Revelation 11 where the temple of God was measured with a reed. We are the temple of God as God's Church and we are included in that measurement. And what God is doing or not doing in the Church and in the world includes us and it includes our spiritual condition and our growth. We do have some control over that.

Compared to God, we, as humans, we're very linear in our thinking with a very limited perspective on what He's doing today. I think about one of the natural disasters and you can see how everything goes just from order to just it's completely gone. We realize that the veneer between civilized people and chaos is so very thin and it's so fragile. I don't think the world thinks about it as being that fragile, but it is. We can think in our thinking of linear... Who of us is not guilty of saying, "Well, the end can't come because of this, this, this and this." And again, we have sort of tried to say, "Well, God can't do this because He promises this, this and this," when in fact, you can see that things can happen in minutes, hours.

I just watched on The History Channel it was sort of the early building of America. One of the things that happened at the turn of the century (1900s) was there were a lot of very wealthy people that had monopolies and they wanted to get a president in there that was very pro their monopolies and everything. Well, the person that was running against him was very anti. And they thought, "Well, here's what we're going to do because we can't run against him. We're going to get him to run as vice president because the vice president doesn't have any power." So they voted their guy in because this guy ran, got the popular vote. Did you know that president was the only one who never gave a State of the Union address because he was assassinated! And the people that they wanted in... The vice-president, who they didn't want in, became [president] and really broke up all of the monopolies and started all of that. Again, but here in their thinking, "We've got this all figured out."

It's incredible the knobs and the levers that God has that He bring to bear and at the snap of the fingers it's going in a different direction. It amazes me and it's just interesting to watch it.

But to think how God is going to do something or He can or He's not going to do something is not only foolish, it's also incorrect because none of us have the ability to see or understand God's mind, to understand God's mercy, to understand His love to the degree that He understands how he factors all of that into His actions at any one time. Again, we're very small and we're very limited and "Well, this is the way this is going to come out." It just isn't going to work that way. And, like I say, all of us big hairy-chested, smart, prophetic, deep people, I think we're going to standing there going "WOW! I would have never guessed that."

So, what is God waiting on? And why? brethren, God could be waiting because He's merciful.

We'll go back to Isaiah 30. Let's go back and reread that with that in mind. Isaiah 30 verse 18, it says:

Isaiah 30:18. *Therefore the LORD will wait, that He may be gracious to you; and therefore He will be exalted, ... (NKJ)*

Not us. We didn't figure it out. We didn't do it. We didn't broker a peace treaty. He will be exalted. And why is that?

Isaiah 30:18b. *...that He may have mercy on you. (NKJ)*

God is constructing a beautiful stunning building. And we answer to Him. If we understand, we will appreciate it and we will glorify Him for His patience and His mercy.

Romans 15 and we'll just pick it up in verse 3. It says:

Romans 15: 3. *For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me."*
4) *For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, ... (NKJ)*

What?

Romans 15:4b. *...that we through the patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. (NKJ)*

Let me just read that again.

Romans 15:4. *For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.*
5) *Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus,*
6) *that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (NKJ)*

This is for His glory. What He is doing is for His glory. But, brethren, it's for our—what we see and what we read—it's for our comfort; it's for our encouragement. As we move forward through very discouraging times, we can look at how God dealt with Israel, how He did allow them, but then there was an ending. And God, when the time was right, He brought His mercy and restoration on all of them.

Back to Isaiah 30. Let me read the rest of verse 18. It's interesting that it talks about patience and comfort that God waits on. Let's continue in Isaiah 30:18.

Isaiah 30:18. *Therefore the LORD will wait, that He may be gracious to you; and therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you. For the LORD is a God of justice; blessed are all those... (NKJ)*

Notice:

Isaiah 30:18b. *... who wait for Him. (NKJ)*

Who are patient, who have patience in Him.

One of the most difficult things, I think, is to understand that God will take care of everything. All of those injustices that we've all suffered, all of those mistreatments, all of those put downs, all of those character assassinations—God says He'll take care of them.

And I'll tell you something, as we spiritually mature and we come to see what we've been guilty [of,] we'll see that we have done the same things that were done to us that we did to others. At some point in our paths, that justice that God will mete out to those who have offended or hurt us, will not be a time for gloating celebration for us that they finally got their just desserts. But, brethren, I maintain we're going to remember our frailties and we're going to remember our sins and we're going to go to the Father and ask for mercy on those people that did that to us. That is one of the lessons we are learning, that we need to learn, that we should learn.

I know a person that at one time in his mind felt he had been very terribly wronged by a very close friend. And he had a great deal of love toward this person. And he would go to God and ask God to step in and harshly correct this person and to allow this person to see the damage that they had done. As time went on, this person started to see that he had issues as well, that he had problems. And, as those became clearer to him, his prayer went from demanding justice of God to asking for mercy on that individual.

How many of us, if we're honest with ourselves, have not done—and I could even put it in the present—and even do things against others that if God exacted swift justice, who among us would make it? Now I think it's a frightening thought if we want God to be just and swift to everyone but me. "I want all the patience. I want all the mercy, but You go get those skunks." It doesn't work that way. And like I say, I think as we spiritually mature and we really see what we were, it causes us to ask God for more mercy on people.

Ephesians chapter 4, I want to take it from them to us. Ephesians 4 verse 25 and I'm breaking into this. It says:

Ephesians 4:25. Therefore, putting away lying, “Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another.

26) “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath,

27) nor give place to the devil.

28) Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.

29) Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

30) And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by [which] you were sealed for the day of redemption.

31) Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.

32) And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you. (NKJ)

These are lessons that we need to learn now. These are the attributes that with God’s spirit, with God’s mercy, with His patience will even allow, if we learn it. to participate in what is written next in Isaiah 30. And you can be turning back to Isaiah 30.

When we read about this millennial scripture, about the teachers being with Israel, about the voice behind them, the entire scenario and us being in that is predicated on what we just read. God waits on us in patience and mercy and we learn to wait on Him and exhibit those godly characteristics of mercy and patience to all of those that we will be responsible for. How can we teach it if we’ve never learned it ourselves?

Isaiah 30, we’ll start back in verse 19:

Isaiah 30:19 For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem; you shall weep no more. He will be very gracious to you... (NKJ)

Just as we read in the previous verse about God being gracious, it’s repeated again.

Isaiah 30:19. ...at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you. (NKJ)

It’s interesting because this is talking about a relationship that’s being developed between God and man—God being glorious and gracious and merciful and man calling on God for help and God hearing and God intervening.

Now, does this mean that God is going to be their *genie*? Is He going to solve all of their problems? Is He going to smooth out all of the bumps in the road of life? Is He going to take all of the curves and make them straight? Is He going to turn all of the traffic lights green? Those of you that commute can appreciate that one.

Verse 20, notice:

Isaiah 30:20. *And though... (NKJ)*

After it talks about God being gracious and hearing, notice this verse comes after.

Isaiah 30:20. *And though the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, (NKJ)*

Wait a minute! Wait a minute! “Bread of adversity and water of affliction” in His Kingdom? In the world ahead? Whoa!

We understand this is a millennial prophecy, which, in my mind, goes beyond... If you think of a millennial prophecy, we think of the thousand years, but I believe that this also includes those that will come after.

I think James [Smyda] in his sermon [at the Feast of Tabernacles] talked about and sort of linked the Last Great Day as being an extension because our jobs are going to extend into that because that is when the majority of man is going to be able to develop that relationship. Frankly, it will be our time of being the busiest—whatever that means as a spirit being.

But in reality, this prophecy is inclusive of all the period of humans that are developing a relationship with God and being given a chance to either accept or reject the tree of knowledge of good and evil and accept the tree of life. This prophecy, I believe is, referring to a time in the future when Christ rules over human beings to the end bringing [them] into a family of God. And what is interesting is as far as we can see as long as there are humans; it talks about God giving them the “bread of adversity and the water of affliction.” Why? I thought we were the only ones that were having this tough time.

Turn over to Romans chapter 5. We understand, especially those, that conversion is a process. For the fruits of God’s spirit to develop, there are certain processes that we must experience. Romans 5 verse 3, it says and I’m breaking into it. It says:

Romans 5:3. *And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;*

4) and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

5) Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit [that] was given to us. (NKJ)

Do you think that there’s one process now and there will be a different one in the future? It says they’re going to have “the bread of adversity, the water of affliction.” It’s that that helps develops character. It’s that that helps develop patience. It’s that that helps develop mercy. And I think as we go through this more, we understand just... And I think anyone that says, “These tribulations that I go through are good,”

but the Bible says that we should rejoice. Not in them, but in knowing the peaceable fruit that they're going to bear.

Man's experience in making the choice of the tree of life will include tribulation. No one is going to get a free pass because that process is a refining process and it develops godly character.

Okay, back to Isaiah 30. It says, and I'll pick it back up in verse 20.

Isaiah 30:20. *And though the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your teachers will not be moved into a corner anymore, (NKJ)*

I want to take this out of the future for a few comments and then, we'll go back to the future.

God set up a Levitical priesthood to teach the people. And they utterly failed in that. The priesthood became marginalized. No one really gave them much thought. And those that did told them what they wanted and that was to be stroked and told how good they were. And they wanted to feel good and "We just can't have our self-image damaged;" so they did that.

Look over in Isaiah, just look up the page to verse 9 of Isaiah 30. Notice this.

Isaiah 30:9. *That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children who will not hear the law of the LORD;*
10) Who say to the seers, "Do not see," and to the prophets, "Do not prophesy to us right things; speak to us smooth things, prophesy deceits.
11) Get out of the way, turn aside from the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us." (NKJ)

Don't tell us what we're doing wrong. We don't want that. Tell us the good things. Come back and tell me the Cardinals won the World Series. Oh, okay. Well, that's a stretch, but anyway.

In the future... (I hope I didn't offend anybody here.) In the future, the teachers are going to be battled-hardened, experienced, and all of those hairy-chested terms, but they're also going to be merciful and loving and patient and kind and gentle. They're going to be teachers that are very concerned about the welfare of their students. And those of you that have ever been a teacher or are a teacher now understand those values and the necessity of that.

Okay, let's go back now to the future. Back down to verse 20. It says:

Isaiah 30:20. *And though the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your teachers will not be moved into a corner anymore,... (NKJ)*

You're not going to be on your own. It's not just you against the world.

Isaiah 30:20b. *...but your eyes shall see your teachers.
21) Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left. (NKJ)*

If you want a title for today's sermon, it is Your Eyes Shall See Your Teachers. I want to spend the remainder of the sermon fleshing out these statements.

We understand, as the firstfruits called by God and married to His Son at the marriage supper serving mankind and bringing many sons to glory that that's talking about us. When we project ahead and we try to flesh some of that out, it gets very murky and we see through a glass very darkly. And there is just so much of it that we don't understand. And there is so much that we, as humans, lack the capacity. Let me quickly say that before I set your expectations that I'm going to tell you all you ever wanted to know. My goal is just to shine a little bit of a light through that glass that we see darkly. But, I think, sometimes if you can relate it to things we understand, it will give us a better perspective. Surprisingly, the Bible does give us a good deal of information about this. And we will see there is some detail about some of the specifics. I think, again, you're going to find it encouraging.

First, I would like to start with let's just get up and take a 50,000 foot view of man and God and that relationship just to see what God's initial desire was. Go back to Genesis chapter 2 and we'll just pick it up in verse 15. It says:

Genesis 2:15. *Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. (NKJ)*

Again, we're breaking into this, but this is one you're very familiar with. And here's the question: Is tending and keeping an instinctive process?

When a baby is born, they know how to suck their thumb and a few other things. They know how to cry, but very little else. A baby left to that wouldn't at some point get up and go out and start tending and keeping a garden. I know there are people with green thumbs but that still comes on very slowly. There are people with brown thumbs that don't like the color green I guess. I don't know.

But here's the point: Does the fact that God expected Adam to tend and to keep, does it not at first demand that there was some instruction on how to tend and how to keep? Could you imagine sitting at God's feet and being taught not just His laws and His truth but how to properly function in this beautiful environment that He provided?

Verse 16:

Genesis 2:16. *And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat;*

17) "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

18) And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."

19) Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. (NKJ)

And I will tell you as a grandfather with grandchildren, I believe that as Adam named these, it thrilled God to allow him to be part of that process. Even it was as basic as that. And God said, "You know what? This is taking a long time to do because sometimes he's a little indecisive. 'Should I call him Big Ears or Long Nose? Or should I call him Rough Skin?'" or whatever. I don't know, but as humans we kind of want to cut to the chase. God could have come to Adam and said, "Look, here's a picture. Here's the name. Name him." But He didn't. He wanted to... And, again, this was a process that God participated in. And I will tell you I believe it thrilled God to take those to Adam and to allow Adam to be a part of that process. There were lessons in that for Adam.

Genesis 2:20. *So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him. (NKJ)*

Here, again, God cares what Adam wants to call the animals. I believe Adam and Eve had a close friendship with God. God visited with them. He taught them. He spent time with them. He shared the garden, which He enjoyed, with them. We know these things because we can read them. It's recorded. God didn't just make man and then just disappear and go, "I'll send you a postcard from Maui," or wherever God went off to. God was there.

I personally believe—and we could get off on a tangent—but I personally believe a lot of the knowledge that we have today comes from that period that was given to man directly from God. I hope this is not too crude, but one of my friends on Facebook said, "I wonder what the first person that looked at the cow's udder and said, 'I think I'll pull on that and drink whatever comes out.'" I think God taught man some of those things. I think it was something that they learned. I think a lot of what we have today came from that.

I think this idea that man was real inferior and they've just gotten smarter all over all the years, again, I think that's very Satanic, because Satan said they didn't know anything. They had to do that and start from there. But the idea that ancient men were just ignorant bumpkins and they just continued...

Now, let me say, I don't think our ancestors had electric generators and atomic power, but I will tell you this world, this earth, is dotted with engineering feats that to this day with our modern equipment, we can't figure out how they did it! They look at the columns in Rome. They look at the pyramids. They look at the statues on Easter Island and they still scratch their head. How did they do it? We know they didn't go and rent a D8 Cat and put it up, but some of the precision they were able to do! I watched a show the other night and this man had a feeler gauge, a one thousandth inch feeler gauge. And he couldn't put it between two columns into the crack because it was so perfectly fitted. How did they do it?

And my favorite—fermentation. Now, everybody thinks about it. I'm not saying God was home-brewer. I know the president is, but I'm not saying God is. But the process of fermentation and what that did, the fact that there is a process called nixtamalization. And that is, with corn and with those grains that they had to be processed with an alkaline solution because otherwise they were a poison. And we realize now that we have microscopes and we can understand the process that that caused the grains to release nicotinic acids and niacin and other beneficial enzymes.

But it's interesting the original term "Montezuma's revenge" took place because the Spanish conquistadors went over to the Indians and brought corn back to the Old World. And people were eating it and they were dying from it of pellagra, which is your skin rots off. In 1915, thirteen hundred people in South Carolina died in a ten month period from pellagra, from this lack of processing these grains. Now, who would have ever thought, "Oh, we take what comes out of the fire. We mix it with water. We put it in there for a while and then, it makes it where it doesn't hurt us." I still believe that was something that was passed on.

Again, fermenting beer—ah! That is—ask Eric—that is a critical process. And we know they did it because, in the tombs in Egypt, the process is written out and it's talked about. And there are pictures in the glyphs about it. How did they do that without microscopes? I still personally believe a lot of that was taught to mankind and then was carried away from there.

Now, again, I don't want to say God gave man everything. God knows that's not good. Learning and exploring and building and sharing are fun and it's fulfilling. Again, I can only speak now—maybe I shouldn't say I can only speak. Now, I can speak as a grandpa. And there was a time that whatever customer I had at IBM, that was the foremost in my mind. And, now, it's sitting down with my grandkids and coloring and building rockets or whatever it is, but it's learning and exploring with them and helping them learn those things.

Remember God is not a respecter of persons. God, just as in the Garden of Eden, desired to have a face-to-face relationship with man. The original state—and you can be turning to Genesis 3:8—**the original state was for man's eyes to see their**

teacher. And His intent was to continue that friendship and that relationship for a person's lifetime.

It was man that initially separated himself from God. Again, Genesis 3:8, just across the page, it says:

Genesis 3:8. *And they heard the sound of the [Eternal] God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. (NKJ)*

Do you know what? Is that not human nature? Is that not when we've wronged somebody? When we do something, we want to avoid them. We want to go off and hide. We want to stay away from them. It's something in our consciousness. It's something the way God put us together.

But God's initial intent, His desire was to have a face-to-face, personal friendship with man.

Let's move to another area. God has made a number of immutable promises to us that we can stake our physical and our spiritual lives on. Again, we could spend our complete sermon on these, but let me just go through them. I've covered them in the past. So, I'm going to just mention them and in saying that, be turning to Hebrews 13.

God promised us, every one of us, "I will never fail you nor forsake you." He made that promise and God cannot lie. Hebrew 13 verse 5, it says:

Hebrews 13:5. *Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." (NKJ)*

And that's quoted from Deuteronomy 4:31; 31:6, 8; Joshua 1:5 and others.

Hebrews 13:6. *So we may boldly say: ... (NKJ)*

We don't have to even be timid about this!

Hebrews 13:6b. *"The Lord is my helper; I will not fear [what man can do to me]." (NKJ)*

The second is a reiteration of that promise. Look over in Matthew 28 verse 20. Again breaking into the thought, it says in Matthew 28:20 and this was right before He ascended:

Matthew 28:20. *"teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen. (NKJ)*

It's interesting when the angel appeared to Joseph (And, it's recorded in Matthew 1:23, you don't turn there), but he reiterated the messianic prophecy that was recorded in Isaiah 7:14 and let me just quote it.

Isaiah 7:14. *"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel. (NKJ)*

And, then, Matthew 1 goes on to say:

Matthew 1:23. *...which is translated, "God with us." (NKJ)*

That prophecy was not just an event of His birth, it was a promise of what He had done in Israel, what He was doing and what He is called today and what He will do in the future with mankind and will do with anyone that desires to have a relationship with Him.

God is with us. He is Immanuel to us today. God walks with us if... And it even says He's going to make His home with us.

One of the lessons that should be driven home to us over the past years, and again, are all of the natural disasters—the heat and the drought and the hurricanes and the earthquakes—just to see how thin everything is. There is nothing that any of us can do to prevent them. And let me go on to say, there is nothing that any of us can do to deliver ourselves from those. We are in it and if we make it, God has delivered us.

Here's the point. There is a certainty when Christ returns and sets up His government and He starts to lead the broken-hearted and the shattered mankind back into a relationship that that will be a face-to-face relationship that we read about in Isaiah 30. And, since the firstfruits will be part of the God Family, our job—their job—will be to have that same face-to-face, one-on-one, intimate friendship that God had with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. We're going to be doing that with those that come after us! That was a template. That's what God desires. That's how God initially dealt with man. And that's what He's telling us in Isaiah 30 when He says your eyes are going to see your teachers. We're going to be their friends. We're going to be their companions. We're going to be the ones that are going to be there to teach.

So, here's the question: Is there ever a precedent of this happening before? Has there ever been a human being that has lived, has died, has been resurrected and walked among men as their teacher? And is there possibly a template that we can examine?

Look over in Acts chapter 1. Acts 1 and verse 1, it says:

Acts 1:1. *The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,
2) until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen,
3) to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days... (NKJ)*

Take note of forty days.

Acts 1:3b. *...and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. (NKJ)*

In other words, what did Christ do after His resurrection for that forty day period? He just told us. First, He showed them He was the Messiah; He was God, but then He taught them. He taught them God's truth. He taught them God's laws, those things that pertain to God's Kingdom.

Acts 1:4. *And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, .. (NKJ)*

Again, I find it interesting that after He was resurrected, He walked with the apostles for forty days. And I do think that is very significant that that is mentioned because that same God very visibly with ancient Israel accompanied them on their forty year journey through the wilderness. He was there and He was visible to them as the cloud and the fire. We can read that. It's recorded. We understand that forty is a prophetic time of testing.

Our journey is symbolically, prophetically a forty year journey. And He's with us; He is Immanuel; He is God with us on our entire journey. And He will never leave us and never forsake us.

So what did He do during those forty days? And, again, I think if we start to put those under the microscope that will give us a good idea of what we're going to be doing for those that come after us and what we will be doing for every person that has ever lived during their forty year journey whenever that is. And, again, for most of mankind that's off into the future.

It gives us a great deal of information how a resurrected spirit being interacts with humans. Let's examine the record. Look over in Luke chapter 24 and we'll start in verse 9. It says:

Luke 24:9. *Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest.
10) It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles.*

11) *And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them.*

12) *But Peter arose [Simon Peter rose] and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.*

13) *Now behold, two of them... (NKJ)*

And these are two of the disciples.

Luke 24:13b. *...two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem. (NKJ)*

And this is mentioned briefly in Mark 16:12. This village is not known to this day. Even in the Crusades in the 1200s, it was lost. There was a Fort Emmaus that the Romans had built, but they're not even sure that was [it]. But we know it was about seven miles or I think sixty furlongs from Jerusalem. It was about a two-hour journey from Jerusalem to Emmaus.

Luke 24:14. *And they talked together of all these things which had happened. (NKJ)*

So, here they are. They're walking.

Luke 24:15. *So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. (NKJ)*

So, they're walking and here comes this other person up alongside them.

Luke 24:16. *But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.*
17) *And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?"*

Notice here is the Creator. He didn't come on the scene like gangbusters and say, "Okay, I'm here now. I'm going to take over. Let Me tell you all about it." He didn't start even telling them who He was. He walked with them. He listened to their conversation and then He asked them about it. He wanted their perspective. He was interested in what they had to say.

He asked about their welfare. "Well, why are you sad?" What was their state of mind? There was genuine concern with Christ as He walked with these two. And, again, God holds the universe in the palm of His hands, yet He came to them and He was concerned about them. And He didn't even say, "Let Me tell you who I am." He asked them questions.

Just hold your finger there—second marker. 1 Kings 19, just to make a point here. Again, God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. I just want to make a point of

that. 1 Kings 19 verse 10, and, of course, this is the story of Elijah. God had come to Him.

1 Kings 19:10. *So he said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, ... (NKJ)*

1 Kings 19:10. I think I'm going too fast here.

1 Kings 19:10b. *...Your Covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life."*
11) *Then He said [God told Elijah], "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the LORD." And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake;*
12) *and after the earthquake a fire, ... (NKJ)*

Are these not all the natural disasters that we're experiencing now?

1 Kings 19:12b...*but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire... (NKJ)*

And God was showing him all of these things, but it wasn't God. Here was God,

1 Kings 19:12 continued. *...a still small voice. (NKJ)*

And what did that voice say?

1 Kings 19:13. *So it was, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. Suddenly a voice came to him, and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" (NKJ)*

Again, here's the Great God and He's asking Elijah to talk about what he's feeling, what's on his mind. Just as those who were on the road to Emmaus, those two disciples, Christ wanted to know "What's going on? Why are you sad? What has happened?"

And, for the sake of time, we won't go [there], but remember that Adam sinned and he hid himself from God. Remember what God—and we read it before—God said, "Where are you?" He was looking for Adam.

Okay, back to Luke 24. It says, in verse 18, Luke 24:

Luke 24:18. *Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, ... (NKJ)*

Do you know what? I think today we'd go "Well, what planet have you been on?" But he said:

Luke 24:18b. *"Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?" (NKJ)*

That rocked to the roots—Christ's crucifixion.

Luke 24:19. *And He said to them, "What things?" (NKJ)*

Now He wasn't playing with them. He wanted them to talk. He wanted them to express themselves.

Luke 24:19b. *So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, 20) "and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him.*

21) "But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened.

22) "Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us.

23) "When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive.

24) "And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see."

25) Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!

26) "Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?"

27) And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He... (NKJ)

What?

Luke 24:19b. *...expounded to them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself. (NKJ)*

He was teaching them. He was bringing to mind the scriptures. He was their teacher and their eyes, in this case, were seeing their teacher.

What did He do on this journey? He taught them from God's Word. That was what was important. He didn't say, "Look, let Me tell you who I am." He said, "Look at all these scriptures talking about the Messiah and what He was going to go through." They began a friendship and a relationship with Him on that journey. It wasn't run down their throats. They broached the subject and He taught them from God's Word.

Verse 28:

Luke 24:28. *Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone [further]. (NKJ)*

“Look, I’ll see you later. I’m going to go on.” I think it’s significant because Christ did not put Himself on them. It wasn’t, “Hey! While I’m telling you, let Me continue on.” He said (because He’s humble), He said, “I’m going to continue on. “But they,” verse 29:

Luke 24:29. *...they constrained Him, saying, “Abide with us, ... (NKJ)*

They invited Him into their lives. They wanted to learn from Him. They wanted Him to teach them.

Luke 24:29b. *...”Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.” And He went in to stay with them. (NKJ)*

Sometimes when we think of God coming back (and all of the things that are going to surround that), we think of this God that is just going to force everything down people’s throats. God is not going to do that. God doesn’t go where He is not invited. Just hold your finger there and look over in John 14 verse 21. It says:

John 14:21. *“He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and... (NKJ)*

What?

John 14:21b. *...manifest Myself to him.” (NKJ)*

22) *Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, “Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?”*

23) *Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. (NKJ)*

You see, They are invited into our lives. We invited Them into our lives. We ask God; we ask Jesus Christ to be a part of our lives. They don’t just force Their way in. And that’s true with what’s coming. The people that are going to have that relationship with God are going to have to desire it and ask for it.

Remember when God was on His way to Sodom? Abraham, who was the father of the faithful came out and invited Him in. God didn’t come and say, “Hey! Listen, I hope you have a calf killed because we’re going to come in and eat with you.” Abraham invited God in.

As spirit beings, we're not going to force ourselves on people. Our job will be to go where we're invited and to help when we're asked.

Remember—and we won't turn there—one of the instructions that Christ gave the apostles was to only go where they were invited. When He said, "When you go to a city, you don't have to go and tell people. Wait until you're invited. And when you go to that home, you stay there and you teach."

God's way is not to force His will on anyone. There is a saying and it is so true. A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still.

And you can take that one to the bank. God is not looking for compliance out of constraint or demand. God is looking for compliance because we love Him and we know He's doing what is best for us. They have to come to the point that they are going to desire it and ask for it.

Back to Luke 24 and verse 30. It says

Luke 24:30. *Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table... (NKJ)*

And it's interesting that word "sat at the table". We're sitting at tables now and we're in our chairs and our backs are straight. But the word "sat at the table," which is one Greek word; it's #2625, *kataklino* (*kat-ak-lee'-no*). It comes from the root word to mean *to lie and to recline*. Remember when they used to eat, it wasn't chairs. They had a low table and they sort of reclined on one side. That reclining was a way of relaxing and developing a friendship and showing, let's say, even a vulnerability to one another.

It says:

Luke 24:30. *Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. (NKJ)*

Now, it's just an aside, but this was during the Days of Unleavened Bread. But this is what He did. He served them. He didn't say, "I'm kind of hungry. Give me some of the bread." He took the bread. He blessed it. He broke it and He gave it to them. He served them.

Are we going to be just standoffish teachers in the corner just waiting to go, "This way, walk in it! This a way, walk in it!"? Or are we going to have a relationship? Are we going to have a close intimate friendship with those that we're serving? Not lording it over, but as servants, as serving them?

Up to this point, all of this had happened; they still didn't know who the person was who was serving them.

Verse 31:

Luke 24:31. *Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; ... (NKJ)*

At that point, they realized “This was Immanuel. This was God walking with us and among us.” And notice as soon as that came:

Luke 24:31b. *...and He vanished from their sight. (NKJ)*

He was gone.

Now how did they receive what He said and taught and all of that? How did that come on them? Verse 32. Now remember, it was near night. They had just come the two hours. They had eaten.

Luke 24:32. *And they said to one another, “Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the scriptures to us?” (NKJ)*

In other words, “That was so exciting! That was so fulfilling. That was so interesting for us even down internally.”

Luke 24:33. *So they rose up... (NKJ)*

So, they didn’t just hear.

Luke 24:33. *So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, (NKJ)*

They took the two hour trip back.

Luke 24:33b. *...and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, (NKJ)*

So, here they go back two hours to Jerusalem to meet up with the eleven apostles. Verse 34:

Luke 24:34. *saying, “The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!”
35) And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.
36) Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, “Peace to you.”
37) But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit.
38) And He said to them, “Why are you troubled?” (NKJ)*

Notice He always cares about what they’re thinking and about what they’re feeling.

Luke 24: 38b. *[Why are you afraid?] And why [are there] doubts?*
39) *"[Look at] My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me..."* (NKJ)

In other words, "Touch Me." 1 John 1:1, we won't turn there, but even John said "From the beginning we've heard; we've seen with our eyes; we've looked upon; our hands have handled concerning the Word of Life." But He says, "Handle Me. Touch Me."

Luke 24:39b. *... see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."* (NKJ)

Christ had manifested Himself as a human being. Even as a spirit being, He walked among as one of them. He went even to their level.

Luke 24:40.

Luke 24:40. *When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.*
41) *But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?"*
42) *So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb.*
43) *And He took it and ate [it] in their presence.*
44) *Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets ..."*
45) *And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the scriptures.* (NKJ)

He ate food with them.

I'll tell you what. Just let this be our last scripture. Turn over to John 21, just one other. I think we are probably running out of time, but I just want to make one other point or no. Let's just submit the point we just made. John 21:9, this is where the apostles had given up on Christ. "Look, I'm going back, going fishing."

John 21:9. *Then, as soon as they had come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid on it, and bread.* (NKJ)

What did Christ do? He was still serving them! He had prepared a meal for them. He had cooked their fish.

John 21:10. *Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish which you have just caught."*
11) *Simon Peter went up and dragged the net to land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not broken.*

12) *Jesus said to them, "Come and eat breakfast." Yet none of the disciples dared ask Him, "Who are You?"—knowing that it was the Lord.*

13) *Jesus then came and took the bread and gave it to them, and likewise the fish. (NKJ)*

Again, He was serving them. He wasn't on a throne. He wasn't clapping His hands saying, "I'm hungry. Bring Me a meal." He served them because of the tremendous love He had for them.

Verse 14.

John 21:14. *This is now the third time Jesus showed Himself to His disciples after He was raised from the dead. (NKJ)*

And again, for the sake of time, I would just encourage you to do an in-depth study of the forty days that Jesus walked the earth after His resurrection. It's about as true a vivid picture that we can get from the scriptures on how the family of God, Jesus Christ and the firstfruits, are going to deal with and interact with mankind. But remember, their eyes are going to see their teachers. They're going to teach face-to-face where they are invited, where they are wanted, where they are invited in.

But they're not just going to teach. They're going to be among. They're going to eat together. They're going to laugh together. They're going to play together. They're going to... Because we all know "I don't care how much you know until I know how much you care." We have to have a relationship before that teaching we're going to be doing is going to have a positive effect on them.

During any person's time of trial and testing, we need to understand that we now are not alone and during their time of affliction and their time of testing, they're not going to be alone either. The difference is we as the firstfruits, as kings and priests, are going to walk among men. We're going to teach them God's word. We're going to encourage and we're going to have a relationship with them. We're going to know them and they will come to know and love God through our teaching, our encouragement, our gentle correction and our example of service.

Back to Isaiah 30 and verse 20.

Isaiah 30:20. *And though the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your teachers will not be moved into a corner anymore, but your eyes shall see your teachers. (NKJ)*

brethren, that's going to be us as their teachers, as their mentors, as their friends.

Isaiah 30:21. *Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," (NKJ)*