Isaiah 51:1-2

**Listen -- Look -- Learn**

“(1) **Hearken to me**, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: **look** unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. (2) **Look** unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.”

The day in which Isaiah spoke these words was a dark day for Israel as a people. Those who knew the Lord and His promises were cast down because they could see so much more in the Scriptures than they saw with their own eyes.

Israel had been divided at the end of Solomon's reign. The majority of those professing to be followers of Jehovah had been led off into idolatry. The judgment of God was upon his own people - It had begun in the house of the Lord! Isaiah and others who truly followed Jehovah had witnessed the people of God turning to Assyria for help against their enemies instead of to the One, True and Living God. Further judgment was coming from the Lord upon them.

Isaiah had been privy to the future events which would come upon the people of God. He knew they would turn to more and more idolatry. He knew more and more judgment would come upon their land as a result. He knew they would eventually be taken captive by the Babylonians and carried off to a far land. He also knew that only a remnant would be preserved. Indeed, if it had not been for the Lord's mercies to this day they would have already been as Sodom and Gomorrah. (**Isaiah 1:9-10**)

What were the people of God to think? Did not the promises of God say that they would be as the stars in the heavens and as the sand upon the sea shore in number? Did not the Scriptures teach that the people of God were to be a glorious people? Did not the Scriptures teach that the blessings of God would be upon the true people of God? Were not they the true people of God? Did not those promises of grace and glory belong to them?

What were they to think of God -- His word -- His promises? Were they true or not?

**Question**: Can the people of God get discouraged? Can the people of God become cast down? Can the people of God be plagued with unbelief, doubt, and even questions concerning the veracity of God's word?

God calls out to His people! It is the voice of God and not the voice of Isaiah that arrests the people of God. It is He who instructs them to listen – to hear - what He had to say to them.

First: Listen -- “Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD ...”

**Hearken --** To hear intelligently.

I want your close attention so that after you hear you may be able to obey. God is calling His people together so they may give serious consideration to that which He is about to speak. God is saying, “Cause yourself to hear that which I have to say, understand what I am saying so you may be able to obey me.”

The people of God are described in two ways:

**1. Ye that Follow** -- to run after, chase, follow after or pursue

**2. Ye that Seek** -- to search out especially in worship or prayer; to strive after:--to ask for, beg for, beseech, desire, inquire after, or seek for. An active vigorous seeking after righteousness. In the New Testament it is expressed in the words -- hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

# Sometimes those we are true Christians listen to all kinds of different voices

**1. Jonah 2:8** -- “They that observe **lying vanities** forsake their own mercy.”

They were guilty of listening to those things which lie to them! They were guilty of believing vanities (false religions) over what God has said in His word.

**2. Mark 4:24** -- “And he said unto them, **Take heed what ye hear**: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given.”

Are we listening to the voice of God or the voice of another? Are we listening to our own hearts? Are we listening to our own understanding? Are we listening to our own reasoning? What are we listening to?

**3. Luke 8:18** -- “Take heed therefore **how ye hear**: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.”

Are we listening carefully? Are we listening in faith? Are we listening with confidence toward God? Are we listening so as to be instructed? Are we listening so as to be led from faith to faith? How are we listening?

**We should be listening to the voice of our God in our daily devotions** -- our times of prayer -- in the counsel of the brethren -- in the preaching and teaching of God's word. Is God speaking to us? Are we listening?

Second: Look -- “... look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: ...”

To give evidence to what He is about to teach His people and to instill confidence in them, God instructs them to **look** (to think upon and to seriously consider) to the rock from which they were hewn and to the pit from which they had been dug.

**Look** -- to look intently at -- to carefully examine so as to understand. Cause yourself to give serious consideration to the matter - to look so that you see!

**The Rock** -- God gathers his jewels out of the mountain of people from all time. We as God's people are removed from the mountain of people and gathered to God as His own special treasure.

**The Pit** -- a hole (especially one used as a cistern or prison): dungeon, pit.

**Digged** -- to dig out, pick out.

When you are filled with all sorts of questions concerning the promises of God:

**A.** **Look at where God found you.**

**B. Look at what God has done in your own life.** How long has He taken to make you into one of His special jewels? God is quietly working even when we do not think He is doing so.

# C. Look at your spiritual forefather, Abraham and his wife Sarah.

1. Their lives testify that the promises of God are true.

2. Their lives testify that the promises of God will come in God own time.

3. Their lives testify that the promises of God are not hindered by our weak and feeble attempts to fulfill what we believe to be God's will nor or they hindered by our failures during the time we are waiting for them to be fulfilled.

4. The elect of God in every generation are exhorted to look to Abraham. As He acted in faith, waiting upon the Lord, so they are to act and wait.

**Romans 4:16-21** – “(16) Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, (17) (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. (18) Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. (19) And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: (20) He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; (21) And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.”

Third: Learn -- “… for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.”

**Called** - to call out to - to call for, to call forth, to call upon

# A. God called

1. God is the one who called us out of darkness in to His glorious light

2. Our callings in life are also from the Lord. Whatever calling God has called you to is where we are to remain until He very obviously changes that calling.

3. The difficulty of the place of our calling is no indication of it not being the called of God.

**Alone** - As one individual and promised him He would make him a nation. But God did not call Him after He had made Him into a nation. He called Him alone. Abraham had God's promise. He failed in his understanding of how and when God would fulfill that promise. He tenaciously held onto God for the promise in times when he questioned how it would be fulfilled.

# B. God blessed

Blessed -- when used with regard to man it means that God bestowed abundant benefits upon him.

1. Day by Day

2. More on certain occasions

3. Finally in due season according to His will

# C. God increased --

Increased -- to increase in whatever respect -- in abundance -- to enlarge, to exceedingly increase, to be made great - to heap upon, to increase much - to multiply, to nourish, to provide plentifully and thoroughly

**Question**: Did God increase Abraham? Was not Isaac God's increase to Abraham?

Child of God our God would have us listen to Him instead of this world, the evil one, or our own hearts. He would have us seriously consider where He has brought us from and what He is doing in our lives. He would have us seriously consider the life of our fore-father Abraham. His life was blessed. His life was increased with the increase of God. He was a man of faith.

That which God had promised came to pass. But it came to pass according to God's will and not Abraham's. True faith leaves the results to God. Can we leave the results of our lives to God?