

March 1st

*"Now when eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve."
(Mark 11: 11).*

It is recorded in the Gospels, that the Lord Jesus Christ visited Bethany eight times. As for as we read in the Scriptures, He never once stayed overnight in Jerusalem. He would go there in the morning, heal the sick and perform miracles, and then go to Bethany or the Mount of Olives nearby. The Mount of Olives and Bethany are side by side, and either He would go to the Mount of Olives to pray, or He would go to Bethany (Mark 11:1,11,19). On each occasion, after healing or teaching or performing miracles in Jerusalem, He would return to Bethany or to the Mount of Olives in the evening. Finally it was from Bethany He ascended into heaven (Luke 24:50). All this goes to show that the Lord Jesus had special lessons to teach His disciples in Bethany and it was at Bethany that He gave the last message and command to His disciples: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel."

Today's calendar Bible verse:

Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, that my feet did not slip. Psa 18:36.

March 2nd

"And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs, and they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered." (2Kings 20.7).

The word Bethany means house of figs. In the Bible figs speaks of health c.f. 2 Kings 20:7. Figs are a part of the normal diet of the Jews. In 1 Samuel 25:18 we read how Abigail brought the best things to David, hoping to appease his anger, and amongst them were two hundred cakes of figs. On another occasion in 1 Chronicles 12 :38-40 men of war came to make David King, and there was great joy in the whole Kingdom. There was feasting, and the best things were available for eating and drinking. Amongst those good things were cake of figs. This is an illustration of the value of the figs among the Jews, for feasting and also for health. Bethany as house of figs is also house of health.

The Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to bring us true health. All men are sick of sin and sickness of sin cannot be healed. Other diseases may be healed by medicines or by some other treatment, but this disease of sin cannot be healed. So the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to heal men and women from the sickness of sin.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

Let us not love in word, ... but in deed and in truth. 1 John 3:18.

March 3rd

"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not." (Jeremiah 33:3).

In Jeremiah 33:6 to 8, we read that because of rebellion and sin, the people of Israel became captives in Babylon for seventy years. Because of His love for them, God promise to bring them out from their captivity after seventy years.

He said: "I will pardon your sins and transgression and iniquity," and said also: "I give you health and cure." The Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to pardon our sin, transgression and iniquity, and to give us spiritual health. Because our unhappiness and miseries are due to our sins, when our sins are forgiven we become happy and full of joy and spiritual prosperity. Then we have liberty to call upon the Lord Jesus Christ for every thing we need.

Bethany speaks of spiritual health and cure. The Lord Jesus Christ speaking to show to through Bethany how men can receive health spiritually, and true peace. He went to Bethany a number of times, and on each visit, He gives and how we can receive true spiritual health. All diseases caused by sin, and even death itself. In Bethany there is healing, provided you come to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

I have loved thee with an everlasting love. Jer 31:3.

March 4th

"The Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." (Psa. 133.3).

The first time the Lord came to Bethany is recorded in John 11.1. The Lord had a special love for the family of Martha, Mary and Lazarus. They had many shortcomings, failures and inward weaknesses, but still He loved them. In the same way He loves you and me but unless we are fully prepared to receive that love, we cannot enjoy the life and joy and health He offers to us.

Man can be prosperous, but very miserable inside. Earthly prosperity is not of divine love, but that very wrong conception exists in many hearts. Men think of health and prosperity and spiritual blessing, but God's blessing is for eternity (Psa. 133.3). True blessing is always in terms of eternal life, and whatever we enjoy through eternal life is true blessing. When we have inward peace we enjoy true life, and in spite of whatever God may allow in our lives whether suffering or difficulties, because of eternal life we can enjoy true blessing. Blessings come to us in different ways. In fact, in Psalm 119:67,71 we see how David regards affliction and trials as blessing. He is thankful in his affliction because he learns how to keep and understand God's Word (Psa. 18:91, 35 and 36). Through the very same affliction, he comes into enlargement. In the same way in Job 42:6, 12, 13, through many painful trials, Job received a double portion of blessing. Whatever God may permit in our lives, even though it may be painful, because we enjoy eternal life it becomes a blessing.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths. Micah 4:2.

March 5th

"I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." (Rom: 7. 18).

To show His love to Martha and Mary, the Lord Jesus Christ came to Bethany again and again, but they had to be prepared to receive His fullness. The first time He came to show them their true condition. If we really want to receive God's love fully, we have first to see our sinful and corrupt condition. There is nothing good in us, as Paul testifies (Rom. 7:18). It takes us many years to learn that lesson, because we do not want to think that there is nothing good in us.

Outwardly the family at Bethany were very nice people. They looked after Lord Jesus and loved Him. They were not like the Pharisees and Sadducees who found fault with Him. This family had great respect for the Lord Jesus Christ, and welcomed Him with great joy every time. Whenever the Lord Jesus came from Jerusalem, He must have stopped there on the way. Even though His visits are recorded only eight times, He must have gone there many more times than that. The Lord knew very well their condition and it was not because they were perfect that He went there. He knew how much he could accomplish in them by going there so He kept on going. The first time He went, it was to show them their true nature and condition, for He only can see our hearts.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

Able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless. Jude 24.

March 6th

"If any man be in Christ he is a new creature, old things are passed away; behold all things are become new, and all things are of God." (2Cor. 5:17-18).

No doubt Martha and Mary belonged to a nice family. When the Lord Jesus to the house, straightaway Martha would begin to cook food, and straightaway Martha would come to the feet of the Lord Jesus. What a nice family they were, very generous, kind, loving and so hospitable, and above all a God-fearing family. But they had seen something which others could not see. Unless a man becomes totally new, he cannot receive God's love, power and grace. Even though outwardly he may look nice and well-behaved, none of these human virtues can satisfy God, unless they come from an inward change of nature. We remain under condemnation as long as we do not come to the Lord Jesus. Whatever we have through our old nature, our good behavior and manners or that which we call virtue, is nothing but filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). It is only as we receive new life that our nature becomes new.

So the Lord Jesus Christ came to Bethany to let them see first their true inward condition, for only then could He bless them. Patiently and lovingly He came to Bethany, till He found a change in the whole family. The Lord Jesus Christ very lovingly comes to us, and sends His people to us and His servants again and again till we are brought into full possession of new life. Then our yea become yea and our nay becomes nay, and every step will be controlled by Him. That takes time, but the Lord knows all our difficulties, and very lovingly comes to us again and again.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

I have put my words in thy mouth. Isa 51:16.

March 7th

"Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her." (Luke 10:41-42)

In the beginning we find there is not mention about Lazarus. Evidently he was not interested at first. He was a good man. There was no charge against him, for he was honest and hardworking, and a good brother. We know that, because Martha and Mary wept so much for him when he died. If he was a bad man, nobody would have wept for him. There are some very nice people who are very kind and very loving. But somehow they do not have any hunger or thirst for the things of God.

In Luke 10:40 we see how kind Martha was. As soon as she saw the Lord through the window, she got busy getting the fire ready and began to prepare the food. She was very hospitable, kind-hearted, and a very good cook. But she was also full of jealousy and bad temper. She went on cooking for sometime, but kept one eye upon Mary and one eye upon the food. She waited for a while, but her heart was burning, till looking very angry, she went to the Lord Jesus, and said "Lord look at that woman! Tell her to come and help me." By the Lord coming into her family, all her hidden weakness came out.

Whenever the Lord uncovers sin, He does it to bless us, but human beings uncover sin, to shame us. He went to Bethany not to shame us. He went to Bethany not to shame them, but to allow them to see their own folly and weakness, and how they could be transformed and become new.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart. 1 Kings 3:12.

March 8th

"Now mine eye seeth Thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job: 42.5-6)

In every way Mary was outwardly humble. Straightway she came to the feet of the Lord Jesus when He came into the house. She was so hungry for the Word of God, but judging by her attitude in John 11:20 she was too proud. It was true that the Lord Jesus had not come to them when they wanted Him, yet He was worthy of respect. Even though Martha was in sorrow, when she heard the Lord had come, she straightway left the house and went to receive Him. She knew she must welcome Him properly, and to show her respect went to meet Him, but Mary sat still weeping and saying: 'I won't go! I won't go! Why did He not come when we called Him? We loved Him and served Him! I won't go!' She was too proud.

The Lord went to Bethany in order first to let that family realize their true inward condition. Before God can bless us and help us. He must show us also our true nature. Unless we humble ourselves and see ourselves as the Lord Jesus sees us, He cannot bless us.

This is a picture of a true church. In every visit to Bethany He revealed something. He wants to teach us also how His love can come into us fully. Our Lord wants our heart, home and church to be a Bethany, and then there will be a triumphant life, a happy home and a living church. This threefold secret is revealed by our Lord going to Bethany.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you". Isa 66:13.

March 9th

"That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection." (Phil. 3: 10).

The first visit of the Lord Jesus Christ to Bethany is described in Luke 10: 38-42. The second visit was at the invitation of Martha and Mary. The first time He went of His own choice. But in John 11: 3 the sisters sent for Him to come home, because there was a special need at that time. Their brother was very sick. They did not know then what a great blessing the Lord Jesus Christ had in store for them by not coming immediately.

In the beginning of our Christian life, we go to the lord only when we are sick or any need. We pray only for our personal needs or problems. We think only for our personal need. We find however, that when the Lord delays in answering prayer, it means that He wants to give us a greater blessing. We can see from God's Word that the power of resurrection is the highest power in world (Phil 3:10). Paul was not longing for the miracles or the third heaven. He was longing for two things, viz., "that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection."

The Lord Jesus Christ went to Bethany for the same purpose—so that Martha, Mary and Lazarus might know Him more intimately, and so that they might have a personal experience of the power of His resurrection.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

The path of the just is as the shining light. Prov 4: 18.

March 10th

"Jesus said.... I am the resurrection and the life." (John 11.25).

In John 11.12 Martha said: "Wherever you ask God He will give it to you." In verse 24 again she says "I know that he shall raise again in the resurrection." When Jesus said that Lazarus would rise again on that very day, she could not believe it, though she believed he would rise at the last day. Even through the Lord Jesus was about to raise Lazarus, Martha came in His way and said: "Lord by this he stinketh; for he hath been dead for four days." The Lord had already told them to roll away the stone, but their faith was merely a mist. The Lord used a painful experience to reveal to Martha and Mary the power of resurrection.

Our faith is mostly head faith. When Mary rose up hastily and came where Jesus was as in verse 32, she said: "Lord, if thou hast been here my brother had not died", as if healing depended upon His going to the house. They had no living faith. Lazarus (John 11.44) came out of the grave wrapped about with the grave clothes. This was for a purpose. If God wanted He could have brought him out without the grave clothes. But Jesus said: "Loose him and let him go." Others had to come to help him. Thus Lazarus became free. New power came into him and automatically power came into Martha and Mary. So Martha, Mary and Lazarus became a happy family. Once we receive the power of resurrection, we are in a better position to enjoy God's plan.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

"Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you". John 15:7.

March 11th

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthen me". (phil. 4.13).

The Lord took Paul through many painful trials (2Cor.12:7-10). Nobody knows even today what his thorn in the flesh was, but we believe it was something very painful. That is why he besought the Lord thrice to take it away from him. He was not a man to grumble. He never complained to the Lord, nor did he murmur against the trials he went through (2Corinthians.11:24-28). With all these sufferings he never once complained. He knew how to go through the most painful sufferings. Never once did he say, "Oh Lord don't take me through these sufferings any more." Then came this thorn in the flesh. It was so painful that he prayed thrice for the Lord to take it away. He said "I cannot bear it any longer. This is too for me" The Lord said, "My grace is sufficient for thee." The thorn was for a purpose. First of all to keep him humble, lest he should exalt himself above measure, and secondly to prove the power of resurrection to him. In Philippians 4:11-13 he said: "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me."

There were times when he had to do without food for some days, and had other needs as well, yet he felt strong in all his trails. God permits in our lives many painful situations and circumstances that we may have an opportunity to prove His faithfulness, and so that the power of resurrection will come more and more to us.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living. Psa 142:5.

March 12th

"I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee." Gen. 12.2.

To prove resurrection power God made Abraham to wait till he had become old and his wife had passed the age for child-bearing. Unless God had put new life into those two bodies they could not have had a son. You can imagine the agony which they had to go through for twenty- five years after they left Haran. Abraham was a righteous man, but he had no son for a long time, and at last decided to make his will to the steward of his house. For many years he had been through agony and trials, and doubtless many mocked at him saying, "You said God would make of you a great nation! Why did He not give you a son? If He had wanted to, He could have given you a son long ago." Thus people may have mocked and ridiculed, and God was silent till Abraham knew the power of resurrection (Rom. 4:18-25). But that faith was given to him only after he had waited for 24 years. Then he began to see that God had poured into him and his wife the power of resurrection through they had passed the age of child-bearing. Unless God had put new life into those bodies, that miracle would have not been possible.

In the beginning, Abraham had some faith when God appeared to him. Straightway he had left his home and followed the Lord. But the Lord was not satisfied. He wanted the faith that would claim the power of resurrection.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee. Exo 20:24.

March 13th

"Without me ye can do nothing." (John 15.5).

It is only with the resurrection power that one can overcome all limitations, and trials and temptations. It is only with resurrection power we have an intimate knowledge of the Lord Jesus. Such an intimate knowledge of God comes by resurrection power. That is why Paul had no longing for vision, or dreams or signs; nor did he desire to be caught up to the third heaven. He longed to know Christ and the power of His resurrection.

Such a faith will not come easily till we have had many failures. After we have failed many times we will say, "O Lord, I confess I am no good." Consciously or unconsciously we depend upon our own strength, our wisdom and our knowledge. Paul said, "I die daily." (1Cor. 15. 31). As human beings we all remain weak in spite of our Bible knowledge, cleverness and past blessings. With our old nature we think we can conquer temptation. The devil brings something into our path every day, by thought, word or deed, and the Lord puts into our life some disappointment, some painful situation some trial or difficulty to teach us how to depend upon Him constantly. "Without me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). For all things you can depend upon Him. Generally we go to the Lord for big matters and not for small matters. That attitude brings us into many failures. We have to recognize the power of resurrection for small matters too, for every burden for every ministry, and for every need.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. Psa 91:14.

March 14th

"Against the day of my burying hath she kept this." (John 12: 7).

In John 12 is the record of the third visit of the Lord Jesus Christ to Bethany. On that occasion Mary anointed the feet of Jesus with costly ointment of spikenard. The house was filled with its odor and the sweet perfume must have been smelled from a distance by the people passing by, it was so strong and sweet.

That is how our Christian life should be, and also our Christian home life and our Church life. The sweetness of the Lord Jesus should be smelled and felt by all who pass by. The house speaks of peace and joy and victory, but before it was a house of sorrow, tears, unbelief and of murmuring almost everyday. Now it has become a house of joy, peace and happiness. Before we are born again, we are like a house of mourning, and our lives are full of defeat and failure and many problems, like Bethany was in Chapter 11. In some houses the people are full of murmuring and complaints, and this house was once like that, but it is now full of peace and joy, and a house of fellowship, worship, and victory, because His power has come into the family. In John 11 we saw how they all experienced the power of resurrection collectively.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

*The Lord shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.
Prov 3:26.*

March 15th

"There they made Him a supper, and Martha served." (John 12:2)

Mary, Martha and Lazarus had to face extreme difficulties and sorrow and shame, but with the same sorrow they experienced the power of resurrection; and in John 12 we find that the home is entirely different. Imagine the Lord sitting on one side of the table and the Lazarus on the other side and perhaps some other guests also. There, is Martha serving joyfully and Mary pouring the most costly ointment on the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ. These five things speak of grace for a triumphant life, a happy home and a living Church. Very lovingly and joyfully they have made the Lord Jesus Christ the Head of the family. Till that time He had been there as a guest only. Every time he came, they received Him as a guest, honored Him have Him food and entertained Him. Then He was only a guest, but now they have found by experience that He is their Lord and Savior and Creator, and must be the Head of the Home and their lives, so they have given Him the charge to comfort and console them, but had no power to take away their sorrow. But the Lord Jesus solved all their problems, wiped their tears, and turned sorrow into joy; so willingly and joyfully they made Him the Head of the family.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

*Thou shalt be called Hephzibah and ... Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee.
Isa 62: 4.*

March 16th

"Continue ye in my love." (John 15.9).

Many Christians regard the Lord as Head in the same way, but the Lordship of the Lord Jesus is not evident in their lives. It is only after many failures and defeat that they realize the importance of giving everything over to Him as the Head. I suffered for two years seeking to have that power in my life. I was reading the Bible the whole day, spending many hours in prayer and Bible study, attending meetings, and keeping myself from worldly association. But there was something lacking in my life till the Lord showed me the secret of living victorious life.

One night the Lord met me and said to me: "Tell me, Bakht Singh, how are your sins forgiven?" I said, "Lord, I acknowledged that I was a great sinner, and I believed that you died for my sins, and have forgiven me for my sins." Then the Lord said to me, "Do you believe that you are the weakest person living and that you have no power over the flesh?" At once I got the secret: that for even the smallest thing I had to consult Him; and that I could depend upon Him for wisdom, knowledge and strength for every detail, as a child holds the mother at every step because it cannot depend upon itself for anything. That is how we have to cast ourselves upon the Lord for everything (John 15.5). for the smallest thing we have to go to Him.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way. Exo 23:20.

March 17th

*"We have been planted together in the likeness of His death ... also ... resurrection."
(Rom. 6.5).*

We have to acknowledge the Lord Jesus as the Head of our family life, and Church life. Before we make and plan for prayer, for Sunday ministry or personal work, we should go to the Lord and make our plans in His presence. In practice however, we go to Him about big things and not about the small things. For our ministry on Sunday we pray two or three times, but for Open Air meetings we do not pray at all. That is how men treat lightly the things of God. However for everything we must go and consult Him, whether for family life, individual life or Church life, whether for a small or great ministry. Then we will know new life flowing into us, into the family and into the Church. But remember this: death and resurrection go together.

When we are born again, we are planted or grafted into the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. The word "planting" is important. Here it means "grafting". After grafting, the trees which formerly yielded sour fruit begin to yield good, sweet and large fruit. Paul uses the same word for grafting into the Lord Jesus. Not only has the Lord Jesus forgiven us our sins, but spiritually we are baptized into His death, burial and resurrection, and by the power of His death we are able to die to our old nature.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

Happy are ye, for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. 1 Peter 4:14.

March 18th

"The life which I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God." (Gal. 2:20).

Many people believe in the death of the Lord Jesus, but they will not die to their old nature, because they fail to appropriate the power of resurrection to make them new. As we are planted into the death of the Lord Jesus (Rom.6.5), we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection. It is very important that we claim by faith every moment and every day the power of resurrection for a triumphant and victorious life. Every time we read the Bible, we must pray and begin to read if there is service to do, we must pray and begin work. We must receive the power of resurrection by faith for every thing. The gift of God must be received every moment. It is an active and living faith as Paul says in Galatians 2:20 "the faith of the Son of God" – not our faith.

You must be conscious of the Lord Jesus Christ living in you, and then exercise faith for all your needs, responsibilities and trials. The same power can be received for our daily duties, and we receive the same power for times of temptation or hardship. It is wonderful power that is available to us. The two things go together, first, we receive into us the power to die to ourselves, and secondly the power of resurrection by faith.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God; him shalt thou serve. Deut 10:20.

March 19th

"At the name of Jesus every Knee should bow... and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." Phil 2: 10-11.

The Lord Jesus represents the head. Lazarus represents the power of resurrection. Thirdly, there was food on the table, which speaks of the word of God which we enjoy through our fellowship with our Lord Jesus. Then there will be true growth, both personally and with the family. Fourthly, Martha was serving joyfully (John 12: 2).

Mary was full of devotion and worship (V.3). Before she had been so proud. Openly she was humble, but inwardly she was proud. They now all acknowledge Jesus as their master, Lord, Creator and Resurrection; and say "Thou art worthy of all worship! When you see Him as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, honor Him as such.

There are five simple divine principles for a triumphant life, a happy home and a living church. Firstly we must go to Him for everything and get His approval all our plans; Secondly we must seek the daily appropriation of the power of resurrection for all our needs and problems and trials; thirdly, we must have fellowship, and be subject to the word of God; fourthly, there must be joyful service; and fifthly true devotion and worship with humility and gratitude. This five-fold secret is for a happy home, and a happy home fulfills the divine order. May our Lord give us this experience.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. Eze 36:29.

March 20th

*"Thy king cometh unto theelowly and ridingupon a colt, the foal of an ass"
Zech. 9: 9*

At His fourth visit to Bethany the Lord planned to reveal His Kingship. He wanted His friends to understand this, and how they could enjoy the privilege of that Kingship, and paradoxically how to be humble and meek. Many believers only accept the Lord Jesus as their Savior. They want Him only to forgive their sins and eventually to take them to heaven. They do not understand the real longing of the Lord Jesus to make them His coworkers and partners, and that, for that purpose they have to be brought under His kinship and Lordship constantly. After many years and failure, they understand and to give the right place to Lord Jesus in their hearts as heavenly king. He has to be our king of our hearts, home and church, and His authority must be fully exercised in our midst constantly, individually, as a family, and as a church.

Thought our Lord could have commanded any beast even a lion to ride upon, he choose purposely a colt of an ass. Among all animals a colt of an ass is a very rebellious animal. The colt of an ass will not allow anybody to ride on it and those who try to do so do not have any easy time, yet he choose an unbroken colt. When they brought this unbroken colt to him, straight away he sat on it and there was no kicking. It carried the Lord Jesus with great joy and obedience.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself. Matt 16:24.

March 21st

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart."(Matt.11:29)

Many believers, alas! Are unlike the colt and need to be beaten many times. That is our nature; we are so stubborn we do not yield to the voice of God easily. We only want Him to bless us and deliver us from difficulties. When it comes to doing His will we do not want that. We only want our will to be done that is why many believers do not grow spiritually, they do not obey the Lord Jesus Christ implicitly. Yet with what joy and humility the colt carried the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus was showing His disciples at that time, if they wanted to be His true disciples, if they wanted to serve Him and follow Him, then they should be like that colt. By nature it was stubborn, but in God's presence it was perfectly humble and obedient. No man can break our will. All of us are very stubborn and it is only after many years of beating that we become humble.

There are different kinds of pride in all of us and that is why we find it hard to obey the Lord implicitly. The Lord has to break our pride in many ways. Sometimes they breaking comes through sickness.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. Matt 16:24.

March 22nd

"The Lord saveth not with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lords."(1Sam.17:47).

God has His own way of breaking all of us. David himself testified in 1 Samuel 17:47, and declared very boldly that he was not defending upon the sword or any other weapon. Yet, after winning many other battles in the strength of the Lord he wanted to take pride in numbering his people, to show to others that in his kingdom there were many mighty men or valor to fight enemy. He commanded Joab to number the people. Joab reminded him that he had not fought any battle in his own strength, nor by the strength of his army, but that it was the Lord that had fought for him. Yet the king's word prevailed and Joab numbered the people, till God's wrath fell upon David, and he was brought to the threshing floor, (2Sam.24:15,16) to break his pride. A threshing floor is the place where men separate the grain from the chaff. David had begun to take pride in his knowledge, schemes and plans, but God was telling him; "David, what you called cleverness is nothing but chaff." He had to be brought to the threshing floor to be humbled and emptied, and to break and take away his strength and self-sufficiency. God does the same to us to make us depend upon Him completely. That very threshing floor later became the site for Solomon's temple (2Chronicles 3:1)

Today's calendar Bible verse:

The Lord... will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom. 2 Tim 4:18.

March 23rd

"Jesus said ... If a man love me, he will keep my words." (John 14:23)

Many people take pride similarly in the work of God. They are ignorant of God's word, and think it is old fashioned. Instead they take in their degrees and their philosophy, and to impress the crowds they use worldly means. They do not use God's word as they should. In preaching they use references to break up what they say, but men can never go against God's word. God uses different methods to break our pride in culture, in nationality and education it only through humility and full obedience that we can build the house of God: only through acknowledging the headship and kingship of God. To show this, the Lord Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem on the colt of an ass, as a humble person and not in all His glory. We find this colt of an ass walking on garments and honor given to it.

How that colt was honored! We have the same honor when we uphold the Lord Jesus in the right way. We in ourselves have no honor as God's servants but when we obey the Lord fully, whenever we go we are showered with Love and kindness in so many ways. If, however, we start kicking like an ordinary colt we also will be beaten.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

*I will make an everlasting covenant with you even the sure mercies of David.
Isa 55:3.*

March 24th

"Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Mark 11.9).

This fourth entry of our Lord Jesus into Jerusalem from Bethany was on a colt and showed that He was entering as a king. First of all, we have to enthrone Him as King in our hearts, then in the family and lastly in the Church. Then only can we go with boldness and authority to preach the Gospel because we have the heavenly King enthroned within us.

Only when we give the Gospel with full authority and purity and in all humility than there be any results. We see in Mark 11:8 what great joy began from Bethany and continued into Jerusalem.

Though Bethany was a small village joy came from that place. It is with a small remnant that the Lord will accomplish His purposes these days. Though we are few in number God can do great things through us if we keep humble and obedient. There should be wholehearted and implicit obedience without questioning. Do what He commands you to do. We find that when certain of them nearby asked the disciples what they were doing (Mark 11:5) loosing the colt, they replied that Jesus wanted it, so they let it go. So whatever the Lord demands of you give it quickly and willingly and joyfully and you will find the secret of His power for a triumphant life, a happy home and a living Church.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

*I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places.
Isa 45:3.*

March 25th

"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." (1Pet.2.22).

In Mark 11:11 we have the account of the fifth visit of the Lord Jesus to Bethany. After He had seen the condition of the temple, our Lord came back to Bethany (v.11). That day He had seen what was happening in Jerusalem in the temple. Before He could pour out His wrath upon them He turned back to Bethany perhaps to share His burden with those there. As in Genesis 18:17-22 God appeared to Abraham before He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, saying, "How can I hide this great secret from my servant Abraham, because he is My friend."

At Jerusalem He had seen with His own eyes what was happening in the temple (Mark 11:17). He had openly said that it had become a den of thieves. Such was the condition of the city. As we begin to grow spiritually, we begin to know what it means to have partnership with the Lord. As was the condition of the people in the day of Malachi 1:6,7 so it was then, and as the Lord Jesus went about with His disciples, He could see the priests offering polluted sacrifices (V.8).

The Lord Jesus was found without sin, for He had no sin. He was perfectly blameless in thought, word and deed. To foreshow His moral perfection, the people had to offer an animal without blemish, and the priest was supposed to examine the animal before it was sacrificed. Otherwise there was no value in the sacrifice. God was foreshowing how for their own salvation somebody had to be offered on their behalf without blemish.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven. Matt 5: 12.

March 26th

"The secret things belong unto the Lord our God." (Deut. 29. 29).

All the things the Lord Jesus saw in the temple and among His people in Jerusalem as described in Matthew 23: 13, 15-23, He must have told His friends at Bethany. I can imagine the Lord Jesus Christ with a very sad, heavy and burdened heart returning from Jerusalem to Bethany that night, and before He scourged the temple, He told them that secret. As we become co-workers with the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord reveals many secrets which he has hidden from other (Matt. 13:17; Deut. 29:29).

In this way God's people can enjoy partnership with the Lord Jesus Christ. If we are growing spiritually, many things will be revealed to us before they happen. The Lord has warned us through His prophets of coming events like earthquakes, famine etc., and again and again before anything happens, the Lord gives us the privilege to prepare His people for the coming judgment. Thus we enter into the hidden secrets of God's heart. The fifth purpose of the Lord Jesus in visiting Bethany was to share His secret and burden with those who had become His co-workers.

Today's calendar Bible verse:

*I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires.
Isa 54:11.*

March 27th

*"The Lord thy God... will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His Love"
Zeph 3: 17.*

Now we read of the next or sixth visit of the Lord Jesus to Bethany in Mark 11:19. Having cast out the people from the temple vs. 15-17, our Lord is returning from the city (v.19). It had been a very hard task for the Lord Jesus Christ. He had shown love and compassion to all the people, but because they did not accept it, they had to be judged. He had thrown down the tables and had turned the people out with a scourge. He was feeling very sad, and turned back to Bethany where He found real rest and satisfaction. In Jerusalem there had been nothing but sorrow, grief and pain, but in Bethany He knew that there was a small group who would give Him real rest and satisfaction.

The Lord Jesus Christ never regarded Jerusalem as His home, but Bethany, where He could share His burden and sorrow; a place where he could be comforted and strengthened. What a mystery! The Lord Jesus our creator was seeking comfort from His people. He was showing how He was longing to be comforted. In Bethany he had no sorrow because of the warm welcome given to Him by those few who loved Him. In Bethany He found real rest and peace and comfort, and those who were longing to listen to Him.

Today's calendar's Bible verse:

Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours. Deut 11:24.

March 28th

"Lord! What will thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6).

Many children go to their father only when they want sweets and other things, but they never say: " Father, can I do anything to help you? You are looking so tired and sad. Can I do anything lessen your burden?". There are very few of that type. Yet there are some children who look at their fathers and mothers face and say: " You take rest. I will do all the work." That is the right attitude!

Do you say, " Now Lord, tell me in which way I can please thee and satisfy thee and give thee comfort and rest?". He will answer those who ask. He will tell us what He requires, as He did to those at Bethany who ministered to Him satisfaction, comfort, rest and peace. If you want to grow spiritually, our daily attitude should be : " Lord, I am not concerned about my own problems or needs of any kind. Please tell me : Do you want me to go anywhere, or to meet anybody, or help anybody?. Is there anything I can do for you which will be in accordance with your perfect will, which will give you more joy and happiness and peace?". Then He will tell you where to and what to do. It is a wonderful thing to obey God, and the way He helps us to obey His will is also wonderful. Then it happens automatically and unasked that the Lord helps us and supplies our every need.

Today's calendar's Bible verse:

The Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil. 2 Thess 3:3.

March 29th

"She brake the box and poured it on His head." (Mark 14:3)

For the seventh visit, let us turn to Mathew 26 and Mark 14:1 to 9. In Mathew 26:2 it says after two days was the Passover, and the ointment was poured on His head. In John 12:1 we read that six days before Passover He came to Bethany. In Mathew 26:2, our Lord said again to His disciples that the time had come for Him to suffer, to be reviled, to be killed and to rise again. Even though He said this a number of times, yet His disciples could not understand or believe what He was saying.

In contrast the women believed what He said . While all those disciples could not understand what our Lord was saying so clearly, Mary understood! (Math.26:2,12). She just came to prepare Him for His burial, (John 12:7). Somehow her eyes had been opened, and she began to understand that He was giving His life willingly for the whole world (John 10:11,14,17,18).

The woman must have spent all that she had to buy that box of ointment. Then she brought it to the Lord Jesus and broke the box and poured the ointment upon Him. (Mark 14:3). She wanted every single drop to be poured upon Him, so we read in Mark 14 that she "brake the box". Nothing could now remain. She poured it all upon His head that His whole body might be anointed.

Today's calendar's Bible verse:

God is a Spirit: and they .. must worship him in spirit and in truth. John 4:24.

March 30th

*"Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto.....the Lamb for ever and ever"
(Rev.5: 13).*

This woman only wanted to exalt the Lord Jesus. She could not do anything else, so she came to anoint Him saying in that act: "Now Lord, I believe you are dying for the whole world. You have said so. You are giving Your life for the sheep and dying as the Lamb of God. You are my Creator and King ." So she brought the most precious ointment to Him saying by faith "Lord, I am prepared to pour out all for Thee. Now you demand anything from me, and I am prepared to give it to You". That is true worship.

When we too believe the words of the Lord Jesus, the light of God begins to shine in us, and we will begin to see that He is our Creator, King of Kings and Lord of Lords and worthy of true worship and we will say, "I will give all I have." We will be willing to pour out on Him all that is precious to us, and willing to be at His feet. Then we will be exalted by Him; and the more we exalt Him the more we will be exalted. "Worthy is the Lamb to receive all power and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor".

Today's calendar's Bible verse:

*How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him... that publisheth peace.
Isa 52: 7.*

March 31st

"Tarry ye.....until ye be endued with pour from on high. "(Luke 24;49).

"Go ye.... And preach the Gospel".(Mark 16: 15).

The eight visit of our Lord Jesus to Bethany is recorded in Luke 24:50. the Lord ascended onto heaven from Bethany, (vs.51). in Acts 1 we are given details of what happened before the Lord ascended, (vs.4). He commanded His disciples that they had to wait first for God's time, to be "endued with power from high". If they wanted to be His disciples, they had to wait for His time. Often we go ahead or behind God's time, but we should always wait for God's command and God's time.

Secondly, we must be governed by the Holy Spirit completely (Acts 1:5), and led only by the Holy Spirit (Romans 8: 14).

Thirdly, the disciples were not to dictate to God or to interfere with His plans (Acts 1:7). We must get God to take charge of the whole situation. He is sovereign. He won't allow anybody to interfere with His plans. As we obey Him, we come into His plan.

The disciples became witnesses of His ascension (vs. 10) . while they were gazing up into heaven, two men came and said to them: "Why are you standing and gazing up into heaven? Go back and tell people what you have heard. You tell them how you have seen the Lord go into heaven and also how He shall come again in like manner as you have seen Him go into heaven. " That is the last message: "In the same manner He will come again".

Today's calendar's Bible verse:

The Lord... will be with thee, he will not fail thee. Deut 31:8.