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Substance of Prayer Meeting Address given by our Pastor  
on June 1. 1982.

Lesson. 1 Kings 18. vv. 41-46.

If we are favoured to equate this with things of the spirit, what amazing discernment Elijah had when he said, "for there is a sound of abundance of rain" -- God's mercy, God's rich blessing, God's wondrous favour. See if you have spiritual discernment. "for there is a sound of abundance of rain." Two observations as we begin, dear friends. In Jeremiah 31 the Lord gives to His dear, captive remnant an amazing blessing. It is comprehensive, concise, complete: it carries us through earth, tribulations, and is a most blissful experience in His Church on earth; and it carries us to Glory. Notice carefully the inspired language. "Therefore they shall come" -- the elect, loved with an everlasting love by God in the Covenant of His Grace. "Therefore they shall come." Nothing can alter it in hell or on earth, or sin; no opposition of men or devils. God says they shall come, be born, know the second birth. They shall come, however distant, in paths of sin, unbelief, rebellion. "They shall come and sing in the height of Zion." They shall come from Babylonia to mount Zion. "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion." This is a height of Zion here. Let the Lord indulge your soul and you will sing in it. You will feel you are near Heaven, ascend into the clouds, have a heavenly, divine transport, leave the earth behind, the flesh and earthly things. "Therefore they shall come and sing" for joy of their souls, for the love of Christ, His dying love; for the forgiveness of sin, for the wonders of redeeming love in their souls. "Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion" and in Glory for ever.

And this is one of the sweetest words in the Bible; "and shall flow together." Love divine flows, grace flows, mercy flows, divine peace flows, all the fruits of the love of the Father flow; every precious fruit of the dolorous, vicarious sufferings of Christ, of His victory

flows. Every fruit of the Spirit flows, and all flow into Zion, <sup>through</sup> ~~to~~ the ministry of the Spirit, to souls who hunger and thirst after righteousness, until their cup runs over and they flow together; they are one. "to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul" — and this links with the Lesson — their soul shall be as a watered garden," all supplied from Heaven with divine unction, heavenly moisture, bearing fruit, beautiful fragrance, no barrenness. "Their soul shall be as a watered garden," the unction of the Spirit flowing to their soul day after day. Wonderful to live so close to the Lord, detached from the world, dead to sin! It comes up with trumpets into Glory; "and they shall not sorrow any more at all," all sorrow over. Notice the word, "their soul shall be as a watered garden." Water is one of the most important elements in Creation. Every early settlement of man was where water was found. Wonderful to know Elim, Zion, "where were twelve wells of water, and three-score and ten palm trees," and to encamp by the waters.

This leads me to the second observation. Elijah "prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months." We have dealt with judgment and the ensuing famine. It is a remarkable word. "And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit." I want to emphasise the change of direction in the wind, or the gale of the Spirit. Do you understand? You who have lived in the country all your life know what it is for the wind to change direction. It is spiritually so. It is the Holy Spirit. He prayed earnestly that it might not rain. The wind changed and there was a gale of grace. The wind changed and he prayed in the opposite direction. He prayed earnestly, and he prayed again. I hope I can get it over to you who are deeply taught and spiritual. You will find prayer with you is not formality. There is the wind and the direction of the wind, the Spirit. You do not pray as you think you will; not according to the course. You pray according to the direction of the wind. If you take it home and meditate deeply in this, you will see wonderful things in the economy of grace. This links with Elijah. He said, "there is a sound of abundance of rain." The course of the direction of the wind changed. "I am about to pray that it may rain: that the heaven may give

rain and the earth bring forth her fruit."

What is the sound of abundance of rain? Some may have a perception of it, especially those who have worked on the land. It is in the atmosphere, and it is something that is almost tangible to your understanding. "There is a sound of abundance of rain." I will tell you what it is. Everything was settled with Elijah. They had acknowledged God to be the living God: they were not halting between two opinions. The prophets of Baal were slain, and Elijah was in peace of soul for a while. There was a wonderful atmosphere that could be discerned, felt; an atmosphere of peace and the Lord's goodness. It is mercy about to emerge triumphantly in your life and path. You are filled with the peace and goodness of God. You sense that rain is about to descend on you. This has been sweet to me because it is for the Church. "There is a sound of abundance of rain." So he went to the top of mount Carmel. He knew, he had heard the sound. Have you, in your trials and path? You have a wonderful feeling, an aura permeates you; you feel to be on the threshold of God's appearing and the emergence of His sweet mercy, believing there will be an abundance of rain.

Elijah put his face between his knees and prayed. How many of you are in this? "There is a sound of abundance of rain." My friends, there is. God has not forgotten His seven thousand. "There is a sound of abundance of rain," of mercy, conversions, willingness to follow the Lord. "Behold, a troop cometh." Elijah said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing." I read it slowly and deliberately for you as sent to you by God. "And he said, Go again seven times." Seven is a perfect number. "And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand." It was mercy emerging. Have you seen it? I believe I have tonight, and on the Lord's Day. There is a little cloud like a man's hand. Presently "the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain." Do some listening. See if you hear anything from God; if you see a sign from God. Do some looking out over the sea; see if you can perceive a little cloud. We do too much talking: there is too much talking in religion: so much of it is empty. Try to ask God to give you a spiritual sense of discernment to listen for sounds of abundance of rain. Amen.