

Father, this morning, we just come to You, we just thank You, we just praise You, we just worship You, Lord. Rimes are not easy. I pray that none of us are fooled by the apparent calm. Open our eyes that we might see You, open our understanding that we may truly discern and understand and read the times correctly, that we would gird our loins and be prepared when that day comes into all our lives and stand and when everything is over, we're still found standing in that victory which You have won for us. This morning, give us hearing ears, believing hearts and a will that's bent always in Your direction in repentance and in obedience. Speak, Father. For in Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.

There are certain things in the Bible which God repeats over and over, emphasizes it over and over again. Therefore, it is incredibly important for us and for God and in the Kingdom of God and one of the things He emphasizes in the Bible is that His people shall walk by faith, there is no other way. He says, *"My righteous shall live by faith."* Four times, He repeats. Once in the Old Testament in the *Book of Hosea* and three times in the New Covenant, He repeats, *"My righteous shall live by faith."* In *Corinthians*, He will say, *"My righteous shall walk by faith and not by sight."* In *Hebrews 10:38*, He will say,

Hebrews 10:38

³⁸ Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him."

And when He says things like this, we need to constantly dwell on those topics which He repeats and we need to go deeper and deeper and an entire chapter in the *Book of Hebrews 11*, He goes over and over and says, *"By faith, Abel offers; by faith, Enoch; by faith, Noah; by faith, Abraham."* A whole chapter is devoted to a set of people who are commended for their faith. So, we have to constantly learn to go deeper into the Word because the Word is as deep as God because it is His Word. It is really, really deep and Scripture says, *"Deep calls out to the deep."* Never be satisfied with a casual reading of the Word, shallow reading, never be satisfied because you will miss out on what real life is because Scripture says, *"This is eternal life that we know God, we know Christ."* And the primary revelation of God is through His Word and learn therefore, to compare Scripture with Scripture, balance Scripture with Scripture. Like to Nicodemus, Jesus will say in *John 3*, He will say, *"Unless you are born from above; born by the Spirit, you will not see, you will not enter into the Kingdom of God."* Paul, in the Epistle to the *Romans*, will say,

Romans 10:9-10

⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Now, if you listen to what Jesus said to Nicodemus and you read this and take it at a very superficial level and say, *"Yeah, I believe in my heart and I have confessed and I am born from above, and I am saved and I am going to heaven."* We could really get fooled because we don't look at Scripture closely. In *Romans 10:17*, God says,

Romans 10:17

¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Yeah! I have faith because I listened to the Word always. James in *James 2:17* will say

James 2:17

¹⁷ Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead

So, that's how you balance Scripture. Faith comes from hearing but hearing alone is not enough. The faith that you have heard and you have received is proved by its action. So, if you have only a hearing faith and no corresponding deeds, God is actually saying, *"Your faith is dead!"* I claim I'm born from above because I've heard, I believed and I confessed and I have entered into the Kingdom of God but Jesus comes and say in *Matthew 7:21*,

Matthew 7:21

²¹ "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.

Now, He comes and uses the same term, entering into the Kingdom of God. In another context, He told Nicodemus, "Unless you are born of the Spirit, you will not enter." In *Romans*, Paul will say, this all put together – "If you believe in your heart, and confess with your mouth, you have entered into the Kingdom," and we go with this reality, our presumed reality, "I have entered!" Jesus comes and says, "Hang on! Faith has works." Then, He uses the same term and says, "Not everyone who says, what?" if you believe with your heart and confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus Christ, am I not saved? God says, "Wait a second, if you confess with your mouth, Lord! Lord! Shall enter, don't think you will enter into the Kingdom of God of heaven but he who does the will of My Father in heaven." So, there is a believing, there is a confessing and there is a doing and what is that we have to do? The will of God. So, what is the purpose of studying the Word of God is to understand the will of God. So, He says, "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied?'" Was your confession wrong? Didn't they have deeds? Yes, but those deeds were not the will of God for them. So, you have to put it all together to understand what salvation means. Then, we will be really, really serious about salvation and understand what Paul meant by work out your salvation with fear and with trembling.

Like if you were there on Thursday for the GTLC Annual day, we were looking at the primary purpose of education. The primary purpose of education is that we know God and imitate His character and then, imitate His works and the methodology is different. God uses different methodologies and symbols to teach lessons. He uses a tree in the Garden of Eden to teach a lesson. He uses a rainbow after Noah to put across a lesson. Jesus uses parables to teach and parables are truth that are hidden, basically saying, "If you are serious about Me, you will have to dig. Then only, you will find." So, Scripture says, "He always taught in parables." Why? He says, "If you are serious, you will dig. If you are not serious, let it be hidden from you," because the Kingdom of God is worth all your life, all your effort, all your attention and if it is not, you will not find it. If people gave one-tenth of their attention to the Kingdom of God. The effort they put in for an EAMCET exam, you will be stalwarts, giants in the Kingdom of God by now. But the thing is that we are not very serious. So, God uses different symbols to teach. He uses different methodology to teach about the seriousness of salvation so that we can walk with the confidence and the real assurance of salvation and we can continue to work out our salvation.

The devil, on the other hand, not interested in our salvation. He opposes our salvation, he hates people, he hates all men but he especially hates those who are saved and those who are walking in their salvation and one of the ways the devil wants to thwart our salvation is to move us from the walk of faith to the walk of sight. What does he want us to do? To walk from faith to the walk of sight. Because if we are walking in faith, we intimidate him but if we walk in sight, we are right in his realm, he can deceive us, he can manipulate us and he can intimidate us. That's why God warns in *2 Corinthians 2:11*, He says, "Beware,"

2 Corinthians 2:11

¹¹ lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

We should not be ignorant. We should be very careful about his devices, how he operates and he operates through our sight. When the Bible uses the term 'sight', it means our physical perception, our eyes, our ears, our smell, our tongue, that physical part of us by which we understand reality, he manipulates our sight. Like I said, God uses symbols to teach the truth of the Bible because sometimes, a symbol, from the study of it, we understand a truth better. Now, when the devil, satan is introduced to us, when he is introduced to us, he is first introduced in *Genesis 3:1* what is he called? Not a crocodile, not a baboon. Of all the creatures on earth, how many species we have, I don't know. Animals, reptiles, birds, insects, He picked one and gave a symbol. What did it say, "The serpent!" Snake. That's why we have an aversion and automatic built in fear and aversion to snakes. Satan is introduced to us as a snake and in *Revelation 12:9*,

Revelation 12:9

⁹ So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him

He is called the snake, the serpent. So, snakes are mentioned through the Bible and one of the things mentioned about a New Covenant believer who walks by faith and follows God, one of the things told about him in *Mark 16* is,

Mark 16:16-18

¹⁶ He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷ And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; ¹⁸ they will take up serpents;

They shall deal with serpents, they will handle serpents, they will know how to handle snakes. They understand the devices of the devil, they know how to handle him. They will handle snakes well. We are not snake catchers, we are snake handlers. We should be good snake handlers, we should know how to handle snake. So, listen carefully, today's message is kind of about snakes.

The devil who is introduced to us as the snake is mankind's arch-enemy. He was the cause behind our fall and he is compared of all creatures to a snake. It is a symbol. The devil is not a snake but we look at a snake, we can understand what he's kind of like and the first thing which we all know, I guess you studied in your biology class about snakes is snakes don't have ears. They cannot hear, faith comes from hearing. A snake cannot hear and he doesn't want you and me to hear. He opposes everyone from walking in faith because he knows the one who walks by faith, he loses his power over them because they hear and he cannot. Understand, those who walk by sight don't hear and they are in his hands. Those who walk by sight do not hear because he knows Scripture very well, he knows God very well. He was there for ages before, he understands how the Kingdom of God works. Faith comes from hearing and when it comes to the term hearing, in the Bible, it has two components – one is listening, the other is obeying – two. You are all listening, that doesn't mean you have heard. The fact that you have heard will begin after service is over, when God says, "Okay, you heard today. Now, you apply it in this situation whether we will obey God or not." So, hearing does not mean I listened. It means I heard and I obeyed. In *James 2*, this is what James says,

James 2:19

¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!

Demons tremble. Do they obey? What is the difference between a believer and a demon? Both hear, only one obeys. Demons hear, they never obey anything willingly, they only obey a command because of power and authority exercised over them. Otherwise, they don't obey. They are afraid of God, they tremble before God but they will never walk in obedience to the will of God. So, the first lesson God wants us to learn, when the devil is introduced in the Bible is that the devil is a snake. He has no faith because he does not hear and obey. Therefore, he will deceive us not to hear and not to obey what God has said. That's how he deceives Adam and Eve. God said, "if you eat, you will surely die." He came and said, "You will surely not die. You don't have to obey. Okay, you heard. That's fine, I also heard, you also heard, you don't have to obey. It doesn't matter. Come on sit there, listen nicely, even take notes, it's also okay. I have no problems with people who take notes. I have issues only with people who obey. Don't obey, don't obey the Word of God," because the minute you start obeying the Word of God, you escape his clutches from the realm of sight through which he holds mankind captive, to the realm of faith over which he has no power. So, we have an entire world, not the earth, world, creation based on sight. That's why Scripture says, "The ruler of this world is the devil." Why? We see, we hear, we taste, we feel. Everything is based on sight and he deceives people through it and God says, "The only way you can overcome the devil is through the route of faith." If you do not live by faith like *2 Corinthians 5:7* says, we will end up walking by sight and if we end up walking by sight, who has power? The devil. If you walk by faith, who has power over us? God. If you walk in sight, who has power over us? Devil. Now, I can see all of you, but I can only see you, I cannot see your heart, I can only see and like I said, I honestly believe that I've got one of the best Churches in the world because if I look at the way you deal with each other in the Church and after the Church, you are so loving and kind. You fellowship well, I see nobody getting angry screaming, shouting, you pick up everything before going, you do everything. I only see that. Only God knows what you really are, I don't know. So, if I go by sight, by appearances, I could really say, I've got one of the best Churches in the world. But what does the devil do? He uses this outward appearance to deceive, to manipulate, and to intimidate. But devil is big on outward appearance. In *2 Corinthians 11:14*, this is what it says,

2 Corinthians 11:14

¹⁴ And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.

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What? But is he *an angel of light*? No! But what does he do? Outwardly, he comes and appears to us as if he is the angel of light. That is the reason the Bible focuses on the inward reality. And says, "Don't focus too much on the outward." The inward, you focus and one day, it should tally with the outward. If you are only focusing on the outward.. you are deceived. Because that's the devil. The devil comes and you look at him, he is so cool. Like an angel of light. But if you were to see his heart, you would be shocked. Outward reality, inward reality. Outward reality is an appearance. That outward reality has to match the inward reality. Then only, it becomes truth. That's what Jesus is trying to tell the lady, the Samaritan woman. What does He say? In *John 4*?

John4:21-23

²¹Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father.

He says, "We are talking about outward worship." No! We are true worshipers. Why? "Because we worship on this mountain of our father Jacob." Jews said, "No, we worship in Jerusalem of our father Abraham." These are all outward reality – where you worship, How outwardly you worship, it doesn't make you a worshiper!

²² You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. ²³ But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit

In what? Can you see the spirit? Only God can. You know what Shakespeare said? "That one may smile, and smile, and still be a villain." If you want to please the worship leader and the Pastors, then you can smile and worship. But you are so angry inside. God says, "You cannot. You need to *worship God in Spirit and in?*" Both are inside. They are not outside. Outward appearance should match the inward reality. That's the way of faith. That's why when Paul will teach us about we all use the full armor of God and it says, "Gird yourself with the belt of truth and the breastplate of righteousness," and then, he says in *Ephesians 6:16*,

Ephesians 6:16

¹⁶ above all, (what?) taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to (what?) quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

Darts of the deception. Darts of manipulation. Darts of intimidation. To get us out of faith into sight. Faith into sight. He says, "You need to have this." The Roman shield was. So, there were two kinds of shields – one was large; that was for long distance battle, to handle the arrows. And short small one, for close encounter, battle with the sword. They had two shields. He is talking about the long one, which covers him practically from nose all the way. You need to have a shield of faith. Because he will throw darts, arrows of deception, arrows of intimidation, arrows of manipulation to get us out of faith to sight. So, God says, "Be very sure." You don't understand how the devil works. Because the devil can quietly come like an angle of light and make us all feel so good with our outward reality though it doesn't not match our inward reality. And God says, "You are being fooled." That has been his strategy from the beginning. *Genesis chapter 3*. when he is introduced, and he has spoken his words and taken Eve's focus from God and His Word, what He has spoken. As soon as his focus is from the Word and the truth which God has spoken that, "*If you eat you will surely die.*" He has confused her and he has misinterpreted God's Word and actually, changed God's Word. When your eye is of God's Word and in truth, suddenly, sight starts opening. And what happens? "*She saw it was pleasant to the eyes.*" Very pleasant to the eyes. Isn't that how he does? How can something or somebody who looks so beautiful be actually bad? He is such a good-looking dude, he can't be bad. How can something that feel so good actually be a trap? How can something that feels so good actually make me a slave, at the end? That's how addicts are born, made. Because they are made to feel that, what feels so good, cannot be bad. We are deceived, we are manipulated. Then, when we try to get out, we are intimidated. We are what? Intimidated. He tries everything. First, he will deceive us and get in. Then, he manipulates us by saying, "Okay, you feel it is bad?" "Yeah, I am feeling terrible inside." "Okay, it's okay. It's just a feeling; it will go away. Try it one more time. You try it one more time." You feel even more worse. "Then, I am going to get out of this. You want to get out of this? Really? Okay, I am going to see that, I will let your father and mother know. No please. Okay, I'll stay quiet! That's how he works. Different situations. What is that? Deception, manipulation, and intimidation. Devil focuses on the outside, on the appearance. The inward reality is this, "*If you eat, you will die.*" Faith hears the voice of God, sight doesn't. That is what the prophets and the apostles have been trying to teach mankind from the time the Word of God is written.

That's what happened to Samuel. Remember Samuel? He had mentored king Saul for so long. Tall handsome dude, that even he got fooled by outward appearance. So, he came to Jesse's house, told Jesse, get all your sons ready, tomorrow is the big day. And he is looking at Jesse's sons all coming. And he is looking at the appearance and says, "This must be God's anointed." God says, "No, that's not. You are looking at the outward appearance, I am looking at the inward reality." You know the outward reality was David was just a small little boy, a young boy. So, even the father looked at the outward appearance and said, "who's going to pick him? You go take care of the sheep." On that day, God didn't look at his appearance at all. He hasn't had a bath. According to what Samuel said, "He hasn't anointed himself. He's not dressed in anything." He is just brought straight from the wilderness. But the inward reality mattered to God. Understand, even a prophet, if he lives in this world and his eyes are on the outward reality, even the prophetic will go wrong. Will go wrong. The most important juncture of his life, prophet Samuel went wrong. He got the wrong one. If God hadn't spoken, if he would have anointed Eliab or Abinadab or Shammah, what would have been Israel's history? A second king Saul. They were proud arrogant boys. See? Even the prophet can go wrong. If he takes this outward reality, as reality and chooses to live in it. Even the prophetic will go wrong. That's what the Bible is trying to teach us. That's what God is trying to teach us. I am not sure of title of today's message. I was thinking about the title being "Handsome men and Beautiful women." Let's see, maybe.

Let's look at outward reality and inward reality. Okay? First, we'll look at *1 Peter 3:1-6*. Don't worry, we'll get to men. Ladies, don't worry. We will get to them.

1 Peter 3:1-6

¹Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands...

Okay? Read Scripture very carefully. This is something that is inside, which will be manifested outside. To whom? To your own husbands. Not to others. Meaning – women are very good in being submissive to their male bosses in their office and fight with their husband at home. That man is another woman's husband. You being submissive to him is not going to get you any brownie points in heaven. It's good for your career. There is no crown there. "Yes, sir. Yes, sir. Thank you, sir." It won't work in heaven.

...that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,

So, inward and outward both have to tally. So, it doesn't matter if your husband doesn't believe, he's not a believer. God says, "Without opening your mouth," meaning – don't open your mouth. What does it mean? Don't open your mouth. Don't give him a sermon every time he says something. Just endure it. Be submissive, be reverential in your behaviour

² when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. (Okay?) ³ Do not let your adornment be merely outward...

Don't focus on outward appearance. He says, he's not saying all should come in rags. That's not he is saying. He says, "Okay, dress well. But let your appearance not be just outward

—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel— ⁴ rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, (Inward) with the incorruptible beauty...

That beauty cannot be corrupted. Outside beauty can be corrupted. Whatever you do, your outside beauty is been corrupted. Now, you all are looking very nice, because you are young. Wait another 15 years. Then, you will know, how nature works. Because all outward beauty is corruptible. Inward beauty, God says, "Incorruptible beauty of the hidden person." What is that?)

...of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.

Very precious; meaning – God says, God, as a Father, comes and says, "All My daughters are looking so good today." Then He looks at all daughter's hearts. I don't know how many He'll be able to say, "You know what? This one is so beautiful. Look at her heart." Because in the spiritual realm, hearts can be seen. In the physical realm, only outward. Even the cardiologist who does surgery can't really know the state of your heart. He can only see where the blocks are. God sees the blocks, not the

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physical blocks. Every other block He sees. Let's come to *verse 5 and 6*, okay? We have heard it many times. That shouldn't make it stale. Only one woman in the entire Bible is picked up

⁵ For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, (Where did they adorn themselves? Inside) being submissive to their own husbands, ⁶ as Sarah.

Sarah worked on her inner person through her life. You need to really understand this. If you work on your heart and allow God to work in your heart, you grow old gracefully, gracefully. And even in your old age, you'll reflect the beauty of the Spirit. That is why at the age of 89-90, when Abimelech looks, Sarah still looks beautiful. She looks beautiful. Reason? She was working on her heart. Real beauty of the heart cannot be hidden from the face. But if you work on the face and leave your heart alone, one day, the heart will be reflected on the face. That's why you have to look at all the Hollywood actresses. Of, when they were young and now, look at them. Man, can you wash your face and come? I want to take a good look at you. The make-up goes thicker and thicker and thicker. Even Hindi actresses, look at some of them! Look terrible. There is no grace, no beauty. God said, "That's not the way it used to be." If you had worked on your heart, it would have shown on your face. But if you don't work on your heart, that will also one day show on your face. Okay? Inward beauty. Sight focuses on outward appearance, because the devil is an outward appearance alone. He doesn't want anyone to know what his heart is like. Just look at me, I am a cool dude. Faith works on the inward appearance.

Let's look at Bible, okay? The famous example in the Bible, the cool dude called Jacob. He comes, he sees. That's why we have all terms in English "Love at first sight." If it is love at first sight, have you seen her heart? Have you seen her behaviour? When it is love at first sight, love is really blind, to the inward reality. It's open only to the outward reality.

Genesis 29:17

¹⁷ Leah's eyes were delicate, but Rachel was beautiful of form and appearance.

"Itna sundar hai dekhne ke liye." She was beautiful of form and appearance. You study Bible carefully, you will realize – she was not a nice person. Jacob is an incredibly terrible judge of character. He falls for the outward appearance. And *verse 18*,

¹⁸ Now Jacob loved Rachel; (For what? For her outward appearance,) so he said, "I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter."

Like I said, last time, Laban looked at him and said, "Yeh bakara tho mil gaya. Got this fellow." Seven years? He is watching Jacob. He is looking at Jacob watching Rachel. "This fellow, if I can manipulate well, I can get him for 14 years for free."

Genesis 30:1, marriage is over. And,

Genesis 30:1

¹ Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and said to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die!"

Honeymoon is over. Life has begun. And it is intimidation. And emotional blackmail. "If I don't get what I want, I will kill myself." Her mother-in-law, that is Jacob's mother, prayed and fasted for 20 years to have a child. This one, why is she upset? One, because her sister is having baby. She envied her sister. Now, she has started blackmail, intimidation. "Give me a child. Otherwise, I will kill myself." Inward reality is revealed. There is no prayer, there is no humbling, there is no submission, it is intimidation.

Genesis 30:2-3

² And Jacob's anger was aroused against Rachel, and he said, "Am I in the place of God, ("who do you think I am, God?") who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?." ³ So she said,

First, she intimidates, "Give me a child or I will die." So, caught him under that foot. His immediate reaction. "What is this? I am not responsible. If problem is with me, Leah shouldn't be having babies. The problem is not with me; the problem is with you. God has withheld." Now, manipulation. After intimidation, manipulation. She said, "Okay, here is my maid. Got him. Have a child through my maid, so that I will have a baby."

You see how the devil does his work? Now, she manipulated him and got him where he says, "Okay, she is threatening that she will kill herself, she is upset, she is depressed. Now I better do what she asks or she may do something to herself." As if two wives were not trouble enough, she is offering a third one. She should have asked him the history of his mother and his grandmother. He would have said, "Mother had no trouble in the home, grandmother had a lot." Manipulation!

Genesis 40:4-6

⁴ Then she gave him Bilhah her maid as wife, and Jacob went in to her. ⁵ And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. ⁶ Then Rachel said, "God has judged my case; and He has also heard my voice and given me a son." Therefore she called his name Dan.

She brings God into the picture. You see manipulation? How devil brings God into the picture something in which God has nothing to do? Remember how Jacob also did that to his father? "How come you got this animal?" "No, God blessed me." That's why the animal came so fast.

We have to bring God to bring some legitimacy. Really? God has judged your case? He has vindicated you?

...He has also heard my voice and given me a son."

Dan means vindication. Vindication, he has judged and I am innocent. He has judged my case, he heard my case, he had heard my prayer and he has given me a son and I shall name him. Who called? Always check Scripture carefully. *He brought a son and named him Cain.* The naming is for the father and not for the mother. But whenever the manipulating spirit and intimidation takes over we will see in the Bible that the woman names and not the man.

⁶ Then Rachel said, "God has judged my case; and He has also heard my voice and given me a son." Therefore she called his name Dan.

Now, God will judge this case and this is what God says later through Jacob the father after she is dead. In,

Genesis 49:17

¹⁷ Dan shall be a serpent by the way, A viper by the path, That bites the horse's heels So that its rider shall fall backward.

Why? This is the child born of deception, manipulation and intimidation. His line will go like that. You open through the Bible you can see history unfold past and history yet to be future.

Revelation 7:4-8

⁴ And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:

God is sealing the last days, it is yet to come. He is sealing the children of Israel whom the anti-Christ won't be able to destroy

⁵ of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed;⁶ of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed;⁷ of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed; ⁸ of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed.

Dan is not there. Instead, He put Manasseh and Joseph as two tribes. No Dan. Understand! Inward reality and outward reality!

Genesis 30:7-8

⁷ And Rachel's maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son. ⁸ Then Rachel said, "With great wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, and indeed I have prevailed." So she called his name Naphtali.

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What is this? Competition! Are you competing with what you call your co-sister? No, it's your sister. Poor thing. She doesn't have any outward appearance. Her husband doesn't really love her. "Your husband loves you." "Yeah, but I am competing with her." And enormous things like conception and child birth which is so great in God's eyes because another generation is coming out because children are from Him has made it into something like competition. Why? Because inward reality doesn't match. That's why God says, "Outward appearance, wow! Look at her, beautifully formed. She must have been that slender, translucent young girl. When she walked, leaves would have fluttered but inside, she was a deceiving, manipulating, intimidating, competing not finished." After 20 years, Jacob is leaving. Jacob left with his wives, concubines; all the children and Rachel quietly stole her father's idols. No, before we reach there one more is there –

¹⁴ During wheat harvest, Reuben (Reuben is the eldest son of Leah) went out into the fields and found some mandrake plants (Mandrakes is like modern-day ginseng), which he brought to his mother Leah. Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's (your son's mandrake, not my nephew's) mandrakes." ¹⁵ But she said to her, "Wasn't it enough that you took away my husband? Will you take my son's mandrakes too?" (They are fighting over some roots. Two sisters!) "Very well," Rachel said, "he can sleep with you tonight in return for your son's mandrakes."

Very manipulative! She said, "Yeah, don't fight over the mandrakes, okay? I know Jacob is with me. And he is not going to come to you unless or until I let him. Well, I will do one thing – I will sell him for a night if you give me those mandrakes which your son brought. The price for having the husband with you tonight is giving me the mandrakes your son brought. And after that, I can have him still."

See how calculative she is. Does her heart in anyway agree with her outward form? Though it is a woman used here as an example this is could be woman or a man. Your heart could be equally calculative like Rachel's.

Like I said, twenty years later, they all run from Laban. Laban catches them and Laban has no clue who has taken his idols. Now this is the scene that unfolds. Now Rachel has taken the household idols; meaning – if your heart is not is right, you will never know your husband's God. Because faith is from the heart. And your heart is very manipulative. Instead, what she took? She took the idols of her father. Now what is her father? Cunning, deceiving, manipulating, intimidating. The same idols she carried.

Genesis 31:34-35

³⁴ Now Rachel had taken the household idols, put them in the camel's saddle, and sat on them. And Laban searched all about the tent but did not find them. ³⁵ And she said to her father, "Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise before you, for the manner of women is with me." And he searched but did not find the household idols.

She deceived her husband by quietly stealing that and now, she is deceiving her father too. What does she say? She is sitting on the idols and telling you know this – "My periods. Please don't make me get up. I have got cramps. I cannot stand up." After twenty years of living with Jacob, nothing has touched her, of the God of Jacob. Then, we see the final scene of Rachel. She is dying in *Genesis 35*,

Genesis 35:16-19

¹⁶ Then they journeyed from Bethel. And when there was but a little distance to go to Ephrath, Rachel labored in childbirth, and she had hard labor. ¹⁷ Now it came to pass, when she was in hard labor, that the midwife said to her, "Do not fear; you will have this son also." ¹⁸ And so it was, as her soul was departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-Oni; but his father called him Benjamin. ¹⁹ So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem). ²⁰ And Jacob set a pillar on her grave, which is the pillar of Rachel's grave to this day.

What does Ben-Oni mean? Son of my sorrow! My grief. You see, she is bitter in her death. She dies a bitter mother, even when giving birth to her son, she calls him 'grief'. Jacob intervenes and his father called him 'Benjamin, the son of my right hand'. That's what the Bible is talking about – our inward reality has to match our outward. Outwardly, Rachel was an incredibly good-looking woman. Inside, I read Scripture – I think she was pretty ugly. And she died miserably. And God, in His mercy, takes her out before she could mess up Joseph's destiny. In which chapter does she die? *Genesis 35*. *Genesis 36* is the history of Esau's generation and *Genesis 37* begins with Joseph. God looked and said, "That boy, he is My boy! He has got a destiny and if this lady survives, she is going to mess him up. So, let her die." We will say, "Poor Joseph, he is an orphan." But

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God says, "No, it is better that he grows like that. Because she will destroy him." That's why God says, "My ways are higher than your ways; My thoughts are higher than your thoughts." We don't even understand because He sees the inside and outside and He is protecting the ones whom He has known even before the foundation of the world have been saved. We focus on outward appearance. God focuses on inward appearance. Let's look at Jesus.

Isaiah 53:1-2

¹Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ²For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him.

What is the problem with Jesus and with the message of Cross, there is no outward beauty. Message of the Cross is an offence to the perishing man because there is no outward beauty. It doesn't feed your flesh at all. The Cross doesn't talk about your career promotion, it doesn't tell you how many houses you are going to own. It's not going to tell how much your bank balance will be. It won't tell you how good looking you are. It doesn't mollycoddle you. Message of the Cross is an offence to the outward man. So is the Man who hung on the Cross because what was powerful was his message and his inward beauty. Outwardly – No. Inward beauty, *Song of Solomon*, puts it this way,

Song of songs 5:10

¹⁰My beloved is white and ruddy, Chief among ten thousand.

He is fairest of ten thousand to my soul and not to my eyes. You go through this and you encounter the real living Jesus, He is the kindest, most compassionate, noble, most righteous, most holy, most merciful Person you will ever meet. That is His inward beauty. He is the fairest of the ten thousand. This is not talking about outward. This is talking about the inward reality which should match with the outward. The question is – Sisters, are we beautiful? I don't know. I am not judge over any person. Are we beautiful?

Let's go to men. Men, strategically seating on the left side.

1 Peter 3:7

⁷Husbands (let's put it across like men), likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

God says, "Men, do you dwell with wife or deal with women in understanding?" God says, "Are you considerate? Do you know that they are the weaker vessel?" One thing which used to make me mad all the days I grew up was this – I was the youngest among the five, 3 boys and 2 girls, I always got the whooping from my father. Anything that he caught me and gave me nicely, sometimes, my brothers also got but never can I remember in my life him raising his hands against my two sisters. They could do whatever they wanted and get away with it. And I used to get so mad and he always used to tell me that, "They are my daughters; they are not my sons." God is saying, "Do you treat men and women differently?" He says, "You should." That's what makes you beautiful inside. Because you have to treat them differently understanding with consideration knowing we are differently made. This (Steel Cup) if you throw, it won't break. But the other one "Glass" will break. That's what it means – 'handle with care'.

God supplied from heaven when every girl child came with a tag 'Fragile – handle with care'. And you know, boys get very mad and say, "You are partial with the girls." "No, we are not. We are just being Scriptural." They have to be dealt differently. They are not dealt the same way.

What is the crisis in the 21st century? We have taught gender confusion. So, the women think they are men and men don't know how to handle them. Every man knows how to handle a woman. But when a woman acts like a man, he doesn't know what to do because he knows how to handle men. We fight, we hit each other and we forget in five minutes. On the other hand, if you hit the woman by mistake, they will sue you and take you to court; yet, they want to be like men. This is the gender confusion. Why are all the laws in the world being changed? Because women have stepped into the men's arena and men have to be structured and told to them, "Don't do this, don't do this." The entire set of rules of 'don't do this' – connected to whom? The women. When the men alone worked in the fields in the army and in offices, there were no rules. Because

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men knew how to deal with men and they knew how to deal with women. But now, there is a total confusion. Absolute confusion! Men do not know who they are and women do not know who they are and completely, a set of children are rising up who have no clue who they are.

God says, "Come back to the ancient days." Let us have handsome men and beautiful women, not outside but inside. God says, "Dwell with them with understanding." You need to understand how they are made. Everybody will say, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." That is about man. Woman is more fearfully and more wonderfully made. Understand! You also need to understand the other side of it. If you study people like Rachel, oh! They can be manipulative, they can be intimidating, they can be very cunning, and you have to be very careful to read through the words, into their thoughts and into the depths of their hearts, what is she saying is not what she means.

"What do you want for your birthday?" "Anything" You get anything and try it. When a woman says 'anything', she means something very specific. "If you cajole me enough and I got you down to the total state of surrender, I will let you know what I want. First, I want you to get you over there." "I will kill myself." "What can I do?" "Okay, take my maid servant." Did you see, she got him where she wanted? God says, "Live with them with understanding. Understand them well. They are not like you." Man thinks that every woman thinks like him. They don't think like us. It's not like the physiologists say that men are from mars; women are from Venus. "No, they are all from earth." But God says, "With understanding, be considerate and know that they are made differently. Therefore, give them honour." The way how you deal with your glass utensils and how you do with that china-ware. How you handle steel and how you handle glass is different. Treat men like steel vessels.

So, women start acting like you are women, okay? They will treat you differently. Be feminine. So, there you are, in the last days, be very careful. God is not looking at the what the theories say in the universities, media and those TV pictures; He is not looking at that; He says, "I will have a set of My daughters and My sons, when the final trumpet is blown, I will have My children – they will be women and they will be men; they will be beautiful inside and they will be handsome inside." He says, "Don't go by sight, go by faith." Work on your inside.

The devil, on the other hand, keeps on trying to get us to focus on the outward appearance. He keeps on deceiving. If you look at the phrases in Jesus times, (maybe today also) they were outwardly most religious – long robes, black. Today also, you will have them – black, purple, nice collar and they will come with their this thing. They look the most religious. Outwardly, you will think, "This man is a holy man." Jesus has something to tell over them; this is what He said.

Matthew 23:27-28

²⁷ "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly (you go to cemeteries – wow! Nice marble plank, everything. Will anybody open it? No,) but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.

Outward reality! These are the teachers of the law – the priest. The outward reality and the inward reality are an absolute mismatch. And he is not saying these are people who are fallen and repenting. That is fine; but here, there is no repentance also; they are absolute fakes; he is not talking about people who fall and repent – that's a reality; outward and inward reality matches. As soon as you repent, God restores your righteousness. So, there is no issue with that. But this is a different thing

²⁸ Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

I didn't say this; Jesus said this. Jesus' imageries are fantastic, right? Nobody would ever have thought about this. He had picked a nice one. He said, "You are whitewashed tombs." A little more tougher was the one who came before Him. Who was the one who came before Him? John the Baptist. Listen to what John says;

Matthew 3:7-8

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees (outwardly, very holy and religious men with their robes, when they came to him) coming to his baptism, he said to them (what?), "Brood of (snakes) vipers! (Brood of snakes, you are snakes, flattering to deceive. You are snakes) Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance,

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Do you see how the devil deceives us from an inward reality to focus on the outside? These are all the examples in the Bible, given in the Bible.

Let's look at another example in the Bible of the other side. You saw the negative side of Rachel. Let's look at the positive side of another woman in the Bible. Because woman always symbolises in the Bible as the Church. So, let us look at another woman. Remember, these are all the symbols in the Bible. We know this woman, Isaac is 40 years old; 40X50 is 2000; 50 is the year of the Jubilee. So, Isaac, 40X50=2000 years; that means Jesus is 2000 years young and waiting for His Bride. And Isaac is 40, the Holy Spirit comes out to gather his bride; Eliezer is sent to look for a girl for Isaac. He reaches Haran, he goes on his knees and he worships God and asks for favour. Let's look,

Genesis 24:12-23, 25

¹² Then he said, "O LORD God of my master Abraham, please give me success this day, and show kindness to my master Abraham. ¹³ Behold, here I stand by the well of water..."

"Lord, I am standing here in every Church where the water of your Word is being preached. I am looking at all the people come to the well." Where there is no Word, there is no Spirit because the Word is what prepares you to be the Bride of Jesus Christ. So, when you go out of this place and you go to another town, pick a Church where this is preached and preached uncompromisingly; because the Holy Spirit waits at wells, where there is living water, where the Word of God is preached.

¹³ Behold, here I stand by the well of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. ¹⁴ Now let it be that the young woman to whom I say, 'Please let down your pitcher that I may drink,' and she says, 'Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink'—let her be the one You have appointed for Your servant Isaac. And by this I will know that You have shown kindness to my master."

He puts requests before God and in his request, there is nothing outward. "Oh! Let her be pretty, let her have long, thick hair and let her hands be so soft." Nothing. Did you see the prayer of the Eliezer? For a bride, for the most eligible man, living on planet Earth, the richest man, young heir to all of Abraham's promises and his wealth, his only prayer is that – she should be a girl with a giving heart; and that she will go beyond the giving of the law, she will go to the giving of the grace. I will ask for a pitcher of water, she will say, "Not only for you, I will water your camels also." Jesus will come 4000 years later and says, "If somebody compels you to go one mile, go to 2 miles; if somebody asks for coat, give him a shirt too." And here is Rebekah coming who is the woman of grace. How is she described when she comes?

¹⁵ And it happened, before he had finished speaking, that behold, Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, came out with her pitcher on her shoulder. ¹⁶ Now the young woman was very beautiful to behold, (first look is the outward. "Hey, she's a pretty girl." Scripture is written. You know she is a pretty girl; second, behold) a virgin (pure inside – beautiful outside. Pure inside); no man had known her. And she went down to the well, filled her pitcher, and came up. (Did you see how the woman is introduced? What the prayer is, what God's desire is? Let's continue the narrative.) ¹⁷ And the servant ran to meet her and said, "Please let me drink a little water from your pitcher." ¹⁸ So she said, "Drink, my lord." Then she quickly let her pitcher down to her hand, and gave him a drink. ¹⁹ And when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking."

Can we draw water like that? Can you really give all these camels? Are you strong enough? The Bride of Christ is strong. She is not a weakling; she is strong.

²⁰ Then she quickly emptied her pitcher into the trough, ran back to the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels.

²¹ And the man, wondering at her, remained silent

He was wondering. Eliezer is wondering. He has seen many women in Abraham's household. He has hundreds and hundreds of maidservants. He's wondering at a girl who is the only daughter of a very important family in Haran. She is the daughter of Bethuel, Abraham's brother. Very well to do, very prosperous, extremely important family. What is this girl going? Early in the morning, she is; do you know how to use a broom? Does it matter what your father is, your mother is or your background is? Do you know how to use a broom? Do you know how to draw water from a well? Do you have the strength to keep on

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drawing, because that's been your habit? You don't have beautiful soft hands but have strong hands. She is not from an ordinary family; she is from a very important family;

²² So it was, when the camels had finished drinking, that the man took a golden nose ring weighing half a shekel, and two bracelets for her wrists weighing ten shekels of gold,

He is already decided, "This is the girl, this is the girl," he is so excited and he is taking all this out. One more question,

²³ and said, "Whose daughter are you?..."

"I need to get the daughter right. I cannot have a girl from another family. It has to be from the family of faith. It doesn't matter how good the girl is outwardly; how pure she is inwardly; how gracious in her behaviour; how wonderful and hardworking; yet, she has to belong to the family of faith. If that is gone, everything is gone."

²³ ..., "Whose daughter are you?..." ²⁴ ...she said to him, "I am the daughter of Bethuel, Milcah's son, whom she bore to Nahor."

And he asks her a question.

²³ ..., is there space in your father's house for all of us?" ²⁵ (We have) Moreover she said to him, "We have both straw and feed enough, and room to lodge." ²⁶ Then the man bowed down his head and worshiped the Lord

Third time worship is recorded in the Bible. First, on Mount Moriah, "I and the lad will go and worship God." Second time, when he worshiped was when he reached. Third time, when he found, he has got an answer to his prayer. "What kind of a girl is this? She is outwardly beautiful, inwardly pure, hardworking, gracious, giving, submissive." What does she call him? "My lord." And? Hospitable - that's inward beauty. That is what God is looking for. One detail about the outward, everything else about the inward, and Scripture says Eliezer, the symbol of the Holy Spirit, in this chapter, was watching her closely. Christ watches us closely. Remember, He does. You read through the gospels, you will see, He always watches things closely. That's what the Bible is actually talking about. *Revelation 19:7-8*,

Revelation 19:7-8

⁷ Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready."

You will say, "No! That's not possible." In all, today, the bride never gets herself ready, others get her ready. But God says, "That's an outward reality; we are talking about an inward reality." What is that?

⁸ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

They have an inward reality in which they live. The bride's inward beauty is shining. It's an inward beauty. And then, in 21, the outward beauty is shown. What is that?

Revelation 21:21-22

²¹ Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ²² Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

He says, "I see a beautiful city coming down." So, there is an inward beauty; there is an outward beauty. At the end, they match. There's no deception here. It's one and the same person. That is what God is trying to make us. That is what the devil doesn't want us to be. So, beware of the snake. Beware of the snake.

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So, God is building, working on this all the time. The true Word of God is directed at the inward person, not the outward person. The Word of God is directed at, what? Not the outward person. It's at the inward person. Then only, Scripture what Paul says is true. In *Philippians 2:12*, he says,

Philippians 2:12

¹² ***Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence*** (Same life, outward and inward), ***work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;***

You see, the pictures are given all there in the Old Testament and the New Testament. Solomon's temple was being built. Solomon's temple is being built in that specified, beautiful area – Moriah. It is being built. But that was the final construction, all the work was taking away, far away. If you go to Solomon's site, there is no sound there. Nothing is happening there. “All the stones,” Scripture says, “is being prepared in the quarry.” There, the work is going on. And then, on the appointed day, the stones are brought, and they all are fitted in. And if one stone doesn't fit, there is? We are all living stones. There is a silent work that is going on inside all of us. If we don't cooperate, if we don't agree with that work, one day, we will realize, we don't fit into that temple. The work is not going there, the stones are being prepared here. That is why the Church is called living stones. We are all living stones. There's no sound in heaven of any construction. New Jerusalem is being built on earth. But it will appear from heaven on that day, because suddenly, all the prepared stones will fit in and the city of Jerusalem will take its shape from everybody who allowed God to work inside. So, do not be so gungho about your outside form; you will miss the inward reality.

In *Genesis 39:6*, Scripture talks about this young man.

Genesis 39:6

⁶ ***Thus he left all that he had in Joseph's hand, and he did not know what he had except for the bread which he ate. Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.***

You see how construction is? If we had written in the 21st century, we will write this – *Now, Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. Therefore, he left everything in his hands.*

Go for an interview, a lot of, I have heard, “You know what? Some people are recruited in to companies only because they are good looking. That's not what it will say.” He was a good-looking dude, but the master was looking at him and said, “You know what? This guy is honest. He's got integrity, he's hard working. He can be trusted.” Often, people see only the outward form, but the inward form of Joseph was – he was an honest, hard working, no complaints, faithful to God and faithful to his master. And therefore, when Mrs. Potiphar tries something, it doesn't work. Because he did not have just an outward form, he had an inward reality. That's what Jesus is warning us – when you hear the Word, let it go deep.

In the Parable of the Sower, he gives us a warning, you know

Matthew 13:5-6

⁵ ***Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up...***

So, don't get so excited when you hear. I see all these Churches, they jump and they do. Chill. Chill. Word hasn't gone that deep in for you to jump. It just touched your emotions. Chill, because you do not know the price you have to pay to be made beautiful by God. Just don't jump. Let it go deep. Quickly. But, reason,

⁵ ***...they had no depth of earth.*** ⁶ ***But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away.***

That's why when you hear messages, all this Bill Winston and all this people, when they come... Once, in my life, we went to see what this drama was. “Oh my gosh, when you hear about money, I realize, there is no Jew, no Greek, no Indian, no Afro-American, no white, we are all one – not in Christ, in mammon. Oh, you have to see them jumping when they heard about money. “It's coming, it's coming, it's coming.” The way they jumped. See? Wow, what excitement when you preach money in the Church! You know what James has to say in *James 1*?

James 1:11

¹¹ For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits.

What were you after? God says, "Let the Word go in deep." Don't look at outward things, outward appearances. That is why Peter will say our faith is so precious. So, precious. that we are allowed

1 Peter 1:7

⁷ ...more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to the praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

God tests our faith over and over and over and over and over again. He keeps testing us. And we don't like that. We want it to be easy. God says, "I am preparing a bride for My Son and I am willing to go any distance." First things he tells is, "Eliezer, come here. Put your hand under my thigh and make a vow, you will not pick a Canaanite woman for my son." Who is a Canaanite? A merchant who trades. That's when Zechariah, God will say, "In My house of judgement, it is over." There will be no Canaanite. Canaanites are those who trade for gain. They hear the Word, they are only listening – "What is in there for me today?" "No Canaanites in My house," God says, "The Jew, the gender." The true Jew, in his heart, is saying, "What is in there for God today? What can I do for Him?" Understand how Scripture works. So many Christians are satisfied with an outward appearance. Jacob got fooled, Christ doesn't. Christ doesn't.

Beware of the snake. He deceives. He manipulates. He intimidates so that you keep the outward form. Of such men, Paul will say in his letter to *Timothy*, "Withdraw. Keep away". They are only interested in outward form of godliness, they reject the inward. Of them, he says, "Stay away!"

Another man, connected with a snake. Okay? Just with the snake. We are dealing with snakes today that you don't get bitten.

Job 1:1

¹ There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job (What an introduction, his name was Job); and that man was blameless and upright and one who feared God and shunned evil.

Four things mentioned about a man. We don't know who he is, we don't know which time he lived. Theologians say this is the oldest book in the Bible, though, *Genesis* records history before that, this is the oldest book. We don't know who this man is. But God has four things to say about Him – He's blameless. He's upright. He fears God. He shuns evil. He's not perfect. He's blameless. God is not asking anybody to be perfect. He's asking us to be blameless. You sinned? Repent and be blameless before God. Walk blameless before God. That was his inward reality. Not just outward appearance. And the serpent went after him. Actually, the serpent didn't go after him, because he thought there's no point going after that fellow. So, God drew his attention to this man. Okay, who? The devil looked at this man and said, "Isko chodho (leave him), nothing will work this fellow. Chodho (leave him)!" God said, "Come here, satan."

Job 1:8, 10

⁸ Then the LORD said (Who said to satan?) to Satan (The Lord said to satan. "Arre arre, you are ignoring My man? You are going after all these fellows who have no testimony at all. Wait wait wait here. You really want to fight? I will show you a man."), "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?"

You know what the devil said? "Ya. Big deal. One, You put a hedge around him. You put a hedge around his family. You put a hedge around all his property. And you blessed him within that hedge. Who will not serve you?" That's the prosperity gospel. Who preached the first prosperity gospel? The devil. He preached the first prosperity gospel.

¹⁰ Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.

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You see, we can only obey God, we can't build a hedge. It is God who builds a hedge. Unless the LORD builds the city. You and I cannot build a hedge against the devil. God has to build it. For God to do that supernatural spiritual work around us, we have to do a work, which is listening and obeying the voice of God. Otherwise, he cannot build. Man obeys, God builds. Job obeyed God. Worked on his inside. God worked on the outside. God put a hedge around this man. The *Book of Ecclesiastes*, Solomon will say this,

Ecclesiastes 10:8

⁸ He who digs a pit will fall into it...

A lot of people will dig pits for us, they are falling in to it, don't worry about that. Don't push me in to the pit. That's all. He will fall by himself. Don't push him. Like in the country where I lived in, when I grew up. you see, it was Buddhist. So, they did not allow slaughter of animals, but they loved meat. It's a contradiction. Okay. You love meat, but you can't kill animals. So, what would they do? On a steep side of a mountain, they would come and tie their cattle, so that it would slip and fall, and die, and we shall eat them. Because you can eat, if it died in an accident. Okay? So, don't push somebody into the pit, let them fall by itself.

8 ...whoever breaks through a wall will be bitten by a serpent.

Don't break the hedge. If you break the hedge, who waits? God puts in the Old and New Testament in a beautiful way. It says in *Matthew 7:14*, if I am right –

Matthew 7:14

¹⁴ Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way...

Both sides? Just walk circumspectly, carefully. Both sides hedges are there. Keep, stick to the narrow path. Because if you break the hedge, who will bite? Serpent will bite.

And how does He put it across to Joshua? To Joshua, He says,

Joshua 1:7

⁷...do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left...

“Stick to that, because if you turn on to the right, the serpent will bite, if you turn to the left, the serpent, I have put the hedge. Stick to that narrow path. Stick to the narrow path.” The narrow path, Scripture explains it very beautifully.

You know something about snakes? You know, I have killed quite a number of snakes in my lifetime. One thing you learn about snake is that, if a snake comes in, if somebody brings and leaves a snake over here, don't worry. Why? It cannot move. Snakes cannot move on smooth surfaces. They have no grip on smooth surfaces. If the surface is very smooth, it's just stuck there, it cannot move. Because for it to move, its scales have to get a grip. The smoother the surface, the more difficult the snake finds it. So, what does John the Baptist come and say? It's a proclamation.

Luke 3:4

⁴ as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.

First, let the path be straight. Why? The devil doesn't go straight. The snake doesn't go straight. Its path is always crooked. So what do you need to do? Make your path straight. Second,

⁵ Every valley (Fill it up, until it is leveled) shall be filled And every mountain and hill (Bring it down, it has to be straight, it has to be leveled, fill the valley, bring the mountain down) brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough ways smooth...

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What happens? The Prince of glory comes, the devil cannot move there. You see how beautifully Scripture puts it all across well and says, "If you want to make life difficult for the devil, have a smooth, straight road in which you walk. He will find it difficult to follow you." So, the devil says, "Yes, I have seen Job for a long time, I can't do anything. Because his path is very straight and his road is very smooth. I can't do anything with him." You need to realize; the devil cannot do what you think he can.

In *Luke 22:31*, we know,

Luke 22:31

³¹ And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you..."

"You have been following Me, you have made your paths all crooked, all straight and smooth. And now, this fellow says, "I cannot touch him at all." So, He is asking Me permission, "Will You just lift the hedge a little? I want to get this fellow.""

So you need to realize – God removes hedges for His servants to be tested by the snake. First, God removed one hedge. One hedge. What did he do? Removed one. Satan came in and took all his wealth. He wakes up. All money is gone. His stock market crashed. From multi-billionaire to a pauper in one day. First hedge gone. Prosperity is gone. Was he attacked because he was evil? Was he attacked because he was disobedient? Was he attacked because he broke the hedge? No. God lifted the hedge and said, "Test My servant."

Second hedge, his family was taken out. God said, "Okay, you can touch.

Job 1:12

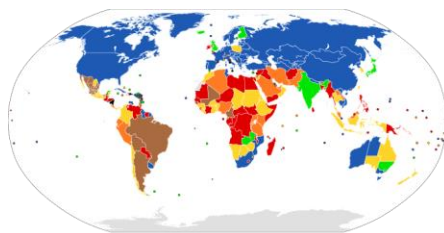
¹² And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person."

"Don't touch him." Second hedge removed. The devil came in and took all his children out. The devil did not kill Job's wife because she was more useful to the devil alive than dead. It's true. The reason some people are not killed by the devil though the hedges are all broken is because they are more useful to the devil alive than dead. He knew he could use her to nag, to irritate, to see everything possible; to see if Job would walk away from the walk of faith and curse God; and he was using her for that. Remember her words? "Curse God and die." So, if you are living, be sure you are living for God and you have not been left alive for the devil. The devil went after the children. All ten died. It's one of those symbols which God is talking about. The devil is always after the future generation. He is always after the children because he knows, in every child, there could be a potential threat to his kingdom. And if you know snakes, if you have seen National Geographic or otherwise, you know where snakes go? They quietly come and eat all the eggs. The mother bird and the father bird have gone after their career; the snake comes in and eats all the guddu (eggs), right? He doesn't want boiled or anything – plain. He's a targeted assassin. He knows. He has heard in the Garden of Eden, "It is (not the woman) but it is the seed of the woman that will crush my head." He knows that it is the next generation. So, every generation, he looks, there is a head-crusher somewhere hiding over here. "If I can get him before he grows up." So, Cain kills Abel, the first seed of the woman – Cain. Are you the fellow who is going to do it? That's why she says, "I have brought a man child out." He asks, "Are you the fellow who is going to crush my head. Before you crush my head, I'm going to fix you so that you crush your brother's head. Then, let me see how you will crush my head." You can see the line. After Noah, everything is destroyed; he centres and he realizes that it is going to come from Abraham's family. "Yes, let me manipulate over there." He gets an Ishmael created over there through manipulation and now, you see conflict between Ishmael and little Isaac. From there, you come to the next level – Isaac – you have conflict between Esau and Jacob. Why? Because he knows it is the seed of the woman that is going to destroy him. And when he looks and Jacob has these twelve sons, "Arrey, isme tho kaun hoga? Baara hain. Lekin ek ladki hain. (Who could it be among them? The eleventh one. But there is a one girl) Maybe it is her son. So, let me destroy her first." She gets raped. Then, he looks around. You know what? "It has to be this boy called Joseph. He is too good. I will turn his brothers against him. I will get him sold out. He is after the next generation. Then, they are in Egypt and he realizes, out of Egypt, among it, this one will come. He turned as a Pharaoh, "Kill all the babies. Get the babies. Throw them into the Nile." Not the Egyptians. There is no threat from the worldly babies. He says, "Let them thrive." It is from the consecrated ones. "Throw the into the Nile." God plays a nice trick on him, takes His baby and hides him in the Pharaoh's house. God knows how to blind the enemy also. Jesus is born. Herod is incited. All the babies in Bethelhem are being killed. You see, he is not after Roman babies. He is not after Canaanite babies. Those Canaanite babies are being offered to Baal and Asherah as human sacrifices but he is

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after our babies because he knows – they are destiny's children. Then, he went. All history, you will see – he went after the Jews. Next month, May 14, less than a month, a month and another six days to go, Israel will be celebrating 70 years. That's why you are seeing the churning that is going on because the devil is mad. Everybody is mad because 70 years of this nation coming back to life. 1948, May 17. But before that, he knew history. He knew how to read Daniel and the weeks. He knew, "This nation is going to be born and this nation is going to be trouble for me in the future." So, he used a Hitler to try to wipe out the Jews. God had a remnant who came back and that became Israel. So, you will see, two ways – the Church is growing powerfully, consecrated to God, mighty persecution is working out. China has become really bad because after Mao Si Tung, we have another dictator who has taken over. He has been given a blanket, appointed for life. After Mao, no president has so much power. He has purged the army. All those who opposed him. He is a real dictator with a lot of power. The first thing he did after he got in power is, he said, "Go after the underground Church." It has been proclaimed. The order has been passed. "No underground meetings." Why? He knows they are destiny's children. So, he works in two ways against.

In the western world. I want two maps put up. I want to show you something interesting. First map.



You see the blue? This blue are all, primarily, except for China; but China also; the largest Church in the world is in China but it is a different thing. All this blue are Christian nations where abortion is legal. In all the regions where it is colored, abortion is not legal. We, people of God, who alone know the sanctity of life, have legalized the murder of children in all the Christian world because the next generation is being destroyed. He has never changed. In this land alone, in the last 40 years, at least 70 million babies have been aborted because he knows we are a threat to him.

Next map. Another strange one.

Same-sex Marriage is Now Legal in 26 Countries

Beginning with the Netherlands in 2000, these countries have legalized same-sex marriage. Australia was the latest to do so on December 7, 2017.



Same-sex marriage is only legal in some jurisdictions in Mexico.
SOURCE: Pew Research

FORTUNE

Did you see this again blue? See that it's all Christian world? Homosexuality is legalized. From gay union, you have no children. When two men get married and when two women get married, there is no children and even if they take insemination and have a child, that child has no destiny at all because it is not a destiny's child unless God works a miracle. Because you have already perverted God's purpose. Do you see? Rest of the world, still holding back. These were the first foremost Christian nations.

The devil consumes children. Don't break hedges; build. Walk by faith on that narrow path. Walk like Job. When he had everything, Job worshiped God. When he lost everything, Job worshiped God. That's a true worshipper. Worshipping God has got nothing to do with your outward reality. Worshipping God has got to do with your inward reality. "I need nothing outside to worship God. You don't have to bless me. You can bless me; You can take everything out. I am created to worship You." You see, the snake cannot see the future. He only can presume. So, what he does, he does a preemptive strike always. He cannot see the future like God can see the end from the beginning. He doesn't see. But he presumes. But you walk with God by faith, you can never be destroyed by the enemy. What does Job say at the end in *Job 42*,

Job 42:13

¹³ *He also had seven sons and three daughters.*

And God blessed him materially, double of what he had in the beginning. Got it? He could not be destroyed. Job hung in there. That's why you have to be very careful of how you deal with the snake. Very careful. In *Thessalonians*, Paul will tell us something about,

1 Thessalonians 5:22

²² *Abstain from every form of evil.*

Not all evil; all appearances of evil. If something appears evil, stay away from it. Meaning? Don't wait for the whole snake to appear. If you see the head coming, either kill it or run. Appearance. He is after, what? *Genesis 3:15*, of the snake,

Genesis 3:15

¹⁵ *And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."*

He is after our heel. We are after his head. He is after our heel. Meaning, he just wants to see that our walk is affected, that we don't walk by faith; that we walk by sight. So, he will always be after our walk because he knows – the man, the woman or the child who walks by faith, he loses power over them. All appearance of evil. Appearance. Sometimes, because of the appearance, we don't realize how evil it is and how drastic the effects can be. And Paul, using the Old and New Covenant, will explain to us. In *1 Corinthians 10:9*, he says,

1 Corinthians 10:9

⁹ *nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents;*

Don't tempt Christ. And they were destroyed by whom? God allows the serpents to come in to teach us an objective lesson. What happened over there? *Numbers 21:4-6*. I'm just going about the snakes alone, okay?

Numbers 21:4-6

⁴ *Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way.*

"The journey to Heaven is taking a long time. Lord, I'm praying, I'm fasting, I'm doing everything. My breakthrough is not coming. When, Lord?" And you are getting discouraged. And when discouragement sets in, what happens?

⁵ *And the people spoke against God and against Moses:* (first, God and then, His leaders. Find another Church, "Maybe, they will preach something better for me.") *"Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread."*

They are contradicting themselves. "There is no food but we hate this bread." So, there is food. Only thing – you don't like it. You don't like the manna. It's not tasty to your inner man. "Ah! We remember the flesh pots of Egypt. Slurp!" "How nice it was when I was in that Church. Oh, the Pastor came dressed like this. He had a tie and this flowing shirt. He said such good things about me. Every day, I went back home feeling so good about myself and I thought I was the cat's whiskers. And then, the trumpet was blown and I realized – half my friends are gone and I have heard nothing." They complained.

⁶ *So the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died.*

Remember last Wednesday's message? 'Welcome to Bootcamp'. God is making warriors out of them; not sloppy complaining people. He couldn't do anything but He got the next set of generation who were soldiers, who were willing to fight. These people were only complaining. If the bed was a little hard, "The bed is too hard." If it was soft, "It is too soft." If it is too hard, "My back is hurting." If it is too soft, "Therefore, I overslept." "It's not my mistake. It's always the bed's mistake." Complaints. They were not meant to be killed by snakes; they were meant to be snake-busters. God has only one solution in *Numbers 21:8*,

Numbers 21:8

⁸ Then the Lord said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live."

What is He saying? "Keep your eyes on Jesus. He is the only One who has defeated the devil. If you look at Him, keep your eyes fixed on Jesus, you can walk by faith. If you take your eyes off Jesus, you will be bitten by the snake." You have a choice. If you have been bitten, get back on the narrow path, keep your eyes fixed on Christ Jesus because He has broken the power of the devil and have taken all his poison away. When children are bitten in remote places where there is no anti-venom, what do the parents first do? They suck the poison and spit the poison out so that the child won't die. Jesus has taken all the poison. The serpent has no power. He says, "If you look at Him, you will live." Keep your eyes fixed on Christ Jesus because he is after your walk. "Your walk may be long; your walk may be difficult but the destination is assured – I am going ahead of you to prepare a place for you. In My Father's house, there are many mansions. If I go, I will come back." Don't complain, don't grumble against God. Don't complain against His servants. Don't complain saying, "The Word is too tasteless. I don't like Your Word." God says, "Let the serpent in. The hedge has been removed. You removed it. Let them bite. Not only is the hedge is gone, God now tells the serpents, "Go in and bite them. They need to be taught a lesson." Keep your eyes fixed on Christ Jesus. The devil is after your walk and if your walk is straight, nothing is going to deter your eyes which are on Jesus throughout all your troubles, persecutions and trials; you are pursuing God, worshiping God, He will come after your work. Here, the wilderness can't kill him, kings won't kill him, storms won't kill him, famine won't kill him, hunger won't kill him. Finally, the shipwreck. The ship is in Malta and Paul is in Malta. They reached there, the Roman prisoners and he is one of the prisoners. It is very cold, they were shivering. They start a fire. The prisoner picks up a few sticks to come to light the fire. What happens?

Acts 28:3

³ But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat, and fastened on his hand.

You want the snake to come out, let some Holy Ghost fire come in. He will come out from the sticks where he is hiding. And he hung on to his hand. Why? Now, he is after your work because he cannot affect your walk. So, because of your walk in your company, you lost your job, rejoice. He is not victorious. Keep your feet on the narrow path. Keep your eyes on Christ Jesus. If the devil bites your hands, remember – the devil is after the hands of righteous men and women because he knows the power of clean hands. Who will ascend to the hill of God? Those who have clean hands. At that point on earth, I don't believe there was any man who had hands as clean as his and the devil bit him there. What did he do?

Acts 28:4-5

⁴ So when the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, "No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he has escaped the sea, yet justice does not allow to live."

Don't worry about what unbelievers say about your situation. You're so worried. "I lost my job. I wonder what people will say." Why did you lose your job? Because you walked that narrow path? The devil bit you? The work of your hands got affected? Don't worry. Let them say anything. What are you called to do?

⁵ But he shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm.

"That's where you belong. I'm sending you ahead of time because I know that it is written that the devil, Death, Hades, the beast and everything will be thrown into the Lake of Fire. You go in advance. Before time. Because you chose to bite my hand. These hands have been consecrated to the Lord. You don't bite these hands. If you bite these hands, you die. I don't." They are waiting for him to die and they realized that he didn't die. Then, they said, "Oh, he must be a god." What the devil meant for harm, God says, "I will turn it around for good." They all said, "This is a man of God." The leader of that little Malta island, his son is sick; Paul goes there, lays hands upon him, he is healed. Now, the whole village is taking care of them. Why? Because he allowed a snake to bite him and he was not killed. The end of the devil is very clearly mentioned in the Bible in *Revelation 20:10*,

Revelation 20:10

¹⁰ The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

And he wants to take as many humans as he can with him. Therefore, beware. The devil deceives; he intimidates; he manipulates; he lies; he puts across these false appearances. He flatters to deceive. Stick to this narrow pathway of faith.

As I close, the last five minutes, okay? Time over. There is something about snakes which you need to understand. You can actually outrun a snake. A snake is fast but that doesn't have stamina. It cannot run long distances.

James 5:10-11

¹⁰ My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. ¹¹ Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

He says, "Work out patience, perseverance and endurance in your life. You will always outrun the devil. He will give up." We all know evil is shorter. Good will last forever. There is an end to evil. Evil is not eternal; righteousness is eternal. So, God says, "Persevere and run. Don't give up before the face of evil. Keep on going. Keep on moving." The devil knows something which we don't know about the devil. It is there in Scripture in *Revelation 12:12*, if I'm right.

Revelation 12:12

¹² Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time."

He knows he has very little time. That's why perseverance is an incredible virtue in the saints throughout the Bible. Don't give up. You may fall a thousand times. Get up, get moving because ultimately, you will outrun him. Don't lie there. He will kill you. Don't lie in your sin. Get up. Like we saw on Wednesday – yes, messed up fully and completely. God said, "Yes, I'm going to put you in this position because I called you from your mother's womb. I set you apart. I consecrated you. I gave you the guidelines. You went against all that. You messed My anointing up. Now, I've got you exactly where I want you to be. Are you blind?" "Yes, Lord." "Are you tied?" "Yes, Lord." "Yes? See? I had to get you there. Now, has your consecration come back?" "Yes, Lord." "What do you want to do?" "I want to destroy Your enemies." "One more chance I will give you." Samson's end – he destroyed more in his death than in his entire life. God says, "Go out with your guns blazing. You are My son." "Oh, I am finished. I want to die." "That's not what I got you out for. Go." That is what is called a martyr in the army. Martyrs don't die. They live forever. Go to Delhi, go to the place and see that huge India Gate and take a close look. The names are written – Lance Naik, commander, lieutenant – names are written. All who died for our wars. They live forever. God says, "That's how My children go. You fall, get up. Don't lie there. Fall a thousand times, get up; because you will outrun him ultimately because his end is sure. Your end is not. You have a destiny to fulfill." *Revelation 14:12*, the last verse for today. God will say,

Revelation 14:12

¹² Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

Patience. Don't give up. If you are somebody here, or many here, whose faith is concentrated attack in certain areas of your life, remember – don't give up. That's where your victory lies. The devil went after Job's family, he went after his finances. That's where your attack is happening? Hang in there. Don't change your ways. Hang in there and say like Job, "Even if You slay me, I will yet serve You." So, when the end came, he persevered. God restored him his family and God gave his money back double. Don't give up. There are no quitters in Heaven. Don't give up.

So, this morning, shall we stand up? If you and I broke the hedge down, the answer is – repentance. If God lifted the hedge, the answer is – perseverance. If you and I brought the hedge down, allowed the serpent to come in to bite us, to attack us, God says, "Repent and look at Him. I will build the hedge back. I will build the walls around your life back." But if you didn't and God has lifted the hedge, rejoice and be exceedingly glad and keep on going. Persevere and don't quit. That's what Job is saying. He is absolutely not sure what is happening but he says, "One thing I know. That's the only thing I will do. Even if You slay me, yet I will serve You." God has to come all the way to *Epistle of James* and say, "Remember Job, his perseverance.

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He refused to quit." Don't quit, young ones. Don't quit, elder ones. Because you are all destiny's children. The devil is not after the children in the world; he is after you. He will be after them when they come into the houses of God but he is after you. Don't let him fool you with appearances. Don't let him fool you, deceive you. He is the king of appearances. Jesus is the King of inward reality. Let both match. Shall we look to the Lord?

Closing Prayer:

Father, this morning, we just come to You, the Author and the Finisher of our faith. We look to You; not to ourselves. Looking at Your promises that the good work that You have begun, You will finish. All we ask, O Father, is that, in our weakness, Your strength may be perfected. We are weak but You are strong. Help us to cling on to You. Help us to follow You to the end. Help us not to quit half way. If there are children in Your house who have strayed away from that narrow path and have gone through the hedge and are bitten and are spiritually lying there, I pray, Father, today, there would be a healing released into their lives. There is only one anti-venom known in eternity, that is the Blood of Jesus. The most powerful shortest prayer in the Bible is, "Lord, help me." And I pray, Lord, those who have fallen, will cry out today, "Lord, help me." For Your Word says, "If you confess, He is willing and the Blood of Jesus will cleanse us of all unrighteousness." You are the Balm of Gilead. You bring healing into the lives of Your people. I pray men, women and children will rise up today if they are bitten, they would get back to that narrow path; they would seek Your Kingdom and Your righteousness once again. And Your Word promises – the Son of Righteousness shall rise over you with healing under His wings and you shall go out as calves released from the stalls. Our walk will become a leap. We will put on garments of praise. We will not allow the enemy to steal our song. If our own spirit brethren can sing in those dingy prisons in China, in Korea and in other places, we definitely can sing in the comfort of our homes. We can and we will declare the praises of Him who is brought out of darkness into His marvelous light. If God is for us, who can be against us? No power, no principality, no ruler, no one can. I speak a release into the hearts of Your people now in the Name of Jesus of Nazareth. Be set free in Jesus' Name. Whom the Son sets free is free indeed. For this purpose, the Son of Man came that He might destroy the works of the devil. Yes, Lord. Let every work of the enemy be destroyed in our lives. Let there be an opening of our eyes that not only will we see You, Your Kingdom and Your glory, but our eyes will be open to see the deceptions of the devil, too, Lord; that we will know our enemy. We will be forewarned of our enemy for You have given us power; not to run before our enemy. But You said, "Behold, I give you power over all the power of the enemy. You shall trample upon snakes and scorpions and they shall by no means harm you." And You promised us – "In a very short while, the God of peace shall crush satan's head underneath your feet." That's the promise and we confess and we believe and we ask for strength to walk that walk, O Lord. Thank You, Father. As we go into another week, I pray Your presence would go with us, all of us. Let us have hearing ears. Let us walk that walk of faith. Let us defeat the powers of darkness. Let us bring glory to our Father in Heaven so that He too can say, "Look at My son, look at My daughter in Hyderabad? Do you see? He is blameless. She is blameless. She is upright. She fears God. He fears God. She shuns evil. He shuns evil." Lord, we will give You something to rejoice about, O Lord, this week. We just praise You. We just worship You. Help us to do our work and we know, Lord, You will build those hedges around us. Thank You, Father. I bless Your people in Your Name. may the hand of God reach out into the deepest part of your past and repair those breaches, repair those hidden things. Let Him restore strength in Your inner man. Let Him give you strength for today and courage and boldness to face tomorrow. Thank You, Lord. Now, by faith, believing our hands have been cleansed by the Blood of Jesus, by the Word of God, our hearts have been purified and sanctified by Your Spirit, we lift up holy hands in Your sanctuary and we bless Your Holy Name. For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever, Amen.

Benediction:

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit rest and abide with each one of us, Amen.