

Father, this evening, we just thank You, Father. We come to You. We've gathered in Your name. We've come to study and meditate on Your Word. The entrance of Your Word brings light, every time. I pray, Father, even tonight, a little of the darkness in our minds, areas we are not unaware of Your ways. Your thoughts that light will dispel those darkness. When we leave this place, we will know You a little more better. Our Father, Our God, the Shepherd of our souls; that we'll know You a little more better when we leave from this place. So, speak to us, O Lord. Give us hearing ears, single eye, and a believing heart. Speak, Father. For in Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.

The first text for today is from the *Book of Daniel*; the second part of the verse. *Daniel 11:32*. Let's leave the first part and this part, okay?

Daniel 11:32

³²...but the people who know their God shall be strong and carry out great exploits.

This is an end prophesy, if you specifically put, given to Daniel thousands of the years about those who know God. But let us generally look at it and I'll read that again, but I want to look at three words in the second of this verse.

...the people who know their God shall be strong and carry out great exploits.

The key, this are the three stages; "*people that know that God*", "*shall be strong*", and "*do exploits*". You have to put these three together. We have to know, we have to be, and we have to do. They shall do exploits. These are the three stages of doing great things. We are called to great works. That is the works of Christ. The works of God, all of us. Because we serve a great God. Because the life we live is His life. We are called to great works. But to do these works, Scripture says, "People know their God; therefore, they shall be strong." It is from the knowledge of our God that our strength comes. And it is that strength that we do exploits. In *John 14:12*, this is what Jesus told His disciples and to us.

John 14:12

¹²"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.

So, Scripture says, Daniel says, "*Those who know their God.*" Jesus says, "*Those who believe in Me.*" Put it together. It all begins – why do we gather? Why do we study the Bible? Why do we sing the songs? If you were watching carefully listening, listening the lyrics of the songs that we sang, the lyrics are all connected with knowledge of God, of who God is. We don't randomly sing songs. When you sing to your girlfriend, you don't randomly pick a song. You pick a song that has to convey some meaning in your heart to her, something about her or something you want to tell her. Here, when we sing the songs of God, those songs are connected with who He is, the attributes of our God. That's our faith comes from. Hearing, reading, studying, signing. The people who know their God. The problem is, the question is "do we know our God? We need more than an idea of God. We need the reality of God who's a Person. You can have an idea of God, and there, it is the Person of God because remember the days in which we are living is a very dangerous shallow age. Because you cannot believe in a person you do not know. And you cannot know a person you do not believe. If you take a selfie, say, with me and post it, does mean you know me? Because there are lot of ministries believe in taking selfies with Jesus. That doesn't mean you know that person. But we take selfies with celebrities and post it because you want others to think we know them when they have no clue who we are. Remember Jesus telling a lot of people, Jesus said, "On that day, I'll tell many 'I never knew you'." Though they claimed with their words that they knew Him, on that day, He says, "I never knew you." So, if you take a selfie, it doesn't mean you know that person. Or on Facebook or Twitter or any of these medias, if you press like, that doesn't mean you like that person. You see, how we get fooled with an idea and never participate in the reality? If you press 'follow', that doesn't mean you are following that person. This is what virtual reality does – it is just virtual; it is not real. And therefore, we are getting our minds getting conditioned to these kinds of shallow lifestyle. And we try to bring that into our relationship with God also. And just be because we sing those songs and if the lyrics makes no sense to us, we do not know that God about whom we are singing.

That's what God is telling through Daniel and Jesus is telling us, "Those who know," and to know, we need information; we need knowledge. That's what faith demands. In *Hebrews 11:6*, Scripture says,

Hebrews 11:6

⁶ But without faith it is impossible to please God...

You want to please God, you need to have faith and *faith comes from hearing and hearing from the Word of God*. Without faith, it is impossible because once you have faith, you start pleasing God because faith itself is a sign you know something about.

...For he who comes to God must believe that He is...

The question is: do we know who He is? None of us know Him completely but we should know something about Him, about who He is. Do we know how He does things? When you know a person, you also, like many of you know me. In the sense, between like 2-4 P.M, don't even try calling me. Those who're laughing know that you'll never get me to pick my phone. They know that's when I sleep. You call me at 2 in the morning, you might get me; you call me 2 in the afternoon you'll never get me. So, you know something about a person's ways. If you do not know the ways of God or if you know ways of God, you get to know God. That's why Moses prays the prayer, "Lord, teach me Your ways." You see, people in the world and Church. World, I am meaning Church, had been fooled by the enemy, the devil, with appearances. Appearances always deny reality; often, deny reality. And we also like appearances. That's why you all are appearing so good and so attentive, God alone knows where your mind is. We often act to be something which we are not.

Many people in the world are not so much worried about having money. They want to look like they have money. If they were really concerned about having money, they would save it. But they actually want to look like they have money, so they spend it. They spend it on things which is actually not required but they spend it on these things, so they have an appearance they have wealth. If they really want money, they would save it. And they would be very careful how they spend it. But their appearance is more important than reality because we live don't live a life before God; we live before people. People don't really want to be intellectual or informed; they only want to look intellectual or look informed. If they want to be intellectual or informed, they would read the books they have instead of keeping it in the showcase. But you'll always see behind this, many most houses you go, these set of books; it's very embarrassing to ask them, "Have you read at least half of them?" But then, why? "No, I don't read." "Then, why do you keep the books?" Because you want to look intellectual and not actually be intellectual. That's a trap. The devil satisfies us with this appearance and God is not satisfied with appearance, He is satisfied with who we a really are making us like Him. God doesn't just pretend, He is real. To the average, it does not matter that he does not know God. As long as others think he knows God. That is King Saul. Remember King Saul, when he is being disgraced? In *1 Samuel* he said, "I have sinned; yet, keep honoring me now. Don't do it loudly people will hear."

1 Samuel 15:30

³⁰ Then he said, "I have sinned; yet honor me now, please, before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, that I may worship the Lord your God."

"Not my God. Just honor me. Please don't expose me. You know, I know, I don't know God, don't let it out. Just stand by me, prophet. Let people think I know God." That's what God is talking about. When there is no real prayer life, when there no Word life, then there is no real knowledge of God, it's a life of pretence. Say, "I don't want to pretend." You should stop pretending. God likes honesty first. "Lord, I don't want to pretend." Do you want to be free or look free? Do you really want to be smart or look smart? If you want to be smart, you'll have to work hard. If you want to look smart, all you have to do is forward something somebody smart wrote. Right? Children don't have WhatsApp; so, they're wondering what this is. But those who're on WhatsApp know. That's what Scripture is taking about. Know the "do"; to know God, to have the knowledge of God, to have the knowledge of ways of God, the first key is – I need knowledge; I need information.

Hosea 4:6

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⁶ My people destroyed for a lack of knowledge because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me...

The first thing we need to do anything for God or in His name or even for Him to do through us is – we need knowledge. That’s where the mind comes in. Remember the past few weeks’ messages – the mind. The whole purpose of teaching, the whole purpose of gathering Wednesday after Wednesday for ten years, (forget Sunday, Sunday can be religion. Wednesday is not religion) is that we may know about God and the ways of God. because the whole process is connecting to becoming that person God wants you and me to be. That was what God was telling Joshua, “You mediate upon my Word day and night. Don’t turn to the left, don’t turn to the right. If you start thinking My thoughts, sooner or later, you’ll start doing My works.” When your thoughts and your works, over a period of time, consistently start matching that’s who you become. That’s what God is telling all of us. That why we put this (Bible) above everything else. Our minds, our thoughts need to be defined how God thinks. That’s where it begins that’s how the Gospel according to *John* begins. It says,

John 1:1

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The lie of the devil, not full lie; half lie, “If you eat of this tree of knowledge of good and evil, you’ll be like God,” but that is not from how you become like God. God wants us to be like Him. He doesn’t want us to be unlike Him; He actually wants us to be like Him. Not in terms of power, but in terms of character. And the only way we can be like Him is by allowing His Word to start taking over our thinking. Scripture will say in that same Gospel, “*The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.*” So, when the Word took a body, it showed us how does God think, how does God work? How does God react to terrible situations? Terrible situations, good situations, death, tragedies, sickness, storm, you name every facet of human experiences, how will God react in such a situation? Jesus showed. That’s how we learn from the four Gospels. This is how a man were to have the mind of God and were to walk in flesh – this is how He would react. To know is the beginning, it is to know. So, you’ll see the Bible is the revelation God’s thoughts and how God works. So, you study the Bible not memorizing Scripture for Scripture sake. We are basically trying to understand – how does my God think? How does He work?

Even Jonah knew God at least once facet of His character he knew God and He didn’t like that part of it. And in all his response, you know the story of Jonah, the whole gamete of rebellion in his life is connected because he knew God. He was not rebelling because he did not know God, that is ignorance. He is rebelling because he knew, and this is what he says

Jonah 4:1-2

¹ But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry. ² So he prayed to the Lord, (you can pray angrily. This is an angry prayer) and said, “Ah, Lord, was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore, I fled previously to Tarshish; for I know (what) that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm.

He knew his God. The message, if you don’t know our God, we will look at a message given. “How can I preach this – ‘40 days and you’ll be no more?’” Now, he hates the people of Nineveh. He hates them with perfect hatred and the message is given, “Go to them and tell, 40 days and Nineveh is no more.” And he should have gone “Yup, I was waiting all my life for this message I am going to give them.” But he looked at the message and he knew the person who gave the message. He says, “I know this message but I also the one who gave the message. If this message is effective and they start repenting, He will start having mercy on them. And I don’t want God to show mercy to them. I don’t want God to.” You see, we don’t know the God. So, when we read Scripture, we’ll say, “Ah, this is nice. This is what I’ll preach.” Because you don’t understand Him. Jonah knew his God.

Job knew his God. David knew his God. In *Psalms 51*, in spite of all the mess he makes, He knew his God.

Psalms 51:16-17

¹⁶ For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. ¹⁷ The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart— These, O God, You will not despise.

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He knew. He is a guy who knew God and he said, "Lord, this is what You require." That is why you cannot believe in somebody whom you do not know and you cannot know somebody whom you don't believe in. You cannot serve a God whom you do not know; you cannot follow a person you do not believe. The knowledge of God is the first step because that's where it works and in the knowledge of God, you need to understand the full knowledge of God. Not the complete knowledge of God but as we grow, the both sides. Paul will say, "*Consider the kindness and the severity of God.*" When you are under the severe judgment of God you understand it and you don't fall under, you also understand His kindness. And when He is absolutely being kind to you, you don't take advantage of Him. You also remember His severity. Balance it, how God functions. It is the knowledge of God that actually helps us to be what we should be in any situation. What does God want me to do? How do we know? Because we have the knowledge of God because we know this is how God expects me to because it is revealed.

Let's look at three verses and continue about God. We have looked at this before.

Deuteronomy 30:19-20

¹⁹I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; ²⁰that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days;

He says, "I set before you blessing and curses, life and death. Choose life," and then, He turns around and says, "He is your life.: When I am choosing what God is telling me to choose, I am choosing His life. This is what Jesus says in *John 6*.

John 6:63

⁶³It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

See, why is this different from every other book? Because, in this Book, you see the unity in God. God is One and He is consistent from *Genesis 1* to *Revelation 22:21*. You go through this and you understand what? See, if God changes from Sunday to Saturday, it is very difficult to know what He will do tomorrow. That's the problem with multiplicity of gods. No two gods are the same. If you look at Roman mythology, Greek, Babylonian, Egyptians – any one of these ancient mythology, no two gods are the same. So, the people each pick their own God. But with our God, there is only one God and He is absolutely consistent in His ways and when He says, "I have revealed you through Me through My Word and through My Spirit," He says, "My words are life." And every time we choose to think the way He thinks and therefore, do the way He does things, what we are choosing is we are choosing His life and He is literally living through us. In *John 17*, this is what He actually says.

John 17:3

³And this is eternal life, (what is eternal life?) that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

This is eternal life. What is eternal life? Eternal life is to know God. Eternal life is not to live forever and ever; it is to know God. Because you can live forever and ever in hell and never know God. Eternal life is to know God and you see we start by knowing God by understanding of God for what He has spoken and how He has dealt with different people in the Bible. You see, He is consistent in His ways; therefore, you see people in the Bible, when they know the parts of God's character, they appeal to that character because they understood this is the way He works. In *Romans 8:29*, connected to salvation, He says,

Romans 8:29

²⁹For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son,

How you do get, I get, we get conformed to the image of His Son? First is with the thinking. *As a man thinketh, so is he.* If I start slowly start learning to think like God my image, my inside soul, my spiritual image is being conformed to the image of His Son. It doesn't matter; we all look different; we all dress differently. All those things doesn't matter outwardly. Because outward things will all perish, your skin will start having wrinkles, you start getting grey hair and your knees and joints will

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all start hurting. Outer things will perish but inwardly, Scripture says, “We should be conforming more and more to the image of His Son,” and it starts with the mind and that is our first battle, it’s here.

Remember Sunday? First battle – *Ephesians 6:17*; that is the first battle. Put on the helmet of salvation. Wear your thinking caps. We say, in English, “Put on your thinking cap.” Here, it says,

Ephesians 6:17

¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

I can never use this as a weapon unless my thinking is right. I’m holding the Bible and I am thinking Shakespeare, it’s not going to work. I am thinking the way the world thinks. I am thinking philosophies of philosophers and not the Word. I am holding this (Bible) but it has no power to work in my life because my thinking is different. So, Scripture says, “This is where it begins.” We know we are in a fight but the question is: do we know how to fight? The tactic is very clearly shown; we know from King Saul, the first king of Israel. He is anointed. Like I said, anointing on an empty head or a vain head, puffed up head is dangerous or useless. Little later, this is what happens in Israel with the king with a vain head, big head anointed which will never happen in David’s reign. What you see here; remember we have physical examples in the Bible; so, we, in the New Covenant, understand the spiritual implications.

1 Samuel 13:19

¹⁹ Now there was no blacksmith to be found throughout all the land of Israel, for the Philistines said, “Lest the Hebrews make swords or spears.”

What did they do? No blacksmiths. They gave order to all the blacksmiths. What is that? When the Hebrews comes no swords no spears

1 Samuel 13:20

²⁰ But all the Israelites would go down to the Philistines to sharpen each man’s plowshare, his mattock, his ax, and his sickle;

What are these? Agriculture and trade implements. No fighting instruments. Blacksmiths are there, instruments are not there. Philistine blacksmiths are there and they are told very clearly when the Israelites come no sword, no spear all other implements, okay?

1 Samuel 13:22

²² So it came about, on the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people who were with Saul and Jonathan. But they were found with Saul and Jonathan his son.

In the entire nation of Israel, Israel army had only two swords. One with Saul and one with Jonathan; yet, they didn’t stop Israel from living. They said, “Bring all the implements to us and we shall sharpen it for you.” What is that? Your agriculture and your industrial implements. What does it mean? The devil and the world don’t mind you prospering because it helps them too. The Israelites will work hard and they will sow and they will water and they will grow and harvest, Philistines will come and take it. They want us to prosper they don’t want us to fight. We are talking spiritual; there, it was physical. So, the devil has very subtly changed the blacksmiths. So, what do you have? You have Churches, which he is talking about – full about prospering in this world and never have taught the people how to fight this good battle of faith against the powers of darkness. So, when the day of calamity, when the day of trouble comes, nobody knows how to react, how to fight, how to stand. So, when a tragedy happens, people just fall apart. When problems happen in families, they are just crushed. When a death occurs, they are crushed. When a Church is attacked, people scatter because nobody has been taught how to fight this spiritually. You fail in your exam, you lose all your hope. We were never taught but you were taught. What I am saying, generally speaking. That’s the problem. That is what is happening. He wants them to work but doesn’t want them to fight. But God says, “Everyone born of God is born into a battle, battle against sin, battle against powers of darkness, battle against the system that entraps your mind,” And on the day of battle, they were absolutely clueless. And there were just two guys with swords and they are hemmed in from every side. Israel sitting, they can’t go to the left, they cannot go to the right. They cannot go to the front, they cannot go, all are surrounded by whom? Philistines. And they have just two swords.

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Yet, 400 years ago when they began the story was exactly the opposite, *ultra* (Reverse). In *Joshua 6:1*, you know what it says? Jericho was securely shut up because of children of Israel. None went out, none got in.

Joshua 6:1

¹ Now Jericho was securely shut up because of the children of Israel; none went out, and none came in.

When the age of the apostles began, and the power of the Holy Spirit came in. That's how they began. The demonic realm was trembling; nobody got out; nobody got in because the apostles have hemmed them in. Today, it is the other way – the Church has hemmed them in and they are having a riot. Because we forget how we fight. When God has actually said, *"The gates of Hell shall not prevail against the armies of the living God,"* the armies of the living God, like Saul, and his army are sitting there and trembling and shivering because they don't know how to fight. They know how to harvest, they know how to study, they know how to get jobs, they know how to get promotions, they know how to build hospitals, they know how to build schools but they don't know how to fight.

If you don't know how to fight, ultimately, we will be overcome in mind. And whoever controls your mind, controls your body. The battle is for our minds. That's what I have been battling for 10 years for your minds. You stare at me; I don't know whether I have your minds. You cannot break free unless you have some knowledge of God. That's why I said – the power of one thought which aligns with who God is. And Jonathan, suddenly gets a thought which is godly. You know what he says?

1 Samuel 14:6

⁶ Then Jonathan said to the young man who bore his armor, "Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised; it may be that the LORD will work for us. For nothing restrains the LORD from saving by many or by few."

One thought, "Hey! I cannot sit like this and I am not going to tell my father. He's not going to support, he's not going to send anybody with me." He tells his armor bearer, "Will you come with me? We are just two and there are hundreds. But God doesn't need numbers to win, because God is not dependent on numbers. Will you come with me?" One thought. Isn't that the servant of God, 100 of years ago, he heard a preacher saying, "The world still has not seen a man, who is being fully surrendered to God?" Semi-literate boy, who hardly had gone to school, sitting at the back and he heard that, he said "Lord, I will be that man." One thought, what was his name? D.L. Moody. One of the greatest evangelist the world has ever seen. Even till his last sermon, he was full of grammar mistakes. But that didn't stop God from using his message to save millions. How did he start? Because, in some meeting as a young boy, he heard the preacher said, "The world has still not seen, a man who's fully surrendered to God." He heard that and said, "I will be that man." Power of one thought aligns with God. Because God is not dependent upon numbers to win. He's only looking for somebody who believes in Him, "Who I am? That, I am for you. Are you for Me?" That's all He is looking for. That's why Scripture says, *"Without faith, it is impossible to please God."* This young man had faith and that was enough. Jesus said, *"If you have faith, as little as a mustard seed,"* that is mustard seed's faith. One sword, two people. Scripture will say, later, if we have time, we will look how he won the battle and how he killed so many people. He was killing with the sword and his armor bearer was killing behind him. I don't know with what he killed. Maybe with a shield, he was knocking them on the head. Because he had no sword, no spear. Two of them; this are physical battles but we fight spiritual battles. And that's what God is talking about. Throughout the Bible, you will see deliverance always or often begins with one thought, or information or knowledge of God, who God is.

He is looking back into the past of every victory God has given Israel in their history and he is saying, "God is still the same God." He is; He has not changed. We have changed. He has never changed. Therefore, He is. Anyone who comes to God must believe that He is. For students, if you honor God with your mind, and with your soul, and with your body, He is still the God of Daniel, He will make you better than the rest. You have to believe – "What He did for Daniel, He can do for me." He is the same God. That is where faith comes. Your exhortation from God; it doesn't come from hard work. Hard work is necessary if it comes from faith. And the hard work that follows faith. Not hard work at the cost of faith, because there are more hardworking people in the world. And you cannot match them for their background, for their intelligence, for their knowledge, their skills – what you have is what they cannot have. What you have is faith. You can have faith, with faith, every time, you can please God.

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So, we need information. If we don't have information, how do we please God? How do we even understand, what is happening? That is the whole, first thing is – reading your Bible, knowing your Bible, getting to know this God, getting to know his ways. So, faith is arising.

When we hear about Elijah coming down from Mount Horeb and going to meet Elisha, Scripture says over there.

1 Kings 19:19

¹⁹So he departed from there, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he was with the twelfth. Then Elijah passed by him and threw his mantle on him.

Here is the young man; these are all young man. Here is the young man, he is ploughing twelve yokes of oxen and he is ploughing. And Elijah, the old man, is coming from somewhere down the mountain. Many months have passed by, and he is coming down. As he is coming down, he does one thing, he takes his old cloak and puts it over Elisha. What does Scripture say?

1 Kings 19:20

²⁰And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah, and said, "Please let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you."

The question is: if you didn't know who Elisha was, and if he didn't know what the mantle was, would he have that reaction? He had information. This is what every godly young man's dream was – The mantle of Elijah. If you don't have that information, why would you want to follow him? Would have said, "What's wrong with this old man? His dirty, stinking old mantle." He would have thrown it and continued with the work. And people do not have information and people do not value that information. Therefore, when the call of God comes on their lives, they pursue their career, because they do not have information – what this call would mean in eternity. Jesus said to the young ruler, "Forget it, throw it all and follow Me!" Instead, he turned around and walked away because he didn't value what the call was. You need information. If you don't have information, nothing is going to work. We need the knowledge of God; we need to know His ways and follow that knowledge.

In *Joshua 3:4*, when a new generation is going to enter, Scripture says,

Joshua 3:4

⁴Yet there shall be a space between you and it (that is the Ark of the covenant) about two thousand cubits by measure. Do not come near it, that you may know the way by which you must go, for you have not passed this way before."

Scripture is telling very clearly, Joshua is telling them, "Follow the ark. The Ark will go ahead of you, around two thousand cubits." That's an ancient measurement –2000. Because you don't know the way but the Ark knows the way. You have not passed before, but the Ark has passed before. You have never experienced it, the Ark has already experienced it, why? God has seen the end from the beginning. You do one thing – you don't worry about your future; don't stress about your future; don't worry about your enemies; just follow the ark. Just keep your eyes fixed on Christ Jesus and follow the leading of God. Why? Why follow the ark? Because *Exodus 35*, where the Ark is described. Where the making of the Ark is described, at the end of it God says something about the ark, *Exodus 35:22*,

Exodus 35:22

²²And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the Ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.

It is from there God speaks. It is from there that God guides. So, God is saying, "Follow." You need to have knowledge on what you are following. Those subsequent generations, they did not have knowledge of this Person represented by this Ark, or His righteousness, His holiness, His ways; they started attributing power to the vessel instead of the Person the vessel represented. So, when they carried the vessel without the Person, they lost because they did not know the Person. Not only did they lose, they were killed. Not only were they killed, the Philistines took the Ark away, because they did not know the Person because the Ark gets its significance because that is from where God spoke to Israel. So, we need to realize – there

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is a place in our lives from where God speaks to us. He speaks to us from This (Bible) and we follow that because we don't know what lies tomorrow; we don't know what lies in 2019; but He knows. God has no beginning nor end, because He has already seen the end of history as it is; therefore, we can follow Him. That is where it is found. So how do we know where to go? To them, God said, "Follow the Ark." So, it doesn't matter whether you know the place where you have to go; whether you have experienced it before, it doesn't matter. He has already experienced it for you and me.

You know, in *chapter 3 and 4 of Joshua* the Ark is mentioned 17 times – in two chapter. In chapter 3 alone, it is mentioned 10 times. I want to look at three verses in chapter 3:6

Joshua 3:6

⁶ Then Joshua spoke to the priests, "Take up the Ark of the covenant and cross over before the people."

Why? So that the people will see the Ark and they will follow the ark, 2000 feet. So, let us for, in terms of understanding, 2000 feet behind, everybody can see clearly and actually, it's a huge crowd of people. So, the one in the front can see clearly; they follow, the others follow, the others follow. That's what happens in the Church – there are some who are in the front who see the Ark clearly and other little behind and behind and behind. Everybody is following somebody. Therefore, to whom much is given, much is required because if I fall, you will all fall. If I take a wrong turn, most of you will take a wrong turn. That's why Scripture says in *James 3:1* that, "Brethren, many of you should never teach, should not teach because those who teach will be judged very strictly," because if I take a wrong turn from the pulpit, Churches will take a wrong turn from the pulpit. Other pastors will turn and congregation will turn because everybody is not in the front where they see the Ark clearly; many are at the back of the crowd following others. So, we all have a responsibility of keeping our eyes on those who are in the front because the fellow at the last row may be seeing nothing; just the back of the one before you. He sees no Ark; he sees no priest; he doesn't know what is lying over there; he just following the one before him. Therefore, it is important that every one of us are focused and keep our eyes. The Ark went ahead of them and *verse 11*, Scripture will say,

Joshua 3:11

¹¹ Behold, the Ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is crossing over before you into the Jordan.

It went before and the next verse in verse 14, Scripture will say,

Joshua 3:14

¹⁴ So it was, when the people set out from their camp to cross over the Jordan, with the priests bearing the Ark of the covenant before the people-

God has to go before us but God is going before us – Old or New Covenant, we cannot be independent. Like I said, every true leader was once a true follower, because only good followers will make good leaders and many, many of you will be disqualified from being leaders because you never follow. If I haven't learnt to follow another man's leading, who was being led by God, how will I lead myself? This is important. Elisha had to follow Elijah year after year before the mantle will fall on him and then, all the sons of the prophet will then, start following Elisha for years. Like I said on Sunday, every one of you is a leader, even if you are leading only yourself; you are a leader. So, be very sure where you are leading yourself into. It was a difficult crossing. *Verse 17* says,

Joshua 3:17

¹⁷ Then the priests who bore the Ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan...

It's a very difficult crossing – flooded river. The flood separates; standing in the middle; one side, dry; the other side, water; standing in the middle. It's a very difficult crossing but what you need to know is – the Ark of the Covenant stood with them in the middle. You are not crossing alone. He is standing with you in the most difficult situations of your life until you cross over. That's why we keep our eyes on God. He is not saying, "Do it on your own." He says, "I will never leave you nor forsake you. I will be with you till the very end – the good times, the bad times, the worst of times, the most difficult of times," He says, "I am there with you. I will not abandon you," but we have to learn to keep our eyes on Him because He will not go where I want to go but I can always go where He takes me. So, we are duty-bound to keep our eyes on Him

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because He has given us that free will to choose. That is how faith comes. This is all our learning process. This is what we are called to do. But, to learn, there are certain things; remember old lessons? Has school started? Has everybody's school started? Do you run into the classroom when your class starts? No. I've told you always. Before you can sit in the classroom, there are few things – one – school will say, "Reach on time." Two – You have assembly. Three – they will check your uniform. All these are part of preparing you to sit down and listen. We cannot just listen. We cannot just hear from God. There is a preparation that goes before hearing from God and that preparation will go to hearing; that hearing should go to being; that being should go to doing. And in *Joshua 3:5*, before they even start, God will tell them what they need to do. He says,

Joshua 3:5

⁵ And Joshua said to the people, "Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you."

God will do, tomorrow, a lot of things in your midst but to receive it, you need to do something. You and I need to sanctify. In *John 17:17*, in the New Covenant, Jesus comes and tells us,

John 17:17

¹⁷ Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

Do you know that the hearing of the Word itself is preparing you to hear the Word? If I had not heard from God in the years in the past in the eighties and the nineties, I wouldn't be hearing so clearly now. What brought the clarity today is the Word which I heard in the beginning, believing that Word, practicing that Word is what brought clarity here. Sanctification is a work which the Word does, which the Spirit does and which the Blood does but here, we are looking at the Word. The Word of God sanctifies us.

¹⁷ Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

How does it work? It works when we take the Word and put it into practice. Like I told you, in *Ephesians 5:26*, Scripture says,

Ephesians 5:26

²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her (that is, the Church) with the washing of water by the word,

The Word acts like water. When two children believe and it is not true – water is not your enemy; water is your friend; whether it is cold water or hot water, it is your friend. It is the enemy on the dirt on you. but sometimes, children think that water is their enemy. Water is not your enemy; the Word of God is not your enemy; the Word of God is the enemy of the wrong ideas in your head which lifts itself above the knowledge of the Living God but because you like those ideas, you are fighting it because those ideas have become your ideas; now, you are fighting against the Word of God and God says, "No one has fought Me and ever won." Some ideas can become part of ourselves. That's why God tells Jeremiah, "I have called you to uproot, pull down; then, build." That's what is happening over here. The Word of God is coming and it is cleansing, it is sanctifying, it is breaking down ideas. You may think it is not happening but in ten years, I know it has happened in almost everybody's head. If you have doubt, go to another Church and come back; or invite somebody from another Church and they will say, "How can you sit for 2 hours?" Everything in our thinking, our religion, which cannot be found in the Word of God, put it on the shelf; leave it there. Don't take it down until you find it in the Word of God. You go to school, you go to college, you go to higher universities; they will teach you all kinds of things. Take it, leave it. If it agrees with the Word of God, receive it. If it doesn't agree with the Word of God, take it here, write it here and forget it. You can argue. You can contest in open society ideas but don't believe it if it doesn't agree with the Word of God. We are only to follow the Word of God. Why? Because sanctity brings clarity. Where there is no sanctity, there is no clarity. The reason we are confused often is because there is not a sanctity of thought. We are not trying to seek the will of God in our minds; we are trying to bend God to do our will. So, there is no sanctity. The minute you start aligning your mind and keep saying, "Lord, let Your will be done," you will realize – God starts speaking to you very clearly. That's what you experience by faith. When we obey God's Word, we shall become strong. In *Joshua 3:8*, Scripture says,

Joshua 3:8

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⁸ You shall command the priests who bear the Ark of the covenant, saying, ‘When you have come to the edge of the water of the Jordan, you shall stand in the Jordan.’ ”

Those who know their God shall be strong. Who were asked to stand in the water? Those who bore the Ark. Meaning, symbolically representing – these people are bearing God; meaning – they know God and those who know God are not called to stand on the edge; they are called to stand in the water. Not stand in the edge but stand in the water. Go stand in the river. Standing on the edge is not enough because many are standing on the edge, waiting for somebody to step in; because they don’t know God. They have heard about God from other people. They are waiting for that man to come and step in so that they can step in behind him. But the miracle is not on the shore; the miracle is in the river. We wait for signs before we get our feet wet. Then, we do not know our God. Problem is – we cannot box God into our ways but only follow Him by faith. In *Isaiah 55:9*, Scripture says,

Isaiah 55:9

⁹ “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

Put these together – God’s ways and God’s thoughts. God does the way He thinks. We do the way we think. As a man thinketh, so is he. Now, all of you are not sitting here because you thought that way but because Ailsa Aunty thought for you; for she was very thoughtful. But one day, you will be free. You will have your own job. You will move out or you will be moving out of this city. Maybe, you will be in a college. That is when you will know whether your thought and your way tally. That’s why freedom is a very expensive gift. What will you do with your freedom?

Often, we do not see what God is doing because we are near-sighted. We don’t see. The priests carrying the Ark stepped into the water. What does Scripture say in *Joshua 3:16*? It says,

Joshua 3:16

¹⁶ that the waters which came down from upstream stood still, and rose in a heap (where?) very far away at Adam...

The guys are holding the Ark and they are standing here. The water is flowing like this. The water stopped miles and miles away where the eye cannot see. You and I stand by faith but God is doing a work far beyond what we can see. Because you and I do not see, it does not mean God is not working. So, faith takes God at His Word. “Step into the water,” and you step into the water. And you don’t see anything but He is doing a work upstream. And it is called ‘Adam’. Where did sin begin? With Adam. So, “Lord, rescue me. I believe. I am standing.” God says, “I am here.” “But I don’t see anything.” He says, “I am going back into your past where your sin began and I’m dealing with situations and putting things right. One day, you will experience your deliverance because I have to go back into your past and put those things right. Wait, I am doing it because you have to know Me – I am a God who is righteous. I cannot just push you across because then, My righteousness is marred. I have to deal with things here and I’m dealing with it and putting it right. Soon, you will see thy crown and you can walk across.” God is doing a work. That is why He says, “My thoughts are not your thoughts; My ways are not your ways.” All we can do is align our thoughts to Him by faith and do what He says and God says, “You don’t realize it – you are now thinking like Me and doing like Me. It will always bring results.” All you can do is trust Him and obey Him.

Jonathan, when he did that, he acted on what he knew about God. One thing – “This, definitely is not our destiny. We are not supposed to be hemmed by the Philistines; the Philistines are supposed to be hemmed by us. How did we end here? When I look, there are only two swords. One is with Dad. He is never going to come out. He is sitting there with 600 soldiers under a Terebinth tree. And I’ve got one and you are with me. Will you come with me?” He said, “Lord, wherever you go, I will come with you.” Then, he opens his mouth and says something, “The LORD can save with few or many.” That is the key that breaks through. What he said is true. God doesn’t need many. If God wanted many, He would have chosen twelve thousand disciples; no, 12. Twelve is enough. One will go; eleven is enough. “And leaving these 11 aside, I will pick another one 12 years later and using him, who nobody will pick, I pick him and he will write one-third of the Scriptures.” God doesn’t think like us. He thinks differently. He is not dependent upon numbers; He is not dependent upon power, or strength or anything. He does differently and Jonathan got it and he stepped forward and Scripture says in *1 Samuel 14*; when he stepped forward, what happened?

1 Samuel 14:13-15

¹³And Jonathan climbed up on his hands and knees with his armorbearer after him...

You are going into a spiritual battle. Don't take it literally. This is literal; this has happened in history but we are looking at how it applies to me. Put on the helmet of salvation and take the sword of the Spirit and pray all kinds of prayer. Get on your knees and your hands. That's where the war is fought. That is where it is fought. You win or you lose in your prayer closet. That is why that is the place the devil attacks the most. He doesn't want you to read your Word; He doesn't want you to pray because He knows – if you get this together and start aligning, you win and he loses. He got on his knees and his hands. After him, Scripture says,

...and they fell before Jonathan...

They are falling. And if your eyes are open, when we practice this, we will see powers of darkness falling before us. The principalities, the rulers, demons falling after us and what does Scripture says?

...And as he came after him, his armorbearer killed them. ¹⁴That first slaughter which Jonathan and his armorbearer made was about twenty men within about half an acre of land. ¹⁵And there was trembling in the camp, in the field, and among all the people. The garrison and the raiders also trembled; and the earth quaked, so that it was a very great trembling.

Another version will say, "God shook the earth," because one man stood up in faith and he said, "Lord, I align my mind with what I know about You and I want to step out."

Those who know their God will be strong and they do great exploits. Those who know their God. We have to become what we know. Either way, we will become what we know. All of us are becoming what we know. Some of you are IT professionals. That is fine. That should be your job but don't let that define your thinking. Some of you are on social media like half your life. At least, be sociable. That's fine but let your thinking be governed by the Word of God. Always governed. Because we are becoming according to what we know. So, the question is: are we hearing? Are we becoming? Are we doing? The power of God, in the Bible, has many words to describe – it is called 'the acts of God'; it is called 'the anointing', 'the power of the Holy Spirit' but the question is: is the anointing on empty heads? Is the anointing on vain heads? Is the anointing on lazy heads? You know what lazy head anointing is? Lazy head anointing is the children who will not study through the year and when the exam is coming, they will pray, "Lord, I pray for wisdom and understanding." That's a lazy head. They never receive grace, which is the power of the Holy Spirit. What they receive is called 'mercy'. We should receive mercy for our sins and we should receive grace for our daily life. We are not called to live on mercy alone. "Lord, I'm lying on the floor. Forgive me." God says, "Get up. When will you do something with your life in My Name?" People confuse mercy and grace. Grace is the greatest thing that has ever happened in human history where the very power of God's own Spirit has been released into the lives of people. God says, "Live by grace. Mercy is when you fall." But because people are in a constant fallen state, they are living in mercy. God says, "No." Anointing was meant for heads, minds that were governed by the thinking of God.

If you are a hard worker with integrity, that's how God works. First day, God worked and He said, "It is good." He worked hard and He liked His work. Did you like today's work? Can you say your today's work was good? Can somebody else say, "Your today's work was good"? God never lies. He is absolutely holy. He is absolutely righteous. At the end of the first day, He said, "It is good." Every day, He said, "It is good." Except for one day because of the darkness. Every day, He said, "It is good." And finally, He said, "It is very good." So, He is a worker with integrity. The doing part – He is a worker with integrity. And it doesn't matter what work you are doing; it is irrelevant.

Pastor Vijay and I – we were discussing in the morning about what it is to become. A lot of fathers over here. You parent your child. That doesn't mean you are a parent. If you are a parent, you can parent anybody's child. If you are a teacher, you can teach anywhere, any situation. Your conditions do not restrain your performance because that is what you are. Jesus could teach the crowds in a beach; He could teach on the mountaintop; He could teach down in the valleys; and He could teach anywhere because that's what He was but when you are not something which you are pretending to be, you need all the setting that helps you because you are not that person. So, it is not your work; it is becoming that worker of

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integrity. That's what I keep telling students – "It is not your marks; it is how you study that matters to God." If you don't have integrity in the way you study, God cannot prosper because He says, "That is what you are."

In his father's house, there was one man his father could trust, for Jacob; that was Joseph. He was one of the youngest of his sons but was the only son he could trust that, "If I entrust something to him, he doesn't need supervision; he will do it, more than what I expect." Can we be trusted? Scripture says, "From his father's house, being the pet in the family, the next day, he was sold as a slave." But Scripture says, "His master trusted him." The master realized, "This guy doesn't need supervision." Why? He is a different kind of a worker. He's got integrity. In a very little while, here, Scripture is very clear, "I shall make you the head and not the tail." It's God who does it. Though he has 12 sons, spiritually speaking, the youngest one, one of the youngest one is the head. The only one the father is trust is the head. He comes in as a young 17-year-old slave in Egypt, a Hebrew in Egypt to a house, probably, with hundreds of slaves. A little later, this young little 17-year-old teenager is at the head of the slaves. Why? He looks and says, "I can trust this dude. He is trustworthy." He is the head and not the tail. In that house, he is the head and not the tail of the employees. From there, for a false accusation, he is picked and thrown into prison. A little later, this Hebrew boy who is a prisoner in the Pharaoh's prison, where all the Pharaoh's employees are thrown into prison, he is the head and not the tail. Why? Because he has got something in him. He is a worker with integrity. Those who know their God, they will be strong and they do. How you do matters. Those who know their God, how they do things will be different and they will always recognize it. A little later, he is standing before Pharaoh – a Hebrew boy – a 30-year-old young Hebrew man is standing before Pharaoh and the Pharaoh says, "You are the head and not the tail. Take charge of my country." How do you do? It doesn't matter where God has placed you; spiritually, you should still be the head. I'm not talking about promotion. I'm not talking about pay-rise. I'm talking about – who are you there spiritually? Because spiritually, to be promoted, only God can promote you and God can only promote those who think like Him, act like Him and work like Him. And it starts when you are small. You; not us. We did not know the Lord at your age. You guys know. You know so much which we did not know at 30 or 35 years old. You know so much. So, you have an unbelievable start in life like Joseph and David and Daniel had. You had that start because you know what they did not know. You have the anointing available which they did not have. You can be the head and not the tail. You can do greater exploits which Jesus promised which other generations could not do because you have access to something which others in your age did not know. So, don't take it lightly. All it takes is faith. That is where you position because the anointing falls on the head.

Now, the rainy season is coming, right? If you want to escape the rain and you are walking on the rain, you open your umbrella. If you open your umbrella, where should the umbrella be? Above your head. If you don't want the rain falling on your head, the umbrella should be above your head. What if you have the umbrella far away from you and walk? Does it help? Think. Where is the Word? The Word is here and if the anointing is falling here, where do I have to position myself? Underneath here. If the anointing is falling here, I have to position myself where the anointing is. God is anointing you and me; He is not. Let me tell you very clearly – he is not anointing me because we are only the body; the head is Jesus. The head of the Church is Jesus Christ. It is the head that is anointed. It is He who is anointed and when the anointing is falling, our job is to align ourselves under the head but we all have been given individual heads also. So, this head has to align with His head for the anointing to flow and to work. Otherwise, it will not work. That is why Scripture says, "*Submit to God.*" Come under God. Come under This (the Bible). All the fights and the struggles believers are facing is only with the Bible. "I don't like what Peter Anna says!" That is not the truth. You don't like Peter Anna being the head. "Why should I listen to him?" I'm just telling an example for the boys who are under Peter Anna or Sammy. That is the only issue. The issue is not about what he is saying is right or wrong. "I want to be headless." That, you find in chicken shops. That's what is happening in Christendom – lot of headless people. Question is: who is your head? You can't be independent and say, "God is my head and I will not accept any head." Things like that don't work with God. To come to this level, I had to go under many heads. Some very nasty heads, to see that I would stay under that head until He moved me. It was just my test. Joseph had to stay under his father's head, had to stay under Potiphar's head, had to stay under the jail warden's head and finally, stay under the Pharaoh's head. He stayed under many heads. None of the heads were really good. As soon as the father saw the coat, he decided that his son was dead. He did not even send a search party. As soon as Potiphar heard his wife saying that, he forgot all his integrity, his work and threw him into prison. Are you seeing? Who is your head? The head of man is Christ. The problem is – when you have headship in your home, there is an anointing that automatically comes because of that office but the problem is – what if the head is empty and the head is vain or the head is lazy? You have abuse in the house. What if the woman refuses to come under the head? You have conflict in the house. What if the children refuse to come under the head? You have rebellion in the house. You will say, "But I am an orphan." God says, "I am a Father unto the

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orphans and a Husband unto the widows.” He says, “Nobody is without a head.” He says, “Stay under.” Because there are great exploits to be done. You have to see that. You have to look at yourself in the mirror and say that, “I am destined for greatness because my God is great and it is His life that I live.” Anything that you do is great if He does it through you because every work He does is great but He has to do it. It can only come by faith. Faith comes from hearing. Those who know their God.

Even a little knowledge of that God, blind Bartimaeus (as I close), sitting in the road outside Jericho’s city’s gates. He heard that Jesus was passing by but he had knowledge of Jesus which others did not have. If Jesus is the prophesied Messiah, then He is the Son of David. Then, if He is the Son of David, He is a merciful Savior. So, he opens his mouth and he shouts, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” You can repeat somebody’s and God knows you are not. Canaanite woman said, “Jesus, Son of David,” Jesus refused. “You are pretending. You don’t even know who David is. You don’t even know the Son of David.” He refused to answer. He is not going to respond to pretense. He is going to respond to faith that comes from real knowledge. “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me.” He stopped and He said, “Bring him to Me.” Isn’t it interesting that God, who is walking on earth, knows who is a true Israelite and who is not from the voice?” “You are a Canaanite. You are a Yehudi. Yehudi can call Me ‘Son of David’. I will stop. You, I won’t even answer you,” until she says, “Lord, have mercy.” And then, He says, “Okay.” Get the knowledge of God right. If you do not know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, don’t say, “Father, have mercy.” He won’t even answer your prayer. He would say, “I’m not your Father. I’m your Creator.” But if you are a child of God, go to Him boldly, confidently and say, “Baba, I goofed up but You are still my Baba.” That’s what He called them to say ‘Abba’ – it is the Hebrew word for ‘Baba’. You can come boldly any time. That’s the boldness of the prodigal son. The prodigal son knew his father better than the elder son who stayed at home. He says, “My father. He may be mad at me but I know he will take me back and I’m going back home.” Because he had knowledge – something the other fellow did not have. Do you have the knowledge of your God? Because that will stand up for you in the hour of trouble. Do you know your God? For those who know their God shall be strong. The knowledge of God brings strength and that strength will do exploits. Shall we stand as we pray?

Closing Prayer:

Father, this evening, we just come to You, Lord. We continue to meditate upon Your Word. We continue to believe that Your Word will change our thinking and I pray, these young ones and the older ones, O Lord, will grab hold of You by faith. There is so much to be done before You come back. So much to be done. And You need Your men and women in every place on earth – every office, every workplace, every college, every school – You need witnesses. I pray these ones, these dear ones will know their God and they will be strong and their strength will only increase with their knowledge and You will continue to do great exploits through everyone, Lord. We are not looking for fame. We are not looking for recognition. We are not looking for followers. We are looking to do Your will. That’s all we want to do, Lord – to do Your will, finish our task and stand before You with joy and here from Your lips those incredible words. I pray, tonight, Father, anybody who is struggling with a situation, let them know You are there with them. They are not alone. You are there. The Ark has gone ahead and the Ark is standing in the middle of the river and the Ark will not move until we have crossed over. And You are standing and waiting for us to cross over. You are the One who is holding the flood back. The enemy would have destroyed us many times over but it was You who had held the flood back because You want Your children to cross over and possess this life for which You came, lived, died and rose again, O Lord. We have a life to possess, a life to live out, a life to declare and that life is what the people need to see, Lord; because it is written in Your Word, “In Him was life and that life was the light of men.” If we live our lives, it is only darkness before men. If we live Your life, it is life before men. Help us to live Your life, Lord. You brought us safely. I know, Lord, You will reach each one safely. Take each one home safely, Lord. May the hand of the Living God rest upon each soul. Thank You, Father. Thank You. In Jesus’ Name we pray, Amen.