

*Father, this morning, we just come to You and we just surrender our hearts, our minds, our entire being, our bodies into Thy hands and I pray, Spirit of God, You will touch us; that we will be able to focus and listen to everything that You have to say through the voice of man, O Lord, because You speak through men and You have spoken through men for thousands of years, O Lord, but it was You who spoke and I pray and I believe You will speak to us again today and You will teach us and help us to hear, to believe what You say, Lord. Speak to us once again. In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.*

Last Sunday, we looked at drifting. We're just two weeks away, like I said, from the Passion Week and the Resurrection Sunday and this year, interestingly, once in a blue moon it happens, Passover is on Friday and resurrection Sunday is on April 1<sup>st</sup>. God has to declare at an age when everybody seems to be against God, God says, "I'm going to make a fool of all of you." April 1<sup>st</sup>, I declare My resurrection, and Good Friday is Passover." It rarely happens because Passover usually falls on a Wednesday or Thursday but these two weeks, we try to look at, try to study the last days of Jesus on earth. It is also in so many ways a picture of how the last days will be on earth. Please remember, when the Bible talks of the last days, it actually includes the entire period from the first coming to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ is called last days. We think the last days must be the end. No, Scripture doesn't say that. It actually says – the last days is the entire period between His First Coming and the Second Coming. Yet, before He comes, there will be certain signs which is called the labor pains, before the actual delivery. So, in *Hebrews 1:1-2*,

## **Hebrews 1:1-2**

***<sup>1</sup> God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup> has in these last days spoken to us by His Son,***

So, when Jesus came in and He started speaking, the last days began and we are all part of that generation. We are all part of that generation to whom God has spoken through His Son. That is what the writer of Hebrews says. The others heard messages spoken to man through angels and for every disobedience, the judgment was terrible. How much more will we escape this great salvation and has come through His own Son and not through angels or servants?

## **Hebrews 2:2-3**

***<sup>2</sup> For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, <sup>3</sup> how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation,***

So, we should be even more serious because to us God has spoken through His Son. So, the last days is from there and we are towards the end of the last days. So, in the Olivet discourse, which means when the disciples asked Him, "What are the signs of Your second coming?" So, you will have in *Matthew*, you will have it in *Luke*. Jesus gave signs. There are two kinds of signs. One is signs which are external, which is connected with nature, politics and all that kind of things – famine, pestilence and earthquake. It's been happening in an increasing order for the past two thousand years but there is another sign which is internal. See, I can go absolutely wrong about the last days with the outside signs in your reading but you can never go wrong in the inside sign. Last Sunday, we said about two witnesses that will stand before every unbeliever who says, "I did not know about God." There is an external witness; there is an internal witness. In the same way about Jesus' coming, there are external witnesses. Everybody can go wrong in that but what about the internal witnesses? So, today we will look at that internal witness which is a clear sign of the last days.

When Jesus was asked, "What was the greatest command?" Let's look at that portion.

## **Matthew 22:35-40**

***<sup>35</sup> Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, <sup>36</sup> "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" <sup>37</sup> Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' <sup>38</sup> This is the first and great commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' <sup>40</sup> On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."***

They asked Him a question. It was a question to test Him. Thank God some of them tested Him. So, we got fantastic answers. That's what, like when we were classroom teachers, centuries ago, (I'm not that old but centuries ago,) we were excited by some of the students answers and those answer scripts I use to tell them, "After you have finished, I want to keep that copy with me because that answer was fantastic." Even teachers get excited, questioners get excited by answers because you look at it, this is no guide, this is original and you have used your imaginative capabilities in these answers and we love it. So, thank God people asked Jesus questions because we have incredible answers that you can take thirty-nine Books of the Bible and make it into two statements. So, easy, right? That's what you buy a guide for, right? So that you don't have to read the test. Jesus said, "The entire text is compressed into two."

So, now, we look at an internal sign. Jesus, in the Olivet discourse when He was talking about the signs of the last days. He said something in *Matthew 24*,

**Matthew 24:10-13**

**<sup>9</sup> "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake."**

This is very clear. If this happens to you, you know you are part of the last day sign. You don't have to look for an earthquake because you are part of the earthquake.

**<sup>10</sup> And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.**

Now, these are things which are inside. They are things inside. Listen to Wednesday's message about a lady who is so desperate and God uses a little offensive word to her and she is not offended and you will see today, it is offense. Anything can be misconstrued as an offense. You have to be very careful about what you say. You better check the dictionary before you use words, to see what all possible meanings are there and then say, "Ok, this word is slightly dangerous," because people are walking on offense. And, what happens?

**<sup>11</sup> Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. <sup>12</sup> And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.**

Jesus said, "This is the greatest command. Love God with all your heart, all your mind, all your strength, and love your neighbor as yourself." And Jesus said, "One of the signs is that love will grow cold,"

**<sup>13</sup> But he who endures to the end shall be saved.**

There is going to be increase of persecution, there is going to be an increase of people falling away from faith. Let's read that portion again.

**<sup>9</sup> "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. <sup>10</sup> And then many will be offended, will betray one another...**

You know *verse 10*; this is talking about Christians. It is not talking about non-Christians. This is part of falling away from the faith. Your faith will be tested, your love will be tested. There will be a falling away from faith, there is an increase of persecution, there is going to be an incredible, unbelievable breakdown of relationships and above all of these, main reason is love grows cold; your love for God and your love for your neighbor grows cold and Jesus says in *verse 13*. He says,

**<sup>13</sup> But he who endures to the end shall be saved.**

Endures till the end but hanging in there? No, who endures in love for God and for his persecuting neighbor. He who endures till the end only will be saved. He says, "You need to persevere in this." We will see in Jesus' own life also, especially the last days of His life, the faith of His followers will fail and love will grow cold, yet, tens and thousands of followers' love all changed. Though He hasn't done anybody any harm other than to bless them. So, now, we are looking at one primary internal evidence as we come to the end of the age. Are we part of the falling away or are we part of those

who are enduring? When Scripture says, “They fall away from faith,” he does not say, “They stop going to Church.” Are we part of the falling away? Or are we part of the enduring? Paul, in his epistle will tell us how this happens and how society as a whole, as completely, will fall headlong into this trap. In 2 *Timothy* 3:1-5,

**Timothy 3:1-5**

<sup>1</sup> ***But know this, that in the last days*** (He says last days) ***perilous times*** (Which means, terrible times) ***will come: (How does it happen? It happens because men)*** <sup>2</sup> ***For men will be lovers of*** (They won’t be lovers of their neighbors. They will be lovers of) ***themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,*** <sup>3</sup> ***unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good,*** <sup>4</sup> ***traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,***

In those four verses, he will give you almost eighteen characteristics of how the society will change. So, how do we read Jesus’ instruction and reconcile what Paul is saying?

In *Matthew* 22:39, the second is like it.

**Matthew 22:39**

<sup>39</sup> ***And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.***

And Paul will say, “For men will be lovers of themselves.” So, how do we reconcile these two, right? Little contradiction, right? Jesus is saying, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” and Paul will say, “Terrible times will be there because people will be lovers of themselves.” Then, we should, “Yes, it should be good, right?” Jesus said, “Love your neighbor as yourself. So, I need to love myself,” and Paul says, “No, actually, it will be terrible because people will be lovers of themselves.” Are we getting it? We will become lovers of ourselves; we won’t love our neighbors. See, our problem is, unless our minds are framed by the Word of God, we will measure everything differently. Society measures progress absolutely differently. We will say we are the most advanced among human humanity in six thousand or more years. Why? If you want to look at a prosperous nation, we will look at the wealth of the people. We will look at the strength of the military and we will see the quality of their technology which leads to quality of life and we’ll say, we have progressed. That’s how politicians pick up slogans also. When a politician says, whether it is India ‘Acche din’ or whether it is America, ‘Let’s make America great again.’ What do they mean? More wealth, more power, more technology. At a personal level, how do we read, therefore? If I have more money, and if I have more influence and if I have more gadgets in my home, I have progress. When God and in the Bible never measures the progress of a society in any of those terms. He is absolutely, completely different and we saw this earlier, we will see it again because we need to go back to that core text, over and over again.

**1 Corinthians 13:1-3**

<sup>1</sup> ***Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.*** <sup>2</sup> ***And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.*** <sup>3</sup> ***And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.***

God says, “A society will be measured only in the terms of their love,” and in love, if we haven’t progress, we are regressing. There is another term called ‘regress’, the opposite of progress. A society may progress in wealth, in military power, in technology, everything and actually be regressing in love, in kindness and in compassion. It can happen at a national level, it can happen at a personal level, it can happen even in a Church. God says, “If that’s what we are, then we are a big zero because the Bible tells us, ‘God is love.’” Therefore, since we were created in His image, man cannot help but love. The problem is – sin and the devil takes the focus of our love and makes it destructive from God to self, from others to our self. That is the nature of satan’s love. He is in love with himself. Satan is one being in the universe, who is absolutely in love with himself and he will destroy anybody else and everything else to preserve that love and when you see a society moving towards, where it is the love of self, you know the love of God has been perverted. It’s been absolutely perverted. Our object of love has turned from God to self, from the other to self and the nature of our love changes and that is what in *Timothy*, Paul was writing those eighteen characteristics of what happens when men become lovers of themselves. When men are not lovers of God or lovers of others, what happens to a man, a woman or a child who loves themselves, the first manifestation is they become lovers of money. First thing is, they love money. Are we getting the picture? Jesus said, “Love

## **Pacify Or Crucify?**

your neighbor as you love yourself.” When Jesus said that, He assumes a truth that we all love ourselves. We all love ourselves but our problem is Jesus says, “Love your neighbor as you love yourself.” Now, what are our complains about? God says, “You will complain if your need is not met. Why? Because you love yourself.” If you didn’t get your breakfast, you will be upset. Why? Because you love yourself. God says, “That is good!” But He says, “You never get upset when your neighbor doesn’t have breakfast.” You get upset when your clothes aren’t so great but He says, “You don’t get upset when your neighbor is walking around in rags. You get upset when somebody disobeys you but you don’t get upset when you disobey somebody else. Do you see how Jesus puts it together? He says, “I assume every man loves himself.” He says, “That’s good. That’s the way it should be, you should love yourself, but in the same manner, love your neighbor. Otherwise, what will happen? We will end up becoming narcissist beings. Like a generation is so involved with self. We get so upset, if somebody talks ill about us but we don’t get upset when we talk ill about somebody else. Jesus is saying, “Why don’t you just love your neighbor the same way?” There are lots of things that are coming to a life as a result of the fall. God says, “Deny that? And express what has come into a life as a result of salvation. That’s where the Cross stands. Do you know the title of today’s message? If you look at the small babies at the back, the small ones, the mother will buy what is called a ‘pacifier’. To stop a baby from crying, the mother puts it in the baby’s mouth. It will keep on sucking the pacifier without realizing there is no bottle at the other end. It will keep on; no sustenance, nothing. The title of today’s message is “Pacify or Crucify” – it’s your choice. Because congregations have risen where the congregations want pastors to come and pacify their flesh. Not crucify. See, to pacify the crowd, Pilate ordered – “Crucify Jesus.” There are only two choices. Either we pacify our flesh and crucify Jesus or crucify our flesh and exalt Jesus. There are no two ways. That’s where the cross stands. The cross denies everything that is selfish. Everything that is selfish the cross denies. Yet, it doesn’t remain silent. It’s not a silent spectator. From the Cross, you will see, all over the world, next week, people will talk about the nine stations of the cross, the nine words from the Cross. All this comes from the Cross. The Cross is never silent. The Cross denies everything that is selfish; yet, the Cross speaks. The first words that are spoken from the Cross is an expression, because He loves. Yet, when we turn love to self, 2 *Timothy chapter 2* says, the first visible sign is we love money. We love money. 2 *Timothy 6:10* says,

### **2 Timothy 6:10**

<sup>10</sup> ***For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil...***

It doesn’t say that money is evil. It doesn’t say that. The Bible never says money is the root of all evil. He says, “No.” Money can be root and a cause of a lot of good. But he says, “The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil.”

***...for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.***

In a society, we love money. We pursue money, because we love self. You cannot indulge in self unless you have money. Unless you have money, you cannot indulge in self. Our charity itself often is not because we love our neighbor, it’s because we love ourselves. That’s why Jesus told His disciples in *Matthew 6:1-2*,

### **Matthew 6:1-2**

<sup>1</sup> ***“Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them.***

Why did He say that? He says that because, what will happen; you won’t even realize because you are doing charitable deeds before men; on the other side, you are pursuing money. But because you are doing charitable deeds, you will walk under false assumption that you love your neighbor when you actually don’t. That you are doing all this not because you love your neighbor but because you love yourself and you want a reputation as a philanthropist. This is guarding our hearts from the love of money.

***...Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. <sup>2</sup> Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.***

God is talking about why we love money. Why do we love money? One of the primary things about loving money is you will always be discontent, if you love money. If you love money, you will always be discontent or always afraid, because it doesn’t matter how much money you have, it will never be enough. So, the questions we ask ourselves to test like this

lawyer was testing Jesus, we test ourselves is: am I content with what I have? Am I content with what I have? Do you compare your life with somebody else's? Even pastors do that. I wish pastors only had a clue of my congregation, that one-third are orphans, the other one-third are single mothers, and may be in ten or fifteen people in this congregation actually have jobs. But they look at the cars and they say, "Man! He must be raking in money!" Because they don't even look at people. They look at the cars parked over there which you may be paying through your nose, your EMIs. Do you realize? Is that how we look at life? Do you compare your life with others? Do you honour God with what you have? Am I a lover of God or am I a lover of money? That's what Paul is saying, "Check your heart. Check your heart. Do you love money?" Loving of money can be in two ways – either you want so much money because you want to indulge in yourself and then, show to people that you are a charitable person or you love money because your security is in it. It can be either.

Jesus' final journey of His final journeys is very interesting. When Jesus, next Sunday, you will see it all around the world people will be going around with palm leaves and if they don't get palm leaves, then any leaves. Palm Sunday, it is called. "Hosanna! Hosanna!" All that is there. The procession finished. Scripture tells very carefully in *Mark* and *Matthew*; it tells very clearly, the procession finished and He went into the temple and it was late in the evening. I was telling the pastors on Monday, during the Monday's pastors meeting. Even if it is late, He stills comes into the temple and He takes a good look. He came into the temple and He took a close look at everything and then, He went out. Then Scripture says, "The next day morning they were coming back to the temple. You will see much of Jesus' ministry happened around the temple, because He was teaching us stuff. In the Old Covenant, God had a temple for His people. In the New Covenant, God has a people for His temple. So, you make come back straight from the office and say, "Okay. I had a hard day's work. I'm going to put my feet up and I'm going to watch my program." Even though it is a late hour, He comes into the temple and takes a good look. He came to the fig tree. Scripture says, "He was walking down and He saw a fig tree, full of leaves." And Scripture writes very clearly that it was not the season for fruit and yet, He looked for fruit and He saw no fruit. And He cursed it. Next evening, they will say that they found the fig tree had dried up. The question is: why did He go to the fig tree in the first place? Because Scripture says, it was very leafy. Leaves attracted Him to the tree. But when He came to the tree, He looked for fruit, but He didn't see any fruit. "Even though it is not season, O Lord of creation, why are You looking for fruit?" Because for the fruit of the Spirit, there is no season. Fig tree is a symbol of Israel in the Old Covenant and a symbol of Church in the New Covenant. Because for the fruit of righteousness and the fruit of the Holy Spirit, there is no season. What attracted Him to the tree? It was the leaf. What attracts Him to the Churches? It is our outward worship. But what is He looking for? He's not looking for shouts and clapping and waving of hands. He is looking to see, is there fruit of righteousness? Is there fruit of the Spirit? That's what He's looking for. If that isn't there, He is unhappy. He is unhappy. Because if you look at it, why would He? Why would He curse? Because He was teaching them even in His last journey. What attracted Him? What attracted Him was the leaf, the outward religion. There's an outward religion. God doesn't have to look for Christians on Sundays. He knows where they are. They're all in the Churches. The leaves are there. The leaves are all green. When He approaches, when He comes, He's not looking for leaves. He's looking for fruit.

Let me tell you the difference between the leaves and fruit. You put one tree here. Apple tree. Orange. Mango. Pomegranate. Custard. All these trees. But unless you're an expert, if they are no fruit, you'll not be able to identify the tree. You do not identify the tree by its leaf. You identify a tree by its fruit. You don't identify a tree by its fruit. You identify a person by his fruit. You identify a Church by its fruit. That's why He will say, if I'm right, in *Matthew 21:43*, He will say, "The kingdom will be taken away from you and given to a nation that will bear its fruit." What is the kingdom? The Kingdom is a matter of power. The Kingdom is righteousness, peace, and joy. The Kingdom is not a matter of talk, a matter of power. The Kingdom is not even to produce leaves. The Kingdom is to produce fruit. And He says, "The Kingdom is the power of the Holy Spirit." That is what creates all this. And He says, if you do not utilize that power and you are only a leafy Christian. He says, "I will slowly withdraw My Spirit and give it to a set of people who will produce its fruit who are walking in peace, walking in righteousness, who are walking in joy, who are walking in love, and who are kind and compassionate to one another. You can continue with your leafy ceremonies. But there is no fruit." Then He walks into the temple. Scripture says, "He took a whip of cords, and He turned everything upside down. Tax collectors, their money, everything. Total mayhem inside the temple." Why? You know what He said? "My Father's house will be a house of prayer for all nations. You have made it into a den of thieves." Now, He is not against commerce. There is commerce that should take place. Because without commerce, you cannot have anything that is going on. There is economics. There is commerce. Everything has to take place. That is God ordained. But He's not talking about commerce here. He said, "You've made it into a den of thieves." What you have there is covetousness! He says, "I am an incredibly kind and loving landlord." Let me tell you. Now, in our country, we understand it very well. Land is owned mostly by few people. Then, they give their plots to poor people to

farm. When they're giving it for farming, they will say, "50% of the crop for me. Fifty, you keep." Somebody else works over there. He gets the harvest and then, he gives 50% to the landlord. And the other fellow doesn't do anything. He sits in his house. He divided all his plots. Fifty-fifty. Our God says, "The earth and the fullness belong to Me. I give it to you. Just give Me 10%." What did He say? People won't even give Him that and they say, "He is a hard task master." You see. Instead, they have turned the temple into covetousness. They turned the whole temple into a practice of covetousness. That's how the entire Old Testament finally closes. He says, "You bring this sheep. One eyed fellow. One legged fellow, which nobody will accept, you will come and give it to God. And this other fellow over there. The priest who's supposed to sacrifice, if you give him enough money, he will take the sheep. And it's all being offered. So, you have made it into a den of thieves."

Hrishi was talking about worship. Because this is all part of their worship. You know why we struggle with worship? Because Old Testament patterns of worship will not work in the New Covenant. Because in the New Covenant, it's a spiritual act. It's not a clapping of hands, and waving of hands and jumping and all. Nothing will make a difference in the New Covenant unless you worship in spirit and truth. And every day of our life, we struggle with truth. Spirit is our attitude. We struggle with this truth and attitude. When David brought the ark with all the songs and the musical instrument and the crowd and everything, he did not jump and dance and all that. He didn't do any of those things. But God was not pleased. The procession was judged. A man died. David was terrified. First, he was angry. Then, he was afraid. Then, three months later, he got it right. "O Lord, this is the way. I did not worship in truth. Your truth says this is the way that I should worship." When he had judged himself after seeing the judgment of God, after he had judged himself, that's when he started worshipping in truth. That's when he jumped in the spirit. Everything else is just public display. Worship is a very personal thing in the New Covenant, because I cannot make you worship. You will do lot of actions for my name's sake. But I cannot make you worship. The only person I can make to worship is me myself and nobody else, because I myself am the only one who know how I am dealing with truth. I don't know about you. I don't know about anybody here. But you can fool anybody—lift your hands, clap your hands, jump, dance and walk in a lie. That's why in the New Covenant, nowhere you will see about worship. Paul and Silas sing in the prison with their legs chained and back broken. It is true, because they are worshipping in truth. Because most of what happens is entertainment. Why is she able to worship? Because she is walking in the truth. It's very simple. She looks at what she knows. She judges it. She keeps her life very simple. She walks and she is able to worship. We struggle because God is dealing with the temple.

One of His first acts, in *John 2* and final acts of Jesus' ministry was cleaning the temple, because He says, "The temple is where I reside. I and My Father will come and reside." And our obsession with money is because of our obsession with self and our lack of trust in God. We can trust God. All of us sitting here, look at that. You will see, you know what? I'm 28 years old. I'm 50, 53, 54 years old. I don't know. But there's always a confusion of my age in my family, because we are all one, one year older. I have two brothers and two sisters. And I'm the youngest. If I'm one year older by mistake, all of them are one year older. So, they fight with amma which is right? So, I think I'm 54. I don't know whether I'm 55. But imagine, 55 years, I have never struggled for food. I've never struggled for clothes. I've always had a roof over my head. So, God always took care of what I actually needed. My struggles were the things which I wanted. Look at anybody sitting here, can you say God did not take care of you all these years? Didn't He say if you have food on your table and clothes on your back you can be content. But people are not content. Because they want money to possess things which most of us don't need most of the things we have. That's why we pursue money. O, you want a security outside of God, a security that is in our hands. That's why God says, "When people become lovers of themselves the first thing is they want is money. They become lovers of money. Instinctively, everybody knows, the God of the Bible does not indulge or encourage self-love. They look at the Cross and they say, "Yeh kya hai?" This is not self-love. There is something wrong with this God. So, when you have pictures of Jesus, you have to make Him wear a simple robe and walking around not with big gold and this thing. Nothing is there. This is not somebody who indulges. Very simple. This is the crisis we are facing. We are facing our crisis in these last days, because we are a selfie generation. That's why it is called a selfie. It's not called a neighborie. It's called a selfie. You see, salvation is a journey of faith. The first stage is very interesting.

Like Hrishi said, he loved going to Sunday school. Every child in that stage – L.K.G, U.K.G – if there are no exams at all, toys and songs, they are all ready to go to school. And then, class 1 and exams begins, they started dragging their feet. That is how the first walk of faith is – you pray, the answer comes. Sometimes, the answer comes without praying. You ask for a needle, you find it. You ask for everything, God seems to be answering, because He treats you like a child. And then, you hit a dead block, a dead-end; Crisis of faith, "Lord, what happened? I thought we had a deal." Now, we have three options – either pretend everything is okay and play religion, you cannot testify to anybody. Earlier, you are the first witness to have a

testimony, “I have a testimony. I have a testimony.” “What happened?” “Oh, last week, I was writing an exam and I didn’t remember the answer, I asked God and the answer came. Next week, I lost my pen.” Now, no answers are coming. Still, you have to pretend, “Hallelujah. Thank You, Lord.” Because people should not know that I have no testimony. So, pretend as if everything is okay or I am getting out of here. “I thought we had a deal and You are a deal breaker.” Not maker. Or you can hang in there and continue to follow God. That’s the season of waiting – to be quiet and to listen and to take notes. Am I preaching from? I am preaching from the three Chapters of *Habakkuk* 1, 2 and 3. Chapter 1 – wow; chapter 2 – sit down quietly and take notes. Nothing is going to happen. Learn the lessons of faith. Take it down, learn. Because God doesn’t move in your life anymore, it doesn’t mean God has given up on you or He is dead. He says, “Learn now! You cannot remain a child all your life, you cannot.” When you come to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Chapter, circumstances do not change but faith does. Faith changes. That’s what James is talking about because our love and faith are being tested. James says,

**James 1:2-4**

***<sup>2</sup>My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,<sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. <sup>4</sup>but let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.***

He has to bring us to that point where I realize – I lack nothing. I may not have anything but, I lack nothing. God says, “That’s the final stage of faith, where you lack nothing. And it never going to happen until I have led you through trials and tests and tribulations, you are perfected.” This is the journey of faith. Your faith is perfected, your love is perfected and you suddenly realize – “Actually, I have everything that I need for life. I lack nothing.” And no one will reach there unless we go through session-1 & session-2, where we have all the excitement of the beginning and then, the quietness of the middle and hanging in there. That’s why *Habakkuk* 3:16, he says:

**Habakkuk 3:16-18**

***<sup>16</sup>When I heard, my body trembled; My lips quivered at the voice; Rottenness entered my bones; And I trembled in myself, That I might rest in the day of trouble. When he comes up to the people, He will invade them with his troops.***

What is Habakkuk is talking about? He is talking about the Assyrian invasion that is coming. God says, “This is what is going to happen.” What is that? “This is going to be the end of Israel, judgment upon Israel.” And he says, “I was trembling.” What is God saying? Next verse, God is saying, “Yet, I waited patiently.” What is God saying? You hear about Anti-Christ coming; you hear about the tribulation like the world has never seen; you quiver; and you will say, “Lord, I pray I will not caught in it.” Bible says, “If God hadn’t shortened those days, even the elect will not survive.” There will be days like never before in human history, these were nations; Assyrians are nations known for their cruelty and He says, “Even they will pale into what is coming now.” Scripture says,

***<sup>17</sup>Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labor of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd in the stalls***

All have failed, everything has failed; yet, I am sitting there patiently waiting; and what happens? Scripture says,

***<sup>18</sup>Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.***

What has happened? “Habakkuk, do you have anything?” “No.” “Do you have any good news?” “No.” “Are you complete?” “Yes. I can still rejoice in my God in whom I trust. I am complete. My faith has been completed. I can rejoice in whom I trust.” This is the final stage of faith. And God, through His Scripture, He is saying; very few will reach that state of faith or love, “If you endure till the end, you will be saved.” If you endure in your faith till the end, you will be complete. Even when you have nothing, yet you will be able to rejoice in the Lord. And God says, “That’s the process,” but people don’t want to hear that. They just say, “Pacify my flesh. Please don’t crucify. Pacify it.” And God says. “When trouble comes, do you realize you are not able to stand at all? You are venting forth all in all kinds of situations.” Paul will say this is *Philippians* 4,

**Philippians 4:11-13**

***<sup>11</sup>Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am to be (He says, “Whatever my state, whether I am sitting with king Agrippa in his palace or lying in prison, chained in Roman prison I am,) content: <sup>12</sup>I know***

***how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. <sup>13</sup> I can do all things...***

Is this not a problem? My contentment is no longer in outside things, why are people discontent. Why are people? We live in an age, where we have more than what any age had and yet, are people content? Are we content? This faith doesn't happen overnight. Imposters will come on TV – instant faith, instant wealth. “Just send in a hundred-dollars offering, hundred-fold, God will give you in two weeks!” Does that happen in Bible? These are manipulators on TV. And why do we buy into it? Don't blame a thief to steal. My question is: why do you give possessions give over to him? Because the problem is with our heart. When we see that, why do we get excited? Wow, if send 1000 rupees to this ministry, this man is prophesying and I believe God has seen my need, I have a real need over there, I was hoping and praying for a car. He is saying, if you send a 1000 rupees in a week, you will get one lakh.” This is judgment on your covetousness.

If you knew your Word, if you knew how the faith works, “Elijah, turn eastwards and go to Cherith. There, I have prepared a poor widow.” He didn't say that. He said, “First, you learn to wait on the raven for couple of months.” Once, the widow obeys him and the flour bin is full it is very easy; you know, every day, it is full; but to wait for months and months and looking for a raven in morning and evening; it's not easy.

First, you go to stage-1. Then, stage-2 will happen. We don't stage-1, stage-2; we want lottery. And God says, “It's a judgment upon our own hearts.” He says, “Deceivers will come. Imposters will come.” Why are they being allowed by God? To judge our hearts! Our hearts are being judged. Our hearts are being tested. Crowds gathered, miracle is happening; Jesus said, “Go preach the Kingdom and heal the sick.” He didn't say, “Heal the sick and don't preach about the Kingdom.” Yes, we need healing, but check the doctrine. Do you want the healing above doctrine? Will you need healing from anybody? You don't want to know the source of the power? Because there are only two sources of power – it's either God or the devil. There are only two sources; there's no third source. Third source is hospital, they will give you medicines. Only two sources – it's either God or the devil. How do you know whether the power is from God? Check the doctrine. We don't check the doctrine, because we don't care who gives the healing, where the healing comes from, “I just want healing in my body.” It's our problem. It's a judgment upon ourselves. We love ourselves. And money becomes our God because we are pursuing our self.

Our goal, our dream already this society has framed for us if you are successful and the sad part is not the society, let the society goes in the Babylonian way; the sad part is when the Churches had been framed. So many prosperity Churches are telling the believers, “Oh! If you don't have this much money, house and a car, God is not blessing you.” Then, Jesus was the most unblessed Person on earth. He had nothing; He didn't even have a house to sleep in. He had to go to the gardens to sleep at times. He did not have money to show as an example; He had to borrow it from somebody. He did not have the grave. He had to borrow the grave; yet, He was the most blessed Person who has ever walked on the earth. How we changed the terms of the society and it has permeated in the Church and we don't realize why the Church is struggling because we have taken something and have become lovers of ourselves! God says, “Automatically, you will be the lovers of money.” That's our goal; that's our dream, if you love yourself and not our neighbour.

In 2 Timothy, He tells the second thing,

### **2 Timothy 3:4**

***<sup>4</sup>Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;***

*We become lovers of pleasures rather the lovers of God*, what have we become? Lovers of pleasure! Is it sin to have pleasure? “No.” We were designed by God to experience pleasure. But only one thing – where does this pleasure come from?

### **Psalms 16:11**

***<sup>11</sup>Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.***

What is at His right hand? The Living God, the Living Word, Jesus Christ sits at His right hand – “*At Thy right hand, there are pleasures for evermore.*” He says, “Every pleasure you and I have is designed by God, you should experience under the control of the Word and the Spirit.” He says, “It will be *forevermore.*” But we become lovers of pleasure instead of lovers of



the one who sits at the right hand. That's why *Psalms 37*, people will say – God will give the desires of your heart. “No.” He said, “*Delight in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.*” God doesn't give this open statement like whatever you ask I will give you. He says, “*Abide in My Word and if My Words abide in you then you ask the Father, He will give it to you.*” Because God is not going to give us anything to destroy us, but something which will be lasting and sustaining now and for evermore.

Food, drink, clothes, sex – everything was designed by God. God designs it all, but we are not called to love them. We are called to love God, the Giver and not the gift. We worship food. Therefore, we would become gluttons. We become gluttons; not worshippers. We worship food. That's why there will be people in the Churches who don't know the Books of the Bible; they know every restaurant even the latest one opened in the city. Why are you hopping from restaurant to restaurant if we are not lovers of food? Once in a while, you take your family out, that's a different thing. But every week, there is a new restaurant. Why? Because you worship food and not God. If you worship alcohol you become an alcoholic. If you worship sex, you become an addict. Either you will frequent the porn sites or you frequent the prostitutes. One of the two will happen. The ultimate sign of self-love is homosexuality. Read *Romans 1* – what God does when people refuse to retain the knowledge of God, He says, He hands them over to the love of self. Ultimately, we start getting confused. We hate God because we confuse flesh with joy. We say, “God is a joy killer.” “Hey, don't go to that Church, okay? You will lose the joy in your life.”

One man of God said this way – you can tell how far you are from God and how much you have turned towards to yourself, if you look at your attention for your body and towards sensuality. He says, “Corrupt cultures are obsessed with sensuality.” Outwards looks appearance, obsessed with sex, obsessed with status, obsessed with clothes and not just clothes, to look sexy. We love music. We don't love worship. That's why modern-day lyrics are more about man than about God even when they are sung in Church. Sermons are more about man, very less about God. When a society stops loving and worshipping God, natural thing is to turn towards the human body and sensuality as a substitute. We start worshipping our bodies. That's what has happened. Moses is away. One man who brought order in the Church is gone. He is not there. So, where is this fellow? Gone but we have to worship as we have been created to worship.

### **Exodus 32:6**

***<sup>6</sup>And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.***

It's the revelry of senses. Isn't that how every worship takes place in the world? That's why idols are given; an idol replaces God. They wanted an idol. Because idol doesn't condemn us. Now it's happening all over. Yesterday was St. Patrick's Day. What is it so saintly about any St. Patrick's parade in anywhere in the western world? They have all these idols replaced in the Christianity and the idols have taken off and the way people dress and drinking and the revelry all in the name of Christ. People love it because it's the worship of self; it's the worship of sensuality.

Yes, you need to take care of your body but the purpose is that you might use your body to serve God and to serve other people. Stop idolizing your body. So what if you are ageing? You can't reverse it? Accept it. Stop idolizing your body. You have three choices with anything – you can use it, you can misuse it, you can abuse it. Three words in English – use, misuse, abuse: proper purpose in its proper way, it is always defined by the maker. There is a creator and this is a creator's manufacture's manual. He has manufactured us and sent out and says, “Use it for My glory, serve your neighbor.” We can misuse it; we can abuse it.

Let me explain it to you. You have a car/bike. The bike is meant for two people. You can use it properly, see its services, check its tires, service is regularly, that is using with two people and it will run for a long time, ten years, fifteen years. Now, you can take that same bike or the same car and misuse it. You never service it, you never do the oil change, and you do it in once in two years. It is meant for five people but you pack in fifteen people. Now, what are you doing? You are misusing it.

Let me put it another way. You have a car and it belongs to the government or your organization. You take it and you use it for your personal purposes. That is called abuse. That's why the Government of India never has the money for people because much of the money is gone for abuse. You have one crore employees sitting in the governments or more and it is

all abuse. The actual calculation is when the Government spends hundred rupees, only two rupees comes to the common man and the rest is swallowed in between to take care of these people. It's called abuse. Ask yourselves – am I using my body, am I misusing my body, am I abusing my body? If God has committed something into my hands, am I using it, am I misusing it, am I abusing it? This is stewardship in the Kingdom because one day, I will have a set of people who will rule this earth on My behalf because they have learned stewardship first with their bodies on this earth and then, what I committed to their hands.

People forget the end of salvation. End of salvation is bigger than the beginning. He is creating a set of people who are meant to be the kings and the queens. It's not about this life. It is something bigger than you can think or imagine. The Scripture says there is a road to it. And that is the road when people come into the Church we teach them you are in a race, don't forget. You are in a race. There is a purpose. So, how you handle stuff, how you handle people? One of the greatest things which God had given me is, He placed people under me. I don't abuse, I don't misuse, I don't even use a car to go from my office to my home. Unless it's an emergency still I take Uber (Taxi) if my scooter isn't there. Because I know, I bought the car but I gave it to an organization, if I use it for personal use it will be an abuse. I learned it from my father before I became a Christian. "Do not use Government property. It's meant for the Government." How do we learn? Because we live before the different set of eyes.

"One day," Scripture says, "everyone has to give an account of what they did with His body." So, whatever he does if it's wrong, put it before God, cleanse it, sanctify, and walk straight.

This body is not for alcohol; this body is not for smoke; this body is not for drugs; this body is not for overeating. This body is not for 253 lotions. Problem is not with the lotions; the problem is with the millions who are without footwear in this country. Problem is not with lotion. If somebody gives it to you free, use it. The problem is when you are opening your closet, now, you don't know which lotion you use. Obsession! I am talking about the things connected with the body because we have become the lovers of ourselves. That's why you hear stuff here than other Churches because these kids have been here for last ten years, why are they walking around with mushroom cuts? Because they love their body. Other kids and news kids are okay. You have been sitting here for more than ten years. You know what is right, you know what is wrong. You know what is Babylon and you know what Jerusalem is and you still choose to go the Babylonian way, nothing is getting in. Because the man looks at the outside. Yes, God looks at the inside but my testimony is before man and God, not just before God. You cannot say that God knows my heart. Yeah, but what did you say? How do we handle relationships? How do we handle people? Because we have become lovers of ourselves, the problem is – we don't love our neighbor. God says, "Don't abuse, don't misuse. Offer it daily as a living sacrifice. Otherwise, it is idolatry." They were not dumb to worship a metal calf. You think people are silly. They go during puja time and get an idol and worshipping and you are saying, "It's so foolish to worship it," but you know what Paul says in *Corinthians*?

### **1 Corinthians 10:19-20**

***<sup>19</sup> What say I then? That the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? <sup>20</sup> But I say, that the things, which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.***

Do you know that every idol that is bought from the market and brought home or temple and it is consecrated and when it is consecrated a power gets in and that's the power they worship? That is idolatry. Have you seen in the market hundreds and hundreds of idols? Does anybody go there and bow before it? "No, nobody does." But once they bring it over there and have done their rituals by a Brahmin or a pujari (priest). After that, they worship because something has entered it. That's why God says, "Beware of idolatry." Because when you start idolizing yourself, something enters it. One disciple who walked with Jesus for three and a half years, his whole thing was how to raise money, how to make money. He understood what Jesus was talking about the Cross and realized, "This deal is not going to work. Let me make some money out of it." And the Scripture says that on the final communion, Lord's Supper, He dipped it and gave it to Judas and the devil's power entered him. Because what did he do for three and a half years? He was the lover of himself, not the lover of his neighbor. That is the danger with idolatry. You can have peace; you can manipulate that idol to give you what you want. That's why people love idols. When we were all Catholics and many ex-Catholics sitting here; why do we love Virgin Mary more than Jesus? Does Mary teach you anything in the Bible? Does she show you the path of righteousness? Does she give a sermon? Can you learn anything from her? Only one thing that you can learn from Mary. What is that? "Go and listen to whatever

my Son says.” That’s the first words spoken when Jesus began His ministry. Other than that, we learn nothing from her, except her humble heart when Angel Gabriel comes. Why do we idolize her? Because she demands nothing from us. Yet, we can pray to her, our most warped prayers and she can answer us. Idols! We love idols. Going to the Living God demands change. We talk about Hindus and their idols, forget it; we have more idols than all of them.

John Calvin who said, “The human heart is an idol factory.” That’s why we are lovers of money. We pursue money, we pursue success. We pursue education, we pursue appearance, and we pursue relationships. We want approval. See, Abraham never worshipped his wife but he worshipped his son. We know that he worshipped himself. When he had to choose between himself and his wife, he said, “You die and I live.” “Say that you are my sister, okay?” Not once, twice but when he was told to throw Ishmael away, he said, “Lord, please, Lord. What are You saying, Lord? Bless him also, please.” He was not willing to let go. He let go. We can worship a relationship. That’s why God said the greatest commandment is – *Love your God with all your heart and mind; love your neighbor as yourself*. He didn’t say to love your neighbor with all your heart. So, until Isaac is bound on the altar, he is free.

We love all these things. Pharisees came to John the Baptist and said, “John, John, do you know the Jesus you pointed? Now, he has more Facebook likes than you. He has more followers in Twitter than you.” John was a humble man; he said, “He should have more followers, and I should have less. It is okay. Even if people put dislike, dislike on me, even then, I am okay.”

Yesterday, statistics today came that 60% of Prime Minister Modi and Rahul Gandhi’s Twitter followers are fake. They are not even real. They do not even exist. Why do you want to show this numbers? “12 million following me,” when half of them are also not genuine. You see a generation who genuinely has no relationship. All their relationships are virtual. It’s on Selfie, Twitter, Facebook. They have no real close interaction to have friends who will say, “Hey, hang on, man. I love you. I won’t let you go this way.” Like Jonathan who will stand with David and says, “I know, David, you are called by God. My father is wrong. He is after you to kill you. I am saying, I have got your back. Brother, I got your back. I am with you all the way. I see my father calls me to be king but I see you have been called to be the king by your Father. I stand with your Father against my father. I got your back.” That’s not a selfie or a Facebook post. That is a real live friendship. We don’t have any real relationships anymore. It’s all virtual. You want to boast, “You know how many Facebook likes I have, how many followers I have?” Self-loving people. That is what is God taking about. We no longer love our mates or children. We either idolize them. That’s why we are not able to let them go. Even when we let them go, the ropes are still in our hands. We think it’s a kite. “Oh, I’m trying to gain kites.” One day, he breaks the string and goes away. And you finally see that he is tangled in somebody else’s line. God says, “I told you not to worship him. Worship Me.” We can only worship the Lord, your God. You cannot worship anybody else. Only He alone deserves our worship. We love pleasure. Therefore, it is alcohol, sex, video games, sports; the Bible calls it ‘idolatry’.

You see, we gather in huge stadiums and we colour our faces according to our teams. We have our head dresses and our costumes. O, we are worshipping. But we don’t realize, 2000 years ago, they gathered in the same manner in the stadium with their colours and were waving when Christians were being thrown in the stadiums to the lions. Worship hasn’t changed. Only the object of our worship has changed. Then, it was Christians; now, it is football. Then, it was idolatry; now, it is also idolatry. Do you realize what we have made ourselves into? Worship. Jesus said, “You shall love God with all your heart, all your might, all your strength.” Idolatry is a result of loving self and loving pleasure and without realizing, we have become a society of slaves.

How many of you are below 15? Only one below 15. Let me tell you. We pretend you don’t know anything but I’m sure this generation knows everything. What happens with the height of it is what is happening now. Everything God has put as, “This is the norm. This is how I have programmed it,” the devil turns it around. What is the norm in God’s eyes, the devil perverts it and that is the way of occult. In every occult religion, from thousands and thousands of years, in every occult practice, sodomy is a part of occult. It’s a part of occult. That’s why God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrha and king Josiah destroyed the Sodomites because God said, “This is the way a man and a woman come together.” The devil says, “No, it is the other way.” God says, “Through this, there will be oneness.” Through this, there is an entrance of demons. That’s how they program people. You hear the scandals coming out from Australia, US and all – all the young cadets who joined the Marine Academy and everything; first rights, they were all sodomized. So, their will is broken. That’s what our shastras teach. That is through which the kundalini power of Shiva comes through it and sodomy is part of it. Now, what are the

Christian couples all over the west is talking about? “Oh, my wife has had 2 or 3 children and now, she is not giving me pleasure. Let us have anal sex.” You know what has come in? What God called as an abomination has become honourable in the bedrooms of believers. What God had made as holy, the demonic entities have taken over our bedrooms. We have no clue what is happening in the world. We have no clue how programing is taking place. We have become a society of slaves. Lord, have mercy. God, have mercy. That’s why the ultimate symbol of freedom is the Cross. That’s where you are set free. I no longer am a slave of my flesh. I am free to worship my God. Understand how the occult works. Understand how the Kingdom of God works. They don’t work in the same way. The ways are absolutely different and there is power on both sides but on this side, for power, God says, “Let Me come in. Let Me cleanse you up and I will fill you with Myself. Because I am a holy God, I want a holy body.” The devil says, “No, you want power? I will add pleasure to it. Let’s have drugs. Let’s have sex. Let’s have every kind of perversion. I will give you power and give me blood.” That’s why every year, you hear, in every city, tens and thousands of children are missing. Gone. No trace. They are not adopted. They are not taken. They just disappear because they are sacrificed for power. That’s what the Bible talks in the ancient days onwards, down to Manasseh, sacrificing with children so that power could come. 50 million, 60 million babies are aborted in the US alone. Where did the embryos go? Is there a record of the embryos being buried? No. Where did they go? They were used in rituals for power. This entire power system of this world is built on occult. That’s why Jesus said, “The world will hate you because of Me because I have come to set you free from the power of the enemy.” Don’t be a lover of money. Don’t be a lover of pleasure. Don’t be a lover of anything. Be a lover of God.

The devil does not want male and female. He doesn’t even want it because it goes against his plans. He doesn’t want it. He wants no gender because he knows that Genesis 1:1 says, “Male and female, He created them.” Second chapter says, “Families created them.” Family is one man, one woman. He says, “No, I’m changing the rules here. One – there will be no gender. You can pick your gender as you go along. Two – marriage will not be between a man and a woman. It can be anything.” And you have no clue. This agenda, the influence it has upon you. And it begins with clothes. System says, “Dress alike. Let’s take the gender division away.” Dress like men. Men dress like women; women dress like men. Have you, boys, asked – how come your pyjamas, your pants are so tight these days, which only girls used to wear? Have you asked in the past two years? Everybody is walking around in track suit which looks like the girls’ tights. Do you know there is a philosophy and an agenda behind everything that is happening and you say, “I ain’t buying into it. I know what God made me. I will stick to that.” Because there is something bigger than clothes; there is an agenda behind it to make women look like men and men look like women because God said, “Male and female, I made them.” And the devil says, “I will change that. I shall make them without any gender. I’m going to neuter it.” Understand the purpose. If we don’t understand the purpose of creation, all this relevance goes. If you don’t understand the purpose, kuch bhi chalega (anything is fine). Once you understand the core purpose, then everything comes into picture.

Let me ask you this question before I close: what is the purpose of an army? The army is to fight. You have to look at the primary purpose of the army. The primary purpose of the army is to fight. So, they need to be the best they can be to fight. That’s the primary purpose. If there’s a war and you need to fight, you need to be the best at the fighting level. It’s not a place for social experiments. You know what they say in America now? They are not able to get recruits because there is nobody who is able to pass the test. How did you begin? “Equality! We need to get the women in.” Why do you want the women in the army? Did God create the women to fight? Then, they changed and said, “Homosexuality should be normal.” Now, they said, “Transgender should be in.” Generals are struggling because you have a set of recruits who are confused. The woman wants to act like a man. The transgender doesn’t know whether he is a man or a woman. And they have to fight in Afghanistan, they have to fight in Iraq, under the most extreme circumstances and the generals are scratching and said, “What have we done?” Because social experiments are not for the army. The purpose of the army is to fight. Do you know your purpose as God’s creation? What is our purpose? It is for our body, soul and spirit to glorify God. This is not a space for enemy’s social experiments. I know what I was created for. I know what I am redeemed for. I know what He has called me for. Each one need to know. This is not a space for his social experiments. It stops here. It doesn’t get in. You need to decide.

That’s what Daniel said on the first day – he purposed in his heart, “I’m not a vessel of Babylonian’s social experiment. It stops here.” And God said, “You have favour with Me.” Three friends, a little later, said, “You know what? We have been called to worship God. We will not bow before this idol. If we die, we die. If we live, we live; but one thing we know – we worship God. We don’t do this.” Third thing – Daniel said, “You cannot stop me from praying. It’s a very personal intimate thing and I will not let any government, any king intrude into my private space, what I say to God, how I say to God, when I

say to God. You are out of bounds.” All Babylonian social experiments. It’s happening now too. Do we see? Do we hear? Do we realize why we are so discontent? A child of God is never going to be content if he doesn’t fulfil the purpose of God because we are created to be content in Christ alone. Outside of Christ, we are going to be discontent. That’s why God said, “You are a holy nation, a peculiar people.” When you go to your school, they should say, “That’s a peculiar boy.” When you go to your office, they should say, “That’s a peculiar girl.” We are not the norm. When we go to office, we are square pegs in a round hole. We don’t fit. If you fit in so well, there is a problem. You have compromised somewhere. Why do I say all this? Because the day is getting closer and closer. Habakkuk says, “When I see the judgment of Israel coming through the Assyrian sword, I am trembling. Yet, I will rejoice in the Lord and I will trust my God and He will keep my feet like the feet of the hind.” That’s what God is saying. It’s coming closer. It’s getting closer. The Day of Judgment is closer. It’s so terrible. That day, Heaven and earth will flee from His sight and every man will stand before God and give an account. When we give an account, we should be able to say, “Yes, Lord. I did not know but on the 18<sup>th</sup> of March, I knew and I changed.” God would say, “That’s fine. I didn’t ask you when you changed; I only asked you if you changed.” I realize my purpose. I realize my purpose was bigger than me. Much bigger than me. It’s about You. It’s about Your Kingdom. That’s what Jesus does on His final trip. He walks in. He takes a good look everywhere, comes back, looks at the fig tree, “Where is your fruit? Be cursed. Every tree that doesn’t bear fruit, you are cursed. We don’t want decorative items in Heaven, only fruitful trees.” And the tree in Heaven will bear fruit twelve months of a year. All the seasons. We are all the tree of life because in us is Him and in Him is life, that life was the light of men. So, you and I are called to bear fruit all seasons. We cannot say, “Oh, this is off season. I cannot love.” “Oh, I am not feeling good. I cannot forgive.” God says, “No season for fruit because you are planted by the waters of the Holy Spirit and you shall bear fruit in all season.” Then, He gets into the temple, cleans it out. They are coming back. Peter says, “Lord, the fig tree is withered.” They miss every lesson. They are stunned by the spectacle. “Ah, Lord, it is dried.” He said, “If you speak to the mountain ‘be moved’, it will be moved.” And we talk about the mountain; our mountain never moves. You know why? Jesus immediately said, “You will face obstacles in your life, major obstacles. You have the power of God available to you to remove these obstacles in your life but on one condition – when you stand to pray, if you owe somebody forgiveness, forgive.” Unforgiveness brings no answer from God for any prayer. Did you see His last visit to the temple and the lessons He taught in one trip? It’s all about relationships. You want something from God, you need to give out something this way. You hold something which is not to be withheld, He says, “You will receive nothing from God. Your mountain will grow bigger and bigger because you didn’t do what you could do – forgive people.”

Today, somebody wrote a prayer request – “Help me not to be bitter.” Forgiveness is an active choice. Forgetting is passive. It may take year to forget but the more you forgive, that forgetting becomes easy. Forgiving is active. As soon as the memory comes, you open your mouth and say, “I choose to forgive.” It’s active and you will realize, “After some time, the memory doesn’t hurt you at all.” Esau who said, “I will kill him,” and Jacob who was hiding, when they meet after 20 years, they are hugging and kissing each other. Everything is forgotten. Understand how it works.

We have two choices this morning – either pacify our flesh or crucify. If you keep on pacifying, one day, like the baby will wake up and take it out and say, “Arrey, iske picche bottle nahi hain? (What? There is no bottle behind this?).” You will realize, you pacified and you will realize – you are empty, without strength. In the hour of trouble, you have no strength because you used a pacifier. There was no strength. Don’t use pacifiers. Don’t.

Shall we stand this morning? As we go into this season and the nation goes into a tough two weeks, I encourage everyone to stand up and to be counted. It’s not the volume of your prayer; it’s the sincerity of your prayer. It’s not the power of your words; it’s using and exercising the authority that God has given you. Exercise the God-given authority and pray from your heart because He has said in His Word, “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.” But when you stand to pray in these two weeks, the Holy Spirit will first do a cleansing in the temple. He will come. He is in the temple. He will come and He will start cleaning out stuff. First thing, He will clean out covetousness. The love of money which is the root of all kinds of evil. Allow Him to clean it out because if you can be free of that, you can be free of almost everything else in life. Know that, Church. Know that. Over and over, we have heard it but it is not sinking in but let it sink in. Abraham lied and deceived. God forgave him. Isaac lied; God forgave him. Jacob was a liar; God forgave him. Moses murdered; God forgave him. David took another man’s wife, committed adultery, murdered him; God forgave him. Balaam was covetous, Judas was covetous, Ananias and Sapphira were covetous. Everybody who sold out their heart for gold, God could not save them. Because you cannot serve God and mammon and if anybody teaches you, show him the Bible. It is not possible. That’s why God says, “People will be lovers of themselves and lovers of money and lovers of pleasure.” There is pleasure that is on the right-hand side of God.

## **Pacify Or Crucify?**

Let it be ordained by Christ Himself and dictated by His Word. Offer today, your bodies as a living sacrifice. Offer your minds over to God and say, "Help me to think the way you think. Today, when I sit with my Word and read, help me to think Your thoughts. Align my thoughts with Your thoughts. Help me to hate what is evil and love what is good and what You call good is good; what You call evil is evil. It doesn't matter what the government say or the society say, Lord, help me to believe, accept and confess what You said is evil." The meaning for abomination has never changed in English. Go through your Bible and mark out what God calls an abomination in the Bible. It is still an abomination. What God calls an abomination, don't call it by any other name.

### **Closing Prayer:**

*We stand before You today, Lord. The reason You came, the reason You walked among us, the reason You hung on the Cross is so that You could have a set of people called out, set apart daily, continuously offering ourselves to be cleansed by Your Word, by Your Spirit and by Your Blood so that You can abide in us. You said, "If My words abide in you, if you obey My Commands," You said, "I and My Father will come and abide in you." Jesus, we do not want You to be a visitor. We want You to stay. Show us and help us to meet all the conditions in our lives, in us that will make Your stay in us pleasant for You, pleasurable for You. For Your Word says that we are the temple of the Living God. Show us. Cleanse us. Dwell in us so that wherever we go, we really know You are with us because You are in us, abiding in us, comfortable in us; comfortable in what we say, comfortable in what we watch, comfortable in what we do, comfortable where we go, comfortable with the company we keep, the books we read, the music we listen to. It will be absolutely comfortable, Lord. help us to make You comfortable in us. Show us, Lord, each day, what causes discomfort for You. Show us and help us to remove it because nothing is worth keeping if it disturbs You. Nothing. This is about You. It is with You we will dwell forever because it is written, O God, in Your Word, that the Father came and dwelt among us and He wiped every tear and every sorrow and He made His dwelling place with His people forever. Let it begin today, Lord; not tomorrow; today. I commit ourselves into Thy hands. As we go into another week, go before us and teach us to walk before You and be blameless. Meet Your people, Your children at their point of need. Whatever their struggle is, meet them at their point of need that they may experience Your power and walk free. I commit the young ones into Thy hands, Lord. They have heard so much. They are young. O, blessed are those who serve their Creator in the days of their youth. I pray these young ones, boys and girls, will rise up and serve You; that when You come into our lives, into our homes, into our Churches, You will be pleased. You will want to stay. You will want to walk in our midst. You will want to hug Your people. You will want to say, "I love being with you." Help us to turn the focus to You, Lord, from ourselves. Help us to know the Gospel is not about man; it is about a God who came searching for man. The Parable is not about the prodigal son. It is about the waiting father. It is not about the son who came dragging his feet, it is about the father who ran towards his dirty son. Help us to see everything in the light of the Kingdom of God, O Master, when we read Your Word and not see ourselves reflected; but Your face. Let it be about You. Thank You, Father. Thank You. For Thine is the Kingdom, Thine is the power, Thine is the glory. Not ours; it's Yours and Yours alone. For now, forevermore, O Lord. So, by faith, now, believing we have received Your Word that You have spoken to us, we lift up holy hands. We bless Your Holy Name, O Father. Thank You, Lord. We just commit ourselves into Thy hands, Father. We ask and we pray, in Jesus' precious Name, 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.*