

## Promoted, Demoted Or Detained?

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*Father, we just come to You. We just thank You. We just praise You. We just worship You, Father. Thank You, thank You, thank You, Father. We look to You, the author and the finisher of our faith. We look to You in faith that what You have begun, You will finish. I pray Father, that people will stand everywhere in faith trusting You and putting their hope in You. As fear overwhelms the world a set of people will arise who will walk with God, who will stand there firm and who will show the way to those who are fearful. There is a true and a living God who will never forsake His people who has seen the end from the beginning and in whose hands our lives are secure; for His promises are true. Help us, Lord. Help us to stand firm in this hour in faith. For in Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.*

As we go to the Word, I also want to once again encourage you and tell you, stick to the directions given by the government and the medical authorities okay? Faith is practical. The whole book of Leviticus is medical advice and practical advice. So when the government says, "Stay away from public places, stay away." Unless it is urgent, stay away. And if you go the public place and you come back, the first thing you do is – wash your hands and then remove your mask. Don't remove your mask and wash your hands or remove your mask and if you need to wash your hands three times it's okay. But please don't take it lightly, because next week, the next four days the government moves to step two and shuts down, we will text you if you're not on the WhatsApp group, give your number we will text you. The message will be online, meaning, we will speak to you, if you have 4G or internet, you'll be able to login. Because every Church is preparing and in most countries churches have gone online. Because they may bring a restriction of 10 members 5 members or whatever it is. So be prepared for all this. And be really practical, because here the problem is not with the young people, the problem is with the older generation with underlying medical conditions, you put their life into risk. If you look in US, the young people are not listening. That's why New York has curfew from 5 in the evening till 5 in the morning, because the young people are on the roads and they are actually harming the older generation. Everywhere you see most of the people who have died are those who are older and because they have underlying health issues. So please younger people, okay? You don't have to wander around. If you have to, go and come back and sanitize your hands. Wear your mask and stay inside, because this will take quite some times before it is over. It grows exponentially like 2 cases in twenty-five days in Italy, it crossed over to 25000 cases and then the whole country had to be on military curfew. You need to realize that all the governments including our government is prepared for that. They have already given orders that if it comes, the army will be on the roads blocking everything down, shutting down, so that people will not be able to move. That's the only way this can be contained until a vaccine comes. So be very practical okay. This is flippant faith: nothing will happen to me. That is testing the Lord thy God. That's what the devil told Jesus, jump from the temple. God says, "If you fall I will hold you." Not that if you jump. So don't test God. When government gives you those directions, stick to those directions.

Lets' turn to,

### **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.***

We know from *1 Corinthians 13:13* that three things, they're interlinked and incredibly important in God's Kingdom is love, faith and hope. And then when Jesus comes, it will be love alone. You don't need faith because you see and you don't need hope because hope has been fulfilled. Faith has become sight. So that's the order that it is in. So, we're looking at all these three and primarily we are looking at faith. Please remember: faith that is not tested cannot be trusted. If your faith is not tested, your faith cannot be trusted. God will test your faith and all of us and some of you are still there in school and college, the tests were designed for the student and not the examiner. The test and the examination is for the student. It was never for him or her, it was for the student. The purpose of the test is that you would know that your knowledge was true, not the examiners knowledge. And also, it was the test that opened the door for promotion. Exactly the same way or similar in the life of a believer. God knows us. God knows the subject. He doesn't have to test us to know us. He knows us but we need to know. We need to know ourselves whether we are in the faith or not. Second: He needs test us and declare the results so that the principle of justice and righteousness is upheld so that nobody will say that God is unfair. He's fair. God knows Sodom and Gomorrah. He knows exactly what is happening over there. But the outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah has come to me. I'm going to check it out whether it is true or not. True or not meaning, God doesn't know it? No. so that

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nobody will ever say that I was unfair in My judgement. So, actually, you will see in Sodom and Gomorrah, when the angels go in and Lot takes them home and a crowd comes outside and they are banging at his door and when he tries to negotiate with them, they turn violent and they strike them with blindness and they're still groping for the door. So God says, "You see, I have proven My judgement is fair." Nobody will ever say in history 'You were not fair.' You saw it and you have the evidence over there. You saw the test. You saw the result and you see the judgment. So even now never forget the purpose of a test, of a trial by God. Only believers go through the test of faith. Unbelievers don't go, because they don't even know. Like I told the pastors yesterday, only students in the school go through an examination, not the fellow who's walking on the road. First you enter into the kingdom, and the test begins. And the purpose of the test and the intention of the God as the Father, the teacher as the Father is promotion, and not demotion. Please remember the examiner in your school or college, he never demoted you. You did it yourself by your answers. He just certified the results. He never actually truly demoted you. You and I did it ourselves. What demoted us? Our answers, though we blame him. It is the same in the Kingdom of God.

### **John 12:48**

***<sup>48</sup>He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.***

He says, "I don't have to judge you. You'll judge yourself." You will know your entire life, you will know everything that you heard whether you believed or what you did. It will be very clear and nobody will say God is unjust or unfair. So in a classroom, let us say class 10 board exams in Telangana, maybe five hundred thousand students may be writing the exam. It's a mass exam, but it is personal. Though five hundred students maybe writing the exam it doesn't change the fact for you. It's a very personal exam which you are doing, though the exam is the same for 500 thousand students. So please remember when God was giving them time during the time of Noah, it was a personal examination for everybody though it was a mass judgment. It's a personal examination, an individual test God was giving. Though we hear as a group, the test is individual. How we hear, how we receive, how we'll be judged is in the individual's hands. Then we look at the test, the reason behind the testing of the faith.

### **Deuteronomy 8:2**

***<sup>2</sup>And you shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you (He was testing them, it was a test of their faith.), to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.***

The test was that you heard My Word. Now, I want to know whether you believe it and keep it. It's as simple as that. Forty years in the wilderness. It was a test. You can't say I got distracted; there was so much noise around. I couldn't hear the questions clearly. He says, "No. I took you to the wilderness." That's why the examination hall is very silent. Very silent. You don't hear a sound over there, very silent. He says, "You cannot complain. You cannot complain. You cannot complain it was loud." I took you into the wilderness. You heard very clearly from my teacher who taught you, Moses. Now it is a test whether you believe it and keep it. But remember you'll see the word over there, it will show you what's in your heart. We'll come to that later.

### **1 Chronicles 29:17**

***<sup>17</sup>I know also, my God, that You test the heart...***

Faith begins in the heart not in the mind. If you believe in your heart, it begins. So, it's a heart question. Love also begins in the heart. God doesn't say, "Love with all your mind." He says, "Love with all your heart."

***...and have pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of my heart I have willingly offered all these things; and now with joy I have seen Your people, who are present here to offer willingly to You.***

So, God tests the heart and it is a test of uprightness and integrity. It's a test of integrity. It's a test of whether we believe. You need to understand it's not a test of only our integrity, it's a test whether we believe in God's integrity. That's why unbelief is a very dangerous thing. Unbelief is a very dangerous thing because you are actually calling God, He's not upright. God is not true. So, it's a test of my integrity and it is a test of God's integrity. And then if you come to the third one,

**Exodus 20:20**

<sup>20</sup> ***And Moses said to the people, “Do not fear; for God has come to test you, and that His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin.”***

We see three things: in *Deuteronomy 8:2*, we saw about God is checking us whether we heard, whether we believe and whether we will obey what we heard. In *1 Chronicles 20:17*, we are seeing that God is testing our uprightness, whether we believe in God’s uprightness and He’s testing our integrity. And in *Exodus 20:20* what is God testing us about? He is actually testing do we have the fear of God? When God says something that is one of the most dangerous things in the last days in the world and the in the Kingdom of God. You will see in Noah’s time and you will see in Lot’s time and you will see in the Canaanite culture there is no fear of God. In *Hebrews 11:7*, when Noah is told by God.

**Hebrews 11:7**

<sup>7</sup> ***By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear (we have been given so many warnings in the Bible including what is happening now.), prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.***

These forwards of Psalm 91 don’t work, though *Psalm 91* is true and the God of Psalm 91 is true. That’s what I was telling the pastors; don’t go through Psalm 91 causally, *Psalm 91* makes it very clear one place and one place alone is safe, it’s the secret place in the shadow of the Almighty. The question is: do we know what the secret place is, are we in the secret place? Have all these things have been happening now in the past two and a half months causing us to move to the secret place? And Jesus said very clearly what the secret place was—when you pray in secret, when you give in secret, when you fast in secret. Has our prayer life changed because of what is happening? If not, we have missed what is happening. We have missed the message behind the event. Because this will go after few months and God is using this for His people only to move into the secret place. Change your prayer life. Change the way you read the word. Change the way you spent time before God. Change it. Let this change you. Somebody sent a forward, February 14 was valentine, and March 14 was quarantine. Quarantine is very good for the believer. Excellent for the believer. God is saying, “This is what you wanted no?” I’ve worked through the five-day week and the four day week; He says, “7 days off. Work from home.” Will you sit at home and spend time? Or is it happening like the news that came in from China, quarantine and divorce rate went up. Because all this while husbands and wives never talked. Now they are forced to talk and they don’t like each other. So everybody is applying for divorce while in quarantine, online. So you’re forced to spend time with God and you realize I don’t like this. That’s what God is talking about. See, the first quarantine in the world was the children of Israel in the wilderness for forty years and by the end of the forty years they absolutely disliked God. They didn’t like God at all. They all died without God. Quarantine itself does not make you go to God. Epidemics and plagues don’t automatically make you go to God. They went through all of that, epidemics and plagues and everything. They saw in Egypt and in the wilderness. None of them changed their heart. So please learn these lessons. Just reading *Psalm 91* over your life isn’t going to change anything unless you believe, unless you really believe and you’re standing steadfast in faith and it is moving you into the secret place, then it’s very powerful. Absolutely. Otherwise you are like the word of faith preachers, you only speak and you don’t believe. And you don’t walk. So you’ll see in Hebrews 7, Godly fear. In *Genesis 20:11*, when Abraham actually lies to Abimelech about Sarah and when he’s asked why did you do that? Because I thought surely the fear of God is not in this place. Because the lack of fear of God causes people to do a lot of stuff. This cringing fear when you see lightning and thunder and judgment and punishment is not what God is talking about. It’s a genuine fear of God that is consistent in your life which is got to do with knowing God and He’s also the judge of all flesh. In *Genesis 22* when Abraham offers Isaac as a sacrifice and God stays his hand what God tells him is that--

**Genesis 22:12**

<sup>12</sup> ***And He said, “Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.”***

He didn’t say that I know that you love Me. He said, “I know that you fear Me.” Because God says, “He’ll test the heart.” First: do we really believe? Second: the integrity of our heart. Third: whether we really fear Him or not. And fourth is *Jeremiah 17:10* where He says,

**Jeremiah 17:10**

***<sup>10</sup>I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings.***

He says, “I test so that I can reward you, to promote and to demote you. I test.” And we know every exam has two results, either you are promoted or you’re demoted. So, He says, “I test you so that I can promote you or you’re demoted.” *James 1:12*. talks about eternal promotion.

**James 1:12**

***<sup>12</sup>Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.***

So, please keep this in mind – our love will be tested. Our faith will be tested and hope will be tested and everything that can be shaken will be shaken, because we are receiving a Kingdom that cannot be shaken. So, you know everything is being shaken. Financial world is being shaken like crazy. Medical systems, our entire infrastructure of the first world (they call themselves ‘the first world’) crumbled under the weight. Italy’s medical infrastructure just crumbled under the weight. Financial, the governments – every system is being shaken. God says, “You will know. You are receiving a Kingdom that cannot be shaken.” So, all this, when it is being tested – love is being tested, faith is being tested, hope is being tested – be very clear – the difference in the world and in the Kingdom of God. In the Kingdom of God, all these three are connected to a Person. The Person of God. Why? If your faith is not growing stronger and stronger in the Person or you detach faith from the Person or love from the Person or hope from the Person, it just becomes an ideology. It just becomes a religion and both ideology and religion have the power to kill and not to save. Remember this. It’s always connected to a Person. For this to be real in Kingdom terms, it has to be connected to a Person. So, 14 years of slavery for Jacob looks like days because of his love for Rachel. You have to look at that. Faith also has to be connected to the Person of Jesus Christ. I have this issue with the Word of faith as not that everything they preach is wrong. A lot of stuff they preach is true but the problem is – they detach the Person of Jesus Christ from it. The actual Person and it basically is tuned to your own self, which becomes, very dangerous. So, please remember. It’s an examination of faith; it’s a self of our faith. When the test happens, then you know your lack of knowledge. The test is actually the test of your lack of knowledge of the Person, the ways of the Person and who this Person is. Like I said – faith is not the test of the knowledge of your Word; faith is the test of the knowledge of the God of the Word, how well you really know Him. Because you can know the whole Scripture, the Old Testament, like the Pharisees and not know Jesus at all, or God at all. Whether our trust is centred on God. So, lack of faith also will be apparent. Like I said, remember, the first word we notice is – heart. Faith (means trust basically) begins in the heart, not so much in the mind and it grows as our knowledge of the Person increases. It begins with the Person. Trust in a Person. Faith in Jesus Christ and it keeps on growing as we grow in the knowledge. That’s why Peter says, “Grow in the grace and in the knowledge of God.”

In *John 2:11*, the disciples had just started to walking with them. A few of them. Scripture says,

**John 2:11**

***<sup>11</sup>This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.***

They don’t know Him really well. They just started following Him but they see the first exhibit of His power. So, it’s called a sign. They saw the sign and they believed in His power. “Okay, this Man is not only a good Man; He is a powerful Man.” They started believing. So, please remember – that is not enough. Even demons believe in the power of God but they do not believe in the Person of God. Do you believe? That’s why James says, “Good. Even the demons too, and they tremble.” They don’t believe in the Person of God; they believe in the power of God. They know the power of God.

So, remember last week and Pastors’ Conferences, we looked at it and we will see. If you take a typical crowd that followed Jesus and divide it, you could take that crowd into three. There was a crowd; there were the Pharisees; and there were the disciples. Three. If you look at the crowd that came out of Egypt and wandered in the desert for 40 years, there were three. There was the crowd; there was the Pharisees – that is Korah, Dathan and Abiram and the 350, plus Miriam and Aaron, till a point of time and then, there was Moses and the two disciples and the next generation who will follow. These two. And you will always see Jesus saying, “The secrets of the Kingdom is given to you and not to them.” So, the crowd could ask a

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question and the crowd could follow Him and He will turn around and sound nasty. The Pharisees could ask a question and Jesus would answer the disciples. It's like being rude. Imagine if Dr. Richard asked me a question and I answer Sammy. You will see that. The Pharisees ask the question and Jesus answers the disciples. The crowd will ask and He will answer the disciples. He will not. He will talk to them in a way they will not understand. He does not explain it to them. So, please remember. Because why? The crowd, the Pharisees and the disciples – all three, what is common? They are exposed to the power of God which will not generate lasting faith. Only when you are exposed to the Person of God, you generate lasting faith. Power, everybody is exposed. From the time you go to sleep till morning, everything is showing the power of God. God says, "The whole creation is exhibiting the power of God." That should draw you to the Person of God. Then, what happens in the Gentile world is – they turn around and started worshipping the power. They start worshipping the power and they don't see the Person. So, please, old things, we know. We know this very well.

### **Exodus 33:13-14**

**<sup>13</sup> Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation is Your people."**

Everything is connected with that. Your sight. Teach me Your ways that I might know You. And God says,

**<sup>14</sup> And He said, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."**

Now, see, this is a very intelligent man like Paul. He understood. If you have to know a person, you have to know his ways. And you will never know a person's ways unless you walk with that person. Otherwise, you will never know that person. And the disciples put their trust in Him because when the disciples start following Jesus, the first question they ask is, "What do You seek – power to Person?" Basically, that's the underlying question. What are you seeking – power or Person? And the disciples say, "Where do You stay?" He says, "Come." They said, "We are seeking You." They've not seen a single exhibition of power because they're seeking the Person. So, he says, "Show me Your ways that I might know who You are." God is very happy. He says, "You know what? My presence will go with you." For somebody's presence to go with someone, the person has to be going with that person. It's not perfume. It's the presence. God does not say, "My perfume will go with you." God says, "My Presence will go with you." Person will going. Honestly, as you walk with persons, that's what happened in China. The report is very true. People have been married for years together but they've never walked with each other. They've never spent time with each other. Then, suddenly, quarantine comes and they ask, "Is this the one I married? Really? This is the one I've lived with several years? I want to get out." And the problem is – people can be within the four walls of the Church, or a Christian home and have never really known God because they've never sought God for Himself. They've always looked at God as a trouble-shooter. When I am troubled, when I'm in trouble, help me and now that I'm out of my troubles, stay, please. That's why *Psalms 103:7*, Scripture says,

### **Psalms 103:7**

**<sup>7</sup> He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel.**

He showed His presence to one and power to the other. The people never knew the presence of God. They never knew Him as a Person and because they did not know Him as a Person, they fell away but the man who knew the presence of God, the power never bothered him at all. He didn't follow God for the power; He followed God for the presence. So, technically, if you speak, he finished his race.

If you come to *Hebrews 3:9*, very familiar passages. Let's go back over and over again.

### **Hebrews 3:9**

**<sup>9</sup> Where your fathers tested Me...**

Things turned the other way around. They were testing me.

**...tried Me...**

After what?

*...And saw My works forty years.*

“It didn’t matter that they saw My power being exhibited every day of their lives for 40 years. They still tested. They still didn’t believe Me.” So, either you trust or you test. So, fathers will tell the children, “Don’t test my patience.” But the fellow knows, “My father has got long patience.” So, he’s trusting in his patience. He knows how much he can go. God is saying, “You tested Me. You tried Me.”

**Hebrews 3:10-**

***<sup>10</sup>Therefore I was angry with that generation, And said, ‘They always go astray in their heart, And they have not known My ways.’***

“They have never understood Me. So, what did I swear? I swore something.”

***<sup>11</sup>So I swore in My wrath, ‘They shall not enter My rest.’ ”***

What does it mean? “My presence shall go and you shall have no rest. You will never know Me as a Person. They will not know Me as a Person. They will know My power but they will not know Me as a Person. And because they will not know Me as a Person, they will not know what it is to dwell in the presence of the Lord and because of that, they will never have rest.” When the epidemic comes, it is panic because they don’t have the presence of God to be sustained because it will only increase. It’s just the beginning. It is only increasing.

Like I told the Pastors yesterday. It’s okay. It’s good. What the government told is absolutely wonderful. What is that? Wash your hands. Cover your mouth, your face, right? But doesn’t *Psalms 27* say, “Who can ascend up to the holy hill of God and stand in His presence? But he who has clean hands and a pure heart?” So, is that causing you to wash your hands, your other hands, your works? You saw the sign. Is it causing something else within you? Is it causing you to put a mask over your spiritual mouth? Because Jesus said very clearly – there are two deaths – a physical death and an eternal death. It is not what goes inside, that can kill you only physically. What comes out will destroy you in eternity. So, did we put that mask or are the signs being lost on us? Because these are all signs. Either you have to believe that this is a sign or that God is not in control. God is now detached from human reality and He says, “Do whatever you want. I’ve given it to mother nature.” No, Father God. What mother nature? It is Father God in action. And you have to believe. You have to reconcile both. You can’t say, “He’s a God of love.” Yes, but He’s also a God of judgment. Consider the severity and the kindness of God. Both are there. You cannot take one out of the character of God. Our job, as preachers, we are not God’s PR men to make God look like what He is not. God doesn’t wear makeup. He has exposed Himself as He is in human history – the kindest and the toughest human ever possible. When it comes to upholding His righteousness and His holiness, He’s the toughest. When it comes to His mercy and kindness, He will pick out the worst rogue from the gutter if he believes in Him. Both are there. And the Cross is the centerpoint of humanity where God’s righteousness – His love and His mercy meets. So, don’t misunderstand this. Who has not sworn deceitfully. The mouth and your hands. It’s a very good thing. Because when dengue came, everybody bought mosquito nets. When Corona virus came, everybody bought sanitizers and masks. But we are forgetting. First was a visible thing – that was tiny little mosquitoes which brought nations into panic. Now, it’s an invisible thing. So, if you look, they saw His works for 40 years. They went astray in their hearts. They never knew Him as a Person. They did not even long. That’s what Jesus says in a beautiful way. First, I did a part of my Ph. D. in children’s rhymes and one of the way we go back and we say that the oldest children rhyme ever recorded is found in the Gospels – we played the flute for you; the children sang the dirge for you. We tried the good message, “God loves you.” You didn’t respond. We tried the other message, “God is a God of judgment.” It still didn’t matter to you. You didn’t respond to either messages – the good and the tough one. So, they went astray in their hearts. So, if you look as an example for today in *Numbers 13* how we fall away from our faith or how we allow our apparent physical issues, what we call – the epidemic or any personal trial, testing or trauma we go through, how it causes us to reveal our faith or lack of faith. Very familiar portion.

**Numbers 13:25-28**

***<sup>25</sup>And they returned from spying out the land after forty days. <sup>26</sup>Now they departed and came back to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the children of Israel in the Wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; they brought back word to them***

***and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. <sup>27</sup> Then they told him, and said: “We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. <sup>28</sup> Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there.***

First three verses, if you look at it, in the midst of all the possibilities, they hung on to the impossibility. That’s the problem. We look at the whole picture. We are also like them. We look at all the promises of God and all the things God has done and is doing and finally, we say, “Nevertheless, Covid-19.” “Nevertheless, Corona will finish us all off.” Unlike other generations, meaning – unlike other people, we are the only set of people for whom plagues and epidemics are nothing new in human history. If I’m right, the first four plagues that came upon Israel, upon Egypt, God allowed both to go through it and the fifth one, if I’m right, God said, “I’ll make a distinction between them and you.” Then, only Egypt is suffering and nothing is touching them. So, we know our God is in control of epidemics, plagues, everything. We have seen it all. We have seen famine through the Bible, pestilence through the Bible, epidemics through the Bible, systems – all these we have and after seeing, reading and meditating and confessing *Psalm 91* over our lives, we say, “Nevertheless.” We hold on to the impossibility and not the possibility with God. That’s why God says, “All things are possible with God. All things are possible with him or her who believes.” So, we have to always ask – actually, what do I believe? The problem is – you have to see in light of what they are saying, in light of what God has spoken and what they have seen.

### **Numbers 13:2**

***<sup>2</sup> “Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the children of Israel; from each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, every one a leader among them.”***

You don’t have to see because what I say is true. But I know that you guys really don’t know Me. I brought you all the way from Egypt, told you that I’m taking you to a land that is flowing with milk and honey and all. And you thought Egypt was cat’s whiskers. You think there are better places than Egypt? God says, “Yes.” There is. You think the world was great. He says, “I want you to taste the Kingdom, the joy of the Kingdom, the peace of the Kingdom. You thought the world was great, right? So, do one thing – let people go and spy it out for 40 days. But I’m already telling you – I’m giving it to you.” So, they have a word that is already spoken – “I have given it to you.” And they have the testimony of their eyes that what He has already spoken is really true. The land is really a good land, flowing with milk and honey. And then, they came and said, “Nevertheless.” But God said, “I give it to you.” Right? And they had experienced the power of God till that moment in all their victories from Egypt till here. They’ve experienced the power of God but they really did not know or trust the Person of God. In *Numbers 23:19*, God will tell these people,

### **Numbers 23:19**

***<sup>19</sup> “God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?”***

“I said I am giving this land to you. Do you think I’m a liar? Do you think I say something and I won’t do it?” See, they knew the power of God but they did not know the Person of God. Why I’m telling you is that if you actually read Scripture and come to revelation to the end of time, you will see what God did and the enemy was not able to do... there are certain things that the enemy was not able to do. Like the enemy also duplicates many of the miracles in Egypt and all that but certain things, he was not able to do. On Mount Carmel, Elijah brought fire. They couldn’t do anything. The Bible, it says, “The enemy will bring fire from Heaven. The enemy will, kind of, fool people by rising up from the dead.” Two of the things which he hasn’t done so far. The only thing the enemy cannot really, really duplicate is – he cannot duplicate the Person of God if you know Him. He can duplicate the power of God. That’s why in *Thessalonians*, the Bible says, “He will deceive people by lying signs and wonders.” Why? Because people did not receive the love of truth. The love of truth is God as a Person, God as truth. God, the Person of truth. So, the real issue here is – if you do not know the Person of God, when these things happen, usually, the way down is very fast. It’s not gradual. It’s very, very fast. That’s why God says, “Love God with all your heart.” It’s impossible to please God without faith. Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. This should be the parameters on which we work our lives. Otherwise, signs are... whether it’s a good sign or a bad sign. The miracle which benefited you and something terrible that is happening – both are signs from God. The Red Sea parting was a sign from Israel. They went through. The Red Sea swallowing Egypt was also a sign. Remember signs can be a good thing and a bad thing but the signs are lost. So, God will show a sign. The question is: what does the sign do to us? Does it pull us to the Person of God? Otherwise, the sign is lost. Scripture says about the disciples – this was one of the first signs Jesus did

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and the disciples put their faith in Him. They followed Him even more closely. They are getting to know the Person. In *Exodus 3*, you will see this.

### **Exodus 3:2-4**

***<sup>2</sup>And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed.***

That's a sign to Moses. To one man, that is a sign. God can show a sign to an entire nation, to one person or to the whole world. The pandemic we are going through, to the whole world, it's a sign. Here, it is to one man.

***<sup>3</sup>Then Moses said, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn." <sup>4</sup>So when the Lord saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him...***

There is a sign. What has the sign done to you? He moved towards the sign to know. We use the term in English – 'We want to see the Signifier behind the sign' and then, God spoke to him. What would an average Indian do? He would build an altar of the fire and worship the fire god. Not the Person. That's why I have issues with testimony because much of the testimony is celebrating just the power of God and your faith and not the Person of God. "I believed." And exalt that person in whose ministry that happened. So, you have to be careful. Has it drawn you? Otherwise, the sign is wasted. What is wasted? The sign is wasted. The sign is from God. It's a demonstration of His power and you need to understand – God is an incredible good steward of resources, His own resources. He doesn't even waste His power. That's why scientists will tell you – power is never lost. Energy is never lost. It just changes its form because God does not waste anything, even science.

In *Matthew 12:38-39*,

### **Matthew 12:38-39**

***<sup>38</sup>Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." <sup>39</sup>But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.***

He is saying, He is literally calling them an evil generation. "You are following Me for the signs. You are not interested in Me. You are not disciples." All the signs you have seen so far hasn't made a single one of you to come closer to Me. It hasn't made any difference in your life." This, He doesn't say only once. This, He says it multiple times to the same kind of people. You look at *Matthew 16:1-4*,

### **Matthew 16:1-4**

***<sup>1</sup>Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him...***

Earlier, they were polite. Now, they're testing Him.

***...asked that He would show them a sign from heaven. <sup>2</sup>He answered and said to them, "When it is evening you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red'; <sup>3</sup>and in the morning, 'It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times. <sup>4</sup>A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah." And He left them and departed.***

And even when He talks about the sign of Jonah, He doesn't really explain how it's connected to Him. Imagine telling about a sign and not even telling you what the sign means. So, you will see, this is the pattern – if our faith is not in the Person of God and not in the power of God... the power of God has to be associated intimately with a Person. Don't detach it. The Person of God. What happens? When trials and testing happen, either we will go up or we will go down. We will be promoted or we will be demoted. *Numbers 13:31*,

### **Numbers 13:31**



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***<sup>31</sup> But the men who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we.”***

You see, the lack of faith when the test comes, admits defeat before a single battle is fought. It already admits defeat. They haven't fought. They haven't even tested it out. Before the battle begins, they said, “We surrender.” It's not, “I surrender all to God,” but I surrender all to the enemy. I give up. Even before the battle has begun, we give up. So, half of Christendom is not getting ready to live; they are getting ready to die. Fear has taken over. While the Psalmist says, “I will not die but live and declare the works of the Lord.” What does faith do to you? What does trial do to you? What is it doing to you?

### **Numbers 13:32**

***<sup>32</sup> And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out...***

First thing – they give up. Second – the bad reports begin to spread. Our testimony changes. We start testifying more and more about Corona and not Christ. Bad report. The bad report starts spreading and prevail and people start moving away. Then, if you look at *verse 33*,

### **Numbers 13:33**

***<sup>33</sup> There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.”***

Now, we start magnifying the problem and the problem becomes bigger and bigger and they become smaller and smaller. The problem is – okay, if a Gentile becomes smaller and smaller. But the problem is – when the Christian becomes smaller and smaller, Christ also becomes smaller and smaller because you and I have no identity apart from Him. God has put His Name on Israel. So, when Israel becomes small, God becomes small. When we got baptized, our identity was submerged in Him. We have no identity separate from Him. So, even whether we live or die, we have to live or die as a conqueror. Death doesn't scare us. That's what Paul says, “If I live or die, both is gain.” So, the way a believer actually confronts epidemics and plagues and all these things – his attitude is completely different because he knows he cannot be defeated. Why? Because Christ cannot be defeated. Christ is the Man of War. From age to age, He has never lost a war. That's why the Bible says, “It takes us continuously in triumph in Christ Jesus.” In death or life, we are victorious. That's why people are always amazed in Scripture and in Christian history, the way Christians died. They died victoriously. Because nobody dies like that. Because if you look at *Romans 6:3-5*, this is our identity.

### **Romans 6:3-5**

***<sup>3</sup> Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? <sup>4</sup> Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. <sup>5</sup> For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,***

I was telling the Pastors on Saturday an example. I think it was 1998 (I cannot remember) in Assam when Tendulkar was playing. I can't say India was playing Australia because India did not play, Tendulkar played Australia. It was in Sharjah. Storm hit and the game had to be stopped. When the sand settled, he singlehandedly took us to the semi-finals and he took us to the final. I was sitting on the edge of my seat, interceding for Sachin- “Please Lord! Let him not fall.” And he took us. Even till today, when I really, really want to chill, I go back to that old match and watch it. But today if you see me watching I am relaxed. I am not tense. Do you know why? Because I know India won so there is no tension at all now watching the same match. I remember how I watched the first time and how I watched every subsequent time. Earlier it was tension and excitement at the end; now it is excitement through it all. Why? Because you have seen the end. We are the only set of people who have seen the end from the beginning! God says, I expect your reaction to be different. We know the end of the book. We know the end of the story. We know! God says- I expect you to react differently, whether in life or whether in death; you will live victoriously, you will die victoriously. You will die singing. You will die interceding for others; not for yourself. “Lord, have mercy on me!” No! “Lord, have mercy on my murderers. I already know I am a man who has received mercy. Now I am pleading for my killers.” That's what God is trying to tell. Here what happens- the bad report spreads, Christ gets smaller and smaller and smaller and smaller.

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Then in *Numbers 14:1*, chain reaction!

### **Numbers 14:1**

***So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night.***

What is the order of the day and night? Weeping! Weeping is good as long as it is over sin and unbelief. "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief." "Lord, save me." He pulled him out. All that cry is good but this weeping is different. This weeping is – "Poor me!" That's why you have to understand in the society there are certain sets of people who are categorized and put down. In the Kingdom of God, those people cannot complain. In the society, who are the lowest, who deserve sympathy and pity are orphans and widows; not in the Kingdom of God. To the widow, God says, "I am your spouse." To the orphan, God says, "I am your father." So, He says, "If you are orphan in the Kingdom of God, walk differently; you got a Father in Heaven, which the others who have fathers don't have." Walk differently as a widow; the other widow has a husband who troubles her day and night; you have a husband who loves you. If you come from a society demarcated 'lower caste' into the Kingdom of God, you are casteless; you belong to a holy nation and a royal priesthood. So these excuses do not work with God. God says, this is all a test of it- what do you really believe? What is your identity? What do you really believe? So weeping! The whole congregation is weeping. Through the night, they are weeping. "Poor me! Poor me! Poor me!" You see, the fall is very fast. If you look there is a pattern that is happening with them. If you look at the core of it, all this is happening because they did not know the person of God. They never sought the ways of God. They experienced His power but they did not experience His presence because they never sought it.

### **Numbers 14:2**

***<sup>2</sup> And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron...***

Complaining and murmuring began. You see there is a procedure- weeping 'poor me', complaining and murmuring against God and the leadership who stood with God. The pattern that is going on; now they are complaining "If only"-

***...and the whole congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness!***

What do you say it today? You start having suicidal thoughts. You are thinking of ending your life because of your misery though outwardly nothing has really changed. Has God changed? Has His promises for you changed? No! You are reading a situation looking at your outward circumstances and you are suicidal. You want to take your own life. That's what I am saying- "We wish we had died!" Do you struggle with suicidal thoughts? Do you struggle with depression? Is anything too difficult for God? Think! Learn from these patterns- what absence of faith in the person of God! You will say, "Pastor, you don't know what I am going through." But doesn't God know? I may not know- that is true but doesn't God know? Is God going to push you over the rock or the devil is going to push you over the cliff? Doesn't He say- a *smoking flax He will not put off, a bruised reed He will not break*? How gentle He is with people! He knows how you are and what pressures you are facing and He is very gentle? So, murmuring goes to death wish- suicidal thoughts!

### **Numbers 14:3**

***<sup>3</sup> Why has the Lord brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?"***

Now what is it? From there to 'victim mentality'! Now they are no longer victors, they are all victims. So, victim's conversation is- "I wish I was born in another home, another family, another country! I wish the color of my skin was white! I wish I had more money! I wish I had gone to the English medium convent school! I wish!" Victim mentality begins. People start feeling like victims and not like victors. Do you why again? It's because they do not know the person of God. We wish! He is trying, He has already planned to lead them to victory but what do they see themselves as? As victims! In spite of all our shortcomings, all our failures and all of our sins, God only wishes His children to win because He is a Father. He is not your teacher who is mad at you. He is a Father who cares for you. It's like Naomi- "Don't call me Naomi; call me Mara. I went full, I have come back empty." It's not true, Naomi! You goofed up. Your husband goofed up. You are believers. You took your children over there, you destroyed their lives also and now God is showing you mercy, harvest has come back to Bethlehem and He has actually brought you back to redeem you but you are still walking in that victim mentality. He has

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brought you back to redeem you and you are not able to see it. It's a victim mentality! "Why did You?" "He brought us here (to die)!" They are questioning the integrity of God.

### **Numbers 14:3b**

***...Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?"***

Now inside they want to go back. Outwardly we sit in Church; inside we go back. You have to read the comments about quarantine places and all, people saying- "I am ready for 30 days; I bought my provisions, I bought my water, I have stocked it and I got 'Netflix'. 30 days I am going to watch all my favourite movies." I am going back! So, what do we do? We sit in Church, we look good but when we are in the privacy of our house, we go back; we watch the world. We go back and start dreaming those things of the world. "It was better in Egypt!" We go back. They were considering going back to Egypt! This is too much- this spiritual battle! Do you know what Peter says in 2 Peter 2?

### **2 Peter 2:20**

***<sup>20</sup>For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ...***

Not by the power! It's not by the power! Power is secondary by knowing the person of Jesus Christ. Knowing the person of Jesus Christ- that's how you come out of sin. That's why David could come out of sin and Saul could not. Saul could not come out because he had only experienced the power of God; he was never interested in the person of God. David had experienced the power and the person. So when he fell, he jumped back; he always could come back because the person of God drew him back; it's not the power of God. Are you getting it what he is saying?

### **2 Peter 2:20b-22**

***...they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. <sup>21</sup>For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. <sup>22</sup>But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."***

Tough verse but don't start reading it and start judging yourself. Nobody has reached there. You wouldn't be here if you had reached there. My question is how do you escape? It's by knowing the person of Jesus Christ. There is no other way. Power of God is something else. Jesus can cast the demon out of a person but after that the person has to choose to walk with Jesus Christ otherwise you go out, demon will come back. Demon looks and says- you are empty; you are not full. The power that released you and caused that place to be empty and clean was not filled with His presence. What do you fill that empty place with? With His presence! If you don't fill it with the presence of God, the enemy will fill it with his presence- all kinds of negative thoughts and suicidal thoughts and depression, discouragement, all dreams about the world- and that's what is happening over there. They want to go back.

### **Numbers 14:4**

***<sup>4</sup>So they said to one another, "Let us select a leader and return to Egypt."***

What kind of a leader are they looking for? They are looking for a leader who will take them back to the world from which they escaped. They want a leader but they want a leader not like Moses. Moses will take them forward further and further into the land of promises. This fellow will take you further and further back to the life that you left.

Paul's warning to Timothy—

### **2 Timothy 4:1-2**

***I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: <sup>2</sup>Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.***

Don't change your doctrine. It's not about the world; it's about the Kingdom of God. Why?

**2 Timothy 4:3**

***<sup>3</sup>For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;***

It will stop being the Kingdom of God; it becomes a democracy- you choose your own leader according to your desire. What did they say? "Let's select a leader who will take us back to Egypt." So, what happens? Because you have autonomy over the internet, you start listening to messages, which takes you back to the world. They will tell you – "This is God's will for you. Go back to the world. Prosper in the world. Your best life now! It's a message of hope." Like I said- the worst opportunity US wasted was 9/11, first few weeks, Churches were packed. Do you know what they did? They gave them such a sloppy watered-down message saying, "God loves you" instead of telling, "Repent, this is judgment upon the nation. Get your act together." Instead of surgery, what did they do? They put 'Band-Aid' and sent them. Now second one is coming. How many nations do we have affected already? 169 nations! Only one national leader called for a day of prayer. Last Sunday was a day of prayer for America by president. Not a single nation asked for the help of God. Many of them forwarded messages by saying, 'doctors are gods'. Gods have failed; now doctors are gods.

**Jeremiah 8:11**

***<sup>11</sup>For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly, Saying, 'Peace, peace!' When there is no peace.***

Very lightly! 'Peace, peace! God loves you! God understands!' Now they are doing the same thing. In the last days, what did God say? They will again preach the same message. They will say- '*peace and safety when sudden destruction comes.*' Paul is telling Timothy. You know the doctor who loves you is the one who tells you the truth, not who flatters you. They looked for a faithless leader who would take them back to Egypt.

**1 John 5:4**

***<sup>4</sup>For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.***

Faith is supposed to overcome the world and not the world overcome faith. They are looking for a leader, who will take them back to Egypt and not the other way.

See how it slowly moves.

**Numbers 14:10**

***<sup>10</sup>And all the congregation said to stone them with stones.***

Now they are turning violent. Read it very carefully; there is a downward spiralling that is taking place. Now they are tuning violent. They want to stone Moses and Aaron; forgotten everything. Do you know why they are doing all these? They are doing all these because they do not know the person of God. They have no clue about the person of God. Now they are turning violent.

**John 8:59**

***<sup>59</sup>Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.***

The first place when they picked up stones, Scripture says the glory of God came and covered that place, stopped it. Jesus hid; He is such a humble meek God. Glory of God did not come and separate; He just hid Himself. But the reaction of the crowd is the same. Have Moses and Aaron done any harm to them? No! Has Jesus done any harm to them? No! Violent! Now the reaction is becoming violent. How is it when these things go, are you getting angry? Inside are you getting angry? We don't do violence not because of God but because of the cops (law and order). Otherwise! God is saying, are you getting angry, mad when these things happen? "I didn't sign up for this! When I accepted Jesus, this was not part of the deal." Are you getting angry? Are you getting upset? You see the order: they are moving towards violence and ultimately, they will attract God's wrath.

**Numbers 14:11-12**

***<sup>11</sup> Then the Lord said to Moses: “How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them? <sup>12</sup>I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they.”***

Nobody wants pestilence to be a sign. Whether it is from Wuhan or anywhere, it is a sign. If it is especially from Wuhan, it's a bigger sign. Do you why? Every time God judged in the Bible, it was the east wind; it was not a north wind. Blessings came from the north and judgment came from the east. So, this is from the east! Man departed from God towards the east. Cain went towards the east. Further Christian people have moved to the east, have you noticed they are more hardened (whichever way), very resistant to the Gospel? We are very lucky in the east to have accepted Christ and Christ accepted us. The eastern people, the further they have gone east, it's very, very hard. You look at Japan, the most prosperous nation in the world. Do you think it is 1% who believes? No! The Gospel resistant nation! It is Mao who brought half of China to Christ; that persecution had to come before they surrendered. Further you go east, it is demonic. Powers of satan rules over eastern nations. So, if it is this part of east, it is snake and that part of east, it is dragon. Openly! The two names he has- the snake and the dragon. Openly! That is the festival that is all celebrated with the snake and the dragon. It's very open. You need to realize, we are very, very grateful- “Lord, out of the snake's mouth, you delivered us.” So, it says, it will attract God's wrath.

#### **Numbers 14:12**

***<sup>12</sup> I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they.”***

He is talking to Moses.

#### **Matthew 23:37-38**

***<sup>37</sup> “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! <sup>38</sup> See! Your house is left to you desolate;***

He also tells the same thing. “How much I wanted to cover you and protect you and keep you but you would not accept My word so I have to leave you into the hands of Romans.” They will destroy you. Top to bottom, Jerusalem would be destroyed.

In *Numbers 14*, from verses 13 onwards, you will see the man of God intercedes.

#### **Numbers 14:13-16**

***<sup>13</sup> And Moses said to the Lord: “Then the Egyptians will hear it, for by Your might You brought these people up from among them, <sup>14</sup>and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that You, Lord, are among these people; that You, Lord, are seen face to face and Your cloud stands above them, and You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night. <sup>15</sup> Now if You kill these people as one man, then the nations which have heard of Your fame will speak, saying, <sup>16</sup>‘Because the Lord was not able to bring this people to the land which He swore to give them, therefore He killed them in the wilderness.’***

Do you know what he does? Man of God intercedes because he knows the person of God and because he knows the person of God, he is very zealous for God's name and reputation. ‘Hallowed be Thy name!’ He is very zealous for the name of God. He says, “Look Lord, I know You understand all that but excuse me. Let me explain to You. I am from Egypt. I lived forty years of my life in Egypt. (If) You do this, I know what they will talk about You. It doesn't look good on You.”

#### **Numbers 14:17**

***<sup>17</sup> And now, I pray, let the power of my Lord be great, just as You have spoken, saying,***

He appeals to His power. “You are a powerful God. You said all these things but please, I am telling You, don't use Your power to judge your people, to destroy Your people because people will talk about it.”

**Numbers 14:18**

***<sup>18</sup> ‘The Lord is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He by no means clears the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation.’***

He says, “Lord, I am upholding both Your love and Your righteousness; Your mercy and Your righteousness. I will not change the order. You are a loving God and You are a righteous God.”

**Numbers 14:19**

***<sup>19</sup> Pardon the iniquity of this people, I pray, according to the greatness of Your mercy, just as You have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now.”***

I am not appealing to Your righteousness now. You are right to judge them but please deal with them according to Your mercy. This confession of faith doesn't matter. You have to stand in the gap. When the epidemic comes, say- “Lord, please show mercy. Let them not die without knowing You. Let them not die in their sins. Please!” Remember when in the plague, wave after wave, people were dying before the Lord, Aaron stood there and made atonement. He literally stood in the middle of death and death stopped. They were dying; he stood there. Moses couldn't make atonement because Aaron was high priest. Aaron as the high priest like Jesus' role stood there and stopped death in its track. But don't change the message because if you change the message, nobody will want mercy. Why do you want mercy if there is no judgment?

God relents to one man's voice, one man stood in the gap.

**Numbers 14:20-23**

***<sup>20</sup> Then the Lord said: “I have pardoned, according to your word; <sup>21</sup> but truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord— <sup>22</sup> because all these men who have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not heeded My voice, <sup>23</sup> they certainly shall not see the land of which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who rejected Me see it.***

Do you know what He is saying? He doesn't destroy them but He judges them to a life of wandering. Do you know how many tens of thousands of actual believing Christians are wandering? Ask them. They have experienced His signs, they have experienced His power, they have experienced His wonders, they know the power of the hand of God, they all have testimonies of God but you ask them, “Are you walking with God? Have you reached your destiny? Are you fulfilling your calling?” No! Their lives are just circles. They are wandering. He judges them in His mercy; not to Egypt to go there and die but He says, “You will not fulfil My plan and My purpose for you.” He has told that. *Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice and do not conformed to the pattern of the world but by the renewing of your mind, you shall know what is the good and pleasing and perfect will of God.* Fulfil your purpose and grace will be given. Faith will be there. According to your faith and according your grace, fulfil your call. This set of people never fulfilled anything. They just wandered. The problem is- they were neither promoted nor demoted, we have a third word in English in school, they were 'detained' in the same class for 40 years!

Do you that can happen? When I was class 1 in Bhutan, the guy sitting next to me was 21 years old. They don't chuck you out of school; it's government school. He had sat in the same class for so many years. When I reached class 1, he was 21 years. It was a new school and my father was the principal. So, he checked and said, “You, 21 and this boy, 5, are sitting together?” Next year, he sent him to the army. So, class 1, he joined the army because he would never finish class 1; he would never pass. This is the children of Israel! 40 years, not demoted to Egypt, not promoted in the promised land; they were detained in the desert. Promoted, demoted or detained! Please don't wander. All you young ones, don't get fooled. All these should make you go and spend more time with God. Spend time. Simple! These are not complex Pharisaical prayers and all. Simple prayers! God loves that simplicity of the heart. You can't impress God with your prayers. You can impress me; I will say, “Wow! Look at that one praying. I didn't know he/she knew so much.” No! You can impress me; you can't impress God. You need just the simplicity of heart; go to Him and talk to Him as Father. When a child comes to his father or mother, they don't want KJV. “Tell me in simple language what you want.” One of the things fathers and mothers say is- “Don't beat around the bush. Tell me what you want.” That's why I said; don't do this thing like pagans do. I believe in *Psalms 91* absolutely. My problem is: don't make *Psalms 91* into mantra. That's what pagans do; they make it into mantra. In the morning, they begin with one mantra and in the afternoon, they have another mantra. They have mantras

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and we also have selectively picked up portions from the Bible and left the rest of the Bible and we have made those into mantras. God is not fooled though every word He says is true. The question is- is it true for you and me?

Let's pray.

### **Closing Prayer:**

*Father, we just come to You, Lord. We just stand once again, putting our trust in You, Lord. All we can say every day, every moment, when we see all these things happening (even more we can say), is- thank You for Jesus. O Lord, so many have died, Father. We have seen, Lord; in the Kingdom and outside of Kingdom, people are dying. The first one to die in Malaysia was a young Pastor, Lord. Pastors are dying, congregation is dying and Gentiles are dying. The plague comes; there is no separation now. You are not making a distinction between the righteous and the unrighteous right now, Lord because this is a warning to everyone, both to the Church and to the world. To the Church, to get their act right- "get back into your closet, get back into the Word, seek My ways, walk in My presence." To the world, You have only one message- "Don't die in your sin. Repent and believe. Even if you die, you shall live. No man has to fear death anymore because Jesus has conquered death." I pray, Father, we will not fear at a time and a season like this but everyone will quarantine themselves. They don't need government guidelines. Quarantine themselves, spend with You! They will lock themselves with You and spend even more time in Your presence so that when this plague is over, they will come out with even more purpose and even more clarity and determination to serve You, Lord. Because in this interim period when the plague is floating around, we would have known Your ways even more better, Lord; that we could be able to say, looking back one day, what the enemy meant for evil, God turned it around for our good. I know Him better now after the plague is over. Like Job could say, after the plague was over in his life- "my ears had earlier heard about Him, but now in the midst this pestilence and through this pestilence, my eyes have seen Him." Let it be every believer's testimony, Lord. Let one more sign not be wasted on us. Thank You, Father. Thank You, Lord. Once again, I plead the blood of Jesus over the Church, every one present or absent, around the world, our Churches, leaders, families and especially the older generation in our Churches, who have underlying health problems. We look at the facts but we lift up Your truth. I pray Lord, especially them, when You stretch Your wings over Your people, let the oldest among us find shelter close to Your breast, Lord. Cover them closest, Lord because they need You more than anybody else, O Lord because fear is striking their hearts more, O God. Therefore, they need to be held closer than anybody else, O Lord. The youngest and the oldest among us, cover them, Lord, with Your wings. Cover all, Father. Let them find that safe place. Thank You. Thank You, Father. I pray that this will bring forth awakening in US, too, Lord, one Christian nation left on earth, that they will truly believe what they have written in all their dollar notes, Lord- 'In God, we trust'. Banking may fail but let them believe in God who never fails, Lord. Thank You, Father. Thank You, Lord. We praise You. We worship You. We glorify You. For in Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.*