

Father, we just stand in Your presence; all of us, Lord, not just who are in this room, wherever, whichever place, whichever country they are watching from, Your children. If under the Old Covenant, Aaron could stand between the living and the dead and stay the plague, how much more can we under the New Covenant? I pray every one of Your children, wherever they are, in their apartment, on their street, in their town, in their city, in their country will stand there as a royal priesthood. Even as we worship, even as we look at the Word, we will never forget our real function – we are called to stand between the dead and the living and make intercession. Hear our cry, Lord. More than physical death, which is just a symbol, multitudes, multitudes in the valley of indecision, dying, perishing spiritually; only the Church has the power to stand in between because only the Church has life. Because You said in Your Word, “In Him is the life and that life is the light of men.” So, I pray, all Your children stand up in this dark hour and those who are perishing will see that life and that light. Speak to us now, Lord. For in Jesus’ Name we pray, Amen.

So, the one-day lockdown has become 10 days and under the circumstances and restrictions as far as possible, we will try to meet as often as we can. We will always give you advance notice, all those who are watching online and we will try to encourage ourselves in the Lord. We were prepared for a time and a season like this. Only thing that the technology. I have never seen the sound and the audio/video team so much on their toes in all these 12 years. So active! So alive! They are more alive than the streaming. They are also hungry. So, our dear sister, Apu, has been feeding hungry men. Since you do not see the people here, pray for them. We are here for you.

Let’s look to the Word and as we look to the Word, we go first to the Gospel according to Luke.

Luke 17:20-22

²⁰ Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the Kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, “The Kingdom of God does not come with observation; ²¹ nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the Kingdom of God is within you.” ²² Then He said to the disciples, “The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it.

One of the questions people keep asking (we have to preach that is relevant to the time and there has never been a time like this), the constant question is: is this the end? ‘The end’ means different things to different people. So, there is this question that people are always asking: is this the end? That’s the question in everybody’s mind. Even here, when Jesus walked on earth, this question was asked. Like I said, it means different things to different people but here, the Pharisees are asking. So, the question Christians ask is different. For them, the end means the beginning of something else. Is the Kingdom of God here? That’s what they were all waiting for and I hope we are also waiting for. Jesus is being asked this question, if you notice, by the Pharisees. Asked by whom? The Pharisees! When asked by the Pharisees, He gives them a very cryptic reply. He tells them, “The Kingdom of God does not come in ways that can be observed.” Meaning, if you look at what He answers—

Luke 17:21

²¹ nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the Kingdom of God is within you.”

There is a fundamental issue, which Jesus is talking about. If you are looking for the Kingdom of God, it does not come with observation. People outside the system (that is the Kingdom), it doesn’t matter how much they try with academic success or study or scholarship, they will not be able to know the Kingdom because the Kingdom of God is within you. Meaning, what Jesus had told Nicodemus, if the Kingdom of God is not within you, you cannot see or enter the Kingdom. It is the Kingdom of God within you and me that tells us, warns us, prepares us for the Kingdom that is coming. If we are outside the Kingdom, then we will not be able to understand the coming of the Kingdom or be prepared for the coming of the Kingdom. It is similar to what Jesus had told about the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit comes, the world will not know Him and the world will not receive Him. You cannot receive what you do not know. It is the Holy Spirit that prepares you for the coming of the Son.

Through the book of Revelation, God says, “*all those who have ears, let them hear.*” That’s what He says. So, the Kingdom of God is within us and the actual sign of it is the Spirit of God because the Kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in

Preparing Spiritually - 2

the Holy Ghost. In the midst of all situations (every situation), there is this guarding of righteousness, peace and joy by the Holy Spirit. That's the Kingdom of God. Holy Spirit prepares people who are within Kingdom for the coming of the Kingdom. Pharisees who are outside the Kingdom are asking this question and He straightaway tells them it doesn't come with observation. You can be absolute, fantastic scholars of the Bible and you will have no clue when the Kingdom is coming. That's a very scary thing. Scholarship is good only if the Kingdom is within you first because Nicodemus was a scholar of Scripture. When Jesus told him something that is so simple for us without scholarship that you need to be born again, he didn't understand. You ask anybody outside the Kingdom, even in the mainline Christianity that you need to be born again, they don't understand it. They will say, "I was baptized as a child. I go to Church regularly."

They asked this question. They are not able to understand. Nothing has changed in 2000 years. The Kingdom of God is still the same. There is a humbling of oneself, receiving by faith the work of Christ alone and enter through that narrow gate and then suddenly you are in the Kingdom and the Kingdom starts making sense. Then when you read the Bible, you realize Bible is all about the King and the Kingdom. It's not about you; it's not about this world. It's not preparing you for this world. It's preparing you to get out of this world. So, when you see all these signs, you read it differently. You don't read it with panic; you read it with hope and joy. So, Christians who are panicking, they need to be very careful. They don't look at and this is a sign, maybe you are outside the Kingdom.

Then, if you go further down, next verse 22—

Luke 17:22

22 Then He said to the disciples...

That's interesting! The question is asked by the Pharisees; the answer is given to the disciples. You see this consistent pattern in the Bible, especially in the ministry of Jesus. In the ministry of Jesus Christ, there were three sets of people who always followed Him. One set was the crowds – the large crowd. The second is a smaller crowd, but they are also a crowd; these are the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Levites, the scribes – this religious crowd. Third is a small group, which are called the disciples. Three groups follow Him wherever He goes. You will always see the reaction to Pharisees and these crowds are sometimes quite hostile. He never answers directly, clearly to the Pharisees or to the crowds. To the point, He speaks to them only in ways they cannot understand. We don't understand the ways of God but we have to accept the ways of God. To the point, His disciples come and ask Him, "Lord, why do you speak to them in parables?" He gives them an answer. Fantastic answer! He tells them, "*The secrets of the Kingdom!*" meaning, the Kingdom is secretive; It's hidden. Something that is secret is hidden. Why is it secret? It's because it is hidden. If it's open, it's no longer a secret. He says, "*The secrets of the Kingdom of God are given to you and not to them.*" To whom is it given? It is given to the disciples; it's not given to the crowds, it's not given to the Pharisees.

So, one of the primary conditions to understand how the Kingdom operates and the coming of the Kingdom is, first, be a disciple. The Church has failed in this for 2000 years and we are all guilty of it because the Great Commission was to, "*Go to the world, to the ends of the nations and make 'disciples' of all nations.*" We made followers and we made Pharisees. We didn't make disciples. There is a problem. If you look in the first pattern that is happening (you have these patterns in the Bible) – Israel leaves Egypt; one day, God delivered them and He is taking them to the Promised Land, a type of the Kingdom. There is huge crowd called '600,000 men', with women and children besides. In these 600,000 men is this huge group called 'the crowd'. There is a smaller group called 'Pharisees' with the 250 leaders, ecclesiastical leaders under the leadership of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. There are three disciples (I am talking about one generation) called Moses, Joshua and Caleb. Joshua and Caleb are representing, of course, the next generation. Three people are named over there. So, you have these three people.

Let me ask you this. Who knew about the Kingdom in their terms? Only these three! Not the crowd, not the leadership; only these three! If you actually look at, Moses also entered the Promised Land, maybe 2000 years later but these three are the only ones, who entered into the Promised Land but the others did not. The crowds were caught with this world- what to eat, what to drink, Egypt was better- all connected with the issues of this body, this life. The religious group was connected with religious pride. "God does not speak to you only; God speaks to us also. We are all holy." Moses never said any of those things. He had no choice. God picked up him; he did not pick himself. So, you see this pattern and this pattern is very, very, very important because you need to realize what we are seeing now is a worldwide epidemic. We know it's come. We were

Preparing Spiritually - 2

prepared for this. If you are not prepared, then you have not been listening to the messages and you are outside the Kingdom and you did not know. We always knew these things are coming and we even had series on preparing for famine, preparing for this season. But it is not for this famine we were preparing you for. We were preparing you for another famine, which is the most important.

Amos 8:11

¹¹“Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord God, “That I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine of bread, Nor a thirst for water, But of hearing the words of the Lord.

This is the greatest danger that can happen to a man. God is using symbols; God always used symbols. He used bread and wine to denote His life. He used bread and water. He will use all these symbols of our physical, material world reality to talk about eternal things. So, a physical famine is a reflection of a spiritual famine. So, there is a physical famine that is happening. For next 10 days, everything is shut and everybody is panicking. About what? The necessity of stocking materials; physical things, which we need! But God is opening our eyes to say, “Have you stocked the Word of God? Did you stock it enough?” That’s what God is asking. “Did you make use of your time? Because the days are evil!” I told you to stock.

In every generation, even in Babylon, a remnant that survived and came; everybody survived in Babylon but only a remnant came to Jerusalem. That’s what is important. Other names we do not know. Jerusalem is a typical symbol of those who came out of captivity and came to God’s presence back. Their names we know. Why? It’s because even in famine, they had stored the Word of God. It didn’t matter who they were or how well settled they were in life or not. In Babylon, in his old age, Daniel is going through the scrolls of Jeremiah and he finds that seventy years are up; it’s time to go back. The heart is always towards Jerusalem. We have (plaque) here- *‘rise up and build’*. This man, Nehemiah was a cupbearer to the emperor, the most powerful man and he has reached the pinnacle of his career but his heart and his mind is in Jerusalem. When he gets the news, his heart broke. The question is- if we are people of the Kingdom, where are we and what were we doing all these 7 years, 8 years, 9 years, 10 years, 11 years or 12 years? God gave us a lot of time.

Turn with me to the book of Genesis. This is what disciples do and this is how disciples function in the Kingdom of God. This is our function in the Kingdom of God.

Genesis 41:47-49

⁴⁷Now in the seven plentiful years the ground brought forth abundantly.⁴⁸ So he gathered up all the food of the seven years which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities; he laid up in every city the food of the fields which surrounded them.⁴⁹ Joseph gathered very much grain, as the sand of the sea, until he stopped counting, for it was immeasurable.

So, during the time of plenty, what did Joseph do? He stored! If you look at our website, though we were (numerically speaking) very small Church compared to big Churches (everything is a comparison), but we stored so much Word and one of the reasons, our Church did not grow in numbers is because of the length of the Word we preached. I refuse to change that. Lot of people try, “if you make it 30 minutes or 40 minutes, we will come.” Now, they all want to sit at home and listen. I am not talking about our people, who are listening online. I am talking about others. Now they don’t know what to do. We preached and we preached and we preached and we studied and we preached and we made it available for everybody free. Somebody asked me some time back, “How is it that your website doesn’t have any link where you can send a donation!” I said, “We don’t want a donation.”

It’s there – audio, recordings; we went even beyond that to have the entire transcript. If you look at generally the transcripts of Churches, they only give few points and put it across. But we didn’t. We just put it, made it available so every servant of God, every child, if you want to read and listen. Lot of people said, “It was a real blessing for us to hear and to read simultaneously.” Lot of people! We don’t know even know how many people worked behind the scenes. We don’t even know over these years and they all made it possible. So, in the years of plenty, we have stored up enough grain. We did! It’s available to anybody for the next 12 days, even if we are not able to come live stream; all you have to do is to go to the website and keep listening, systemically keep listening and prepare your hearts and minds and allow God to speak.

The problem is—

Jeremiah 8:7

⁷“Even the stork in the heavens Knows her appointed times; And the turtledove, the swift, and the swallow Observe the time of their coming. But My people do not know the judgment of the Lord.

This is God talking about, do you know when Jeremiah wrote this? How many years ago? Almost 2,600 years ago! Now we know about migration of birds because of National Geographic and all that; God knew all of this. Those days, in Jeremiah's time and all, they don't even know most parts of the world but God already knows from one end of the corner, when the winter comes, they are migrating all the way to Africa, 10,000 miles or 5,000 miles and all. God says, they all know their times but He says, “*My people do not know.*” These are all symbols before us.

Proverbs 30:25

²⁵ The ants are a people not strong, Yet they prepare their food in the summer;

They are very weak. I mean, you can crush a whole lot of them with one stamp; they are very weak but they are very prepared for adversity. When summer comes, the ants cannot come out, especially in Andhra or Telangana heat, they are prepared. God says- are we prepared? God is just giving us a window of time and He says, “Look! Were you prepared?” Even in this material case, didn't I tell you weeks early? It's coming! They will shut down because they have no option. Stock up! Enough! You don't have to hoard but just be sensible physically. But we are not talking about physical things right here. The thing is: have you stocked up spiritually to withstand a season like this? Because after pestilence comes famine and after famine, if things get bad, can come wars and riots, martial law in many nations. It could come. We don't know. The question is- how are we spiritually prepared?

Jeremiah 12:5

⁵“If you have run with the footmen, and they have wearied you...

You get tired running with footmen. These are the soldiers who walk.

...Then how can you contend with horses? And if in the land of peace, In which you trusted, they wearied you, Then how will you do in the floodplain of the Jordan?

He says, “When times were good and you were tired, now pestilence and famine has come, how are you going to survive?” That's the question God is asking because we win battles outside by the measure of our spiritual strength. These are not temporary battles; these are eternal battles. This is life and death; not temporary death or life but eternal life and eternal death. That's what God is talking about. Did you get tired? Why are our people excited when we preach for 3 hours in the morning and another hour in the evening? It's because they were used to it. We were prepared always. We are ready. We are used to it. But what if you were not used to it? What if you were not spiritually prepared for a time and a season like this? The fear of death will overwhelm you. How will you contend? That's the question.

Genesis 41:49 (NIV)

Joseph stored up huge quantities of grain...

He had stored up so much! I, always, as a servant of God, who reads the Bible, understand how dispensations have worked in every system and I have always found every system is actually hostile to the true believing Church. I always have to try to prepare God's people for the worst case scenario. Do you know what the worst case scenario is? The worst case scenario is like this – complete lockdown without warning! Meaning, suddenly, nobody can go out. They haven't said that. One person of family can go out but imagine sudden lockdown, nobody can go out; nobody can come in and you have no food. That's a worst case scenario! Worst case scenario is where you are isolated, let us say, imprisoned. Worst case scenario in prison, in the isolation chamber of a prison. Do you have enough of the Word stored in your spirit, which you can bring out? The Word is hidden in your heart. Even if you do not know whole Scripture by heart, you know the principles because the messages-principles of God's Kingdom, His Word, His life- are all imprinted in your soul and you know this is how I need to everything. That's what the Bible is talking about. Story! If you look at that passage over there, in *Genesis 41:49* and then, verse 53, suddenly, it says,

Genesis 41:53-54

⁵³ Then the seven years of plenty which were in the land of Egypt ended, ⁵⁴ and the seven years of famine began to come, as Joseph had said. The famine was in all lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.

You need to realize, the years of plenty were also in 'all' the lands, but only Egypt prepared. Egypt prepared because Joseph was in-charge. It was not that the years of plenty was only in Egypt. The Word of God was freely available to the whole world but when the famine came, suddenly others realized, "Oh! We have to go online and our people don't know the Word because we never preached the Word. We gave them the soft, nice, cushy, comfortable messages and now the times are so drastic, what do we tell them?" They are not prepared. There was famine in all the lands but in the land of Egypt, there was bread. Anybody who used what was available in these 12 years, whether they are in the Church or not in the Church, wherever they are, you know they are all prepared. They are all prepared if they have made use of the material that was happening and did their own studies further. Everyone, whichever apartment you are living in, whichever part of the world, you are actually prepared to feed the others because you were never starved; you were ready. You cannot blame that you were not fed.

Genesis 41:56 (NIV)

⁵⁶ When the famine had spread over the whole country, Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians,

Joseph started feeding and that's what we are called to do. There is famine; we will feed you. But let me tell you something in between. We read from chapter 41, from that narrative – 7 years of plenty and 7 years of famine, in between, there are interruptions of God. Interesting ! Like *Genesis 37* will begin with the history of Joseph, go all the way till chapter 50 and in between there is a chapter talking about Judah and Tamar. Interjection over there; meaning, don't get carried away by the history of Joseph because Jesus will come from Judah and Tamar. Don't forget. Joseph is a bigger picture over there but the core of it is – it's of Judah and Tamar, Jesus will come, not out of Joseph. So, suddenly, there is a check. But here, if you look at, there are interesting verses in between, from *verses 50 to 52*. In *verse 49*, we saw that he stored up so much. Then, in between, there is a change of narrative. What does it say?

Genesis 41:50-52

⁵⁰ And to Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, whom Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On, bore to him.

So, he had married there and he had two sons.

⁵¹ Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: "For God has made me forget all my toil and all my father's house." ⁵² And the name of the second he called Ephraim: "For God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction."

Listen to me carefully now, whether you are live here or live online. Listen to me very carefully. Why does God, in the midst of a narrative about plenty and famine, put these 3 verses? Because in the time of plenty, one man had discernment from God what to do. And during the time of famine, that one man is who God uses to feed them. Joseph represents the believing Church but how did he become like that? You learn how he became that by the naming of his sons. You don't become that in one day. God has to put you through certain situations and frame you through those situations before you can be that man who has the discernment of times and will store and feed when the seasons come. So, he calls his first son, what does he call his first son? Manasseh. What does it mean? "I have forgotten all my toil and my father's house." This is what a disciple is. "If any man loves his father, mother, wife or children or anybody more than Me; then, you cannot be My disciple." And when he gets his first son, by his naming, he is telling, "I was a disciple. I have put my God and His purpose ahead of everything else." In the *Book of Hebrews* and the *Book of Galatians* all will say, "Do not grow weary in doing good." You see no rewards at all. You may have not seen any rewards for worshipping for twelve years; you may have not seen any reward for praying for twelve years or preaching for twelve years or doing good to others for twelve years. No rewards! Don't grow weary. God says, "If you don't grow weary, at the appointed time, you will receive your reward." You see, in those thirteen years of imprisonment and slavery, Joseph never grew weary of doing good. And when the day comes, he has forgotten. Because now, he is in charge. God says, "You know what? all the days you spent at the feet of the Lord studying the Word of God, all the days you spent praying and interceding for others; all the days you spent helping others, a Day is coming when the trumpet will be blown and you will realize 'my toil was not in vain'." Everything we do is by faith. We do it by faith. People will accuse

you or slander. It should not stop you. That's the test of your character because if it stops you, then you were never prepared. Because these circumstances are designed for, what? To bring out what is within you and that's what God about told Israel. "I led you into the wilderness, humbled you and caused you to hunger to show what was within you." Everybody jumped and danced when there was victory but when the wilderness journey came and they started running out of food and water, what was inside came out. It had nothing to do with the circumstances; it just revealed what was inside. Like you know our old illustration? Remember the illustration of the glass of water; I asked somebody to come and push me and the water spilled on me? And I asked you, "Why did the water spill on me?" And the answer everybody said was, "Because somebody pushed you." But that was not the reason. The reason why the water fell on me was because there was water in the glass. If it had been coffee, then it would have been coffee. If it would had been tea, then it would had been tea. So, when God uses the circumstances to push us, then what is inside comes out.

So, in his father's house, in Potiphar's house and in prison, you see Joseph was consistent. What was inside came out – integrity, righteousness and the desire always to help somebody else, it was consistent. So, now, he is seated on the throne as prince of Pharaoh or the right hand of God, he is still the same. He is still a good steward. He was a good steward of his father's name in his father's house, was a good steward in Potiphar's house; he was a good steward as an assistant. If you look at it, in his life, he was always like the right hand of his father, the right hand of Potiphar, the right hand of the warden and the right hand of the father. So, he represents Jesus, who sits at the right hand of God and if the Church is seated in Him then we become the right hand of God. So, you need to realize all these things that are happening is a revelation of who we are. So, when he has Manasseh, he names his son and says, "*I have forgotten my father's house and I have forgotten my toil because good times have come.*" We need to also realize this – are we attached to flesh and blood or are we attached to the Spirit? Do we struggle consistently to do what is right and what is good, though we may see no rewards in this lifetime? It is not like the prosperity preachers who would say, "Name it, claim it and get it." Bible has both records, in *Hebrews 11*, the second half of the record.

Hebrews 11:35-38

³⁵ Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶ Still others had trial of mocking and scourging, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented— ³⁸ of whom the world was not worthy.

It is incredible, the view point. The view point on earth is – these people are not worthy. But God says, "The world is not worthy of them." How many thousands of God's children are now still living in Middle East and in so many places like Iran another nations, persecuted and living like nomads in Afghanistan and in caves and in Korea, North Korea and China? Do we know them? The government names them by saying, "You are not worthy in China if you are a Christian," who is a believer, everywhere. "You are not worthy." But God says, "You got it wrong; you are not worthy for them." But one day, when the trumpet blows, they will forget their toil. We read that in the morning and we read it yesterday as well. That day, God will come and make His dwelling place with us and He Himself will wipe away every tear, every grief, every sorrow and He says, "I am your God and you are My children."

In the *Book of Hebrews 1* talks about that people God says. He was not ashamed to be called their God. You know what? God is very proud to be called our God if we are a part of Ephraim. These are the fundamental lessons we have to learn when these situations happen outside, when lockdown happens, when a famine comes, when pestilence comes, what is inside me will be revealed. What do I look at these situations? How do I look at this situation? What am I seeing? How do I look at it? What is inside me comes out. Am I panicking or am I rejoicing and grieving? See, the Son of Man, Jesus Christ was a strange Person. He was a Man of sorrows and yet, He was anointed with joy more than His companions. We are dual creatures – when we look into the world, we have sorrow; but when we look up, we have joy. Usually, it's the other way. An average Christian, when they look out, they have joy; and when they look up, they have sorrow. When you look into flesh and blood, extended family, all and I look that they have reached, career-wise, everybody are like the cats whiskers. But when I look at them, there is only sorrow. The more they prosper, the more hardened their hearts are becoming; the more closed their ears are becoming. You don't look at their success with carnal eyes; you have to look at it with spiritual eyes and say, "Lord, it is becoming more and more difficult." There is sorrow when you look into the world but when you look up, there is joy. Jesus was that kind of a Man, a Man of sorrows; yet, anointed with joy. And that's what Joseph is, he labored and we too labor.

Preparing Spiritually - 2

Okay, modern technology and all is there, feels good but it's just a feeling but at the end of the day, after all this, when you go to Church and preach you see only so much people. We have 14,000 people subscribers on Podcast. It's a number but we still live in the physical world, right? But thank God, these numbers are there. So, we also know but it's not that we are not effective. God has taking the Word even without seeing and people are hearing.

So, he has named his first child 'Manasseh' and what does it mean? I have forgotten my father's house and I have my toil. So it's a hallmark of a disciple. He loves his family and all but he is attached to his God. He will not love anybody more than his God.

And two – he will keep on laboring, toiling and what is inside is coming out and it is consistent. One thing I tell my wife, in spite of all this happening in your life, don't stop being who you are. Don't change. You are a kind, compassionate, giving person from the day I have seen you. Don't let all these stuff that been done to you, spoken about you stop you from what you are. Let not that river stop flowing. Because that's what the devil does. He wants to stop that river of life flowing. Everybody from us whom the Holy Spirit is Jesus said, "It will be a river of life flowing out and it flows out in different way." For me, it is preaching and when all these things happen, we noticed the preaching never changes. So, each one of you, like Peter's, is worship. It should not only go one more notch higher. Somebody might be serving, it should go one more notch higher, it should only grow because there is no lack from the altar where it flows. It flows and keeps flowing. And when these things happen, it is a sign to us from within. We need this sign.

And the second thing it says, "He named his second son as Ephraim." Why? "Because God has made me fruitful," where? In the land of suffering. And where did God make Joseph fruitful? Not in Canaan. He had no suffering there. He made him fruitful in the land of affliction where he was imprisoned for fifteen years and what exactly Jesus said, "If you are attached to the wine, I will prune you," and pruning is very painful and He will prune us. Only those who get attached to the wine gets pruned. "Why do I prune you?" So that you shall be more fruitful and that's the purpose of pruning. Get these two things that are put over there because these are all hallmarks of disciples because everybody wants to know – when is the Kingdom coming? And Jesus says, "The Kingdom of God does not come with observation. Either you will know it or not know it but it does not come with observation." Then, He turned to the disciples, He didn't give an answer to the Pharisees. You will always see He will teach the disciples and let's go back *Luke*.

Luke 17:22

²² Then He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it.

He immediately makes a distinction which only the disciples will understand. The Pharisees ask about the Kingdom. What do the Pharisees ask? About the Kingdom and Jesus answers the disciples about the King, not the Kingdom. He does not answer about the Kingdom; He answers about the King. He says, "The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man." He is only telling to the disciples. Now, let's say Peter is the disciple (Peter) and I am Jesus Christ. So, Peter and I had walked for three and a half years, he had seen everything and he had stopped me also few times. He has seen it all and also, walked with me and lived with me, fellowshiped with me, ate with me, prayed with me and everything; he has seen. So, he knows what it is like, one of the days of the Son of Man. He knows what it is like because he has been with me and then, He says, "You will long for that." Meaning, a disciple is separated from the rest of the crowd by the longing of their heart and the longing of their heart is for the Son of Man. That's what a disciple is. We have different longings. It's not that all the longing are bad. Honestly, I long to go back home because I have two ladies sitting at home, my mother and my wife; two ladies in a house. This is why Jesus in the narrative, at the end, says, "Remember Lot's wife." Here is God pulling them and here is she looking back. So, where was her longing?

Want to talk about the last days? Jesus said, "Last days do not come with observation." The key to the last days for the disciples is a longing in your heart. Meaning – there are so many layers in it. He says, "Why should I reveal Myself to people who do not long for Me?" There is a Kingdom of God within and there is a Kingdom of God outside. It's like mercury. You know mercury? You know, when we were children, we loved these mercury balls. We put over there and played and all of them merged to become a big mercury ball. We are always juggling it around to see how they all become one. It's literally like that. Ten thousand believers within the Kingdom of God and one day, they will all become one mass because inside, they all were longing for that to come. They are the ones to exalt and rejoice. The kingdoms of this world have become the

Preparing Spiritually - 2

kingdoms of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ because the longing within and the longing outside has become one. The others are worried, the stock market has gone down; now twelve days of shut down. How will I farm and plant? How will I sow and reap, giving in marriage and all those things? A lot of people and Christians are worried. "My daughter's marriage as on 29th and now, it is lockdown and I have to postpone." News in Kerala says that one wedding has already been postponed three times because of this Corona Virus and Jesus said, "That would be the concern of the minds – giving in marriage, what to eat and what to drink." Noah and Lot's time, eating and drinking is anything wrong? No! Marrying and giving in marriage? No! Building and planting? No, nothing wrong. The question is: even when you are doing this, what is your longing? Remember in the book of some minor prophets actually says, "When the Day of the Lord is coming, blow the trumpet, let the bride come from her bridal chamber and go to fasting." Those are stunning verses. She is in the bridal chamber, getting ready for her wedding and she hears the news, "The Lord of Israel is coming," and she is going into fasting and preparing for this and not for her wedding. Got it? It is there in the *Book of Joel*. Let her come out. See, the picture is there in the Bible from Rebekah onwards.

Joel 2:16

¹⁶ Gather the people, Sanctify the congregation, Assemble the elders, Gather the children and nursing babes; Let the bridegroom go out from his chamber, And the bride from her dressing room.

Kya baath hai (What can I say, excellent). The pictures that I got, like they were saying the children were more excited to listen to the Word with their notebooks watching the live streaming on the computer, everywhere. You know, our children, all we put into their hearts and minds did not go waste like a time like this. All the children everywhere in their homes are sitting in front of the laptops, with their note books, listening to the message and taking their own notes. Every one of them. And I love our children because you know, we have gone so much about the little concept of training our children in the ways of God and educating them too. Like, Siri just went and we all had to go to Shishu Vihar and little Sarah was with me. I was studying and this child who doesn't disturb at all. So, I gave her something and she finished reading and then, she took a paper and said, "Grandpa, I want to color something." I said, "Okay," and I had no pencils. So, I gave her a pen. It's still over there. So, she drew a nice picture and drew lots of hearts and wrote, "Grandpa, I love you very much but I love Jesus more." Honestly, kya baath hai! (Excellent). These are the babies that are coming out. Gather the children and the nursing babies, the bridegroom and the bride comes out. That's what God is talking about, longing. Our hero and there is no hero like him in *Philippians*.

Philippians 1:21-24

²¹ For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain...

Can we put this in our times? For me to live is Christ and pestilence is gain or Corona Virus is gain. This is a man who would say that, "Corona Virus is gain." In Corona Virus case, you breathe a little, the government takes you to the ICU in an ambulance, gives a ward and everything but that poor man's head was cut off and he told, "It was gain," and he called it, "Departure." Imagine, you are taken over there and your head put over there and as the sword goes up he is thinking, "I'm going home, few more seconds." He, probably, in his heart, in his spirit, was waiting for it to fall so that he can he could go to the other side. He can't go on his own. God has to make a way for him to go and he saw death that way. Death is gain and in this plague, that is taking place and fear has crippled the world, how many believers are looking up? I mean what are they afraid of because death is gain otherwise death is loss.

²² But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell.

I can live on God gives and I can keep working for Him and for you.

²³ For I am hard-pressed between the two...

He did not marry; he had no family. So, the Church was his family. He says, I'm caught between the two, Church and Christ.

...having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.

He says, "I want to go with Christ."

²⁴*Nevertheless, to remain in flesh is needful for you.*

Can every man think like that? If I live, it's good for my family but if you ask me, I want to go with my Christ. Every wife thinks that way? If you ask me, "If I stay, it's good for you, Raj. I will cook for you. But if you ask me, I would like to go with you." Sometimes, spouses get offended when they hear that but that's the truth. The longing and that's what Jesus said, "You will long for Me." The question is: did we have one of those days with God so that we could long for that Day? One day just spend time with God in worship, in prayer, meditation and you know God was there? The more you experience that in the Spirit, the more you long it to become a physical reality and that's what rapture is. Rapture is for a prepared people, not for all people. There is a longing in the Spirit and we experience it. That's why the Bible talks about all these things saying, "Taste and see that the Lord is good." People will ask, "How can we taste the Lord?" We sound like Nicodemus, "How can I be born again?" "Oh taste and see, Your word is sweeter than the honey in the rock." These are all connected with longing. Jesus is giving us clues over there in *1 Corinthians 16*, after writing a tough letter to the Corinthian Church and this is what Paul says.

1 Corinthians 16:22

²²*If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come!*

So, you have to read and understand the context. He says, "If anyone does not love the Lord in this manner," that his cry every day is, "Lord, Come, Maranatha! Come, Lord", let him be accursed. What is that curse? Let him be left behind. Why should He even take those people? Let them go through tribulation. That's the reading of it. "If they are not loving You that way and after this entire thing You did for mankind from the beginning till today and the mercy..." Thank God, I was born as a man and not an angel but if I had to be an angel and I, accidentally, happened to be one among the one third of the angels who fell away, there would have been no redemption for me. You need to realize – two thirds are there but one third of them fell away. They may be in billions and there is no redemption for them because they saw Him and fell. So, there is no redemption. So, we should say, "Thank God I am a man. There is redemption for me and You died for me not for any angel; You died for me." When you look at all that He has done for me and what He is planning for me, it is not that He would say, "You got saved and be a chaprasi (keeper), sweepers in Heaven." No, He says, "My sons and daughters, you inherit all, you will reign with Christ Jesus and be overcomers." When you hear all these things, if you don't long for His Coming, then let him be cursed.

So, let me ask you this question: how do you see the pandemic – Corona Virus, as a curse; or maybe this is the doorway that I would go through. And maybe if I don't go through the Corona Virus, it's maybe because I need to be more fruitful and I'm fine with either. If I go through, I'm going to You and I don't go through then I need to labor more. So, I don't see the Corona Virus as a curse but I see it as a doorway. One way, either the doorway, I become more fruitful or a doorway – I will go to You. Because this is the cry of my heart, "I long for You, Lord. Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus." That's what God is talking about and that's what the picture is given there – the ideal picture between Abraham the father, Eliezer – the type of Holy Spirit and Isaac representing Jesus and Rebekah. And the family, the mother, the brother and everybody says, "Let the girl stay for ten days. Let us eat and drink." Ten signifies His government; the time we spend on this earth are those ten days. Ten Commandments, we are judged of our lives on this earth by the Spirit of Ten Commandments. Ten denotes the number of days of a man's life on earth. After that, "Let her be with us for ten days," and Eliezer says, "No, I need to go." They said, "Okay, we are asking you to stay and you are saying you need to go. Let's ask the girl." And they called the girl and asked her, "What do you say?" She said, "I'll go." The question you need to ask Rebekah, "Have you seen Isaac?" "No!" "Do you know Isaac?" "No!" "Then, what do you know?" "Only what I have heard." Have you seen Jesus? No. Have you heard about Jesus? Yes. Will you go? Rebekah said, "I will go," and they get on to the camels and leave. Like I said last time, they went on the camels and travelled and it must have been the most tiring journey. I mean, if you have ever gone to Dholari dhani? Ever got on a camel? Oh boy, I'm telling you; even an elephant is more comfortable. There is no more uncomfortable mode of transport on earth than a camel. From Haran to Canaan, this girl travelled and I like the portion over there which says it's interesting and we have looked at it last time. We will look at it and understand.

Genesis 24:64-65

⁶⁴*Then Rebekah lifted her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she dismounted from her camel;* ⁶⁵*for she had said to the servant, "Who is this man walking in the field to meet us?" The servant said, "It is my master." So she took a veil and covered herself.*

Isaac was walking towards her and she lifted up her eyes and she got down and then, she asked the question, “Who is that man?” The question is that’s not what we will do. We will ask the question first, “Who is that man?” And then, get down. How did she know this was the man whom she had never seen? How did he know that this is the girl, whom he had never seen? There’s something that is happening over there. Isaac is moving towards Rebekah. She’s sitting on the camel. Give me a chair. You’ll have to lift your camera. I’m Rebekah and that’s Isaac. She’s on the camel, at a height. Where is Isaac? At the ground level. Where is she? On the camel. Yet what does scripture say? She lifted her veil. You don’t lift, you look down. Even if you’re looking down, still in your spirit you are looking up if it is Jesus. How can you lift up your eyes from the back of a camel when the man is down and see him? So, it’s more that Rebekah and Isaac. She lifted up her eyes and she saw him. She got down from her camel. Then she asks Eliezer, “Who is he?” We will also lift up our eyes and the Holy Spirit will say, “That’s your master.” And everybody will dismount and get down from wherever you are perched upon. It’s not a physical thing. It’s a spiritual thing. You will come down. You will humble yourself. Every knee shall bow. The first knee that shall bow is the bride’s knee. She will have the honor to bow first. Everybody will bow, but she’ll have the honor to bow first. That is longing. Unless you see discipleship this way, you and I will never know whether we are disciples or not. Longing is important. That is how you read this man called David, an old covenant man. We read one day is your courts is like a thousand days and we read, I was glad, very glad, this is the king speaking. Why? His longing is always for God. Nothing changed him. You need to realize this is about David. What never changed David is that when he was an unknown little shepherd boy in the wilderness taking care of his father’s sheep, his longing was for God. When he was recognized and brought to the king’s palace and he was recognized that he was a musician, his longing was still for God. Then he becomes a champion for Israel and he’s sent out to fight, his longing was still for God. When he was leading his band of 600 men and he had become a leader on his own standing, his longing was still for God. When he was anointed as king in Hebron over a few tribes, his longing was still for God. Seven years later when he’s anointed king over all Israel, his longing was still God. Why? Let’s bring the ark and he’s dancing and people are looking down. His wife is looking down with contempt and he’s dancing like an ordinary man. He takes off his royal robe and that’s why she’s upset. Because he says, “I can’t wear that robe, because there is only one king in Israel that is God.” If I wear the robe, then there are two kings. There cannot be two kings. There can only be one king. If the ark is out there in public, then that’s the king. God’s presence is there. It’s not me. And I’m just as ordinary as all the others. The longing was always about God. You’ll always see that his longing was always for God. His son takes over the throne. He’s running out of the city with his faithful ones, and they bring the ark. Anybody will say, “Get the ark. Bring the ark.” Because the ark becomes the point around which people will rally. It’s the symbol of the presence of God. So, if the ark is with David, people will say, “God is with David.” If the ark is with Absalom, people will say, “God is with Absalom.” He said, “Let the ark go back to Jerusalem. That’s its rightful place. It doesn’t come with me. If God wants me, He will take me there. The ark will not come with me. I will go to the ark if it’s God’s will.” Who will say that? That’s not a good military tactic. He said, “Let it go back to Jerusalem.” That man! Simple shepherd boy, had a longing for God.

This is what separates. We have to ask ourselves this question: do we have that longing over everything else? Our work, our life, our ministry, everything may be good, because the Church in Ephesus, the first Church Jesus came and inspected and then judged, everything was good. He had nothing bad to tell about them except one thing – you have no longing for Me. You desire to do My works, but you don’t desire Me. Do you know the height from which you’ve fallen? You’ve forgotten your first love. Go back and do the things which you did first. Otherwise I’ll come and take away the lampstand. All those dear brethren who are watching online, you need to realize we are a captive audience by the government, so we have no compulsion to stop. We don’t have to stop. So, we will preach. If you have something urgent to do, you can do and come back. It’s being recorded. I don’t see any pressure to stop. Let’s go back to,

Luke 17:23

²³ And they will say to you...

And He says, “You will not see it.” Meaning, I will not give you the physical evidence you are longing for. I’m not going to give you the evidence. I have called you to walk by faith and not feelings. Didn’t He say that in *verse 22*? You will not see it.

...‘Look here!’ or ‘Look there!’ Do not go after them or follow them.

We want those tangible evidences. We may not have done anything the whole week, but when we come to Church and Peter is leading worship, we feel because of the music and everything our hair standing up. And we say, “O Lord! I experienced You today.” God says, “You didn’t. You didn’t experience Me today. If you’ve experienced Me the six days before, then maybe,

you would. But I didn't say that I will give you physical evidence. You are called to walk by faith." You may see nothing. You may feel nothing, but once you have understood the truth of who God is; God is truth, His Son is truth, the Spirit is truth, the word is truth and the Church is truth; can you stand no it alone? This is who God is. I don't need any more things in my feelings. To acknowledge Him, to serve Him, to love Him, I don't need anything. This is enough. Then for those people who long for God, verse 23.

Luke 17:23

²³ And they will say to you, Look here!' or 'Look there!' Do not go after them or follow them.

He says, "When you have this longing and the longing becomes very emotional, the chance of getting deceived is very much. You can get deceived, because the enemy sees your longing and the longing is right." The enemy sees your longing. Looking at the longing, the enemy will bring messages by saying that He's here, He's there. That is why feelings are good. Feelings should be a good servant and not a good master. That's the problem. When you're led by your feelings, you don't know where you'll be led. One of the books that's taking over the Christian world is the book of Enoch. Nobody will read the book of Enoch unless you're longing for the Lord's coming, because is the one who prophesied Jesus' second coming. So there's a book called the book of Enoch. Do the Jews accept the book of Enoch? No. Do the Church leaders accept the book of Enoch? No. But everybody is reading the book of Enoch, even if they don't study the book of Revelation, they study the book of Enoch. But if you tell them anything they'll get offended, not in my Church, but in another group because I preached about this in that language, one guy who was involved was so upset, he left the group. He was upset over the book of Enoch. The question I ask is this: it took Moses forty days and forty nights in the presence, absolutely in the presence of God, saturated by the presence of God to receive the first five books. The first five books of the Bible were written by Moses and to get it, it took him forty days of fasting up in the mountain in the presence of the glory of God and He got it. It's not like in the other books where the angel came and told and all that. Please understand the way the first five books, which is called the law, came by Moses. So he got Genesis. He got Exodus and Leviticus, and Numbers and Deuteronomy. And in Genesis chapter 5, you got Enoch coming. How come God didn't give Moses the book of Enoch? How come He didn't give? And how come someone else wrote the book of Enoch and people are running after it, because you have a longing and your longing is not solidly based on faith and people will deceive you. They'll say, "He's here. He's there." Everybody is running for prophecy conferences. And do you know these prophecy conferences you need to go and some of the places you have to register for three thousand or five thousand rupees. They will not go to Church services which are free, but will go for prophecy conferences paying through their nose. Why? Because you've been deceived. You've been deceived. That's what Jesus said: when you look at all these signs, be very careful. Be very careful.

Luke 17:24

²⁴ For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day.

He says, "When He comes, every eye will see. Every eye will see." I heard about a train, actual event that took place in this century, a train that was going from Scotland to England and a set of senior Bible college teachers and pastors were sitting and discussing eschatology, about the second coming of Jesus, and even the clerks and all were sitting and the train conductor was coming and checking tickets. So, one of them said and asked him, "Do you believe in Christ?" and he said, "Yes." "What is your view on eschatology, the Second Coming of Jesus Christ?" He said, "Every eye will see and the Lamb will be lifted up." We don't need to know so many things. Certain things are very clear. Jesus said, "The days of the coming of the Son of Man will be like the days of Noah and the days of Lot. There will be eating and drinking and getting married and giving in marriage, planting and building, buying and selling, until the day Noah entered and until Lot was taken out and then," meaning; he won't come at a time like this. He will come at a time when it's absolutely normal. He won't come at a time like this. Now people are panicking. Everybody is saying who is coming? Who is coming? He says, "I won't come like that. I will come when everything is normal." So, the only ones who were longing and the Kingdom was within them, they will know. And they will be prepared, because He will come totally unawares, at a time you least expect. It's like when the teachers come in and says, "Put all your books away. Take your notebooks. It's a surprise test." Ninety nine percent of the Church will be like, "Ah Sir, we didn't prepare!" one fellow will be like, "I'm ready." That is the guy who studied daily. The surprise test is not a surprise for him. It's not a problem at all, because he daily did his devotions. He was always with the Lord. He always kept short accounts with God. He repented, put things right, applied, confessed, walked with God and his soul was clear. He tried his best to walk blameless before God. He wasn't perfect, but he was blameless. He knew the scripture. He walked in it. And

Preparing Spiritually - 2

therefore, it didn't actually matter to him which day the Lord came. And that's what the Bible is talking about—deception, deception, deception. Be very careful! Jesus warns in *Matthew 24*, *Luke 21* and all, the first thing He warns is, don't get deceived. Because deception, not pestilence or famine, it's not that. Deception is the biggest weapon of the enemy. It's not even death. Fear of death is deception. And he uses the deception of the fear of death to trap people. So, what happens? during this time there will be a lot of panic and rush. "Lord, forgive me. Lord, Lord, forgive me!" When pestilence is over and shutdown is over and they are also over. They go back to their old life. He deceives you. Do you know where deception started? *Genesis 3:1* deception begins. Two chapters, creation. Third chapter deception begins. You know where it ends? It ends in *Revelation 20:7-8*. That is after Satan has been imprisoned for a thousand years, Jesus has ruled earth for a thousand years and this is what the Bible says,

Revelation 20:7-8

⁷ Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸ and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea.

Satan will be released and will go out to deceive. Think this as the entire Bible. Two chapters in the beginning: *Genesis 1* and *2*. Two chapters at the end: *Revelation 20* and *21*. The whole in between is the devil working through deception. *1* and *2* you don't see him. *20* and *21* you don't see him. The rest, he's actively involved in deceiving people from *Genesis 3* to *Revelation 20*. And God says, "Be careful My children who long for Me. He will try to deceive you too." Emotions are good servants, but bad masters. You will long. It's good to long. But do not be deceived. The only way you don't get deceived is, you know what is written. You have the confirmation inside – the Spirit and the Truth, the letter and the Spirit. The letter of the law kills, the Spirit gives life. Allow the word and the spirit of God to operate. The key is the Spirit of God, it's not the Word of God. All those who have ears, let them hear. So, it's the Holy Spirit who speaks. Faith comes from hearing and hearing from the Word of God. Because if Jesus had the word and the Pharisees had the Word of God, Jesus had the word and the Spirit. And all His was connected with keeping in step with the Holy Spirit. Don't upset Him. Don't deceive Him. Don't oppress Him. Everything is about the Holy Spirit. That's what the Bible is talking about. So be good students of the Word of God. Every teacher should be a good student. And as we come to a close, maybe I should close right, unless somebody is complaining online, we go to *Matthew 13* aside, but connected to this.

Matthew 13:23

²³ But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

So, He's always giving parables and the parables are always about the Kingdom of God, not about the world.

Matthew 13:24-30

²⁴ Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵ but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. ²⁶ But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. ²⁷ So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' ²⁸ He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' ²⁹ But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."

So, He gives another illustration. The illustration is about a field. And let's go back to where we began.

Now, He says, "The seed is the Word of God." So, He's using a parable, a day-to-day common life illustration, which they understood, which we also understand, farming illustration and He says, "The Kingdom of God is like a man who sowed good seed in the field." So, the word was preached and a good seed was sowed. We have to protect that seed. We have to be alert and awake to keep that seed protected. But Bible says, "While men slept," slept meaning, they did not sleep. They allowed their spirits to go to sleep and they're watching YouTube. I don't the names of Telugu stars. What are their names? Chiranjeevi and Mahesh Babu. Suddenly, Mahesh Babu, haa! So, what happens? The enemy is sowing tares. You know in farming it has

to be protected, especially when they're planted and they're at their tender stage, you have to protect. Two times you have to protect usually. One: at the beginning and, two: when it's full grown, when the fruit is out and the birds come for the fruit. But they didn't and when they were sleeping the enemy came and sowed tares. The problem with the tares is, the wheat and the tares look alike. Absolutely alike, they sit in the same pew. They may be sleeping in the same double bed. So, the angels came and asked. Basically, that's the angel. The tares also appeared. So, the servants of the owner came and said to him, who are these servants? These are the angels. It's not pastors. Pastors don't know who is who, which is wheat and which is tare. Only angels know. Lord, how did it come?

Matthew 13:27

27 So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' 28 He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' (So the angels said, "Should we go and separate them?") ***The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?'***

God said, "No. Let them grow together." How easy ministry would be if God sent angels to separate the wheat and tares right? You get out, you get out. Suddenly, you have a nice pure blameless Church. Maybe five people, but you have no trouble at all. Absolutely holy and worshipping group. God said, "No. Don't do that. Let them grow together." Why? Because their lives are intertwined together. The wheat and the tares are in the same field and if you look underground, their roots are intertwined. He says, "If you pull them out, you will create a lot of damage." Let them grow. And then, Scripture says, "Until harvest." So, you need to realize, the separation is also not done by Pastors; it is done by angels at the end of the age. Until harvest, let them grow. How could do know the difference? At harvest time, you will know them by their fruit. And you know what the *Book of Revelation* says? It's something that the *Book of Revelation* says in,

Revelation 22:11

11 He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still."

He says, "There is something that is happening which is not visible to us." We always look at the world and say, "Oh my God, what is happening? The world is getting more wicked and wicked." God says, "You don't worry. The Church is getting better and better. Another side you don't see, I see." There's a Church that is hidden which nobody sees. It's getting more just, more righteous and more holy. Church is going this way and the world is going is going this way. At the harvest time, I'll show it. I'll separate it. Don't worry about the world. Where sin abounds, grace abounds. And we misinterpret it. Why is grace given? Grace is given so that we can reign in righteousness. So, there are a set of people who are using the most wicked times grace to grow and grow in righteousness. Here is a set of people who are getting more and more unrighteous and unjust. So, in the midst of a gentile dark nation, Joseph shone like a star. In the midst of Babylonian iniquity, Daniel and his three friends, shone like stars. If God hadn't seen them, we wouldn't have seen them and known them. But God saw them. We have these records of people, because God saw them. It's not because man saw them. So, God says that these two are growing side by side. They're growing and at the end of the age what will happen? They will be separated. Two will be in a bed, one will be taken and nobody knew. Nobody knew. Is it possible? Of course! How many times does Peter call Lot righteous? This righteous man in that ungodly generation, in his righteous soul was tormented by the unrighteous deeds, you mean to say that his wife did not see the righteous torment of her husband? If anybody could have seen, it would have been Mrs. Lot. She didn't see and she was untouched by it all. Yet, at harvest time, they were separated and they were separated at the gate. Like I said in the morning, they probably had four daughters, but they had no intimacy. She really never knew or appreciated what her husband was. So, God separated them.

Don't take these things lightly, because we as God's people look at life, look at incidents with completely different eyes. And that's what God is talking about. We can look at the story of Noah negatively or positively. But Noah found grace in God's sight. The world was covered in darkness, yet Noah found grace. In the dark sky one light was blinking. The whole story after that is about that one guy. This is a righteous man who's preaching a righteous message for hundred and twenty years, day in and day out he's preaching and living it out, in the front of his family. Forget the people. In front of his family, they see this man. They see his words. They see his life. They see his work. And when they come through the judgement seven people in the boat owe their entire life to the righteousness of this one man. And when that man falls once, one son will only know that and not the other. He forgot 120 years of his father's righteousness and magnified one failing of his father and God said, "Cursed is he." He got deceived, because scripture says, "Love covers a multitude of sin." And here there was not a multitude,

there was only one. This father had a multitude of righteousness and one little failing. He's drunk and lay uncovered. What did Ham do? That's why we have to guard our hearts. All these things are written as examples to us upon whom the end of ages has come.

So, tonight as I close, please remember this, there's only one calling in the Bible – that's the calling to be a disciple. There's no other calling. Be a disciple or perish. There's no other calling. You are not called to be a religious scholar, you're not called to be a follower, you're called to be a disciple. There's no other calling in the Bible. You are either a disciple and you'll go to the other side or you will perish. And all these things that are happening around us will show us as discipleship being bound into my bones, into my very soul, have I been reframed? Am I being confirmed to the pattern of the world when I see what is happening or am I being conformed to the image of my Saviour? There are two instances of conforming in the Bible: whomever He has predestined, He's conforming. Second: do not be conformed to the pattern of the world, but be transformed. So, Jesus knows, it's time to go to Jerusalem to die. What does scripture say? They sang a few songs and He went. Kya baat hai! (What a testimony!) Where are you going? To die. How are you going to die? Beaten, broken beyond recognition, and then crucified. How are you going? Singing. Why? To do My will. In the volume of the book it is written, "To do Thy will, have I come." It gives me incredible joy to do His will even if it means to die on the cross. Do you see how He looked at calamity? That shows who is inside, who is winning inside and who is triumphing inside. And we look at it and we say, "Lord, I'm fine. If I survive I'll be fruitful because this would have taught me even more lessons. If I don't survive, I know where I'm going." Why am I saying this? Because the world has never seen anything like this, never ever seen anything like this. I have never seen anything like this. Nations, cities, a country like India panicking, and being shut down. Can you imagine? After the British started the railways, I don't think ever in Indian history the railways have shutdown. As far as I understand Indian railways transports twelve crores (120 millions) of passengers a day. Hundred and twenty million people travel everyday by train, closed! That was the old number when I was fascinated by railways. Can you imagine what is happening before our eyes? What I'm saying is that don't let these signs miss us. Read it correctly and make corrections. Lord, help me to be a disciple. Let there be this longing in my heart that I too can cry out with the other servants that have gone before me, that cloud of witnesses, I should be able to say, "Maranatha! Come Lord Jesus!" and if You tarry, let me be more fruitful in your vineyard.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we just thank You. We just praise You. We just worship You, Lord. And thank You for all these dear children who have gathered here in spite of all the restrictions, few of us and all Your children who are watching wherever they are, bound by one Spirit, O Holy Spirit, our cry is – never leave us, Lord. Never leave us. Guard us. Guard our hearts, guard our hands, guard our feet and above all, guard our ears. Let our ears never lose the capacity to hear from You, never ever lose, Lord. And I pray Lord, all Your children, Lord, who've been taught these twelve years, wherever they are in Church or other places, let them arise at a season like this. Like Esther it was told, for a time and a season like this, they were prepared. Once again, I pray, every one of them in their apartments, in their streets, in their cities will stand up like Aaron did between the living and the dead. And will make intercession and You will hear their cry and will turn hearts of the people. Let intercessors arise, O God, in this season. Let people shut off everything else. Everything has been shut down except the Internet and the TV lines, but let them shut it down Lord. Social media, let it be shut down and keep it open only for Your word, yet spend time in that closet restoring fellowship with God and with man, vertical and horizontal, this twelve days, ten days lockdown, humble themselves, truly humble themselves and come through those gates of righteousness, that when these ten days, two weeks, one month and two months are over, it will be a different set of people the world will see, fearless like Elijah. Three and a half years, nobody saw him. Three and a half years later, when he stepped down, he was standing on mount Carmel alone, confronting powers of darkness, because that three and a half years of quarantine had made him into a different man altogether, Lord, and he could stand there alone and bring a nation back to God. I pray that the spirit of Elijah will fall upon Your Church and they will stand there as voices in this wilderness, in this darkness, declaring the coming of the Lord. Thank You, Father. Thank You. We thank You. We praise You. We worship You for this opportunity Lord. How many times we were mocked holding this place. Does a small Church need such an office? How many times I was stressed to the point of giving up. Now at a time and a season like this this very place has become a blessing to many. Thank You, Lord. Thank You, Lord. Eight years, from the time this place was finished, nobody has lived here, it has been the Church's. Eight years till today. This is the eight year and this eight year this place has become a greater blessing and all the meetings we had, because at the time of God's people's need you opened this place. Thank You, Father. Thank You, Lord. Help us, Lord, in the next nine days in spite of the restrictions, make a way open that we can come and continue encouraging your children and preparing them to meet their Maker. Thank You, Father. Thank You. Let the hand of God rest upon them every one, every part of the globe, whether it is day or night, may

Preparing Spiritually - 2

the hand of God rest upon them. Whether it is pestilence that flies by night or the plague that flies by day, You're the God of day and night, for the God of Israel neither sleeps nor slumbers. He is the God of the valleys and the God of the mountains. So, let Your hand be there over Your people. Protect them. Preserve them. Keep them, Lord. And all our children, we commit them into Your hands, and we proclaim and confess over our children that all our children in the Church, who were once in the Church, little ones, grown-ups, teenagers and every one of them, all our children will be taught of the Lord and great shall be their peace. Thank You. Thank You, Father. We praise You. We worship You and glorify You, Lord. For in Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.