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Because You Know

The certainty of the Coming of the Lord is brought before us in II Peter 3:17,18. Peter, in this his second epistle, speaks of different groups of people who had different ideas of His Coming. Some thought the Lord would come late. So Peter wanted to place before them the fact of the imminence of the Coming of the Lord. The Lord is delaying, not because He wants to delay, but because He is patient and wants to see us right with God. Actually, it is we, the people of God, who are delaying the Coming of the Lord—because we want to live as we like.

It is with these two verses that Peter concludes his epistle. He addresses a group of people as "beloved" and says, "Ye know these things before." The subject of the Coming of the Lord was not new to them. They were the beloved of the Lord and they were not ignorant like others. Yet they did not live preparing themselves for the Coming of the Lord. They were careless and made no effort to live according to the truth God had revealed to them. Reminding them that they knew these things, the first word he says is BEWARE. They were not to live careless lives but be CAREFUL. The Lord is not going to come suddenly and quickly, clean you up and take you. He reveals His will to you daily and expects you to keep obeying and be prepared always. That's why we often read of instructions like, "Be ye ready", "Be watchful", etc.

Beware, BECAUSE YOU KNOW! He that knoweth and doeth not, shall be beaten with many stripes. We must beware and think back on all that we know. "Beware, lest ye also..." We must beware lest we, who know about the Coming of the Lord, also join the group who do not know. We must beware lest we be "led away with the error of the wicked." We must not be babes, carried about with every wind of doctrine (Eph 4:14). Error of doctrine makes you move from one preacher to another—you'll keep looking for the truths that suit you. Error of life brings wrong ideas, wrong desires, wrong thoughts, wrong values. You'll want positions, fame. "Lest ye...fall from your own stedfastness." If you keep giving room to erroneous teachings and erroneous ways of life you'll begin to walk proudly and you'll lose your steadfastness. Child of God, are you standing firm in the faith? Don't doubt the Word of God. Stand sure and firm in the revelations God has given you. Abraham continued in his faith and in his tent life till the end.

"But grow in grace." Being steadfast, we must GROW—grow in grace. St.Paul confesses, "I am what I am by the grace of God", and he continues to minister and labour according to the grace he received. He knew the value of the grace of God. The Lord doesn't give grace to any and every one, but to the one who humbles himself, to the one who is grateful to God. Paul says, "Lord, the grace You have given me is not in vain." Did you use the talents God has given you and the good natures God has given you, for the profit of the work of God or for your own gain? Without the grace of God we cannot

do any ministry or live this life. One moment away from the grace of God is enough to make us fall. Any spiritual seed can grow only in the grace of God. The landlord says, "For three years this tree has borne no fruit; cut it down", but Jesus says, "Oh no, please wait but one year more. I will pour more grace." Child of God, you are not alone. Jesus is with you. You are in the garden of God, not on the streets. The grace of God will help you grow.

"Grow...in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." There is a standard to which you must grow—you must grow in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the standard. We must be perfect like He is. Jesus said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt 5:48). If we are to become perfect like our Father in heaven, we need a knowledge of Him. God has set servants of God in the church to understand God and reveal Him. They are to understand the excellency of the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. They do not need to know all the theologies, but know how to grow to the standard of Jesus. For this purpose we see St.Paul making a great consecration—he FORSAKES EVERYTHING. "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord" (Phil 3:8). Blind eyes can be opened only by real consecration.

Even a 50-year-old knowledge of Jesus is not enough. In Colossians 3:10 we read of "the new man, which is renewed in know-ledge after the image of Him that created him." Keep growing in the knowledge of Jesus, adding and adding to it each day. "Giving all diligence, add...that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" says Peter in the first chapter of his second epistle (see verses 5-8). Add till you "abound". Renew the new man day by day.

Trust And Obey

The Lord led the Israelites wonderfully in the wilderness. He kept them as the apple of His eye and He made them ride on the high places of the earth—"As an eagle fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings." "The Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him" (Deut 32:12). But a time came when the Israelites forsook their God. They sacrificed to new gods and forgot the Lord Who had led them all along. The Lord says, "See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no god with Me" (Deut 32:39).

We need to have a good knowledge of our God. Then we can be in union with Him. The Lord our God is holy and He has severed us from others so that we may be united with Him. ``Ye shall be holy unto Me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be Mine" (Lev 20:26). The Lord did not call us because we were good or perfect but so that we may depart from everything strange to His nature and be united to Him. And He had to pay a high price for the strange things in us to be removed.

God removed Himself from those who took strange gods to themselves. He said, "Let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them"

(Exo 32:10). Whenever strange things were present we see that God immediately stepped aside. When Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, offered strange fire before the Lord, which He commanded them not, there went out fire from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord (Lev 10:2).

God is love and nothing strange to love can be united with Him. At the time He anointed us there were many strange things in us. But knowing this He anointed us so that we may become exactly like Him. And for this He is prepared to work relentlessly and to the utmost. We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all (Heb 10:10). Jesus completed the work of sanctification on the cross. "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Rom 5:5). His love that He has put into us will never disappoint us. It gives us a hope—the assurance of attaining His glory, and keeps revealing God to us. If we have this hope we will keep purifying ourselves. ``Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure" (I Jn 3:2,3).

God's love must operate in us if strange love is to depart. And for His love to work, we should come forward to love Him. God always looks at our heart. So we need to renew our eagerness for holiness, for the things of God. God Himself will give us this longing. "Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem" (Ezra 1:5). This desire that is kindled in us will inspire us to pant, groan, cry out (in prayer). "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God'' (Psa 42:1,2). True desire cannot be suppressed.

It is in prayer that desires are realized. In prayer we see the presence of God and God fulfils the desires of our heart. It is here that we can understand that the Lord has already changed us. He reveals this fact to us gradually and we find that all strange things have departed from us. He reveals to us the God Who anointed us, the God in Whom strange things are absent. As there is no strangeness in our God, as we gradually progress, it is impossible for strange things to persist in us—they are only defeated spirits that retain no power over us. Jesus Christ defeated them on the cross and sanctified us there, having earned the victory for us. Now we only have to believe Him, to see His glory, to see His victory, to meet Him. We need to believe and obey. It's because the Israelites did not believe and did not obey, that they could not enter Canaan (Heb 3:19). It is a land occupied by seven wicked nations and thirty one wicked kings that God wanted to turn into a home for the Israelites. "I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites" (Exo 3:8). It is our heart which is the dwelling place of wicked natures that God desires to change. He has already come down and changed us. But now we need to obey. When the love of God enters us, in

view of this love, we consent to obey.

There is a great victory contained in obedience. "Being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil 2:8). For the unsanctified natures that are hidden in the heart to be removed, we need to obey the love of God that is in our heart. It's when we agreed to obey that the Lord anointed us (Acts 5:32). When the Israelites received the anointing and heard the voice of God, they entered into a covenant with the Lord promising to obey Him (Exo 24:7). If we obey God we can defeat Satan and all evil natures because Jesus Christ was obedient unto death and received a name at which every knee shall bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth.

"The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ... having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled" (II Cor 10:4,6). God cannot work in the disobedient. But the obedient pull down the strongholds of the devil—having the increase of the anointing in them. When we obey, God immediately sends an anointing, and the evil nature in our heart is destroyed. In its stead a good nature is created. It is thus that we go on from victory to victory.

"God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us. And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:8,9). It is by faith that our hearts are purified. To get a faith in the heart we need to first hear the truth. "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word." What the Lord has sanctified, He reveals through the truth. This we should believe without doubting. It is then that we experience a salvation. In order to progress in faith we need to believe more and more incredible things. If we doubt what the Lord has fulfilled for us, there will be no change in us. The Lord will perfect those who believe in the finished work of Calvary, filling them with more and more of His fulness.

Pastor Don Spiers—A Shining Life

(Serial No.45)

An apostle of love

To describe Pastor Don in one sentence one can say, Pastor Don is an apostle of love. You could never see him hating anybody. He did not have any enemies. "That's been a beautiful inspiration for my life," says one.

Pastor Don was a true father and brother to all. "He had a large heart and loved all of us," is everyone's testimony. The brother who assisted him says, "More than my assisting him, he really helped me in many ways. God gave Solomon largeness of heart even as the sand on the seashore. Pastor Don had such a large heart—to accommodate everyone. He accommodated my foolishness, my pride, my everything."

Overflowing love of God could be seen in the life of Pastor Don. He was the expression of love to everyone—to the workers, to the believers and to the unsaved. He loved everybody the same; he had

Christlike love. "Although we all have our own stories to tell about Brother Don, I don't think any of us has any more or any less to say than anyone else. Because what he did for one, he did for all," says one child of God.

"In his messages, he shared with such enthusiasm, with such a love for people, that it caused you to understand God's heart for people," testifies a child of God. "He just let you know that God loves you—no matter what you've done, or what your background. And we saw that Brother Don had that same love. He didn't have any barriers—he was not biased on the basis of anything."

One Sunday in Philadelphia, a newly saved man who was formerly homeless, gave a testimony of how God delivered him from drugs. When he finished his testimony, Pastor Don gave him a big hug. It didn't matter to him that that man was different, and used slang words. Pastor Don saw in him someone who loved Jesus and whom Jesus loved. "Pastor Don's love to me as a father was unconditional. He loved me regardless of my situation," testifies an ex-convict.

The love of God in him was almost tangible. In all the hundreds of testimonies that came from all over the world at his funeral, everyone had spoken about the love of God in him—everyone had felt it in a very personal and warm way. Whenever he met people, he took time to greet them, whoever they were. He always gave a listening ear and wanted to know the thoughts and concerns of others. He did his best to bring joy to everyone he came into contact with. His fatherly care, warmth and gentleness touched the lives of all who met him and knew him. "Love was poured out through his entire being to me," says one brother.

"His love for us was so real," says a believer. "Even though he was a great and wonderful pastor, his love wasn't floating in the air like a balloon. His love was right here. He was so down to earth. And there were no barriers to him. His room was wide open; you could walk in any time.

Pastor Don loved to fellowship with the saints of God. He always preferred to come to the dining hall than eat by himself. And whenever he came, he would remember to go to the kitchen and pray for the kitchen crew and thank them for the food and tell them how good the food was.

Pastor Don often spoke on loving the brethren. "How many of you have memorized John 3:16?" he once asked. Many hands flew up. Then he asked, "How many have memorized I John 3:16?". He then turned to that verse and explained how both verses were related and how we'll perceive the love of God by loving the brethren, by laying down our lives for the brethren just as Jesus did.

In this excerpt, Pastor Don tells of how we learn to love, from God our Father.

What is Jesus saying when He tells us that God is our father? The principal revelation is that God loves us. The Bible says, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Today we use the word "love" for lust and other things. But in the Bible it speaks of the highest emotion of man; and yes, it's something much more than emotion—it's the very motivating force of life. For God so loved us that He gave His only begotten Son to die for us. God loves even His enemies. He has compassion on us. As a
father pities his children, so the Lord has pity on us. In the term "father," all of the beauty of love is expressed. And we are called upon to learn the love of God. "Husbands, love your wives." "Love one another." And so we learn to love, because God is love. We learn to be a father as God is a father. Jesus came from the bosom of the Father. He came from the love of the Father.

At the beginning God with His mighty power and wisdom created the starry heavens and the earth. He created the whales and the other animals. He made man in His own image and likeness. Every thing was good. But something was missing. Adam had no one to love him. Why had not God created a help mate for him in the beginning? Because the message of a bride is the message of love. And love cannot be created. Love must be won. And so to bring forth a wife for Adam, God had to pierce his side. This is a picture of Calvary. God could not create a bride for His Son; His Son had to die. His heart had to be pierced, and His blood flow out.

In the Old Testament, we find very little mention of love. Because love had not been won from the heart; God could not create it. God commanded the Israelites to love Him. He told them that He loved them. But they were not impressed. God had tried to show His love in giving them many wonderful gifts. He did mighty signs and wonders for them. He saved and delivered them. But they did not love Him.

Of all the Old Testment people, only David said that he loved God. But he says, "I love God because He's good to me. I love God because He hears my prayers." But that's not the love of the New Testament. When John beheld Calvary, he said, "Now behold we the love of God!" How do we know the love of God? Because He gave His life for us. Because He spilled His blood for us. In this, love is known. And through this great work on Calvary, God's hopes that man will love Him, grew. The bride of Jesus Christ is the main topic of the New Testament. This group is distinguished by this one feature above all others—that they love God.

We have a picture of this in the life of Abraham. Isaac was the son of his love and he loved him most dearly—more than anything else in this world. But when God asked him to give him as a sacrifice, he did it. That's a little reflection of how our Father gives His only begotten Son for us.

Now, just as God loves me, He loves my brothers also. And He has shed abroad His love in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, that just as God loves us, we should love one another. This is God's love; it's a pure, holy love. It has baptized us all into one body in the Lord Jesus Christ, that we should have the mind of Christ, that we should have a heart like God's heart, yea, that we may be perfectly united in one.

It's not difficult to love our friends; but God loves even His enemies. And He tells us that when people smite us on one cheek we're to show the other cheek. *Once when I was witnessing to a Jewish rabbi, he spit on my face. I smiled and said, "I love you." He didn't know what to make of that. He said, "My religion teaches me to hate you." I said, "No, the Bible says God is love and that as they were nailing Jesus to the cross, spitting upon Him and mocking Him, He prayed, `Father, forgive them.*' " God so loved the whole world that He gave His only Son to die for our sins, and we're also to love one another like that.

I went to a certain man's house. He was praying, praying, praying, praying. "This man's really spiritual," I thought. I had to wait two whole hours. Then I talked to him. He was from another religion. I said, "What were you praying about?" "I was praying to get revenge on my enemy." I said, "I have a knowledge that you don't have. I pray for God to forgive my enemies." "Wow, I've never heard of that!" he exclaimed.

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The love of God is to be found in us. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God...Beloved, now are we the sons of God...we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him" (I Jn 3:1,2). So God wants the same love that the Father has bestowed on us, to be in us.

"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren" (I Jn 3:14). ***This verse is precious to me. I was in the Presbyterian church for just a few days after I was born again; I went off to the mission field. Then one day somebody asked me, "Brother, are you born again?" I said, "What's that?" "Are you saved?" I said, "I don't know." "Are you a child of God?" I said, "Wow, those are terms I've never heard of!" I went to my room and prayed, "Lord, am I saved? What does that mean? Am I a child of God?" Then God gave me this scripture—I said, "Wow, I am saved!" A lot of things I don't know. But one thing I do know—I love the brethren, I love the house of God, I love the church of God. All these 47 years I've been living with the saints of God, and I just love the brethren all around the world wherever I go.***

Sometimes I can't even speak the same language. But I just love the brethren, love to be with the brethren, love to gather together in the house of God, love to sing the songs of Zion. Sometimes we have our rough edges, and we get our toes stepped on. Sometimes we get our faces slapped too. I've been betrayed by brethren, I've had brethren misunderstand me, speak evil of me, gossip about me. But you know, it's strange, I love the brethren anyway. **We go through all these things joyfully—because He gives us peace which passeth all understanding and all misunderstanding. We've never had the thought, "I'm going to leave the brethren. I'm going to leave the church of God." No way. This is our family. We are going to work out things somehow.** ***I thank God, I have stuck with this family of God all these years. I know to Whom I belong. I know who my brothers and sisters are. And I can feel the love of God in my heart.***

There's only one life—I love my brother and he loves me. My only desire is to do him good, and his only desire is to do me good. And we're free to help each other. That's the glorious liberty of the sons of God. But you cannot give that freedom to those whose hearts are not in love with God.

If we obey His commandments, we shall abide in His love and our joy shall be full. And this is His commandment—that we should love one another, that we should lay down our lives one for another. This is the Church, the body of believers which is the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. This is where we learn to love one another, to serve one another. The Bible says that as we love one another, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.
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By Faith Noah

Many children of God are weeping over rebellious members of their families.
How did Noah succeed in saving his family
from the great judgment of God?

"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith" (Heb 11:7).

We are living in a time when the Coming of the Lord is no longer some distant possibility. There are unprecedented signs in the sky, a severe outbreak of pandemics, and other signs in the world and in the Church that clearly indicate the imminence of the glorious event.

Jesus compared this time to the time Noah lived in. Noah (B.C. 2948-1998), the tenth in descent from Adam, in the line of Seth, was the son of Lamech, and grandson of Methuselah. He had three sons, each of whom had married a wife. Noah himself was a righteous man, and perfect in his generations, and, like Enoch, had been walking with God. But there was almost universal apostasy during his time. Jesus warned us that prior to His return, the lifestyle of people would be reminiscent of the time of Noah. *"In the days before the flood people ate and drank, men and women married, up to the very day Noah went into the boat; yet they did not realize what was happening until the flood came and swept them all away. That is how it will be when the Son of man comes"* (Matt 24:38,39 GNB). While people were totally removed from God, Noah continued to be faithful to God. The fact that not one soul outside Noah's family cared to enter the ark indicates how abhorrent it was for a person to enter the ark and remain in it; yet Noah's whole family was saved by the ark. Today, many children of God are weeping over rebellious members of their families. This

article focuses on how this man of God succeeded in saving his family from the great judgment that came upon the world. Let us study seven stages in the salvation of this family, five of which are taken from the verse quoted at the beginning.

1. Noah's walk with God

2. The faith of Noah

3. The warning Noah received

4. Noah's reaction to the warning

5. The making of Noah's ark

6. Noah's hundred years of preaching

7. The saving of Noah's family

1. Noah's walk with God is recorded in Genesis 6:9. Noah, like Enoch, was an antediluvian who ``walked with God''. They enjoyed, to an extent, the fellowship with God that Adam lost in the Garden of Eden. Noah's walk with God was at a time when the world was preparing itself for judgment through its sinful excesses. It is essential for us to have a daily walk with God if we must receive daily direction from Him to guide those under us.

2. The faith of Noah was a product of his walk with God. This faith was so remarkable that it found its place in the annals of the faith of the Old Testament saints recorded in Hebrews Chapter11. This faith was not the basic faith of simply ``believing in the existence'' of God, but the faith that kept clinging to God in times of extreme difficulty.

There were periods of darkness in Israel's history when God seemed to go silent and would not answer His people. Even the patriarch Abraham had to wait for many years trusting God. Noah had to exercise faith to ``believe'' God's warning of rain because at that time he had seen no rain. But after that he had to ``trust'' God when nothing happened

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even after many years of preaching. He had to wait much longer than Abraham did years later.

Even these days, God is taking many of His loved ones through periods of darkness. Everything around them seems to indicate that they have been forsaken by God. They receive no answer, no help and no mercy. Yet for no apparent reason, they continue to trust in God. *"Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God" (Isa 50:10).*

3. God warned Noah of the impending global judgment. *"And God looked upon*

***the earth, and, behold,it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth"* (Gen 6:12,13).**

Mankind had rejected God and become totally depraved. *"And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually"* (Gen 6:5). The time that we are living is reminiscent of the days before the Flood. Sin is being glorified and mankind has rejected God and become totally degenerate. So the God of Noah ceases not to warn His people. The ministry of ``warning'' has always been part of the apostolic ministry. St.Paul says, *"Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col 1:28).* When St.Paul was departing from the Ephesian believers he left with these words, *"Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears"* (Acts 20:31). We must take heed to the warning God has given us.

4. Noah moved with fear. When Noah was warned by God we read that he ``moved with fear''. We do not read, ``He was moved with fear''. Being moved with fear is merely an emotional reaction to a warning. The reaction of many to a message of warning is merely emotional. There may be a lot of weeping and decision-making, but not much follows after that. Yet Noah moved with fear. His was not merely an emotion but an act; an act of faith. Fear is the opposite of faith. But here we read that Noah's fear was because of faith. By faith he moved in fear. When he received warning, Noah believed and feared God and his faith made him work in the fear of God too. Faith must have an action; without works, faith is dead. We read of the devils' faith in James 2:19. The devils believe and even tremble; but they will do nothing more. When we believe the warning of God, then, by faith, we must act on it.

5. Noah began making an ark. This was Noah's visible reaction to God's warning. It was an act of faith. *Once in a rural and quite religious farm community, there was a disastrous drought and the crops were dying. In desperation, the local preacher announced that the whole community would assemble at the edge of one of the fields and pray for rain. A large crowd gathered, and the preacher climbed on a bale of hay and surveyed the flock. He said, "Brothers and sisters, you have come here to pray for rain." "Amen!" responded the crowd. "Well," said the preacher, "do you have sufficient faith?" "Amen! Amen!" shouted the crowd. "All right, all right," said the preacher, "but I have one question to ask you." The crowd stood silent, puzzled and expectant. "Brothers and*

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***sisters," shouted the preacher, "Where are your umbrellas*?" Noah believed God and the ark was the visible proof of his unseen faith. By this faith he became the heir of righteousness.**

Secondly, it was a step of faith because there was no machinery at that time. The ark was discovered in 1916. Inside was discovered, rooms with cages from floor to ceiling. It was covered with a resinous substance inside and out. The ark was pitched inside and out to prevent water from entering it (Gen 6:14). This reveals our inner and visible life being covered by grace and consecration. The ark weighed about 34,000 tons. There was evidence of about 35,000 land animals and 1,700,000 insects needing a total of 167 railroad cars. The ark was large enough for 522 cars. Noah built it by faith. By faith, Noah went against

the trend of the world—the world of his time had never seen a boat at all! How much they must have scorned him for making such a huge ship. They laughed at him, but Noah had the last laugh; that is why we read, he condemned the world.

6. Noah preached for 100 years. We infer this from Genesis Chapters five to seven. Noah's sons were born when the earth was corrupt (6:10,11). Noah was five hundred years old then (5:32). He began preaching the moment he heard the warning; but the Flood came only when he was six hundred years old (7:6). St. Peter calls him "a preacher of righteousness" (II Pet 2:5). But none apart from his family was saved. We understand that he must have used the help of hundreds of men to build the ark which was as tall as a building. Yet none of those men who helped build the ark themselves entered in. The ark is a type of the church. There are many who are useful and help in building the Church. They are happy in being helpful with their labour and financial support but fail to build their own lives. They think that their help in construction is the means to their final salvation.

Like Noah, we must speak the truth without looking at those around us who are keener to be useful than faithful.

7. He saved his family. In those hundred years, he preached to his family and to others. His sons grew up and married their wives and all entered the ark with him during the days of corruption. They obviously had watched his personal life. His life bore constant testimony against the unbelief and wickedness of that generation. It had influenced them to join him in the ark.

May God help us all to follow the footsteps of this saint and by faith prepare our lives and our families for His imminent return.

Zion, the perfection of beauty

(Serial No.17)

special redemption

(Contd. from Aug'09 issue)

All those who are redeemed from the earth have one language—the language of love, of holiness. If we are of one language, whatever we do for the Lord will prosper. It was a wrong thing that the people were doing at

Shinar, in trying to build a tower for their own glory (Gen 11:4-6). But they were succeeding in their endeavours because they were all of one language! Whether what you are doing is right or wrong, the principle behind "unity" holds good. What were the people doing at Shinar? Read verse 5. They were building a city and a tower. We are also building a city and a tower by the grace of God. The Lord Himself is building the city and the tower, and we are helpers or co-labourers with Him. If the people had to be of one language to build an earthly city and tower, how much more necessary it is for us to be of one language to build the heavenly city of Jerusalem and the tower of Zion! Therefore

beloved one, always remember that we don't belong to any particular language. We are building a great city for the Lord.

We are servants of the most high God. We belong to the country of Zion. Our language is the language of Zion. The language of Zion is a holy language. "Then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent" (Zeph 3:9). To serve the Lord, a holy language is needed. Many cannot get this revelation. We already saw in Revelation 14:3 that the saints in Zion sang a song that others could not learn. They could not even sing the song. Those who are not called to Zion cannot understand this life; they cannot live this life.
Those who have a "nationality spirit" can only go to New Earth (See Revelation 21:24). "The *nations* of them which are saved" will only walk in the light of New Jerusalem, being in New Earth. Although they are saints, they are not saved from distinctions of nationality, caste, etc. Isaiah 45:20 says, "Assemble...ye that are escaped of the nations," or "ye that are escaped from nationalistic differences." So those who are gathered together are all those who have escaped from the "nationality spirit". God is going to gather such saints soon.

Those who are redeemed from the earth will never be worried about having their financial needs met. Money is of the earth. People in the world are attached to money. But when we are redeemed from the earth, we are redeemed from the attachment to the earthly money also. We will not feel burdened to even pray for money. There is nothing wrong in praying for money when you are in need. But if you are really redeemed from the earth, you will forget to pray for money. You may be sent to a place where there isn't enough money to meet your needs; but you need not worry. You are redeemed from the earth; all the money in the earth belongs to you. It does not mean that you should never pray for money. But generally, if you are lost in God, you will not feel the need to pray for money. "If God's work is done in God's way, God's supply will never lack," says one man of God. Pray for the riches of faith and the riches of grace.

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d **Knowing the Time *(Part IX)*** *(contd. from page 11)*

Pastor S.B. Ernest used to say, "Our calling is not to worry about money; our calling is to worry about Zion, about building Zion." One thing is required of us, and that is to build up Zion in our life and in the church. Money may one day fail, but our God will never fail. We have been called to be burdened about the work of God, about the perfection of souls, about the perfection of Zion. When the devil puts a burden concerning money in your heart, the burden which the Lord put there will depart. To do this ministry, it is not money that we need, but faith and grace. The ministry will never suffer due to lack of money; but it certainly will, if we lack faith and grace. We are redeemed from the earth. That means we are also redeemed from the worry about money. If we are redeemed from the worry about money, we will have the faith that all the money in the world belongs to us. We don't need to go after money; money will come after us.

This is a glorious calling. Many servants of God do not have this revelation of being redeemed from the earth. Beloved child of God, receive this revelation into your spirit today. We don't need to worry about our home, our country, or about money. All the money in the world belongs to us. All the houses and countries in the world belong to us. As we are redeemed from the earth we will sing a song which nobody else can learn or sing! o

Two Grandmasters

Chess is an intricate game in which two players alternately move one of the 16 pieces each has, on a chequered board of black and white squares. The 16 pieces, known as chessmen, consisting of a "king", a "queen", two "bishops", two "knights", two "rooks" and eight "pawns" are drawn up in battle array as two opposing forces on two sides of the board. The game is over when one player manages to "checkmate" his opponent or, in other words, capture his king.

The life of each one of us is much like a game of chess played between the Lord and Satan. The Lord and Satan are engaged in a war over us, each striving to hold the reins of our life, each endeavouring to establish his kingdom in our lives.

Each has his own chessmen—circumstances, people, opportunities, problems, joys and pleasures, adversities, etc—which he "moves" (designs or engineers) in his turn. Both the Lord and Satan are grandmasters, and each makes his moves scrupulously after much forethought, after long deliberation.

Each piece moves in a unique manner. The queen is the most powerful piece, being able to move any distance in all directions, sideways and diagonally. The bishops move diagonally, forwards and backwards, and the rooks move on the ranks and files. The knights move in a peculiar fashion in L shapes and they have the special ability to jump over other pieces—as they move. The pawns are the smallest pieces and have the least value,and yet they too have the power to capture pieces; they can evencheckmate.Each"move",

whether the Lord's or Satan`s, has a unique influence on us, plays a unique role in our life. Each affects us in a special way, some more forcefully, some rather insignificantly, some in unexpected and unforeseen ways, and some indirectly and almost imperceptibly, each weak

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ening or strengthening the Lord's or Satan`s control over our lives.

As the game proceeds, the players often station certain pieces in certain positions in order to give protection to some important piece of theirs. That`s why we sometimes find certain situations, which we would like to have ``moved'', persisting in our lives. Some "moves" knock out or capture the opponent's pieces, and sometimes the players position certain pieces in certain spots to prevent the opponent from advancing to an advantageous position. The Lord`s moves override or overrule Satan`s and vice versa. Surprisingly, the players sometimes actually give up some of their pieces for capture—as and when their plan requires it. The Lord sometimes has to allow in our life setbacks, losses etc. and Satan often allows us bouts of pleasure, peace or

smooth sailing—to suit their purposes. So if we go by what's happening in our life, we'll get confused, and may even take sides with the wrong player!

Both the Lord and Satan are able to do great things in our life to carry out their own purposes or frustrate the opponent's. And both are skilful in using even a pawn to win an issue. Remember how the Lord used a shepherd boy`s sling and a pebble to defeat giant Goliath, and how Satan used a mere woman to overpower the mighty Samson?

The thing to note in this game between the Lord and Satan, the most important factor in it, is that no matter how ingenious their moves, both players are limited, or rather bound, by the choice (will) of the individual whose life the game concerns. The Lord's and Satan`s work in our lives, their intervention in our life's circumstances, their power to work out things or change things in our favour or otherwise, all depend on how much we give room to them.

Both players have a blueprint in their mind before they begin. First they establish purpose, then they decide procedure. The Lord says, "I make known the end from the beginning" (Isa 46:10 NIV). And His plan for us is good, exceeding good. "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end" (Jer 29:11). Satan`s plan, on the contrary, is to steal, to kill and to destroy (Jn 10:10). Though both the Lord and Satan have their own plan for our life, neither can carry it out to fruition just as planned. Both have to take diversions, make detours, etc—based on how we accept or reject each specification in their blueprint.

In some people's lives the Lord is able to steadily work out "the good pleasure of His will", abounding toward them in all wisdom and prudence, and making known to them the mystery of His will step by step according to His good pleasure which He has purposed in Himself. He's able to work all things in their life "after the counsel of His own will" with no interference from their will, until finally they are found" as the very ``habitation of God'' (Read Ephesians Chapters 1&2). The lives of some others are just the opposite. They keep yielding to Satan, walking "according to the course of this world", "according to the prince of the power of the air", and fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and get completely overpowered by the rulers of darkness (Eph 2:2,3).

There are still others whose lives are just a series of alternating defeats and triumphs. It is a case of divided loyalties. They keep shifting their allegiance from one player to the

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other. Like the Israelites in the wilderness, "their spirit is not steadfast with God", "they keep not the covenant of their God", but "turn back in the day of battle like a deceitful bow."

Young reader, who is on the lead in the game of your life—the Lord or Satan? It's not too late to switch sides. Take your eyes off your present condition and present circumstances and set them on the glorious life the Lord has planned for you. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom 8:28). Just commit your whole life to the Lord in loving trust; He'll defeat the devil`s purposes in your life, and He`ll make all things, yes, ALL things, even the mess you`ve got yourself into,

work together for the fulfilment of His grand plan concerning you. o

``Is There Anything Too Hard For Me?''

We see many questions in the Bible, and the above is one important question posed by the Creator God to everyone in the world. This God is the Lord of all flesh (Jer 32:27). People in this evil world are afflicted by many unsolvable problems. Some go to famous and able people, but they too are unable to solve their problems as they have more problems than the people approaching them. But here God says to everyone having problems, "Behold, I am the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for Me?" Believing this claim of God everyone should go to this God of all flesh. Our God is waiting for us to help us in every aspect of our life. Nothing is impossible with Him as He is God Almighty. Psalm 65:2 says, "O Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come." Our compassionate God is a prayer-answering God. Oh come to Him immediately. Seek this God with all your heart, with fasting, and with weeping and you can find a solution for your problems.

"Bring him unto Me"

When Jesus was in this world doing the will of God, a man came to Him and said, "Master, I have brought unto Thee my son which hath a dumb spirit. It teareth him and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away. I spoke to Thy disciples that they should cast it out and THEY COULD NOT." Jesus answered and said, "BRING HIM UNTO ME." The father of that boy would have gone to many people for deliverance for his son and finally come to the disciples of Jesus. But he was disappointed as they could not help him. In this darkened world people are wandering, going from place to place and from people to people, only to get the answer "I cannot". But dear reader, what our Jesus always says is, "Bring him unto Me" or "Bring that matter to Me" and "Is there anything too hard for Me?" Believe this word of Jesus. Go to that Jesus with all your problems. Why not give that Jesus a chance to work in your life? God is not a man that He should lie: neither is He the son of man that He should repent: hath He said and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken and shall He not make it good? Do you have impossibilities in your life? Don't worry; just bring them to Jesus. Are the terrible challenges of Satan making you think living a spiritual life is too hard? Just bring all your failures and failings and backslidings to Jesus. He is the answer. When they brought that boy to Jesus, Jesus rebuked that foul spirit saying, "Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him,

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and enter no more into him.'' And the spirit cried and rent him and came out of him. He was completely healed. Jesus is the same yesterday and today and forever. Bring all your matters to this Jesus without delay.

"Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?"

Nebuchadnezzar was a famous king of Babylon. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were three youths who were brought to Babylon from Jerusalem as captives. At one time the king made a huge golden image and commanded everyone to worship it. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego did not obey. They were brought before the king. He threatened them and challenged them saying, *"WHO IS THAT GOD THAT SHALL DELIVER YOU OUT OF MY HANDS?"* They replied, "Our God Whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace...but if not...we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." The king was furious. He ordered the furnace to be heated seven times more, and cast them into the fire. But when the king looked, he saw four men loose and walking in the midst of the fire without any hurt. He called them out and saw that not a hair of their head was singed, nor had the smell of fire passed on them. The king then declared that there is no other God that can deliver like this and promoted them in the province of Babylon. Dear

reader, stand firm for every doctrine revealed to you. By that

others will come to know that nothing is impossible with God, and you will get a promotion too. For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him.

"How shall this be?"

This question was posed by Mary when the angel appeared to give her the good news of the birth of Jesus, the Saviour of the whole world, through her (Lk 1:34). The angel answered and said unto her, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. For with God nothing shall be impossible" (vs 35,37). Then Mary said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." Everything spoken by the angel came to pass in Mary's life. Mary then understood that nothing is
impossible with God. Though she once said, "How shall this be?" now she exclaims, "He that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is His name" (Lk 1:49). Now also our loving Almighty God is saying many things to His people through the angels of the churches. But often we give our heart to the question, "How shall this be?" and the result is that God cannot work further. Right now confess, "Nothing is impossible with my God." Believe it in your heart and declare it with your mouth. Then the

Almighty God will start doing in you and through you, excellent things which the world can never dream of. Submit yourself and humble yourself in His mighty hand saying, "Let it be unto me according to the word of the Lord." Then God will do great things past finding out: yea, and wonders without number.

"Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days"
Jesus was not present at Lazarus' death. He came after four days, and when He saw a stone laid at the mouth of the tomb, He asked that it be removed. Though the miracle-

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working Jesus was present there, Martha was unable to believe, that nothing was impossible with Him. That is why Jesus said to her, "If thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" When they took away the stone, Jesus performed the wonder. He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." The living word of Jesus gave life to the man who had been dead for four days. Nothing is impossible with our Almighty God, but to see the glory of God we need faith. Dear reader, are you sick? Pray to Jesus. He will heal you and raise you up. The Word of God says in James 5:14,15, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." Further, we are waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body at the time of the Coming of the Lord. Those who have died in Christ will be raised up by the power of God which raised up Jesus from the dead, followed by those who are alive.

God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise us up by His own power (I Cor 6:14).

Nothing is too hard for our Almighty God, and He performs wonders for His beloved ones. Whatever your problem, approach Him now. He is calling you and waiting to show you mercy. He will perform all things for you. The worldlings do not know the excellency of the power of God, but we are given the privilege to enjoy the Almighty God at all times. We are His children and He is caring for us and living for us. He says to everyone and especially to you, in Jeremiah 32: 27, "Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for Me?" Can you say to that God, as written in Jeremiah 32:17, "Ah Lord God! behold, Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched out arm, and THERE IS NOTHING TOO HARD FOR THEE"?

What do you think?

And I saw thrones, and they sat on them...(Rev 20:4). But in truth, there is a lifetime of wars to be fought and victories to be won before ``they'' can sit on the throne. Why is all that left out in the verse? The reason is this.

If we let Him fight all our battles, let Him go before us in every situation, it is a life of rest all the way through for us—and that needs no mentioning.