

Prayer Service in Surabaya, May 21, 2014 (Wednesday Evening)

Peace and grace in the love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Revelation 1:17-20 (it has been explained since General Service in Surabaya, May 11, 2014).

Revelation 1:17-18

1:17 *And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.*

1:18 *I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.*

This evening we are in the verse 17 (Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.)

John the apostle fell at God's feet or **worshipped God with a contrite heart**, and he experienced God's hand touched him and he received the things as follows.

1. Do not be afraid = we fear no more (it has been explained since General Service in Surabaya, May 11, 2014).
2. I am the First and the Last = we receive God's grace (it has been explained since Bible Study Service, May 19, 2014).

This evening, we will study the second part I am the First and the Last.

The First refers to the first love.

The Last refers to the love of the Bridegroom or the perfect love, the peak of love.

By **falling on our knees with a contrite heart**, John the apostle could receive the first love until the perfect one.

Matthew 24:12

24:12 *And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.*

Why do we need the increasing love of God?

Because we are facing the end of time, where the lawlessness will increase and the crisis of love will happen, the love turns cold (the winter of love).

If the lawlessness increases, we will need the love that increases as well.

The crisis of love means human, including God's servants, commit sins until the peak of sins (sin of eating and drinking and sin of marrying and giving marriage). The consequence is God will punish him.

Exodus 9:24

9:24 *So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, so very heavy that there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.*

God had done this punishment once. At the time when the Israelites went out from the Egypt, the seventh plague was the hail and the fire.

Revelation 16:21

16: 21 *And great hail from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great.*

The hail in the book of revelation will be the seventh plague.

2 Peter 3:10

3:10 *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.*

For now, in the New Testament, at the time when the church will leave the Earth to meet Jesus in the glorious cloud, there will be hail and fire, and the world with all things in it will melt and be destroyed forever and ever.

Yesterday, we have studied about **the process to earn the love** or to increase in the love (it has been explained in Bible Study Service in Surabaya, May 19, 2014).

This evening, we will study **how to keep the love**.

At the time before God punished the land of Egypt, He had given a safe place for a shelter.

Now, before God will punish the world, **He** provides us with the place to keep the love to avoid it's being cold and we are free from His punishment.

Those who do not believe or go to the shelter will be punished, but those who believe will be saved.

There are **three places to keep the love of God as follows.**

1. Exodus 9:18-19

9:18 *Behold, tomorrow about this time I will cause very heavy hail to rain down, such as has not been in Egypt since its founding until now.*

9:19 *Therefore send now and gather your livestock and all that you have in the field, for the hail shall come down on every man and every animal which is found in the field and is not brought home; and they shall die.*

âBehold, tomorrow about this time I will cause very heavy hail to rain down.â This is a warning from God. If Godâs children or Godâs servants get into the punishment, it is because their hearts are too hard, as Godâs Word has already told us before the plague happens and He has provided us a safe place.

The first shelter is our **home**.

The home refers to the marriage.

In the marriage, love cannot get cold.

We have to get back to our responsibility in the marriage.

- o Wife: being obedient to her husband in everything.
- o Husband: loving his wife as himself and not behaving rudely.
Although a husband cannot give much money to his wife, as long as he loves his wife, he has the love.
- o Children: being obedient to the parents.

At home, **Godâs love will be poured** upon us to warm the family, and there will be no winter of love. Nowadays, we are already near to the crisis of love (we are near to Jesusâ second coming). Therefore, letâs get back to our responsibilities in the marriage.

2. Exodus 9:25-26

9:25 *And the hail struck throughout the whole land of Egypt, all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail struck every herb of the field and broke every tree of the field.*

9:26 *Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, there was no hail.*

The second shelter is in the land of Goshen (â*Only in the land of Goshen, there was no hail.*â)

It refers to the shepherding.

We have to be in the righteous and good shepherding, **which means** as follows.

- o We are always in the shepherding or diligent in 3 kinds of main services as follows.
 - a. The Golden Candlestick, the perseverance in the General Service.
 - b. The Table of Showbread, the perseverance in the Bible Study Service and Holy Communion.
 - c. The Golden Altar of Incense, the perseverance in the Prayer Service.

In the shepherding, the Word, Holy Spirit, and Godâs love will repress our flesh, which is full of lust, desire, emotion, and ambition, and we will be in peace.

If we have ambition or carnal desire, it will make our lives not peaceful.

For example, we have a certain amount of money. Our flesh will want more and it becomes not peaceful, even though what we have now is enough.

- o We always listen and obey the voice of the shepherd or the true Word (being obedient).
If our flesh is not repressed, we cannot be obedient. If our flesh is repressed, we can be obedient.
When we are obedient, Godâs love will be poured upon our lives.

John 14:15

14:15 *âIf you love Me, keep My commandments.*

Being obedient means loving God, and Godâs love is poured to do these things.

- a. Nurturing our lives miraculously,

- b. Protecting us from false teaching, problems, sins until the peak of sins,
- c. Making us happy.

The more we are obedient, the more God's love is poured upon our lives, and our lives will not be dry and disturbed by the situation of the desert of the world, which is hot and dry.

3. Romans 5:5

5:5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

The third shelter is within our **heart**.

The shelter starts from us, then the marriage, and then the congregation.

Matthew 11:28-30

11:28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

11:29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

11:30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

Those who have no grace will only labor and be heavy laden. The gentle and lowly heart is the heart that can store love.

In any situation, either blessed or anything, especially during tribulations, we have to learn from Jesus on the cross about humility and gentleness.

- Humility. Jesus' humility is confessing all of human's sin. He did not know sins nor commit sins, but He confessed all of our sins at the cross. Humility, for us now, is the ability to confess our sins to God and others. If we are forgiven, do not do it anymore.

We have to learn the humility from Jesus on the cross, especially when we are in tribulations, or in any condition. When we are blessed, most of the time our heart is hard (not willing to confess our wrongs), especially in the tribulations.

- Gentleness. Jesus' gentleness at the cross is when He cried *â€œFather, forgive themâ€*. Gentleness, for us now, is the ability to forgive and forget others' sins.

If we are humble and gentle, every sin (our sins and others') is solved by Jesus' blood and **God's love will be poured upon us**, and we will not be disappointed nor dismayed, we will not leave God whatever we face, but we will love Him more than anything, even though we are suffering.

We only have to choose, either to keep our sins and be dried because of no love, or to finish our sins by Jesus' blood and get God's love be poured upon us.

If we finish our sins and God's love is poured, the results are as follows.

a. **Matthew 11:29-30**

11:29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

11:30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

The first result is God will use us in the latter rain revival of the Holy Spirit or the revival of Christ's body. Our ministry and our life will be easy and light.

Our serving to God is not to give more burdens to our lives. Sins are the ones that make our lives heavy laden. If the sins are thrown away, God will give the yoke or the ministry, not a burden of sins. Ministry from God is easy and light, and our lives will be easy and light.

If God entrusts us with ministries, it is not to make our lives hard, but to make it easy and light.

A testimony:

â€œI remember Pastor Pong always said it is better to get tired because of our ministry to God than resting. After I experienced this thing by myself, it is indeed true. If I took a rest and did not serve, it made me more fatigue. That's why it is better for me to serve.

God knows that we are working while serving. Maybe other people think that we are heavy laden, but we feel easy and light. The important things are humility and gentleness, and God's love will be poured upon us.

If there is God's love, all things such as our lives, marriage, or ministries, **will be easy and light**, so we will not abandon anything.

- b. Like what Peter had. When God asked for 3 times about love (Peter was in the shepherding and loved God), Peter was able to stretch his hands to God (and only said *It is up to You, Lord*). Formerly, Peter had not been able to stretch his hands and he had done anything on his own.

John 21:18-19

21:18 Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish.

21:19 This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, Follow Me.

The second result is we can stretch our hands to God, the Great Shepherd (we will only say *it is up to You, Lord*).

you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old without God's grace, we gird and get busy with ourselves. We cannot surrender to God.

When we stretch our hands to God, He will also stretch His hands to us and our lives will be in the hands of the Great Shepherd. It means as follows.

Isaiah 40:11

40:11 He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those who are with young.

- The merciful hands of the Great Shepherd will *gather* us. God will **hug us**, He will nurture us and unite us, from our marriage, shepherding, until we are one in the perfect body of Christ.
- God will *carry* us. God will bear every heavy burden and we will be in peace. The Great Shepherd will **solve** every problem even the impossible ones, right on His time.
- God will *lead* us. The hands of the Great Shepherd will **lead** us to the living fountains of waters, until the final shepherding, the New Jerusalem.

Revelation 7:17

7:17 for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

Great Shepherd's hands will lead us to a successful, beautiful, and happy future, until the final shepherding, the New Jerusalem. We are sanctified and renewed until perfect like Him, and we will be with Him forever and ever.

This evening, let us fall down before God, like John the apostle. In the suffering in Patmos, John fell down and worshipped Him with a contrite heart until He put His hands.

May we have God's love and we come back to the true marriage, shepherding, and to a heartfull of His love (not sins, or any other things), that He can use us to serve Him, we can stretch our hands, surrender all to Him and He will stretch His hands (we live on the hands of the Great Shepherd).

We are hugged, nurtured, united and carried (God takes every burden). We have peace, and every problem is solved. We are led to a beautiful future.

God leads us slowly. Even though now we see dead-ends, God will lead us little by little to a solution, until the last shepherding, the New Jerusalem.

God blesses us.