

Christmas Fellowship Service in Malang, December 24, 2022 (Saturday Evening)

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

The theme is as follows:

Matthew 2:12

2:12 *Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way.*

Revelation 18:21

18:21 *Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore."*

The great city Babylon is the same as the millstone.

Matthew 18:6

18:6 *"But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea."*

It is the same as the sin of stumbling.

Thus, the sins of Babylon or eating-drinking and marrying-being given in marriage are the same as the sin of stumbling as follows:

- Being the stumbling-block for others until they commit sins.
- Easily stumbling until committing sin because of others.

The consequence is that a millstone is hung around the neck and then being drowned in the depth of the sea.

The neck refers to the closest relationship between the head and body. The Head refers to Jesus, the Husband and the body refers to us. The neck refers to the service and ministry to God.

The matter of a millstone is hung around the neck means that we feel uncomfortable in the service and ministry to God, become unfaithful until leaving the service and ministry to God, cannot worship God, and become dry spiritually, until being drowned in the sea of fire and brimstone or perishing forever in the hell.

Job 41:24

41:24 *His heart is as hard as stone, Even as hard as the lower millstone.*

The cause is the hardness of heart.

On Christmas day, Herod whose heart was as hard as a stone became the stumbling-block to the birth of Jesus for hindering the salvation of the sinners to make them kept on perishing.

Matthew 2:1-3

2:1 *Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem,*

2:2 *saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him."*

2:3 *When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.*

The facts found in the stumbling-block are as follows:

1. Herod and all Jerusalem were troubled hearing about Jesus who had been born as King.
It prophesied about Jesus' second coming in the glory as the King of all kings and the Heavenly Bridegroom on the glorious clouds.

Revelation 19:6-7

19:6 *And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!"*

19:7 *"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready."*

The Bride Tidings troubled the entire world which was ruled over by Herod.

1 Corinthians 3:3-4

3:3 for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?

3:4 For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not carnal?

Being troubled refers to jealousy, strife, and division because of gossips and other teachings.

Matthew 2:4-6

2:4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

2:5 So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet:

2:6 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.'"

Therefore, we must be gathered for looking for the true teaching Word which is based on the Bible in the true shepherding (Bethlehem means the house of bread).

1 Peter 1:22

1:22 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,

We must hear and obey the true teaching Word until experiencing the sanctification to the heart, deeds, sight, words, and whole body, so we live in holiness as well as love, unite, and help one another.

The true teaching Word results in the holiness that encourages us to worship God.

Matthew 2:2

2:2 saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him."

Holy Spirit encourages us to worship Jesus as the King of all kings.

Thus, celebrating Christmas, we get the new way, namely the way without Herod or the way of the teaching Word, holiness, and loving one another, so we are not fearful or troubled when Jesus comes a second time. We can welcome His second coming.

2. Pretense, hypocrisy, lies, and falsity.

Matthew 2:8,13

2:8 And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also."

2:13 Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him."

Herod said that he wanted to worship Jesus, but actually he wanted to kill Him.

The trinity of Satan appears in the false service and worship that go towards the hatred without a cause up to murdering.

Matthew 2:13-14

2:13 Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him."

2:14 When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt,

The angel of God came through a dream to Joseph so that he could bring Jesus from Canaan to Egypt. It spiritually refers to the death experience or the way of cross with Jesus. It had been prophesied to Abraham, namely the people of God would be afflicted in the world when it was dark in the falsity, hypocrisy, pretense, and lies.

Genesis 15:12-14

15:12 Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon

him.

15:13 Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years.

15:14 "And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions.

Genesis 46:1-4

46:1 So Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac.

46:2 Then God spoke to Israel in the visions of the night, and said, "Jacob, Jacob!" And he said, "Here I am."

46:3 So He said, "I am God, the God of your father; do not fear to go down to Egypt, for I will make of you a great nation there.

46:4 "I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up again; and Joseph will put his hand on your eyes."

In the beginning, Jacob could not understand the purpose of God's bringing them to Egypt. We often do not understand the way of God, namely the way of death with Him or the way of the cross. When we do not understand, but doubt, fear, and worry, we must not make any decision because it will be wrong. Do not ask others also because they can be wrong too!

Nevertheless, Jacob offered the sacrifice. It means coming to God. We appreciate the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. It means that we bring the fleshly men with all fears, anxieties, doubts, and so on to God for being slain and burnt through the worship prayer until the flesh does not control anymore and we can dream, namely we receive the way of God and experience the way of the cross or death experience with Jesus. The way of the cross is far away from Herod or cannot be touched by Satan.

Revelation 12:11

12:11 "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

On the way of the cross, the blood of Jesus is powerful for defeating Satan with the cunning, pretense, lies, and so on, so we can be sincere like Joseph.

1 Corinthians 15:55-58

15:55 "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"

15:56 The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.

15:57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

The proof of defeating Satan with the power of death is having the firm and tested faith that does not fall because of anything. We do not leave God or the true teaching Word regardless of anything that we face. We can be faithful and fervent in spirit in the service and ministry until the end line.

The new way refers to the way of the cross, so there is no pretense, falsity, lies, and so on. We can be sincere, enduring, faithful, and fervent in spirit. Our labor will not be in vain because our reward is in the hand of God for our present life up to the eternity.

3. **Herod killed the little children.** It means the hatred without a cause or the top of the hardness of heart.

Matthew 2:16

2:16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men.

That is when the Antichrist reigns over the world for three and a half years or the great persecution and massacre happen.

Luke 22:39-42

22:39 Coming out, He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him.

22:40 When He came to the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation."

22:41 And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed,

22:42 saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."

In the worship prayer, Jesus willingly bore the stone in Gethsemane garden. It means bearing the hardness of the heart of men. He willingly received the will of God and become obedient up to the point of death on the cross for defeating the

Antichrist, who resists against God.

Jesus is the living, beautiful, and glorious stone, but He is willingly thrown away by the builders until being the chief cornerstone in the edification of the spiritual house.

1 Peter 2:4-6

2:4 Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious,

2:5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

2:6 Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame."

We must also worship God much more in one hour prayer, fasting prayer, and all night-long prayer so that we get the tearing of flesh with all of its lusts, desires, and characteristics, so we get the renewal of life from the stumbling-block to the living stone or the priests and kings.

The priest is the same as 'cohen' or a holy man who bears the ministry and gift of Holy Spirit or a man who serves and ministers to God for being used in the edification of the perfect Christ's body = '*departed for their own country another way*'. It begins from the household, shepherding, and so on. It is the same as placing Jesus as the Head.

Thus, the new way refers to the way of the edification of the perfect Christ's body.

'*departed for their own country another way*' means the new way, namely the way of the true teaching Word or holiness and loving one another, the way of the cross or sincerity, endurance, faithfulness, and fervency in spirit, as well as the way of the edification of Christ's body. We are placing Jesus as the Head.

Luke 22:43

22:43 Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him.

As a result, the hand of God or Holy Spirit is stretched out to us as follows:

1. Holy Spirit gives us strength and renews us.

Titus 3:5

3:5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,

We keep strong and of good courage. We are not disappointed and hopeless and we do not leave God regardless of anything we must face. We keep on holding fast and obeying the true teachings, so we do not commit sin, but live in righteousness and holiness. We keep faithful in serving and ministering to God. We keep on believing, hoping, and worshipping God.

2. Holy Spirit is like the fence of fire around us.

2 Kings 6:16-17

6:16 So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them."

6:17 And Elisha prayed, and said, "LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

It means that Holy Spirit is able to protect and preserve us in the midst of the difficulties in the world.

2 Kings 6:18

6:18 So when the Syrians came down to him, Elisha prayed to the LORD, and said, "Strike this people, I pray, with blindness." And He struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha.

Holy Spirit gives the miraculous victory, finishes all impossible problems, and gives beautiful successful future life. There is peace; all things become easy and light.

When Jesus comes a second time, Holy Spirit will change all of us to be perfect for welcoming His second coming.

God blesses you.