

DOING EXPLOITS

By
Barbara Samuel

I would like to talk about the desire of God's Heart: that God wants us as His People to **know Him**. He makes Himself known to us so that we would know Him as He is – not in the vain imaginations of our religious minds. And this is so that we can function daily in the Reality of the Relationship of Oneness that He has brought us into: Oneness with Him in His Son. Let's look at this in **Daniel 11: 32**, “... *but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.*” Now the word ‘exploits’ has been added, and it implies that these people will do great works. But I want us to consider this closely. Out of the knowing of their God: out of God's People experiencing Him in the Truth of their Relationship with Him – they will “do”. Because He is making Himself known to them and they are knowing Him as their personal, Covenant-keeping God, they will function as His People. So it is not just a case of them doing what man assesses to be something “great”: but they will Live in Relationship with their God and whatever they do will be because they are knowing their God and their Oneness with Him.

The word ‘know’ here is important, because it is more than just learning a fact. It means to discover, discern, acknowledge, be sure of, consider. And this “knowing their God” permeates their lives and being and all that they do – making them strong. But this ‘strong’ is not in themselves or in the earthly realm; but this means to be settled, established, confident in their Relationship with their God. They are strong in HIM and in the

power of His Might, not in the arm of flesh. And “knowing our God” causes us to trust Him and rest in Him. And out from this knowing and being strong, His people – “do”. That means they become, accomplish, bear, bring forth, execute. It all comes from HIM: from Who He is in their midst. God wants us to be experiencing daily His Indwelling Presence in us: that He is always with us, and desires to be ruling our hearts and minds. And when this is the case, whatsoever WE “do” will be in accordance with His Mind, Nature and Purpose. **Colossians 3:15**, *“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”*

Now I know that for many of us as Christians, we have very quickly been indoctrinated into a ‘doing for Jesus’ mentality: meaning that because we now are saved we have to be busy doing things FOR The Lord. And many times we are strongly encouraged to ‘do great works’ for The Lord, but very often these just become the works of the flesh. Let us look at how Jesus answered when they asked Him about “doing” mighty works of God. And this question implies how we can become empowered to do great things for God. It sounds righteous and noble, but sadly too often that is only our religious flesh desiring to be great and to be seen of man. **John 6: 28**, *“Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? 29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”* This is the mighty thing you can do! You can **Believe on HIM: Believe** on The One whom God has sent; **Believe** in the Reality of this

Jesus who is the fulfillment of God's Plan of Salvation and the fulness of The Life we are now having.

And this "believe" is a very powerful word, and means to have faith in the person or thing, to entrust one's spiritual being to Christ, and commit to trust Him. This is not simply receiving doctrinal religious truths that we think are true or want to believe are true: causing us to become religious. This is a living, active 'believing' that motivates and dictates everything you do. So that you can believe on Him, believe Him, trust Him fully, and entrust everything of you and your circumstances to Him. There is a confidence and an assurance that comes from "knowing our God": knowing The Life He has given us and believing on The One who has given us this Life - His Son Jesus Christ. **1 John 5:11**, *"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. 13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."* And everything that we 'do' should come from knowing and believing our God this way. 'Believing' is so important: not just that we believe that God will make us strong and great: but this believing causes us to come to know and experience this glorious **Relationship** we now have with God in Christ. **John 1:12**, *"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."* And it is this kind of Faith that pleases God and was operating in the heroes of Faith that we read about in **Hebrews 11**.

Here is an interesting note on **John 6:28**. The Living Bible says, *"...what shall we do to satisfy God."* Please consider this.

God is satisfied when we are acknowledging Him, trusting Him, and standing completely and firmly in our Union with Him. 'Our works' may satisfy US, but believing and standing in our God satisfies HIM! Just think of **Ephesians 6:10**, *"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; 15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: 18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints,"*

Our being strong is only "in the Lord and in the power of His might." And then the whole issue is that you may STAND because you are knowing HIS Greatness and HIS Oneness with you. Yes, the issue for us is to stand ... against the devil, against wicked powers ... but then to stand: stand firm and secure in your Oneness with Him. And the 'armor' that we put on that enables us to withstand and stand is the knowledge of HIM! We are to be totally enveloped in Him, covered by Him, functioning by believing and trusting Him. This was not intended of God to be a big 'to do' when we are in a battle, but this is the Reality in which we should face every day. Standing

in Him, as He is – is your strength! And from this position and condition of Faith: strong in Him – we do.

Our problem so often is that we want to do things FOR GOD. And you can do things – good things, religious things, but not really be knowing your God. It is not just OUR doing that God desires: but He wants His Mind, His Heart, His Plan, His Will to be manifested in and by His People. I would like us now to consider some scriptures that show the difference between ‘our doing’ and ‘knowing our God’.

- **Genesis 15 and 16.** God had spoken to Abram promising him a seed. And rather than believing his God and trusting that God would do what He promised, Abram considered his old age and Sarah’s barrenness. **Genesis 16:2**, “*And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.*” Some might consider this a ‘great work’, but the son of flesh that was produced was not received of God as “the seed” and God would not make covenant with him. Ishmael was conceived out from the fleshly desire of Abram’s heart to bring about God’s Promise by joining himself to a servant. He thought he was helping God, but God Himself would bring forth HIS SEED in Abram and Sarai in His time!
- It seems as if our first response, even when we hear from God and receive a promise from Him is, ‘What do I do?’ we see this with the rich young ruler in **Matthew 19:16**, “*And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing **shall I do**, that I may have eternal life? 17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none*

good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. **18** He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, **19** Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. **20** The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? **21** Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.” Notice that Jesus was not impressed by the things that this young man said he kept: how he followed all of the Law. Jesus said if you will be ‘perfect’: meaning coming to a maturity in full knowledge of your relationship with Me. And what is required is leaving everything and coming to Him and following Him completely.

- Even Jesus’ Disciples tried to impress Him by their overzealousness against those that did not receive Him. They wanted to ‘do great works like Elijah’ and prove their faithfulness to Him by doing things before others. **Luke 9:54**, “And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? **55** But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. **56** For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.” And at the heart of Jesus’ rebuke was the fact that they did not know HIM and what He was making them to be. They did not know His Heart and the Spirit in which The Son of Man had come to this earth. And this is a real challenge for us as we go forth

condemning others who have not received The Lord. It is so necessary for us truly to know Him: His Love and Grace, and share that with others. And if we don't, we can get puffed up and exalted in what we consider to be 'our great exploits for The Lord.'

- I am often reminded of the Apostle Peter who genuinely loved The Lord, but it still was with a heart of flesh, and according to his own understanding. He thought he – in his own strength and determination could dictate The Plan of God! **Matthew 16:21**, *“From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. 22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. 23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.”* And don't forget the way Peter responded in the garden of Gethsemane when the servants of the Priest came to arrest Jesus. **John 18:10**, *“Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. 11 Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?”* Jesus' rebuke against Peter clearly shows us that He was not impressed by Peter's bravado and fleshly acts. These fleshly acts only came out from the heart that truly was not yet 'knowing His Lord and believing Him'.
- And we have to be very aware that it is possible for us to 'call on His Name' or attempt to use His Name, but not truly

be ‘knowing Him’. We see this clearly with the sons of Sceva in **Acts 19:11**, “*And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: 12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them. 13 Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. 14 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. 15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? 16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. 17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. 18 And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds.*”

Now I am not saying that we will not ‘do’ for The Lord: not ‘do things’. But this is not something that WE work ourselves into, or try to convince ourselves of so that ‘we can be victorious’ (even though this is what is often preached). Our manner of Living as Believers: as those who are One with The Lord should be the outworking of our **knowing Him; believing Him.** And this is the kind of believing their God, knowing Him and trusting Him that we see was operational in Daniel and the Hebrew boys. They were ‘knowing their God’: they were strong in Him (in their belief in Him), and because they allowed Him to rule them, they did great things. But we must see the ‘great things’ that they did were to make Jehovah known even in the midst of Babylon as the true and living, all-powerful God.

Remember God does make Himself known in us and to us so that we can make HIM known in the earth. He is to receive all of the Glory because it is HIS working in us: not us. Paul came to this wonderful understanding. He worked: he did, but not in his own strength. **Colossians 1:29**, *“Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.”* This is the understanding we must come to so that He can be glorified.

But concerning Daniel and those Hebrew boys: remember that from the beginning they determined in their hearts to be faithful to their God. **Daniel 1:8**, *“But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.”* **Daniel 3: 16**, *“Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. 17 If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. 18 But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.”* This is so important. They did not entertain any compromise even though they knew they would be putting themselves in mortal danger. And their Faith in their God delivered them from peril. Now most of us will probably never be asked to function to this extreme, but how many of us still compromise: not just with the world, but with ‘our religion’? The Apostle Paul determined in his heart to give up everything that had been gain to him - and that was his religion. **Philippians 3: 7**, *“But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered*

*the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.” And the overriding concern of Paul’s heart we read of in **verse 10**, “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;” It was all so that he could truly and fully know Him: not just to know things about Him, but to come to a full experiential knowing of Christ as his Savior.*

The Amplified Version of **Philippians 3:10** gives us even greater insight into the Apostle Paul’s heart regarding his desire to “Know Him”. *“And this, so that I may know Him [experientially, becoming more thoroughly acquainted with Him, understanding the remarkable wonders of His Person more completely] and [in that same way experience] the power of His resurrection [which overflows and is active in believers], and [that I may share] the fellowship of His sufferings, by being continually conformed [inwardly into His likeness even] to His death [dying as He did];”* And I pray that this would be the desire of our hearts also. It is to a heart like Paul’s that God makes Himself known in such glorious ways.

We read of Daniel believing and trusting his God and coming totally under God’s Rule – not man’s in **Daniel 6**. King Darius had made a decree that all the people could only ask a petition of the King. But this was prompted by jealousy against Daniel in the princes. **Daniel 6:3**, *“Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm. 4 Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they*

could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him. 5 Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God.” They knew Daniel still remained firm concerning The Law of his God. But this did not deter him! He knew the consequences of breaking Darius’s law, but Daniel knew his God! **Verse 10**, *“Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime. 11 Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God.”* Notice Daniel looked toward **Jerusalem** because even though historically at this time that city had been destroyed and Daniel was in Babylon in captivity, Daniel knew God remained faithful to His City and His Thoughts for His People there. And remember that although Daniel’s body was physically in Babylon, his heart remained fixed in Jerusalem under his God!

We know that God delivered Daniel from the lion’s den, but that was not the fulness of the “great work”. Through this miracle the God of Daniel: (and it is written as that), was making Himself known. There were many gods in Babylon, but Daniel was there to make The Living God known to the King and the people of the land. **Daniel 6: 20**, *“And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions? 21 Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. 22 My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions’ mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have*

*I done no hurt. **23** Then was the king exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God."*

Why did God do this? And what did Darius understand? Daniel served his God continually, and he believed in his God! And King Darius' decree acknowledged the God of Daniel not just as The Living God who delivers and is steadfast: but even greater than that. **Daniel 6:25**, "*Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. **26** I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. **27** He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions."* The God of Daniel is now shown to be The One whose Kingdom and Dominion is greater than that of Babylon. So here we see God using the Faith of His People even while they were in captivity to make Himself known to the heathen.

And let me finish this lesson showing us another "great work" done by Daniel that came out of his faith and trust in his God. He believed God's Word! **Daniel 9:1**, "*In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; **2** In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem."* Daniel understood by books... he understood by The Word of The Lord spoken by Jeremiah that

the 70 years for their captivity were going to be accomplished. They were now over! He believed that God did and would perform His Word! And the question for us is – do we? Do we believe in Him? Do we believe His Word - that it is true, and that He will faithfully perform what He has said? And Daniel's prayer through this chapter is beautifully prayed, acknowledging God and asking Him to work – not for Daniel's comfort and gratification, but for God: for His City, His Name, His Glory. **Daniel 9:16**, *“O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us. 17 Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. 18 O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. 19 O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.”*

To the world this may not look like much: but to God, this is the “doing”: the “doing exploits”. These are the Great Works that pleases Him. It all comes from **knowing Him and believing Him**. May we come to know Him and believe Him this way: as The Truth of our Salvation in everything we do.

My prayer is that we would come to the understanding and assurance that Paul came to in Christ. **2 Timothy 1:12**, *“...For I KNOW WHOM I HAVE BELIEVED, and am persuaded that*

*his is able to keep that which I have committed unto him
against that day.”*

Amen

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