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THE BIBLE TEACHER

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EDITORIAL



The Grace of God

Man is a sinner. He is such, not because he was born with the guilt of sin, but because he himself has transgressed the law of God. He has broken God's law, and that is what sin is according to 1 John 3 : 4. As responsible being, one who has reached the age of accountability, knowing right from wrong, then he has thought, said, and done those things that are bad and wrong in the sight of God and man.

Since God is holy, and without sin, and cannot sin, and sin cannot enter into his presence, then he demands that sin be punished, and that justice be done. The Bible therefore says that whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap (Galatians 6 : 7, 8), that the soul that sinneth it shall die (Ezekiel 18 : 20), and the wages of sin is death. (Romans 6 : 23).

But God being the creator of man (Genesis 2 : 7), and the lover of souls (John 15 : 13), and not willing that any should perish (2 Peter 3 : 9), decided that he would make an atonement for the sins of the world by offering a sacrifice. (Romans 5 : 11). To do

that he would have to make a sinless offering. There was but one who could do this and that was his only Son, Jesus Christ. So we read, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world through him might be saved." (John 3 : 16, 17).

Therefore, the Bible tells us that Jesus Christ came to this world and died on the cross for the sins of man. We read, "For even hereunto were ye called : because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow in his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (1 Petter 2 : 21-24). Again he said, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." (1 Peter 3 : 18). The Apostle Paul wrote, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5 : 6-8). And on we could go with many similar scripture references.

Now what do we have? We have man a sinner, unable to help himself or to save himself. He is lost and doomed. That means that with sin man must die because sin must be punished. But then God steps into the picture. He loves man so much that he is willing to even give his only Son to die on the cross as a sacrifice for the sins of the world. Now that's grace, unmerited favour. When man could not save himself then Christ gave himself that the man might be saved. It is a gift that is unparalleled. Man could never re-pay God for all of this. He could never do enough good works; he could never obey enough commands; he could never give enough, sacrifice enough, worship enough,

or do anything else enough, so that he could say that he has now earned his salvation. The Apostle Paul informs us, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2 : 8, 9).

Although we are saved by grace, that does not mean that there are no conditions, no commands to obey, and no responsibilities on man's part. The inspired writer said that we are saved by grace through faith. God has extended his grace to man in making it possible for man to be saved. Now man must reach up by faith to accept that grace. Faith comes by hearing the word of God. (Romans 10 : 17). Without faith it is impossible to please God, but by faith we must obey the Lord's commands. To make it possible that man have faith then he commanded that the gospel be taken into all the world and then he said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16 : 16). So when one learns the truth of God and believes it then he will obey the Lord. If he refuses to believe then he will be lost since Christ cannot save those who do not believe. And one who believes, but will not obey, does not have a faith that is strong enough to save him.

But to believe and obey the Lord does not nullify the grace of God. Even in one's obedience it will still take the grace of God to save a person. It was God's grace that made it all possible, made even obedience possible. But grace cannot apply to those who reject God's grace by refusing to obey him.

It is by grace that we are saved in this world; with all the many blessings that God has in store for his people, and it will be by the grace of God that faithful are saved in heaven forevermore. So we conclude with the words of the Apostle Paul, as he speaks to Christians, those who have been saved by the grace of God, For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world: Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and

our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2 : 11-14).



associate editorial

If A Child Died Where Would He Go?

There is no plan of salvation mentioned in the New Testament of the Bible for children. This within itself proves that little children need not to be saved, they are safe, and if a child dies he will go to heaven. The Bible teaches:

1. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." God says, "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." (Ezekiel 18:20). The inference is, no one, upon the day of judgment, will be declared righteous because his parents might have lived righteous lives upon earth, or a son or daughter will not go into hell because their father had sinned. THE SOUL THAT SINNETH, (*individual*), IT SHALL DIE. Therefore, since little children cannot sin they would not be condemned to die in hell, or to live eternally in hell.

2. Jesus told his disciples: "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 18:3). And at another place, speaking about children, he said that of such is the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 19:14). Because in little children there is no sin, they are without sin, therefore the Lord want us to become like little children,

because of such is the Kingdom of heaven. Now, if little children, as the Lord said, would enter into heaven, it follows then that they are without any sin. But if they were without sin, they would not need salvation. The plan of salvation, as revealed by the Lord in his New Testament, is for penitent, for those who can believe in him, and can repent of their sins, can confess Christ as the Son of God, and can be baptized for the forgiveness of sins. (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:36-38). No one will be saved without obeying the commands of the Lord. (John 3:36). But little children cannot do any of these things. Doesn't it show that little children need no salvation, because they are already safe, because they haven't sinned. The plan of salvation is for sinners. But children have no sin. If little children were also in sin then the Lord surely would have revealed a plan for their salvation. But he didn't.

4. When king David's little child died, he said, "Wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." (2 Samuel 12:23). Was he saying that he would go into hell to be with his child? No.

It is sad to see that many today have perverted God's word. Parents take their little children to so-called priests and pastors so that these little children should be sprinkled (baptized). This teaching was forced on people by the Roman Catholic church because she believed that if a little child died he would go to hell because of the sin of Adam, so she commanded that little children should be sprinkled (baptized), since baptism was commanded in the scriptures for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38). Later when all the modern day denominations (churches) came out of the catholic church they continued to practice among other things this unscriptural teaching also. The great danger in this teaching is that not only it is unscriptural but those who have been sprinkled (baptized) in their childhood at the instance of their parents refuse to be baptized scripturally because they believe they had been baptized already and thus remain in a lost state.

Reader, friends, you need to be baptized (immersed in water), for the forgiveness of your sins, if you have never been baptized

scripturally. There is no such thing taught in the Bible as infant baptism or sprinkling as baptism. If you have little children do not take them to anyone for baptizing them. Because if you do, you are not only adding into the teachings of God's word, but you will also be responsible for their refusal to obey God's command scripturally when they are grown up and when they would be required by the Lord to obey him.

Another Look At Repentance

Richard Rogers

The most pressing need in the world today is repentance. The absolute necessity of repentance for all men is borne out by the following Scriptures: Acts 17:30-31; 2:30; 2 Tim. 2:25; Luke 13:3, 5. Repentance was required under the Old Covenant (2 Chron. 7:14) and is under the New. Even the Gentiles were not exempted from God's requirement of repentance (See the book of Jonah). It was the condition of the return of God's favour to the people. Repentance was the burden of the preaching of John the Baptist (Matt. 3:1-12); and also of Jesus' message (Matt. 4:17; Mark 1:15).

WHAT REPENTANCE IS NOT

To help us understand what repentance is, let us examine some things that it isn't. First of all, repentance is not, as many think a "coming forward" and writing on a card, "I've done many things contrary to the will of God," or checking a box marked, "Restoration." It may be that one's sins are of such a nature that confession needs to be made to the brethren (James 5:16) and their prayers on his behalf sought (Acts 8:24); but he had better first repent of his wickedness and pray that God might forgive him (Acts 8:22). Some, by coming forward, get the consent of their consciences to continue in their sin, thinking they can always be "restored" again when they tire of their lives of sin. That's like Israel thinking they could sin

and then appease God's wrath by offering sacrifices. But compare Isa. 1:10-17: "What unto me is the multitude of your sacrifices? saith Jehovah:...When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand to trample my courts...Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil learn to do well." This concept ruined Israel and can ruin the influence of the church unless checked.

Secondly, repentance is not conviction of sin. On the day of Pentecost, Peter in his sermon on the death of Christ convicted the Jews of the sin of crucifying their Lord and King. They were "Pricked in their hearts," (i.e., convicted of sin), and wanted to know what to do. Notice Peter's answer to these convinced sinners: "Repent ye and be baptized every one of you." These Jews, though convicted of their sin, still needed to repent.

Third, repentance is not sorrow for sin. Surely to repent, one must have a repulsion in regard to his sin. But Judas proves that one may sorrow for wrong committed and never repent. In Matt. 27:3-5, Judas was sorry that he had sold Jesus. However, this sorrow worked death, not repentance. As Paul states in 2 Cor. 7:10, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." Judas regretted his bargain, but could not find repentance.

Last, repentance is not transformation of life. Truly, without a changed life there has been no repentance. But the new life stands in relation to repentance as effect to cause. See Matt. 3: 7-10; Acts 3:19; Ezekiel 18:21.

WHAT REPENTANCE IS

There are two Hebrew words translated "repent" in the Old Testament: (1) Naham, which implies difficulty in breathing, hence "to sigh" or "to groan." From this naturally evolves "to lament" or "to grieve." When considering others it merges into compassion and sympathy. When one's own sinful character is in view it comes to mean "to rue." The principal idea is not personal rela-

tion to sin, either sorrowing for or turning from. It indicates the emotions of God which impel Him to take a different course in dealing with people. (2) *Shubh*, more generally used to express the ordinary connotation of repentance. The prophets used this word exclusively. It emphasizes a radical change in one's attitude toward sin and God. It carries with it a conscious separation from the word and a personal decision to forsake sin and to enter into fellowship with God. The distinction between these two words is emphasized by such statements as God "is not a man that He should repent" (1 Sam. 15:29; Job. 42:6; Jer. 8:6).

In the New Testament two different Greek words are translated "repent": (1) *Metamelomai*, literally means to have a feeling of care, concern, or regret; like *naham*, it expresses the emotional aspect of repentance. This is the word used in regard to Judas in Matt. 27:3. Thus Judas regretted his sin but did not fully repent. (2) *Metanoeo*, expressed the idea of a spiritual change in regard to God. Literally it means "to have another mind." When we understand that, involved in mind is intellect, emotion and volition or will, then we get the true picture of repentance by just seeing it as a change of mind. Our intellects have been educated to the right and wrong involved. Our emotions have been stirred to love the right and hate the wrong. So our volition or will is motivated to do the right and shun the wrong.

Repentance brings about a complete change as expressed by the Greek word, *epistrepheo*. It is used, primarily in the book of Acts, to bring out more clearly the distinct change wrought by repentance. See Acts 9:35; 11:21; also 1 Thess. 1:9.

We can see the difference between regret and repentance best by viewing some examples of both in the Bible. Saul, the first king of Israel, when rebuked of his sin of not obeying God, cried in 1 Sam. 15, "I have sinned." Yet, he continued to live in rebellion to God. He was sorry that he had sinned, but he did not repent. Therefore, God rejected him. David, on the other hand, who succeeded him to the throne, after his terrible sin with Bathsheba, not only cried that he had sinned but begged, also, "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from

my sin...Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps. 51:3, 10).

Also, one might contrast the two thieves on the crosses. One wanted to get out of the immediate consequences of his sins, death on a cross. The other rebuked him, saying they were only getting what they deserved. Then he asked Jesus for a spiritual blessing in the kingdom. He was desiring to escape the prolonged punishment for his sins. One was sorry he had sinned and didn't want to die. The other repented and wanted to be in the heavenly Kingdom.

WHAT REPENTANCE BRINGS

In 2 Cor. 7, Paul is commending the brethren for their repentance in regard to the incestuous brother in 1 Corinthians, "For behold, this selfsame thing, that ye were made sorry after a godly sort, what earnest care it wrought in you, yea what clearing of yourselves, yea indignation, yea what fear, yea what longing, yea what zeal, yea what avenging! In everything ye approved yourselves to be pure in the matter." With such wonderful results awaiting us, let us repent and turn to God.

Do Men Speak In Tongues Today?

Rubell Shelly

One of the most significant movements in modern Church History is generally designated Pentecostalism. It began on New Year's Eve, 1900, at the Bethel Bible College of Topeka, Kansas. A student named Agnes Ozman asked the director of the school to lay his hands on her head and pray for her to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. When he did so, she began uttering sounds which no one understood and which were then alleged to have been the gift of tongues. From this point of beginning sprang the present-day Pentecostal groups, including the Assemblies of God, the Uni-

ted Pentecostal Church and the Church of God. These denominations have experienced phenomenal growth through the years.

The tongues-speaking phenomenon was generally confined to Pentecostal groups until around 1960. On April 3, 1960, Dennis J. Bennett, rector of St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Van Nuys, California, announced to his 2,600 member congregation that he had experienced the gift of tongues. He was shortly forced to resign his pulpit and the news media gave his story national attention. Now that "the cat was out of the bag", claims of a tongues experience began to be heard from leaders in numerous non-Pentecostal denominations. Lutherans, Baptists and other old-line denominations began to be affected. Outside the Pentecostal churches themselves, this movement is often referred to as Neo-Pentecostalism.

And now this movement has penetrated our brotherhood. Pat and Shirley Boone are probably the best-known personalities among those who have claimed this experience. A New Song is the book Brother Boone wrote to set forth his views on the subject. Testimony magazine shortly thereafter ran a cover photograph of Pat Boone in company with two denominational clergymen who also claim to have received tongues. This photo points up the tendency of such people to make the "baptism in the Spirit with tongues" the sole test of fellowship and to brush aside other considerations of doctrine. Several other brethren on the West Coast, among them some preachers, went into the movement at about the same time. Since then at least one church in Nashville has split over this issue and two or three other congregations have disfellowshipped some of their members over it. And I am personally acquainted with several brethren—some quite young and some not so young—who are unsure about speaking in tongues.

We cannot ignore this issue. The claims of those who say they have miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit such as tongues are being pressed hard and weak brethren are being confused and misled. We must investigate these claims and their underlying doctrine carefully and either wholeheartedly accept or vigorously oppose them. We cannot remain indifferent.

A STANDARD FOR EVALUATION

It might surprise you to learn that claims of speaking in tongues are by no means limited to so-called Christendom. The Eskimos of Greenland and the "holy men" of some other religion claim the experience. In fact, practically all pagan religions claim tongues. Even some in today's drug culture say that tongues-speaking has been part of their psychedelic experience. These claims obviously cannot all be true. They may all be false. But how can we know? How can we distinguish between the real thing and the counterfeit? How can we determine the attitude we should take toward this doctrine and its devotees?

The test of the tongues-speaker is not his claim that he has spoken in tongues by divine power, for even pagans make the same claim, but the propositional revelation of God in the Scriptures.

The Bible warns: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 John 4:1). Jesus said that many will be cast out in the final judgment even though they claim to have done "many mighty works" in his name. Why? Because they have not actually done the Father's will. (Matt. 7:21-23).

One of the most frightening passages in the New Testament is Paul's warning against deception by "power and signs and lying wonders". Such people will be condemned for believing a lie rather than the truth (2 Thess. 2:9-12). How can one avoid such a deception and the damnation which will result therefrom? How can we know if Pentecostalism is deception or reality? The very same passage goes on to teach that true assurance is not in alleged miracles and personal experiences but in the objective truth of the Word of God: "God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: where unto he called you through our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye were taught, whether by word, or by epistle of ours" (2 Thess. 2:13b-15).

The Word of God must sit in judgment upon human claims and actions, not vice versa.

An examination of the Word of God will show beyond question that genuine speaking in tongues can be known only as a historical fact and not as present-day reality. The tongues which occurred in New Testament times were of God but those alleged to occur today are counterfeit.

WHAT WAS SPEAKING IN TONGUES?

Tongues-speaking is unknown in the Old Testament record and is specifically referred to in only five places in the New Testament: Mark 16:17-18 (a promise to the apostles), Acts 2:1-13 (the apostles on Pentecost), Acts 10:44-47 and 11:15-18 (the household of Cornelius), Acts 19:1-7 (twelve men of Ephesus) and 1 Corinthians 12:1-14:40 (some in the church at Corinth).

Only one of these references contains an explicit description of the nature of tongues-speaking. There is no valid reason for thinking that the other occurrences were any different. Acts 2:4 tells us that the apostles "began to speak with other tongues" after the Holy Spirit came upon them. Acts 2:6 gives us the hearers' perspective on their tongues-speaking. "Every man heard them speaking in his own language." Thus it was that the apostles spoke with "other tongues" (i.e., languages other than their customary one) and the men who listened (i.e., men who themselves spoke the languages being given the apostles by the Holy Spirit) understood them with ease.

Modern tongues-speakers seldom claim and have never demonstrated such a phenomenon. Instead, they claim a "prayer language" or "ecstatic utterance" which they freely admit is not a human language. Anybody can babble incoherent syllables. But only such men as genuinely received power from on high could ever speak fluently in foreign languages they had not learned by the customary means of education!

"But doesn't the Bible speak of the 'unknown tongue'? And is

that language not a heavenly language different from human tongues?" asks someone. The word "unknown" does appear in the King James Version of the New Testament in 1 Corinthians 14:2,4,13,14,19, and 27. But the word is in italics which means that it has been supplied by the translators in an effort to clarify the meaning. In this case the translators obscured the meaning by inserting a word which is not in the Greek text. The word "unknown" does not occur in other standard translations of this passage and there is no valid reason for thinking that anything other than human languages are designated in 1 Corinthians 12-14.

Some people think 1 Corinthians 14:2 and 4 demand something other than human language. "For he that speaketh in a tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God; for no man understandeth; but in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. . . . He that speaketh in a tongue edifieth himself." There is nothing here which demands a "prayer language" or "ecstatic utterance". The statement that the uninterpreted tongue speaks only to God requires nothing more than a foreign language which the speaker does not understand and for which there is no interpreter. The statement that he who speaks in such an uninterpreted tongue edifies only himself means that although no one (including himself) understands what he says the speaker nevertheless is aware that God is performing a miracle through him and is edified or encouraged in that fact.

The tongues of the Scripture were always human languages. The alleged Tongues of Pentecostalism never are. They are gibberish such as can either be faked by the charlatan or deceptively foisted off on the unlearned but sincere convert. The recent film Marjoe demonstrates this point. Marjoe acknowledges that he faked tongues-speaking and demonstrated such in the film. But he also duped many sincere people into imitating his "lying wonder" unto their deception.

WHY SUCH CANNOT OCCUR TODAY

There are numerous reasons why we can confidently say that

Pentecostalism with its alleged speaking in tongues is a false movement which can neither be accepted nor tolerated by faithful Christians but which must be vigorously opposed.

First, there is no Holy Spirit baptism available to men today. Whereas the Bible speaks of several baptisms (including baptism in the Holy Spirit), Paul declared that by the time of the writing of the book of Ephesians there was but "one baptism" available to men (Eph. 4:5). Was that "one baptism" the baptism of the Holy Spirit or some other? On Pentecost and at Cornelius' house, both Spirit baptism and water baptism were in evidence. But by the time Paul wrote Ephesians 4:5, at least one of the two had ceased. But which? By virtue of the command of Christ, water baptism was to be administered "unto the end of the world (i.e., age)" (Matt. 28:19-20). Thus it must be that Holy Spirit baptism ceased after the cases recorded in the New Testament and water baptism continues (and will continue) as the "one baptism" of the Christian religion until Jesus returns to end the age.

Second, there can be no tongues or other miraculous gifts today because there can be no apostolic laying on of hands. Miraculous tongues were imparted to men not only through the baptism of the Holy Spirit but by the laying on of apostles' hands. Of all the men who possessed spiritual gifts, only the apostles could impart them to others. For example, Philip was a Spirit-filled evangelist who possessed various miraculous gifts. But, in order to have similar gifts imparted to others in the city of Samaria, Philip—who was not an apostle—had to wait for Peter and John to come down to that city and lay hands on certain men!

Third, Paul said that miraculous gifts would cease when the New Testament was completely revealed unto men. Paul contrasted the temporary nature of such gifts as tongues with the permanent nature of love when he wrote: "Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part: but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." (1 Cor. 13:8-10).

Special miraculous gifts were given to certain Christians in order to confirm and establish the gospel as it was preached and to facilitate the harmonious functioning of the body of Christ until such time as (1) the revelation and confirmation of the gospel was complete, (2) the church was functioning as she should, and (3) leaders could be developed by normal means of spiritual growth. Once the New Testament was completed and circulated, the need for spiritual gifts would cease to exist. God does for us through his inspired Word what he once had to do through miraculous means before the gospel was completely revealed and confirmed. "That which is perfect" (i.e., the full revelation of the gospel) is now in our possession and "that which is in part" (i.e., miraculous gifts such as tongues) has ceased!

CONCLUSION

Although some alleged tongues-speaking today is mere fake and trickery (e.g., Marjoe), perhaps most of it is to be explained psychologically. In his book, *The Psychology of Speaking in Tongues*, John P. Kildahl states that 85 percent of the tongues-speakers he interviewed admitted that they were in the midst of great personal anxiety immediately prior to their experience with tongues. Kildahl mentioned anxieties such as stem from marriage problems, loneliness, illness, financial pressures and guilt and then concluded: "We believe anxiety is a prerequisite for developing the ability to speak in tongues" (p. 55). Pat Boone, for instance, confessed that he and Shirley had wrestled with serious marital problems and that he was faced with other personal and professional crises at the time of his first experience with tongues. Thus psychologically conditioned for the "experience", many people are led into it quite easily and naturally. They then experience a psychological uplift and a release from tension and are convinced that God has given them a baptism in the Holy Spirit. Again, the "instant religion of experience" is such as we would expect at this time in history when the irrational is given preference over the rational. Modern man has accepted a new attitude toward truth which must be understood if one wants to see why the tongues movement is upon us. Arriving at truth through a

careful use of reason, logic, proof and debate is demanding. It requires time, diligent study and personal sacrifice. But this is the path the Bible itself commands us to take in proving that Christianity is true (Cf. 1 Pet. 3:15). Modern man does not want to go this difficult route. He wants a short, easy and "instant" religion. He therefore seeks some sort of personal experience or personal encounter with deity to tell him he is saved. This experience can be non-rational and unverifiable. He can interpret it to mean anything he wants it to mean. It is a totally subjective approach to truth which is as foreign to the Biblical approach as can be. And tongues-speaking fits conveniently into its framework!

The path to solid ground in religion is not the seeking of mysterious personal encounters but the learning of and obedience to the propositional truth of the Bible. Any other approach is wrong and must be rejected.

Daily Living With Christ

Gene A. Ellmore

"And they, continuing daily with one accord..." (Acts 2:46).

The Lord Jesus had gone up, the Holy Spirit had come down, and the apostles went out, and that same day "there were added unto them about three thousand souls." And they continued daily with one accord. It is difficult to get Christian to continue daily. Yet, this was the secret of the remarkable growth of the church in its beginning. The Christians of the first century were earnest and enthusiastic. Daily they went from house to house, preaching and teaching, eating and drinking with gladness and singleness of heart, and the Lord blessed their labours by adding the obedient—the saved to the church. When Christians are faithful in continuing daily, the Lord is faithful in adding daily.

The greatest business in the world is winning souls! Jesus

started the business by daily walking the dusty roads of Palestine, talking to men about their souls. He trained twelve men to carry on the same business and to train others to expand the business for the future. Great results came to the early church not by the eloquence of the preacher nor the grandeur of a building, but by a daily continuing, all-out witnessing the truth concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

The early Christians developed a burning passion to preach Christ to the whole world. This was an aggressive task, presenting the gospel of Christ to the pagan masses. They could succeed only by continuing faithfully to preach the Apostles doctrine. To faithfully preach the Apostles doctrine they had to be nourished and sustained daily by the word. Where there is a daily witnessing, there must be a daily feeding. A passion for winning souls is preceded by a hungering and thirsting for the truth. Not until we as Christians continue daily in saturating ourselves with the truth of God's Word and in personal evangelism, will we impress the dying masses that they need the Saviour that we claim to love and depend upon. May we, like the Bereans of old "receive the Word with all readiness of mind, and search the Scriptures daily" (Acts 1:11).

Jesus of Nazareth

Jesus of Nazareth was, for example; altruistic, without indiscriminateness; constructive, without castle building; dignified, without stiffness; delicate, without daintiness; enthusiastic, without fanaticism; guileless, without credulousness; chivalrous, without rashness; aggressive, without pugnacity; conciliatory, without sycophancy; prudent, without opportunism; modest, without self-depreciation; gracious, without condescension; just, without severity; lenient, without laxity; flexible, without vacillation; conservative, without obstructiveness; progressive, without precipitance; patient, without stoicism; persistent, without perverseness; decisive, without bluntness; imperative, without imperiousness;

heroic, without coarseness; independent, without self-insultation, self-conscious, without self-conceit; optimistic, without dreaminess; sad, without gloom; sympathetic, without mawkishness; generous, without prodigality; frugal, without churlishness; appreciative, without effusiveness; indignant, without bitterness, forgiving, without feebleness; sociable, without familiarity; reserved, without moroseness; conscientious, without bigotry; self denying, without asceticism; saintly, without unctiousness; virile, without fierceness; diversified, without contrariety; in a word perfect, without unnaturalness. He is the way, the truth and the life.

We must be men of humility and of thought, if we are to occupy the position of neither "too little" nor "too much" in our duty to ourselves, to others and to God. We must ever be in quest of the golden mean, and when we finish our quest we will find safety and happiness. Remember that truth is seldom, if ever, found at an extreme, and that middle ground is the vantage ground of truth. Remember, that our conduct here will determine whether the Son of God will be to us an "enswathing kiss or a consuming fire."

—Selected

Purpose of the Law of Moses

L. L. Gieger

The members of the church in Galatia, being in need of instruction about the source of their salvation, were given to understand that they did not receive the Spirit by the works of the law. Instead, they were in reception of God's Spirit by the "hearing of faith"; hence, another purpose than this was served by Moses' law. But, first let us establish the meaning of the expression, "law of Moses," and then determine its purpose in God's eternal plan.

MEANING OF "LAW OF MOSES"

John declared, "the law was given by Moses" (John 1:17), and

it should be known therefore that Moses was simply God's instrument for the giving of his law unto the Israelites (Ex. 19:20.) Thus it was really God's law given through Moses at the time of the Mount Sinai experiences recorded in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. This law was partly written (the ten commandments on two tables of stone), partly spoken (the instruction about sacrifices and incense), and partly seen (the pattern shown to Moses by which he built the tabernacle). Thus, the "law of Moses" includes the "handwriting of ordinances," the offering of animal sacrifices through the Levitical priesthood, and the worship that centered around the tabernacle. This law rested upon the priesthood of Levi and its central part pertained to the words that were written on the two tables of stone. These words were called the covenant (1 Kings 8:9, 21), and were kept in the "ark [box] of the covenant" in the Most Holy Place of the tabernacle. (Ex. 31:18; 25:10-22.)

Did God intend that this covenant regulate his people through all succeeding ages? No! He inspired Jeremiah to predict a change to be made (Jer. 31:31-34), and even Moses, the giver of it, to explain that the Lord would raise up another prophet (Christ Jesus) and put his words in the mouth of that prophet (Deut. 18:18-20). Perhaps now we are ready for Paul's teaching in Gal. 3:19ff. Let us read each thought carefully and with ample connection with the writing in both Old and New Testaments.

PAUL'S QUESTION AND ANSWERS

"Wherefore then serveth the law?" Many generations passed between the time of Abraham and the standing of his descendants before Mount Sinai to receive the law, and these generations had endured blessing, cursing, tempting, trying, fidelity and infidelity. They had come through good times and bad, and had known pagan practices and heathen principles firsthand. Adversity had befallen them in Egypt and the journey to Canaan was a new and strange experience. They needed help! God had promised Abraham that Christ would come through his children, but it had been a long time before and they were confronted with many immediate problems and decisions. Their minds were still much

on Egypt, their concerns were about the wilderness and Canaan, and Messiah may have been subjugated to a secondary place in their thinking just at this time; but God had not forgotten. The Saviour was to come as promised and the people would have to remain separate from all others and marry only among themselves to show the world that God kept his promise to Abraham and actually brought Christ through him, Issac and Jacob. Fleshly ordinances and carnal control, therefore, composed part of the "yoke" that was placed upon them. But God was also a Spirit, and this part of his nature had to be brought out in his dealing with the human family. So, there were both material and spiritual reasons for his giving the law.

FOUR REASONS

1. "It was added because of transgression." Had they been as faithful to God as was Abraham, or had they been as careful to marry only of their own number as he was for Isacc to do so, the whole history of the Jewish people would have been different. But they were not. They sinned in many ways and to keep them from increasing in transgression, to the promise of blessing that had been made to Abraham, God added the law. It was to regulate his descendants and to keep them as a separated people "till the seed [Christ] should come." They alone were to keep it, and this because of rebellion on the one hand and intermarriage with strange people on the other.

2. The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. The "schoolmaster" here is comparable to our school bus driver, and not to our school principal or superintendent. As the bus driver is in charge of the children until they arrive at school, so the law of Moses was given charge of the ancestors of the Messiah. It would be unreasonable, therefore, to suppose that this law was to be continued in force after Christ came and confirmed his claim of being the Messiah by his resurrection from the dead and his coronation as King of kings. In another figure of speech, he is the sun of righteousness and at his "rising" the dark shadows of the Mosaical system were no more the light upon which the Lords' people must depend.

3. The law pointed out duty and alerted to danger. During the long, Old Testament period of hundreds of years, the people needed to be informed that obedience to God was right, that he would condescend to inform man of the divine will, and that he would forgive him of his sins. To this end, some revelation was made in Eden and more as the years went by; but, the law specifically told the Israelites certain things to do and not to do. It required definite acts of worship toward God and ordered particular treatment to be given friends and enemies. Paul said, "I had not known...except the law had said." (Rom. 7:7). The pointing out of duty alerted to danger even when it was not positively stated, because a law has a penalty connected with its violation or it is no law at all. Basically, Moses' law was contained in "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not" statements.

4. The law was a temporary regulatory system. The expression, "till the seed should come," when studied in connection with Jer. 31:31-34, Deut. 18:18-20, Rom. 7:1-4, Eph. 2:12-17 and Col. 2:14-17, can have no meaning except that the law of Moses was to continue in force until Christ came, fulfilled it (Matt. 5:17, 18), took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross (Col. 2:14), and established his law in its place (Rom. 8:1-4).

Question: Did the law of Moses serve its purpose? Yes, in a most excellent way. Although the people were not always obedient to it, and in spite of the fact that they later rejected it in favour of their many traditions (Mark 7:7-9), it escorted them unto Christ. So well did it do this that there is no shadow of doubt that Christ is of the seed of Abraham and therefore that God kept his promise of Gen. 12:1-3, "...and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." It served well as a wall to keep the Jewish people apart from all others (Eph. 2:14), being specifically their law (Deut. 5:3), for only they and the few others who were their servants and who were proselyted by them were its subjects. In a most excellent way did it point out duty and danger to those who engaged in its study, and, although it was "weak through the flesh" (Rom. 8:3), and had no blood in it that would take away sins (Heb. 10:4), the people were by it shown that obedience to God in whatsoever he specified was attendant with blessing and that disobedience resulted in receiving his curse.

Ten Commandments

Terry Bell

Have you ever heard someone say "I just don't get much out of the worship service? Sometimes this is more of a commentary on the person than on the service. Here are some suggestions that may help you improve the quality of your worship when you gather with the Saints on the Lord's Day.

1. *Make Sunday Worship A Priority.* It is the most important commitment of the week. It is nothing less than a "meeting with God."
2. *Don't Bring God Left-Overs.* God has always demanded the "first fruits." He cannot be satisfied with scraps. Get plenty of sleep on Saturday night and come to worship with an alert and refreshed mind.
3. *Prepare Your Mind.* Discipline begins in the mind. So does discipleship. Train your mind to CONCENTRATE on things of the spirit.
4. *Be On Time.* Rushing in late makes it difficult for you to settle into meditation and disturbs other worshippers. Get up a little earlier if necessary.
5. *Bring Your Bibles.* Coming to worship without your Bible is like going out to drive your car without the keys.
6. *Open Your Mouth And Sing.* Singing is not an option. It is a command. Those who violate this command are just as guilty as if they neglected the assembly in the first place.
7. *Sit Close To The Front.* Experience has shown that some marginal church members would rather switch congregations than change pews. Research indicates that the level of

emotion and mental participation decreases as one moves closer to the back.

8. *Before And After The Service.* Be Friendly. Worship is enhanced when done as a family. Family members should know and love each other.
9. *Listen Carefully To The Sermon.* Taking notes may help. Follow along in your Bible. Take the message seriously. It will help you. It will encourage the speaker. It will show non Christians that we are serious.
10. *Make Your Worship God-Centered, Not Man Centered.* Worship is primarily a giving situation. Those who say, "I don't GET much out of worship" are wrongly focused. It is in the GIVING of ourselves that we GET. NO GIVING-NO GETTING.

चिन्ह और चंगाई

जसवन्त गुड़िया

(जमशेदपुर)

आजकल बहुतेरे ऐसे लोग हैं जो यह दावा करते हैं कि उन्हें यह वरदान मिला है कि वे बीमारों को चंगा कर सकते हैं या अन्य ऐसे कार्य कर सकते हैं जिनका विवरण हम मरकुस १६ : १७ - १८ में पढ़ते हैं। दूसरे शब्दों में हम कह सकते हैं, कि वे चिन्ह दिखा सकते हैं।

लेकिन इन चिन्हों का क्या प्रयोजन था या है ? क्या आज हमें इन चिन्हों की कोई आवश्यकता है ? चूंकि इन चिन्हों का विवरण हम बाइबल में पढ़ते हैं इसलिए यह भी आवश्यक है कि इन प्रश्नों का हल भी बाइबल ही में ढूँढें।

हम आगे चलकर मरकुस १६ : २० में पढ़ते हैं कि इह चिन्हों के द्वारा वचन को दृढ़ किया गया (प्रेरितों १६ : २०)। इन चिन्हों को देखकर लोगों ने सुसमाचार पर विश्वास किया (प्रेरितों ६ : ३४ - ३५ ; ६ : ४२ ; २ : २२)। इसी प्रकार

हम पुराने नियम में भी पाते हैं। यहोवा परमेश्वर ने मूसा के द्वारा तीन चिन्ह इसलिए दिखाए की इस्राएली मूसा पर विश्वास लाएं (निर्गमन ४ : ४ - ६)। यहोवा परमेश्वर ने मूसा के द्वारा मिस्र में अनेक चिन्ह प्रगट किए ताकि इस्राएली अपनी आनेवाली पीढ़ियों सहित परमेश्वर पर विश्वास लाएं (निर्गमन १० : १ - २; भजन ० ७८ : ६)। इसी प्रकार गिदोन को भी चिन्ह दिया गया (न्यायीयों ६ : १७)। फिर नए नियम में हम पढ़ते हैं कि प्रभु यीशु ने अपने विरोधियों को प्रत्युत्तर देते हुए कहा “जो काम मैं अपने पिता के नाम से करता हूं वे ही मेरे गवाह हैं।” (यूहन्ना १० : २५) “...चाहे मेरी प्रतीति न भी करो, परन्तु उन कामों की तो प्रतीति करो ताकि तुम जानो, और समझो कि पिता मुझ में है और मैं पिता में हूं।” (यू० १० : ३८)। अतएव यह स्पष्ट ही है कि चिन्हों का प्रयोजन यह था कि लोग परमेश्वर पर विश्वास लाएं। हम लोग विश्वास करें कि प्रभु यीशु परमेश्वर का पुत्र है।

तो क्या हमें आज परमेश्वर पर विश्वास करने के लिए प्रत्यक्ष चिन्हों की आवश्यकता है? किन्तु चिन्ह ढूंढनेवालों को प्रभु ने चेतावनी दी है, (लूका ११ : २६)। हमें यह भी ज्ञात होना चाहिए कि प्रथम शताब्दी के मसीहीयों को बाइबल उपलब्ध नहीं थी। क्योंकि बाइबल का लिखा जाना उस शताब्दी के अन्त में पूरा हुआ। उन का विश्वास उन चिन्हों पर ही आधारित और दृढ़ था। लेकिन हमारे विश्वास का स्रोत है बाइबल। “क्योंकि विश्वास सुनने से और सुनना मसीह के वचन से होता है।” (रोमियों १० : १७; यू० २० : २६)। सो यह स्पष्ट है कि हमें आज प्रत्यक्ष चिन्हों की कोई आवश्यकता नहीं है। हमें उन्हीं चिन्हों पर विश्वास करना चाहिए जिनका वर्णन हम पवित्रशास्त्र में पाते हैं। (यू० २० : ३० - ३१)। इस प्रकार ही हम सुसमाचार पर विश्वास ला सकते हैं, क्योंकि यह विश्वास करने-वालों के लिए उद्धार के निमित्त परमेश्वर की सामर्थ्य है। (रोमियों १ : १६)।

कुछ लोग यह भी कहते हैं कि चंगाई एक आत्मिक वरदान है जो पवित्रात्मा द्वारा दिया जाता है। बाइबल के नए नियम में हम पढ़ते हैं कि प्रेरित जिन व्यक्तियों पर हाथ रखते थे वे आत्मिक वरदान पाते थे। (प्रे० १६ : ६; रो० १ : ११; २ तोमु० १ : ६)। जैसा कि पौलुस ने लिखा “—कि मैं तुम्हें कोई आत्मिक वरदान दूँ जिस से तुम स्थिर हो जाओ।” (रोमियों १ : ११)। यहाँ स्पष्ट है कि आत्मिक वरदानों का क्या प्रयोजन था। आत्मिक वरदानों का पर्याप्त विवरण १ कुरिथियों के १२वें, १३वें और १४वें अध्याय में मौजूद है। अन्य भाषाएं विश्वासियों के लिए नहीं परन्तु अविश्वासियों के लिए चिन्ह है और भविष्यवाणियां अविश्वासियों के

लिए नहीं परन्तु विश्वासियों के लिए चिन्ह हैं। (१ कु० १४ : २२)। हम यह भी पढ़ते हैं कि जब नया नियम इस संसार में आएगा तब आत्मिक वरदान लोप हो जायेंगे। (१ कु० १३ : ८ - १२)। “—परन्तु सर्वसिद्ध आएगा, तो अघूरा मिट जाएगा।” सर्वसिद्ध, अर्थात् स्वतन्त्रता की सिद्ध व्यवस्था, या विश्वास की व्यवस्था या आत्मा की वाचा, मसीह की व्यवस्था, नई वाचा या नया नियम। (याकूब १ : २५ ; इब्रानियों ६ : १५ ; गलतियों ४ : २४ ; १ कु० ६ : ३१ ; रोमियों ३ : २७ ; २ कु० ३ : ६ - ६)। सो आज नया नियम हमें दिया गया है, और आत्मिक वरदान समाप्त हो गए हैं। यदि हम स्थिर हैं तो आत्मिक वरदानों के कारण नहीं बल्कि “आत्मा की तलवार जो परमेश्वर की वचन है” के द्वारा (ईफि० ६ : १३ - १७)। यदि हम स्थिर हैं तो उस विश्वास के द्वारा जो वचन के द्वारा मसीह में है। (१ कुरिन्थियों २ : ५ ; रोमियों १ : १६)। क्योंकि “उसके ईश्वरीय सामर्थ ने सब कुछ जो जीवन और भक्ति से संबन्ध रखता है, हमें उसी की पहचान के द्वारा दिए हैं—” (२ पत० १ : ३)।

सो यह स्पष्ट है कि आत्मिक वरदान समाप्त हो गए हैं और इनकी आवश्यकता नहीं है। क्योंकि प्रेरित जिन पर हाथ रखते थे वे आत्मिक वरदान प्राप्त करते थे परन्तु उन व्यक्तियों के पास यह अधिकार नहीं था कि हाथ रखकर अन्य व्यक्तियों को वरदान दें। इसको समझने के लिए हम फिलिप्पुस पर ध्यान दें। (प्रे० ६ : ५, ६ ; प्रे० ८ : ४ - १७)। क्योंकि उसने चिन्ह और समर्थ सहित सुसमाचार का प्रचार सामरिया में किया लेकिन यरुशलेम से प्रेरित बाद में वहां गए कि लोग पवित्रात्मा पाएं। (पद १४ - १७) अतएव हम इस निष्कर्ष पर पहुंचते हैं कि जब प्रेरितों की मृत्यु हो गई और तत्पश्चात् वे लोग भी सो गए जिन्होंने हाथ रखने के द्वारा वरदान पाया था तब आत्मिक वरदान पूर्ण रूप से इस पृथ्वी पर से समाप्त हो गए परन्तु अब विश्वास, आशा और प्रेम स्थाई है (१ कु० १३ : १३)। इन तीनों के ही द्वारा हम अपनी आत्माओं का उद्धार प्राप्त कर सकते हैं और स्वर्ग के राज्य के वारिस भी बन सकते हैं। परन्तु प्रेम अटल है। (१ कु० १३ : ८)। क्योंकि मसीह के दोबारा आने पर हमारा विश्वास और हमारी आशा मसीह में पूर्ण हो जाएंगे। (रोमियों ८ : २४ ; इब्रानियों ११ : १)। सो हमें आज चिन्हों की कोई जरूरत नहीं। इसलिए सावधान रहें कहीं हम ठोकर न खाएं, जैसा कि पौलुस ने लिखा है “यहूदी तो चिन्ह चाहते हैं—जो यहूदियों के निकट ठोकर का कारण—है” (१ कु० १ : २२ - २३)। इसलिए इस प्रकार का दावा करना सरासर गलत है और ऐसे लोग झूठे हैं।

अब इन भूठे लोगों के प्रचार और कार्य पर भी ध्यान दें और वचन की कसौटी पर परखें। इन भूठे प्रचारकों का मुख्य प्रचार यह है कि

(१) आज लोग रोगों से पीड़ित हैं, इसका कारण लोगों के पाप और शैतान है।

(२) यदि हम अपने पापों का अंगीकार करें, प्रभु के नाम से तेल मले प्रार्थना करें और प्रभु पर विश्वास करें तो हम चमत्कारी ढंग से चंगे हो जाएंगे।

(३) यदि ऐसा करने पर भी हम चंगे नहीं होते हैं, तो इसके कारण ये हैं :

(क) हमारा अविश्वास या संदेह।

(ख) हो सकता है हमारे माता-पिता ने पाप किया हो अतः वे भी आकर अपने अपने पापों का अंगीकार करें।

(ग) यदि हम विश्वास में बने रहें और तेल का इस्तेमाल करते रहें तो धीरे-धीरे रोग-मुक्त हो सकते हैं।

अब इन बातों को यदि हम वचन द्वारा परखें तो हम पाएंगे कि नए नियम के अनुसार :—

(१) रोगी पूर्ण रूप से और तत्काल ही चंगे किए जाते थे।

(२) प्रभु यीशु ने एक अंधे व्यक्ति के बारे में कहा था “तू तो इसने पाप किया था ; तू इसके माता-पिता ने—” (यू० ९ : १ - १३)।

(३) रोगी निराश होकर वापस नहीं जाते थे, तू ही उनसे यह कहा जाता था कि उन्होंने ने चंगापन इसलिए नहीं पाया क्योंकि उन्होंने अविश्वास या संदेह किया। इसके विपरीत हम पाते हैं कि ऐसे रोगी भी चंगे किए गए

जो कि इस बात से अनजान थे कि अमुक व्यक्ति द्वारा हम चंगाई प्राप्त करने जा रहे हैं। उदाहरण स्वरूप, मंदिर का लंगड़ा (प्र० ३ : १ - १०),

और ३६ वर्षीय बेतहसदा कुण्ड का रोगी (यू० ५ : २ - ६)।

(४) चंगाई प्राप्त करता रोगी के विश्वास पर निर्भर नहीं करता बल्कि प्रार्थना करनेवाले व्यक्ति के विश्वास पर निर्भर करता है। (याकूब ५ : १४ - १५ ; प्र० ३ : १६)।

(५) हर प्रकार के रोग और पीड़ा दूर किए जाते थे। क्या जन्म के अंधे,

गूंगे, लंगड़े, यहां तक कि जो दुर्घटनाओं के शिकार हो जाते थे। (प्र०

नित प्रार्थना २० : ७-११; लू० २२ : ५०-५१) । जबकि (ये) भूठे प्रचारक केवल भौतिक शरीर की अंदरूनी बीमारी ही चंगा करते हैं। यदि दुर्घटनावश मेरा पैर फट या टूट जाता है तो इसे चंगा करने में ये सर्वथा असमर्थ हैं। जबकि बाइबल में हम ऐसा नहीं पाते हैं। यहां यह कहना निरापेक्ष होगा कि आज जो ये भूठे प्रचारक चंगाई का ढोंग करते हैं मैं समझता हूं कि एक मनस्विकितस्क इनसे बढ़कर कार्य करता है। क्योंकि मनुष्य के अधिकांश रोग मानसिक विकारों के कारण ही उधजते हैं।

हम तब नियम में पढ़ते हैं कि प्रेरित पौलुस एक बार बीमार पड़ा था। उसने प्रभु से यह कहकर प्रार्थना की कि यह उससे दूर हो जाए। किंतु इसके बावजूद उसे यह बीमारी भोगनी पड़ी। (२ कु० १२ : ७-१०)। त्रुफिमस को पौलुस ने मीलेतुस नामक स्थान में बीमार छोड़कर अपने प्रचारक कार्य हेतु वहां से प्रस्थान किया, (२ ती० ४ : २०); जब कि पौलुस के पास इतनी सामर्थ्य थी कि रोगी उसके कपड़े का स्पर्श कर रोगमुक्त हो जाते थे! (प्रे० १६ : ११-१२)। पौलुस ने तीमुथियुस को लिखकर यही सलाह दी थी कि वह अपने पेट की बीमारी के लिए दाखिरस का उपयोग दवा की तरह करे। (१ ती० ५ : २३)। इपफ्रुदीतुस, पौलुस का एक सहयोगी, मरने के लगभग बीमार पड़ा, कारण मसीह के काम के लिए प्राणों का जोखिम। (फि० २ : २५-३०)। यहां मैं प्रश्न पूछता हूं कि ये भूठे प्रचारक जो अपने आप की विश्वासी, उपदेशक और वचन के ज्ञानी कहलाते हैं क्या पौलुस से बढ़कर हैं? इससे साबित होता है कि इनके कार्य और प्रचार किस हद तक भूठे हैं। मैं उन लोगों के विषय में भी कहता हूं जो इनके द्वारा चंगे होने का दावा करते हैं, कि वे अपने मनोविगों और तीव्र भावुकतावश कुछ समय तक चंगाइपन महसूस तो करते हैं किन्तु बाद में वे जरूर इसे भी महसूस करते हैं कि वे कितने स्वस्थ हुए हैं, और सच्चाई क्या है? क्योंकि इसके प्रत्यक्ष प्रमाण स्वयं मेरे कई संबंधी गण हैं।

इन सभी उदाहरणों से यह स्पष्ट हो जाता है कि यदि हम परमेश्वर के संतान हैं तो यह भी आवश्यक है कि हमारा सांसारिक जीवन दुःखमय और परीक्षाओं से परिपूर्ण हो। क्योंकि परमेश्वर की महिमा हमारी निर्बलताओं में भी सिद्ध हो सकती है। (२ कु० १२ : ९-१०)। प्रभु जिस से प्रेम करता है उसकी ताड़ना भी करता है और जिसे पुत्र बना लेता है उसे कोड़े भी लगाता है (इब्रा १२ : ५-११; नीतिवचन ३ : १२)। सो यदि हम सुख में हैं या दुःख में हैं यह परमेश्वर की इच्छा एवं अनुग्रह पर निर्भर है क्योंकि हमारे लिए सब बातें भलाई ही को

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