

THE Law in the Heart

*From a sermon delivered by Rev. T. G. Oshokoya
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We are thankful to God that we are starting the year, 1979, with God. Our prayer and wish is that we may end it with God.

At the time the ministry of Moses came to an end, God called Joshua, the servant of Moses, who succeeded him, and gave him the secret of what was going to make him and his ministry successful.

"Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success" (Joshua 1:7, 8).

These verses were words of encouragement and exhortation from the very lips of God unto Joshua. Joshua must have been full of anxiety as to how he would be able to accomplish the gigantic task before him. But God made him understand that all he had to do was to take heed unto the laws and precepts which were written by Moses.

There may be those who argue today, that God has given them very wonderful revelations which may not be in accordance with the precepts in the Word of God, but claim that as God dealt with Paul the Apostle personally, so God is dealing with them too. However, these verses of the Scriptures have made them liars, because God told Joshua that he must meditate upon the Law, and not turn to the right or to the left.

"The just shall live by faith" was the summary of the sound doctrine that was propounded by Martin Luther. This was a testimony of the change of heart, the regeneration, which he experienced through the saving grace of God. He experienced this after the Dark Ages. Luther opposed the ceremonies and forms of worship, which those who were supporters of false religions of his own day, were practicing. Because of his stand for the Truth, he was persecuted and his official rank within the church was reduced to almost nothing. He, however, preached the Word of God that it was necessary for people to be born again, and have a new heart. This is made possible through the grace of God, by the application of the Blood of Jesus Christ, upon the heart of the believer after the confession of his sins. 'It is by grace we are saved through faith; and that not of ourselves: It is the gift of God, lest any man should boast.' This brought about a mighty revival worldwide at the time. It was the origin of Protestantism.

We also heard, as years went by, of another man in the continent of Europe, by the name, John Wesley. He was the son of a pastor and also a chaplain in their church. He bravely preached the Word of God. He went further to proclaim that it was only the pure in heart who would see God. He made them to understand through the Scriptures that it was necessary after one had been regenerated, to press on and pray for an experience whereby the "old-man" is destroyed and the sin principle eradicated. One is then entirely sanctified and becomes pure in heart. Wesley had followers who believed him. Some people however, did not feel happy about his preaching and he was expelled from the church.

He, however, continued to preach the Word. As a result of the teaching of this man of God, there arose groups that preaches against drunkenness, smoking, and many other vices of the society. They also preached the need to dress modestly. All these teachings were from the Word of God. Later, many sanctifies people all around the world, started praying their way through to the baptism of the Holy Ghost. It was after this that there arose lot of revivalists, and those who preached on restitution.

"When we go to God in penitence and make peace with Him, good things happen to us"

Some people may say that the Word of life was meant for men of ancient times only, and that times have changed. They do not believe that the Word can apply to those of modern days. However, the Word of God says that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. You should know that it is human beings who change; God never changes,- thanks be to God, the Word, of God never changes!

God says that if you dare change or alter it, if you dare turn to the right or to the left, you are not going to prosper; it shall not be well with you.

**"My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings.
"Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart.
"For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.
"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.
"Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee.
"Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.
"Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.
"Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil" (Proverbs 4:20-27).**

This was God's Word to Solomon and the Word, which he was told to incline his ears unto, was the Word of God, the precepts of God. He was expected to meditate upon it, to make sure that he understood it, to think about it and put it into practice. If he obeyed the Word, it would be health unto him, it would grant him peace and it would be an everlasting treasure unto him. "Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart."

You remember that at the time you were seeking salvation you had no desire for any other thing than to obtain the experience. It was uppermost in your heart. If you had sought God half heartedly, you would certainly not have received any blessing from Him. That is why we are told to meditate upon the Word: to speak, think, and ponder on it. "For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh."

No sinner has the breath of life. The breath of life is that breath which God breathed into Adam, and he became a living soul. He had the image of God and all round him was the perfection of God. When Adam disobeyed God, he became a cursed person. The image of God was taken away from him, and that was why he had to be driven away from the beautiful Garden. All the seed of Adam, who were born by women, were also born in sin. They are only capable of doing evil. But the moment a person reconciles with God and believes all His Word, God dwells in him. The glory and beauty of God show on his countenance, and from that moment, he has a change of heart, a change of personality. He is a new person. He does not steal any longer, nor tell lies, and he does not fight. God removes the desire to indulge in sin completely from him. Old things have passed away and he is now a new creature in Christ.

If he had been having bad dreams before, he will not experience them any longer; he will not suffer from nightmares any more. When we go to God in penitence and make peace with Him, good things happen to us. When a person becomes a new creature in this way, he finds that God is able to talk to him, and he is also able to talk with God. All his crooked past he would, by the grace of God, straighten.

This new spirit, the new breath of life, must be guarded very jealously. The work of grace that has been wrought has got to be kept very judiciously. Do not give room to lying, or anything which is going to tarnish your testimony. Make sure you keep your heart from evil or from any wrong thing. Make sure you do not open yourself to the temptation of the devil. Do not give any allowance to the flesh, evil, or the world. Do not allow anything to come

between you and God. Deceit should be removed far away from you.

"Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.

"Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.

"Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil."

Some people embraced the Gospel and were up and doing for the Lord, very fervent in the work of God. But because they looked to the right and to the left, they are no longer fervent for God. Without actually repenting and doing the first works, making sure that they turn away from all the past wrongdoings, so that they can move close unto the Lord, they may find out that it will be trouble on every side. Every day, one problem or the other will continue to overtake them and affliction upon affliction will be their lot. The worst of it is that, some

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people who will not change, line up with the Word of God and retrace their steps, crave for money, children, houses, and the material things of this world. They are very crazy in their desire for a husband or wife, and those things constitute a weight, which will not allow them to line up with all the precepts of God. My prayer is that God will deliver us from such a deadly situation!

"STAND fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Galatians 5:1).

Do not attach yourself to crooked teachings. Let the sound Word of God, with which you are being fed, suffice for you. When you go and attach yourself to a false teaching, the little which you have got will be taken away from you. You will become an unbeliever, and find yourself at crossroads, not knowing which way to take any longer. You will be one of those who are like a wave of the sea being tossed here and there, not knowing where they stand. Therefore, you have got to stay in the freedom which Christ has given unto you. Do not go here and there, because if you do, you will make a shipwreck of your faith. God has given us the Scriptures we embrace here; therefore, make sure you attach yourself to the sound Word of God.

"One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.

"For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock" (Psalm 27:4, 5).

There are some whose sole purpose would be to pursue wealth. Some may want to follow the fads and fashions of the world. There are those whose affections would be after property, and there are others who would have other ambitions. But David avowed to God that, the one thing he desired of the Lord was to be in the temple of the Lord, not just for one year or for a moment of time, but all the days of his life. There may be those who, in their prayers, ask only for children, money, houses or some other things of the world. But David prayed for one thing and only that one thing: that he might dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life. It is those who dwell in the house of the Lord who will be blessed of Him. The Scriptures make us to understand that we should seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all other things shall be added unto us. It is those who are living in the secret place of the Most High and who are abiding under the shadow of the Almighty, who will not be touched by the hands of the evil one. It is those whose eyes are fixed upon the beauties of the Temple of God, who will not be employed by Satan. It is those who are living in the House of God and dwelling in His Temple, who are going to be surrounded by the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is such people who will be sheltered by Him. When He comes back, He will rapture and take them unto Himself, so that they will live eternally with Him.

My friend, do not forget that Satan does not want you to dwell in the House of God, he does not even want God to dwell in you. David's prayer is my wish this year. When this world comes to an end, it is only God Who can usher us into His Home. Won't you come to the altar of prayer and make a vow unto God as to what you want your life to be? God is ready to go into a covenant with you.