

Message Two

The Two Evils of God's People and God's Faithfulness in Fulfilling His Economy (2)

Scripture Reading: Jer. 2:13; Psa. 36:8-9; John 4:10, 14; 7:37-39; 1 Cor. 10:4; 12:13

III. We need to see God's faithfulness in fulfilling His economy—cf. 37:3:

- A. Although we are unfaithful, God is faithful (Lam. 3:23b); the chorus of a well-known hymn (*Hymns*, #19) says, "Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness! / Morning by morning new mercies I see. / All I have needed Thy hand hath provided; / Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!":
1. We may understand what the Bible says and what this hymn says about God's faithfulness either in a natural way or in a spiritual way.
 2. If we understand God's faithfulness in a natural way, we may think that He is faithful primarily in the matter of material provisions or physical blessings, but God's faithfulness is not according to our natural understanding; 1 Corinthians 1:9 says that God is faithful in calling us into the fellowship of His Son, but to our natural understanding He may not seem to be faithful in caring for our welfare.
 3. "Consider the sufferings of the apostle Paul. He was called, commissioned, burdened, and sent by God, but wherever he went, he had troubles. For example, as soon as he began to preach Christ, he began to suffer persecution. He even had to escape from Damascus by being lowered down the wall in a basket. Does this mean that God was not faithful to Paul? No, it means that God's faithfulness is not according to our natural understanding" (*Life-study of Jeremiah*, p. 28)—Acts 9:15-16, 23-25; 2 Cor. 11:30-33; Col. 1:24; 2 Cor. 1:5; Phil. 3:10; Rev. 1:9; 2 Tim. 2:10; 3:12.
 4. When we believed into the Lord Jesus, we might have expected to have outward peace and blessing, but instead, we might have had many troubles, and we might have lost our security, our health, or our possessions; when some Christians experience such things, they may question God's faithfulness and ask why He did not prevent hardships from happening to them—Acts 14:22; 1 Thes. 3:2-5.
 5. We need to realize that in allowing us to have troubles, God is faithful in His purpose to turn us from idols and bring us back to Himself; our peace, safety, health, and possessions may become idols to us, but God is faithful to take these things away so that we may drink of Him as the fountain of living waters.
 6. For example, if our house or our possessions become idols to us, we drink of them and not of God; God's faithfulness is a matter of dealing with these idols and causing us to drink of Him—Psa. 36:8.
 7. God is faithful in leading us into His economy (1 Cor. 1:9; 1 Thes. 5:23-24), and His economy is for us to drink Christ, to eat Christ, to enjoy Christ, to absorb Christ, and to assimilate Christ so that God may have His increase with us to fulfill His economy.
 8. We need to see that we are not better than Israel; anything can become an idol to us, but God is faithful in fulfilling His economy; in His faithfulness He deals with our idols so that we may drink of Him; we all need to drink of God

as the fountain of living waters, receiving Christ into us and assimilating Him so that He may increase for the fulfillment of God's economy to have His expression through us as His counterpart—John 3:29-30.

- B. If we realize that we have been unfaithful to God, we may repent and weep, but then we should begin to drink of the living waters, praising God, giving thanks to Him for everything, and enjoying Him (1 Thes. 5:16-18); this is what God wants; God is not interested in anything other than our enjoyment of Christ:
1. We may think that because of our failure, we are hopeless; surely, the people of Israel must have felt that God had given them up and that they were finished, but God's compassions do not fail; rather, they are new every morning—Lam. 3:22-23.
 2. Jeremiah could even declare that Jehovah was his portion and that he hoped in Him, for He is good to those who wait on Him; there is hope in God because with God there is no disappointment—vv. 24-25; cf. Psa. 16:5; 73:25-26.
 3. Our failure opens the way for Christ to come in to be our righteousness and our redemption and also to dispense Himself into us to be our life and life law with its capacity to know God and to live God; in other words, our failure simply prepares and opens the way for Christ to come in so that He may be exalted in and through us to be our centrality and universality—Jer. 23:5-6; 31:33-34; Col. 1:17b, 18b.
 4. If we fail God today, we should not be disappointed; God has a way to deal with us and cause us to mature and become the New Jerusalem, either as His overcoming bride in the next age or as His wife for eternity—Heb. 6:1a.
 5. There is no need for us to worry about our situation; God is patient, sympathetic, and compassionate, and He will take the time to make us mature:
 - a. Every believer, whether presently weak or strong, will be a constituent of the New Jerusalem, and everyone there will be mature—Rev. 19:7-9; 21:2.
 - b. Therefore, we should not be dismayed or discouraged; rather, we should be encouraged and comforted with the God of all comfort and encouragement—2 Cor. 1:3-4; Rom. 15:5.
 - c. We should be the true worshippers of God, who is the fountain of living waters, by drinking Him so that He can be the reality within us, which eventually becomes our genuineness and sincerity in which we worship God with the worship that He seeks—John 4:23-24.