

PRIVILEGES OF THE SONS OF GOD

"Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of."

– Matthew 6:8.

THESE words were not addressed to the world in general; for the whole world is lying in sin, altogether out of relationship with God. These words were not addressed even to the ordinary Jew; for the Jews are also members of the Adamic race, which is out of harmony with God, and their Covenant was not one of sonship, but of servants. Moses was faithful as a servant over all his house. (Hebrews 3:5.) We never find Israelites referred to as sons of God. In the prophecies there are references made as to what God would do for them in the future. But there is no direct statement that He was their Father, or that they were His children.

We all see that this was so. It would have been improper that this should be otherwise, for the Sin-Atonement has not yet been made for the world. Neither a Jew nor one of the world today has a right to call God his Father, nor to think of Him as his Father. The only ones who have a right to call God "our Father," are those who have come into covenant relationship with Him through Christ. Through this relationship, the Apostle John says, "Now are we the sons of God."

We are not yet in the Kingdom, to be sons of God without imperfection; but in the future, in the moment of our "change," we shall be "sons of God without rebuke," and be like our Master and share His glory. But in the present time we are sons of God, and have this blessed privilege, this honor, of calling God our Father, because we have received His Holy Spirit. We have this treasure of the Holy Spirit in earthen vessels, and walk by faith, not by sight. All those who have come into the Body of Christ by full consecration are sons of God by faith, and are permitted to call

themselves such, to realize Him as their Father, and to think of the testimony of the Scriptures as fully and completely referring to themselves.

SONS OF GOD BY FAITH

But the question is, Why did the Lord use these words to the early disciples before He appeared in the presence of God on their behalf and made an imputation of His merit for them? Were they not really under the Law Covenant still? We answer, Yes. They were still under the Law Covenant. Only by faith were they permitted to call God their Father. They had accepted Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life, had accepted Jesus as the Sent of God, the One who would ultimately accomplish all that He had come to do. They were to manifest their faith by calling God their Father, calling themselves the sons of God – although we find that they did not really speak of themselves as the sons of God.

It was some time after our Lord's death that their faith began to grasp this privilege. The Jews would have been afraid to call themselves sons of God, or to call Him their Father. If they had spoken of themselves as sons of God, they would have thought that they were doing something reprehensible. When Jesus spoke of Himself as the Son of God, they said that He was a blasphemer. – John 5:18; Luke 22:70,71.

We find from the context that the Lord is advising us that we should not think of our petitions to the Heavenly Father as being for His information. Our Lord said, practically, "You have not an ignorant Father. The heathen go through great supplications, as though their God was asleep, or indifferent, when they petition him. But you, as My disciples, know of God as your Heavenly Father; and as a good earthly father loves his child and makes provision for it, so your Heavenly Father knoweth the things you have need of before you ask Him. It is not necessary for you to give Him advice;

for He knows your needs better than you do, and is aware that some of the things for which you ask would be injurious."

THE DIVINE OBJECT IN ANSWERING PRAYER

Why then do we ask at all, since He is our Father, and, as a loving Father, makes all the provisions necessary and needful? We answer that our instruction to pray is intended to awake a further realization of the fact that all of our blessings come from the Heavenly Father; otherwise we should fail to get a great spiritual blessing from contemplating His love and care. He would not have us get the blessing in the same way that trees take in moisture. He would have us to be intelligent, to consider that He is our Father. He knows our needs and has made provision for them. He wishes us to exercise faith in respect to His care and to all the things promised.

The Divine object, then, in answering prayer is that we may have a stimulation of faith in connection with our receiving daily blessings – both temporal and spiritual. The Lord knows the things that the world has need of, and He is making a general provision for the world. He has already arranged a way by which the world ultimately will return as sons on the human plane, and He is making all things to work together for good to them in a general and broad way. God has a great Plan of redemption through Jesus, and a great Plan of exalting the Church to be with her Lord in the Heavenly Kingdom. Then that Kingdom shall pour blessings upon the earth for the rolling away of the curse, and for the Restitution of mankind to the original perfection of Adam in Eden.

To whatever extent any one has an ear to hear, it is proper to tell him about these good things. But only those who have the ear to hear are to be specially instructed at this present time. The knowledge of God's grace at this time has been especially for the called-out ones. The remainder of mankind has been allowed to remain in ignorance. It is quite proper that, as they begin to be awakened, they should hear a little and understand a little; but we

are certain that the world cannot see the deep things of God. As the Apostle tells us, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Again he tells us that "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." – I Corinthians 2:14,10.

WHO MAY PRAY

The Lord is not dealing with the world; for they are not in covenant relationship with Him and, therefore, they cannot please Him now. His last dealing with the world was when they were condemned in Adam. They had no right to life. They were sinners and must die. He has not yet completed the arrangement for the healing of the breach. He has been getting ready for that New Covenant arrangement for the restoration of the world.

The only ones who are now in relationship with Him are the members of the Body of Christ. "If ye abide in Me and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." If we go out of relationship to Christ, then we have no right to pray. But if we maintain this relationship, if His Word abides in us, if we are conforming our lives to His will, and if we are in harmony with His will and the Spirit of His Word, we may ask what we will, and it shall be done.

Those who are abiding fully in Christ would not want anything except God's will to be done. And if they have **[R5219 : page 118]** His Word abiding in them richly, they will know what things they may properly ask for. But if they are ignorant of God's will in the matter, then they would surely say, "Not my will, but Thine be done!" So whatever would be the petition, they would get it, because they desire God's will to be done.

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