

THE CUP OF THE LORD AND THE CUP OF DEMONS

Do you know why Israel which is a covenant nation with God had to suffer many devastating attacks from the pagan enemies surrounding her? This was because they constantly broke the covenant they had with the Almighty God and gave allegiance and service to foreign gods. The result of Israel's apostasies were followed by swift divine judgments which came in the forms of natural disasters, foreign invasions, internal instability, famines, plagues and incurable diseases just to name a few. Israel is the only nation that has known and enjoyed God in a very special manner; and is also the only nation that has suffered most as a result of divine justice. Israel's peculiarity with God lies in the fact that God had established a covenant with them (through which humanity would be saved). The promise that God made to Abraham, He passed it to Isaac and confirmed the same to Israel (Jacob) in the form of a law on Mt. Sinai (1Chronicles16:15-19).

By the moral, civil and ceremonial regulations contained in the law code, Israel was expected to keep herself pure from the pagan contaminations that were surrounding her. This in essence was the binding term of the covenant, requiring Israel's faithfulness and devotion to her God to obtain divine favours and protection. On the contrary, disobedience brought a breach in relationship and invoked divine displeasures in many forms. The Bible gives the sad history of Israel's disloyalty and the resulting consequences. As a result, God's covenant was constantly being broken.

In the light of all these, God decided to establish a new covenant (which was not to be broken) with Israel and all of humanity at large. He sent Jesus Christ to be an example and fulfilment to the old covenant law. In the course of His ministry, Jesus established the cup ordinance as a symbolic representation of His atoning death on the cross. By this, humanity is expected to believe in Him and be saved. The importance of the cup stands in the fact that it signifies a binding relationship among the people or parties concerned.

By believing and depending on the atoning work of Christ on the cross, we have entered into a new and eternal covenant relationship with God. We are then expected to leave and abandon all other religious activities which are outside Christ.

All the religious cultural practices around the world are hostile to God and have evil spirits as the source of their inspiration. These spirits in these lands, whether residing in the rivers, mountains, forests, rocks, valleys etc, have tuned and influenced the local inhabitants of such lands into specific religious and cultural practices (traditions) that are aimed at giving them allegiance and worship. That is why animal and even human sacrifices are made to appease or seek the favour of such gods (demons).

But as we know, the Lord God Almighty in His mercy has already provided the blood sacrifice in the Person of His dear Son, Jesus to cleanse the sins of the whole world, and granting us access into His eternal kingdom. All other wine or blood sacrifices are now made but to demons who are in direct rebellion against God and whom God shall eternally punish (Jeremiah 10:10-11).

What do we think? Are we to continue in our religious cultural practices after haven heard the gospel or even claimed to be Christians? You cannot drink of the cup of the Lord and still drink of the cup of your cultural tradition. God's verdict on this subject is clear in the word of God in 1Cor.10:19-22. *What am I saying then? That an idol is anything or that what is offered to idols is anything? Rather, that the things which the gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's Table and of the table of demons or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy (anger)? Are we stronger than He?*

Believers in Christ now have a completely new heritage (inheritance rights). In the faith, we now have completely new ancestors from our heathen forefathers. Our new ancestors now become people like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David and all the other patriarchs through whom the work of redemption was accomplished in the Bible. These are our spiritual ancestors who are all fathers of faith. We also have to worship and serve the God of our forefathers, which all boils down to Jesus Christ.

Many so called Christians are repeating the errors of ancient Israel in a spiritual disloyalty to God and think they are still children of God. But the sins of ancestor worship shall yield their results in God's judgment in the eternal lake of fire. Talking of idolatry, I would like to add that whoever bows to any sort of statue is an idol worshipper, even if it is the statue of Jesus. And that Jesus Himself will be the first to condemn all those who have been bowing to such portraits purportedly to be His or that of any other saint. Other related sins in this category dealing with man's disloyalty to God are also listed in the Bible. These are the grievous practices or abominations that evoke God's immediate and lasting judgment.

*There shall not be found among you any one that makes his son or daughter to pass through the fire, or that uses divination, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations, the Lord your God is driving them out from before you. **You shall be perfect with the Lord your God.** (Deut. 18: 10-13:)*

Human or child sacrifices: The practice of child sacrifices made on fire to appease or seek the favour of a god was common in ancient times. Today, human sacrifices are common in ritualistic killings and also in people offering up their relatives or others to demon spirits in secret societies to obtain certain favours like riches, prominence, power etc.

Divination: This is the art and practice of seeking certain concealed information using supernatural means. This involves divining with various types of objects to know certain secret information about a person's life, a past or future occurrence etc. In this category, we have soothsayers, sorcerers, diviners and others.

Observer of Times (Astrology): This is the science of predicting character and events by observing the movements of the stars. This sin is common today in the writing and reading of the horoscope, palms reading, tarot cards etc. (Children of God are supposed to walk by faith as only God directs their lives on a daily basis).

Enchantment: This is a magical art like divination which has to do mainly with speaking and singing for the purpose of invoking, manipulating, or causing harm. Untold numbers of people suffer today as a result of spells cast on them through enchantments.

Witchcraft: This is the art of carrying out spiritual transformations or operations through the aid of evil spirits. Witchcraft and occultism in all their forms is condemned in the Bible.

Charmer: One who uses magical power to seduce and manipulate men or animals to do what was not originally in their will to do. Charming and all other forms of magic are condemned by God in the Bible.

Necromancer: One who uses demonic spirits to invoke the dead for the purpose of consultation or divination. Even though this is a satanic manipulation because the dead can no longer return to the living and demons only come to represent them, many people are still being deceived in this area. This sin shall equally be eternally punished by God in the lake of fire.

Those agents of Satan working as mediums and “healers” who practice any or some of the above are great sinners before God. And by dancing to the tunes of your cultural traditions or practicing any of the above you are drinking of the cup of demons. By this, you are in direct league with Satan and his kingdom in a covenant relationship to be punished in hell with no exception whatsoever.

WHAT WE MUST DO

Since many have deceived themselves in thinking they are Christians when they are not. And since many have not yet known what it truly means to be saved, it is therefore necessary for us to know and follow the simple steps that lead to salvation. God is equally willing and able to deliver those who are involved in such practices that are linked with the kingdom of darkness. This, you can get by following the A, B, C, procedure:

ADMIT that you are a sinner and that by your personal endeavours you cannot be saved. *“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8). “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).*

BELIEVE that Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay for your sins so that you can inherit His righteousness. *“For with the heart man believes unto righteousness” (Romans 10:9-10a).* By believing, you are to depend solely on this work of grace to be saved.

CONFESS your sins to God through Jesus Christ. Also confess Jesus as your personal Lord and Saviour and invite Him into your life. *“If we confess our sins, he (God) is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).*

DENY AND DENOUNCE the works of darkness and continue in a steadfast relationship with Christ. *“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness” (2 Corinthians 6:4).*

God knows you. He loves you and wants to have a personal relationship with you. To make a decision for Christ, and receive His forgiveness is the most important thing that can happen to you. To make a prayer of commitment and receive God’s forgiveness, you need to pray to God if possible and preferably in a quiet place and make peace with Him in a prayer like the one mentioned below.

Most gracious God, I come to you this day in total repentance. I plead that you forgive all my sins (name those you can) and wash them with the precious blood of Jesus. I also accept and receive Jesus into my life to be my personal Lord and Saviour. I separate myself from all demonic covenants and ask You to establish me only in the covenant of Christ. Help me to live the rest of my life to please and serve you. This I pray and thank You for saving me through Your dear Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

If you have done this in sincerity, then know that God has forgiven you totally. Praise God, you are saved. Salvation is personal. So, do not allow anybody to influence you negatively on your decision. What you need to do is talk to God daily in prayers as well as obtain and study your Bible daily too. Where you worship matters a lot, because it can either help bring you closer to God or take you further away from God. Having known the truth, I counsel that you seek for a spiritual and committed spiritual church where its worshippers are truly born again Christians and prove to lead a righteous lifestyle. Share this tract with a friend, relative, or neighbor. For more information, counselling or prayers, contact the address below.



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