
THE FAITH OF CALEB AND JOSHUA.

Joshua and Caleb, through faith, passed over Jordan and entered the promised land. When Moses sent out the twelve spies to view and explore the country, he said, "Get you up this way southward, and go up into the mountain, and see the land what it is, and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many; and what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad, and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents or in strong holds, and what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein or not; and be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time was the time of the first-ripe grapes," Num. 13: 17—20.

They went up and viewed the land, even as Moses had commanded them by the mouth of the Lord, and after forty days they came to Moses and Aaron, and to the

whole congregation in the wilderness of Paran to Kadesh, carrying with them grapes, pomegranates and figs, saying, "We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey, and this is the fruit of it. Moreover, we saw the children of Anak there. And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it. But the men that went up with him said, we be not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we. And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof, and all the people that we saw in it are men of great stature; and there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants; and we were in our own sight as

grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight," Num. 13: 27—33.

"And all the congregation lifted up their voice and cried; and the people wept that night, and all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron; and the whole congregation said unto them, Would to God that we had died in the land of Egypt, or would to God we had died in the wilderness, and wherefore hath the Lord brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? Were it not better for us to return into Egypt? And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt. Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. And Joshua and Caleb rent their clothes; and they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, the land which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land, for they are bread for us; their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us; fear them not. But all the congregation bade, stone them with stones." Num. 14: 1—10.

Behold, dear reader, it is because these two faithful men believed the word and promise of God, with all their hearts, that they trusted firmly in his Almighty power, paternal mercy and great works, as if they had already obtained them. They saw the heinous unbelief and heard the bitter murmuring of their brethren, that they thereby detracted from the Almighty Majesty, as if he were not able to fulfil his promises unto them, and that he had deceived them by his enticing words, therefore, they were very sorrowful and sad, and rent their clothes, as has been said. And therefore they were the only two persons of six hundred thousand, that came with Moses out of Egypt, who entered into the promised land. All the rest died in the wilderness during the time of forty years, and they did not reach the promised land, because they did not believe on the Almighty God, the God of their

fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who with such unheard-of signs and wonders, led them through the Red Sea, and so graciously upheld and guarded them in the wilderness.

Thus, alas, it is with some at the present day. They have spied the pleasant land, have seen and tasted its precious fruits, have been enlightened by the word of the Lord, have tasted the heavenly gifts, have partaken of the Holy Ghost, have tasted of the sweet word of God, and the power of the world to come, and have beheld the grace of the Lord, but since they do not consult God, but their own sinful, disobedient, evil flesh, which always seeks its own pleasure, and will not willingly bear the cross of the Lord. They behold with carnal eyes, and see that so many powerful tyrants and fenced cities are arrayed against them, that they have to pass a howling wilderness, and must ascend many high mountains: that they must give as a prey, honor, money, possessions, wife, children, body and life: hence they murmur against Moses and Aaron, and seek to stone Joshua and Caleb. They cause their poor teachers and leaders, who with true love direct to the word and examples of Christ, and preach the pure truth, such intolerable suffering. They backbite and defame them beyond measure, and choose for themselves, here and there a captain, false prophet or teacher, who, with fair words and under the appearance of good, lead them back to Egypt. They prefer temporal to eternal things, they fear perishing man more than the immortal, eternal God, the Lord and Creator of the world. With unbelieving, carnal Israel, they say in their hearts, We are not strong enough to go up against this great and strong people, and are not able to obey the doctrine, ordinances and example of Christ, for all the world is against us, all lords and princes persecute us, the preachers and priests upbraid and defame us, and we must become a by-word and a derision to all the world. We are much too weak to bear such great misery, therefore they want to transfer it to the Lord. Thus you think and err, for your unbelieving, carnal hearts have so blinded you, that you know not the righteous judgment of God, you hope not that a

shall be kindled against this place and shall not be quenched. But to the king of Judah, which sent you to inquire of the Lord, thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, as touching the words which thou hast heard, because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, when thou heardest what I spake against this place and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes and wept before me, I also have heard thee, saith the Lord. Behold, therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace, and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place, and they brought the king word again.

"When now the king heard these words, he sent and gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. And the king went up into the house of the Lord, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests and the prophets, and all the people both small and great, and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant, which was found in the house of the Lord. And the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the Lord to walk after the Lord and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes with all their heart, and all their soul to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant," 2 Kings 22: 15—20 and 23: 1—3. And Josiah caused all who were to be found in Israel to serve the Lord, and they departed not from him as long as Josiah lived.

Here, dear reader, observe what kind of faith Josiah had, and what the fruits thereof were. He heard the word of the Lord, and believed it. He rent his clothes, inquired of the Lord and renewed the covenant because he heard what God had commanded in the same book; that they should not do according to their own thoughts; that they should not follow after strange Gods, nor the abominations of the Canaanites and the other heathens which were dispersed before them, but they should serve the Lord alone and cleave to him, and keep his commands as he directed them. He was strong in the

Lord, resolved in a manly spirit, and acted valiantly in all his doings, for he believed and trusted God with all his strength; and with earnest zeal, he tore down all that his forefathers and former kings, out of their own imaginings and choice, had brought in and established as holy service.

He burned all the vessels of Baal and tore down all the groves, high places and altars, in the land of Judea and Samaria. He defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of the children of Hinnom. He destroyed the horses of the sun, and burned the chariots of the sun with fire. He broke down the altar of Bethel and offered the idolatrous priests and the dead bones thereupon, as the man of God had proclaimed aforetime. He destroyed all that was opposed to the law of God. He kept the passover of the Lord as it was written in the book of the covenant, in such a glorious manner as no judge or king had kept it before. He also put away all sooth-sayers and wizards, images, idols, and all the abominations, that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, that they might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah, the High priest found in the house of the Lord, and like unto him there was no king that turned to the Lord with all his heart and all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him, 2 Kings 23: 24, 25.

Hear now, O ye great princes and kings, and all those who suffer themselves to think that they are faithful lords and christian princes, to you is my admonition! Have you any fear of God? Any love to Christ or his blessed word? Or is there yet any sincerity of nature with you, who have understanding? Then know that you are not gods from heaven; but poor dying men of the impure guilty seed of Adam. Humble yourselves under the Almighty hand of God, and compare Josiah with his faith and works with your faith and works, in order that you may learn to know how far you are from the Spirit and word of Christ, and that you bear nothing else than a mere, idle, vain, empty name.

Whilst Josiah was yet a child, and young in years, he feared God, and manifested a

mature mind and understanding in all his works; but you, my dear lords, fear neither God nor the devil. Cursed unbelief is your mother, and unrighteousness, your sister. In divine things you are blind, deaf and dumb; yea, during your whole lives, you are as destitute of understanding as children.

Josiah was eight years old when he was made king, and in the eighth year of his reign, he began to seek the God of his father David; but your seeking, from the cradle on, is solely pomp and splendor, haughtiness of heart, wantonness, riding, sporting, killing, enlargement of your dominions, increase of patronage and treasure, fighting, warring, taxing and usury; to afflict the destitute and poor; to domineer one over another, and to live, with all your might, openly, according to the lusts of the flesh. The open deed testifies that I write the truth.

Josiah began, in the twelfth year of his reign, to purify Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, groves, idolatry and molten images, but you build them in every city, village, street and alley; upon every high mountain and in every deep valley, and whoever would admonish you with the Spirit and word of Christ, must be a heretic and must tread the press of affliction.

Josiah was solicitous for the house of the Lord, and appointed and paid artificers to labor thereat. But you break down, and by your vindictive mandates, tyranny and the sword, oppose the house and dwelling of Christ, which is his church, which he has sanctified by his Spirit, cleansed by his blood, and adorned by the word, ordinances and sacraments of his Father. You prevent it from being rebuilt in its apostolic clearness, and from becoming perfect in its doctrines, sacraments and conduct, according to the command of Christ and his holy word.

Josiah expelled all soothsayers and wizards. He offered the idolatrous priests upon their idolatrous altars, and burned the dead bones, &c., but the bones of the man of God from Judah, and of the prophets of Samaria, he burned not. But you sustain and cherish, as shepherds of the flocks of Christ and keepers of your souls, false prophets

and deceiving priests; the greater part of whom are open drunkards, libertines and idolaters, full of all unrighteousness, covetous in heart, whose belly is their god, blind watchmen, and dumb dogs, who dishonor God, and destroy poor miserable souls. You have them in preference in your courts and give them the highest seats at your tables. They are honored with high names and great titles, and are greeted by every one as doctors, lords and masters. You present them splendid dwellings, great rents and possessions, and say, They who serve the gospel must live by the gospel; although they do nothing but place soft pillows and cushions under you, and preach according to the itching of your ears. But the true, pious teachers and faithful servants of Christ, who sincerely seek your salvation and that of the whole world, who direct you to Christ, who rightly use his sacraments and ordinances, who desire to lead you and all men on the right way, and who walk unblamably, they must without mercy or christian modesty be persecuted by you, sentenced to fire and water, and must bear mockery and shame before all the world.

Josiah made a covenant with the Lord, and with all the elders, priests, prophets and common people, that they should serve the Lord as long as they lived, &c. But you have made your covenant with anti-christ and with all your preachers, priests, monks, judges and rulers, that the perverted, broad way should be pursued, the doctrines and institutions of men should be taught, followed and observed, instead of the true service of God; to the people, doctrine, commands, Spirit, Supper, life and separation of Christ, you give no place, and whoever acts or speaks contrary to your abominations, must lose his possessions or his life.

Josiah heard the word of the Lord and became contrite in heart; he rent his clothes and wept before the Lord; he feared the coming wrath, because they and their forefathers had rejected the word of God. But you, my dear lords, are so hardened and blinded, so bound by your sins, and lusts of the flesh, through cursed unbelief; so enchanted by the false prophets, that we cannot, in the least, move your impeni-

tent, hardened hearts, neither by the threatening law of the Lord, nor by his fierce wrath, and terrible judgement; neither by the devouring flames of hell and eternal death, nor by the peaceful gospel of grace; neither by the precious blood of Christ, nor by the pious, unblamable life of all the saints, who with their simple *yea* and *noy*, are daily murdered, before your eyes as innocent sheep, on account of their faith and piety. It is time that you awake, and take notice how you and we, with our forefathers, have so abundantly merited the righteous punishment and wrath of God. May the merciful Lord grant you eyes that you may see.

Josiah turned to the Lord with his whole heart, soul and might, but you dare proudly disregard the God who has created you, deny the Lord who has purchased you, and turn yourselves to dumb idols, to wood, stone, gold and silver images, to water, bread and wine, to the unprofitable doctrines and commandments of men, *yea*, to open abominations and idolatry, not observing that it stands written, "Idolaters shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone," Rev. 21: 8.

Behold, dear sirs, the above is true; it is manifest by your pride, whoredom, carnal life, and by the ruins of burnt countries and cities, the great number of churches, cloisters, priests and monks, matins, vespers, and every other false worship.

Besides, when we, on account of the multitude of our sins, are visited with pestilence, famine, war, and other dangerous evils and plagues, your only remedies, to appease the wrath of God, and quench the burning fire of his anger, are idolatrous masses, processions, as they are called, dead bones, images, crosses, banners. They, the papists I mean, bear these strange abominations, and follow after them with uncovered heads, folded hands, and burning waxcandles, &c. Therefore, you turn not aside the fierce wrath, but augment it more and more, for the Lord will not give his divine honor to works of man's choice nor to any creature, neither does he accept any such masses, processions, crosses, images and abominations, nor regards them in his mind, as the prophet said.

Beloved sirs, repent. The statute book of Christ is entirely lost to you. Christ and his truth, sacraments, Spirit and life, you have never known nor possessed in the least degree. You serve strange gods, you hear, follow and use the doctrine, sacraments, ordinances and commands of anti-christ; you lead an unclean, ungodly and carnal life. O sirs, take warning! your sins have arisen to heaven.

Although it is so little regarded by you, God grant it may be otherwise, yet this book of Christ, by the grace of God, has been found again by some. The pure, unadulterated truth has come to light, through the pure, unmingled gospel, and is daily read in your ears, and explained before your eyes with a godly, virtuous life, with an open confession, and above all, with much of the property and blood of the saints; yet your hearts continue so stony and hard that they cannot be converted or moved, neither by grace nor wrath; neither by adversity nor prosperity, as we have said. Behold thus has the blindness of Sodom, the darkness of Egypt, the hardening of Pharaoh, through the righteous judgment of God, come upon our kings, princes, lords and rulers.

Dear sirs, awake! and make haste, the trumpet is sounded, prepare yourselves! Your mortal sickness and cankering, filthy wounds are shown to you. I counsel you to suffer yourselves to be helped. You possess neither Christ nor his word. Your controversy is against the Lamb and his chosen. Your way is in darkness, and leads to the abyss of hell. The wrath of the Lord has gone forth over you and your land, for you live more carnally and evil than can be imagined or described.

O my dear sirs! reform, repent, so that you may stand before God; cleanse your hands and hearts before the Lord; change your pride, into humility, and your mirth, and joy into sorrow; rend your hardened hearts, and your garments; hear and seek Christ, and not anti-christ; implicitly obey Christ's Spirit, doctrine, sacraments, commands and infallible example, and not the vain doctrines and commandments of men for they corrupt and profit not.

Put away from among you, all offence,

abominations and idolatry, masses, altars, infant baptism, the idolatrous bread, or supper (I mean such as is used by the world), images, confessions, the wanton sodomy, unchastity of the papistic priests and monks; destroy and root up all accursed heathen disgrace; such as brothels, every species of gambling, open houses of drunkenness, together with idolatrous temples, high places, groves, churches and cloisters, which were so numerous built contrary to the Scriptures by our forefathers, through blindness and ignorance.

We call on all, poor, deceiving teachers and false sects, great and small, who are against the Spirit, ordinances, word and life of Christ, sincerely to repent, and help us to resist, not by violence, tyranny or sword; as, alas! it is the custom with you, but by the Spirit of Christ, with doctrine, exhortation and the like virtuous services and mild means, so that they may turn from evil, and hear and follow Christ.

Permit all faithful messengers and servants of God to preach Christ, to use his sacraments and ordinances according to the Scriptures, lead a penitent and unblamable life, and gather unto Christ a glorious church, that they may, through the Spirit and grace of God, according to the Scriptures, win and bring unto Christ an unspotted, pure virgin.

Again I say, reform; you have erred and mocked God too long, and worshipped anti-christ instead of Christ too long; walked too long in the perverse and broad way of death. Awaken! it is yet to-day; behold, the true book of the law; the saving, pure gospel of Christ which was hid for so many centuries by the abominations of anti-christ, is found.

Hear and read attentively, believe and observe it faithfully; it is the word of the Lord God, which Jesus Christ, the first and only begotten Son of the Almighty Father, brought from heaven and taught us. Bow to his righteous sceptre, fear, love, serve, honor and follow him with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your powers, as did the pious Josiah. For the Lord our God, is Lord of lords, and God of gods,

a mighty, and a terrible God, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward.

Yes, beloved lords, Can you thus convert yourselves with all your hearts? Can you change your hearts and humble yourselves before God? Deny yourselves, seek and follow Christ and his righteousness? Renounce the world and flesh with all its lusts, as you have heard? Then you will become, true, spiritual kings, and priests; then you will possess your souls in peace, gain the victory and conquest over all the deadly enemies of your souls; you will live and die in grace; then you may in truth, without any hypocrisy, be called christian kings and believing princes. The testimony of Peter to all christians, I say to *all* christians, is true, "Ye are a chosen generation, a holy nation, a peculiar people," 1 Pet. 2: 9.

But if you refuse this and remain what you are now, preferring perishing, temporal pleasures, joys and glory, to the imperishable, eternal joy and glory; I desire then that you would reflect upon what Sirach says, "Why are earth and ashes proud? He that is to-day a king, to-morrow shall die," Sir. 10: 9. Yea, what are they all, who are of Adam, but dust and ashes, a passing wind, a vapor, poor, miserable, mortal flesh, food for worms, yea men, and not God. O, Sirs, take warning, awake and reform yourselves! God is Lord, who will judge you. Once more, take warning.

Behold, my kind reader, here you have before you a few examples of true faith, as Noah and Abraham, before the giving of the law, and Moses, Joshua, Caleb and Josiah, under the law, cited from Scripture, wherefrom you may learn how simple and plain, unfeigned, open and obedient, yea, how full of all kind of virtues and fruits a true faith has been from the beginning, as may be seen in Abel, Enoch, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Jephthah, Barnab, Gideon, Sampson, Rahab, Samuel, David, Ezekiel, Elias, Helias and others. Now I will, by the grace of God, present you with a few examples from the New Testament, whereby you may very clearly learn what an indescribably great power, fruit, spirit, life and energy, a true, evangelical, christian faith in its true nature always includes. So that you will not, through a false notion, conform to this

ignorant, unbelieving world, who boast and pretend that their fruitless, dead opinion | and historical knowledge of Christ, is a sincere, evangelical faith.
