

CAN WE PRAY AGAINST GOD WITHOUT REALISING IT?

By: Arnold Kennedy.

One cannot afford to be sentimental in the things of God. What we want to look at is the possibility of prayer enthroning sentimentality over God's law and thus such prayer being an abomination.

Proverbs 15:8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.

Prayer when not in uprightness is not a sign of grace; rather it is a sign of depravity when we place our feelings above the Word-Law of God. We have to see that this is evil; we are given to know that the judgements of God are true and faithful. There are blessing only when we walk in his ways.

*Psalm 81:1-16 But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels. Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel **had walked in my ways!** I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. The haters of the LORD should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever. He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.*

As God is righteous altogether, we cannot expect him to deny His own statements and laws. Thus we should not pray against God's righteous judgements. It is not uncommon to hear Church people praying for ease for themselves or others when they are reaping what they, or others, have sown. If God is chastening a person, would it be right try to ease this judgement by praying against it? Sowing and reaping is a law of God but it has become the church vogue to reject these laws and to pray against them.

Galatians 6:7,8 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Colossians 3:25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

What right then have we to even try to help a person or try to mitigate through prayer against God's judgments when God has decreed that a person should reap what he has sown. Let us consider some examples:

1. Say an elder in a church has been and still is a stumbling block to others through smoking, and eventually the elder has lung cancer, should we pray for the elder to be healed? Remember the thief upon the cross who still had to pay for his deeds, and even if he was forgiven. Jesus did not get him taken down from the cross to be restored to society.

2. Even King David, a man "after God's heart" was not let off consequences for his sin, even if he had repented in saying, "*I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.*"

Samuel 24:12-15 Go and say unto David, Thus saith the LORD, I offer thee three things; choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee. So Gad came to David, and told him, and said unto him, Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? or that there be three days' pestilence in thy land? now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me. And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man. So the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan even to Beersheba seventy thousand men.

Hosea 8:7 For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind:

Where God is blowing a whirlwind, should we try to set up windbreaks in prayer to pray and act against God and His righteous judgments?

3. The Apostle James make a simple but profound statement about double-minded people, and if God will not give such people anything, why should we? Would prayer and sentimentality, move the hand of God?

James 1:6,7,8. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

If such a person is not going to receive anything from God, why should we pray against God and ask God to bless them by giving them what they want? Many churchgoers are double-minded in thinking that God turns a blind eye to their deliberate misdemeanors and that He will still give them what they want. Instead He says:

Psalm 106:14-15 But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.

Most people in our churches have leanness in their souls!

4. Should we pray for people with doctrinal error? Are we too sentimental to obey?

2 John 9 *Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.*

Popular sentimentality does not instruct along these lines. "God speed" in Greek means "to rejoice and be glad" and "to give one a greeting". "God speed" is an interesting expression because neither does "God" nor "speed" appear in the Greek text. The words have to do with "rejoicing with and giving greetings to". Can we "give greetings to" or rejoice with those who "abideth not in the doctrine of Christ", lest we become a "partaker" [which means "to enter into fellowship, join one's self to an associate, make one's self a sharer or partner, to come into communion with"] in the same condemnation. And, we need to understand the meaning of "abideth not in the doctrine of Christ", because what we have to struggle with is a particular subtle incitement to disobedience through praying for or "rejoicing with and giving greetings to" those we should not. Churches can be menacing because of this incitement to disobedience. The matter is one of doctrine here rather than perfection of behavior. Remember Jesus says in John 17:9, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine". So Jesus does not pray for everyone - why should we? We have to answer the following questions.

- Should I pray with or hug one who remains a Bahai, a Jehovah Witness, a Roman Catholic, or a Mormon, etc?
- Should I commune with those who support ancestor worship and who pray to ancestors at the same time as professing Christ? This may include Roman Catholics, Maoris or those of other ethnic extractions.
- Should I pray for and with those about whom God says "Pray not"? [1 John 5:16 "There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death".] There are those Jesus did not pray for [John 17:9, that is the 'world' of those who were not His].
- Should I pray with someone I am not to eat with? [1 Cor 5:11 "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat"]. Can we then pray with a disobedient 'brother' for his welfare, apart from leading him to repentance?

If these people are nice and generous people and even good living people, yes, or even old friends, does sentimentality change God's word?

We must believe the "For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." To do this is to be found praying against God and what is reaped from this is judgement, not blessing for anyone. The assumption that prayer is holy and carries more weight than God's word is not valid. It is seeking our will rather than God's will, and the enthronement of sentimentality. We cannot nag God into compliance with our wishes, even if we think our wishes are virtuous. Instead we will reap judgement from God, and we do not want to be "partaker of his evil deeds" through disobedience. Now we might understand why we feel very uncomfortable when we hear prayers that are a hope rather than being in accord with God's will as shown in His Word. It has been said that this is exalting feelings and prayers to a position of ascendancy over God Himself, thinking this position is a holy one. And, vows are to be made to God, to be witnessed by man but not made to man.

5. There are very few purely Protestant churches today. It has become the vogue to pray with and for those who worship the Queen of Heaven, and in doing this we have to ask if the churches have become pimps for the Roman whore that sits in the city on the seven hills. Such praying is against God! [See Jer. 7:16, 11:14, 14:11, 17:9 and 17:15].

*Jeremiah 7:16-18 Therefore **pray not** thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee. Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger. [See Rev. 17 and Jer.44 also].*

Should we then agree with, or pray 'God speed' to those who accept Mary as the co-mediator [1 Tim.2:5] or say that the Mass is no longer blasphemy? [Rom.6:10, Heb.7:27, Heb. 9:12, Heb. 9: 26-28, Heb. 10:10, 1 Peter 3:18]. Can we disobey God in fellowship when it comes to those who add Roman Catholic sacraments as being necessary to salvation?

6. Paul says, *'But if the unbelieving depart, let him (her) depart'*-(1 Cor.7:15). Godly parents must be on the side of the Law of God-(Deut. 21:18-21), not on the side of rebellious children. In the case of an unbelieving spouse who has 'departed' there is no demand to pray for that person. Instead of doing this, people tend to pray to God for a conversion and then act as though they must obey their hope but not God's word! They assume that their prayer is especially holy and carries more weight than God's word.

They expect God to answer their prayers when they pay no attention to God's word. Our love for an ungodly spouse or child cannot sanctify our refusal to obey God's word. Have we done well by our stubborn insistence that our wishes and prayers must outweigh God's word? Too often such praying people insist in seeing their position as the holy one. They will say that, in spite of their pastor's counsel and the word of friends, they cling to their prayers for the spouse's or child's conversion. But their persistence is evidence of sin, not grace. If conversion later occurs, it may do so as a consequence of repentance on the part of the praying person who has come to terms with God's Law, not his hopes nor his prayers.

7. There are times when God forbids us to pray with certain persons (1 Jn. 5:16); there are certain persons we are not to help.

2 John 10 *If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:*

2 Chronicles 19:2 *And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD.*

Yes, God says wrath! God does not say he does nothing in such cases. Rather, he places limits on our freedom to pray. Too often, praying is a way of saying, *'My will be done'*. One determined mother routinely asked friends to pray with her for her very wayward son who had left home, saying, *'I am determined that he come to know the Lord'* She was in effect saying, *'My will be done,'* and she was determined to nag God into compliance. Her prayers were not answered, and she became more and more a caricature of a Christian. Prayer is no substitute for obeying God; it cannot replace obedience. Stubborn insistence that prayers be answered has done damage to relationships. People who disregard God's plain word in praying for a miracle and what they want should not be surprised if the answer received is their own judgement instead.

8. Take 2 Corinthians 6:17 *"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you"*. 'Thing' is an added word and the word "touch" is used in 1 Cor. 7:1 of sexual activity. This parallels Ezra 10:11-12, *"Ye have transgressed, and have taken strange [or foreign] wives, to increase the trespass of Israel. Now therefore make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange [i.e. foreign] wives"*, so should we pretend that to try to pray against God for the salvation of other than God's people is somehow virtuous? Should we follow or pray for a movement such as Promise Keepers for instance where there is a hidden motive to encourage race-mixing?

9. Then we have what primarily applies to some homosexuals. *"For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections"* and *"And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient"*. Might we pray against God here? There are two mentions of "without remedy" in the Book of Proverbs, namely, *"Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy"* and *"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy"*. Will praying change this?.

10. Should we pray for those who have rejected their inheritance? *"Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears"*.

In all these matters we are required to judge righteous judgement, or as Paul puts it, *"judge ye what I say"*..

IGNORANCE IS NO EXCUSE.

One thing that is very clear, and that is that the principle expressed in Lev. 5:17 is valid, *"And if a soul sin, and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the LORD; though he wist it not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity"*. Should we then associate in fellowship with people who profess but who just do not want to know and thus must *bear their iniquity*? As pointed out earlier, *"For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds"*. God says this, not me!

It seems that at a low level, church members of big organisations do not know what is going on in their upper echelons in the same way that a Mason novice has no idea what Masonry is really about, or a sincere Roman Catholic has little idea about international politics at the Vatican. There are no such secrets in Biblical Christianity where only those chosen of God to be disciples are given understanding of the mysteries of God.

Matthew 13:11 *"He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given".*

Most churches in their doctrine and practice will to not believe that there are people to whom, *"it is not given"*. The basis of this thus cannot be just a matter of belief; it is who they are.

CONCLUSION.

We have to watch against the promotion of collectivism which is the Communist/Anti-Christ mechanism for gathering together different ethnic groups and beliefs by supplying a wrong common objective in the form of a doctrine without it having the essential Gospel message in that doctrine. To collectivism under world government all must submit, ultimately by coercion. This also is the object of World Government and also that of Rome as the "universal Church" with a "universal Pontiff". Universalism as taught in the Protestant churches is an abomination that originated from Rome.

The Biblical condition of fellowship is *"walking in the light as He is in the light"*-[1 John 1:8]. The statements some make about "faith alone" must be false. What they mean by, *"The just shall live by faith"* does not to them include what follows that statement, *"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; [Rom 1:17-18]. "The wrath of God" is not what we want to experience. Jesus tells us to "judge righteous judgment", the stricture against judging others is when we are doing the same things ourselves. Otherwise we have to obey the command to judge, here and elsewhere, such as in I Cor.5:12 and 6:5.*

It has been pointed out that it has become the church vogue to reject God's laws and to pray against them. The conditions of answered prayer are clear and much of it is summed up by one small group of verses.

John 14:21 *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.*

John 15:10 *If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.*

1 John 3:22 *And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.*

To call this legalism is to deny the word "commandments" as found in each of these verses. To pray otherwise outside of being *doers of the Word* is to pray against God.

Malachi 2:1-4 *And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you. If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart. Behold, I will corrupt your seed, and spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your solemn feasts; and one shall take you away with it. And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you..."*

Our private wishes and hopes must not be enthroned above obedience to the revealed will of God and the righteous judgements of God. Thus when we come together to pray, we cannot pray in sentimentality for every person in a block of land lest we come into condemnation and are judged by God. ALL PRAYER IN SCRIPTURE IS FOR, OR FOR THE BENEFIT OF GOD'S PEOPLE ONLY. [This includes "Gentiles" of the House of Israel who have the 'fathers', Abraham, Isaac and Jacob]. When Paul asked for prayer, it was for the ministry of the Word, not for any group of mixed people as a block..

Colossians 4:3 *Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:*

The word "withal" is about praying together for a door of utterance. When God opens the door of utterance, no man will be able to shut it!.