

Will We Never Learn Humility?

by Bill Crews

Arrogance in man is one attribute that God will neither overlook nor tolerate, especially an arrogance that presumes to elevate man or the things of man to a place that belongs alone to God and the things of God. Conversely, humility in man is an attribute that God commands and commends, especially that humility that exalts and submits to God and serves the needs and welfare of other men.

Genuine humility would have kept the ancient Israelites out of trouble, but even when kings and subjects had rebelled against God in forsaking His laws and going after other gods, Jehovah called for humility and repentance and showed mercy when they were forthcoming (Leviticus 26:40-45; 2 Chronicles 7:12-14; 12:5-8, 12; 34:26-28).

God said to His people, *"I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit..."* (Isaiah 57:15), but He also warned, *"The lofty looks of man shall be brought low, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and Jehovah alone shall be exalted in that day"* (Isaiah 2:11). Jesus *"in the days of his flesh"* was *"meek and lowly in heart"* (Matthew 11:29), taught humility in service to others (John 13:4-5, 12-17), and *"humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross"* (Philippians 2:8). That same Jesus, our Lord and Savior, and God's Son, says to us, *"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"* (Matthew 5:3). *"Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven"* (Matthew 18:3-4). His servant, the apostle Peter, wrote: *"Likewise, ye younger, be subject unto the elder. Yea, all of you gird yourselves with humility, to serve one another: for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time"* (1 Peter 5:5-6).

The Egyptian Pharaoh in Moses' time said, *"Who is Jehovah that I should hearken unto his voice to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah, and moreover I will not let Israel go"* (Exodus 5:2). (Many today are living lives that say, in essence, "Who does God think that he is? He cannot tell me how to live my life. I live my life as I please." But God said to Pharaoh, *"How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me?"* (Exodus 10:3). How that Pharaoh was humbled because he would not humble himself before God! He suffered; his people suffered; many died.

No sooner had Nebuchadnezzar, king of the mighty Chaldean empire, said, *"Is not this great Babylon, which I have built for the royal dwelling place, by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty, ..."* than a voice from heaven said to him, *"Thy kingdom is departed from thee"* (Daniel 4:30-31). He was taken from his throne, driven from the presence of men, and compelled to live as a beast of the field until he humbled himself before God and gave God His place. Only then was he restored to his throne. (Read all of Daniel 4; all earthly rulers should be required to read it!)

We must not ascribe the attributes of God to either men or the things of men. Resorting to blasphemous flattery to get back into the good graces of Herod (Agrippa I), the representatives of Tyre and Sidon shouted, *"The voice of a god, and not of a man!"* Herod had made a speech unto them, arrayed in royal apparel, and sitting upon his throne. They should not have uttered such rash words, and he should not have accepted them. But he liked what

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