

Bible Study at Surabaya - Monday, June 11, 2007

Yesterday we learned about the fleshly church walking on the path of Balaam. The church of Pergamos, for instance, was established in the faith during temptations and murders, but they unfortunately held the doctrines of Balaam and Nicolaitians. The doctrine of Balaam teaches the church to pursue money and other worldly matters, while the doctrine of Nicolaitians is about gathering many people in all manner of ways regardless of honest and dishonest dealings. These two false doctrines work together to reach one goal, that is, gathering many people to get much money; seeing that the woman (Babel) sits on many water, referring to great quantity and physical matters. Both of them are contrary to Bride Tidings and Tabernacle Teaching, which are able to make us the perfect Bride of God.

Now we continue learning the second part, i.e., the fleshly church walking on the path of Korah, who was a rebellious man. Such a man lives without hope.

1 John 3:2-3

2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Our highest hope or goal is to become as perfect as Jesus Christ (to become the Bride of God) and welcome His second coming. All that we have in this world will be in vain if we fail to become as glorious as Jesus Christ is. Seeing that, we should not be proud of and satisfied with ungodly matters, such as intelligence and riches as well as great splendid church building.

Before Jesus comes the second time, antichrist will come and rule over the rebellious.

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4

3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,

4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

The Antichrist will want to be worshiped as God. All Christians and pastors who rebel against God will become like antichrist and come to their end in hell.

There are two forms of rebellion as follows:

1. being unfaithful and forsaking godliness

Hebrews 10:25-27

25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

26 For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.

Verse 25 "as is the manner of some" shows a habitual sin that the servants of God feel not guilty when they do not commit service and ministry. Such condition will continue and become intentional sin (Verse 26 "For if we sin willfully...") that is a rebellion and there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries (verse 27).

God never lies to us; He has promised us the promise of life in the service and ministry.

1 Timothy 4:8-10

8 For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.

9 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.

10 For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.

Verse 9 tells us the experience of Apostle Paul that God in the ministry had cared for his life. Those who do not serve God will surely live without hope. Therefore, we must take heed to godliness, since God has promised us the double promise of life: the life that now is (in this dry barren world) and of that which is to come (eternal life). The people of Israel, for example, went forty years in the wilderness and worked nothing for life. They could neither sow nor harvest, but serve and offer

sacrifices to the Lord by which the Lord had cared for their lives for that long period. The forty years here is counted according to the year of Jubilee, which is equal to fifty years, so the forty years is equal to two thousand years (the age of the Church now). Thus, now we have to serve the Lord earnestly until we receive the promise of God, that is, the care of God for the life that now is in so far as the eternal life.

"For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe." (verse 10)

Only if we hope for the perfection as in the appearance of Jesus Christ, we will not hesitate to labor for godliness above all activities in the world. We must study and work hard, but let nothing hinder us to serve and minister God. As long as we rely on worldly matters, we will find it difficult and impossible to serve and minister God, and such is called rebellion.

2. **complaining**

Numbers 16:8-11

8 Then Moses said to Korah, "Hear now, you sons of Levi:

9 "Is it a small thing to you that the God of Israel has separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to Himself, to do the work of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to serve them;

10 "and that He has brought you near to Himself, you and all your brethren, the sons of Levi, with you? And are you seeking the priesthood also?

11 "Therefore you and all your company are gathered together against the LORD. And what is Aaron that you complain against him?"

Korah served and ministered the Lord, but he demanded a higher position. Such is named fleshly ministry demanding fleshly matters, such as position, wages, praises and honors. Because men are never satisfied of what they have and of what they already are, they will get no satisfaction and always complain if they serve God in the manner of Korah. Complaints are commonly expressed through mouth but unrealizedly they arise also in heart. It is a correction for me that I have complained in heart after I had fasted and there were only few people committing service in church. I also complained in heart when there were only few people committing service in church in Surabaya, seeing that I had traveled from Malang to Surabaya. It is all because I demanded fleshly matters. I am corrected by God.

Thus, forsaking godliness is a rebellion as well as demanding right and complaining are too.

As Korah did his complaining against Moses, he was swallowed up by the earth. It means to us dryness or death of spirituality aiming at the second death in hell. Such is exceedingly more dangerous than the physical death.

To handle complaints concerning the fleshly matters, God has sent the Holy Spirit as portrayed in the Aaron's rod, which could bear fruit after one night in God's presence.

Numbers 17:5-8

5 "And it shall be that the rod of the man whom I choose will blossom; thus I will rid Myself of the complaints of the children of Israel, which they make against you."

6 So Moses spoke to the children of Israel, and each of their leaders gave him a rod apiece, for each leader according to their fathers' houses, twelve rods; and the rod of Aaron was among their rods.

7 And Moses placed the rods before the LORD in the tabernacle of witness.

8 Now it came to pass on the next day that Moses went into the tabernacle of witness, and behold, the rod of Aaron, of the house of Levi, had sprouted and put forth buds, had produced blossoms and yielded ripe almonds.

Now take a look at the process of Aaron's rod bearing fruit (the ministry in the Spirit):

- **A rod was chosen.**

A rod defined as a piece of uprooted wood, which symbolizes man in their nature having to uproot from their sins by repentance (stopping sinning and returning to the Lord) and water baptism (being buried into water with Jesus Christ to walk in the newness of life).

1 John 3:9

9 Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

A man who walks in the new life does not sin anymore – even if he is tempted, threatened, offered profits, or anything. Nonetheless, the fact that we have in general is a man does not commit sin because he has no chance to commit sin. For example, a smoker could smoke at home, work, restaurants, hospitals, and any other places, but not in church and on plane. See, he did not smoke only when he was in the certain places forbidden to smoke. As soon as he departed from those places, he would smoke again. If he had been truly delivered from smoking, he would not have smoked again although being offered cigarettes and money, or on the contrary, being threatened with job loss. Joseph, for instance, was teased by Potifar's wife and thrown into jail because he refused to commit adultery. In this case, we can see that Joseph had been delivered from adultery. Being delivered from sins, we will someday be unable to sin. We become righteous as Jesus is righteous. Now you have to be delivered from sin whether you have been baptized in water or not. Water baptism is a circumcision/covenant so let us promise to God and ourselves not to commit sin anymore. We will have a strength through

our promise.

- **The rod was placed before the Lord all night long.**

Numbers 17:7

7 And Moses placed the rods before the LORD in the tabernacle of witness.

“All night” shows faithfulness, which is the characteristic of ministry in the Spirit.

James 4:4

4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

There is always a victory for the faithful to gain. We must accordingly be faithful until Jesus comes the second time.

Conversely, the unfaithful are always defeated since they:

- make friendship with the world.
- carried away to the hustle and bustle world in many kinds of sorrow and delight.
- become the enemies of God – so that they will blame and complain against God when troubles (such as salary cut) come. On the other hand, if they are faithful, they will always praise and worship God in sufferings though because they love God.

- **The rod sprouted.**

If we deal faithfully, we will surely sprout sometime – even though we are poor and weak. We just need to wait for the time of God and need not think of other things. As pastors, you may have only few churchgoers or small church building but God does not see the big or small number. You will sprout if you are faithful.

Numbers 17:8

8 Now it came to pass on the next day that Moses went into the tabernacle of witness, and behold, the rod of Aaron, of the house of Levi, had sprouted and put forth buds, had produced blossoms and yielded ripe almonds.

A piece of wood will sprout if it is planted. Sprouting means it is alive, referring to the anointing of Holy Spirit.

John 6:63

63 "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

The flesh with all their intelligence profits nothing, just like dead trees. Only the Spirit gives life and makes us cry out “Abba, Father” (being obedient).

Thus, the sign of sprouting or being anointed by Holy Spirit is the obedience. Students of Lempin-EI, you may not have church building with the congregation but you have a hope through your obedience although you are little rods only. Nonetheless, intelligence without the anointing of Holy Spirit is nothing because the rod cannot stand facing heat and water causing destruction. On the contrary, living rod will become more fertile with the more heat and water it gets. Flowing from that, we must have obedience because it determines our future. As long as there is no obedience, the rod is dead and useless.

- The rod produced blossoms, denoting the gifts of the Spirit, which are a marvelous capability for us to do the work of ministry in proportion to the priest’s offices we have received.
- The rod yielded ripe almonds, denoting the fruits of the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22-23

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

These fruits will satisfy God, the others, and ourselves, so that no complaint will come out of this mouth.

Complaint happens in the ministry because there is no fruit of the Spirit.

After ministering God for a couple of years, we should not be proud of our ministry whenever it seems to be successful. We should look into ourselves if we have entered complaints into the ministry or not.

These are two complaints most commonly found in godliness:

1. **complaint due to the doctrine (the hard saying).**

John 6:60-63

60 Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?"

61 When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, "Does this offend you?"

62 "What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before?"

63 "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

Before stepping forward, let me tell you once again the two sorts of the preaching of the word.

1. the word of gospel, which is intended to bring sinful men to have faith in Jesus Christ and be saved. For example, in John 6:1, Jesus gave five thousand people (not including women and children) bread. They all felt happy but it was not enough. There is the second sort of the preaching of the word.
2. the teaching word or the hard saying, which is intended to bring saved souls to become the Bride of God, welcome Jesus’ second coming and enter into the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Both these words are important and inseparable. Soon after becoming a Christian (having faith in Jesus Christ, repenting, and being baptized with water and the Spirit), we must hear and accept the teaching word to perfect our lives.

2 Timothy 4:2

2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

Here are the contents of the teaching word:

1. "convince" = revealing sins, even hidden evil things.
Sins are revealed in order that the church may realize, regret, and confess them. In such a manner, God will forgive and deliver them from the death (since the wages of sin is death). Thus, we should not be afraid of our sins being revealed by the word of God, because we will not be punished but quite the reverse, we will be saved because the presence of God is not hidden for us but real in us. As long as a sin is hidden, the presence of God is hidden from us and we remain in death.
2. "rebuke" = expressing sharp disapproval to us for the repeated sins.
Many people repeat their sins after being forgiven; they do it over again and make themselves doubly worse. That's why, the word always criticize harshly as it were a hammer or a sword piercing into the deep inside that we may repent. As long as we retain sin, the word of God will always beat and pierce until we repent. Soon after we come to repentance, the word of God guides us in exhortations.
3. "exhort" = guiding us to remain in righteousness and holiness as well as helping us to find the way out of all problems.
For example, God advised the Three Wise Men through dream that they should not go back to Herod lest they died. The weakness of the pastors is the condition of no advice in the preaching of the word of God so it is difficult to have the ways out. It is because the word of God still convinces and rebukes because there is no repentance.

1 Corinthians 14:3

3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.

We will still find peace in suffering and grief if we confess sin and repent because there is always comfort of love beyond the hard saying. We will be strong to face anything even when our beloved dies. Besides the exhortation, we will have edification.

4. Edifying us in spiritual matters that we may become the perfect Bride of God/Christ's body. If we have spiritual edification, we will have the edification in physical matters such as in marriage, economy, and beautiful future. On the contrary, keeping sins, there is no exhortation in the word of God. Such person will complain as in John 6. The Church will be shaken in economy until the biggest one, i.e. because of not enduring in the last revival of Holy Spirit/teaching word. It is dangerous, seeing that the five thousand people (not including women and children) were eliminated became twelve disciples only, even one of the twelve disciples became a traitor so there were only eleven. Such is an exceedingly great shaking more than physical shaking. Tsunami in Nias shook some Christians only but shakings because of teaching word happen to many Christians.

John 6:61

61 When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, "Does this offend you?"

Many Christians are shaken in the last days because they cannot stand hearing the teaching word/hard saying which sanctifies to the perfection. They are shaken until they lose their faith and go back, walking with Jesus no more.

John 6:66

66 From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.

The triple six points to a danger; seeing how many percent is eleven compared with five thousand people (not including women and children). Many Christians said that Jesus was great through the Gospel they have heard like the five thousand people receiving bread but then they went back after hearing the word of sanctification. We can see now who still hold fast the teaching word from the time it is proclaimed first in 1980's until now or from Lempin-El Generation I until now.

John 6:66

66 From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.

Many Christians will go back as the disciples. They have a form of godliness, even still become pastors, but they reject and forsake the true doctrine. This is the meaning of "walking with Jesus no more" that is to say falling from the true teaching word/the faith. Whom then will they walk with? As written in 2 Timothy 4:3, they will heap up for themselves false teachers and satisfy their own desires, or they will stop serving God and entangle themselves again in the world.

As a consequence:

John 6:62

62 "What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before?"

The Son of Man had ascended where He was before (that is, on the right hand of the Father) and He will descend for a second time. In addition, it is also written In Acts that Jesus, who was taken up into heaven, will so come in like manner as He went into heaven. Thus, the question "What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before?" means the same as the question "What then if you will see the Son of Man descend in the cloud?" So, we can answer for the consequence: they will not be able to see and welcome Jesus' second coming. It means they will be left in and destroyed with the world. For that reason, we must be extra careful, for many will proclaim themselves the followers of Jesus, but they are actually the followers of the world/Satan/false prophets. They will submit to their own desires and not to the will of God.

2. Complaints due to sufferings

James 5:7-11

7 *Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain.*

8 *You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.*

9 *Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!*

10 *My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience.*

11 *Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.*

Below are the two acts of manner in suffering:

- negative action: to grumble or complain; they will stand before the Judge and be punished (vs. 9)
- positive action: to endure and be patient (vs. 10), meaning as follows:
 - to wait patiently for the time of God.
We are trained to be patient in times of suffering. So, be patient as a farmer waits for the harvest, lest we be disappointed and desperate.
 - to put our faith in God and not rely on the others.

Job, for example, could only wait patiently and fully trust in God although he saw himself getting worse (his wealth was gone and his body was full of wounds), while the Lord was waiting for his confession, that he was a mere clay.

Job 42:5-6

5 *"I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You.*

6 *Therefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes."*

(vs. 5) Very often we hear testimonies proclaiming the power of God is real, great, fabulous, amazing, and so on, but God actually wishes us to undergo it individually (by ourselves and not by the hearing of the ear).

(vs. 6) A man whose hope is in God confesses himself clay in the hand of the Potter, which means:

- realizing his being unworthy, only God is willing to hold us with His hand.
- demanding God for nothing
- confessing himself weak and incapable

Hebrews 4:16

16 *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

God will surely help us in due time provided we wait patiently for Him and confess ourselves clay. In fact, we like to demand God do what we want right away. We should not do this anymore because we realize ourselves unworthy to get help, but if God gives us a hand, it is the grace of God, and because we can do nothing – even if we have all wisdom and wealth – so that we can only trust our lives to His grace. Practice this and let see the High Priest giving His merciful hands to help us in due time. As we can see what Job had had at last, we will also receive blessings, either physically or spiritually. This clay will be restored to the original state as perfect as the Lord Jesus is. Korah went down into the pit, but we, the true church, will go up into heaven after being recreated as perfect as the beginning.

God bless you!