

Weighty Matters:

Seeing is Believing

Jews require a sign before they will believe that God is speaking or working.

This requirement is not unique to Jews or their fathers, the Israelites. This is common to all men and relates to the nature of man and the nature of faith.

Faith is what God The Creator gave man the creature to live by - whether in carnal life with the creation or spirit life with the Creator.

Living by faith has become a uniquely Christian doctrine for all Christians to live by; but man has no choice in this matter, whether he is Christian or non-Christian,

Faith was given to man to live by just as instinct was given to animals. All moving souls must have a guidance system to direct movement as well as the ability to move.

Animals have a spirit to control, direct, and influence their activity of flesh life as well as the ability to obey with their body the activity that is directed by the spirit.

To look for faith in animal souls would be looking for something that is not there. The Creator would never engage in such vanity. He knows it is not there, but he does look for it in man because He knows it is there.

What did He mean when He said at Mount Sinai, "I cannot find faith in My chosen people whom I have redeemed?" I know faith is in them by birth and put in them by the demonstration of My power in Egypt; but every test fails to find it.

The electrician believes there is power in the cord; but the test light will not shine. If the power is present why doesn't it produce light?

God is saying, "I have tested for what I know I put in - but I cannot find it (no manifestation is evident)."

God gives man faith so that man can have a reason for what he does. His activity will be based on free will and reason.

God desires to have control of man's activity. Therefore, he must have control of faith, which is man's guidance system within the heart.

This means that God must somehow contact, or touch, the spirit of man and become the reason for what man does.

God could use a bit and bridle to control the flesh, but then man could not live by faith, and do what he desires to do. Anyone that is controlled from without cannot do as they desire within; because they are constrained from without.

Some believe the New Testament to teach that none are righteous in God's sight without Christ, but why would God be looking for righteousness in faith before Christ came?

God will not look in man for something that does not exist, nor require of man that which man is unable to do.

God requires of man obedience, righteousness, holiness, faith, respect (fear), love. These things will make man like God in character and virtue. God continued to require these same things in His children as He had in the children of Israel

God will not require more from man than man can do; or, that God expects. But, God can expect more from a new creature than an old creature because the new man has a new Spirit from His Spiritual Father.

If God does, however, require more than man can do, then God will enable man to do it. This is often seen in the Bible and it is called the filling of the spirit (of God) that is given by God to man for service to God.

The Spirit filled life is a very misunderstood Bible term. It is confused with the receiving of the Holy Spirit which is regeneration. To be a Christian requires a new birth, which puts the born again person in the family of God. These Children of God must now be filled with the Spirit, which was the same requirement for the Children of Israel in the Moses covenant.

No one in the pre-Christian era, Jew or Gentile, ever received the Holy Ghost; they were only filled with it. To receive the Spirit of God is regeneration and Birth (Spiritual of course); to be filled with the Spirit is behavioral, controlled, guided, enabled, etc.

The children of Israel only recognized the filling of the Spirit when it produced signs. They believed signs were proof of God's work (ability) in nature and would not believe any message (word) without this proof. They must see to believe.

Such is the test whereby man tests God and this could be a temptation for God as well as an offense because God wants His word to be His bond and for faith to increase by believing it.

We cannot deny reality and what we see. But we can see and not perceive what we see. We can also hear and not understand what we hear. God is pleased when His Word is heard and believed, because this requires faith in Him personally, not in nature and the creation.

Man cannot help but believe in God when he sees him do the supernatural which no man can do.

Such observation requires no faith at all; just seeing and believing. Faith must trust and obey and neither are required to observe and see; only to know and believe.

Faith must have its own works of responsible activity. Signs and wonders are the work of God which require no faith to see nor anything to believe, except that God exists. How else could you explain the sign.

A promise by God, when heard, requires faith in God to keep His promise. This will require patience because God will delay...to prove your faith to test your hope.

If all we believe is what we see, we have never exercised faith. Seeing is believing what we see. But that doesn't mean we know what we are observing.

The sin of unbelief, in the Bible, was not trusting God to keep His promises; it was committed by people who saw the power of God in Egypt as well as in the wilderness.

They were led by God, fed by God, and protected by God. They even had a written covenant with God.

This is a case where seeing is believing; but where believing is not pleasing to God because it is not receiving the inheritance of Promise. It is God's pleasure to give and man must receive, or else displease God.

The Jews require God to provide a miraculous sign before they will believe that anything is of God. This has its origin in Exodus when Moses was sent to Egypt by God. We see God continue to provide faith in the covenant people with signs and wonders; yet little faith and hope was found without these signs.

Israel made heroes of sign-Prophets like Moses and Elijah. However, they rarely if ever, believed anything from the Prophets sent by God without a miracle.

When The Christ came to these sign-requiring Jews, He did miracles in their sight just like Moses had done for the fathers; and, like Moses, He warned them of unbelief.

The Holy Ghost continued with miracles by The Apostles so that they could give visual evidence of God in the Christian Gospel. Pagans also needed signs if they were to turn from their idols and worship the God of the Jews.

Paul exhorts all Christians to live by faith and not by sight. The end of The Apostolic period will also be the end of signs and miracles. Faith will continue in Christian living but now faith must work from love and not from sight.

Love is a dependable, constant, continuous, daily, inspirational motivator that never fails. Faith will need love when 'seeing signs' has ceased. And hope will cease when it has what it hoped for.

Faith will continue in hope regardless of what it sees. Unbelief is sin, which is a failure of faith. Unbelief is the loss of hope by those who have a promise from God.

Israel received the promises of God from Moses but would not believe with a steadfast hope. They wanted to

possess – to see, taste, and handle.

If I promised something to my children I would expect to find hope within them, even if the fulfilling of my promise was delayed.

Unbelief is the worst sin that faith can commit regarding a promise. Unbelief cannot exist without the knowledge and revelation of a promise.

Paul says in Romans 8:24 that faith ceases to hope when it has what it hoped for. Now that faith has seen its hope fulfilled, it can produce other works besides hope.

The second generations of Israelites under Joshua saw what their fathers were promised, but never possessed.

They did not enter as a result or reward for faith, but by the grace of God apart from faith and hope. This Old Testament salvation for Israel is a picture of New Testament salvation for the children of God.

The Pentecostal Diaspora Jews who received Christian salvation had lived in hope of seeing God fulfill His promise to them. Therefore, they believed what they saw to be what they had hoped for.

Many years later when Gentiles believed and joined Jewish Christians in the faith, it was supposed that they were partakers of the Jewish hope. This changed, however, when first generation Jewish Christians began to fade out and Jesus did not return to Jerusalem to fulfill their hope.

God revealed to Paul that hope was now in what Christ had already accomplished; not in a future return. Revelation also revealed that Jew and Gentile were heirs to the same promise.

Jesus, like Joshua, gave the inheritance (based on grace) to the circumcised and uncircumcised because neither had persevered in faith to see hope fulfilled.

There can be no hope in the Messianic promise until it is seen because no one even knew what it was until it was fulfilled.

Eye had never seen. Ear had never heard. Mind had never thought. Therefore, no one's hope was fulfilled by Messiah because all faith was expecting a restored Kingdom, instead of the New Kingdom which Messiah established.

Seeing is believing but they could not see a Spiritual Temple or House of God. Neither could they see the work of Messiah as Priest because it was done in the Spirit world.

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