

AF A9 BIBLE STUDY: "Our Restoration and Growths" Luke 13

Scripture of Lesson: Luke's Gospel 13: 11-21

1. Liberation from Satan's bondage

- A. **Christ liberates souls in Satan's bondage and restores them:** Lord Jesus made whole a woman who had been bent up for 18 years. He explained to the chief of the synagogue that this woman had been held in Satan's bondage all this time. And it did not matter whether the time of this restorative work of her body and soul was on a Sabbath or not. The synagogue chief, who was called a hypocrite by the Lord, believed that keeping the rules of Sabbath keeping was more important than restoring a soul who had been in Satan's bondage for many years. Today, Jesus Christ wants to liberate souls who are in torment because they are under the control of Satan and thus cannot stand upright before God and others. If you are one of those souls, come to Jesus and be loosed from Satan's bondage and be made whole before God so that you can and worship Him wholly.
- B. **Has the hand of the Savior ever touched you?** Lord Jesus touched this woman to make her whole. It was the hand of mercy, compassion and divine love of her soul. Jesus loves your souls as much as He did this woman. If you come to Jesus in your deep need and in the spirit of seeking His help, He will restore your soul also.

2. Kingdom of God likened as a mustard seed

- A. **A tiny seed planted in you will bring about large growth in you:** A mustard seed is so small that you can hardly recognize it. However, when it is fully grown, it becomes a good size tree with many branches. Here, we show a fully-matured mustard tree below:



- B. Characteristics of a mustard tree are as follows:
- . Mustard seeds germinate easily and grows quickly.
 - . Mustard seeds provide a useful condiment for food.
 - . A mustard tree has many branches and leaves for birds to nest.
- C. Interpretations of this parable – Some theologians interpret this parable to how the small, humble beginning of the Christian ministry in the 1st century experienced rapid growths through the centuries and now the Christendom has spread worldwide. This interpretation is a valid one but not the only one.
- D. Another interpretation is that a small lump of faith in Jesus Christ can grow into a mature stature in a Christian life that becomes fruitful and useful to God and men. Since Lord Jesus spoke about the fruitfulness of trees immediately prior to this parable, the theme of 'fruitfulness' could have carried into this parable.
- E. Analogy between Christian faith and the mustard tree can give us important lessons towards being fruitful:
1. **Christian faith, like a little seed, has the true life programmed in it:** Have you ever thought how much information is included in a tiny seed less than 1-millimeter size so that it can grow into a good-sized tree you see in the photo above? Likewise, the gospel of Christ, when it is accepted in faith, has the life of Jesus Christ programmed in it so that it keeps growing in you as long as you keep your soul under the care and nurturing of God.
 2. **Just as the little mustard seed is wholly buried in the ground, the Christian faith must be wholly accepted into your heart and soul to germinate and bear fruits:** Have you ever known a farmer who dissects a seed and plant only what he likes into the soil and throw out the rest? Likewise, the whole teachings, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ must be accepted by faith so that this faith can germinate, grow and bear fruits that are pleasing to God.

3. Kingdom of God likened as a lump of leaven

- A. This short parable of describing the kingdom of God as a lump of leaven is similar in context to the parable of the mustard seed in that both refer to a small, living element inserted wholly into the target material (ground, a flour dough), can grow and result in a larger living being. This parable of leaven, however, has a couple of distinct lessons:
- B. ***Just as leaven requires right temperature and moisture in the dough, the Christian faith requires obedient, mallow and humble heart to grow and to transform the soul.***—Does the story of Jesus warm your heart? Do you accept the gospel message as true into your heart? For this small faith in Jesus Christ to grow in your heart and soul, we encourage you to keep your heart humble and soft before God. Allow His Spirit to work in you and transform your values, thoughts, habits and whole self – perhaps not entirely at once but little by little as you subject yourself to the Spirit’s control. Then, just as a lump of leaven performs a transformative work in the dough, the Spirit will make you a different person, a changed child of God in due time.
- C. ***Just as leaven works quietly over time, give God the time and quietness of spirit to work in you.*** Do not be overly impatient toward God when He tries to bring about changes in you. You need to cooperate with God who has started and will finish the work He has begun:
Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ [Phil. 1: 6]

Discussion topics:

- 1. Are you frustrated that your spirit growth has not proceeded well? If so, what might be the impediments that hamper the growth and how can you remove them from your life?*
- 2. Let us discuss how we can cooperate with God in bringing about the growths that God would like to see in us.*