

The Torch

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AVOID VENGEANCE

...But on Mount Zion will be deliverance; it will be holy, and Jacob will possess his inheritance. - *Obadiah 1:17 NIV*

Esau was the brother of Jacob who lost his inheritance, more because it was the Will of God rather than the belief that it was due to his desire for portage due to hunger. Although both if they eventually met after several years, it was more of a friendly meeting as it seems both of them had made progress and had moved on from the events of the past. This truce between them evidently did not extend to their generations, especially the descendants of Esau who probably still felt short-changed by that agreement and so were usually very happy with any negative happenings around the descendants of Jacob. They were so vengeful that they were ready to look the other way when their brothers were under attack. They were used to doing this and getting away with it but God was taking a record without their knowing.

Obadiah whose name means Servant of God, was a prophet sent by God to announce the punishment of the descendants of Esau. Verses 10 to 14 of this single chapter biblical book of Obadiah lists out their act wickedness, which God sees as violence against the Israelites, as follows:

1. They watched enemies violate Israel and did nothing about it. He saw their act as been joyful that the Israelites were being attacked concluding that they were as guilty as the attackers –vs. 11-12.
2. They marched mockingly through the gates of Israel on the day of their disaster. They even joined to seize their possessions – vs.13.

3. They waited to cut down those who were escaping the disaster as they also handed some of them over to their attackers.

The Almighty God says the time for his judgement on them has come and listed their punishments as follows:

1. Although they felt untouchable believing that they cannot be brought down, the Almighty God has decided to utterly despise them amongst nations and bring them down – vs. 2-4.
2. He promised that unlike an attack by robbers that leaves some properties for the victim of their attack or grape pickers that still leaves some grapes in the field, Esau will be ransacked by allies, friends and those to whom they have been benefactors and nothing will be left – vs. 5-7.
3. He promised to destroy all the men of wisdom and understanding of Edom such that all their warriors will be terrified and cut down – vs. 8-9.

Today, there are so many people who are walking into this trap that the Edomites walked into and earned the curse of the Lord. No matter how much you may feel wronged as a Christian, you are not allowed to rejoice over the fall of anyone especially as you do not know the relationship of that person with the Lord and why he/she is in that fallen state in the first place. Genuinely offer to help anyone that you are in a position to help without any hidden plans as you are not in a position to seek revenge for anything, no matter how right you may be. Many Christians there are today whose situation is the consequence of their action against someone whom they could have helped out of a bad situation but chose not to do so because they felt wronged and believe the person is reaping what he sowed. Even if that was to be the case, it was not for them to gloat over, as only God knows why that person is in that situation. Moreso, the good you do to those who are good to you has no value when compared with the good that you do for those who you think are bad to you or are not in a position to appreciate your good gesture. For the Christian who has

decided to choose the path of the Edomites, the repercussion of such a choice should be clear now if it has not started manifesting.

For the Christian who is been mocked or ignored because of his/her situation, it is not yet a lost cause as revealed in today's scripture. If only you can honestly show remorse for your dis-obedience to the instructions of God, there is great hope for you. He can also restore you as listed in verses 17 to 21 and summarised as follows:

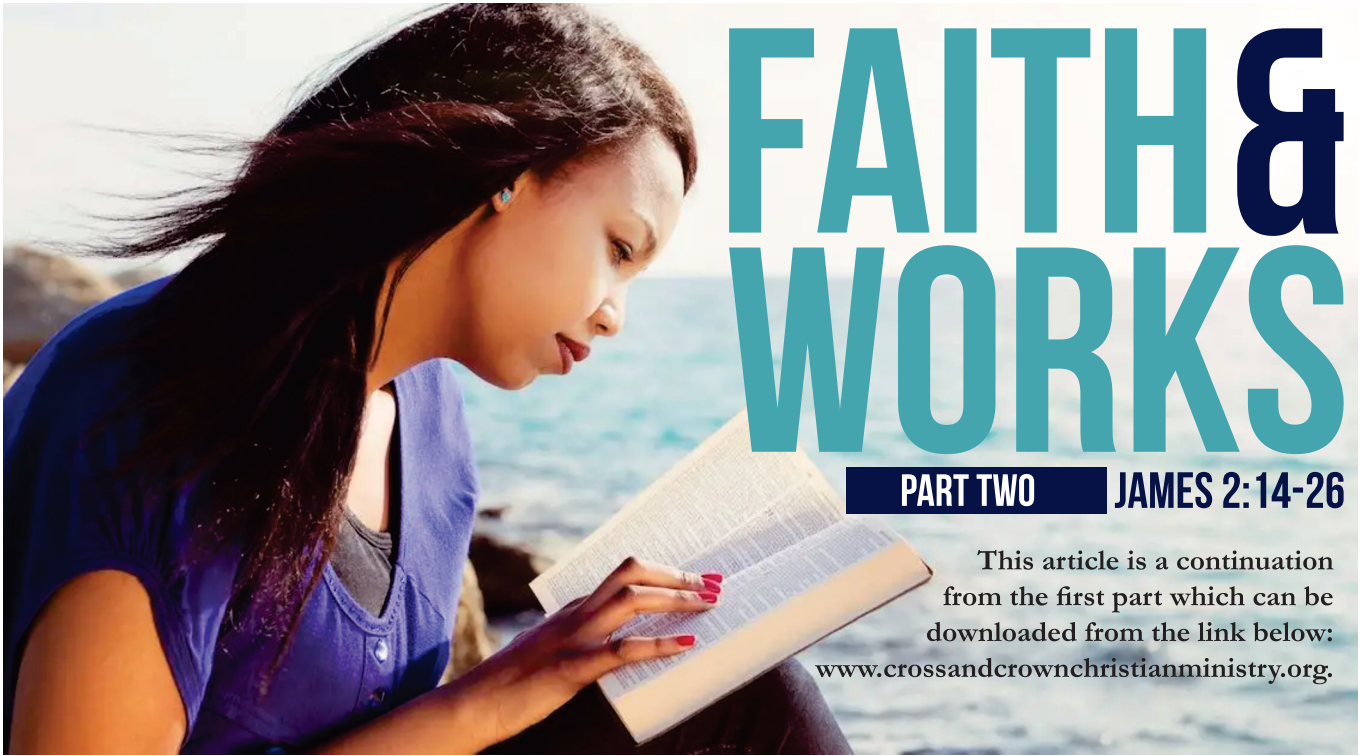
1. There will be deliverance from all those forces that are making things very difficult at the moment – vs. 17a. Amen
2. Holiness will be conferred on you by the Lord – vs. 17b. Amen
3. All that is lost in the form possessions will be recovered – vs. 17c. Amen
4. God will make you a fire and make all your mockers stubble and your fire will consume all of their negative effects on you and nothing from there will survive – vs. 18. Amen.
5. You will take possession of all the possessions of all those who have been mucking you – vs. 19-21. Amen.

You can avoid the curse on the Edomites by avoiding their reactions to supposed enemies just as all the prayers above will be for you if only you can remain faithful to the Lord even when you are under his caution. May God guide all our steps and actions in Jesus name. Amen.



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FAITH & WORKS

PART TWO JAMES 2:14-26

This article is a continuation from the first part which can be downloaded from the link below: www.crossandcrownchristianministry.org.

Faith expression should not be mistaken for living a false life style. One who dresses like a king with the belief that he will soon be a king will be expressing faith but one who dresses and introduces himself as a king when he is yet to be crowned king is no longer expressing faith but is living a false life style as he is trying to usurp the role of a king.

There is a tangibility associated with the proof of faith of one who claims to have faith. This tangibility is the act of the person that indicate the state of belief of the person. It is these steps or acts that James deems as works.

There is hardly a Christian gathering that is completed with the “faith” as a word not mentioned. Either in the course of explaining what the foundation of Christianity is or explaining why there is a delay in a response to a prayer request, faith is regularly mentioned with, adherents constantly encouraged to exercise it. The Bible is very clear on the need for the Christian to exercise faith in order to have a fruitful and rewarding Christian life. It is not

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enough to have faith. It has to be exercised for it to have any meaning. Not just faith about the events in this world but also about faith with regards to events in the life after life.

Christians themselves are quick to respond in the positive whenever the question; “do you have faith?”, is asked. Yes! I have faith, is the response most times but all the available

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evidence is in most cases pointing to the contrary. The faith of the Christian may not be visible but the act of faith must be visible for all to see. Faith that is not proven with available evidence may not be faith as faith must be a tool of encouragement to others. People must be able to reference it at all times.

The expression of faith in a Christian is the manifestation of the light associated with the faith. The evidence of being a light bearer is its ability to shine in darkness. The level of faith is expressed in the intensity of the shining and how much it is able to overcome darkness. Darkness in this case is not the type that happens when the sun disappears and the earth is without any form of illumination or is being lit by the moon. It is those times when all things seem to be wrong as nothing is going right. When all expectations are gone and helpers or supports are absent.

A professed Christian at such times is expected to pray to the Almighty God in the name of Jesus Christ and have faith faith that whatever is asked for at those times and

according to the Will of God will be granted. One who cannot demonstrate this and would rather see or acknowledge the strength of darkness will not be proving that he/she has faith in God.

Faith must come with evidence which in this instance will mean the instant disappearance of that darkness and all its effects at the appearance of the light bearing Christian, else there is no faith being expressed.

The Bible says, without faith, the Christian cannot even please God because those who come to God must firstly prove that they believe that who they cannot see exists and He rewards those who diligently seek Him – Heb. 11:6. Faith must be demonstrated to have meaning. To demonstrate something is to make it visible for those who care to see. Let your light (faith) so shine (visible) before men that they may see your good works and glorified your father.

Christian leaders and groups must encourage the growth of faith amongst its members. Although the Bible says faith is a gift, Christians must be thought to earnestly desire it as it remains a core requirement for a productive Christian life.

A faith that does not manifest any work is no faith. Aim to demonstrate your faith so it can make you whole. May God grow His faith in us all in Jesus name. Amen.

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