

19 03 23

Gentleness –Pt 1 God is gentle with His children

This is our first study on the word “gentleness”. In this teaching we establish three points– (i) God’s gentleness made David great (ii) wisdom from above (from God) is gentle, and (iii) as a nurse cherishes her children so God was gentle with Israel by gathering them together.

The word “gentleness” occurs four times, and “gentle” –five times.

A meaning for the word “gentleness” from the scriptures–

To be gentle is to show meekness

“Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you...” (2 Cor.10: 1). See also Tit 3:2.

To be gentle is to cherish–

“But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children”

(1 Thes.2: 7)

The opposite of being gentle is to be a brawler–

“To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men” (Tit.3: 2).

The opposite of being gentle is to strive–

“And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient” (2 Tim.2: 24).

From the Greek we establish that the English word “gentle” and “gentleness” are also translated– clemency, moderation, patient, good, goodness and kindness.

It is from our search of the scriptures that we establish our four points–

1. God’s gentleness made David great.

“Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy gentleness hath made me great” (2 Sam.22: 36). See also 2Sam.22: 36.

What did God do that showed His gentleness, and how did it affect David?

God enlarged his steps so that his feet did not slip

“Thou hast enlarged my steps under me; so that my feet did not slip” (2 Sam.22: 37). See also– Ps18: 36

God girded him with strength to battle

“For thou hast girded me with strength to battle: them that rose up against me hast thou subdued under me” (2 Sam.22: 40). See also Ps.18:39

God avenged David

“It is God that avengeth me, and that bringeth down the people under me” (2Sam 22:48). Ps.18: 47.

2. The wisdom from above (from God) is gentle

“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy” (Jam.3: 17).

How is wisdom from above (from God) gentle?

First we establish that the Lord gives wisdom
“For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge” (Prov.2: 6).

The Lord was gentle with Moses after he told the Lord that he could not bear alone the burden of the children of Israel

“Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers? [14] I am not able to bear all this people alone, because [it is] too heavy for me” (Num.11: 12, 14).

The Lord’s wisdom for Moses was to gather 70 men to help him with the load
“And the Lord said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. [17] And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which [is] upon thee, and will put [it] upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear [it] not thyself alone.” (Num 11:16, 17).

3. As a nurse cherishes her children so God was gentle with Israel by gathering them together

“But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children” (1 Thes.2: 7) – CF. – “O Jerusalem...thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings...” (Matt.23: 37). See also Lk 13:34.

Such gentleness meant that God bore Israel as a father does his son
“And in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that the Lord thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came into this place” (Deut.1: 31).

When the children of Israel were outcasts He gathered them together– Ps 147:2–
“The Lord doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel”

Illustration

Raising children is an act of love, kindness, selflessness, and longsuffering as we established last week. But it is also a beautiful picture of what it means to be gentle. There is consistent tension in the family on giving instruction when children are disobedient & giving them chastisement. And then there will be opportunities for the parents to show amazing gentleness when, potentially the children do not deserve it, as Saul did not, David did not, and neither did Israel. Yet, God in all wisdom dealt with them with gentleness as a nurse cherisheth (is gentle with) her children.

Questions of the scriptures

- i) How do we see the gentleness of God in the spiritual battle?
- ii) How is does God show gentleness to His children today?

Answers from the scriptures

- i) In all of our temptations He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able
“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God...will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1Cor 10:13).
- ii) He gave us His only begotten Son (Jn.3: 16), who is both meek and gentle to us.
Do you exhibit the gentleness of God, a gentleness that sets believers apart from the world, as it did David? Think on that question until next week when we will look in detail at the gentleness of Christ, and how that impacts believers, as it did Paul.