

Acquired Righteousness through Spiritual Gymnastics

Bowles, Linda. "Helpful, Heartfelt Hints to the President." Conservative Chronicle. 10 Jan., 1996, p. 24.

There is a worldwide political peace which will come to men but only after the Second Advent of Christ and only enjoyed by them in the perfect environment of His Millennial theocracy.

The First Advent brings peace with God but only on an individual basis through faith alone in Christ alone.

Tranquility of soul, unity with fellow believers, tolerance toward all mankind, and prosperity from the divine treasury are only available to those who enlarge their streams of consciousness with Bible doctrine.

It is this prosperity from doctrine which is emphasized in Hebrews 12:11. This is amplified by identifying the source of this prosperity which is said to come from: *dikaosune* - "righteousness; justice; integrity."

Hebrews 12:11 - One the one hand, all discipline, while being applied, seems not to be an occasion for happiness but an occasion for sorrow. On the other hand, afterward, it pays back with interest prosperous gain from the source of righteousness.

The question arises, "What is this righteousness?" It is the righteousness of God, is it the imputed righteousness of the believer, or is it the righteous standards to which the believer submits in fulfilling the plan of God?

Dikaosune is a word which describes the integrity of God. The word is a development in the Greek language which emerged from two older words, the noun: *dike*, which means "justice," and *dikaos*, which refers to "social rule which is well-ordered and civilized."

The difference between *dikaosune*, and its two predecessors is the suffix - *sune*.

It changed the meaning of the noun from the simple to the complex, from the concrete to the abstract.

Dikaosune was first used in the 5th century B.C., by the historian Herodotus. He coined the word as a legal term meaning "the thinking of a judge in allotting to each one what is due him." This word, according to Herodotus, communicated the idea of the objective thinking necessary for all citizens to be equal under the law and judged fairly by its administrators.

The abstract concept of fairness also included those under the law so that citizens who adjusted to it were said to possess *dikaosune* or "civil virtue."

Dikaosune therefore means "adjustment to the law" and in this sense it means righteousness, but justice can also be an equally accurate translation.

In the Septuagint, *dikaosune* was used to translate the Hebrew word *TSEDEQ* which can be translated either "righteousness" or "justice." The two are so interrelated in the Hebrew mind that they sometimes cannot be distinguished and the Hebrew language makes no clear distinction.

In biblical application, God becomes the righteous and just standard and believers become *dikaosune* when they adjust to that standard.

By the time it entered the Koine Greek of the New Testament, *dikaosune* meant "justice" as a characteristic of a judge, the legal thinking of a judge, or the integrity of a judge. Therefore, it means righteousness, not merely in the sense of being the absolute standard, but also the one who subscribes to those standards in the achievement of correct thought, decision, and action.

Thus, to describe a person with *dikaiosune* means he possesses both virtue and integrity. When this word is applied to God it has three possible meanings:

1. Divine righteousness as the principle of His integrity.
2. Divine justice as the function of His integrity.
3. The integrity of God.

The words expressing the integrity of God are: *Dikaiosune Theou*. The word for God is the noun Θεοῦ *Theos*, and may be translated in one of two ways in this context:

As a subjective genitive, which means God is the subject of the action. This means that God produces the action of the word it modifies, in this case, *dikaiosune*. When God produces the action of *dikaiosune* it emphasizes His justice.

As a possessive genitive, which indicates something which God possesses in principle. This means that God possesses the word it modifies. Thus, the principle of *dikaiosune* emphasizes His righteousness.

When *dikaiosune* is used to describe man, it refers to the believer's adjustment to the divine standard in the accomplishment of correct thought, decision, and action. Thus, when used of man, it describes the believer's advance to spiritual maturity, something which is never accomplished without direct contact from time to time with the justice of God.

This then brings clarity to our passage. The administration of divine discipline is the reversionist's direct contact with the justice of God. This experience, while being applied, is not one of happiness but instead one of sorrow. However, afterward, this pain and suffering pays dividends with interest.

These dividends are the prosperity which accrues from the source of integrity.

Hebrews 12:11 - One the one hand, all discipline, while being applied, seems not to be an occasion for happiness but an occasion for sorrow. On the other hand, afterward, it pays back with interest prosperous gain from the source of integrity.

This prosperous gain is available only to the few, indicated in context by two prepositional phrases. The first is: *tois* - "unto them" followed by the verb: *gumnazo* - "to train." This refers to exercise which is painful.

"... unto them who are trained . . ."

This is the word from which we get the English word "gymnasium" which is a place where people train and exercise. *Gumnazo* in the Greek refers to the act of physical training.

If a person desires to acquire good physical conditioning he must submit to the discomfort, the pain, and soreness which accompanies the early stages of this process. However, if the athlete sticks with it, he will eventually get into excellent physical condition. He needs only to maintain his daily regimen in order to avoid a regression back to the initial pain and suffering.

In order to build up strength, a great deal of self-discipline is required to stay with it. Consequently, if you enter into weight training and its associated regimen, you must submit to the authority of a trainer and be willing to follow his direction even when it hurts without quitting.

It is absolutely necessary that you keep up your consistency. For every day you fail to exercise it will sometimes take three days to get back to status quo.