

Acts 8:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me.

Analysis

Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me. Simon's response to Peter's rebuke appears focused on avoiding judgment rather than genuine repentance, revealing a heart still unconverted.

The request pray ye to the Lord for me could indicate genuine contrition, yet the motivation clause—that none of these things...come upon me—suggests self-centered concern about consequences rather than grief over sin itself. True repentance laments offending God; false repentance fears only punishment.

Simon asks apostles to pray rather than praying himself, possibly revealing continued belief in human intermediaries' special power. He doesn't acknowledge his wickedness directly nor express desire for holiness—only for escape from threatened judgment. This parallels Pharaoh's repeated false repentances in Exodus, seeking relief without heart change.

Reformed theology distinguishes between attrition (sorrow from fear of punishment) and contrition (sorrow from love of God). Simon exhibits attrition at best. The text doesn't record his ultimate fate, leaving his conversion ambiguous—a sobering warning that religious profession doesn't guarantee salvation.

Historical Context

Ancient sources diverge on Simon's fate. Luke's account ends here without resolution. Church fathers like Irenaeus and Justin Martyr identify Simon as founding figure of Gnosticism, suggesting he didn't truly convert. Others allow possibility of genuine later repentance.

The ambiguity serves didactic purpose—examining our own hearts rather than judging Simon's eternal state. First-century Christianity encountered many like Simon: attracted to Christianity's power and community without genuine submission to Christ's lordship. Around 35-37 CE, this incident taught early believers to maintain discernment about genuine versus spurious faith.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How can we distinguish between fear-motivated repentance and genuine godly sorrow?
2. What does Simon's request for intercession reveal about his understanding of relationship with God?
3. In what ways might modern Christians seek benefits of Christianity while avoiding genuine submission to Christ?
4. How should churches respond to those who exhibit external compliance without evident heart transformation?
5. What does the unresolved nature of Simon's story teach about presuming on others' eternal destinies?

Interlinear Text

ἀποκριθεὶς	δὲ	ὁ	Σίμων	εἶπεν	Δεήθητε	ὕμεῖς	ὕπὲρ
answered	Then	^{G3588}	Simon	and said	Pray	ye	for
G611	G1161		G4613	G2036	G1189	G5210	G5228
ἐμοῦ	πρὸς	τὸν	κύριον	ὥπως	μηδὲν	ἐπέλθῃ	ἐπ'
me	to	^{G3588}	the Lord	that	none of these things	come	upon
G1700	G4314		G2962	G3704	G3367	G1904	G1909
ἐμὲ	ὧν	εἰρήκατε					
me	which	ye have spoken					
G1691	G3739	G2046					

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 8:8 (References Lord): Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, Intreat the LORD, that he may take away the frogs from me, and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may do sacrifice unto the LORD.

Numbers 21:7 (Prayer): Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people.

Job 42:8 (Prayer): Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job.

James 5:16 (Prayer): Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Exodus 10:17 (Prayer): Now therefore forgive, I pray thee, my sin only this once, and intreat the LORD your God, that he may take away from me this death only.

Exodus 12:32 (Parallel theme): Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also.

Genesis 20:7 (Prayer): Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine.

1 Kings 13:6 (Prayer): And the king answered and said unto the man of God, Intreat now the face of the LORD thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God besought the LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before.

1 Samuel 12:23 (Prayer): Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way:

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