

THE SIGN OF THE FIST

Psalms 66:7 ... "He [God] rules by his power forever; his eyes observe the nations; do not let the rebellious exalt themselves."

Proverbs 17:11 ... "An evil man seeks only rebellion; therefore a cruel messenger will be sent against him."

In our previous devotional we discussed kindness and how keeping a record of people who are kind or unkind to you is wrong. Today, we look at anger with an emphasis on the words from today's passage from Psalm 66: EXALT THEMSELVES.

It is common today to see people displaying a closed, extended fist to express their feelings, concerns about government, and their political preferences. The fist has been used throughout the ages to display rebellion and anger, both of which have spiritual implications. A closed, down-turned fist says only one thing: I reject you, your laws, your morals, your beliefs and your help. A fist is a threatening, belligerent, and hostile response to someone else's beliefs or convictions and is often used to injure and kill. Have you ever had someone plant a fist on your body in love? Has anyone ever shaken their fist at you while saying "I love you?" Is there any Biblical record of Jesus using his fist to minister to others?

The spiritual principle that should cause you to rethink the use of the closed fist, is that blessings come to those who open their hands and hearts to God. When people come to our ministry for assistance, they do not come with closed fists. They come with empty hands turned upward hoping to be blessed, although there have been some who left shaking their fists at us because we did not yield to their attempted extortion, demands or threats. We cannot put Pesos, food, medicine or books into downturned fists. You do not obtain love and help by displaying anger and hostility. And, if you want God to help you, you must approach him with respect and in the spirit of righteousness and love. If you insist on shaking your fist at God and demanding his help, you will probably die with a closed fist without God's intervention.

You may think that displaying your fist is only a cute and popular fad with no real importance. You may do it without thinking because others do it. But, even if your heart does not harbor anger, hatefulness or rebellion when you display your fist to others, you are showing solidarity with angry, hostile and disrespectful people. Many Filipinos collaborated with Japanese invaders during WWII to obtain favor and appointments in their regime. They even reported other Filipinos who were fighting the Japanese, which resulted in the executions of those guerillas. The Chinese people learned decades ago that if they want to own a business or property, they must join the Communist Party. Germans joined Hitler's socialist party for the same reason. Perhaps many of those "joiners" did not think of themselves as Communists or Fascists, but they were willing to be associated with evil for protection and financial reward. Pretending to be rebellious is itself a rebellious act; pretending to be angry, is actual anger; pretending to be evil, is the same as being evil.

My best advice on this matter is to decide today who you will serve, align your convictions with the teachings of Christ, then consistently demonstrate your convictions without compromise. But remember, a closed fist is a hostile act and a rejection of God's blessings. You cannot receive God's blessing if your hand is closed, and you cannot bless others with a fist.

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