

God first addresses our unbelief

- by Bro. Sreeram

In Mark chapter 9 from verse 14, we read of a scene in which a man whose son is demon possessed, brought before Jesus. Previously the disciples of Jesus tried to drive the demon out of the boy but without any success. Now that Jesus was in their midst, the man brings his son to him. In verse 20 we read that, when the boy saw Jesus *the spirit threw him into a convulsion, and falling to the ground, he began rolling around and foaming at the mouth.* So the condition of the boy became more serious when he was brought before Jesus. He was probably fighting for his life there. Now Jesus questions the boy's father, *"How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. It has often thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, take pity on us and help us!"*

In front of Jesus, there are now two needy people, one - the boy who is possessed by a demon that has now put him in convulsion to destroy him and on other side the boy's father stands in unbelief. Whom do you think Jesus will address first? If you and I have been there with the ability of Jesus to drive out demons, then we will first heal the child. But God's ways are not Man's ways. Jesus first addressed the unbelief found in the boy's father. *And Jesus said to him, "'If You can?' All things are possible to him who believes."*²⁴ *Immediately the boy's father cried out and said, "I do believe; help my unbelief.* Now that Jesus has addressed the unbelief in the boy's father, he then heals the Child.

Now in the process of dealing with the unbelief, even if the child had died, Jesus would be able to raise the child from the dead. But if the boy's father remained in unbelief then he would get nothing from God. James 1-7 says that *the one who has doubts will get nothing from the Lord.* Hence it was perfectly logical for Jesus to first address the man's unbelief.

Even in our life, just like the child was possessed by a demon from birth, a past sin could be haunting us from the time we are born again. Even though we have confessed and repented so many times, it can still keep haunting us. We might wonder why God has not freed us from this sin. But it may be the case that God is addressing our unbelief first. He wants us to believe that he can free us. Let us cry

out like the Boy's father towards Jesus, 'I do believe'. Even if unbelief is still playing tug-of-war with our belief, cry out to God to help with our unbelief. God will definitely help with our unbelief as he did with the Boy's father. He will also drive the sin out and help us live an overcoming life. Amen.