

J25 JONES, Dan. *Beth yw "gras cadwedigol"?* (What is "saving grace"?) *Swansea: Published and printed by D. Jones, [1854].*
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This pamphlet's first four pages are printed in the 18 November 1854 *Zion's Trumpet* (pp. 565–69) as a "Quoted segment of the treatise that is now in the press." No further mention is made of it until the 12 May 1855 price list in *Zion's Trumpet* (pp. 159–60). Its price was three shillings and sixpence per hundred for distributors.

The contents of *What is "saving grace"?* are purely doctrinal. Dan Jones explains the Mormon interpretation of *grace* as a divine gift, but one which does not exclude the importance and necessity of works. Jones's doctrinal explanation appear to have been borrowed from some other writer or writers within Mormonism; the source, however, has not been identified.

WHAT IS “SAVING GRACE”?

NEARLY every time believers of this “godly” age are asked to obey the ordinances Jesus Christ commanded, the answer received is “The ordinances are of practically no importance when one has received saving grace; the ordinances and devotions are outward and unimportant things; one can either receive them or not; all that God asks now is that one have a new heart,—the image of God on one’s Spirit—a rebirth or the work of grace on one’s heart.” That is the hiding place of thousands of believers, and it is self-justification that makes the divine commandments futile. We readily acknowledge that those things are good in their place, the more the better; but let us reason together—if the popularity of this assertion is sufficient proof of its truthfulness, it will do no good to examine it; however, since salvation depends on having *grace in the heart*, it will be most beneficial to determine whether it is possible for grace to be in the heart of those who believe this statement!

Let us note in the first place that “grace,” according to the language of the scriptures is equivalent to “gift,” “endowment,” or the presenting of any blessing of God to men; and thus it must be, like every other gift, substance: if the gift is not *substance*, it is *worthless*, since one can comprehend only substance and nothingness, and thus it cannot be a “gift.” It is said that “eternal life is a gift of God;” consequently, eternal life must be substance. When it is said that the Lord gives “grace to the humble,” it signifies the granting of some blessing as substantial as are *all his mercies*.

When God gives “grace in the heart,” he must give his Spirit *substantially* to influence the heart; and since it is acknowledged that the heart is but flesh, but that it signifies the influence of the substantial Spirit of God on the no-less-substantial spirit of man, that shows that the recipient must agree with the conditions that God placed as a rule for man to receive the influence of his Holy Spirit. To deny that he gave a rule is the same as claiming that man is capable of making his own rule; and that would be to deny the commandments of God altogether. To acknowledge that he has given the promise of the grace of his Spirit through obedience to his commandments is the

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same as admitting that grace cannot be in the heart of anyone who has not obeyed those divine commandments, regardless of what man himself supposes or asserts. This leads us to the scriptural and correct standard to prove who has "grace in the heart," namely he who has obeyed God's plan. And since throughout all the scriptures there is no promise for anyone to have the Spirit of God except by the proper administration of the ordinance of the "laying on of hands," who else without this ordinance can have "grace in the heart?"

And since there is no scriptural basis for the laying on of hands on any persons before they are baptized "for the remission of sins," and since repentance and faith are indispensable qualifications for baptism, how is it that those who convince themselves that they have received "grace in the heart" while not having done all of that, are not deceiving themselves and are deprived of such grace?

The importance that Jesus Christ and his apostles placed on obedience to all the commandments of God, and the exactness with which they taught that, prove, together with all their promises, that the only way they knew how to obtain "grace in the heart," was by total obedience, proving also the uniqueness of the way in which we obtain it.

The few exceptions that God made for Cornelius and others do not authorize anyone to change or neglect his *divine plan* for that.

But the ordinances, such as baptism and the laying on of hands, &c., are not essential for the enjoyment of "grace in the heart," says the zealous sectarian; they are merely external and carnal things, for does not the scripture say, "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified?"

We answer that in this verse Paul referred to the ceremonial law, yet Paul says that baptism and the laying on of hands are ordinances of the gospel, divinely commanded, and essential to obtain "grace" from God. He obeyed them himself, and his chief work was to encourage others to obey them also. It is true that no one is saved by external works unless they derive from true faith, and from correct purposes; yet the misuse that is made of the ordinances by hypocrites does not excuse another from obeying them, for in every age and under every circumstance God required obedience to every "external" commandment, as they are called, and there is no instance of his approval without that. He commanded Israel to "rend their hearts and not their garments," for some had performed that demonstration hypocritically, and hypocrisy is what He forbade, not the deed.

Another fact that proves that the condition of sanctification and

godliness that many think of, is not to be enjoyed without complete obedience of the *body* to external works, yes, to every divine commandment, whether so-called 'temporal,' 'external,' or 'earthly' things, or spiritual things, is that every deed of man is a spiritual deed, because his body is but a tent in which an intelligent being resides, namely his *spirit*. There is no intelligence in the body itself, as is proved by the departure of the spirit from it. Thus every utterance of the mouth, every movement of the limbs, and every deed of the body must obey the promptings of the internal spirit, and consequently it is fitting that they are called deeds of the spirit or spiritual deeds.

The responsibility of man when he is judged "according to his works in the flesh, whether they be good or evil," proves that it is the spirit that God holds responsible for that which was done in the flesh; and thus will it be also for that which one neglects to do.

This is too clear to need explanation; and thus it is no less clear that it is spiritual to obey the ordinances which are too frequently disregarded in favor of carnal and futile things. Every deed proves that it pertains to an intelligent being; thus it must be that man's every obedient act proves what his spirit is thinking. If the body in and of itself is not intelligent, why do we talk about "physical" or "carnal" deeds? Are any eating, drinking, loving, hating, or one good or bad deed done that do not derive from the prompting of the spirit to the constitution? If so, only the body will be punished or rewarded for that! If not, it is not just carnal.

Thus we see that baptism is a deed of the spirit as much as are faith and repentance. It is the spirit that hears the commandment, and it was the spirit that agreed and decided whether to obey or disobey; the body obeys the one or the other as the spirit wishes: if it wishes to go to the edge of the water, the feet are completely willing to carry the body there; if the spirit wishes for the body to be buried in the water, is there not complete agreement in every member? Therefore, baptism is a spiritual deed, and the body is but a machine at the service of the spirit. Perhaps this principle seems strange to the reader, yet it is not as strange, we think, as it would be to hear his fellow-man say that his feet had gone astray and taken his body down to the water, and that his body had insisted on getting baptized contrary to his wishes, and that he was sorry he could not forestall it! Would not such a claim be the object of scorn, and would you not say immediately that his body could not cause his feet or hand or himself to

move from the place without his spirit's wishing that? That is proof of our statement then, namely that all the deeds of man, when traced to their proper cause, are nothing more or less than the deeds of his spirit, which dwells in and fills his tent to the tips of his fingers, every joint, knuckle, and bone of him, using them as tools in his hand to do his own will.

The only difference that is between the movement of the attributes of the spirit, such as loving, hating, pondering, or planning, and the fulfillment of such by the action of the body is the degrees of power that are in them. When the spirit believes it to be a duty to be baptized, that is faith, which shows its power only by obliging the body to do so; as it is said that faith without works is dead, because it is not capable of influencing the body to carry out its wish, so on the other hand it is said that faith is perfected through works. On the one side and the other it is seen that the spirit is the primary agent. "Without faith it is impossible to please God," and since there is no faith where there is no obedience to God, it is obvious that the one who has not sufficient faith to oblige his body to go to the waters of baptism also has not sufficient faith to merit "grace in the heart," rather he deceives himself. Since their faith is commensurate with their works, those who do the greatest works for God, according to his word, are those who please him the most, and as a result receive the most "grace in the heart," while the disobedience of the one who disobeys forfeits his right to that "grace" which is promised only to the faithful, commensurate with their faith, which is proved by their works.

We do not wish to suggest for anything that the works are deserving of the blessings, rather it is all grace; yet, *only the obedient* will have grace; obedience is what qualifies one to enjoy the promised blessing. It is not the water that washes away sins, for the purpose of baptism is not "to wash away the filth of the flesh," rather it is "the answer of a *good conscience* toward God, by our Lord Jesus Christ." Since the spirit is the conscience, a proper baptism must be a spiritual work, and must originate from the belief of the spirit that it is obligatory; while, on the other hand, if a man were immersed without his believing, that immersion would not answer the purpose any more than sprinkling benefits a baby, who is without conscience in the matter, since he does not understand; and thus, God must change his plan of imparting "grace," we see, before those who expect grace through faith only, disregarding the works He requires, before the hypocrite

who obeys without faith,—the baby ignorant of the matter, or anyone of the disobedient can receive “saving grace.”

In a word, God gave no such things as temporal or carnal commandments, neither can they be only external works, either by God or by men; for the Spirit is the God who *inspires* his commandments and his works,—He speaks the commandments to the spirit of man and does his works for his spirit—his promises and his warnings are spoken to the spirit of man, and man’s body is given to him to obey, and he, body and spirit, will be held accountable for his disobedience as well, and the one and the other will be rewarded, in “life and immortality” when the obedient will receive “adoption, to wit, the redemption of the BODY.”

Although frequent use is made of the words physical, carnal, and temporal works, they always suggest the effect and not the *cause* of the deed, or the one who does the deed; for inasmuch as no deed or effect can be shown to be disconnected from its appropriate agent, and the worker cannot be other than an intelligent being, and since the body alone does not have intelligence, being merely the machine, as was proved already, of necessity it follows that the spirit is the intelligent being, and consequently, the agent of the deed, which appropriately deserves to be considered a *spiritual deed*, although worked on a *carnal* object. If God gives carnal commandments, he is a carnal God to that extent! If his ordinances are carnal, their author is carnal. If God is not allowed to be a carnal being because he created a carnal world, and because he governs all carnal substance to answer his own wise purposes, how does the creation of a spiritual being, as is man, and the creation of those substances in obedience to God to bring about those purposes, as is the water in the baptism, the oil for anointing the sick, the bread and the wine in the sacrament, and the hands for giving the Holy Ghost, deserve to be called carnal or ungodly deeds?

The acknowledgement of God’s right to the service of the spirit, because it is He who made it and owns it, is such clear logic to prove his right to the service of the body also as its creator and its keeper; and, the fact that God wishes to save the body and the spirit to life, logically forces on the mind of the intelligent the necessity of serving God with the body as well as with the spirit—and the two together, and not the one without the other, which is not acceptable.

The fact that God intends to restore this earth and its inhabitants, and do so through their own instrumentality, places us in the most

advantageous position to understand and choose the good and refuse the bad—to be “workers together with God,” as the Apostle says. All this works in harmony with the frequent commandments that we are to “work out our own salvation with fear and trembling,” performing every good work that is asked of us. God does not require some state or sensitivity of the spirit only. The existence of every member, knuckle, joint, and bone of the body proves this clearly. Nor is it just a matter of avoiding evil, although we must certainly do so. Neither does he ask for some “grace hidden in the heart” that has to do with the spirit alone. All that the spirit itself can do is still insufficient to please God. This does not apply to the spirits of the unseen world, since they do not possess bodies. Men who possess bodies, however, are foolish to think to please God or be saved by him just by the service of their spirit; we must serve God with both body and spirit in all things he requires. Offering the service of the spirit alone to God, and refusing the service of the body, is hypocrisy as bad as offering to him the service of the body alone while the spirit refuses to serve. All the shouting of “the blood of the cross,” “faith in Christ,” “pray unceasingly,” and pondering on “the virtue of sacrifice,” “rejoicing in the eternal design,” “resting on the grace of God in the election,” “devotion through faith to rest on Jesus;” praying for grace in the heart until one’s tongue sticks to the palate,—if one were to weep bottles of tears, or if one’s body were given to be burned; the most spiritual and heavenly condition that the most fanatical man can work himself into, is nothing but hypocrisy and loathing, self-justification and “dirty rags” in the sight of him who said,—“Oh, love me, keep my commandments,” in the presence of him who assures that—“He that saith that he loveth God, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him;” all that the spirit of man can think or do, we say, is nothing but hypocrisy, while he refuses to carry out the works that God requires of him; neither will the carrying out of every other work that he himself imagines suffice in place of that. If that feeling of spirituality and heavenliness does not derive from the Spirit of God in the physical obedience to the deed that God seeks from him, it is but fanaticism,—deceit,—imaginings unlike religious substance, and the influence of false, anti-Christ spirits, on the truth of reason and the word of God, though it be a torrent that sweeps its thousands to the place they do not imagine they are going; and where they will perceive, woe be to them, the truth of our statement that one cannot serve God in the spirit while the body is disobedient to his

work, and “works will not follow them” to reward them because of them.

One part of the “Christian” world has gone to the other extreme by asserting that works justify and save man; and a numerous part of the rest has gone to the opposite extreme of believing that physical works are of no importance to save man, only to obtain “saving grace,” &c., which deprives God of the service that he deserves, namely the body and the spirit in obedience to all he seeks, which is the only service acceptable to him.

We are not suggesting that he who serves the Lord with all his heart according to the light he possesses, will not enjoy happiness in his bosom and peace toward God commensurate with his conscientiousness, in so doing; but this is what we say, rather what God says: namely, that He will not accept any persons who are disobedient to that which he seeks from them; for example, God would not condemn any who do not obey the ordinance of baptism or the laying on of hands before he sends his servants to teach them concerning that, and to administer it to them; but after he sends his servants to teach and to properly administer these divine ordinances, it is vain for the disobedient to expect to obtain “saving grace” by doing all other things they choose; for they are under the same condemnation as were the Jews when our Savior said to them—“This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light.” This principle frees our own forefathers from the unavoidable punishment to their children, because they were not offered the greater light that is offered to us, and thus they did not refuse it.

In case the reader until now has not understood the difference between the enjoyment of “saving grace” and true religion in the soul and the popular whim, namely that it has no connection with the works of the body, come with us for a moment to look at the effects of “saving grace” on the prophets—on Jesus Christ, and on all his apostles; being confident that they will not be considered carnal and sensual because of them! Moses proved his devoutness by obliging all Israel to kill with the sword all their brethren who had worshiped the golden calf; the “saving grace” of Abraham made him a wanderer from place to place, and in his sight, piling stones on each other to make an altar was a task as religious as praying for acceptance of his sacrifice; were our zealous sectarians to see a man working so hard as did Noah to build the ark, no doubt they would shout at him, “stop

working so hard, poor old man, if there is grace in your heart you will be saved without that dilapidated old boat!" Were they to hear Israel blowing their rams' horns at the walls of Jericho, they would no doubt tell Joshua that he was deceiving the people with some carnal and useless toys, that it would be much better for them to throw their old horns away and pray for "saving grace in their hearts!" In the sight of our age, those who have inspired themselves to the extremities of the air, reaching our little earth and all that pertains to it, it would be foolishness to call on them to build a Temple as did Solomon, and they would call Jeremiah a lunatic for "marrying two harlots" at the same time—for eating what he ate, and for doing what he did with a girdle, &c.: no, it is all external and unnecessary. In a word, all the works of the Son of God, from his baptism to his cross, were unnecessary, according to the same logic—all carnal; only prayer was essential. If Christ had to obey his Father in every deed, why is there no longer the same need for all to obey Christ? The apostles proved they had "saving grace" by devoting themselves to doing all things that God required of them, whether it was preaching around the world without purse or scrip, baptizing or laying on hands, or whatever God told them to do; that is what they would do, without stopping and asking if it was a carnal deed, or whether it would be necessary to obtain "saving grace."

Lastly, we say, that the only way that heaven has organized to present "grace to the heart," that which is indispensable to "live a new life," and although "devout" and "holy," is by *the obedience of the body* from true faith, to *every word*, commandment, ordinance, and work that comes from God;—to neglect any external work He commands will bring a punishment commensurate with the size of the blessing that would derive from obedience; for the one and the other are the work of the spirit.

Do not deceive yourself, dear reader, into believing that the effect of "grace in the heart" is your conscientiousness and feelings, unless they result from your faithful obedience to the commandments of God; unless you have first obtained the remission of sins by being baptized for that, and unless your faith has obliged your body to submit to the divine practice of the laying on of hands,—the *only* way to obtain "grace in the heart," says your experienced friend,

D. JONES.
