

The True Salt – by Bro Bakht Singh

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1 Jesus, the True Salt

'Ye are the salt of the earth' (Matt. 5 : 13). I believe there is a precious message for us in this fragment from the Lord's Sermon on the Mount. This wonderful Sermon, contained in Matthew chapters 5 to 7, is well known in every part of the world. Even those who do not believe the Gospel often quote from it. There is no doubt that it contains a very high moral standard for mankind. You will find that the Lord sums up the whole Sermon of three chapters in these few words, 'Ye are the salt of the earth'.

What does salt mean?

1. Taste: Let us consider what is the meaning of salt. Firstly, it adds to the taste. Human beings in every country like to have salt in their food. Any dish may be very well cooked, but if it has no salt nobody will like the taste. Those who have high blood-pressure, and there are many such nowadays, are advised not to take salt in their diet. You can imagine how much they suffer. Even though you eat a large quantity of food, if it is without salt, you are not satisfied. A small quantity of salt can give much taste to food. The Lord's intention is to gather to Himself a people who, like salt, can bring health and enjoyment to the whole world.

2. Faithfulness: Salt represents faithfulness. There is a saying in Hindi which says, Be not ungrateful to him whose salt you have eaten. There is a story of a thief who went to rob a house. As it was empty, he was able to open one box after another and gather much loot. He

made a very large bundle of it and placed it on his head. As he was about to leave the house he noticed something on a shelf. He thought it must be sugar and put a small quantity into his mouth. It was salt. Then he said to himself, 'I have eaten the salt of this house, so how can I rob this wealth from here?' So, the story says, he left the whole bundle there and went away. Thus, salt is usually spoken of as representing loyalty and faithfulness.

3. Preservation: *Salt* is also used to preserve things. Generally butter gets spoiled if kept too long, but if you add a little salt to it, it keeps for a long time. In the same manner, if you put rocksalt in ghee it will be in good condition for many months; otherwise it will smell bad after some days. Salt is also used to preserve pickles. Fish, *beef* and mutton are also preserved with salt. Thus salt represents something that preserves things for a long time.

4. Friendship: Salt also represents an abiding friendship. In 2 Chronicles 13 : 5, we read of a 'covenant of salt'. In the margin it is rendered 'a perpetual covenant of friendship. Every meat offering in the Old Testament was offered with salt (Lev. 2: 13; Mark 9 : 49, 50). So salt represents eternal life, and faithfulness in friendship and love. These sacrifices were offered in order to obtain God's friendship.

All this helps us to understand why the Lord Jesus said to His disciples, 'Ye are the salt of the earth'. In all that He said and did He had one object, that through them He might provide salt for the health and enjoyment of the whole world.

Christ, the True Salt

Without Christ this world is like food without salt. If you are given saltless food morning, noon and night, day after day, *even* though you may have a large quantity

of such food and in much variety every time, you will get sick of it within a few days. You will say that without salt the food is no good. In the same way, the world without Christ is of no use.

1. He chooses a few to make them salt: Before the Lord Jesus came into this world, it was like a wilderness. There was no joy anywhere. There was only sorrow, suffering and misery. Then the Lord Jesus Christ began His public ministry. Before doing this, He was baptized in the river Jordan and was tempted in the wilderness. After this He straightaway went to Galilee. He said to some men : 'Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men, and straightaway they followed Him (Matt. 4: 18-22). You see that the Lord Jesus did not begin His ministry with a multitude. Was it because there was no multitude available there? No. Multitudes had come to hear John the Baptist as he preached and baptized in the river Jordan, near Jericho. To such a place the Lord Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John. One might have thought that he would-stay on in such a place and preach to the multitude. But He did not. He left the multitudes, and after forty days of temptation in the wilderness He came to the land of Galilee. He had to travel more than a hundred miles to do so. Why so? It was because the few men whom He wanted to make His disciples, were living in Capernaum. This was a wellknown town by the sea of Galilee, and Simon, Andrew, James and John lived there. Imagine, for the sake of four or five men, the Lord Jesus travelled such a long distance. Why? Because He was going to make these few men as salt for the whole world.

2. He draws all in need: After He had chosen these few men the Lord went about teaching in the synagogues in that area. Then the multitudes came after Him. He never called them, but they just came. As they saw

the power and authority manifested through Him, they flocked around Him. They came to Him to receive healing and deliverance. They came to Him from all classes of society. They came from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judaea and from beyond Jordan.

The people living in Galilee had everything in plenty. It was a fertile country. It was regarded at that time as a land of plenty. They had very good water, plenty of fruits, and corn and fish. As far as their earthly needs were concerned they had no lack. In spite of all this there were people among them suffering from all kinds of diseases.

Decapolis means 'a group of ten cities'. It was about 80 miles from the river Jordan. These ten cities lay in a large valley. They had very grand buildings, for this was a district of beauty and luxury, with many activities intended to bring comfort and pleasure to the people. In spite of all this, these people were unhappy, and they also came to the 'Lord Jesus.

Jerusalem was the centre of religion. The Temple was there. There were to be found the High Priest and many Levites who served in the Temple. There were prophets to *give* messages from God to the people. The people of Jerusalem could boast of their Temple, their prophets and their forefathers, but they were blind *spiritually*.

Our Lord drew people from all directions. That is why *we* find that, as the people heard of the fame of our Lord, they came swarming around Him from different places right from Decapolis to Jordan. What was their state? They were all like food without salt. They had no real joy in their hearts or in their lives. They were absolutely useless.

3. *'I will make you salt'*: In chapter 5 we read that our Lord looked at the multitudes and began to deliver

His message. He told them that they had come there for healing, but healing would not make them happy. He healed them, yet they were not happy. They were still miserable. They had no true joy. That is why He said to them, You need salt. Once there was a doctor in North India who healed every disease with salt; so much so, people called him Dr. Salt. I have found by experience how salt removes hoarseness of the throat. Whenever I have throat trouble I use salt. The Lord was telling the multitudes : 'You must depend upon salt for your happiness'. He was saying further, 'Firstly, I will give you salt, secondly, I will make you salt; you will become the salt of the earth'. We all know how a small quantity of salt can make food tasty. Our Lord was saying, 'When you become my salt, even though you are few, through you I will give true peace, joy and happiness to the whole world'. That is why He chose only a few men in the beginning. He never asked the multitude to follow Him, but He said to a few chosen men, 'Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men'; in other words, I will make you the salt of the earth'.

Christ, the purifier of salt

Salt has to be purified before it can be used. Salt was manufactured in Palestine from the waters of the Dead Sea. It had to be purified before it was used for cooking. There are several stages in the purification of salt. We find ten stages mentioned in Matthew 5 : 3-12. Those who follow the Lord have to go through these stages and then only can they become true salt. What a joy it is to be like good salt bringing blessing to the whole world!

Salt without savour

Today we find sorrow, suffering and unhappiness

everywhere. Men's lives are like salt without savour.

When salt is refined, it is separated into two parts; one has taste and -the other is tasteless. The latter will be thrown out. Sometimes it is used to fill up the basements of buildings under construction. The salt which has lost its savour is quite useless. It is not useful either for trees or for human beings or for birds. Our condition will be similar to this if we become like the salt that has lost its savour.

Are you good salt?

Now consider your condition; can you be called good salt, or salt that has lost its savour? We will see later, how we can become good salt. Our Lord wants us to be good salt that we may bring new taste and new joy into many lives. The few fishermen who became the Lord's disciples, even though few in number, had more joy than the multitudes.

May the Lord help us to become good salt.

2 Jesus Seasons Salt

'Ye are the salt of the earth • but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men' (Matthew 5: 13). 'Salt is good : but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear' (Luke 14: 34, 35).

I have already drawn your attention to the first part of Matthew 5 : 13 quoted above : 'Ye are the salt of the earth'. Now we shall consider the second part of the same verse. I want you to notice also the words in Luke 14 : 34, 'Salt is good : but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?'. The Lord is speaking of salt which has lost its savour : please keep that in mind.

Salt without savour (a)"

Unsaved people.

I mentioned to you how the Lord, as He saw the multitudes coming to Him, was comparing the life of a sinner to salt that has lost its savour. We saw in Matthew 4 : 25 how there followed him multitudes from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judaea and from beyond Jordan. On seeing those multitudes, He uttered the words in Matthew 5: 13. He could see two kinds of people : one, a very small group, which could be called salt; the other, a large group, perhaps more than 5,000, who could be called salt that had lost its savour. The

good salt was very small in quantity, answering to the handful of disciples that followed Him. The others were those who loved just to see miracles and eat loaves and fishes; and the Lord compared them with salt that had lost its savour.

We see in Luke 14: 34 quoted above, that the Lord makes a very remarkable statement. The dunghill provides food for ants, worms, and other small insects. Our Lord says the salt that has lost its savour is not fit even for the dunghill; it is useless, so much so, that if you bring ants, worms and insects and put them in it, they will not stay there long; even they cannot thrive in it. The salt that has lost its savour is useless and must be thrown away somewhere. Such is the condition of the person who has not been saved.

If you cannot say truthfully, joyfully and clearly, that the Lord has forgiven you your sins, washed away your defilement, and given you a new divine nature, you are like the salt that has lost its savour. No matter who you are, you are useless. Your stay upon this earth is only a burden. Wherever you go and wherever you live, you will bring nothing but misery and sorrow.

Please say truthfully what your life is like. Is your life bringing any good to anyone? Are your neighbours and friends being profited spiritually through your life? What kind of spiritual profit have your brothers, sisters, friends, and relations, received through your words, works, testimony and prayers? You see, those who are not truly born again can never say truthfully that they are of any help or use to others. Their life is being wasted.

(b) Unbelieving Israel.

All this can be aptly illustrated by the people of Palestine. They had been scattered because of their dis-

obedience to God and were living in all countries of the world. Now we see them coming back, and being forced by many circumstances, to settle in Palestine. They have brought with them wealth and knowledge from the other countries, and in twenty-five years have changed the land now occupied by them, from a desert into a fertile country. Had you gone to Palestine twenty-five years ago you would have seen nothing but a desert. Now you find a beautiful country with very prosperous cities everywhere. They are still building new roads, schools and universities. Thus they can show from the Scriptures how, long before Christ came into the world, the prophets had said that the land which had become a desert, would again become fertile. They have carefully preserved the Scriptures. I spent a few days in Palestine with believers who are Jewish converts, and they told me how they cannot but feel sorry for their countrymen. With so many advantages, they are still in darkness and blindness. They can really be called salt that has lost its savour. They are in total spiritual blindness. They are bitterly opposed to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. They will not allow anyone to preach the Gospel openly these days. They do not mind evil coming into the country; in fact they have already brought with them many evils from Europe and other countries. But they do not want the Gospel. That is why they are like the salt that has lost its savour.

(c) Seekers of loaves and fishes.

The Lord said about the Pharisees and Sadducees who went after Him, that they were following Him only because they had eaten of the loaves. They were offended at these words and went away (cf. John 6: 5, 26, 27 and 66): They thought it was wonderful to be fed miraculously without labour and even without the trouble of cooking food. So the Lord tells them in verses

26, 27: 'Ye are seeking for the loaves to satisfy you. It does not matter what kind of a loaf you eat, it will never *give* you true satisfaction. I am the bread of life; you must eat Me. I will teach you how to eat Me. Then you can live for ever'. When they heard these words they became angry and were offended and walked no more with Him. They were people familiar with prophecy, ye.. totally blind spiritually. So they went away. They had come so near but failed. They could have received God's kingdom, but they went away empty. That is why our Lord compared them with salt that has lost its savour.

Be good salt—comforting, edifying .

Now please consider what your condition before God is. Can you be compared with good salt, or are you only like salt that has lost its savour? There are experienced cooks who know exactly how much salt to use. There are others who can never learn that lesson; sometimes they use too much, sometimes too little. If you know how to put in the exact amount of salt the food will be so tasty and good. Just as the salt gives taste to food, so should your life be. Wherever you go or stay, your life should be like salt. It should bring enjoyment to those all around you. Your words and your presence should bring comfort to others. I want you to know for yourself what your real condition is before God today. Please be truthful. How many enemies, friends, strangers and relations have been spiritually benefited by your life? We preachers love salt. Every time our throats get hoarse and rough we use salt. There is nothing better than that. See how thankful we all are to salt. Just a small quantity brings relief. That is how your life should be.

By nature, we are like red pepper. Rather than

bring-

ing relief and comfort, we hurt the feelings of others and bring pain. Often we are like some visitors who make us say in our heart, 'When will they go away?' Outwardly you may say, 'Please have some tea or coffee', but in your heart you wish they would go away soon. And when they do go, how relieved you feel ! There are others who bring blessing to you and you feel sad when they are gone. Like a small quantity of salt they brought you joy, comfort and encouragement and refreshed you.

The Lord our Salt seasons us

The Lord Jesus Himself is our Salt. It is only by His life coming into our life, that we are able to live like salt. I am concerned about one thing, and that is that you should see for yourself what your condition is before the Lord. You may have titles and degrees attached to your name. People may honour you. Yet perhaps God says to you, 'You are Mr. Salt, but you have lost your savour'. But when you are changed by Him, wherever you go, you will be called by a new name and people will receive you and welcome you like good salt.

These days we see men and women who take pride in culture, education, buildings and worldly honour, but wherever they go they bring misery, sadness, defilement and sorrow. By the words they speak and the books they read we can see how low they have fallen. They live in shameful and defiling ways. If you are like that, we pray that the Lord may change you right now. Do not wait till tomorrow. You must be changed today. Your nature, your heart and your life must become new. That is what God wants to do for you.

Some people find joy and pleasure in serving others. This is because they have become good

salt. Suppose you say to salt, 'Mr. Salt, thank you very much; you have made my food very tasty', what will Mr. Salt say?

He will say, 'It is my pleasure, duty and privilege. I am not doing any favour to you. I was made for that purpose'. Whether young or old, if you have the life of the Lord *Jesus* Christ in you, you will look for an opportunity to help others. You will bring comfort, joy and relief to others, and then you will find your own life becomes full of joy too. Has God made you good salt or not? Can you truthfully say, I have become good salt in the hand of God?

The Lord's seasoning forges eternal bonds

Now please turn again to Luke 14: 25-27 . When we first read these words we cannot understand why one should hate father, mother, brothers, sisters, wife and children, and even one's own life. But our Lord Himself gives the answer in Luke 8: 19-21. In the beginning, Jesus' relatives did not want to encourage Him. They were saying 'He is mad and beside Himself'. But when they saw the crowds coming after Him, they went to meet Him and sent a messenger saying, 'You go and tell Him that your brothers and mother have come to see you'. Now they had not really come to see Him, but they wanted to be honoured along with Him, so that the multitudes might say, 'These are His mother and brothers'. First they had said 'He is beside Himself' and now they say, 'You are our brother'. The Lord replied, 'Who are my mother, and brothers? Those who do the will of God, they are my mother, brothers and sisters.' When do we hate our brothers, sisters, father and mother? When we see sin in anyone, whoever that may be, we hate the sin in him. We cannot have any fellowship with sin. By nature all men are sinful, so they cannot be our true brothers and sisters. Those who belong to the Lord and do His will become our brothers and sisters for eternity. Our Lord is saying that if you want true brothers and sisters who will love you for all

eternity, then you must first learn to be free from the partiality of human love. Then only will you be useful. Not only to your own sisters and brothers, but wherever you go, you will be useful to all men. I had the privilege of visiting many cities in several countries of the world. When the people whom we meet here and there write and say that they have been benefited by some few words spoken to them, we greatly rejoice to hear it. How great is the privilege given to us to help others !

Oh, come! Abide in Him!

Once again we ask you, 'How much comfort, inspiration, peace and joy do others receive through you daily? Or are you like the salt that has lost its savour?' Such salt is neither fit for the land as manure, nor for the dunghill where there are pests and insects, nor to anybody else. Such a life is a wasted life. I have heard many people say, just before they die, 'My life has been wasted !' I have seen them shed tears saying, 'Now it is too late. My life is almost gone. I can see nothing but waste'. Take care that you do not lead such a life. Your life can be fruitful and profitable. Everybody who comes in touch with you can receive something from you. The Lord is powerful to change you. Come to Jesus and say to Him, 'O Lord, I have been till today like salt that has lost its savour. I am unwanted by everybody. Will you change my life today so that I can bring comfort, and be fruitful to my fellowmen, in my college, in my business or wherever I am?'

The Lord Jesus called a few men to follow Him and said to them, 'I will make you fishers of men'. He can do this for you also. Men and women can be saved through your life and prayer, provided you first become His salt.

Now, how can any branch bring forth fruit without

abiding in the vine? See John 15 :4. Rather, it will wither away. If the branch abides in the vine, then it will yield fruit. That is how our life also can yield plenty of fruit. Through word or action, you can bring forth fruit, provided the life of the Lord Jesus Christ flows in you. If not, you can come to the Lord Jesus Christ now and have your sins forgiven. Call upon Him this very moment and He will forgive you and pour His life into you. He will teach you how to abide in Him and how to bring forth fruit.

3 Seasoning of Salt 1: A Broken and Contrite Heart

Chosen few become Salt

I have been drawing your attention to this small fragment of Scripture 'Ye are the salt of the earth' (Matthew 5: 13). The Lord Jesus was *going* about Galilee with His few disciples. Multitudes came after Him from parts of the country; from Decapolis, Galilee, Jordan, Jerusalem, Judaea and from beyond Jordan. They had heard about His miracles; therefore they came from all parts to be healed by Him. But our Lord had one great objective before Him and that was to call a few disciples for the work to be done on the earth. When He saw the multitude coming after Him, we are told, He went up a mountain. There on the mountain, not far from Galilee, He preached the wellknown and wonderful Sermon on the Mount. That sermon is found in Matthew chapters 5, 6 and 7. At that time He made this statement, 'Ye are the salt of the earth'. He had come to seek and to save sinners that He might provide salt and light for the whole world. Whatever the Lord did, He did with that thought in mind: to provide salt, which could bring everlasting joy to mankind; and light, which could give everlasting life.

We see from God's Word how, by coming into His hand, we can become His salt. Some of you may have seen how salt is made by the seaside. Sea-water, which is full of salt, is evaporated and the salt remains behind. This salt has to be purified before it can be used. God wants good, pure salt. Each one of us can *become* that good, pure salt. Even though we be a very small

number, wherever we are we can be sufficient to bring joy to the whole country. While we require many bags of rice to provide food for thousands, we do not need so much salt. To make good food, we do not require much salt. A small quantity of salt can give taste to the food needed for many people. There are cities, towns and villages where believers are just a few in number, perhaps only two, three, four or five. Yet those few believers can be sufficient to bring joy, gladness, happiness and light to all the people of that place. That is why the Lord compares believers to a city on a hill. The city on a hill can be seen from many miles away. Even one believer is sufficient to tell people that then; is life and light in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Even though multitudes followed the Lord Jesus Christ, only a small number of them became His disciples. Yet those few have turned the world upside down. They were just ordinary men, but because they were disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, they became salt. Through them, you find that the love of God has been made known to every nation in the world.

True Salt—Divine love

In some parts of North India, when a visitor arrives, they will first of all give him something very salty to eat, and a glass of water. In doing this they say to the visitor, 'We receive and welcome you, and we give this to show our love to you'. Thus salt stands for true and fervent love.

True love can only be shown by believers. Your mother, father, brothers, sisters, or friends cannot love you in the same way as your fellow-believers. Human love changes. As time, circumstances and conditions of life change, human love will also change. But the love of the Lord Jesus Christ will never change. When the

Lord Jesus Christ says, 'Ye are the salt of the earth', He means that through you He wants His eternal life to be shown, declared and preached wherever you go. People of many races, speaking more than 1,155 languages, have received that same love through those who are born again. People of all conditions, like cannibals, murderers and thieves, who had been absolutely rejected by society, are now testifying of God's love to others.

During the last war, there was a soldier lying very sorely wounded in a hospital. When *King* George went to visit the hospital and see the patients, he came to this man's bedside. He saw his pain and suffering and felt very sorry for him. He said to him, 'Young man, can I do anything for you? Have you got any request?' The soldier said, 'Your majesty, I want only one favour. Will you please thank that nurse for nursing me so kindly and lovingly all these months?' There were tears in his eyes as he uttered these words. 'Even my own mother or sister would not have cared for me like that nurse. She has been nursing me so kindly, lovingly and patiently all these days and nights. Please, Sir, thank her on my behalf.' So the king called her and said, 'Nurse, on behalf of my wounded soldier, I want to thank you for your kind nursing'. The nurse replied, 'Your Majesty, I have not nursed him. It is God who is living in me that has nursed him. Please, Sir, the Lord Jesus Christ has saved me by His grace and gave me love for him'. That is true love, which cannot be received from either friends or relations. Earthly love is dependant on earthly conditions; but divine love goes deeper under every circumstance. That is why the Lord said, 'Love your enemies!' What wonderful salt ! The persons who hate us and curse us can be loved by us. We can love them not only to *give* them temporary relief from their suffering, but to make them partakers of the same love for eternity. Even

though the food may be just lentils and that not even cooked properly, the salt put into it makes it more tasty than mutton, fowl or fish, without salt. It is the same way with divine love. We can offer people something for eternity, wherever they may be. As we come in contact with them, we will be able to give them the real taste of divine salt.

Salt can bring real relief in many ways. Some people eat too much ghee and butter, and their stomachs start bloating. That is why they have to take soda, wherever they go. For such people salt is useful to take away the bloating from the stomach. In fact salt can *give* you relief from many ailments. Every one of us must become God's true salt.

How we become true salt

We see in verse 3 of Matthew 5, how we can *be* made such true salt. We must have a humble, broken and contrite spirit. That is the first stage in the purification of the salt. People throughout the world have been trying to find God. People of all classes and religions have been trying to build many great buildings with the desire of seeking God, thinking that through such grand buildings, they would be able to find God. They spend much time, energy and money on these buildings.

Some years ago, I saw in Lebanon the ruins of a very 31d temple built by the Romans. We can see, still standing there, huge pillars and very thick walls, about 40• or 50 feet high, built with very big stones. One wonders how such big stones could have been lifted up so high. People have built high buildings through much hardship, with the longing to find God. But when you go inside you find the devil there! I found many Roman Catholic buildings in Palestine—huge buildings in Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jerusalem and Galilee. They are very grand

buildings; but inside, there is nothing but darkness, evil, shame and sin. They think that through such buildings, they can come nearer to God and feel His presence more (cf. Isaiah 57 : 15 and 66 : 2). God does not live in buildings made by hands, whether they are built by Christians, Mohammedans, Jews or by anybody else. The Jews thought because they had a very great temple built by Solomon they knew God better. But that very same temple became a ruin and if you go to Jerusalem now, you will find Mohammedan mosques there. God does not live in buildings which men have made. He lives in a broken and contrite heart. What an honour and a privilege! Only when God Himself comes to live in us, can we become the salt of the earth. Only then can we show true love to all men and even to our enemies. Otherwise our hearts will remain full of jealousy, enmity and corruption. The whole world, these days, is full of hatred and bitterness; nation against nation, brother against brother, friend against friend, and children against parents. Why? Because there is no salt in them.

Sometimes God uses many painful means to make us truly humble. Read what David says in Psalm 51 : 17. He learnt his lesson through very bitter experience. We see in 1 Samuel 16: 12, 18, the outward qualifications of David, when he was a young man. How many good outward virtues he had. He could play an instrument, he was a mighty man of war, a very prudent and wise man, and fit to be a king. Yet he never knew the inward filthiness of his own heart. The time came when he was sorely tempted by the flesh. You find the story in 2 Samuel 11. In a cunning and subtle way the devil deceived him. The great, wise, noble king became an adulterer. And then, because of that

sin, he became a deceiver, a hypocrite, a cunning man and finally a murderer. Although he was a wise and noble king *he* was deceived by the devil.

Every human being is liable to be so deceived. After that downfall, David learnt a lesson. So now he says with great sorrow in his heart, 'In sin did my mother conceive me' (Psalm 51: 5). He had begun to realize the filthy condition of the human heart.

There are some children who look very nice, sweet and charming. They are so attractive, loving and sweet, that you feel like kissing their toes. But after two or three hours, when they become stubborn, angry and start kicking, they seem devilish ! It is because we are all born with a sinful nature, as God's Word says.

Now David cried, 'Oh God, forgive me my sins; against Thee only have I sinned and done this evil in Thy sight. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow'. See, he was conscious of his inward defilement. He was crying to be washed, 'Oh Lord, purge me, purge me'. Now that word 'purge' in English applies to gold being refined in the fire. You cannot clean gold just by washing it in water. It must be refined, or purged by fire. When gold is refined it has to go through the fire seven times. This process of refining is called 'purging'. By this purging, even the dirt hidden inside will come out and be completely removed. We do not realize how much corruption, evil and defilement we all have in our hearts. It is only the light of God coming inside that can enable us to see it. When you know what you are, you will cry like David, 'Lord, purge me and wash me thoroughly. Cleanse me inwardly and outwardly. Cleanse me from all evil'. The heart from which such a cry comes is called a broken and a contrite heart. If your heart is not like that you will remain as salt that has lost its savour. God cannot come and live in you. If you want to become good salt like David, then cry unto the Lord to cleanse you.

True salt brings blessing

See how much comfort the Psalms of David have brought to mankind throughout the world. Men in sorrow, trouble and discouragement have read the Book of Psalms. How many have been blessed through Psalms 23. 91. 103 and 104 ! All these wonderful Psalms have divine salt, healing men of every kind of wound. They have wiped away so many tears, lifted so many burdens. and brought peace to so many people. It is only after David became a man with a broken heart, that he became a man of true salt. This is the first stage in becoming divine salt ; 'Blessed are the poor in spirit : for their's is the kingdom of heaven' (Matt. 5 : 3). Now see what reward is received by such people. Not only do they become God's dwelling place, and God's salt, but God's Word says here. 'Their's is the kingdom of heaven!' They become partakers and heirs of God's holy kingdom. This is not possible by Bible knowledge, or college degrees, or good sermons, or singing, or miracles. but by being of a broken heart. You have to become more and more humble before God. It is a life-long lesson. That is why the Lord says we should know our own spiritual poverty. and our inward corruption. God's grace and love are available to change us.

There are certain diseases which cannot be diagnosed without the help of the X-ray. Without it, even a very clever doctor cannot correctly diagnose such diseases. When they have taken the X-ray photo, they may discover that the brain or intestines have had that disease for many years, quite unknown to the patient. The X-ray will reveal the whole thing, as these rays can penetrate the body.

I know a young man who was suffering from a bad throat and cough. He thought it was an ordinary cold.

One day someone advised him to go to a good doctor for diagnosis. He went, and the doctor said that an X-ray should be taken. Then, when it was taken and examined, the doctor told the young man, 'I am sorry, young man, you have got T.B.' He took that X-ray photo and went home weeping. His mother asked him, 'What is the matter? Why are you weeping?' He said, 'I have got T.B.!' Then the whole family started to weep. They were poor people. They had no money to send him to a sanatorium. So they sold everything possible in order to get him properly treated in the sanatorium. Then he was cured.

Now the real light is the light which you receive in the Lord. The light of God has to come into us so that we may see our own personal condition. He says very dearly, 'I am the light of the world.' He is not the light of the candle or the light of the sun or the light of the electric bulb; but He is the Eternal Light. We are told in the Word of God that in the new creation there is no need of any kind of lighting. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, will be the Light. Now the mystery is that this eternal, divine, pure Light is now being offered to us. First of all, by the help of that Light, we will see our sinful defilement and true condition. That is going to be our 'X-ray. Just as the young man became anxious and started to weep after he saw the photograph, in the same way, it is only when the light of God comes into you, that you will see your true condition and feel truly sorry.

When a man goes to a photographer to have his picture taken, he usually borrows a coat and a watch and other things, and tries to look his best. His hair will be beautifully brushed and combed. He will be sure to have a shave and will even powder his face. Even though his face may actually be ugly and

black, if it turns out to

be a very nice photo, he feels happy, and keeps on saying, 'See my photo!' Now, the Bible will not give you a wrong, deceptive photo like that! You will be made to see clearly and minutely what you really are. We ought to be thankful when we are made to see our true condition. Then we can call upon Him with a broken heart saying, 'Yes, Lord, I never knew; my heart is very wicked, sinful and defiled. Have mercy upon me!' Then He replies, 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love; and with cords of love I have drawn thee.' Because He loves me, He shows me my true condition, so that He may wash me and come into me.

Now, supposing you are told today that some great person in India desires to come and stay in your house for a few hours. You will make much preparation. You will say, 'So-and-so is coming to my house!' You will clean every spot in the house. Even though you might not have washed your bathroom for the last twenty-five years, on that day, you will buy a big tin of phenyle and clean the whole house so that the visitor may get good smell. Here we see the Lord Jesus Christ wants to come and live in us for all eternity. That is why we must be cleansed. We must have a broken and contrite heart. That is the beginning of the process of becoming salt. The holy, loving God, the great God, the living God, wants to come and dwell in us.

Have you become that salt? Can your friends, neighbours and others taste that divine salt through you? If not, please become true salt now. Then you will find, that wherever you go, tears will be wiped away through your words, and many burdens will be rolled away. New joy will come to many homes. Your whole town and country will be blessed through you. Day by day, more and more people will be prepared through you to become such divine salt.

God lives in a humble heart and a broken spirit. He comes to give us His All and He will live in us forever. When people go to visit relations, usually, they will not go empty handed; they will take with them sweets or fruits. When I was a boy, my mother once told me that my uncle was coming to visit us. She said, 'He is very kind and very wealthy too; the last time he came he brought us many things.' So when my uncle arrived, before he could enter the door of our house, I put my hands into his pockets; and, sure enough, there was a small package in it! God gives us everything when He comes to live in our hearts. He brings His fulness. With Him is the whole kingdom. His full glory is for us. Will you not become broken now and be washed by His blood?

May God make us of a broken heart and a contrite spirit.

4 Seasoning of Salt-2: Trials

We have seen how the Lord Jesus Christ is gathering men who are to be like the salt of the earth. We have considered how salt plays an important part in our lives. People use salt for trees and crops. Many kinds of salt are found in the earth. You find the roots of plants travel very far in search of it. We have seen that for health also, salt is necessary. The bones, muscles and blood all require salt. Salt preserves vegetables, butter and ghee. We know how a small quantity of salt brings good taste to the food we eat every day. In every country, people require salt for their food. We see how salt speaks of joy, love, light and health. Now the Lord Jesus Christ came into this world to provide salt for the health, joy, life and happiness of all mankind. Thus we have seen how in many countries, joy and health is being brought to many people through a small number of believers.

Divine X-ray reveals heart's condition

Now we shall see in the Sermon on the Mount how we can become true salt. The salt is of no use for food while it is in the sea-water. It has to be separated from water and refined before it becomes useful. We have seen in Matthew 5 : 3 the first step in becoming refined, pure salt: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' This is the first stage of the refining; we must come to God with a broken heart and a contrite spirit.

The second step in making us good salt is comfort in

trials. 'Blessed are they that mourn : for they shall be comforted' (Matthew 5 : 4). These words are full of meaning. We find that as soon as we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ from our hearts, we have to face situations which we had never thought of before. Before our conversion, our friends, relatives and parents praised us very much. But as soon as we decided to obey our Lord Jesus Christ, our friends became enemies! Our brothers and sisters, children ,and parents who loved us very much, have begun to hate us! In my family I am the eldest son, and so from childhood my mother, father, brothers and sisters showed me much love. They never said a word to wound me or hurt me. But when I became a Christian and the lord Jesus Christ became my personal SaViour, changed my life and delivered me completely from my evil ways and gave me new life, then my relations and friends rejected me! When I came back to India in 1933, my parents met me in Bombay. My father said to me, 'only mother and I know that you are a Christian.' (I had written a long letter to my father telling him how the Lord had changed my life.) My father continued, 'We have not the least objection to your being a Christian. We will not stop you *going* to Christian meetings. You can go wherever you like and do whatever you like. We have only one request: as long as you are in our home, don't say that you are a Christian!' I said to my father, 'If the Lord Jesus Christ had not changed my life, I would have lived a life of sin, wasting money and doing all sorts of wicked things. But now the Lord Jesus Christ has delivered me and changed me and given me a new life. He has sent me to you to show you the way of salvation.' I continued, 'Supposing I close my mouth and nose, how long would I live? Similarly, now my Lord is my life. :How can I live denying Him?' 'In that case, my

father replied, 'you cannot come home!' Even though

I had come back to India after seven years. they did not want. me to go home. With tears my mother had written to me again and again while I was away, 'We are counting the hours and .,days for you to come home.' But when I actually came hack I was not wanted! So. whatever money I. had, I gave to my father as a sign of respect. He left me in Bombay and went away. What a sorrowful thing it was! At that time I. thought. if I had come hack to India as a drunkard and adulterer, they would have welcomed me. Now that my Lord had changed me and given me a new life.. they did' nor want me! My mother began to weep at the railway station. and she said to me, 'For my sake Won't you come home for a few days? What is the harm in saying that you are not a Christian? We are not going for stop you from reading the Bible and from praying. Perhaps if you come. many will become changed as you are.' I told my mother that my God came first. But when I saw her crying more and more, a thought came to me. 'Let me go home for her sake. After all. she is my mother, I must respect her. I can go for just a kw days.' I was about to say so, but something took hold of my throat. Words would not come our of my mouth. After a few moments, I heard these words, 'No man, having put his hand to the plough. and looking back._ is fit for the kingdom of God. Whosoever loveth father or mother, brother or sister more than Me is not worthy to follow Me.' So I said to my mother, I am [sorry.](#) [my](#) Lord comes first.' Then they both left me in Bombay and went away.

I was a complete stranger in Bombay. Not a

single person there knew me. There was no money in my pocket and no place to go to. For some time I was very sad. But now I can thank God, even though for a period I was hated, despised and rejected, that very same sorrow was later turned into joy. My father had a dream in

which he heard somebody saying, 'Your son has found peace, do not trouble him.' So my father came to me and took me home. There, he said to everybody, 'My son has found true peace, don't say a word against him.' At the same time he kept on abusing me and cursing me for many days. All who came to the home would say to my parents, 'We are very sorry to hear about your son; what a sorrow!' This went on for many days. Right before me, they would begin to abuse and curse me.

Remember, there are times when we all have to go through sorrow and criticism. You cannot help but be sorrowful when your own brothers and sisters hate you, curse you and abuse you. But thank God, we are comforted by our Lord Jesus Christ.

As time went on, God began to speak to all in my family in His own way. I allowed them to curse me and threaten me and I never said a single word against them. Also, in my heart I had no hatred for them. I thank God for the privilege of suffering reproach for my Lord's sake. After a few months, my mother became very ill. My brother sent for a doctor. The doctor came. He was a specialist. He said to my brother, 'She has got typhoid, you will have to be careful.' When the doctor went away, my mother said, 'My son, you pray for me, I don't want the doctor's medicine, you pray for me.' So I knelt down and prayed just a short prayer, 'Lord touch my mother and heal her.' That very evening her temperature became normal. She had no more fever. From that time onwards, whenever they are in difficulty and trouble, they write to me, 'Please pray for us.' I have a small nephew. He calls me, 'Praying uncle.' Whenever he sees me he says, 'Praying uncle is coming.' Whenever they are in trouble they write to me or call me. What a privilege! Whenever I go to my home-town or to my relations or my friends, many come to me saying, 'Please pray for

us.' Thus you see, if we bear our sorrow and mourning cheerfully, afterwards others will be comforted through us. Those very ones who were cursing and abusing me, afterwards came to me for comfort. During those days the Lord drew near to me and said, 'I am with you always.' He became very dear to me in my sorrows. He took me through many sorrows for several years. I say it only for His glory. I spent many hours in tears. I was not wanted by anybody in the family. But the time came when they would call on me in their every need.

Comforted to be of comfort

A few years ago my third brother lost his eldest son, a young man of twenty-one years. He was knocked down by a train. It was a great shock to my brother and his wife. He would not eat or shave or even talk to anybody. When he came home and saw his son's body lying in the compound *he* fell down on top of it. His clothes got all stained with blood. He would not change those clothes for eight days. Many people came to console him. In fact almost the whole city came. On receiving the news I went by air to see him. When I saw his condition I did not know what to say to comfort him. He said to me, 'Tell me, where is your God now? What has happened to Him?' I kept quiet. I could not answer him. I just knelt down and prayed, 'Lord, comfort him; his sorrow is so great. He has lost his eldest son, a very nice young man. If only Thou wilt comfort him, he will change.' That same day he got up, changed his clothes, shaved and went to work in his office. What a comfort that was! So we ourselves have to mourn, in order to be able to comfort others. In other words, 'Blessed are they that mourn : for they shall be comforted'. You will then be a source of comfort to other people. See 2

Corinthians 1:4-7. Paul was able to comfort many because he was a partaker of the sufferings of Christ.

Unless we learn how -to mourn, how can others be comforted through us? It is a great privilege to be able to comfort otbe.o. Wherever we go, tears can be wiped away : tears of failure, disappointment, criticism and unhappiness. That is how we can become the salt of the earth. When we go to a sorrowing home, just a few words will make them feel comforted and strengthe1,11. Prayer, love, or a few words of comfort bring joy to those that are mourning. But first, we ourselves have to learn how to mourn. So do not be surprised when your father or mother, brother or sister, wife or husband, children or friends or neighbours hate you, curse you and reproach you. The Lord may take you through many sufferings and afflictions. It may be physical trouble, or death in the family, or any failure or tragedy. The Lord alloWs that, so that we first of all may be comforted by Him. 'Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted'.

Some years ago, while I was in Canada, the weatner was very cold. I had no money. I bought a tin of cocoa, and that was my only food for many days. One day, feeling very sad, I was walking in the street. I was saying in my heart, 'When I lived in sin, I had plenty of money and plenty of friends. Now that I am saved, I have no money and no friends!' I was feeling very sad. As I walked I saw a big building and went inside. There was an empty armchair and I sat down. Feeling hungry and tired, I went to sleep. As I was asleep on the chair, somebody put a hand on my shoulder and I heard a small voice saying, 'Why did you say you are lonely? Did I not tell you I will never leave you nor forsake you? Why are you sad?' I said, 'Lord, please forgive me for doubting Thee'. As I came outside the building and turned the corner, I saw a tall man. He came to me and said, 'Oh, I see you are from India!'

I said, 'Yes'. 'My parents are eager to meet a man from India. Please come with me to my house. That is my car over there. I will take you home to meet my father and mother'. I did not know him. They say that in America people rob you in the day time. They point a gun at you and take away your money. So I thought that he might be a thief. But I said to myself, 'I have no money and I have no watch—so why should I worry?' I went with him. It was a nice home by a lake. He said to me, 'We are so happy to have you; please stay for lunch'. Twice I said, 'No, thank you,;'; but the third time, I consented, and they gave me a very nice meal. They became friends throughout my stay there. That is how the Lord encouraged me. In every sorrow, in every trial, He became dearer to me. That is how we become God's salt. Do you want to become God's salt?

Receive Him and become His salt

He says, 'Ye are the salt of the earth: This is possible only when the Lord Jesus Christ comes into us. He must become your living Saviour. When He became my Saviour, I did not know anything about salvation, or new birth, or atonement. I did not know anything about the devil. But the Lord appeared to me and showed me the awfulness of all my sins. I saw my body covered with black spots and there was a filthy smell. He said to me, 'Bakht Singh, these spots which you are seeing, and the smell which you are getting, are because of your sins'. I replied, 'Yes, my Lord, it is true. I have covered my sins from everybody all these years, but today I confess them. I am a great sinner, totally defiled and very miserable.' Then a loving voice came, 'This is My body broken for you, and this is My blood shed for the remission of your sins'. I said, 'Lord, these words are beyond my understanding. I am so stupid. I don't know what these words mean, but I know they are Thy