

## -GENTILE BELIEVERS-

## -BEFORE ACTS 28:28-

1. They had an inferior position in reference to the Jews, for they were placed in a position to receive blessing by being grafted into the true olive tree as a wild branch. Rom. 11:17-24.
2. Blessing came by becoming the children of faithful Abraham thru faith. Blessing could only come thru the promise made to Abraham. Gal. 3:6-9.
3. Two baptisms were required. By water to identify them with repentant Israel, and by Spirit to include them in the Church of God. Examples, Acts 10:47,48; 1 Cor. 12:13.
4. They could have no part in the service of God. They could not be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, or teachers. The service of God pertained only to the Jews. Rom. 9:3-5.
5. They were kept separate from the Jews by a wall of partition which was mainly ordinances. They even had a separate gospel. Acts 15:5,10,20. Gal. 2:7.
6. The gospel was always proclaimed to the Jew first. Rom. 1:16.
7. They expect to meet the Lord in the clouds at resurrection. 1 Cor. 15:51-52. 1 Thess. 4:13-17.
8. They partook of the Word of God which was sent to Israel. Acts 10:36.
9. Partook of a calling which was from the foundation of the world. Matt. 25:34.
10. They were identified with the Lord in His death, burial, and resurrection. Rom. 6:4.
11. Their blessings were in a place where angels dwell. Heb. 12:22.
12. They were blessed only that Israel might be blessed. Rom. 10:19-20; 11:13-14.

## -AFTER ACTS 28:28-

1. Perfect equality with the Jew. Fellow-citizens, fitly framed together, builded together, joint-heirs, joint-members, and joint-partakers. Eph. 2:19 to 3:13.
2. After Israel was set aside, no blessing could come thru them or Abraham. All spiritual blessings now are in heavenly places in Christ. Eph. 1:2-3.
3. Only one baptism. Eph. 4:5. This is a baptism by the Spirit into the death of Christ. Col. 2:12.
4. The 12 and other workers were chosen by the Lord while here. But after His ascension He chose prophets, apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers from both Jews and Gentiles as Gifts to the church which is His body. Eph. 4:8-13.
5. The middle wall is broken down. Jew and Gentile are reconciled to each other since ordinances are no longer required. Eph. 2:13-17.
6. Gentiles have first consideration. Eph. 3:1,6,8. Col. 1:27. 1 Tim. 2:7. 2 Tim. 1:11. "Far off" spoken of first. Eph. 2:17.
7. His citizenship is in the heavens. Eph. 2:6. From that place after his resurrection he will await the manifestation of the Lord. Col. 3:4. Phil. 3:20.
8. The dispensation of the mystery was sent especially to the Gentiles thru Paul. Eph. 3:1-3.
9. They had a calling which dated from before the foundation of the world. Eph. 1:3-4.
10. They enjoyed the added blessing of being raised and seated with the Lord. Eph. 2:5-6.
11. Their blessings were in a place above angels, above all principality and power. Eph. 2:6; 1:20-21. Col. 2:10.
12. They were a people chosen from before the foundation of the world, predestinated to be children also, and accepted in the beloved. Eph. 1:3-6.

-TRUTH FOR TODAY-

A careful study of the Word reveals the fact that there are four future resurrections of groups of people. I say GROUPS here, since there may be more than that if we were to consider some individuals who have special resurrections, the two witnesses of Rev. being one example.

The first three of these resurrections consist of those who have special callings, and therefore will include only those who are saved or have life. The fourth is made up of all left over from the first three.

In point of time, the greatest of these is the first. It embraces those of the present time who by faith have received a place in the mystery, the church which is the Body of Christ. As to time and manner, nothing is told to us about this one. The fact is stated without any details. This calling began shortly after the setting aside of the Jews at Acts 28:28. The doctrine of this dispensation, as well as the practice, is set forth in Eph. and Col. Practical applications are to be found in both Phil. and 2 Tim. It is the hope of this group to see Christ manifested in His glory in the heavenlies and to be glorified along with Him. By expressing the great grace of God, this dispensation has the highest and grandest hope of all. This is extended to us Gentiles, who for a long time were not a people, were far off, were dogs, and without a hope or God. We have been especially chosen that we might show forth the manifold wisdom of God, not to the earth, but to principalities and powers in heavenly places. This manifestation of the Lord in the heavenlies is known as the **EPHESIANIA**, and is found in 1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim. 1:10; 4:1,8; Tit. 2:13. The word appears in one other instance, but does not speak of an appearing, but the **BRIGHTNESS** of an appearing.

The second of the four resurrections has to do with the appearing of the Lord in the clouds. This is

for an outcalling of Israel. It is the better resurrection spoken of in Heb. The first to take part in this hope, that we have record of, is Abraham. A few Gentiles will also have part. It will be those grafted in and identified with repentant Israel during the period in Acts after Cornelius believed. The hope is to be caught up with the Lord in the air and to dwell in the New Jerusalem. Since this outcalling primarily deals with Israel, it is not offered today, for Israel has been set aside for the time being. For some of the high points concerning this special calling for the Church of God, see 1 Cor. 15; 1 Thess. 4; and Heb. 11.

The third resurrection embraces earthly Israel. It will be at the last day. The Lord will appear at Jerusalem on the Mt. of Olives. He will set up a kingdom on earth with the capital as Jerusalem. He will reign over the earth, the 12 apostles taking part in this reign. He will reign with a rod of iron and break the nations to pieces. Any unrighteousness will be speedily dealt with. The Magna Charta of this kingdom is the sermon on the mount. This kingdom is the theme of the prophets. It will last for 1,000 years, during which time the old enemy Satan will be bound. It is also impossible for anybody of the present time or dispensation to have part in this resurrection, for it is for Israel only, and they are set aside now.

The fourth or last resurrection will embrace all the nations before Abraham and all others since then who have not had a part in the other three. Job will have a part in this one, as well as the believing malefactor. It comes after the millennium and after the present heavens and earth have passed away. It will take in both saved and unsaved peoples, but there will be no question of salvation there. That will have been established long before. The names of the saved will be in the book of life. All others will be cast into the lake of fire.

-UNDERSTANDING-

The stock excuse most people seem to have for not reading and studying the Word is that they cannot understand it. They are satisfied to belong to a church somewhere, do the required observance of forms, listen to the preacher's opinion on spiritual matters, and hope that they won't burn. Some even think that the Word is not to be understood, altho they do not know just why it should have been given to us. Some even take pride in their ignorance and boast of it. Others get angry if one tries to explain the simplest truths to them acting as if they did not desire to know truth.

Nicodemus saw the wonders and signs wrought by the Lord. He also heard His teaching. Unlike the other leaders in Israel, he made a step of faith and obtained life. That step of faith, even tho at night and in great timidity and fear, brot him nearer the Lord. He had a question in his mind. He wanted to know why the Lord did as He did, and why He taught as He taught and what it all meant. He never got to ask the question, for the Lord knew what was in his heart and answered it before it was uttered.

The answer was, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." In other words the Lord said, "Of a truth, Nicodemus, except a man be born from above, he cannot enter into or understand the things of God." Spiritual perception is more than just a head knowledge. It has little to do with an education. It has nothing to do with this world's wisdom.

Then Nicodemus does ask a question. He wants to know what this being born from above means. He had the law and the prophets and should have known.

The Lord further said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Again the Lord is very emphatic and gives the only

way and means possible for any degree of spiritual perception. It is to be born of water and of the Spirit. To try to make this mean water baptism is extremely silly. I hope none of you is so foolish as to think that by washing according to some denominational formula will give a man any spiritual perception in any way or form.

When speaking to the Samaritan woman, the Lord spoke of water. He meant the teaching or Word of God. If she had that she would never thirst again, for it is the Word that will satisfy every longing of the heart. The Lord Himself was the Incarnate Word, and to receive the written Word is to have the incarnate Word.

But to read and study the Word is not enough. The Bible will yet remain a closed book unless the Word is taught by the Holy Spirit. He is our teacher. He alone can by the Word of God give us spiritual perception. So our only hope is to read and study the Word and ask that the Holy Spirit will lead us into all truth.

In this connection read Psa. 119:50; 1 Cor. 4:15; Jas. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23; and Jno. 6:33.

This being born from above imparts a new nature in man. It does not change his heart. That will never be changed until this corruption puts on incorruption in the resurrection. The old nature stays with us during this life. As soon as the new nature comes in, there is war. The new nature is begotten of God and partakes of His nature. It cannot lie. It cannot sin. But the old nature can. So we must be on guard. The new nature is one of the steps in the regaining of the lost image of God. It was lost thru sin.

Let us ever be aware of the extreme weakness of the flesh. Let us always strive to show ourselves approved unto God. Let us ask for the spiritual perception which we must have for any understanding of the things of God. May we never be so foolish as to try to excuse our shortcomings by ignorance.

## -SOME DIVIDING LINES-

There are two distinct purposes in God's dealing with men in the time covered by Acts. Yet these two cannot be unrelated, for the second is because of the first.

The first purpose was to save a remnant of Israel. His own did not receive Him, but as many individuals from among His own as did receive Him, to them gave He the power to become the sons of God. This was just a remnant since the nation as a whole did not receive their king.

The second purpose was to take out from among the Gentiles a people for His name. But this was to provoke Israel to jealousy so they would receive their King. The purpose still was the blessing of His people, Israel.

The ministry of Paul is divided into parts. One part was performed during Acts and the other part after Acts.

Paul was a chosen vessel of the Lord, a minister unto the Gentiles. But during Acts this Gentile ministry was limited in many ways. It always put the Jew first. In every place Paul preached, it was to the Jew first. If he went to a city which had no Synagogue, he passed thru and did not preach there. The reason being that Gentiles were grafted in where a Jewish branch had been taken out. During this period Paul wrote 7 letters. Keep this list in your Bible.

1. First Thessalonians.
2. Second Thessalonians.
3. Hebrews.
4. First Corinthians.
5. Second Corinthians.
6. Galatians.
7. Romans.

The latter part of Paul's ministry was primarily to the Gentiles. He had a mystery or secret which God had given him to make known to the Gentiles. The Jews were set aside and now held an inferior place. During this period Paul wrote another 7 letters.

1. Ephesians.
2. Philippians.
3. Colossians.

4. Philemon.
5. First Timothy.
6. Titus.
7. Second Timothy.

If we will but bear this in mind when we read, we will be able to rightly divide the Word of truth and not be ashamed of our workmanship.

By making the proper divisions we eliminate many things which on the surface appear to be contradictions. We will then be able to find what is TRUTH FOR TODAY and order our lives thereby.

Most of the confusion in church circles today is caused by a lack of or a careless division of the Word. Before we read a letter, we should be careful to look at the address. It might not be written to us. What was the will of God in one dispensation may not be His will at all in another.

The dividing must be according to God's divisions, not according to our own notions. A wrong dividing is shown by those who take to themselves the keeping of the Sabbath, but omit circumcision. Both these belong to the same dispensation and they cannot be divided.

Some have been mistaken and that they found truth concerning the church in the prophecies. So they proceeded to make all blessings apply to the church and the cursing to Israel. That is another example of wrongly dividing.

Some try to keep ordinances and at the same time preach the gospel of grace. The keeping of any ordinances and being saved by grace just do not fit together. If we now live in the dispensation of the grace of God, then we must away with ordinances or we frustrate the grace. There must be some consistency in the spiritual realm as well as in the material.

God has made dividing lines. It is well that we consider the things that differ. It is His will that we know and practice what is TRUTH FOR TODAY. Truth for some other dispensation can be sin if practiced today. Strive to show thyself approved unto God.

## -DOCTRINE IN EPHESIANS-

Having chosen us before the foundation of the world and blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, it was the Father's will that some day we should be presented before Him perfect and in love. Sin having entered since this will was formulated, it had to be accomplished by the shedding of the blood of the Son so that we could be acceptable. This transaction has the witness of the Spirit, both in the written Word and a work in our hearts in giving us a new nature which is a sample of the finished work that will be done in resurrection.

It is the earnest prayer of Paul that we might know the hope of this calling, and not only the wonderful hope, but also the riches of the glory of Christ in His inheritance in the saints. He further desires that we may know the great resurrection power of Christ which is to us who believe. This power is the same power that raised the Lord far above all principality and power and seated Him at the right hand of the Father.

We have a threefold fellowship with Christ. We have been quickened or made alive with Christ and this is by grace only. We have been raised up together with Christ from the grave to the highest place in the heavenlies. There we are made to sit with Christ, not only enjoying blessings there now, but in the ages to come will have them heaped upon us continually.

None of this can ever be accomplished by any works of ours, lest we should boast and thereby dim the glory and praise due to God only. On the contrary, we are His workmanship, a display sample of His grace to be shown to all the powers in the heavenlies. Certain good works have been ordained and set up beforehand that we who are His workmanship should walk in them, not for our glory, but for His. It is impossible to do these good works unless first made a new creature in Christ Jesus. These works are not of the flesh.

At one time we Gentiles were far off and at enmity with God because of sins. Now we have been made nigh since He is our peace. Tho in the dispensation before there was a barrier between Jew and Gentile, the two have been reconciled and made into one new man, making peace. It is further revealed that the two who were reconciled to each other have in one body been reconciled to God and have access to Him because Christ came and preached peace to both those that were nigh and those that were far off.

Gentiles then are no longer strangers, but are fellow-citizens with the Jews in the church which is the body of Christ. Jews and Gentiles are living stones which are being used to build a building which is fitly framed together and which is growing into a temple in which God may dwell thru the Spirit. Not only is each person's body a temple of the Holy Spirit, but all the members together make a temple for God.

Paul then makes it plain that it had never been revealed or thot of in any age before that a Gentile should ever in Spirit be joint-heirs with Jews. But now such is the case. It is also revealed that the Gentiles are members of a body with perfect equality with the Jew, a thing which was never true before. In the last part of Acts ministry the Gentiles were just grafted into the olive tree which was a type of the Jew. But now he has full and equal rights, not in the olive tree, but in an entirely new order. This makes them partakers of the promise of life on an equality instead of in a dependent position as before. This new order has a witness far above all others in that it is to manifest the manifold wisdom of God to all the principalities and powers in the heavenlies.

These things are a part of the mystery which never before had been known to ages and generations but had been hid in God. Now they were to be made know to all men by the apostle Paul.

**-FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK-**

We have been having such nice weather that it has been hard to stay in and work on the paper. There is always plenty to do on the farm and we know that the stormy days will come when we will not want to be outside.

We sold our old chickens and now have the laying house about ready for the pullets.

Another new calf came Oct. 20. It is a Holstein heifer, weighs about 100 lbs. and the name is Cookie.

I still spend my Saturdays in Warsaw teaching music. I teach the accordion and some wind instruments.

Since last month we have added well over 50 names to the mailing list. I have appreciated the correspondence. Don't feel badly if I am slow in replying. I need a time stretcher.

I am grateful for the gifts that have come in for the ministry of TRUTH FOR TODAY. Our needs have been met at all times. But above all I appreciate the fine spirit of fellowship that prompted these numerous gifts. I do not feel that I am working alone.

I have refrained from asking for financial aid, and will continue to do so. If you make a contribution, it is at your own risk. I do not

have as yet much of a system of bookkeeping, except for a large receipt book in which I try to keep a record of all money coming in. Since there is no organization or any way of checking on my use of funds at present, you will just have to rely on my own personal honesty if you entrust any funds with me.

The conference at Grand Rapids was a success. It was held Oct. 5-9. Mr. Hazekamp was a fine host and worked hard to make up a good program. The speakers were; Mr. Hazekamp of Grand Rapids, Mich., Mr. Robinson of Jewett, Ill., Mr. Julien of Rockford, Ill., Mr. Elleby of Kalamazoo, Mich., Mr. Bowser of Bremen, Ind., and myself. The attendance was good and there seemed to be a keen interest. It was a little disconcerting to speak with a pair of wire recorders set up. It seems that some who were unable to come were determined to hear anyway. We were glad for such interest. I made two round trips to Grand Rapids during the conference.

Last month I spoke of the illness of Mrs. Baker's mother. We put her to rest in a little country cemetery near here Sept. 25.

Our telephone is Atwood 394. Address all mail to Oscar M. Baker, R 2, Warsaw, Ind.

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