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**-STUDIES IN EPHESIANS- #5**

We find it necessary to go back to the first word in 1:2. The word is GRACE. We did not give this word due consideration in our first study. It occurs 12 times in the epistle, and we should look thru these occurrences to see what it might mean and to whom it might apply.

1. In this first appearance (1:2) it is directed to the saints and faithful. This is a clue to the fact that God does not dispense grace to any but believers.

2. In verse 6 we find that it is by grace that believers are made accepted in the Beloved.

3. In verse 7 we hear of the riches of His grace wherein He has abounded toward believers.

4. "By grace are ye saved" occurs in 2:5. When God shows grace to a man, it is in salvation. If He is showing grace to all, then all must be saved!

5. Verse 7. In the ages to come He will continue to show grace to His own.

6. In verse 8 we have repeated the fact that men are saved by grace. But only those who accept it have it. To accept it, one must accept Christ.

7. In 3:2 we hear of a dispensation of grace. It was entrusted to Paul to give to the saints and faithful, not to the whole world in general.

8. In 3:7 we find that Paul's special ministry of the secret was given to him as a gift of the grace of God.

9. In the next verse (8) we find Paul emphasizing his own unworthiness to receive such a gift of grace. But it was given to Paul as a believer.

10. In 4:7 Paul uses the word US, thus including himself with the saints and the faithful. To them (US) is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

11. In verse 29 Paul warns that we should be careful with our conversation so that we may minister grace to our hearers. This is not to unbelievers.

12. Finally in 6:24 Paul again asks that grace be upon all that love the Lord.

A study of these 12 along with a concordant study of GRACE in all the NT will soon convince one that God is not dispensing grace upon all mankind today, but only upon those of His own household. The word DISPENSATION ITSELF has to do with the management of a household. Let us stretch it no farther than that!

**-THE SPIRIT WORKING-**

Today God has chosen to work in the world by the Spirit IN THE BELIEVER. The Holy Spirit, which is the "Another Comforter" of John 14:16, is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Just read very carefully the verses following.

With this being true, what manner of persons ought we to be? It is well that we examine ourselves and see whether we are fit vessels for the Holy Spirit to dwell in. Also are we vessels that will show Him forth to good advantage?

In John 16:8 we are told that when He (the Comforter) is come, He will reprove, or convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. When He dwells in a believer and that believer comes in contact with the world, the world is convicted, convinced, or reprovved of sin. That is done principally by the fact that the life and walk of the Christian is so different that it condemns the world. The world cannot live a righteous life because of unbelief. They do not have the power or ability to do it. The world is reprovved of righteousness because Christ was raised and seated in the heavens. Some day He will come and judge the world. The world does not like the prospect. The world is also convicted or reprovved of its judgment of the Prince of the world. They judged Him and cast Him out, the One to whom all power was given in heaven and in earth (Matt. 28:18).

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit thru Peter, convicted men. The same happened thru Stephen, Paul, and others. He still works today thru believers. That is the way it was planned and that is the only way He can work.

The natural conclusion then is that the work of the Holy Spirit in the world today can be aided or can be hindered by the believers. They can yield their lives to Him, or they can do as the one-talent man, live their lives to suit themselves and thus grieve and hinder the Holy Spirit.

This one truth, above all others, ought to make us stop and think. Do we stress the practical side of our wonderful gospel of the dispensation of the Mystery as we ought? The world reads the lives of the believers. There they see Christ. But what picture of Christ do they see in us?

Let us put off the old man with his deeds and put on the new man so that the Holy Spirit can do His work thru us.

**-I COME QUICKLY-**

All thru the Acts period of time we find that the coming of the Lord was imminent. It was close at hand. This was the burden of the epistles written during that time, viz., 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John, 1st and 2nd Peter, James, Jude, 1st and 2nd Corinthians, 1st and 2nd Thessalonians, Hebrews, Galatians, and Romans.

Peter spoke of some being reserved unto the judgment of the nations which would follow the tribulation.

Paul warned the people to be prepared for the tribulation.

But when we get into the Revelation, which was written maybe as late as 96 A.D., we find the words "Behold, I come quickly"(3:11). At the end of the book again we find the words "Surely I come quickly." All the way thru there is the theme concerning the coming of the Lord, and that soon.

But this was written almost 1900 yrs. ago and He has not come yet. What has happened?

Let us take up the reason for the expectancy in Acts first. From a computation of 70 weeks on the holy city and the people we find that the weeks would have run out in A.D. 85. But something has happened. Instead of the 70 weeks running their course, they were interrupted and so they have not run out yet. We now live in a parenthesis or an age about which prophecy knew nothing as to how God would deal with the believers. So all the apostles were perfectly right in telling people that He would soon come.

Acts 28:28 tells us what happened. In the gospel of John we find the same thing. His own had received Him not. The 7 last epistles of Paul are in the same period of time and reveal the secret.

But the Rev. has to do with the DAY OF THE LORD which is yet future. It is from the standpoint of the beginning of the day of the Lord that these things are shortly to come to pass. The epistle is written to and for Israel when they will have received Him. They will have settled in Asia Minor, in what is now known as Turkey. Apostasy will have set in and from the standpoint of the letter, the tribulation will be at hand.

Remember, all the Rev. is yet future and no history books are needed to get the message. All is centered around the COMING in chapter 19.

**-SATAN IS COMING!-**

Yes, Satan is coming. But a lot of folks may think that he is here already. In a way, that is true, for in Job we find that Satan goes to and fro in the earth and walks up and down in it.

Even centuries before Job we learn that Satan found his way into the garden and brot death upon the human race.

He was in the wilderness at the time he tempted the Lord. He also took the Lord up on a high mountain. I do not know how he did it. He also set Him up on a pinnacle of the temple. I do not know how he did that either. Neither do I know how the Lord got down from the mountain or the pinnacle of the temple.

Satan is a deceiver. He works in the best of society and the best of churches. He does not bother about the slums and the skid-rows. He has plenty of unclean spirits or demons working under him to take care of those places.

But in Job we also find that Satan presented himself before the Lord along with the Sons of God (angels). He also accused Job there. The conversation indicates that they met at some point distant from the earth. Where could it be?

In the Revelation, in chapter 12, we learn that some day Satan is going to be cast out of heaven into the earth. This will be as the result of a war in heaven with Michael as the leader of the Lord's hosts. Satan is spoken of there as being the accuser of the brethren and that he accused them in heaven day and night.

So then we must conclude that Satan has his abode today in heaven and that like the angels, he can come to the earth to work.

This idea is further strengthened in Eph. 6:12 where we are told that the warfare of the church which is the body of Christ is not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual wickedness in high (heavenly) places. In the Greek the word HIGH is the same as HEAVENLY in 1:3, where the believers are blest.

The prospect of Satan coming to the earth is not a happy one. In Rev. 12:12 we see that he will have great wrath because he knows that his time is short. He will persecute the woman (Israel), who brot forth the man child. He will also make war with the remnant of her seed. When Satan has come then will Israel pray "Thy kingdom come!"

-STUDIES IN JOHN- #35

1. What did the Jews want Pilate to have done to the executed ones? 19:31
2. Why did they desire this done?
3. Was this the weekly Sabbath that was coming, or was it some other day that was called a Sabbath?
4. If the Lord was in the grave 3 days and 3 nights and rose after the beginning of the first day of the week (some time after sundown on Saturday), Then when must He have been hanged?
5. To understand verse 32, you should read appendix 164 in the Companion Bible. Who were the "first" and the "other"?
6. Why did they not break the Lord's legs?
7. What did on of the soldiers do?
8. What was the result?
9. Who was watching this act and was therefore a witness? 35
10. What was the real reason for not breaking His legs? 36 See Exodus 12:46, Num. 9:12 and Psa. 34:20
- 11 How does verse 37 fulfill Psa. 22:17, Zech. 12:10, and Rev. 1:7?
12. Who asked for the body of the Lord? 38
13. Was he a believer?
14. Why had he not been mentioned before?
15. What was his financial status? Matt. 27:57
16. Who helped him with his task?
17. What did they bring for preserving the body?
18. Were these cheap?
19. Was the garden near the scene of death?
20. Did you know that all this happened in the selfsame place where Abraham was about to offer up Isaac?
21. What was the name of this mount where this happened and on which the temple was also built? (The mount extended outside the wall of the city)
22. How was Isa. 53:9 fulfilled by these events?
23. Can you describe how this sepulchre must have looked?
24. Why did they make haste in the burial?
25. Why did they try to preserve the body if He were to rise from the dead?
26. At least 36 prophecies were fulfilled in those 24 hours. Was that just a matter of accident?

DEAR YOUNG FOLKS: A few weeks ago another young man joined our study club by sending in answers to the questions on John. He is from Illinois. Any others may yet join by sending in answers to the questions. It will not be many months now till we shall have completed the studies in John.

I find that several of the older folks look over your shoulders and read this column too. That is fine for all of us can still learn lessons from the Scriptures.

We find in the Word that those who were first quite often came in last. Our Lord once said that the last should be first and the first last.

Take the case of Cain. He was the first born. He had every advantage by birth and position. But his brother Abel was the one that was acceptable.

Abraham was the youngest of three children. He was chosen and they were not. We often wonder why.

Esau was older than Jacob, but Jacob was the chosen one thru whom the blessing should be transmitted.

Saul was the people's choice but David was the second king and God's choice. This reminds us that the Anti-Christ will come before Christ comes as king.

We can go back a little and find that Moses was younger than both Miriam and Aaron. But he was the proper child (the one chosen).

There are others which you may be able to name here. But the point is just this; what men may think is good and to be chosen may not be at all what God approves and would choose. So we must be careful when we place our approval on a person or line of action that we seek the will of the Lord in it. For what might seem perfectly proper to us might be very displeasing to God.

Like Gideon, we should carefully try to find what is the will of the Lord before we take any action. Too often we run on before Him and spoil things. Then we have to suffer for it.

Some are like Saul; they go their own way and then God will not speak to them any more. So they start running around so seances and fortune tellers trying to find what to do. They are no happier than Saul was, and finally get involved with devils and mental ills. Seek God and His will first.

Sincerely in HIM, Oscar M. Baker.

- THE EDITOR'S DESK -

TRUTH FOR TODAY is printed and sent out on an average of once a month as we find the time to get it done. It is sent to anyone anywhere free upon request. YOU can help by sending in the names and addresses of those you know who might be interested.

THE CLASS which meets at the home of your editor each Tuesday nite at 7:30 is now in the study of the Revelation. Tape recordings have been made of the first three lessons which we have had. These run just about 1 1/2 hrs. each.

VISITORS; Elroy Robinson of Libertyville, Ill., spent a couple of days with us. Not many visitors this time.

VITAL STATISTICS; Specky, a Holstein heifer, has her first calf. We call him Blazes. He weighed over 100 lbs.

LATCHSTRING is still out for those who would like a day or two of visit and Bible study. Some who did not get here last year may be able to make it now.

NOTICE: We are selling the Companion Bibles at about 25% below the regular bookstore prices. In buckram \$12. in 1/4 leather \$14. In the full leather \$24. Prices are postpaid.

DITTO: By special arrangement, we can sell you any of the Berean Publications postpaid at the list prices. A large stock is on hand at all times.

REQUEST: Several have written us about second hand books that are out of print. Will those who wrote before the first of the year please write again making their requests known again? We are not so sure that we have them all in our lists. We do not want to miss anyone.

REPORT: Just a few days ago we sent out the quarterly report. If you are a donor and did not get your report, let us know. This is another record that is difficult to keep straight.

TRACT: We printed 5,000 of the little tract we sent you last month, DO YOU KNOW? If you can use some of these let us know how many you can distribute. We can print as many more as we may need. This was done on the Multilith we recently got. More printing will be done as we find the time.

TERMINOLOGY: We should be careful not to use the phrase THIS DISPENSATION, but rather say "This age." All the world is no more under grace today than was it all under law in the time of Moses. Dispensation has to do with a household, with God's family. Others are outsiders.

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