

-STUDIES IN EPHESIANS- #31

Our subject this time is BEFORE ORDAINED, Eph. 2:10. The word ordained could just as well be translated prepared. It would not change the sense. There is another thing brot out in a careful study which may be significant. It is likely that it can be said that we were prepared or before ordained to walk in the good works.

In this chapter two walks are mentioned. One is the walk of the fallen creature and the other is the walk of the new man. There is no other walk known in Scriptures. Today men are exhorted to walk as children of light and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Notice that the Scriptures speak of the works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit. No fruit can be borne in darkness; just fungus growths and the like.

The walk of the unsaved is in the grounds or territory of sin and death. There is a great distance from this walk to the walk of the believer. Between lie death, quickening, resurrection, ascension, and seating with Christ in the heavenlies. The two walks must then be very far apart.

It would appear that God has some good works then that are to be done to perfect His glory. Only prepared ones can do this work. So the call goes out today for workers, prepared or trained workers, who can do that which God wants done. Note that there is no possible way that a worker can train or prepare himself. He must be God's workmanship. This is a field that flesh can never enter. There must be a new creation or new creature.

Since it is impossible for the old creation to produce good works, God has to make a new creation so that they can become possible. That is a part of His wondrous grace; making it possible that we could do some good works.

So it is not the walk that is pre-ordained. If that were so, then it would be vain to exhort us to walk in love, walk worthy, walk not as the Gentiles, etc. Our free will to choose has not been interfered with. In fact, we had no choice till we were a new creation, for there is no possibility for the old to in any way produce or walk in good works.

In the dispensation of the mystery God has introduced a new creation. He is the Creator and Maker. The goal is good works. He has prepared every member of the Body to walk in those good works.

That is why that we are to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Ahead is a walk to be adorned with good works.

-PATCHWORK-

In Matt. 9 the Lord says that no sane person would put a new patch on an old garment, for it would only make the rent all the worse. He is directly referring to the state of Israel as a nation. They have been a failure. They cannot be patched up in any way, but must be reborn and become a new nation capable of receiving the new covenant by which they will be a light to the nations of the world.

This same lesson is brot out in Jer. 18 by the lesson in the potter's house. There is no way of patching up the old. There is going to have to be a new one made.

Altho these things do not refer directly to us today, yet there is a lesson there for us and one which we should not miss.

The old creation, the old man, cannot be patched up and made meet for the presence of God. No amount of the so-called social gospel can ever make a specimen of fallen humanity a son of God. Yet that is the main occupation of Christendom today, and has been for a long time. Nearly all seem to be agreed that there must be a patch, but not all are agreed as to the color and the kind of material, some insisting that it must be this way, and others insisting just as strongly that it must be that way.

The old creation has been condemned to death. It can produce nothing good. But God has made provision and if we will but look to God's ways, we will have success. The new creation needs no patch. Some may argue that some types of social gospel are better than others. That may all be true, but it seems that the better the patch, the worse the rent! The gospel which God has ordained to be preached does not patch up anything. He never intended it that way. But when the gospel is preached the old garment is put off and a new one is given. It needs no patching and never will. How foolish for men to be occupied then in trying to fix over the old one when a new one is at hand free for the asking!

But the natural man is just that foolish. Ever since the expulsion from Eden, man has been trying to regain paradise. Back in olden times he made groves and altars and idols on high places, vainly trying to regain paradise. He is still at it, but in more refined ways. But the truth still remains; even if man could in his fallen state find his way to paradise, he would have no capacity to enjoy it. Rather he would despoil it and degrade it to suit his lowest lusts and desires of the flesh. Even now many call their lowest dives EDEN.

-HEALING AND ATONEMENT-

Very often this has been a question. Is there healing in the atonement? Like so many other questions, the argument has been jumped into without due consideration of all the angles of the case.

You should read all of the chapter of Isa. 53. But it is from verse 5 that the proof is taken for this idea. It is well to think on whom the antecedent of WE is, for a beginning. And that just may be where one will end, for when that is established, then we have little argument left for today.

The next verse speaks of WE being like sheep. When our Lord was on earth He spoke of Israel as being sheep. When we look at the very first verse in Isa. 53 we find that it is concerning Judah and Jerusalem. That is the subject of verse 5.

He was despised and rejected by His own people Israel. Israel did not recognize Him as the Prince of Peace. But nevertheless He bore their griefs and carried their sorrows, even to the tree. He was wounded for the transgressions of His people Israel. The chastizement of their peace was upon Him, and WITH HIS STRIPES THEY WILL YET BE HEALED.

Even tho Israel have gone astray like sheep, on Him was laid the iniquity of them all. He poured out His soul unto death. He bare the sin of many (that is, Israel). Now it has been revealed that it is not only many, but all.

But what do we mean here by HEALING? Maybe we had better get back to the subject. There are several references and incidents that look back to this, but one will suffice. It is found in Acts 3 and 4. There is the story of the healing of the man lame from his birth. He was helpless, the same as was Israel. It was by the name of the same One we read about in Isa. 53 that this man was healed. When Peter was called before the council, he made a remarkable statement. For in speaking of Christ he says, "Neither is there salvation (healing) in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby WE (i. e. Israel) must be saved (healed)." There you have it. A true echo of Isa. 53. If you run down the word SOZO and its relatives you will find that it is translated HEAL as well as SAVE, or rather healing and salvation when used in the noun forms.

It is also remarkable that during the Pentecostal times, bodily healing of disease and infirmity was in the nature of a gift of the Spirit. It was a power that was given and was not something in the atonement.

-DEFEAT.... TRIUMPH-

- I. The man, Adam, created and placed on probation in Eden in a perfect environment. Result, thrust out and put under the curse. By this one man sin entered the world and death was the end.
- II. Mankind left to his own devices. Conscience as a guide. Result, overwhelmed by an intrusion of demons. Then deluge.
- III. Mankind given up. The promise given to the Patriarchs. Result, the promises almost forgotten, a coffin in Egypt, and rigorous bondage.
- IV. Israel under the lawgiver, Moses. God's chosen people destined to be a nation of kings and priests. Given the oracles of God. Result, idolatry in the wilderness, weeping. Did not enter into the promise.
- V. Israel under the judges. Delivered time after time. Result, they would not listen to God or His judges, failed to occupy the promised land, every man did what was right in his own eyes.
- VI. Israel under the kings. They rejected God in asking for a king. Got their own choice first. Then God's man, David. Result, division, NO REMEDY.
- VII. Israel under the prophets. Men of God spoke to the rulers and the people. God even pleads with them. Result, the nation is rooted out of their land, the king captive, and a curse is threatened.
- VIII. Israel under the ministry of John, the Christ, the 12, and the 70. The King and the kingdom proclaimed. Result, The Prince of Life judged by men and cast out. He departs.
- IX. Israel under the apostles. Their second chance to receive their King and kingdom. Gentiles grafted in to provoke to jealousy and fruit-bearing. Result, no fruit-bearing, blinded for a season, their city destroyed, and the salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles.
- X. To all men is shown the grace of God. Even heaven itself is now opened and accessible as the future abode of those who will. Result, even with heaven itself offered, men despise the grace of God, and many run after false teachers. The quest is on for a great world ruler, a super-man that can be worshipped.
- XI. Christ sets up His rule on the earth. The Millennium runs its course. Evil one is bound. Result, the greatest revolt the world has ever seen.
- XII. Triumph at last! All enemies put down. Governmental perfection (the number 12). Result, the great post-millennial kingdom. God all and in all. The goal of the ages.

-THE COMMANDMENT-

Some have said that there is an 11th commandment and that it is found in Jn. 13:34 in the words "Love one another." However, an examination will reveal the fact that this is only a summing up of the last 5 of the 10 commandments, Love thy neighbor as thyself. The first 5 have to do with love to God. So the basis of the decalogue is love, first to God and then to fellow-men. The same that is expressed in Eph. where all is to be rooted and grounded in love.

But what we want to get at is the commandment in 1 Tim. 1:5. Here we read, "Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned."

Now just imagine that you have a tree in a picture before you. It is rooted and held fast in love. That is the root. There should be no root of bitterness, but only the root of love. In this connection you must remember that you can translate charity as love. The same is true in 1 Cor. 13.

But it says love out of a pure heart. That is a real requirement. Too often love out of an impure heart is only lust. Because of such impure hearts and minds many people do not know really what love is. In the novels and pictures of today about 99 44/100 % of what is called love is just lust, impure desire. So young folks should be on the defense and watch that they be not deceived in this matter. Notice in 2 Tim. 2:22 that it is again said that there are things that must come out of a pure heart. Our Lord once said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Somebody has said that the reverse of this is also true. I think it would have to be.

Then the apostle mentions a good conscience. A good conscience can only come from a pure heart. It can come only from an enlightened mind. It is not a safe guide otherwise. It is conscience that makes the Indian woman sacrifice her child to the god of the Ganges river. Conscience can only lead you along the lines you already know. But there may be something else here too. Real love cannot come from an impure heart or a conscience that has been outraged by wrong doing.

Then the fruit of our tree appears. It is a faith unfeigned. It does not have to be put on or worked up. It is not like an ornament you find tied to a Christmas tree, false and deceiving (feigned). But it is a real fruit that grows naturally.

Timothy was a young man and this was timely advice. It is for you too.

DEAR YOUNG FOLKS: The Commencement season is about over at this writing. No doubt many of you have been to such public meetings the last few weeks. If you, have, the chances are that you have listened to speakers whose one theme was How to Make the World Better. Graduating classes are reminded that it is their duty to go out and make the world a better place for all. That all sounds good. The man of the world would put his OK on that most every time. But is that God's program for today? That is a question we should ask before embarking on such a life of service.

The very fact that the world favors such a program makes me suspicious of it from the very start. The Lord told His disciples that the world would hate them and why. The constant testimony of the Word thence was that He had spoken the truth. The servant of the Lord can expect tribulation.

Then what is the plan and program for today? What are young folks to do? This is a very serious question for it involves the futures of many. There is also the question of reward for the Christian which comes at the end of a life of service.

In writing to the Romans, Paul said to them, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable, unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God." This is just a reasonable service. But it is not the way the world reasons. If you follow what the world reasons to be good service, then you will have missed being transformed, but will merely be conformed to the world. That is a very dangerous state for anybody to be in.

The safe way, the reasonable Christian way is to put Christ first. To lift Him up that all men might see Him and be drawn to Him. That is our service. A life that is built around that principle is going to be a life of joy and peace in the Lord.

There are some who want to serve self first. They will never be satisfied. There are those who will take up the wise saying of the world and seek to help their neighbors first. But that is not God's program. It must be that God and His will be first. Our own desires and plans must be put aside for the time. But there will be no disappointment for those who do put Christ first. He is able and does give peace and joy. Try it.

Sincerely in HIM, *Dear M. Baker*

- THE EDITOR'S DESK -

YOUR EDITOR'S HOME is 6 miles west of Warsaw on the Harrison Center road, or 7 miles north-east of Mentone, or 4 miles south of Atwood. It is the meeting place of the Truth For Today Bible Class each. Tue. nite at 7:30. Anyone interested in the study of the Bible as the Word of God is welcome. Also here is published the Truth For Today magazine which is monthly and free to anyone anywhere upon request. You may have it sent to your friends, if you wish. Back copies as far back as #67 still available to those who desire them.

TIPS FOR TAPES: Avoid trouble with your tape player or recorder by cutting off all the sticky ends of new tapes. Never let any of this sticky stuff run thru the head of the machine. You will have some work for the repair man in a hurry. If you have any trouble with tape coming loose and getting wound round the capstan when you start, just lay your hand lightly on the full reel when you begin to play it. Be very careful that you do not turn the machine to "record" and erase part of the tape.

Our shortage of lending tapes is about over and we can take care of most of the requests now. There are 8 of the tapes on the Welch itinerary here in this country last year. That makes 16 addresses most of which are close to one hour long. Then there are 10 tapes on Eph. so far that were made in the Chapel in London, making 19 lessons in Eph. and one address by Mr. Imberg. More will soon follow on Eph. Announcements will be made when future tapes are ready. Some have not understood the furnishing of the charts with the tapes. The charts are free and for you to keep. We aim to have each listener have a set of these charts. So let us know how many you need.

FINANCES: This we do not like to talk about and even forgot it last month. So here is the report for April; Receipt Nos. 1318-1336 with a total of \$135.30. Expenses were \$132.15. For May; Receipt Nos. 1337-1355 with a total of \$175.86. Expenses were \$132.42. Thanks a lot for entrusting you funds with us for this kind of work. We do hope and pray that we can use it wisely.

NEW SPECIAL! Just off the press, a reprint of The Great Cloud of Witnesses or Heb. XI by E. W. Bullinger. Per copy \$3.00.

THE GRAPES OF ESCHOL, by Charles H. Welch. Copies just came in. Each 10¢. 12 for 60¢. 25 for 90¢. 50 for \$1.50. Or \$3. per hundred. The same prices are for companion pamphlets, The Dispensational Frontier, The Key of Knowledge, and Who Then is Paul? These may be assorted at the same prices. Help scatter these.

-USED BOOK BARGAINS-

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