

Walk worthy. We have now traversed the first 3 chapters of the book. We have reveled in the great doctrinal truths that have been presented to us. We have had a glimpse of what is *far above all heavens*. We have seen that there was a great choice made *before the overthrow*. We have seen that there are kindnesses in store for the ages to come. We know that God is able to do *exceeding abundantly above all that we might ask or think*. All seems rosy and glorious. There is nothing, it seems, to mar this glorious calling. And then at the beginning of chapter 4 we see these words, Walk worthy!

Walk worthy. We meet these words and it is like a dash of cold water in the face. It brings us down to earth with a bump. This is where so many have turned back. But we cannot remain on the mountain top indefinitely. There is work in the valley to do. A calling must have its corresponding duties to perform. There is responsibility. The first 3 chapters of Eph. are like *the grapes of Eschol*. They give an evidence of the glories beyond. But all too many see only the *giants and walled cities*. Sadly they turn back and build their churches somewhere in Acts. Many who at first turned back at Kadesh-Barnea, would later have changed their minds and gone into the land, but it was too late. *No place of repentance could be found*.

Walk worthy. In the vernacular these only say, *Practice what you preach!* You cannot talk one thing and act another. If the glorious truths of chapters 1-3 cannot become a part of our living, then they are useless to us. Why?

Walk worthy. The word WORTHY in the Greek is *AXIOS*. It refers to the beam or balance on the scales. When there are equal weights in the balances, then this beam is exactly horizontal. If you will use your concordance you will find the idea of comparison or equality in the word.

Walk worthy. It means nothing less than the fact that the life should be consistent with the profession. You can never divorce practice and doctrine. One is useless without the other. After all actions speak louder than words. It is useless to make a profession unless it is lived out in actual practice. *Faith without works is dead*. That is a universal truth and applies to all the families of God.

Walk worthy. Yes, many have studied and many have taught up to this point and then stopped. This phrase is a stumbling block to the *EGO*. Here is where self must wait outside, or else affection for the things of the earth will turn one back. At this point is where the mind and affections must be put on *things above*. No compromise can be possible. Here is where many fall by the wayside whose faithfulness has been undermined and destroyed by trying to be useful. But the end cannot justify the means. We are read like a book. People are not easily deceived. But they may not say anything.

Walk worthy. The *doctrine* must be adorned with *practice*. The believer cannot be lost because he does not *walk worthy*, but he can suffer great loss. The prize and the crown are at the end of the race. We can be useful servants only as we walk worthy.

In our recent outline of the sections of the Bible, we mentioned that there was a gap between the 5th and 6th sections. It is in this gap that we live today.

It might be a shock to some to learn that not a single prophecy has been fulfilled since the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70. In more ways than one this is a time of the *silence of God*. This age is not described in prophecy. It is told that Israel would be set aside if they did not obey, but God never revealed what He would do in that interval until that time came. There are many attempts to connect world events today with prophecy. But all in vain. Prophecy nowhere tells about conditions in Palestine as they are now. When Israel enters the land in accordance with prophecy, it will be a great deliverance and miraculous entrance as when they left Egypt under Moses and entered the land under Joshua. Moreover the land will be *given* to them. They will not have to buy it or steal it.

There is a day coming when God will again deal with Israel as a nation. But that day is not today. It is the *Lord's day* when all that will be done. It is spoken of in the OT as the *day of the Lord*.

The character of the present age was a secret or mystery hid in God from ages and generations. Israel knew nothing about it for it did not concern them, but was a program to fill in the gap while they were a failure. From the time of the call of Abraham to the present age, which began at the end of Acts, it is all charted and prophesied. Also the events that will follow this age when Israel again will be on the scene, are charted in prophecy.

There is only one place where you can find out anything about the character of the present age. That is in the writings of Paul after Acts 28:28. Paul wrote 7 epistles during the Acts period of time, but not a breath about the mystery. He knew nothing about it till he had finished his missionary journeys and was in Rome. Up to that time he had preached only what was in Moses and the prophets. Even his gospel of grace to the Gentiles during that time was no secret. It had been told long before by Moses. God did not reveal anything about the present interval until Israel was set aside and the stage cleared for greater events. The great secret that was hid was the heavenly program that God had in store for the present age. It had not been revealed that there would be a replenishing of the heavens by an earth people. Satan did not know that some day his domain would be taken over by earthlings. And that was why that it had been a secret. It would not be good strategy to let the enemy know all the plans. So Satan was kept in the dark about the great plan of the ages. It was also necessary that Israel should not know what God would do in case they should fail. They have no excuse.

A new phase in the purpose of God is set before us in the prison epistles of Paul. We do well to search them to see what is God's plan and purpose for us now, not trying to follow the blueprints for some other dispensation.

THE PAROUSIA

The King has gone to a far country for the present interval. He must stay there till the times of the restitution of all things which the prophets have foretold. All this concerns the kingdom and Israel. Otherwise the prophets would not have had it as their theme.

A great number of things will happen when the King comes again to receive His kingdom unto Himself. A most important event will be the resurrection of those who had hoped in the coming kingdom, but had died. The prophets knew about this great hope, and so Martha and Mary were assured that Lazarus would rise at the last day. So the coming of the King and the resurrection of His dead subjects will be at the last day. Notice the usage of the expression *the last day* in John 6. Those raised at the last day are those given Him by the Father. Only those who have everlasting life will be raised. None of these comes to Him except the Father draw him. They must have a very close and vital relationship to Him as evidenced in John 6:54.

But when He comes, there will be some who are alive who also have this hope. It had not been revealed to the prophets just what would happen to these. It is not mentioned. The Lord revealed it in His talk with Martha. He showed her that those believers who were alive when He came would be given life (Jn. 11:25,26). But this was not written for believers to read until after Paul had written his epistles to the Thessalonians and Corinthians.

Peter does not speak of resurrection in his sermon at Pentecost. But he does make it plain that the coming of the Lord is dependent on the repentance of Israel. Later Paul preaches the same thing. They speak of the Lord's coming as being close at hand. So the coming, not resurrection, has come to the front in their gospel.

So the saints in the various churches have been waiting for the coming. But in the meantime friends and relatives who had the same hope have fallen asleep in Christ. They begin to wonder just what is going to happen. When will the living and the dead realize their hope?

To reassure his converts, Paul explains the whole matter (1 Thess. 4 & 1 Cor. 15). It had not been public knowledge before, because during the Lord's public ministry on earth, the kingdom was offered and of course little said of what would happen if it were rejected. The offer of the kingdom after His death had its main emphasis on repentance. There was an urgency about it. It was to be immediate. So no revelation could be given until it was evident that this repentance was not going to be immediate. A great multitude believed at Pentecost, but soon things began to simmer down. The horns were choking out the Word.

So Paul revealed a secret (*not The Secret*). Not all would sleep. The living would have no advantage over the dead. The dead in Christ would rise first and then the living would be changed, given life. All the saints then, would be with Him in His kingdom for the age.

Many such things have been kept secret so that people would have no excuse when they reject the light that was given.

POLITEUMA

FOR OUR CONVERSATION IS IN HEAVEN; FROM WHENCE ALSO WE LOOK FOR THE SAVIOR; THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. Phil. 3:20

This is the only place in which *POLITEUMA* occurs. It is translated *conversation* in the AV. In the ASV it is translated *citizenship* with *commonwealth* suggested in the margin. Wigram has it, "lit., enfranchisement or community." Bullinger has it, "citizenship, life as a citizen." *POLITES* is Gr. for citizen.

Since this word occurs only this once, there has been some discussion as to its real meaning. Evidently *conversation* is not the right word at all. *Citizenship* leaves something to be desired. *Life as a citizen* may help a little, but it does not tell us much about where the seat of citizenship is and whether the citizen is there or elsewhere. Neither does it make clear just where the looking is to be from, which looking is for the Savior.

But the archeologists may have found something that will help us. They have dug up pottery and other materials on which much has been scratched or written. The Greek used at the time our New Testament was written was called Koine Greek. It was a sort of international language or vernacular which was quite different from the classical Greek of the great writers and poets. It has brot to light many expressions of everyday life, medical terms, law, trade, etc. This word *politeuma* has come up in these writings many times. We do well to consider what it meant then to the common people in whose language the Scriptures were written.

It meant a COLONIST.

For instance, a citizen of Rome might migrate out to a foreign country and live there as a *colonist*. But he still maintained his *citizenship* at Rome. He was expected to conduct himself and behave as if he were in Rome. He was not to forget his *citizenship*, even tho a stranger and pilgrim in the colony.

Furthermore, if he were to see and have a part in the coronation of a new ruler or king, he would have to be in the place where his *citizenship* originated, Rome. If he were to have a part in the glory of that procession and share in the glory of the new ruler, he would have to be in Rome.

Now let us apply what we have found. The members of the body of the dispensation of the mystery are *citizens of the holiest of all*, that place where Christ sits in His Father's throne. But they are pilgrims and strangers here on the earth, merely *colonists*. Some day the Savior is to be crowned. The members of the body are to share in the glory. When that day comes, He will furnish the transportation and the necessary clothing for that glorious event. There is nothing to worry about if one is a *citizen* of that place.

The word *WHENCE* then has as its antecedent the place from which the *citizenship* is derived. That would be understood. The ruler is not likely to go out to a colony to be crowned. But after the coronation He does visit the colony, (Rev. 19:12) and John saw Him with many crowns. Let us walk worthy of our *citizenship*!

WAS THE PRAYER ANSWERED?

BEGINNER'S CORNER #24

FATHER, FORGIVE THEM; FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO. Luke 23:34.

There is little need to discuss the question as to whom is meant by *they*. Peter refers to it in Acts 2:36 and Paul mentions it in 1 Cor. 2:6,7. The Lord told Pilate that they who delivered Him up to him had the greater guilt. It was the Jews who were responsible for the tragedy on Calvary. They asked that His blood be upon them.

Now the question is just this; was the Lord's prayer answered? A great deal hangs in the balance. How shall we answer the question?

The great majority of those who profess Christianity answer it, *No*. They say that the prayer was not answered, that then and there the Jews were set aside and rejected, and that a new thing, a church began at Pentecost. There is hardly a creed today that does not have this for its basis. Boldly they proclaim that the church began at Pentecost.

But a few have given the question serious consideration, and they say, *Yes, the prayer was answered*. They believe that the gospel of the kingdom was preached thruout Acts. They believe that the Jews were given a second chance as an answer to this prayer, but that when they rejected again with finality at the end of Acts, then and there they were rejected and the church began. Now who is right?

Our Lord spent 40 days after His resurrection teaching and training the apostles, not to set up a church, but SPEAKING OF THE THINGS PERTAINING TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD. Only Jews were saved at Pentecost. Not until about 8 years after did a Gentile get saved. That was Cornelius, and Peter claimed to be the first to preach to Gentiles, speaking of this occasion. Furthermore, you will find that all thru Acts the Jew was first. If he had been cast away at Calvary, then he could not have been first all during Acts. Paul's ministry to Gentiles during Acts was a last resort to make the Jews jealous so that they would repent and bring forth fruit. Paul told the Romans plainly that God had not yet *cast away His people* at that time. These are just a few of the facts that should be considered.

But there is a more important fact that should be taken into account. If this Jesus of Nazareth was the *Son of God*, the very *Jehovah* of Israel as He claimed to be, just how could it happen that His prayer was not answered? If those who were His could ask anything in His name and it would be done, how much more would it be true that if He asked anything of the Father, it would be done! Any creed that says that Israel was cast away at Calvary and that a church began at Pentecost is tacitly affirming that our Lord was after all a mere human being, denying His deity. This is getting on dangerous ground. The old man is so deceitful that we forget and would make our Lord say prayers that He never expected to have answered. Could such a thing be possible? Sad to say, many of us are that way; but never our Lord!

If He was all that He and the Scriptures claim Him to be, *the prayer was answered!*

HOW THAT BY REVELATION HE MADE KNOWN UNTO ME THE MYSTERY; (AS I WROTE AFORE IN FEW WORDS, WHEREBY, WHEN YE READ, YE MAY UNDERSTAND MY KNOWLEDGE IN THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST WHICH IN OTHER AGES WAS NOT MADE KNOWN UNTO THE SONS OF MEN, AS IT IS NOW REVEALED UNTO HIS HOLY APOSTLES AND PROPHETS BY THE SPIRIT); THAT THE GENTILES SHOULD BE FELLOWHEIRS, AND OF THE SAME BODY, AND PARTAKERS OF HIS PROMISE IN CHRIST BY THE GOSPEL. Eph. 3:3-6.

To appreciate this statement of Paul's it is necessary to go back a few years (and pages) and refresh our memories concerning Paul's apostleship.

In Acts 9 we have the story of Paul's conversion. In vv. 15,16 we have the Lord's words to Ananias, GO THY WAY; FOR HE IS A CHOSEN VESSEL UNTO ME, TO BEAR MY NAME BEFORE THE GENTILES, AND KINGS, AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL; FOR I WILL SHEW HIM HOW GREAT THINGS HE MUST SUFFER FOR MY NAME'S SAKE.

Years later when Paul was defending himself before the scribes at Jerusalem he cites another meeting with the Lord. While he was praying in the temple the Lord again appeared unto him and said, MAKE HASTE AND GET THEE QUICKLY OUT OF JERUSALEM; FOR THEY WILL NOT RECEIVE THY TESTIMONY CONCERNING ME (Acts 22:18). DEPART: FOR I WILL SEND THEE FAR HENCE UNTO THE GENTILES (v. 21).

When these lines are coupled with such verses as Gal. 1:12, FOR I NEITHER RECEIVED IT OF MAN, NOR WAS I TAUGHT IT, BUT BY THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, (15,16) BUT WHEN IT PLEASSED GOD WHO SEPARATED ME FROM MY MOTHER'S WOMB, AND CALLED ME BY HIS GRACE, TO REVEAL HIS SON IN ME, THAT I MIGHT PREACH HIM AMONG THE HEATHEN; IMMEDIATELY I CONFERRED NOT WITH FLESH AND BLOOD, we should be persuaded that Paul was the recipient of certain information from the Lord that was not given to the other apostles. The fact that much of it was by direct revelation certainly coincides with his assertion in Eph. that the mystery was by revelation.

If we at times think this teaching is hard to understand let me quote 2 Pet. 3:15,16 in part, EVEN AS OUR BROTHER PAUL ALSO, ACCORDING TO THE WISDOM GIVEN UNTO HIM, HATH WRITTEN UNTO YOU; AS ALSO IN HIS EPISTLES, SPEAKING IN THEM OF THESE THINGS; IN WHICH ARE SOME THINGS HARD TO BE UNDERSTOOD, WHICH THEY THAT ARE UNLEARNED AND UNSTABLE WREST, AS THEY DO ALSO THE OTHER SCRIPTURES, UNTO THEIR OWN DESTRUCTION. Peter acknowledges that Paul had written of things that were hard to understand, even for the apostles during Acts. We should feel thankful therefore that we can even begin to see what is the fellowship of the mystery, and once seeing it, go on to perfection.

Now the essence of Paul's gospel to us Gentiles is this: You who were once far off, having no hope and being outside the covenants of Israel (Eph. 2:12) had obtained a part in Israel's blessings by being grafted in to provoke her to jealousy; but now that Israel has been set aside, you have obtained an inheritance of your own. Israel may have part in this too if they will give up the old and take on the *New Hope*.

THE ONLY BEGOTTEN SON

Like begets like. This is a law of God which is immutable. Man has ever tried to deny this great truth. He has invented the theory of evolution so as to cheat God of His glory in creation. But every creature that is born is after his kind. There is no known exception to the rule, evolutionists notwithstanding.

Like father, like son is an old proverb. If the Father were God, then the Son was the same, not something else. When the Son said MY FATHER AND I ARE ONE, He meant just that. Regardless of how men may try to explain away these words and say that He was trying to show that He and the Father were one only in intents and purposes, the fact remains that the Jews understood it to mean that He claimed deity. And that is why they crucified Him. If they mistook what He meant, it was His duty to enlighten them then and there. Otherwise He would be accepting a name to which He was not entitled. So if he were a GOOD man, He would immediately have cleared up any misunderstanding on this score.

If Jesus of Nazareth were not God, then He was an imposter, for He not only claimed deity, to be equal with the Father, but He also accepted worship. Is there any instance where a person fell down to worship Him that He objected and forbade it?

The Lord, the risen Jesus of Nazareth, appeared unto Ananias in Damascus and spoke concerning Saul of Tarsus. Later, Paul, when relating that incident calls the same Lord, this Jesus of Nazareth, the God of our fathers. Read Acts 9:10-17 and compare with Acts 22:12-16.

Our Lord did not say, BEFORE ABRAHAM, I was. A creature might have said that. But only God could say in that place I AM. And how often we find that expression, I AM. That was the name of Jehovah as revealed to Moses at the burning bush and to the children of Israel after that.

A creature is something created. But our Lord was not a created being. He was begotten. He was begotten of God the Father. Therefore He was of the same nature. For a project, suppose you look up all the attributes you can find concerning Him. When you come to the end you will find that the Lord Jesus Christ is given all the attributes of God in His essence except that of invisibility. The reason for that is that He was God manifest, made visible. No one has ever seen God in His essence at any time. But they who saw the Son saw the Father. (John 14:9).

Now were the Father and the Son two separate individuals? No, that could not possibly be. God in essence is infinite. He is one. He cannot be divided up into individuals as is the human race. He might manifest Himself in a thousand ways, but He is still the same God, one and indivisible.

There are some beings who are called sons of God. But they are never spoken of as being begotten; not even the highest archangel. All such beings are creatures (created).

To honor the Son is to honor the Father. To dishonor the Son is to confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an ANTICHRIST (2 John 7).

THE EDITOR'S DESK

TRUTH FOR TODAY has its home at the first house west of the junction of roads 600W and 100S near Warsaw. In fact, that makes it 6 mi. west and 1 mi. south of the center of the city. The publication is monthly and is sent free to anyone anywhere upon request. Help widen the circle of readers by sending in names and addresses of those whom you think might be interested. The telephone is Ulysses 8-2684.

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BIRTHDAY. Our Lord was born in Bethlehem of Judea 4 B.C. on Sept. 29th according to our dating today. Now this is not Christmas. The mass is unknown in Christian worship. For the date, see Companion Bible, Appendix 179.

VISITORS WELCOME. We have had a number of pleasant visits with callers this summer. We would like to meet more of you. Drop in.

HAY FEVER. No doubt some of you can weep with your editor this time of the year. It is a matter of grinning and bearing it till frost. It is hard to get accustomed to it, even after more than 55 years of it.

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