

## STUDIES IN EPHESIANS #72

## STEPS TO A GOAL #22

THAT WE HENCEFORTH BE NO MORE CHILDREN, TOSSED TO AND FRO, CARRIED ABOUT WITH EVERY WIND OF DOCTRINE, BY THE SLEIGHT OF MEN, AND CUNNING CRAFTINESS, WHEREBY THEY LIE IN WAIT TO DECEIVE. 4:14.

It may seem strange that after the supreme height of coming into the unity of the faith, even the knowledge of the Son of God, we should be shown something of the opposite. But contrast is a good method in teaching.

The measure, a perfect man according to the stature of the fulness of Christ, is mentioned in the preceding verse. Then here we have babes, unstable, deceived, and an easy prey to the wiles of the devil.

The Corinthians were called babes because they were carnal. They had need of the milk of the Word, not strong meat or food for adults. Among them were divisions, carnal desires, enmity, and even incest. We see this spirit rampant today among carnal Christians, running after all new things, healing campaigns, prophetic rackets, and all that is sensational (appealing to the senses or carnal man).

This is not so of the mature man, the member of the mystery body. Those who know the mystery do not promote divisions, sensational programs and new things for the Athenians. Their mind is stayed on Christ, the Head.

It is sad to see so many babes that are tossed and whirled about with so many winds of doctrine. They never get settled on any one thing, but flit from one thing to another. This instability is easily taken advantage of by crafty men who make themselves rich by preying on such folks. There is a continual drain on the finances of such for all kinds of fine buildings, schools, and other man-made programs. All this done in the name of Christ. To many such He would say, if He met them, I NEVER KNEW YOU.

The sleight of men is significant. In these days we hear of hired performers on the platforms of healers to fool the people. Back of all this deception is the great deceiver, that old serpent, the devil or Satan. He has many disciples today, and they lie like truth.

One of the great deceptions is that Satan is at the bottom of all the vice and lawlessness of today. It is not commonly known that he is first of all a deceiver and that he is working in the best of religious circles. Churches, Seminaries, and Bible Schools are the main places where he lies in wait to deceive. He has his workers planted in these institutions who are cunning in craftiness and who are ready to instill doubt in the minds of students with the old question, HAST GOD SAID? The authority of the Word is undermined and the lie substituted for the truth. Man is told that he will not surely die, but that he can be as God is. This all appeals to the pride of the flesh, and so Satan's lie is written into the very creeds of the religious organizations today.

The perfect or full grown man, who has come into the knowledge of Christ as Head, is not following these cunningly devised fables. He has no part in the Satanic system of this age.

After the failure at Kadesh Barnea, Israel wandered in the wilderness for 38 years. Not a great deal is told us concerning these wanderings except for a few high points. Many people are inclined to think that a merciful providence took care of them during that time. But God was leading. He was overseeing. Not many have recognized the fact that Psalms 90 and 91 are written by Moses and are concerning this experience in the wilderness.

During this 38 years there was one group of people that was condemned to death in the wilderness. They knew that they would never enter the land. Moses wrote of these people in Ps 90. They knew that they were turned to destruction, carried away as by a flood, and were like the grass that is cut down. They were consumed by His anger and troubled by His wrath. Everybody knew about their iniquities, their sins were out in the light. Their days were passed in His wrath. Even tho they should live to be 70 or 80, it was only to experience sorrow. Verses 12-17 contain a prayer of these sorrowful people.

But Ps 91 is concerning the people who are to enter the land, the young people and Caleb and Joshua. Their experience is entirely different, tho they live right with the others. They know what it is to abide under the shadow of the Almighty. They know Him as their Refuge and Fortress. He will protect them from all evils about them, such as, snipers, pestilence, lions, adders, dragons, and anything that could harm them. Satan quoted from this Psalm when he was tempting Christ. He was trying to make this apply to Him; FOR HE SHALL GIVE HIS ANGELS CHARGE OVER THEE, TO KEEP THEE IN ALL THY WAYS. THEY SHALL BEAR THEE UP IN THEIR HANDS, LEST THOU DASH THY FOOT AGAINST A STONE.

Can you imagine what it would be like to live under such conditions? Here is one group who can expect no protection from God. Right with them, members of the same families, are those who are protected in every way!

It was a terrible thing for this people to come right up to the frontier and then refuse to cross over. They did not believe God. They did their own reasoning and thinking. They were led by their senses. They saw only the giants and high walls of the cities. They forgot the God who had led them out of Egypt with mighty signs and wonders.

All thru these studies we have stressed the fact that these are recorded for us as examples. We have similar experiences. We need not make the mistakes these folks did. We have the record. We should beware.

When we come up to the dispensational frontier of Acts 28:28 we should not be scared of the consequences of making a stand for truth. The giants of the religious world, the walls of creeds and sects, and the opinions of men can go down like the walls of Jericho if we but advance in faith. To turn back into the wilderness is but to suffer loss and leanness of soul. In that place no repentance is to be found. But those who failed can be a great deal of trouble to those who would go on.

## BAPTIZED INTO ONE BODY

You will find this expression in ICo 12:13. You never find such an expression in connexion with the church of the dispensation of the mystery. Investigate this for yourself.

This epistle was written to the church at Corinth, a corporate body here on the earth and with the hope of the coming of the King and His kingdom (15:52). Cf Ac 28:20. The church of the dispensation of the mystery is not a corporate body here on earth, neither does it await the King and kingdom, but a manifestation in the heavens (Col 3:4; Ph'p 3:20).

Paul tells the Corinthians in chapter 12 (and verse 2 makes it clear that this is the Gentile section of the church, just as chapters 10 & 11 were to the Jewish members of the church) that he wants them to know concerning spiritual things (See note in Companion Bible).

He makes it plain that any person who has the new nature or new man cannot recant or renounce his faith. Neither can anybody confess and make Christ as Lord in his life unless he has this new creation within.

These folks had diverse gifts, but all came by the same Giver. There were different ministries, different workings, but all given by the same Giver. As many as 9 of these gifts of the Spirit are enumerated.

Now for verse 13. Because they were in Christ and therefore partakers of His spiritual nature or the new nature put in them, they were identified together as one corporate body or group. They were distinct from the world in this respect. ONE SPIRIT in this verse is without the article in the Greek and in the original AV of 1611 was spelled with a small (s). It is not the giver, but the gift. Baptize has the basic meaning of identify with.

Also these believers have by this unity and identification been made to drink AT the same spiritual fountain of spiritual gifts. This fountain is the *power from on high* that was promised to the apostles and which came upon them at Pentecost. They also drank AT it.

The church of the dispensation of the mystery never had spiritual gifts or power from on high as was promised to the Pentecostal church. They have their being and move in a far higher realm than that.

Verse 27 says that they were the body of Christ (possessive case). They were as a body, a chattel of Christ. They belonged to Him. There is no thot or hint here that they might be members of His Body of which He is the Head. On the contrary verses 14-26 indicate that some of the members of this corporate body are parts of the head. So then, this corporate body at Corinth is likened to a body with its various members.

Verse 28 tells us that God set some in this church at Corinth in various capacities. Not so with the mystery church. It had gifts of men given to it to discharge certain duties, (Eph 4:11).

It is fruitless to try to identify this corporate organization at Corinth with the church of the dispensation of the mystery!

## I WAS NOT DISOBEDIENT

Did Paul know concerning the dispensation of the mystery before Acts 28? Did he even know that he had a ministry beyond Acts? These questions have bothered a number of people over the years. Let us see.

When talking to the Ephesian elders on his last trip to Jerusalem, Paul said, I GO BOUND IN THE SPIRIT UNTO JERUSALEM. NOT KNOWING THE THINGS THAT SHALL BEFALL ME THERE: SAVE... BONDS AND AFFLICTIONS ABIDE (AWAIT) ME. Evidently Paul is walking right into the dark. He goes because he is constrained by the Spirit. All he knows is that bonds and afflictions await him.

At Ceasarea Paul is bound in his own girdle by Agabus signifying that bonds await at Jerusalem. Paul says on that occasion, I AM READY NOT TO BE BOUND ONLY, BUT ALSO TO DIE AT JERUSALEM FOR THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS. There is no indication here that he knew of anything beyond bonds in Jerusalem. He has no hope of any ministry beyond this point.

Now all of Acts 26 should be carefully read. Before Festus and Agrippa, Paul testifies, I HEARD A VOICE... I AM JESUS... TO MAKE THEE A MINISTER AND A WITNESS BOTH OF THE THINGS WHICH THOU HAST SEEN, AND OF THOSE THINGS IN THE WHICH I WILL APPEAR UNTO THEE.

The following verses show that Paul is to be delivered both from Jew and Gentile. He is sent to Gentiles to open their eyes. They are to have an inheritance along with the Jews. Then Paul says, I WAS NOT DISOBEDIENT. That means then that Paul had preached both what he had seen and what the Lord had also revealed unto him. He did not say, *I have finished half of the work*. No, he has been obedient to all the vision. There is no more left to do of what he had been commissioned to do up to that time.

This did not include the mystery, for he says, SAYING NONE OTHER THINGS THAN THOSE WHICH THE PROPHETS AND MOSES DID SAY SHOULD COME.

It is true that Paul revealed several mysteries during his Acts ministry. One was concerning the headship of the first and last Adam in the matter of sin and death and resurrection. Another was that not all would sleep before the Lord came but that some would be changed without sleeping. You may be able to find some more. But he never so much as hinted at the great secret or mystery which he preached after Acts 28:28.

But just as soon as that meeting broke up in Rome in Acts 28, Paul could lay all his former sermon notes aside and forget his people Israel, and preach an entirely new line of teaching.

Romans 11 makes it clear that the Gentile, during Acts, was grafted into Israel as is a wild olive branch grafted into a good olive tree to make it more fruitful. Romans 15:27 defines this as, THE GENTILES HAVE BEEN MADE PARTAKERS OF THEIR (ISRAEL'S) SPIRITUAL THINGS. The oil, the fatness of the olive tree, was likened to Israel's spiritual blessings.

But in the preaching of the mystery, Israel and their blessings are left entirely out. All are blest in Christ Jesus, not thru Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

It is well to test such questions by the Word.

## A MOST DANGEROUS BUSINESS

## THE QUICK AND THE DEAD #1

Thinking is dangerous. We dare you to do it. Tyranny and tradition will hate you. But we do believe that God will reward you.

Even secular history demonstrates the dangers involved in thinking. Athens executed Socrates 2300 years ago. Even tho it is said that he was so busy with his thots that he couldn't worry about his looks, and that his walk was like a pelican's waddle, he was still deemed dangerous.

Cassius gave Caesar the creeps. What for? Let Caesar speak for himself: *Let me have men about me that are fat, sleek-headed men, and such as sleep a-nights. Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look. He thinks too much. Such men are dangerous.*

Galileo thought too much! He dared to study the sun spots and the Church of Rome bitterly opposed him. Although blind his last five years he was constantly watched by the Inquisition in his own home. Edison started thinking at an early age. When six he was found sitting on eggs. He had seen a goose hatch eggs; why couldn't he? But look what his later thinking gave the world.

Yes, Christian, it is high time we started thinking too--as to what the Word of God really says. Recently, here in Southern California, an event occurred which illustrates this need. A very forceful Bible teacher in a very fundamental church taught his Sunday School class a lesson on the soul. To prove its immortality he quotes Plato several times. This adult class went out convinced of their own immortality.

But stop! Let's think about this for a moment and, if we dare, ask a couple of questions. What book of the Bible did Plato write? In my Bible I find Paul, but no Plato. Was Plato inspired of God? Chapter and verse by *the apostle Plato*, please. Even the devil's crowd sometimes shows more wisdom than the children of light. An evil spirit was shrewd enough to ask the 7 sons of Sceva, JESUS I KNOW. AND PAUL I KNOW; BUT WHO ARE YOU? (Ac 19:15).

To further complicate the Sunday School lesson I find that Paul has something to say on this subject in 1Ti 6:16. He contradicts Plato. Whom shall we believe?

The Christian who cares to think in the light of what God has spoken constitutes God's nobility for the last days (2Ti 3:1). He can be like the Bereans of old whom Luke describes as MORE NOBLE-MINDED... FOR THEY RECEIVED THE WORD WITH ALL WILLINGNESS, EXAMINING CLOSELY THE SCRIPTURES EACH DAY TO SEE IF THESE THINGS WERE SO.

Paul pleads to be considered, even in fundamental churches. WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED AND RECEIVED AND HEARD AND SEEN IN ME, DO; AND THE GOD OF PEACE WILL BE WITH YOU (Ph'p 4:9). He is the prisoner of Jesus Christ for us Gentiles (Eph 3:1). God used him to make known the PLAN OF THE SECRET about the body of Christ (Eph 3:9). His final message completes the Word of God (Col 1:25-26). No other apostle makes these claims.

Think! Yes, he pleads for believers to think. FINALLY, MY BRETHREN, WHATEVER IS TRUE... THINK ABOUT THESE THINGS (Ph'p 4:8)...SIDNEY A. HATCH

The inspiration for this new article is the offspring of a number of discussions during the past 3 years concerning the *Beginner's Corner*.

On numerous occasions during the course of the above-named article people have asked me for further explanation which I was quick to give. However on all these occasions it seemed we bogged down on a more basic doctrine than that of the mystery. Namely state and standing.

This may sound like a far cry from the Dispensation of the Mystery, but invariably before I could answer or get to the Hope of the Mystery my questioner would get embroiled in his own works and rewards. In fact the rest of the time allotted would be devoted to the effort of trying to instruct the listener in what his standing was before God.

This line of thot and reasoning naturally stems from our present social gospel of preaching salvation by works. This leads the layman to regard himself as battling his sins day by day and ever losing. When a discussion is begun it is only a short time before it veers from the Hope laid up in Heaven -- to the punishment meted out in hell.

It appears foreign to most thinking that I have encountered, that any punishment has ever been handed down by God. Not realizing this, the layman is most concerned over the punishment to come rather than the Salvation that has already come. When it becomes necessary to inform him of the fact that condemnation has already come upon the world, the effect and thot is so startling, and ofttimes so unacceptable that any further teaching along the lines of the Mystery is impossible. And so it was with this thot in mind that the following article was conceived.

When once the layman sees that he wrestles not against flesh and blood (Eph 6:12), that his purpose here on this earth is not to live within laws and ordinances, *make them what you will*, but to look to Christ who is our Salvation; then and only then can he begin to grasp the fundamentals of Christianity.

When this same man in the course of a discussion is told that he has been condemned already he immediately wants to know in what manner. Not knowing he is under condemnation he feels that he has only to lead a good life or a better one day by day to eventually reap his reward.

Once he is confronted, however, with such passages of Scripture as, WHAT SHALL A MAN GIVE IN EXCHANGE FOR HIS SOUL (M't 16:26), or, WHEREFORE, AS BY ONE MAN SIN ENTERED INTO THE WORLD AND DEATH BY SIN; AND SO DEATH PASSED UPON ALL MEN FOR THAT ALL HAVE SINNED (Ro 5:12), or, THEREFORE AS BY THE OFFENSE OF ONE JUDGMENT CAME UPON ALL MEN TO CONDEMNATION (Ro 5:18), he finds he is in an entirely new dimension where he cannot be redeemed by works. FOR YE KNOW THAT YE WERE NOT REDEEMED WITH CORRUPTIBLE THINGS AS SILVER AND GOLD (1Pe 1:18).

Good or bad, member or non-member, the burning question is, *Are you listed among the Quick or among the Dead?* ..DENTON C. ABBEY

## WILL ALL BE SAVED SOME DAY?

## THE EDITOR'S DESK

There seems to be an increasing number of people these days who seek to by-pass truth as revealed in the Word and in Christ Jesus, and hope that without obeying God or committing themselves to His conditions and laws they will eventually be saved. It is evident that this is not of the spirit or new nature, but something of the flesh or old nature. It is a doctrine that appeals to the carnal man and his desires.

Many of these have become quite skilful in wrongly cutting up the Scriptures, changing the meanings of words, and otherwise making the Word of God of none effect. Perhaps it would not be out of place to ask a few questions along this line. Does their doctrine line up with the Word?

1. In Isa 26:14 we read, DEAD, THEY SHALL NOT LIVE, DECEASED, THEY SHALL NOT RISE; THEREFORE HAST THOU VISITED AND DESTROYED THEM, AND MADE ALL THEIR MEMORY TO PERISH. If these creatures are dead and never will live again, just how are they to be saved?

2. Jer 51:39,57, in speaking of Babylonian princes, they are said to SLEEP A PERPETUAL SLEEP AND NOT WAKE. If they never wake, just how are they to be saved?

3. In Da 12:2 we read that many of Israel that sleep in the dust shall awake. How shall the rest who do not awake be saved?

4. In M't 16:18 we read that the gates of the grave (hell or hades) will not hold those that believe. But how are those whom it will hold going to be saved?

5. The Son quickens those whom He will (Joh 5:21). How about those whom He does not will to quicken, those who are His enemies?

6. Those who believe are given everlasting life and will be raised up at the last day (Joh 6:40). What happens then to those who do not believe and are not given everlasting life and are not raised up at the last day? How are they saved?

7. In John 3:16 we read that there are two alternatives; everlasting life or perishing. We understand from Joh 6 that those who have everlasting life will be raised. ICo 15:18 tells us that to perish is equivalent to not being raised. Then how can those who have perished be saved?

8. HE THAT HATH THE SON HATH LIFE; AND HE THAT HATH NOT THE SON OF GOD HATH NOT LIFE. (1Jo 5:12). If one does not have life, then how can he live? If he does not live, how can he be saved?

9. Eze 28:19 tells us that a day is coming when Satan will be no more, cease to exist. If that is so, how can he ever be saved? Can that which does not exist be saved?

10. In 1Co15:22 we are told that all in Adam die. Also that those in Christ are to be made alive. In Christ only is life (Joh 1:4). How can one that does not have life be saved?

There are many more questions that might be asked, but these will suffice to show that this doctrine of universal salvation just does not jibe with the Scriptures. It is high time that we search and see what is the truth. Too many are willing to let others do their research and thinking for them. Never aver that such-and-such is the truth unless you first investigate.



We pay tribute to one of your editor's early teachers, Dr. S. E. Long, A.M., D.D. It was in one of his Bible classes in college that your editor first heard of The Companion Bible and Dr. Bullinger's Critical Lexicon and Concordance. This was back in 1919. It was a challenge to further study. Dr. Long was an extension teacher at one time for Moody Institute, taking groups on lecture tours of the Holy Land. He was also on their radio programs for some time. He was a visiting professor in Dallas Theological Seminary and Graduate School of Theology. Dr. Long could translate original Syrian, Semitic, and Greek languages from their early archeological tabloid to modern usage. He also held a number of honorary degrees and was active in Bible teaching up till his death a few years ago. He was a great help to many.

**NEW BOOKLET; These Signs...Mark 16:17** by Ernest H. Streets, 25¢ each.

**REMEMBER;** We announced last month that we have copies of The Foundations of Dispensational Truth by E. W. Bullinger. This is a fine approach to this vital subject. Price, \$3.

**TRUTH FOR TODAY** is published monthly and is sent free to anyone anywhere upon request.

**OUT OF PRINT;** Number in Scripture by Bullinger is no longer available.

**COMPANION BIBLES;** In buckram, \$12 (will be \$13 when present supply is gone). In ¼ leather, \$16. India paper, cloth bound, \$18. India paper in full Morocco overlapping covers, \$28.

**BEREAN BOOK LIST:** Last month we ran out of these and so some who live in Ariz., Ark., and Calif. did not get any. If you want a list, just write and we will try to find one for you. A few are being returned.

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS** should be given if you do not want to be dropped from our list. Scores of papers come back which cost us 3¢ each and we have no way of knowing the new address.

TRUTH FOR TODAY  
R 2, Warsaw, Ind.

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U. S. POSTAGE PAID  
Warsaw, Ind.  
Permit No. 20