

## STUDIES IN EPHESIANS #75

## STEPS TO A GOAL #25

OUT OF WHOM ALL THE BODY--

FITLY FRAMING ITSELF TOGETHER

AND CONNECTING ITSELF,

THROUGH MEANS OF EVERY JOINT OF SUPPLY,

BY WAY OF ENERGISING IN THE MEASURE OF  
EACH SINGLE PART--

SECURETH THE GROWING OF THE BODY

UNTO AN UPBUILDING OF ITSELF IN LOVE. 4:16.

The theme of this verse is, THE BODY...UP-BUILDING (GROWING)...IN LOVE. Remember that the preceding verse speaks of growing in love. For growth, *each member must be rooted in love and walk in the light*. The growth of the whole depends on the growth of each member.

But the growth must be from or out of the Head. From the Head comes the supply for which the members (joints) are the channel. From the Head comes the energising or life. We must never forget to begin with the Head.

When Solomon built a temple for the Lord, every part was fitted carefully in the forest or in the quarry so that when they were brot to the temple site, they were ready to fit, each in its place; and so it is all fitly framed together. How fitting a picture!

All this fitting and working together is not the result of any efforts in the flesh for unity. No societies or unions can ever effect such a unity. The unity is in the spirit. The growth is in love.

The ligaments connect and compact the whole into a unit. No loose joints. These ligaments are the bond of peace. He (the Head) is our peace.

Unity seems to be the keynote all thru. In looking thru Ephesians, we see that *body* is used 7 times. Here in this verse the central member of the structure is *body fitly framed together*. We are members one of another in this body of Christ. No place here for one to isolate himself from other members. We must note that prayer is a powerful weapon as well as a channel for the supply. Members should always pray for each other.

Of course all this picture supposes that the body is a well body, free from blemishes or deformities. There are no broken bones or bones out of joint. There can be no warring between members. Even a Levite, when in the temple service, had to pass a rigid physical examination.

The supply is power from on high. It is the power that raised Christ from the dead. It is to usward who believe. There can be no service without that power. It is given, not according to our stature, but according to the measure of the gift of Christ. No inequality here.

There is another energy at work these days. It is also a mystery which is to be revealed in that wicked one some day. It is the Satanic lie with Satan at the head.

In the doctrinal section, chapters 1-3, we see the stress upon the body of believers in the likeness of a temple, but in the practical section they are likened unto a body with Christ as the Head. The temple for an habitation, the body for activity. Compare and contrast these two for more light.

It is well that we make a brief summary of some of the past lessons before taking up another phase of our study. Some items have been passed by because of lack of space. There is a wealth of detail in such a study as this.

First, there is the name Jehovah in connection with Israel. They were to come to know this name thru a series of mighty works and wonders. Other nations might have their gods, but none could do the things that the God of heaven could. Israel did not see their God. But there was a manifestation of His presence with them by day and by nite. The ultimate goal was that they should not be so concerned about a place and mode of worship, but that there should be a spiritual worship which centered about a person, later revealed as the Lord Jesus Christ.

Second, there is the name Jehovah in connection with Egypt. They also came to know the name Jehovah, but in a far different light than that of Israel. They were to spread this knowledge to other nations so that 40 years later they were weak with fear when Israel entered the land at Jericho. He is a God of refuge to them that are His, but a God of vengeance to them that believe not. In the last days there will be those who will pray for His kingdom to come, and also there will be those who will pray for the rocks and mountains to fall on them and hide them from the face of the God of wrath.

Third, Israel were to learn that the salvation of God was two-fold. On the one side was the redemption of His people. On the other side was the destruction of their enemies. This is later unfolded in the purpose of God in the fact that the last enemy that is destroyed is death. When men cease to die, then death is destroyed. It is a divine plan and truth that when God's people are saved, then their enemies are destroyed.

Fourth, the crossing of the Red Sea was by faith. It is a lesson that people must go forward on the strength of God's Word alone. Faith is believing God. It results in action. Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Without faith no man can please God. Faith is more than just nodding the head in agreement. It is more than having a mere head knowledge of something. It must be strong enough to produce action, or works, as James says. So with a mountain on one side, a desert death-trap on another, and the Egyptian army on the third, Israel by the Word of Jehovah, set foot into the waters of the Red Sea and went across. They did not know where they were going. Neither did Abraham know where he was going when he set forth out of Ur of the Chaldees at the command of the Lord. It is not ours to question, but to obey.

The failures of the nations, and the failures of Israel can all be traced to one cause. Man has yet to learn the lesson that he cannot stand alone without the strong arm of the Creator to uphold him. As long as man insists on following his own do-it-yourself program, he will fall far short of the glory of God and will fail in every undertaking.

## THE COLOSSIAN LETTER (CONT.)

## WITHOUT REMEDY

The love and the supreme optimism of Paul is shown by his thankfulness that such an one as he, less than the least of the saints, one who was not worthy to be called an apostle, should be allowed to share and even supplement the sufferings of Christ. If there was ever a time that he might be the least disposed to repine at his lot, or if at any time he felt that his cross was too heavy to bear, he saw the bright side. When he contemplated the wealth of God's mercy and his own privilege of bearing a part in that magnificent work of Christ, his sorrow was turned to joy and thanksgiving. Truly Paul did learn to know Christ and the fellowship of His sufferings.

Paul had a feeling that in spite of all that Christ underwent, He had left something as Master for Paul the servant to undergo. It was that Paul might in his flesh suffer for His body, His spiritual body, the church.

Paul claimed that by a special appointment he was a minister of the church, a steward in God's household. It was for the purpose of administering his office in behalf of Gentiles that he might dispense to the Gentiles the stores which the bountiful grace of his Lord had provided.

Paul had been charged to preach without any reservations whatsoever the whole gospel of God. He was to proclaim the great mystery which had remained a secret thru all the ages and generations from the beginning, but which in those last times was revealed to God's holy people, His chosen from among the nations. This was Christ's good pleasure. He had spoken it from heaven.

There was an inexhaustible wealth displayed in the call of the Gentiles. It was the glorious revelation of the mystery. This mystery was that Christ was not the Savior of the Jews only, but that upon their being set aside, Christ in the Gentiles, dwelling in them, became to them the hope of glory. God willed that Paul should make all this known to the nations.

We must notice that Paul makes no claim to taking part in the atonement. He in no way belittles the finished work of Christ. On the other hand he is not here laying any foundation for the belief that there is merit in the work of the saints. There is no excuse here for indulgences of the Romish church.

Whereas a mystery among the heathen was something to be revealed to only a few, Paul asserts that he is to make this mystery known among all the nations, Gentiles. There is a difference between a heathen mystery and the mystery of the gospel.

Paul is proclaiming that God has unlocked His storehouse of riches and wealth and by grace is bestowing them upon the Gentiles. Peter had stressed the plan and purpose of God for the earth and His earthly people, Israel. But to Paul was revealed the plan and purpose concerning the heavens and a people chosen from among the Gentiles to carry out this purpose. The mystery is not Christ, but Christ given freely to the Gentiles.

HE, THAT BEING OFTEN REPROVED HARDENETH HIS NECK, SHALL SUDDENLY BE DESTROYED. AND THAT WITHOUT REMEDY (Pr. 29:1).

Destruction is death. Over and over again we find this usage. The Egyptians were destroyed in the Red Sea. Use your concordance on this word and see for yourself how it is used.

There is only one remedy known for death. It is resurrection. It is quite evident that not all will have the remedy applied. Here in this verse is one class that will have no resurrection. There is no remedy for them.

We have others mentioned in the Word who do not have the remedy. In Isa 26:14 we find a class of people who will never rise, who will never live again. They do not have the remedy.

Also in Jer 51:39, 57 we find people who will sleep the sleep of death and never awake. They, too, do not have the remedy.

In Joh 5:40 we see that the Lord is talking to some folks who also did not have the remedy. They would not come to Him that they might have it. In the next chapter the Lord makes it plain that one must first believe on Him in order to have everlasting life so that he could be raised up at the last day (6:39, 40, 44, 54).

Our Lord Himself died and was in Hades or hell (the grave) 3 days and nites. During that time He was in silence. There was no knowledge in that place. He could not ascend to the Father till after resurrection (Joh 20:17). He was dead during that 3 days and 3 nites. He said so. He said, I AM HE THAT LIVETH, AND WAS DEAD; AND, BEHOLD, I AM ALIVE FOR EVERMORE. (Re 1:18). If Christ did not rise from the dead, have a resurrection, then He is still dead. And if He never had a resurrection, then all who have died are perished, they are dead and will remain so, there is no remedy. This is Paul's argument in 1Co 15.

Can men be so foolish as to believe that they can die and then live without a resurrection when even our Lord could not? Are they better than He? Surely the wise of this world have been taken in with the Satanic lie, YE SHALL NOT SURELY DIE (Ge 3:4).

If our Lord died and could not live again outside of a resurrection, then surely I will need the remedy too. If He is the firstfruits of them that slept, I want to be a part of the harvest to follow.

The great victory of our Lord over Satan and his seed was at Calvary and the empty tomb. There he tore the keys of hell and death from Satan's grasp. We await the day when the final part of the sentence will be carried out and Satan finally will be no more. He will have no remedy either. There is no evidence that those who receive the mark of the beast and worship his image will ever have the remedy.

Dear reader, do you have the remedy? Have you accepted the gift of life so that you, too, may have a resurrection? God gave His only Begotten Son so that if you would believe on Him, you might have everlasting life and be in line for the remedy, the only remedy for the death that comes upon the sons of Adam.

## TO LIVE AGAIN

## THE QUICK AND THE DEAD #4

Have you ever thought about Acts 3:17-21? Lack of space prohibits quoting it here, but these are the circumstances. Peter had just healed the lame man at the gate, *Beautiful*, and the man is walking and leaping and praising God. The Jerusalem throng is astounded. Isaiah had said, THEN SHALL THE LAME MAN LEAP LIKE A HART (35:6). They rush to Peter and John. Then Peter addresses them, MEN, ISRAELITES.

These are Peter's points (Note the RSV):

1. *Israel acted in ignorance when they killed "the Author of life."* Do we doubt this? Then do we doubt our Lord's words, FATHER, FORGIVE THEM; FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO (Lu 23:34)? Do we doubt Paul when he said, I RECEIVED MERCY BECAUSE I HAD ACTED IGNORANTLY IN UNBELIEF (1Ti 1:13)?

2. *The prophecies that Messiah should suffer are now fulfilled.* The problem now is; When will His glory follow? The prophets had written OF THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST AND THE SUBSEQUENT GLORY (1Pe 1:11).

3. *If Israel repents (changes her mind about Jesus of Nazareth) and turns to Him, her sins will be blotted out.*

4. *This will make it possible that "times of refreshing" may come.* What does REFRESHING mean? The Greek is *anapsuxis*, from the verb *anapsucho*. Its basic sense is LIFE AGAIN. Look at its parts. *Ana* means UP or AGAIN. *Psucho* is related to *psuche*, BREATH, LIFE, SOUL, or PERSON. So the TIMES OF REFRESHING would be TIMES OF LIVING AGAIN. This word was used in the LXX (Greek translation of the OT) for the Hebrew words *naphash*, TO TAKE BREATH, and *chayah*, TO LIVE AGAIN. Thus Israel will live again as a nation. There would also be a resurrection from the graves. This is associated with the establishing of the Millennium (Eze 37, Da 12, 1Th 4, Re 20:4, etc.).

5. *This repentance will also enable God to "send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus."* Yes, there would have been the matter of the Tribulation. But the events of the end-time would have begun to come to pass and closed with the personal advent of Christ to earth.

Did Peter mean what he said? Was this offer made in good faith? Would Christ have returned to Israel and begun Millennial times? What right has one to assume otherwise? Any other position makes him a hypocrite or an ignoramus.

Obviously, no church which is His body has been born at Pentecost. If so, how terribly mistaken Peter is in offering Israel the return of her Messiah and His kingdom. No, he is speaking to those who are THE SONS OF THE PROPHETS AND THE COVENANTS (Ac 3:25, cf. Ro 9:4). The theme of this book of Acts has been established. It is the re-offer of Christ, in resurrection to Israel. It is her opportunity TO LIVE AGAIN.

At the close of Acts this offer is withdrawn. The present interim period, and the formation of the church of the dispensation of the mystery, begins to THE PRAISE OF THE GLORY OF HIS GRACE, WHEREIN HE HATH MADE US ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED (Eph 1:6).

Paul had the same problem in his day that we have in our day. There were those who said there was no resurrection, and those who said it had already taken place. And so it is that Paul wrote to these people concerning this thing.

In 1Th 4 he says, I WOULD NOT HAVE YOU TO BE IGNORANT, BRETHREN, CONCERNING THEM WHICH ARE ASLEEP...FOR THE LORD HIMSELF SHALL DESCEND FROM HEAVEN WITH A SHOUT, WITH THE VOICE OF THE ARCHANGEL, AND WITH THE TRUMP OF GOD: AND THE DEAD IN CHRIST SHALL RISE FIRST. Here we see that the believers are dead or asleep in Christ. The Greek word for sleep in this instance being *koimaomai* denoting death; in contrast to *katheudo* as used in 5:6,7 which means to fall asleep naturally.

This is some 20 years after the resurrection of our Lord, and the believers at these cities were being troubled by false teaching contrary to the gospel Paul had given them.

So these that had fallen asleep evidently were still asleep. Not only were they asleep or dead, but in 1Co 15 Paul says that both the *quick and the dead* are perished if their faith was in vain. AND IF CHRIST BE NOT RAISED, YOUR FAITH IS VAIN; YE ARE YET IN YOUR SINS. THEN THEY ALSO WHICH ARE FALLEN ASLEEP IN CHRIST ARE PERISHED (17,18). Here again is the word *apollumi* that we discussed in Joh 3:16.

The context of both of these passages is a contrast between life and death. However, popular mythology would have us believe that it was contrasting *presence and absence, affiliation and separation*, or some such mutilation. To prove or disprove either of the 2 theories requires but a little research on the word in question.

The word *apollumi* occurs some 93 times in the NT. Of this number about 60 are translated *destroy, death, perish, or die*; the remaining 33 are translated *lose, lost or marred*. Immediately, it can be seen that the overwhelming evidence is on the side of *perish or destroy*. The meaning of this word leaves little doubt as the following few references will indicate.

FOR HEROD WILL SEEK THE YOUNG CHILD TO DESTROY HIM (M't 2:13). FEAR HIM WHICH IS ABLE TO DESTROY BOTH SOUL AND BODY IN HELL (M't 10:28). AND THE FLOOD CAME AND DESTROYED THEM ALL (Lu 17:27). IT RAINED FIRE AND BRIMSTONE...AND DESTROYED THEM ALL (Lu 17:29). WHEREBY THE WORLD THAT THEN WAS, BEING OVERFLOWED WITH WATER, PERISHED (2Pe 3:6).

The remote possibility of the remaining 33 referring to any meaning of separation is clear from the usage. WHOSOEVER SHALL SEEK TO SAVE HIS LIFE SHALL LOSE IT; AND WHOSOEVER SHALL LOSE HIS LIFE SHALL PRESERVE IT (Lu 17:33). BUT IF OUR GOSPEL BE HID, IT IS HID TO THEM THAT ARE LOST (2Co 4:3). FOR THE SON OF MAN IS COME TO SAVE THAT WHICH WAS LOST (M't 18:11).

FOR IF WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS DIED AND ROSE AGAIN, EVEN SO THEM ALSO WHICH SLEEP IN JESUS WILL GOD BRING WITH HIM (1Th 4:14).

I AM THE RESURRECTION, AND THE LIFE (Joh 11:25). Yes, the life for the Quick, and resurrection for the Dead.

## WHERE WILL THE RESURRECTION BE?

For those who expect to spend a future life on the earth, there is little question of where their resurrection will be. It will be right here on the earth.

But among God's chosen people of today, the question does come up. Where will they be resurrected?

They understand that they have been chosen from before the downcast and blest with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies. They have some connection with His inheritance in the holiest of all. They have been identified with Christ in being quickened, raised and seated with Him at the right hand of the Father. They have the distinction of being fellowcitizens with other members of the body in the holiest of all. Already they are a witness and a display sample of God's manifold wisdom in the eyes of principalities and powers of the heavenlies.

They now can claim that their citizenship is in heaven and are made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the holiest of all in the very Shekinah glory. Even now are they translated into the kingdom of His dear Son--moved from an earthly realm to a heavenly. All this with a view to the fact that Christ among them is the hope of glory. They are complete in Him and when He appears, they are to appear with Him in glory. So where will be the resurrection of those who are looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of God and our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ?

It surely cannot be here on the earth! What have they to do with the earth in the future life? Do any of them think for a moment that when they have laid aside this tabernacle of clay, they will some day take it up again? Even those who are to be on the earth will have a house made without hands in the heavens. It is a house that is incorruptible and which will receive the gift of immortality.

So how about those who belong to the church of the dispensation of the mystery? Cannot they be raised in that realm in which they are to be glorified and to have their home?

Furthermore there is no need for the earthlings to know about it. The witness is not to men, but to heavenly beings, principalities and powers. The witness is not even to angels. They are associated with Israel and an earthly kingdom, and also the new Jerusalem.

Don't ask me what these new bodies are like and of what they are made. All of the elements and their combinations that I know are corruptible. In my limited knowledge I have no idea of what substance such glorious bodies will be made. It is not yet found here on the earth.

Somebody has suggested that the corrupting agents will have to be removed. That might be, but they would have to get along without oxygen, hydrogen (water), and also all the carbons, at the very least. I am not acquainted with such an environment.

Just as silently and mysteriously as the dispensation of the mystery began, so it will end. The resurrection of its people will be just as silent and mysterious to this earth.

## THE EDITOR'S DESK

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