

STUDIES IN EPHESIANS #97

5:1

BE YE THEREFORE FOLLOWERS OF GOD, AS DEAR CHILDREN.

The first 2 words are in the form of an exhortation. This is not a law. There is no penalty in the immediate offering for not doing it. These words are spoken to saints who are to walk by grace, not by law. So the apostle pleads with the saints at Ephesus, and with us. And not only does the apostle plead with us, but this is the desire, the will of God.

The next word is THEREFORE. Mr. Lambourne once remarked in a tape recording that when you see the word THEREFORE in Scripture, be sure to see what it is there for. We will have to re-read the whole of chapter 4 to find the reason for THEREFORE. But it especially hinges on the word FORGIVEN in 4:32. When we fully realize what was forgiven and how great that forgiveness was, then it should work itself out in our daily walk. To realize the forgiveness of God will result in our forgiving those with whom we have contact.

But this comes out all the stronger in the next word, FOLLOWERS. The Greek is *mimetes*, and means imitators. In 1Co 4:16 Paul tells them to be followers (imitators) of him. So here we are to be imitators of God. But in what are we to imitate Him? By forgiving, in the first place. But in the last part of chapter 4 we find some other things that would characterize the imitator of God. It is no wonder that in Philipians we are exhorted to work out our salvation with fear and trembling! What a great salvation it is. What a wonderful Savior we have. So let us imitate the forbearance, love, and forgiving as we see in Him.

We are to do all this as *dear (beloved) children*. The children here are the natural children, the borne ones (Scotch, bairns). How well we know that children will imitate their parents. That is the major part of their home training. So we too should imitate our Father in heaven.

We well remember how that God took Israel by the hand, as a little child, and led them out of the land of Egypt. We remember how that the Lord, when in Peter's house in Capernaum, took a little child (maybe Peter's little boy Marcus) and set him in the midst of the disciples and gave a lesson on humility. They were to be as little children in faith and humility if they were to have a part in the kingdom of heaven. And here in the dispensation of the mystery we have the same thing cropping up. There is to be the same faith and humility, the same imitating as of little children.

Now a little child cannot successfully imitate a parent unless he wants deep down in his heart to be like that parent. Any other motive would only result in a false imitation, or plain hypocrisy. But the motive in this passage can be supplied by the realization of what is involved in being forgiven in the verse before. When the walk is right, then there can be no hypocrisy.

To walk worthy of the vocation then is to be imitators of our heavenly Father.

THE NAME OF JESUS

GOD...HATH GIVEN HIM A NAME...THAT AT THE NAME OF JESUS EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW...AND EVERY TONGUE CONFESS THAT JESUS CHRIST IS LORD. Ph'p 2:9-11.

As a usual thing we have been careful not to use the familiar name of Jesus, the earthly name, very much in our writings. But here in the epistle to the Philippians, it is given a very high place. And we may wonder why.

Jospeh and Mary were told to call His name Jesus because He was to save or salvage His people (Israel) from their sins. There was no objection or questioning about the name. There must have been a reason. What did the name mean? Did it occur in the OT?

It does occur in the OT close to 100 times. But not many would notice it. It really does not occur there as a name of someone, but just as a noun. But we must remember that such a noun could be used for a name, for every name in the OT had a significance,

In Ge 49:18 Jacob says, I HAVE WAITED FOR THY salvation, O LORD. The word salvation here is *Yeshua*, the Hebrew form of the word Jesus. It means and is translated *salvation*. Jacob was waiting for the One who would save His people from their sins.

David says in Psa 9:14, I WILL REJOICE IN THY SALVATION (Yeshua).

Look at Isa 12:2,3 and you will find it 3 times. Note the wonderful message there. Use your Hebrew concordance for other occurrences.

Now this *Yeshua* or salvation was what Simeon was looking for, and when he took the Child in his arms that is the very word he used. He had seen *Yeshua*.

You will find it very plain in Isa 62:11. It says, BEHOLD, THY YESHUA COMETH; BEHOLD HIS REWARD IS WITH HIM, AND HIS WORK BEFORE HIM.

Now we know what the Lord meant when He told the Samaritan woman that salvation (*Yeshua*) is of the Jews. Truly, He had come to save His people from their sins. But it is revealed later that He came to save other peoples from their sins, too. So at the end of Acts we hear the news that *Yeshua* is no longer of the Jews, but is sent to the Gentiles. That marks a great change in God's dealing with the nations.

Before the end of Acts, those who were called by His name, Israel, were to be a channel of blessing to the nations. That is why that the adding of the Gentiles to the Olive tree was no new thing. It was in Moses and the prophets. But what was new at the end of Acts was that this nation should be set aside for the time being and their salvation (*Jesus, Yeshua*) was sent to the Gentiles and they no longer had to look to Israel as a channel of blessing. They had their own channel, *Yeshua*.

In Hab 3:13 we find that this salvation, *Yeshua*, is to wound the head of the house of the wicked one, taking us right back to Ge 3:15. What a wonderful Salvation we have!

Since we have learned this truth, we are not going to be so backward in using the name *Jesus*. That name has a meaning, and that meaning is stressed in Ph'p 2:9-11 quoted above.

NONE OTHER THINGS

AC 26:22

HAVING THEREFORE OBTAINED HELP OF GOD, I CONTINUE UNTO THIS DAY, WITNESSING BOTH TO SMALL AND GREAT, SAYING NONE OTHER THINGS THAN THOSE WHICH THE PROPHETS AND MOSES DID SAY SHOULD COME.

Here is a broad statement, but nevertheless concise and pointed. It is complete in itself. Whatever may have preceded or followed it does not alter it in any way. For anyone to read into this plain statement that Paul had been preaching concerning a secret that had been hid in God from ages and generations is just so much nonsense. It makes Paul and the Holy Spirit, who inspired this passage, liars. It is a branch of criticism we do well to avoid like a plague.

Now the next verse takes a certain portion of the teaching of Paul as also being under this same category, that it was only what the Prophets and Moses did say should come:

THAT CHRIST SHOULD SUFFER, AND THAT HE SHOULD BE THE FIRST THAT SHOULD RISE FROM THE DEAD, AND SHOULD SHEW LIGHT TO THE GENTILES.

A better rendering would be, *If Christ should suffer, that He should be the first that should rise from the dead.* However that may be, we do find here that the message concerning Christ is pretty much the same as what was preached to the carnal Corinthians (1Co 2:2). Being limited by what was in the prophets and Moses, Paul could not have preached Christ seated at the right hand of God as Head of a church which is His body. That would have been a new revelation for that time. Paul did not preach it or did he know anything about it till after Acts 28:28. During Acts Paul did show light to the Gentiles, but never did he show that they were to enjoy all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ. Never during Acts did Paul preach or even know that there were some believers who would go to heaven at the resurrection. So Paul's point was well taken, that, up to the time of Acts 26:22 he had preached nothing outside of the prophets and Moses, even as to the death and resurrection of the Christ.

In this passage Paul was speaking to Agrippa, an Idumean, who held to the Jew's religion and knew what Paul was talking about. In verse 26 Paul insists that what he had preached was historical fact and that all including Agrippa knew it. No mystery or secret here. It was common knowledge. And then in verse 27 Paul says, KING AGRIPPA, BELIEVEST THOU THE PROPHETS? Paul did not ask him if he believed some new teaching, a mystery, which had not yet been revealed. You cannot read that into it.

Furthermore Paul, in this same chapter (v 16), plainly tells what his commission was. He first was to preach what he had seen. He had seen what was done in the synagogues by the apostles and also he saw and heard Stephen. Then he was to preach a revealed gospel. He tells of this revealed gospel in Ga 1. In Acts 26:19 Paul declares that he has completed this commission. Yet he is accused by the critics of today of preaching something else. Beware!

SOMETHING WRONG SOMEWHERE!

That is the idea the average person gets today just as soon as he begins to do a little thinking for himself. Many are beginning to wonder what it is all about. There is much activity and ado in religious circles, but so little instruction in the Word of God.

Tradition tells us that when men die they go either to heaven or to hell. But when we open the Bible we find that when resurrection day comes, they are in their graves (Joh 5:28). There is something wrong somewhere!

While we are wondering about how they all get back into their graves again, we see that the tradition has also put heaven and hell as the places for future life. But again we open the Word and find that some are to spend an age, a glorious one, here on the earth in the millennial kingdom. Not all go to heaven for future blessing. There is something wrong somewhere!

Then we are told what to do to be saved. One group has this to do, and another group has something else to do. They are all agreed in one thing, and that is, that one has to do something. But when we open the Book, we find that salvation has been done and all we do is to accept that fact by faith. There is something wrong somewhere!

Again men tell us that if we are to serve the Lord, we must do a lot of work for the church. In fact, the church is made to take the place of Christ and is the means of salvation. But when we look into the Book of Truth, we find that the only Mediator between God and man is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Something is wrong somewhere!

Then we look into a place of worship and find that in most instances the Person worshipped is not present, so in His absence a picture or likeness is set up to look at and adore (worship). But the Good Book says that where 2 or 3 are gathered together in His name that He will be there in the midst of them; and they are to worship in spirit and in truth. Something is wrong somewhere!

Now this is not a fault-finding spree, but seeing that each of us must give an account to God some day, we must stop and think clearly and consider what God has said. Man speaks so often about a person having an immortal soul. But God is the only one who has immortality according to my Bible. Something is wrong somewhere!

Tradition has changed everlasting punishment into everlasting punishing, but they would never think of changing everlasting salvation into everlasting saving. Something is wrong somewhere.

What will you have? Truth or tradition? Which is safer? What is going to happen to those who deliberately turn from truth to fables (traditions)? Oh, if they mean all right, they will get by. That is the general opinion. But when we face the Judge, we are judged by the Scriptures. That is what God has said. All notions to the contrary plainly show that *there is something wrong somewhere!*

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES #6

The contrasts and comparisons in this book are rather interesting. The story begins in Jerusalem and ends up at Rome. In Jerusalem, the gospel is preached to Jews only, but at Rome the salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles. At Jerusalem the apostles received the power from on high, the baptism of the Holy Ghost. At Rome the Jews are reminded of what the Holy Ghost had said by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah.

Peter was the central figure at the beginning and Paul was the central figure at the end. We last hear of Paul at Rome and we last hear of Peter at Babylon.

The paths of Peter and Paul crossed in the little town of Caesarea. It was there that Peter first preached the gospel to Gentiles and it was in the same place that Paul was imprisoned for a couple of years before going to Rome. It was in Jerusalem that Peter was put into prison and was let out by an angel. It was in the same city that Paul tried to preach and they sought his life. So he fled to Tarsus.

For some reason or other Peter was at the city of Joppa (now Jaffa) when he was called to go to Caesarea. He was called Simon Bar-jona (Simon, son of Jona). This was the same city which Jonah left to get away from his mission to preach to Nineveh.

During Acts Peter and the rest of the 12 preached to Circumcision only (except the one case of Peter preaching to house of Cornelius) and their message was concerning the kingdom of heaven being at hand. Their converts were still under the law. Paul preached the same message. His Jewish converts remained under the law--same as those of the 12--but his Gentile converts were under grace. They partook of the hope and spiritual blessings of Israel without any requirements of the law.

The 12 did no miracles or wonders in the presence of Gentiles since their commission was to Circumcision only and there was no need of proving their apostleship to the Gentiles. On the other hand, Paul did wonders and miracles for both Jew and Gentile for he was an apostle to both. However there is no instance in Acts in which Paul did not go to the Jew first. That was his obligation.

It also must be remembered that altho Paul was given a commission separate from the 12, even tho his work did overlap theirs, he could not begin till Peter had opened the door of the kingdom to the Gentiles. So in reality, Peter first did what Paul later did, preached to the Uncircumcision. And it is to be noted that Peter proclaimed grace to the Gentiles, just as did Paul. But it took a vision from heaven to make Peter do it.

There is one point that is overlooked by most teachers of the Bible. The 12 were to preach to the Jews in the land that was promised. They were not to go outside it, and there is no record that they did during Acts. But Paul was to preach to the Jews of the dispersion outside the land, in Asia Minor, Europe, and maybe even in Spain. He was not a success in the land.

THE QUICK AND THE DEAD #26

DENTON C. ABBEY

It seems there are some who feel that I have strayed from the Bible in giving my proof, and thereby have failed to substantiate my claim for 'The Quick and the Dead.' So in this article I have gone *academic* and listed a few references from the Bible pertaining to the subject.

I have tried to use only those words that have a direct bearing on the state of the dead. Inasmuch as this is an exceedingly lengthy survey, I have had to condense it as much as possible to include even a part of it in this paper.

Now, are the people who die, dead, or are they alive and wandering around the universe?

Nekros, abothneeske, thneeske, nekroo, and *telutao*, that translate our English word *dead*, were used 269 times, and in every instance but 2 it was translated *dead, die, or dying*. The other 2 being *mortify and perish*.

Koimaomai was used 18 times, 17 as *sleep* and 1 as *dead*.

Not content with that, I next took the words *epourantos* and *ouranos*, translated *heaven* or *heavenly*. These were used 304 times. One spoke of God in heaven, names written in heaven, treasure in heaven, Satan fell from heaven, heavenly calling, house from heaven, blessed with all spiritual blessings in heaven, partakers of the heavenly calling, but not one reference of man going to heaven with the exception of the 2 witnesses in Re 11:12 and the armies in heaven in Re 19:14.

Next I looked up *pneuma*, translated *Spirit, Ghost* or *wind*. This was used 385 times, and again no mention of spirits going to heaven. The Spirit giveth life (2Co 3:6), access to the Father (Eph 2:18), Spirit dwelleth in us (Jas 4:5), the body without the spirit is dead (Jas 2:26), quickened by the Spirit (1Pe 3:18), I was in the Spirit (Re 1:10, also 4:2), Carried away by the Spirit (Re 17:3, also 21:10).

Pneumatikos, translated *spiritual*, was used 25 times. Of these there was one reference that could be construed as meaning a spirit being. It is raised a spiritual body, and there is a spiritual body (1Co 15:44). Note the *raised*.

Phantasma is used twice of *spirit*.

Still I wasn't satisfied, so I looked up the word *bsuche*, or *soul*. This was used 105 times, being rendered *life, soul, mind* and *heartily*. The only reference that any of these went to heaven was in Acts 2:31, HIS SOUL WAS NOT LEFT IN HELL, and Heb 4:12, WORD OF GOD...TWO EDGED SWORD DIVIDING THE SOUL AND THE SPIRIT. Also Re 6:9, UNDER THE ALTAR THE SOULS OF THEM...

Now here are approximately 1108 references from the Word of God dealing with *death, life, spirit, and soul*, and the only indication that any of these went to heaven at death or at some time shortly thereafter was in the person of Christ and the 2 witnesses in Re 11.

Now doesn't that seem odd? What do you make of it? Now if the Scriptures do tell us that the fate of a dying soul (of a believer) is to be absent from the body and present with the Lord, how come the Scriptures are so silent?

TO BE CONTINUED

INTERROGATIONS

THE EDITOR'S DESK

31. *Why is it that text books and magazines persist in putting forth the ideas of evolution even tho scientists have dropped the idea?*

It would ruin a man's ego if for a minute he were to admit there was a fall. It would hurt his pride. So to bolster up his importance and wisdom (?) man still clings to evolution like he does to Santa Claus. His world is a make-believe and in it he is the center and the circumference. This is preparing for the worship of a super-man some time in the future when this age is nearing the end.

32. *Has the church (the pillar and ground of truth) really failed and gone to ruin as is suggested by some periodicals today?*

No doubt 1Ti 3:15,16 is here referred to. Mr. Welch has helped to solve this problem. Since there was no punctuation in the Greek and we may have mistaken sentence beginnings and endings, he suggests that according to the context it should read here, A PILLAR AND GROUND OF THE TRUTH, AND WITHOUT CONTROVERSY, GREAT IS THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS... (I am quoting from memory). The truth expressed here is that the mystery of godliness is a pillar and ground of the truth. This mystery is that God was in flesh here on the earth. The church mentioned in the context is not a pillar and ground of the truth. The visible church has gone to ruin as is evident on every hand today.

33. *Was Judas lost and unsaved?*

We do not know. There is evidence for both sides of the question. It may be none of our business. But this we do know. He was one of the 12. He was given power to heal the sick and cast out devils. He was not suspected by the others, so he must have lived a morally upright life except for putting his hand in the treasury too often. He had a bishoprick which was taken by another, Matthias (Ac 1:15-26). I believe that Mr. Welch reads verse 25 thus, THAT HE (MATTHIAS) MAY TAKE PART OF THIS MINISTRY AND APOSTLESHIP. THAT HE MIGHT GO TO HIS OWN PLACE. FROM WHICH JUDAS BY TRANSGRESSION FELL. Whether Judas was lost or not is not so important, but we do see here a man who was almost thru his period of training with the Lord and was almost ready to take his part in the ministry and would have had his name on the foundations of the New Jerusalem, and at the very end, when faced with the death of the Messiah and the postponement of the kingdom, he failed and lost all. It is something to make us stop and think and question our own lives and motives.

34. *Was Christ the eternal Son, as so many speak of Him?*

No, He was not the Son of God until He was born in Bethlehem of Judea. John, in his gospel, is very careful to make the distinction. Christ was the Word before His incarnation. Prophetically He is spoken of as the Son in the OT, but that is looking forward to His coming as do many other such expressions. He did exist before Abraham, but not as the Son. He was Jehovah in the OT, and many other divine names and titles were given to Him there.

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