

STUDIES IN EPHESIANS #103

5:8-10

FOR YE WERE SOMETIMES DARKNESS, BUT NOW ARE YE LIGHT IN THE LORD: WALK AS CHILDREN OF LIGHT; (FOR THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS IN ALL GOODNESS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS AND TRUTH;) PROVING WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE UNTO THE LORD.

It does not say that we once were in the dark. We were darkness. It penetrated and permeated our whole being like the rot that spreads thru a fruit. If we had been in the dark, then we would have been in ignorance. And that is true so far as it goes. But we were also in sin. Ignorance and sin go together. Sin and wisdom do not make a team; never. So those in ignorance and sin were also alienated from the life that is in God. But being ignorant they do not realize the exceeding sinfulness of sin. They do not want to be saved from their sins. They love them too much. Israel would have accepted their Messiah as a King to free them from Rome, but never as a Savior to save them from their sins.

Now as saved people, these Ephesian saints were light in the Lord. They basked in the sunshine of holiness. They walked in the light of knowledge. So they were not merely in the light, but light was also in them. Have you ever seen that light in the face of a non-Christian?

Walk as light's children. Let your life every day show forth the fact that you are not only walking in the light, but that the light of salvation fills your whole being.

It is too bad that we have *spirit* instead of *light* here. The fruit of light is what is meant. There is no fruit of darkness. No fruit can grow in the dark. There are deeds that are done in the dark. We all know that. Some have said that evil folks can be known by their fruits. But that is not so. Only a plant that grows in the light can bear fruit. Christians are known by their fruit. And it is true that some need a bit of pruning at times. They might bear more and better fruit.

Note the 3 fruits; goodness, righteousness, truth. Now let us examine ourselves and see if we are fruit-bearers.

Now note verse 10. What is acceptable is that which is well-pleasing. Those who walk in the light and are light, and who bring forth the fruits of light, are not grumbling about the demands of God and looking forward to further burdens and ill ease. They do not find the Christian life irksome and dull. They do not try to escape from it by going to the halls of entertainment. Their one aim and goal is to find and do that which is well-pleasing to the Lord. That is the natural outcome of love.

So goodness is purity, the opposite of evil. Righteousness is honesty and has regard for the rights of others. Truth is underlaid with reality and covered with sincerity. These will go along way in helping one to seek and approve (prove) whose things that are acceptable and well-pleasing to the Lord. Our love for Him is manifest in these very things. What we do is going to speak louder than what we say. Let us put off the old man with his deeds.

KNOWLEDGE AND FAITH

The question that has been put to us is something like this; *How much must one know in order to exercise faith?*

In the back of the questioner's mind was the problem of how much one had to know in order to enter into the church of the dispensation of the mystery. And a further vexing question was whether this knowledge could puff one up.

In the first place one does not receive anything from God except thru faith. No man has ever received salvation or a dispensational position by works. Romans tells us plainly that the law could give neither life nor righteousness. These all come thru faith.

Faith can only come by knowledge or by hearing truth. So somebody asks just how much knowledge one must have in order to enter the church of the dispensation of the mystery. That may be answered by another question. How much did Abraham have to know in order to be justified by faith? All we know is that he believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. But it is patent that Abraham could not believe God if he did not know what God said.

It is not very likely that one is going to be a member of the body of which Christ is Head if he does not know about it. Now you tell me how much a man has to know to be saved and then maybe I can tell you how much he has to know to be in this body just mentioned.

Probably the stumbling is not at the knowledge, but at belief. We should say, LORD, I BELIEVE; HELP THOU MINE UNBELIEF. There is the sore spot. Very seldom were people in the Scriptures upbraided for lack of knowledge, but it was their unbelief that was their undoing.

After the saints of Ephesus had heard of the sacred secret and had trusted, the apostle prayed that they might be given the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ (as Head now of the church). So it is quite evident that they were not by any means perfect in knowledge when they first trusted. There is a problem of growth in the knowledge of Christ.

It is true that very few know about these things even tho they may have an open Bible. All too often their eyes have been closed by traditions of men and so they cannot see the truth even tho they may read it. There is where the need of revelation comes in. So there are few Christians who realize that there is a church here on the earth today which has no membership rolls here on earth, who are not subject to any Jewish rituals or the law, nor even to the ordinances of Acts 15. Among this invisible church are none who will inherit the earth however meek they might be, but rather are already seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. In fact, they do not mind earthly things such as the coming King and kingdom here on the earth, but expect to be manifested with their blessed Head in glory before He comes to the earth scene to carry out a purpose here.

We do not mean to appear pessimistic in saying that there are relatively few who know and accept these things by faith. Faithful saints have always been few in all ages.

I KNOW - - HE KNOWS

JOB 19:25; 23:10

I. I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVETH. Job said this hundreds of years before that Redeemer was ever born. The statement is surely prophetic. Job knew even way back then that Christ should live in resurrection, for that is what this verse implies. It further states that this Redeemer will at the latter day stand upon the earth. Even Job believed and knew that the Lord would come again.

Job was so sure of what he believed that he wished with a great longing that he could write it in a book so that folks might read and know about it. He wished that what he believed and knew could be engraved in the rock with an iron pen and filled with lead so that it might stand as a witness forever. We need a lot of people like Job today!

It might be interesting to some to know that the word STAND means to stand in resurrection. In Psa 1:5 we have it used again. There it is stated that the ungodly shall not stand (rise) in judgment. There is no need for them to rise in judgment for the ungodly are already judged. Look for other occurrences of the word.

Now the question we must ask is just this. Do you and I know what Job knew? Are we ready to say so to the whole world? Do we want it proclaimed that we know such things? What do you think of a Christian who will work along with other people for years and never open his mouth to say even that he is a Christian? Can it be that such are ashamed of Christ? Or is it that they do not know as did Job?

II. Now the second thing that we have to speak of is that Job says that the Lord knows the way that he chooses. Are we willing to admit that? Job has just stated that he is not able to see God. He might go forward, but God is not to be seen there. He may go backward, but God is not there. God is seen on neither the right nor the left. There is no evidence of any material kind that God even exists. But Job says with all confidence, HE KNOWETH THE WAY THAT I TAKE.

Job admits that he chooses the way that he will take. He confesses his own responsibility for the way he is in. He may be in the most severe trial, but he does not feel that God has let him down.

But that is not all there is to it. Job knows that his Redeemer lives; he knows that the Lord knows the way he is choosing; and he further knows that when he is tested he will come forth as pure gold.

When a man tests gold, he puts it into a cup and melts it with a very hot fire. If there is the least bit of dross, it is skimmed off and the gold reheated. Whenever the chemist can see clearly his own reflection in the gold, then he knows that it is pure. Likewise when we are tested and tried in this life it is to the intent that all impurity be removed so that our Maker can see Himself reflected in us. The goal of the Christian is to be conformed to the image of His dear Son. Then he can reflect the likeness of his Creator.

Now; what do YOU know?

I'M JUST WONDERIN' #1

1. THEY ARE DEAD. THEY SHALL NOT LIVE; THEY ARE DECEASED. THEY SHALL NOT RISE: WHEREFORE HAST THOU VISITED AND DESTROYED THEM, AND MADE ALL THEIR MEMORY TO PERISH. Isa 26:14. We just wonder what does become of these folks. Was Rahab among this people? If so, will she be raised? What about the children of these people, will they have a resurrection? Suppose they intermarry with other peoples, will the resulting children be raised? Who are these dead folks anyway?

2. IN THEIR HEAT I WILL MAKE THEIR FEASTS, AND I WILL MAKE THEM DRUNKEN, THAT THEY MAY REJOICE, AND SLEEP A PERPETUAL SLEEP, AND NOT WAKE, SAITH THE LORD. Jer 51:39. If these people of Babylon never wake, then what becomes of them? If they never wake, are they conscious now? Are they to be judged, or are they already judged?

3. AND I WILL MAKE DRUNK HER PRINCES, AND HER WISE MEN, HER CAPTAINS, AND HER RULERS, AND HER MIGHTY MEN: AND THEY SHALL SLEEP A PERPETUAL SLEEP, AND NOT WAKE, SAITH THE KING, WHOSE NAME IS THE LORD OF HOSTS. Jer 51:57. This time it is the rulers of Babylon that shall not wake. Why? I wonder what becomes of them.

4. THE UNGODLY SHALL NOT STAND (RISE) IN THE JUDGMENT. Psa 1:5. Now one cannot get around this one by saying that they will take their judgment lying down. You will find this same word STAND in Job 19:25. Does this then mean that the ungodly will never rise?

5. CAN I BRING HIM BACK AGAIN? I SHALL GO TO HIM, BUT HE SHALL NOT RETURN TO ME. 2Sa 12:23. Evidently David never expects to see the child again. He expects to go to the same place, the dust of the earth. But David expects to come back. See Psa 17:15. Now I wonder what becomes of the little child.

6. THEREFORE WILL I BRING FORTH A FIRE FROM THE MIDST OF THEE, AND I WILL BRING THEE TO ASHES UPON THE EARTH AND IN THE SIGHT OF ALL THEM THAT BEHOLD THEE...THOU SHALT BE A TERROR, AND NEVER SHALT THOU BE ANY MORE. Ezek 28:18,19. Here is a great created being who aspired to set his throne above the throne of God. What does it mean that he will be no more? I wonder what really happens to him.

7. AND MANY OF THEM THAT SLEEP IN THE DUST OF THE EARTH SHALL AWAKE, SOME TO EVERLASTING LIFE, AND SOME TO SHAME AND EVERLASTING CONTEMPT. Da 12:2. Them refers to Israel as the context most clearly indicates. Yet only many, not all of Israel awake. I wonder what becomes of the rest of them. What is the shame (2Ti 2:15)? Is it a believer or an unbeliever that is ashamed? Why is not the shame everlasting?

8. AND THEY SHALL GO FORTH, AND LOOK UPON THE CARCASSES OF THE MEN THAT HAVE TRANSGRESSED AGAINST ME: FOR THEIR WORM SHALL NOT DIE, NEITHER SHALL THEIR FIRE BE QUENCHED; AND THEY SHALL BE AN ABHORRING UNTO ALL FLESH. Isa 66:24. Now I wonder if these carcasses are conscious of what is going on here in the city dump of the Millennial Jerusalem. Will they be raised, or is this the finish? Are the worms immortal? What kind of fire is it there? I wonder!

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES #12

(CONCLUDED)

The ministry of the Lord, while He was here on earth, is summed up by 2 words in Ac 1:1. They are *do* and *teach*.

He did miracles and wonders and signs to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.

His teaching centered around, REPENT, FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND.

In the times of the Acts the apostles were to do greater wonders than He did. They did.

In the times of the Acts the apostles were to proclaim the kingdom (Ac 1:3,8). They did.

There is one thing that must be emphasized about this record. It was all the result of a prayer (with the exception of the last few verses). When hanging on Calvary the Lord prayed that the Father should forgive these Jews for what they were doing because they were doing it in ignorance. That made it possible then that miracles should continue and that the kingdom should still be offered to Israel.

The apostles were prepared for a rejection of their gospel by the parables of the kingdom given to them in M't 13. They would not be so cast down then when they saw no fruit of their ministry going on to perfection.

They knew that their great commission, as given in M't 28:19,20, could never start until the times of the restitution of all things. And they understood that these times would begin with the conversion of Israel and the presence of her King here on the earth.

But they did obey the commission given to them in M'k 16:15-18 and the signs followed confirming their apostleship and the truth of their gospel. And in every instance of the being endued with power from on high, the Holy Ghost came in visible form and sat on people bodily. This was to both Jew and Gentile.

They did not know the time of the Lord's return, but assumed that it would be soon if Israel did repent and accept their Messiah. We now know that the time of His return would have been about 84 A.D. if Israel had repented and received Him as King and Priest.

It was then no mistake for them to suppose that the coming of the Lord was at hand. It was no mistake for the believers to sell what they had and have things in common. For they knew that when the King came, they would each receive an allotment in the promised land and their needs would be taken care of.

Paul made no mistake in supposing that he would still be alive when the Lord came to set up the kingdom. It was a bona fide offer to Israel that they should repent and the Lord come.

Israel will yet be a channel of blessing to the nations of the earth. The 12 will yet go out to teach all nations. Abraham will be there to see it and realize the fulfillment of the promise that in him should the nations of the earth be blest.

After all the events of the times of the Acts had taken place, Luke wrote the book to confirm the gospel of the dispensation of the mystery which Paul began to preach in Ac 28:30,31. So the book is really an introduction to the dispensation of the mystery.

THE QUICK AND THE DEAD #32

DENTON C. ABBEY

Leaving the question of the word PRESENCE in the hands of the Almighty, we go on to the next verse listed in article 15. This is found in M't 5:22 and reads as follows, --BUT WHOEVER SHALL SAY, THOU FOOL, SHALL BE IN DANGER OF HELL FIRE.

A literal translation of the original Gr. will do much to clear up the confusion. --BUT WHOEVER SHALL SAY, THOU FOOL, SHALL BE LIABLE FOR THE VALLEY OF FIRE. Hell here is the Gr. *gehenna* or the Heb. *gai Hinnom*. There is no intimation in the Greek that this word means a punishment in the hereafter, and in the Hebrew it certainly does not. If we turn to 2Ch 33:6 we find one of the first references to its use. I would like to write this in its entirety that all might catch the importance of rightly dividing the Scripture. AND HE CAUSED HIS CHILDREN TO PASS THROUGH THE FIRE IN THE VALLEY OF THE SON OF HINNOM. Now this is *Mannaseh*, the son of *Hezekiah*, who plunged Israel into idolatry and, --DID THAT WHICH WAS EVIL IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD. One of these evils was to cause the children of Judah to pass thru the fire in this valley. Jer 7:31 records this, AND THEY HAVE BUILT THE HIGH PLACES OF TOPHET, WHICH IS IN THE VALLEY OF HINNOM, TO BURN THEIR SONS AND DAUGHTERS IN THE FIRE, WHICH I (God) COMMANDED THEM NOT, NEITHER CAME IT INTO MY HEART.

There are numerous other references, but this will set the stage for the meaning of the word hell. The Gr. *gehenna* is used 12 times and each time is rendered hell. Hades is used 11 times and is translated hell 10 times and grave once. Not only does it fail in any of these references to speak of a future punishment so often put forth by the advocates of such doctrine, but it is refuted. In Ac 2:31 we read this, HE SEEING THIS BEFORE SPAKE OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST, THAT HIS SOUL WAS NOT LEFT IN HELL (Gr. *hades*) NEITHER HIS FLESH DID SEE CORRUPTION. Now notice that it says WAS NOT LEFT IN HELL. This infers that someone had power over this decision other than Christ. You might check 2Co 4:14 and Ro 4:25.

But the Bible says that our Lord's soul was in hell. How shocking! If we are going to allow the orthodox interpretation, then we must admit to the fact that Christ was in a place of torture. And this by their own admission is fire and brimstone. Then I might ask, *Why was He sent to hell? --the one Man who knew no sin -- what punishment did He fall heir to?*

Oh, I begin to see now. He was taking my punishment. If I confess to Ro 5:8,9, WHILE WE WERE YET SINNERS, CHRIST (suffered) FOR US. MUCH MORE THEN, BEING NOW JUSTIFIED BY HIS (torture), WE SHALL BE SAVED. If my punishment is to be fire and brimstone, then to pay for my sins someone would have to pay that penalty. So death on the cross was not the price that was paid for my miserable hide, but rather, to be tortured for 3 days in hell.

All this talk about, --WITHOUT SHEDDING OF BLOOD IS NO REMISSION in Heb 9:22 is just so much window dressing. It was really the 3 days in hell that turned the trick????????????????????

INTERROGATIONS

THE EDITOR'S DESK

57. *When was the gospel of John written?*
 Bengel, In his Gnomens of the New Testament, says of John 5:2, "John wrote before the destruction of the city. *There is, saith he, not there was, a pool.*" So there is pretty good evidence from this that the gospel was written before A.D. 70. Then in 1:11 we note another time element that must be reckoned with. HIS OWN RECEIVED HIM NOT refers to what happened at Acts 28:28. That was the final rejection of the King and the kingdom. So somewhere between Acts 28:28 and A.D. 70 John wrote this gospel. From the message and content of the book, my own personal opinion is that it was written very soon after Israel were set aside. There is plenty of evidence that the book was primarily intended for Gentiles of the present age. But there is also a message there for Israel when they come back into God's favor and will. The eight signs will speak to them then.

58. *There is something about Paul's ministry that has been bothering me. In Ac 13:46 he says, WE TURN TO THE GENTILES. Yet immediately in 14:1 he goes first to the synagogue. The same thing happens in 17:1,2; 17:10; 17:17 and 18:4. In 18:6 he again says, FROM HENCEFORTH I WILL GO UNTO THE GENTILES, yet in 18:19 and 19:8 he find him right back again in the synagogues. Finally in Acts 28 we find him disregarding the Roman church he wrote his epistle to and calling together the chiefs of the Jews. Why?*

Not many people really know what was going on during the times of the Acts of the apostles. The gospel of that time, preached by Paul and the 12 and all other evangelists and preachers and any that had a message to give, was concerning the coming King and kingdom. So Peter in Ac 3:26 reminds the Jews that the Messiah had been sent to them first. But when Jerusalem and Judaea rejected the gospel, Peter turned to the Gentiles (Ac 10). In each synagogue where Paul's gospel was rejected, there was then a turning to the Gentiles. But all thru Acts the Jew was first. Gentiles were added to provoke Israel to jealousy. Paul speaks of Israel's Savior in ac 13:23 and in the next verse emphasizes the fact that John preached repentance first to Israel. Whenever a feast was prepared and the guests would not partake of it, then those in the highways and byways were invited in to partake of the things that had been prepared for Israel. This happened in synagogue after synagogue till Israel, both in the land and outside, had all been invited. All refused. So finally no more tables were set for Israel. The salvation of God was sent to the Gentiles. But it was no other the feasts prepared for the Jews, but an entirely new dispensation. Instead of a King coming to reign on the throne of His father David, it is now the Head of all creation taking over His rule of all the universe with His throne in the heavens. No longer do the meek inherit the earth in this new dispensation, but saints are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places. Paul was consistent in his reaching during Acts for he was to proclaim the kingdom to the Jews of the dispersion.

TRUTH FOR TODAY is published and mailed out the first of each month by TRUTH FOR TODAY, INC. The editor is Oscar M. Baker. There is no subscription price, but it is sent free to anyone anywhere upon request.

ANNIVERSARY DAY is over. Folks are still writing to tell us how much they enjoyed May 6 with us and are already looking forward to a similar meeting next year.

BIBLE CLASSES are being resumed on Tuesday evenings at 7:30 EST. Sundays are reserved for visitors and extra meetings. So anybody coming on Sunday (or any other time, for that matter) should let us know. During week we work part time in Warsaw. We can entertain visitors as well as ever, only we have to plan a bit.

TRUTH FOR TODAY, Vol. 1, has been reprinted and is on sale at 50¢ per copy, 3 for \$1, or \$3 per dozen. We still have some bound volumes 10, 11, 12 and 13 which are free while they last.

ALPHABETICAL ANALYSIS, Vol. 5 has arrived and is \$2.50 per copy. Also we have copies of The Unfolding Purpose of God by Stuart Allen, \$2. The Unity of the Spirit and of the Faith by C.H. Welch, 55¢. Salvation by C. H. Welch, 45¢. The Address on the Envelope by E. Moore, 15¢. Satan by C.H. Welch, 15¢.

TAPES AND RECORDERS. We have 6 recorders at \$70 each f.o.b. Warsaw. Original price of these was \$99.95. We want to clear these out. We forgot last month to announce a supplement sheet to the tape catalog. Ask for a copy. If you do not have the tape catalog, we have copies which are free. If you wish to buy or borrow tapes by Welch, Allen, Streets, Imberg, Lambourne, Baker or others, write to Lt.-Col. A. P. von Deesten, 357 South Curson Ave., Los Angeles 36, Calif.

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