

STUDIES IN EPHESIANS #106

5:15

FOUR FUTURE SPHERES OF BLESSING

SEE THEN THAT YE WALK CIRCUMSPECTLY. NOT AS FOOLS, BUT AS WISE.

The word *circumspectly* in the A.V. is not quite the word we want here. It would be better to say *accurately*, for it has the idea of exactness and carefullness, and according to wisdom. The opposite walk is that of fools.

Seeing that we are under grace these days, there is no excuse for laxness in the walk. There is no excuse for being carelessly. Grace cannot overlook any deviation from the straight and narrow. To entertain such a thot is only looking for trouble.

This is the 7th and last occurrence of the word *walk* in Ephesiains. Look them up and see the connections. This is the 3rd occurrence in this section concerning the new creation and its walk. First there is the walk in love (5:2). Then walk as children of light (5:8). And now comes the admonition to walk accurately. There is no room here for fools and their foolishness.

Another point to remember is just this. When there is a walk or an example put forward, it is not in seeking for salvation. Salvation is ever by faith. The law could not bring life. Just as sure as God cannot lie, life comes by faith. There is no other way. The walk must be the outcome of the life.

To walk accurately, the eyes must be open spiritually. That may be the reason that in the A.V. we have the word *circumspectly*. That word comes from the Latin and means looking all around. If you are walking and looking at a star, you may fall into a pit. If you are driving a car and looking at the scenery, you may have a wreck. There must be attention on the matter at hand. Thots must not wander. Pay attention to your business.

Not as fools; what does that mean? The fool may say in his heart that there is no God. Saul confessed that he had played the fool in his treatment of David, but being a fool he never seemed to learn from experience. A fool is not easily corrected. A fool is forever prating about himself and his greatness. Fools utter slanders. Mischief is the sport of fools. The fool is always right in his own eyes, but cannot help revealing his folly. The fool rages and is very confident. He hates instruction. The father of a fool has no joy. A fool will always be meddling, and don't tell anything to a fool that you do not want broadcast to the world. You take it up from here. I was using the concordance.

But as wise; how do the wise walk? The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. So fear to do that which is wrong. It might displease your Father. Surely, if you love Him, you would not want to grieve Him. Walk accurately. Make every step count. There is no time to dance by the wayside. There are paths where your feet should not wander. Walk as if every step were to be preserved in concrete so that all can see where you stepped. All these things make up the walk that is circumspect and accurate, a walk of which the workman need not be ashamed.

Most of the folks who read this are already aware of the fact that not all believers have the same hope or calling. They may know that there are at least 3 families of God which have in them an adoption or firstborn. But that there may be a fourth family has not been quite so clear to some. And how all this is related to the great plan and purpose of the ages is also a fascinating study. Furthermore, it may be that there are even more spheres than four. There is yet a lot that we do not know.

1. Paradise. In the new earth there is a great multitude of the nations of them that are saved (Re 21:24). We are quick to admit that these mentioned in Revelation are those that are saved during the Millennial kingdom by the working out of the great commission of M't 28:19,20. But Job describes a similar setting and time for resurrection of Gentile believers (See Job 14). Also in Luke 23:43 the dying malefactor (not one of the thieves) was promised a place in this paradise. Adam will be there and other believers who have no part in Israel or the church of the dispensation of the mystery.

2. New Jerusalem. This also will be in the new earth (Re 21:1,2). The 12 gates are for the 12 tribes of Israel, each tribe having its particular gate to use in going out and coming in. The only Gentiles who have a part in it are those that were grafted in to partake of Israel's blessings (Ro 10,11, and 15:27 in particular). Altho no mention of this city is found in the OT, Abraham looked for it (Heb 11:10). It is also a place for the overcomers of the great tribulation (Re 3:12).

3. Millennium. This is on the present earth, not the new earth. There will be a renewal of the promised land so that it will be fruitful and also the animals will be tame in the land. The Millennium is primarily Israel's hope. The King will sit on David's throne and rule the nations of the earth with a rod of iron. It will be a time of reward for Israel and at the same time it will be working toward bringing all in subjection to Christ. It will end in the greatest of rebellions, but it will be put down swiftly never to rise again.

4. Heavenly Places. This was never revealed till Acts 28:28 where Israel was set aside for the time being. It is for Gentiles only. No Jew, as such, can enter. He must renounce all advantages of being a Jew (Ph'p 3:1-14). In other words, no fleshly distinctions enter into this particular sphere. See Eph 1:3; Col 3:1-4.

This is a very brief mention of each. Other articles in the past have taken them up in more detail. But they are summed up here for a purpose. And that is, to which of these do you belong? Peter, in writing to the 12 tribes, admonished them to make their calling and election sure. We might extend this admonition to all people today without doing violence to the Word. What part do you have in the plan and purpose of God for the ages? Are your works in keeping with your calling? Do you have your blue-prints? Will the verdict be, WELL DONE?

THERE IS A NEW CREATION

CHRIST IN SCRIPTURE #1

Let us look at 3 Scripture references and see how they are related and what they may mean. The first is 1Co 15:22, FOR AS IN ADAM ALL DIE, EVEN SO IN CHRIST SHALL ALL BE MADE ALIVE. The second is 2Co 5:17, THEREFORE IF ANY MAN BE IN CHRIST, THERE IS A NEW CREATION: OLD THINGS ARE PASSED AWAY; BEHOLD ALL THINGS ARE BECOME NEW. And the next verse goes on to say that all these new things are of God. The third is Re 21:5, BEHOLD, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW.

There is a general thot running thru these that the old things have to do with Adam, the old man, the old nature, and that the new things pertain to Christ, the new nature, the new man. All things that pertain to Adam die, and that is the end of them. That includes the old man, and also the body. Resurrection of the body is a thot foreign to Scripture. So it is absolutely true that anything that has its origin in Adam must die. It is equally true that anything and all things that are of Christ will be made alive. And in the new creation is no more death. So Adam as one head of the race has brot death upon all. Christ as Head of a new creation brings life to all that new creation.

There is a new creation, the new nature, in every believer no matter to what dispensational family he may belong. And each and every one of these will be made alive, both the just and the unjust. Spend a month or 2 in a study of Romans 8 for some of these great truths.

Now you will note that when the new heavens and earth come into view there is nothing of the old in them. All things that are in the new heavens and earth are made new. So only the new creation which is in Christ can enter there. There is no remembrance of former (old) things which have passed away.

Yet in spite of the plain facts of the Word, there is a great concerted effort among men today to make the old nature, the old man, all that is of Adam, fit for the new heavens and earth in which dwell righteousness. The social gospel that is so popular today would do just that. Then there are the folks who believe in universal salvation; they would also do likewise. They assume and assert that all in Adam will not die, but be raised and will dwell in the new heavens and earth. If that should be true, then we would also expect music halls, taverns, brothels, and the like in the new heavens and earth. If there were none of these things there, what would the poor souls do? It would be a place of torment to them.

But the Scripture tells us plainly that that which is flesh remains flesh, and that which is spirit remains spirit. In other words, the old nature cannot be changed; neither can the new. The flesh profiteth nothing. Those who sow to the flesh reap corruption. This is speaking of the believer. He cannot carry anything of the flesh over into the new life.

In spite of the concerted effort to bring the old things over into the new creation, God and His Word stand true and all this effort will be in vain. The title of Satan's lullaby is, *All will be Saved Regardless.*

The subject is too big to take up thru the whole of the Bible, but a sampling from the epistle of Paul to the Philippians will do well for an example. Here we can learn the place Christ held in the life and ministry of Paul. But also, on the grounds of the inspiration of Scripture, we find here a record of God's beloved Son who is the central theme of the Word from beginning to end. Truly the Scriptures testify of Him.

Paul begins by classifying himself as a servant of Christ. His message is to those who are in Christ. His message is not to the unbeliever who has no life or hope or reward, but to those who have the salvation mentioned in Eph 2:8,9. They are to work out this salvation.

Grace and peace come from the Father and the Son, Jesus Christ. There is no other source. In verse 6 the day of Christ is mentioned. It is again found in verse 10. A great and glorious day that will be.

Paul's love for the saints is because of the love and mercy of Christ. No one can be filled with the fruits of righteousness except there be a new nature in which Christ can dwell. Paul recognizes the fact that his bonds are in Christ and because of Christ. Therefore he can joy. He counts as brethren in Christ those who preach Christ in contention as well as those who preach Him sincerely. He can rejoice that Christ is preached, whether in pretence of truth. He realizes that his release (salvation) in the coming trial will depend on the supply of the spirit of Christ as well as the prayers of the saints. Note the place of prayer.

Paul is sure that Christ will be magnified in his body, whether he lives or dies. He is bold to assert that if he continues to live, it will be Christ's gain, or if he dies, it still will be Christ's gain. What a testimony! He is torn between the desire to depart and be with Christ (at the resurrection in the day of Christ, 2:16) and to stay and be of service to the saints. He decides that he would rather stay so they can rejoice more abundantly.

They are to walk in a way becoming of the gospel of Christ, to walk worthy of their calling. And it may be hard for some to realize it, but suffering is a gift in behalf of Christ. We should be thankful for it, not complaining. Chapter 2 begins with 4 things that are in Christ; consolation, comfort of love, fellowship in the spirit, and a merciful spirit.

Then there is the great exhortation to have the mind of Christ which began in humility and ended in exaltation. Then comes the name of Jesus and the adoration of all creation. Look this up in Isa 45:23. This testifies to the universal Lordship of Christ in the ages to come.

There is a hint in 2:16 that the resurrection and judgment of rewards comes in the day of Christ. Paul trusts in the Lord Jesus in his everyday experiences. Paul is concerned because those who profess to be Christians seek those things which will benefit themselves rather than what would benefit and glorify Christ. Note the phrase "In the Lord" in verses 24 and 29.

ACTS 10 OR 13?

THE QUICK AND THE DEAD #35

DENTON C. ABBEY

No doubt most of our readers are familiar with the grafting in of the Gentiles into the olive tree as given forth in Romans 10 and 11. Briefly, these Gentiles were grafted in where the natural branches were failing to bear fruit. This horticultural practice was in vogue at that time and it worked on the olive trees.

This adding of the Gentiles was predicted by both Moses and Isaiah (Ro 10:19,20). So Paul was on strictly Scriptural grounds here. And it was not a mystery that had not been revealed before. So grafting in Gentiles had nothing to do with the dispensation of the mystery which had been hid from ages and generations. A remnant of Israel was left. It was obtaining the blessings Israel looked for. But the remnant could not bear the fruit that the whole tree was supposed to produce.

For the purpose of this grafting, see the word *provoke* (Ro 11:11,14). Israel was to be a channel of blessing to the nations of the earth. That is the reason for them being a priestly nation. They had a commission to perform.

During Acts, Paul and the 12 were working under the great commission of M'k 16:15-20. They were to preach the gospel. What gospel? Read M'k 1:1,14,15; 13:10; 14:9. It was the gospel of the kingdom being at hand. Paul preached this gospel and the signs followed just as with the 12. So their gospel was nothing new. It was the same as John the Baptist had begun to preach at Jordan.

Now the question is, where did this adding of Gentiles or grafting begin? Was it at Acts 10 or 13? Had you ever considered that?

It is a well known fact that the first Gentile convert to the kingdom gospel was Cornelius. The Scriptures are plain on that question and no one can produce any Scripture to the contrary. And the preacher was Peter. Note his claim to being the first to go to the Gentiles when at the council in Jerusalem (Acts 15:7). Also you will see that James did not dispute this fact, but repeated it in verse 14.

Now the question that has bothered theologians for centuries is why that Peter went to the house of Cornelius. They knew that Paul grafted in Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy, but never realized that Peter had done the same thing first. There is no other explanation of why that Peter preached to the household of Cornelius.

Now if anyone gets any strange ideas about this grafting in of Gentiles being connected with the dispensation of the mystery, he had better stop and think that Peter did it first. Therefore if the adding of Gentiles was the beginning of the dispensation of the mystery, Peter began it.

It is well to weigh all the evidence and get the facts before coming to a conclusion. It is very evident from Romans 10 and 11 that this grafting was no secret hidden in God from ages and generations. These Gentiles were to partake of Israel's blessings (Ro 15:27). Just what blessings did Israel have aside from the kingdom? Can you answer that?

There are two factors we must face: Do we die? Are we resurrected? If we can settle either of these, the remaining one then must, by its own limiting factors, fall into place. If we cannot convince ourselves that we die, then perhaps a note on resurrection can so place and confine death that there will be no other alternative than that advanced.

Now if people don't die and await their appointed time, why do we have reference to it in the Bible? IF A MAN DIE, SHALL HE LIVE AGAIN? ALL THE DAYS OF MY APPOINTED TIME WILL I WAIT, TILL MY CHANGE COME (Job 14:14). The angel told Daniel; BUT GO THOU THY WAY TILL THE END BE: FOR THOU SHALT REST, AND STAND IN THY LOT AT THE END OF DAYS (Da 12:13).

There are other references to these specific times when the Lord will perform that which He had ordained. One is in Re 11:18, THE TIME OF THE DEAD THAT THEY SHOULD BE JUDGED, AND THOU SHOULD GIVE REWARDS UNTO THY SERVANTS THE PROPHETS, AND TO THE SAINTS, AND THEM THAT FEAR THY NAME, SMALL AND GREAT. Note this one, UNTIL THE TIMES OF RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS (Ac 3:21). In 1Co 15 we have the firstfruits, BUT NOW IS CHRIST RISEN FROM THE DEAD, AND BECOME THE FIRSTFRUITS OF THEM THAT SLEPT--BUT EVERY MAN IN HIS OWN ORDER (20,23). MARTHA SAITH UNTO HIM, I KNOW THAT HE (Lazarus) SHALL RISE AGAIN IN THE RESURRECTION AT THE LAST DAY (Joh 11:24).

When you tie all these in with the fact that we have 4 or 5 resurrections mentioned in the Bible, you can begin to see (I hope) why we need an appointed time.

If Christ were the firstfruits, then we know that no one was raised before Him. This coincides with what Job said.

If no one was raised before Christ, then he must of necessity be raised some time after. To help make it clearer for many, we will take the most popular belief first, which will force us to list them in reverse order.

In Re 20:11 we have the great white throne judgment. Here the sea, death and hell give up their dead. This is a resurrection and fits in with number 2 in reverse order, AND THEY LIVED AND REIGNED WITH CHRIST A THOUSAND YEARS, BUT THE REST OF THE DEAD (above) LIVED NOT AGAIN UNTIL THE THOUSAND YEARS WERE FINISHED (Re 20:4,5). Note that the dead are divided.

Next we have a third group in Re 7:9, AND, LO, A GREAT MULTITUDE, WHICH NO MAN COULD NUMBER, OF ALL NATIONS, AND KINDREDS, AND PEOPLE, AND TONGUES, STOOD BEFORE THE THRONE. Now some people would include these with those in Re 20:12 which stand before the throne. Be that as it may, it either invalidates the theory that those in 20:12 are all wicked, or it gives us another resurrection.

Then we have the so-called rapture of the church in 1Th 4:16,17. It is not mentioned in the Revelation.

And 5th and last, but not least, we have one in the prison epistles, FOR YE ARE DEAD, AND YOUR LIFE IS HID WITH CHRIST IN GOD. WHEN CHRIST, WHO IS OUR LIFE, SHALL APPEAR, THEN SHALL YE ALSO APPEAR WITH HIM IN GLORY (Col 3).

AN INVITATION TO YOU!

THE EDITOR'S DESK

357 South Curson Ave.
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Please let me hear from you.

Yours in His blessed service,
Arthur P. von Deesten C. E.
Lt Col AUS Retired.

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