

STUDIES IN EPHESIANS #112

5:25-33

HUSBANDS, LOVE YOUR WIVES, EVEN AS CHRIST ALSO LOVED THE CHURCH, AND GAVE HIMSELF FOR IT; THAT HE MIGHT SANCTIFY AND CLEANSE IT WITH THE WASHING OF WATER BY THE WORD, THAT HE MIGHT PRESENT IT TO HIMSELF A GLORIOUS CHURCH, NOT HAVING SPOT, OR WRINKLE, OR ANY SUCH THING; BUT THAT IT SHOULD BE HOLY AND WITHOUT BLEMISH. SO OUGHT MEN TO LOVE THEIR WIVES AS THEIR OWN BODIES. HE THAT LOVETH HIS WIFE LOVETH HIMSELF. FOR NO MAN EVER YET HATED HIS OWN FLESH; BUT NOURISHETH AND CHERISHETH IT, EVEN AS THE LORD THE CHURCH: FOR WE ARE MEMBERS OF HIS BODY, OF HIS FLESH, AND OF HIS BONES. FOR THIS CAUSE SHALL A MAN LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL BE JOINED UNTO HIS WIFE, AND THEY TWO SHALL BE ONE FLESH. THIS IS A GREAT MYSTERY; BUT I SPEAK CONCERNING CHRIST AND THE CHURCH. NEVERTHELESS LET EVERY ONE OF YOU IN PARTICULAR SO LOVE HIS WIFE EVEN AS HIMSELF; AND THE WIFE SEE THAT SHE REVERENCE HER HUSBAND.

Wives are to submit to husbands as the church unto Christ. Husbands are to love wives as Christ the church. This is the relationship put in a few words.

There is nothing here about a bride and that the church is the bride of Christ. Neither is there anything here about the wife of Jehovah, which in the OT is Israel. We have here a comparison of husband and wife and Christ and the church, but no figure to identify the wife with the church or the husband with Christ.

There is a mystery here presented about the church and Christ's love for it and the final presentation of it to Himself. This is a great truth. But that truth is presented here to show how great love men should have for their wives. The subject is still the Christian home.

The two phrases, OF HIS FLESH, AND OF HIS BONES at the end of verse 30 were probably not in the original manuscripts.

The fact that the wife was first created as a helpmeet for man helps us to determine the relationship of man and wife. Their interests should be one, not the wife pursuing a career or line of her own, but that they should work together in one common interest, the work and interests of the husband primarily. In this day when people pervert nearly all truth to their own selfish ends, it is likely that the writer will get no bouquets for saying this.

What have they seen in thine house? What evidences are there that your home is Christian? Is a Bible in view for the visitor to see when he enters? Do the children know what it is to sit and listen to family Bible reading and prayer? What kind of music is displayed on the piano? What program is going on on the TV? Is there harmony in the home, or continual bickering and yelling? What have they seen in thine house?

If the husband loves the wife as Christ the church, what will be the home atmosphere? And before any blame is laid for any disunity in any home, it is wise first to find what the attitude of the husband is. Almost always this is the key to the situation. If the husband loves, there is little question of obedience.

WHO WERE THE UNCIRCUMCISION?

The myth concerning the 10 lost tribes of Israel takes strange turns at times. Just before the turn of the century much was made of the coronation stone of England and the story that an Irish king married a princess of Israel. But when scientists and historians looked into it and results were published, it died down for a while. Now other angles are coming up. But in general, as the literature comes to our desk, it seems that they now claim that Paul did his missionary work among Israelites which were called uncircumcision or Gentiles. Some go so far as to say that Cornelius, the centurion, was an Israelite. Then as a further step, they claim that especially the people of Galatia were pushed westward and came to inhabit the British Isles and so were the ancestors of the British and American peoples. Some also include the entire white race as being Israelitish.

They claim that these folks forgot circumcision and so were called uncircumcision by those of Israel that practiced circumcision. They say that Peter and the eleven were to preach to Judah or the Jews, and that Paul was to preach to the 10 tribes, the uncircumcision.

This makes a nice story and could be the basis for many a plot in fiction. But will it stand examination?

James did not know that 10 tribes were lost, so he addressed his epistle to the 12 tribes! Paul did not know it either and so he spoke of the 12 tribes as if they all were well known. In fact, there is nothing in the Scriptures anywhere that says anything about 10 tribes being lost. It is true that there were lost sheep from all 12 tribes whom the Lord came to seek and to save.

The assumption that 10 tribes forgot circumcision and did not practice it is not according to the Bible nor to history. The only time in history that circumcision was neglected was during the wilderness wanderings. Joshua saw to it that every male was circumcised before they entered the land via the Jordan.

But the most important item that has been overlooked by these folks is the fact that if uncircumcised, an Israelite was cut off from the covenants of promise (Ge 17:14). That was before the law was given. Look up everything you can find on circumcision.

Now if it were true that these Gentiles to whom Paul ministered were uncircumcised Israelites, then the Judaizers at Jerusalem were right. These folks could not be saved (come into the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant) unless they were circumcised. Paul was absolutely wrong. He had no gospel for Israelites, but Gentiles. If he were speaking to uncircumcised Israelites, then his message should have been that they should immediately be circumcised and then they would come into the blessings promised to their father, Abraham. And there could have been no other way. Peter would not have preached to Cornelius and his household if Cornelius were of any of the tribes of Israel. Peter would have told him to obey God and be circumcised.

Let us take to truth rather than fancies.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD #6

Here is a little sample of the UR reasoning quoted from a recent letter to me from one of the disciples of this system;

If not all are called (Ac 15:14--Joh 6:44), and if God fails in a complete salvation of the race.. Why does He? Is it because He does not want to? If so where is His love? Is He not able? If so where is His omnipotence? If man's free moral agency stands in the way, who gave this power to men? Did not the Creator? Did not God know that man would misuse this power, if he had it? If not, what becomes of God's omniscience? If He provided this power knowing that millions would misuse it to their own destruction, what then becomes of God's love?

Did you get lost in the woods? That is the object of the argument, to get you confused and lost so that you will blame God for everything. But the whole thing revolves about this one idea--that God must save the entire human race from Adam to the end or He will be a failure. A very fine argument!

BUT -- Scripture says that God gave the nations up (Ro 1:24,26,28). And nowhere do we find any reference to the fact that God intended to save each and every human being. So the argument put forth starts with a false premise. And that is a mighty shaky foundation to build anything on.

And what is love? Is it something that can be forced on anybody? You do not live very long till you discover that some people will not let you love them. And that is true of God's love. He so loved the world that He gave -- but many will not allow Him to love them, and they will not receive the gift that was given. A gift cannot be forced on anybody, for as soon as it is forced, then it is no longer a gift.

We are not arguing about whether God wants to save folks. His will is not being done here on earth to any appreciable extent, notwithstanding their arguments. If so, then why pray, *THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN?*

And if God is doing everything according to His will, then why and what was the temptation in Gethsemane? Why was our Lord saying *NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE?* And when all believers can come to the place they can say this same thing, when there will be unity. Unbelievers can never say it. They know nothing of God's will.

Again we say there is no question about the extent of God's power. There is no limit to it either side. But there is a limit to His sovereignty, and that is another thing altogether.

We have some very narrow shortsighted men in the world today who think that the ideal government is one in which all the subjects are rainwashed so thoroly that they do the will of the dictator without question, that they no longer have the ability to question, but like machines do the will of the ruler. But such has always failed and will fail.

And there are some who think that God's government of the world should be on the same pattern, and that if He so much as lets anyone do a bit of thinking for himself, then God has failed. What do you think? Or, can you?

AN ACT OF FAITH

FRED RALPH

From Ex 2:2 we learn that when Moses was born his mother saw that he was a *GOODLY CHILD*, and she hid him three months. The Hebrew word *to'eb* (goodly) is found many times in the OT and is mostly translated *good* as in Ge 1 where God saw that everything He had created was *good*. It is also translated *fair*: Rebecca was said to be *VERY FAIR TO LOOK UPON* (Ge 24:16). Vashti the queen was *FAIR TO LOOK ON* (Es 1:11). From its general usage therefore there is nothing to indicate that the mother of Moses saw that he was anything but an exceedingly bonny baby to look at, and perhaps, in temperament also.

When we come to the NT, however, more than this is revealed. In Ac 7:20 he is *asteios* to *Theo* (beautiful to God) while in Heb 11:23 we read that his parents saw that he was a *PROPER asteios* child. This Greek word appears nowhere else in the NT.

It is obvious that his parents saw that he was more than just a beautiful child, for they are numbered in Heb 11 among those who are set forth as examples of faith for we read, *THEY WERE NOT AFRAID OF THE KING'S COMMANDMENT*. Like Joseph and Mary, they probably received intimation that the child was to be used by God. Indeed, Josephus, a Jewish historian, records that the father of Moses received a vision in the night concerning Moses and the son who was to follow (Aaron), but this is not recorded in the Scripture.

Altho they were not afraid of the king's commandment, nevertheless, they did not disobey it. Jacob and his mother, when placed in a similar circumstance, knew that the birthright had been promised by God to Jacob, but in their anxiety to prevent Isaac from giving the blessing to Esau, they resorted to dubious means and ultimately caused themselves much difficulty and unhappiness. The parents of Moses, however, like all those of true faith, very wisely left the matter in the hands of God. The king's commandment had stated that every male child should be cast into the river, but it said nothing presumably about the manner in which this should be done. They, therefore, made an ark of bulrushes and placing the child therein cast him upon the surface of the river and left the outcome in the hands of the Lord, at the same time leaving Miriam, his sister, at the spot to see *WHAT WOULD BECOME OF HIM*.

It is easy for us to read the story now with its successful outcome and miss the important part played by the parents of Moses. How many of us would have had as much faith and instead, by disobeying the king's commandment sought some other way of preserving the child's life. Had they done so, God would have over-ruled them and achieved His will, but it would have been to their loss as they would not then have been numbered among those who endured *BY FAITH*. Thanks to them, however, Pharaoh was led to bring into his own house the one who was to bring about the very thing he feared - his own downfall and the release of the people of God.

So Moses was not only a goodly child, but the proper child, and his parents heroes of faith.

THE TWO RESURRECTIONS

RE 20

We do not read very far in this book till we are aware of the fact that the people of the 7 churches are divided into two groups -- the overcomers, and those who do not overcome.

To the overcomer is promised the privilege of eating of the tree of life which will be situated in the paradise of God; that he will not be hurt of the second death; that if faithful unto death, he will be given a crown of life; that he will eat of the hidden manna and will receive a white stone in which will be written a new name; that he will be given power over the nations and rule over them with Christ; that he will be clothed in white and his name will not be blotted out of the book of life; that he will be a pillar in the temple of God, and will have the name of God and the city of God written upon him; and that he will get to sit with Christ in His throne just as He sits in His Father's throne.

Furthermore these overcomers come out of great tribulation, having washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. And it is this group, all of whom are beheaded for the witness, that makes up the first resurrection. Few ever notice that all who take part in the first resurrection lose their heads in the great tribulation. No one who does not come into the tribulation then will have any part in this first resurrection.

Now the whole book is written to and for the 7 churches of Asia, Jewish believers, for each of the seven letters is to be delivered by John to the angels (readers in the Jewish synagogues). So out of these churches come this band of faithful ones who are beheaded because they overcame by their testimony and by the blood of the Lamb. They only take part in the first resurrection.

But what of the rest? What of those who were believers and belonged to these churches, but somehow did not rank as overcomers? Were they lost? No, that cannot be, for it says that the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years is finished. So the rest of the members of these churches have died sometime before the finish of the millennium.

But finally they too are raised and judged according to their works, as all believers are. But they missed the kingdom. They did not enter into it. They were raised too late. And why? Just because they were not quite faithful unto death. They did not qualify as overcomers as outlined in chapters 2 and 3. And it was only the overcomers that had part in the first resurrection. All the members of the churches are to be raised, but not all at the same time. There is nothing here about unbelievers being raised, nor can you find it anywhere else for that matter. God is dealing primarily with His own people, Israel. Those who are apostate and receive the mark of the beast and worship the image of the beast, whose names are not in the book of life, they perish and that is the last we hear of them. The tares, the children of the evil one, are destroyed by fire as is the chaff at the threshing floor. But keep your eye on the 2 groups of believers and their fate.

THE QUICK AND THE DEAD #41

DENTON C. ABBEY

Now after a short summary, we are going to try to bring this series on *The Quick and the Dead* to a conclusion. It seems that it is always easier to start something than it is to finish it. However, I feel that we have covered a great deal of material, that the reader has a good grasp of the problems involved, and if he so desires, he can now continue the study by his own efforts.

Above all, we have shown that the curse upon the earth was death (Ge 3:17-19). This has been true all down thru the ages. Even the holy men of God, such as Moses and David, are recorded in the Bible as having their final resting place in the ground. In this same vein we made a careful search of the words that would bear upon this death. For instance, the word *perish* that we find in John 3:16. This is the Greek word *apollumi*, meaning to die. This word was used some 93 times in the NT, and of this number 60 were in direct reference to, *destroy, death, perish, or die*. The remaining 33 referred to *be lost, lose, or marred*. Nowhere did it intimate that these folks were in hell or in a place called heaven. This subject can be found in detail in article No. 4. Then, not to leave any stone unturned, we took up the word *dead*. This, for the most part, was a translation of the Greek word *nekros*, a word that is still used in our modern English as necrosis or rotting flesh. We discovered that this word was used 134 times in the NT, and in every single instance it was translated *dead*. Again there was no reference to any of those people being any place but in the grave. This was taken up in more detail in article No. 6.

There is no passage in the Bible that sums up this whole concept so well as 1Co 15:17,18, AND IF CHRIST BE NOT RAISED, YOUR FAITH IS VAIN: YE ARE YET IN YOUR SINS. THEN THEY WHICH ARE FALLEN ASLEEP IN CHRIST ARE PERISHED. Now let us examine this.

It plainly says that if Christ be not raised, then those who have fallen asleep in Him are perished. Now the word for *sleep* here is the Greek word *koimaomai*, which is always used of a person who is dead. See John 11:11,14. Here Christ says very plainly that Lazarus is asleep. He uses the word *koimaomai* and then defines it by saying that Lazarus is dead. In contrast, the Greek word *kathuodo* is always used of a person who is asleep naturally. See 1Th 5:6.

Therefore, those in 1Co 15 are already dead by our Lord's own definition, but Paul goes on to say that if Christ be not raised, that their faith is vain, and that they are perished. And here is our word *apollumi*. Now how can a person be twice dead, when orthodoxy disallows even one death?

These folks are dead. But in Christ they have hope, providing Christ be raised from the dead. And if He be not raised, then theirs was a vain faith and they are perished. This then would be final; they are gone; they have no return. There is nothing left, not even a remembrance of them (Isa 26:14). This describes the alternative of eternal life in John 3:16.

INTERROGATIONS

THE EDITOR'S DESK

83. *In a few words define for us; man, death, resurrection.*

When alive, man is a living soul. When dead, he is a dead soul. He is made from the dust of the ground. Death is the return to the dust. And resurrection is a re-creation of man, not from the dust of the earth, but of incorruptible, immortal material.

84. *A long time ago you said that the apostles and prophets of Eph 4:11 had passed off the scene and that there remained only evangelists and pastors and teachers. What is your authority for this statement?*

If you will look at Eph 2:20-22 you will note that the foundation is built upon (the teaching of) the apostles and prophets. That foundation has long since been laid and there is no provision for the carrying on of this work. You don't keep on building foundation. It must be finished and the building started. So the foundation of the church of the dispensation of the mystery was laid by Paul and those that were apostles with him. Today we should be building on that foundation.

85. *How can one know that he is called to be a preacher or a missionary today?*

If you see something that ought to be done and you can do it, that is your calling. Do not waste time waiting for anything more, get busy and work while there is time.

86. *What is the millennium?*

The term occurs just 6 times in Scripture, all in Revelation. It is called a thousand years. A thousand in Latin is *mille*. So a millennium is a thousand years. Now it is interesting to note that a period of seventy weeks of years as we find it in Daniel 9, is 490 years. If we add to this the jubilee years of that time we get 500 years. Two of these periods could then make a millennium. It is also interesting to note that the history of Israel has been divided into periods of 490 years each. But that is another subject and a long one. All the occurrences of the term are in Re 20:

1. Satan bound for the M. Verse 2.
2. Satan loosed after the M. Verse 3.
3. Overcomers live and reign during M. 4.
4. Second resurrection after the M. 5.
5. Priests reign for the M. 6.
6. Satan loosed after the M. 7.

You might wish to make a structure of these occurrences. This is not the extent of Christ's reign. It is only a time of getting peace established on the earth and subduing all enemies. The real kingdom will have no end.

87. *Is not the mystery a pretty deep subject or missionary preaching among the heathen?*

Education, civilization and culture have little, if any, effect on the ability of man to grasp spiritual things. In fact, I have a notion that perhaps they are more of a hindrance than help. The poorest cannibal has a right to know about the gospel of the dispensation of the mystery. Paul's object was to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery. Let us not shirk our responsibility in this matter.

TRUTH FOR TODAY, monthly periodical for pastors, teachers, and Bible students who wish to know what God says. The editor is Oscar M. Baker of Route 2, Warsaw, Ind. It is published by Truth For Today, Inc. The directors are also the officers. Oscar M. Baker is Pres., Denton C. Abbey, V. Pres., Mae Baker, Secy., and Oscar M. Baker, Treas. The Magazine is sent to anyone anywhere free upon request.

BIBLE CLASS. Each Tuesday as usual.

OUR BOOK SHELF. Berean Publications, Bagster Publications, and various helps for study.

TAPE MINISTRY. We have news this time. For the last 6 years Mr. von Deesten has ably done the job of dubbing and mailing tapes out on sale and chains. In that time he has mailed out a total of 5,894 tapes. This has gotten to be too much for one man. Feb. 15th, there was a meeting in Phoenix, Ariz. An organization was formed to carry on the work of the tape ministry. Arthur von Deesten is chairman of the board of directors. Tom Kent is executive director. Then other members are Arthur C. Lambourne, C. V. Duff, Geo. T. Foster, R. A. Rumsey, and Oscar M. Baker. Those on the tape chains will receive further information later. In the future, address all requests for tapes to: Berean Tape Recording Ministry, P. O. Box 3249, Scottsdale, Arizona. Donations gladly received.

C. H. WELCH has just published 2 new books. *Satisfied (Five Studies in Spiritual Values)* is \$1.50. Vol. 6 of the *Alphabetical Analysis* is now available. We now have a stock of Vols. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 of this 10 volume set. Vols. 7 and 10 will come later. All volumes are \$2.50 each. Fine for reference.

MEET a new contributor to our paper. He is Mr. Fred Ralph of Basingstoke, England.

ANNIVERSARY DAY CONFERENCE coming up May 5th. The program will be from 1 to 5 P.M. EST.

VISITORS. Welcome to come for a day or more for questions and instructions. Be sure to arrange for a date with us. Telephone (area 219) Ulysses 8-2684 (Atwood Exchange).

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