

STUDIES IN EPHESIANS #113

6:1-3

CHILDREN, OBEY YOUR PARENTS IN THE LORD: FOR THIS IS RIGHT. HONOR THY FATHER AND MOTHER: WHICH IS THE FIRST COMMANDMENT WITH PROMISE: THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH THEE, AND THOU MAYEST LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH.

The first requirement for children is obedience to parents. Why? Because it is right. That is a good reason and we need not look for another. There may be times when it is wise to take a child into confidence and tell him why he should do certain things. But a parent is not required to give a reason every time he is asked, except that it is right to obey.

Those who are in the Lord are to obey their parents. Those who are not in the Lord cannot well obey such a commandment, for they are still in the flesh which is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. God is not laying down rules of conduct for the unbelievers. He never does.

One of the greatest offenses that can be committed against these little ones is to get them to distrust or have disrespect for parents. Many Christian workers have not realized this and oftentimes have told children that their parents were wrong. No good can come from such procedure. Some have thought that this meant that children should obey only that which they thought was in the Lord. Children cannot make such judgment. Their parents are responsible for them till such a time they can take over their own responsibility. An example is our Lord being subject to His parents from age of 12 until He was 30. Have we outgrown the example?

We find the command repeated in Col 3:20, CHILDREN, OBEY YOUR PARENTS IN ALL THINGS: FOR THIS IS WELL PLEASING UNTO (IN) THE LORD. Look up other occurrences of *children* in the prison epistles. It is an interesting word.

The first of the 10 commandments that had a promise attached was this one about honor to father and mother. Note that in Ex 20:12 where the commandment is first given, the promise is long life in the land which the Lord their God was to give them. This was to Israel and was concerning the promised land. But here in Ephesians the Gentile believer is in view, so he is promised long life on the earth. It may be you can think of some reasons why a child who obeyed and honored parents should live longer than one who did not obey. Just look around you and observe how those who do not obey live. You will find part of the answer right there.

A harmonious family life is more conducive to health. Meals can be eaten in an atmosphere of restfulness and quiet. The digestion can work better. Children brought up in such an atmosphere are less likely to have quarrels and trouble with other children. And as they grow older, they get along with their fellow men better and do not have all the worries and frustrations which tear down the body. So there are good physical reasons why it is right for children to obey their parents and why they may live longer.

On the other hand, moral decay of the last days is characterized by disobedience to parents.

THE LESSON OF KADESH BARNEA

The reader should review the story in Numbers 13 and 14 in connection with this story.

No doubt there was hardly a person in the land that did not know that Kadesh was right on a boundary line. That was common knowledge. The Israelites had not been taken by a direct route from Egypt to Canaan lest immediate war should dishearten them. But after the giving of the law at Sinai, the building of the tabernacle, and organization into tribal groups, it was time to go into the land.

Now Israel also knew that this was a boundary line. They knew that stepping across this line would be a challenge to the enemy who possessed the land. All this was very real.

But after all, how many of them knew what *really* lay across that line? There are some things which only the eye of faith can see. They had been told that it was a land flowing with milk and honey. Did that mean that they could go to the nearest brook and stoop and drink milk or honey? Or, did it mean that it would be a land of plenty for those who would work it? Manna came down from heaven in the wilderness, but no milk and honey came down from heaven in the land. But how many realized that here would be a land of plenty if they would only work it and take care of it?

And further, how many could look forward to the glories of the kingdoms that should follow? Kings had been promised to the tribe of Judah. Did they see that beyond the frontier?

And beyond all that, for overcomers was a great millennial kingdom of the Seed of woman. And further yet, there was a city whose builder and maker was God which Abraham looked for. How many could glimpse these things by faith? But they all lay beyond the boundary line at Kadesh Barnea.

And why did not the people cross and claim this country and its blessings? We are told that they entered not because of unbelief. Their unbelief caused them to request the spies. They just could not take God's word for what awaited them. They could not walk by faith. They wanted visual proof. But the appearances were deceiving and so 10 of the spies brought back an evil report. Only Caleb and Joshua had the faith that could see the unseen.

So by unbelief these people lost a great inheritance. There is nothing said about them being lost, but they suffered a great loss. For their attitude and fate thereafter, read Psa 90.

But those who were under 20 years of age, plus Caleb and Joshua, were preserved to enter the land. Read of them in Psa 91.

So Israel knew where the boundary was. They looked over and saw the hills and plains. They tasted of the fruit the spies brought back. God had told them of the blessings there. Yet they refused to enter.

And today there is a great boundary line that is commonly known about, but not all who talk about it have gone over. They too do not enter because of unbelief. Some think it a great mental feat to know about it. But they will never be blessed on the wilderness side.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD #7

LET MY PEOPLE GO

FRED RALPH

Those who speak longest and loudest about the sovereignty of God are the very ones who question it and try to destroy it. If God is really and truly sovereign, then how foolish it is for folks to try to direct it and make rules by which God must exercise it.

Now if God is sovereign and the Creator, then He can do as He pleases with the creature. And no creature should question any act of the Creator. For an example, we find in John 5:21 that the Lord quickeneth whom He will. And just try quoting that, and you get a rise of protest. A lot of folks will object and say that such a thing cannot be, that the Lord is compelled to quicken all people. Immediately they try to take His sovereignty from Him and dictate what they want, indicating that they think their will and their demands are greater than those of God. How impudent can men get!

There is one matter that these folks are strangely quiet about. They have never made any attempt to explain why God made man disposable; why that man is made of such frail material as the dust of the ground if God was going to save all of them regardless. Why did He not make them of some better material, something imperishable, if He was going to save all of them? But if any one thing is plainly revealed in God's Word, it is that man, as a soul, is made from dust and to dust returns. It is equally plain that the only hope of escape lies in the words of John 3:16, that whosoever will may believe and have life and hence a resurrection. If there is any other way, the Scriptures fail to mention it. We may be assured that any other way is the way of thieves and robbers.

Here is a quote from a recent letter which shows the lengths to which the blasphemy of the UR's will go; *You accuse us of stating that God is the author of sin. This is definitely not so. Sin is missing the mark, and we are assured that God does not miss the mark. In closing may I put it to you that if there is no ultimate salvation for the vast majority from Adam down to the present, except those saved by faith, then the Maker of all has missed the mark.* You will note that this man has another way of salvation outside of *by faith*. Also note that he does not accuse God of being the *author of sin*, but of *actually sinning*. And what is the mark? It is one that this man has very arbitrarily set up for God to shoot at. It is an artificial fictitious mark which exists only in the imagination of a man.

Now it is not too hard to find in history just where this doctrine of universal salvation began. It was conceived and brot up in the atmosphere of the lie of Satan, the theory of the immortality of the soul. Satan has said that man does not surely die. Most of mankind has believed this lie. And in believing it, they had to devise compartments for such folks, one for the good and one for the bad. But the latter got to be so bad in their imagination that some revolted from it. They thot surely God would not torment people forever, so they surmised that He would save all. That is how it began.

Contrary to what one would expect, Exodus 1 does not begin with the birth of Moses, but we are taken back to Jacob and Joseph and the 70 souls which came down to Egypt from Canaan. Then follows the statement, AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL WERE FRUITFUL AND INCREASED ABUNDANTLY (1:7). Look at the repetitions in this verse. FRUITFUL, INCREASED ABUNDANTLY, MULTIPLIED, WAXED EXCEEDING MIGHTY, and then the conclusion, AND THE LAND WAS FILLED WITH THEM. This is ample fulfillment of the promise of God to Abraham, I WILL MULTIPLY THY SEED AS THE STARS OF THE HEAVEN, AND AS THE SAND WHICH IS UPON THE SEA SHORE (Ge 22:17).

In Ex 1:9 Pharaoh admits, THEY ARE MORE AND MIGHTIER THAN WE, and says, COME ON, LET US DEAL WISELY WITH THEM; LEST THEY MULTIPLY, AND IT COME TO PASS, THAT, WHEN THERE FALLETH OUT ANY WAR, THEY JOIN ALSO UNTO OUR ENEMIES, AND FIGHT AGAINST US (verse 10). The attempt of Pharaoh to deal *wisely* with the situation was doomed from the start. The apostle Paul, when writing to the Corinthians said, FOR THE WISDOM OF THIS WORLD IS FOOLISHNESS WITH GOD. FOR IT IS WRITTEN, HE TAKETH THE WISE IN THEIR OWN CRAFTINESS (1Co 3:19). As a result, Pharaoh's wisdom was used to encompass his own defeat and that of his army. As Moses is a type of the Redeemer, so Pharaoh is a type of the oppressor (Satan, who also will in like manner bring about his own destruction with his army, Re 20).

Pharaoh appoints taskmasters to afflict the people WITH RIGOUR and to make their lives bitter with HARD BONDAGE, but we read, THE MORE THEY AFFLICTED THEM, THE MORE THEY MULTIPLIED AND GREW, AND THEY (Egyptians) WERE GRIEVED BECAUSE OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL. Instead of causing the number of the children of Israel to decrease, they were toughening them up and causing them to increase. There is no reason to think the midwives were telling a lie when they told Pharaoh (verse 19), THE HEBREW WOMEN ARE NOT AS THE EGYPTIAN WOMEN, FOR THEY ARE LIVELY, AND ARE DELIVERED ERE MIDWIVES COME IN UNTO THEM. The hard toil day after day must have seemed hopeless, but the people unbeknown to themselves were being strengthened in the midst of their enemies. The unseen God was using it to toughen them for their desert march. This is a word of comfort for any of us who feels his pathway is exceedingly hard. Satan will seek to discourage any who seeks to worship God in truth and by HARD BONDAGE tempt us to complain, but if we endure, we know that the Lord in His wisdom will use it not only for our good but to assist forward His will and purpose for the ages. Ere long the cry will once again go forth, LET MY PEOPLE GO, and the words of 2Co 4:16-18 come blessedly true; FOR WHICH CAUSE WE FAINT NOT; BUT THOUGH OUR OUTWARD MAN PERISH, YET THE INWARD MAN IS RENEWED DAY BY DAY. FOR OUR LIGHT AFFLICTION, WHICH IS BUT FOR A MOMENT, WORKETH FOR US A FAR MORE EXCEEDING AND ETERNAL WEIGHT OF GLORY; WHILE WE LOOK NOT AT THE THINGS WHICH ARE SEEN, BUT AT THE THINGS WHICH ARE NOT SEEN; FOR THE THINGS WHICH ARE SEEN ARE TEMPORAL; BUT THE THINGS WHICH ARE NOT SEEN ARE ETERNAL.

BLESSINGS FOR GENTILES

THE QUICK AND THE DEAD #42

DENTON C. ABBEY

I. From the earliest times of the commonwealth of Israel till the time of the apostle Peter, a Gentile believer had no part in Israel's hope (King and kingdom). But there were many Gentiles who partook of the blessings of Israel in a small way. Our Lord, in dealing with the Canaanitish woman, called this eating crumbs from the children's table.

We read in 2Ki 5 about Naaman the Syrian being healed of leprosy. A prophet in Israel was the agent for the healing. But Naaman could not enter the holy place in the temple to worship, neither could he keep the feasts of Israel. All of which definitely barred him from Israel's hope. In like manner Nebuchadnezzar believed and had some crumbs from Israel's table, and even wrote a portion of our Bible, but there is nothing about his sharing the hope of Israel.

And at a later date, the dying malefactor could not have a place in the kingdom, but was promised a place in paradise.

II. But when Peter had a vision on the house top and went into the house of Cornelius, there was a change. For the first time Gentiles received gifts of the spirit which were signs connected with the kingdom. So Paul later explains it by saying that they became children of Abraham by faith and therefore had part in the promises to Abraham. So from Acts 10 to Acts 28:28 Gentiles could sit at Israel's table instead of being under it to get the crumbs. Peter ate with Gentiles at Antioch (Ga 2:12). And since Gentiles shared Israel's blessings, Paul urged them to be generous to the poor Jewish saints at Jerusalem (Ro 15:27).

This position of the Jew and Gentile is further brot out in Ro 11 in the illustration of the olive tree and the wild shoot. So it was still Israel's table, but the Gentile could be a guest and partake of the good things.

III. But at Acts 28:28 the Jewish table with its goodies passed from the scene. Upon the failure of the Jews, the promises made to Abraham were put on the shelf for the time being. The kingdom is in abeyance. The times of the Gentiles must run their full course before the prophetic clock of Israel will start again. And now for the first time in history, at Acts 28:28 was revealed the fact that the salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles. And in Eph 1:3 it is announced that on the Gentile table today are all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ. What a prospect! What a feast!

But what of the Jew? Is he left out? The table is only for Gentiles, so it is evident that a Jew must no longer count himself such, but laying aside all notions of priority, he may be a guest at this Gentile table, yes, even more than a guest. For of the two there is a new creation, onew man, which is the church of the dispensation of the mystery, the body of Christ.

No more do Gentiles depend on crumbs. No more do they come in as guests of a superior race or people. But they are blest directly in Christ without benefit of promises to Abraham or the mediatorship of Israel. They have a table of which man had never dreamed.

Just as we have ample proof in the OT that man's final resting place is the grave (Job 19:26 Da 12:2 Isa 26:19 Ps 49:15 Pr 14:32 Ho 13:14), so we find the NT upholding these same tenets. Just as Moses and the prophets spoke of these, so do we have Paul in the NT devoting pages to this same doctrine (Ro 5,6,7 for example). Then too we found by searching the words of Christ, that He too spoke not of punishment awaiting man, but rather of resurrection. He (Christ) was portrayed as life as contrasted over against death.

In articles 8,9 and 10 we gave evidence in more detail. All Bible history showed that when men of note passed on, it was so recorded that they died. Nothing further was added, and nothing taken away. Deut. 34:5 is a good example. MOSES THE SERVANT OF THE LORD DIED THERE IN THE LAND OF MOAB, ACCORDING TO THE WORD OF THE LORD. Here it states that Moses died in the land of Moab. And no less an authority than the Lord tells that this is true.

In article 10 we stressed the point that Paul spent a great part of the book of Romans trying to bring home this fact of sin and death; that death freed a man from sin; that death was necessary to escape the condemnation of the flesh. Even death was the requirement of the cross for the payment of sin. Christ was made in the fashion of man and suffered death just as man because He too was flesh. But unlike man, He was sinless, had fulfilled the law, so death had no hold on Him.

How can we explain the fact that if death frees a man from sin, as Paul says, that we can have a man living on *immortal* and having escaped death, lives in sin??? Are we to conclude from this that the righteous must die to be freed from sin, while the unrighteous live on deathless in sin??? Remember that God has concluded all under sin (Ga 3:22). FOR ALL HAVE SINNED AND COME SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD (Ro 3:23). Now if this is true, it would seem to present a paradox, as the righteous must die while the unrighteous must live on!!!

Paul warned his readers many times about the fact of sin and death. He mentions the word death, *thanatos*, some 56 times in his epistles. But not once do we find him using the word hell to threaten them with a fiery place of torture if they are not good.

We also pointed out that all references in the Bible painstakingly refer to the first man as of the flesh, earthly, and subject to death; while the second man was of heaven and spiritual. What a contrast!

HOWBEIT THAT WAS NOT FIRST WHICH IS SPIRITUAL, BUT THAT WHICH IS NATURAL: AND AFTERWARDS THAT WHICH IS SPIRITUAL (1Co 15:46).

Editor's note. Because of heathen background it was very unfortunate that in the very early days of Christendom the church chose to propagate Satan's lie (Thou shalt not surely die). This has been the root of many false teachings such as spiritism, purgatory, torture chambers of hell, worship of saints, prayers for the dead, and a host of like abominations.

INTERROGATIONS

THE EDITOR'S DESK

88. *It is said in 1Ki 6:1 that Solomon began the temple in the 480th year from the exodus. But from the figures given in Ac 13:20,21 and elsewhere we figure that this should have been about the 573rd year after the exodus. What is the reason for this discrepancy?*

In Kings we are going by the sacred calendar which does not count some years if they are when God's people are Lo-Ammi. In the Hebrew of 1Sa 3:1 it says that Saul reigned 2 years over Israel. The reason for this is that after 2 years God rejected him as king and so the remaining 38 years do not count. Now if you will go to the book of Judges and add up the total years of the 5 captivities you will get 93 years. Add that to your 480 and you will get the 573. It is no problem when you get to know God's ways. The same principle must be followed in computing the 2 prophecies in Da 9.

89. *In the epistle to Titus God is spoken of 3 times as Savior, and also 3 times Christ is called Savior. Is there a mistake?*

These and many other passages are going to bother the Bible student unless he confesses to the deity of Christ, that He was God manifest in the flesh (1Ti 3:16).

90. *Is not Ultra-dispensationalism just another form of modernism?*

To a devotee of a Judaized paganism it might appear so.

91. *Are we to assume, from 1Co 7, that it is not the best thing for the young men and women to get married?*

At the time this epistle was written, there was still the expectation that Israel might repent and so bring in the times of the restitution of all things. And if Israel repented, they would go thru a time of tribulation, their baptism with fire, and then would be the parousia, the presence or coming of the Lord. The theory of a pre-tribulation rapture had not yet been invented. And when this time of tribulation should come, WOE UNTO THEM THAT ARE WITH CHILD, AND TO THEM THAT GIVE SUCK IN THOSE DAYS (Mt 4:19). Paul speaks of the present distress and realizes that there might be a tribulation or the Corinthian church. So his advice is in view of a tribulation at hand. That does not pertain to the church today. So the crisis is at hand and they may marry as they will.

92. *If the church is not awaiting the coming of the Lord to earth, but expecting to be manifested in the heavens with Him, why do we have the sentence, THE LORD IS AT HAND in Ph'p 4:5? Is this a contradiction?*

This does not refer to the coming of the Lord, but to His presence with the believer right now. He is at hand, right at your elbow, and. And the following verse goes on to say that in consequence of this, BE CAREFUL FOR NOTHING: BUT....

93. *Was Paul a woman-hater?*

From just a superficial reading of the Bible, some have gotten this idea. But when a real study is made and the names listed of those whom Paul commended, we find women occupying a very large place. The idea is not founded on facts.

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