

STUDIES IN EPHESIANS #120

6:13

WHEREFORE TAKE UNTO YOU THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD. THAT YE MAY BE ABLE TO WITHSTAND IN THE EVIL DAY, AND HAVING DONE ALL, TO STAND.

Putting on the whole armor of God is simply putting on Christ. As we have said before, there is nothing about going forth to war. It is not that simple. The wiles of the devil are in view. Wiles are systematic deceit. That was his method in the very beginning in Eden, and he still uses the same device to a great advantage against the flesh.

Another thing to put on is the new man. The new man is the new nature that is in the believer. Now we do not actually put on the new man, for that is the work of God. But we must work out this spirit within us. We must work out our salvation with fear and trembling. So really, to put on the new man is to bear the fruits of the spirit.

Nothing short of the whole armor will do. There must be no weak or exposed place. The enemy will find it and aim his darts in that direction. So take heed to any weakness of the flesh you may have and be sure that it is covered by the armor of God.

In the chapter before we are to redeem the time because the days are evil. But here we have mention of an evil day. What that may be, we are not sure. We sometimes speak of evil days coming upon some people. Whatever it may be, we should be prepared so that there will be no time of weakness or failure on our part. Feeding the new nature with the Word of God, another way of putting on Christ, is good insurance against times of tribulation and testing. We must always be ready for anything that might happen to try our spiritual strength.

In the evil day Peter denied his Lord. In the evil day the disciples all forsook and fled. In the evil day Judas lost his bishoprick. And in the evil day David fell into temptation and lost the joy of his salvation. And it is in the evil day that we may lose our reward, the prize, the crown. We are to watch and pray.

And having worked out our salvation with fear and trembling, we still are to stand. There is no time to relax and get careless. We have the old nature until resurrection, and it is thru it that the devil can attack us and gain an entrance. We are not to fight the devil. He is too much for us. But we must be on guard, and armed with the whole armor of God, we can do as our Lord did in temptation. He quoted from the Word of God, that which had been written.

There are many who will not know what we are talking about. They are too immature to put on armor yet. They still carry their bottle of milk. And then there are others who are so defeated in their Christian life that they do not know about the wrestling with the powers of darkness. Even in the dispensation of the mystery there are those who walk as enemies of the cross, who even tho they be believers, walk in the broad way that leads to the destruction of all their works. They are saved as by fire. But what a sorry end!

PERFECTION OR PERDITION

In each family of God, there is the choice of the believer as to whether he will go on to perfection, or draw back to perdition. Perfection has to do with going on to a full end and reaching the goal. Perdition may mean anything from waste (M't 26:7,8), to complete destruction as of the man of sin. These must be kept in mind. Perdition, when used of the believer, means primarily the loss of reward. The man with the one talent shows this. Also the judgment of believers in 1Co 3:12-15 shows how that one's works may be burned up. He suffers loss, but is not lost; saved as by fire.

1. *The Kingdom Family.* In M't 5:48 the believer is urged to go on to perfection, to be perfect even as the Father in heaven is perfect. This is a pretty big order. But that is the goal. In 7:13 the word perdition is destruction. Note that in the kingdom family, most of them suffer loss. They travel in the broad way that leads to a destruction of their building material at the testing. The disciples are urged to stay clear of the broad way and take the narrow one that leads to life or reward. Israel suffered loss at Kadesh Barnea. King Saul was a loser when he turned to the mind of the flesh. Esau was a loser when he despised his birthright. The reader can think of other examples. This study should be pursued.

2. *The Holy City Family.* The book of Hebrews was written to those who are to be blessed in the New Jerusalem which comes down from heaven. In Heb 6:1 the believer is urged to go on to perfection. There are certain things to be left behind. There are certain things which they are not to do. And then in 10:39 it speaks of those who draw back unto perdition. And back in chapter 6 it is clear that those who have tasted the powers of the age to come and then draw back, that there is no repentance for them. Esau is given as an example. So failure to go on to a victorious end or goal will result in ending up in failure, loss, perdition.

3. *The Family in the Heavens.* In the dispensation of the mystery we find the same principle in effect. Some have gotten such a high and mighty idea of the mystery that they have fallen into the error of believing that the members are perfect and cannot sin. This is a dangerous position. One can suffer a terrific loss in this dispensation too. In Ph'p 3:12 we see that at that time Paul was not sure that he had attained unto perfection, that he had reached the goal. He was pretty sure of it when he wrote his last epistle. He tells Timothy to lay hold on the reward, eternal life (1Ti 6:12). In Ph'p 3:18,19 we see those whose end is perdition (loss). They have minded the things of the flesh (old nature) and not the things of the spirit (new nature). And the last verse in Col 3 also tells us that believers will receive for the wrong they have done. Our liberty is not license. We have great responsibility to work out our salvation with fear and trembling (Ph'p 2:12). We should run for a prize, strive for a crown, and shun failure or loss. Which will it be for you, perfection or perdition?

THE QUESTION OF DEITY

THE APOSTOLIC MINISTRY #1

W. J. MCKEOUGH

When Peter confessed the deity of Christ (Mt 16:17), he was immediately informed that he had not learned it from human teachers or by any fleshly perception, but by a revelation from the Father. The deity of Christ is a foundational doctrinal fact that is not dispensational, but truth for all time. It can only be known and confessed by a favored few.

Thomas not only admitted His deity (Lord), but also called Him God (Joh 20:28). In this connection please note that Lord is *Kurios* in the Greek and was substituted 134 times in the OT for the word Jehovah. It was understood to mean deity and was claimed by Roman emperors. That is why early Christians would rather suffer death by torture than to call the emperor Lord.

Paul immediately recognized the Lord's deity on the Damascus road and addressed Him as Lord. Later, in Ac 20:28, Paul tells us that God bought His church with His own blood. In spite of all the attacks on this verse in past centuries it still stands as written. Our Lord spoke from heaven thru Luke and said that of Himself. Who dares to deny it?

John the Baptist came to prepare the way for Israel's God (Isa 40:3). Did he ever deny the deity of Christ?

In Ro 10:9,10 Paul made it clear that if Israel would only confess Jesus as Lord, confess His deity, and believe that God had raised Him from the dead, they would be preserved as a nation. But Israel refused and Titus came, killed millions of them, and ruined Jerusalem.

And now somebody may ask if it is true that if just anybody will confess the deity of Christ, they will be saved. Demons, who knew Him from of old, confessed His deity without hesitation or question. But that did not change their status before God. And there is another angle to this question. We are told in 1Co 12:3 that no man can confess the deity of Christ except by and thru the new nature which God puts in the believer. Again we can see that it is not revealed by flesh and blood. This also reveals to us the status before God of those who deny the deity of Christ. They are none of His (Ro 8:9). And it is true that a great segment of Christendom today denies the deity of Christ. Such have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. They are still children of the darkness, taken in by the wiles of the devil.

Spiritual things are not seen by the flesh (the old nature which comes from Adam). Only the spiritual man can see them (1Co 2:14). The Pharisees were not spiritual, so they denied the deity of Christ. It naturally followed that they should also deny His resurrection. They could not own Him as Savior, hence they had no claims on salvation. They were lost. But they still tried to claim salvation some other way, by virtue of being children of Abraham. They thought they could honor the Father without giving honor to the Son. But the Son is to receive equal honor with the Father (Joh 5:23). And there is no access to the Father except by the Son, for He said, NO MAN COMETH UNTO THE FATHER, BUT BY ME. See Tit 1:3; 2:10,13; 3:4,6.

Simon Peter, a Servant. COME, AND I WILL MAKE YOU FISHERS OF MEN! Peter never regretted that summons. His first venture was in territorial waters. YE MEN OF JUDAEA, AND ALL YE THAT DWELL AT JERUSALEM... HEARKEN TO MY WORDS. He did not have to find his fish. Pentecost had brot a great shoal of them to the very door of his house.

How the conception ever arose that Peter was addressing Gentiles and starting an Ecumenical church can only be ascribed to the wisdom and subtlety of the great adversary of mankind. The vast crowd being addressed on that day, were YE MEN OF ISRAEL (Ac 2:22). He reminds his hearers of JESUS OF NAZARETH. A MAN APPROVED OF GOD AMONG YOU BY MIRACLES AND WONDERS AND SIGNS, WHICH GOD DID BY HIM IN THE MIDST OF YOU. None of those who heard could contradict this, for Him, Whom they had crucified and sealed up in a tomb of rock, was now preaching from heaven itself thru the apostolic band, and with greater power and stronger signs and miracles than ever before. No wonder WHEN THEY HEARD THIS, THEY WERE PRICKED IN THEIR HEART AND SAID UNTO PETER AND TO THE REST OF THE APOSTLES, 'MEN AND BRETHREN, WHAT SHALL WE DO?'

In the parable of the sower, Jesus said of the seed sown: SOME BROUGHT FORTH AN HUNDREDFOLD, SOME SIXTYFOLD, AND SOME THIRTYFOLD. Not all were persuaded, but the three thousand gathered into the church, demonstrated the power of the spoken word by Spirit filled men. Within a matter of days, this number had become five-thousand. Stephen, the first Christian martyr speaks of a church that was prior to the Pentecostal church, THE CHURCH IN THE WILDERNESS, that called-out company that looked forward to the coming of Messiah. The church formed thru the words of Peter were of the same company. The word GENTILE is not even mentioned in all these experiences. Jesus had said I AM NOT SENT, BUT UNTO THE LOST SHEEP OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL. Peter, loyal to his Master, and keeping to the terms of his commission, followed in his Master's steps. It is Peter that opened the door of the kingdom of heaven, as distinct from the kingdom of God, to Gentile believers! But it took a treble miracle at Joppa, with a miraculous repercussion at Caesarea to accomplish this, and Peter bluntly informs Cornelius, a man of rank and substance: YE KNOW HOW THAT IT IS AN UNLAWFUL THING FOR A MAN THAT IS A JEW TO KEEP COMPANY, OR COME UNTO ONE OF ANOTHER NATION. (Ac 10:28). The news of Peter's mission to the Gentile Cornelius quickly preceded the apostle's return, and he has to face his outraged brethren to explain why he has not only visited Cornelius, but actually ate and drank with him.

If the book of Acts had been written in the light of modern tradition, what a different story we would have had. Fortunately it was written under inspiration. In Acts the Jew came first. His was the birthright, and until the Jew has been converted, the nations must wait--or must they? The story gets more and more wonderful as we trace it out. There is more to come.

INTERROGATIONS

118. *In 2Th we read that when the Lord comes He will take vengeance on those that know not God. Does this mean that there will be a great slaughter of those who have never heard of or known God?*

No, this is not what this passage means as is evident from the fact that in M't 25 there are nations judged after His coming who do not know Him. Back in 1611 the word *know* could also mean *acknowledge*. The translators have taken knowledge of this. Rotherham speaks of these refusing to know God. But Weymouth says they are those who do not acknowledge God and who obey not the gospel. Then it must mean those who are apostate Jews, who refuse to acknowledge God, who receive the mark of the beast and worship the image. These then are the tares upon whom vengeance falls and they are burned up. Only these suffer the second death.

119. *Will there be Gentiles in the so-called rapture?*

Of the dead who are raised at that time there may be some who died as Gentile believers during Acts 10-28 and who will take part in the resurrection at that time. But there is no indication that any Gentile believers will be living at that time. The experiment of grafting in Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy has long since been past and there is no reason to believe that it will be repeated in the days to come. At that time the times of the Gentiles will be over and God will be again dealing with Israel as a nation. If any Gentile would want to partake of the hope of Israel then, he would have to become a Jew as was the law before Acts 10, where Peter opened the door of the kingdom to Gentiles for the first time.

120. *The Bible says that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Does this mean that little children and unborn babes have sinned?*

Here is another text that is almost universally pulled out of context and made to mean what it does not mean. The believers of the church in Rome are the subject and to whom the apostle is speaking. These believers are made up of both Jews and Gentiles. So what is meant is that all the Jewish and Gentile believers alike of that church had sinned and come short of the glory of God, that is, had missed the mark. An unbeliever could not be in this, for he has not yet shot at the mark, so how could he miss? Not all have sinned, but all die.

121. *Just why don't you believe that the mystery began in Acts 13?*

I don't for the simple reason that there is nothing recorded there that had been hid in God from ages and generations. Also what was done in Acts 13 was first begun by Peter in Acts 10. It was no secret that Gentiles would be blest along with Israel. That is made plain in Romans 11. No one today partakes of Israel's blessings as Gentiles did in Ro 15:27. There is nothing in the Acts period about Christ having an inheritance in the holiest of all and our being partakers of that inheritance. Search and see.

THE QUICK AND THE DEAD #49

DENTON C. ABBEY

As a modern proverb would have it, *There are two kinds of pedestrians, the quick and the dead*. Whether this be true or not I must admit that there are more than two meanings to the *Quick and the Dead*.

I have refrained from mentioning this as I have been trying to contrast the living and the dead. These I have called either the quick or the dead without reservation. However, I do want to utilize this article admitting that there is more than one classification in this category.

The *Quick and the Dead* can be used to denote the living (quick) in contrast to those who are dead. Also it can be used to refer to those who have been *quicken*ed in Christ, in contrast to those who are lost. And in the third category, we can say, those who have been or will be resurrected are *quicken*ed in contrast to those who are perished.

In my articles I have used *quick* to represent those who have life without explanation as to which life. This may have been a bit confusing at times, but appeared less bothersome than trying to explain the usage each time. My concern was that regardless of the life one had, the end was death, whether temporary or eternal. Just as we are given life at birth, so do we lose it at death. And even tho we be quickened in Christ, we still must go thru death just as He did. Our Adamic nature has reaped corruption by means of the flesh, and so must die. And even tho we have been endowed with the new nature, the old one is still with us and must go.

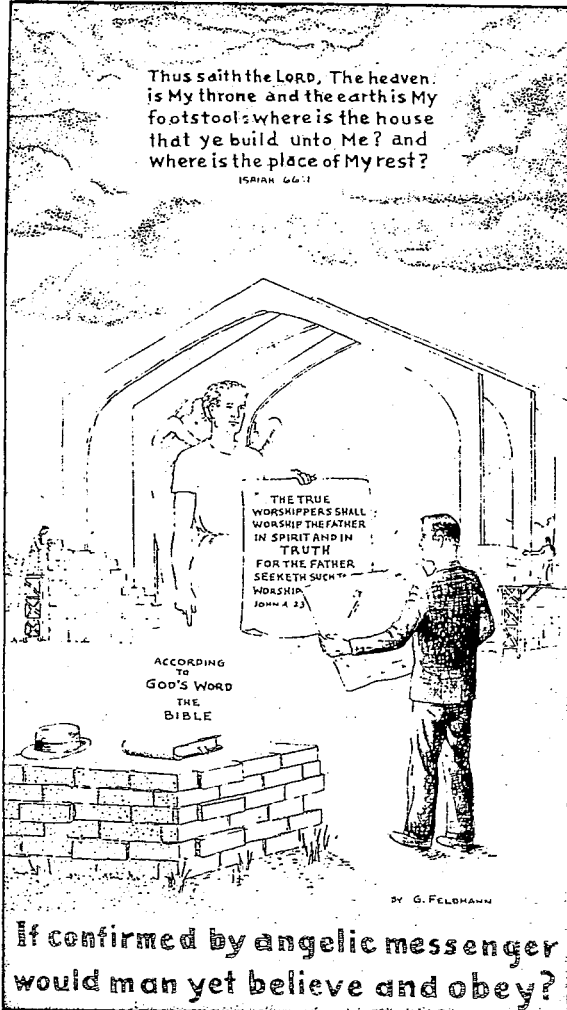
But fearing that some of you might feel that I had used the term loosely at times, I wanted to take this occasion to give some explanation. Usually I have used it to denote the present day living, or the quick versus the dead. But several times I have used it as a future condition. Here it might better have been *quicken*ed. For instance, in Art. 47 I ended by saying, *Will you be amongst the quick or will you remain among the dead?* These are people who have been quickened in resurrection. But in contrast to those who were quickened there could be those who were not, and so remain dead; not spirits separated from God, as so many believe.

These terms and usages present a small problem, but should not bother us too much. We find this same question raised in Eph 2. In verse 1, AND YOU HATH HE QUICKENED... Here you are already quick (alive) but now you are quickened. But to further complicate our thinking, in verse 6 it states that we have been raised. But somehow all my Christian friends seem to be around me as usual, so I doubt that they have been raised. However, in God's sight, I must assume that this is an accomplished fact.

And so it is in some respects with the *Quick and the Dead*. Even as we have two groups of the dead--sleeping and perished--so do we have the quick--those who are alive, those who have been quickened in Christ, and those who will be quickened in the resurrection.

But the important thing is that you be aware of your classification. Where do you fit in?

THE EDITOR'S DESK



THE TRUE WORSHIP

Man's worship has always been too much of the flesh. Primarily his worship is to please himself, rather than some god he may adore. The great temples of ancient Babylon, Egypt, Greece and Rome show what work man will perform to worship gods of his own workmanship or of his imagination. And the temples and cathedrals today still show the same tendencies. True spiritual worship is rather a scarce commodity.

We have a God who is limited neither by time, space, nor matter. The earth and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him. But in the wilderness He did condescend to dwell in a tabernacle in the midst of His people. Later He dwelt in a temple in Jerusalem. These were designated as places of worship.

But no other place has ever been designated as these two have. Today we have no such directions. The only direction we have is to worship God in spirit and in truth. The place has no part in it.

It is well that we examine ourselves in such matters. The flesh, the old nature is very deceitful in these things.

In appreciation of the great work of C. H. Welch of England, friends in this hemisphere are gathering together a fund to pay for the publishing of Vol. 10 of The Alphabetical Analysis. The cost is from \$2700 to \$3000. Already over \$2400 has been raised. Checks are being made out to Truth For Today, Inc., but sent to Mr. C. V. Duff, 2911 Antelo View Dr., Los Angeles 24, Calif. We mention this so that all may know and no one feel left out of it.

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