

## STUDIES IN EPHESIANS #121

6:14-17

STAND THEREFORE, HAVING YOUR LOINS GIRT ABOUT WITH TRUTH, AND HAVING ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS; AND YOUR FEET SHOD WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; ABOVE ALL, TAKING THE SHIELD OF FAITH, WHEREWITH YE SHALL BE ABLE TO QUENCH ALL THE FIERY DARTS OF THE WICKED. AND TAKE THE HELMET OF SALVATION, AND THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD.

As far back as the time of Jerome, it has been understood that putting on the whole armor of God is equivalent to putting on Christ. In Romans 13:12 the apostle exhorts them to cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light. Then in verse 14 he goes on to say, BUT PUT YE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND MAKE NO PROVISION FOR THE FLESH, TO FULFILL THE LUSTS THEREOF. And he tells the Galatians that as many of them as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ (Ga 3:27).

You will note that there are 6 pieces of this armor. Some have felt that this is not the perfect number, and so have added ALL PRAYER in the next verse. In fact we read in Pilgrim's Progress that Christian was forced to put up his sword and betake himself to another weapon, all-prayer. But we feel that the prayer referred to is in another subject.

But we do have the perfect number, when we resort to outline;

## I. Christ

1. Girdle of truth.
2. Breastplate of righteousness.
3. Shoes of peace.
4. Shield of faith.
5. Helmet of salvation.
6. Sword of the Spirit (Word of God).

Christ is the truth personified. He was made unto us righteousness. He is our peace. Let us not forget that it was by His faith that all these things have been made possible for us. And finally He is our Salvation. In these days we learn that at the end of Acts the Salvation of God was sent to us Gentiles.

We have already learned that the conflict is not over and about salvation. It is in connection with the prize, the reward or crown. We are to beware that we let no man beguile us of our reward. We are to have the armor to withstand the wiles of the devil.

But some say that the most important thing is to be saved, and that it matters not about the reward. Beware lest we despise the prize! Esau despised his birthright and was called a profane person. There are those who would like to have all the blessings, but none of the responsibility. Such hide their talent in the ground and live as they please.

Stand. There is no turning and fleeing. Such would be foolhardly, for there is no armor for the back. And when we have worked out our salvation with fear and trembling we are to still stand. There is nothing about fighting, that is, starting an offensive. It is just to stand on the ground that has been bought for us by our Lord and Savior, the Captain of our salvation. So let us put on the whole armor and stand.

## THE MYSTERY - WHAT IS IT?

## I. All Spiritual Blessings (Eph 1:3).

This is not the first mention of spiritual blessings by any means, but it is the first time that anybody is said to have all spiritual blessings in any sphere. Israel had spiritual blessings and the Gentile could partake of them (Ro 15:27). But when the promises were made to the fathers, they included material blessings as well as the spiritual ones. But in the dispensation of the mystery we are not promised material blessings. Our affection is to be on things above, not on things on the earth. But we do know that our spiritual blessings in the heavens are reflected to the earth and the life we now live in the flesh.

## II. In Heavenly Places (Eph 1:3).

This is the first mention of spiritual blessings in such a sphere. All peoples before the dispensation of the mystery were earth people, that is, they had the expectation of spending their resurrection life on the earth. Read the Word from Genesis to Ephesians and you will not find anything about people going to heaven in resurrection till you get to this first chapter of Ephesians.

## III. Before the Foundation (Eph 1:4).

The kingdom was prepared from the foundation of the world (M't 25:34). All the earth program is said to be from or since the overthrow or foundation. But before the foundation is used only of Christ or the church of the dispensation of the mystery.

## IV. Seated Together (Eph 2:6).

The apostles were promised thrones in the kingdom from which they would rule the 12 tribes in worldwide missionary effort. And in the Revelation overcomers were promised that they might sit in the Lord's throne with Him even as He is sitting in the Father's. But all these are future and will be on the earth. But in the dispensation of the mystery God has made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. It is our present position and possession even though we have to wait till resurrection for its reality.

## V. The Both Made One (Eph 2:14).

From Acts 10 to 28 the Jewish and Gentile believers in the churches were separate. The wall of partition was still up. The Jew had the advantage dispensationally in the flesh. It is true that there was a oneness in Christ, but in the flesh the Gentile was in an inferior position. But now both have been made one and as such reconciled in one body to God.

## VI. No Longer Foreigners (Eph 2:19).

Since the kingdom is now in abeyance and the Gentile believer has blessings and a citizenship of his own, he is no longer a foreigner, for he has no relationship to Israel in any form.

## VII. An Habitation of God (Eph 2:22).

God tabernacled among men in the wilderness, and dwelt with them in the temple, and again tabernacled among them in the flesh. Believers had been reminded that their bodies were temples of the Holy Ghost. But here for the first time we find believers growing into a temple of living stones for an habitation of God.

## THE CREED OF THE UNGODLY

## THE APOSTOLIC MINISTRY #2

W. J. MCKEOUGH

The following announcement was printed in the  
Los Angeles Times, Sat., Sept. 28, 1963.

ARE YOU A  
UNITARIAN or UNIVERSALIST  
*Without Knowing It?*

- \*DO YOU BELIEVE THAT RELIGIOUS TRUTH CANNOT BE CONTRARY TO TRUTH FROM ANY OTHER SOURCE?
- \*DO YOU BELIEVE MAN IS CAPABLE OF SELF-IMPROVEMENT AND IS NOT CONDEMNED BY ORIGINAL SIN?
- \*DO YOU BELIEVE THAT STRIVING TO LIVE A WHOLE-SOME LIFE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN ACCEPTING RELIGIOUS CREEDS?
- \*DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF BROTHERHOOD?

*Then you are professing UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST beliefs*

A Christian cannot read the above without a chill going over him. It is obvious that the whole thing strikes at the roots of Christianity, and all it means. Let us examine the 4 points:

I. A straw man is put up in the name of religious truth. There is no such thing. No religion has truth. The truth is in Christ Jesus. He is the way, the truth, and the life. But the implication is made that there is truth outside the Bible, and that maybe the Bible is not all truth. This is not said, but you can see the slant they put on it. They merely ape the one who said, YEA, HATH GOD SAID! (Ge 3:1).

II. The natural man is ever endeavoring to improve the flesh, the old man. He vainly hopes that the flesh can be improved till it can come into resurrection and spiritual blessings. But flesh and blood cannot inherit these things. The flesh, the old nature, is not subject to the law of God, neither can be. And one of God's greatest servants once confessed that in his flesh dwelt no good thing. So their second statement is an out and out denial of what God has said about man's condition. The implication is that man is as God (Ge 3:5). That is what the one who is a liar from the beginning said.

III. Again the straw man is put up to knock down. Be not deceived. Man is neither saved by living a wholesome life nor by accepting any religious creed. Neither one of these is the way of life. They try to sidestep the issue and blind folks to the way of salvation. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. God makes no if's or and's about it. You either accept the life that is in Christ as a gift, or you don't get it. The devil would like for everybody to be morally good. That would help build up his counterfeit pre-millennial kingdom.

IV. Again the issue is beclouded. The implication is that God is Father of all men and that all men are brothers. But the truth of the matter is that those who do not have the new nature within them are none of His (Ro 8:9). Then all cannot be the children of God. If I am a child of God, then one who is not, is not my brother. It is that simple. I do not claim the devil as my brother, nor any of his children, for that matter. But some may do so.

These words are to warn some of the snare of the evil one. For others, it may be too late.

A Dilemma. The ministry of *The Twelve* apostles was sweeping like a prairie fire among the dry stubble that was Israel. Men like Stephen were brot in to help in the administration of the church and to assist in preaching and teaching as evangelists; *The Twelve* remained twelve, even as the tribes of Israel remained a constant number.

A great company of the priests believed the message of the resurrection, and the authorities had to take action. Even Herod was moved to intervene. Miracles, signs, and wonders were commonplace events. Perhaps the greatest of them was the conversion of Saul, the arch persecutor.

Even the very apostles needed a lot of convincing: AND WHEN SAUL WAS COME TO JERUSALEM, HE ESSAYED TO JOIN HIMSELF TO THE DISCIPLES: BUT THEY WERE ALL AFRAID OF HIM, AND BELIEVED NOT THAT HE WAS A DISCIPLE (Ac 9:26). Saul was problem No. 1 to the early church, and remains so to this very day.

Was Peter the head of the church at Jerusalem, or was it James, the Lord's brother? It is not a matter of importance to us, but undeniably Peter possessed the *Keys* of the kingdom (M't 16:16-19). Peter nearly lost those keys in the palace of the high priest, but they were confirmed to him on the day of Pentecost; hence it was Peter, and not Paul, who opened the door of the kingdom to the Gentiles; but it was to Paul, and not to Peter, to whom the gospel of the Gentiles was given. This formed the subject of the first Christian conference held at Jerusalem.

But the Lord, Who as Jesus, had called Peter away from his boats, is the same Lord Who called Saul, I HAVE APPEARED UNTO THEE FOR THIS PURPOSE, TO MAKE THEE A WITNESS BOTH OF THOSE THINGS IN THE WHICH THOU HAST SEEN, AND OF THOSE THINGS IN THE WHICH I WILL APPEAR UNTO THEE (Ac 26:13-18). THOSE THINGS WHICH THOU HAST SEEN formed the unanimous witness of the Twelve and of the one apostle. Subsequent events show that Paul did not get all his revelation in one package.

Peter and Paul are the highest expression of Christian concord between two diametrically opposite men. The diameter of Peter's circle of influence ran thru Judaea; that of Paul ran thru Asia and concluded at Rome. The Spirit of God always calls the right man and equips and fits him for the right office. The statesmanship of James is seen as he becomes spokesman for the church. Having pointed out that Simon had first moved in admitting Gentiles into fellowship of the church, he declares in Ac 15: 16 the hope of the church to be the return of the Lord TO BUILD AGAIN THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID, WHICH IS FALLEN DOWN; AND I WILL BUILD AGAIN THE RUINS THEREOF, AND I WILL SET IT UP. Can this be said to be the hope of the church today? He continues, IT SEEMED GOOD TO THE HOLY GHOST AND TO US (v. 28). So the ministry of the two apostles is confirmed; Peter to the circumcision, Paul to the uncircumcision. Those who urge a return to Pentecost should think this over.

## INTERROGATIONS

122. *Is there a sin unto death today as is mentioned in Ro 6:16 and 1 Joh 5:16,17?*

No. Since there is no law today, and God deals with His people by grace, He does not demand the death penalty for breaking the law. In the above references the Jew was still under law and subject to its penalties. Ananias was subject to the law since he was a Jew, therefore judgment came upon him. Only Jews observed the passover, so that is why that Paul speaks of judgment coming upon some that partook of it unworthily (1Co 11:29,30). At that time the Gentile was under grace, could not partake of the passover, and so no judgment was on him. Right division is needed here.

123. *Do we have any record of when the Lord appeared to Paul in fulfillment of the promise in Ac 26:16?*

The time and place are not specified, but the gospel which Paul preached to the Galatian Gentiles came by revelation (Ga 1:11,12). So it was not included in those things which Paul had seen prior to his conversion on the Damascus road. It is evident then that the gospel of grace to the Gentiles which Paul preached during Acts 13-28 was that which the Lord revealed to him in fulfillment of His promise.

124. *Can one be saved today by being kind to the Jews as in M't 25:31-46?*

A careful reading of that passage will reveal the fact that it is first of all a kingdom message, as is indeed, all of Matthew. But this event comes at a special time, the great tribulation. At that time if any are kind to the believing Jews in their distress, there will be a reward. This, then is not for today.

125. *One account says that Saul killed himself, another says a man killed him, a third says the Lord slew him. Which is correct?*

Well, you have a good one there. And it is just possible that 2 of these could be right. Now in both 1Sa 31:4 and 1Ch 10:4 we are told that Saul committed suicide by falling on his own sword after his armor bearer refused to kill him upon request. But in 2Sa 1:2-16 we have an Amalekite who said that he killed Saul by request. It is evident that this is a lie and that he thought to get a reward for killing David's enemy. But it did not work out that way. Now we have the fact that Saul killed himself. But in 1Ch 10:13,14 we are told that the Lord slew Saul, the reason being that Saul had not obeyed the Lord and also had gone to one who had a familiar spirit for guidance. Now after Saul's disobedience, about 38 years before his death, the Lord sent an evil spirit upon him and finally it brot him to suicide. Thus it was that the Lord slew him. So two of the items are true.

126. *Should we keep the Sabbath today?*

The Sabbath was a part of the covenant which later became law. Now all the commandments but this one are repeated in exhortations to Christians today. And if it were still the law, it would be the Sabbath, and not Sunday. But in the dispensation of the mystery we are not to observe rituals and festivals (Col 2:16). But it might be a good health measure to rest.

## THINGS I NEVER KNEW #1

DENTON C. ABBEY

Leaving the Quick and the Dead, I would like to do some short subjects in my new series. People always seem to have problems and many with whom I have talked sooner or later discuss these I have in mind.

Scattered thru the Bible, are verses that seem to be contradictory, either in themselves or in conjunction with other verses, more widely scattered.

I will admit that some of these, seemingly defy interpretation, but many of them, as far as I am concerned, readily yield to a careful study and small doses of right division.

And so with your permission and the continued benevolence of the editor, I am going to do a series of subjects. I hope I can keep these as short as possible and yet cover the necessary ground.

One of those in question, is in John 5, the great chapter on resurrection. Our problem here, and the one that a great many have trouble with, including me, is the interpretation of verses 25 and 28. A few years ago I sat down and did a little research on these and tho my answer could be wrong it appears to be logical, is harmonious with the rest of Bible doctrine, and stands on Scriptural evidence. The verses in question are as follows.

VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, THE HOUR IS COMING, AND NOW IS, WHEN THE DEAD SHALL HEAR THE VOICE OF THE SON OF GOD; AND THEY THAT HEAR SHALL LIVE. (25)

MARVEL NOT AT THIS: FOR THE HOUR IS COMING, IN THE WHICH ALL THAT ARE IN THE GRAVES SHALL HEAR HIS VOICE, AND SHALL COME FORTH; THEY THAT HAVE DONE GOOD, UNTO THE RESURRECTION OF LIFE; AND THEY THAT HAVE DONE EVIL; UNTO THE RESURRECTION OF DAMNATION. (28,29)

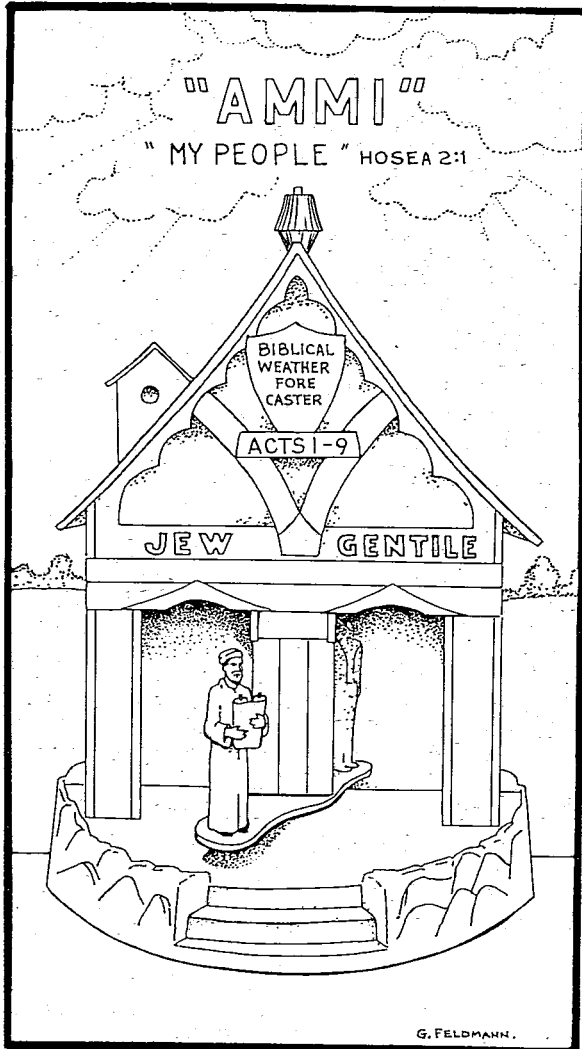
First, before we get technical, I would like to point out a few of the differences we have in these two verses. Differences, I might add, that tend to resolve our problems as we take a closer look.

In the first verse it says that the dead shall hear the voice of the Lord, and they that do hear shall live. Yet in verse 28, it states ALL THAT ARE IN THE GRAVES SHALL HEAR HIS VOICE AND COME FORTH. So here we have our ambiguity. THEY THAT HEAR...AND ALL SHALL HEAR. But note, the first group is promised *life*, and the second group *judgment*.

Now before we go any farther, I might inject this note. There are many who divide this into two resurrections, first a resurrection of the saved, and then a resurrection of the unsaved, putting the latter group over into Re 20:13. This seems to be a coherent and biblical doctrine. However, this approach is a little like saying the thief in the hen house is stealing. Maybe he is trying to catch the fox in order to collect the bounty! It will be necessary to first prove that those in Re 20:13 are lost.

We must not make the mistake of trying to prove something from mere assumptions.

My time is up and I didn't even get off the ground. We will continue this next month and see what we can learn from a few word studies.



### THREE DIVISIONS OF ACTS #1

Ac 1-9

Israel are still Ammi (My people). Why? Had they not crucified their Messiah?

Yes, but He had prayed, FATHER, FORGIVE THEM; FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO. And anything He asked of the Father was done. And He had a right to ask this, for there was a provision in the law for a sacrifice for one who had done a sin in ignorance. Peter recognized the fact that they had done it in ignorance (Ac 3:17). So this prayer by the Lord made the Acts of the apostles possible.

An examination of the first 9 chapters will reveal the fact that Peter opened the door of the kingdom to Jews only at Pentecost. And all during that period the gospel was to the Jew only (the Samaritans were not Gentiles).

A careful reading will reveal the fact that the tradition that Gentiles were in the church at Pentecost is entirely false. Gentiles and Jews did not mingle at that time, nor could a Gentile enter the temple, except into the court of the Gentiles. One of the highlights of this section is the defense of Stephen in chapter 7. Read it very carefully. No Gentiles there.

### THE EDITOR'S DESK

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Eph 1:15, 16 & 6:18, 19.

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