

Scriptural Truths

E-Mail Meditations

The Lord Will Come . . . Perhaps Today . . . Behold, I Come Quickly . . . Rev. 22:7

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Four Men

Readings

Genesis 12:1-4; 13:1, 5

Introduction

There are many folk who are unsure whither they are ready for Heaven or not. In the language of the New Testament, whither they are saved from hell for all eternity or not. Some wonder if they are part of the elect, others if they have committed some sin and have lost their salvation. Let it be clear from the start, an individual saved by 100 percent dependence on the sacrifice of the Lord, not depending on any works of their own and Christ, are saved. Salvation is total dependence on God's promise and the work of Christ at Calvary. God put the penalty of our sins on Christ. He suffered the judgment of God that was my due and offers me salvation as a free gift (Rom. 6:23) (Jerusalem Bible). From the moment the individual accepts Christ as the only way of salvation, depending exclusively on His finished work, they can be assured that they will eternally escape the caverns of the damned. The Lord informs the individual that no man can pluck them out of His hand and He is in the Father's hand (Jn. 10:28-29). Furthermore, since He knows all our sins, including the ones we will commit in our future, He assures us that the full penalty was put on Christ. In pondering this, we consider the lives of the first four major men of Genesis, Adam, Abel, Enoch, and Noah. These four men show the need of salvation, the way of salvation, and the results of salvation.

1) Adam

Through the man Adam God draws particular attention to two truths. First, we observe that the world is getting exceedingly corrupt whither it is government, local or corporate; whither it is business or social; whither it is individual or universal. Wickedness and immorality is abounding on every hand. How did all peoples of the world get this way? Man can change the name of some sins and make them seem less "sinful". Abortion is changed to "women's rights" etc., yet God makes it quite clear that sin is rebellion (lawlessness, 1 Jn. 3:4). Where did it all begin?

- a) God reveals that sin was brought into the world by Adam. Prior to Adam taking the forbidden fruit there was no such a thing as sin or death in the world. God could not make it more plain, "By one man sin entered into the world" (Rom. 5:12). Because we are all the children of Adam we partake of his "genes", one of which is "sin". We cannot help sinning, it is an automatic activity to lie; deceive ourselves; believe a lie rather than the truth; and provide a covering for our failures by good works. In Eden Adam made a deliberate decision in taking the fruit. He knew God had declared there would be a judgment called "death", but at that time Adam had no idea what "lest ye die" meant (Gen. 3:3). He had never seen or touched a dead body. However, he ought to have known that the results of disobedience to God would not be beneficial. Yet, he took of the fruit

and sin came into the world. Again, when Paul wrote to Roman saints he wrote, “Since by one man all under the headship of Adam (are the children of Adam), are marred by sin” (Rom. 5:12 paraphrased). Then a wonderful truth is brought into focus, “all who are under the Headship of Christ (are children of God), are made alive spiritually” (Rom. 5:15). Every human being, irrespective of church position; colour of skin; creed; culture; country or speech; is a sinner by birth and what one is by birth cannot be changed. I am Irish by birth and no matter what I do, I can never be a Canadian by birth. To be such I would have to die and then be born in Canada. That is what the Lord said to Nicodemus, “Ye must be born again” (Jn. 3:7).

2) Abel

It is almost impossible to think about Abel without thinking of the sacrifice he made which the Lord had respect to (Gen. 4:4). By offering the sacrifice of the animal Abel acknowledged two truths, God specified how to approach Him and by the offering Abel accepted his unworthiness to approach Him. Thank God the Lord Jesus made a far superior sacrifice, providing an escape from the judgment of God. Simply put, Christ changed places with each of us by suffering the eternal judgment of God deserved by us, and not only offering the escape from Hell, but enriching us to the place of sonship. The escape from the condemnation of Hell is what the scriptures mean by being saved.

3) Enoch

Enoch lived 65 years then something happened that changed his whole perspective. Not only was a son born (Gen. 5:21), but his name, Methuselah, meant “a duration of time”, but what did that mean? The name Methuselah means, “when he dies it will come to pass”. This begs the question, “what is the it?” The “it” was the judgment of God on humanity by the flood. There can be no doubt the days of Enoch were evil but in the 900 plus years from the birth of Methuselah until his death, the morals of the world had gotten a lot worse (Matt. 24:37-38). God in mercy held back the judgment of the flood for 969 years, so man had ample time to prepare for the coming judgment. Much as people today, God gives most of humanity 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70 years, sometimes even beyond those years to get right with God. God is not a hard being with a big stick waiting in excited anticipation to send people to hell. He is, with an enduring patience, waiting for every individual to accept His Son. The scriptures inform its readers, “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Pet. 3:9). No human being will ever be able to say, “God did not love me” or “God did not provide a way of escape for me”. Those who will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire are there by their own choice.

4) Noah

What a commendation this man has, “By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith” (Heb. 11:7). This man lived in a world which he knew was under the condemnation of God, in which the people knew not when judgment would fall. It would be catastrophic with the death of all living creatures on the land and air, and he preached of approaching judgment and the only way of escape (2 Pet. 2:5). Today we live in a world of humanity under the condemnation of God. How solemn are the words, “He /she that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (Jn. 3:18). Every unsaved person across the face of the earth is living with the dark thunderous cloud of God’s condemnation over them. There is no need to wait to see how they will fare. Like a condemned prisoner waiting in the cell, they are condemned already. Noah preached and worked proclaiming the gospel, preparing the way of salvation for the whosoever will. Out of the world of possibly millions of people, only eight were saved.

For Ones Consideration

Those words, “condemned already,” ought to be utterly terrifying to those who are unsaved. It is frightening to know that just as the unsaved individual had no sympathy for Christ, He will have no sympathy for them; just as they care not for His sufferings, God will have no care for their cries; just as they treat the proffered Salvation with indifference, so God will treat their cries with indifference. God, in grace, gives to all who hear the gospel and understand it, the opportunity to accept the free gift or reject it, to take God at His word and believe Him, or make God out to be a liar (1 Jn. 5:10) and they will get to heaven their way. The Scriptures teach, “There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Prov. 16:25).

Wise is the individual who casts aside, as a filthy garment, their good works, seeks deliverance from the fury of divine judgment, and responds in haste to the exhortation, “Flee from the wrath to come” (Matt. 3:7; Lk. 3:7). Wise is the

individual who avails themselves of the opportunity of receiving salvation before it is too late. The hymn writer has expressed it beautifully:

Oh come, sinner come, for why do you delay?
The pressing invitation is that you should come today;
Tomorrow has no promise that it can give to you,
Tomorrow is eternity, just hidden from your view.

Oh come, sinner come, accept the proffered grace,
For death may soon be calling you into its cold embrace;
The summer will be ended, the harvest will be past,
Your lamentation then will be, “My soul is lost at last.”

God says:

“O that they were wise, *that* they understood this, *that* they would consider their latter end!”
(Deut. 32:29).

Why not just as you are take the gift from the gracious God.

. . . Rowan Jennings

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