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DOES GOD SEND MEN TO HELL?

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS
NUMBER 126
HEBREWS 12:17

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This message was given to the Jews in 67 A.D. who were standing on the verge of national disaster. Before we study this verse in detail, let us get a corrected translation of verses 14-16.

Verse 14

"With all, royal family of God, keep moving toward the objective. Likewise, for you unbelievers, aspire to sanctification, without which no one will see the Lord."

Verse 15

"See to it (take personal responsibility for it) that no one falls back from the grace of God (relapse into reversionism) that not one root of bitterness sprout up causing trouble and through this relapse (chain sinning) many be contaminated."

Verse 16

(Now we move to the unbeliever again.) "That there be no fornicator (the spiritual type of fornication) or unhallowed (the unsaved type) like Esau, who himself sold his birthright for one meal."

HEBREWS 12:17 "For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." In verse 16 we saw that Esau rejected grace and now here in verse 17 we will see how Esau is rejected by grace. The rejector becomes the rejected. The word "for" comes from gar to show that the subject is being continued. "Ye know" is the present, active, indicative of isate. This is an attic form of oida and it refers to doctrine in the mind. It refers to confidence which comes from what you actually know. The word hoti is used after this verb of thinking and means "that". "Afterwards" is an adverb from metepeita and should be translated "even afterwards." This is a post mortem of verse 16. For one meal Esau sold his birthright and heritage. Next we have "even when he kept desiring" and this is a present, active, participle of thello. This is referring to what happened in the past and continued up to the time when Esau started crying. Esau became an unbelieving crybaby. The only thing worse than that is a crying drunk. "Esau kept desiring" is a temporal participle and should be translated "Even when he kept desiring." He had discovered that his inheritance would have amounted to millions and he actually sold out for one meal. Next we have an aorist, active infinitive of kleronomeno meaning "to inherit." He sold his inheritance but wanted it back and started screaming, "Bad deal!" He lost his rulership, power in the family, lost his cattle, lost everything. But now, since he is no longer hungry, he wanted the birthright back. "The blessing" comes from eulogia and this refers to the birthright, the inheritance, the heritage. "He was rejected" is the aorist, passive, indicative of apodikimazo and it means "to declare useless." (The aorist tense here is the culminative and it gives emphasis to the results.)

1. The entirety of this aorist tense covers all his reversionism.
2. This means that every rejection kept adding up until scar tissue brought a blackout into Esau's soul and he dropped into the deepest reversionism. His total negative volition opened up a

vacuum and Satan entered into him with his negative viewpoint. This is the kind of reversionism that only an unbeliever can have. When one says no to the gospel, in comes demon doctrine and this leads to religion and the rejection of Christ. (2 Thess. 2 is exactly the picture of this.) It is too late for the unbeliever to be saved, and we know he won't be saved in eternity. No one will be saved then. If one is not saved in time, he will not be saved in eternity.

3. Esau is a photo of the thousands of Jews who were in Jerusalem in 67 A.D. who would not listen to God's last call. So the writer is using Esau as the illustration and told the Jews in Jerusalem in 67 A.D. that they were just like Esau.

So this verse says, "For you know that afterwards even when he kept desiring to inherit the blessing, he was rejected." Here is the principle--You reject Christ in time and then he rejects you in eternity. This is the last talking point you have when you witness to the one who keeps saying, "No."

THE DOCTRINE OF THE LAST JUDGMENT

1. DEFINITION.

The last judgment is God's alternative to salvation. The judgment is the expression of the righteousness and justice from the essence of God. In the cross God found a way to keep his righteousness and justice from being contaminated and compromised. Propitiation is the way God did it. Christ on the cross bore our sins and that satisfied the righteousness and justice of God. But God must judge the unbeliever in eternity, and if he didn't do this, then he would compromise his righteousness and justice. The unbeliever says, "No" to the cross and then God says "No" to him in eternity. Therefore, if there is no last judgment, then there is no God. Everyone who rejects Christ as Saviour will be in the last judgment. This is the culminative judgment of history and there all unbelievers will be sentenced to the lake of fire forever, and it is called the second death. This is the only way God can maintain his righteousness and justice. The key to the character of God is not love, but righteousness and justice. God never compromises his character.

2. THE BASIC CATEGORIES OF THE HUMAN RACE ARE BASED UPON THE LAST JUDGMENT.

The human race is divided into two categories. John 3:36, saved and lost, believers and unbelievers. "The wrath of God abideth on him" simply means that God is true to his character. (Acts 4:12)

No one can be saved unless he comes to the cross in faith. The cross is the only place where the righteousness and justice of God is propitiated. If there is not a lake of fire, then no one has eternal life. You can't have saved ones unless you have lost ones. Both are halves of the whole of life. God's righteousness and justice will not tolerate sin. For the believer, the last judgment is another proof of eternal security. The hotter the fire, the more secure you are.

3. IN THE LAST JUDGMENT THE UNBELIEVER IS UNDER INDICTMENT.
This indictment is based on his failure to believe in Christ as Saviour. (John 3:18) Here we have judgment and not-judgment. John 16:9 tells us that it is the unbeliever who is under indictment. It says, "Concerning sin, because they believe not on me." Just one reason why people are at the judgment and that is, they fail to be propitiated by the cross. God's righteousness and justice will last forever and that's why hell will last forever. (Revelation 20:15)
Romans 8:1 says there is no judgment to them that are in Christ Jesus.
4. THE BELIEVER IN CHRIST IS NOT INVOLVED IN THE LAST JUDGMENT.
(Romans 8:1)
5. THE UNBELIEVER HAS TWO APPOINTMENTS WITH GOD.
His first appointment is with the sovereignty of God and the sovereignty of God decided when the unbeliever dies. So physical death is the first appointment. The second appointment is the judgment. (Hebrews 9:22-28)
6. THE SECOND APPOINTMENT OF JUDGMENT IS KEPT BY A SECOND RESURRECTION.
The first resurrection is for believers. The second resurrection is for unbelievers. (John 5:24-29)
Verse 29 says, "And shall come forth, those who did the intrinsic good thing (Believe in Christ) they come forth to the resurrection of life. Those who produced the worthless things to a resurrection of judgment."
Daniel 12:2 says there are two general resurrections.
7. THE RESURRECTED UNBELIEVER IS CONDEMNED AT THE LAST JUDGMENT ON THE BASIS OF HIS HUMAN GOOD.
No one is ever judged on the basis of his sins, because Christ paid for those sins on the cross. In Revelation 20 twice we have the words "According to his works." We have two books here, one is the book of life and the other is the book of works. Every human being in the world is listed in the book of life. All unbelievers will have their names erased from this book and at the end this will be the Lamb's Book of Life. The unbelievers are all listed in the book of works. No sins will ever be mentioned at the Last Judgment, only human works, human good.
8. THE ETERNAL STATUS OF THE UNBELIEVER IS THE LAKE OF FIRE.
(Matthew 25:41, Revelation 20:14-15, John 8:21 and 24)

So we have that phrase, "For you know that afterwards, even when he kept desiring to inherit the blessing, he was rejected."

The next phrase begins with "for" from gar and it is used here in an explanatory sense. "He found not" is the aorist, active, indicative of heurisko ouk. (You recall when Archimedes discovered the great secrets of truth tied up in natural laws he screamed, "eureka, eureka.") This is a constative aorist regarding the action in its

entirety. He had passed the point of no return. We translate this "He found not." Next we have "a place" and this is the accusative singular of topos and it means "opportunity." "Of repentance" is the genitive singular of metanoia and this means a complete mind reversal.

Let us get six points on "for he did not find an opportunity for repentance."

1. Perpetuation of negative volition toward the gospel pushes the unbeliever into the position of strong delusion.
2. Strong delusion means passing the point of no return.
3. It is the unbeliever involved in the blackout of the soul and scar tissue forms on the soul. This is how to pass the point of no return.
4. Esau is an illustration of a man who passes this point of no return. His photograph is this--He sold his birthright for one meal.
5. Like Esau eating one meal, the unbelieving Jew of 67 A.D., by eating one meal of Judaism could not find a place where he could change his mind about Christ.
6. Repentance or metanoia is the condition which immediately precedes or is coterminous with faith in Christ. One side of the coin is believe. This is the decision side of the coin. On the other side of the coin, we find that the information about Christ causes him to change his mind about Christ, but both sides of the coin go together. You can't have one without the other.

Next we have the word kaiper and it means "although." Next we have the aorist, active, participle of ekzeteo and it means "to search out, to seek." The main verb is "he was rejected." But the seeking comes before the rejection. The word autos is translated "it" and it refers to salvation. Meta dakru and it means "with tears." "Although having sought the same blessing with tears."

So the whole verse goes like this.

"For you know that afterwards when he kept desiring to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he did not find an opportunity for repentance although having sought the same blessing with tears."

THE DOCTRINE OF WEeping

Weeping does not necessarily mean that one has characteristics of weakness, neither does it mean one has characteristics of strength. It is the condition of the soul that determines the meaning of weeping.

1. DEFINITION.

Weeping, the emission of liquid from the tear ducts of the eyes, is an expression of the feeling of the soul. It is used to express sorrow, loneliness, emotional stimulation, happiness, frustration, and pain. In the Bible, weeping is found in all these instances. Weeping does not necessarily mean weakness. Weeping may be an illustration of nobility and strength, just as it was in the weeping of Jesus. Quite obviously, in this illustration with Esau, it was an expression of his sincerity and weakness. Quite often the weakest people rely on sincerity to augment weakness.

2. WEeping OFTEN IS AN IEXPRESSION OF REVERSIONISM.

This is true of our passage here in Hebrews 12:17. When the children of Israel were afraid to go into the land, after the twelve-man team had made a thorough reconnaissance of the land, they wept all night. They listened to the majority report then wept all night.

(Numbers 14:1-2) They made an abortive attempt to go into the land, but they were decisively whipped in battle, and they settled back in the desert for the next thirty-nine years. Weeping is an expression of reversionism when the soul gets involved in the rejection of God or God's plan.

3. WEeping IS OFTEN AN EXPRESSION AGAINST REVERSIONISM.

Paul wept when he saw the terrible reversionism of the people. (Phil. 3:18-19) They were "enemies of the cross." Paul wept over this kind of activity. These kind of people made emotion their god and dishonor their glory. This is a picture of noble weeping of a pastor over the reversionism of believers. Paul wept while he wrote, but once he got up to speak, he put weeping aside. The pulpit is no place for weeping.

4. WEeping COMES FROM REVERSE PROCESS REVERSIONISM.

This is the worst stage of reversionism. It is illustrated in James 5:1. Here a wealthy man is pictured as losing his wealth and is being set up to receive the sin unto death. This verse says, "Come now, you rich believer, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you." Wealth had corrupted this man and as he is about to lose his money, he weeps. Life and prosperity and happiness were all related to his money, and when he lost it, he fell apart and wept. So when you see a reversionist with all his money, don't envy him at all, because he is riding for a fall when his life is his money.

5. THE WEeping OF REGRET. (2 Samuel 14:23-24)

It is wonderful to get through the battle of life with no regrets. Absalom had been banished from the land by David. Absalom was really a chip off the old block. He was handsome like his father, David, and he was really the David Junior much more than Solomon. Absalom's sister, Tamar, was raped by her step-brother. Absalom went to David and said to him, "Dad, what are you going to do about this?" and his Father let him know that he wasn't going to do anything about it. Absalom stepped in and executed the step-brother, and for this David banished him from the kingdom. Absalom was gone for two years. One day Joab said to David, "David, you have banished your son Absalom, and he has been gone for two years. Why don't you bring him home?"

This incident of the raping of Tamar is found in 2 Samuel 13. When Absalom returned, David should have given him an audience and should have forgiven him. David let him return to his palace but gave him no audience and didn't see his face for two years. It was a partial pardon, and that was no pardon at all. David compromised his own understanding of grace. Those two years he went without seeing him were bitter years. He didn't operate on the principle of Col. 3:13.

2 Samuel 14:28 tells us that Absalom didn't see his father's face for two years. This was half forgiveness. Absalom was restored physically to Jerusalem but not really restored to his father. This will later on be the cause of great regret for David. He failed to forgive as Christ forgave, he failed to follow the principles of grace and he refused to see Absalom face to face. People today do the same, they say, "I'll forgive but I won't forget." This always leads to regret. Eventually Absalom led a revolt against his father and David had to escape from Jerusalem. David organized an army and he instructed his soldiers not to harm his son physically. When David was restored to Jerusalem, he waited in the tower over the gate for the soldiers to bring him word about the battle. (2 Sam. 18:33) Also 2 Samuel 19:1-4.

The army should have entered the city as a conquering army, but they had to slip back into the city as if they had been defeated. When he heard of the death of his son, there were many tears of regret. This turned out to be the bitterest experience of his life.

6. THE WEEPING OF DISASTER.

(1 Samuel 30:4)

David had his army in Ziklag. Ziklag had been burned out. As they saw the burned out conditions, they wept until they had no more power to weep. But David aroused them and they arose and recovered all that had been taken from them.

We see this same weeping in time of disaster in Psalm 42. The Jews were weeping because Sennacherib had come to destroy them. This is a picture of total helplessness.

7. THE WEEPING OF REVERSION RECOVERY.

(Psalm 30:5)

Weeping is temporary but it is turned into a celebration type happiness the next day. Weep for a short time, but get up and move on in recovery. Verse 11 gives the same idea, weeping turned to happiness.

8. THE WEEPING OF SOUR GRAPES.

(Ezra 3:11-13)

This was the scene of the dedication of the second temple. The band and choir gave the music and there was an elaborate dedication ceremony, but some of the "old timers" cried because the new temple wasn't as beautiful and as ornate as Solomon's Temple. Some shouted for joy and others wept for regret but the shouting was so loud it covered up the weeping and the enemy could not detect between the weeping and the shouting which group was the larger.

9. THE WEEPING OF DRUNKS IN NATIONAL DISASTER.

(Joel 1:5-6) A drunk can't cope with prosperity or adversity. There is nothing worse than a crying drunk.

10. THE WEEPING OF PATRIOTS IN NATIONAL DISASTER.

(Isaiah 22:3-4) A patriot is noble when he weeps for his country. This is a picture of noble weeping. We also see this in Jeremiah 9:1 and in Lamentation 1:16.