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WHY DYING IS BETTER THAN LIVING!
(or WHEN GREAT BELIEVERS DIE!)

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF HEBREWS
NUMBER 99
HEBREWS 11:13

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Hebrews 11:13

Death never separates a family of believers. When the Lord takes one of his own, he always has something better waiting for him. Death will strip a believer of all pettiness. This will be experienced by every person who has ever put his faith in Christ.

The Hebrews 11 List Experienced This

All these super grace believers in Hebrews 11 found death was a great experience because they died with doctrine resident in the soul. Death for the super grace believer is better than the best things we experience in the super grace life. If you die under super grace, the last paragraph in your super grace blessings is dying blessings. Dying is better than anything we can experience in life. Pleasuer, sex, fame, wealth all added together is not even to be compared with the glory of God's great provision for his people in death. Death is a great doorway.

Let Us Interview Abraham For A Moment

We say, "Abraham, what do you think of the amazing super grace blessings and prosperity God has given you?" Abraham answers, "It has been absolutely amazing. I have loved every minute of it." "Abraham, now that you are facing death, what do you think about it?" And he answers, "It will be even better than the best."

Reality The Key

The more real dying is, the more real living is and the more real living is the more real dying is. This is exactly what Hebrews 11:13 says. "These all" comes from the pronoun houtos. If you live in the high ground of super grace, you will die better. Notice it says, "These all" and the all refers to Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. The "All" from pantes refers to all these super grace believers in the family of Abraham. "Died" is the aorist, active, indicative of apothnesko and it means they were transferred from time to eternity. DEATH DID NOT SEPARATE THIS FAMILY. They were all moving in the same direction. This is a constative aorist and contains all that went into all their super grace living which prepared them all for this experience. (Illustration--Even old Jacob who had been named "Cheat" or "chiseler" pulled himself up on the bedpost and in his dying moment, gave illustrious prophetic messages concerning the future of Israel and then fell back on his bed and died. He had made it to the high ground. The old chiseler Jacob had finally made it to the high ground Israel.)

Life is a preparation for dying. If you seize and hold the high ground there will be no regrets. Dying will be better than living. We next read, "These all died in the faith according to the norm or standard of doctrine." We get this from kata pistis. It means according to the norm or standard of doctrine resident in the soul. Doctrine triumphed in their lives, and when doctrine triumphs in your life, then Jesus Christ triumphs in your life. When Jesus Christ triumphs in your life, it means you have reached the high ground of super grace living and you are occupied with the person of Christ. Doctrine and Christ go hand in hand in your life as you seize and hold the high ground.

Death (spiritual death) comes before life, and then life (physical life) comes before death (physical death). From the time of the cross until on the road to glory you prepare for death and then death comes after life for death should be better. Just as dessert comes after dinner and is better, so death comes after life and is better. God designed death to be better than life. Dying is better than living. (To die is gain). This comes about by having doctrine resident in the soul.

Illustration--

Suppose you knew that you had just four hours to live, would you have a period of regret and frustration or would you be relaxed and excited (I saw my father die and he was excited as if it were Christmas morning and he was waiting to open his presents.) I earnestly covet for every one of my sheep in this great congregation of Immanuel members that you have the greatest time of your life when you come to die.

Some of you have asked me where I get the term "super grace." This is a translation of James 4:6 where he says "more grace" and this means "super grace."

- a. The moment we are born we start living under living grace.
- b. The moment we are born again we start living under saving grace.
- c. Once we learn doctrine and start living by the Word we are under super grace.
- d. When we die we are under dying grace.
- e. When we pass into eternity we start living under surpassing grace

Super grace is important for many reasons.

1. Super grace opens the door so you can have maximum blessings in your life.
2. Super grace means a variety of blessings for different people. For some believers, it means great wealth. For others, it means limited prosperity. For some, it means great sexual prosperity, or social prosperity or leadership dynamics. The temporal blessings vary but you always have exactly the blessings that the Lord knows you should have. There is something that all believers share in common and that is occupation with the person of Christ. Occupation with Christ is the possession of all those who reach spiritual maturity.

Dying Better Than Living

Every super grace believer of all time will experience that dying is better than living. Dying blessings surpass any blessings we may receive while we live. This is the way we make the transfer from living to dying from time to eternity.

A Contrast

Dying for the reversionistic believer is a horrible experience. Dying for the super grace believer is greater than any experience he or she has ever had in life. Your attitude toward doctrine determines the way you will go out.

Thus far, in this verse, we have, "According to doctrine resident in the soul, they all died under dying grace." Next we have "not having received" and this is the aorist, middle participle of komizo. This is a constative aorist and it contemplates the verb in its entirety.

As long as they were in time, they could not receive these things, but once they moved into eternity, they received them. In order to be able to receive these fantastic blessings, one must be in a resurrection body and must have the old sin nature stripped away and must have all human good burned up. In this changed state, we will have capacity for these surpassing grace blessings. Next we have the accusative plural of epaggelia. We have no capacity for all these things in time, but we will have capacity for them in eternity. So this phrase says, "Not having yet received these surpassing grace blessings." Next we have the word "but" from alla. Next we have an aorist, active participle of horao meaning "Having seen clearly." This we are able to do from the knowledge of doctrine. Knowledge of doctrine opens the eyes so we can see the coming blessings. Abraham actually saw some blessings that were yet coming that were far greater than anything he had. This is a cluminative aorist and looks at the final results. Through doctrine he looked forward and saw these things. Next we have an intensive pronoun autos meaning "the same blessings." The adverb porrothen means "from afar off." This refers to the unseeable future. The phrase "and was persuaded of them" is not in the original. The next phrase "And embraced them" is from aspazomai and it means to salute and embrace. We salute at the beginning of dying grace and we embrace at the beginning of surpassing grace. As we die, we salute, and as we pass over, we then embrace.

A Great Acknowledgement

This word translated "confess" is from homo logeo and means to recognize, to acknowledge. This is an aorist, active, participle and it is a dramatic aorist. Next we have hoti and it means here are some who thought differently. "That they were those who thought differently and were transients (the passing through type) on the earth."

THE DOCTRINE OF DYING GRACE

Some several months ago we looked briefly at dying grace, but here we are going to give the whole fourteen points on dying grace.

1. CHRISTIAN DEATH.

Christian death is described as "absent from the body and face to face with the Lord." (2 Cor. 5:8)

REVELATION 21:4 "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

1 PETER 1:4-5 "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

In John 14, Jesus told the disciples that he was going away so he could prepare a place for them.

Categories of Death in the Bible

a. Spiritual death.

We are born spiritually dead with an old sin nature. We got this old sin nature from Adam (as in Adam all die). Every person who has ever been born since Adam (except Jesus Christ) was born with an old sin nature.

- b. Physical Death.
This is when the human soul and the human spirit leave the body and go into the presence of God. The real you is your soul and your spirit. Death is official when the soul and the spirit leave the body. (Matt. 8:22, Rom. 8:38-39, 2 Cor. 5:1-8, Phil. 1:21)
 - c. The second death.
This is the death to be experienced by all fallen angels and all unbelievers. The unbelievers are brought up before the great white judgment throne and sentenced to hell on the basis of their human works. They are brought up under what is called "The second resurrection." They are judged by Jesus Christ. (John 3:18 marks the division.) This is called the "Second death" in Revelation 20:12-15.
 - d. Operational death.
This is the believer who fails to produce any divine good. (James 2:26)
 - e. Positional death.
This is the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer. The believer moves back to the cross and is identified with Christ in his death. He is also identified with Christ seated at the right hand of God the Father. When Christ died, we died (positionally).
 - f. Temporal death.
This is the believer out of fellowship because of unconfessed personal sins.
 - g. Sexual death.
We have just recently studied this in connection with the life of Abraham and Sarah.
2. LOOK AT COMMENTS THE BIBLE MAKES ABOUT PHYSICAL DEATH IN GENERAL.
- a. Death is associated with ending a revolution. (Num. 16:25-31)
 - b. Death is a matter of the sovereignty of God based upon his perfect character. God makes this sovereign decision based upon his omniscience. (Psalm 68:19-20)
 - c. Love is stronger than death. (Song of Solomon 8:6)
 - d. God can and does prolong life under certain conditions. (Psalm 102:19-20, 103:23-24, 118:18, Prov. 14:27)
 - e. Women must be taught the way to face death because a woman is a responder in her soul. (Jeremiah 9:20-25)
 - f. The sin unto death does not bring glory to God. (Isaiah 38:18)
 - g. Death cannot be faced properly when there is no divine viewpoint in the mind. (Lamentation 1:19-20) This person with no divine viewpoint is not capable of facing death.
 - h. To die is a promotion for the believer. (Phil. 1:21)
 - i. God provides dying grace. (Amos 5:8)
 - j. God delivers the believer under certain circumstances from death. (Job 5:20, Psalm 33:19, 56:13, 106:8)
3. THE DEFINITION OF DYING GRACE.
- a. Dying grace is God's provision for a mature super grace believer.
 - b. It is God's means of transferring the super grace believer from time into eternity.

- c. Therefore, dying grace is the experience of physical death under special blessings. The special provision of grace, whereby, dying is greater than living. Please remember that this has been said in your ears--for the super grace believer dying will be far better than living.
- d. No matter how much physical suffering or pain comes in physical dying, the maximum surpassing blessings erase it all and surplants it all.
4. DYING GRACE IS THE MISSING LINK.
 There is a relationship between the super grace blessings in life and the surpassing grace blessings in eternity. Dying grace is the transition. Dying grace is that missing link. Dying grace means that everything keeps improving as you go along.
ROMANS 5:20 "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:"
 This is the great golden drawbridge, an extension of the road to glory. Super grace is the best for time, dying grace is better, and surpassing grace is better than the best.
5. DYING GRACE IS FOR THE SUPER GRACE BELIEVER (Psalm 33:18-19)
 It says "Those who are occupied with him" not fear him.
6. DYING GRACE REMOVES FEAR FROM DEATH.
PSALM 23:4 "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."
 "Even though I walk through the valley of deep darkness of death I will fear no evil for you are with me."
 1 Cor. 15 says it takes the sting out of death.
7. DYING GRACE IS A SUPER GRACE BLESSING. (Psalm 116:15)
 "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Godly ones." These are the super grace believers. Dying grace is the last sentence in our super grace paragraph.
8. DYING GRACE IS THE BRIDGE BETWEEN SUPER GRACE BLESSINGS AND SURPASSING GRACE PROVISION. (Heb. 11:13, 2 Tim. 4:7-8)
9. THE NOBELEST TYPE OF DYING.
 Seizing and holding the high ground is definitely related to the doctrine of divine decrees which God made in eternity past about you. He knew about us and our needs and he designed some paragraphs about us. The paragraphs show that he is to give us maximum blessings in time and maximum blessings in eternity. Dying is the highest blessing of super grace. Dying grace is the golden drawbridge that links super grace and surpassing grace. This is exactly what Phil. 3:12-14 says.
 "Not that I have before now received permanent super grace status, nor have I before now reached the objective (seizing and holding the high ground) now I keep on pressing (positive volition toward doctrine) that also I might seize and hold the high ground on account of which high ground I was also seized and held by Christ Jesus."

Verse 13

"Members of the royal family of God, I evaluate myself as not yet having seized and held the high ground, but one thing on which I concentrate, forgetting that which lies behind (failure) and pressing forth to what lies before (super grace, dying grace and surpassing grace)."

Verse 14

"I keep advancing to the objective for the purpose of reward belonging to the upward station from the God in Christ Jesus."

10. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUPER GRACE AND SURPASSING GRACE IS FOUND IN DYING GRACE.

Super grace is linked to surpassing grace not by living, but by dying. You can't get to God but by dying. You can't get to live where God lives except by the death road.

We live to get to super grace.

We die to get to surpassing grace.

This is exactly what Hebrews 11:13 says, "According to the doctrine resident in the soul, all these died under the principle of dying grace, not having received surpassing grace promises, but having seen the same from a distance and having saluted and embraced them also having acknowledged that they were strangers and the passing-through type on the earth.

11. EXCEPTIONS TO DYING GRACE.

a. There is a disciplinary exception and we call it the sin unto death. This is maximum misery and maximum discipline.

b. To make the transfer without dying like Enoch did. (Hebrews 11:5-6) "Enoch was transferred that he should not see death."

c. The third exception is the transfer generation which we call the rapture generation. (1 Thess. 4:16-17) All believers go together, there is no such thing as a partial rapture. (You might wish to add a fourth which was Elijah in the chariot of fire.)

12. THE BIBLE'S BEST DESCRIPTION OF DYING GRACE. (Job 5:19-27)

God has found a way to deliver us from every disaster in life.

Verse 19--Delivers us from every kind of trouble.

Verses 20 and 21--Economic disaster--Military disaster--Social disaster--and dying disaster.

Verse 22-- You can laugh at violent death (shodh). Not be afraid of violent death when it comes.

Verse 23-- No weapon can destroy you until your time comes.

Verse 24-- From knowing doctrine you will know what is going on. You will visit your home destination and finally have no old sin nature.

Verse 25-- Many others have this same experience. Death does not change the course of world history.

NO ONE CAN GO WITH YOU. (In India they tried to make others go and they burned wives with their husbands when they died.) BUT THE LORD JESUS CHRIST GOES WITH YOU OVER THE GOLDEN DRAWBRIDGE. "Even though I walk through the darkness of death."

Verse 26--You will come to the grave in a full age. At the right time. GOD'S PLAN FOR YOUR DYING IS JUST AS PERFECT AS HIS PLAN FOR YOUR LIVING.

Verse 27--We have researched it and know that these are the facts.

13. DYING GRACE IS AN ADVANCE ON SUPER GRACE.

(Phil. 1:20-21)

"According to my intense concentration (seizing and holding) with confidence that in nothing shall I be disgraced. But in all confidence at all times even now Christ will be glorified in my person either through living or dying. For to me to live (living by super grace) Christ, and to die (dying grace) gain (better)."

14. DYING GRACE CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED IN SEVERAL WAYS.

- a. The normal way for a believer to go--maintain super grace until death and then cross over the bridge to surpassing grace.
- b. Go like Enoch did.
- c. As in the rapture, go at once from life into a resurrection body. Go to surpassing grace without going over the golden drawbridge.