

New birth

When I started reading the Bible, cover to cover, I quickly realised that some of the sermons I've heard, used scriptures which have nothing to do with the subject the minister was talking about??? To understand the verses properly one has to read at least the whole chapter. The most surprising to me has been what I've discovered in the so-called Apocrypha books. I have seen scriptures in the other books of the Bible that support these 'rejected books'. For example the book of 'Bel and the dragon' is all about Daniel, mention this book to some people and they smirk, "Dragons? ha, ha", but look at Job 41, verses 18-21 in particular, also Isa 30:6 talks about '*The viper and the fiery flying serpent*'. So Daniel could have killed the dragon that the people were worshipping.

Also regarding Bel, an idol, worshipped by the King and his people in Babylon. After Daniel proved to the King that this idol did not eat and drink, the King had the priests of Bel killed and gave the idol to Daniel to destroy. Hmmm! does that sound far fetched? Have a look at the following verse and remember Jeremiah was writing this before the children of Israel were taken off to Babylon.

*I will punish Bel in Babylon,
And I will bring out of his mouth what he has swallowed;
And the nations shall not stream to him anymore.
Yes, the wall of Babylon shall fall. (Jer 51:44)*

Also regarding: '*Yes, the wall of Babylon shall fall*', how about Dan 5:1-31?

The question is; Do we really believe what we are reading? or do we just believe what is credible to us?

I read John 3:18, but the first thing I notice is that it is only a piece of the conversation, and to read it on it's own, is where error can creep in.

Jesus is talking to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man was very familiar with the Laws of God. Have a look at Jer 31:31-34, I believe this is the key to understanding the reason for the New Testament and why Jesus Christ, the Son of God, had to die on the cross.

Jesus says in Joh 3:5;
"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water {natural birth} and the Spirit, {Born again} he cannot enter the kingdom of God."
Jesus states it again another way and says in Joh 3:6;
"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

We clearly have a body of flesh and a spirit. At the end of our lives, the bodies of flesh will die, but our spirits will not.

Jesus says in Joh 3:13;

"No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven."

Here Jesus says no one has ascended to heaven and He is from heaven. We know that it was He, the Son of God, The Word of God, who created everything in the Beginning. He came down to earth to become 'The Son of Man', born via Mary, the wife of Joseph.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (Joh 3:16)

Jesus was sent to redeem Man, who had been separated from God by sin.

Jesus is the perfect sacrifice for each one of us, to redeem us from sin, whilst we are living. All we have to do is believe in Him, work hand in hand with the Holy Spirit, towards improving our behaviour and improving ourselves. Working for the good fruits of the spirit, and not by satisfying our fleshly materialistic desires, which lead us into sin. We do this by reading the Word of God and obeying His commandments.

"If you love me, keep my commandments." (Joh 14:15)

Jesus came as 'Our Saviour' to redeem us, not to judge or condemn us, at this time. When He comes again, He will judge all, according to the status of their spirit, and the works they have done in their lives.

When people keep the laws of God they become dear to God, whether before or after Jesus came. Jesus said; *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (Joh 14:6)*

So we will not be saved from the second death {on Judgement day}, if we reject Jesus Christ as the son of God, while we are living.

Now if we look at Joh 3:18 *"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."*

If we, the New Covenant people, do not believe in Jesus, we cannot be saved, and if we die without Christ our spirits will wait in torment (hell) until Judgement day. So if one does not accept Jesus, they are 'condemned' because there is no second opportunity for salvation after one has died.

To put it another way if one wants to go to Durban via bus, you have to acquire a valid ticket. Even if you queue all day with the other passengers, it will do no good! When you get to the bus door, you will be rejected and not be allowed to get on the bus, because you have not acquired a valid ticket. Someone has to pay the price for the ticket to Durban.

Jesus has paid the price of sin for all with His life! No-one has to die for their sins. One only needs to confess who Jesus is, and ask Him to be the Lord of our lives. Repent of sin, and be baptised, to experience the new spiritual birth in Christ.

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