

THE GRACE OF GOD BRINGETH SALVATION

There is no doubt whatsoever that without the grace of God, man would be eternally doomed to the fires of hell. The apostle Paul stated, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9).

Many are they that readily throw this passage of scripture in the face of anyone that would suggest that one had to actually obey the commands of God in order to be saved. They point to this and say, "See, salvation is not of works, its only by the grace of God". There are a number of ways to show the fallacy of their belief, but we wish to zero in on just one aspect of the grace of God that by itself shows the need for one to do something in order to be saved.

Paul, the same author as wrote the book of Ephesians, told Titus, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:11-12). According to what Paul wrote here, this grace of God that bringeth salvation has appeared to **all men**. If one is saved by the grace of God alone, then **all men** would be saved. However, the Bible clearly shows that all men will not be saved (Matt. 7:21).

In addition to the "all men being saved" argument, we also note that the first two words of verse twelve is "**teaching us**". It is the grace of God that teaches us!. Now most will readily admit that when it comes to the doctrine of Christianity in general and how to be saved specifically, we are taught this by the word of God, specifically for Christianity, the gospel of Christ. Paul said, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:16-17). Notice the words, **doctrine, reproof, correction** and **instruction**. It is by the grace of God that He has provided for us His word that will teach us all that we need to know to get to heaven (I Tim. 4:16).

Finally, notice that which the text tells us that this grace given teaching will do. It will teach us that we must live "soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world". One simply cannot live righteously without being obedient to God's word. All of God's commandments are righteousness (Psalm 119:172)

Robert

WHAT TIME WILL IT BE WHEN THE LORD RETURNS?

Our question is not; when will the second coming of the Lord be? The answer to that question is we do not know! Oh, many have made their predictions for the second coming, and many of those dates have come and gone without the return of the Lord. Others of those dates are still future and have not proven themselves to be wrong. A number of years ago, a local storefront group posted a date for the second coming and it was just a few months in the future from the time they posted it. I talked with the preacher, (who claimed to be an apostle) but to no avail. In departing I told him that I would be back to see him on the day after the day he predicted the Lord's return. That day came and the next day I went to see him. He had left town.

When Jesus' apostles asked Him "what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world" (Matt. 24:3), His answer to them was, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matt. 24:36). At that time, even the Son of God didn't know when it would be. He said to them, "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up" (Matt. 24:42-43).

But, now to answer the question that makes up our title. As Jesus continued His answer to His apostles about the time of the Lord's return, He used the parable of the ten virgins. He spoke of the bridegroom coming and those that were ready entered in and the door was shut. "Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" (Matt. 25:10-13). At another time, one came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are" (Luke 13:23-25). What time will it be when the Lord returns? It will be **TOO LATE** to make things right if they are not already right. Right now you have time, but not then.

Robert