

Thursday Evening Bible Class. Translated Into The Kingdom

Colossians 1:13

17th November 2022

KJV ...Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

Diaglott translation: ...who delivered us from the dominion of darkness and changed us for the Kingdom of the Son of his love

Context

Paul in the context is telling the Ecclesia how he is praying for them and he praises and encourages them for the good spiritual fruits they are showing, in the way the ecclesia is growing and also at a personal level, in the good deeds that they are doing. He describes “living worthily” as pleasing God - by bearing fruit, growing in knowledge, and strengthened with power to display patience and steadfastness, and to joyfully give thanks.

To give thanks especially, that through this worthy living they will be qualified to share in the inheritance of the saints in light – and because they have been delivered from the power of darkness – that is ignorance and sin, and eternal death – and instead have been “*translated into the Kingdom of his dear son*” – possible because of redemption through the forgiveness of sins.

Questions

Now, what does this mean – to be translated into the Kingdom? Does this mean we are in the Kingdom now? Does this mean we are saved now? How are we translated into the Kingdom? Does this mean we are like Enoch who was also translated?

Does this mean we are in the Kingdom now?

No. Although those who have put on Christ, and who are forgiven for their sins, after diligent confession and repentance from their

sins, are citizens of the Heavenly City, as we discussed in a recent Bible class, they are members of a symbolic Kingdom, one that exists in principle, and in hearts and minds, but is not a Kingdom in actual reality. As strangers living in a strange land, - Hebrews, passers through, the saints – those to whom Paul writes, they are in the world but not of it. Hebrews 11: 13 – 16: *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.*

The Apostle here plainly says that upon death, these faithful received not the promise. This rules out going to heaven. Although Paul speaks of a heavenly city, he is referring to the heavenly state of things, a state of affairs which exist in heaven – perfection, free from sin, goodness, righteousness, and love.

The Kingdom of God once existed on earth, with David sitting on the throne of the Lord (1 Chronicles 29:23) ruling over God's people (1 Samuel 9:17) living in God's land (Joel 3:2)

But the Kingdom was dissolved. The throne was overturned, the people were dispersed, and the land was made desolate. The glory of the Lord departed as we have read recently in the prophecy of Ezekiel.

The Kingdom will be established on earth again in the future: 2 Samuel 7:13,16, Psalm 89:4, Isaiah 9:7, Luke 1:32-33.

It is therefore wrong for some to suggest that this passage means that those who are deemed worthy, are transferred to the Kingdom of God now, or in heaven after death. Clearly as the above passages

show the Kingdom of God is on earth. In verse 12 of this chapter to the Colossians, Paul speaks of the inheritance of the saints in light. To inherit something, means it is in the future, and not something we possess now. In James 2:5 [Believers are] ... *heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him*. It is a future possession.

Does this mean we are saved now?

No. It means we are being saved now. It is an ongoing process during our life time. There are those who state that once we have invited Jesus into our life, that we saved, and once saved always saved. But this is not true. Even in the context of this passage, Paul explains that it is for example, dependent upon the forgiveness of sins (verse 14). In 1 John 1:9: *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*. But we note the all important word IF. If we fail to acknowledge sin, and admit it then there can be no repentance. In Philippians 2:12 ...*work out your own salvation with fear and trembling*.. it is not something which is guaranteed in our lifetime, as Daniel 12: 2 makes clear. Paul in the context of this verse in question makes it very clear as well.

21 -23: And you that were ...enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled...to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: **IF** ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, ...

So how are we translated into the Kingdom then?

By comparing the KJV translation with the Diaglott translation, we can see hints that the KJV translation is not entirely accurate in this instance. The better rendering is translated FOR the Kingdom, or changed FOR the Kingdom – not into, but for.

This changes the sense of the passage. Instead of being a finished product – changed into, a completed process, the changing or translating is ongoing. It describes an ongoing preparation. Being changed for the Kingdom.

In context, the individual is changed from the power of darkness to the inheritance in light. It is a process which is ongoing, and is dependant upon certain conditions. Paul alludes to these in the context: verse 9: that you might be filled with the knowledge of his will... verse 10: that ye might walk worthy of the Lord. It is not definite, but dependant upon the fruits that he is speaking of in these verses.

However, in lieu of these fruits being produced, and a life being walked worthily, the state of the individual is changed. No longer in ignorance, the knowledge of the word of God has changed them. It has a power over them, and has an affect upon their conscience. This affects a transformation – or a translation. Knowledge brings responsibility. A choice to obey or disobey. A process of change is then commenced for one purpose only. The Kingdom of God.

Does this mean we are like Enoch who was also translated?

No. This use of the word translated occurs in Hebrews 11:5 *By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.*

This does not tell us that Enoch went to heaven of course, despite some so called christians telling us that it does! (see John 3:13) Instead it is just telling us that Enoch was changed so that he would not see death. It does not say that he did not die, but just that he would not be aware of it. Enoch must have died. Enoch being listed in Hebrews 11, we are told specifically that he died – verse 13 already referred to earlier .. *these all died in faith not having received the promises...* He was changed, as we all do upon death, from life to

death. We are told he was changed in such a way that he was not found. That is his dead body could not be located – just as Moses was also translated that he could not be found. (Deuteronomy 34:6)

We are unlike Enoch, in that we are not taken by the Holy Spirit like Enoch, Moses and Elijah, and buried, but instead are buried by family and friends, all are aware that we go to the grave when we die. But we are like Enoch, in that we are also prepared like he was for the Kingdom of God, we are translated using a gradual process of transformation, growing and developing the fruits of the spirit over a period of time, being prepared for the Kingdom.

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