

Biblical Forensics ©

“Unbelief - The Point of Reckoning” Part 2

The last segment covered the way the term **“apistia”** was used to note the different situations and settings where Jesus dealt with the disciple’s doubt concerning Jesus’ resurrection. Later He appeared to them **“alive after his passion by many infallible proofs”** -(Acts 1:3). Fortunately, the disciples did not display signs of unwillingness to believe.

Usually unbelief in the New Testament is a term used to describe the attitude of individuals who do not have faith and who will not believe. Theirs is an unbelief which **rests on opposition to the truth**. The truth which the unbeliever refuses to accept is not a philosophical doctrine or an abstract idea, but **God’s self-revelation in nature and in the salvation that is found in Jesus Christ.**⁽¹⁾

Since the day that Adam and Eve fell in the Garden, unbelief has been a fundamental sin central to the nature of man. The actual fall itself consisted of a series of internal questionings leading to doubt, thereby eroding trust which ultimately caused man to stop believing that God and His Word were all that was needed for right decision making and living.

Ultimately, man consciously chose instead to believe a lie and acted according to the false accusation that Satan made against God. As a result, this fallen nature became an inherited trait which was passed down to the entire human race. By nature we are all the “children of **“apeitheias”**”, and tainted with ‘disbelief and disobedience’ -(Ephesians 2:2). This inbred unbelief and opposition to God cannot be changed or conquered by man himself -(Romans 7:15; 8:7). He must be born-again and created anew by the Spirit of God -(John 3:3, 7).

The regenerating and creative act of the Spirit of God in the heart of man is made possible through the work of Christ. In Him, God has reconciled the world unto Himself -(2nd Corinthians 5:18). **To reject Christ Jesus and His work is unbelief in the worst degree**, the ultimate sin in the life of mankind. We know this as the “unpardonable sin” or blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.⁽²⁾

The issue of “Unbelief” is a serious issue that is often ignored or even discounted as having minimal bearing in the life of the individual. Note carefully here my use of the word “individual” because this factor applies to a believer as well as a non-believer in Christ Jesus.

There is no guarantee that a believer will be taken in the Rapture just because a person says they are a Christian. When a person says they are a Christian, the tendency is to take their words at face value; however, there

should be evidence by the way that person's life is lived, or "fruit" as Jesus noted several times in the Gospel of John alone.

Allow me to stop here and **identify the reasons for the Rapture:**

- To fulfill all Scripture -(Acts 3:20-21; 2nd Peter 1:16).
- To fulfill Christ Jesus' promise to come again -(John 14:1-3).
- To fulfill Christ Jesus' promise to resurrect the righteous dead -(John 11:24).
- To fulfill Christ Jesus' promise of eternal life -(John 6:40).
- To fulfill Christ Jesus' promise of taking us to His Father's House -(John 14:1-3).
- To fulfill the promise of rewards for faithfulness -(Matthew 24:45-48).
- To fulfill the promise of a new immortal body -(1st Corinthians 15:51-53).
- To confess us before His Father and the angels -(Matthew 10:32; Luke 12:8).
- To enjoy the Marriage Supper of the Lamb -(Revelation 19:9).
- To remove the Bride (Church) before the time of God's wrath -(1st Thessalonians 5:9).
- To bring about the final world harvest of souls -(James 5:7).
- To bring judgment (vengeance) on the ungodly and wicked -(Matthew 24:37-39).

Those who are considered Christians in name only, will not be going in the Rapture! **If a person is living in unbelief, they cannot inherit any blessings from God!** I will share a list of over sixty passages that make this point clear, but first let's address these questions:

1. If a person says, "I don't believe in salvation", can they be saved?
2. If a person says, "All of that healing stuff is fake", can they be healed?
3. If a person says, "Giving is a trick and I'm not giving", can they be blessed?

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." -(Hebrews 11:6).

In Matthew 13:58, we are told that at Nazareth, Jesus could not do mighty miracles because of their unbelief. In Matthew 17:17, Jesus rebuked His generation for their unbelief. In Matthew 17:20, we learn that the disciples could not cast out a spirit because of unbelief. Taking this a step further, when a person says, "*I don't believe in the coming of the Lord or the Rapture*", how does that affect the outcome?

This makes my point. Most people who read my work, know that I am for the most part addressing an audience of mostly “believers” in the Lord Christ Jesus. My focus in these segments is primarily meant to address those who are Christians in name only. Chances are you have heard the term RINO’s, Republicans in name only! CINO’s is an appropriate acronym for those we recognize as Christians in name only! These are people who may have been born into a Christian family and may have even been baptized, but fail to apply or live by Biblical principles. They may not have ever read the bible and they may or may not attend church services. But they view themselves as good people, and even good Christians. Occasionally, they might quote a familiar Bible passage but fail to grasp its full import for daily living.

I repeat my premise, if a person is in unbelief, they cannot inherit any of the blessings from the Lord. This includes the blessing of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture, which is a reward for faithfulness!

In Part 1, I mentioned a book that I had done a critical review on at Amazon. It is *‘The Rapture Verdict’* written by Michael Snyder. In no way whatsoever does Mr. Snyder believe Paul’s teaching of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture. Consequently, he is going to need all the survival food buckets and prepper supplies he markets at his Economic Collapse blog and other websites. Unless he has a change of heart, he will without a doubt not be going with believers in Jesus Christ who do believe and look forward to the Pre-Tribulation Rapture. The fact that he is a former lawyer and now markets survival and prepper supplies, reminds me of a charlatan who sells his own version of snake oil cures. These kinds of ploys are a form of psychological exploitation based on people’s need for personal safety and security. They provoke fear while nursing a greedy heart for personal gain or notoriety! In the segments to follow, I will back my statements up with biblical support.

The sin of “unbelief” is key to this position. Following are a list of Biblical verses that address the issue of “unbelief”. A good Berean identified in Acts 17:11 will endeavor to see what they say and draw their own conclusion based upon the Biblical evidence rather than personal opinion.

Genesis 1:1-31

Isaiah 66:2

Matthew 7:21; 10:15; 17:17; 17:20; 22:14

Mark 6:5-6; 9:23-25; 16:16; 16:1-20

Luke 1:2-80; 2:1-52; 7:23; 18:8; 21:2-7

John 3:16; 3:18-19; 3:36; 4:23; 12:48; 20:24-29

Acts 20:28-31

Romans 1:18; 3:23; 3:29-30; 6:1; 6:23; 10:4; 10:1-21; 16:17

1st Corinthians 5:5-8; 11:27-34

2nd Corinthians 6:14-18
2nd Thessalonians 2:3; 2:15; 3:15
Ephesians 2:8; 5:11
1st Timothy 2:4; 3:1-16; 6:3-5
2nd Timothy 3:5
Galatians 3:11
Hebrews 11:1; 3:1-15; 11:6;
1st John 2:15-17; 4:1; 5:19-21; 1:6
1st Peter 1:16
Jude 1:22
James 1:6
Revelation 22:18; 2:1-29; 3:11; 7:1-17

The author of Hebrews (presumably the Apostle Paul) in chapter 3, verse 12 addresses professing Jewish Christians as “brethren”. The writer began to apply Psalm 95 by telling them to watch out in case any of them had an “evil heart”. He was not just talking here merely of their emotional nature. **“Heart” referred to the core of their being.** The action of such an evil heart is described by the phrase **“en to apostenai”** which speaks of their turning aside from God.^(b) An evil and unbelieving heart leads to dire consequences; it causes a person to turn away from the living God. As illustrated by the Israelites, hard hearts can cause rebellion. Turning away from Christianity implies more than turning away from a system of beliefs or a set of doctrines; it means turning away from God. Unbelief abandons God and rebels against Him.^(a) The God they were in danger of leaving was not some idol; **He is the “living” God.** The whole tenor of the argument to this point suggests that if they abandoned their belief in the Son, they would be rebelling against God as the wilderness generation did in Moses’ day.

The danger of rebellion was so great that the writer asked the believers to admonish and encourage each other on a daily basis. I will pick up with this point in the next segment.

Pastor Bob

Notes:

1. <http://www.hayespress.org/article-apr-1980-gods-self-revelation>
2. <http://www.equip.org/PDF/JAP344.pdf>

Commentaries:

- a. Life Application New Testament Commentary
- b. Wuest’s Word Study on Hebrew’s 3:12

Wuest’s Word Study on Hebrew’s 3:12^(b)

Having reminded his readers of the defection of the wilderness generation, the writer now proceeds to warn them against committing a

similar sin. He says "Take heed." The word is **blepete**, a present imperative involving durative action. "Be seeing to it constantly, keep a watchful eye ever open," is the idea. The words, "lest there be" are in a construction in the Greek which indicates that with the fear that the thing spoken of may occur, there is also a suspicion that it will occur. The words "in any certain individual of your number" show that the writer is appealing to each one individually.

The Greek order of words is "**a heart evil with reference to unbelief.**" The genitive of reference here defines the kind of evil spoken of. The particular word for evil here is not **kakos**, evil in the abstract, but **poneros**, evil in active opposition to the good. When Satan is spoken of as the evil one, the word used is **poneros**. The latter is a much stronger word than **kakos**. Paul uses it in Galatians 1:4. He speaks there of this present **poneros** (pernicious) age. The positive activity of evil comes out far more in this word than in **kakos**. The **kakos** man may be content to perish in his own corruption, but the **poneros man is not content unless he is corrupting others as well, and dragging them down into the same destruction with himself.** The English word which best translates this Greek word is "pernicious."

This evil heart of unbelief of which the writer speaks, and which he suspects is found in some of his readers, is **a heart in which the evil of unbelief is present, not in a passive or latent state, but in an active, pernicious condition.** The attitude of these Hebrews toward the New Testament was not one now of a passive neglect, but **one of an active opposition, which attitude the writer was afraid would result in a deliberate and final rejection of the New Testament.** We must be careful to discriminate here between a heart in which unbelief is present, and an unbelieving heart. The first may be true of a Christian, but not the second. The latter expression refers to **a heart solely and entirely controlled by unbelief, in which there is no faith whatever.** These Jews to whom this warning was issued, were not saved as our historical background and analysis have shown. **They had merely given an intellectual assent to the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth and to the New Testament.**

The word "departing" deserves special attention. It is **aphistemi** which is made up of **apo** "off," and **histemi** "to stand," the compound word meaning "to stand off from." This was exactly the position of these Hebrews. **They were standing aloof from the living God.** The idea is not that of departing, but of standing off from. Our word "apostasy" is derived from a form of this Greek word. Apostasy is defined as the act of someone who has previously subscribed to a certain belief, and who now renounces his former professed belief in favor of some other which is diametrically opposed to what he believed before. In other words, his new belief is not merely a new system of faith, but **one which at every point negates his former belief.** These Jews, should they renounce their professed faith in the New Testament system and go back to the First

Testament sacrifices, would be embracing that which if brought in again would negate the New Testament. It was a question of the Levitical sacrifices or the crucified Messiah. In making a profession of Messiah as High Priest and then renouncing that professed faith to return to a dependence upon the sacrifices which God set aside at the Cross, **the person would commit the sin called apostasy.**

Translation: *Take heed constantly, brethren, lest there be in any one of you a heart perniciously evil with unbelief in standing aloof from the living God.*