

Commentary on John 3:16, Hebrews 2:9, Romans 9:15-25

Written by C. H. Cayce

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Brother J. L. Harder, of McKenzie, Tenn., has requested our views of the above passages. We have not space or time now to write at great length on these, but will state our views briefly.

John 3:16-17 reads:

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved."

This text tells us plainly that God gave His Son for the believer. He did not give His Son for the unbeliever. If God did not give His Son for the unbeliever, then Christ did not die for all the race, unless all the race are believers. To argue that the term "world" in this text embraces all Adam's race, is to make the text contradict itself. As the text does not contradict itself, it follows that the term "world" does not embrace all Adam's race, It necessarily follows, therefore, that it refers to the believers - the world of believers. Again, to make the term "world" embrace all Adam's race would be a positive contradiction of Ro 9:13, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." This tells us positively that God hated Esau. Then if Esau was a part of Adam's race, He did not love all the race. Now, notice Joh 3:18-19, *"He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil."*

" The Saviour here tells us plainly that the condemnation is that men loved darkness rather than light. The condemnation does not rest in their unbelief, but in the fact that *"light is come into the world, and they loved darkness rather than light."* This is where the condemnation rests.

Hebrews 2:9 reads:

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"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

Verses 10, 11 and 12 read, *"For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in Him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me."*

The word "man" in the ninth verse in the King James' translation is not in the original Greek. In translating any passage, if a word is lacking and needs to be supplied, a word should be supplied that will agree with the context. This is a universal and invariable rule. In verse ten these characters are called "many sons," and in verse eleven they are called "brethren," in verse twelve they are called "brethren," and "the church;" in verse thirteen they are called "children," and in verse fourteen they are called "children." These are all the same characters, or persons, that are referred to in the ninth verse as "every man." Hence He tasted death for "every son" (many sons), for every one of His "brethren," for "the church," for every one of His "children." He died for these, and these only.

Our opinion is that Brother Harder wished the foregoing passages harmonized with Romans 9:15-25. There is a seeming contradiction to some in these, but there is no contradiction, and the seeming contradiction vanishes when the foregoing passages are rightly applied.

In Romans 9:21 the apostle says:

"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour?"

This refers to the case of the prophet going down to the house of the potter and seeing the potter at work. A vessel was marred in the hands of the potter. Then he took clay of the same lump and made another vessel as seemed good to the potter to make it. In the beginning, or in the morning of creation, God made the man. The vessel was marred in the hands of his Creator by [because of Adam's -Ed.] sin. Now, God takes clay of the same lump (for all are alike by nature) and makes vessels unto honor, as seems good to Him to make them. He does not make a vessel unto honor provided the clay becomes willing, but as it pleases Him. He does not save one man and not another because the one man is better clay than the other, but He saves

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as it pleases Him. Verse sixteen says, *"So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."* Salvation is of

God, and He shows mercy in saving. It is His work to save.

"It is not of Him that willeth."

Our will is not consulted as to whether they will be saved, yet He makes them willing by the regenerating power of His Holy Spirit. They are shown the awful depravity and corruption of their own hearts, are given a new and higher order of life, and then they begin to hate and to abhor sin and to love righteousness and holiness; and their will is now sweetly inclined to that which is holy and righteous.

These few thoughts are submitted in love for truth, and we trust they will be blessed to your good.

C. H. C.