

# **“Many Will Seek to Enter the Kingdom, and Will Not Be Able”**

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

## Introduction:

### A. Luke 13:23-24

1. As Jesus was entering Jerusalem, someone asked, "Lord, are there few that be saved?"
2. Jesus - "Strive with earnestness to enter in through the narrow gate; for many, I say to you, will seek to enter in, and will not be able."
3. I thought Jesus said that seekers will find - Matt. 7:7-8, 13-14

### B. Is this a contradiction?

1. Is it possible for one who is seeking the Kingdom to fail in finding it?
2. What did Jesus mean?

## **I. THE MEANING**

### A. Of the question

1. "Are there few that be saved? It was the prevalent opinion among the Jews that few would enter heaven." (Barnes Notes)
2. "As but two of all the hosts that came out of Egypt entered into the land of Canaan, so some of the Jews maintained that a proportionally small number would enter into heaven." (Lightfoot)
3. "The man wanted the opinion of Jesus. It was a question generated by idle curiosity. The answer to it would have done little good. It was far more important for the man to secure his own salvation rather than to indulge in idle inquiries and vain speculations about the judgment and salvation of others. Our Lord therefore advised him, as he does all, to strive to enter into heaven." (Matthew Henry)
4. "The Jews are said to have had many curious theories on this subject. Some supposed all Israelites would be saved; others, that very few would escape, as of all who came out of Egypt, but two entered Canaan. The question clearly means whether the saved would be few or many, and it is supposed that he had reference to the Jews only." (H. Leo Boles)
  - a. Began with a mistaken premise - Jews only will be saved
  - b. Began with a wrong motive - satisfy curiosity over a Jewish philosophical difference
  - c. Began with the wrong spirit - casually treated a grave subject that mandates fear
5. This matter began on a different basis than the Sermon on the Mount

### B. Of the answer

1. "Strive with earnestness to enter in through the narrow gate; for many, I say to you, will seek to enter in, and will not be able."
2. On the answer given it appears that all are in agreement:
  - a. "Our Savior came to guide men's consciences, not to gratify their curiosity. Ask not, How many shall be saved? But, Shall I be one of them? Not, What shall become of such and such? But, What

- shall I do, and what will become of me? Strive to enter in at the strait gate. This is directed to each of us; it is, Strive ye. All that will be saved, must enter in at the strait gate, must undergo a change of the whole man. Those that would enter in, must strive to enter." (Matthew Henry)
- b. "Jesus did not answer the curiosity of this inquirer, but gave answer to an infinitely more vital question: How could they themselves be saved?" (H. Leo Boles)
3. If we suppose that this is a disciple asking a serious question, the answer is the same as though this were a Pharisee seeking to draw Jesus into controversy.
- a. There are far more important matters for us to consider than how many people will be saved in the end.
  - b. The question of greatest importance is: "Shall I be one of them?"
4. The Lord's answer to the question is two-fold in nature:
- a. You should seek to be among those who are saved
  - b. There will be those who seek to be saved, but will not be able to

## **II. WHAT CAUSES ONE TO BE LOST EVEN THOUGH HE DESIRES TO BE SAVED?**

### **A. Accepting another authority**

- 1. All authority is now in Jesus - Matt. 28:18
- 2. On the basis of that authority, God's will has been revealed to men by the Spirit - John 16:13-15
- 3. On the basis of the surety of that revelation, Paul writes - Gal. 1:6-9
- 4. There is no authority in another person, preacher, parent, friend, organization, or philosophy.
- 5. Even if one desires to be saved, if he does not hold to the proper authority, that desire will do nothing for him

### **B. Love of others**

- 1. It is unfortunate that many believe that if they obey the gospel, it is an indicator that they do not love unsaved family members. "I am sending my mother and father to hell."
- 2. What this is actually proclaiming is that they love their parents so much that they would rather join them in hell than be saved themselves
- 3. The question that should be answered is: Did your mother and father love you before they passed? If so, they would not want you to come where they are? - Luke 16:27-28

### **C. Pride and arrogance**

- 1. It is equally unfortunate that many will be lost because they desire God to save them on their terms instead of His
- 2. When confronted with the truth, they no longer want to hear it
- 3. These are the people Paul speaks of in 2Tim. 4:3-4
- 4. "I know that's what God's word says, but I know God better than that."
- 5. "The God I believe in will accept me as I am." Creating God in their image... presumptuous, proud assumptions

#### D. Ignorance

1. Acts 17:27 - This describes someone who desires to find, but is searching in all of the wrong places
2. The image of a blind person in an unfamiliar room: the only way to find things is by groping about.
3. Such people are described as ignorant - Acts 17:30
4. They are commanded to repent, but how shall they repent unless they learn? - Rom. 10:14, 17

#### Conclusion:

1. It is unfortunate that anyone should be lost
2. God's desire is that no one should - 2Peter 3:9
3. Unfortunately, even though there are many who seek to enter in, many will fail for the reasons given today
  - a. They accepted another authority rather than the doctrine of Christ
  - b. They love someone too much to displease them by obeying the gospel
  - c. They think they know more than God revealed in His word
  - d. They simply do not know what they must do
4. Are you one of those who would fail should your life end today?