

AN INTERESTING QUESTION ANSWERED. THE EXTENT OF JUDAS' KNOWLEDGE.

Question. – The Psalms, quoted from in the New Testament, seem to show clearly that destruction is Judas' end, – but can we decide that the scribes and Pharisees of our Lord's time came under the two Scriptures that specially bear on the case, I Tim. 2:3-6, with the will of God that all should come to an "*Epignosin*" of the truth, and Heb. 6:4-6 that the ones it is impossible to renew, are those who have once been enlightened, tasted the heavenly gift – become partakers of holy spirit – tasted the good word of God, and powers of the coming age? Did they reach those conditions? I think not.

Answer. – All will agree that no matter how positive a word may be used respecting the bringing of mankind to knowledge before judgment, *general knowledge* is not meant. To assume that general knowledge of the sciences, or even of the science of religion is necessary to a trial for eternal life, would be to assume that God had not given to father Adam a full, proper or just trial for eternal life; – and from such a proposition we would all dissent, for we know that he was justly tried and justly condemned. His *knowledge* will help us to understand what degree or kind of knowledge his children must have, before they can come under the responsibility of the second trial secured by the ransom for all. Father Adam's knowledge consisted in a discernment of the right and the wrong of the question before him – and no more knowledge than this was necessary. It was immaterial whether he thought of God as Trinity or Unity; whether he believed in heaven and hell, etc., or not; whether he knew about the sun, moon and stars, and the laws governing their motions, or not. He knew what was necessary for him to know; namely, (1) that God had a right to command his obedience, and (2) that God had commanded him not to eat of that fruit, and had attached thereto some penalty. It did not matter

whether he knew exactly all that the penalty implied or not. He knew that to eat would be transgression – sin.

So, we take it, is the responsibility of all mankind, as soon as they come mentally in contact with "the light of the world." We cannot conceive how Judas could be ignorant of the wrong which he committed, after his three years of experience with the Master, and in the use of the power of the holy spirit communicated to him. It seems to us unnecessary that he should know either about the planetary movements, or about all the particulars of the divine plan: he knew of the holy and pure character of our Redeemer; and of his self-sacrificing service of Jehovah and the people; and it seems to us he must have known beyond question that his conduct was treason to God and to righteousness; and to every principle of goodness reprobate. We reason that if Adam's knowledge and transgression were justly punished with death, Judas' knowledge and sin could bring nothing short of the Second Death. However, we leave the matter; any who see it differently are entitled to hold their opinions.

Respecting the scribes and Pharisees: Their conduct seems indeed flagrant; we would find it impossible to imagine that they felt within themselves that they were doing the *right* thing in crucifying the spotless Lamb of God. Nevertheless, our Lord did not say of them that it had been better for them not to have been born; he merely said, "How can ye escape the condemnation of Gehenna?" – the Second Death. This leaves us abundant room to suppose that they may yet have opportunity to escape that condemnation; but it also suggests to us the probability that some of them will not escape the Second Death – that some of them had so perverted and seared their consciences with pride and wilfulness and love of evil that even the blessings of the Millennial Age would fail to dissolve the callousness of their hearts.

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