



The Caller

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Confidence Corner

In this week's Confidence Corner we will examine a passage in Genesis chapter four. In Genesis 4:6-7 the LORD is speaking to Cain. Cain's sacrifice has been rejected by the LORD. Cain is angry and the text states his countenance has fallen.

The text then reads, "So the LORD said to Cain, 'Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at your door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.'" (NKJV) What does this passage mean?

Coffman in his commentary states that Genesis 4:7 is one of the most difficult and disputed passages in Genesis. After stating such he then provides his interpretation of the passage to be, if you do well there is a sin-offering lying at your door. Let me try to put some sense to this passage. I do not think Coffman is correct. He seems to be basing his thoughts on the LXX translation which is quite different from the Hebrew text....actually LXX seems to build into the text the whole Mosaic sacrificial system (which shows translators bias and also why it is so different from MT).

According to Gesenius' Hebrew grammar in Gn 4:7 there is a substantial participle (a lurker, a coucher). Sin is presented as a lurking animal (Hebrew word) waiting to pounce...not passive sacrifice. It is even probably from the Akkadian word rabaatsu which the CAD notes can mean "to lie in wait, to lurk" (thanks Dr. Musgrave). If Cain does not repent of his attitude sin will overtake him even worse than it has.

The word door is probably best translated "opening" keeping with the imagery of a beast at the opening of its cave (den etc.) waiting to pounce.

The last part "it desires to have you but you must master over it"...is identical to Gen 3:16 regarding the wife's desire will be to rule husband and he will rule over her....thus messing up perfect existence of husband and wife prior to the fall.

The Hebrew of Gen. 4:7 is "and toward you [is] its desire, but you must rule over it." As in Gen 3:16, the Hebrew noun "desire" refers to an urge to control or dominate. Here the desire is that which sin has for Cain, a desire to control for the sake of evil, but Cain must have mastery over it. It appears here that the imperfect is understood as having an obligatory sense—at least that is my understanding.

jfb



Believe

Sunday's Sermons:

AM — ALL WILL KNOW

JOHN 3:34-35

PM — GOD'S LOVE FOR MAN

JOHN 3:12-16

WORDS WITH FRIENDS

Words with Friends—perhaps many of you remember when this game was so popular. Perhaps many of you played it on a regular basis. For those who have not played the game, it is akin to the board game Scrabble, although in Words with Friends, you play your words on an electronic device that enables the game to be played literally by those on opposite ends of the earth (or by those in the same room). Obviously the object of the game is to use letters worth the most points to make your word score higher. The higher the points a word is worth, the greater likelihood you will win the game.

I hope all of that is correct as I have never played Words with Friends, and have only played Scrabble when forced to do so. I do see many though in different places on the Internet bragging about the word score they obtained in a game they were playing. I saw one young lady who had scored a 111 point word. That seems from most accounts to be a great score for a single word.

Reading various people's accomplishments in Words with Friends got me to thinking...I wonder how many points words like salvation, propitiation, justification, and Jesus would be worth? I do not know exactly how the point system works in Words with Friends, so I do not know how much they are worth in a game. I do know though, that these words ought to have great "value" to us regardless of the word score they would be given in the game.

Salvation is a word that ought to have great value to us as Christians due to the great price that was paid for our salvation. John 3:16 clearly reveals the great love of God that allowed God to send His Son into the world to suffer, so that we could be saved. Salvation is God's way of providing people deliverance from what we deserve—sin and death.

Propitiation deals with the means by which our sins are forgiven. In 1 John 2:2 we read, "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world." Did you catch that concept? Christ, the perfect Son of God is the One Who provides salvation from sin; Christ Himself is the means by which our sins are forgiven. Such a word could never be valued in earthly concepts.

According to Louw & Nida justification means, "to cause someone to be in a proper or right relation with someone else—to put right with, to cause to be in a right relationship with." Hallelujah, what a word! To think, because of Christ's love and our obedience we are able to be caused to be in a right relationship with God, when we could never deserve such a standing on our own, is truly amazing.

Jesus! The very name brings up in our hearts an emotional worth we cannot begin to express in human words. We often sing about this great name and our Savior, yet still our minds cannot comprehend the blessedness of the word.

You may say "What is your point John?" My point is not that I dislike the game Words with Friends. My point is not that you should not have fun with a game like Words with Friends. My point is that as I thought about the point value or worth of certain words, I began to think that there are words that have a different type of value. Actually with those we have mentioned as well as many others, there is simply no way to put a value on spiritual terms—they should indeed be priceless to us! Yet allow me to make one final point—Do we share these priceless spiritual words with friends?!

John F Board
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