

mar 15

so, here we are friends - the ides of march. a day made famous by shakespeare's account of the brutal murder of caesar. it is a day when supposed friends become enemies, even the best of friends. we have seen so many friends become enemies during this pandemic because of different beliefs; because of fear. it ought not to be so in the family of God.

like shakespeare, i want to tell you a story also. a story right from the word of God. a time of "tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be". matt 23:21 the ides of march will be as a whisper is to a shout. "unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved," matt 24:22

"in those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them." rev 9:6 even as men now fear death, they will be seeking it and not be able to die. this is why we scramble so feverishly to warn of the "wrath to come".

we look at some things in the bible and know there will be a future fulfillment. the thing is, there will be a fulfillment! our Lord says, "do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. he who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still." rev 22:10-11

i believe there are two things required to have us

reach our destination: faith and determination.

here is an example of the faith required. "the centurion answered and said, "Lord, i am not worthy that You should come under my roof. but only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. for i also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. and i say to this one, 'go,' and he goes; and to another, 'come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'do this,' and he does it. when Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, 'assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!'" matt 8:8-10

here is an example of the determination required. "but He answered and said, 'I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of israel.' then she came and worshiped Him, saying, 'Lord, help me!' but He answered and said, 'it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs.' and she said, "yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.' then Jesus answered and said to her, 'o woman, great is your faith! let it be to you as you desire.' and her daughter was healed from that very hour." matt 15:24-28

this is the kind of faith jacob exhibited when struggling one night in genesis. as he persisted, he said, "i will not let You go unless You bless me!" gen 32-26 that's the kind of "doggedness" one must have in their fight of faith; their determination. even when a situation is staring you in the face, you say, "i don't care what it looks like, smells like or tastes like.

God said it. i believe it. and that settles it. i shall not be moved."

will there be a rapture? some christians say yes, some say no. i believe yes. it is not a dreamers escape from the woes of the world. it is a believer's faith they will be saved "from the wrath to come". 1 thess 1:10 i believe there is a rapture and a second coming - two events with a wedding feast between them.

i believe it is one's faith and determination that will get them there in either instance. "he who endures to the end will be saved." matt 10:22 "according to your faith let it be to you." matt 9:29

linda