

“The Penitent Thief”

Luke 23:39-43

Introduction

- I. I am quite certain that some of you have been presented with the question, “But what about the thief on the cross?”
- II. This is usually in opposition to the command to be baptized.
- III. Let us study the penitent thief closely.

Discussion

- I. The penitent thief was just that, penitent!
 - A. He readily admitted his guilt (Luke 23:41).
 - B. He also regretted the mocking of the Lord (Matt. 27:44; Mark 15:32; cf. 1 Pet. 2:23).
 - C. He defended the Jesus' innocence (Luke 23:40).
- II. For being a penitent individual, a great assurance was given to the thief (Luke 23:43).
 - A. We need to understand that “Paradise” in this text is not the final destination of Heaven (John 20:17).
 - B. It is a part of the Hadean realm (Luke 16:19-31).
- III. The argument of many is that no where was the thief required to be baptized, so let us answer that argument.
 - A. First of all, this is a unique situation while Jesus was still alive (Matt. 9:6; Mark 2:10).
 - B. Secondly, no one can prove whether the thief had been baptized or not (Matt. 3:1-6; that baptism was for the remission of sins (Mark 4:1-11).
 - C. The Gospel was not fully in effect when the thief died (1 Cor. 15:1-4; Rom. 6:3-6; cf. Heb. 9:16).

Conclusion

- I. Do not let the penitent thief on the cross cause you any difficulty when teaching the Gospel to others.
- II. When he is examined properly, we can see that he lived and died before the New Testament came into effect.