

# Few

Intro: Jesus was asked an important question regarding salvation by an unknown inquirer as to the number of those who would be saved. In this lesson, we want to look at the question and Jesus' response. We find this exchange in Luke 13:23-24 <sup>23</sup> Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, <sup>24</sup> Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

## I. FEW?

### A. Noah

1. Gen. 6-8
2. While we do not know the population the lower estimate is 195 million, but a more reasonable number would be 15 billion (some upward of 122 billion).
3. Noah and his family: 8 souls
  - a. Gen. 7:1 <sup>1</sup> And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation."
  - b. 1 Pet. 3:20 <sup>20</sup> Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."

### B. Lot

1. Gen. 18-19
2. We have no knowledge of the population of Sodom, Gomorrah, and the cities of the plain.
3. 10 righteous souls could not be found.
4. Initially 4 souls were going to be saved.
  - a. Gen. 19:15 <sup>15</sup> And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city."
  - b. His wife looks back and turns into a pillar of salt; Gen. 19:26 <sup>26</sup> But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt."
  - c. Ultimately 3 souls saved from that destruction.
  - d. His 2 daughters proved to be wicked; Gen. 19:30-38 <sup>30</sup> And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters. <sup>31</sup> And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father *is* old, and *there is* not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth: <sup>32</sup> Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. <sup>33</sup> And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. <sup>34</sup> And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, *and* lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. <sup>35</sup> And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. <sup>36</sup> Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father. <sup>37</sup> And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same *is* the father of the Moabites unto this day. <sup>38</sup> And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Benammi: the same *is* the father of the children of Ammon unto this day."

### C. Israelites

1. Those coming out of Egypt.
  - a. Exo. 12:37 <sup>37</sup> And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot *that were* men, beside children."

- b. This number excludes the Levites and only fighting men; Num. 1:46 “<sup>46</sup> Even all they that were numbered were six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty.”
- c. If each of those 600,000 had a wife and 5 children would be a population of about 6 million.
2. Those allowed to enter the Promised Land.
  - a. Joshua and Caleb.
  - b. Num. 14:30 “<sup>30</sup> Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, *concerning* which I swear to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.”
  - c. Num. 26:65 “<sup>65</sup> For the LORD had said of them, They shall surely die in the wilderness. And there was not left a man of them, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.”
3. The prophets often speak of a very small remnant being saved.

## II. STRIVE

### A. It comes from the Greek ἀγωνίζομαι (*agonizomai*).

1. It means, to fight, wrestle, struggle, compete to enter a contest, contend with an adversary, make effort (from various lexicons).
2. Zodhiates adds, “It also came to mean to take pains, to wrestle as in an award contest, straining every nerve to the uttermost towards the goal.”
3. We get our *agony* and *agonize* from this word.

### B. As Christians, we are to strive.

1. Barnes Notes: “The word is taken from the Grecian games. In their races, and wrestlings, and various athletic exercises, they *strove* or *agonized*, or put forth all their powers to gain the victory. Thousands witnessed them. They were long trained for the conflict, and the honour of victory was one of the highest honours among the people. So Jesus says that we should strive to enter in; and he means by it that we should be diligent, be active, be earnest; that we should make it our first and chief business to overcome our sinful propensities, and to endeavour to enter into heaven.”
2. Strive to live the Christian life.
  - a. Satan is out to destroy us; 1 Pet. 5:8 “<sup>8</sup> Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”
  - b. Temptation is strong; 1 John 2:16 “<sup>16</sup> For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”
  - c. There is also the present temptation to become lackadaisical.
    - (1) In our worship to God.
    - (2) In our service to Him.
  - d. It takes our best effort and straining every muscle and nerve to continue in Christian living.
3. Strive to enter heaven.
  - a. Mt. 7:13-14 “<sup>13</sup> Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: <sup>14</sup> Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”
  - b. As Paul and Barnabas returned to congregations they had established; Acts 14:22 “<sup>22</sup> Confirming the souls of the disciples, *and* exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.”
  - c. Few are willing to strive for heaven. They want the reward, but not willing to strain every muscle and nerve for it.

**Conclusion:** So few actually strive. Many of those who are Christians do not strive. They have somewhat of a desire to enter heaven, but they are not willing to put forth the effort to do so. What about me? What about you? Do we really strive? All who strive lawfully will enter heaven's home.