THE GRAPES OF ESHCOL



Charles H. Welch

THE BEREAN PUBLISHING TRUST (CIO)

THE
GRAPES OF ESHCOL

by

Charles H. Welch

Author of

Dispensational Truth
The Apostle of the Reconciliation
The Testimony of the Lord's Prisoner
Parable, Miracle, and Sign
The Form of Sound Words
Just and the Justifier
In Heavenly Places
etc.

THE BEREAN PUBLISHING TRUST (CIO)
52A WILSON STREET
LONDON EC2A 2ER

© THE BEREAN PUBLISHING TRUST (CIO)

ISBN 0 85156 168 3

First published as an issue
of the Berean Expositor 1956

Reset and Reprinted 1995

THE GRAPES OF ESHCOL

A sequel to the booklet '*The Dispensational Frontier*'

A cluster of peculiar blessings, brought from the high calling of the Mystery, and exhibited to the Lord's people in much the same spirit as prompted the witness of Caleb and Joshua.

The book of Deuteronomy opens with the words of Moses 'on this side Jordan' in the wilderness over against the Red Sea, but the record is interrupted at the second verse, by a parenthetical observation:

> 'There are eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of Mount Seir unto Kadesh-barnea' (Deut. 1:2).

Somewhat comparable, and at first sight as difficult to understand is the strange interruption of the narrative of Acts 1:15:

> 'And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty, Men and brethren, this Scripture, etc., etc.' (Acts 1:15,16).

We have purposely omitted the marks of parenthesis (...), there being none in the original, to intensify the strangeness of this interpolation. The structure reveals that there is a correspondence between this 120 with the addition of Matthias to the 'eleven' thus making up the number of the apostolate (12) (Acts 1:26), and with the number of different countries represented at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:9-11) which are twelve, because it was essential, if Israel were to be called once more to repentance, that there should be 'twelve thrones' judging the 'twelve' tribes of Israel. So, returning to Deuteronomy, the break in the narrative is inspired and purposeful. Let us ponder its meaning and its implications. At Horeb, the solemn covenant had been made between the Lord and this people, and from Mount Sinai the people set out across the wilderness, and the stages of their journey are all noted in Numbers 33. From Sinai to Kadesh there are twenty-one stages indicated (Num. 33:16-37) and some of these were marked by gross disobedience as at Kibroth-hattaavah, so that Israel took much longer than

‘eleven days’ to traverse the route laid down in Numbers thirty-three. Disobedience and unbelief apart, the direct route would have occupied just eleven days, and the implication is that *one more day* would have seen Israel over the border, and into the land. Instead, Moses reminded Israel:

> ‘The space in which we came from Kadesh-barnea, until we were come over the brook Zered, was thirty and eight years’ (Deut. 2:14).

The thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of Numbers set out the tragedy of Kadesh-barnea at some length. The twelve spies searched the land from one end to the other, and at Eshcol, a valley in the vicinity of Hebron (Num. 13:22,23), very near the Southern border of the land of promise, they cut a cluster of grapes which they bore between two upon a staff, and brought it as an evidence of the goodliness of the land towards which the Lord, through Moses, was leading His people. Alas! while Caleb and Joshua testified to the goodness of the land, and to the faithfulness and power of the Lord to fulfil His promise and give them the land for their inheritance, the ten spies intimidated the people by their report concerning the giants, the sons of Anak, so that the faithful two were threatened with stoning for their pains.

In this booklet we too are bringing as it were ‘a cluster’ from Eshcol even at the risk of being as badly treated for our pains as were Caleb and Joshua. The country which we have searched and on which we report is represented by the epistle to the Ephesians, and in the history of the Church, Israel’s defection has been, alas, only too faithfully copied to its loss. Paul, like the faithful spies, was forsaken at the close of his life. ‘All in Asia’ turned away from him; the precious revelation of the truth of the Mystery which it was his glory to make known was discounted, and so completely was his testimony rejected that no vestige of it is discernible in the writings of the ‘Fathers’ who go back to the early portion of Acts, and wandered in *their* wilderness, even as Israel did in theirs.

Should the reader not quite appreciate this analogy, we suggest that the earlier booklets of this series be consulted, namely *The Dispensational Frontier*, *Acts 28:23-31* and *Who then is Paul*?, otherwise we shall have to occupy much of our limited space in going over ground already covered.

We have however prepared a pamphlet pointing out that leading men among the early 'Brethren' saw the distinction between the calling of the church formed during the Acts and that of the church called afterwards, and before producing some of the high glories of the Ephesian epistle, called by us 'The Grapes of Eshcol' in reference to this halt and withdrawal at our spiritual 'Kadesh-barnea' we will reproduce that pamphlet here, in the hope that some may be led to deprecate the attitude that not only refuses to go on into the high calling of the Mystery, but which threatens to 'stone' those who would emulate the simple trust of Caleb and Joshua.

> An appeal, addressed to readers of the writings of B. W. Newton, and C H. Macintosh, concerning the unique character of the dispensation of the Mystery and of Acts 28 as a dispensational frontier.

In 1907 and 1908, J. J. B. Coles wrote a series of articles in 'Things to Come' under the Editorship of Dr. E. W. Bullinger entitled KADESH BARNEA, in which he saw in the timidity of many believers, when faced with the teaching of Ephesians 3:1-13 and Colossians 1:24-28, and the unpleasant consequences of accepting that claim of the apostle to have received a dispensation for the Gentiles, a repetition of the attitude of the ten spies who said 'we be not able to go up' (Num. 13:31). While literal 'stoning with stones' (Num. 14:10) has not been resorted to by Christians who condemn our insistence upon Acts 28 as a dispensational frontier, the spiritual equivalent alas, has not been unknown in the past, can still be sensed in the present and will possibly be intensified in the future, if we do not misinterpret certain signs. It is not our custom to quote the opinions of others, or to cite their teaching, whether it be for or against our own, but to occupy our

time, strength and resources in giving positive teaching, leaving the vindication of our witness or its refutation to the Saviour Whom alone we recognize as 'Master and Lord'. However, in this leaflet, we are making some quotations from the writings of men who were prominent teachers among 'The Brethren' whose testimony, had it been followed, would have led the believer over the dispensational frontier of Acts 28, into the exclusively new and parenthetical dispensation of the Mystery, leaving intact Matthew 24 with its association with Daniel 9, as the hope of Israel, and yet allowing the position laid down in Romans 11 to colour the teaching, as it should and does, of the early epistles of Paul, namely Galatians, Hebrews, Romans, 1 and 2 Thessalonians and 1 and 2 Corinthians. These epistles while giving the great *doctrinal basis* of Justification by Faith for *all time*, revealed that Israel was still 'first', that the Gentile believer though 'justified' was, dispensationally, a 'wild olive' grafted contrary to nature into the existing olive tree of Israel. The organ of the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony (Watching and Waiting, March-April 1953) gives the testimony of one such teacher among the early Brethren. He saw that the *lo-ammi* condition of Israel since the rejection of their Messiah, demanded some compensatory change in the dealings of God with the Gentile world, and practically demanded the church of the new calling which was revealed to Paul as the prisoner of Jesus Christ. The article in question is entitled:

How B. W. NEWTON LEARNED PROPHETIC TRUTH

and one or two statements there recorded indicate how near that man of God came to ascending the hill country of the Amorites and entering into the high calling of the dispensation of the Mystery.

'The question is (says J.J.B. Coles in his opening article in *Things to Come,* March 1907), have *we* entered Canaan by way of the mountain of the Amorites? or, are we going with the multitude by the way of Jordan? The lesson of Kadesh-Barnea has been lost to many, and Caleb's

whole-heartedness has found but few imitators. We must of course be careful not to press an Old Testament type beyond a legitimate *application*'. B.W. Newton's immediate quest was the true interpretation of Prophecy, but Scripture is one in its testimony, so that to approximate to the truth of Prophecy will necessarily lead to the illumination of related revelation.

First we quote B.W. Newton's interpretation of Romans eleven:

ROMANS CHAPTER 11 CONSIDERED

> 'Circumstances, however, occurred, that led me to consider with care the eleventh chapter of Romans. I could not close my eyes to the fact that the future history of the *literal* Israel was there spoken of; and that it was put in marked contrast with the history of those who are *at present* being gathered out from among the Gentiles, *during* the time of Israel's unbelief. I saw the words 'there shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob' could not be explained of any past act of Grace that has hitherto been shown, either towards Jews or Gentiles. I saw that it could be explained only of the *future* forgiveness of Israel, *as a nation.* I saw also that Israel when nationally converted, are not to be merged in the present Gentile Church, for then they would have been represented in this chapter as grafted in upon the Gentile branch, which constitutes in Romans 11, the symbol of the present professing Church. On the contrary, it is said in this chapter that, as a *distinct* branch, they shall be grafted back into their own olive tree. These, and a few other connected truths, I began to discern, though dimly and imperfectly'.

B. W. Newton goes on to give clear and un- uncompromising testimony to the failure of the Preterite system of Prophecy, in which so much that is really future is interpreted of the past, and with this, we are in complete agreement, but his conviction now to be cited, *that there is a threefold division of time in Israel's history*, pointed so clearly to the present dispensation of the Mystery, that one is still left amazed and distressed that eyes so touched by the spirit of grace should not have seen the open door, and have entered into all the blessings that are revealed in the great Epistle of the Mystery, Ephesians. We quote again from B. W. Newton:

THREE PERIODS IN ISRAEL'S HISTORY

> I observed also, that the history of Israel during the time of their punishment and subjection to the Gentiles is distributed into three distinct divisions: the first extending from Nebuchadnezzar to their dispersion by Romans, the second being the *present Period of their dispersion*, the third, the yet future period of their national re-establishment in unbelief; so, the prophetic visions of Daniel are to be divided into three parts, corresponding to these three periods. But I observed this likewise, that when the first of these periods terminated, *historic detail terminated.* As soon as the dispersion of Israel was effected, and they ceased to have a recognized national existence in their land, there is a *pause* in the historic detail of Daniel — no person, no place, no date is mentioned during the present period of dispersion. But when the third period of their unbelieving history commences, when they again have returned in unbelief to their own land, then the historic detail of Daniel *re-commences*, and is given with even greater emphasis than before. So entirely is Gentile history made in the Scripture to revolve around Jerusalem as its centre. Whilst Jerusalem nationally exists, the history of the nations that are brought into connexion with it is given; but when Jerusalem ceases to exist nationally, the history of the Gentiles in Scripture ceases too.
>
> We are in the *interval*, the period of dispersion, now. It will terminate when Jerusalem is nationally reconstituted. (Watching and Waiting, March — April 1953).

Look at the words 'no person, no place, no date is mentioned during the present period of dispersion'. These words cry aloud that Dispensational Truth demands during the period of Israel's blindness which commenced at Acts 28:23-31, that no Old Testament Prophecy is being fulfilled. Matthew 24 also must belong not to the present calling of the Mystery, but to the 'third period' when the 'historic detail of Daniel recommences'; that a new revelation, with a new sphere, constitution and hope must be given by God if any Gentile is to be saved and blessed during the setting aside of the hitherto exclusive channel of blessing — Israel. Accepting B. W. Newton's view and taking it to its logical conclusion, we have the following threefold division of Israel's history:

FIRST DIVISION	SECOND DIVISION	THIRD DIVISION
From Nebuchadnezzar to Dispersion by the Romans, A D. 70, a few years after Acts 28.	'There is a pause'. Here comes the dispensation of the Mystery, a parenthesis, unconnected with Israel, Prophecy or Covenants. From Acts 28 to the resumption of prophecy.	Unbelieving history commences, historic detail of Daniel recommences. Daniel nine is intimately linked with Matthew 24 (Matt.24:15), and so, completely disassociated from the Second Division.

To the making known of the unique calling of this 'Second Division' wherein Israel is 'dispersed' the writer of this present leaflet has devoted the bulk of his life and energies, yet those who advocate the teaching of B. W. Newton as set out in the above quotation, can, at the self same time see nothing incongruous in seeing in Matthew 24 with its incisive reference to Daniel 9, characteristics of the hope of the church today. Is it too much to believe that a few, after pondering these things may be led, Berean like, to 'search and see'?

The May issue for 1952, 'Questions and Answers', edited by Dr. Harold P. Morgan, Riverton, New Jersey, U.S.A., opens with the following headline:

'WHAT WERE THE TEACHINGS OF EARLY PLYMOUTH BRETHREN REGARDING THE CHURCH, THE BODY OF CHRIST?'

Quotations are made in answer to this question from two teachers among the early Brethren, namely C. H. Macintosh, and Richard Holden.

> 'The thought of a church composed of Jew and Gentile "seated together in the heavenlies" LAY FAR BEYOND (*our emphasis*) the range of prophetic testimony .... We may range through the inspired pages of the law and the prophets, from one end to the other, and find no solution of "the great Mystery" of the Church .... Peter received the keys of the kingdom, and he used those keys, first to open the kingdom to the Jew, and then to the Gentile. But Peter never received a commission to unfold the mystery of the church' (*Life and Times of Elijah the Tishbite*).

How strange to find C.H.M. and C.H.W. saying the same things, yet how strange to note the way in which ‘The Brethren’ have honoured the one, and repudiated the other!

In 1870 Richard Holden wrote a work entitled:

‘THE MYSTERY, THE SPECIAL MISSION OF THE APOSTLE PAUL. THE KEY TO THE PRESENT DISPENSATION’.

Here is a brief quotation from this very precious testimony:

> ‘To make all see what is the dispensation, or in other words, to be the divinely-appointed instructor in the character and order of the present time, as Moses was in the dispensation of "law", is that special feature in the commission of Paul in which it was distinct from that of the other apostles .... If then it shall appear, that, far from seeing "what is the dispensation of the Mystery" the mass of Christians *have entirely missed it*, and, as the natural consequence have almost completely misunderstood Christianity, importing into it the things proper to another dispensation, and so confounding Judaism and Christianity in an inexpressible jumble; surely it is a matter for deep humiliation before God, and for earnest, prayerful effort to retrieve with God’s help, this important and neglected teaching’.

It seems almost unbelievable that a movement that could produce such a testimony, could nevertheless perpetuate that ‘inexpressible jumble’ namely of confusing the NEW COVENANT or TESTAMENT made *only* ‘with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah’ (Jer. 31:31), and make it the very centre of that worship and assembly, thereby ‘confounding Judaism’ with the truth of the Church of the Mystery, the present dispensation and calling, in which *no covenant* new or old finds a place, but a choice and a promise made ‘before the foundation of the world’.

We send forth this leaflet with the prayer that the Lord may direct its distribution, so that some, at present distracted by the ‘inexpressible jumble’ entertained by the successors of such writers as C. H. Macintosh and Richard Holden, may have their eyes opened to see ‘what is the hope of His calling’.

A reference to the closing words of J.N.D. in his 'Synopsis' on Acts 28, will show that he too believed at the setting aside of the Jew, believers enter into '*another sphere on other grounds*', yet his followers definitely turn back from this Kadesh-Barnea, and build upon the epistle to the Corinthians for their assembly and its communion, and say hard things, as did Israel, of those who have accepted this position and who have followed out its logical conclusions.

This interim dispensation is called in Ephesians 3:9, R.V. 'The dispensation of the mystery, which from all ages hath been hid in God who created all things'.

THE MYSTERY

'WHAT IS THE DISPENSATION OF THE MYSTERY?'
(Eph. 3:9 R.V.)

For the guidance of the earnest inquirer after truth, most books of the Bible contain one or more key words, which if faithfully accepted and applied, unlock treasures of truth that must otherwise remain undiscovered. Some time ago attempts were made to teach that the epistle to the Hebrews and that to the Ephesians taught the same truth, ministered to the same calling, belonged to the same dispensation. Nevertheless, however many parallels may have been discovered, no unbiassed mind could resist the fact that whereas the central feature of Hebrews is THE NEW COVENANT, explicitly referable to the prophecy of Jeremiah (Heb. 8:8-13, Jer. 31:31-34) the central feature of Ephesians is The MYSTERY, explicitly said to have been 'hid in God' (Eph. 3:9); and 'hid from ages and from generations, but now made manifest' (Col. 1:26). It is not our intention to take up this controversy here, but in this booklet it will be our endeavour to set out as clearly as grace will enable, an answer to the question 'What is the dispensation of the Mystery?' Before considering either the occurrences of the word 'mystery' or its several contexts and connexions, it will be necessary to seek the essential meaning of the term.

THE MEANING OF 'MYSTERY'

In the first place we observe that the Greek word *musterion* has not been translated, but carried over from the original and expressed in English letters. The word is derived from *muo* 'to close, to shut' as the lips or the eyes, and so to preserve a secret. This root *mu* appears in other languages than the Greek, with much the same significance. 'Mute', dumb, comes *via* the Latin *mutum*, the Greek *muo* and the Sanskrit *muka*, and so also is derived 'mutter', and such words as mum, mum-chance, mum budget, mumble, all of which have the idea of something shut or hidden as a common factor. There are other terms found in the New Testament that indicate an intended contrast with the pagan mysteries which were in active operation in the earth. The many references to 'the perfect' is one such term, the word indicating one who had been 'initiated' into the mysteries.

'Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are *perfect* ... the wisdom of God in a *mystery*' (1 Cor. 2:6,7).
'Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded' (Phil. 3:15).

When the apostle said 'in all things I am instructed' (Phil. 4:12) he used the Greek word *mueomai* 'to be initiated into a mystery'. It is significant that where some of Israel are shown to be blind and the proclamation of the near advent of the kingdom of heaven gives place to 'the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven' that the word *kammuo is* used, 'to close, and to shut' the eyes (Matt. 13:15), *kammuo* being a compound of *kata* 'down' and *muo* 'shut'. While it must ever remain true, that if God hides a thing, no human wisdom or power will ever lead to its discovery, it is also true that, when once such a mystery has been made known, it is as understandable as any other subject of revelation, and the following passages make this feature quite clear.

'It is given unto you TO KNOW the mysteries' (Matt. 13:11).
'Ye should not be IGNORANT of this mystery' (Rom. 11:25).
'According to the REVELATION of the mystery' (Rom. 16:25).

'We SPEAK the wisdom of God in a mystery' (1 Cor. 2.7).
'Though I UNDERSTAND all mysteries' (1 Cor. 13:2).
'Having MADE KNOWN the mystery' (Eph. 1:9; 3:3).

Other passages could be cited but these are sufficient to show that there is nothing 'mysterious' about the mysteries of Scripture, they are secrets, hidden by God until the appointed time for the revelation arrives and thus they form a part of the truth that pertains to the time then present.

MYSTERY OR MYTH

The word translated 'fable' in 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus and 2 Peter is the Greek *muthos*, another derivative of *muo.* At the end of his ministry, the apostle Paul warns of perilous times, and among other things says:

'All they which are in Asia be turned away from ME'.
'They shall turn away their ears from the TRUTH, and shall be turned unto MYTHS' (2 Tim. 1:15; 4:4).

We can see this sad turning away from Paul and his teaching today, and the ever-increasing substitution of the 'myth' with all its blight and deception, for the 'mystery' with all its glory and grace.

The first occurrence of *musterion* 'secret' or 'mystery' is in the book of the prophet Daniel, and there is significance in that simple fact. Daniel may be likened to the apostle Paul. Both were 'prisoners of the Lord', both had a special message for the 'Gentiles', both exercised their ministry consequent upon the failure of Israel. The relationship of Daniel, Israel, Gentile and Mystery may be seen in the following sequence:

Daniel	Kingdom of Israel suspended	Times of Gentiles begin.
Matthew 13	The mysteries of the Kingdom	Isaiah 6:9,10.
Acts 28*	Kingdom and hope of Israel suspended	Mystery 'For you Gentiles'.

So far as Israel is concerned it can be written:

'When HISTORY ceases, MYSTERY begins'.

It can be demonstrated from the Old Testament records, that on more than one occasion the prophetic clock stopped, and while mundane time goes on, time as related to Israel is limited to their being reckoned as *ammi* 'My people'; it ceases to be reckoned by God, when Israel becomes *Lo-ammi* 'not My people', and during the waiting period spoken of in Hosea 3, the parenthesis of the present dispensation of the Mystery was introduced by God at Acts 28. No prophecies, other than those found in Paul's epistles, especially those dealing with 'the last days' in 1 and 2 Timothy, will be fulfilled during the dispensation of the Mystery. Israel are the people of prophecy and when they emerge from their long exile and look upon Him Whom they have pierced, the present dispensation will have come to a close.

ISRAEL AND THE MYSTERY

When we consider all that God has said concerning the place that Israel occupies in the outworking of His purposes, when we remember that the Lord Himself acknowledged that 'Salvation is of the Jews' (John 4.22) any failure on their part to live up to their high destiny, must inevitably bring about catastrophic consequences, and whether we believe that at Acts 28, that great dispensational rupture occurred or not, the events that happened both to Israel and Jerusalem in A.D. 70 make a change of the attitude of God to the Gentile imperative if salvation is not to die out of the earth. What God would

* See the booklet *The Dispensational Frontier.*

do, should Israel fail, no one could tell, for such an event is neither foreshadowed nor discussed. No one living before Acts 28 became history, except possibly Paul himself, knew that *before* the foundation of the world, God had foreseen and provided against such a condition, and until this new truth was revealed to Paul as the Prisoner of Jesus Christ for us Gentiles, it necessarily remained a 'mystery' in the fullest sense of the term. That aliens and strangers, Christless, Godless, hopeless Gentiles could ever be the objects of such superlative grace, that of such it could be written:

> 'And hath raised us up together, and made us SIT TOGETHER in heavenly places in Christ Jesus',

never entered the mind of man, and even today is received by comparatively few.

When the seventh angel sounds, the mystery of God will be finished. Had there been no sin, no death, no failure, no serpent, Satan or Devil there would have been no need for mystery or secret. Israel's failure at the proclamation of the Gospel of the Kingdom is met by the introduction of the '*mysteries* of the kingdom of heaven' in which the long-deferred end is related to the words of the second parable 'an enemy hath done this'. The mystery of the gospel as spoken of in Romans 16:25, something that had been 'hushed' since the world began, looks to Romans 16:20 where Genesis 3:15 is brought into light, and the enmity between the two seeds is seen to be the background. As we go through the several mysteries of the New Testament that impinge upon our calling, we shall find that this feature is constant. The Mystery is the answer of the *Wise* God to the machinations of His *wily* foe. He reveals His will, but does not always make known what might be the 'mystery' of His will (Eph. 1:4,5,9). It was the revealed 'will' of God that if Adam disobeyed the Lord's command, 'in the day ... 'he would surely die. It was the *mystery* of His will, and all unknown to Adam, to provide a Redeemer 'before the foundation of the world'

(1 Pet. 1:19,20) and so take the wise in his own craftiness and outwit the Devil in all his ways.

THE BAPTISM INTO MOSES

(The baptism from which water was excluded)

We who publish this booklet have been, by that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, into a land of promise, a land not bounded by earthly frontiers, not flowing with milk and honey, not the seat of an earthly Jerusalem, containing no 'Dead Sea', but of which the earthly land of promise can be used as a type. We have been redeemed by the precious blood even as Israel were by the Passover (Eph. 1:7), and have had our Red Sea experience at least in one vital sense. Israel, on leaving Egypt were 'baptized INTO Moses' (1 Cor. 10:1,2) we have been baptized INTO Christ. *This is the first of all baptisms and the most neglected.* Christian societies have concentrated so much attention on the baptisms that were introduced into the tabernacle worship, which the epistle to the Hebrews speaks of as 'divers baptisms and carnal ordinances imposed on them' (Heb. 9:10), that the one essential baptism has been overlooked and neglected.

In most places where the Red Sea crossing is mentioned in the Scriptures, our attention is drawn to the singular fact that Israel went 'on dry land in the midst of the sea'.

'The children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the DRY GROUND ...the children of Israel walked upon DRY LAND'.

'The children of Israel went on DRY LAND in the midst of the sea'. 'The Lord DRIED UP the water of the Red Sea'.

'The Lord your God DRIED UP the waters of the Jordan from before you ... as ... the Red Sea'.

'He turned the sea into DRY LAND: they went through the flood on foot'.

'He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it was DRIED UP: so He led them through the depths, as through the wilderness'.

'That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness'.

'By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by DRY LAND'.

Exod. 14:22,29; 15:19; Josh. 2:10; 4:23; Psa. 66:6; 106:9; Isa. 63:12,13; Heb. 11:29.

If we believe that 'all Scripture is given by inspiration of God' then this repeated insistence upon 'dry land' is *essential truth.* If we believe that the Old Testament types foreshadowed New Testament realities, we cannot, we dare not use *water* baptism to fulfil the type of the baptism of Israel into Moses. The church of the Mystery is baptized into Christ, and there is the same insistence upon the absence of water. In the unity of the spirit (Eph. 4:3-5) there is but 'one' baptism, whereas during the Acts there was baptism in both water and spirit (Acts 10:47). This unity will not tolerate two baptisms, any more than it will tolerate two Bodies, two faiths or two Lords. Before there can be any participation in the high glories of the Ephesian teaching, this one baptism, typified by the baptism of all Israel 'into Moses' without a spot of water in the process, must become a fact.

> 'Buried with Him in *baptism*' (Col. 2:12) follows 'In Whom also ye are circumcised with the *circumcision made without hands* ... by the circumcision of Christ',

and when it can be proved that the church of Colosse were instructed to perform the rite of literal circumcision, it will be time enough to argue that the burial with baptism that follows takes place at the font by sprinkling or at the pool by immersion.

Assuming that the reader has travelled with us in spirit so far and is willing to examine the clusters of blessings that may be represented by this bunch of the grapes of Eshcol, let us turn our attention to some of the unique features of this great Epistle to the Ephesians.

ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS

(Eph. 1:3)

Writing to the believer before the great dispensational landmark of Acts 28, Paul speaks of 'the blessing of Abraham' coming on the Gentiles, but Abraham is never mentioned in the 'Prison Epistles', and no blessing of Abraham is associated either with 'heavenly places' or 'before the foundation of the world'. There are some

terms used in the Scriptures, which by their very nature and the place they occupy in the scheme of salvation, come over and over again in the writings of the apostle. Such terms as ‘faith’, ‘redemption’, ‘justification’ will come to the mind immediately, and are found in many of the epistles whether written before or after Acts 28. No one moreover could deny the use of the word ‘blessing’ when speaking of these great doctrines of salvation, yet the fact remains that Romans 15:29 ‘the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ’, 1 Corinthians 10:16 ‘the cup of blessing which we bless’ and Galatians 3:14 ‘the blessing of Abraham’ are the only other occurrences of the word in Paul’s epistles. So far as the Prison Epistles are concerned Ephesians 1:3 stands alone, the word ‘blessing’ meeting us in the very opening words of the new revelation and never again employed in any capacity by the apostle. Terms such as ‘seated together’ and ‘blessing’ receive emphasis by their glorious solitariness. They stand alone and are beyond compare.

Green, in his handbook says that where the adjective *pas* ‘all’ in the singular number is written without the article ‘the’, it signifies ‘every’, but with the article it means ‘the whole of the object’ which it qualifies. Thus *pasa polis* means ‘every city’; *pasa he polis* or *he pasa polis* ‘the whole city’ and *he polis pasa* would have a slightly different meaning — either ‘the city, all of it’ or ‘the city in every part’.

The church of the one body is blessed ‘with *every* blessing that is spiritual’. This is even wider in its scope than to say ‘all spiritual blessings’, for if the number of the blessings were but few — say four, they could still be defined as ‘all spiritual’, whereas the mind reels as it endeavours to grasp the fact that there is no blessing that comes under the category of ‘spiritual’ that is omitted. It is highly improbable, that, while we are in this life, we shall be able to appreciate a tithe of what is here so freely bestowed.

In complete contrast with the spiritual blessings of the Mystery, are the ‘carnal’ or ‘natural’ blessings of the law.

> ‘Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field ... blessed shall be thy basket and thy store ... the LORD shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses ... the LORD shall make thee plenteous in goods ...’ (Deut. 28:1-11).
>
> ‘Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in His ways. For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table’. (Psa. 128:1-3).

How completely opposite all this is from the experience of the believer under the dispensation of grace. Like Paul, he may know what it is to suffer need, to be in want, to know what it is to be continually in trouble. He will have no guarantee of a settled dwelling-place, he has no promise of special protection during periods of danger, his ‘basket and store’ may show impoverishment, while the ungodly may appear to prosper. It would be foolish to assess a man’s spiritual worth today by the size of his bank balance, or any other material standard. Ephesians 1:3 does not speak of daily bread, of dwelling-place, of home comforts or of business success. It visualizes a new plane, the spiritual, which is on resurrection ground. The earnest of our inheritance is not a bunch of grapes as it was when the spies returned with the grapes of Eshcol, neither are our enemies men of flesh and blood, but they are spiritual Canaanites, principalities and powers.

IN HEAVENLY PLACES

(Eph. 1:3)

We have said elsewhere that this phrase is unique, that it occurs in the epistle to the Ephesians and nowhere else. The unwary can easily be moved when they read that, in spite of what we have said, *epouranios* occurs in fifteen other places outside of Ephesians, as widely distributed as Matthew, John, 1 Corinthians, Philippians, 2 Timothy and Hebrews. We have been accused of misleading God’s

people and of misquoting Scripture, and yet, in spite of all that has or can be said we repeat that the phrase 'in heavenly places' *en tois epouraniois* is unique, occurring nowhere else than in the epistle to the Ephesians. The word 'heavenly' *epouranios* most certainly occurs elsewhere, this we have never denied. We read in Matthew 18:35 of 'My *heavenly* Father' and in John 3:12 of '*heavenly* things', in 1 Corinthians 15:40 of '*celestial* bodies' and in Hebrews of those who 'tasted of the *heavenly* gift'. No one, so far as our knowledge permits us to say, has ever maintained that those Hebrews who had tasted of the heavenly gift, had actually ascended up to heaven itself in order to do so! Many things may be heavenly in origin and in character that are not enjoyed 'in heaven', and this is the point, it is this feature that is unique. The reader will agree that the word 'places' answers the question 'where?' and our first consideration must be to examine the Scriptures to see whether 'this is so'.

Hou is an adverb of place, and is used elliptically instead of the full expression *eph hou tupou* 'in what place'. We read in Colossians 3:1 'seek those things which are above, WHERE Christ sitteth on the right hand of God'. Presently we shall see that 'heavenly places' is synonymous with 'where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God', and that it is moreover allied with the word *ano* 'above', which also is directly connected with these heavenly places.

This one passage, Colossians 3:1, establishes that Christ is represented as being someWHERE, and if He is said to be *seated at* the right hand of God in heavenly places in Ephesians, no more need be said on that score. That such a statement is true, every reader is aware, for Ephesians 1:20,22 directs our wondering attention to the exalted position of Christ, Who, being raised from the dead, was set 'at His own right hand in the heavenly places'. This sphere of exalted glory is further defined; it is said to be 'far above all principality and power' (Eph. 1:21). Now the simple connective *ano* is sufficient to take us to

'where' Christ sitteth at the right hand of God (Col. 3:1), consequently the intensive *huperano* employed by the apostle, and translated 'far above' in Ephesians 1:21, cannot certainly mean less, it must mean more than the simple *ano.* If we allow the apostle to speak for himself we shall be left in no doubt as to the nature of this exaltation. In Ephesians 4 we read:

> 'He that descended is the same also that ascended *up far above all heavens*, that He might fill all things' (Eph. 4:10).

Let us notice one or two important features in this passage. 'He ascended up', *anabaino*, literally means 'to go up' as one would a mountain (Matt. 5:1); or as the false shepherds who 'climb up' some other way (John 10:1). The Ascension is put in contrast with His 'descent' *katabaino.* This also primarily means 'to go down' as rain descends (Matt. 7:25), or when one descends a mountain (Matt. 17:9). Ephesians 4 tells us that His descent was to 'the lower parts' and that His Ascent was 'far above all heavens', and lest we should be tempted for any reason to set a limit to this ascent, we are further informed that this Descent and this Ascent was in order that He may 'fill all things'. Consequently, the Saviour ascended to the highest conceivable position in glory. Now this position described as *huperano* 'far above all heavens' is found in Ephesians 1:21, 'far above all principality and power'. *They are co-extensive in scope and meaning.* In other parts of the New Testament we read of this Ascension and one or two passages give further meaning and point to the phrase we are examining. The apostle speaking of the Ascension when writing to the Hebrews, says of Christ that He 'is passed *into* the heavens', which the Revised Version corrects to read 'passed *through* the heavens'. The word here is *dierchomai* 'passed through' as Israel passed through the Red Sea (1 Cor. 10:1) or as the proverbial camel is spoken of as going through the eye of a needle (Matt. 19:24). Again, in Hebrews 7:26 Christ is said to have been made '*higher* than the heavens'. We must therefore understand that the *epi* in the compound *epouranios* does really indicate position and place — every

reference so far considered points to that one fact, this is 'where' Christ sits, this is 'where' all spiritual blessings will be enjoyed.

However, we have not yet concluded our examination. Christ is said to be in 'heaven' (Heb. 9:24) in the self same epistle that says He 'passed through the heavens'. How can this be? The Hebrew reader acquainted with the first chapter of Genesis would need no explanation. The heaven, which is 'at the right hand of God' is the heaven of Genesis 1:1. The heavens through which Christ 'passed' and above which He ascended is called the 'firmament' or 'expansion' in Genesis 1:6. This 'heaven', spread out during the ages 'as a curtain' and 'as a tent to dwell in', is to pass away. The Lord is far above this limited 'heaven' and *so is the sphere of blessing* allotted to the church of this dispensation. Here then are two unique features of this high calling of Ephesians.

It is not possible, nor even desirable, that we should take notice of every difference of opinion that is current, but in the present instance silence could be misinterpreted and damage done to the cause of truth. An honoured teacher who has stood for the great principle of right division for many years has published his findings in the matter of 'heavenly places' in a booklet that is headed:

'The Earth, not Heaven, is the
future home of God's redeemed'.

> 'This is what I believe. It is a belief that is not based upon tradition, upon emotion, or upon wishful thinking. It is not a conclusion that I have arrived at hurriedly'.

This brother's contention is that the words translated in Ephesians 1:3 'in heavenly places' should be rendered 'among heavenly beings'.

In the first place if the addition of the word 'beings' be permissible so also can the addition of the word 'places'. If Ephesians 1:3 was the only occurrence of the Greek phrase thus translated, we should have to admit that there was just as much reason to accept one translation as the

other. This however is not so. We turn to the second occurrence of this phrase, namely in Ephesians 1:20.

There the reference is to the Ascension which, as Ephesians 4:10 shows, placed the Lord '"far above *all heavens*", that He might fill all things', even as Ephesians 1:20-23 reveals that Christ our Head is seated at the right hand of God *far above all principality and power*'.

Christ is not represented here as being seated AMONG these heavenly beings but ABOVE them. The apostle even goes so far as to include 'every name that is named' either now or in the future and clinches his argument by the quotation 'and hath put all things under His feet'. Paul has not left us in doubt as to what this quotation implies.

> 'For in that He put *all* in subjection under Him, He left *nothing* that is not put under him' (Heb. 2:8).
>
> 'But when He saith, *all* things are put under Him, it is manifest that *He is excepted*, which did put *all things under Him*' (1 Cor. 15:27).

With this as our guide, we must decline to accept any conclusion, however slowly arrived at, that would read into this passage that the seated Christ is only conceived of as AMONG and not FAR ABOVE every heavenly or spiritual being, 'GOD' alone being the most glorious exception.

We are more sure than ever that we have been blessed with all spiritual blessings IN heavenly places, and while thankful for the contrary opinion that has compelled us to 'search and see', we cannot but be concerned about those who may not be able to examine such suggestions for themselves.

Summarizing so far, the 'grapes' of our 'Eshcol' include:

(1) Every blessing that is spiritual, which will be enjoyed

(2) In heavenly places, where Christ sits at the right hand of God.

BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD

(Eph. 1:4)

This unique company 'the church which is His Body' is not only blessed with every blessing that is spiritual, not only blessed in heavenly places, but was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. This too is unique. We have a number of passages which speak of those who are associated with a choice and a call FROM or SINCE the foundation of the world, but one company only is ever said to have been chosen BEFORE. Let us set the Scriptures that use these terms before the eye:

FROM THE FOUNDATION

(1) With reference to the use of parables, in speaking of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

'That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world' (Matt 13:35).

(2) With reference to the separation of the nations at the second coming of Christ.

'Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world' (Matt. 25:34).

(3) With reference to the character of those who killed the prophets sent to them:

'That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation' (Luke 11:50).

(4) With reference to the typical character of the Sabbath:

'As I have sworn in My wrath, if they shall enter into My rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world' (Heb. 4:3).

(5) With reference to the character of the offering of Christ:

'Nor yet that He should offer Himself often ... for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world' (Heb. 9:25,26).

(6) With reference to names written in the book of life:

'Every one whose name hath not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that hath been slain' (Rev. 13:8 R.V. Margin)

'They whose name hath not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world' (Rev. 17:8 R.V.).

BEFORE THE FOUNDATION

(1) With reference to Christ alone:

(a) 'Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world' (John 17:24).

(b) 'As of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world' (1 Pet. 1:19,20).

(2) With reference to the redeemed:

'Chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world' (Eph. 1.4).

Comment upon the most obvious difference between these two sets of passages is unnecessary. Let us, however, not miss one precious item of doctrine that is revealed by comparing together the three references to 'before the foundation'.

In John 17:24 Christ was 'loved' *agapao*; in 1 Peter 1:19,20 He was 'without blemish and without spot' *amomos.* In Ephesians 1:4 the believer is said to have been chosen before the foundation of the world 'in love' *agape*, to be 'blameless' *amomos.*

Here, those who were chosen in Christ were looked upon as being so closely identified with Him that the same terms are used. No wonder that as we proceed, we read of further identification with the Beloved, that not only speaks of being 'crucified together with Christ' and 'raised together' as in the early ministry of Paul, but 'seated together' and ultimately to be manifested together with Him in glory in the epistles of the Mystery.

These two sets of terms ‘before’ and ‘since’ indicate two distinct time periods. Further studies will show that ‘before’ or ‘since’ the age times is a somewhat similar set of terms, but before these can be allied we must arrive at some understanding of the meaning of the word ‘foundation’.

Now, happily, we have a New Testament quotation in Hebrews 1:10, where the word ‘foundation’ is expressed by the word *themelion*, but when we turn to any of these passages where the words ‘before’ or ‘from’ the foundation of the world occur, *themelion* is not found, but instead the word *katabole* is employed.

Now it is impossible to argue that Paul, for some peculiar reason, would not and did not employ the word *themelion*, for it occurs as the translation of the foundation of a temple in Ephesians 2:20, ‘the foundation of the apostles and prophets’, and again in 1 Corinthians 3:10 and 2 Timothy 2:19. Therefore, there must be some good reason for choosing so different a word as *katabole.* This word has entered into our own language as a biological term, metabolism, being the name given to the process in an organism or a living cell, by which nutritive material is built up into living matter and this process is divided into (1) constructive metabolism which is called *anabolism*, by which protoplasm is broken down into simpler substances to perform special functions; and (2) destructive metabolism, which is called *katabolism.*

In its biological use, *katabole* indicates ‘destruction’. It is strange, that if this word means ‘to place upon a foundation’, it should have been adopted by scientists to indicate the very opposite, namely disruption. Very clear evidence of the essential meaning of *katabole* can be gathered from the usage of the verbal form *kataballo.* This verb *kataballo* is used three times in the New Testament:

‘*Cast down,* but not destroyed’ (2 Cor. 4:9),
‘The accuser of our brethren *is cast down*’ (Rev. 12:10),

indicate very clearly the meaning of the word. The other reference is Hebrews 11:11 where it is translated ‘conceive’.

In Hebrews 6:1 the word is used with *themelion*, the true word for a foundation, but this addition alters the whole intention, and there it appears to have its primitive meaning ‘cast down’, but whether in the sense of overthrowing, or of laying a foundation, only a most exhaustive study of the context can decide. Job 12:14 quoted below, has a bearing.

Kataballo occurs twenty-nine times in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament Scriptures. It will strengthen the faith of many, and deepen the conviction of most, if these references which contain the word *kataballo* are quoted, but to avoid occupying a disproportionate amount of space, verses will not be given in full. We will also quote from the A.V. instead of giving a translation of the LXX version, except in those cases where the LXX uses an entirely different text. Those who have access to the LXX will not be hindered by this course and those who cannot refer to it will be helped.

‘Joab battered the wall, *to throw it down*’ (2 Sam. 20:15; LXX 2 Kings).

‘Ye (they) shall *fell* (felled) every good tree’ (2 Kings 3:19,25, LXX 4 Kings).

‘As one was *felling* a beam’ (2 Kings 6:5; LXX 4 Kings).

‘They *slew* him with a sword’ (2 Chron. 32:21).

‘Behold He *breaketh down*, and it cannot be built again’ (Job 12:14).

‘He *teareth* me in His wrath’ (Job 16:9).

‘He *breaketh* me with breach upon breach’ (Job 16:14).

‘To *cast down* the poor and needy’ (Psa. 37:14, LXX 36).

‘Thou *casteth* them *down* into destruction’ (Psa. 73:18, LXX 72).

‘To *overthrow* them in the wilderness’ (Psa. 106:26,27, LXX 105).

‘She *hath cast down* many wounded’ (Prov. 7:26).

‘The words of a talebearer are *as wounds*’ (Prov. 18:8).

‘Like a city that *is broken down*, and without walls’ (Prov. 25:28).

‘Esebon and Eleale *have cast down* thy trees’ (LXX translation, Isa. 16:9).

‘The lofty city, He *layeth it low*’ (Isa. 26:5).

'I will cause them *to fall* by the sword before their enemies' (Jer. 19:7).
'I *will cast down* your slain men before your idols' (Ezek. 6:4).
'Thy remnant *shall fall* by the sword' (Ezek. 23:25).
'They *shall destroy* the walls of Tyrus, and *break down* her towers' (Ezek. 26:4).
'He *shall cast down* with his swords' (LXX translation, Ezek. 26:9).
'He *shall cast down* thy walls' (LXX translation Ezek. 26:12).
'I will leave thee *thrown* into the wilderness' (Ezek. 29:5).
'I will cause the sword *to fall* out of his hand' (Ezek. 30:22).
'Have him *cast down* upon the mountains' (LXX translation, Ezek. 31:12).
'Will I cause thy multitude *to fall*' (Ezek. 32:12).
'Thou *shalt fall* upon the mountains of Israel' (Ezek. 39:4).
'He *shall cast down* many ten thousands' (Dan. 11:12).

This is rather a formidable list, and the verification of each reference is no light task, as in one or two passages there is no obvious Hebrew equivalent, yet we believe it is impossible for any reader not to be impressed with the solidarity of its witness. Every single reference is for the translation 'overthrow', *not one* is for the translation found in the A.V. of Ephesians 1:4.

This however is not all. If each reference be read in its own context, the references will be found to be those of battle, of siege, of destruction, of judgment, which tilt the beam of the balances still farther. If in addition we discover what Hebrew words have been translated by *kataballo* in the LXX our evidence will be complete. These we will supply, for the benefit of any who may not have the facilities to discover them.

Naphal 'To cast down, to fall' (LXX, 2 Sam. 20:15 and sixteen other references).
Haras 'To cast down' (LXX Job 12:14; Ezek. 26:4,12).
Shachath 'To mar, corrupt or destroy' (LXX Ezek. 26:4).
Natash 'To leave, spread out' (LXX Ezek. 29:5; 31:12).
Nathats 'To break down' (LXX Ezek. 26:9).
Parats 'To break forth' (LXX Job 16:14; Psa. 106:29).
Taraph 'To tear' (LXX Job 16:9).
Satam 'To hate' (LXX Job 16:9).

Not a solitary Hebrew word that means to build, to lay a foundation, to erect, is here but a variety of words every one meaning destruction, spoiling, or causing to fall. This is 'proof positive', no reasoning is necessary except the most elementary recognition of fact when it is presented. From every point of view, the word *katabole* in Ephesians 1:4 should be translated 'overthrow'.

The Church of the One Body consequently is blessed with peculiar blessings, these blessings are to be enjoyed in a peculiar sphere, and this Church is the only company connected specifically with the 'overthrow of the world'. Proof that this 'overthrow' is referred to in Genesis 1:2 will be found in the articles on Ephesians in Volume 36 of *The Berean Expositor.*

ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED

(Eph. 1:6)

When we think of the wonder of redeeming love, and can turn to such passages as 1 Corinthians 1:30 or 3:22,23 where Christ is made unto the believer 'wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption' and where we read 'ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's' we may well demur at the suggestion that to be 'accepted in the Beloved' is one of the unique blessings of the dispensation of the Mystery. Let us see for ourselves. The words 'made accepted' translate the Greek *charitoo* which occurs in but one other place in the New Testament. It is the salutation of the angel to Mary.

'Hail, thou that art HIGHLY FAVOURED' (Luke 1:28).

So unique is this term that the Greek word is unknown to classical Greek, and surely no one will deny that Mary the mother of our Lord held a unique place in the history of womankind. To have focussed upon her the prophecy of Genesis 3:15 and of Isaiah 7:14 and 9:6, and to be associated as she was so intimately with the mystery of Godliness (1 Tim. 3:16) gives this lowly woman a place that is indeed one of high favour. It is *this word* that the

apostle singled out from all the words that were available, because NO OTHER CALLING is so related to Christ in His super-heavenly position as this church of the Mystery. The title of Christ 'The Beloved' too is as rare as it is lovely. The title is found in Matthew 3:17, 12:18 and 17:5 in which we read the added words 'well pleased'. In Colossians, which belongs to the same dispensation as Ephesians, Christ is called 'The Son of His love' (Col. 1:13), but Ephesians 1:6 is the only occurrence of the title 'Beloved' outside the Gospels. Both the 'acceptance' therefore, and the One in Whom this acceptance is found, are unique.

We have now exhibited some of the blessings that belong exclusively to this dispensation of the Mystery. We do most earnestly plead with the reader to ponder them as before God, to re-read the exhortation given by Caleb and Joshua (Num. 14:6-9) and the awful alternative of Numbers 14:10. There are, however, more unique blessings to exhibit, and the next is a title given to the church of the one body that seems too wonderful to be true. It is called:

THE FULNESS OF HIM THAT FILLETH ALL IN ALL

(Eph. 1:23)

The Saviour descended into the lower parts of the earth, and ascended *far above all heavens*, that He might *fill all things* (Eph. 4:10,11), and the church which is His Body is the fulness of Him that filleth all in all! This church has a standard, it is nothing less than 'The measure of the stature of the FULNESS of Christ' (Eph. 4:13). Where in the whole range of the Scriptures can such a position or such a title be found? To this most high and wondrous calling the apostle refers in Colossians 2:9,10.

> 'For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete (FILLED TO THE FULL) in Him, which is the Head of all principality and power'.

The following comment, by J. Armitage Robinson, D.D., is suggestive:

> ‘We now come to what is perhaps the most remarkable expression in the whole epistle. It is the phrase in which St. Paul further describes the church, which He has just declared to be Christ’s Body, as "the fulness of Him Who all in all is being filled". When the apostle thus speaks of the church as the *Pleroma* or Fulness of Christ, and in the same breath speaks of the Christ as "being fulfilled", he would appear to mean that, in some mysterious sense, the church is that without which "the Christ" is not complete, but with which He is or will be complete ... ’.

Just as in Philippians we read that for the purpose of salvation, the Lord ‘emptied Himself’ (*heauton ekenose* Philippians 2:7), so, still in relation to the redemptive purpose, and in no way intruding into the realm of essential Deity, that ‘self-emptying’ of His most wonderful DESCENT into humanity, is more than compensated, by this equally wonderful counterbalancing ‘filling’ associated with His ASCENSION as Head of this company. He shall indeed in every sphere be ‘satisfied’ (Isa. 53:11).

Following close upon this most wonderful revelation of the Divine purpose in this unique church, is the equally overwhelming statement, that this company is potentially

MADE TO SIT TOGETHER IN HEAVENLY PLACES
IN CHRIST JESUS

(Eph. 2:6)

This church shares with those whose calling is found in the epistle to the Romans, in that both are reckoned to have been quickened together, raised together with Christ, but never in all the highest flight of teaching, or of exultant worship, has any believer of any other calling, ever been seen as ‘seated together’ where Christ sits at the right hand of God. *Sunkathizo* occurs but once more in the New Testament namely in Luke 22:55 which passage has no bearing on the subject before us, leaving Ephesians 2:6 unique in the record of blessing. *Kathizo* means ‘to sit’ but there are comparatively few passages where the idea of

authority is absent. This aspect of the word has come over into our language; *cathedra* is a chair, to speak *ex cathedra* is to speak with authority, and a *cathedral* is so named for the 'seat' or throne of the bishop which it contains. When we read in Ephesians 1:20-22, it seems almost unbelievable that any believer, let alone those who were Gentiles, should be so closely joined to the Lord, as to be reckoned not only to have been raised up together, but made to sit together in those heavenly places 'far above all', but such is the glory of His grace. The epistle to The Hebrews emphasizes the fact that Christ is seated at the right hand of God, but nowhere throughout that epistle is the believer ever said to be 'seated together' in heaven's holiest of all. The Hebrew believers were bidden to 'draw near', the Ephesian saints were 'made nigh' and wondrous as the calling revealed in Hebrews is, there is nothing comparable to Ephesians 2:6 to be found in any other epistle.

Conclusion

Here, under the symbol of the grapes of Eshcol, we have presented a few of the unique blessings that are to be found ONLY in the Dispensation of the Mystery, and which are peculiar to the epistles of Paul which were written by him after Israel were set aside and became 'Lo-Ammi' at Acts 28.

Should the present reader be unable to accept the idea that Acts 28 constitutes a 'Dispensational Frontier' he is recommended to see the evidences set out in the pamphlet of that name. If after searching to see, the reader remains unconvinced, we must accept some measure of blame for the manner of our presentation, but on the other hand such readers may belong to another calling, for no amount of argument can ultimately over-ride the initial choice of the believer to this high calling that was made 'before the foundation of the world'. We are but instruments through whom that sovereign choice may at times be implemented. 'How shall they hear without a preacher?'

On the other hand it has been, and still will be, our joy to see the light dawn, and to see those who by nature are aliens and without either promises, covenants or fathers, entering into the blessings of the highest calling of God made known in the Scriptures.

Such can come without further preparation; they have no need to invent for themselves such titles as ‘spiritual Israel’, such have no need to thrust themselves into a ‘covenant’ made specifically with ‘the house of Israel and with the house of Judah’ and which cannot be implemented while the contracting parties are called by God Himself ‘NOT MY PEOPLE’.

May many be led to emulate the faith shown by Caleb and Joshua, to shun the unbelieving attitude of the ten spies, to accept the evidence of these ‘Grapes of Eshcol’, believe, accept and thank the Lord for such overwhelming grace to those so far off, and then seek to walk worthy of such a high calling.

THE BEREAN PUBLISHING TRUST (CIO)

The Trust exists to distribute the works of Charles H. Welch, Stuart Allen, and other Bible teachers whose object is the Right Division of the Scriptures according to the principle laid down in 2 Timothy 2:15.

A comprehensive catalogue containing details of all our publications, together with a current price list, will be sent free on application to the address below :

The Berean Publishing Trust (CIO)
52A Wilson Street,
LONDON, EC2A 2ER
England

THE BEREAN EXPOSITOR

This is a magazine which is devoted to Biblical exposition and is published every two months. First published in 1909 it contains much that will provide interest and enjoyment for those who wish to know more of Christ and His Word, and thus give impetus to their faith and service for Him. Write to the above address for a specimen copy.