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The Berean Expositor

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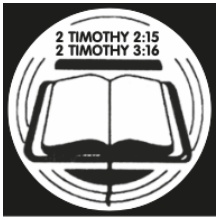
"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

2 Timothy 2:15, KJV



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Principals and Ministers
Stuart Allen 1965-1997
Alan Schofield 1997-2007

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Michael Garstang.....2007-2024
Archie Falisi 2024-present

The Berean Publishing Trust

This ministry is dedicated to teaching the Word of God rightly divided. It has published and distributed numerous books, booklets and other materials since its inception. With a continued commitment to serving our Lord, God and Head Jesus Christ, we strive to provide resources that foster a deeper understanding of the Scriptures.

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." (Acts 17:11)

The Chapel of the Opened Book

In 1943, Charles H. Welch established the chapel as "The Chapel of the Opened Book" and as a Bible School, serving as its first principal. He began Sunday and weekly meetings for Bible expositions, both of which remain a vital part of our ministry to this day. The chapel also houses The Berean Publishing Trust, which continues Charles H. Welch's legacy by distributing publications and promoting both on-site and online teachings of the Word of God.

The Berean Expositor

Charles H. Welch laid the foundation for The Berean Expositor (B.E.) by publishing its first edition as a "little pamphlet" in 1909. In the inaugural issue, he expressed his intent by stating, "We write the Berean Expositor, for Berean readers, trusting that they will test every statement by the Word of truth." Mr. Welch taught the importance of 2 Timothy 2:15 and Ephesians 3:9, and added in his little pamphlet, "Let us stand fast to the freedom wherewith Christ has made us free."

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:" (2 Timothy 3:16)

"And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:" (Ephesians 3:9)

Our Tenets:

- Full inspiration of the Scriptures
- Right division of the Scriptures
- Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ
- All sufficiency of His one sacrifice

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EDITORIAL

By: Archie Falisi

We send our warmest greetings to our readers and fellow-labourers of the Holy Scriptures. We take the opportunity to express our gratitude and appreciation for the continued readership and encouragement we received during the transition from Michael's retirement.

As we embark on our continued witness in 2025, may we be deeply conscious of the trust committed to us, as we endeavour and pray for the following year to have a much improved website and to write new articles in The Berean Expositor. To publicly make known the riches of His Glory of the Mystery contained in the apostle Paul's Prison Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians.

May the Lord give us grace and strength, in every opportunity to faithfully proclaim His Truth and our completeness In Him (Colossians 2:10; Colossians 4:3)

May we be counted among those who have no confidence in the flesh (Philippians 3:3), but have faith in Christ which separates us from the world and earthly things. May we be among those who set their affection on things above, not on things on the earth (Colossians 3:2). May we never lose focus that our citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20), as we look forward to our Lord's appearing, let us walk worthy of the calling with which you are called (Ephesians 4:1)

SAFEGUARDS AND CORRECTIVES

By: Charles H. Welch

"Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit..." (Ephesians 4:3)

We have seen that in the epistles to Timothy, Paul gives a warning concerning the departure from the faith that will characterise the *last days*. To leave the matter there would be to present a negative aspect of truth. The same Apostle gives positive teaching which is intended to be a corrective and a safeguard, and these are indicated by a series of injunctions, exhortations, and examples which fall into four main groups.

- To Keep (Eph 4:3; 2 Tim 1:12,14; 2 Tim 4:7)
- To Hold (Phil 2:16; Col 2:19; 1 Tim 1:19; 1 Tim 3:9; 1 Tim 6:12,19; 2 Tim 1:13; Titus 1:9)
- To Stand (Eph 6:11,13,14; Phil 1:27; Phil 4:1; Col 4:12; 2 Tim 4:17)
- To Watch (Col 4:2; 2 Tim 4:5)

In the course of our expositions we shall probably come across other injunctions, but for all practical purposes the references listed under these four headings will provide the necessary correctives and safeguards against the infection of apostasy, and against the plague of "the itching ear".

It is not without significance that, though these four exhortations and examples range throughout the Prison Epistles, finding illustrations in Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, the first epistle to Timothy and the epistle to Titus, a reference is found under each heading from Paul's last epistle. It is important enough to justify a demonstration:

Correctives to Apostasy

- Keep - Ephesians 4:3 and 2 Timothy 4:7
- Hold - Philippians 2:16 and 2 Timothy 1:13
- Stand - Ephesians 6:11 and 2 Timothy 4:17
- Watch - Colossians 4:2 and 2 Timothy 4:5

This fact emphasises the place which the second epistle to Timothy occupies in relation to the departure from the truth that will characterise the last days and impresses every true Berean with the imperative need for its study and assimilation.

Most readers of *The Berean Expositor* are aware that the pivot of the epistle to the Ephesians is the word *worthy* of Ephesians 4:1, the first three chapters containing the great doctrinal revelation of the Mystery, the second three containing the corresponding practice that is required. This practice is not limited to the church and its ministry, but to daily life in home and business. It provides complete armour against the evil day, and calls upon the believer to put on the new man, put off the old, and to repudiate the lie. Yet none of these things occupies the first place. The first exhortation in the practical section after the opening admonition "to walk worthy", reveals the fact that the believer is first and foremost a custodian, a keep, before he is a preacher or a teacher.

His first endeavour is directed to the safeguarding of a treasure, to keeping the unity of the Spirit. To neglect this, to put other service in its place, is to surrender the citadel and expose the whole revelation to betrayal. The admonition opens with a word of urgency "endeavour", σπουδάζω (spoudazo). The root of this word, σπεύδω (speudo), means "to hasten", but the word must not be interpreted as the

English "haste" often is, namely a "hasty" action, implying rashness or precipitate unreflection. The only association of σπουδάζω (spoudazo) with "haste" is its diligence and zeal that cannot tolerate waste of precious time. Σπουδάζω (Spoudazo) has no element of "haste" in it when employed by the Apostle in 2 Timothy 2:15, where it is translated "study". The Revised Version in both Ephesians 4:3 and 2 Timothy 2:15 reads "give diligence".

Ephesians 4:3 opens with an exhortation to diligent endeavour, an endeavour that is intolerant of delay, that will not yield to the claims of other things as of "more practical importance", an endeavour that puts first things first. Every believer is not necessarily a preacher or a teacher, he is however, a keeper. This responsibility can neither be shelved nor transferred. We can no more evade the responsibility of being a keeper, than we can avoid being members of the Body if Ephesians 1:4 is true of us. If we are lax here, we give the enemy of truth a foothold.

Note: "unity" occurs but twice in the New Testament, in Ephesians 4:3 and verse 13. "The unity of the Spirit" which we are enjoined to keep, and "the unity of the faith" unto which we are to attain. It is possible that the words "the unity of the Spirit" can mean "the unity of which the Spirit is the author", or it can mean "the spiritual unity, which is composed of the seven items that follow". The words "the unity of the faith" however, can hardly mean "the unity of which Faith is the author" but rather that unity which is composed of the items that follow. In both cases the "unity" is expanded. Thus:

The unity of the faith:

(1) The acknowledgement of the Son of God
(2) The perfect (mature) man
(3) The measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ

The unity of the Spirit:

(1) One body
(2) One Spirit
(3) One Hope
(4) One Lord
(5) One Faith
(6) One Baptism
(7) One God and Father

This sevenfold unity constitutes the treasure of which we are the custodians. Some of the items are the cause of much controversy. The distinctive constitution of the church which is His Body is indicated in Ephesians 3:6, σύσσωμα (sussoma). This word is extremely difficult to translate into English. It is one of three terms, which have been rendered joint-heirs, joint-body, and joint-partakers, and the idea seems to be that of a new kind of body, in which every member is on perfect equality with every other member, and one unknown in the physical world. This conception of the church it is our duty and joy to "keep". Now as the body without the spirit is dead, being alone, so we need to remember that this joint-body is no formal lifeless uniformity, but a company actuated by one Spirit (see Philippians 1:27 for its outworking). The hope that we must safeguard is not the hope of Israel (Acts 28:20), nor the hope that is focused upon the reign of the Son of Jesse (Romans 15:12,13), nor the hope that is vitally linked with

Israel's prince, the Archangel (1 Thessalonians 4:), but the one hope of our calling.

Perhaps the most fruitful source of controversy and one that requires great watchfulness is the "one baptism". Baptism can be considered under seven heads:

(1) The "diver washings" (Hebrews 9:10); and the "doctrine of baptism" (Hebrews 6:2) which the Hebrews were enjoined to leave as they pressed on to that which was "better" and "perfect" ("mature").

(2) The ceremonious "washings" of cups, pots and vessels, which the Pharisees substituted for the true worship of God and love of man (Mark 7:1-13).

(3) The baptism of John, which was in water, unto repentance, and intended to reveal who was the Messiah. (Matthew 3:11, Luke 3:3, John 1:25,26)

(4) The baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire. (Matthew 3:11)

(5) The partial fulfilment of this (Acts 1:5), the "fire" in its full sense reserved unto the Day of the Lord.

(6) The baptism in water which set forth in symbol the believer's union with the Lord in His death, burial and resurrection (1 Corinthians 1:13).

(7) The baptism of suffering to which the Lord referred in Matthew 20:22,23. This baptism was spoken of after the baptism at Jordan, and could not be therefore a baptism of either "water" or "Spirit" for that had already been observed. The baptism of Matthew 20:22,23 was the reality of which all the earlier baptisms were types and shadows.

There is one further typical baptism which is seldom

mentioned but which is of extreme importance here. Long before the "baptisms" and other carnal ordinances were "imposed" upon the people until the time of reformation, and which signified that the way into the holiest of all was not then made manifest (Hebrews 9:8-10), there had taken place a baptism which had united the whole of Israel unto Moses as their leader, a baptism where "water" was excluded by miracle. This took place at the crossing of the Red Sea.

> "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;" (1 Corinthians 10:1-2)

Here is baptism that followed immediately upon the exodus from Egypt; it made the people one, it joined them to Moses, but it was not a carnal ordinance. The people neither did nor observed anything, they just went over dry shod. The church of the One Body has had its exodus (Ephesians 1:7) and "upon believing" it was sealed (Ephesians 1:13). Every member of the one Body has been united unto Christ in His death, burial and resurrection by the only effective baptism that Scripture knows. Not typical or ceremonial, but an actual identification. The baptism of Colossians 2:12 can only be literal if the circumcision of verse 11 is literal. The one baptism of Ephesians 4:5 is balanced by the one Spirit of Ephesians 4:4. This blessed unity we are to keep. The other members of the sevenfold unity are not so controversial. The One Lord takes His place as the central and unifying member of the seven. On either side is ranged the one hope and the one faith.

The unity of the Spirit is kept in the bond of peace. We

observe that the article is used with the word "peace". It is not peace in general but some aspect of peace in particular that is before us "the bond of the peace". To thus speak raises the question in the mind "what peace?" The answer is supplied by referring back to the second chapter of Ephesians. We can only truly understand what aspect of peace is in the writer's mind if we know the kind of "enmity" with which it is contrasted. So, the "peace" of Romans 5:1 is associated with justification, and the enmity is indicated in verse 10, and so the nature of the "peace" of Colossians 1:20 is explained by the enmity of verse 21. Now the enmity of Ephesians 2:15-16 existed between two parties named "the both" or "the twain". It arose out of "the decrees" (Acts 15:1-16:4), or as the same word is translated in Ephesians 2:15, "ordinances", and was symbolised by the middle wall of partition that kept the Jew and the Gentile apart in the Temple of Jerusalem, and kept believing Jew and Gentile apart during the Acts of the Apostles. That has all gone now. The middle wall of partition has been broken down, and of the twain He has "created", κτίζω (ktizo), "one new man, so making peace". It is *this* peace, connected with this unity that the Apostle has in mind in Ephesians 4:3.

> "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them

that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." (Ephesians 2:14-18)

It will be seen that this touches the very core of the calling of the church of the Mystery. The differences that were resident in the dispensation of the Acts cannot be brought over into the dispensation of the Mystery. The "both" and the "twain" are gone; in their place stands a "new" thing, newly "created". This new man has his own standing, hope, faith, and calling. The believer who is a member of this Body is called upon to "keep" inviolate the peculiar distinctiveness of this calling. He must be prepared to be called hard names, because "compromise" is not found in his vocabulary. He will be accused of bigotry because he refuses, as a sentinel, to parley. It is surprising what arguments believers will employ which, if applied to mere monetary trust would be rejected with scorn. The writer of these words holds a sum of money in trust, which can be used for one purpose only, namely the reprinting in book from articles published in *The Berean Expositor*, which would otherwise be lost when bound volumes go out of print. No one has charged us with bigotry because we have not dipped into this fund to help other worthy causes. No one has pleaded "christian charity" and hoped to receive help from this fund. The mere suggestion of either parleying or conceding is monstrous and unthinkable. Yet what is the trusteeship of a few hundred pounds compared with the sacred trust of keeping the unity of the Spirit? We can make no concessions, for the truth is not our property; we cannot reduce the terms or alter the constitution, for we have no authority to do so. It is required in stewards, not that they should be generous with other people's money, but that they

should be faithful.

It is this spirit that alone can stem the tide that leads to apostasy; any other attitude is of itself an incipient "departure".

Quoting from the letter recently received, the writer says it is impossible to introduce the truth of the Mystery without giving offence as it is to preach the cross and avoid its "offence" and all attempts to do so foredoomed. The attitude of *The Berean Expositor* from its first year of publication is that of uncompromising witness to the full truth of the Mystery, and a readiness by grace to take the consequences.

THE TWOFOLD PURPOSE OF AGES (2)

By: Stuart Allen

Being Part 2, continuation from The Berean Expositor, July 2024, Volume 72, Number 07

In further consideration of the twofold purpose of God revealed in the holy Scriptures, we look at the book of Genesis. This contains within itself "the book of the generations of Adam" (Genesis 5:1). In contrast to this the New Testament opens with "the book of the generations of Jesus Christ" (Matthew 1:1). In the first book is the introduction of sin and death; in the second we have God's salvation and the hope of eternal life. These books contain the backbone of what the Word of God reveals and unfolds. The last book in the Hebrew canon is not the prophecy of Malachi, but the two books of Chronicles which open with the words "Adam, Sheth, Enosh" and contain on the last page the ominous words "no remedy of healing" (2 Chronicles 36:16), whereas the last pages of the book of

Revelation speak of the restored "right to the tree of life", the leaves of which are for the "healing" or health of the nations, sin and death having been for ever removed.

There are important links of pairs in Genesis that must not be missed. They are:

- The creation (Genesis 1:1) and the re-fashioning (Genesis 1:2-2:3).
- Two Adams. One present (Genesis 1:26; Genesis 2:7), the Other promised (Genesis 3:15; 1 Corinthians 15:45).
- Two coverings - leaves (Genesis 3:7), skins (Genesis 3:21).
- Two ways - Abel (Genesis 4:4), Cain (Genesis 4:5).
- Two Lamechs and the curse (Genesis 4:11,19-24 ; Genesis 5:29-30).
- Two heads of the nations - Adam (Genesis 1:28), Noah (Genesis 9:1).
- Two pledges - the Ark (Genesis 6), The coffin (Genesis 50:26).
- Abraham's two sons, Ishmael and Isaac.
- Isaac's two sons, Esau and Jacob.
- Twofold type of Christ, Joseph and Benjamin.

The first and last Adam

It is the fashion nowadays to deny the historicity of Genesis 1-5. In many schools the pupils are taught that these chapters are no more than myth. There was never a real man called Adam. The whole story was just a fairy tale or legend, a convenient way of making a beginning in the Bible. Not only in schools, but in many pulpits these ideas are promulgated and anyone who believes that these chapters

are literal history is looked on with pity or amazement.

But let us face the consequences of denying the historicity of the first five chapters of Genesis. First of all, the whole validity of the Old Testament is involved, for the closing books of the Hebrew canon, as we have already pointed out, are the books of Chronicles. The first *nine* chapters of 1 Chronicles are devoted to a genealogy starting with Adam (1 Chronicles 1:1) and adopt without question the genealogies set out in the book of Genesis, in which there are eleven. It then goes through unbroken succession to David and his sons, the ninth chapter opening with the comment:

> "So all Israel were reckoned by genealogies; ..." (1 Chronicles 9:1)

These governed the right of succession, inheritance, marriage, priesthood and were never questioned, but always accepted as valid. So, to be reasonable, the critic must set aside the complete Old Testament, for it is an organic whole. When we come to the New Testament, the seriousness of this repudiation becomes evident. Not only did the Lord Jesus Christ endorse and accept the Old Testament as the Word of God of which not one jot or title should pass unfulfilled, nor can it ever be broken (John 10:35), but in *resurrection*, and not under the so-called limitation of ἐκένωσεν (ekenosen)[1] theory ("He *emptied* Himself", Philippians 2:7 literally), as the conqueror of sin and death.

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[1] The Greek Word in Stuart Allen's article was κένωσις (kenosis), a noun, meaning "emptying, depletion". The Greek Word in Philippians 2:7 is ἐκένωσεν (ekenosen), an aorist form of the verb κενόω, (kenoo) “to empty, to deprive”. In both instances, the meaning of "emptying" is being conveyed. However, to ease into direct reference of Philippians 2:7 quoted in his article, κένωσις (kenosis) has been replaced by ἐκένωσεν (ekenosen) from Philippians 2:7.

When He was about to ascend and take His place at the right hand of the majesty on high, the Lord Jesus said "These are the words which I spake unto you, *while I was yet with you*" (Luke 24:44) and so endorsed all that He had said concerning the Old Testament Scriptures during the days of His flesh. He continued:

> "... that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me." (Luke 24:44)

Coming to the specific question concerning Adam, we note that if Genesis 1-5 is unhistorical, the genealogy of Christ is validated. Luke 3:23-38 ends with "... which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, *which was the son of God*".

If we refer to the genealogy given in Matthew one which commences with Abraham, we read "Abraham begat Isaac ... begat Joseph the husband of Mary" (Matthew 1:1-16). How can fictitious characters begat children? There is only one logical thing to do if we deny the record of Genesis 1-5, and that is to repudiate the genealogies of the Saviour and in so doing we shall be forced to lose all the blessed and wonderful consequences resident in the prophecy and the name "Emmanuel", "God with us", which is one of the links in this chain. Further than this, in Mark 10:1-12 we have the account of the Pharisees' questioning of the Lord regarding divorce. In his reply (verses 6,7) Christ said:

> "But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;" (Mark 10:6-7)

Here the Lord is quoting literally from the Septuagint version of Genesis 1:27 and 2:24 and from this there can be no doubt whatsoever that He regarded Adam and Eve as literal persons. The context makes no sense without this.

How can anyone therefore call himself a *Christian*, a true believer in Christ, who does not accept as true everything that He taught? But there is more than this. The whole central section of the epistle to the Romans, namely 5:12-8:39 stands or falls with a literal Adam:

> "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ... death reigned from Adam to Moses ... if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many." (Romans 5:12-15)

Surely if "one man" Adam is a myth, the whole of the Apostle's argument and doctrine is jeopardised. Its basic doctrines of the Christian faith: justification by faith apart from works or human merit, its "no condemnation" and its glorious "persuasion", all have no logical basis if they do not rest upon historical fact. Both Paul and Christ must have been deceived if Adam never existed and who can trust deceived people for time and for eternity? Truly we can echo the cry of Mary, "they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him" (John 20:13).

Not only is the fundamental epistle to the Romans invalidated, the glorious hope of resurrection is likewise nullified:

> "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so

JOINTS & BANDS
(COLOSSIANS 2:19)
2TIMOTHY2:15
2TIMOTHY3:16

October 2024

The Scottish Conference

Saturday, 22 June 2024

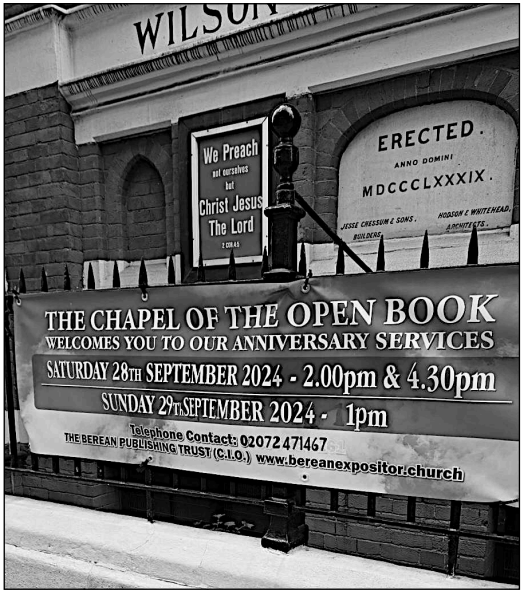
The Scottish Conference was held this year in Glasgow on 22nd June 2024. Alan Taylor convened the day and gave an opening welcome to all who came and those who joined via zoom.

Our first speaker was Archie Falisi on the theme of divine election. He highlighted examples of those who had been elected throughout the Scriptures, including Israel (Deuteronomy 7:7,8; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 45:4), the 12 disciples (John 15:16), the apostle Paul (Acts 9:5,6; Galatians 1:1; Ephesians 1:1; 2 Timothy 1:11), the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:4; Colossians 3:12; Titus 1:1-2; 2 Timothy 2:10), the elect angels (1 Timothy 5:21) and others. He said, "those divinely elected are closely linked to God's wisdom, His council and especially His grace."

After a short interval Alan resumed the second part of the conference and introduced our next speaker, Michael Garstang. We read Ephesians 2:19-3:14 which his talk was centred on. Firstly the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile and putting to death the enmity between them so making peace. Secondly our citizenship of the holy places - to be seated with Christ in heavenly places and members of the household of God. Thirdly Michael emphasised that Ephesians 3:1 "For this cause" directs us back to the preceding chapter where we are being built as a dwelling place for God and completes the reason for Paul to bow the knee in prayer at Ephesians 3:14 after he has shared the great truth of the mystery.

The 81st Anniversary of the Chapel

Saturday, 28th September 2024



The 81st Anniversary of the Chapel of the Opened Book was celebrated on September 28th-29th, 2024. Peter Ambrose initiated the Anniversary Weekend by extending a warm welcome to attendees at the chapel and on Zoom, followed by an opening prayer. Ian Tan then reported on the new design and changes made to *The Berean Expositor*.

After the Bible reading of 2 Peter 1:1-21 and Hymn 41, "Blessed be our God and Father," Mr Edward Preston, our guest speaker, began his talk on the significance of the fundamental truth in 2 Timothy 3:16, which asserts that all Scripture is divinely inspired. Referencing 2 Peter 1:16-21, he highlighted the "more sure word of prophecy", Peter having seen and heard the Lord along with James, and John during the Transfiguration. Peter also warned about false teachers and Edward Preston stressed discernment amidst today's challenges of artificial intelligence, drugs, and mental

illness, among even young children. He concluded on a positive note with 1 John 4:4, which affirms "...greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world."

Hymn 113, "I am trusting Thee Lord Jesus," preceded the interval, and Graham Thomason led a closing prayer from Ephesians 3:14-21.

Downstairs attendees then enjoyed a bountiful array of food and engaging fellowship.

The second part commenced with Peter Ambrose's prayer, followed by Ian Tan reading Ephesians 1:1-23 and introducing Hymn 125, "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross." Archie Falisi, our minister, discussed three main points: the wise counsel of God in the Old Testament, Paul's three-year Ephesian ministry (Acts 19:1-20:38) and the privileges, position, and purpose of the Ephesian saints from the Ephesian epistle. He concluded with a list of twenty things God has done for us from Ephesians and then closed with the doxology from Romans 11:33-36.

The final Hymn was 119, "O Love That wilt not Let Me Go," and Archie's prayer of thanksgiving was a fitting end to this special day.

Sunday 29th September

During our final Anniversary weekend on Sunday September 29th, Craig Glasheen from North Carolina, USA spoke via Zoom at the Chapel of the Opened Book. He delivered a compelling study on resurrection and what happens when believers die. He challenged common misconceptions, asserting that we are mortal souls awaiting resurrection upon death, contrary to the belief in immortal souls immediately entering heaven.

Starting with Adam as a living soul, he didn’t have a soul, but he was a soul. He then moved on to the assumptions about Enoch and Elijah's supposed immortality, referencing Hebrews 11:13 and 2 Chronicles 21:12-15 for investigation.

With Ecclesiastes 12:7, he noted that at death, bodies return to dust, and life returns to God. Old Testament passages illustrating the absence of consciousness after

death include Psalm 6:5; Ecclesiastes 9:5; Job 14:10-15; Psalm 49:12, while New Testament examples include Lazarus (John 11:24, 1 Thessalonians 4:13) and David (Acts 2:29-34; Acts 13:36).

The idea of death as a temporary sleep before resurrection was highlighted through 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:20, emphasising Christ as the first fruits from the dead.

Craig Glasheen asserted only God has immortality, with believers falling asleep and anticipating resurrection rather than instantaneously entering heaven.

Throughout the study, many other verses were referenced, culminating in an emphasis on the clarity and significance of the resurrection in Scripture.

Obituary

Elizabeth Conway

Known to us for her loyalty to the Scottish Conference, usually held in Perth. Elizabeth was, for many years, a familiar face amongst us, usually insisting that she buy the lunch for the group from England as a thank you for her lift from Stirling to Perth. Much catching up since the previous year was effected during this lunch. Diagnosed early this year with lung cancer, Elizabeth was under palliative care until death on July 15. Her funeral was held at the Bruce Memorial Church on 2nd of August. Alan Taylor from Fife, who is a BPT Trustee, attended the service. Our prayers continue for Elizabeth's son David and her daughters Anne and Nicola and her grandchildren.

in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Corinthians 15:21-22)

Here the argument from Romans five is reinforced by the emphasis on resurrection. That Paul completely and unreservedly endorsed the opening chapters of Genesis, let the subsequent references to Adam in 1 Corinthians 15:45-49 speak:

"And so it is written, *The first man Adam* was made a living soul; the *last Adam* was made a quickening spirit ... *The first man* is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven ... and as we have borne the *image of the earthly*, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (1 Corinthians 15:45-49)

When we are dealing with the doctrine of resurrection, let us remember we are handling the very foundations of our faith and hope in the future. If there is no resurrection then the whole Christian faith collapses:

"And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." (1 Corinthians 15:14-18)

We can thank the Lord with hearts continually full of gratitude that our hope is sure and certain and based upon true historical facts whether we are dealing with the Old

Testament or the New Testament for both these rest squarely upon a crucified and risen Saviour.

There are three more references to Adam in the New Testament to complete the tale:

"For Adam was first formed, then Eve." (1 Timothy 2:13)

"And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." (1 Timothy 2:14)

How much better and safer it is to believe the facts of God's Word, than to be deceived by the fallible opinions of men living nearly two thousand years after Christ, yet are sure that their pronouncements concerning Adam are right and the Lord Jesus (who claimed to be the Truth, John 14:6), and the apostles are wrong. These people are blind leaders of the blind and their false ideas must be completely rejected.

Jude, knowing that the son of Cain was called Enoch, wrote in his epistle "Enoch, the *seventh from Adam*" (Jude 14), and Paul refers to the temptation of *Eve* by the serpent in 2 Corinthians 11:3. If Adam is a myth, we have no God given Redeemer, but are stranded without chart or compass with but one thing to do, namely "to eat and drink for tomorrow we die"! What a prospect!

The Two Coverings

The first reaction to the consciousness of guilt, as recorded in Genesis 3:7 is that of seeking and providing a covering. The guilty pair "made themselves aprons", and although these man-made coverings were stripped off, being completely insufficient, nevertheless coverings were

provided by God, but these were of skin and so were sacrificial (Genesis 3:21). Psalm 32:1 says "blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is *covered*", yet Proverbs 28:13 tells us "he that *covereth* his sins shall not prosper".

There is no contradiction here. Sin must certainly be covered, but if it is merely "covered up", in contrast to being "confessed" and "forgiven", it is wrong. If it is covered because "lifted up" and borne away (Hebrew word נָשָׂא, pronounced "nasa", to mean "forgiven"), it is blessed indeed. The word נָשָׂא (nasa) translated "forgiven" is rendered "bear" 156 times, beside "be borne" and "carried", and is employed in such passages as "Surely He hath *borne* our griefs" and "He *bare* the sin of many" (Isaiah 53:4,12). The cry of Cain, according to the Authorised Version of Genesis 4:13 is "my punishment is greater than I can bear", but the margin reads "mine iniquity is greater than that it may be forgiven", with a reference to Genesis 19:15 where "iniquity" in the text is "punishment" in the margin. So interwoven in the Hebrew conception is sin and punishment, forgiveness and sacrifice, that the words used are as it were the reverse and observe of a coin. One side cannot exist apart from the other.

We have no information as to how far our first parents were instructed in the symbolism of this provision of a sacrificial covering made by God. But we who have the complete Scriptures and can see both type and fulfilment set before our eyes, have no excuse. This leads us to consider the two opposing ways of approach to God recorded in Genesis which are linked with Cain and Abel. Let no one think that the antiquity of this subject makes it quite

irrelevant today. It is basic for all time. God Himself has provided the way back to Himself for sinful man. He has provided *one* only, but it is all sufficient. The tragedy is that millions ignore it.

MEN GOD CALLED (2)

By: C. J. Holdway

Being Part 2, continuation from The Berean Expositor, July 2024, Volume 72, Number 07

Abraham: On the immediate historical background to the great man of faith, Scripture is silent. We know that Abraham was the son of Terah, and that originally he lived in Ur of the Chaldees (Genesis 11:31).

We do know that, all too soon after the Flood, men engaged in planning the Tower of Babel. It is clear from the account in verses 1 to 9 of Genesis 11, that this was an act of rebellion against God, and was judged by Him as such. Up to this time God had been dealing with mankind as a whole; now He begins to move towards the calling of one family, one race and nation. With the call of Abraham this purpose comes into operation.

In some instances those called of God for His service experienced that call over a very short period. Others, like Abraham found that their calling extended over a much longer period, developing step by step. If we have experienced one of these, we must be careful not to deny the other. To some God speaks in an instant; to others He speaks over a more prolonged period of time, leading them step by step to greater things. Nor must we look upon those who experience differs from our own as being less spiritual, or

more spiritual than we are. God deals with us as individuals, and chooses and uses us according to our needs and abilities. From the human standpoint it might seem that one needed to be led step by step, as was Abraham; and Abraham merited the proud title of "father of the faithful".

In recounting the history of the chosen people Stephen, before his accusers, said this of Abraham:

> "And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldean, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell." (Acts 7:2-4)

"Then came he out". Hebrews 11:8 adds to this information by telling us "and he went out, *not knowing whither he went*". This is often quoted as support for those who "leave all" to serve the Lord, giving up the means of livelihood, and "trusting to the Lord" to supply their needs. It is just as frequently forgotten that Abraham took his livelihood with him, in the shape of flocks and herds! "He went out, *not knowing whither he WENT*". He knew from whence his next meal would come, and from the same source, as wool or skins would come his clothing, and accommodation could also be provided by tents made from skins. This is not to say that God does not, or cannot supply every need; He can, of course, but sometimes what passes for faith is nothing more than credulity.

> "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, *unto a land* that I will shew thee: ... and I will bless thee" (Genesis 12:1-2)

Having made this statement, the account continues (verse 4) "so Abram departed, *as the Lord had spoken unto him*". Although the call had been "from thy father's house", when, after 25 years delay at Haran, Abram went into the land of Canaan, it was "as the Lord had spoken unto him".

"And Lot went with Him" (verse 4). The next verse states: "And Abram *took* Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son". The inference seems to be that Lot *wanted* to go with Abram, although *he* was not called, and Abram, in spite of the injunction "Get thee ... from thy kindred", acquiesced to the young man's request, and took him with him. We know from the history of Abram that Lot was the cause of a good deal of trouble for him later on. It is also significant that neither Acts 7, nor Hebrews 11 makes any mention of Lot.

We are given the initial call to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3.

> "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." (Genesis 12:1-3)

He was called, then:

(1) to a land;

(2) to a blessing;
(3) to be a blessing;
(4) to a great name;
(5) to be a blessing to those who blessed him;
(6) to be a curse to him who curse him;
(7) to be the means of blessing to all the families of the earth.

Abraham was called "to a land", yet already, in verse 7, there appears to be a hint to the effect that Abraham, himself, would not inherit the land:

> "And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him." (Genesis 12:7)

This is developed further in Hebrews 11:8-10.

> "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Hebrews 11:8-10)

To a place *he should afte*r receive for an inheritance. The word translated "he should after" signifies "he was about to". It was his if he wanted it. But "by faith he *sojourned* in the land of promise". Sojourned is the word παροικέω (paroikeo): to dwell beside, or near, hence to live as a stranger. The substantive of this word occurs in Luke 24:18, "Art thou only a *stranger* in Jerusalem?" The sense of verse

9, then, is "he dwelt as a stranger in the land of promise". It was his, God had given it to him, yet in it he lived as a stranger!

Nonetheless, the promise to Abraham was that the land was given to him:

> "For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever." (Genesis 13:15)

Similar statements are also found in Genesis 15:7; Genesis 17:8. Yet Abraham lived as a stranger in the land of promise. The reason for this is given in Hebrews 11:10.

> "And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." (Genesis 17:8)

The word "looked for" in the original, occurs also in Hebrews 10:13, "From henceforth *expecting* till His enemies be made His footstool". The basic thought of the word is to take, or receive from: *to take up*. Abraham *took up* the city whose builder and maker is God. He had "an option" on either the land, or the city. He *took up* the option on the city. God had given him the land, and this was good; but at some point God had also revealed to him the possibility of inheriting the city, and this was better. To gain the better, he had to renounce the possibility of the land which God had given him. Abraham knew it was not possible "to have the best of both worlds".

Believers today have a similar choice: "Life through his name" with an earthly inheritance, or citizenship and eternal life in heavenly places; the good, and the better. But as Abraham found with his choice, there is a cost attached to

the better; that of becoming "strangers and pilgrims on the earth".

Those of old time, who looked for a heavenly city, did not obtain the promises (Hebrews 11:13), "but seeing and greeting them from afar, confessing that they were strangers and sojourners on the earth (or *land*), made manifest that they sought a fatherland". Those heavenly citizens became strangers and sojourners, in the promised land. Yet, "if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned". Abraham had set out not knowing whither he went, to a land God had promised him. Then it was made known to him beyond the land (all the land which thou seest), was an unseen fatherland, which was far better.

When this "secret" was made known to Abraham, we do not know. That there was progression in his calling seems certain:

> "And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered." (Genesis 13:16)
>
> "And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be." (Genesis 15:5)

Here may be more than a hint of the earthly calling (the dust of the earth), and of the calling to the heavenly city (the stars of heaven).

It is instructive to note what preceded the second of these two promises. After the victory over Chedorlaomer and the kings with him, Abram met the priest-king Melchizedek,

and to him Abram gave "tithes of all". About the same time the king of Sodom offered to Abram all the booty of the battle:

> "And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, That I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich: Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion." (Genesis 14:22-24)

Chapter 15 begins:

> "After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." (Genesis 15:1)

Abram renounced earthly reward, and desired only to "glory in the Lord". As a result the Lord declared Himself to be Abram's exceeding great reward, and there followed the promise of a seed as numerous as the stars of heaven. Nevertheless, the land is still mentioned, and this is also the case in Genesis 17:8. When we come to the confirmation of the covenant with Abraham in chapter 22, following the offering of Isaac (Genesis 22:16), for the first time there is no mention of the land as the inheritance of Abraham. He is promised that his seed shall be "as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore" (Genesis 22:17), and in his seed all the nations of the earth are to be blessed.

Progressively, step by step, the Lord led Abraham on, and

step by step and in response to the faith displayed by Abraham in his obedience, God made known to him more of his purpose. It cannot be ascertained at what point Abraham became aware of the calling of the heavenly city; but what is clear, is that Abraham was content with nothing less than the best.

As with many another whom God called, Abraham had experienced the "awe-fulness" of God. When the Lord covenanted the full extent of the promised land (Genesis 15) we read:

> "And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him ... And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces." (Genesis 15:12,17)

Abraham was one whom God was pleased to call "my friend" (Isaiah 41:8), yet in the presence of God he experienced "an horror of great darkness". He knew the greatness and the holiness of the One with whom he had to do. Surely this is the secret of faithfulness in any servant of God.

Today, in our calling, there is usually a progression to what has been termed "a calling within a calling". Normally we begin with the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and then, by the grace of God progress to the knowledge of the Secret, the calling to heavenly places. There is, as many know from experience, a price to pay if we desire the best. So it was with Abraham, who was numbered those who:

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." (Hebrews 11:13)

CHRISTIAN ATTITUDES

By: G. T. Foster

Relaxation

"Be still, and know that I am God: ..." (Psalm 46:10)

In his series in *The Berean Expositor* on the Psalms, Stuart Allen drew attention to many interesting features of this Psalm (Vol. 50). He points out that Psalms 46-48 form a trilogy and he comments on the prophetical aspect, as the Psalmist looks forward to the time when war will cease, and this must relate to the second coming of our Lord.

The Companion Bible gives the following outline:

v.1 God our refuge
  v.2,3 Danger defied (earth moved, waters roar)
    v.4,5 Zion defended
  v.6 Danger defied (heathen rage, earth melted)
v.7 God our refuge
  v.8 Works seen (Behold God's works, earth desolate)
    v.9 Wars ended
  v.10 Himself known (Know God, His exaltation, earth)
v.11 God our refuge

The psalm commences with "God is our refuge and strength" and in verse 7 and 11, we have the refrain, "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."

The refuge in verse 1 is a place of refuge, a place to which one flees. A different word is used in verses 7 and 11, which means a high place, a tower, or an impregnable place.

The Psalmist describes a scene of great trouble, the removing of the earth, the roaring of the waters, but he contrasts this with the peaceful scene in the holy city, where streams of the river bring joy and gladness. God is there. The city will not be moved.

Then a different scene is set. The heathen rage, the kingdoms are moved. He utters His voice and the earth melted. The Lord of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our refuge.

A description of a peaceful scene follows. He maketh wars to cease, the bow is broken, the speak is cut asunder, the chariot is burnt. Then comes the words which we wish to consider "Be still and know that I am God".

We live in difficult days, and there is trouble all over the world. The pressures of life affect us all and there are times when we need a word of comfort. In the business world, the strain is enormous and many are caught up in what is called the "rat race". How do these conditions affect us? What is our attitude of mind? When the business man goes home, does he take his worries with him? If we have an hour to spare in the evening, can we relax, or are we still troubled by the strains of this life? It may be easy to advise the troubled to "Be still" and relax. But how can the anxious mind be set at rest?

The Hebrew word translated "Be still" is only translated once in this way. There are at least 20 occurrences of this word, and it is rendered cease, fail, forsake, let alone, let go, stay ...etc. The basic meaning is to "let go". The translation

"Be still and know that I am God" reads much better than "Let go and know that I am God". Yet, as we meditate upon it, we can see that the rendering "let go" is a valuable aid to our understanding. We carry our troubles always, and we do not let them go. How can we relax if we do not let our troubles go? Psalm 55:22 reads "Cast thy burden upon the Lord and He shall sustain thee ...". But if we cast our burdens on the Lord and then pick them up again or fail to let go, are we relieved of our burdens? To cast our burdens on the Lord means that we must let them go. And if we let go, then we become "still" and know that the Lord of hosts is with us. We enter the refuge.

Certainly there is a need to "hold fast" and to be steadfast in the things of God. But we need to let go those things concerning this world which constitute a burden.

We need to rightly divide, to distinguish between those things which we should hold firmly and those things which we should hold very loosely, things which we should let go when we need to relax.

When we wish to relax, and "let go" may we remind ourselves of Philippians 4:6,7.

> "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7)

Yes, that peace will help us to "let go" and relax. Then shall we "Be still and know, that I am God."

So then, let us learn to set our affection on things above, not on things on the earth (Colossians 3:2)

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"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." (Colossians 3:16)

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"And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:" (Ephesians 2:6)

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