

The Berean Expositor

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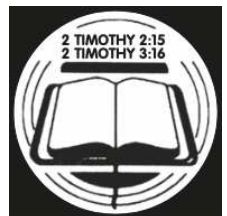
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JOINTS AND BANDS

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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



FOUNDER, PRINCIPAL AND MINISTER

Charles H. Welch1909-1965

PRINCIPALS AND MINISTERS

Stuart Allen1965-1997

Alan Schofield1997-2007

MINISTERS

Michael Garstang2007-2024

Archie Falisi2024-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

The Berean Publishing Trust publishes the work of Charles H. Welch, Stuart Allen and others according to the principles of 2 Timothy 2:15. It is only when we approach the Scriptures rightly divided that we are able to see things that differ, for example, the difference in Paul's ministry and Peter's ministry, or of God's heavenly hope and His earthly promise.

Not rightly dividing the Word of God results in much confusion. In our ministry, we rightly divide to expound His Word and teach the Holy Bible across the world. We expound dispensational truth so that those who is see may see, those who hear may hear, and understand His Word according to His purpose, that we may "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love" (Ephesians 4:1,2)

OUR FOUNDATION

By G. T. Foster

"... Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;"
(Ephesians 2:20)

Each year in the month of May, we hold special meetings in London on a Saturday which is called "Foundation Day". The notice announcing the meetings usually contains a brief note, thus:

(Figure 1 on the next page)

The Berean Publishing Trust

Our Basis

- (1) Full inspiration of the Scriptures
- (2) Right division of the Scriptures
- (3) Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ
- (4) All sufficiency of His One sacrifice

Figure 1. The four tenets of The Berean Publishing Trust.*¹

Two Trusts were formed in 1944, The Berean Forward Movement and The Berean Publishing Trust and both Trust Deeds contain the four basic tenets*². Charles H. Welch suggested that once a year we should remind ourselves of these basic tenets. We hold Foundation Day so that they will not be forgotten.

In 1943 we were granted the use of Wilson Street Chapel for a trial period of one year, and since then permission has been extended for an indefinite period. The Chapel which was closed at the beginning of the war was reopened in September 1943 and named "The Chapel of the Opened Book".

In 1909 C. H. Welch became the Editor of *The Berean Expositor* which was produced with the support of Frederick P. Brininger and other friends. The two Trusts*²

*¹ The original article was titled "The Berean Forward Movement" in *Figure 1*. See also footnote *².

*² The Berean Forward Movement was incorporated into The Berean Publishing Trust. The four basic tenets were carried forward to the amalgamation and unity of the two Trusts. The four tenets are the firm foundation of this ministry, unchanged since Charles H. Welch.

were formed to put the work on a more formal footing. Only a few books and booklets had been published but C. H. Welch had written many MSS, which awaited an opportunity of publication. The Berean Publishing Trust took over the MSS and most of these writings were in print by the time Mr. Welch died in 1967.

Some friends feared that the use of Wilson Street chapel might lead to the formation of a sect or denomination, but C. H. Welch and the Trustees were opposed to any such development. Nevertheless, the witness of the Berean Trusts is distinctive in character in that it emphasises the dispensational aspect of truth, while adhering to the need to study basic truth, practical truth, as well as prophetic truth.*³

In the Trust Deed Scripture references are given for each tenet and these are given for the information of our readers:

1. Full inspiration of the Scriptures

"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)

COMMENT. We believe unreservedly in the full inspiration of Scripture. Peter supports Paul in 2 Peter 1:21 which reads:

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter 1:21)

*³ The stewardship of dispensational truth and the principal foundation of the four tenets are taught to all, and carried forward by the Trustees today and into the future. Unchanging in the purpose of this ministry since Charles H. Welch, we serve our Lord Jesus Christ for the glory of God.

The Greek φέρω (phero)*⁴ here translated "moved" is translated "driven" in Acts 27:17.

2. *Right division of the Scriptures*

"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)

The Trust Deed then gives Acts 28:17-31 as the second reference, but as it is a long passage, we quote only Acts 28:28. The reader may refer to the whole passage in view of its importance:

"Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it." (Acts 28:28)*⁵

COMMENT. The reference to "right division" leads us to consideration of dispensational truth. Writing to the Philippians, Paul says:

"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ." (Philippians 1:9,10)

In the margin, instead of "approve things that are excellent" there is the alternative rendering "try the things

*⁴ In 2 Peter 1:21, φερόμενοι is the present passive participle of φέρω. In Acts 27:17 ἐφέροντο is the imperfect passive imperative of φέρω.

*⁵ The original was quoted from NIV: "Therefore I want you to know that God's salvation has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen!" (Acts 28:28 NIV)

that differ".*⁶ In our search for knowledge we have to observe differences. For example, if I say I have an animal with four legs, you do not know whether it is a donkey, or cat, or dog, or cow ... unless further information is given which will identify it. The fact is that a donkey has four legs, but everything with four legs is not a donkey. So in our study of the Scriptures, we learn by observing differences. Does Peter's ministry differ from that of Paul? We quote a short passage:

"But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)" (Galatians 2:7,8)

3. Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ

"And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matthew 16:16)

"And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." (John 6:69)

"And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God." (John 20:28)

COMMENT. We add the following important references:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1)

*⁶ In Philippians 1:10, "εἰς τὸ δοκιμάζειν ὑμᾶς τὰ διαφέροντα" is best understood as "so that you test, try, examine, or scrutinise things that differ, or things that are more valuable than the other".

"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;" (Titus 2:13)*⁷

"And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." (1 John 5:20)*⁸

Stuart Allen has written an excellent and lucid booklet on this subject entitled "*The Lord Jesus Christ, God or Only Man*" and this is recommended reading. There are many other references such as Matthew 1:23 and Philippians 2:5-11.

4. *All sufficiency of His One sacrifice*

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

"For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Hebrews 10:14)

COMMENT. We suggest that the whole passage Hebrews 10:10-14 be read. The all sufficiency of His One sacrifice is a vital tenet because this covers the basis of our

*⁷ The original was quoted from NIV: "while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ," (Titus 2:13 NIV)

*⁸ The original was quoted from NIV: "We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life." (1 John 5:20 NIV)

salvation. While we recognise our duty to study dispensational truth, we must be clear about the gospel of our salvation. If we are to build up our doctrine, we must start with a sound foundation. Paul's prison epistles set out the basis in a few words. Ephesians 1:6,7 tells us that we are accepted in the Beloved and in Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. Verse 4 says "... that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love ...". The gospel expressed in simple terms in Ephesians 2:8-10:

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:8-10)

Paul speaks of "my gospel", and we are sure that Paul's gospel includes salvation through the grace of God. We should take every opportunity of making God's grace known to others. Paul did this all through his life to the end. He wrote:

"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" (1 Corinthians 9:16)

In writing to the Galatians he says:

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto

you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Galatians 1:8-12)

In *An Alphabetical Analysis* Part 6, C. H. Welch has written an article headed "Foundation". He makes the remarkable statement that foundation is a relative term. In searching the Scriptures for its use we find that sometimes it must be taken literally, and in other cases foundation must be regarded as a figure of speech. We find the following examples of its use:

- Foundation of the house of the Lord (1 Kings 6:37) (and numerous references)
- Foundations of the earth (Psalm 82:5; Isaiah 24:18; Isaiah 40:21; and Isaiah 48:13)
- Foundations of the hills (Psalm 18:7)
- Foundations of heaven (2 Samuel 22:8)
- Foundations of the world (2 Samuel 22:16; Psalm 18:15)

The excitement when the foundation of the Temple was finished is recorded in Ezra chapter 3. Some sang, others shouted for joy, while older people wept as they were overcome by emotion.

C. H. Welch points out that a foundation may be of no value if it does not support a building. So, in various passages there are descriptions of different kinds of buildings that may be erected.

In Matthew 7:24-27 Jesus Christ speaks of a wise man who built a house on a rock foundation, while the foolish man built his house on sand. The storm tested the houses and only the house built on rock survived. Christ used the example of the wise man to show that after hearing the words of the Lord, action needs to be taken. The foolish man is one who hears the word, but ignores it. So we may take this to mean that to preach doctrine and so lay a foundation is of little value, if faith and a practical Christian life do not follow the preaching.

Paul also uses the figure of the builder. He describes himself as a wise master builder who laid a good foundation. Others built on that foundation, some found gold, silver, or precious stones while some used wood, hay, or stubble. The buildings were tested by fire. Paul comments on his foundation in 1 Corinthians 3:11:

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Corinthians 3:11)

So Paul affirms that Christ is the only and the true foundation.

This leads us to an important verse which Peter quotes in his first epistle:

"Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste." (Isaiah 28:16)

In the context the corner stone appears to be a part of the foundation, but we have a problem. Peter quotes Isaiah 28:16 and the Greek for corner stone means a stone "at the

extreme angle" (Young's Concordance)*⁹. The chief corner stone may therefore be the head stone, the keystone, or the topmost stone. Is it correct to view Christ as the true foundation, and the same time the head stone or keystone? Psalm 118:22 says that the stone which the builders rejected is become the head stone of the corner. Do we have difficulty in reading that Jesus Christ is the beginning and the ending, the Alpha and Omega? As we view the complete building, Christ is the foundation, and completes the building like the keystone. As the glory of the Lord filled the Temple, so the whole building is filled with the glory of the Lord.

We have said that Peter quotes Isaiah 28:16. We will quote what he wrote in his first epistle:

"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious ... the same is made the head of the corner," (1 Peter 2:4-7)

Peter goes on in verse 9 to remind his readers that they

*⁹ A note on "extreme angle" in The Young's Concordance. The concordance's current 8th edition was revised in 1939. Ἀκρογωνιαῖον is related to ἄκρον and γωνία. Ἄκρον primarily means the extreme, highest, tip ...etc, while γωνία primarily means angle, but some modern lexicons also suggests "corner". "at the extreme angle" is not the best translation for 1 Peter 2:6 in modern English. The phrase "λίθον ἀκρογωνιαῖον" in 1 Peter 2:6 definitively asserts "corner or foundation stone". Mr. Foster provides excellent expositions about this in his article.

are a chosen nation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation ... and here we see that Peter is faithfully dealing with his ministry to the circumcision.

We will observe how Paul writes, for he also writes of a spiritual house. We must save space so we ask the reader to look up Ephesians 2:19-22. The fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God are like a building, based on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone. We are living stones in this building and are fitly framed together, growing into a holy temple, and in this temple God Himself will dwell through the Spirit. This temple differs from the one described by Peter, but Jesus Christ is the corner stone of each building.

So in Ephesians we have the figure of the Body of Christ, we being members of His Body, the church, and He being its Head. We also have the figure of a holy temple, we being stones fitted together to make a dwelling place for God Himself.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Corinthians 3:11)

And it is this foundation that is the basis for the gospel of grace, and also for the "new man" (Ephesians 2:15,16), the Body of Christ of which He is the Head.

SAFEGUARDS AND CORRECTIVES (4)

By C. H. Welch

The call to stand, withstand and standfast

The corrective against the apostasy of the last days is fourfold; the believer is exhorted to "keep", "hold", "stand" and "watch". We have given some consideration to the first two, let us now examine the teaching of the epistles regarding the exhortation and encouragement to "stand". The references in Ephesians, Colossians and 2 Timothy use the word ἵστημι (histemi), the references in Philippians the word στήκω (steko); but the difference between these two words will be examined after we have considered the opening passage of Ephesians 6:11,13,14.

The injunction "to stand" in Ephesians 6 is introduced by the word "finally". Doctrine and corresponding practice have occupied the bulk of the epistle, and now the concluding section is brought into correspondence with the opening section. "Spiritual blessings" find an echo in "spiritual wickedness". The choice that took place "before the foundation of the World" is set over against the "darkness of this world". "The word of truth" finds a correspondence in "the girdle of truth"; "The gospel of salvation" with "the helmet of salvation", the exceeding greatness of the "power", "working" and "mighty power" which was wrought in Christ, is repeated in the exhortation to be "strong" in the Lord and in the "power" of His "might". Where our blessings are there will be conflict. Just as Israel were bidden not to meddle with other nations, but to fight with the Canaanites that barred their way to the

land of promise, so we wrestle not with flesh and blood, our foes are "spiritual" and are "the world rulers of darkness", spiritual Canaanites. Against these spiritual enemies the church of the Mystery is exhorted to stand.

It is of supreme importance that we should heed the accompanying commands. The exhortation is not simply to stand, it is accompanied by other equally important injunctions.

Put on the whole armour of God
 that ye may be able to stand against (πρός, pros)
take unto you the whole armour of God
 that ye may be able to withstand (ἀντί, anti)
having done all
 To stand.

Then follows the repeated exhortation to stand together with a detailed description of the whole armour of God. The armour is sixfold, and is rendered effective by prayer. This we can see if set out as follows:

A	The girdle ... <i>Truth and faithfulness</i>	} Praying with all prayer
B	The breastplate ... <i>Righteousness</i>	
C	The shoes ... <i>Firm footing of peace</i>	
A'	The shield ... <i>Faith or faithfulness</i>	
B'	The helmet ... <i>Salvation</i>	
C'	The sword ... <i>The Word of God</i>	

The word "stand" is in the original (1) ἵστημι (histemi), (2) ἵστημι πρὸς (histemi pros)*¹⁰. (3) ἀνθίστημι (anthistemi). The preposition πρὸς (pros) when used with the accusative indicates "the literal or mental direction, as an end, marking the ultimate purpose" (Dr. Bullinger's

Lexicon).

The "mental direction" and "ultimate purpose" of this armour is directed against "the wiles of the Devil". These "wiles" have been spoken of before in Ephesians. The word is contained in Ephesians 4:14*¹¹ "cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

"Instead of remaining immature, blown from our course and swayed by every wind of doctrine, by the adroitness of men who are dextrous in devising error; we are to hold by the truth" (Ephesians 4:14,15 Moffat).

Under the law of Moses, no one took up arms until reaching the age of twenty (Numbers 1:45), consequently the spiritual equivalent is "the perfect (mature) man", not "babes" or the immature that are exhorted to put on the armour and withstand the wile of the Devil. His experimental acquaintance with the great doctrines of the faith, symbolised by the whole armour of God, "put on" and "taken" are to be directed against these Satanic attacks upon the truth. No other armour will avail, and but one weapon is provided, "the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God". Ανθίστημι (Anthistemi) also means to withstand or stand against, and is well translated "resist" as it is in James 4:7 "Resist*¹² the Devil" or as in 1 Peter 5:9 "whom resist*¹² stedfast in the faith".

Some emphasis is laid upon this conception of

*¹⁰ Mr. Welch illustrates ἵστημι throughout the list. In Ephesians 6:11, στῆναι is the infinitive form of ἵστημι, and "στῆναι πρὸς" to mean "stand against". Mr. Welch used the lexical form ἵστημι for easier recognition.

*¹¹ In Ephesians 4:11 πρὸς τὴν μεθοδεῖαν, it is the accusative form of μεθοδεῖα.

*¹² In James 4:7 and 1 Peter 5:9 ἀντίστητε is the imperative form of ἀνθίστημι.

"standing" and "withstanding". Practically nothing is said to encourage a campaign or an active invasion of the enemy's territory. That may await us when "the evil day" arrives, but we should be wise not to attempt to run before the Lord commands. He has said "stand"; to "march" may appear bolder and even wise, but will ever be disastrous. He knows the enemy better than we do, He knows His plan and has control of both time and place. It is enough that we obey.

The word used in Philippians 1:27 is στήκω (steko)*¹³, a form derived from ἵστημι (histemi). It is difficult to assign a reason for the choice of this form except that it lends itself (being derived from the perfect tense), to the emphatic form "stand fast or firm". The word occurs but once in the Gospels, the remaining seven occurrences being found in Paul's epistles. These seven passages are the following:

"... to his own master he standeth or falleth." (Romans 14:4)

"... stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." (1 Corinthians 16:13)

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free ..." (Galatians 5:1)

"... stand fast in one spirit ..." (Philippians 1:27)

"... stand fast in the Lord ..." (Philippians 4:1)

"... stand fast in the Lord." (1 Thessalonians 3:8)

*¹³ In Philippians 1:27 στήκετε is the imperative form of στήκω.

"... stand fast, and hold the traditions ... taught ..." (2 Thessalonians 2:15)

The armour provided in Ephesians 6 is useless unless "put on", even as mere doctrine is of no avail unless it be translated into practice by experience, so the exhortation in Philippians 1:27 "stand fast" is not without its experimental context. "Conversation" (manner of life) that becomes the gospel, "your affairs" as well as your creed, and a unity of both spirit and mind are the setting of this attitude.

Where Philippians 1:27 says "stand fast *in* one spirit" the next reference says "stand fast *in* the Lord" (Philippians 4:1). Once again the words are set in a practical context. Two sisters in Christ are entreated by the Apostle to be of the same mind in the Lord (Philippians 4:2). It is therefore very evident that the greatest single condition for this firm stand for the truth is found in unity. First, in defending and treasuring "the Unity of the Spirit" as we have seen in Ephesians 4, then in the twofold practical unity of these passages in Philippians 1 and 4. Unity can be attacked from without, but it can also be ruined from within.

Let us weigh our own motives, our plans, our desires in the balances of the sanctuary. Do they "become" the gospel of Christ? do they strengthen or weaken the "oneness" of mind and spirit that should be characteristic of those who are by grace equal members of "one" Body, holding "one" faith, looking for "one" hope and acknowledging "one" Lord?

Many a plan that has been evolved by believing men and women, has had at the very commencement the seeds of its own undoing by reason of failure in these essential features.

We believe that there is a clarion call to all who rejoice in the truth of the Mystery, to stand fast in one mind and in one spirit in this blessed endeavour both to further the truth and to withstand the threatened apostasy, and only as each step conforms to the basic requirements we have seen, can any such movement prosper with the good success that comes from the Lord. This we covet above all else, not that in our stewardship we should be found successful, but found faithful. The rest is with him.

THE TWOFOLD PURPOSE OF THE AGES (5)

By Stuart Allen

The reader may feel that a mistake has been made here, for Jacob had 12 sons and also a daughter. Although this is true, there are two who specially carry the story and the purpose on to the end of Genesis. They are Joseph and Benjamin.

There are seven great types of Christ in the book of Genesis:

A | ADAM *Sin and Death*. Return to the dust (Gen. 3)

B | ABEL *Accepted offering*. (Gen 4:1-4)

C | SETH *Substitution*. "Instead" (Gen 4:25)

D | NOAH *Atonement*. "Pitch" (Gen 6:14)

C | ISAAC *Substitution*. "Instead" (Gen 22:13)

B | JUDAH *Surety*. "Instead" (Gen 44:33)

A | JOSEPH *Preserver of life*. "The coffin" (Gen 45:5; 50:26).

Some may wonder why Abraham does not figure here, but he was more a type of God the Father, who "spared not

His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all" (Romans 8:32).

Jacob's record opens in Genesis with the words:

"And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. These are the generations of Jacob ... " (Genesis 37:1,2)

Jacob's generation was not written as from Padan-aram the home of Laban, but from Canaan, the land of promise, and does not commence with Reuben the firstborn, but with Joseph. Again, the record does not say "now Jacob loved Joseph" but "Israel loved Joseph", indicating that this love was something over and above natural affection. The coat of many colours was no mere dressing up. It marked Joseph off from his brothers both as the heir and priest of the family. The consequence of this preferment was that "his brethren ... hated him". When Rebekah prepared Jacob to deceive Isaac and so to procure the birthright, she took "raiment of desires" literally (Genesis 27:15), and throughout the Scriptures clothing has a symbolic value.

The dreams of Joseph were of great importance and were misunderstood by his brothers and even his parents. We must remember that, in Joseph's day, there were no written Scriptures and as far as the record goes, no one who possessed the gift of prophecy. Dreams were probably rare then, and God used them to make known His will. They were not given to Joseph for himself; they were prophetic. Even the dreams of this period *run in pairs* as follows:

(Please see next page)

First Pair	Joseph dreams of pre-eminence	<i>Prison</i>
Second Pair	Prisoners' dreams interpreted	<i>Deliverance</i>
Third Pair	Pharoah's dreams interpreted	<i>Glory</i>

Joseph was bound to make known his dreams, for they were a communication from God Himself and could not be kept secret. The reaction of his brothers very closely anticipated the attitude of the Jews against Christ centuries later:

"And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words." (Genesis 37:8)

Stephen, in Acts chapter 7, uses the story of Joseph stressing "the second time" and of Moses, "whom they refused", to enforce the lesson upon his own countrymen (Acts 7:13,35). It can be no accident that Judah (Judas in the Greek) suggested selling Joseph for 20 pieces of silver (Gen 37:28).

Joseph's pathway to the throne of Egypt via prison, sets forth in type the two advents of Christ, who, during the interval while Israel suffered want, was being used to bless Gentile Egyptians and who married a Gentile wife. While there is still disagreement over the exact meaning of the title Pharaoh gave to Joseph, namely "Zaphnath-paaneah" (Gen 41:45) which the Authorised Version margin renders

"a revealer of secrets", the possibility is that it can mean "abundance of life" or "of food for the living" (see *The Companion Bible* note). If so, it was anticipating Christ as "the Bread of life". The words "what he saith to you do" (Gen 41:55) is echoed by Mary "whatsoever He saith unto you, do it" (John 2:5), even as the words "his father observed the saying" (Gen 37:11) remind one of Mary who "kept all these sayings and pondered them in her heart" (Luke 2:19,51).

The necessary stages of prophetic foreshadowing can be summed up thus:

- (1) The repentance of Israel (Gen 42:13,21,22).
- (2) The revelation to Israel (Gen 45:1-4 cp. Zech 12:10).
- (3) The restoration of Israel (Gen 45:7,11; Gen 46:6).
- (4) The resurrection of Israel (Gen 49:29; Heb 11:22).

So far we have been concerned with one son of Israel, Joseph, who is a very rich type of Christ. Who is the other, without whom the type is not complete? Let us first enquire why Joseph was so called. The verb "to add" in Hebrew is *jasaph* and is so translated in the Authorised Version 39 times, its first occurrence being in Genesis 4:2 where we read that, after the birth of Cain, "she (Eve) *added* to bear his brother Abel" (she *again* bear in the A.V.). Here, at the beginning of the book, the birth of two sons is recorded, one being *added* to the other and setting forth the two opposing seeds from Cain and Abel. The other pair at the end of Genesis, which we are now considering, uses the very word "jasaph" or "Joseph" because his mother Rachel said:



JOINTS & BANDS

(COLOSSIANS 2:19)



July 2025

Message from the Minister

by Archie Falisi

We are delighted to see the chapel filled with dearly beloved members of the Body of Christ on Foundation Day, Saturday 31 May 2025. We enjoyed a day of fellowship, worship, and ministry of His Word. We had a pleasant surprise to see Michael and Ping Garstang visiting the chapel, it was a blessing to have them present and joined us in fellowship.

The chapel repairs were coming to completion. A feast was prepared for body and spirit, and we were reminded that Christ is The only One Foundation for our faith.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Corinthians 3:11)

The 82nd Foundation Day on Sat 31 May 2025

by Michael Garstang

On Saturday, May 31st, some 16 - mostly familiar faces gathered at The Chapel of the Opened Book to thank God again for Foundation Day Services. In the preceding weeks, quite extensive renovations had been effected - many thanks to Tony Quinn - a regular at Chapel meetings, for his work at that time. Happily on the Day a clean-up during that week made The Chapel once again a pleasure to attend. Peter Ambrose convened our opening meeting with warm words of welcome. We sadly were missing the fellowship of Edward Preston from Hastings who had phoned-in his apologies on this occasion. An opening prayer was offered by our good

friend David Privett. Following the reading from Ephesians chapter 3, Hean Tan gave a BPT report.

Archie Falisi, our Chapel Minister, gave the address from the Ephesian passage. It is most needful to discriminate between "The Mystery of Christ" and "The Mystery" - that truth of all truths wherein we Gentiles are made joint-heirs, fellow partakers and of the same Body of God's promise in Christ through the good news whereby (Paul alone) became its first minister. Understandably everyone stayed for the interval of sandwiches and cakes - and of course conversation, a word of thanks we give to they who organised this feature of our fellowship.

Alan Taylor was our evening (4:30p.m.) convenor, it was good to see him, having travelled from Fife in Scotland. A surprise speaker in the evening service was Michael Garstang, now resident with Ping in the Philippines. Romans 5, 6 & 7 and the passage of the believer to that triumphant "no condemnation" of Chapter 8:1 was the matter under view, essential to our seeing the better "Ephesian Truth".

On Sunday, June 1st, Ian Tan, held forth on the truth of "Hope", looking at both the legitimate hopes of other companies of God's people yet concentrating on our getting to know "what is the hope His calling" (Eph. 1:18).

The singing of one or two hymns was enjoyed during the Saturday and Sunday meetings. As we sang "Great God of Wonders all Thy ways are worthy of Thyself Divine", we realise that even we are amongst the "countless acts of pardoning Grace" which "beyond His other Wonders shine" (Hymn No. 90).

A Personal Devotional

By Ian Tan

In this edition of *The Berean Expositor*, we studied the account of *Gideon* from Judges. The excellent exposition by Mr. Holdway sparked great interest for me, in particular Gideon's personal relationship with Jehovah. Israel is in view

with our studies of Judges from the Holy Scripture, dispensational understanding and right division must be observed through all Bible Studies.

Let us recall Judges chapter 6. It sets the context of Israel before the Lord's calling of Gideon. In Judges 6:1, "the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord", the Midianites invaded and "prevailed against Israel" (6:2). While the Midianites were victorious, they left "no sustenance" for Israel, so there were "neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass" (6:4), they "entered into the land to destroy it." (6:5) Thus, "Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites" (6:6). They are going through difficult times, and "the children of Israel cried unto the Lord." (6:7), and the Lord reminded Israel "ye have not obeyed my voice" (6:10). With the Lord's mercy, "there came an angel of the Lord, and sat under an oak" (6:11) that belonged to Gideon's father. While living in the land destroyed by the Midianites, Gideon "threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites" (6:11). When "The angel of the Lord appeared unto him" (6:12) to reassure him, saying, "The Lord is with thee" (6:12), Gideon replied in despair: "my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites." (6:13). Oh! Such heartfelt cry to the Lord!

Let us also look at Job, who suffered much affliction. A series of tragedies befall him, not one, but several:

"there came a messenger unto Job" (Job 1:14), the messenger tells Job of his loss of oxen and asses, and his servants slain.

"While he was yet speaking, there came also another" (Job 1:16), this messenger tells Job of his loss of sheep and servants.

"While he was yet speaking, there came also another" (Job 1:17), this messenger tells Job of his loss of camel and his servants slain.

"While he was yet speaking, there came also another" (Job 1:18), this messenger tells Job, "Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead;" (Job 1:18).

Yet, there is more, when we read this verse, "... smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown." (Job 2:7).

Such heartbreaking series of tragedies one after another! Just when you think, "Can it get any worse?", then another tragedy follows. Job's grief "was very great" (Job 2:13), his grief was so great that, he said "Why died I not from the womb? why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly?" (Job 3:11)

In both the accounts of Job and Gideon, we read the Holy Scriptures' revelations of events leading to these tragedies. However, for the rest of us today, we simply don't understand when difficult things happen to us. Perhaps feeling disappointed, frustrated, angry, this gives opportunity for our "old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" (Ephesians 4:22) to lash out: "Why is this happening to me?"

For Gideon, The Lord responded to his cry simply, "Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?" (Judges 6:14) which the verse implied: *I am the Lord - Trust Me*. While the Lord did not say these exact words, have a read at His Word in this verse:

"Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man." (Judges 6:16).

Strong, powerful Words of the Lord. Even so, when Gideon heard it, he was not very certain. Gideon lived at the time where an altar of false god baal was erected, and he is likely having difficulties trusting whether the things he heard came from the True God Who saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians. Gideon is also not sure why The Lord has chosen him to save Israel, such a monumental responsibility! Gideon

seek reassurance from the Lord more than once (Judges 6:36-40), but regardless, the Lord sees Gideon as "mighty man of valour". (Judges 6:12). That's the way the Lord works from the revelations of the Holy Scriptures.

The world today is rampant with false gods and philosophical new-age views that are largely contrary to the Christian faith. We must trust in the Lord to overcome our spiritual enemy, both within and without. The false gods have no power over believers who place their trust firmly in the Lord, "for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee." (Psalm 9:9,10). And for Gideon himself, "The Lord is with thee" (Judges 6:12).

There is nothing to fear from false gods, "if he (baal) be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar" (Judges 6:31), "Let baal plead against him, because he hath thrown down his altar" (Judges 6:32). baal is false and powerless against the True God.

God is more powerful than His enemies. God is mightier than His enemies. We trust in the Lord to let Him be in control, and know that His enemies are beneath Him. His enemies will eventually be defeated.

What happened to Job, and what happened to Israel in Judges 6, our Lord is in control. Job himself regretted his complaints, and answered the Lord:

"I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job 42:2-6)

Sometimes, Our Lord does things that may seem contrary to our limited understanding. In the account of Gideon, isn't it contrary to human logic that the Lord wanted *less* people to overcome the Midianites?

The three friends of Job assumed that Job displeased God due to his afflictions, but to the contrary! The three friends were the ones that the Lord was wrath with. The Lord said to the Eliphaz:

"My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath." (Job 42:7).

When things happen that we simply don't understand, we just have to trust in God. We may not be comfortable with not knowing how things may turn out, and we may not understand why things happened, but we can trust that He knows, and He is in total control, and He will take care of everything.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

And, to take the same quote from this article by C. J. Holdway again,

"... God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence." (1 Corinthians 1:27-29)

We may not understand everything except what is revealed in the Holy Scriptures, but we know we can trust our Lord, to trust In Him, and to live In Him.

Expositions with Biblical Greek

By Ian Tan

Our founder, Charles H. Welch, and succeeding ministers and teachers at The Berean Publishing Trust often support their expositions with Biblical Greek. Quite often, the expositions show Greek words in the lexical form, but when

searching the same word in the Holy Scriptures, the word may have conformed to its grammatical function in the verse. Example, in English, the words "fly", "flies", "flew", "flown", "flying" are all related to the verb "to fly", with different grammatical functions. We add footnotes if or where we can provide additional information for our studies of the Holy Scriptures, and to help readers search His inspired Word in the original language of the New Testament writers.

What is Biblical Greek? It is sometimes known as New Testament Greek. It is a common dialect spoken by the Hellenes from 4th century BC. It is known as *Koine Greek* or *the common language*.

Before the development of Koine Greek, and, before Alexander the Great (who died in 323BC), the Hellenes originally had several dialects, the popular ones were Ionic, Aeolic, and Doric. Ionic became the literary dialect, and it developed into Attic used by play-writers, orators, philosophers ...etc. Owing to its widespread adoption in Athens, Attic became the chief dialect of Greece.

Attic Greek became the language of literature and commerce over a vast area due to territorial expansion by Alexander the Great. His conquests attracted many soldiers, merchants, trades and activities from all parts of the Hellenic world, many spoke different dialects, while many learnt new dialects. With the influence of a range of dialects and non-native speakers, *a common language* was developed into what we know as *Koine Greek*.

Koine Greek is the original language of the New Testament Holy Scriptures. Writers of the New Testament used the *Koine Greek*. Other languages are translated from *Koine Greek*.

Two Books Re-printed in July 2025

The Apostle Of The Reconciliation, by Charles H. Welch

Reprinted in 2025, this is a great study to further the understanding of the Lord's redemption and reconciliation, particularly from a Gentile view.

The Kingdom of God In Heaven And On Earth, by Stuart Allen

Reprinted in 2025, a must-read to explore God's two-fold purpose regarding heaven and earth.

Future Events

Sat 23 August 2025

2:00pm - 6:00pm

"The Northern Conference"

Freedom House Church Manchester

5 Premiere Road, Manchester, UK, M8 8HH

Refreshments provided, all are welcome to join our Bible Study and fellowship.

Sat 27 September 2025

11:30pm - 6:00pm

"The Anniversary at The Chapel of the Opened Book"

Chapel of the Opened Book

52A Wilson Street, London, UK, EC2A 2ER

Lunch before first session and refreshment breaks. All are welcome to join our Bible Study and fellowship.

Wed-Thu 15-16 October 2025

Wed 10:00am - 5:00pm, Thu 10:00am - 4:30pm

"Christian Resource Exhibition 2025"

Sandown Park

Portsmouth Road, Esher, Surrey, UK, KT10 9AJ

The Berean Publishing Trust will exhibit at stand M1. All are welcome to visit us at the stand.

"And she called his name Joseph; and said, The Lord shall add to me another son." (Genesis 30:24)

In Genesis 35:16-18 we have the record of the birth of Rachel's second son during which she died and "as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Ben-oni: son of my sorrow". In the ordinary course of things, no husband who loved his wife as Jacob had loved Rachel would have altered her last wish, but Jacob was constrained, (we believe by the Lord) to name him Benjamin, "son of my right hand". To complete the type of Christ set forth in the life of Joseph we need to "add" the picture of Benjamin, the Son of the Right Hand, as in Psalm 110:1, "Sit Thou at My right hand" or as it is reiterated in Hebrews (Heb 1:3,13; Heb 8:1; Heb 10:12; Heb 12:2). The type of Joseph ends with death in Genesis 50:26, a coffin in Egypt. We cannot stop here, for a risen Christ is essential for redemption and final fulfilment of God's purpose, so Benjamin completes the picture by portraying the Christ Jesus of resurrection - "Son of My right hand".

The Twofoldness of the Book of Exodus

The second book of the Bible is written around two sacrificial types of the work of Christ, namely, the Passover and the Mercy Seat. In the New Testament two words are used to bring these two aspects of truth into prominence, the words ἐξοδος (*exodus*) and εἰσόδος (*eisodus*). The former will be familiar to us as the title of the second book of Moses and means "a way out". The other word εἰσόδος (*eisodus*) means the opposite, "a way in". While all Gospel preaching if it is to be faithful must stress the great work of

deliverance or redemption as set forth in the Passover, a picture of the offering of the Lamb of God on Calvary's cross, it is a mistake to stop there. While *redemption* sets us gloriously free, we need to be able to come into the presence of a thrice holy God and so need *atonement* and this is based just as securely on the finished work of the Lord Jesus.

We find the word ἔξοδος (*exodus*) in Luke's record of the Transfiguration:

"... Moses and Elias: Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease (*exodus*)*¹⁴ which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." (Luke 9:30,31)

Both Moses (Exodus 14) and Elijah (2 Kings 2:14) are associated with a miraculous parting of the waters, either of the Red Sea or of Jordan, and there, on the Mount as representatives of the law and the prophets they both speak of His "exodus" of which theirs were but foreshadowings.

The εἴσοδος (*eisodus*), or "the way in", is found in the epistle to the Hebrews:

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter (boldness of the *eisodus*)*¹⁵) into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Hebrews 10:19)

The two aspects of Christ's finished work are indicated in Exodus 3:7,8,10 and 6:6,7:

"... I am come down to *deliver them out of* the hand of the Egyptians, and *to bring them up out of* that land unto ... a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites ... that thou mayest bring forth

*¹⁴ In Luke 9:31 ἔξοδον is the accusative form of ἔξοδος.

*¹⁵ In Hebrews 10:19 εἴσοδον is the accusative form of εἴσοδος.

my people the children of Israel out of Egypt." (Exodus 3:8,10)

"... I *will bring you out* from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will *rid you out of* their bondage, and I will redeem you ... I will *take you to me* for a people" (Exodus 6:6,7)

The passover is the great type of the real exodus the Lord accomplished at Calvary. After Israel had crossed the Red Sea and were in the wilderness, the Tabernacle was erected with all its typical furniture and offerings. These complement the Passover with its "way out" by stressing the equal need for a sacrificial basis to give Israel, represented by the High Priest, a "way into" the Lord's presence without which their deliverance from Egypt would have been incomplete.

Let us give further attention to this by considering the teaching lying behind the Passover and the Tabernacle. We have this twofold aspect of the one offering of Christ in several parts of the New Testament:

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins ..." (Ephesians 1:7)

The word "forgiveness", ἄφεσις (aphesis), is translated in Luke 4:18 "deliverance"*¹⁶ and "to set at liberty"*¹⁷. This is the exodus aspect.

"... ye who sometimes were far off are *made nigh* by the blood of Christ." (Ephesians 2:13)

*¹⁶ In Luke 4:18 ἄφεσιν is the accusative form of ἄφεσις.

*¹⁷ In the same verse Luke 4:18, the next word ἀφέσει is the dative form of ἄφεσις.

This is the *εἵσόδος* (*eisodus*) aspect. Peter likewise presents this twofold truth:

Redemption "... ye were not redeemed with corruptible things ... But with the precious blood of Christ ..." (1 Peter 1:18,19)

Atonement "... Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God ..." (1 Peter 3:18)

The word translated "to bring" in 1 Peter 3:18 is *προσαγωγή* (*prosagoge*), the same word that is rendered "access" in Ephesians 2:18.^{*18 *19}

The same order is observed in Titus 2:14:

"Who gave himself for us, that he might *redeem us* from all iniquity, and *purify unto himself* a peculiar people ..." (Titus 2:14)

^{*18} We make apologies for a minor correction here. The inspired Word of 1 Peter 3:18 is *προσαγάγη* (*prosagage*), not *προσαγωγή* (*prosagoge*). Note the subtle difference between "α" and "ω", it is very easy to miss on small text font! Both words are unrelated to each other. The word *προσαγάγη* (*prosagage*) in 1 Peter 3:18 is the subjunctive active aorist form of *προσάγω* (*prosago*), examples are Luke 9:41 "Bring thy son", Acts 16:20 "brought them to the magistrates" or "led them to the magistrates", Acts 27:27 "they drew near" or "they were approaching", and 1 Peter 3:18 "he might bring us to God". Whereas the word *προσαγωγή* (*prosagoge*) in Ephesians 2:18 is *προσαγωγήν* (*prosagogen*), the accusative noun of *προσαγωγή* (*prosagoge*). Examples are Romans 5:2 "by whom ... have access" or "obtained access", Ephesians 2:18 "through him ... have access", and Ephesians 3:12 "In whom ... have ... access ...".

^{*19} The minor correction is isolated to the one paragraph, and does not detract from the accuracy of Mr. Allen's expositions. *The Twofold Purpose of the Ages* are foundational teachings, a series well-worth study to enlighten all students of Holy Scripture.

MEN GOD CALLED (5)

By C. J. Holdway

Gideon. The immediate background to the call of Gideon is recounted for us in Judges 6:1-10, "The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord", and as a result the Midianites became their overlords for seven years. The Israelites worked, and the Midianites benefited. The latter were as "grasshoppers", or better, "locusts", indeed they were worse than locusts, for not only did they destroy "the increase of the earth", they left "neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass". "They entered into the land to destroy it". Nothing can be more disheartening than to labour successfully, and then at the last moment be deprived of the reward. Great impoverishment was the outcome for Israel, and the people were finally driven to "cry unto the Lord". But there is no hint of *repentance*, as is made clear in verses 8-10:

"... the Lord sent a prophet unto the children of Israel, which said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage; And I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you, and drave them out from before you, and gave you their land; And I said unto you, I am the Lord your God; fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but ye have not obeyed my voice."
(Judges 6:8-10)

Neither does the prophet make any mention of deliverance.

The sequel demonstrates the patience and longsuffering

of God; for although there is still no hint of repentance on the part of the nation as a whole, in mercy He acts:

"And there came an angel of the Lord, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat ... And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him ..." (Judges 6:11-12)

It was the angel of the Lord: the angel of *Jehovah*, the covenant God who came to Gideon. Although deliverance was to be effected through Gideon, it was not on the grounds of national repentance, but on the grounds of God's faithfulness to His covenant. This is perhaps emphasised in the greeting the angel gave: "*Jehovah* is with thee, thou mighty man of valour". It was a personal message to Gideon: thee, thou. Yet like others, such as Moses and Daniel, Gideon associates himself with his people, and in his reply says "if the Lord be *with us*". He included himself in the corporate responsibility of the nation.

Gideon was addressed as a "mighty man of valour". The word for "mighty man" is "*gibbor*": a man of physical strength. This point is underlined by the use of the word "valour": strong, force. But Gideon was sufficiently perceptive to realise that physical strength was not enough, although in human terms the situation demanded a leader of strength and a people of military strength. In his reply Gideon acknowledges the strength of *Jehovah*, and concludes, as the nation has been reduced to such impoverishment, that *Jehovah* has deserted them:

"And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites." (Judges 6:13)

Jehovah's answer to this, shows what was in Gideon's mind at the time: "Go in *this* thy might, and thou shalt save Israel ... Have not I sent thee?" Physically strong Gideon might be, the ideal man to deliver Israel; but his true strength was his trust in the power of God.

Gideon's response to this commission, at first sight, appears to be a case of false humility:

"... Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." (Judges 6:15)

He was the smallest, or youngest, of a family of strong powerful men. Like David, whose family seem scarcely to have thought of him, until Samuel enquired whether *all* the sons were present, Gideon was God's choice. Often God chooses and calls the least likely, and the least suitable from an outward standpoint to fulfil His purposes.

To this objection, Jehovah replied, "I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man." (verse 16). An assurance given to Moses, to Joshua and to others. It is still true that "God and one are a majority". The man God calls needs to have a soundly based conviction that God is with Him.

Gideon was a cautious man: a fact which makes the method of his choice of those who would go with him

against the Midianites the more remarkable. At this point he seeks reassurance that it is Jehovah Who speaks to him:

"And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me."
(Judges 6:17)

He had already pointed out that Jehovah had, in the past performed miracles for His people (verse 13), now he requests a sign that he may be certain he is not being deceived. The sign is recorded for us in verse 18-21, where we read that fire rose up out of the rock and consumed the provisions brought by Gideon for the angel. Gideon placed great emphasis on the power of God to perform "miracles", as we see also from verses 36-40 where the signs of the fleece are recounted. It would be nothing less than a miracle if Gideon, even with a large band of his compatriots, could save Israel from the Midianites, and Gideon sought proof of the power of God, which had not recently been exercised on behalf of Israel.

Like others we have considered in these studies, Gideon also was aware of the holiness of God:

"And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the Lord, Gideon said, Alas, O Lord God! for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face. And the Lord said unto him, Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die." (Judges 6:22,23)

If on perception of an *angel* Gideon reacted in this way, he clearly recognised that the holiness of God was much greater. The response of Gideon to this was worship:

"Then Gideon built an altar there unto the Lord, and called it Jehovahshalom ..." (Judges 6:24)

The one called of God is "worshipful": he worships, and worships with gratitude in his heart. Today so many lack the sense of the holiness of God, and hence they lack the spirit of worship and reverence.

The first of the exploits performed by this man called of God was the destruction of the altar of Baal. The background to this incident is curious: Gideon's father was named Joash. A name that means "Jehovah gave". It thus seems likely that Joash had been brought up in a godly home, where Jehovah was revered and worshipped. Yet the altar that Gideon destroyed was "the altar of Baal that thy father hath", and he was also bidden to destroy the "grove" or *asherah* that was by it. An altar to Baal with all the pagan symbols attaching to it, owned by the one "Jehovah gave". Moreover Joash says after the altar has been destroyed "If Baal be a god, let him plead for himself" (verse 31). In which God did Joash believe? Jehovah or Baal? Or is the confusion revealed in the incident symptomatic of an attitude current today: "It's the same God, under a different name"? This would provide a further reason for Gideon's insistence on signs, and Jehovah's ability and power: he wanted to be quite certain it was Jehovah and not Baal Who was addressing him.

This incident also shows Gideon as indeed a man of courage. He was prepared to destroy his father's altar to Baal, and

"he feared his father's household, and the men of the city" (Judges 6:27)

Perhaps there is here a hint that Joash, in his heart worshipped Jehovah, but because of popular opinion was prepared to compromise. Gideon was not prepared to compromise. Though "the men of the city were against him", and his own kith and kin, he had to make a clear and clean break with Baal. Gideon destroyed the altar of Baal, and built an altar to Jehovah. Once again we are reminded that service must be preceded by worship.

Then from Judges 6:34 to the end of chapter 7 we read of Gideon's army and conquest of the enemy. He gathered to himself a company of twelve thousand and twenty (possibly, even of thirty two thousand and twenty). But this force was too large, and perhaps too strong, to be used of God. He was instructed to reduce the numbers with him, and after an appeal for those whose hearts were not in the fight and who were afraid, to leave, no less than "twenty and two thousand" went home. But still the number was too large. After the test at the water (Judges 7:5,6) only three hundred were left. The fearful (possibly the faithless?), and the incautious, or possibly idolaters departed.

It is interesting to note the title given to the three hundred who remained. In verse 8 they are spoken of as "the people": an inference that in this small band Gideon had the "faithful remnant" of his day.

Then comes the well known story of the defeat of Midian. By the most ridiculous means the enemy army was reduced to chaos and confusion. After the breaking of the pitchers, and the sudden appearance of the light of the torches, and the equally sudden shout of "The sword of the

Lord, and of Gideon", "all the host ran, and cried, and fled".

"And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host ..." (Judges 7:22)

Thus it appears that the defeat of Midian was accomplished without the three hundred using their swords. Only when the Midianites had *fled*, did Gideon call together the men of Israel to pursue, and to consolidate the victory. It was an excellent example of:

"... God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence." (1 Corinthians 1:27-29)

Indeed, this was very much what Jehovah said to Gideon concerning the numbers with which he set out:

"... the Lord said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me." (Judges 7:2)

But, alas, Gideon, like so many men God calls, was not without his faults. He resisted the suggestion that he should be king (Judges 8:22,23), but he made an ephod of the spoils of battle that came to him.

"And Gideon made an ephod thereof, and put it in his city, even in Ophrah: and all Israel went thither a whoring after it: which thing became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house." (Judges 8:27)

It may have been that Gideon did this with the best of intentions, seeking to re-establish the worship of the true God, but it led the whole nation astray, and became "a snare" to Gideon and his family. Nevertheless his commission:

"... Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites ..." (Judges 6:14)

was fulfilled:

"Thus was Midian subdued before the children of Israel, so that they lifted up their heads no more. And the country was in quietness forty years in the days of Gideon." (Judges 8:28)

Gideon was one of the comparatively few called to a ministry which, in terms of the world's assessment, might be called "successful".

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST AND OF THE DEAD

By Charles H. Welch

The Witness of the Old Testament

The Book of Job

What has been called "the oldest question in the world" is found in the book of Job:

"If a man die, shall he live again? ..." (Job 14:14)

This "consummation devoutly to be wished", is denied or explained away in all the philosophies of the Ancient, and in the religious beliefs of those outside the pale of Christianity. Only within the pages of Scripture has it been found possible to include in the list of Divine titles, that which is ascribed to Abraham's faith:

"... even God, who quickeneth the dead ..." (Romans 4:17)

In Athens, the home of philosophy (Acts 17:18), the attitude of many to the Apostles' testimony to the resurrection was that they "mocked":

"And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked ..." (Acts 17:32)

To Agrippa Paul said:

"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" (Acts 26:8)

And when the Apostle reached the words:

"... he should be the first that should rise from the dead ..." (Acts 26:23)

Festus, the Roman Governor cried:

"... Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." (Acts 26:23,24)

Neither Greek "wisdom" nor Roman "power" can contemplate the possibility of resurrection. Nevertheless, the mind of man was still haunted with the age-old question "if a man die, shall he live again"? and entertained ideas that involved the immortality of the soul, reincarnation, the denial of the fact of death, saying with the poet "There is no death, what seems so is transition". To all such fancies begotten of fear and ignorance, the Scripture replies with certainty and finality, "Death is an enemy" that cannot be circumvented.

We return therefore to Job 14 and consider his search and his findings. First let us remember Job had no Bible. His three friends manifest a wisdom and knowledge that still holds the best of us in thrall, yet not one made the remotest approach to the answer of Job's question "If a man die shall he live again?" Although Job had no written revelation from God, this book abounds with references to the phenomena of nature, sun, moon, stars, animal and vegetable life, storm, snow, wind, rain, are all explored and employed. So we find Job in chapter 14 turning to his "Bible". "There is hope of a tree" (Job 14:7). Job uses the word "hope" of a tree once again in Job 19:10 "Mine hope hath he removed like a tree", but, as in Job 14, so here Job moves on to the great confession of verses 25 and 26 where personal, literal resurrection is again acknowledged and

believed:

"... there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again ..." (Job 14:7)

This figure "to be cut down" is used of a flower also:

"He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not." (Job 14:2)

The two words are not the same in the original. Moffatt preserves the distinction, saying of the flower "it fades", and of the tree "it is felled", but the end is the same. Job apparently pondered the fact that a tree though thus cut down and its root should wax old, and the stock thereof die in the ground, will live again, but from the story of the tree, he turns to the tragedy of man and asks:

"But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" (Job 14:10)

The complete process of thought that passed through the mind of Job is not recorded, but he seems to have suddenly changed his attitude, as though he said "If there is hope for a tree, will not God also think of His greater creature, man?"

"So man lieth down, and riseth not". That at first seems final. But Job continues:

"... till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." (Job 14:12)

Here however, we pause. "Awake", "sleep" are words to call a halt.

Let us go back to chapter 3, where Job cursed the day in which he had been born. Had he but died at birth, Job says:

"... I should have slept ..." (Job 3:13)

Later, when thinking of his terrible sufferings, and imagining that he was being punished for his sins, he said:

" I have sinned ... why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away my iniquity? for now shall I sleep in the dust; and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be." (Job 7:20,21)

This is as far as Job got in the extremity of his misery. He would "sleep in the dust" and even God, though he sought him in the morning, would not find him, for said Job, "I shall not be". Annihilation however is the philosophy of despair. The same man, Job is now moving on, his own words have struck a spark:

"... till the heavens be no more ..." (Job 14:12)

"... thou shalt seek me in the morning ..." (Job 7:21)

Is it possible that He, God, "will seek?" If so, surely that means a deeper interest in the fate of man than Job had hitherto entertained. "Till" - while it visualises a great stretch of time, does have a limit. What will take place when the "heavens are no more?" Job turns his cogitations into prayer:

"O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!" (Job 14:13)

The operative words here are not "the grave" or "wrath" but "hide me", "keep me secret", "appoint me", "remember me". Job got no farther than "the grave" - it took the

coming of Christ and the revelation of the mystery through the apostle Paul to speak of one's "life" being "hid with Christ in God" (Col 3:3); but Job could ask the Lord "to hide" him. Job uses the word "hide" which is used later of the preserving, sheltering care of the mother of Moses (Ex 2:2,3), and of the shelter given by Rahab to the spies (Josh 2:4), and the language of Job here, is given fuller meaning in Psalm 27:5:

"For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; ..." (Psalm 27:5)

and in Psalm 31:20

"Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues." (Psalm 31:2)

"The set time" which Job envisaged is the same word in the original as "the decree" of Psalm 2, the Psalm of Resurrection:

"I will declare the decree ... this day have I begotten thee." (Psalm 2:7)

It seems to have slipped the notice of many scholars, that in all this Job has still in memory "The hope of a tree, if it be cut down", for the word "sprout again" (Job 4:7) and "change" (Job 14:14) are the same in the original! If God will cause the dead stock of a tree to "sprout again", then He may cause Job to "change", that is to live again too. This reasoning is intensified by the following verse, namely:

"Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands." (Job 14:15)

The word "desire" is rich in its implications. In its noun form it is the word translated "silver" in Job 3:15. The Hebrew translation "silver" is derived from a word meaning to become "pale", even as the Greek word for silver, namely ἀργύριον (argurion) is derived from the word ἀργός (argos) meaning "white". The word is then used to speak of the emotions, in which one "turns pale" with the intensity of feeling:

"My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord ..." (Psalm 84:2)

We may make as great a discount as we please, and remind ourselves that these figures of speech which ascribe human emotions to God are to be used with great discretion. We are sure, that Job, in his perplexity and fear that God had forsaken him or was antagonistic to him, would heave a sigh of relief if God's "desire" unto the work of His hands was so intense, that it could justly figure that He "turned pale" with its intensity; for then the whole aspect would be changed. He could wait, and wait with joy until his change came.

We move now with Job to chapter 19, a chapter that contains those well known and wondrous words: "I know that my redeemer liveth" (Job 19:25).

We say "well known", but we have been surprised to find how few, comparatively, are aware of the wealth of teaching that this word "Redeemer" contains, for it is really "A Kinsman-Redeemer", an office with several features of vast import. To appreciate the wealth of Job's

acknowledgement here, in chapter 19, we must turn back to his earlier sense of need. One of the complaints of Job in his deep distress, was the infinite distance that must necessarily intervene between a man of flesh and blood, and the Almighty:

"If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand." (Job 9:3)

He moves mountains; He shakes the earth; He commands the sun; He doeth great things past finding out (Job 9:4-10);

"How much less shall I answer him, and choose out my words to reason with him? ... If I had called, and he had answered me; yet would I not believe that he had hearkened unto my voice." (Job 9:14-16)

and so Job goes on bemoaning the distance that was necessarily between the finite creature and the Almighty Creator. He brings his complaint to a conclusion, which contains in its questioning, the answer of the ages - The Kinsmen-Redeemer.

"For *he is not a man*, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should *come together* in judgment." (Job 9:32)

One of the translations of the Hebrew word for "together" is "alike"; it is also translated "be joined" and "unite" as in the well known passage:

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Psalm 133:1)

Job would have no problem about brethren dwelling together in unity, his problem was how can Man and God

come together? The coming of Christ and His glorious Gospel has answered this once and for all for the believer, and modern teaching has taken from "the man in the street" the wholesome fear of the Almighty that is expressed in Job. Job continued:

"Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both." (Job 9:33)

Moffatt renders this verse "Oh for some umpire over both of us, who might decide our case".

The "Daysman" would have been understood at the time the A.V. was being translated. He was a lawyer who attended court, and was at the disposal of any litigant who needed advice or arbitration. The Hebrew word *yakach* translated "Daysman" is found in Job seventeen times. It is used in Isaiah 1:18 "Come now, and let us reason together". Later in Job, after he had realised that he had a Kinsman-Redeemer, he said, using this same word:

"Will he plead against me with his great power? No; but he would put strength in me. There the righteous might dispute with him; so should I be delivered for ever from my judge." (Job 23:6,7)

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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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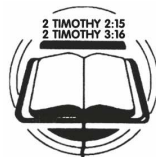
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