

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



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

As we have now approached the end of the year in 2025, we reflect on a very challenging year. The Berean Expositor is being published more than 100 years. Today, we made every attempt to provide additional references to the expositions. The U.K. subscribers has increased, with additional contacts in the Christian Resource Exhibition. We give sincere thanks to all who supported us for so many years, and still support us to this very day.

Our objectives have always been the same regards to our expositions, first established by Mr. Welch in 1909. To exalt The Lord Jesus Christ in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:3), to make all men see what is the Dispensation of The Mystery (Ephesians 3:9), revealed exclusively to The Apostle Paul who is the Apostle to the Gentiles (Colossians 1:23-27).

I look forward to having further fellowship with you all in the year 2026.

SAFEGUARDS AND CORRECTIVES (5)

By: Charles H. Welch

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

The exhortations "to stand" that are found in Paul's later epistles are incorporated in the prayer of Epaphras, who prayed on the behalf of the Colossians that they should "stand perfect and complete in

all the will of God". (Colossians 4:12).

In the structure of the epistle to the Colossians, this prayer of Epaphras is in correspondence with the preaching and warning of the Apostle; the one rounding off the other.

A 1:28-2:1 Preaching to present perfect.

A' 4:12,13 Prayer to stand perfect.

The words "present" and "stand" are both derived from the same root παρίστημι (paristemi) "to present" which is literally "to stand or cause to stand beside", while the word "stand" in the prayer of Epaphras is the simpler word ἵστημι (histemi).

The great lesson for us all at the moment is the intentional inter-relationship of "preaching" and "praying". Paul's preaching and Epaphras's praying are both marked by the same intensity. In both passages the word ἀγωνίζομαι (agonizomai) "to agonize" or to be in great conflict is used "striving" (Col 1:29). "Great conflict" ἀγῶνα (agona) Colossians 2:1, "Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently/ἀγωνίζομαι/agonizomai for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect/mature and complete in all the will of God".

If we are to use the armour provided, we must not only take the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God, but we must sanctify all that has been provided by the grace of "all prayer" (Ephesians 6:10-18).

If some are to stand in the breach and successfully withstand the onslaught of the evil one, others must as earnestly kneel in the presence of God in upholding prayer. We are dependent upon one another, and no member of the

Body of Christ, is superfluous.

There is however one thought more that Truth demands before we can feel that we have presented this matter in all its aspects. We have closed the list of references under the heading "stand" with 2 Timothy 4:17.

"Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." (2 Timothy 4:17)

Here we are no longer in an atmosphere of active and united fellowship; we have arrived at the conditions and characteristics of "the last days", isolation, rejection, misunderstanding. The actions of those like Demas who could not endure the limitations set by the exclusive truth of the Mystery, and who go back unto those conditions from which in the first flush of their acceptance, they had withdrawn. Paul was not absolutely bereft of human fellowship, he could still write "Luke is with me"; that was blessed, but he had to write "only Luke is with me" which was sad (2 Timothy 4:11).

"At my first answer no man stood with me ... Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me ..." (2 timothy 4:16,17)

The words translated "stand with" in these two passages are not the same in the original. The first means "to come in at the same time", the other means "to stand beside", a word already brought to our notice in the transitive form "to place one beside", "to present" (Colossians 1:28).

While therefore the active fellowship of the Lord's redeemed children is everywhere stressed as a vital factor in this great stand for the faith, it is nevertheless made very clear by this closing experience of the Apostle, that even though all men forsake us and none stand with us, "He hath said I will never leave thee nor forsake thee", and consequently though at the last we have to experience the bitterness of solitude and rejection, we shall nevertheless have the joy of knowing that He will remain with us to the very end.

We earnestly desire the active cooperation and fellowship of all like minded believers in our stand for the truth entrusted to us, but we seek all sufficient grace, to be prepared to stand alone, if need be, in the blessed fellowship of a rejected Apostle, a rejected revelation, and alas a rejected Christ.

The fourth and closing exhortation of those listed by us in the opening of this series is the exhortation to "watch". Two passages are before us:

"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;" (Colossians 4:2)

"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time." (2 Timothy 4:5)

Two different Greek words are employed by Paul in these passages. (1) γρηγορέω (gregoreo), and (2) νήφω (nepho). While both words are translated "watch" they have distinct origins that must be investigated.

The first word is derived from ἐγείρω (egeiro) "to awake" as from sleep, and which is used not only to speak of actual wakefulness, but of resurrection from the dead.

- *To awake from sleep.* Matthew 2:13,14,20,21; Matthew 8:25,26.
- *To arise from the dead.* Matthew 10:8; Matthew 28:6; Romans 4:24.

Watchfulness that demands the word γρηγορέω (gregoreo) therefore, is a watchfulness that is wakeful, has aroused itself, is anticipating the resurrection of the dead in its alertness in a world that sleeps the sleep of death.

In the Gospels the word is used of two calls for vigilance "watching" because the day and the hour of the Lord's return is unknown, and "watching" with the Lord in the garden of Gethsemane.

When Paul warned the Ephesian church concerning the grievous wolves that would enter in among them, not sparing the flock, drawing away disciples after them, he said,

"Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." (Acts 20:31)

To the Corinthians who were divided among themselves, and whose doctrine and practice had been invaded by false teaching and false ideas, he said:

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

To the Thessalonians the Apostle wrote:

"Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." (1 Thessalonians 5:6)

Here Paul introduces the second word νήφω (nepho) "be

sober" indicating most clearly that while there is a watchfulness that rises above the claims of natural sleep, there is a watchfulness that can be impaired by insobriety.

"For they that sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation." (1 Thessalonians 5:7,8)

Here, moreover is a link with Ephesians 6, and there it will be observed that those who put on the armour of God are called upon to wrestle "with the world-holders of this darkness" (Ephesians 6:12).

To Timothy and all those faithful men who are able to teach others also (2 Timothy 2:2) the Apostle says in the day of declension "Watch thou in all things".

Νήφω (nepho) and νηφάλιος (nephaliος) are mostly translated "sober"*¹ (1 Thessalonians 5:6,8; 1 Peter 1:13; 1 Peter 4:7*³; 1 Peter 5:8; 1 Timothy 3:11 and Titus 2:2). In two Passages νήφω (nepho) is translated "watch"*² namely in 2 Timothy 4:5; and 1 Peter 4:7; and νηφάλιος (nephaliος) "vigilant" in 1 Timothy 3:2.

Νήφω in its primary meaning refers to abstinence from drink, and while it is obvious that no man who was

*¹ Sober. Forms of νήφω: 1 Thessalonians 5:6,8 νήφωμεν, 1 Peter 1:13 νήφοντες, 1 Peter 4:7 νήψατε, 1 Peter 5:8 νήψατε. Forms of νηφάλιος: 1 Timothy 3:11 νηφαλίους, Titus 2:2 νηφαλίους.

*² Watch. Forms of νήφω: 2 Timothy 4:5 νήφε, Forms of νηφάλιος: 1 Timothy 3:2 νηφάλιον.

*³ 1 Peter 4:7 σωφρονήσατε with νήψατε to mean sober and abstemious. One could infer both Sober and Watch, as in the KJV translation.

addicted to drink could serve as an evangelist with Paul's approval it can hardly be held in seriousness that he actually counselled Timothy "do not get drunk" in 2 Timothy 4:5. The word had already moved from its primitive reference to drink. We shall discover the significance of the Apostle's choice if we turn to another reference in the same epistle, this time a compound, ἀνανήφω (ananepho) translated in the Authorised Version "recover themselves" the margin reads "Greek awake" and the Revised Version margin reads "Greek, return to soberness" and Moffatt "come to their senses". The whole passage is of supreme importance in view of the subject that is before us, namely, withstanding the drift that is now setting in toward the foretold departure from the faith.

Moffatt 2 Timothy 2:23-26 reads: "Shut your mind against foolish, popular controversy; be sure that only breeds strife. And the Lord's servant must not be a man of strife; he must be kind to everybody, a skilled teacher, a man who will not resent injuries; he must be gentle in his admonitions to the opposition — God may perhaps let them change their minds and admit the Truth; they may come to their senses again and escape the snare of the Devil, as they are brought back to life by God to do His will."

In the opening article of this series, we observed that the four key words "keep", "hold", "stand", "watch" while found in several of the Prison Epistles, are all found in the last epistle that Paul wrote, namely the second epistle to Timothy. One or two elements of instruction emerge from this fact.

- (1) The epistles to Timothy were primarily addressed to a

workman, a teacher, an evangelist, and the approved successor of the Apostle. No believer today stands exactly in the unique position that was occupied by Timothy. However, Timothy himself was instructed how to ensure a succession, and this is found in 2 Timothy 2:2 and in various exhortations regarding service that run through the epistle.

- (2) The fact that the complete set of words are all found in 2 Timothy indicates the great importance of that epistle to us all, who find ourselves living near the end of the dispensation. We believe the importance is sufficient warrant for a restatement as we draw to a conclusion.

KEEP. 2 Timothy 4:7 Here we have the example of the Apostle Paul. He sums up his life's witness under three heads.

- (1) "A good contest". In this he says he has put up a good fight.
- (2) "A course finished". The race set before him has been covered.
- (3) "The faith I have kept". This is his last word.

KEEP. 2 Timothy 1:12,14. Paul was unmoved and unswayed by the intense and persistent opposition he had experienced, being persuaded that the Lord was fully able to keep that which had been entrusted against that day. As he comes to the end of his course he passes "the good deposit" over to the safeguarding of Timothy.

"That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us." (2 Timothy 1:14)

HOLD. 2 Timothy 1:13. In direct connection with this good deposit and sacred trust Timothy is exhorted to have and to hold "a pattern of sound words" which he had heard of the Apostle and to hold such a pattern in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

STAND. 2 Timothy 4:17. After the exhortation "to stand" that he had given in earlier epistles, the Apostle encourages us all who are in any sense in true succession with his despised yet glorious ministry to remember that even if "no man" will stand with us, the Lord will, even as He stood by Paul until his work was done.

WATCH. 2 Timothy 4:5. This we have been considering in this article and this one word gathers up within itself the other three. We can neither "keep", "hold" or "stand" if we do not watch, if we are not conscious that we are surrounded by a world lulled to sleep in a drunkenness, not brought about by wine or strong drink, but by the false doctrines that have been imbibed and which have been circulated by the Father of lies.

We have seen something of the "Signs of the Times" and have been forewarned concerning the character of the apostasy from the faith that shall darken the closing days of this dispensation and we have seen the fourfold corrective given in Paul's later epistles, which if heeded will not only keep us ourselves from complicity with this sad departure, but enable us to hold aloft the Word as in a dark place with the glad consciousness that some at least will be led to change their minds, come to their senses, and be delivered

from the snare that is spread for their feet.

THE TWOFOLD PURPOSE OF THE AGES (6)

By: Stuart Allen

Continuing our consideration of the finished work of Christ in its twofold aspect, redemption and atonement, we notice that John's Gospel opens with "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (redemption). In the opening of his first epistle John reveals the fact that the cleansing blood of Christ enables the redeemed "to walk in the light, as He is in the light" (atonement, 1 John 1:7). Israel had first to be delivered from the bondage of Egypt before they could learn the preciousness of access into the holiest of all. The one offering of Christ is both our redemption and our atonement, our "way out" and our "way in". In spite of the indiscriminate use of the term, atonement is not primarily for unsaved sinners, but for the complete salvation of the redeemed:

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;" (Romans 3:24,25)

Before examining the record of the Passover in Exodus 12, let us acquaint ourselves with the distinctive meaning of the two words redemption and atonement as used in the Old Testament. The word פָּדָה (padah) which is translated

"redeem" and "redemption" a number of times primarily means "to sever, separate or divide". In Exodus 8:23 we read "I will put a division between My people and thy people." The Septuagint uses the word διαστολή (diastole) translated "difference" in Romans 3:22. Again, where Isaiah 29:22 uses the word נָפַד (padah) ("the Lord Who redeemed Abraham"), the Septuagint translates by the Greek ἀφώρισεν (aphorisen) "separated" as in Romans 1:1^{*4}.

The tract of country called Padan-Aram is the country separated by the two rivers, Euphrates and Tigris, and named by the Greeks Mesopotamia, the land lying in the midst of the rivers. Gaal or Goel refers to the wonderful type of Christ as the Kinsman-Redeemer. The office of the Kinsman-Redeemer is set forth in the book of Ruth and this is the One Job spoke of when he said "I know that my Redeemer liveth" (Job 19:25).

(Please see structure on the next page)

^{*4} Aphorisen is in Aorist form, which is neither its lexical form nor the actual grammatical form in Romans 1:1. The Greek word in Romans 1:1 is ἀφωρισμένος (aphōrismenos), its lexical form is ἀφορίζω (aphorizo). The corrections here is grammatical is shown, which does not detract from the expositions.

The Passover (Exodus 12)

Let us first of all see this chapter in outline:

A 1,2 The beginning of months

B 3-11 The feast of Passover

C 12,13 I will pass over

B' 14-17 The feast of unleavened bread

C' 17 This day I brought you out

A' 18-20 The first month

"This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." (Exodus 12:2)

Notice that the words "unto you" and "to you" indicate a change. The first month of the year, till the institution of the Passover was Tisri, corresponding with our October. Here, at the Passover, Israel started anew and their New Year began which corresponds with our March-April. This is Gospel truth in type and shadow.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17)*⁵

It is Christ on the cross where the sinner must commence. There is no other beginning that God recognises. "It (the Passover) shall be the beginning of the

*⁵ NIV was referenced: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (NIV 2 Corinthians 5:17)

year to you". "A lamb", "the lamb", "your lamb", such is the suggestive progression in verses 3,4,5, that from a Saviour, we may pass to the Saviour and not have rested until we can say my Saviour. "Your lamb shall be without blemish" (Exodus 12:5). The law in Leviticus is stringent right down to minutest details, that the holiness and perfection of the great Antitype, the Lord Jesus Christ, might be constantly in the fore and ever be in the mind of the believer:

"... there shall be no blemish therein. Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a wen, or scurvy, or scabbed ... Ye shall not offer unto the Lord that which is bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut ... they shall not be accepted for you." (Leviticus 22:21-25)

All such animals must be set aside "It shall be perfect to be accepted" (verse 21). The lamb was to be taken on the tenth day of the month and sacrificed on the fourteenth. This would give time and opportunity for careful inspection.

The true Lamb of God was constantly under inspection by His family, His disciples and the multitudes around Him. One day He threw out a challenge "which of you convicteth Me of sin?" (John 8:46). No one could reply for it was impossible. He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Hebrews 7:26) and only as such could He be the Saviour of failing men and women. Had He sinned but once in thought, word, or deed, He would have needed a saviour Himself. A sinner cannot atone for or put away his own sin and put perfection in its place, let alone atone for the sin of the whole world!

Luke 23 contains the finding of those who examined the true Lamb of God:

- *Pilate* "I find no fault in this man" (Luke 23:4,14)
- *Herod* "No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto Him" (Luke 23:15)
- *The Malefactor* "We receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss" (Luke 23:41)
- *The Centurion* "...glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man" (Luke 23:47)

Matthew 27 adds further evidence:

- *Judas* "I have betrayed the innocent blood" (Matthew 27:4)
- *Pilate's wife* "Have nothing to do with that just man" (Matthew 27:19)

God's doctrine necessitated the tremendous statement that Christ "was made sin for us", but it immediately adds "Who knew no sin" (2 Corinthians 5:21). Peter insists that He Himself "bare our sins" but straight away states "Who did no sin" (1 Peter 2:22-24) and speaks of "the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18,19).

"It shall be PERFECT to be accepted". Such was God's requirement for the type of His Son for such is the Lamb of God, our Saviour.

"And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you ..." (Exodus 12:13)

The word אֹת (oth), "token", is often translated "sign" in the Old Testament. The rainbow in the cloud is called the token or sign of the covenant (Gen. 9:12). "The blood shall be to you for a sign", that is, it signified something and that something was life laid down:

"For the life (soul) of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls (lives): for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul (life)." (Leviticus 17:11)

The shed blood atoned for the soul or life, by reason of the soul in it. The sprinkled blood upon the door post was a sign that redemption had been made. Nothing else could be that sign and nothing else did the Lord "see". No genealogy showing direct descent from Abraham could be a sign; no promises, vows, prayers, nothing but the sprinkled blood redeemed and protected those in the house. It is important to understand that the Lord "passing over" each house of the Israelites was synonymous with protecting. It is difficult to understand that the act of passing over a building could protect it from harm. But when we realise that the word פָּסַח (pasach), "pass over", is rendered "halt" in 1 Kings 18:21, "how long halt ye between two opinions?" and here is the thought of suspension of movement. "Hovering" gives the sense better in Exodus. The theme of Deuteronomy 32:11 seems appropriate here:

"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings ..." (Deuteronomy 32:11)

The Lord, like the eagle, spread abroad His wings,

hovered over the houses of His people, protecting them from the destroyer that went through the land and caused death in every house. Psalm 91:4 expresses the feeling of פָּסַח (pasach) "to pass over" without using the word:

"He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust ..." (Psalm 91:4)

We should note too that the two side posts and the upper door post were sprinkled with the blood, but never the floor and the threshold, for not even in type would God allow "trampling under foot the Son of God and counting the blood of the covenant ... an unholy thing"? (Hebrews 10:29). God's true Passover Lamb was perfect inside and out and in Him alone can we find redemption, acceptance and access.

The immediate result of the Passover was that all who came under the redeeming action became "pilgrims":

"And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste ..." (Exodus 12:11)

There could be no more waiting in Egypt, the place of bondage, after such redemption, the exodus to freedom must start straight away. All this great illustration of the fulness of redemption must have been in Paul's mind when he wrote:

"... Christ our passover is sacrificed for us ..." (1 Corinthians 5:7)

The Atonement

After Israel were separated by redemption from Egypt (a

type of the world system under the domination greater than Pharaoh, Satan), the next great typical movement was the erection of the Tabernacle. In this, the Mercy Seat is the central feature. Priests are necessary, cleansing is emphasised and the solemn privilege of access and entrance into the holiest of all is set forth where the blaze of God's glory, the shekinah dwelt. We say "solemn privilege of access" advisedly, because only one Israelite went into this most sacred dwelling place of God, once a year. God surrounded Himself with barriers as it were to impress on His redeemed people that access into His holy presence was a privilege beyond estimation. The ordinary Israelite lived the whole of his life without once entering the most holy place in the Tabernacle. Aaron only went in once a year in his capacity as the high Priest, representing the people of Israel on the great annual Day of Atonement and then "not without blood", for access to a thrice holy God would be for ever impossible for sinners unless they had been redeemed and cleansed by the precious blood of Christ. But we read in Hebrews 10:14,

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

The most holy place of the Tabernacle was a picture of the reality in the highest heavens:

"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands (the earthly Tabernacle), which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:" (Hebrews 9:24)

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest (the most holy place) by the blood of Jesus ... let us draw near" (Hebrews 10:19-22)

What no Israelite could do in the Old Testament dispensation before the redemptive and atoning work of Christ on the cross, we who are saved and members of the Body of Christ can experience at all times:

"For through him (the Lord Jesus) we both (Jewish and Gentile believers) have access by one Spirit unto the Father ... In whom (the Lord Jesus) we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him." (Ephesians 2:18, Ephesians 3:12)

How highly favoured we are! May we ever value highly such a tremendous privilege and remember that the basis of it is nothing in ourselves, but it has all been wrought out for us by our glorious Saviour and Head. Redemption snaps the bondage and slavery of sin. Atonement cleanses from the defilement of sin and makes us fit to enter the holiest of all in heaven through the Lord Jesus Christ, the Way and the one Mediator, unto our God and Father.

MEN GOD CALLED (6)

By: C. J. Holdway

"And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of ... Samson" (Hebrews 11:32)



JOINTS & BANDS

(COLOSSIANS 2:19)



October 2025

Joins and Bands Update

By: Archie Falisi

The October 2025 edition of Joins and Bands now contain reports and events up to and includes all of October 2025.

January 2026 edition will contain reports and events up to and include all of January 2026. It will be printed and distributed in Feb-Mar 2026 depending on printer schedule and distribution.

Likewise, April 2026 edition will contain reports and events from to and include all of April 2026. It will be printed and distributed in May-Jun 2026 depending on printer schedule and distribution.

Hence, this edition of Joins and Bands now contain all reports and events as titled ending in the quarter, August 2025 to October 2025.

Sat 23 Aug 2025, Northern Conference

By: Archie Falisi

The Northern Conference was held in Manchester. The minister, Mr. A. Falisi, opened and introduced the first Northern Conference to a packed hall, and gave the opening prayer to start the meeting. The first scripture reading was given by Mr. A. Taylor from Scotland which was taken from 1 John 1:1-10, "The basis of fellowship with Him".

The first speaker that day was Mr. P. Ambrose, he focused on the most loved Psalm, Psalm 23:1-6, "The Lord is my shepherd", highlighting the safety and security we have in

God, that God is our provider, refresher, protector, restorer, preserver, and ever present with us. Mr. P. Ambrose went on to explain in Ephesians 4:22-24 regarding put-off the Old Man (Old Nature), and put on the New Man (New Nature) with the renewal of your mind. The conclusion to his message was centred around Ephesians 6:10-18 and the importance on having to wear the full armour of God to withstand the attacks of the enemy. The message was gladly received by all who were present at the conference.

The first to give their personal testimony was Mrs. F. Fuller, as she explained how God had moved within her life giving her "Blessed Assurance" over the battle of the mind and how important it is to read, to study, and to trust the written Word of God. Mrs. Fuller also emphasised the necessity to wear the whole armour of God to withstand the attacks we receive from the spiritual dark forces (Ephesians 6:10-18) and how blessed we are to have the unsearchable riches of Christ (Ephesians 3:8). Mrs. Fuller highlighted the great importance of Berean fellowship amongst the members of The Body of Christ.

The second scripture reading was given by Mr. N. Tidswell from 1 John 2:1-17, "The Test of Knowing Him".

Mr. J. Wyatt gave a brief personal testimony, reflecting upon the Lord's dialogue with the woman of Samaria in John 4:1-24 and how God can use any individual no matter who or what they are in their social status or their personal history. The important factor is availability to God, to be used of God and to serve God.

We had a short interval break with refreshments and time of fellowship.

The second part of the Northern Conference was introduced by the minister, Mr. A. Falisi, as he opened up in prayer giving thanks to God for His blessings upon our meeting so far.

This was followed by a Scripture reading from 1 John 2:18-29 given by Mrs. H. Fuller, "The Test of Loving God".

Another personal testimony was given by Mr. J. Fuller, expressing his new found joy in biblical studies focusing on

geographical studies, locations, and places within Israel, the holy land, the spiritual capital of the world.

The final scriptural reading was given by Mr. E. Fuller from 1 John 3:1-11 "The Imperative of Love".

The second speaker in the afternoon was Mr. J. Tidswell, as he spoke on the all important subject of "The Atonement" first focusing on "The Ark of the Covenant" Exodus 25:1-40 as to the contents within it. He went on to explain the Old Testament types regarding Christ's atonement as seen in Genesis 6:14. Noah his ark was completely covered inside and outside, was waterproof fully covered with pitch, symbolising that we are fully covered in our salvation due to Christ's atonement for us, Exodus 25:10-22, the Mercy Seat. The Propitiation, the Blood Stained Mercy Seat, Romans 3:25. All points to Christ's Sacrifice.

The exposition went further to explain Israel's "Yom Kippur", the day of National Atonement, Leviticus 16:1-34. Israel's sins are covered all in one day. In the New Testament Christ's sacrificial atonement excludes the Law, the Law pointed to Christ and His sacrificial redemption for all who will accept His offering for sin, deliverance from sin and access to God. The Lord's substitute and atonement covers past, present and future sins.

Final conclusions:

What is the intent and purpose? 1 Peter 1:19. Redeemed with the precious blood of Christ.

What is the extent? Who? Christ died for all. Isaiah 53:5, our transgressions and iniquities.

What is the application? Mark 10:34, "and to give His life a ransom for many." The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, John 1:29, Christ died for all, 2 Corinthians 5:14, reconciliation now made possible in Christ, 2 Corinthians 5:18-21, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

The final two personal testimonies were given towards the end, by Mr. D. Bond and Ms. S. Thompson.

Mr. Bond spoke about the Grace of God in his personal life and how he came to see the mystery, and the impact upon his understanding on the Word of God.

Ms. Thompson gave her own personal testimony expressing how she didn't find God, but God found her. It is only God who can make a major difference in our lives.

The minister ended and concluded the first Northern Conference with a prayer and praise to God for the time of encouraging fellowship we had together that afternoon with the members of the Body of Christ and looks forward to next year's conference in 2026.

Sat 27 Sep 2025, The Annual Anniversary Meeting

By: Archie Falisi

Mr. P. Ambrose was the convener for this special occasion as he gave a warm welcome to all those who took the time and effort to attend the annual event at the Chapel. After Peter had read out the names of individuals who were not able to attend this annual event due to ill health, Mr. A. Taylor opened up the meeting in prayer and praise to God for our gathering together this afternoon. The Secretary, Mr. I. Tan, gave reports as regards to the website, the BE subscriptions and reprinting books

The opening Hymn was No. 85, the first verse was very significant:

"The spirit breathes upon the word
and brings the truth to sight;
precepts and promises afford
a sanctifying light."

The first scripture reading was Psalm 8:1-9, the minister Mr. A. Falisi began to expound the meaning behind this significant and important Psalm in relation to Adam and in relation to Christ. This Psalm is related to the Mystery of Christ. The minister explained how David's praise appeared to have been sparked by comparing the work of God in the

heavens with the seeming insignificance of man on the earth (Psalm 8:3-4). David is amazed that God would even be mindful of man, and consider and care for him. David noted that God created "Son of Man" a little lower than the angels, and crowned Him with glory and honour (Psalm 8:4-5). Having placed the work of God's hands under His feet (Psalm 8:6), including the animals, birds and fish (Psalm 8:7-8). But this dominion was lost due to the fall of Adam, but will eventually be regained by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as a result of His Resurrection and Ascension to heaven, as now He has all authority both in heaven and on earth. (Matthew 28:19; Ephesians 1:20-22; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Hebrews 2:5-9; 1 Peter 3:22). The Psalm begins and ends in the same way, praising the excellence of God's Name in all the earth in response to His creation, consideration of man and his conquest over the enemy and the avenger (Psalm 8:1-9).

The second Hymn was No. 83 and the 5th chorus of the hymn reflects David's contemplation of the heavens in Psalm 8:3:

"His every word of grace is strong
as that which built the skies;
the voice that rolls the stars along
speaks all the promises."

The closing prayer before our intermission was given by Mr. C. Fraser from Ayrshire, Scotland.

During the interval we were blessed with much food and sweets during time of fellowship together with the members of the Body of Christ.

The second part of the meeting was reintroduced by Mr. P. Ambrose. The opening prayer was given by Mr. M. Benjamin from Bedford. Two scripture readings were given. The first from Genesis 28:10-12, read by Ms. S. Rajbahak. The second scripture reading was from 1 Timothy 2:1-7 by Ms. C. Moulton.

The second speaker from the afternoon is our guest, a translator of biblical manuscripts from Hebrew and Greek, Mr.

G. Thomason. The focus of his subject was centred around 1 Timothy 3:16 as he defended the verse in which,

"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." (1 Timothy 3:16)

Mr. G. Thomason showed the original manuscripts that pointed out textual inconsistencies which produce modern translations, an example of which, is 1 Timothy 3:16 "he" was manifest in the flesh, which the word "God" was replaced.

The closing hymn to end the anniversary's annual event was No. 125, the much loved hymn, "When I survey the wondrous cross".

The closing prayer was given by Mr. R. Bevan, he cited Philemon verse 25, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen." This concluded the time of fellowship among the members of the Body of Christ, who were blessed spiritually and physically.

We look forward to seeing you again next year.

Sun 12 Oct 2025, Friends From Australia Visited Chapel

By: Archie Falisi

We were honoured and privileged to have with us at the chapel, Mr. and Mrs. D. and J. Tavender, a very special and welcomed guests from Australia. We had very encouraging time of fellowship together with the Word of God. We all look forward to see them again if they have any further plans to visit London. We shall continue to be in contact with Mr. and Mrs. Tavender, although they may live far from us, they are near in our hearts as we uphold as dear members of The Body of Christ.

Wed-Thu, 15-16 Oct 2025, Exhibiting At The CRE

By: Archie Falisi

"... freely ye have received, freely give ..." (Matthew 10:8)

The CRE, Christian Resource Exhibition, was a two day event taking place at Sandown Park on Wednesday 15 and Thursday 16 October. The Berean Publishing Trust was located at stand M1. The free Berean literatures being displayed included Mr. Welch's first book, "The Dispensational Truth", alongside that, "The Testimony Of The Lord's Prisoner", as we also included "The Apostle of The Reconciliation". It has been reprinted this year and was a popular choice for many. We also included two books by Mr. Stuart Allen which have both been recently reprinted. The first book being "The Unfolding Purpose of God" and the newly reprinted book on the subject titled "The Kingdom Of God In Heaven And On Earth", which drew much interests from various Christians who are not aware of God's two-fold purposes.

This year at the CRE we had a huge level of support from other fellow Bereans joining us at stand M1. The ones representing The Berean Publishing Trust was the minister, Mr. A. Falisi, accompanied by Mr. J. Tidswell. The others supporting us at The Berean Publishing Trust were Mr. G. Thomason, Mr. A. Taylor, Ms. F. Love, Mr. T. Quinn, and Mr. D. Privett. They all helped us witness the Truth Rightly Divided, 2 Timothy 2:15, as we made known to all who came to speak to us about "The Dispensation Of The Mystery", Ephesians 3:9.

The booklets such as "Far Above All", "The Blessed Hope", "Steps Through Scriptures", and the new reprint of 2025 were all very popular choices amongst the people we spoke to at Christian Resource Exhibition. It was another successful and productive year at the CRE as different christian groups now know who and what we are and what we represent regarding The Word Of God.

Looking Ahead

Sat, 30 May 2026 : Foundation Day

at The Chapel Of The Opened Book
52A Wilson Street, London, EC2A 2ER
Starts 12 noon, ends 6pm.

Aug 2026 : Northern Conference

Details to be confirmed.

Sat, 26 Sep 2026 : The Annual Anniversary

at The Chapel Of The Opened Book
52A Wilson Street, London, EC2A 2ER
Starts 12 noon, ends 6pm.

Wed-Thu, 14-15 Oct 2026 : Christian Resource Exhibition

at Sandown Park, Esher, Surrey
Opening times to be confirmed.

It sometimes comes as something of a shock to the thoughtful reader to find Samson listed among the "heroes of faith" in Hebrews 11. Samson whose morals can hardly be said to be of a very high standard: Samson whose exploits often appear to be little more than childish tricks. Yet Samson is named as one of those "who through faith subdued kingdoms..." (Hebrews 11:33).

Perhaps more than others, of those God called, it is necessary to put Samson in his historical background. It was a time of which it is recorded:

"And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years." (Judges 13:1)

Twice it is recorded in the book of Judges "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 17:6; Judges 21:25). The lawlessness (or, as we might say, the permissiveness) of the times may account in part for the failures of this man. For it is only too easy for the godly person to be influenced by the customs of his day without realising it.

Like Samuel and John the Baptist, Samson was one of those born of a barren woman: like Jeremiah and Paul, he was one of those specifically mentioned as marked out by God before birth. He was marked out for, and placed in the position where he could fulfil God's Will for him; yet his failures are more familiar to us than his successes. May it not be said that Samson was predestined by God for His purpose, and demonstrates a point often overlooked in the consideration of predestination, that there is no element of fate involved. Predestination requires man's cooperation:

Samson's cooperation was only partial.

The angel of the Lord told his mother before his birth:

"For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines." (Judges 13:5)

Samson was to be a Nazarite: one separated to God from his birth. It was God's intention that Samson should be wholly concerned with the Lord's will for him: frequently he was concerned only with his own desires and will. Nevertheless, Samson is an illustration of the fact that "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (Romans 11:29). God purposed that he should begin to deliver Israel from the Philistines, and in considering this man called of God, this needs to be remembered. Frequently he is thought of as a Judge, with all that is implied to us in the word: but it was not as a judge that he was commissioned. His commission was to begin to deliver Israel, and in this, and to this extent, he succeeded. While the frailty and sinfulness of human nature is very clearly to be seen in the life of this man, he did fulfil his commission to this extent. Yet as we look at the life and exploits of this man called of God, recognising that he did "begin to deliver Israel", we can only say "what might have been". How very much more he might have accomplished had he not given way to his own likes and dislikes, his own desire and whims.

It is clearly the responsibility of believing parents to bring up their child in the way that he should go. Samson was fortunate in that his home influence was godly:

"Then Manoah intreated the Lord, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born." (Judges 13:8)

"So Manoah took a kid with a meat offering, and offered it upon a rock unto the Lord ..." (Judges 13:19)

Samson was born into a family which desired to know the will of God, and to do it; a family which worshipped Jehovah. Yet, alas, Samson was not all he might have been.

Samson's first exploit is recorded in chapter 14: what a disappointment it must have been to his parents to find their son, of whom such great things had been foretold, desiring marriage with a Philistine woman. Yet there was something about it they did not realise:

"But his father and his mother knew not that it was of the Lord, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines ..." (Judges 14:4)

It was of the Lord that he sought an occasion against the Philistines. When marriage with aliens was forbidden by God, it is clear that the occasion Samson found was one of his own devising: God's Spirit moved him to seek an opportunity to move against the Philistines; but his own wishes found him an occasion which pleased him. We also need to beware lest we seek to do God's will our own way.

Samson, it seems, always sought an excuse, if not a reason, for attacking or injuring the Philistines. In this case the "reason" came through the riddle: the Philistine guests at the wedding cheated! As a result Samson slew thirty Philistines. The discovery, later, that (evidently in accord

with custom) his wife had been given to the "best man", gave him a further opportunity to take action against the Philistines. Following his revenge taken by releasing in pairs with burning firebrands tied to their tails, three hundred foxes, events led up to the situation in which "he smote them hip and thigh with a great slaughter" (Judges 15:8). The combined result of these events was that the Philistines came against Samson, and persuaded no less than 3,000 men of Judah to take him (Judges 15:9-16). The outcome of this was a further 1,000 Philistines slain by him.

This latter incident reveals just how submissive to the Philistines the children of Israel were at this time. Three thousand of them meekly went to capture their own champion at the bidding of their enemies! There is another hint of the extent of the subservience of the nation to the Philistines in the incident where Samson kills the lion with the jawbone of the ass. 1 Samuel 13:19-22 informs us:

"Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel: for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears ... So it came to pass in the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people ..." (1 Samuel 13:19-22)

With a nation meekly submitting to their enemies, and with the complete absence of weapons among them, it is no wonder Samson could only begin to deliver Israel!

The downfall of this man God called is recorded in chapter 16:1-21. Samson saw an harlot. The Companion Bible note at this point reads: "He could rend a lion, but not his lusts. He could break his bonds, but not his habits. He

could conquer the Philistines, but not his passions".

Not long after, it seems, came his affair with Delilah. The Philistines were able to capitalise on this weakness of Samson's, and to discover the secret of his strength by means of the seductions of Delilah. Samson was captured.

"... the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house." (1 Samuel 16:21)

From God's appointed leader of His people, reduced to the work of women and slaves in the prison of his enemies.

Then, his hair, the symbol of his separation to God, began to grow in prison. The day came when his enemies gathered in the temple of Dagon to rejoice over the downfall of Samson, and he was brought in "to make sport". Calling upon his God to grant him once more his strength, he pulled down the pillars on which the whole structure of the temple depended: "So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life" (1 Samuel 16:30).

Did he repent? or did he simply recognise another God given occasion against the Philistines, by which he could also get revenge for his eyes? We cannot be certain. We can be certain of his faith in Jehovah, even at the darkest moment of his life. If only he had, in all things, put God first!

Why should this bloodthirsty man be included with the heroes of faith? The Philistines were mixed with "the giants": Goliath, slain by David later, was the Philistine champion. These were the offspring of Rapha, one of the

nephilim, the result of unlawful, and unholy union between the "sons of God" and the daughters of men. Satan's object in this was the defeat of the purpose of God. It was therefore right that they should be destroyed.

Samson: physically strong, morally weak and childish. Was it necessary for him to visit the dead body of the lion and so be defiled? What was the purpose of his riddle? or of the removal of the Gates of Gaza? On two occasions at least he was not strong enough to withstand a woman. But he had faith: he ought to have been a better man: but he began to deliver Israel.

DISPENSATIONAL AND FOUNDATIONAL TRUTH

By: Stuart Allen

As an introduction to his Alphabetical Analysis of Truth, C.H. Welch divides the subject into three sections, (1) Doctrinal Truth, (2) Dispensational Truth, (3) Practical Truth. He explains each section in this way:

- (1) "Doctrinal Truth embraces all that has been revealed concerning the Being and Attributes of God, and all that God has done, commanded, promised or foretold in creation, law and grace." This is truth that time does not alter. It is basic or foundational. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23) is true under whatever dispensation we may be called. "God is just" is as true under Grace as it was under law. There is therefore a permanence about foundational truth.

- (2) "Dispensational Truth takes note of the purpose of the ages, the changes that have been introduced since creation, such as may be denominated the dispensation of Innocence, Law, Earthly Kingdom, Grace, Church, Mystery etc., and the office of dispensational truth is to decide whether any particular doctrine — be it command, promise, calling or prophecy — does or does not pertain to any particular individual or individuals. Dispensational truth would lead the believer to distinguish between the blessing that says 'the meek shall inherit the earth' (Psalm 37:11, Matthew 5:5), and those blessings which are described as all 'spiritual' and to be enjoyed 'in heavenly places' where Christ is enthroned" (Ephesians 1:3,19-23; Ephesians 2:5,6). To those who discern "things that differ" (Philippians 1:10 margin), these two statements cannot mean the same thing if words are allowed to have their normal meaning.

Under the law of God given through Moses sin and its forgiveness was linked with animal sacrifice (Leviticus 4 and 5) and this could not be ignored. To do so meant discipline and punishment. Today no Christian who sins is involved with animal sacrifice, for the great Antitype, Christ Himself, the Lamb of God, has made the one necessary sacrifice for sin, namely giving Himself, so doing away with the O.T. types and shadows which are no longer necessary, as the epistle to the Hebrews so clearly shows. Because of this, we now have a dispensation of grace resting on the finished work of the Saviour. The O.T. dispensation of animal sacrifice has passed, having

achieved its object. This is no problem when the Scriptural setting of each is realised and distinguished.

- (3) Practical Truth. This should be obvious, for it is the practical working out in experience, of the doctrine or instruction given to us in the Word of God.

However, problems will arise if (1) and (2) are not understood and acted on, and some dispensationalists seem to be confused here. It has been pointed out that, in reading the Word of God, we should note "the address on the envelope", that is to say to recognise to whom the passage of Scripture is addressed. This is right, but we must not draw wrong conclusions. The name and address of the person on the envelope decides who is the owner of the letter. But the owner would be foolish, if, before he opened the letter, he decided that every sentence must refer to him and no one else because he is the owner! Statements in the letter might refer to a dozen different people and these would have to be given their place.

We must bear this in mind when we come to the Scriptures. By all means let us note to whom it is addressed. Failure to do this will affect the interpretation. But don't let us assume that every statement in Scripture can only relate to those who are mentioned in the opening verses.

Let us take for instance the prophecy of Isaiah in the O.T. and the epistle of James in the N.T. Isaiah tells us that his prophecy is "concerning Judah and Jerusalem" (Isaiah 1:1). James addresses his epistle to "the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad" (James 1:1). We have heard it said that because these Scriptures are addressed to Israel, they are not "for the Body" and therefore they need not

receive careful study by those who belong to the Body of Christ. And this, in spite of the statement by the Apostle Paul, that "all Scripture is profitable for doctrine (teaching) (2 Timothy 3:16), that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work".

Let us turn to Isaiah 26:3 where we read.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." (Isaiah 26:3)

And then compare this with Philippians 4:7,

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." (Philippians 4:7)

These two Scriptures are addressed to two different groups of God's children, the people of Israel, and the Body of Christ, but both deal with the same basic truth that peace of mind can be enjoyed to the full through complete trust in the Lord. The previous verse in Philippians mentions prayer and thanksgiving which must include trust in God. This is typical of what we can find right throughout the Word of God and therefore we must be careful to distinguish between what is foundational or basic, with what is dispensational.

The command to "rightly divide" the Word of God (2 Timothy 2:15) goes far beyond making a distinction between Israel and the Church, or recognising Acts 28 as a dispensational division. It means that we must go carefully through every passage of Scripture we are studying and note what is basic and what is the position of the people in the context (dispensational) and their relation to the

purpose of God. Foundation truth upon which the purpose of the ages is built is covered by such Bible terms as justification, redemption, atonement, sanctification, propitiation, reconciliation, substitution, identification, forgiveness, pardon, ransom. Dispensational truth on the other hand, notes the differences that God has planned for various sections of His redeemed family. Their placing in glory depends entirely on His elective purpose and in His wisdom, love and grace, He knows just where is the best place for each in the new heaven and earth He will yet create.

Some He purposes to bless on the new earth (Psalm 37:11; Matthew 5:5); others look forward by faith, like Abraham, to the Heavenly Jerusalem which finally descends to the new earth (Hebrews 11:9,10,16; Hebrews 12:22; Revelation 3:12; Revelation 21:10-27). Others will be enthroned with the ascended Christ, "higher than all the heavens" (Ephesians 4:10; Ephesians 2:6). The whole of God's vast creation will be peopled with His children.

The Lord's great redemptive plan is much greater and wider than the average Christian appreciates. Certain it is that the glory of God will completely fill this new creation as will His redeemed family as they contemplate for eternity and praise the One Who has done "immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine" (Ephesians 3:30 NIV). Then "all things in heaven and earth" will stand in the Headship and power of Christ (Ephesians 1:10).

The need to distinguish what is basic and what is truly dispensational is essential when we are dealing with such an epistle as that by James. It is easy to call this Scripture "Jewish"; but what is meant by this? Do those who use this

term mean the passage is predominantly Jewish, or entirely Jewish, that is, every verse is not only addressed to Israel, but concerns Israel and no one else. Unless this term is used with care it can lead to considerable misunderstanding. This can be seen in the interpretation of the Gospels. When we come to the Gospel of John, some assert that this is Jewish. If they mean that it was primarily addressed to the nation, they are right, for it is a history, as all the Gospels are, of the earthly life and ministry of the Lord Jesus and this is looked at from four different angles. If they mean that every statement of the Lord recorded by John is about Israel alone and has no reference to the Gentile, then their viewpoint is sadly wrong.

One of John's key words is the word "world" which occurs no less than 79 times. It means mankind in general and not one nation in particular. No one can give a correct interpretation of this Gospel, unless they study every occurrence of this important word. Obviously it must have taken a prominent place in the Lord's ministry, for we should remember we only have a selection under the Spirit's guidance of the Lord's words spoken during His lifetime. As to why He should stress His relationship to the whole of mankind in a ministry which He Himself said was limited to Israel (Matthew 15:22,24) and also that of the Twelve (Matthew 10:5,6), we have dealt with in a previous article on The Great Commission of Matthew 28. But we should carefully note that while Christ's ministry was primarily to Israel, yet He declared "I am come not to judge the world, but to save the world (John 12:47) not just to save Israel, and His goal was the belief of the world (John 17:21,23), not just the belief of Israel. The comment

of the Evangelist is to the point here "for God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved" (John 3:17). And the previous verse, which has been the means for the salvation of thousands, gives the way this salvation with eternal life may be realised, namely by faith, belief or trust in the Saviour. "He that heareth My Word and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24). These verses give the simplest expression of salvation, eternal life and freedom from condemnation in the New Testament. It mattered not whether a Gentile or a Jew were listening to the Lord's words, if they responded by faith, then this salvation was theirs. And this is still true today.

Here is a good example of basic or foundational truth which is truth for all time. Sin and death are not dispensational, nor is God's remedy for them dispensational. God has only one way of removing sin and justifying the sinner, namely by the redemptive work of His beloved Son and this is received on the principle of faith and John's Gospel gives a clear witness to these facts.

This being so, we must carefully distinguish what is dispensational in this Gospel from what is basic and unchanging. If we do not do this our exposition is bound to be unbalanced and lop-sided. On the other hand, if we do it, the purpose of God for the heaven and earth becomes clearer and more wonderful. To have an inheritance in any part of these spheres is a tremendous privilege and reveals how great is the love and grace of God which alone makes it possible. Human goodness and merit cannot intrude here.

We are in the hands of One Who is working "all things after the counsel of His own will" (Ephesians 1:11), and the design that He has will surely be fulfilled in His time and His own way. Because of this we can go on in "full assurance of faith" and not be moved by anything around us.

Like the Psalmist, we look forward to resurrection glory and can say with him, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness" (Psalm 17:15).

ANTONYMS, OR CLARITY BY CONTRASTS (1)

By: Charles H. Welch

*Introducing the Principle of Contrast,
as an aid to Interpretation*

To the average busy reader, eager as he may be for the truth, yet occupied for many hours of the day with the exacting demands of this life, such terms as homonym, synonym and antonym, may appear too much like a piece of pedantry, and we can imagine a few of our readers turning the page in search of something more practical. We ask such however, to stay a moment longer, for nothing can be more practical for the believer than true interpretation of Holy Writ, and anything that contributes to clarity and exactness, or preserves from error should be of supreme value.

When the Apostle wrote to the Corinthians that series of contrasts and asked what fellowship had "righteousness with unrighteousness", "light with darkness" or "Christ with Belial", he was using antonyms, a means of

instruction that is very powerful in that it forces the mind to perceive a truth by the strength of contrast. An antonym as the word implies, is a term which is the opposite of another, a counter-term. It is allied with a figure of speech called antonomasia, which is a change of name, like "The Iron Duke" for "The Duke of Wellington". It is the opposite of synonym, which is the name given to two or more words in the same language, which possess the same general sense. The antonym is extremely useful in removing the ambiguity caused by homonyms in a language. A homonym is the name given to words, which though they have the same spelling, have entirely different meanings, such as "Let", which means "to permit, or to hinder, or to hire". These words entered the language at different times, and the slight distinctions that might have been preserved in their spelling have been ignored. The reader may call to mind many other homonyms of everyday use: "to lie" has two meanings, "to baste" has three, and "court" has four, while "strike" has to our knowledge at least a dozen: it may mean a stoppage of work by employees, a half bushel basket, a discovery of oil, or the minting of coin; beside the more common use of the verb, to strike a match, or a clock striking the hour, of striking a circle, or of striking a sail; one can even strike an attitude. This English word "strike" is used in the Authorised Version to translate no less than ten Hebrew words, and six Greek ones, and as this is a common feature with all versions that do not set out to be literal, the value of some simple means that will lead to the recognition of such homonyms, and the discovery of some means of testing them, will be conceded by all. The antonym is exceedingly useful for this purpose. Let us

illustrate our meaning by an example. Will the reader answer the following question? "What is the opposite of "light" in 2 Corinthians 4 ?". Most probably think the word "darkness" comes to most of our minds, and if there were but one reference in 2 Corinthians 4, and that the passage which reads: "God, Who commanded the light to shine", then "darkness" would be the antonym. But there are two references to "fight" in 2 Corinthians 4. One whose antonym is "darkness":

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness ..." (2 Corinthians 4:6)

And another, whose antonym is "heavy" or "weight",

"... our light affliction ... weight of glory;" (2 Corinthians 4:17)

The ambiguity resident in the English word "light" is resolved the moment we apply the antonym. This principle is of great use where the ambiguity of a word does not reside in the fact that it is a homonym, but that by usage it may have two or more shades of meaning. A most important illustration of this is found in connexion with the Hebrew word which is translated "evil" the word רָע (ra). This word can mean "evil", in the sense of wickedness, a meaning that is found throughout the whole of the O.T. There are, however, too many passages where the meaning is "adversity", "affliction", "calamity" and the like, for the reader to ignore; and to assume that every occurrence of רָע (ra) must of necessity mean moral evil or wickedness is both unwise and unscholarly. Take for example Psalm 34:19:

"Many are the רַע (ra) of the righteous." (Psalm 34:19)

Can we translate this "Many are the moral wickednesses of the righteous?" We realise that we cannot, and the LXX did not hesitate to use *thlipsis* "affliction". Even when the translation "evil" is a good one, we must be careful not to confuse moral evil with righteous judgment. For example, when the Lord said:

"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil;" (Deuteronomy 30:15)

The context makes it plain that the evil that was before Israel was the very opposite of being "blessed in the land" (Deuteronomy 30:16), and when the Prophet would emphasise to Israel these alternatives, he says in place of "life and good, death and evil":

"... I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing ..." (Deuteronomy 30:19)

Which shows that the "evil" of verse 16 was not the moral wickedness of the people, but the righteous judgment of God in sending "evil" in the sense of punishment upon them.

If the reader turns to Ecclesiastes, he will observe that the writer is concerned with what "good thing" a man should pursue in view of abounding vanity and vexation. So, in Ecclesiastes 1:13 "This sore travail" is רַע (ra) "evil", so is the word "grievous" of Ecclesiastes 2:17, "adversity" of Ecclesiastes 7:14, and "misery" of Ecclesiastes 8:6; quite apart from the passages which though they be translated "evil" like "This also is vanity and a great evil", Ecclesiastes 2:21 cannot possibly indicate moral evil and

wickedness. Turning to the prophet Isaiah we read:

"Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help ... they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord! Yet he also is wise, and will bring evil ..." (Isaiah 31:1,2)

No one in his senses would believe that Isaiah intends us to understand that God in His wisdom brings moral wickedness upon any one. The remaining verses of chapter 31 are a good commentary, and the fact that "He will not call back His words" shows that the judgment threatened by law and prophets upon apostasy would surely fall. So, with regard to that classic passage, Isaiah 45:7:

"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." (Isaiah 45:7)

From The Companion Bible, "Evil: never rendered 'sin'. God brings calamity about as the inevitable consequence of sin".

Even had the phrase read "good and evil", evil would not necessarily have meant moral wickedness, but when its antonym is "peace" we know for a certainty that "calamity" in the form of judgment is the only possible meaning that can be attached to Isaiah 45:7. The Companion Bible says, regarding the word "create":

The Companion Bible reads: "Heb. the past participle of the verb bara (create) which, with 'evil', requires the rendering 'bring about'. Not the same form as in vv. 8, 12 or v. 18, in connection with the earth. In Jeremiah 18:11 the verb is yazar, to frame or mould. In Amos 3:6 it is asah, to bring about, a word of wide meaning; its sense has to be

determined by its context. Here disturbance in contrast with 'peace'."

It is not our intention to pursue this question of evil, or the correct translation of the Hebrew word רָע (ra), but this has provided a useful example of the value of the antonym "peace" in deciding the meaning of "evil" in Isaiah 45:7. Neither is it our intention of dealing with synonym, antonym or homonym in any direct sense in subsequent articles, but to bring before the reader such evident contrasts as "Bondage and Liberty", "Flesh and Spirit", "Law and Grace", with the belief and the hope that positive lessons of spiritual value will most certainly accrue.

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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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