

Spiritual Blessings

Vol. 15 N°5

Sept.-Oct. 2001



Put yourself in the picture at this year's Bethshan Conference

The Lord Came Down with a Special Message.

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. 1 John. 4:9.

What a glorious day when the only begotten Son of God became flesh and dwelt among us. He came down and died that we might live. God has been very kind to us, and His kindness elevates that word to new heights: **But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:** Eph. 2:4-8.

The Lord descended to take away the sin of the world but this was not the first time He had descended to the earth, nor the last. If I can

stretch the meaning of 1 John, it could be understood that He came down and gave instructions so that people might live to please Him, i.e. might live lives of faithful service. There are many accounts where The Lord Christ descended and spoke to people before He was born in the stable.

It was the Lord Christ who spoke to Adam & Eve in the garden. He gave them certain instructions, one of which was not followed and the consequences were not good. Read Genesis 3.

The Lord descended and spoke to Cain about his offering. Cain had an opportunity to consider his situation, but the words of The Lord were disregarded, again, with very unhappy consequences. See Genesis 4.

There are other examples, and of course we all remember that the Lord descended to the mount and gave Israel, through Moses, The Law which, on a national scale, was disregarded, again with sorry consequences. Read the Old Testament.

The Lord descended with special messages prior to His birth, but He also descended with something special for us gentile believers long after the gospels and the Acts period. Please consider the following passage which reveals effects produced by His work on the cross but which, during the gospel and Acts, had not been disclosed through or to anyone. In other words, The Lord descended and told Paul truths which are to help us live as faithful followers today. Do we know them?

For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. Eph. 2:14-17.

The Lord descended and revealed to Paul the present dispensation of The Secret or The Mystery. This present administration of God is not widely understood, perhaps inadvertently disregarded, but it can be clearly understood when we rightly divide God's Word.

If you would like to know more about the Bible based principle of right division, or more about the special message given to our Apostle Paul for us today, please write to The Secretary using the address on page two.

Brian Kelson.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Anne Ward. President BBFA

Spiritual Blessings is a vital part of the ministry of the Berean Bible Fellowship of Australia. We are pleased to send the magazine to our fellow believers in many countries. I would like to extend a warm greeting to all of you. I trust that you are being enriched in your daily lives and that the magazine edifies you in your study of the Scriptures. At this time Janelle and David Tavender, from Newcastle, NSW, Australia are enjoying the fellowship of believers from the Open Bible Trust as they enjoy a holiday in England. Janelle and David have also visited our friends in Malawi, Africa, where they were able to spend time teaching the Word to the believers there. We look forward to their safe return and to sharing in their experience and fellowship.

We are in the midst of preparing for our Annual Bible Conference to be held from Friday 5th to Sunday 7th October. Included in this issue are details on the venue, programme and accommodation. This weekend has always proven to be incredibly edifying and refreshing as we have the opportunity to enjoy the riches of the Scriptures for three days - away from the cares and trials of this world. I encourage you to mark this date on your calendar, as you will find it truly rewarding. We have prepared an interesting and varied programme. Come for the three days, or just one. We would love to fellowship with you! If you would like to enquire further about the Conference please phone Anne Ward on 02 49608162 or Eveline Walter on 02 49964455. Register Today

Bethshan Registration.

Australian readers.

Enclosed in this edition is a copy of the Bethshan Registration form. Please locate, complete and return your Bethshan Registration Forms as soon as possible.

Our hardworking secretary is often embarrassed because she cannot tell Bethshan how many folk will be arriving at what time and for how long, this is very poor. Please make her job easier by returning your registration form immediately. RSVP Sept. 14th.

Overseas Readers.

Bethshan Holiness Mission is located at Wyee just 100kms north of Sydney. Email or write to the secretary if you would like to take a holiday in Australia.



Spiritual Blessings

is the official journal of the **Berean Bible Fellowship of Australia Inc.**
Producer is Brian Kelson
email: charis@idl.net.au

Articles which honour The Lord Christ Jesus, and acknowledge the principle of right division will be considered for publication.

The interpretation of Scripture by various authors is not necessarily the one held by the majority of the Fellowship.

All articles are accepted on the basis that they may be used as the BBFA sees fit unless otherwise requested by the author.

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The BBFA Tenets.

1. Full Inspiration of the Scriptures.
2. The Deity of Christ.
3. All sufficiency of Christ's One Sacrifice.
4. The Bible study principle of right division.

The BBFA Committee.

President: Anne Ward.

V-President: John Hutton.

Treasurer: Eveline Walter.

Secretary: Janelle Tavender.

Committee members: Peter Ward, David Tavender.

Meetings

**2001
Conference
5-7 October
BETHSHAN
Wyee**

Brisbane

Alternate
Sundays
10:00AM

Long Weekend
June 2002
(07) 3297 1981

Sydney

3rd Sunday.
From 12:15.
Community Hall
104 Galston Rd
Hornsby Hts.
(02) 4996 4455

Newcastle

Every Monday.
7:00PM
34 Aroona St
Edgeworth.
(02) 4950 6708

Friday 5th October

10.30 Morning Tea
11.00 Athol Walter
12.30 Lunch
2.00 David Tavender
3.30 Afternoon Tea
4.00 Brian Kelson
5.30 Dinner
7.30 Singalong,
..... Discuss & Supper
..... Testimonies

Saturday 6th October

8.00 Breakfast
9.15 Brian Kelson
10.30 Morning Tea
11.15 Rom Harper
12.30 Lunch
1.45 Group Discussion
..... David Tavender
3.30 Afternoon Tea
**4.00 Triennial General Meeting,
..... election of officers**
5.30 Dinner
7.00 Praise and worship led by
..... Athol Walter

Sunday 7th October

8.00 Breakfast
9.15 Frank Haegler
..... Evidence of Creation
10.30 Morning Tea
11.00 Ken Grice
12.30 Lunch
2.00 John Hutton

**Notice:
Triennial General Meeting**

The Berean Bible Fellowship of Australia hereby gives notice that during the 2001 October conference on Saturday the 6th, a TGM will be held. Please carefully consider this important meeting where the election of officers for the next three years takes place.



Margaret Rieker
Reports

A new venue, spacious and quiet (except for the crows) and a new speaker, added to our time together at our Brisbane Bible Study held June 9 to 11.

It is a great pleasure to have three days set aside in the middle of the year to enjoy fellowship and friendship, and our appreciation to Athol and Eveline Walter and Peter and Anne Ward for travelling such a long distance to be with us.

Our thanks go to Frank for finding a school that was vacant for the three days, except for a service on Sunday morning. There was plenty of space for the studies, for the children and for our meal times. In attendance for all or part of the time were 17 adults and 20 children.

Rom Harper shared his thoughts on the signs given to the Jews so that they would know that Jesus was the Messiah and his message encouraged us in this subject and also in that this was Rom's first time as a speaker with us. We look forward to many more.

All the speakers, Athol, Frank, Peter and Rom, turned us once again to the truth we seek in the Scriptures.

The BBFA Bethshan Conference is for You



A happy group at the last BBFA Conference.

The committee has worked hard to provide another exciting Bethshan programme with plenty of variety and appeal. Come along and support their efforts by attending as much of the weekend as you can.

Walking Worthily In The Lord.

In our last study, we started to look at the second half of Ephesians, which begins at ch. 4.

It seems to me to be obvious that these last three chapters are mainly practical, outlining for us the good works of 2:10. And it cannot be stressed too much that our walk in and for the

Lord must be in harmony with the truths of the Dispensation of the Mystery that were revealed for the first time through Paul in the first three chapters of this epistle.

The A.V. uses the word "vocation" in 4:1: "I ... beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." Vocation means exactly the same as calling. God calls us to walk and work for Him, so we have a calling to live up to. In Phil. 3:14 Paul says: "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The word "high" is "above" in the Greek, which changes the meaning slightly. While our calling is indeed a high calling, the meaning is better expressed, perhaps, by the Revised translation which goes like this: "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

If you will cast your mind back to Paul's statements in chs. 1 & 2 about being blessed and seated with Christ in the Heavenly Places at the right hand of God, far above all principalities and powers, then the thought of our calling being an upward calling, or even a high calling, will seem to be quite appropriate.

We can and should glory in the fact of such a wondrous calling, but we must ever be mindful of the serious responsibility this places on us "to walk worthy of our calling". I think it is an indication of the kindness and love of our Heavenly Father that, before He calls on us to walk worthy, He has His scribe (Paul) tell us that the same power that energised the Lord Jesus and brought Him from the grave, operates within us. He has placed at our disposal

the resources to enable us to answer His call.

The word worthy also demands a little attention. The Greek word translated worthy is "axios", and is related to such words as axis and axle. The basic thought is that of a pivot on which the balance arm of an old fashioned set of scales pivots. It was a favourite game of my brother and I as small boys to play on the large set of scales on the railway station platform. We stood on the platform, and then had to keep adding weights on the end of the long arm until the arm swung down and "balanced" our weight on the platform. Perhaps a more appropriate example is that of the set of scales we used in the high school chemistry class. Essentially this consisted of a long arm, pivoted in the middle, with a small dish on each end. Some substance was added to one dish until it equalled the weights in the other dish and the arm would then swing to the horizontal position.

The significance is that the one thing was being compared or tested against the other. When the right quantity was added to the one end and the balance was achieved, it could be said, using the language of Eph. 4:1, that the substance in the one dish was "worthy" of the weights in the other dish.

I know that sounds a little strange, but that is only because we don't really understand the word worthy. If I speak about something being worthy, and say nothing more, then the question should immediately be asked. "Worthy of what?" To speak of worth, or worthiness, implies comparison, or as I said above, testing to see whether one thing measures up to the worth of another.

We might hear that a friend has paid a certain sum of money for, say, a car. After looking at the car, our reaction might be that the car is not worth the amount paid for it. In cases like this, we automatically make a comparison in our minds to see if the worth of the object equals the worth of the money asked or paid for it.

Maybe your thoughts, like mine, have gone to Daniel 5:27, where it is said of

Ephesians

Nº 32



Athol Walter

Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. and above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. and let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

Col. 3:9-15.

Belshazzar, "You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting." He was tested and found unworthy. What a terrible indictment. May it not be the Lord's verdict on any of us, when, in that great and awful day, we stand in His presence to account for our stewardships. And that reminds us that it is required in stewards that they be faithful. (2 Cor. 4:2)

Perhaps two references from 2 Timothy are appropriate here:

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Tim. 1:8, 9)

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth". (2 Tim. 2:15)

Walk With Attitude.

I had decided that I would try to cover the material more quickly in this second half of Ephesians, but we cannot skip over the terms used in these opening verses of chapter 4 without giving them the attention they deserve.

The Apostle goes on in verse 2 to implore us to walk with all lowliness, and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love. What an attitude is required of us here!

Two other verses will help us with the meaning of lowliness. Firstly, Acts 20:19 where Paul claims that he serves the Lord with all humility of mind. Humility of mind is the same word as lowliness.

Secondly, Phil.2:2, 3 says, "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind (same word) let each esteem other better than themselves." Please also look up Col. 3:12 & 13 which parallels Eph. 4:2.

Humility is a basic requirement for the child of God, and we must ever remember how God hates pride. It was pride that led to Satan's rebellion. So humility rates high with God. There is a false humility, however, which we must guard against. Paul has something to say about that in Col. 2, which I hope you will read.

Meekness is closely associated with humility. Meekness is not weakness, as many people seem to think. Meekness is being gentle and unselfish and mild, when there might be some justification to strike out at others. I sometimes think that it takes a strong person to be meek, just as it takes a frightened person to be brave. Two other references which are worth looking at are Gal. 6:1 and 2 Tim. 2:25.

Longsuffering means just what it looks like. "Love suffers long, and is kind", says 1 Cor. 13:4. It is interesting that the two qualities are mentioned together in both places. Col. 1:10 & 11 state that one of the goals of our worthy walk is "unto all patience and longsuffering". It is very difficult to put up with some other believers. It may help if we stop and consider how much more difficult it probably is for them to put up with us!

"The vocation wherewith ye are called". How can we walk worthily of a calling unless we know what it is? ... If we truly appreciate the graciousness of God's calling, (as found in Eph.1-3) then we have no reason for boasting in ourselves. Humility, meekness, patience and bearing with each other in love should be our hallmark."

"Notes on Ephesians" James Poole

It is important to remember 2 Tim. 4:2, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine".

The last item in Eph. 4:2 is "forbearing one another in love". It is a little hard to distinguish between some of these terms, but the Amplified Version puts it this way: "making allowances for one another because you love one another". I pray that we each may, with the power of the risen Lord operating in us, walk in humility, meekness, patience and love. **S**

Shall there be a literal rebuilding of the Temple?

The Temple in Jerusalem played a major role in the Israel's life and worship in the Bible. Sacrifices and many other ceremonies and rites were performed there. Since AD70, however, there has been no temple on Mount Zion, and the question is sometimes asked, "Will the Temple literally be rebuilt, or do the Scriptures talk about a future temple in a spiritual sense?"

A brief look at some verses in Matthew 24 (and elsewhere) should convince Bible readers that there will indeed be a literal rebuilding of a temple in Jerusalem. It will help if you have the chapter open while reading this.

Before the Second Coming.

Matthew 24 is a chapter which deals with signs of things to come, and a literal temple plays a major role amongst these signs. Note that the chapter begins with the Lord looking at the literal temple of His time (Herod's temple) and speaking to the disciples of its destruction (24:1,2). It is certainly no coincidence that the record then immediately tells us of the disciples' questioning the Lord about His coming. The two are obviously related.

The Lord was looking at the temple which was to be later be destroyed in 70 A.D., but in order for the rest of the events in Matthew 24 to take place in the future, there must again be a literal temple which must be rebuilt and standing when these things eventually come to pass.

Further on in the chapter, the Lord describes many of the terrible events prior to His coming (24:4-28), all of which are literal, such as wars, earthquakes, deception by false prophets, etc. Among these signs is the sign spoken of by Daniel - the abomination of desolation in the holy place of the temple (24:15). We

know this is referring to the holy place of the temple, because in Daniel, where the Lord was quoting from, there is a description of the destruction of both the city and the sanctuary, which was part of the temple. (Daniel 9:26,27)

Reference is also made to this desolation in 2 Thessalonians 2:4; Daniel 11:31 and 12:11. If you are looking at these verses, note also the sorts of words around them. There are many references to very literal things, such as the literal return of the Lord (2 Thessalonians 2:8), the literal rebuilding of Jerusalem (Daniel 9:25), and literal nations such as Persia, Egypt, Moab, Edom, Ammon, Libya, Ethiopia, etc. (Daniel 11:2,8,41,42).

All of the above refers to the literal temple which must be built before the Lord's second coming. It will be built and then destroyed before the Lord's return.

The Millennial Temple.

After His return, another temple shall be built to the literal specifications set out in Ezekiel chapters 40-46. Note the detail of the measurements and so on, which cannot be spiritualised. This temple will operate during the earthly kingdom of the millennium (see Revelation 20:1-4).

After the millennium, the earth upon which that temple was situated shall pass away (Revelation 21:1) and the New Jerusalem shall descend to the new earth (Revelation 21:2). It has already been mentioned that there shall be no temple in that city (Revelation 21:3,22).

This last point highlights an often forgotten principle involving the temple. The tabernacles and temples mentioned in Scripture are all places where God is said to "dwell" in one sense or another, and is often where God meets and fellowships with man. Any rites and rituals associated with temples all flow from the need of man to be in a right and pure state before being in the presence of God.

PLEASE EXPLAIN



**David
Tavender**

Search and The Berean Expositor.

Two great Bible study magazines you should also receive.

David accepts subscriptions for *The Berean Expositor*. Cost: \$13 p/a surface mail for 6 study booklets. \$26 p/a air mail. You can write to him using the address on the back page.

Ruth Andrew is the agent for *Search* and her address is: 4/15 Calypta Rd. UMINA NSW 2257. Cost: \$25 p/a, for 6 magazines and 6 booklets

What Can I Do to Help?

The readers of this little magazine have warm and generous hearts as is wonderfully demonstrated by the response to our Bibles for Malawi appeal, (see the back page).

Such a response from our small readership is very encouraging, especially for those who administer the BBFA and produce Spiritual Blessings.

BUT there may be some readers who hesitate to send money for such appeals and would like to make a more specific donation to worthwhile Christian endeavours. Spiritual Blessings would like to advertise two worth while projects which have been in progress for many years.

Receive Spiritual Blessings via the Internet.

What you must have:

1. An email address.
2. Adobe Acrobat Reader.
This is available as a free download from <http://www.adobe.com>

What you must do:

1. Write/Email the producer of Spiritual Blessings (see page 2) and request subscription to Spiritual Blessings.

Once SB arrives you can read it on screen or print it if you have a printer.

PLEASE EXPLAIN Cont.

I believe that either we take all of these things literally, or we say that they mean something different to what they are saying, in which case we can make up our own meanings for the things stated in the Scriptures. It is not sound Bible study practice to take one verse out of a literal context and say that it should be interpreted in a "spiritual" manner, and the question about the temple is a prime case in point.

Any Questions for David?

You can write direct using the address on the back page or email him:
tavender@ozemail.com.au

Kath Plumbe has been compiling and despatching miscellaneous goods for Neena L Shanthi of India and Ruth Andrew likewise for David Y Raju, also of India.

Neena and David run Christian orphanages with such a dearth of resources that maybe we would have given up a long time ago. "Please!" appeals David, "we need soap, toothbrushes, combs, biros and pencils, rubbers, colouring pencils, shampoos, hair clips, and clothing". Neena likewise has great need of such things especially having suffered the ravages of some disastrous floods in her region of late.

Kath and Ruth gather these simple items and then pay for the postage as they can. These basic household items give great pleasure to the Indian children and, if purchased during the many sales at our shopping centres, do not represent a great financial burden for us. Perhaps you could think of other common things which will benefit the children such as cheap torches, calculators, books, cards and of course, old Bibles, or Scripture portions.

If you would like to join in this ongoing ministry then write to:

Ruth Andrew
4/15 Calypta Rd.
UMINA NSW 2257
AUSTRALIA

Kath Plumbe
2/7 Anderson Pl.
SALAMANDER BAY
NSW 2317
AUSTRALIA

Thank you for any items but perhaps you could send a small financial contribution. Postage is a huge expense.

Thank you on behalf of them all.

HEY!

Don't forget our
**Australian
National
Conference.**

NEXT MONTH

5-7 October
2001
BETHSHAN
MISSION
Wyee
NSW

**Fill out the
Registration
Form in this
issue.**



For this cause, I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; Ephesians 3:1-3a

Very Traditional.

Traditions, or universally accepted positions, can be beneficial, but they must be Bible based. Test these:

1. The "church" started at Pentecost.

By the "church" it is understood to be "the church which is his body" in which Jews and Gentiles are joint members, joint heirs, joint partakers. (Eph.3:6).

However, Peter needed a vision (Acts10-11) to speak to Cornelius, a gentile, who was then baptised in holy spirit, and this amazed some:

"And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 10:45.

Highly unlikely they would have been astonished if Gentiles were baptised in Acts 2. No! Jew and Gentile were not baptised into the body of Christ at Acts 2.

In Romans 1 Paul says:

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Rom. 1:16.

Paul says Gentiles were blessed with Israel:

"And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;" Rm.11:17.

The Jew is not first, nor is the church blessed with Israel today, but these things were so during the Acts period.

2. Israel were cast away at the cross.

This is what the Bible says:

"I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite." Rom. 11:1

Israel were cast away for a time, but not at the cross, the Bible says so. Please read Acts 28:17-29.



Audio Cassettes

"The Names of God"

Bob Davidson
(43 mins)

On this tape, Bob Davidson takes a look at several titles (and their meanings) ascribed to God in the Scriptures. Such titles as Elohim, Adonai, Jehovah, and many more are all shown to be wonderful illustrations of His nature, and of His relationship to mankind.

\$4.00 (postage included)

BOOKS

"The Book We Trust"

Brian Sherring. Paperback 27 pages.

This concise booklet clearly sets out the overall plan of the Bible, showing the main sections. Brief summaries of each book are provided so that the reader is able to see how each book fits into that plan. It is emphasised that every book falls into one of four main categories, but also, that every book will "point us to the Lord Jesus", and that "whatever they are about, they must teach us of Him". \$5.00 (postage included)

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Bibles for Malawi appeal.

\$995 so far.

Our friends in Malawi sincerely thank the donors who have given \$995 for Bibles.

This is a tremendous response from the readers and friends of Spiritual Blessings.

We, who might take our Bibles for granted, may only begin to appreciate how thrilling it will be for those Christians in Malawi to hold their first Bible.

Please keep the donations coming.

THANK YOU



The Berean Bible Fellowship of AUSTRALIA Incorporated

2 Timothy 2:15 2 Timothy 3:16