

Spiritual Blessings

Vol. 16 N°4
July/August. 2002

Dispensational Difficulties.

Part 2.

(A short series looking at various verses that may appear, at first sight, to present problems for the Acts 28 position, but which, on further examination, are not problems at all.)

One verse that is sometimes held up as a difficulty is found in Eph. 5:25; **"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."**

Critics of Dispensational Truth who know their Bibles well, have pointed out to me that, in the Greek, this verse reads, "... and gave himself for HER." This, they say, destroys our argument that the Church which is His Body is a new calling, distinct from the church being built up in Acts. And as far as the Church in Ephesians being a man, if the Lord gave Himself for HER, then surely Paul is not talking about something new in Ephesians, but the same church as in Acts, the Bride of Christ. I have even heard it said once or twice that the church is "the Body and Bride of Christ".

Let's clear up that last point first. There is no such term in Scripture as the Bride of Christ. The Scriptural term is the Bride of the Lamb, and while I am well aware that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, I also believe that it does not help our understanding or exposition of Scripture to be inaccurate in the terms and figures of speech from the Bible.



The Chua family with Athol Walter taken during Athol & Eveline Walter's recent tour to the Philippines. Full report Page 8.

It certainly is true that the Greek of Eph. 5:25 does say that the Lord gave Himself for HER, the church, but this certainly does not mean that the Church which is His Body in Ephesians is a female, even as a figure of speech. The difficulty is of the critic's own making, and the answer lies in the peculiar little twists of language. Any reader who has studied some language other than English will not need a detailed explanation, but if English is your only language, the point may seem a little strange at first.

Let's take the French language as an example. The French words for the table are *la table*. But the book is *le livre*. Those little words *la* and *le* both mean "the", so

Inside

President's Word	2
Ephesians #37	4
Kids' Korner	6
Tour of Philippines	8
Please Explain	10
Tapes & Books	12

why are they different? Simple. Unlike most English nouns, French nouns have gender. They are either feminine or masculine. There is also the neuter gender, but that does not affect us at the moment.

Continued page 3



The Berean
Bible Fellowship of
AUSTRALIA Incorporated
2 Timothy 2:15 2 Timothy 3:16

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable....

The President's Word



Back in late March, my wife Eveline and I visited the Philippines at the invitation of the Open Bible Fellowship of that country. (See the report page 8 in this issue.)

We had the privilege of attending their two-day Easter conference, and also visiting groups of Acts 28 believers in four regional areas.

These visits enabled us to see life in the Philippines as it really is, rather than what is presented for tourists. In every place we were received with open-hearted kindness and warm hospitality, and both of us were greatly enriched by their fellowship and knowledge of the Word.

The work done by Pastor and Mrs. Santiago Chua since taking an independent stand for the truth of the Mystery is impressive and has obviously been wonderfully blessed of God. In each of the places we went, we found vibrant groups of well-instructed believers rejoicing in their standing as members of His Body. I came home thinking that rather than my going to minister to them, I should have just sat in their midst and learnt from them.

We thank the Lord for this opportunity to see His work in a setting so different to our own. We also thank the Chua family for their many kindnesses and wonderful hospitality, and the members of the various fellowships for making us feel so much a part of them.

The BBFA committee is looking at ways in which we may be able to foster closer links between the like-minded believers in our two countries. I believe that if we can get some of the young men from the Manila fellowship out here for a visit they will certainly stir us up. Please join us in praying that we will be in the right frame of heart and mind to ascertain what the Lord's will is for us in these and other matters of policy and organisation that face the committee from time to time.

Athol Walter.



Santiago Chua (second from left), Athol Walter (second from right), and friends at the Bicolod Conference.

Meetings

**2002
Conference
27-29 Sept.
BETHSHAN
Wye**

Brisbane

Alternate
Sundays
10:00AM

Long Weekend
June 2003
(07) 3297 1981

Sydney

3rd Sunday
of each month.
Lunch 12:45PM.
Study 1:30PM.
Community Hall
104 Galston Rd
Hornsby Hts.
(02) 4996 4455

Newcastle

Every Monday.
7:30PM
34 Aroona St
Edgeworth.
(02) 4950 6708

ADDRESS CHANGE

Please note that we will no longer be able to access mail sent to our old postal address (P.O.Box 367, Mayfield, 2304), as the box is soon to be closed. We remind all of our readers to note this change in your address book, and to send all postal correspondence to our current address below.

Spiritual Blessings

The official journal of the
Berean Bible Fellowship of Australia Inc.

Visit our Web Site: www.bbfa.org.au

Articles which honour The Lord Christ Jesus, and acknowledge the principle of right division will be considered for publication. All articles are accepted on the basis that they may be used as the BBFA sees fit unless otherwise requested by the author.

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

BBFA Postal Address:

Box 3141
GLENDALE, NSW 2285
AUSTRALIA

The journal is registered by Australia Post PP255003/00975.

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: Athol Walter.
V-President: Anne Ward.
Treasurer: Sue Hall.
Secretary: Margaret Abbott.
Committee members:
Bob Davidson, David Tavender.



Dispensational Difficulties

From Page 1

La is the feminine definite article which must be used with a feminine noun, and *le* is the masculine definite article which must be used with masculine nouns. This means that the two words I used above as examples, table and book, have to be accompanied by the correct forms of the definite article. That is *la* in the case a table, a feminine noun, and *le* in the case of book, a masculine word.

Now we come to the part that makes learning any of these languages difficult for English speakers. The rule is that pronouns, adjectives and adverbs must agree in form, that is, in gender, with their noun, which means that a feminine word must have a feminine pronoun. Likewise with a masculine word. So a Frenchman would refer to a table as "her" and a book as "him". Do not imagine, however, that a Frenchman would mistake a table for a woman. The gender refers to the word, not the object.

To translate a French sentence into English correctly, however, a table must be called "it", because in English, table is a neuter word. This is exactly what must be done in Eph. 5:25, and, of course, in many other places in the Scriptures. "Church" in Greek is a feminine word, and rightly has the feminine pronoun "her". But remember, the gender applies to the word, not the object. When, however, we translate from Greek into English, "church" is a neuter word so must be called it, not her.

As I said, this so-called difficulty rests with the critics, and we must remember that Paul definitely tells us that this new Church called the Church which is His Body, is a new man (Eph. 2:15), and its goal is to grow up into a perfect (that is, complete or mature) man (Eph. 4:13). These phrases and words, including the Bride of the Lamb, while being titles, are also something of figures of speech, and as I said earlier, if God does not mix His metaphors, neither should we.

One further comment on this. If the critic's point is right, i.e. that the word "her" for church in the Greek means that the Church of Ephesians is the Bride, then it proves too much. For example, in Eph. 1:22, we read that Christ is the Head. Head, in Greek is a feminine word, and if we apply the critic's rule, this would mean that Christ is woman! Absurd, of course. The same applies to other titles or figures that the Lord used of Himself. The words VINE and DOOR are

both feminine words in Greek. Just as it is silly to say that this proves that Christ as the Head, Door or Vine is a female, it is as silly to say that the Greek pronoun "her" in Eph. 5:25 proves that the Church which is His Body is a female.

More to come later.

Athol Walter.

Brisbane Long Weekend. June 8-10.



Frank Haegler

Another weekend of exploring the Bible has come and gone. What a time of fellowship it was, with a peak of 17 adults and 30 children on the Sunday, some of those being a new family, for which we give thanks. Having had to move from our previous venue due to the insurance debacle was a real blow as it had all we could desire, and in a central location to boot. The new location was somewhat smaller and although we did all fit there were a few children that had to sit on the floor and colour in. And the smaller size did make the singing rather something. On Saturday and Sunday evenings we went to the Harpers' place to relax and enjoy our evening meal together. This we did and also kept up the conversation following on from points to arise from the studies.

Our style, as usual, was rather relaxed but we actually started on time each day and kept pretty much to the schedule. Frank started the weekend off with a walk through the New Testament giving an insight on just how long that period was and at what stage some things happened. It was a surprise to some to learn how long it was between the Lord's death/resurrection/ascension and events like Paul's conversion. John Hutton shared for the rest of the day on the difference between the miracles of the Lord during the Gospels and of the disciples during the Acts period. He also touched on the fact that none of these are happening at the moment, nor have they since Acts 28:28. On Sunday morning Rom Harper spoke on the similarities between the apostles Peter and Paul, many of which were pointed and one of which had a dispensational aspect. Athol Walter spoke for the rest of the day on the theme Pictures From an Exhibition and shared about Cain, Abel and Seth, then Saul and David and then Abraham and Lot—drawing application from their stories and the faith some of them exhibited. On Monday morning Athol again spoke, this time about Christ the Man, his point being that whilst Christ was fully God on earth, so was He fully man. The concluding remark being Behold, the man! (John 19:5) with the thought that Christ was the ideal man.

The Measure of The Stature of Christ's Fulness.

In our last study, we gave some consideration to the measure of the gift of Christ, with its associated unity and ministry (Eph. 4:7). I would like to move on now to the other two measures that we meet further down in the chapter. We will find, I think, that these too have ministries and unities connected to them.

Ephesians

Nº 37



**Athol
Walter**

1. The Measure and The Fulness.

The gifts given to the Church which is His Body, which we discussed in the last study, are said to be for a definite purpose.

V. 12. "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: (13) till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: (14) that (better, so that) we henceforth be no more children ..."

Firstly, note the contrast in these verses between the perfect man, a position that is part of our goal, and the children (the word is infants, by the way) who can be tossed about by the winds of changing doctrine. It would, I suspect, be a worthwhile exercise for us each to reflect on just which category we find ourselves in, the adult in Christ, or the child, unable to comprehend and appreciate the deeper things of our faith, or to stand firm against the wiles of the devil.

The second point I would have you notice is that the English translation of Greek prepositions is not always accurate. FOR the perfecting of the saints is fine, but the next two statements should be UNTO or WITH A VIEW TO the work of the ministry and UNTO the edifying of the body of Christ.

For readers who like to know what the actual words are, the first word FOR in v. 12 is the Greek word PROS and the second and third occurrences of FOR translate the Greek word EIS. Certainly, our word FOR can be and is used in these different ways, but the correct meaning is not always apparent.

The next thing I want to tell you is that the word perfecting in v. 12 is not the same as

the word perfect in v. 13, and I am not just referring to the difference between the verb *perfecting* and the adjective *perfect*. They are quite different words with no links between them.

The word perfecting in v. 12 translates the Greek word KATARTISMOS. Several examples of the verbal form of this word are:

Matt. 4:21; "And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren ... MENDING their nets."

1 Cor. 1:10; "I beseech you ... that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be PERFECTLY JOINED TOGETHER ..."

Gal. 6:1; "Ye which are spiritual RESTORE such an one."

I quote C. H. Welch's comment; "to mend as one would a broken net, to be perfectly joined together as contrasted with division, to restore as one would a dislocated limb (the medical use of the word), this seems to be the sense uppermost in Ephesians 4." (In Heavenly Places. P. 351.)

The word perfect in v. 13 (perfect man) translates the more usual word for perfect TELEIOO. This means complete as in mature, or fully ripe, or arriving at one's destination. Nestle's Interlinear Greek has it as "a complete man". In other words, a fully mature adult.

Now if the church that Paul speaks of throughout Ephesians and Colossians is but the mature state of the immature church we see throughout the years of the Book of Acts, he could have used TELEIOO in v. 12. But, as we have seen, he does not. He uses the different word which implies a rent, a rupture or break which needs to be repaired or restored or adjusted.

The change which came about with the setting aside of Israel as God's people in Acts 28 was something of a climax, to say the least. And Paul was the instrument through whom God chose to reveal the revelation that would adjust the believers to the new calling.

It was a rupture that caused considerable confusion and then animosity in those who turned away from Paul and his message. This turning away resulted in the mixing of the truth concerning the Body of Christ with the truths of both the Old Testament people of Israel, and the election of the Bride of the Lamb which was happening during the second offer of the Kingdom to Israel in the

Col. 1:23 if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

Col. 1:24 I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church,

Col. 1:25 of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God,

Col. 1:26 the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints.

Col. 1:27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Col. 1:28 Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

years described by the Book of Acts. The new revelation relating to the Dispensation of the Mystery, having no association with the calling, blessings, promises and covenants that belonged to Israel, necessitated a new order of apostles and prophets who were not linked with the twelve whose witness was to the disobedient and gainsaying people of Israel. (Rom. 10:21)

Back to Eph. 4:13. Please note that the perfect or mature man is part of the goal set before the member of the Body of Christ, and linked with it is the MEASURE of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

I would like to quote vv. 12 and 13 of Eph. 4 from the Amplified Version because they give the additional thoughts contained in the Greek words that don't make it through to the English translations:

12. "His intention was the perfecting and the full equipping of the saints (His consecrated people), [that they should do] the work of ministering toward building up Christ's body (the church), (13) that it might develop until we all attain oneness in the faith and in the comprehension of the full and accurate knowledge of the Son of God; that [we might arrive] at really mature manhood - the completeness of personality which is nothing less than the standard height of Christ's own perfection - that measure of the stature of the fulness of the Christ, and the completeness found in Him."

Out of all the profound thoughts in that quote, I want to touch on only one point. The standard (or measure, METRON) of the stature of the fulness of Christ is THE GOAL that is set before each of us. Looking ahead to v. 15, we read there that we are to grow up into Him, our Head, in every way. So the maturity that is put before us as our goal is twofold. Negatively, that we might not remain infants, the very opposite of adulthood, and then positively, that we might measure up to His standard of maturity, of adulthood as it was really meant by God for Adam and His descendants.

2. The Measure of Every Part.

Our word METRON, measure, comes again in v. 16. In the previous verses, Christ the Head is the focus, but in v. 16 the attention turns to the Body, the Church, which joined to the Head and receiving the nourishment through the joints and ligaments, grows as each part of the body measures up to its function. The whole body thus grows and builds itself up in love.

If you felt earlier that the focus was on the evangelists, pastors and teachers to the exclusion of the ordinary members of the Body, relax, for here we are all brought in. Each part of the Body has its function, and if that function is not carried out or is only partially fulfilled, then the Body as a whole will suffer. Remember, this Body is one united whole. There is perfect equality between the members, a situation that was not in existence in the church of the Acts period. Here all distinctions and enmity, advantage and disadvantage have been done away with. There are no second class members in this Calling. And it is only as each one of us nourishes ourselves on His Word and the power that not only brought Christ from the dead, but over and above, set Him at the right hand of God in the Heavenly places far above all, that we will make our contribution to the growth of the whole Body.

In the last 10 verses or so that we have been considering, there are many wonderful and deep truths expressed for our learning. Don't think, however, that it is pie-in-the-sky stuff. Definitely not. From v. 17 on Paul lays the practical consequences of what he has been saying on the line for us. Let me summarise.

v. 17. This I say therefore ... walk not as other Gentiles walk ... emptiness of their minds ... understanding alienated ... ignorance ... blindness of heart ... past feeling ... given themselves over to work uncleanness

v. 20 But ye have not so learned Christ ...
v. 21 as the truth is in Jesus ...

The winds of doctrine

all make for instability and uncertainty, but their greatest harm is in that they prevent or hold back the saint from going on to believe all truth, and so from going on to grow up into Him, the Head, Christ. "Whereby they lie in wait to deceive"; has been rendered "with a view to systemizing of error."

A characteristic of the days in which we live is the number of systems of interpretations that sway believers to and fro. These systems are so contrary to each other that they must perforce be erroneous; but one feature they all have in common—they pose as the truth and in this they are all counterfeits of the truth. To know the truth that God would make known to His saints is the means of being established.

To keep the sinner from the Saviour and the saint from his glorified Head is the twofold work of evil. Thus the systemised work of evil is to hold down mankind from the truth.

J. Eustace Mills. "All Truth".

Continuing our look at

the Bible !



Last time, we listed the **66 books** of the Bible. Now we will look in more detail at ...

- the **Law** books in the **Old** Testament.

The first **5** books in the Bible are also called The **Pentateuch**.
Pente means **5**.

Can you list the first 5 books from memory?

.....

Where are they?

*Circle the 5 law books in
WORD SEARCH*

Y	M	O	N	O	R	E	T	U	E	D	P
S	U	C	I	T	I	V	E	L	E	R	C
U	I	O	E	F	P	C	O	A	S	H	B
D	R	S	P	W	E	K	L	H	N	A	S
O	O	B	E	Y	E	L	E	T	H	J	T
X	M	C	L	N	U	M	B	E	R	S	V
E	K	X	D	L	E	E	N	K	I	V	H
I	T	P	X	N	Y	G	P	M	L	H	U

Did you know

Genesis tells us about the Creation, Adam & Eve, the flood, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the start of the people of Israel, Joseph and Egypt ?

Exodus tells us about the Israelite's flight from Egypt to the Promised Land ?

Leviticus lists the Law (that is, the rules for living) ?

Numbers gives us the official counting of the people of Israel, and describes their wanderings in the wilderness ?

Deuteronomy ... lists the Law again for the next generation of Israelites ?



How well do you know

Genesis



QUIZ TIME



What did God create on each day?

(Read **Genesis** Chapter 1)

Day 1

Day 5

Day 2

Day 6

Day 3

Day 7

Day 4



List the first 4 human beings in the Bible.

(Read **Genesis** Chapter 2,3, & 4)

.....



Do you know why God did not want Adam & Eve to eat from the tree of life?

.....
.....

What were the names of Noah's 3 sons?

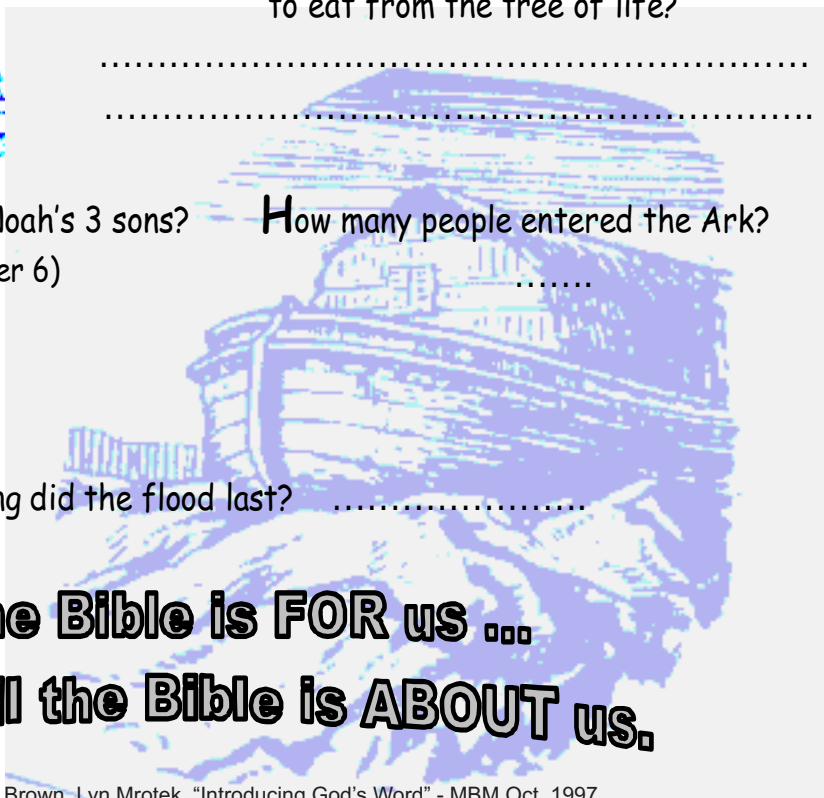
(Read **Genesis** Chapter 6)

.....

How many people entered the Ark?

.....

How long did the flood last?



Remember

... all the Bible is FOR us ...

... but not all the Bible is ABOUT us.

Thanks to M. Penny, Carol Brown, Lyn Mrotek. "Introducing God's Word" - MBM Oct. 1997

Athol's First Missionary Journey.

.....and he was invited to
journey into Asia...

and after much prayer, and being assured by the believers in the homeland that he would be upheld by their prayers for his guidance, support and safety, he decided to venture into a new territory.

which were adorned lavishly with biblical texts were a sight to behold and it was immediately apparent that here was a country very different from his own, with a population with an interest in religion.

On arriving at his lodging, Athol was warmly greeted by the family of the leader and though the hour was late, a fine meal had been prepared.

A two day conference of believers had been arranged for the Easter weekend and an eager crowd of 80 souls gathered to hear the Word expounded, to worship and make a joyful noise to the Lord. The Speaker's

words were received with joy and gladness and much animated conversation and questioning took place throughout these days.

He travelled then to Legaspi City in the south of the island and from thence by car through beautiful countryside with banana, rice and coconuts growing profusely, to Donsol in Sorsogon, a country market town where Pastor Amando Luna and his wife Eden are working with the people of that region. A study on Atonement was held in the evening with many young people present. Bibles and David Tavender's books, "Reading The Bible For Yourself" and "Acts 28:28, The Dividing Line" have been sent to help the leaders in their work.

A pleasant interlude here was spent in an outrigger canoe, eating fresh coconut and looking for the giant "whale shark" said to be the largest animal on earth.

The next study was held at Bacacay in Albay, where the home was full of interested listeners. As always, the greetings and hospitality were clearly evident. The next day we flew back home to Manila.

Map from Theos, The Internet.



He travelled through the air and arrived in the capital of the Philippines, a large city called Manila where he was greeted warmly by the leader of the believers for the whole region and taken to his lodging. The throng and noise of the populace and their vehicles

The next journey was to Dumaguete on the Island of Negros where once again we were greeted by local believers. Pastor Benjie Casido and his wife and little boy, and his associate Pastor for that region, Ben Artos, met our party at the airport. Pastor Casido's name is well known to many believers around the world and it was a great opportunity to share fellowship with him and his flock and to hear what a good work is being done. The study was held in a special room in their home in Bais and music and singing was enjoyed also. From Bais the three, Pastor Santiago, Athol and his wife travelled in a fully laden modern bus for a 4 hour journey over the mountainous, lush

Pastor Chua used the available time after lunch to speak to the gathered believers in their own dialect. This was particularly useful and appreciated.

Our party left by plane early the next morning to return to Manila. As that day was a holiday, we were able to enjoy a stimulating discussion time in the afternoon with some of the folk who had attended the Manila conference.

Some rest days were appreciated following this time away, and Athol was most interested to visit with our host, Santiago, the island of Corregidor which is a famous place in WW2 history.



country to the northwest of the island. At times the bus barely fitted in the street in some cities we passed through, and we often drove over rice lying on the road to dry. On arrival at our destination, a fine, large city called Bacolod, we were greeted by Pastor Val Ronquilio and a group of believers with garlands of flowers and then escorted to a nearby lodging house (a fine hotel actually) then to view their Berean Church and facilities. The believers in this area have been very industrious to have such a fine building which seats about 80 - 100 persons.

Believers came many miles, from outlying areas with their Pastors, one of whom, Antonio Orduyo, Athol was able to provide with a new Companion Bible. These good folk had travelled for many hours to attend the Sunday studies.

They brought with them many beautiful gifts that were crafted in their villages, and these Athol was able to bring to his home to display. The weather here was incredibly hot; there was a power failure, so fans were not working.

Even the locals were having difficulty getting comfortable. Sadly, Athol was not well, he had lost his voice, and was only able to give two studies on the Sunday morning, but

The final day's study was held in the Manila City Council offices where a group of keen believers, many who work at the council, attend weekly studies led by Pastor Chua. Athol spoke on Rejection followed by Mystery, using Matt. 13 as a starting point. This was followed by a fine meal, and the presentation to the visitors of many beautiful gifts for them to take home as a remembrance.

We thank the people of Australia for their prayer support, the Chua family for their unstinting and generous hospitality, and the believers in Manila, Donsol, Bais, Bacacay and Bacolod for the warmth of their fellowship, their generosity of spirit and their eagerness to share the Word rightly divided.



Eveline Walter

The Word and Words of God

On the next page you'll find a poem titled "An Interview With God". I first read this about a year ago, and having come across it several times since then from different sources, I felt it was worth making a short comment upon. One would think that an interview with God would actually contain some of the actual words of God ... but not this one! Instead are words from a human source portraying what the author thought God would have said.

It has been the practice of Christians and non-Christians alike throughout the centuries to tell us what God thinks about such and such when no such details have been revealed by the one source that really matters - the Word of God. This poem is a typical example of how the Bible can often get left on the shelf when we start considering the things of God.

In the Bible, we have at our fingertips God's very thoughts and words as He made them known, both through His Son, and through the writers of the Old and New Testaments - "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son" (Hebrews 1:1,2). Imagine someone else publishing what YOU think about such-and-such an issue, but not consulting you first? The scope for misrepresentation is enormous.

To assume what God would want or would say, instead of actually looking to see what He wants and has said in His Word, is the best way to come up with a set of beliefs about God and His plans for us which are not quite (or even near to) those set forth in the Scriptures. As an example of how easy it is for us to make up these things, consider how many of each kind of animal Noah really had to take on the ark. Most people say "two of each animal", but why not consult Genesis 7:2,3 and read God's very own words? Take a look. You'll find it's quite a bit different to the traditional story, but it's easier to go along with what people say than check the Bible.

The "quotes" in the interview poem about money and health, expression of feelings, forgiveness, and children, are all derived from a human mind, and are more along the lines of an approach which emphasises the need to be comfortable with yourself, and not hurt anyone else in the process. Regarding such issues, I can't find anything

in Scripture which even remotely represents the ideas put forward. Not much of it lines up with the things that God has to say in the Bible - the true record of what God has said.

If you've read this far, you've already spent a few minutes reading the poem, and this article, so may I suggest you now spend at least one minute carefully considering these words - some of the actual words of God - and note the authority and importance the Bible plays in God's revelation to mankind...

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Timothy 3:16)

"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17).

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105).

"Jesus answering said unto them, 'Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God?' " (Mark 12:24).

In addition, the people of Berea were considered to be "noble" because, after hearing Paul speak, they "searched the Scriptures daily" to see "whether those things were so". (Acts 17:10,11).

It may seem pointless to use up space in our magazine to print such a poem as the "Interview With God", yet it is just one example of the masses of articles and presentations out there which have so much influence over many Christians, but with so little foundation. If God is who we make Him out of our own imaginings, there is little room for Him to reveal something of His true nature and being to us. And that's building on the sands of falsehood, instead of the Rock of truth.

In closing, may I say that I have no objection to people making suggestions about how to conduct ourselves. Actually, there are probably quite a few worthy sentiments expressed in the interview poem. However, my main problem is with the idea of presuming to portray the words and thoughts of God without consulting one's Bible - the genuinely God-breathed Word (2 Timothy 3:16), and thus, the source of what God has revealed to us about Himself.

Any Questions for David Tavender?
You can write direct using the address on the back page or email him:
tavender@ozemail.com.au

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 Calyptra Rd.
UMINA NSW 2257.
Cost: \$25 p/a, for 6 magazines and 6 booklets

"Interview With God"

(see "Please Explain" article for comment)

I dreamed I had an interview with God.

"So you would like to interview me?" God asked.

"If you have the time" I said.

God smiled. "My time is eternity".
"What questions do you have in mind for me?"

"What surprises you most about humankind?..."

God answered...
"That they get bored with childhood. They rush to grow up and then long to be children again. That they lose their health to make money and then lose their money to restore their health. That by thinking anxiously about the future, they forget the present, such that they live in neither the present nor the future. That they live as if they will never die, and die as if they had never lived."

God's hand took mine and we were silent for awhile.

And then I asked...
"As a parent, what are some of life's lessons you want your children to learn?"

God replied with a smile.
"To learn they cannot make anyone love them. What they can do is let themselves be loved. To learn that it is not good to compare themselves to others. To learn that a rich person is not one who has the most, but is one who needs the least. To learn that it only takes a few seconds to open profound wounds in persons we love, and it takes many years to heal them. To learn to forgive by practising forgiveness. To learn that there are persons who love them dearly, but simply do not know how to express or show their feelings. To learn that two people can look at the same thing and see it differently. To learn that it is not always enough that they be forgiven by others. But that they must forgive themselves. And to learn that I am here always."

(author unknown)

Available at:
<http://www.reata.org/words.html>
And in print form through several publishers.

Ephesians 37. From page 5

v. 22 put off ... the old man ...
v. 23 be renewed in the spirit of your mind ...
v. 24 put on the new man ... true uprightness and holiness.

From v. 26 to the end of the chapter, very practical subjects are mentioned such as anger, giving place to the devil, stealing, charity, false witness, inappropriate language, bitterness wrath, malice and not grieving the Holy Spirit.

In the last verse, 32, he turns from the negatives and sums up the positives in beautiful and simple words that no one can have any difficulty understanding.

"And be ye kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

May this not only be our prayer, but also be plainly evident in our conduct every day.

I am conscious of having passed over many important things in ch. 4. We will, as the Lord enables, return to some of them in our next study. **S**

Berean Bible Fellowship of Australia

Visit our WEB PAGE
www.bbfa.org.au

Your website is rich in spiritual blessings. I passed it on to our daughter ... I am sure she will use it for studies. She is new in the faith and it has been an exciting experience for mom and me. Love all of you in CHRIST JESUS, and keep on keeping on with the truth. Bob & Jean Briggs, USA

Old & New Testaments. From back pg.

Later, in Genesis 17, God made another Covenant with Abram. The inner promised land and circumcision were introduced.

Later, God made a Testament or Covenant with King David. Please read 2 Samuel 7:1-13. While David thought of building a house for God, God promised a special house for David. Please read Acts 2:29-31.

So, while we divide our Bible into two Testaments or Covenants, there are actually more in the Bible than just two.

God promised Abram's seed a larger portion of the fertile crescent. He also promised Abram and his seed the inner portion, the land of Palestine. He also promised King David a Son, who "shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever."

Israel will be restored and God will keep His promises. His Kingdom will come on earth, then peace like a river will flow.

Brian Kelson

Spiritual Blessings

Via the internet, in full colour.

Ask for your electronic copy

Share Spiritual Blessings.

Post to your favourite email group.

Send in names & addresses

Electronic and paper back issues available



Therefore do not fear, O My servant Jacob,' says the LORD, 'Nor be dismayed, O Israel; For behold, I will save you from afar, And your seed from the land of their captivity. Jacob shall return, have rest and be quiet, And no one shall make him afraid. Jer.30:10

The Old Testament and New Testament.

Our Bible is divided up into two Testaments which is confusing.

It could appear that there are only two Testaments, the old and the new, but this is not the case.

The Old Testament traditionally refers to the Testament or Covenant God made with the children of Israel at Mount Sinai and the New Testament is the one our Lord ratified at His death. But there are other Covenants or Testaments God made, and to know them is helpful.

In Genesis, God made a promise after Noah had offered an offering:

Gen. 8:21 And the LORD smelled a soothing aroma. Then the LORD said in His heart, "I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.

Gen. 8:22 "While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease."

This Covenant is still in vogue today, we see the rainbow and rejoice in the promise of God.

God entered an agreement with Abram.

Gen. 15:18 On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates —

This is an unconditional Covenant. There were no obligations on Abram, only on God. Read all Genesis 15. Find a map and note the dimensions of this promised land.

Continued page 11

Bible Conference 2002

Now is a very good time to make plans for

Bethshan Australia

Take a break from the world, recharge those batteries, experience the uplift from the rightly divided Word of Truth.

Fabulous fellowship, worship and study. What more could you want?

Be there

September 27-29 2002



Audio Cassettes

"Shorter Studies: The Scriptures"

C.H.Welch

4 x 20 minute messages on one cassette

Focussing on internal and external evidence for the inspiration and validity of the Scriptures, the four messages on this cassette are: "The Evidence of Archaeology"; "The Testimony of the Son"; "The Canon of Scripture"; "How It Was Given". An excellent short series suitable for both beginners and advanced students of the Word.

\$4.50 (includes postage)

BOOKS

"The Unfolding Purpose of God"

Stuart Allen - Paperback 260 pages

(excerpts of a review by Robert Guenther)

Mr. Allen brings out the importance of understanding the broad overview of God's purpose in Christ Jesus our Lord (Eph.3:11). The simple and easy-to-understand style of writing which makes this book very helpful and enjoyable.

The writer begins by explaining the unique position the Bible must have for the Christian. He helps us to prove that all scripture is God breathed (2 Tim. 3:16). He points out that while the Bible was written over a period of 2,000 years, and by many writers, it still maintains unity, and ultimately points to Jesus Christ. Another remarkable point the writer makes is the pin-point accuracy in regard to future events. Mr. Allen then describes and explains some very important rules we must all follow if we want to understand what the Bible has to say to us.

The writer goes on to discuss the nation Israel and God's purpose with her, then spends the rest of the book explaining what he refers to as Paul's prison letters which are: Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, 1&2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. These books contain our marching orders for today. Finally, Mr. Allen draws some practical conclusions for us. May I encourage all new believers to read this book.

\$12.95 (includes postage)

**B.B.F.A. Book Agency,
P.O. Box 3141,
Glendale. 2285,
NSW, Australia.**

Phone (02) 4950 6708
tavender@ozemail.com.au



The Berean Bible Fellowship of AUSTRALIA Incorporated

2 Timothy 2:15 2 Timothy 3:16