

Spiritual Blessings



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Holy and Without Blame

David Fryer

“.. He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love ..” (Ephesians 1:4)

WE THANK OUR HEAVENLY Father for His great love to us (Ephesians 2:4) wherein He loved us, has made us alive in Christ, even when we were dead in sins (Ephesians 2:5) and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in Heavenly Places in Christ Jesus.

How we rejoice, for God in His riches of mercy has brought us out of darkness, into His marvellous light and too has delivered us from the power of darkness (Satan) and hath brought us into the Kingdom of His Dear Son (Colossians 1:13).

All this was by His mighty power, for Ephesians 2:10 reads, “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them”.

Yes, even before the foundation of the world God planned and purposed it all and it was even then that He foreknew us and chose us in Christ that we should be “holy and without blame”. The two words “Holy” and “Blameless” (or “without blame”) are repeated in Ephesians 5:27 and Colossians 1:22.



Come and join us for great Bible studies and fellowship at our annual conference in September - see page 12 for more details. Registration form with this issue - don't delay, send it today.

A Glorious Church

We cannot of ourselves in any way accomplish the Father's object, to achieve this state, but the blessed and comforting truth is declared and is accomplished by the sacrifice of His Son. Ephesians 5:25-27 reads, “Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it ... that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.”

The words are exactly the same as those rendered “Holy and without blame” in Ephesians 1:4. What fulness! What assurance! The object and desire of the Father, accomplished by His Son our Lord.

Made Meet

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Now we read Colossians 1:12-22 and it brings us to this same blessed truth. Here again we find the Father and Son in perfect accord – “Giving thanks to the Father who hath made us meet (or sufficient) to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light (or Holy

(...continued page 8)



The President's Word



Athol Walter

Meetings

Don't put it off any longer. Make plans to fellowship with us at one or more of the following meetings...

Brisbane:

Alternate Sundays
10:00AM
Long Weekend
7-9 June 2003
(07) 3297 1981

Sydney:

3rd Sunday of each month.
Lunch 12:45.
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

Annual

Conference:

26th, 27th, 28th
September 2003
Bethshan,
Wyee, NSW.
- see page 12.
A rare opportunity to hear special guest speakers from the Philippines.

SINCE THE LAST EDITION OF *Spiritual Blessings*, my wife, Eveline, and I spent most of June in England. The reason for the visit was the marriage of our youngest daughter, but it was a wonderful opportunity for us to renew acquaintances with Dispensationalists in London and the regions.

It is always a special thing to visit the Chapel of The Opened Book, where Charles Welch and his successors have preached and taught. I have listened to many a Bible study recording by Mr. Welch starting with the words, "this is a recording made in the Chapel of The Opened Book", and even though I have been there several times previously, it still gave me a thrill to be there again. Alan Schofield had invited me to present a study on Sunday morning, June 1st, and I was happy to be able to do that.

We were also able to visit a number of folk in their homes during the time of our stay, and the fellowship with them was warm and rich. Our heartfelt thanks to all those folk.

The task facing the BBFA Committee now is the visit of four men from the Philippines in September/October for our annual Conference. I ask for your prayers that their applications for visas to visit our country will be processed quickly and smoothly. It is not automatic that anyone wanting to visit our shores will be granted a visa these days. Last year, one of our Fellowship tried to bring a lady from India to our conference, but was unable to arrange it. So, please pray about this.

Also, I invite you to decide now to be at this year's conference, make your plans and send in the registration form. I know that you will be greatly blessed if you attend.

This issue of *Spiritual Blessings* contains the last instalment of my study of Ephesians. While it has been a lot of work, I have learned a great deal, and I have appreciated the various expressions of appreciation I have received. My desire is that something I have said in the series of studies will have been of some help and guidance.

To echo some of the closing thoughts of the study, I ask for your prayers, not only for myself, but for the work and witness of the BBFA and also for the various Acts 28 groups throughout the world.

Athol Walter

Spiritual Blessings

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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.

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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.

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V-President: Anne Ward.

Treasurer: Sue Hall.

Secretary: Margaret Abbott.

Committee members:

Bob Davidson, David Tavender.



Be Filled With The Spirit ...

(Ephesians 5:18)

Charles
H. Welch



THESE WORDS ARE important enough to warrant a pause and a careful examination.

First we can see an intended contrast, a contrast introduced in verse three of this same chapter. The Gentiles who knew not God found their enjoyment and inspiration in the intoxication of wine, their speech was corrupt, filthy and unfit for saints. Their drinking songs, accompanied by instruments, resounded with the praise of Bacchus, Venus and the like.

The saint is to be a contrast. Instead of wine he is to be filled with the Spirit, instead of unclean mirth and idolatrous songs he is to sing spiritual songs and make melody in his heart. Instead of praising the gods of darkness his melody and praise should be directed to the Lord. What are we to understand by the injunction, "Be filled with the Spirit"?

To understand this statement it is necessary to understand the use of the Greek verb to fill. *Pleroo*, "to fill", takes three cases after it. As an active verb, followed by the Accusative, of the *vessel* or whatever is filled. As an active verb, followed by the Genitive, of what it is *filled with*. As a passive verb, followed by the Dative, of the *filler*, and as a passive verb, followed by the Genitive, of what the vessel is *filled with*. In the passage before us the verb is passive, and "with Spirit", *en pneumatī*, is dative.

This means that the Spirit is the One that fills, and not that the believer is filled with the Spirit.

To make sure that the meaning is clear, let us put it this way. A cup may be filled with water, it may be filled with a pump. Now, the incongruity of the statement would prevent anyone from imagining that the pump was found afterwards in the cup, but as there are passages which speak of the filling or baptism of the Spirit, the unguarded reader does not discern the meaning so clearly.

*... be not
drunk with
wine,
wherein is
excess,*

*but be
filled with
the Spirit ...*


Ephesians 5:18

Now if the Spirit fills us with something that takes the place of "wine wherein is excess", we should seek to know what it is. Once again the parallel epistle, Colossians, supplies the needed information (we give a slightly revised rendering):

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

This parallel is so complete that we cannot avoid the inference that "to be filled with the Spirit" will be to be filled by the Spirit *with the word of Christ*. The Spirit everywhere takes of the things of Christ and applies them to the heart of the believer. That constitutes the inspiration of his renewed conversation, "speaking to yourselves", and will prevent any corrupt communication from proceeding out of his mouth, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, and a heart filled by the Spirit with the word of Christ will speak accordingly. The melody of hearts finds its Amen in:

"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"

(Ephesians 5:20). 

(from "An Alphabetical Analysis"
Vol 10 pp 352, 353)

Ephesians No. 43



Athol
Walter

Ephesians 6:18-24

18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; 19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, 20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

21 But that ye also may know my affairs, *and* how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things: 22 Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and *that* he might comfort your hearts. 23 Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

Grace and Benediction

THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF God (Eph. 6:13) is provided by the Lord for our defence and protection against the wiles of the Devil. It was suggested in the previous study that, rather than equipping us to rush out and attack all and sundry in the Name of the Lord, the armour is to enable us to stand against whatever the Enemy of the Truth throws against us.

There was also the thought brought out that most, if not all, of the enemies we are to fight against and subjugate are those within rather than without. More often than not, it is the lusts of our own sinful natures that cause us to sin rather than Satan. "The Devil made me do it" is not really a valid excuse for the child of God.

Certainly, Satan tempts us in the matter of faithfulness to the light we have received through the Word, but I think that most of our struggles in our Christian walk are to do with our sinful natures fighting for supremacy.

When I was a babe in Christ as a young teenager, all I knew about Ephesians was the passage about the Armour of God. I can remember taking part in little presentations at the Sunday School Anniversary, where I carried, for instance, a sword or a shield onto the platform and stood in line with other children while the relevant passage was read out. But I did not know, and I cannot remember it ever being mentioned, that we find much of the imagery concerning the armour in the Old Testament. It may well be true, as some expositors suggest, that Paul's circumstances in being chained to a Roman soldier as he wrote this epistle, influenced his choice of the illustration of armour etc. I personally believe, however, that his prepared mind, being full of the Scriptures he had known all his life, supplied the images he needed. Of course, there is also the inspiration of the Holy Spirit! So let us have a look.

The Armour in the OT

Isa. 11:5 has this, "Faithfulness (shall be) the girdle of His reins." The Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures is known as the Septuagint (LXX), and this is the version commonly in use in the days of the Lord and Paul. It translates the word "faithfulness" as

"Truth" and the word "reins" as "sides". We tend to forget that the word "reins" has the underlying thought of checking or restraining. We still speak of having to rein someone in, for example. Anyway, Paul, familiar as he was with the LXX, finds his girdle of truth in this verse.

Isa. 49:2 gives us, "He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword". And Isa. 52:7 says, "How beautiful ... are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace". Still in Isaiah, this time 59:17, we have, "He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation." I'm sure you can see how these three verses refer to the Ephesians passage we are considering.

The last reference is in Psalm 91:4: "His truth shall be thy shield and buckler." These scattered references are brought together by Paul to show us how we are protected and enabled by the Lord's provision.

Just one other comment before we move on. Does the shield of faith refer to our faithfulness or the Lord's? We are undoubtedly called to faithfulness, but the certainty of us meeting the obligation is a little shaky, to say the least. The verse already quoted from Psa. 91 tells us that His truth is our shield and buckler, and I would remind you of the comments above regarding the connection between faithfulness and truth. To be clear and straightforward, it is the Lord's faithfulness, not ours, that is around us to shield us from "terror by night and the arrow that flieth by day". (Psalm 91:5)

Stand and Withstand

Going back for a moment to vv. 11 to 14, I want to bring to your notice the word STAND. It is instructive that the word "fight" does not occur in this passage at all, but "stand" is very prominent.

- v. 11. "... STAND against the wiles of the Devil ..."
- v. 13. "... that ye may be able to WITHSTAND in the evil day, and having done all, to STAND."
- v. 14. "STAND therefore ..."

It is perhaps more true now than in past times that Satan's strategies are starting to come out into the open. Witness the almost open contempt towards the Bible even in Christian circles, the breakdown of morals and the sexual perversions that are becoming acceptable to society at large, and even promoted as normal. However true or other-

wise those statements may be, we are certainly headed for the EVIL DAY of v. 13. If we have not exercised our faith and courage by standing against evil when things are not so bad, it will be much harder to withstand when the full onslaught of evil comes.

Fortunately, the Lord does not leave His people to their own strength and devices. He has provided for us, and we must not only believe, but practice in our daily lives that “we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.”

I think there are lessons for us to learn from the experience of the Israelites when they stood on the shore of the Red Sea with Pharaoh’s army bearing down on them. Were they instructed to turn and fight? No. Were they told to run and hide? No. The Word of the Lord to them through Moses was “Fear ye not, STAND STILL and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show to you today ... The Lord shall fight for you and ye shall hold your peace.” His Word to us is similar, “Stand ... withstand ... and having done all, stand.” His grace will prove more than sufficient for us.

Prayer and Watchfulness

We must not overlook v. 18. Yes, we are to put on the whole armour of God. Yes, we are to stand against Satan, and subdue the enemies within through the resurrection power that operates in us, but over it all, through it all, under it all, there must be prayer and watchfulness.

There are shades of meaning in this verse that don’t make it through our usual translations. This is how it is rendered in the Amplified Version:

“Pray at all times - on every occasion, in every season - in the Spirit, with all [manner of] prayer and entreaty. To that end keep alert and watch with strong purpose and perseverance, interceding in behalf of all the saints.”

We should not fall into the trap of thinking that the only prayer that matters or works is when we are in church, or on our knees with eyes closed and hands clasped together. There is nothing wrong with that, of course, the right atmosphere being of help. But prayer is as much an attitude of heart and mind as saying words, whether set or spontaneous. Is it not possible that whatever our hands may be occupied with at any given time, our thoughts can be tuned to our Saviour and Lord at the same time. Could we say that if we are occupied in any activity that prevents our

thoughts dwelling on God at the same time, that activity might not be one in which we should engage?

Notice that Paul instructs us to pray for all the saints, i.e. all of God’s people. I trust that none of our readers need to be told that all believers are saints, not just a special few who have done something extraordinary. And perhaps in that context, I should remind you that Paul’s instruction was to pray *for* the saints, not *to* them!

We are members of the One Body, and we should ever remember the joints and bands (sinews) that bind us all together, as our own bodies are held together. We suffer together, we rejoice together, we work together, and together we wait in faith looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our great God and our Saviour Christ Jesus. (Titus 2:13)

The break between vv. 18 & 19 is a little unfortunate, as sometimes our eye stops and does not read straight on as it should. After commanding prayer for all the saints, Paul goes on to say “and (pray) for me”. Pause for a moment, and let this sink in.

This is Paul the Apostle writing. He is arguably one of the greatest instruments in the hand of God in both the forming of the Christian Faith and also its spread. He had wonderful experiences, receiving directly from the Lord Himself the Gospel and Truth he was to teach. And this is the man who says to his fellow believers “Pray for me.”

None of us are above or beyond the need for prayer. How regular and consistent are we in praying not only for all the saints, but particularly for those who have the burden of ministry, or service in the Lord’s work in some way? Does the minister at your church fall short in some way in your estimation? Then have you prayed for him, or just criticized him?

Do you think I have missed the point and gone astray in these studies? Then have you prayed for me? I hope so, for I greatly need it. We certainly have a debt to love each other, and I don’t think we do any injustice to God’s Word if we add that we also owe it to each other to pray for each other. As James says in (...continued page 9)

A word of thanks ...

On these pages we have the final part of Athol Walter’s series on Ephesians. The first instalment appeared way back in 1995, in the May-June issue of that year. Since then, this series has been keenly followed by many of our regular readers.

A number of people have written to tell us that it has been their favourite part of our magazine. That is understandable - anyone who has read these articles will be better able to appreciate the glorious riches contained in Ephesians. There has been so much in this series to draw us to praise our Lord, Saviour and Head.

So, we’d also like to take this opportunity of thanking Athol for his time and effort in producing such a helpful and uplifting contribution to Spiritual Blessings magazine over a long period of time. “Thank You”.

- The Editor

The entire series on Ephesians may be found at www.spiritualblessings.org.au Click on “Articles”, and then on the “Commentaries” link.



Last time we saw how, after leaving Egypt, the nation of Israel was to live by the **Law of Moses !**

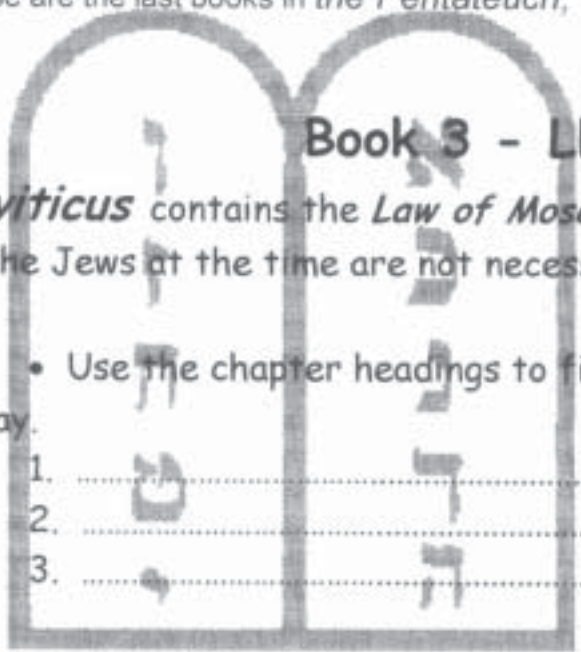


..... they were to follow **all** its rules, not just the **Ten Commandments**.

Now, we will look at the 2 books in the **Old Testament** that cover these laws

Book 3 - Leviticus and **Book 5 - Deuteronomy**, and the book in between, **Book 4 - Numbers**, which deals with the *counting of the people*.

These are the last books in *the Pentateuch*,



Book 3 - LEVITICUS

Leviticus contains the **Law of Moses**. Many of the laws which God gave to the Jews at the time are not necessary for us to follow today.

- Use the chapter headings to find **3 laws** that do not apply to us today.

1.
2.
3.

Now read Leviticus 23.



Unscramble the **8 special occasions** mentioned in *Chapter 23*.

1. Eth Babaths.....
2. Eth Drol's Overpass
3. Eth Drol's Feats fo Duneleaven Bared
4. Stiruffits
5. Feats fo Skewe
6. Feats fo Petrums
7. Eth Yad fo Onetament
8. Feats for Naclebaters

Book 4 - NUMBERS

This book deals with the counting of the people of Israel. A census was taken. There were 12 tribes of Israel.

⇒ Name the 12 tribes of Israel. Read Numbers 1 and write the answers below.

Book 5 - DEUTERONOMY

After 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, the Law of Moses, including the Ten Commandments, needed to be repeated to the next generation.



Read Deuteronomy Chapter 28:1-14.

☺ Now write down 5 blessings God promised Israel if they obeyed Him.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.



Read Deuteronomy Chapter 28:15-68.

☹ Now write down 5 curses God promised would come upon Israel if they disobeyed Him.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

These curses were to come upon Israel because they did not obey God and observe His commandments.



Something to think about

It is important to remember when reading the Bible that **all** the Bible is **for** us, but **not all** the Bible is **about** us. Therefore these curses and blessings do not apply to us, as Gentiles, now living after Acts 28 in the time of grace.

Our salvation comes **alone** from believing in the Lord Jesus Christ's sacrifice.

Finally, write down the name of the person who led the Israelites into the Promised Land. (See Deuteronomy 31).

Thanks to: Introducing God's Word - Carol Brown, Lynn Mrotek, Michael Perry.

Holy and Without Blame

(from page 1)



“... a Lamb without blemish and without spot...”

place) who hath delivered us from the power (or authority) of darkness and hath translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son. ... and you that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of His flesh through death to present you holy and unblameable (the same words used in Eph 1:4 & 5:27) and unreprieveable in His sight”.

To make us sufficient for such an inheritance is the Father's object and is the result of the offering of His Beloved Son, our Lord. Without blame or blemish, made meet or sufficient by the Father, presented perfect by the Son - surely none can withdraw from the words of praise written by Paul: “Blessed be God ... who hath blessed us” (Ephesians 1:3).

When the Lord Jesus died as the great sacrifice for sin, He was as mentioned in Ephesians chapters 1 and 5, “blameless” and “spotless”. The precious blood of Christ was as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world (1 Peter 1:19,20).

Here we learn that not only is the believer's state of “blemishlessness” the same as that of the Lord Jesus, but that the same mark of time (before the foundation of the world) is spoken of them as it is of the Lord as the Lamb foreordained. As we read these verses it should strengthen and deepen our knowledge and faith in Him.

Before Him

Now Ephesians 1:4 adds one more clause which is too important to miss. All this perfection and holiness is “before Him” or “before His face”. This qualification is stated *positively* by the word “holy”; *negatively* by the words “without blame”; and *positionally* by the phrase “before Him”.

If the holiness provided by the Saviour can endure the light of God's presence, we can have that which is perfect and complete. We shall miserably fail should we attempt to improve it or make it more secure.

This perfect standing before God, this completeness in Christ is the basis of the words, “Let no man, though he wishes it, defraud you of your prize or reward, persuading you to self humiliation, and the worship of angels” (see Colossians 2:18). Here we see the glory of our Lord and praise Him for the perfection of the holiness which is ours in Christ. In ourselves we are darkness, but we may walk in the light as He is in the light, for the precious blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin.


“We cannot make ourselves holy ...

but the Lord expects and asks us to walk worthy of the calling.”

Here is the object of the Father's choice. What a calling is ours, those who are the Holy in Christ are called “saints”. The saints demand our love and prayers (Ephesians 6:18) and only as we, in Spirit, embrace all saints shall we begin to understand the fulness of the love of Christ (Ephesians 3:18).

We cannot make ourselves holy. We cannot keep ourselves holy, but the Lord expects and asks us to walk worthy of the calling

(Ephesians 4:1) for He has saved us and called 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 Timothy 1:9).

Consider again the words of Ephesians 1:4, “that we should be holy”. How easy to read, how easy to write, but worlds of thought are contained in these few words. We praise and thank our Heavenly Father for His great love toward us, that we rejoice in our holy calling, for it is all of His purpose and plan for us that, through the sacrifice of His dear Son, we should be before Him “holy and without blame in love”. 

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Ephesians No. 43 (from page 5)



another context, "The earnest (heartfelt, continued) prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available - dynamic in its working". (James 5:16. Ampl. Version.)

Going back to Paul's request for prayer, notice that he wanted utterance to be given to him that he might open his mouth boldly to make know the mystery of the gospel. The fact that this powerful man of God feels the need for boldness in his witness, while being something of a surprise, nevertheless reveals how much he is one with us after all. I find it all too easy, when reading of these great Bible characters to forget that they were ordinary people like ourselves. They tend to take on an almost superhuman standing in our minds, which in my case anyway, makes me think that I could never measure up to the standards they have achieved.

This is not so, of course, and Paul's request for prayer reminds us of this. Obviously he felt afraid at times, we know he suffered from the cold while in prison, he was wounded to the quick, as we would be if some friend betrayed us. He was even known to lash out with an ill-considered and rather harsh rejoinder when he perceived his rights being trampled upon. In short, a person much as myself. But he realised how much help he needed, so asked for prayer and trusted only in the strength of His mighty Lord and Saviour.

Mystery of the Gospel

The phrase "the mystery of the Gospel" in v. 19 needs a comment perhaps. We Dispensationalists give so much prominence to The Dispensation of The Mystery (as we should), that we can be misled whenever we read the word mystery. If you think back to Eph. 3, you will recall that there are two mysteries spoken of there, viz. the mystery of Christ and another one called simply The Mystery. The mystery of Christ, as we saw back there, was something that had been gradually unfolded throughout the ages ever since the first hint was given about it in Gen 3:15.

The Mystery, on the other hand, was a secret hid in God until God made it known through Paul at the point where Israel were to be finally set aside at the end of their probation period recorded in Acts. So to which does Paul's term in 6:19 refer? I think Colossians can help us here. We find that the context of Col. 4 is

the same as that of Eph. 6 and we read in Col. 4:3,4 these words:

"Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds, that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak."

We lose nothing by seeing that Paul refers in Eph. 6:19, not to the Mystery but to the mystery of Christ, because no matter what "good news" is being preached at any time over the millenia of God's dealing with Adam's race, in other words, no matter what the dispensation at the time may be, it is always founded upon, and centred in, the Lord Jesus Christ.

If the message from God is the Gospel of the Kingdom, then the advent of the King must be proclaimed. When the time came for the preaching of the Gospel of grace, the central theme of that Gospel was Christ crucified, dead and resurrected. Similarly, to preach the "good news" of the Mystery which places the believer "far above all, seated at the right hand of God", it must first of all be shown that Christ is not only crucified, dead and raised, but that He has also been "seated at the right hand of God, far above all ...".

Concluding Remarks

In this wonderful epistle, we have been taken to heights of glory and depths of truth encountered in no other Scriptures written before it. And yet, as in his other epistles, Paul concludes on a very personal note.

He knows that if the members of the assemblies to whom he wrote were to pray for him intelligently, then they had to know something of his circumstances. He does not put these details into the epistle, however, but sends Tychicus who would not only deliver the epistle to them, but also make known to them "all my affairs". In addition to this, however, Tychicus had the task of comforting their hearts.

The epistle concludes with Paul's trademark statement about grace being with them all. This was done in order to guard against forgeries, which had occurred.

It is interesting that the last word in the Greek of this epistle is the word "incorruptibility". (The word "amen" is not in the Greek.) The margin

of your Bible should show you that "incorruptibility" is the more accurate word than "sincerity". Is Paul saying here that our love for the Lord should be incorruptible? That certainly should be the ideal, but how possible is it? One expositor named Beza thought that the word incorruptibility should be read with the word *grace* and not *love*. It is God's grace that is incorruptible, unchangeable and imperishable. Well, this side of the resurrection we may never know for sure which way it should be read, but acknowledging that God's grace never changes, our aim should be to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, minds and bodies, as sincerely and consistently as we possibly can. And it is this epistle that tells us we have the same power available to us to help, as God used to raise our Lord from the dead.

I think the words of Frances Ridley Havergal are not out of place as this study of Ephesians concludes:

*Take my love;
my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its
treasure-store;
Take myself,
and I will be
Ever, only,
all for Thee.*

Amen. 📖

The Son of God and the Son of Man

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IS KNOWN BY MANY titles in the Scriptures, including the Lamb of God, the Vine, The Way, the Truth, The Life, The Door, The Good Shepherd, Head of the Church which is His Body, Saviour, and there are many more.

Please
Explain



David
Tavender

Two such titles - "Son of God" and "Son of Man" - are not conflicting or opposites, but, like the other names listed above, highlight different aspects of Christ. The following comparisons are certainly not exhaustive, merely some general observations which may be made about the distinctions between these titles.

General Distinction

Son of God: "Son of God" is a fairly universal title and is used in a broad sense. "Son of God", and simply "The Son" or "His Son" in relation to God the Father, are terms which highlight His deity with less emphasis on His fleshly body, but not to the exclusion of His humanity.

Son of Man: "Son of Man" refers more to the domains of Christ's earthly life, suffering, death, resurrection, current position at God's right hand, coming, judging, ruling. "Son of Man" attributes necessitate or are prophesied to be carried out *by way of a body* - the manifestation of God in flesh. He has a body to fulfil His earthly roles which can be loosely divided into two areas: the suffering servant who dies, and the glorious Messiah who judges and rules.

OT Background

Son of God: OT usage of this term implies heavenly or spiritual nature (Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; maybe Gen 6:2,4).

Son of Man: OT usage of this term implies human nature (Job 25:6; Psalms 80:17; Ezekiel 2:1). This has nothing to do with being sinful, or the other failings which are often associated with humanity, but simply has reference to people. In other words, a son of man is a human being.

Prophecy at Birth

Son of God: It was prophesied that Mary's child would be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35)

Son of Man: There was no prophecy at birth that Christ would be called the Son of Man. It would be like saying to a pregnant woman, "You are going to give birth to a human being". This in itself would be no extraordinary prophecy.

Deity / Humanity

Son of God: (a) The deity of Christ is revealed mainly through The Son of God (Matthew 14:24-33).

Son of Man: (a) The extremes of human experience are revealed through The Son of Man. He went through suffering and death as a human may suffer and die (Matthew 26:2); but will one day reign gloriously (Matthew 19:28; 25:31).

Son of God: (b) It was as the Son of God that others wanted to kill Him, for claiming equality with God. Note that Christ does not say to any of His enemies that they misunderstood Him in this respect (Matthew 26:57,63,64; John 5:18; 10:24-39; 19:7).

Son of Man: (b) No one in the Scriptures ever questioned His humanity (John 9:11,16; 10:33; Acts 2:22). The idea that Christ was not truly human was popular in some circles, but only after c.100 AD.

Son of God: (c) The title "Son of God" itself emphasises Christ's deity.

Son of Man: (c) The title "Son of Man" emphasises those aspects which are carried out, by necessity, with a body (eg, death, resurrection - Mark 10:33; Matthew 17:9; seen as coming again in the clouds Matthew 24:30). The visible form of God in the flesh.

Life / Condemnation

Son of God: The Son of God has more of an emphasis on life. The Son of God was not sent to judge/condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. He that believes on Him is not judged/condemned (John 3:17,18).

Son of Man: It is as the Son of Man that authority has been given to judge, and condemn. This title is therefore more related to judgement and condemnation. Authority over life and judgement has been given to Christ (John 5:22-27), because He is both the Son of God and the Son of Man. He is the only being in the Universe who has experienced life

from both God and man's perspective, and in this respect, is the Righteous Judge.

Sent

Son of God: "Son of God" emphasises the one who was sent from God the Father - He was God's representative in many respects. As such, the Son was subservient and obedient to the Father. (John 5:23,24,30,36,37,38).

Son of Man: The Son of Man is not said to have been "sent". Not so much God's representative, but the ideal and perfect human.

Titles as used by Himself

Son of God: Called Himself "The Son of God" only a few times - Matt 16:16,17; 26:64 ("Thou hast said"); John 9:35; 10:36; John 11:4. Yet this title is probably implied more times as merely "The Son", in relation to His Father.

Son of Man: Called Himself "the Son of Man" 80-odd times in Gospels (Matthew 8:20; 9:6; etc).

Titles as used by others

Son of God: Referred to as the Son of God many times through Gospels and rest of NT, and is generally the preferred title of the NT writers. (Mark 1:1; Luke 1:35; John 1:34; Rom 1:3,4,9; 1 John 1:7; 3:8,23).

Son of Man: He is only once referred to as "the Son of Man" outside of the gospels - Acts 7:56. (Four times if including Hebrews 2:6; Revelation 1:13; 14:14, which all speak in more general terms of a human, who is, from the context of the verses nearby, Christ).

Service / Worship

Son of God: "Son of God" is generally used in a positive uplifting manner by humans. For example, those who confessed who He was - John the Baptist (John 1:34), Nathaniel (John 1:49), Peter (Matthew 16:16), healed blind man (John 9:35), Martha (John 11:27), centurion (Matthew 27:54), etc. The exceptions are statements from His enemies, such as "If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." (Matthew 27:40,43). Even in those instances, the title itself is recognised as being a glorious one (i.e. "if you are as great as you claim...").

Son of Man: "Son of man" suggests a lowliness during His first coming (Matthew 8:20), with the role reversed to one of glory in times yet to come. The "Son of Man" did not force others to submit to Him during His first coming, but will in His second coming. (compare Matthew 26:50; 27:12-14 with Matthew 25:31 & Zech 14:16,17). Interestingly, the first NT occurrence of the term "Son of Man" is used in the lowly sense; whereas the final NT occurrence is glorious (compare Matthew 8:20 with Revelation 14:14).

Association

Son of God: The Son / Son of God is referred to in terms of His closeness to God the Father. Emphasises special relationship with God, as the one who, literally, came forth from God, both in the sense that He was the same substance, and that He was sent from God (John 6:28-33; Hebrews 1:3).

Son of Man: The Son of Man seems to have a closer association to being the suffering servant (Matthew 20:28; Mark 8:31; 9:12), and then the promised Messiah (Matthew 19:28; 25:31).

There is a great deal more which could be said on this subject. The deity and humanity of Christ is an aspect which has traditionally been dealt with poorly in Christian circles. Those who deny the deity of Christ often emphasise His humanity and subservience to the Father at the expense of His deity. Those who uphold the deity of Christ often don't want to acknowledge that there are clearly differences between the Father and the Son, even though Christ was God - these differences all relate to the fact that Christ had a body of flesh. The problem comes about when Christ's deity is upheld at the expense of recognising His humanity; or, when one emphasises His humanity and cannot accept His deity. The Scriptures portray Christ as the perfect representative of both God and the human race. This is difficult for our human minds to grasp, and yet both sides are presented for us clearly in the Scriptures. The only decision we have to make is whether to believe and accept the testimony of His Word, or not. ☞

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God ... and the Word became flesh." (John 1:1,14)

"In Him (Christ) dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Colossians 2:9)

"God was manifest in the flesh." (1 Timothy 3:16)

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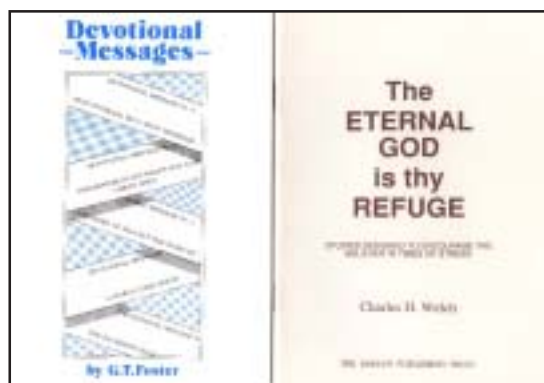
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