

Spiritual Blessings



Vol. 17 No.5
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The official journal of the Berean Bible Fellowship of Australia

Lo, I Come

Athol Walter

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN! The carols playing in the shopping centres are unwelcome reminders for me that Christmas is fast approaching. And so is the end of the year.

It is almost a custom for us to launch into tirades about the way Christmas has been commercialised, and how Christmas celebrations are full of pagan customs that have nothing to do with the Word becoming flesh and tabernacled among us.

Psalms and Hebrews

I am resisting the temptation, however, as I find my mind dwelling on several verses from Psalm 40. Verses 6 to 8 read: 'Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ear hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering thou hast not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me. I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is written in my heart.' You will read the whole Psalm, won't you.

Paul uses some of this passage in Hebrews 10:7, and when we compare the two passages several interesting things come to light. The sentence 'mine ear hast thou opened' in the Psalm,



Dwight Chua with John Hutton at this year's annual conference - see page 8 for more.

becomes, in Hebrews, 'a body hast thou prepared Me'. 'Thou hast not required' changes to 'Thou hast no pleasure.' And the words 'I delight', referring to doing God's will, are not in the Hebrews passage. As many readers will know, the New Testament quotes from the Old Testament are from the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, called the Septuagint (LXX). It is not my purpose in this article to go into that aspect, but it does account for some differences in the quotes as compared to the original verses. There are other reasons for the differences in the passage before us which I want to bring out now.

I suggest that you have two Bibles open before you so you can see both Psalm 40 and Hebrews 10 at the same time.

Firstly, notice what v. 5 says in Hebrews 10: 'Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith ...' It is quite possible that these verses are not so much a direct quote from Psalm 40, but rather what the Word said when He became incarnate.

(This brings up another question which I do not wish to pursue now, but throw it in for future consideration. At which point did the Word actually enter the 'prepared body'? Conception? Birth? Or some intermediate point? It may surprise you to know that there are different points of view about it.)

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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
Study Weekends:
- March 2004
(to be finalised)
- Long Weekend
June 12-14, 2004
(07) 3297 1981

Sydney:

3rd Sunday
of each month.
Lunch 12:45.
Study 1:30PM.
Community Hall
104 Galston Rd
Hornsby Hts.
Study Day:
Sunday May 16
(02) 4996 4455

Newcastle:

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

BBFA Annual Conference 2004

Details are still to be finalised. See page 9 for how you can help us.

IT IS A COUPLE OF WEEKS before our annual conference as I write these words, But, of course, by the time you read them, the conference will have become another page in the history of the BBFA.


This is a special conference in that we have invited four young men from the Open Bible Fellowship in the Philippines to be our main speakers. Eveline and I went to Sydney yesterday to welcome three of the four, Albert, Dwight and Mon, as they emerged into the arrivals hall at Sydney airport. The fourth member, Michael, has not been lost. He is coming later as his boss would not let him have the extra time off work.

We met these men in the Philippines last year when we were there for their conference, and it was a thrill to see them again. All this has set my mind wandering down some of memory's paths, and I have remembered other trips overseas at different times, and to different places, and the wonderful thing is that, no matter what part of the world I have found myself in, I have always been very conscious that I was surrounded by God's love, and there have always been wonderful saints of the Lord to have fellowship with and learn from.

Then my mind went to a funeral we attended in the early part of

this year. To conclude the service, all the members of the family concerned, including numerous grandchildren, stood and sang the favourite chorus of the lady who had fallen asleep in the Lord. These are the words:

*Wide, wide as the ocean,
high as the heavens above,
Deep, deep as the deepest sea,
is my Saviour's love.
I, though so unworthy,
still am the child of His care,
For His Word teaches me
that His love reaches me
EVERYWHERE.*

May you be ever conscious of the Lord's gracious and overflowing love in your life every day. 

Spiritual Blessings

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Visit our Web Site:
www.spiritualblessings.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.

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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.

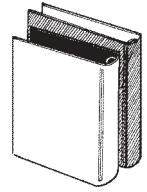
The BBFA Committee:

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



Lo, I Come

(continued from page 1)



To continue then, it seems that Psalm 40 is prophesying what would be said in the future moment (that is, future to when Psalm 40 was written) when the Word actually became flesh and dwelt among us. The Hebrews verses, however, tell us what the Word actually said when this part of God's will was carried out. I see no difficulty in the prophecy being a little different from the fulfillment. I hope the reason will be clear as we proceed.

A Body Thou Hast Prepared Me

The Lord was to save His people from their sins by the sacrifice of Himself, so He says: 'Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me'. His goal is wrapped up in the two names - Immanuel and Jesus, that is, 'God with us' and 'Jehovah, my salvation'. He was the Passover Lamb, He was the sin offering and the burnt offering and the trespass offering and the Day of Atonement offering and every other offering that we read about in the Old Testament.

And to become all those Old Testament types personified, He needed a human body. The Scriptures know, and indeed allow, no other means of redemption than through the kinsmanredeemer, who can pay the required price, free the captives from bondage and restore the inheritance. Therefore, He took not on Himself the nature of angels, but the likeness of sinful flesh, so that in the 'body prepared', He could die as the substitutionary victim, and redeem us, His kinsmen who had been sold into the slavery of sin and its wages.

The laws of God, revealed in His own Book, demand that the Redeemer indeed be the seed of the woman, that is, be truly human, for nothing less would suffice.

Digged

The Hebrew for 'Mine ear hast thou opened' is, literally, 'mine ear hast thou digged.' That is, to say the least, a curious expression to our ears. But consider.

The Hebrew word for 'opened' is *karah*, and is usually translated dig, as a well, or pit or grave. But the feminine form of the word is used for birth.

Ezekiel 16:3 reads, in part,: 'Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan.' Birth here is our word *karah*.

Again in Ezekiel 21:30; 'I will judge thee in the place where thou wast created, in the land of thy nativity.' Nativity is *karah*.

And look at Isaiah 51:1,2, again in part: 'Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you.'

We would not speak about birth as being "dug out", although women might relate to the expression. But that is one way in which the Scriptures talk of it, and with that in mind, it is not such a difficult jump from the digged ear to the prepared body.

Opened

The next point concerns the whole expression: 'Mine ear thou hast opened'. Ears can be blocked, impairing the hearing. Parents will know from experience how children's ears sometimes seem to be blocked solidly. And not hearing, they don't obey. So the ear that is 'digged', is the open ear that hears, and by inference, obeys.

Scripture speaks about the opened ear, meaning the person who has it, hears, and carries out the 'heard' will of God. Isaiah 50:5, 'The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.'

(cont. page 11)



Bob Davidson

2 Samuel 9:1-13

1 And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?
 2 And *there was* of the house of Saul a servant whose name was Ziba. And when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, *Art thou Ziba?* And he said, Thy servant *is he*.
 3 And the king said, *Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him?* And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, *which is lame on his feet*.
 4 And the king said unto him, *Where is he?* And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he *is* in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lodebar.
 5 Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lodebar.
 6 Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant!

(continued next page, far right column)

ShadowsShadows

Series Introduction

WHILE THERE ARE MANY parts of the Bible which are obviously prophetic and often quite clear in their meaning, there is a different kind of prophecy which lies below the surface and can only be recognised as prophetic after the event.

The Lord has given us many of these - illustrations of things to come, using Biblical characters and the events that happen in their lives. They are commonly known as 'types'. When it is seen how the Lord uses thousands of lives to point forward to His plans it gives an idea of how much His will is interwoven into the events of Scripture and of events yet to come.

These types or "shadows" are not figments of imagination, for Scripture refers to them in very positive ways. Paul says in Rom. 5:14, "Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come."

Quite clearly Adam is seen here as a type or figure of Christ. Scripture also uses the word "shadow" when speaking of types. In Hebrews 10:1 we read, "For the law having a **shadow** of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect."

'Similitude' is another word used in Scripture when referring to types. Hebrews 7:15 says, "And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest".

'Pattern' contains a similar idea, and Paul uses it in 1 Timothy 1:16 - "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."

So there is ample Scriptural warrant to examine the Bible in this fashion and see and understand something of the depth of God's

involvement with man and his future. Paul speaks of this in awe in Romans 11:33 - "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out!"

Mostly you cannot recognise a type until its fulfilment (or "anti-type") has been revealed. For example, it was not possible for Israel at the time of the first Passover and the beginning of the Old Covenant to recognise that it was pointing forward to the true Passover and the New Covenant which was also made with Israel in the upper room just before the crucifixion.

However we can recognise some types before their anti-types occur because their anti-types are the subject of prophecy. Staying with the feasts of the Lord, which are described in Leviticus 23, and of which Passover was one and Pentecost was the next, we know from prophecy that the next to be fulfilled is the feast of Trumpets, the anti-type being the return of Christ, and its association with trumpets.

During this series we will be looking at a number of fulfilled types in some detail so that we can begin to understand some of the wonders of God's plans and workings.

No.1 - Mephibosheth

We will begin with an Old Testament story which shows God's marvellous grace in action in salvation. The type involves a man named Mephibosheth, son of Jonathan and grandson of King Saul. He is also called Merib-Baal in 1 Chronicles 8:34 and 9:40. The story can be found in 2 Samuel 4:4 and 9:1-13 (see left column on this page, and right column on page 5).

In summary, when Mephibosheth was five years old King Saul died, falling on his own sword (1 Samuel 31:4). The Philistines had slain Jonathan, his son (1 Samuel 31:2). At hearing this news, Mephibosheth's nurse took him up and fled, but he fell and became lame in both feet.

Some years later, David, when he was king of all Israel, not just Judah, asked, "Is there not still someone of the house of Saul, to whom I may show the kindness of God?" (2 Samuel 9:3).

He was told of Mephibosheth and sent for him. Mephibosheth fearfully prostrated himself at David's feet, not knowing what was to happen. David said to him, "Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually." (2 Samuel 9:7)

Mephibosheth answered, "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?" (2 Samuel 9:8)

David restored to Mephibosheth all that belonged to Saul and his house, and organised people to work his land. Mephibosheth was to eat at the king's table always, like one of the king's sons.

A Picture of God's Grace

What are the elements that make this story a shadow beforehand of God's grace?

(1) Mephibosheth was damaged physically beyond human help. Mankind is damaged by sin beyond human help.

(2) David initiated the action to seek out Mephibosheth, when Mephibosheth had no idea that this was going to happen. God initiated the action and sent Jesus Christ to seek out those who were lost - "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19:10.

(3) There was nothing about Mephibosheth himself to cause David to help him. Mephibosheth himself said, "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?" (2 Samuel 9:8). In another place David himself said, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the

son of man, that thou visitest him?" (Psalm 8:4) David was aware of his lack of value before God, just as Mephibosheth was aware of his lack of value before David.

(4) Mephibosheth must have suspected that his life was forfeit, but David spared him. Our lives are forfeit - "The wages of sin is death" - but God, through the death of David's greater son has spared us - "but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23).


(5) Mephibosheth is rewarded by David - "Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually." (2 Samuel 9:7).

David speaks elsewhere of receiving similar treatment himself - "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever." (Psalm 23:5-6).

In the New Testament similar things are promised. For the church of the Acts period we find - "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:2-3).

For members of the body we find, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." (Colossians 3:1). Mephibosheth goes on to a life of service.

Final Thoughts

The story of Mephibosheth is a marvellous story of unmerited favour and a kind of redemption. The parallel story concerning the works of God is a marvellous demonstration of the grace of God, and true redemption. 

2 Samuel 9:1-13

(continued from previous page)

7 And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.

8 And he bowed himself, and said, What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?

9 Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said unto him, I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul and to all his house.

10 Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in *the fruits*, that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth thy master's son shall eat bread alway at my table. Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

11 Then said Ziba unto the king, According to all that my lord the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do. As for Mephibosheth, *said the king*, he shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons.

12 And Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name was Micha. And all that dwelt in the house of Ziba *were* servants unto Mephibosheth.

13 So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet.

"... a marvellous demonstration of the grace of God, and true redemption ..."

We have now finished the Pentateuch, the first 5 books of the Old Testament. Last time we ended with finding out the name of the next person to lead the Israelites into the promised land.

See Deuteronomy 31.

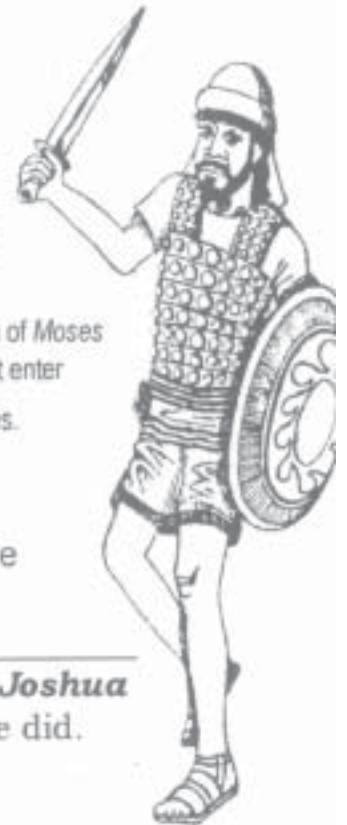
His name was JOSHUA

(which means "Salvation")

With this name Joshua (Heb) becomes a type of Jesus (Aramaic)

The book is named after its main character, Joshua. It tells the events following the death of Moses who had led the Israelites out of Egypt and through the wilderness for 40 years. Moses did not enter the promised land. But, Joshua and Caleb did, with the younger generation of Israelites.

So, Joshua became leader after Moses. He led the people in crossing the River Jordan, conquering Canaan and then sharing the promised land between the 12 tribes of Israel.



But this was not going to be easy. However, God promised Joshua He would be with him wherever he went and whatever he did.

See Chapter 1 verse 9.



Write it down:

.....
.....
.....

This is a good verse for us to remember.

One famous battle was fought at Jericho when the walls fell down flat. It was a miracle. (See the map below)

This map shows the regions of Egypt, and part of Canaan, including Jericho.

Use your Bible maps to find the following: Moab, Edom, The Wilderness of Sin, Marah, Elim and Midian.



Now read **Joshua 6**

 Write down the answers to the following:

1. For how many days did Joshua and the Israelites walk around the city?
.....
2. Who walked with the army?
3. What did they carry?
4. How many times did they walk around the city on the last day?
.....
5. What did the priests blow?
6. What did the army do?
7. What happened to Jericho?
8. Why was Jericho destroyed?
9. Who was spared?
10. Why? *Through Rahab, God's purpose was fulfilled in preparing the way for the birth of Jesus Christ.*

Joshua lived a long life and had many trials. Sometimes he stood almost alone in his faith in God. **BUT NO MATTER WHAT OTHERS SAID OR DID, JOSHUA ALWAYS SERVED GOD.**

Below is a well-known saying of **Joshua's**.

Design and decorate a poster of Joshua's words below.

**"But as for me and my household,
We will serve the Lord."**

Joshua 24:15

Let's be like Joshua!

Thanks to MBM 1988, "Introducing God's Word" - Carol Brown, Lynn Mrotek & Michael Penny & The New Bible Dictionary - IVF.

2003 Annual Conference

THE BEREAN BIBLE FELLOWSHIP of Australia held this year's Annual Conference at Bethshan, Wyee, NSW in late September. It was another good chance to put the regular routine on hold, and focus our thoughts on the things of God and His Word uninterrupted for three days.

The weekend was well attended by the local Sydney and Newcastle groups, with a large contingent making the long journey from Queensland to join us. I'm still wondering how one single house at the conference site could accommodate 24 people - 6 adults and 18 children - at the one time!

Terrific fellowship and enthusiastic singing are always staple parts of BBFA conferences, but the focus of our time together is the study of the Scriptures and most of the programme time was allocated for Bible Study sessions.

This year we were privileged to have four guest speakers from the Philippines join us - Albert Sison, Ramon Perez, Dwight Chua and Michael Paz. Their visit helped to strengthen the already strong ties which exist between the Open Bible Fellowship of the Philippines and the Berean Bible Fellowship of Australia.

Subjects covered by our speakers included: "Bible Study - an introduction", "What is the Dispensation of the Mystery?", "Right Division - a matter of commonsense", "Faith in the Penteteuch, Hebrews and Ephesians", "Those Crucified With Christ", "An overview of the practical section of Ephesians 4-6"; and "A Word Fitly Spoken - Eph 5:18".

Following the success of last year, the programme included a Question and Answer session on the Saturday afternoon. This gave attendees the chance to ask our panel of guests from the Philippines some curly questions, which were all dealt with well. We are grateful that these four men were able to give up their time to bring us fresh insights from God's Word, covering a wide range of doctrinal and practical subjects, and we look forward to more "cultural exchanges" of this kind in the future.





Saturday evenings are usually a bit less formal, and this year we heard some nicely sung items from Mary, Kate and Gabby Harper and Cheryn Haegler, as well as joining in ourselves for a few choruses. In addition, some exciting personal testimonies of the Lord's grace were given by our guests Albert, Ramon, Dwight and Michael.

Thanks go to everyone who attended the conference, and to anyone who helped in any way to ensure its smooth operation. Special mention should go to: our Secretary, Margaret Abbott, who took on much of the paperwork side of things; Emily and Walter Bezdek, for kindly providing our guests with accommodation for most of their stay; Athol and Eveline Walter, who played vital roles in the process of arranging our guests' visit to Australia, and the overall organisation of the conference.

If you've never attended one of our Bible study weekends or meetings, why not check the "Meetings" column on page 2 and plan to come along? Keep an eye on Spiritual Blessings magazine for details of the 2004 Annual Conference. We'd love to see you there! 📖

1. Albert Sison. 2. Dwight Chua. 3. Ramon Perez. 4. Michael Paz. 5. Meal time in the dining room. 6. The panel considers their next response to questions from the floor. 7. Enid Marshall. 8. Grace Spicer and Emily Bezdek. 9. Michael Paz giving a Bible study. 10. Mary Harper holding a very tired young Emma. 11. The outdoor playset was popular with the children. 12. Cheryn Haegler and Kate Harper singing. 13. Anne and Peter Ward.

(photos by Peter Ward and David Tavender)

For various reasons, we are unable to hold our annual meeting at Bethshan next year. Any suggestions for a suitable venue, or maybe even a different format, will be considered. Please let one of the committee members know your thoughts by December 1st (see contact address and list of committee members on page 2).



Knowledge ... and Love

by C. H. Welch (see footnote on page 11)

WE SOMETIMES HEAR WITH great emphasis how essential it is to be grounded in fundamental truth or “in first principles”. The Apostle prays rather that the believer may be “rooted and grounded in LOVE” (Ephesians 3:17)

No building ever had such a rock foundation, no tree ever had such rich soil. Faith and hope even may pass away, but love must remain. Love is greater than all else (1 Corinthians 13:13).

“In love” is the sphere of our predestination (Ephesians 1:4,5), the foundation and ground of our spiritual growth (3:18,19), the all embracing grace needed in our endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit (4:2,3), the temper of all our right relations with fellow members (4:15,16), the sphere and cohesive force of the one body, and the grand characteristic of our walk (5:2).

To hold the truth of the Gospel it must be held “in love” otherwise the mere verbal assent to doctrinal statements however Evangelical and sound will leave us but “tinkling cymbals and sounding brass”, and possibly degenerate into an unholy “say now, Shibboleth” (see Judges 12:1-6).

How little we realize the power and prominence of love. The inspired summary of love in 1 Corinthians 13 needs to be continually read. Knowledge without love is worth nothing.

“Though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.” (1 Corinthians 13:2)

Brethren, we need this word of exhortation. Some of us have been searching the Scriptures and by the grace of God we have beheld wondrous things therein. None of us can dare to say that we understand all mysteries, we are too conscious of the fact that we know none fully.

Prayers of Paul, the Lord’s Prisoner

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ... that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

Ephesians 3:14-19


And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgement; that ye may approve things which are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence until the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus, unto the glory and praise of God.

Philippians 1:9-11

But even though we might know the whole truth concerning the One Body, the great Mystery, even though we may have knowledge sufficient to resolve all problems and difficulties that are before the student of dispensational truth, even though we had attained to such heights ... if we have not love, we should be nothing.

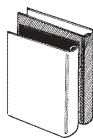
The surest way to bitterness, strife, contention, division, and all the heart breaking results of faction and sectarianism, is knowledge unaccompanied by, and not springing out of love.

Knowledge of the Word of Truth rightly divided, if not received and circumscribed with love, will assuredly “puff up”. We shall merit the scorn of Job, “No doubt but ye are the people and wisdom shall die with you” (Job 12:2).

Love will reveal the utter unworthiness of any to the least of all God’s favours, and the greater the believer’s knowledge of His mighty Grace, the deeper in humility will he be found. 

Lo, I Come

(continued from page 3)



The earlier verses show that this situation could arise when the manslave was to be freed, but his wife and children were still owned by the master, so because of his love for his family, he voluntarily binds himself to lifetime servitude.

Obedience

The Bible, of course, ascribes parts of the human body to God. We know full well that God is Spirit, and therefore does not have a nose or eyes or ears, but none of us has trouble with this. We understand, instinctively I think, that this is nothing more than figurative language to increase our understanding.

For the Word to really have the opened ear, however, He had to have a body that had ears, so a body was prepared for Him. And the ears being opened, He heard, and in the prepared body He carried out the will of the Father, being reckoned as a sinner, that we might be reckoned as righteous.

There is another thought about the 'opened ear'. Some expositors see in it a reference back to Exodus 21.6. The passage sets out rules for Israel when dealing with their slaves, and verse 6 says in part: '(the master) shall also bring him (the slave) to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever.'

The word 'bore' in verse 6 is not the word 'digged', and I am not implying that it is. The passage does, however, beautifully illustrate the obedience of the Lord, who took upon Himself, voluntarily, the form of a slave and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

The sacrifices throughout the Old Testament, starting with those sacrifices in Eden that provided the covering for Adam and Eve, all required the BODY of some animal or other. And when the Word came into the world, He said: 'Lo, I come, in the volume of the Book it is written of me. A body hast thou prepared.'

And in that body, a body which made it possible for Him to die in our place, He gathered up into Himself every Old Testament sacrifice and offering, and fulfilled them all on the cross on Golgotha.

As I write, my mind is filled with the picture of Abraham and Isaac going up to Mount Moriah, the two of them alone, and Isaac asks his father where the lamb for the sacrifice is. I have often tried to imagine the turmoil in Abraham's mind as he searched for words to answer his son's innocent question. How long was the pause between question and answer? We don't know. What we do know is that Abraham said, not knowing what he said: 'My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering'.

And, praise the Lord, He certainly did. 

"Knowledge ... and Love" Footnote

The article on page 10 first appeared in this form in *Spiritual Blessings* Volume 3 No. 1, Feb 1989. However, as submitted by Daisy Collier, it is actually a conglomeration of two extracts from a series by Charles Welch titled "Prayers of the Lord's Prisoner". That series was originally published in the journal, "Things To Come", and the extracts which comprise the article printed here have been taken from Vol 19. pp 42,43,54.

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Thanks, Ed & Bron

For several issues now, the centre pages of *Spiritual Blessings* have been aimed at our younger readers. "Kids' Korner" is compiled by Ed and Bronwyn Munday, and we're grateful for their regular contribution, helping our young folk learn about God's Word.

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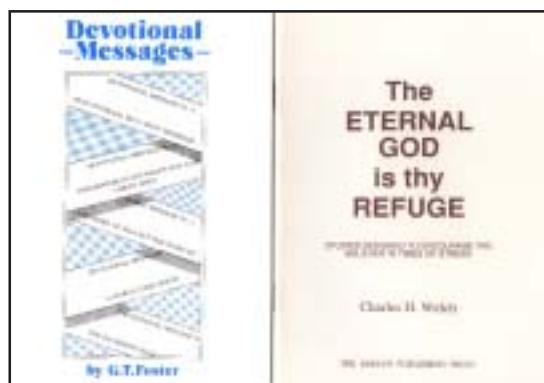
Pictured left are just some of the friendly faces at this year's annual conference.

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