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JOINTS & BANDS

(COLOSSIANS 2:19)



July 2014

Scottish Annual Conference 2014

On Saturday the 10th May, Michael Garstang and his wife Ping took Sheila and I to the Perth Conference in Scotland. As usual the people of Scotland really looked after us.

After the two meetings we travelled to Fiona's home in Dalbeattie for the night. Fiona hasn't been too well for several months, but thankfully she is on her way to being restored to health again. She provided us with loving fellowship. The hospitality shown to us was amazing. Sam, Fiona's son was there to help and was a joy to be with.

Next morning Michael, Ping, Sheila and I travelled down to Preston for our fortnightly meetings. It was good to listen to Michael minister the Word at both Perth and Preston.

Weekends cannot get much better than this. We thank all who attended and took part in this wonderful two days of rich Berean fellowship.

Alan Schofield

On Saturday 10th May, 2014, sixteen of us gathered at Perth for our Annual Scottish Conference.

The afternoon session was opened with a warm welcome from Alan Taylor, who then introduced Alan Schofield as our first speaker. Our friends Rhoda and Alistair Ritchie were on holiday therefore we didn't have Rhoda as our faithful organist. However, we were all in good voice with the help of Alan Schofield leading us off for our hymns.

Alan Schofield spoke on the subject of Joy, following Alan Taylor's reading of Philippians 1:1-30.

Firstly he commented that it is a real joy and a pleasant thing to be with other believers in this truth. He said joy can mean rejoicing, rapture or gladness. He used the example of the Psalmist in Psalm 43 and the prophet, Jeremiah, demonstrating that they suffered but still had joy, and that this is an example for us to mark, learn and inwardly digest the Word of God so that it becomes part of our being

(Jer. 15:15-16). He then quoted the encouraging verses, Ps 30:5 and Ps 16:11.

He explained how joy was one of the fruits of the spirit described in Galatians 5:22, and showed that despite his great difficulties and suffering, Paul put great emphasis on joy, for example in Philippians 1:18, 25, 26; 2:2,17,18; and 4:1,10.

He explained how 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20 describes the joy and hope of the coming, or parousia, of Christ, but that our hope, as members of His body, is in Ephesians 1:18-23.

Paul desired to see Timothy, and we should have that same union between body members, as Christ did not intend the church to be divided. This is the standard we should be arriving at, oneness in Christ and oneness with each other and he used the example of Philemon 1:20. Nothing should deter us from the joy we have in Christ Jesus.

He also mentioned how we should be joyful even if we are small in number, since Paul said 'only Luke is with me' (2 Tim. 4:11), yet he expressed joy in 2 Timothy 1:4, and ultimately Paul could be a happy man with a guarantee of the prize, as shown in 2 Tim. 4:8. Alan concluded that we should share in Paul's joy, looking for Christ's appearing in glory which suggests a prior hope and not the parousia.

After a break for food, fellowship and refreshments, John Robertson ably introduced our next speaker, Michael Garstang. The reading was from Ephesians 1:1-14.

After reminding us of the uniqueness of the truth of the mystery revealed by Paul in Ephesians, Michael spoke about redemption and its profound scriptural meaning. He demonstrated some examples of how the word redemption is used throughout scripture, and ultimately how it revolves around the person of Christ (Isa. 54:5, Isa 53:4-6, John 1:29, and Rom. 3:24). He cautioned, however, that the redemption story of the Lord Jesus Christ is not the whole story. Thus, we examined the various blessings which precede redemption. Firstly, that we are blessed 'in heavenly places in Christ' (Eph. 1:3), and Hebrews tells us this is where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. However not till it is first made known in Ephesians 1:3 do we find that we are also in this high position and sphere of blessing, and we are not only blessed in Christ but also blessed with Christ.

Secondly, that we have been chosen in Him 'before the foundation of the world' (Eph. 1:4), or more accurately, before the 'overthrow' (or 'casting down' as it is rendered in Rev. 12:10).

He then explained the ‘adoption’ of verse 5, and how we have been placed in the sight of God as a son. He looked at the redemption described in verse 14, emphasising the corporate aspect of this company chosen in Christ.

He also said redemption has its roots in the Old Testament, demonstrated in Exod. 6:1, 6:6 and 15:13, and also the book of Ruth. He explained how Boaz is a type of Christ, and Christ is our ‘kinsman redeemer’. He concluded that it will be to the praise of His glory when we see redemption as part of the grander purpose God has spelled out in the first chapter of Ephesians.

S & F Allison

FOUNDATION DAY 2014 REPORT

Saturday – .The celebration officially started with an opening prayer from Mr. F. Papworth and the first meeting was convened by D. Lewis.

Michael read the Berean Publishing Trust report for the year 2013:

- Total donations both local and abroad - £162,671.03
- Total sales both local and abroad - £3,304.50
- Book value on stock £102,484.40

Inspiring excerpts from Berean on line inquiries:

- UK – I know now my search for a congregation of true believers is over and God answered my prayer.

- USA – Taking a ‘cruise’ through scripture with Mr. Welch as the cruise guide is a rare privilege and one to be savoured throughout. Thank you for all you do in sharing the ministry of Mr. Welch. While my ‘ministry’, if one call it such, is a limited one, essentially within my immediate family, hopefully it will add to the credits due Mr. Welch for such a long, arduous, faithful pursuit of the truth of the gospel and the sharing of the fruit of his labour.

- Philippines – I would like you to know that my whole family has been into the study and very glad to see them very enthusiastic and always looking forward to the study sessions every Thursday and Saturday. We can only look forward to growing in the study and the living of life with the trust that is being revealed to us – as family. May we be sustained to overcome the pull of our old sinful selves as I see that the struggle is there. But we have been given the full armour of God and I believe that continuous study will surely strengthen that armour.

At the end of this report the Scripture reading from Acts 20 was read by Archie Falisi.

'Is our Right Division' the 'Right Division' was Michael's theme for the day's occasion.

This talk of mine is just but an 'entree' to Roy's 'main course'. Foundation Day is when we reiterate again our fundamental belief i.e. 'advertise our methodology'. Study may cause us to say 'this must be for students or would be ministers, etc.'. However, please consider Gal. 2:10 ...forward to do...; Titus 3:12...be diligent...; Heb. 4:11...let us labour... and 1 Thess. 2:17 ...endeavour...

In 2 Tim. 2:15 we have a clear line of advice for any who covet to be so presented and approved. It is not simply a case of 'know your Bible' but there is a need to 'Rightly Divide' this invaluable gift of God, His word of Truth. All the Bible is 'for us' not all the Bible is properly 'about us'.

The first meeting ended with hymn number 3 which begins, 'Lord Jesus are we one with Thee'. Tea was then served.

Peter Ambrose convened the 2nd session and the opening prayer was an exposition of Ephesians 3:16-21 by G. Thomason. Scripture reading was by P. Kreling from Genesis 3.

Barry Marple's theme was centred on the Two Seeds as made clear in Genesis 3:15 'thy seed' and 'her seed'.

By giving all references, allowing Scripture to 'speak for itself' and no more comment upon them than was necessary, Barry traced the development of this important, though maybe unpopular, theme. The preservation of the true seed of the woman can be traced from Gen. 4:1-4; 6-9; 9:9; 11:10-26; 49:10; 1 Sam. 16:12-13; 2 Sam. 7:12-17 in summary, as in Luke 3: 23-38. The evil seed was disclosed by Christ Himself in Matt. 13:37-42. John wrote about Cain in 1 John 3:12. Rev. 20:10 is the end of Satan and his angels.

(Dare we pretend to any understanding of the 'last things' if we choose to ignore this truth, one asks?)

The last hymn began '*Fill Thou my life, O Lord my God*' and ended with '*But all my life, in every step, Be fellowship with Thee*'.

Sunday – Roy Ginn's theme was about the 'Word of God' mainly on the four basic tenets here in the Chapel. He started with the rules of interpretation: a) literal rule – give words their literal meaning; b) golden rule – literal meaning of words may be departed from if its use produces an absurd result.

It is important to understand that the way to determine the correct interpretation is to determine what was meant to the people to whom it was spoken to, or written to. Only after this has been established can the Scripture be correctly applied: Interpretation must come before application.

Conclusion – “My aim here has been to demonstrate, in some small measure how the Word of God is divinely inspired and how it is essential that it needs to be ‘rightly divided’ in order to be correctly interpreted”.

And thus the celebration of Foundation Day weekend for the year 2014 ended.

M & P Garstang

The following two studies by CHW are included as they have a certain resonance with the current news from the Middle East appearing on radio and television: [ie. 'two studies', in 'one Article'.]

The Air

Its place in World Politics and Bible Prophecy

.A brief survey of a mighty theme.

Such a passage as that of Ezekiel twenty-eight superficially addressed to the King of Tyre, but which uses terms like ‘thou art the anointed cherub’, ‘thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty’, make it impossible to limit such a passage to the human King of Tyre, and in like manner the language of Isaiah fourteen spoken of as a ‘proverb against the king of Babylon’, can hardly be limited to that earthly king:

‘How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, ‘I will ascend unto heaven,

I will exalt my throne above the stars of God .

I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;

I will be like the Most High’ (Isa. 14:12-14).

As these words stand they are ominous, but when the air and outer space, projected landings on the moon, or investigating at close range Mars or Venus, are topics in our daily newspapers, together with aerial missiles and the use of the air for defence, offence, and worldwide communication, these call for an examination of the Scriptures that have something to say about this important sphere and its relation to the latter days.

There are many prophecies in both the Old Testament and the New, that in earlier times have been scanned by learned and godly men but not apprehended, and have been left to speak when the time foreseen by Omniscience should arrive, and prominent among such foreshadowings are the references to the air found in a number of prophetic contexts, but which until quite recently have only attracted a passing attention. In 1921, in the series of articles dealing with the book of the Revelation, we wrote concerning the monster that represents the Antichristian Beast in chapter thirteen at the time of the end:

‘We do not wish to be fanciful, yet we are confident that Scripture fully anticipates the end. Military experts, as well as the man in the street, know that the next war is to be a *war in the air* . . . we know that the introduction of aerial warfare has broken down all frontiers. That nation, large or small, which has dominion of the air, will conquer the world. Satan, is called ‘The Prince of the authority ‘power’ of the air’ (Eph. 2:2). Satan gives his great authority to the Beast, the result being that all the world at once recognize his position and say ‘Who is able to make war with him?’“

We make no foolish claims to the gift of prophecy; we are only pointing out that for over nineteen hundred years, the Scriptures have indicated that the air and its authority will be the arsenal of the future Kingdom of the Beast to which all nations are unwittingly making preparation for their own subjection by the great urge for political, financial, military and church unity, repeating in the large, the urge exhibited in the building of the tower of Babel. We cannot make amends for the failure of our forebears, but we can turn to these cryptic references to the air with a desire to learn what their inspired foreshadowings have to teach us as the last days which assuredly are close upon us.

The air above is now the sphere both of offence and defence, so let us therefore give the Scriptures a hearing.

When the vials of God's wrath are poured out, we read that the fifth angel poured out his vial ‘upon the seat of the beast, and his kingdom was full of darkness’ (Rev. 16:10). The Greek word *thronos* occurs 46 times, and where we read in Revelation 2:13; 13:2 and 16:10 of ‘the seat’ of the Beast or of Satan, we should alter that rendering and read ‘throne’ (Gk. *thronos*), for Satan is a ‘Prince’ though fallen and wicked. The same word *archon* (prince) used of Christ is used of ‘The Prince of the Kings of the earth’ (Rev. 1:5), and of Satan (Matt 9:34; 12:24; Mark 3:22; John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Eph. 2:2) and we rob ourselves of valuable though terrible teaching

by altering either the word 'throne' or 'prince' out of a false desire to stretch out our hand to stay the ark of God.

Michael had no two thoughts as to the rank of this fallen foe, as Jude 9 reveals. We read not only that one of the vials was poured out upon the *throne* of the Beast, but also upon 'the AIR' (Rev. 16:17).

Now without the title 'the prince of the authority of the air' to guide us, we might wonder why the air we breathe should be thus visited, but knowing this fact, and in the close association with the throne of the Beast in the context (Rev. 16:10), we realize that Satan's domain is here seen to come under the judgment of the last days. Perhaps we shall perceive a deeper significance in I Thessalonians when we read concerning the Second Coming that some will 'meet the Lord in the AIR' (1 Thess. 4:17). It should also be remembered that *ouranos* translated 'heaven' over 260 times in the N.T. is nevertheless translated 'air' ten times, as in 'the fowls and birds of the air'.

This is also true of the Hebrew of the O.T. *shamayim*, translated nearly 400 times 'heaven', is nevertheless translated 'air' 21 times, as in Genesis 1:26, even as in Matthew 13:32. The 'fowls' that devoured the seed in the parable of Matthew 13:4 are explained in Matthew 13:19 as the agents or the work of the wicked one.

With these passages in mind, and with the present emphasis upon dominion of the air for both offence and defence, let us look a little more closely at other prophetic utterances long neglected and misunderstood. When we read the appalling consequences of the atomic bomb that fell on Hiroshima and then come across the terrible description of the plague spoken of in Zechariah 14:12 (and the reader would be well advised to turn to that passage and consult it once more before proceeding) and we read further of 'everyone that is LEFT of the nations, which come up against Jerusalem' in verse sixteen, one begins to wonder whether we have here a prophetic forecast of the results of nuclear warfare, and also in the hurting of the earth, the sea and the trees in Revelation 7:3 which results from the censer filled with fire being cast to the earth (Rev. 8:5).

Do we now deny that man's nuclear weapons could, and possibly will, burn up a third part of the trees, and all the green grass? Is it merely an extravagant figure of speech to say that a 'third part of the ships' were destroyed? or that the 'third part of the waters' become bitter as 'wormwood'? (Rev. 8:7,11). The very diplomats, who might possibly repudiate such a book as the Apocalypse, are entertaining the possibility of these very quotations, without realizing that they have been accessible to all in the pages of the N.T. for 1,900 years.

Time would fail us in the attempt to deal with the details of this chapter, but perhaps the following analysis may be of help.

Main features of the future

Daniel 11:5

A prince originating in Egypt possesses a great dominion. When this development in the near east takes shape — ‘Know that summer is nigh’.

Daniel 11:6

A marriage alliance between Egypt and Syria for the purpose of making 'an agreement' proves a failure.

Daniel 11:7-19

Conflicts between these two kingdoms will result in dire trouble in the ‘glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed’ (11:16) and end in a ‘staggering’ defeat (11:19).

Daniel 11:20

Satan's attempt proving abortive, ‘in his estate’ a raiser of taxes arises, who shall exact heavy tribute from Israel and the land of Palestine. His end shall be sudden and mysterious: within a few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle’.

Daniel 11:21-35

Still undismayed, Satan causes to stand up ‘in his estate’ one who is described as a ‘vile person’. This one, instead of devastating the land, ‘comes in peaceably’, and ‘obtains the kingdom by flatteries’. ‘After the league made with him he shall work deceitfully with a small people; he shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places’. After stirring up strife against the king of the south, and apparently involving more than one king (11:27), he returns to his land with great riches, and at length manifests his true intent:

‘His heart shall be against the holy covenant’ (11:28). This covenant is referred to in Daniel 9:27: ‘He shall confirm the covenant with many for one seven’*. ‘In the midst of the seven years he breaks the covenant, causing sacrifice and offering to cease’, and in its stead initiates (*see note of The Companion Bible on Dan. 9:27*) the abomination that maketh desolate’.

So, from Daniel 11:28 onwards, he has indignation against the holy covenant, and seeks out those who ‘forsake the holy covenant’ so that he might break it. They ‘pollute the sanctuary’ (11:31), ‘take away the daily sacrifice’, which had been restored under the terms of the seven years’ covenant with Israel, and place in the temple ‘the abomination that maketh desolate’ (11:31). Those who have become apostate he will corrupt with flatteries, but those who know their God shall be strong and do exploits.

It is necessary to distinguish between the Antichrist and the beast. The antichrist is the vile person (foreshadowed by Herod in Acts 12) who has to do with Israel, and the breaking of the covenant. The Beast is a vast political power, with whom the antichrist works, as Herod worked with Rome. Antichrist is not mentioned in the Revelation; his characteristics are given in the first epistle of John. His sphere is a religious one; that of the beast is more political.

Daniel 11:36-38

The way being prepared by the vile person in the breaking of the covenant, the wilful king of Daniel 11:36 arises. He is the king described in Revelation 13, whose sway is not for the whole seven years, but, as Revelation 13:5 shows, for the last three years and a half:

* The time that elapses from the making of the covenant to verse 31 is 3 and a half years. The career of blasphemy of verses 36-45 occupies the other 3 and a half years of the last seven of Daniel 9.

‘And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished’ (Dan. 11:36).

A reference to 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 and Revelation 13:5-7 will remove any doubt that this wilful king of Daniel 11:36 is the man of sin himself. While Daniel 11:36,37 states that this king shall magnify himself above every god, verse 38 declares that he shall, ‘in his estate’, honour a strange god, a god of forces, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory. This ‘strange god’ is none other than Satan himself. When the Lord Jesus was tempted in the wilderness Satan offered him all the kingdoms of the world, for an act of worship. The beast of Revelation 13 not only received worship and sat on the dragon's throne, but we read that ‘they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast, and they worshipped the beast, saying, ‘Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him’? He honours a ‘god of forces’ (*Heb. fortresses*), and has dealings ‘in the inmost strongholds of a strange god’, so that the cry is raised, ‘Who is able to make war with him’?

Attacked by the kings of the south and the north, he shall repulse them, and enter into ‘the glorious land’, over-throwing many countries. While in the Holy land unpleasant tidings from the east and north trouble him, and he vents his fury upon many. He plants his tent between the seas (i.e., the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf, the extent of Israel’s land being ‘from sea to sea’), and so attempts a further usurpation of the Messiah's glory. Yet he shall come to his end and none shall help him. Other Scriptures make it plain that this mighty king is smitten of God, e.g., ‘He shall smite the earth (‘earth’ is *erets*: some readings give *arits* ‘the oppressor’) with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked’ (Isa. 11:4). To the same effect is the statement in 2 Thessalonians 2:8.

This brings us to the rising up of Michael, the great tribulation, and the resurrection detailed in Daniel 12:1-3. We desire to impress upon the reader that it is an integral part of the prophecy of Daniel 11. The epilogue of the whole book begins at Daniel 12:4.

Let us remind ourselves of the importance of the association between the prophecies of the four chapters 7, 8, 9, and 11. They may be visualised as follows:

Daniel 7

Four beasts. One having ten horns, and developing the man of sin. Destroyed by the Lord Himself.

Daniel 8

Four kingdoms develop out of Greece. The king of fierce countenance arises from one of these. He is characterized by blasphemy and craft, and he shall be broken without hand.

Daniel 9

At the time of the end, a covenant shall be made with Israel for seven years. This shall be broken in the midst, being followed by the placing of the abomination in the holy place.

Daniel 11

This chapter associates the four divisions of Alexander's kingdom with the vile person, who breaks the covenant and sets up the abomination, and the wilful king, who comes to his end at the hand of the Lord 'in the glorious holy mountain'.

Michael, tribulation and resurrection

The opening verses of Daniel 12 belong to the prophecy of Daniel 11, and must not be confused with the epilogue of the book which begins at verse 4.

MINISTRY OF THE WORD

Throughout July, August and September 2014, the Ministry at the Chapel of the Opened Book (Wilson Street, London. EC2A 2ER) on Sundays at 11.00 a.m., will be, D.V., as follows:

July	August	September
6 th M.Garstang	3 rd G Falisi	7 th M.Garstang
13 th M Garstang	10 th M.Garstang	14 th M Garstang
20 th M.Garstang	17 th M.Garstang	21 st M.Garstang
27 th M.Garstang	24 th M.Garstang	28 th R.Ginn
	31 st M Garstang	

OTHER ENGAGEMENTS AT THE CHAPEL ARE:

Wednesdays at 1:05 to 1:35 p.m. Bible studies for anyone in the City at these times, for business or pleasure.

Chapel Telephone No. Monday to Friday 02072471467

Saturdays at 3:00 pm, on the first Saturday in each month, Meeting for discussion. Please contact Michael Garstang on the phone to confirm that the meeting will be held. 02084468902.

OTHER BIBLE STUDIES

Preston (3 Library Street) Second and Fourth Sunday at 3:15 and 5:15 p.m. (Phone 01772 702236).

PLEASE SEND YOUR NEWS, NOTES, INFORMATION AND ITEMS FOR PRAISE AND PRAYER TO:

Mr. Barry Marple, Orchard Close, 52A St. Mary's Lane, LOUTH, Lincolnshire LN11 0DT as soon as possible **and not later than 6th August 2014.**

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