The Berean Expositor

(Acts 17:10,11)

A Magazine Devoted to Bible Study

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

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EDITORIAL

Cowper, the hymn-writer has,

“God’s purposes will ripen fast
    Unfolding every hour.
The bud may have a bitter taste
    But sweet will be the flower”.

For our part we have been favoured of God to witness the dawn of another year. Is it too much to believe that it is another year of helping forward His, ‘purpose of the ages, which He made in Christ Jesus Our Lord’? (Eph. 3:11). Many Christian movements will be formulating their schemes and programmes for the year; not everyone will believe that to simply, ‘walk worthy of the calling wherewith we are called (Eph. 4:1) will in effect be as a tutorial to principalities and powers, but then not everyone will be certain that existing now as a reality is our citizenship in the heavens (Phil. 3:20). This certainty comes by having rightly divided the Scriptures and thus not claiming any part of the hope connected with ‘Thy Kingdom come… on earth’ (Matt. 6:10, 11) or even that of ‘…the heavenly Jerusalem…’ (Heb. 12:22).

Our studies this month will take us to both the Old and New Testaments, from the grandeur of the Tabernacle as well as to the tender simplicity of Paul writing to one in the church at Colosse.

OUR BASIS
(1) Full inspiration of the Scriptures
(2) Right division of the Scriptures
(3) Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ
(4) All sufficiency of His one sacrifice
‘ALL SAINTS’

‘What is the ‘Breadth?’

It is becoming abundantly clear that, to understand any portion of Scripture, we must get the divine View Point, otherwise we may perceive truth – but shall see truth out of focus, and distorted. The opening articles of this series, dealing with the Pentecostal Dispensation, were written as an attempt to adjust the spiritual focus.

We need, however, not only to obtain the correct point of view, and the correct focus, but we need also to be careful that we take in the whole range of the view before us. Consequently, we propose now to first consider a few passages which will enable us to obtain the necessary breadth of vision.

There are three passages in this Epistle to the Ephesians to which we would draw attention:

Eph. 1:15, ‘Love unto ALL SAINTS’
Eph. 3:18, ‘Comprehend with ALL SAINTS’
Eph. 6:18, ‘Praying for ALL SAINTS

The first fourteen verses of Ephesians chapter one give us, in brief, the work of the Blessed Trinity on behalf of saved sinners of this present dispensation. Broadly speaking we find in:

Verses 1-6, The Work of the FATHER
Verses 7-12, The Work of the SON
Verses 13,14, The Work of the SPIRIT

Here we have the work of the Triune God on behalf of ALL SAINTS. Not one can possibly be excluded or forgotten. The believer is called upon to look upon his fellow saved one not through the eye of the flesh, but through the eye of faith. To see him as God sees us, in Christ, to see in him what God sees in us, the work of the Spirit; to love Him as He loves us.

‘... I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the Saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers’ (Eph. 1:15). [v16]

It was when the apostle saw that these believers not only had Faith in Christ, but love unto all saints, that he could pray that wonderful prayer of Eph. 1:17-23.
Have we here the secret of our own failure? How few of us understand or value this prayer! How seldom do our prayers rise above our own little wants and blessings! The very first word of instruction in this Epistle, and consequently in this dispensation, is – NOT our blessedness – but ‘BLESSED BE GOD … Who hath blessed us’.

We pray for light and guidance in our study of the Word; we pray for power to speak to the unsaved around us; but how seldom do we pray for the spirit of wisdom and unveiling, ‘in the knowledge of HIM!’ . How often have we prayed that we may know what is the hope of our calling instead of ‘HIS calling’, wherewith He has called us! We have been occupied with OUR inheritance, but have we been much concerned to know what is ‘the glory of HIS inheritance in the saints’? Do we not feel self condemned? Have we not been among those who ‘think upon our own things and not on the things of others’? Let us think of the love of God to us:

‘IN LOVE having predestinated us by the placing-as-sons’ (Eph. 1:5). [+v4]

‘He hath made us accepted IN THE BELOVED ONE’ (Eph. 1:6).

‘God, Who is rich in mercy, for His great LOVE wherewith He LOVED us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ’ (Eph. 2:4,5).

Do we not see the nature of this Love of God to us? It is all of GRACE. He loved us not for ourselves but in His Son. Shall we, then, deny to our fellow-believers that which has been lavished upon us?

True, in ourselves, we are often very unloveable – and we must not shut our eyes to evil. We must not compromise God’s truth. But we must love ‘all saints’, whatever their state or position; otherwise we shall fail to enter into the blessedness of the dispensation of the Grace of God, and shall consequently feel more at home among the remnants of a by-gone dispensation. Some of our readers may remember our exposition of 1 Cor. 13. There we found that the present dispensation was to be characterised by three things. Faith, Hope, and Love – and the greatest of these was to be Love.

It will be found that not only is Love the sphere of God’s actions towards us, but the sphere of all our actions one to another and to the Lord.
‘Rooted and grounded IN LOVE, may be able to comprehend with ALL SAINTS,’ etc. (Eph. 3:17, 18).

‘Forbearing one another IN LOVE endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit’ (Eph. 4:3, 4). [is v2,3]

‘Speaking the truth IN LOVE may grow up into Him in all things’ (Eph. 4:15).

‘Maketh increase of the Body unto the building up of itself IN LOVE’ (Eph. 4:16).

‘Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children, and walk IN LOVE, as Christ also hath loved us’ (Eph. 5:1, 2).

‘Husbands, LOVE your wives, even as Christ also LOVED the Church’ (Eph. 6:25). [is 5:25]

‘Peace be to the brethren and LOVE WITH FAITH, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ; Grace be with all them that LOVE our Lord Jesus Christ with incorruption. Amen’ (Eph. 6:23). [v24]

Here is set forth the attitude and sphere of the believer. It is all ‘IN LOVE’. Here also is laid bare the cause of our failure to ‘rightly divide the word of truth’. To carnal ones the apostle could not explain the mystery (1 Cor. 2 and 3). These carnal ones were taken up with making a corporate unity, and occupied with self and the flesh. So long as this is the case with us, the deep teaching of Ephesians will be to us as ‘foolishness’.

Let us not only love, but let our love go out to ‘ALL SAINTS’, irrespective of their connections with things of earth.

Our Unity is in Heaven, not on Earth: our Love is also in the sphere of the Spirit, not of the flesh.

If we thus seek to occupy this position, we shall be better able to understand our next reference

‘That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, 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 unto all the fulness of God’(Eph. 3:17).

In connection with our first reference we read, ‘faith IN the Lord Jesus’. Now the apostle prays that ‘Christ may dwell IN your hearts by faith’. 
This is a step further, and so enables us to ‘comprehend’ deeper truth. To what do the Breadth, Length, Depth, and Height refer? We must look back a little. In verse 14 the apostle says, ‘For this cause’. These words not only link the immediate verses together, but are really a repetition, after a parenthesis, of the same words occurring in chapter 3:1. This, of course, makes us look to the closing verses of chapter 2, in order to discover ‘this cause’. Here again the work of the Blessed Trinity is prominent, and is practically summarised in verse 18:

‘For through Him (THE SON)

We both have access by ONE SPIRIT

Unto the FATHER’.

The verses which follow speak of the saved as being a ‘habitation’ a ‘building’ a ‘temple’; and, of Christ as being the ‘Chief corner Stone’. The Breadth, Length, Depth, and Height, refer, as we will know, to cubic measurement, and in this connection it will be remembered that Moses was instructed to make the Holiest of All (the type of ‘Heaven itself’), a perfect cube in measurement.

We hope to show in our next article, that there is a reference to the Holiest of all in Eph. 2:19; and, if that be the case, we can well understand a reference to it here. However, let us look at each item separately first.

THE BREADTH. There have been many reasons given as to why the word ‘Breadth’ comes first. Whatever else may be included, it seems clear that the Breadth emphasises ‘ALL SAINTS’. All saints are included equally together in chapter 1:3, 4; 2:18 and 3:6. All saints were chosen in Christ; all saints have access to the Father; all saints are fellow-heirs, fellow-members, and fellow-partakers. It is impossible for us to ‘comprehend’ the Breadth, if we have not already obeyed the former passage, and have an experimental knowledge of ‘Love unto all saints’.

THE LENGTH. If we link up chapters 1:4; 1:10; 2:7 and 3:21, we shall have come conception of the Length. [for ‘come’ read ‘some’]

Starting right back ‘before the foundation of the word’, going on to the ‘Dispensation of the fulness of the times’, we are carried forward to the ‘ages to come’ and ‘the ages of the ages’. Eternity past and eternity future linked together in time by the present dispensation. What Length is here!
THE DEPTH. Eph. 2 shows us the depth to which the Grace of God had to descend. It is a pity that there is a division between chapters 1 and 2, for, reading the first word ‘kai’ (and) as ‘even’, we see a little more clearly ‘what is the depth’. ‘…The Church, which is His Body, the Fulness of Him That filled all in all – EVEN YOU, WHO WERE DEAD TO TRESPASSES AND SINS’.

Here is depth. Here is the horrible pit and miry clay in which we were, by nature (verse 3). The Apostle directs us to the descent of the Lord Jesus in Phil. 2. He lays aside His glory, and becomes a man, a servant, and dies under the curse.

What a depth!

And, He did this for ALL SAINTS!

Had the Saviour halted one degree above the very bottom of His deep descent, we should still be unsaved, the educated as much as the ignorant, the kindly disposed as much as the vicious, for there are no degrees in death. We can now understand something, it may be, of the fulness of the apostle’s words in 2 Cor. 5:14 ‘For the Love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus reckon, that if One died for ALL, then the ALL DIED’. All saints are included in this.

What shall we say about the HEIGHT? If Phil. 2 gives us the seven-fold descent of Christ, it gives us the seven-fold ascent also; ‘God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him the Name which is above every name’. So also in Eph. 1:20, 21, ‘Which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own Right Hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality’, etc. Resurrection, Heavenly places, and the Right Hand of God; mark the Height that we have to comprehend.

This is not only true concerning the Lord Himself, but concerning ‘all saints’ of this dispensation.

‘Even when we were dead to sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus’ (Eph. 2:5, 6). Resurrection and Heavenly places mark the ‘Height’ equally for the believer. How much higher is this than the hope and height of Israel’s prophets. The heavenly glories of Christ and the redeemed of this dispensation eclipse the throne of David, the twelve thrones for judging the twelve
tribes, the ruling over ten cities, and all else that formed the prospect of the believer before the unveiling of the Great Secret which had been ‘hid in God’ (Eph. 3:9).

How marvellous that any believers today can refuse to receive this precious wondrous secret, and try to live in a Dispensation which has passed away! Oh may God in His grace ‘reveal even this unto them’ (Phil. 3:15).

The last reference (Eph. 6:18), is in a setting of conflict and battle. Just so far as the believer ‘comprehends’ the Height, or in other words, just so far as the believer enters into the blessings there are for him in the Heavenly places, so far must he expect conflict. The battle of Eph. 6:12 is not with flesh and blood, but with demons and the Devil himself. Satan, as the Prince of the Power of the Air, will combat every inch of the territory, although he knows full well that his sentence has been passed, and that from the Heavenly Regions he must soon be cast out. We do not doubt that many have had most awful encounters with these spirit-foes; but, we feel sure that, as we press on to inherit by faith, that which we shall soon enjoy in reality, we shall experience a warfare that will throw us back upon this chapter, and which will illuminate its teaching in a way hitherto unknown.

Verse 18 reads, ‘PRAYING … FOR ALL SAINTS’.

Shall we not do this? Methinks we are a little band that have invaded the Heavenly inheritance. Shall we not pray for our brethren who seem to desire to tarry in the wilderness-who find the transitional period of ‘Acts’ more to their liking than ‘going on to perfection’, than pressing forward through the Hill country of the Anakim to our Heavenly Inheritance? Shall we not also pray for those who, with the Sword of the Spirit as their only weapon, seek to do battle for the Truth? Can we not feel the depth of the great apostle’s need, when he adds:

‘AND FOR ME, that utterance may be given me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to MAKE KNOWN THE MYSTERY of the Gospel’(Eph. 6:18). [is v19]

Those whose writings are found in these papers would echo that prayer ‘AND FOR ME’. Many there be that criticise; many that judge; and some that condemn. Many there be that misunderstand; but how many are there who ‘pray’, shall we not then, before the Lord, seek grace that we may have an experimental knowledge of this ‘Love to all saints’?
Let us ‘pray for all saints’; and then, with all saints, we shall be able to comprehend the wonderful secret revealed for our joy; and, more than all, we shall know better the ‘Love of Christ which passeth knowledge’. (Taken from ‘Things to Come’ – contributed by Dr Bullinger in 1910).

Charles H. Welch

**The Sufferings and Glory of a Slave who ran away from his Master**

This very short epistle written by Paul to Philemon ranks very high in spiritual wealth and in divine love and grace. His heart is very full indeed, on behalf of his ‘son’ Onesimus, whom he had ‘begotten in his bonds’. Onesimus was a slave who ran away from his master. Philemon was a legalised slave owner in those dark days of the Roman Empire, when human souls were bought and sold like merchandise. A very low form of servitude was practical in those days, and history tells us that in Julius Caesar’s time there were sixteen million slaves in the world. Their lot was hard, for they had no will or choice of their own. This low form of servitude continued in many parts of the world down through succeeding centuries, and was legalised in certain States of America until the 19th century.

An incident is recorded where a certain slave trader had gone to the market and bought some slaves. They were taken on board ship, across to his plantations, but on that ship there was a Christian gentleman who had been impressed by one of the slaves, and he approached the owner with the object of making a purchase. The slave, who was standing by when the sale was settled became enraged against the gentleman and cried out; ‘You, a Christian, buying me to be your slave!’ The gentleman replied: ‘Yes, I have bought you, not to be my slave, but to set you free’! The slave then saw the transaction in a new light, and cried out; ‘Make me your slave; O, make me your slave’. He saw the difference between a bond-slave, as he had known it, and a free slave.

It was reckoned a very serious thing if a slave ran away from his master. To do so, made him liable to be put to death. Onesimus had put himself in this position by running away from Philemon, and reaching Rome, he came into contact with ‘Paul the aged’, and at the same time, ‘the prisoner of Jesus Christ’, who preached Christ to him, and through the reception of the message changed his status before God, and man. The aged

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2. In this new article, Bible passages are generally ‘King James Version (KJV) based; but with variations’. Also, there is no ‘use of italics, to indicate English words added by the KJV translators etc, to try to clarify the meaning of the Greek or Hebrew’, (as is normal in KJV Bibles, and is © in the UK.).
Paul now claims him as his ‘son’, ‘whom I have begotten in my bonds’ (verse 10).

Paul, when enjoying a greater freedom had begotten ‘sons’, but Onesimus being the ‘son’ of his old age, seems to rank very high in his esteem, for he is not without a coat of many colours of high spiritual qualities. Did not Jacob love Joseph ‘more than all his brethren because he was the son of his old age’ (Gen. 32:3). Was it merely because of his old age that Jacob loved Joseph more than the others? Yea, more than that – Joseph was the first-born of his beloved Rachel for whom he served a second seven years, which only seemed to him but a few days, because of the love he had for her. It was love at last producing its first fruit; neither Jacob nor Rachel was the first born, but it was from their union that the ruler over the land of Egypt came. There is divine principle in this, for the guiding hand of the Lord is seen in the birth of Jacob’s twelve sons, but the highest degree of love is manifested in Rachel’s two sons, Joseph and Benjamin. Both combined are a type of Israel’s Messiah as ‘ruler’ and ‘son of the right hand’. Benjamin’s birth was prophetic, for Rachel said when Joseph was born, ‘I shall yet have another son’ (Gen. 30:23,24). In due time he came, and she called his name Ben-oni, which means, ‘son of my sorrow’. Then she died, but Jacob rises above his great grief over the death of his beloved, and changes his name to Benjamin, ‘son of the right hand’ (Gen. 35:17,18). But some may ask: Is there anything parallel in this with the ‘son’ Paul begat in his old age? Yes! In both cases, it is love at its highest, the natural and the spiritual, for there are degrees of sonship and of love in both, which we do well to recognise.

Just study briefly a few features recorded in the letter Paul claims to have written with his own hand:

‘Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellow labourer. And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellow-soldier, and to the church in thy house: Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (Philemon 1-3).

Then he pays Philemon a very high tribute for his faith and love towards the Lord Jesus, and towards all saints, and prays that such faith and love may become effectual in others. In verse 7 [-10] he says:

‘For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother. Wherefore,
though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin that which is convenient, yet for love’s sake I rather beseech thee, being such a one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ. I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds’ (Philemon 7-10).

Here we have three men brought into a unity of love and grace of the highest magnitude, apart from which it would have been almost impossible in their former status of society as men. What was their former status? Paul a Jew of the bigoted Pharisaic caste; Philemon a Roman slave owner; Onesimus a slave of unprofitable repute. Paul had got to know what kind of character he was, and knowing also the claim Philemon had on him as a slave in the flesh, refrained from approaching him in as bold a manner as he might have done, about his son Onesimus, hence he beseeches him ‘for loves sake’. Such is the language of divine love and grace. The status of Onesimus is entirely changed and it is a trial to all concerned to whom this letter is addressed, to confirm their love to him as Paul beseeches them:

‘Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me: Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels’ (Philemon 11,12).

Paul unburdens his soul to Philemon; he does not ask him to forgive Onesimus for departing from him, but to receive him:

‘Whom I would have retained with me, that in they stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the Gospel. But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly. For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldst receive him for ever; not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, especially to me, but how much more unto thee both in the flesh and in the Lord? If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account. I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it …’ (Philemon 12-19). [Is 13-19]

It would be hard indeed for Philemon to refuse such an appeal for in every utterance of it is evidenced a deep and intense love for the son of his old age. Paul had experienced what it was to be loved by another when he least deserved it; how could he ever forget the voice that said to him ‘Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?’ in language of love and grace to one so undeserving. But what a dramatic change it would be to Onesimus to be back with his master in quite a new position, above a slave, a brother beloved. At this point Paul asks, ‘If
thou count me therefore as a partner, receive him as myself (Philemon 17). This is a test to Philemon to receive his former slave in partnership or fellowship with himself and Paul on an equality status, for all three are what they are by the Grace of God. This equality of status is based upon the mystery of the gospel for which Paul was an ‘ambassador in bonds’ (Eph. 6:19--20). It is in this that ‘the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ’ is revealed (Rom. 15:29). If the mystery of the Gospel was not somewhat different from the former presentations, why should Paul ask prayers to be made for him to speak it boldly? And observe that the prayers and supplications are for all saints (Eph. 6:18). It would be the ‘mystery of the gospel’. Onesimus heard Paul speak of that which implied justification, peace and reconciliation. To Onesimus who had been estranged from his master Philemon through bad conduct, now, when he had got to know how bad and unprofitable he was, and that he had been reconciled to God through the death of His son surely there must be hope of being reconciled to Philemon, for reconciliation is essential when estrangement has taken place (Rom. 5:1). Philemon could scarcely withhold from his slave what he himself had received from God, for were we not all the servants of sin, our master, until we were freed from it? ‘But now we are servants of God, and our fruit is unto holiness, and the end everlasting life (Rom. 6:20,21).

It would be no light matter for Paul to entreat Philemon to do as he desired, for he said ‘Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord; refresh my bowels in the Lord’. And though he had confidence that Philemon would do more than he asked, yet his appeal seems like a penitent at the feet of some great one, for in it he recognises the right of Philemon to withhold it from a manward aspect. It is quite evident that Philemon did all that Paul desired, for this letter to Philemon, must have been written before the Colossian epistle. In Colossians Ch. 4 we have, what may be termed, the sequel to Philemon’s gracious response. In verse 1 masters are exhorted how to act toward their servants, and to remember that they also have a master in heaven. In verse 2 prayer is asked ‘That God would open a door of utterance to speak the mystery of the Christ’. This coincides with the mystery of the Gospel I have already alluded to; (Eph. 6:19) ‘for which I also am in bonds, that I may make it manifest’ (Col. 4:4). There were few open doors then, and there are very few now in our time, though saints may have multiplied abundantly, but very few have crossed the boundary line of Acts
28:28. We are enjoined to ‘walk in wisdom towards them that are without’ (Col. 4:5). Our speech is to be always with grace, ‘seasoned with salt’. If so it will prevent corruption; and from verse 7 to 9 we have Tychicus and Onesimus, both faithful and beloved, sent by Paul ‘to know their state and comfort their hearts’. Note these words in verse 9 regarding Onesimus: ‘who is one of you’. And it is to be understood that Philemon had gladly endorsed all this regarding his once unprofitable slave, but now very profitable in the highest service of all.

Paul himself figures most, for he suffered most, yet could say: ‘I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body’s sake which is the Church’ (Col. 1:24). The sufferings here alluded to is the calling in Grace which completed the word of God. Of course there is a long list of sufferings recorded of him on account of his New Covenant ministry (2 Cor. 11:24) before he became the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the Gentiles. He had many sons ‘after the common faith’ (Titus 1:4). Connected with this is the ‘common salvation’ referred to in Jude, verse 3, and universal to all saints, because it saves all from condemnation. There are degrees of faith, of sonship, of love, and of grace. The highest position of sons, of love, and of grace is related to the ministry for which Paul was a prisoner in bonds. How happy he was in the thought of beloved Onesimus begotten in his old age, begotten from the ruins of sin and death on earth and now given the place of a son with his Lord and Saviour, supremely above all earthly and heavenly principalities and powers.

Let us thank God for Paul’s joint suffering with Christ and for such a revelation of His grace.

W. Alexander

The First Principles of the Oracles of God
(A series especially addressed to new readers)

No. 8

Man formed of the dust, breathes the breath of life.

The book of the generations of Adam given in Genesis five, verse one, refers back to both Genesis one and Genesis two, linking the two accounts as of one person, act and period.

‘This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him, male and female created He them’.

3. In this CH Welch article, Bible passages are generally 'King James Version (KJV) based, but with variations'. Also, for unknown historic reasons, there is no 'use of italics, to indicate English words added by the KJV translators etc, to try to clarify the meaning of the Greek or Hebrew', (as is normal in KJV Bibles, and is © in the UK.).
Here there is undoubted reference back to Genesis 1:26-28.

1. The likeness occurs here, but not in Genesis two.

2. Male and female created refers to Genesis one. The actual formation of Eve is described in Genesis two.

3. The blessing is a reference back to Genesis 1:28, the words ‘bless’ or ‘blessing’ do not occur in the second record.

The apostle Paul, when speaking of Adam in 1 Corinthians 15:45 fifteen speaks of the ‘image’ of the earthy as opposed to the ‘image’ of the heavenly. If he is quoting at all, he must be quoting from either Genesis 1:28 or Genesis five. In the same context however, Paul quotes from Genesis two, Adam is the one who was created ‘a living soul’, (1 Cor. 15:45) and this is not written either in Genesis one, or in Genesis five, but in Genesis two. The inference is beyond question therefore, that in the estimation of Moses, who wrote Genesis one and five as well as Genesis two, and in the estimation of Paul also, the man created on the sixth day, is the same man whose creation is given a fuller detail in Genesis two. We make no attempt to square the teaching of Scripture with archaeology or with anthropology; that is not our business, the fact that cannot be circumvented is that Adam is spoken of as the ‘first man’ and Christ as the last Adam and the second man. All who die, die because of Adam, and no man living today in the remotest corner of the earth is outside that all inclusive embrace. Genesis two does not refer to a subsequent and second creation, but enlarges and goes into fuller detail concerning the constitution of one who was called into being during those six momentous days, namely Adam.

In Genesis 1:26 we read: ‘And God said, Let us make man in our image’. In Genesis 2:7 we read: ‘And the Lord God formed man (Adam) of the dust of the ground.’ It is the same God, it is the same man, the purpose of Genesis 1:26 being to speak of man's peculiar distinction ‘the image’ and ‘the likeness’, the purpose of Genesis 2:7 to reveal the lowliness of his origin and his dependence upon the Lord. The word translated ‘formed’ is used of the work of a potter (Jer. 18:2); in fact it is translated ‘potter’ seventeen times. While we are fully prepared to admit that the figure known as anthropopatheia is employed here, ascribing to God what belongs to human beings by way of condescension, that does not remove the intimate relationship indicated between the Creator and the creature; He
‘formed’ man. He did not simply say ‘Let man be, and it was so’.

The material out of which the body of this first man was formed is the material out of which the bodies of all his descendants were and are formed, ‘the dust of the ground’.

The word translated ‘dust’ here may also be rendered ‘ashes’ (as of an animal that has been burnt, Num. 19:17), ‘powder’ (into which the vessels and the altars of Baal were stamped, (2 Kings 23:4,6,12), ‘rubbish’ (that had accumulated on the broken walls of Jerusalem, Nehemiah 4:2), and ‘earth’ (out of which iron can be taken, Job 28:2). ‘The highest part of the dust of the world’ in Proverbs 8:26 refers to the soil, without which neither vegetable nor animal life would be possible.

We often speak of the ‘ground’ but how many of us associate the word with the verb ‘to grind’? The ‘ground’ has literally been ground by the action of flood, fire and frost, and so made into a comparatively fine powder. From this ‘dust of the ground’ the body of man was made, and to this at death his body returns. Let us now examine the composition of this wonderful frame, and see how far the ‘dust of the earth’ enters into it.

The composition of the body of a man weighing a little over 150 lbs. would be as follows:


These are the main constituents of the human body, but there are other elements also present in small quantities. In addition to the 150 lbs. detailed above, we have a ‘trace’ of the following:

Lead, Cerium, Argon, Manganese, Zinc, Vanadium, Beryllium, Aluminium, Lithium, Helium, Iodine, Cobalt, Boron, Neon, Arsenic, Bromine, Scandium, Nickel, Lanthanum, Strontium, Titanium, Copper, Neodymium, Molybdenum, Silver and Tin.

Perhaps the reader would appreciate a few further words on the essential work that some of these elements perform.

POTASSIUM, which figures so largely in the composition of seeds, is the mineral basis of all muscular tissues, and is
essential in the formation of proteins. It can be truly said: ‘No life without potassium’.

SODIUM.—This is one of the principal constituents of blood and lymph. Without sodium, lime and magnesia salts are liable to form injurious deposits in the body.

CALCIUM and MAGNESIUM.—Magnesium assists in the assimilation of phosphorus, while magnesium calcium and iron form the albumen of the blood. One per cent of magnesium enables the lime taken into the body to harden in the formation of the bones.

MANGANESE.—It has been discovered that animals deprived of manganese lack the maternal instinct.

ZINC is associated with the action of vitamins.

NICKEL is associated with the insulin of the pancreas.

If it be true that there is ‘no life without potassium’, it is equally true that there is ‘no thought without phosphorus’. The elements fluorine and iodine are also important: fluorine plays an important part in the composition of the iris of the eye, while iodine in the thyroid gland is essential to growth and development.

The following is a summary of the various functions governed by these constituents of soil, seed and herb:

CALCIUM is a counter to acid, and is the executive element. SULPHUR purifies, and is the maid of all work.

POTASSIUM stimulates the liver, and is the balancer.

PHOSPHORUS aids the growth of nerve and brain, and is the thought medium.

IRON is the vehicle of oxygen, and is the master chemical. IODINE eliminates toxins, and is the gland regulator.

MANGANESE improves resistance, and is the chemical of poise. SILICA gives gloss to the hair and sparkle to the eyes, and is the optimist.

FLUORINE protects against infection, and is the youth preserver.

CHLORINE keeps the body supple, and is the laundryman. SODIUM prevents acidosis, and is the alkalinizer.
Magnesium is alkaline and sleep promoting and is the refresher.

Such is the composition of the body of man. He is of the earth, earthy. The story of Genesis two, however, is not yet told. After telling us that the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, the record proceeds ‘And breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul’. [v7]

Let us examine the two statements, ‘the breath of life’ and ‘a living soul’. Contrary to popular theology, man is not the only ‘living soul’ on the earth. This opinion is fostered by the Authorised Version which does not use the word ‘soul’ in Genesis one, reserving that for man in Genesis 2:7. In a case like this, however, the foundation upon which we must build must be the original Hebrew and not a translation however precious that translation may be. The word translated ‘soul’ is the Hebrew word nephesh.

**Nephesh in Genesis One**

‘The moving creature that hath life (margin soul)’ (Gen. 1:20).

‘Every living creature (lit. living soul) that moveth’ (Gen. 1:21).

‘The earth brings forth the living creature’ (Gen. 1:24).

‘Every thing ... wherein (there is) life (margin living soul)’ (Gen. 1:30).

Here are the four occurrences of nephesh in Genesis one and these demand our attention. ‘Soul’ is predicated in this chapter of ‘creeping creatures’ brought forth by the waters (verse 20), ‘great whales’ (verse 21), elsewhere called ‘serpents’ (Exodus 7:9), ‘dragons’ (Deut. 32:33), and ‘sea-monsters’ (Lam. 4:3) — ‘cattle’, ‘creeping thing’, ‘beast of the earth’ [Gen 1] (verse 25) and finally:

‘Every beast of the earth, and every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is soul life, or living soul’ (verse 30).

**Nephesh in Genesis Two**

‘Man became a living soul’ (Gen. 2:7).

‘Adam called every living creature’ (Gen. 2:19).

It is easy for us to point to this passage (2:7) as evidence of bias on the part of our translators and to ask why the English reader is led to believe that man differs from the beast and
creeping thing. Similarly it is easy in the blindness that pride, even of perceiving one aspect of the truth, can bring, to fall into the equally fatal error of saying that man is nothing more than the beasts that perish. Let us observe one or two facts that are to be found in these two chapters.

Man is undoubtedly a living soul. Cattle and creeping things and great whales are also undoubtedly living souls. To stay here, however, is to be content with half the truth, which, as the poet says, is ‘ever the blackest of lies’

In chapter one, where the animals are called ‘living souls’, man is not so called. When man is to be made, God does not say, ‘Let the earth bring forth’, but:

‘Let us make man in Our Image after Our Likeness; and let them have dominion . . . so God created man in His own Image, in the Image of God created He him; male and female created He them’ (Gen. 1:26,27).

Is it necessary, when repudiating the error of the immortality of the soul, to plunge into the equal error of denying all that is implied by this deliberation of God at the creation of man? While man and beast are alike ‘living souls’, man alone was created in the image of God. In Genesis 2:7 moreover we have the additional statement, not mentioned in Genesis 1:27, concerning the ‘breath of life’:

N'SHAMAH

This word n'shamah is generally translated ‘breath’ or ‘breathe’ in the Authorised Version, its other renderings being ‘blast’, ‘inspiration’, ‘soul’ and ‘spirit’. The word occurs twenty-four times, and we believe in twenty-three of the occurrences man only is the subject. The one passage which demands a more lengthy analysis is Genesis 7:21,22.

Appendix sixteen of the Companion Bible, gives the twenty-three references to n'shamah in the Old Testament. For easy reference we number each occurrence selected from the list.

(1) ‘And breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul’ (Gen. 2:7). It may be queried who it is that is said to breathe, God or Adam, for the pronoun ‘he’ does not decide the question. This breath is by the nostrils, and therefore differs in nothing from that of the lower creatures. Be the answers to these questions what they may, here is the introduction of something special in the process of creation,
something quite exceptional, occurring nowhere in the record of Genesis 1 but finding somewhat of a parallel in the equally distinctive pause and counsel of Genesis 1:26.

(2) ‘Thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth’ (Deut. 20:16). We know that sometimes both man and beast were destroyed by the advancing Israelites, as was the case at Jericho. But when taking the next city, Ai, Israel were by Divine command expressly told to spare the cattle. ‘And thou shalt do to Ai and her king as thou didst unto Jericho and her king: only the spoil thereof, and the cattle thereof shall ye take for a prey.’ If we insist that n'shamah in Deuteronomy 20:16 must include cattle, we introduce a serious problem, but if we leave it to mean man, all is harmony. A glance at Deuteronomy 20:17,18 will strengthen this view, for it immediately goes on to enumerate those who were to be utterly destroyed, namely, the Canaanites, and the reason given is ‘that they teach you not, etc.’

(3) ‘So Joshua ... utterly destroyed all that breathed’ (Josh. 10:40). This is parallel with No. 2; so is Joshua 11:11-14. Our space is nearly used up. The reader should look up the remaining occurrences, which are 2 Samuel 22:16; 1 Kings 15:29; Job 27:3; 32:8; Psa. 150:6 and Proverbs 20:27.

If these references are examined, it will be seen that all who have ruach ‘spirit’ do not necessarily have n'shamah ‘the breath of life’. Psalm 18:15 speaks of the blast (ruach) of the breath (n'shamah) of Thy nostrils, and the quotations from Job 32:18 and Proverbs 20:27 show a close connexion between this breath of life, understanding and conscience, which goes beyond the range of the mere nephesh or living soul, without the additional breath of life. The living creatures (souls) of Genesis 1:21 had not conscience. If there be no such distinction, then Genesis 7:21,22 tells us that all died twice over.

Man stands therefore as it were between two worlds. So far as his body is concerned, he is a living soul, like the lower animals, and lower than the angels. But he was made in the image of God, he received the breath of life and this links him with the world above, and he is destined to be raised in His Redeemer above angels.

Charles H. Welch
The Tabernacle.

No.1

This is the first of seven short studies on the Tabernacle. There are several Hebrew words which are used to describe the Tabernacle:

*Beth-el* = House of God.
*Mishkan* =The Tabernacle.
*Ohel* = The Tent.

Let us look at a list of occurrences in the Old Testament relating to the Tabernacle, in which our Lord fulfils the various services; the following list of references is given by Ada R. Habershon. It is evident from those mentioned in this list that one cannot divorce the Old Testament from the New Testament, both stand or fall together.

1. **A place where God MEETS the sinner.**

   ‘And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it’ (Exod. 25:8,9).

   Also in Exod. 29: 42 and 43 we see references to God meeting with His People:

   ‘And there I will meet with thee ….at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD: where I will meet with you, to speak there unto thee. And there I will meet with the children of Israel...’ (Exod. 29:42,43).

   What an occasion that must have been for the children of Israel, to meet with their God in this way.

   Coming to the New Testament, we see how God reconciled us to Himself through the finished work of Christ.

   ‘... who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation’ (2 Cor.5:18).

   It is only when we meditate on these things, that we get a true appreciation of what God has done for us in Christ Jesus.

2. **The place where God REVEALS Himself to sinners.**

   This is an important statement. Looking at other religions, we see people praying or worshipping god’s which do not reveal themselves, praying to idols etc, which are dead objects, not so with the Christian faith. We rejoice not only in a living God, but one who makes Himself known:
‘And they shall know that I am the **Lord** their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I am the **Lord** their God’. (Exod. 29:46).

Here we see a development of this theme of the Tabernacle, not only does He meet with His people, but He now reveals Himself to His people.

In the New Testament we see how God reveals Himself in the person of Jesus Christ.

‘If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also ... Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?’ (John 14:7-9).

The word translated ‘known’ here, (Gr. *ginosko*) is to know by experience, to learn, to perceive. (*Companion Bible*).

‘And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life’ (1 John 5:20).

God revealed to us in Christ. What a wonderful and foolproof plan God has put in place for our learning. All the ritual and ceremony required in the Tabernacle service is fulfilled in Christ.

**3. The place where God dwells with sinners.**

Two scriptures in the book of Exodus make it abundantly clear that God was dwelling with His people:

‘And let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them’... ‘And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and I will be their God. And they shall know that I am the **Lord** their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I am the **Lord** their God’ (Exod 25:8; 29:45,46).

Is there not a feel of permanence in this word **dwell**?

Early in the New Testament we see this promise of God dwelling with us in Christ.

‘Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted, is God with us’ (Matt. 1:23).

What a wonderful promise this is, it displays the faithfulness of our Heavenly Father to us. All down the centuries the Word of God demonstrates to us His faithfulness to His promises.

‘Jesus answered and said unto him, if a man love me, he will keep my words: and my father will love him... and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him’ (John 14:23).
The word ‘abode’ here is the same word as ‘mansions’ in verse 2 meaning ‘abiding places’. This is not merely a visit, but something more permanent.

4. The place where God speaks with the sinner.
Two references will be sufficient to see an important place which the Tabernacle plays in the worship of the people:
‘This shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD: where I will meet with you, to speak there unto thee’: ‘And the LORD called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the Tabernacle of the congregation…’ (Exod. 29:42; Lev. 1:1).

We are beginning to appreciate how important the Tabernacle was, in the lives and beliefs of this chosen nation of God.

We see in the New Testament how this communication continues, but this time in a more intimate way. The book of Hebrews opens with the following words:

‘God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds’. (Heb.1:1,2).

Much criticism has been levelled at the verbal truth of God’s Word, this criticism often comes from the pulpit, the very place where God’s Word should be faithfully taught. However, the opening words in John’s gospel puts the record straight regarding the truth of the matter.

‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God’ (John 1:1,2).

The implication of this statement is, if the Word of God is unreliable, it then means that God would not be speaking the truth, a position which the believer cannot entertain.

This serious subject continues in John’s gospel, where our Lord’s words are recorded:

‘Why do you not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word’. (John 8:43).

‘He that is of God heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God’. (John 8:47).

The word spoken by God in the Tabernacle is fulfilled and endorsed by Christ Himself.

Alan Schofield
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