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# Spiritual Blessings

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Vol. 25 No. 6. Nov/Dec. 2011

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*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.” Eph. 1:3*

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Exposition

## Book Of Acts (4)

By John Hutton, Newcastle, Australia.

**Please read Leviticus 23 before continuing with this study.**

In the last study, we saw that the conversion of a Gentile in Acts ch. 10 caused a great stir among Jewish believers. This included the apostles who had been with the Lord for such a long time, yet, obviously, they had never heard anything from Him about Gentiles being saved.

We also saw that the reason why Gentiles were let into Israel's blessings at that time was to provoke the Jews to jealousy. It seems to me that, if God went to the trouble of provoking His own people to jealousy, He must have wanted them to return to Him of their own accord very much.

As Luke is the writer of both his Gospel and Acts, it is only to be expected that the end of his Gospel and the beginning of Acts would overlap in their content. An important detail in this overlap is that, at the end of Luke 24, we are told that the Lord opened the eyes of the apostles' understanding so that they might understand what He was teaching them from the Old Testament Scriptures.

Luke 24:48-53 tells us that, after promising the disciples the Holy Spirit, the Lord ascended up, out of their sight. The passage finishes by saying that “they returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And were continually in the temple praising and blessing God”.

Acts 1:1-5 summarises the activities

of the forty days following the Lord's resurrection. During that time, He taught them much concerning the Kingdom of God. He also instructed them to wait in Jerusalem for the coming of the Holy Spirit, whose power would fit them for their great work. After all this, they had only one question, which is in v. 6. “Lord, will You at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?”

In answering, the Lord does not tell them that the Kingdom would not be restored at that time or whether it would be restored at all. Neither does He tell them that they were wrong to ask, or that they hadn't understood a word of what He had been speaking about for the previous 5 or 6 weeks. What He did say was that the Father was in charge of the timing.

I have heard and read that this question was the first apostolic mistake - they should have known, it is said, that Israel had been dismissed by God as His people and had been replaced by the Church. As a result, all of Israel's blessings had been transferred

to the Church, but apparently, Israel's judgements were left to Israel. But I am sure that the apostles made no mistake, for they had listened with ‘their opened understanding’.

Did God cast away Israel after the Cross?

I have spent some weeks now

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## President's Word

Greetings once again to all readers of "Spiritual Blessings" around the world.

### Meetings

Believe it or not, it's already time to start planning for the BBFA's Annual Conference. In 2012 it will be held at Bethshan Conference Centre, Wyee (near Morisset, on the NSW Central Coast). Our Conference there a short time ago was one of our best, and we encourage you to set aside September 22-24 for a weekend of leaving the world aside for a few days, and immersing yourself in great Bible study and fellowship. Don't let it sneak up on you - mark it in your diary today.

There are also a number of other special events tentatively planned for the Brisbane region, the Hunter Region, and Tasmania in the first half of 2012. We will be in a better position to let you know about these in future issues of Spiritual Blessings .

### Changes to the Committee

This column is actually my first for about six months, and it is with a mixture of joy and sadness that it is being written.

In June 2011, I stepped down as the BBFA President in order to assist my wife, Janelle, as she dealt with the onset of lymphoma. Janelle also resigned from her position as Committee Secretary at that time. However, I am pleased to report that she has responded very well to treatment, and is looking and acting like her old self again, for which we give thanks and praise to the Lord. We are also grateful for the wonderful show of love and support shown to us by the members and friends of the Fellowship during these last months. Your kindness has been overwhelming. Janelle's excellent progress has enabled me to resume my former duties as BBFA President with the help of the other committee members, who have kept things going very ably.

Sadly though, my rejoining the administrative committee has come partly as a result of us losing a dear friend, Frank Haegler. Frank took over the role

of President in June but, not long after, he was diagnosed with a rather aggressive form of cancer that eventually claimed his life in December. A number of tributes to Frank are included in this issue, so I will not elaborate too much here. Suffice to say for the moment, that his energetic presence amongst our Fellowship will be greatly missed. It has been a sad time for many of us here, and the BBFA extends its sincere condolences to Frank's wife, Merilee, and her family at this difficult time. I hope that, as you read the tributes to Frank, you will be inspired to reassess your own faith and walk.

In all of these things, whether we fully understand the reasons behind them or not, we trust that our Lord, who sees the end from the beginning, has us in His care and keeping. Until next time, may He be glorified by the walk and witness of each of us, and by the study of His Word.

*David Tavender.*

## Editorial

This issue of Spiritual Blessings is late, the delay being caused in part by the difficulties experienced by some committee members, as detailed by David in his column. We hope to have the Jan/Feb issue out in a few weeks and catch up with the calendar.

An important article in this issue presents tributes to our erstwhile President, Frank Haegler, following his recent death. These give a good account of Frank's long service with the BBFA in the interests of Dispensational Truth. His presence and work will certainly be missed in our ranks.

I want to apologise to the people in some of the photographs in the last issue, as some of those photos were a little out of proportion. It happened when the computer file was being readied for printing, and if any reader with expertise in the Pagemaker program can tell me how to avoid the problem in future, I would be very glad to hear from you.

Please pray for our work, particularly the witness of this magazine as it goes out to many readers both here in Australia and also overseas, As usual, my prayer is that our efforts will bring glory to the Lord Jesus, who loved us and gave Himself for us.

*Athol Walter.*

**cont from Pg. 1**

pointing out the Jewishness of the Gospel and Acts period of history, and I hope that you can see the point. In the sight of God, Israel were still His people even in the Acts period, based on the covenant with Abraham that we looked at in Gen.15.

In all four Gospels we have the record of the Jews crying out to Pilate 'Crucify Him'. In Matt. 27:25, the people cried out 'Let His blood be on us and our children'. The chief priests had also said to Pilate, 'We have no king but Caesar' (John 19:15).

Then Peter accuses Israel of murdering the Christ.

Look at these verses: Acts 3:14.

*'But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; <sup>15</sup>And killed the Prince of life...'*

*What were the disciples told to wait for in Luke 24:49?*

Acts 5:30. *'The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree'.*

Acts 10:39-40. *'And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree'.*

Did you notice the difference between Peter's words in chs. 3 and 5 when he was speaking to fellow Jews and when he was speaking to Gentiles in ch. 10? Speaking to Jews, Peter says 'you killed Him'; speaking to Gentiles he says 'they killed Him'. The Gentile Roman soldiers might have performed the crucifixion, but Peter says—and therefore the Holy Spirit says—that it was the Lord's own people who murdered Him.

It is obvious to me, and I hope it is to you also, that all of what I have been pointing out about Israel's place and privileges in the Acts period over the last few studies is not applicable to the church today. So something must have changed. We will talk about that when we get to the end of the book of Acts.

Whatever the change was, why didn't it happen immediately after the death and resurrection of the Lord? His own people rejected Him! His own people murdered Him! If there was a judgment due to them, if there was a price to pay for what they had done, why wasn't it carried out immediately? Judgment came eventually, when in AD 70, their temple, a sign that God was with them, was destroyed and in AD

135, they were banished from the land and Israel disappeared off maps for about 1800 years. Other than the Second Coming, what will be the greatest sign that we will see in Israel that God is about to take Israel back as His chosen People? The building of the Temple in Jerusalem!

Again I ask the question, why wasn't judgement immediate?

Remember what the Lord prayed on the Cross in Luke 23:34? *'Father forgive them; for they know not what they do'.*

If you look at the prayers of Jesus of Nazareth (truly and properly man and truly and properly God) other than the prayer in the Garden when He prays

'if it be your will', they are not prayers asking whether God might be pleased to do something that He

asks, but 'Father, **do** what I ask'. And here in Luke, He says 'Father, forgive them; because they do not know what they are doing'.

I am convinced that His prayer was answered and the period of history covered by the book of Acts is the record of the answer, when Israel was given a second chance to accept Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah. It was, graciously, a longer chance than they had been given in the Gospel period, and was accompanied by even more proofs that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah. It also covered a much wider area. Now to the next point.

In Acts 1:5, the Lord said that they were to be baptised with Holy Ghost in a few days time. We don't have time now to go into a study of the Holy Spirit, but it is worth noting that in the Greek text of v. 5, there is no definite article before 'Holy Spirit' The Greek literally says *'but ye shall be baptized with Holy Spirit not many days hence'*.

What were they told to wait for in Luke 24:49? That they would be *'endued with power from on high.'* Baptism with Holy Spirit is therefore – enduement with power from on high!

The promise is repeated in v. 8 *'But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the*

uttermost part of the earth' (or land). This time in the Greek, there is the definite article connected to Holy Ghost so it is speaking of the Holy Spirit Himself.

They were wait to be baptised with holy spirit, or power from on high, by the Holy Spirit. The Giver, the Holy Spirit, was to give His gift, holy spirit, or power from on high. If it sounds complicated, it really isn't, or wouldn't be if I was more articulate. If you want to follow up the idea, Doctor Bullinger's book 'The Giver and His Gift' is worth reading.

### Next point

Verses 9 to 11 tell us that the Lord will return to this earth in the same manner that He left it. It will not be done in secret, it will be visible and in the same place that He departed from, i.e. the Mount of Olives, just outside Jerusalem. There have been a number of men, over the centuries, who claimed to be the Messiah, but none of them has descended to the Mount of Olives out of the clouds.

### Next point

**We read in Acts 1:15-16,** *'And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,) <sup>16</sup>Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.'*

It is interesting to note that Judas' betrayal was spoken about in the Psalms, isn't it, but we should not be surprised. You will find that verse 20 is a composite quote from Psalm 69:25, and Psalm 109:8.

**Then in verses 21-26 we have,** *'Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, <sup>22</sup>Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection. <sup>23</sup>And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. <sup>24</sup>And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, <sup>25</sup>That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. <sup>26</sup>And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.'*

The first official thing that had to be taken care of by the apostles was a replacement for Judas. If Israel took their second chance and turned back to God, everything had to be in place. In the Kingdom of Heaven, as Matthew calls it, or the Kingdom of God as the other Gospel writers call it – the Kingdom that will last 1000 years – the 12 Apostles have a special job. We find it in **Matt. 19:27-28:**

*'Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? <sup>28</sup>And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel'.*

The appointment of Matthias restored the number of Apostles to twelve.

Many people, scholars among them, say that this is where the Apostles made their second mistake. They do not argue that Judas did not need to be replaced, but that he was replaced by the wrong person. They should have waited for Paul to be converted and replace Judas. However, beside the fact that the 11 had no prior knowledge of Paul ever becoming a believer, Paul could never meet the criteria for being one of the twelve, could he? He was not with the Lord in the Gospel period at all. Judas' replacement had to have been present with the Lord from His baptism by John to His ascension, requirements that Paul could never meet.

### Next point

Lev. 23, which I hope you read, outlines the feasts of Israel which were to be carried out when Israel entered the promised land.

**Lev. 23:1.** *'And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup>Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations (or assemblies), even these are my feasts.'*

In this chapter Jehovah sets out what are called the feasts of the Lord. We could easily spend a whole study on this chapter but we will only establish what feasts constitute the Jewish festival year. In verse 3 He deals with the weekly Sabbath.

**Verse 5.** *'In the fourteenth day of the first month (i.e. Abib or Nisan which corresponds with our April)*

at even is the LORD'S passover'.

**The first feast is Passover** which celebrated the Passover in Egypt.

**Verse 6.** *'And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread'.*

Leaven represents sin in Scripture, so to be unleavened must refer to something or someone who is sinless.

**The second feast was Unleavened Bread.**

**Verse 10.** *'Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: <sup>11</sup>And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it'.*

**The third feast was Firstfruits.** On the day after Firstfruits the Israelites were to count seven weeks plus one day.

**Verse 15.** *'And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: <sup>16</sup>Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD'.*

**The fourth Feast was called 'the feast of weeks'**, and had loaves baked with leaven in them. Leaven represents sin so it must have something to do with people.

**Verse 23.** *'And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, <sup>24</sup>Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation'.*

**The fifth feast was the Feast of Trumpets.**

**Verse 26.** *'Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement'.*

**The sixth feast is the Day of Atonement.**

**Verse 34** *'Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD'.*

**The seventh feast is Tabernacles.**

I will list these feasts clearly for you.

- 1 Passover
- 2 Unleavened Bread
- 3 Firstfruits
- 4 Feast of weeks
- 5 Trumpets
- 6 Day of Atonement
- 7 Tabernacles or Booths

In Deut. 16:16, God said that three times a year all males would celebrate three of the feasts in a place that He would nominate.

*'Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles...'*

The first three Feasts were fulfilled in the Gospel period.

**1 Cor. 5:8.** *'Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us'.*

The crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth was the fulfilment of the first feast of the Lord in Lev. 23, i.e. Passover.

**1 Cor. 15:22-23** tells of the fulfilment of the third feast.

*'For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. <sup>23</sup>But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming'.*

If the first and third feasts were fulfilled by Christ, then the second one must have been as well. It must have no leaven, i. e. sin, associated with it so I think that it was fulfilled in the sinlessness of Christ. The first three Feasts point to the death and resurrection of Christ.

**Now look at Acts 2:1.** *'And when the day of Pentecost was fully come (or came), they were all with one accord in one place'.*

When I was a lot younger and read that verse, I used to wonder when a day could fully come. Was a day any less fully come one second after midnight, or at midday or at 11 o'clock at night?

The Greek word for 'fully come' is 'sunpleeroo' and occurs in Luke 9:51,

*'And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem'.*

Nestlè's interlinear Greek translates the word 'to be fulfilled' because it is in the future tense. In Acts 2, where the verse is in the present tense, it would be 'was fulfilled'. So what does the Feast of Pentecost refer to?

Remember, from the day after Firstfruits, the Israelites were to count seven weeks plus 1 day –  $7 \times 7 = 49$  plus 1 = 50 – and the Greek word for 'fifty' is 'pentecost'.

Acts 2:1 could read, *'And when the Feast of Weeks was fulfilled, they were all with one accord in one place'.*

I grew up in a Pentecostal church. Every Sunday morning we would be told about Pentecost and that Acts 2:1 was the first Pentecost - more about that later. But you can imagine how surprised I was when I found out that the Pentecost spoken of in Acts 2 was NOT the first one. The Feast had been celebrated for about 1500 years and was still being celebrated in Acts 20. The events recorded in Acts 2 was the **fulfilment** of the Jewish Feast of Pentecost.

With the fulfilment of Pentecost, four of the seven feasts set out in Lev. 23 have been fulfilled. As far as the purposes of God are concerned, what is the next great event to occur? The return, the second coming of Christ, and it will be announced by what? Trumpets! What is the next Feast? The Day of Atonement! What happens on the Day of Atonement? All Israel will be saved. What is the next one? Tabernacles, when Christ will dwell with and rule His people, Israel for 1000 years.

I believe it is very important to understand the Feasts of Israel, for they are like a prophetic time table of God's dealings with Israel. If we lift the Pentecost of Acts 2 out of its setting and try to apply it to the Christian Church, we miss its significance and teaching, and because the Book of Acts occupies such a crucial position in God's dealings with the nation of Israel, misunderstanding Acts 2 will send us off the track throughout the rest of the New Testament. ❖

## Understanding Acts 3

The third chapter of the book of Acts is exceedingly important. We need to have a clear understanding of it because it will affect our understanding of the whole of the New Testament.

If the believer will take time to examine the chapter carefully, he will find that there is a wonderful promise made there to the people of Israel. The time-setting of what is recorded there is about three years\* after the Crucifixion (c.32 A.D). Peter is addressing Israel, and tells them that although they had committed the terrible sin of crucifying their true Messiah, God is then and there extending a period of grace and is ready to forgive them if they will repent for having slain the Just One. He exhorts the nation with the promise that if they do repent, "God would send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you" (v.20). In other words, what we today refer to as The Second Coming, would immediately take place.

Here then is the possibility of Christ's Second Advent taking place at that time. We now know that it did not take place. It is a matter of history. But it could have taken place if Israel had obeyed Peter's command, unless it be said by someone that God was only play-acting, that He didn't really mean it. He knew, of course, that Israel would not repent, and "so, well, it was just one of those things."

But God does not trifle. He always says what He means and means what He says. And if we are teachable we shall believe that. Practically every Epistle written before the close of the book of Acts (c.62 A.D.) stresses the fact of the Lord's early return. Some examples are set out below:

"... to wait for His Son from heaven ..." (1 Thess. 1:10)

"... we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord ..." (1 Thess. 4:15)

"... you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven ..." (2 Thess. 1:7)

"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering unto Him ..." (2 Thessalonians 2:1)

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# **"BYE FOR NOW, FRANK. SEE YOU IN THE MORNING."**

## **Tributes to Frank Haegler**

### **From David Tavender**

It's our sad duty to report the recent death of Frank Haegler to our friends and supporters. His health declined rapidly over the past few months after receiving a diagnosis of a particularly aggressive form of cancer. He was 56. He was a good husband, father and friend, but in these pages we thought it appropriate to highlight something of his place within our Fellowship.

Frank and his wife Merilee both became members of the BBFA about 15-20 years or so ago, subscribing to the four core tenets which are printed on the back page of this magazine. Since then they've both been a big part of the BBFA's ministry and activities. Most recently, Frank was the BBFA's President for the second half of 2011, until he stepped aside due to his rapidly failing health.

Frank was a regular speaker at our gatherings, and the Monday night Bible studies held in his home were a highlight of his week. As Co-ordinator of the Brisbane group, he organised many of the special event weekends in that region. He also served on the BBFA's administrative committee for a number of years, becoming its President in June 2011. At various times he edited *Spiritual Blessings* magazine, and co-ordinated its printing and distribution as well.

One of the biggest tasks he took on within the BBFA was that of setting up and maintaining our website, and there's evidence of Frank's hard work on every page of it. He designed many of its features and he spent countless hours placing hundreds of articles, charts and files onto the site and making sure that the links to each one worked properly. That website won't tell you everything about what was important to Frank, but the content does represent a good cross section of what he believed. If you're

interested in taking a closer look at some of Frank's handiwork and some of his beliefs, the website is still there and you'll find it by typing in [spiritualblessings.org](http://spiritualblessings.org).

Frank did all of these things voluntarily – he wasn't on any sort of payroll for the Fellowship. So why did he do all this? He did it because he believed it would bring glory to the Lord Jesus Christ. Borrowing some words from the Apostle Paul's letter to the Romans (chapter 8), it can be said that Frank was persuaded that neither his death, nor anything else in the universe, would be able to separate him from God's

love and care, and that this was all made possible through the Lord Jesus Christ's own death and resurrection. Again, to Frank, all those things he spent so much time on were worth doing because he believed they would bring glory to the Lord Jesus Christ, and Frank knew that Christ had done a lot for him.

I spoke with Frank just a few weeks ago, and he knew that he didn't have very long to live. We talked about this; in fact, it's something we'd discussed

together many times, and we were always of the same opinion about what would happen to us after we died. Frank's expectation was that, after his death, he would become unconscious and unaware of anything else – he would not become a ghost, he would not be a soul without a body floating around and actually alive in some other form. No. In the words of the Bible, he believed he would "sleep" until the day that the Lord will cause him to wake again (1 Corinthians 15:18, 51). And that's really what resurrection is – it's that waking up from the sleep we call death. The Scriptures speak about this; that, at the resurrection of those whose faith is in the Lord Jesus Christ, the mortal body which is subject to



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death, shall put on immortality (1 Corinthians 15:53,54). That day hasn't happened yet, but it will. Frank isn't yet immortal, but after his resurrection, he will be.

Frank put his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and because Christ was resurrected and lives again never to die, those who put their faith in Christ will also rise again never to die. May each one of us reading these words, who remain behind, consider our position before God.

As we remember and reflect on Frank's life, we feel sorrow and a great sense of loss. However, in this sorrow, we are also grateful for the special part he played in our lives and in the Berean Bible Fellowship of Australia. We remember the strength of his character, the strength of his faith; the happiness and joy he gave to many people. We remember that Frank's hope is found in the Lord Jesus Christ. So, in the sorrow we feel, there is cause for great thanksgiving as well.

The fellowship extends its prayers, thoughts, support and best wishes to Frank's wife Merilee, and to their children Cheryn, Ancel, Elise, Bethany and Gabriel. We also pray for Frank's siblings, the extended family, and for those of us who were privileged to call Frank our friend. May the Lord uphold each one who knew Frank with the comfort and strength that comes through the Lord Jesus

### **From Mike & Sylvia Penny, U. K.**

We met Frank in 1984 on our first visit to Australia, when he sat there 'quietly' and listened in to discussions between Brian Kelson and myself.

Our next visit to Australia was in 2006. Then we had the joy of staying with Frank and Merilee and their family ... and their entourage of animals, including kookaburras which seemed at their most vociferous at about 3.30 a.m.

In 2009 we got to know him even better and appreciated more his deep faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and his commitment to the dispensational approach to the Bible.

Above all, Frank was a character; one of those people who are different, unique. There will never be another Frank and we shall always remember him with fond affection.

And we hold Merilee and the family in our prayers.

### **From Brian R. Kelson, Florida, USA.**

With deepest sympathy. To Merilee and all their family and friends, my prayers, love, and condolences for the loss of our dear Frank.

Frank entered my life around 1977-8 when I sought to employ a driver for my courier business. I had decided against Frank but the Lord overruled and we quickly became friends as well as fellow courier drivers.

Frank's integrity, honesty and warm character endeared him to the customers and me as his commitment to the Lord was manifested in his work ethic. Not once did he complain and he undertook each task with enthusiasm and a cooperative 'OK'. There was never any self-righteousness with Frank. He was open, sincere, consistent, friendly, willing to try new things and suggest ideas for the better good.

Frank's strong faith became incredibly apparent when through the Word of Truth and conviction of the Holy Spirit, he discovered the excitement of The Mystery. He was ready and willing to dramatically change course despite the consequences. What an encouragement for me and others, I'm sure.

I'll never forget the day he came to me showing as much excitement as was ever possible in the Frank personality, and described the way he "saw"

***“For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, “Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?” The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. “***

***“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”***

**1 Cor 15:53-58 and 1 John 3:2.**

Merilee for the first time as a great wife. He got that right as well.

All those years we worked together in the Brisbane meetings, reliable Frank and Merilee were willing hands of practical love and support.

We will meet again in the heavenly places and in the meantime, while I am able, I give thanks to the Lord for Frank Haegler.

### **From Athol Walter**

Frank was one of the earliest men to respond when a witness to Dispensational Truth was being established in Newcastle. This was over thirty years ago, before the Berean Bible Fellowship of Australia had been set up formally.

At that time, Frank worked for Brian Kelson in the Newcastle Messenger Service. At times, when the work was quiet, Brian and Frank would sit in a car-park looking out over the Tasman Sea and discuss the Scriptures. This helped Frank to gain a solid foundation in Dispensational Truth.

When the Haeglers moved to Brisbane, Frank started a meeting and gradually a group of interested Bible students was established. This work has continued to the present time, and over the years, many folk have been brought to a clearer understanding of God's Word.

As well as leading the Brisbane group, at which he gave many studies, Frank also contributed articles to our magazine, *Spiritual Blessings*. These studies, on diverse subjects, were always well received. Frank was also a regular speaker at the Fellowship's annual conferences, again presenting a variety of topics.

Through all these years of a wide ministry for the Lord, Frank has been faithfully supported by his wife, Merilee, and their family.

As I think of Frank Haegler over the years I have known him, the qualities that come to mind are faithfulness, persistence, willingness to help and serve, and most importantly, always holding up the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, Lord and Head.

My wife, Eveline, joins me in expressing our sorrow at Frank's passing, and in assuring Merilee and the family of our deep sympathy and our prayers for you all. Through the sorrow, however, we look

forward to the time when we, with Frank, will rise to new life at the call of the Lord Jesus, and we will then serve and worship our Lord in ways that were impossible for us in this life. ❖

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### **Understanding Acts 3.**

#### **Cont. from p. 6**

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand."  
(Romans 13:12)

"...come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ ..." (1 Cor. 1:7)

"... the time is short ..." (1 Cor. 7:29)

"For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." (Hebrews 10:37)

"... the coming of the Lord draweth nigh ... the Judge standeth before the door." (James 5:8,9)

"... the end of all things is at hand ..." (1 Peter 4:7)

"Little children, it is the last time ..." [The Greek word here is more vivid than "last time". It says, "last hour".] (1 John 2:18)

Please note that all the above references were penned before Paul's fateful meeting with the Jews as it is recorded in Acts 28. The references given above are by no means exhaustive. There are others indicating that the Second Coming of Christ was imminent during the Acts period. But do we need any more? Perhaps we should add our Lord's own words that, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." (Matthew 24:34).

So, the possibility of the Lord's Second Coming extended right to the end of the book of Acts, but the last chapter of Acts clearly shows that it had to be postponed because of Israel's failure to repent. See Acts 28:24, 25.

If folks would only read and believe that third chapter of Acts, verses 19 and 20, they would have the key to the problems and conflicting arguments we hear regarding the Lord's Second Coming. ❖

**(Note: \* Many others believe that the events of Acts 3 occurred much sooner than three years after the Crucifixion. I think it was within three months. The Day of Pentecost, when the disciples were filled with 'power from on high' was just 50+ days after the Crucifixion. Editor.)**

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# The Secret Of Ephesians 3

By Athol Walter

***“... by revelation he made known unto me the mystery [secret] ... that the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.” (Ephesians 3:3,6)***

The Secret spoken of by Paul in Eph. 3 is, next to the foundational truth of the Lord’s one, all-sufficient Sacrifice, the main reason for the witness of our Fellowship.

One point should be made clear immediately. The word ‘mystery’, used in English translations, unfortunately, can be a little misleading to English speakers. The Greek word is ‘musterion’, which has come into English with little change as ‘mystery’. Mystery, however, now means something that is puzzling or baffling, and even when it has been made known, it can still be puzzling, needing a mind like that of Sherlock Holmes to unravel it. But the correct translation of ‘musterion’ is **secret**, and the important point to grasp is that, once the secret—whatever it may be—is made known, it is clear and understandable.

So, with that in mind, I can say that the Secret of Eph. 3 is that God brought in a new Administration (Dispensation) in which the Gentile believers were completely equal with Jewish believers. This had not been the case during the years covered by the Book of Acts.

The “Church” (Ecclesia) connected with this Administration is “the Church which is His Body”, members of which were chosen by God in Christ BEFORE the foundation of the world. The Dispensation of the Secret has nothing to do with Abraham, covenants or the Law of Moses.

The Body of Christ was a secret that God kept hidden in Himself FROM the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4), and therefore is not the subject of any type or prophecy in Scripture before the time God chose to reveal it through Paul. That time was after the end of the Acts period. This is a crucial point. Paul claims in Eph. 3:3-5, that God had revealed through him, this Secret that had hitherto been hidden in God Himself (3:9). Note the words in v. 5,

“in other ages not made known”, and “as it NOW made known”. Consider the implication here. In plain words, Paul is saying that this Secret was not made known since the ages began, and had only been revealed through him (Paul), NOW. Of course, we must understand what time is meant by NOW. It can only be that time following the final witness to Jewish leaders, recorded in the last half of Acts 28.

This must mean that this Secret was not known in the Lord’s earthly ministry, or in the years of the witness to Israel recorded in Acts.

It should be noted that although the calling, purpose and hope of those called to membership of the Body of Christ are all different from the companies of believers that existed in previous dispensations, the foundation of the Dispensation of the Secret is exactly the same as for all other callings of God, namely, the one, all-sufficient sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Another crucial point that flows from these biblical facts is that the only Epistles that teach anything about the Secret are those written by Paul after his imprisonment in Rome, viz. Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon.

The fact that the Secret is separate and different from the Church of the Acts period explains why we do not see any of the miraculous signs that were commonplace in Acts. Israel had not, during Acts, been set aside by God, and the miraculous signs are specifically for Israel. It also explains why the Church, the Body of Christ, does not seek out the Jew first, before witnessing to any Gentiles. It never crosses our minds to do this, although it was the rule in Acts.

An understanding of this secret made known through Paul, comes as the result of heeding two statements of Paul found in his last letter to Timothy. Firstly:

***“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2 Tim.2:15)***

Secondly:

***“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, (so) that the man of God may be complete,***

***thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Tim. 3:16, 17).***

I would not expect any reader to argue that these words applied only to Timothy and not to ourselves. Surely it is beyond argument that each one of us should be—and wants to be—unashamed workers when we stand before our Saviour and Lord. So we can move on.

It is interesting that Paul's rule for becoming an unashamed servant is not about doing the good works that we know are part of the Christian's walk. No, his one and only rule is to rightly divide the word of truth. Of course, if we do this, it will lead us to 'the good works that should follow'. An important point to grasp here, however, is that it is only by 'rightly dividing the Word of Truth' that we can walk worthily according to the rules of our Dispensation, and not mix in things that belong to other dispensations.

The phrase, 'rightly dividing', is not readily understood by modern readers, so it can do with some 're-phrasing'. The NIV has 'correctly handling', which is right up to a point, but is not strong enough. The Greek word for 'rightly dividing' means, literally, to cut correctly. We can handle something without cutting it. I prefer 'correctly apportioning', as it conveys exactly what Paul is saying. When we apportion things, we divide them up and put them in their proper places, which is what Paul is telling us to do in this verse. Phil. 1:9 & 10, which I hope you stop to read, says much the same.

Paul's point is that to walk worthily of Christ Jesus (Eph. 4:1), we must distinguish the different parts of Scripture from each other, and take particular note of the parts that apply to us. Which parts are they? In particular, those seven epistles of Paul mentioned above. Remember, also, that Paul is the Lord-appointed Apostle to us Gentiles.

But, many have said, when presented with these statements, are you not cutting up the Bible and throwing most of it away? No, not at all, and this brings us to the second quote above. All Scripture is profitable for so many things, and it should all be studied. But if we don't recognise that it is not all **about** us, then confusion will reign, and we will find ourselves ignoring many parts of the Bible that don't seem to fit.

A few simple examples will suffice. Here is a direct instruction from God, "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you" (Gen. 12:1). Got your bags packed? Dear Reader, if you have not obeyed this instruction of God, why not? When will you obey it, if you believe that all Scripture applies to us today without any discrimination?

Here's another. "Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven ..." (Luke 18:22). Again I ask you, have you obeyed that instruction of the Lord Jesus? Oh, why not? These are just a few of many instructions in various parts of the Bible that we quietly ignore, or perhaps, don't even know about.

A very easy rule to keep in mind when trying to decide if a particular part of the Bible is directly to us or not, is to remember that Israel plays a very special part in God's plan for the world, and believers since the end of Acts are not part of Israel. So simply ask yourself, is this verse, passage or Book written while Israel were God's people, or at a time when they had been set aside for some reason and become 'not My people'. If the passage was written when Israel were in favour with God, then do not put yourself into what is being said. But as you read the parts of Scripture written before Israel had been chosen or after Israel had been set aside, then take particular notice. This is especially true, as I said before, of those last seven epistles of Paul.

Unfortunately, the early church turned away from Paul and his teaching, and the doctrine that the Christian Church had replaced Israel became accepted teaching. This is called Replacement Theology and is responsible for considerable confusion about the vital truths we are discussing. But, replace Replacement Theology with the truth of the Secret revealed through Paul in Ephesians 3 (and in Colossians), and the light of Scriptural Truth will shine through the darkness of false tradition and illuminate your heart and mind.

Much more could and should be said on this vital subject, but it can't all be served up at once. I can assure you from personal experience, however, that if you apply these two rules that Paul gave to Timothy, the Bible will come alive and make sense to you in a way it has never done before. ❖

*In a crowded street, the people who  
impede our progress the most are  
those who travel the same way as  
ourselves.  
I wonder how many people I impede?*

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