

Right Division Soundbites # 2

Earth / Heavenly Places

Years ago a list of contrasts, prepared by a 'mid-Acts' dean, was made available for distribution. It was titled 'Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth', and suggested as soundbites to create teaching situations. There were 26 separate issues listed. We plan to deal with one topic on Sunday mornings.

For your information, the titles and verses (listed directly below in the box) are exactly as they appear on the dean's chart.

2. Focus is the earth Gen 1:28, 9:1, 13:15-17; Deut 11:21; Isa 11:9; Jer 23:5; Psa 37:9-11; Matt 5:5, 6:10	Focus is the heavenly places Eph 1:3, 2:6; Phil 3:20, Col 3:1-4
--	---

Gen 1:1 is normally where they start separating 'PAUL' from 'everyone else', so even though it was not on the dean's list, we will look at it first:

Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created **the heaven** and **the earth**.

There is their springboard to dive into what-they-call 'right division'.

Then they make comments like, "God made '2 distinct **places**', thus showing that He planned to fill them with '2 distinct **groups of people**.'" This is a foundation assertion of their faulty 'mid-Acts' theology.

The dean's verse comparison began with Adam and Eve, and Noah:

Gen 1:28 And God blessed them (**Adam and Eve**), and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and **replenish the earth**, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

Gen 9:1 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and **replenish the earth**.

The next passage is where they really get their ball rolling. God made promises to Abram (whose name He changed to Abraham in **Gen 17:5**) and his seed, about inheritance of the land:

Gen 13:15-17 For all **the land** which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of **the earth**: so that if a man can number the dust of **the earth**, then shall thy seed also be numbered.

17 Arise, walk through **the land** in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.

The problem is that the 'mid-Acts-ers' do not acknowledge that Paul taught that WE Gentiles who have faith are the seed of Abraham:

Rom 4:16-17 **Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,**

17 **(As it is written,** I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

Abraham rejoiced to see the day of Christ (John 8:56). Jesus was the son of Abraham (Matt 1:1) and He was the seed of Abraham:

Gal 3:16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to **thy seed, which is Christ.**

Now it makes no difference whether a person is a **physical descendant** of Abraham or not. Israel has no advantage anymore (Gal 5:6, 6:15).

By our faith in Christ, we are the seed of Abraham, and fellow-heirs:

Gal 3:28-29 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And **if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.**

The next 5 passages we will read are those used on the dean's list
for the 'earth' side in his contrast of verses with the 'heavenly places'.

Moses told the children of Israel:

Deut 11:21 That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers to give them, **as the days of heaven upon the earth.**

Isaiah prophesied about the coming of the Lord's kingdom to earth:

Isa 11:9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for **the earth** shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

The prophet Jeremiah also wrote of the coming King to judge the earth.

Next week we will look at the issue of Jesus being King:

Jer 23:5 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and **a King** shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in **the earth.**

This next passage in Psalms has a couple of points we should notice, as we also see how Paul taught the same truths about when the Lord comes which the dean's list completely ignores.

1) The wicked, evil-doers will be wiped out and destroyed.

2) Those who wait on the Lord will inherit the earth. (God through

Paul will expand this to be Gentiles with Israel and their inheritance.):

Psa 37:9-11 For evildoers shall be cut off:
but **those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.**
10 For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be:
yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.
11 But the meek shall inherit **the earth;**
and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

Before we go to Paul, we see that Jesus quoted a portion of the Psalm:

Matt 5:5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit **the earth.**

1) As **Psa 37:9-10**, Paul also taught the destruction of the wicked (and the reward for the righteous) when the Lord comes in **that** day:

2 Thess 1:4-10 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith

in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:

5 Which is a manifest token (an evident sign) of the righteous judgment of God, that **ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God,**

for which ye also suffer: (also see Acts 14:22)

6 Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; (God will get them back for how they mistreated His saints)

7 And to you who are troubled rest with us,

when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven

with his mighty angels,

8 **In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:**

9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction

from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

10 **When he shall come to be glorified in his saints,**

and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) (Paul's converts will witness the destruction of the wicked when Christ comes to save the righteous)

in that day. (In what day? in the day of Christ, when He comes)

2) As **Psa 37:9**, Paul also taught that believers are 'waiting' for Christ to come from heaven (also Rom 8:23-25):

1 Thess 1:10 And to **wait for his Son from heaven,** whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

1 Cor 1:7 So that ye come behind in no gift; **waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:**

2 Thess 3:5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the **patient waiting for Christ.** (also see James 5:7-8)

As **Psa 37:9,11** Paul also taught believers would have the same inheritance that God had promised Israel. Paul told the Ephesian elders:

Acts 20:32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and **to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.**

Paul gave his testimony to King Agrippa and told him how Jesus (whose saints he was persecuting) had commissioned him on the Damascus road:

Acts 26:18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that **they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.**

This was part of the mystery of Christ (Eph 3:4) that the Gentiles now share in the inheritance that was originally promised to Israel:

Eph 3:6 That **the Gentiles should be fellowheirs,** and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

Through the new covenant, God made us Gentiles 'fit' for inheritance:

Col 1:12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath **made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints** in light:

The last verse listed on the dean's list to try to make Israel have a different inheritance than us, is about the kingdom of God coming to earth:

Matt 6:10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in **earth,** as it is in **heaven.**

The dean's list teaches contrasts between 'earth' (which he makes for Israel, and 'before Paul') and 'heavenly places' (which he tries to show is for us, and 'only Paul'). However, as we will see, 'heavenly promises' are NOT UNIQUE to Paul's writings. They are promised in other scriptures also:

Jesus told His disciples to be happy their names were written in heaven,
yet the dean's list does not care to link Israel with anything heavenly:

Luke 10:20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not,
that the spirits are subject unto you;
but rather rejoice, because **your names are written in heaven.**

Notice 3 points in this next passage that **unite** Hebrews with Paul:

- # 1) The church's inheritance of the new Jerusalem, God's heavenly city.
- # 2) The church's names are written in heaven (as Luke 10:20).
- # 3) The church is sanctified by Jesus' blood of the new covenant.

Heb 12:22-24 But ye are come unto mount Sion,
and unto **the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem,**
and to an innumerable company of angels,
23 To the general assembly and church of the **firstborn,** (Christ - Rom
8:29, Col 1:15,18) **which are written in heaven,**
and to God the Judge of all,
and to the spirits of just men made perfect,
24 And to **Jesus the mediator of the new covenant,** and to the blood of
sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

Before we look at Paul's writings about the 3 points, we see that the
Hall of Faith (Heb 11) shows the saints of God were looking for a heavenly
city but 'mid-Acts-ers' completely disregard it because it is in Hebrews:

Heb 11:13-16 These all died in faith, not having received the promises,
but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced
them, and confessed that **they were strangers and pilgrims on the
earth.**

14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they
came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

16 **But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly:**
wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God:
for he hath prepared for them a city.

Now let's see those 3 matching points in Paul's epistles.

#1) What is that city? Where is that city? It is 'an heavenly' city, it's the new Jerusalem, which is above, which is our mother, too and which, one day (Rev 3:12, 21:2,10), will come down from heaven to earth. Paul compared the OLD and NEW testaments, and applied the new one to us:

Gal 4:21-31, 5:1 Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?

22 For **it is written**, that Abraham had two sons,
the one by a bondmaid,
the other by a freewoman.

23 But he who was of the bondwoman was **born after the flesh;**
but he of the freewoman was **by promise.**

24 Which things are an allegory: for **these are the two covenants;**
the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.

25 For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to **Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.**

26 But **Jerusalem which is above is free,**
which is the mother of us all.

27 **For it is written**, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.

28 **Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.**

29 But as then he that was **born after the flesh** persecuted him that was **born after the Spirit**, even so it is now.

30 Nevertheless **what saith the scripture?**

Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman **shall not be heir** with the son of the freewoman.

31 **So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman,**
but of the free.

Gal 5:1 **Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.**

#2) Paul also taught saints names were written in heaven:

Phil 4:3 And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my **fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life.**

#3) Paul also taught again as Gal 4:21-31, that the new testament is for us, too not the old covenant of the letter written in stone:

2 Cor 3:6 Who also hath **made us able ministers of the new testament**; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. (also see Rom 2:28-29, 7:6)

Just like we took the focus of the earth, and saw how Paul's verses went along WITH it ... now let's examine some verses on the dean's list about the 'heavenly places' as we compare them with verses 'outside of Paul' that the dean refuses to acknowledge as being the same, but that are:

Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath **blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places** in Christ:

'Mid-Acts-ers' do not want to admit it but the same **heavenly** inheritance is also God's promise in the epistle to the Hebrews:

Heb 10:34 For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, **knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.**

Back to Eph, for another verse on the dean's list, he claims is only to us:

Eph 2:6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in **heavenly places** in Christ Jesus:

'Mid-Acts-ers' do not want anything to do with Peter, who wrote about the same **heavenly** inheritance. They teach Peter preached a different gospel:

1 Peter 1:3-4 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

Another verse on the dean's list says we look for Christ to come from heaven. That goes with the verses we read about what we're waiting for:

Phil 3:20 For our conversation is in **heaven;**
from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

Again in Hebrews we find **things that are the same** as with Paul:

Heb 3:1 Wherefore, holy brethren, **partakers of the heavenly calling,** consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

Heb 9:28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and **unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time** without sin unto salvation.

Finally, the dean listed this passage in Col, as the focus being heaven:

Col 3:1-4 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those **things which are above,** where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

2 **Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.**

3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. (that's what we read in 2 Thess 1:10)

The dean never told us that Jesus promised great reward in heaven, too:

Matt 5:10-12 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for **theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for **great is your reward in heaven:** (Luke 6:23) for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

The dean always overlooks 'heavenly treasures' that are 'outside of Paul':

Matt 6:19-21 **Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth,** where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: (also see Matt 19:21)

20 But **lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven,** where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

In conclusion, John saw 'the mother of us all' (Gal 4:26), and 'Thy kingdom come' (Matt 6:10), as he used the same scripture Paul did (after this):

Rev 21:2-3 And I John saw **the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven**, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, **the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.**

Paul quoted this same promised inheritance, from the old testament:

2 Cor 6:16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; **as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.**

Jesus' apostles knew the mystery (Eph 2:20, 3:5, 2 Pet 3:2, Rev 10:7)

Matt 13:10-16 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto **them** in parables?

11 He answered and said unto them, Because **it is given unto you to know the mysteries [Greek 'mysterion' also translated singular 'mystery'] of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.**

12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: (see Paul's use of this old testament record - Acts 28:23-28)

15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

16 But **blessed are your eyes, for they see:**
and your ears, for they hear.

This is David Dowell saying, "Think about it!"

Copyright © 10-10

The Magnified Word

All rights reserved