

Sunday, February 7, 2021—Colossians 2:18-19 Not Holding the Head

### Introduction/Review

- Two weeks ago, before Bud spoke last week on the topic of Daniel’s prophecy of the 70 weeks, we were looking at Colossians 2:18. This verse is one of the more challenging verses in Colossians to understand. Given that fact, I would like to review some of the main points we considered two weeks ago before moving on into verse 18.
- **Let no man beguile you of your reward**—the verb “let” is in the present tense, active voice, and the imperative mood i.e., Paul is commanding the Colossians to not “let” this happen to them. Paul does not want the Colossians to allow themselves to be “beguiled” i.e., “to delude; to deceive; to impose on by artifice [trick or fraud] or craft.” (*American Dictionary of the English Language*)
  - Colossians 2:4—Paul does not want them to be “beguiled” i.e., tricked, or deceived by “enticing words.” “Enticing words” are words that are intended to persuade in a bad sense in that they are designed to lead someone into doctrinal error.
  - Colossians 2:8—Paul warned against those who would seek to “spoil” the Colossians or take them as a prize.
  - Colossians 2:18—the specific thing that Paul does not want the Colossians to be beguiled of is their “reward.” The word rendered “of your reward” by the King James translators means “to defraud or beguile of the prize of victory.” Paul is commanding the Colossians (imperative mood) to not “let” themselves be beguiled of their reward. How?
- **in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels**—the people seeking to “beguile” the Colossians of their reward were using the tactic of “voluntary humility” to accomplish it. They put on a humble and lowly minded front. These false teachers were feigning the commendable Christian attribute of “humility” to deceptively gain converts. These false teachers were using their false humility to promote the “worshipping of angels.”
  - Read from Baker page 136.
- **intruding into those things which he hath not seen**—the King James says that people promoting the Gnostic error of the “worshipping of angels” were “intruding into those things which he hath not seen.” According to Noah Webster’s *American Dictionary of the English Language* the word “intruding” means, “entering without invitation, right or welcome.”
  - The King James Bible explicitly states, “not seen” i.e., those who are promoting angel worship are intruding into things that they have seen and don’t know anything about. The reason the King James reads as it does is because there are two separate words in the Textus Receptus for “not” and “seen.”

- Modern versions read differently because their underlying Greek text reads differently. Contrary to popular opinion these textual variants do impact doctrine as it relates to the Angles and their relationship to the body of Christ. Are we able to see Angles today in the dispensation of grace, or aren't we?
- **vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind**—these people that are intruding and carrying on about what they have not actually seen are vain and puffed up by their fleshly mind. In my mind, this final phrase of verse 18 impacts how one ought to understand the pervious phrase. These folks promoting angel worship are “vainly puffed up” because they “intruded” into things that they actually know nothing about.

### Colossians 2:19

- **And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.**
- **And not holding the Head**—the problem with the false humility and angel worship of verse 18 is that it's not “holding the Head.” The verb rendered “holding” in English conveys the idea of forcefully possessing someone.
  - Matthew 14:3—“Herod had laid hold on John. . .”
  - II Thessalonians 2:15—“. . . hold the traditions which you have been taught . . .” i.e., retain them, adhere to and/or cleave to the.
  - Hebrews 4:14—“. . . let us hold fast our profession.”
- Colossians 2:19—the false religion of the Gnostics did not hold Christ as the Head. Rather it sought to replace the worship of Christ via the veneration of inferior substitute mediators. Christ is the Head of the church which is his body.
  - Colossians 1:18
  - Colossians 2:10
  - Ephesians 1:22
  - Ephesians 4:15
  - Ephesians 5:23
  - I Corinthians 11:3—Christ is the head of every man.

- Colossians 2:19—the point Paul is making is that anyone involved with the Gnostic error was not holding fast, tenaciously possessing, or strongly cleaving to the Head of the Body, the Church. Put another way, the answer to the error creeping in at Colossi was found in “holding” fast to Christ as the Head.
- **from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God**—“from which” i.e., Jesus Christ the Head. As the Head, Jesus Christ is the source from which nourishment is ministered to the body. The phrase “from which” speaks of the place of origin or the source out of which the Church’s needs are met.
- The body is “knit together” and “nourishment ministered” via the “joints and bands” that connect the body to the other various members but also to our Head. Notice that “joints and bands” is plural. Paul is using the human body as an illustration of a spiritual truth.
  - Romans 12:5
  - I Corinthians 12:12-24
  - Ephesians 4:16
- Colossians 2:19—via the “joints and bands” the Head provides “nourishment” and “unity” for the members of his body. Consider the following summary statement from Ernest R. Campbell’s commentary on Colossians:
  - “In summary, Jesus Christ is the source of His Body’s nutrition and growing. This growing is accomplished through the different functions of the members of His Body; this growing is the actual outworking of God’s . . . purpose for the Body of Christ, the Church!” (115)