Equip 2012 **[1]**

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Over the Easter weekend I attended the Equip Easter convention. I have been attending Equip for the past three years and always enjoy it for the opportunities which it presents to learn to study the Bible, as well as talks, other workshops and the fellowship. I am happy to say that this year, like the [2] others [3], was great!

Our speaker this year was Nathan Lovell. Originally from Australia, Nathan now lives in South Africa and teaches Hebrew at George Whitefield College [4]. He took us through the book of Kings (that is, 1 Kings and 2 Kings) in a series entitled "The Day the Strength of Men Failed". It was a difficult series in the sense that the story which the book tells often seems hopeless. It is the story of the worldly kingdom(s) trying to establish its own glory en sovereignty, only to bring ruin upon itself. In the process, the Kingdom of God is antagonised, rather than embraced. Even when the kings sought the kingdom of God, they were still ultimately relying on their own strength and could not guarantee the security of their kingdoms. But despite the dismal story being told, there is a glimmer of hope, a foreshadowing of a time when God will establish His Kingdom on Earth, not through kings and cities, but in the hearts of those who trust in Jesus the Messiah. The talks were already very condensed and I cannot go into further detail at this time. It has provided me with much to think about and hopefully I can share some of those thoughts here.

At Equip there are workshops where we learn to read, interpret and teach the Bible. This year I was in the group led by Nathan. He challenged us with a difficult passage: 2 Kings 9–10. We carefully worked through this passage and wrestled with it, ultimately employing the skills which we had learned in the workshops from the previous years. In the end we discussed ways in which we would present talks or studies on this passage. Because we did not produce actual talks, I do not have a final product to share here, as I have had previously. However, I was encouraged to keep thinking about my proposal and I hope to eventually produce a series of blog posts.

Electives are topical workshops between which convention goers can select one to attend. This year I attended the workshop on Discipleship. In brief, discipleship is the growing and encouraging of other Christians. The goal is to work with Christians to have a closer relationship with Christ so that they too can have a fruitful life. Discipleship requires wisdom and discerning and I definitely feel challenged in this respect.

That summarises my experiences of the convention proceedings. I thought it was all well organised and am thankful for all the efforts and sacrifices which were put into the organisation. As I said, the talks and workshops gave me much to think about and I hope to start sharing some of it in the coming weeks and months.

I hope that you had a good Easter as well. Whether you spend time with family or relaxing otherwise,

I trust that you reflected on the significance of Easter:

> "Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." — Isaiah 53:10 (ESV)

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