

# Latter Rain

Magazine of the Christian Israelite Church

(No. 36)



*Ignite Your heart*

Luke 24:32



## From the Inkwell

*It is difficult to come up with a single word for a theme for this issue of Latter Rain. However, I am reminded of the story about Alexander the Great, how at the age of 32 after he had conquered Great Britain, he sat down and cried because he had conquered all the known world, and there was nothing left to conquer! Clearly his focus had been on his actions with little thought towards the outcomes or the attitude with which he had been carrying out those actions! Why was he doing it, what impact was his “victorious pillage” having on others, and, in the end, what would it achieve?*

*God calls on us to follow His commandments as well as to trust in Him, and this requires a balance between actions and attitudes – not a neglect or pre-eminence of one above the other. **HOW – Are You Going?** discusses this balance. The closer we look at the teachings in the Old and New Testaments the more we see a convergence or an interdependence between them (**The Foundation of Good Works**).*

*We believe that one of the balancing links is the help of The Mother Spirit (the Holy Ghost) to “guide (us) into all truth” (John 16:13), which came at the first Whitsuntide. There are **Stages in Developing a Relationship with God**, and a good starting point is to become as little children, **For of Such Is The Kingdom of God**. Do we really offer God the best part of our life, as Abel did (**Self focused or God focused**)? Esther (**Sermon 3**), as a type of the Holy Ghost, worked with Israel to save their lives, just as the Power of Christ and The Holy Ghost today will work in Israel to overcome the evil in them so that they may receive physical redemption – life of spirit, soul and body – at Jesus’ return.*

*“O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always...” Deuteronomy 5:29.*

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# HOW - Are You Going?

***Whether you feel that you are making good progress in your walk with God or not, this article explores HOW you should be approaching the task.***

In Matthew 19:16-22 an incident is recorded where Jesus was asked, “*Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?*” A logical question to someone whom you felt was a teacher. Jesus answered, “*Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do not murder; Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor; and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and*

*follow me. But when the young man heard that saying he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.”*

Was Jesus saying that it was wrong to have possessions? Or was there some other point which Jesus was alluding to which made this man proud of his achievements, and were keeping him from thinking of, and worshipping God with his whole heart?

Isaiah had a similar thought when he exclaimed in chapter 1:10-13, 15-20: “*Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs,*



*or of he goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting... yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Wash you make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow: though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."*

God had given to Israel a code of sacrifices and ordinances, which it appears the people were fulfilling, to the letter but not in the spirit. There is one thing to fulfil the letter of an instruction, and there is another to fulfil the spirit of the instruction. God did not want sacrifices, He would prefer people not to sin and need repentance. Sacrifices were introduced so that the sinner could show sorrow of heart through repentance but if the sinner was not repentant from the heart, the sacrifice was not acceptable to God, but was only a ritual being performed.

We can obey commands, pray to God and go to church regularly, but unless our heart and mind are upon our actions at that time, we are not fulfilling the instruction in the way God wants it fulfilled.

Ezekiel hit on a sore point when he

recorded the facts in Ezekiel 18:26, 27, 30-32. God says, "*When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die. Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed... Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord God. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye."*

I believe Ezekiel is referring to the attitude of the heart when good or bad is being done affecting how it is accounted to the individual. It appears people thought they would accrue points of favour by doing good things, and these would stand them in good stead when they committed wrong acts. For example, if a person goes to church, because it is expected, whilst having little or no respect for the act of faith they are performing and the opportunity of learning that is before them, there is quite a chance that they will become cold in their attendances and in time will neglect their personal prayer and worship. We need to know why we do things and to be patient and continuous in our doing good. Similarly, those who repent from doing wrong, because they

have considered their wrong action, will have their sins forgiven them.

From the three passages discussed above we can surmise that man's ways are not always God's ways, and that if we are going to please God, we need to look at things from His perspective. God sees deeper than the surface. 'Beauty is only skin deep' is a popular saying and how true it is. How often a person can appeal to the eye but when they speak their mind we are repelled from them; on the other hand, often a person whose looks do not strike us, when they talk and we observe their actions, we are drawn to them. God sees and judges man by his heart, and his actions; as Jesus said, It is that which cometh out from a man that tells what type of a person they are (Mark 7:14-22). God also judges a man on the attitudes behind his actions, that which emanates from the heart within: those temptations, which he strives to overcome, judging how patiently he holds to his faith to overcome them. God notices if a person is 'trying to impress others by their actions.' This is why he condemned the Scribes and Pharisees (Luke 20:46-47) - it is tied up in the attitude behind why and how we do good that counts with God. The actions are an outward show, the mind and heart are the inward show, and together they form the attitude.

I read recently in a financial magazine the following quote, in reference to one reason why some people succeed in business and why some people do not succeed. We all know the object of working or doing business, is that we will come out financially better, but this is the comment that was made in this regard: "If they (people) are going in to business to make money, perhaps that is the wrong reason. Once people become employed in their own business,

they may not be matching that lifestyle experience that they are used to. Their whole life is going to change – added stress, and added pressure – until they get back to what they were used to. So you've got to have the right attitude. What provides positive attitude in a business is having passion for why you are in business. The money aspect will come if you have the other things in place." Even the commercial world recognizes the correct attitude is essential if you are going to succeed.

The common expression, 'What is in it for me?' needs to be put sideways, and we need to think of religion as 'What can I do for God: He has done so much for me.' Our degree of humility, willingness to learn, eagerness to pray, submission of our own ego to fulfil the will of someone else, are all ways we prepare our heart in the right attitude to God. First must come our willingness to do something for God and the degree of our willingness measures what we will let God do back for us.

Returning to the rich man in Matthew 19, he must have had his mind on his riches above his willingness to serve God. The willingness to offer sacrifices was above the Israelites' desire to be obedient to the will of God. Ezekiel's lesson is that God looks at our attitude of mind when we do things. Business based on personal gain is liable to fail, unless there is a passion beyond the desire of gain for why people are in business.

*"...Obey my voice, and I will be your God..."* Jeremiah 7:23; *"If ye love me, keep my commandments"* John 14:15; *"...turn yourselves and live ye"* Ezekiel 18:32; *"I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil"* John 17:15.

These statements are absolute, but so

pure in their intention that it is hard to comprehend them. We need to have our attitude right so that we obey God in purity of thought and intent as well as in action. This type of life would transcend the need of repentance because we would be doing the will of God from our heart, not just from the letter. We would be living by the new Covenant where no man would need to teach another, because God's instructions are written in their heart (Jeremiah 31:33-34). *"But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they*

*shall be my people"* Jeremiah 31:33. Their attitude is right with God. HOW they are going is important as well as WHERE they are going.

In times past a handshake was the seal of an agreement, because both parties were going to work for the good of each other. God has promised spiritual help to guide and direct us if we ask for it, so let us make a handshake with God and through the spiritual help that is promised strive to do His will in every thing that we do, directed from our heart and mind, presenting ourselves to Him in spirit and soul and body for Him to do His will in us. 📖

## ***Hymn No. 91***

(Matthew 19:17)

Holy as Thou, O Lord, is none!  
Thy holiness is all Thy own;  
A drop of that unbounded sea  
Is ours, a drop derived from Thee.

And when Thy purity we share,  
Thy only glory we declare;  
And, humbled into nothing, own  
Holy and pure is God alone!

Sole, self-existing God and Lord,  
By all Thy heavenly hosts adored;  
Let all on earth bow down to Thee,  
And own Thy peerless majesty:

Thy power unparallel'd confess,  
Establish'd on the Rock of Peace;  
The Rock that never shall remove,  
The Rock of pure, Almighty Love!

# The Foundation

Jesus told a parable about two sons who were asked by their father, "...*Son, go work to day in my vineyard*" Matthew 21:28. We recall how one son said he would go, but did not, but the other said he would not, but yet repented and went. However, the outcome of the parable is that God wants people not only to obey His instructions, but to do so with a correct attitude. Both attitude and actions need to be aligned.

In Matthew chapter 5, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus gave a list of instructions called the Beatitudes. This was a series of 'Blessed are...' statements.

Blessed are:

- The poor in spirit,
- they that mourn,
- the meek,
- those that hunger and thirst after righteousness,
- the merciful,
- the pure in heart,
- the peacemakers,
- they which are persecuted for righteousness sake, and
- ye, when men shall revile you.

It could be argued that these instructions were not at all like the Ten Commandments: 'Thou shalt not...' followed by a number of actual instructions relating to relationships with God, parents, family and fellow human beings. These were specific action-oriented instructions. Some people think of the Old Testament Commandments as representing 'the works of the law' (works) and the New Testament

instructions as representing 'faith' or outlining a 'Christian' way of life.

James talked about faith and works in chapter 2 of his Epistle. "...*shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works*" James 2:18. Commonly the term 'works' is taken to refer to the Old Testament instructions about living – for example in James 2:11, James refers to a number of the ten commandments – and is aligned with keeping a set of specific laws.

However, there is an ethos which forms part of the Old Testament instructions that is often thought of as having been introduced in the New Testament era. This part of the law is associated with works of societal responsibility – that is our relationship with other people, our treatment of those less fortunate than ourselves, and our use of resources and our reaction with the environment in which we live. Whilst these actions, which are summarised in the Sermon on the Mount, are often thought of as being uniquely Christian, they are very much embedded in the Old Testament law.

Job, for example, in chapter 31 outlines what he sees as some basic requirements of living if he is to classify himself as a God-fearing person. These included:

Vs 13: "*If I did despise the cause of my manservant...when they contended with me.*"

Vs 16: "*If I have withheld the poor from their desire...*"

Vs 16: "*or have caused the eyes of*

# of Good Works

*the widow to fail...*”

Vs 17: “... *or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof...*”

Vs 19,20: “...*if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep...*”

Vs 21: “...*I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate...*”

Vs 24: “*If I have made gold my hope...*”

Vs 28: “...*for I should have denied the God that is above.*”

Isaiah in Chapter 58 listed a similar list of responsibilities:

Vs 6: “...*loose the bands of wickedness...*”

Vs 6: “...*undo the heavy burdens...*”

Vs 6: “...*let the oppressed go free...*”

Vs 6: “...*break every yoke...*”

Vs 7: “...*deal thy bread to the hungry...*”

Vs 7: “...*that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house...*”

Vs 7: “...*when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him...*”

Vs 7: “...*thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh.*”

In a sense it might be generally said that whilst the Old Testament Commandments were activity-focused, the New Testament instructions are attitude-focused. But both are striving for the same outcomes.

James spoke further about the balance between observation of “commands” and showing a right approach to the things around us: “*What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without*”

## **Old or New Covenant?**

***Neither - they are the same.***

What difference is there between the 10 commandments and Jesus’ instruction ‘to love one another as I have loved you’. If you treat others as you would like to be treated yourself, then you wouldn’t do against them any of the actions outlined in the 10 commandments, ie. stealing, adultery, lying, etc. Jesus summarised the Law into two statements: Do unto others as you would have others do unto you and Love God with all your heart and mind and body. It is not a new covenant but a reinforcement of the Old Covenant and a re-education on how to keep the Law - from the heart and not the letter.

*thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works” James 2:14-18.*

So when we hear people talking about the need to ‘keep the Law’ let us not forget that an integral foundation of the law is a requirement to observe all these attributes concerning our relationship with, and attitudes towards, others in our family, in

society and in our interaction with the world around us.

With the Power promised from God in the latter days, let us seek to be true servants of God, and agree to obey His laws and commands doing so with a right attitude that embraces care and concern for the whole of His creation.📖

## I Take - He Undertakes

I clasp the hand of love divine,  
I claim the gracious promise mine,  
And add to His my countersign,  
I take - He undertakes.

I take salvation full and free,  
Through Him who gave His life for me,  
He undertakes my ALL to be,  
I take - He undertakes.

I take Him as my holiness,  
My spirit’s spotless, heavenly dress,  
I take the Lord, my righteousness,  
I take - He undertakes.

I take the promised Holy Ghost,  
I take the power of Pentecost,  
To fill me to the uttermost,  
I take - He undertakes.

I simply take Him at His Word,  
I praise Him that my prayer is heard,  
And claim my answer from the Lord,  
I take - He undertakes.

I take Thee, blessed Lord,  
I give myself to Thee,  
And Thou, according to Thy WOrd,  
Dost undertake for me.

# Statement of Belief

**The Christian Israelite Church beliefs can be fully supported by the Scriptures. Here is an outline:**

## **We Believe**

- \* In God Almighty creator of all things (Genesis 1:1).
- \* In the existence of Satan, the Devil, in whom God allowed iniquity to be placed (James 2:19; Ezekiel 28:14,15).
- \* That God created a spirit-existence in which the devil manifested evil and caused some of the spirits to rebel against God (Isaiah 14:12-14; Jude 6).
- \* That God created our physical world, to which each person comes with a body and a soul made alive by a spirit from the spiritual creation (Luke 9:55; Genesis 2:7).
- \* That God gave His people instructions on the way they should live, which instructions were "*for their good always*" (Deuteronomy 6:24).
- \* That all have sinned and come "*short of the glory of God*" (Romans 3:23; 2 Corinthians 5:19).
- \* That God has reconciled the (whole) world to Himself through the sacrifice of Jesus (John 3:16,17).
- \* That through belief in the sacrifice of Jesus believers are counted as righteous before God, and can be assured of the resurrection of their souls (a Spiritual body) at Jesus' return (1 Timothy 4:10; 1 Corinthians 15:44).
- \* That there will be a small number who will fully prove their faith by a work of true obedience to God's instructions and will thereby receive the prize of the highest calling of God, the redemption of spirit and soul and body - this living mortal Body made Immortal without seeing death (1 Thessalonians 5:23; Revelation 14:1-5; Hebrews 11:39,40).
- \* That Jesus Christ will return to this earth again, subdue the power of Satan and reign forever and ever (Revelation chapters 19 and 20).
- \* That the return of Jesus Christ is near and we are living in the period described in Scripture as the latter days (Matthew chapter 24; Mark chapter 13 and Luke chapter 21).
- \* That there are promises in the Scriptures especially to Israel - God's chosen people (1 Peter 2:9).
- \* That although Israel of old did not accept the challenge of spiritually being God's peculiar people, a remnant of their descendants will come forward in the latter days to fulfill the obligations and receive the promises (Revelation 7:1-8).
- \* That the Mission of the Christian Israelite Church is to awaken the lost ten tribes of Israel to this special inheritance to be the physical Immortal "Bride of the Lamb" and to be the vehicle for the task of bringing them all together at God's appointed time (Matthew 10:5,6; Revelation chapter 19).

**We believe that God is the absolute Judge and Arbiter and that we as His servants have an obligation to respond to what He puts in each heart, and that whilst we seek to proclaim and discuss our beliefs, we have no right to contend with other people about them.**

# Stages in Developing a

In 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel chapter 15 is the story about King Saul following (or not following) an instruction given to him by the prophet Samuel. It is interesting to follow the stages of Saul's response to the situation, and to compare these to the stages in our own relationship with God.

Saul was given a reasonably straight forward instruction: "*Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass*"(v3). An instruction like this today would seem quite inappropriate, but at that time it was in accord with acceptable social behaviour. Today we could interpret this request as our instruction from God to totally overcome and destroy the evil from within us.

Saul obeyed God's command – but not completely. King Saul said to Samuel: "*I have performed the commandment of the Lord*" (v13). In his heart he knew that he had allowed some exceptions to what had been requested – he knew that he had interpreted some of God's instructions his own way. However, through self-justification, he argued within himself that near-enough was good-enough! But you can't fool God. "*What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep..?*" (v14), asked Samuel, knowing that the commandment had been to "*...destroy all that they have...*" (v3). Saul suggested that he had

just made a little modification to the command. "*...for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God...*" (v15). What was Saul trying to do? Saul couldn't possibly know better or more than God. Perhaps Saul didn't recognize at first that he was altering God's instruction to fit his own will.

How often today we like to reinterpret God's commands and make them fit in with what we want to do, rather than just follow the instructions!

Samuel pointed out a few home-truths to Saul (verses 16-19). "*Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord?*" Saul then took the approach of blaming others in an attempt to justify his actions (vs20-21). "*But the people took of the spoil...*" (verse 21).

Samuel again pointed out to Saul that he had not obeyed the instruction given to him (vs22-23). The word stubbornness is used by Samuel indicating that to this point Saul had been trying to continue to deceive himself. After this second exposure, Saul realised that he could not continue to deceive Samuel. "*I have sinned*", he confessed (v24). However, Saul then wanted to continue the previous rosy relationship and to pretend that all was well. Samuel could not play this game. Remember James said, "*A double minded man is unstable in all his ways*" James 1:8.

## A Case Study

# Relationship with God:

Once we have turned our back on God we cannot return unless we truly repent. Saul thought he could offer sacrifice and be reconciled to God and perhaps go and do the same again. But Samuel pointed out, “...to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams” (v22). A true change of heart needed to accompany the confession.

After this Saul inwardly became aware of the consequences of his separation from God, and started to truly repent of his wrong, and sought to worship God for who He is, and not just for show in front of others. “Then he said, I have sinned...turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord thy God” (v30).

In the development of a relationship with God there can be a number of stages. Firstly we must acknowledge God, who He is and the difference between right and wrong. This can only be done if we are convicted by God’s Spirit to understand the difference. Jesus said, “No man can come unto me unless the Father which sent me draw him.” *John 6:44*. God draws the person to Him, but it is up to the person drawn to seek to develop a relationship with God, through prayer, Bible study, etc., and on a daily basis (at least) to give their hearts over to follow God’s will and to ask Him to do His will daily in their lives. Through the development of this relationship, our focus will be upwards (heavenly) not horizontal (earthly), and our eyes will be towards God and the greater good, not to ourselves and the lesser. The only way we can overcome the sin within us is through the development of this relationship between Creator and created, and by

acknowledging that without God’s help, we are totally incapable of any ‘good’ work.

Then, once convicted of sin (John 16:8-9), we must seek to God for forgiveness through repentance. “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land” *2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles 7:14*.

It is then at this stage that we begin to realise that there is something within us which still stops us from reaching a standard of full obedience to God. “For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me” *Romans 7:19-21*. From

“...whoever would be great among you must be your servant.”

Mark 10:43



Paul's statement we conclude that there is something called 'evil' that inherently dwells within each of us, and that the final stage in developing a full relationship with God is to ask for His Power to not only overcome our sins, but to remove the evil from within our very physical bodies so that we will not continue to sin. Jesus said, "*I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil*" John 17:15.

Let us then, as Saul, seek to go through the steps of recognition, repentance and remorse for the wrongs we have done, and direct our eyes to the goal stated by Samuel, "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." As Samuel helped Saul through this process, we today have the great High Priest in Jesus Christ. Jesus gave himself as a sacrifice for our wrongs, and through Christ we can receive Power from God to go on to obedience.📖

## God's Reason

I don't know how to say it,  
But somehow it seems to me  
That maybe we are stationed,  
Where God wants us to be;  
That little place we're filling  
Is the reason for our birth,  
And just to do the work we do,  
He sent us down to earth.  
If God had wanted otherwise,  
I reckon He'd have made  
Each of us a little different,  
Of a worse or better grade;  
And since God knows and understands  
All things of land and sea,  
I fancy that He placed us here,  
Just where He wanted us to be.  
Sometimes we get to thinking,  
As our labours we review,  
That we should like a higher place  
With greater things to do;  
But we come to the conclusion,  
When the envying is stilled,  
That the post to which God sent us  
Is the post He wanted filled.  
And there isn't any service we can scorn  
For it may be just the reason  
God allowed us to be born

## Israelite Alphabet

*(From a book handwritten by a Sunday School teacher at Melbourne CI Church, dated August, 1916).*

**A**bstain from all appearance of evil (1st Thessalonians 5:22).

**B**lessed are they that do His commandments that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city (Revelation 22:14).

**C**ome My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast (Isaiah 26:20).

**D**raw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you (James 4:8).

**E**vening, and morning and at noon will I pray and cry aloud and He shall hear my voice (Psalms 55:17).

**F**ear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom (Luke 12:32).

**G**od is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble (Psalm 46:1).

**H**ear my voice, O God, in my prayer preserve my life from fear of the enemy (Psalm 64:1).

**I**f it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men (Romans 12:18).

**J**udge not, that ye be not judged (Matthew 7:1).

**K**eepesthy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile (Psalm 34:13).

**L**ove not the world, neither the things that are in the world (1st John 2:15).

**M**ake haste to help me, O Lord of my salvation (Psalm 38:22).

**N**o man can serve two masters (Matthew 6:24).

**O**h that My people and hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in My ways (Psalm 81:13).

**P**ray without ceasing (1st Thessalonians 5:17).

**Q**uench not the Spirit (1st Thessalonians 5:19).

**R**ecompense to no man evil for evil (Romans 12:17).

**S**earch the Scriptures (John 5:39).

**T**rust in the Lord and do good (Pslam 37:3).

**U**phold me according to Thy Word that I may live (Psalm 119:116).

**V**erily, verily, I say unto you, if a man keep My sayings he shall never see death (John 8:51).

**W**atch and pray that ye enter not into temptation (Matthew 26:41).

**X**amine yourselves (2nd Corinthians 13:5).

**Y**et the Lord will command His loving kindness in the daytime, and in the night His song shall be with me, and my prayer shall be unto the God of my life.

**Z**ion heard and was glad, and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of Thy judgments, O Lord" (Psalm 97:8).

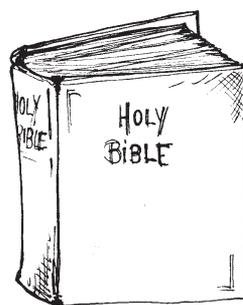
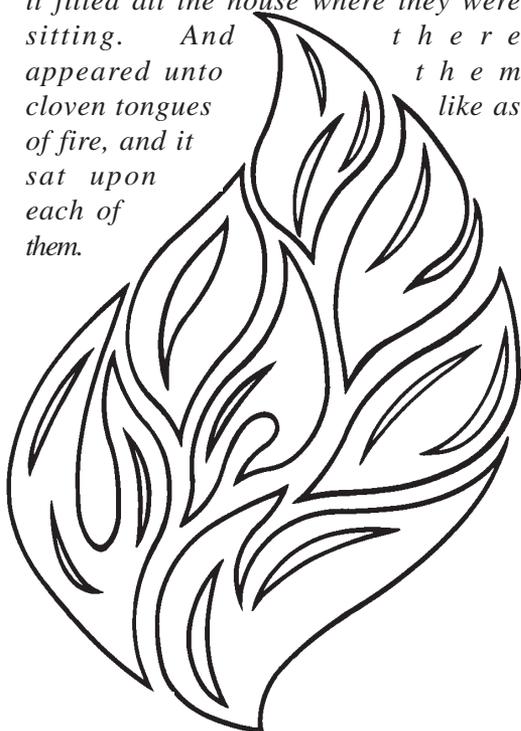
# Debug Your Bible:

## “Whitsuntide”

Whitsuntide is one of the three most prominent Christian Festivals:

1. Easter
2. Christmas
3. Whitsuntide.

Whitsuntide commemorates the occasion of the descent of the Holy Ghost on the disciples in the upper room in Acts chapter 2:1-4, *“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.*



*And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them*

### Feast of Weeks - Shavuot

The second of 3 major festivals: Passover and Sukkot are the other 2. The Jewish people count (the Counting of the Omer which is a reminder of the importance of Passover and Shavuot) down the days from the 2nd day of Passover to the day before Shavuot (49 days or 7 full weeks). Shavuot is also known as Pentecost because it falls on the 50th day. It is a variable feast, because it is determined by when the Passover is celebrated. Work is not permitted during Shavuot. It is customary to stay up the entire first night of Shavuot studying the Torah, then pray as early as possible in the morning. A dairy meal is eaten at least once during Shavuot as a reminder of God's promise to Israel of a land flowing with milk and honey. The Book of Ruth is read at this time. Shavuot is a time to remember the giving of the Torah to Israel. Agriculturally this feast is known as the Festival of Firstfruits symbolising the harvesting of the firstfruits and bringing of them to the temple.

**Shavuot for the year 2006 which is Jewish Year 5766 will occur from sunset June 1st, 2006 to nightfall June 3rd.**

*utterance.”* As you will notice from the passage, Whitsuntide is the same period

as Pentecost. Pentecost occurs on the 50<sup>th</sup> day after Passover – thus its name *pente* and *cost*. The word Pentecost is a Greek word and therefore only used in the New Testament. In the Old Testament Pentecost was known as the Shavuot (Feast of Weeks or Feast of Firstfruits) and celebrated God giving the Torah to the Jewish people. This was also a harvest-time feast associated with the bringing in of the crops, hence the name Firstfruits. During Shavuot, Jewish people would study the Torah and the book of Ruth. The analogy is drawn that Passover and Pentecost are so important because the first (Passover) celebrates the release of the Israelites from physical bondage, the second (Pentecost) the Israelites' release from spiritual bondage. *“And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year’s end”* Exodus 34:22 and *“And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the Lord thy God with a tribute of a freewill offering of thine hand, which thou shalt give unto the Lord thy God, according as the Lord thy God hath blessed thee”* Deuteronomy 16:10.

Whitsuntide/Pentecost is not celebrated on a particular day in the calendar, rather it is determined by whenever Easter falls. The formula for finding out when Easter will be is:

“Easter shall be celebrated on the first Sunday that occurs after the first full moon on or after the vernal equinox. The ‘full moon’ in this rule is the ecclesiastical ‘full

### Vernal Equinox

The **vernal equinox** (or **spring equinox**) marks the beginning of astronomical spring. It occurs around 20<sup>th</sup> March in the Northern Hemisphere, and around 23 September in the Southern Hemisphere. In Chinese culture the vernal equinox marks the middle of spring. At the same moment that the vernal equinox occurs in one hemisphere, it is the time of the autumnal equinox in the other hemisphere.

moon’, which is defined as the 14<sup>th</sup> day of a tabular lunation, where day 1 corresponds to the ecclesiastical New Moon. It does not always fall on the same date as the astronomical full moon. The ecclesiastical ‘vernal equinox’ is always on March 21<sup>st</sup>. Therefore, Easter must be celebrated on a Sunday between the days of March 22<sup>nd</sup> and April 25<sup>th</sup>”(1).

The celebration of the feast has gone on for nearly 2,000 years, but unfortunately the celebration has lost a lot of its significance and importance for this and the last generation. Prior to that it was a major event on the calendar for all of Europe, and still is with some today. Many English villages had Whitsun-parades, Whitsun-plays and other social activities specifically designed for Whitsuntide.

Whitsuntide is an English word, ‘tide’ being old English for time, so it is literally Whitsun time. The word Whitsun has commonly been assumed to mean ‘white’; it

*“You shall count for yourselves - from the day after the shabbat, from the day when you bring the Omer of the waving - seven shabbats, they shall be complete. Until the day after the seventh sabbath you shall count, fifty days... You shall convoke on this very day - there shall be a holy convocation for yourselves - you shall do no laborious work; it is an eternal decree in your dwelling places for your generations”* Leviticus 21:15-16, 21 (Haftorah).

### The Female Spirit

“The development of the persons and attributes of God - Of these *some are male and some female*. Now, for some reason or other best known to themselves, the translators of the Bible have carefully crowded out of existence and smothered up every reference to the fact that the Deity is both masculine and feminine. They have translated a *feminine plural* by a *masculine singular* in the case of the word Elohim. They have, however, left an inadvertent admission of their knowledge that it was plural in Genesis 4:26; “*And Elohim said: Let Us make man.*” Again (v27), how could Adam be made in the image of the Elohim, male and female, unless the Elohim were male and female also? The word Elohim is a plural formed from the feminine singular ALH, *Eloh*, by adding IM to the word. But inasmuch as IM is usually the termination of the masculine plural, and is here added to a feminine noun, it gives to the word Elohim the sense of a female potency united to a masculine idea, and thereby capable of producing an offspring. Now, we hear much of the Father and the Son, but we hear nothing of the Mother in the ordinary religions of the day. But in the Qabalah we find that the Ancient of Days conforms Himself simultaneously into the Father and the Mother, and thus begets the Son. Now, this Mother is Elohim. Again, we are usually told that the Holy Spirit is masculine. But the word *RVCh, Ruach*, meaning Spirit, is feminine, as appears from the following passage of the Sepher Yetzirah: “*AChTh RVCh ALHIM ChIIM, Achath* (feminine, not Achad, masculine) *Ruach Elohim Chiim*: “One is She the Spirit of the Elohim of Life.”

**Kabbala Denudata: The Kabbalah Unveiled.**, S L McGregor Mathers, Translator.

doesn't, it means 'wisdom'.(2) Thus literally this time is called “Wisdom Time”. The Christian Israelite Church believes that the Holy Ghost is the Female Spirit (also known as Jerusalem Above). In the Old Testament, theologians agree that the Holy Ghost is not mentioned, but Wisdom is accepted as being the representation of the Female Spirit in Old Testament literature, such as in the Songs of Solomon, etc. For thousands of years the Jews have celebrated Shavuot by reading the book of Ruth – again the focus is on the wisdom of a woman. It is interesting that the time of Whitsuntide/Pentecost has so many female undertones showing the powerful influence of the Holy Ghost with humanity. The concept of the Female Spirit would not have been alien to the early British church as they had always had a strong belief in the Female Spirit (also known as the Mother Goddess) who was the mother of all things. Now we find in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the undertones of remembrance of the Female Spirit, even though long forgotten by many, but if one looks they are still present.

Whitsun is also a special time on the European calendar in places such as Germany, Luxembourg, etc:

- \* In Italy it was customary to scatter rose petals from the ceiling of the churches to recall the miracle of the fiery tongues; hence in Sicily and elsewhere in Italy **Whitsunday** is called *Pascha rosatum*. The Italian name *Pascha rossa* comes from the red colours of the vestments used on **Whitsunday**.
- \* In France it was customary to blow trumpets during Divine service, to recall the sound of the mighty wind which accompanied the Descent of the Holy Spirit.
- \* In England the gentry amused themselves with horse races. The Whitsun Ales or merrymakings are

*“Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets: she crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying, How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: they would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil” Proverbs 1:20-33.*

almost wholly obsolete in England. At these ales the Whitsun plays were performed.

- \* At Vespers of Pentecost in the Oriental Churches, the extraordinary service of genuflexion, accompanied by long poetical prayers and psalms, takes place. On Pentecost the Russians carry flowers

and green branches in their hands. It ought also to be noted that the week prior to this holiday is known as “green week”, during which all manner of plants and herbs are gathered. The Eastern Orthodox church considers this whole week to be an ecclesiastic feast(3).

Whitsun was the time when people would dress in white, after having been baptised at Easter, and walk in white to Church to begin their new spiritual life. It was a time of renewal and hope for those newly baptised. This tradition has died away though, with the rise in popularity of infant baptism over adult. In medieval days it was a time a jousting and tournaments for the people to participate and view.

Interestingly Whit-Monday is celebrated in England, Wales, Iceland, Sweden, The Netherlands, Belgium and Germany and traditionally Whitsuntide is the week after Whitsunday, but particularly the first 3 days. In England this time was the time the Morris dance was performed dating from as early as 1477. Oliver Cromwell, with his subjugation of many religious festivals, tried to do away with the celebration, but after his downfall festivities were brought back in and are still enacted in some English towns today.

In one of the earliest church warden’s books to be uncovered (1653) it states that Communion was only administered 4 times a year: at Whitsuntide, Michaelmas, Christmas and Easter. So it has always been a very important time on the Christian calendar.

For those readers in the southern hemisphere, the agricultural importance of Pentecost/Whitsuntide is lost because it is Autumn not Spring down south. This time of year was the bringing in of the first of the crops and thanking God for giving them a good harvest. Again the Female Spirit is

ever present in the growth and nurturing of new life (as in planting and reaping) and the promise of provisions to the faithful.

Whitsuntide is a time of rebirth and new hope – just read what the Holy Ghost did for the disciples and realise that this can be a powerful time. We can only imagine what it was like in that upper room amidst flames of spiritual fire, but the results of that experience are clearly seen in the many documents left in perpetuity from witnesses of the amazing events that

happened after this episode. The disciples became zealous, where they had been insipid, and the message of the Good News of Jesus Christ raised was spread throughout the known world, and is still spreading today.📖

#### Footnotes:

- (1) <http://wilstar.com/holidays/easter.htm>
- (2) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pentecost>
- (3) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whitsuntide>

## Fear

Many of us abound with fears which often are hidden and kept out of sight by an outward ‘vener’. Perhaps we fear the future, the economic situation, etc. So much is happening in this world of changing attitudes and values - our family units are changing, we fear changes in our community and churches, our children may drop out of ‘society’, or not want to finish their education. Fear is a negative attitude, and is so disastrous in a world that needs positive and constructive thinking.

As believers in Jesus Christ and the Holy Scriptures, we all need to build up our knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures so that we, individually, may become stronger in our faith and can draw on the resources available to us. Then we may stand firmly, knowing that spiritual help and reinforcement are at hand for all who seek it.

“Nice sounding words and phrases”, I hear someone say. Yes, but let us see for ourselves just what is promised on this subject of ‘fear’. 2nd Timothy 1:7,8 states, “*For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of the Lord...*”.

In 1st John 4:18 we learn that, “*There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth*

*out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love”.*

It seems logical that if we, as individuals, hold strong fears, then obviously we do not possess “that love which casteth out fear”, so what is the answer?

We read it in 1st John 4:12, “*If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us*”. If we believe this truth, then fear should begin to vanish from us, but let us read in verse 20, “*If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?*” Now we are getting to the crux of the matter, for verse 21 states, “*And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also*”, and the key to it all is found in 1st John 5:3, “*For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous*”.

So we sum up and learn from these Scriptures that fear brings torment, but perfect love casteth out fear. To be perfect in Love, we must not only love our brother whom we can see, but we should love God whom we have not seen. How do we LOVE GOD? 1st John 5:3 answers, “*For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments*”.

# Focus on Esther

*Then Esther the queen answered and said...let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request” Esther 7:3.*

*“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 3:16.*

Taking this as our guide, we shall have to show, in the first place, why the queen asked for life, and then for her people; and, in the second place, show the spiritual instruction from the temporal circumstance.

We find that one Haman, whom the king Ahasuerus promoted, setting his seat above all the princes that were with him: because that Mordecai, a relative of queen Esther, would not bow down to him nor do him reverence as all the king’s servant did, the king having so commanded concerning him; that Haman then sought an opportunity to cause Mordecai and the Jewish people to be slain, and he came before the king and offered him money to obtain the power of destroying them, saying, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king’s laws: therefore it is not for the king’s profit to suffer them (Esther 3:1-9).

We find also that king Ahaseurus had a law, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death, except those to whom the king shall hold out the golden scepter, that

he may live; so that when Mordecai desired queen Esther to go before the king and entreat for the lives of himself and her kindred the Jews, she was afraid. But when Mordecai showed to her that she herself would not escape, forasmuch as she also was a Jewess, she then made up her mind to venture her life for herself and her people and to go in before the king, contrary to the law.

These, then, being the temporal circumstances which caused Esther to petition for her own life and for that of her people, we now proceed to show, in the second place, the spiritual instruction.

Taking king Ahasuerus as a figure of Jehovah, and Mordecai as a figure of Jesus, the woman’s seed, and Esther, the queen, as a figure of the Heavenly Jerusalem, resting on those who seek for Her, and Haman as a figure of Satan, let us show the work of the restoration of fallen man.

In the creation what do we find? That Satan succeeded in accomplishing this sentence, to be passed by God, the Almighty King, upon man: *“Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return”* Genesis 3:19. This sentence was pronounced upon his body; but then we find the promise of the woman’s seed to get this sentence reversed (Genesis 3:15), as we here see that it was the intercession of queen Esther which caused the king to grant unto the Jews that they might stand for their lives against their enemies.

We find that at the appointed time came the woman’s seed, Jesus, to withstand Satan, the destroyer of the creation of God,

## *or Sermon 3*

the Almighty King, as Mordecai sought for the deliverance of his people, and he sought for the assistance of the woman and by her help he accomplished their deliverance, and Jesus Christ also Himself is waiting for His bride before He is glorified (John 17:10,22; Revelation 19:7-9; Jeremiah 33:16); for the Immortal Spirit coming down to Israel will cause them to utter the same petition as Jesus when He said, "*I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil*" John 17:15, and their petition agreeing together will be heard (Matthew 18:19); and Jesus also says, "*The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly*" John 10:10; signifying the life of the body as well as the soul.

We find that Esther, the queen, fasted for three days and nights, with her maidens, being figurative of the three dispensations in which the whole creation has groaned and travailed in pain, waiting for the redemption of their bodies (Romans :22,23); and all the Jewish people fasted for her, and she said, And so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law, and if I perish I perish. And we find that neither she nor her people did perish, for the king granted her petition, for she obtained favour in his sight; and the king held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand, so Esther drew near and touched the top of the sceptre (Esther 4:16, 17; 5:2).

And we find that the craft of Haman was defeated, by his being hanged on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai (Esther 7:10); and the people he would have slain were preserved from destruction by the destruction of himself.

Then did not Satan, in man, seek the destruction of the woman' seed, Jesus – did

he not cause the erection of the cross as Haman did the gallows? And though Satan succeeded in taking the life of the blood, wherein in man is that evil which he has power to attract, but which the blood of Jesus was free from, it being shed for a ransom for all the soul that sinneth shall die (Hebrews 9:22; Revelation 20:6; Ezekiel 18:4); yet do we find that the Almighty King had given him power to take it again (John 10:18). And did He not take the same body and it never saw corruption (Acts 13:37)? And did He not thus become the father of the immortal world, as the first Adam became by the fall the father of the mortal world?

But who at His first coming stood with Him? For He stood alone for His life, though willing to do the will of His Father when He said, "*...O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt*" Matthew 26:39. "*And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me*" Isaiah 63:5.

We find that Esther's people stood with her for their lives, that for thirty days she was not to go in unto the king in the inner court.

So now the people of God are called to stand for their lives, for they will not be as the children of the bride-chamber, mourning when the bridegroom is taken from them (Matthew 9:15), their eyes being now opened to see the state they are in by being born of the flesh and not of God, and they will now stand for their lives and seek for the intercession of Jesus to be answered where He says, "*I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil*" John 17:15, and they will stand, and perish not. And the time when the church

of Christ is to stand for their lives we find is pointed out in the Scriptures, for Hosea says, “*After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight*” Hosea 6:2. And Jesus says, “*...Behold I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected*” Luke 13:32, He being born in the fifth thousand years, and in the sixth thousand years He will be perfected by receiving His bride – the one hundred and forty four thousand. The two days during which He cast out devils being the two thousand years of the dispensation of the gospel.

Now, we find that Jesus, the woman’s seed, came after two dispensations (or two days) had passed away: and this was the time when God revived the hope of immortality in the church; and at the age of thirty the Spirit of the Godhead descended, and abode upon Him three years, afterwards dwelt fully in Him (Colossians 2:9), He then having entered into the inner court, which is being immortal; and the almighty King, His Father hath given Him “*...power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him*” John 17:2. “*And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish...*” John 10:28, their bodies – which will now shortly be fulfilled, for we are now in the third day, when “*He will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight*” Hosea 6:2.

Here, then, we see the same power given to Jesus, the woman’s seed, as king Ahasuerus gave power to Queen Esther over her life, and the lives of her people.

But we find, as it was then the people were a scattered people, so now the people or seed of God are a scattered people – scattered to the four winds of heaven (Matthew 24:31).

They know not but that they must die, for Satan, as Haman, persuades them, “*It is appointed unto men once to die*” Hebrews 9:27. He persuades them yet to bow down to the evil, in which bondage he has held man since the fall; but now the time is come, the Lord looks down from the height of his sanctuary in heaven, beholds the earth, hears the groaning of the prisoner (which is Jesus, the woman’s seed at his first coming), and looses those that are appointed to die – those that are the seed of Israel at his second coming (Psalm 79:11). And like as the sentence which Haman persuaded the king to pass on the Jews fell on his own head, so will the sentence of death now fall on Satan, and men be freed from it, if they agree for his power to be taken from them.

The disciples knew of this great salvation (Jude 3), but did not obtain it, because the time of deliverance was not then come; yet they had the first fruits of the Spirit, and were waiting for the adoption, “*...to wit the redemption of our body*” Romans 8:22,23.

And as Esther obtained power from king Ahasuerus for the Jews to slay their enemy, so does Jesus, the woman’s seed, now give power to the mortal and immortal woman to slay the evil in man, that man should live as Jesus liveth; for he says, “*Because I live, ye shall live also*” John 14:19.

And as the command of king Ahasuerus was sent to all provinces (Esther chapter 8), so now is the everlasting gospel (Revelation 14:6) being sent into all nations. “*And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come*” Matthew 24:14.

And this gospel testifies unto the people of God scattered abroad that the decree or sentence of death obtained by

Satan is to be now withdrawn; it calls them to awake, for now their redemption is nigh, even the redemption of their body (1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:23), and they are now called to go on unto perfection, if God permit (Hebrews 6:1-3).

Therefore, if there be no vision, how can there be sight? Or how can it be received? For it says, “*Where there is no vision, the people perish*” Proverbs 29:18. But the seals are being broken open, for the lion of the tribe of Judah has prevailed to open and loose the seals (Revelation 5:5). And as the wise men and Zeresh, the wife of Haman, said unto him, “*If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou has begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him*” Esther 6:13.

Then, reader, if thou be of the seed of Israel, which light the Spirit of God will

give thee, if thou seek for it; for we are now in the time spoken of by the prophet, “*The days of visitation are come*” Hosea 9:7; it being the last day, being the sixth thousand years, to give immortality to those who will be found standing with Him, being of the seed of the Jew, against whom Satan, as Haman, shall not prevail: though he uses the wisdom of the evil that is in man to say he will. For this is the will of the Lord, “*That ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God*” Romans 12:1, the Almighty King.

Then seek that ye may have them cleansed from the evil that they may be found vessels fit for the Master’s use (2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 2:21), that He may show His power dwelling in you; for the Scripture says, “*Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power*” Psalm 110:3 - which day we have now approached unto. 

## Persian Customs in the Book of Esther

The Book of Esther records events during the reign of King Ahasuerus (Xerxes) in the fifth century BC at Shushan (Susa), administrative capital of the Persian Empire. After the death of Darius I (the Persian king who had allowed any Jews who desired to return to their homeland to do so), his son Ahasuerus became king. Ahasuerus was the king who became dissatisfied with his queen Vashti and banished her, marrying Esther.

Royal Persian feasts were noted for their splendor and opulence. Esther describes the Persian custom of eating while reclining on beds or couches. All eating utensils were made of gold, “*the vessels being diverse one from another*” (Esther 1:7).

Special laws protected the Persian king. Esther 1:14 refers to the seven princes who “*saw the king’s face*”. These were the chief nobles who were his advisors. Only a person summoned by the king could visit him, a custom which signified his royalty, as well as

protected him from would-be assassins. Esther feared going to Ahasuerus without being called, because the punishment for such a visit was death (Esther 4:11).

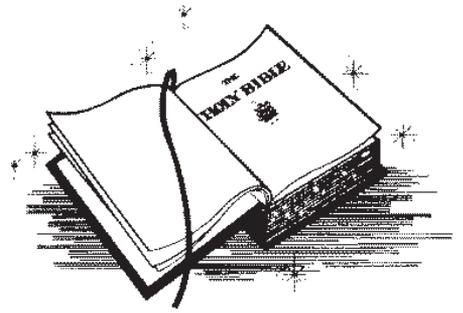
The Persian Empire boasted a well-organised postal system (Esther 3:13). The king’s ring (Esther 8:8) was the signet ring with which official documents were signed. In ancient Persia documents were sealed in two ways: with a signet ring if they were written on papyrus, or with a cylinder seal if written on clay tablets. Among the objects excavated at the royal city of Persepolis was a cylinder seal, which belonged to King Xerxes.

The Book of Esther also refers to the “*the laws of the Persians and the Medes*” (1:19). This phrase describes the ironclad nature of the laws that governed the Persian Empire. Once a law was issued, it could not be changed or revoked - not even by the king himself.

**The New Open Bible**, King James Version, Study Edition, Nelson.

# Expand Your Bible:

## *Attitude*



There is a well known song (or it was a few years ago) that in part goes something like this:

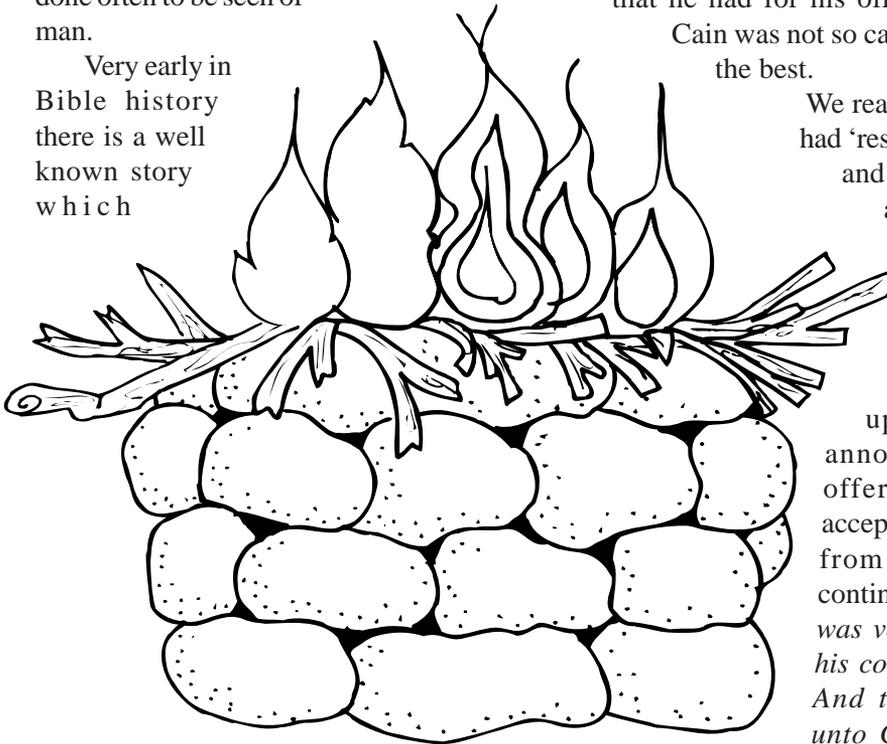
*“It ain’t what you say  
It’s the way that you say it,  
It ain’t what you do  
It’s the way that you do it.”*

How true are these sentiments!

It is the way in which an action is performed or a word is spoken that can alter completely what is said or done, so that often what happens is in no way how it was intended.

A simple act of love and sincerity is of much more value than a grandiose one done often to be seen of man.

Very early in Bible history there is a well known story which



shows quite pointedly how attitude affects the outcome of an action and that outcome can affect many lives.

The first two sons born to Adam and Eve were Cain and Abel. They grew up with very different interests. Cain was a farmer tilling the land and producing all sorts of beautiful fruits, while Abel ‘was a keeper of sheep’. We read in the book of Genesis that both, as young men, brought an offering to the Lord, Cain of the fruit of the ground and Abel ‘of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof’. The inference from the wording is that Abel was very particular and brought the very best that he had for his offering whereas Cain was not so careful to choose the best.

We read that the Lord had ‘respect’ unto Abel and to his offering, accepting it, but not so with Cain and his offering. Cain was, of course, very upset and annoyed that his offering was not accepted. The words from the Bible continue, “*And Cain was very wrath, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art*

*thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him”* Genesis 4:5-7.

The contrast of offerings is not between an offering of plant life and an offering of animal life but between a careless and thoughtless offering and a generous and choice one. The motivation and attitude of mind and heart were important and God looked with favour on Abel’s offering because of his faith. He offered of the firstlings of his flock and of the ‘fat’ or best part. In taking of the firstborn Abel showed recognition that all the productivity of the flock is from the Lord and all belongs to Him.

Cain’s attitude and motivation from the beginning, it would appear, were bad so his reactions were predictable. His adverse reactions continued, carrying over to an argument between the brothers and later on, leading to a fight and the death of Abel. Even then, it would seem Cain’s attitude wasn’t right and when God asked him about Abel’s whereabouts he appeared in no way contrite, but arrogantly replied, “...I know not. (Am) I my brother’s keeper?” Genesis 4:9.

Cain’s attitude to God was obviously

not one of love and respect and recognition that God did not need to ask him the question, as He already knew what had happened. The only time his attitude changed was when God meted out the punishment of being banished from his home and he began to realize how this would affect him personally.

Indeed, the sin that lay at his door had truly claimed him. A modern translation of the Bible refers to this as sin ‘crouching at the door’ like an evil demon crouching at the door of a building, threatening the people inside and waiting to pounce wherever and whenever it can.

What part of our life do we offer to God? Do we offer the ‘best’ part as did Abel or the ‘other bits’ as did Cain?

What is our attitude when worshipping? Do we do things to be seen of God or man?

There are many stories told in the Bible and many events that happen daily, where the right attitude has produced a happy and favourable result, but the wrong one has produced one trouble after another.

Sin ‘crouches at the door’ for each one of us, waiting to pounce, so ‘watch and pray’ that our attitude is correct and directed by our Heavenly Father.

*‘In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he will direct thy path”* Proverbs 3:6. 

## **Psalm 67**

*To the chief Musician on Neg’-i-noth, A Psalm or Song*

*God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.*

# Puzzle Page

## Psalm 37:1-8

Use the clues at the bottom of the page to fill in the blanks.



1. This word is in verse 1 of Psalm 37 and starts with the letter "F".
2. "Trust in the \_\_\_\_\_" is in verse 3.
3. Verse 1 says we should not be \_\_\_\_\_.
4. You can walk on this and the word is in verse 2.
5. The second word in verse 1 is \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The first word in verse 4 is \_\_\_\_\_.
7. This is a color and it is mentioned in verse 2.
8. In verse 4, God promises to give us the desires of our \_\_\_\_\_.
9. "\_\_\_\_\_ patiently for him" is in verse 7.
10. The first word in verse 5 is \_\_\_\_\_.



# Insy Winsy

Do you sometimes make mistakes in your spelling at school? Or, do you find it difficult to colour in neatly? I think sums are hard to get right, do you? How can we become good at these things? Yes, by practice - we must keep trying. Those of you who play the piano really know how much practice one must do, so as to be able to play a little tune without a mistake, don't you?

Let me tell you a story. There was a king of Scotland, King Bruce, who had wanted to do something to make his people happy and although he was a king and had tried - he had not succeeded. He sat down, thinking, "I'll give up trying". Just at that moment, a spider dropped down, on a silken thread, from its cobweb home in the ceiling. King Bruce watched to see what the spider would do - it was so far to the ceiling and it was hanging from such a fine thread!

The spider began to crawl straight up but it slipped back to where it was at first. Then, it ran up again, but it slipped down, lower than ever - it must have been quite dizzy from climbing and slipping, but again and again it tried - each time it climbed, only to fall again. Nine attempts the king counted - he thought the insect foolish to try any more to reach its home in the ceiling. However, the spider did try again - once more - what an anxious time - he was only a foot from home - steadily, steadily, inch by inch, higher, higher and with a quick little run, at last, he was there!



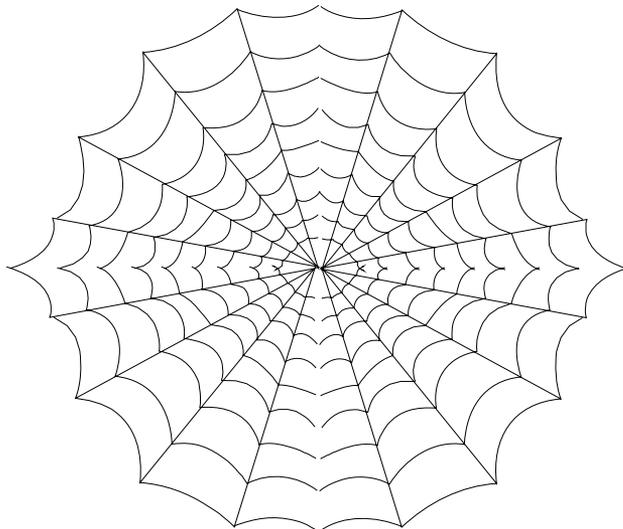


# Spider

“Bravo”, said the king. The spider had defied despair and conquered, why couldn’t he? So, Bruce of Scotland did try again, and this time he too did not fail.

Quite often it is like this with us, when we do so want to be good, but somehow, things do not turn out as we want. Also at school, maybe we do try, but once again we don’t seem to do the right thing - what is the answer to this? Perhaps we too could take a lesson from that little spider, who wanted to climb back to the best place it knew, its cobweb home, and the only way it succeeded was because it kept trying.

We can have a greater aim - our efforts to climb higher can bring us closer to God. We must not give up - we must never say “can’t” but must try, try, and try again to be better people. Truly we are fortunate for God will help us - as we reach to Him!



## Vegetarian Recipes

### **Mushroom & Potato Pie**

**900g potatoes**  
**4 sticks celery**  
**450g mushrooms**  
**1 onion**  
**75g butter or margarine**  
**60ml milk**

**2 crushed cloves garlic**  
**1½ tbsp arrowroot**  
**200ml milk**  
**2tbsp chopped parsley**  
**1tsp dried thyme**  
**10ml lemon juice**  
**salt & pepper to taste**

Boil the potatoes until tender. Grate celery, chop onion and mushrooms. Drain potatoes. Add 25g butter and 60ml milk, then mash potatoes until they are creamy. Season to taste. Melt remaining butter in a saucepan. Add the celery and onion and cook gently until the onion is clear. Add mushrooms and garlic, cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes. Blend arrowroot with a little milk, stir in remaining milk and stir into the mushrooms. Add parsley, thyme and lemon juice, and season to taste. Simmer for 5 minutes. Turn the mixture into a casserole dish. Top with mashed potato and place under a hot grill until heated through and golden or alternatively you can put it in a 190degC oven for 20 minutes. Serves 4-6.

### **Welsh Barabraith**

**300g dried mixed fruit**  
**75g brown sugar**  
**½ lemon, grated rind**  
**400ml hot tea**  
**350g plain flour (wholemeal if possible)**  
**2tsp baking powder**  
**2 tsp mixed spice**  
**1 egg**



Place fruit, lemon rind, tea and sugar in a bowl. Cover and leave to soak overnight. Strain the fruit and save the liquid. Place the rest of the ingredients in a mixing bowl, add the fruit and just enough liquid to make the mixture into a soft drop consistency. Pour into a greased and lined 900g loaf tin. Bake in an oven at 190degC for 45-50 minutes, until the loaf rises and is firm to touch. Cool and serve sliced and buttered.

If you will be visiting one of these areas over the next few months or would like to contact our group, please feel free to attend one of the following meetings at the church addresses shown. All are welcome.

- Melbourne** Regular service held each Sunday morning at 11:30am.  
**Singleton** Regular discussions each week at 11:30am with the exception of the first Sunday of the month when there is a service at 11:30am.  
**Terrigal** Special services and studies as advertised.  
**Sydney** Services/Discussions every second Sunday at 11:30am. Please call to confirm Meeting Sundays.

**For further information please ring or write to one of the following contacts:**

**AUSTRALIA**

**Melbourne**

Church: 193 Fitzroy Street,  
**Fitzroy, Victoria. 3065**  
Ph: 03 9416 0807  
Write: 193 Fitzroy Street,  
**Fitzroy, Victoria. 3065**

**Singleton**

Church: Bishopgate Street,  
**Singleton. NSW. 2330**  
Ph: 02 6571 1269  
Write: PO Box 127,  
**Singleton. NSW. 2330**  
Ph: 02 6572 2741

**Sydney**

Church: 196 Campbell Street,  
**Darlinghurst. NSW. 2010**  
Ph: 02 9331 5625  
Write: 196 Campbell Street,  
**Darlinghurst. NSW. 2010**  
Ph: 1300 135 299

**Terrigal**

Church: Cnr Terrigal Dr & Serpentine Rd,  
**Terrigal, NSW. 2260**  
02 4365 0863  
Write: 31 Bembooka Road,  
**Greenpoint. NSW. 2251**  
02 4365 1974

**Ourimbah**

Church: Seventh Day Adventist Church  
Ourimbah Street,  
**Ourimbah. NSW. 2258**  
Write: 14 Mooramba Ave,  
**North Gosford. NSW 2250**  
0407 875 421

**Windsor**

Church: 340 Macquarie Street,  
**South Windsor. NSW. 2750**  
02 4577 2190  
Write: 114 Morilla Road,  
**Wilberforce. NSW. 2756**  
02 4576 3264

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Telephone: **1300 135 299** (local rate within Australia)

**Web Site:** [www.cichurch.asn.au](http://www.cichurch.asn.au)  
**email:** [cichurch@cichurch.asn.au](mailto:cichurch@cichurch.asn.au)

Jesus said:  
*"If a man keep my saying, he shall  
never see death"* John 8:51.



It's True!