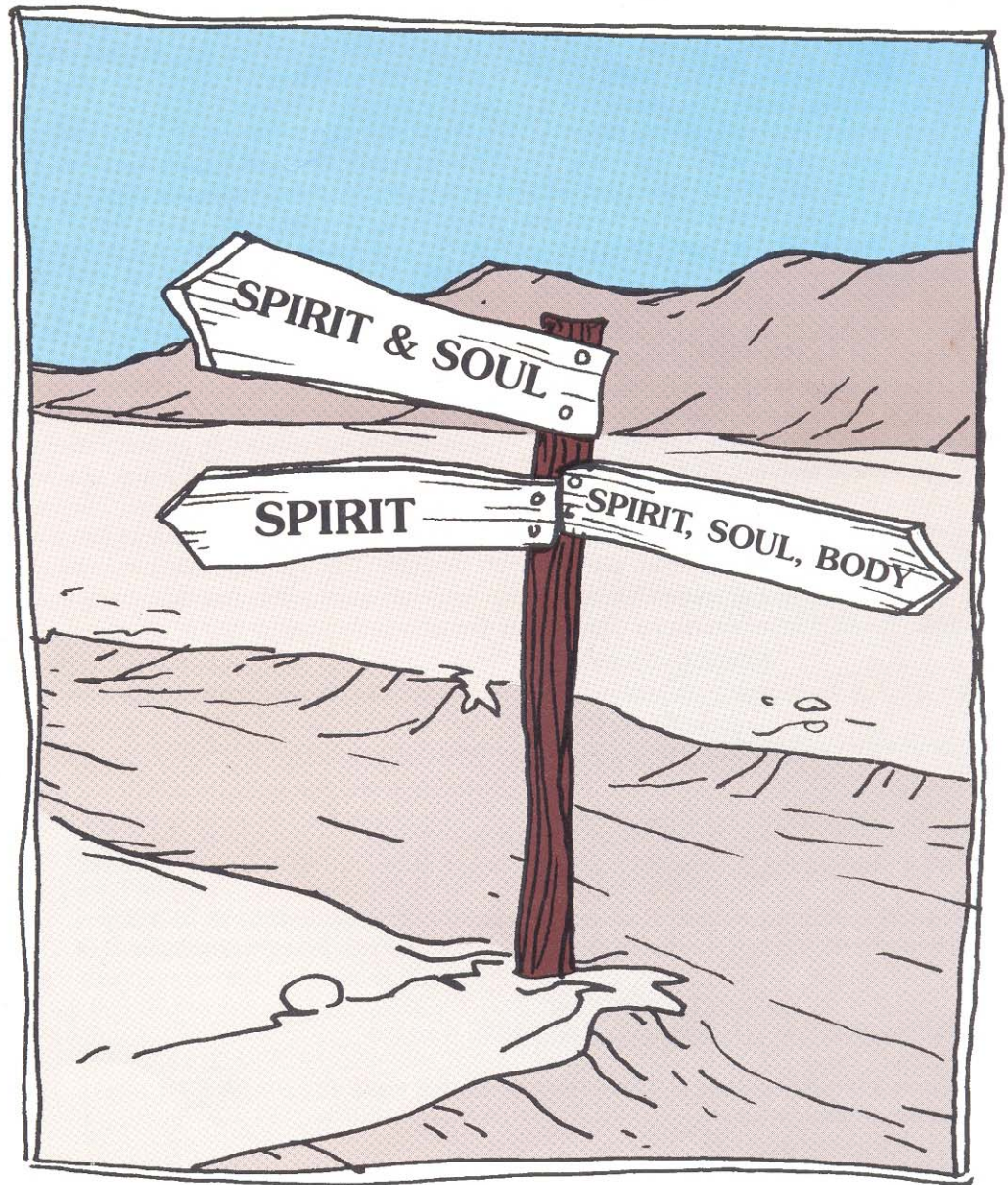


Latter Rain

Magazine of the Christian Israelite Church - Summer 1993



Which Hope?

Why "Latter Rain"?

"One shall say I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel." Isaiah 44:5

Christians (those who say I am the Lord's) believe in Jesus as their saviour and are looking for life after death. They believe it is no longer necessary to keep all the Old Testament laws given by God. The Jews (those who go by the name of Jacob) do not accept Jesus as their saviour. They have only the law and the justification that it brings for a life after death.

Christian Israelites (those who subscribe with their hand unto the Lord and surname themselves by the name of Israel) try to combine the two. Jesus, our example, lived by the Old Testament laws but he tempered them with love. He showed us a new way to live them.

With the help of the latter rain, that is Christ and the Holy Ghost, we can achieve life without death.

"Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God; for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month." Joel 2:23

The moderate early rain came in autumn. It was needed to prepare the ground for ploughing and planting the crops. It is symbolic of the first gift of the Holy Ghost, needed for the preparation and establishment of the early church. The heavier latter rain came in spring to help the crops mature for the harvest. We, like the plants, must grow spiritually before we have the strength to receive our latter rain. This second gift of the God's Spirits will prepare us for maturation in preparation for our harvest at Jesus' return.

This new production "Latter Rain" has evolved from what many readers have come to know as "Notes From Our Church Organ". The "Church Organ" will still exist but its function will be that of an internal newsletter for members and friends. It will come out more often than the quarterly "Latter Rain".

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Articles contained in this magazine are not all doctrinal but rather seek to include thoughts and interesting facts which may assist in bringing the reader to a greater understanding of God.

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Editor: Harley Gray
Illustrations: Jolyon Gray
Production: Lynne Gray

God is our Mother

After the events of the first Christian Pentecost the Holy Ghost was a special companion to the members of the early Christian church. The Holy Ghost was received by baptism and the laying on of hands. Nearly everything that was done was done by the power of the Holy Ghost, with the blessing of the Holy Ghost or after instruction from the Holy Ghost. Like a mother She nurtured and directed the early church at a time when it was most vulnerable. There are in fact over forty references to the Holy Ghost in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, all of them active gifts of power, miraculous healing, prophecy, understanding or judgment.

The Power of Prophecy

Although the Holy Ghost is never mentioned in the Old Testament writings She, with Christ the Rock (1 Corinthians 10:4), apparently played a significant part in developing our understanding of God. Jesus told the disciples that David prophesied by the Holy Ghost (Mark 12:36). Paul also attributed Isaiah's prophecies to the Holy Ghost (Acts 28:25; 2 Peter 1:20,21).

The Holy Ghost - Jesus' Mother?

The presence of the Holy Ghost increased as the time came for Jesus to be conceived. John the Baptist was to be "filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb" (Luke 1:15) and both his parents prophesied and praised God under the Holy Ghost's influence (Luke 1:41,67). This work prepared the way for Jesus' ministry.

When Mary was to conceive Jesus

she asked Gabriel to explain how it would happen. He explained that firstly the Spiritual Mother, the Holy Ghost, would "come upon her" to prepare her for the task, then the Spiritual Father "the power of the Highest" would overshadow her to allow conception to take place (Luke 1:35).

We see God here as both a Mother and a Father, just as it was in creation where God said "let us make man in our image" (Genesis 1:26,27) and made a being both male and female. By our very existence as male and female - father and mother - we prove God is both male and female - both Father and Mother. Matthew at the end of his gospel quotes Jesus, saying "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19), showing this unity of Father, Son and Mother spirits. The trinity is an extremely important concept and is looked at briefly at the end of this article on page 4.

Our Spiritual Mother is also referred to as "Jerusalem" or "Jerusalem Above". She is often referred to in consort with the Father Spirit as the Comforter or Zion Above, but again this will be dealt with in a later article explaining part of the Trinity.

Isaiah spoke of a Spiritual Mother, Jerusalem, in Isaiah 66 verses 10 to 13 and Paul spoke of "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all" (Galatians 4:26; Hebrews 12:22).

It would seem that the Jews thought of Jerusalem the city temporally only, much as many Christians today think of Jesus' mother as His physical mother Mary. They do not see the

and Father

spiritual significance of these “mothers”.

Baptism by the Holy Ghost.

As Jesus came out of the water after His baptism the Holy Ghost descended like a dove upon him (Luke 3:22). The power of the Holy Ghost enveloped Him as though in a spiritual womb (1 John 5:18) and brought him through his temptations in the wilderness (Luke 4:1), and through His three and a half years of ministry to be a perfect sacrifice to overcome the power of death. He promised His followers that they too would receive the Holy Ghost (John 7:37-39) and receive it they did at the day of Pentecost. As the cloven tongues of fire sat on them they were “filled with the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:4). Throughout their early ministry these disciples of Jesus continually received blessing of the Holy Ghost. Wherever and whenever there was a special work to be done the Spirit was there in strength but the measure came and went. They were never quite like Jesus where the Spirit descended and remained (John 1:33). He never needed to be filled with the Holy Ghost again as the disciples did. John develops this thought later in his ministry pointing out three stages we must go through to truly become sons of God (1 John 2:25-3:2).

Becoming Sons of God

“And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.” 1 John 2:25.

The first stage is an “anointing” of the Holy Ghost. With Jesus the anointing was without measure, it was complete,

while with the disciples it was only in part. Unfortunately, it can be a passing phase as the anointing drains away. We are not ready at first for the Spirit to remain with us. Many times in the ministry of the disciples they received an anointing. They were filled with the “Holy Ghost” to do a work, but had to be anointed again next time. This anointing, however, does teach us directly what God wants of us (see Jeremiah 31:34) where we will not have to teach each other about God. Many of us already experience this ebbing and flowing of God’s presence.

The second stage is “abide in Him”. *“And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming” 1 John 2:28.* Once we have received an anointing of the Spirit we are urged to go on. Nicodemus asked Jesus about the Kingdom of God. Jesus answered that we must be born of water and the Spirit before we can enter into the Kingdom of God (John 3:2-13). We are born of water when we are baptised, but the Spirit takes a little longer. Nicodemus was perplexed, “can a man....enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?”(John 3:4) he asked. But the womb was the womb of the Spirit, our Spiritual Mother, Jerusalem Above, the Holy Ghost. If we see God only as a male this whole concept makes little sense. But if we see him as **male and female** (as suggested by Genesis 1:27) using our day to day experience (John 3:12), we can understand being born

again of the Spirit. When we "abide in him", that is in Jesus' teachings, we can also abide in the Spiritual Mother and stand before God blameless at Jesus' coming.

But we are still not sons of God.

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" 1 John 3:1,2.

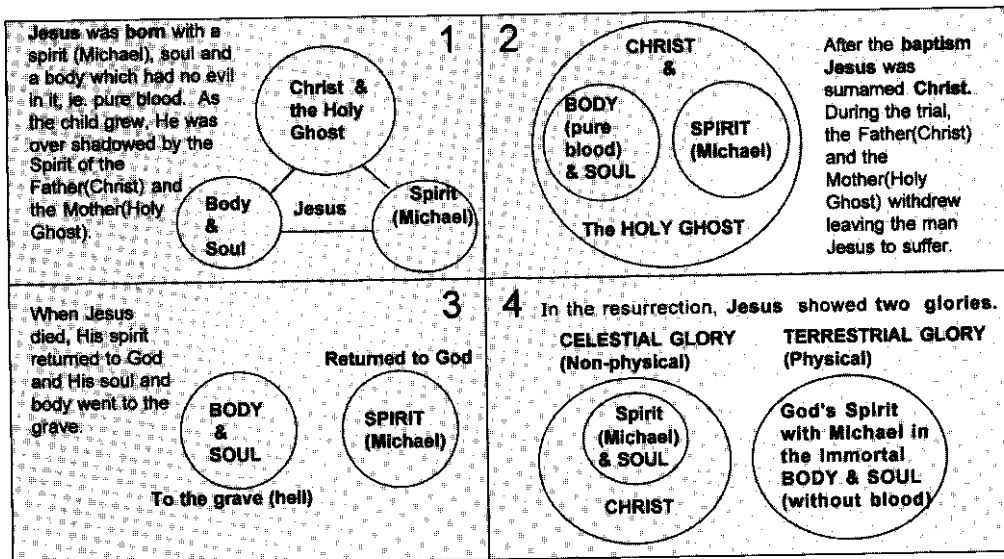
The third stage is our rebirth when the Spirit has transformed our evil nature so that it can become like Jesus' perfect nature. We have gone on to perfection (Hebrews 6:12-6). We are then Sons of God. This birth will not take place until Jesus' return and it will happen to God's elect all together. We are talking here, of course, of physical, immortal, sons of God, not those who have become spiritual sons through faith (1 Corinthians 15:51-54).

How do we get the Holy Ghost?

When Peter explained the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the first day of

Pentecost he referred back to a prophecy made by Joel "in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh" (Acts 2:17, Joel 2:28). In this same prophecy, Joel used the symbols of the early (former) and latter rain. The early rain came before the sowing of crops in Autumn while the latter rain came in Spring to bring the crops to maturity for harvest. The moderate former rain is symbol of the first outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the early church. The latter rain in its full measure is symbolic of the second outpouring of the Holy Ghost to bring to birth the 144,000 of Revelation chapter 7 verses 3-8. On an individual level we receive a moderate early rain when we first accept Jesus' sacrifice. To go on we need the latter rain to allow us to progress to perfection (Hebrews 6:2). This is the time when the great work of our Spiritual Mother, the Holy Ghost will be done.

We are now in our winter waiting for spring and the Latter Rain. We believe this latter rain will be the full outpouring of the Holy Ghost(the Spiritual Mother) to bring us to be physical, immortal sons and daughters of God.



Melbourne House

Melbourne House and grounds,
Is like a Gentleman's seat,
To go and look around,
Tis a very great treat.

See lawns and gardens glare,
And trees with leaves so green,
And flowers most sweet and fair,
Most lively to be seen.

Walks and borders round,
The Mansion stands serene,
With windows all around
Blue, lake and red and green.

North entrance Hall is grand,
The staircase, double and strong,
The corridor, line astrand,
Fully fifty feet long.

The Clock stands on the stairs,
Under the dome it stands,
The light of it, which glares,
Upon its face and hands.

The rooms are large and lofty,
The bedsteads strong and neat,
The beds are thick and soft,
And kept so clean and sweet.

Mary Jane, stands out with fame,
Good cooking and care taking,
Gentle Anna, she's so canna,
So smart and clean in waiting.

Joseph Corry will not worry
Over Dan, nor all his tribe,
He will not hurry, neither flurry,
Neither will he take a bribe.

The Meeting Room is large
And beautiful for sound,
For voices and for music,
Within it, will be found.

The organ tones are soft and sweet,
The voices with it blend,
The people now together meet,
Their worship to attend.

Under Eastern Noble Arch,
Stands beautiful stairs and clock
Mahogany table and chairs,
Mahogany stand with marble top.

The dining room is fine,
With plushy cloth and plaid,
Arches and glasses twain,
Fireplace with marble clad.

With fine mahogany sideboard,
Chairs and tables to match,
With couches and window,
cedarboards,
With curtains red, without a patch.

The Conservatory, it is splendid
With flowers, with names untold,
The plants and flowers well blended,
And vines running up so bold.

Hothouses with vines and tomatoes,
With grape vines looking well,
Flowers and pot plants thriving
Ready for the market to sell.

The gardeners are good fellows,
Their work they do so well,
With the water hose and bellows,

Makes the plants rise and swell.
Kitchen garden at the back,
With many kinds of fruits,
The rain, they so long did lack,
Will nourish, tops and roots.

Now, in the best kitchen,
Stands wardrobe full of ware,
Of gold rimmed cups and saucers,
Plates and dishes so fair.

Goldrimmed paper tea trays,
With goldrimmed basons and jug,
Much shines like beautiful sun rays,
Placed in the cupboard above.

The Library with its crimson cloth,
And crimson curtains four,
Marble mantle, and carpet soft,
Birdseye maple, cedar doors.

See four iron gates standing,
Facing north, east, west and south,
With walls it is surrounded,
Both straight and high and stout.

Trees from path to path are
bending,
Their echoes seem to shout,
A figure of New Jerusalem,

The change, is near about.

Written in 1901 by Henry Paskins
on a trip he made from Maitland
to America to Britain with Charles
Gould. Melbourne House is the
House built for John Wroe by the
members of the Christian Israel-
ite Church in the mid to late 19th
Century.

Links in the Chain

Everybody worships. To worship is one of man's fundamental instincts.

"It is in our very nature to worship, and that inner drive is God-given: the disaster is that as part of a fallen race we have replaced the object of our worship." (1)

We may end up that the object of our worship is perhaps a pop star, a famous footballer or tennis player, a cause, pursuit of pleasure, possessions, money or even oneself! If we worship truly then God is the one we worship and all rivals to His position will be removed by them being shown to be fallible.

This idea is emphasised in Colossians 3:23-24 where told by the Paul,

we are writer,
"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord not for men.....". The living of our life can be a form of worship, whether it be

as a secretary, a business executive, a student, a mother, a road worker or whatever we do.

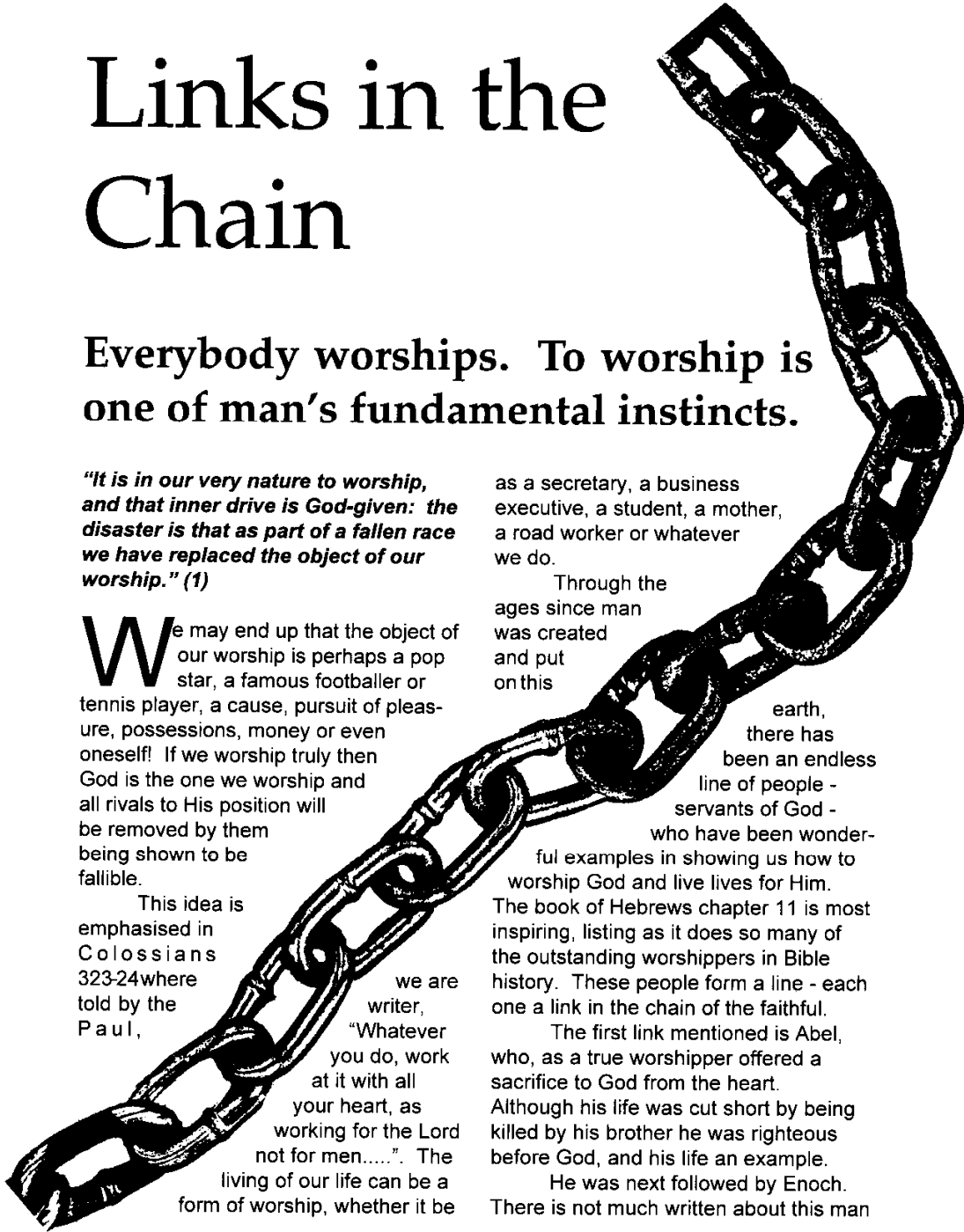
Through the ages since man was created and put on this

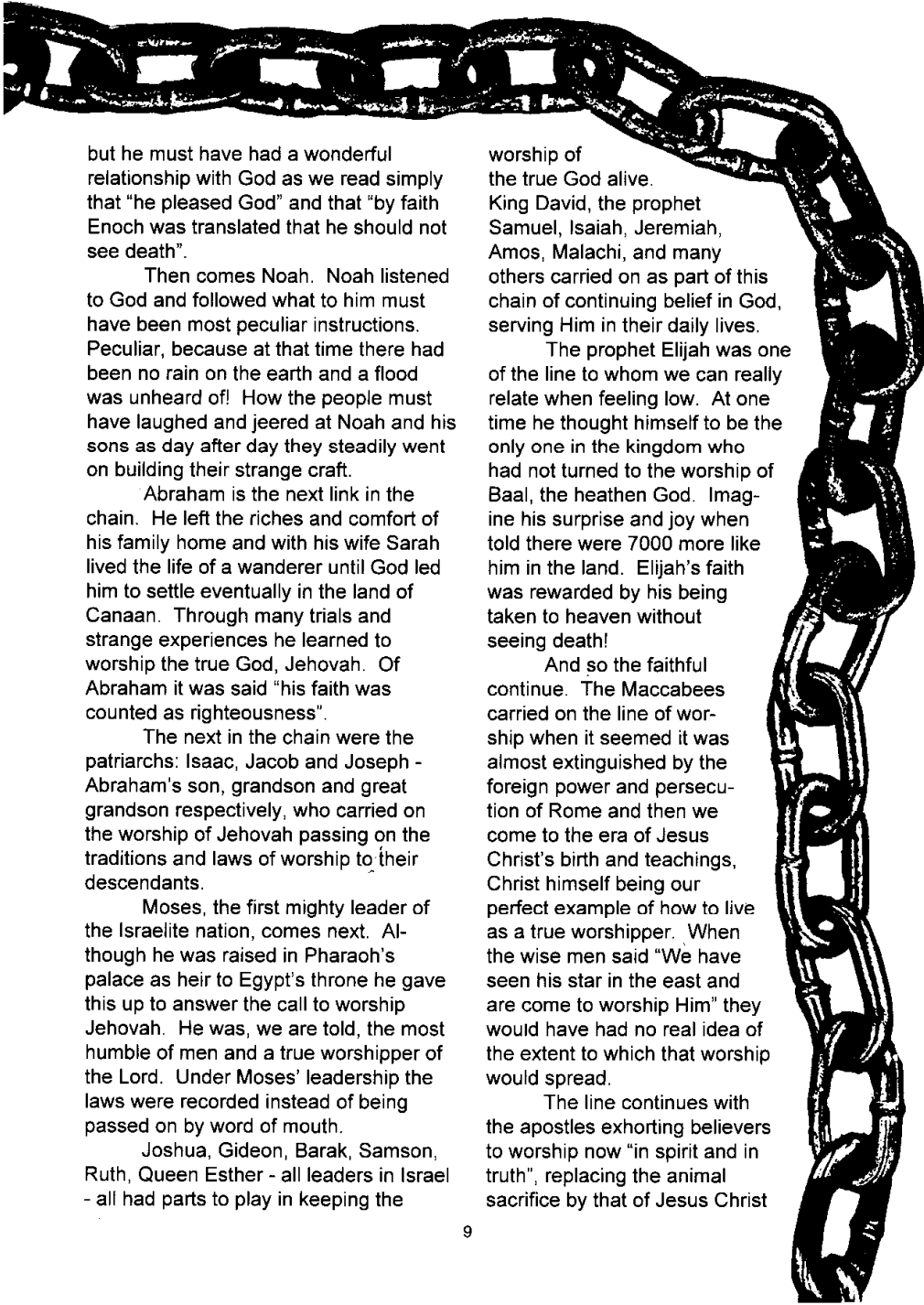
earth, there has been an endless line of people - servants of God - who have been wonderful

examples in showing us how to worship God and live lives for Him. The book of Hebrews chapter 11 is most inspiring, listing as it does so many of the outstanding worshippers in Bible history. These people form a line - each one a link in the chain of the faithful.

The first link mentioned is Abel, who, as a true worshipper offered a sacrifice to God from the heart. Although his life was cut short by being killed by his brother he was righteous before God, and his life an example.

He was next followed by Enoch. There is not much written about this man





but he must have had a wonderful relationship with God as we read simply that "he pleased God" and that "by faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death".

Then comes Noah. Noah listened to God and followed what to him must have been most peculiar instructions. Peculiar, because at that time there had been no rain on the earth and a flood was unheard of! How the people must have laughed and jeered at Noah and his sons as day after day they steadily went on building their strange craft.

Abraham is the next link in the chain. He left the riches and comfort of his family home and with his wife Sarah lived the life of a wanderer until God led him to settle eventually in the land of Canaan. Through many trials and strange experiences he learned to worship the true God, Jehovah. Of Abraham it was said "his faith was counted as righteousness".

The next in the chain were the patriarchs: Isaac, Jacob and Joseph - Abraham's son, grandson and great grandson respectively, who carried on the worship of Jehovah passing on the traditions and laws of worship to their descendants.

Moses, the first mighty leader of the Israelite nation, comes next. Although he was raised in Pharaoh's palace as heir to Egypt's throne he gave this up to answer the call to worship Jehovah. He was, we are told, the most humble of men and a true worshipper of the Lord. Under Moses' leadership the laws were recorded instead of being passed on by word of mouth.

Joshua, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Ruth, Queen Esther - all leaders in Israel - all had parts to play in keeping the

worship of the true God alive.

King David, the prophet Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, Malachi, and many others carried on as part of this chain of continuing belief in God, serving Him in their daily lives.

The prophet Elijah was one of the line to whom we can really relate when feeling low. At one time he thought himself to be the only one in the kingdom who had not turned to the worship of Baal, the heathen God. Imagine his surprise and joy when told there were 7000 more like him in the land. Elijah's faith was rewarded by his being taken to heaven without seeing death!

And so the faithful continue. The Maccabees carried on the line of worship when it seemed it was almost extinguished by the foreign power and persecution of Rome and then we come to the era of Jesus Christ's birth and teachings, Christ himself being our perfect example of how to live as a true worshipper. When the wise men said "We have seen his star in the east and are come to worship Him" they would have had no real idea of the extent to which that worship would spread.

The line continues with the apostles exhorting believers to worship now "in spirit and in truth", replacing the animal sacrifice by that of Jesus Christ

and teaching people to follow the Law in the light of Jesus' teachings.

There must have been thousands of true worshippers who were persecuted for their belief and met an untimely and often horrific death defending it.

In more recent times people such as Martin Luther, John and Charles Wesley, John Calvin, John Wroe and other reformists such as William Wilberforce and Lord Shaftesbury can all be added to the list of faithful witnesses.

These are but a few of the outstanding names known to history as true worshippers of God but of no less importance, and known by name to God, are the countless number of "ordinary people", men, women and children who have gained no name place in history but who have been links in a chain of worshippers over the centuries.

All of these believers had faith in the abiding love and omnipotence of the God they worshipped. In most cases they did not experience the fulfilment of what they were promised, but by faith they saw and accepted the promises and welcomed them from a distance - in the future. By faith they saw - perhaps dimly, perhaps very vividly - these heavenly realities and were convinced that what they hoped for would ultimately be theirs.

What were the goals or promises to which these people aspired? Abraham was told "in thy seed shall all the nations

of the earth be blessed:, and that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the sky. How could Abraham believe when he had no child? Moses' goal was to lead Israel from Egypt to become a mighty nation; the Apostles and early Christians looked to be ready to meet Jesus Christ when He returned. The Apostle Paul looked for the promises to Israel to be fulfilled. In each case, as well as being given a special job to do such as being a leader, teacher, preacher, etc., in the wider community each had a personal goal of attaining to a perfect life by having a closer relationship with God.

What do we see today as the "promise" to which by faith and the works of faith we are aspiring? What is the "some better thing" that Paul speaks of in Hebrews 11:40 that God has provided for us?

As Christian Israelites we believe that this better thing is the promise of being alive when the Lord returns and the promise that evil will eventually be overcome in the bodies of mankind so that these people will be preserved alive not seeing death, to live in God's new kingdom on the earth. What a promise! What a goal to aim for!

Today the chain of worshippers goes on, joining the past and the future. Are we a part of it?

(1) "Worship". Graham Kendrick. p. 24. All Bible quotes from the RV Bible.

CHURCHWISE

The Things We Eat.....

Often, when eating out with acquaintances, and I ask "What's on the menu for vegetarians?", someone will ask the question, "Why are you a vegetarian?" Well, there are two short answers, and I am never quite sure which one I should give - "my religion" or "by choice".

True, my being a vegetarian is a choice I have made because of my religion, but the Christian Israelite Church does not require it as a condition of membership. But there are restrictions on the food we eat.

Everybody knows that Jews don't eat pork - but many do not know why! The Old Testament sets out a distinction between what is commonly called clean meats and unclean meats (see Leviticus chapter 11). Basically animals which chew the cud and are cloven footed are "clean", that is acceptable for eating, birds which do not feed on flesh as their natural food and fish which have both fins and scales.

Full Membership of the Christian Israelite church requires that these food laws be observed. There is also a further requirement - and that is abstinence from eating flesh on the seventh day of each week ie. from Friday evening at the start of the Jewish Sabbath until Sunday lunch time - after commemoration on the Christian Sabbath. This is to remind us that eating meat is an activity of this world, and that in the millennium no meat will be eaten - as no life will be taken.

The Old Testament had two conditions on eating meat - the division of meats as outlined above, but also an overriding exhortation not to eat blood. "But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat" Genesis 9:4 and "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul. Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood" Leviticus 17:11,12. This latter instruction came through even to the New Testament Christians - see Acts 15:20 - who were commanded to abstain from eating blood.

It is perhaps for this latter reason, which, whilst a lesser requirement is more difficult to observe, that many of our members choose to be vegetarian. What is the "juice" in a juicy steak?

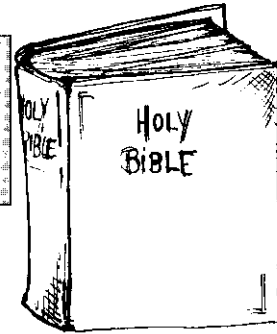
There is also, of course, the fact that in the Garden of Eden Adam and Eve were given only plant life to eat - no meat until after the flood (Genesis 2:16; 9:3). In the reversal of the fall process, in returning to God's perfection, we believe that people will develop the desire to refrain from eating flesh.

Remember, too, how God wanted to feed the Israelites on their way to the Promised Land on manna. But their hearts yearned for meat to eat, and God gave them quails.

So as usual there is not a simple answer to the simple question! Yes, the Church teaches that members should observe the Old Testament food laws, but, because of a belief that meat will not be eaten during the millennium, that originally man was created a herbivore and the difficulty of getting meat without blood, many members choose to be vegetarian.

Rodney Gray

Debug Your Bible



Babel Babble

In Debug this time it is not so much a matter-of-fact dissertation on some scientific discovery, as a brief discussion on an idea that's been making its way through some scientific/philosophical circles for some time now. It is about the Tower of Babel and I guess it's also about astrology and what we see in the stars.

You've probably all heard about the Tower of Babel if only as a children's story. We read about it in the Bible in Genesis chapter 11. To paraphrase the story: after the Flood when the people began to increase in numbers again, and "the whole earth was of one language", the people decided to build a tower "whose top may reach unto heaven". God was displeased to see them trying to build a tower because "now nothing will be restrained from them". So He confounded their language, that they could not understand one another's speech. And "the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth".

Now before we talk about this "Babel babble" I'd like to talk a bit about astrology and the stars, and what better to turn to than the Bible. In Genesis 1:14 we read that "God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years". In this verse we have signs and seasons mentioned as two separate uses for "lights in the

firmament" which implies they don't both refer to terrestrial seasons, and phases of the moon, etc. Another interesting point in this verse is that it says "lights" which could equally refer to comets and light reflected from planets, not just stars. So what could this "signs" mean? Perhaps it refers to such things as miracles or even astrology.

If we consider miracles, firstly we know that God has produced miracles which involved stars (or possibly comets). In past editions we've talked about miracles which involved stars, and most notably our own Sun. Just to quickly recap, we talked about how Sun miracles were mentioned in the Bible with the Sun standing still and even going backwards, and of course there was the Christmas star.

Secondly, if we consider Astrology, then we know it too has origins in the Bible. Astrology is the foretelling of events through the observation of the stars. We see astrology (by that name) mentioned in Daniel chapter 2, where "the king (Nebuchadnezzar) commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans for to show the king his dreams." And later (verse 27) "Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king; But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets,

and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days."

What we can draw out of these Biblical events is that the study of astrology and the observation of the stars to predict the future is bad in the eyes of God. This is told in no uncertain terms in Deuteronomy 18:10. "There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination (predict by inspiration or magic), or an observer of times (note that lights are set for times and for seasons), or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord." This quote then goes on to mention more about observers of times and diviners. Now if these "mysticism's" did not work, why would they be so evil in the sight of God, and why would people do them? The fact that in so many instances in the Bible the observing of times is condemned seems to point to the fact that although it exists and is possible, it should be avoided. But **why** avoid them?

Let's look a little closer at us today and the way we use stars. How many thousands of people swear by and live by astrology? (As indeed man has done in varying proportions since the beginning of time.) People believe that by observing the stars they can see into the future and they can even unravel the "secrets" or "plans" of God. But more than this mere astrology, today we are learning more and more through studying the stars. Let's just think about Science in space. How many discoveries or theories have arisen through the study of the stars? By observing the size and constitution of the planets and the Universe as a whole, scientists have produced theories about life on other planets. By

observing other planets and how they have evolved we have learnt about the history and possibly the future of our own.

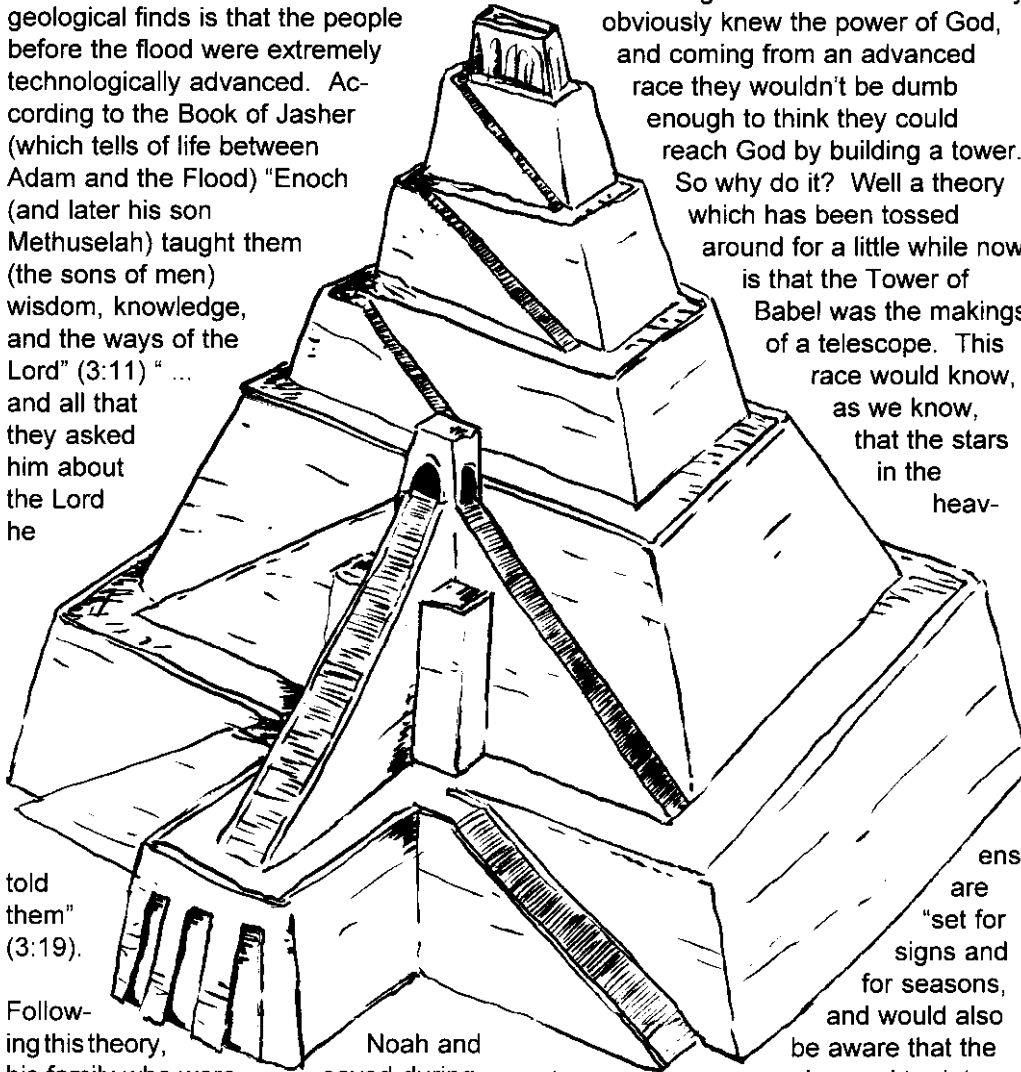
Indeed there have been discoveries on other planets that have questioned our place in the Universe. For instance the suspected Pyramids and other constructions on the planet Mars and the theories that Mars and possibly other planets have been or could be capable of sustaining life. We also have the theory of the Big Bang that has evolved from the study of stars and space. Through looking at the movement of stars it has been proposed that the Universe is expanding away from some initial point of the Big Bang. By observing stars we have theories on our own Sun and the phases it will go through before it ultimately dies. (Don't fret too much - well, at least not for the next couple of million years anyway). But apart from the "signs" there are the "seasons" which are affected by the movement of our planet and its moon.

But this star fascination has always been with us. Pyramids and all those other complex and intricate structures not only have precise alignments with stars and planets, but are evidence of the age old fascination we have always had with stars. Look at the ancient Egyptian, Aztec, and the Greek gods and their architecture and see their relationship with stars and mysticism.

So what's Babel got to do with all this? Well, prior to the flood it was recorded that the knowledge of man increased. The largest of the pyramids in Egypt such as those at Memphis which have all the most fascinating and exact architecture, predate the flood. Post-flood pyramids unfortunately are the ones that crumble and fall apart as they are inferior facsimiles of the original pre-

flood ones. (But more on that in another article). A current theory circulating as a result of these and other recent geological finds is that the people before the flood were extremely technologically advanced. According to the Book of Jasher (which tells of life between Adam and the Flood) "Enoch (and later his son Methuselah) taught them (the sons of men) wisdom, knowledge, and the ways of the Lord" (3:11) "... and all that they asked him about the Lord he

made the rainbow). Why not just live on a hill like Ararat if you're worried about that! Being so close to the Flood they obviously knew the power of God, and coming from an advanced race they wouldn't be dumb enough to think they could reach God by building a tower. So why do it? Well a theory which has been tossed around for a little while now is that the Tower of Babel was the makings of a telescope. This race would know, as we know, that the stars in the heav-



told them" (3:19).

Following this theory, Noah and his family who were saved during the flood started this new race of man from a supposedly advanced race. For some reason they decided to build the tower of Babel. The drawing of the tower in this article is a copy made from the description given in ancient Babylonian manuscripts. But why would they want to build a tower? God promised that He would never again destroy the world by flood (and as a sign of this promise He

ens are "set for signs and for seasons, and would also be aware that the stars can be read to determine the past and the future. Look at our telescopes now. Why do you think that the Hubble Space Telescope was created or observatories are built at high altitude, but to get a better view of space by overcoming the distortion caused by the earth's atmosphere.

That still doesn't answer our questions of why, firstly, the Bible

condemns the study of astrology and, secondly, why God destroyed the Tower of Babel if all they were doing was building a telescope.

Well my answer to that is quite simple. Because God is a just and fair God, how would we choose God if there were no other choices? How would we know that good is good if we didn't have evil to compare it to? The fact is that God created us free agents who are presented with choices which we can consider and come to our own conclusions. If God didn't give us alternatives such as good versus bad, laughter versus crying, pain versus pleasure, then how would we know that God IS good, and that laughter and pleasure ARE better than sorrow and pain? How would God prove Himself to us? The fact is we can learn all of the past and future through a relationship with God and letting Him reveal His mind to us. But He has given us the option to ignore Him and try to discover His secrets through other means, thereby giving us our choices.

So this train of thought would also explain why God destroyed the Tower of Babel and scattered the post-flood race who built it. If they were growing away from God and His desired relationship, and trying to steal or usurp God's secrets through star gazing and astrology, not forgetting that the knowledge of man had

increased at this time so they would know how to, then this provides at least to me a more meaningful explanation of why God would scatter these people. If they knew all there was to know, where would be the scope for the rest of God's creation? It makes a bit more sense that God scattered the people because they were a bunch of mis-guided architects.

So the question is open: was it a Tower of Babel, or a Telescope of Babel.

Does this mean that astrology and stargazing are evil? Well, my thoughts on the matter are, if you're trying to disprove or cheat God, steal his secrets and predict the future, then yes it is wrong. If, however, we look at the heavens as a testimony of His power and make our choice to follow Him the way He asks then perhaps it is good that we can look at what is discovered in the stars and consider it in parallel with God's word in the Bible.

What we must consider is whether we're trying to get closer to or further away from God. But let's face it, with so many secrets still in space, Science isn't about to stop now. (Especially since there's a multi-million dollar telescope sitting out there!) God has already revealed His secrets to us, and continues to do so. Let's see what gets discovered through observing the stars. Who knows, perhaps we'll be able to tick them off one by one in our good old Bible.

Necromancy is described in the Lexicon Webster dictionary as "the art of divining or influencing future events through communication with spirits conjured from the dead; black magic; witchcraft; sorcery."

One ancient Babylonian tablet reads, "The building of this illustrious tower offended the gods. In a night they threw down what they had built. They scattered them abroad and made strange their speech. Their progress was impeded. They wept hot tears for Babylon." The builders were supposed to have been giants who waged war with the gods. Nimrod, himself is called "a mighty one" and the giants in Genesis 6:4 are called "mighty men"

The Gift of Christmas:

Soon it will be Christmas, Everyone likes Christmas time. I like Christmas time because we can think about the first Christmas when Jesus came into the world as a little baby. Christmas is a time to think of others, a time to say thank you to the special people in our lives and a time to share with our friends, our family and our relations.

Do you remember to say thank you when people are kind to you or help you? At Christmas time we give thanks to God for sending His Son, Jesus, as a baby who was born in a manger and grew up and showed us how to live. You see children it is Jesus' birthday at Christmas time and we give gifts to our family and friends to remember this. You like receiving gifts for your birthday don't you? But how can we give gifts to Jesus for His birthday? Well, when we give gifts to others or do things for other people it is like doing things for Jesus. Jesus told us this in a verse in the Bible. See if you can find your Bible and look up Matthew Chapter 25 verse 40 - "when you do things for others it is like doing things for Jesus".

I remember a story about some boys who were talking together on a street corner. Along came an elderly lady wanting to cross the street. She paused at the pedestrian crossing. One of the boys noticed her and left his mates, and walked the lady across the street. The lady felt safe and not afraid because the boy was strong and had good eye sight and walked with a firm step. "Thank you", the lady said to him and smiled, and the boy went back to his mates. "Why did you help that lady, do you know her?" asked one of his mates. "No", said the boy, "but I figure that some day my mother might be old like this lady and I'd like someone to help her.

You know, when it's someone's birthday you spend a lot of time thinking about what would be the best present for them, and choosing something you know they would really like, well, don't forget at Christmas time it is Jesus' birthday, so we want to give Jesus a really great present. Remember that when we think of others and help in many ways it is like giving gifts to Jesus. Let's all remember to say thank you to God for all the wonderful things in our lives and remember too to give your mothers and fathers a special thank you for all they do for you too.

Do you know the Christmas carol "Once in Royal David's City" - let us read it and think about the words in this special song.

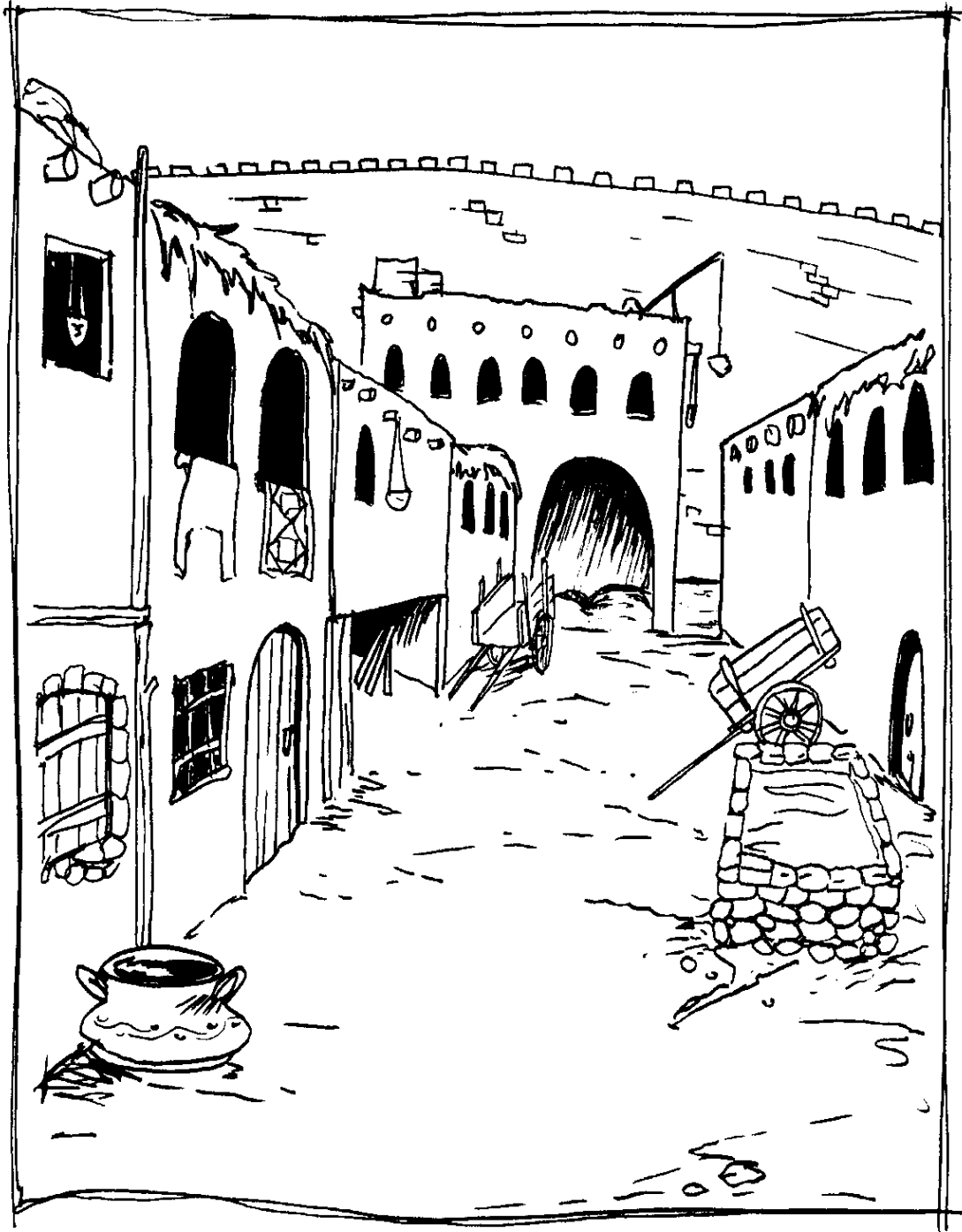
Giving to Others

Once in royal David's city,
Stood a lowly cattle shed
Where a mother laid her baby,
In a manger for His bed.
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven,
From God our Father, Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable,
And His cradle was a stall.
With the poor and mean and lowly,
Lived on earth a Saviour holy.

And through all His wondrous childhood,
He would honour and obey,
Love and watch the lowly maiden,
In whose gentle arms He lay.
Christian children all must be
Mild, obedient, good as He.

For He is our childhood's pattern,
Day by day like us He grew;
He was little, weak, and helpless,
Tears and smiles like us He knew.
And He feeleth for our sadness,
And He shareth in our gladness.

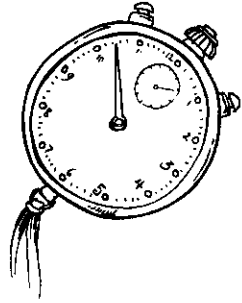


The City of David

Puzzle Page

See if you can do this whole page of FIVES in just FIVE minutes.

Name 5 books of the Old Testament. 1. _____



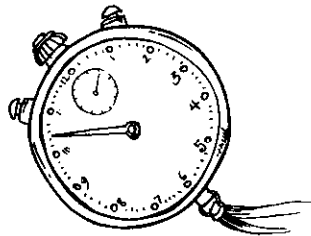
2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Name 5 books of the New Testament. 1. _____



2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Give a five letter answer to these riddles:

1. God's son _____
2. Announced Jesus' birth _____
3. The world's most famous book _____
4. Abraham is noted for his great _____ in God.
5. _____ from a special tree was forbidden to Adam and Eve.

Write the name of a Bible character whose name starts with each of these first FIVE letters of the alphabet.

- A _____
B _____
C _____
D _____
E _____

Expand Your Bible:



"And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan. And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying...." Matthew 5:1

The Beatitudes have long been considered to be the guidelines to understanding the Christian faith. They contain guidelines to enable us to lead a just and righteous life with the hope for heavenly recompense for the suffering that is experienced by Christians in today's world. The Beatitudes are an outline of the great promises of mercy, peace and justice that have come to mankind through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:1-2 says *"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God!"*

The lessons, which were included in Jesus' teaching of the Beatitudes to the huge crowds of followers that gathered just to hear the Teacher speak, are still relevant to people today.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" Matthew 5:3. The promise contained in this verse is available to everyone. We have to be "poor" or humble enough to realise that we need the aid of the Spirit Christ in order to overcome the obstacles that are put in our paths. A further avenue has also been revealed to follow-

ers of the Christian Israelite faith in the additional spiritual help that is available through seeking the aid of the other Comforter (Jerusalem Above). The Kingdom of Heaven is when we put on the Spirits Christ and Jerusalem Above.

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted" Matthew 5:4. This ties directly to the previous Beatitude because if we mourn our sinful natures and are sincerely repentant then we have the comfort of knowing that we are become a new creature through Christ. The old evils are put away (2 Corinthians 5:17). It is also a mourning for the loss of friends and loved ones to either death or to the evil of their own nature. We mourn for them but are comforted in that we have the assurance of Universal Salvation. This gives us the hope that people who have been lost to us will become reconciled to Christ at the Second Resurrection and united with the family of Christ.

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth" Matthew 5:5. The "meek" are those people who demonstrate an abundance of the Fruits of the Spirit because "meek" is another word for "long suffering", "Patient" and "goodness" (Galatians 5:22). These people are the "Elect of God" who will

Reflections on the Beatitudes

inherit God's Kingdom on earth as a just reward for their labour.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" Matthew 5:6. If we hunger for righteousness we will seek for the infilling that comes from God.

This is the filling of the emptiness that is caused by the removal of evil from our natures with the Spirit of God. We have been blessed with the ever increasing knowledge that is being revealed about the Bible and its authors (eg. the Dead Sea Scrolls). If we apply this knowledge to the Bible and biblical teachings then we will increase our own personal perception and understanding of righteousness. This righteousness is both the knowledge of the Word of God and the acceptance of the Will of God in our lives.

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy" Matthew 5:7. We have the firm assurance that "whatever we loose on earth will be loosed in Heaven" and the theme of heavenly reciprocation is continued in this Beatitude. If we can live just lives and show mercy to those who are indebted to us in any way, then we will receive mercy in Heaven for our indebtedness through sin. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love where with he loved us" Exodus 2:4.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" Matthew 8:5. The pure in heart are those whose bodies will be cleansed of the evil so that they may enter into the presence of God. Nothing which is not pure can stand before God and so they must be

cleansed to present "themselves a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God" Romans 12:1. Enoch and Elijah are examples of this promise as they are "just men made perfect" (Hebrews 12:23) and did not see death.

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" Matthew 5:9. Jesus is the shining example that we should strive to emulate. Whenever anger and discord arose among the disciples Jesus quickly defused the situation. We, as believers in Jesus Christ, should strive to attain a peace within ourselves as well as attempting to avoid anger and conflict. This peace is the personal peace that comes from knowing that we have been reconciled with "God through Jesus Christ" (Romans 15:1-5).

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" Matthew 5:10-12. These last three verses are an exhortation for Christians to continue in their faith, against whatever persecutions or sufferings that may arise throughout life. If we can remain steadfast throughout turmoil then we have the assurance of heavenly rewards.

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; Ezekial 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, that we have no right to contend with other people about them.

A Tale of Three Trees

Jesus Christ said so many things about plants and things from gardens. *“And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these”* Matthew 6:28-39.

“Beware of false prophets. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit: but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth forth not good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them” Matthew 7:15-20.

We can see here that Jesus isn't speaking about real trees but figurative trees. He's talking about all of us. He speaks about our every day actions, and that if our actions are good actions it shows that we are good trees. If we produce evil fruit, it shows that we are evil by nature and that we must die. If we as trees bring forth evil fruit because of our evil nature, how do we avoid being “hewn down” like the trees mentioned above, for “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23) and thus have at some time produced evil fruit.

Paul gives us the answer when he speaks of wild olives and pure olives. Wild olives are us, with our imperfect nature. We don't bear good fruit, and we aren't strong healthy trees, but Jesus Christ is the pure olive, Jesus being the good olive. All His fruit is good, and His roots and branches are strong and healthy (Romans 11:17-24). He tells us that we are likened to **three**

types of trees. **Firstly**, we can be just an evil tree with weak roots, branches and evil fruit.

Secondly we can be like olive trees that are grafted into His rootstock, which is strong and hardy, and will make us grow strong and tall. Even if we are grafted into the rootstock, we still have our own branches, with which we bear fruit of ourselves. This fruit is still not perfect.

Then, **lastly**, Jesus Christ tells us that if the wild olive is grafted into the pure olive, with the pure olive grafted again into the top of the tree, then the boll(trunk) of the tree is of the wild olive, but the roots and branches are both of the pure olive. So we can grow tall and strong, bearing perfect fruit, and if we bear good fruit it shows that we are good trees; trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord.

“To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified” Isaiah 61:3.

These are the type of trees that the Lord wants in His garden. Perfect trees, tall and strong, continually bearing good fruit, *“the fruit of the righteous is a tree of life”* Proverbs 11:30 (Psalms 1:3).

Of all the promises that Jesus Christ has made this is one of the greatest - that we may be made like He is, with His roots and branches, gaining our strength from Him and doing the works that He did. *“Blessed 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”* Revelations 22:14.

All Round Health with Kerry Harrison

The Right Mental Attitude

"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" 1 Corinthians 6:20.

A man is not sick because he has a disease but rather a man has a disease because he is sick. Most people, if they are not well go to the doctor or therapist and seek a name for their condition. Once they have a name they can blame a cause: a micro-organism, a poison or a malfunction in their body. But why would this person have a particular bacteria making him sick and not his family or workmates? Is he in fact sick and therefore a good breeding ground for the bacteria or virus? Is he sick and therefore putting undue pressure on a vital organ? For most of us being "sick" is developing symptoms such as headaches, fluid imbalance, pains and aches. But, many thinkers, clinicians and philosophers over the ages have questioned how we actually become sick. They have suggested that when a man is unbalanced in spirit, soul and body, he becomes sick. Over the last few issues we have examined how to assist the body's health with exercise, diet and stress management, but what of our mind's and soul's health?

Peace of mind is needed in large doses for man's inner physical health. Jesus promised in John 14:27 *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you.....Let not your heart be troubled; neither let it be*

afraid".

How do we get peace of mind? We must not let our hearts be troubled, adopt a positive attitude leaving all pessimism, doubt and frustration behind. We are called upon in Galatians 5:19-21 to crucify the sinful nature and leave fear, jealousy, envy, rage, resentment, hatred, sorrow and ambition behind.

Many of these attitudes arise from a deep seated but unsatisfied need for love. Love is essential for happiness and health. But we often draw to ourselves what we believe to be our due or those emotions we give out.

The injunction "love thy neighbour as thyself" is the most important rule of being - its violation the basic cause of unhappiness and mental and physical illness. By loving your neighbour you eradicate many of the negatives, for example, hatred. By loving yourself you are better able to obey this injunction. Of course there are people who love themselves in the wrong way. They are "puffed up" with pride, putting themselves above their neighbours. Such people do not follow Jesus' instruction. The love Jesus means is our self esteem, to realise that faults and all, we are loved and capable of loving, and to feel that in spite of others often negative comments, we belong and have something to offer.

We are taught to love and admire everything God made but not necessarily ourselves.

God wants each of us to learn to appreciate our own strengths and talents, as we become, under His influence, the beautiful person He means us to be.

Are we letting go of all the negative characteristics mentioned above? As we let them go we can be filled with the positive fruits of spirit, "love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" Galatians 6:22.

Have you ever noticed that when you storm around being mad at someone you suffer the most. If you let your anger smoulder for years perhaps, it can make

you sick. Possibly it could give you headaches, stomach ulcers, anxiety or an irritable gall bladder. Much better to let the positives in. Maybe you can learn to understand the person, or replace anger with love, or if it is appropriate, confront the person in meekness and sort the problem out.

Remember by doing good you can change hate to love.

So to be wholly well we must look at our attitudes and approach to life. Negative thoughts and feelings will fester within us and eventually poison us physically as well as mentally.

God would rather our whole attitude be centred around the love and appreciation of his creation and our part in it.

Mixed Vegetable Croquettes

Makes 16

1 tblsp vegetable oil	75g/3oz fresh wholemeal breadcrumbs
2 onions, very finely chopped	pinch of dried mixed herbs
6 celery stalks, very finely chopped	salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 carrots, grated	2 eggs, beaten
175g/6oz mushrooms, very finely chopped	75g/3oz dried breadcrumbs
1 tblsp smooth peanut butter	vegetable oil, for deep-frying
75g/3oz unsalted peanuts, ground or very finely chopped	

Heat the oil in a large saucepan, add the onions and celery and fry gently for 5 minutes. Do not allow the vegetables to brown. Add the carrots and mushrooms to the pan and continue cooking for a further 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Remove from the heat, then stir in the peanut butter until well combined. Add the peanuts, wholemeal breadcrumbs, herbs and salt and pepper to taste. Mix well and bind with half the beaten eggs. Leave until cool.

Meanwhile, pour the remaining beaten eggs into a shallow bowl or on to a plate. Place the dried breadcrumbs on a separate plate, ready to coat the croquettes.

When the mixture is cool, divide it into 16 portions and shape them into croquettes. Dip each croquette in the beaten eggs, then roll in the breadcrumbs until thoroughly coated.

Pour enough vegetable oil into a deep-fat fryer to come to a depth of 4cm. Heat until an inch bread cube browns in 60 seconds. Lower in the croquettes and deep-fry for 3 minutes, until golden brown. Drain the croquettes very thoroughly on absorbent paper and serve at once.

14th December, 1822.

December 14th, 1822, was the date on which John Wroe set out on a Mission, eventually spanning four main continents. At this stage John Wroe was about 40 years of age and he was given a sign that he was to unto those of Israel, who were then residing in the British Isles. John Wroe had turned to the Lord and been given visions and spiritual revelations whilst he was enduring a time of great sickness - many doctors testified to the precariousness of his health. A degree of religious activity had been aroused in Britain through the earlier works of Joanna Southcott, Richard Brothers, George Turner and William Shaw, and it was to these particular groups of followers that John Wroe introduced himself.

Members of such groups were required to testify that the Lord's Spirit was indeed manifest and resident upon the person who was to carry on the work - in this case John Wroe - and thus he was accepted and his work and ministry established. He began his ministry from Bradford in Yorkshire, from where he visited Colne, Liverpool, Ashton-under-Lyne and other parts of England - Hull, Manchester, London. In 1823 John Wroe went by ship to Gibraltar. Here John Wroe met William Cooke, who later took on the ministry in Gibraltar and accompanied John Wroe on a brief visit France. John Wroe was publicly baptised at a place near Ashton, and afterwards continued holding meetings in various parts, ie. Huddersfield, Bury, Idle and Ashton.

During the latter part of 1823, John, in company with William Lees, travelled from London on a mission which was to take him to Paris, Strasbourg, Vienna, Trieste, Milan and back through France

again to England. In late 1827 John with William Tillotson visited Scotland and the northern parts of England. After this two preachers were sent out to gather new members with a gentleman called William Muff. In 1828 he visited Swansea in South Wales.

Various groups of followers sprung up all over Britain. Bodies were established at Sheffield, Devonport (near Plymouth), Park Bridge (near Ashton), Leeds, Bradford, Ireland. He visited Ireland in 1834, 1836 and 1839.

John Wroe had been told in 1824 and 1825 that he would go to America and this finally came to pass in 1840. This first visit was brief, but brought about a following in America which still exists today.

In 1843, John made his first visit to Australia and held meetings in Sydney and Penrith. His visit had been preceded by the work of several preachers who had come to Australia four years previously. Records in Australia go back to 1838. Meetings were held in a local member's home in Pitt Street, Sydney.

John returned to England in 1844 and resumed meetings there. In 1850 he returned to Australia for the second time and was given a tumultuous welcome at Geelong, Victoria. Enough that it was recorded in the Melbourne "Argus" newspaper of the time. John stayed for approximately four months in which time he spoke at various centres including Hobart Town, Little Scotland, Collingwood, Sydney, Liverpool and Penrith. In January 1851 he returned to England via New Zealand and resumed his ministry there.

In 1853 he returned to America en route to Australia. This time he landed in Hobson's Bay, Victoria and visited

Collingwood, Geelong, Adelaide and Sydney. This journey also showed John the new Sanctuary built in Darlinghurst, Sydney and still in use today.

In May 1854 he left Sydney and set sail back home to England. Shortly after his return preparations were made for the erection of a House for the Lord's servant on a site not far from Wakefield, Yorkshire. The house and its plans were as directed by the Lord through His servant, and in 1856 it was decided that the name of the house be "Melbourne House" - after the city in Australia by that name (members from this body had contributed the larger portion of the funds needed for the building). This house thereafter was the residence of John Wroe.

In May 1859, John Wroe, accompanied by Benjamin Eddowes, visited New York, America and spoke to the members there. He visited Newark (New Jersey), Drummondville, Niagara Falls, Boston

(Massachusetts) and Providence (Rhode Island), before returning back to New York, thence to England. In August of the same year, he set out on his 4th visit to Australia and visited Collingwood, Ballarat, Geelong, Adelaide, Hobart Town and Sydney. He returned to England early in 1860.

In August 1862 he set out on his 5th and final visit to Australia, travelling via the ship "Shalimar". On the way one of his collar-bone had been displaced by an accident on board, and his health was of a variable nature. He disembarked at Melbourne, and was there till the time of his decease (in January 1863). John Wroe died in Fitzroy, Melbourne at the rear of the Christian Israelite Sanctuary that is still used today.

Thus in a period of just over 40 years, John Wroe had carried the Word given to him, being, as he once termed himself, a "letter carrier" of the Lord's word to the people of Israel.

Hymn No. 4

**The remnant of the scatter'd seed,
Which did from Isr'el's stock proceed,
Shall be amidst a num'rous race,
As dew which cheers the earth's green face.**

**As dew which from the Lord comes down,
As showers which on the earth are blown,
Which will for no man longer stay,
Nor for the sons of men delay.**

**So now the fixed time is come,
For Isr'el's children to go home,
Men may as much secure their stay
As stop the dew in heat of day.**

**They'll be amidst a num'rous band,
Like a bold lion in the land,
Among the num'rous beasts of prey,
Thus shall the sons of Isr'el be.**

(Micah 5:8, Zechariah 8:12)

The Twelve Apostles



Matthew: the Apostle to the Jewish Christians

This issue we are going to look at the apostle Matthew, known also as Levi before his call to follow Jesus. In the Gospels of Mark and Luke he is referred to as Levi and we are also told that he was the son of Alphaeus, making him a brother of the apostle James the Lesser. He was, as we know from the Gospels, a tax collector from Capernaum, which leaves the implication that this was his native place. Tax collectors were amongst the most despised section of the community and placed on the same level as publicans and sinners (Matt 9:10). The reason for this intense dislike was probably the tax-collectors close link with the hated Romans and the always odious task of collecting the taxes from the people who can least afford them for the people who can afford to do without them. Jesus, in his choice of Matthew, was showing the judgmental masses that the lowliest will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, and that "the publicans and harlots go into the Kingdom of God before you" Matthew 21:31.

Matthew was Jewish by birth thus making him more despised and his standing amongst his fellow Jews that of a traitor. Hence another of the apostles of Jesus to be taken from the lowest (ie, fishermen) of professions and the first from a politically sensitive and debasing profession. This, of course, caused great confusion amongst the observers of Jesus' actions, and also

amongst his own disciples.

Jesus met Matthew at the place of toll in Capernaum on the overland customs route between Damascus and the Mediterranean. He invited Matthew to leave his tax collecting position and become a disciple. Matthew gives a feast for Jesus (Luke 5:29-32) with fellow publicans and tax collectors in attendance, at which the scribes and Pharisees along with his own disciples, questioned Jesus' motives and actions, also showing the reader the unpopularity in which the guests were held.

There is very little else to be gleaned from the Gospels about Matthew's activities. Fortunately we have the Gospel of Matthew to ascertain his beliefs and some of the events he witnessed. Evident throughout his gospel is a perpetual love for his Lord and Master, Jesus. As with all the other apostles, he was present in the upper room for the descent of the Holy Ghost after the ascension.

In his work for the ministry Matthew is usually paired with Bartholomew (Mark 3:18; Acts 1:13). As you know from previous articles, the apostles of the Lord were sent out in pairs to spread the Word. Matthew is said to have preached in Judea (reinforced by historians in that he was the disciple to the Hebrews) for 15 years, then he travelled to Ethiopia and other lands afterward. Matthew is one of the few apos-

ties who did not suffer martyrdom.

We know that Matthew was the writer of the first of the gospels, ie. the Gospel according to St. Matthew written around 37AD at Judea. The Gospel of Matthew (also known as the Gospel to Israel) was written later than the Gospel of Mark. It is felt that it is placed first in order in the Gospels because of its authoritative and comprehensive record of Jesus' life. There are quite a few incidences that are peculiar to Matthew only ie. the visit of Magi, the slaughter of the boy children by Herod, Joseph and his family's flee to Egypt, to name only a few. The Gospel of Matthew is said to reproduce nine tenths of the Gospel of Mark. As with the authors of the other Gospels, Matthew does not mention himself other than in the list of disciples.

We could say that the Gospel of Matthew proclaims Jesus Christ as Jehovah's King of Israel and Saviour of the World. The Gospel of Mark proclaims Jesus Christ as Jehovah's servant and is a gospel of deeds and works. The Gospel of Luke proclaims Jesus Christ as Jehovah's ideal man. The Gospel of John proclaims Jesus Christ as Jehovah's Messiah and God's son.

From these summaries we can see why the Gospel of Matthew was chosen as the Gospel of Israel with a message particularly pertinent to Israel. In Matthew 4:17 "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" taken literally says kingdom from the heavens headed by Jesus Christ for the purpose of re-establishing the Kingdom of God over this rebellious part of God's realm. This is only found in Matthew because it is the Gospel of Jehovah's King and refers to the Messiah's kingdom on earth. (The difference between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven being that one aspect of the kingdom of heaven is the



state experienced prior to entering the Kingdom of God).

Eusebius tells us that Matthew had begun to preach to the Hebrews. When he made up his mind to go to others (ie. the Gentiles) too, he committed his own gospel to writing in his own native tongue. Eusebius tells us that the first Gospel was written in Hebrew or Aramaic, the Greek version we have being a translation. The Gospel of Matthew was purported to be taken to India by the apostle Bartholomew, who preached the Gospel there. This copy is said to be preserved in India to this day. This copy

was found by a disciple of Jesus called Pantaneus, who thought he was bringing something new to India, only to discover Bartholomew had already bought the message there.

Ireneaus tells us that Matthew published a written gospel for the Hebrews in their own tongue while Peter and Paul were preaching the Gospel in Rome.

Interestingly Ebionites use the Gospel of Matthew only and repudiate the apostle Paul - maintaining he was an apostate of the law. An Ebionite is a Jewish Christian - the word 'ebion' means 'poor'.

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"And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments" Matthew 19:16,17.

Answers to puzzles on page 17:

Check your Bible for the answers to books from the Old and New Testaments.

Riddles:

1. Jesus 2. Angel 3. Bible 4. Faith 5. Fruit

Check your Bible for the answers to the Bible characters question.

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 at the church addresses. All are welcome.

Melbourne Regular Service held each Sunday evening - 7pm.
Singleton Regular discussions each week with the exception of the first Sunday of the month when there is a service at 7.15pm.
Terrigal Discussion First Sunday evening in the month. Local papers will advertise services.
Sydney Services and discussions alternate Sundays at 2.15pm.

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

Melbourne

Church: 193 Fitzroy Street,
Fitzroy, Victoria. 3065
(03) 417 4560
Write: As above.

Terrigal

Church: Cnr. Terrigal Dr & Serpentine Rd
Terrigal, NSW. 2260
(043) 84 3535
Write: 64 Erina Valley Rd.,
Terrigal, NSW. 2260.

Singleton

Church: Cnr Bishopgate Street and
Goulburn Street,
Singleton.
(065) 71 1269
Write: P.O. Box 127,
Singleton. NSW. 2330
(065) 72 2741

Windsor

Church: 340 Macquarie Street,
South Windsor.
(045) 77 2190
Write: 114 Morilla Road,
Wilberforce. NSW 2756
(045) 763 264

Sydney

Church: 196 Campbell Street,
Darlinghurst. NSW 2010
(02) 331 5625
Write: P.O. Box 50,
Enfield. NSW 2136
(02) 642 4555

Kempsey

Church: 10 Marsh Street,
Kempsey. NSW 2440
No phone.
Write: 10 Jeffrey's Lane,
Kempsey. NSW 2440
065) 62 5562

U.S.A.

Write: c/- Mrs. M. Shafer,
4502 Shafer Drive,
Lafayette,
Indiana. USA. 47905

Church : 1204N Rural Street,
Residence: Indianapolis. USA 46201