

From the Inkhorn

No doubt you will have noticed the new format in this Issue. We would like your feedback as to how you find it.

Once again this issue brings articles of hope to all, encouragement to Christians, and also challenges theological interpretations. The example of the little seedling being nurtured to grow into a healthy plant (**Growth**) shows how we constantly need God's help as we move towards maturity.

The need for prayer in developing our relationship with God is developed in Debug in the article titled **Prayer. Mission, Evangelism and Apologetics** shows the impact of the changing society in which we live on how we share and present our beliefs to others. The internalisation of our beliefs may be similar, but the way we can effectively share with others has to change!

One of the foundation interpretations of the Scripture held by Christian Israelites is the difference between "incorruptible" and "immortal". A series of three articles (**More, Would You Like an Apple** and **Immortality and Incorruption**) based on talks given at a recent Conference, point out that the concept of 'more' can be both good and bad. The world wants "more" of material things, whilst Christians should be seeking "more" understanding from God in these Latter Days. We believe that the preservation of spirit and soul and body (immortality) represents 'more' compared to the wonderful hope of the resurrection (incorruptible), when the spirit and soul are raised to form a spiritual body. But all in accordance with God's Grace.

Then as well there is the regular story and puzzles for the children, Vegetarian Recipes and our Statement of Belief. We trust that you will receive a blessing as you read these articles.

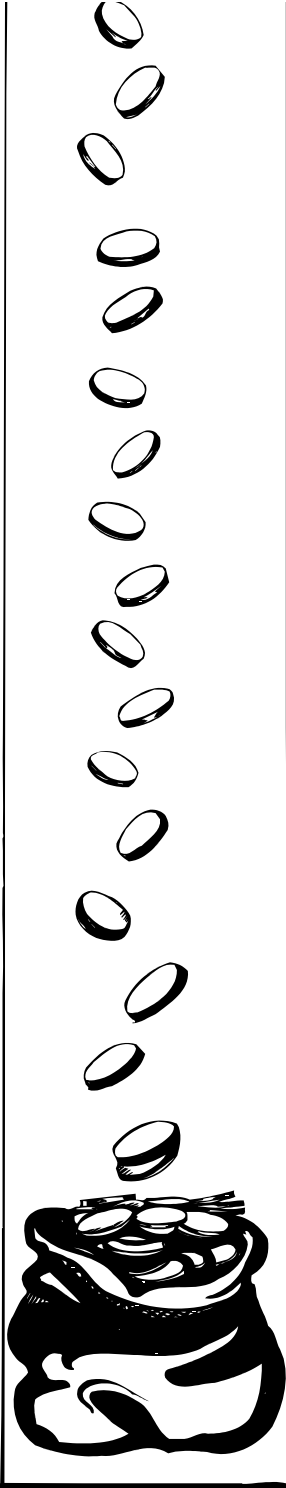
The Editor

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'MORE'

by Teresa GRAY



In this issue of Latter Rain we will be presenting a series of short articles based around the themes presented in 1st Corinthians 15:53.

Before examining this verse further I'm going to spend a few minutes just looking at some interesting observations of our world as noted by anAmericanDoctor

(Swenson, Richard A. *Hurling toward Oblivion – A logical argument for the end of the age.* 1999. Navpress, Colorado).

I don't say this to create alarm because as Christians we know that the end of this world is prophesied (Matthew chapter 24). This is more a glimpse of the present world situation – more to paint the scene for the absolute relevance of the verse we will look at later in 1st Corinthians.

Dr Swenson asked the question: If you could use only one word to describe all that is happening in the world, which would you choose? He remarks and you'd probably agree that a lot of words would come to mind but high on this fellows list was the word 'more'. It makes no difference where you look or what topic you are talking about

Once something has been discovered, you can't 'un-discover' it.

there is always more - more cars travelling more miles, more aeroplanes carrying more passengers on more flights, there are more televisions broadcasting more programs over more stations, more

named Richard Swenson. Dr Swenson looks at measurable trends and empiric forces that are powerfully at work within the world system which he believes are propelling us towards an ominous or catastrophic outcome

computers, more books, more magazines processing more information, more businesses offering more services and making more products, more buildings, more restaurants, more medications, more telephones, more money, more stress, more technology, more of everything.

The phenomenon of more is called 'profusion', and wherever profusion is most active progress is also most active and visa versa.

Mostly by definition people consider progress to be a good thing. The problem however, is that we have managed to

develop lifestyles that are so habituated or addicted to progress that even if ill effects were proven to be associated with progress we would find it hard to modify our lifestyles in any substantive way to address these issues. People will not give up their lifestyles arrived at by progress. Progress is irreversible. You can't turn the tide of knowledge and lifestyle backwards. Once something has been discovered, you can't 'un-discover' it.

When you look at the concept of profusion meaning that we have more and more of everything we can see that it is growing at an exponential rate. So we want more and more of everything and we want it faster and faster. This is a phenomenon unlike any that the world system has ever experienced.

In the statistics given for life expectancy in the year 1000 the life expectancy was approximately 25 years of age, in 1500 it would have been 35 years of age and in the year 2000 the life expectancy has risen to 78.

Health Care Expenditure in the US has risen from 1 billion dollars in 1900 with no noticeable rise until the 1960's when the rise started and escalated to 1100 billion dollars in 2000.

Gross Domestic Product in the US has risen from 1 billion dollars from 1900-1940 with the figures rising from 1940-1980 steadily to 1000 billion dollars and a sharp rise 7500 billion dollars in 2000.

Gross Federal Debt for the US has risen from 0 dollars in 1900-1940 with a rise from 1940-1975 to 300 billion dollars and a sharp rise from 1975-2000 to nearly 6,000 billion.

Air Miles travelled has gone from 0 miles in 1900-1940 with a sharp rise to 550 billion miles in 2000.

Volume of Advertising has risen from 0 in 1900-1940 rising to 25 billion dollars by 1980 and then a sharp rise to 280 billion

dollars in 2000.

Articles of Third Class 'Junk' Mail has risen from ½ billion pieces of mail in 1900 with a gradual rise to just over 20 billion pieces in 1980 with a sharp rise to 75 billion pieces of mail in 2000.

Total Mail (surface and email) has gone from less than 100 billion messages in 1900-1980 then a small rise from 1980-1990 to 200 billion messages but then a sharp rise to 4500 billion messages in 2000.

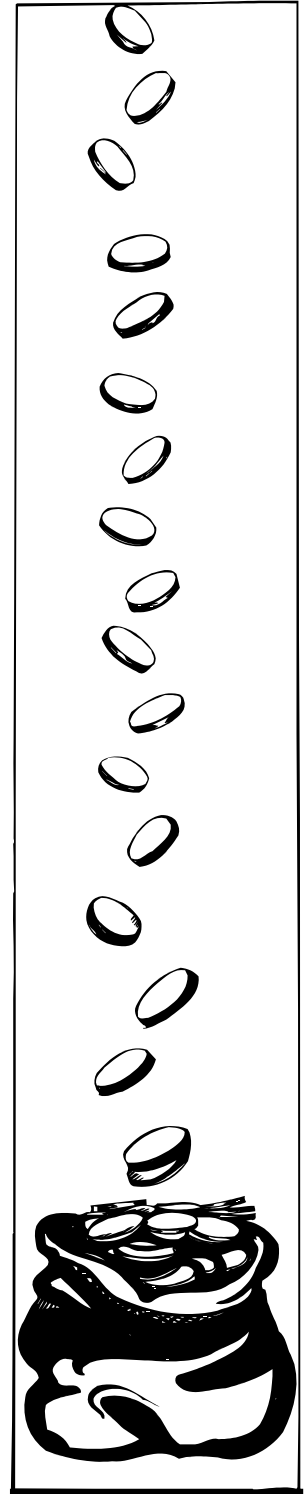
World Population has risen from less than 500 million in AD 1500 to over 6,000 million in 2000.

The Explosive

Overall though,
everything is increasing
- that is the problem

power of Weapons has increased from 0.1 million tons of TNT in 1500-1900 with a small rise to 0.2 million tons of TNT up to 1950 then a very sharp rise to 6 million tons of TNT in 2000.

These figures demonstrate the exponential rate of growth in a number



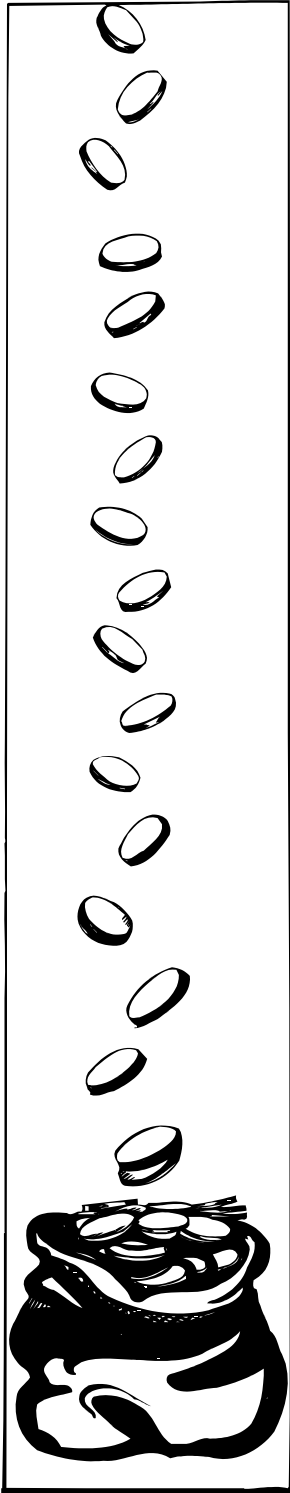
of areas. If you can visualize the shape of the graphs, the curve rises steeply at the end of the graph indicating rapid growth in a relatively short time period. In most of these cases it has risen quite quickly just in the past 25 years.

Even though a lot of this data is American I think the relative rate of growth is still comparable to a good portion of the rest of the world.

Overall though everything is increasing - and here is the problem;

Because we live in a fallen world, every thing in this world is tainted by the fall. That is not to say that some things are not good, but that nothing is purely good.

So as everything is increasing there is an increase of good things as well as an increase of bad things. But even if we could stack them into piles of good things and bad things because of the lethality of the bad things we can't compare the piles evenly.



For example

“You go to the mail box and find ten letters addressed with your name. The first announces that you just inherited one million dollars. A second informs you that your book proposal was accepted by the publisher. A third letter sends the delightful news that your oldest child was just accepted into a top university with full scholarship. Each letter in turn brings good news: Your nephew became engaged, your lost pet was found, and your new BMW finally arrived at the dealership. There is only one problem. Your last letter – from the Public Health Department – contains the results of your HIV test: positive, from an inadvertent needle stick” (Swenson, Richard A. *Hurting toward Oblivion – A logical argument for the end of the age*. 1999. Navpress, Colorado. Page 94/95).

It only took one bad bit of news to outweigh all the good news.

No matter how large the quantity or quality of the positive, if the negative is harmful enough the negative wins.

So as we live in a world where everything is growing exponentially both the good and bad components of these things also grow exponentially. Eventually we will arrive at a time where no amount of positive/good profusion or growth will be able to offset the amount of negative/bad profusion or growth because of the lethality of the bad.

Again I didn't say all this to create alarm - more to reinforce the urgency to be ready and waiting for the one event that will be able to restore this chaotic climax, and that is the return of Jesus. The big question is – what happens then. The next two articles will deal with this question. 📖

Reference:

Swenson, Richard A. *Hurting toward Oblivion – A logical argument for the end of the age*. 1999. Navpress, Colorado.

Hymn No. 55

Genesis 1, 2:7; Daniel 12:6,7

God made the heav'ns and earth within six days,
And man from dust He on the sixth did raise,
Evil and good before him placed were,
Instead of good, man did the evil share.

Man, being deceiv'd, his Maker disobey'd,
And thus on him the penalty was laid;
But from Jehovah's Word it now appears,
He'll life restore, within th' six thousand years.

These six hath God divided into three,
That each two thousand for a time should be,
Wherein have some obey'd the holy law,
And thus escap'd the desolating blow.

But when the fourth time, or the half appears,
Which is the promis'd seventh thousand years,
The Lord, from death, his sting will surely rend,
All sorrow, sighs, and tears will have an end.

Bible Brain Teaser

In the paragraph below there are the names of 16 books of the Bible. See how many you can find.

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible. It was a lulu; kept people looking so hard for facts...and for others it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the names of the books were not capitalized. But the truth finally struck home to numbers of our readers. To others it was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. Yes, there will be some really easy ones to spot. Others may require judges to help them. I will quickly admit it usually takes a minister to find one of them, and there will be loud lamentations when it is found. A little lady says she brews a cup of tea so that she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete. Relax now, for there really are sixteen names of books of the Bible in this paragraph.

Would You Like An Apple?

by Jennie RICARDO

Most people like apples. If offered an apple, most people would accept. But what if taking that apple came with a 'product disclosure statement'. "Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die", would you still take the apple?

When Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden, God gave them a choice, Would you like this apple¹? Adam and Eve chose, they wanted more. The serpent said, "*Your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil*" Genesis 3:5. So they partook and fell, and with this fall came death. "*In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*" Genesis 2:17. So we are here, liable to death, mortal, corruptible.

In life we always want more, however I think it is worth asking the question that unless God had given us this inherent desire for more would we ever be able to achieve His purpose?

We were created to live. 'Live' in the Old Testament is specifically mentioned in terms of not actually dying at least 18 times. In particular it is worth noting Ezekiel 18:32 where it says "*For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live*".

Looking through the Bible we see Enoch, who doesn't have a whole lot mentioned about him, Elijah, then Jesus. All of these had their bodies taken up without death. Jesus, however, is of course different in that he died and overcame death through being raised back to life again and was then taken up. However, for each of these three individuals we see God's desire for mankind, life without death. "*I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live*" Deuteronomy 30:19.

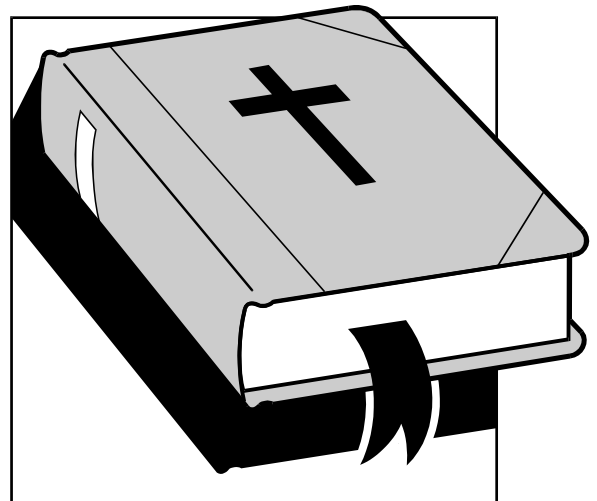
¹ The 'apple' symbolises the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

So what does this mean to you? Paul says, "*I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*" 1st Thessalonians 5:23.

To make up our human being as it is we have a spirit, a soul and a body. Our reasoning or conscience-ness is our soul, our life giving force is our spirit, and our body, well hopefully it is obvious enough what that is.

God wants to save our spirit, soul and body...but why? What is so special about this body that we would want it preserved?

Jesus died on the cross for our sins and through His death and resurrection our souls can be saved. We are given this gift through God's grace, we do not have to spiritually die. However we are all still physically dying, the original fall is still having an effect on our body. "*In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*" Genesis 2:17. Satan still has a triumph; he still has the bodies of mankind. The ultimate triumph for God is in this original promise repeated throughout the bible "*choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.*"



1st Corinthians 15:54 states *“When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory”*. This shows two clearly distinct groups: the corruptible putting on incorruption, and the mortal putting on immortality. *“Death is swallowed up in victory”*. The ultimate win for God is found in a group of people overcoming this physical death. So what is

so special about this body being preserved? It overcomes that original curse; we go back to God’s original promise and desire for our lives. Are we willing to give ourselves to God to use as tools to overcome Satan? Our inherent desire for more encourages us to strive for perfection. None of us are perfect but it is only through striving to grow closer to God, and allowing God to work through you, that he can use you to overcome Satan and destroy the original curse.📖

The Tree of Knowledge

Satan tempted Eve as, with his angels (fallen spirits) he has since tempted all mankind - and succeeded in bringing about the fall of our first parents from a state of innocence to a state of guilt. As a result the bodies of Adam and Eve died within the day, or 1,000 years, and their offspring also came under the curse.

Woman is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The Devil tempted her whilst she was in the time of separation (Leviticus 15:19,24,25). See also Ezekiel 18:2; Proverbs 30:20; and James 1:15, which further explain the evil fruit and the eating thereof.

“The serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes will be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil...she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat” Genesis 3:4-6. They were commanded to multiply, but to subdue the evil of the earth, the body. In season the tree would have produced good fruit - like Jesus, unlike Cain.

Tares were sown among the wheat. *“The enemy that sowed them is the devil”* Matthew 13:39.

“Your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” 1st Peter 5:8.

Curse on the Body

The curse that fell upon our first parents affected the body. Condemnation came on the soul also when the law was given to Israel through Moses. The first curse brought about the destruction of the body - it will not rise again, will not be resuscitated.

“The sowest not that body that shall be...but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption” 1st Corinthians 15:37,38,44,50. See also Job 7:9,10; 10:8,9,21; 24:19; 34:14,15; Isaiah 26:14, Proverbs 21:15,16.

Three Component Parts of Man

God gave a soul as well as a body to each one who has been born upon this planet, so that we have three component parts, a spirit, a soul and a body, and no two of these terms are synonymous. *“I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ”* 1st Thessalonians 5:23.

Immortality & Incorruption

by Sarah GRAY

If the experts are right, this world is increasingly heading towards destruction. From pollution and deforestation, to whaling and global warming, we are told our earth has little chance of surviving. We seem to be heading towards a climactic end - the Bible tells us that these events will occur before the return of Jesus Christ to this earth.

What will happen at the end of this world as we know it, when Jesus does return? There are many passages in the Bible that give us some clues, and one of these is 1st Corinthians chapter 15.

In 1st Corinthians 15:53 we read *“For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality”*. On first reading we might think that ‘incorruption’ and ‘immortality’ are the same thing – both are referring to our current state. However, if we look at the

definitions of these two words we can see that Paul was actually setting out two distinct changes that are to take place at Jesus’ return.

Something that is corruptible is in a state where ‘it is liable to decay’. Genesis 3:19 says *“for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return”*, so when we die our bodies return to the dust they were made of, or in other words after death our physical body will be in a state of decay.

On the other hand a mortal being is one that has life, it is ‘liable to death’. Logically we can only be liable to death while we are still alive.

Some different translations demonstrate the difference between mortal and corruptible: *“This body that decays must be changed into a body that cannot decay.”*

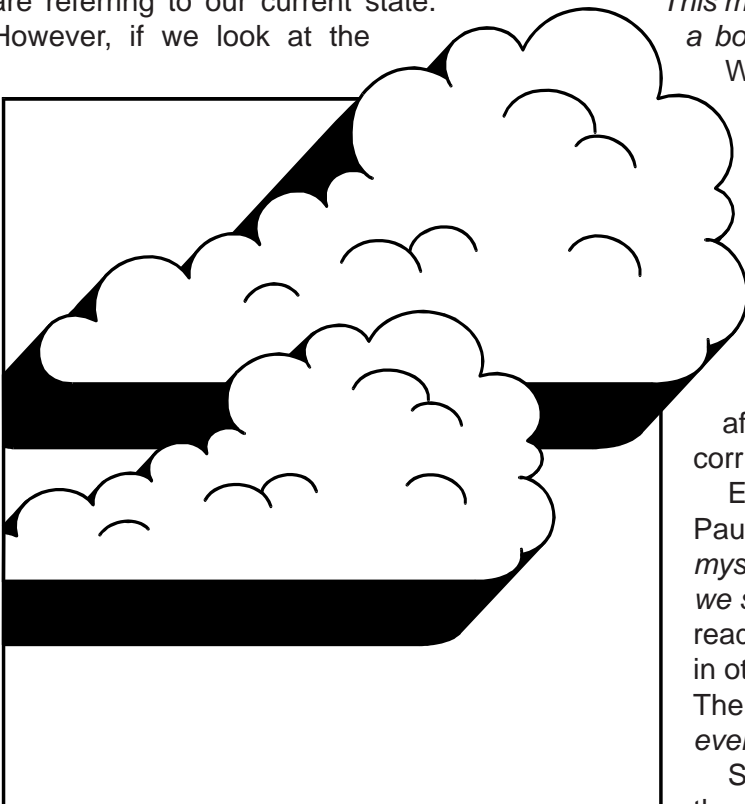
This mortal body must be changed into a body that will live forever” (God’s Word Translation).

This translation clearly shows the difference between a corruptible body and an incorruptible body.

Taking that understanding of the difference between mortal and corruptible we can summarise that while we are alive we are mortal and after we have died we become corruptible.

Earlier in 1st Corinthians 15:51 Paul writes *“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed”*. Firstly we read that *not everyone* will sleep, or in other words not everyone will die. Then the verse goes on to say that *everyone* will be changed.

So both those who have died, and those who are alive, will be changed



– or, both those who are corruptible and those who are mortal will be changed – they will become incorruptible and immortal. No longer subject to the decline of their old state, either death or decay.

In 1st Thessalonians 4:13-16 we read *“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then **we which are alive and remain** shall be caught up **together** with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord”* (emphasis mine).

This passage paints a picture of the events at Jesus’ return. There is a clear distinction made of two groups: those who are dead and those who are alive.

Both these passages show that there will be a group of people who never experience death. At the return of Jesus their bodies will not have corrupted in the grave, they will be mortal.

Each person is made of a spirit, a soul and a body (1st Thessalonians 5:23). When we die our bodies return to dust (Genesis 3:19) – our spirit returns to God and the soul sleeps. When Jesus returns we are promised that we will be changed from our corruptible state, to a state that is incorruptible. Our

spirit and soul will form a ‘body’ that can no longer corrupt or decay, and we will become incorruptible.

But what about the word ‘immortal’? We know that mortal means liable to death, and to become ‘immortal’ we must first be mortal. In our current state we are mortal, and we are made of a spirit, soul and body. If we never experience death our body would not decay in the usual way. If we are still alive when Jesus returns we will still have our bodies. Looking at the passage from Thessalonians we read that *“we which are alive and remain shall be caught up”*. We can see that those who are alive at Jesus’ return will not die, but will be caught up to meet their Saviour with their spirit, soul and body not facing corruption.

1st Corinthians 15:41 states *“There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead”*. This verse shows that there will be different “glories” in heaven. The passages above describe two of these glories – incorruptible and immortal. In Deuteronomy 30:16 God made a promise to the Israelites: *“I command you today to love the lord your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live...”*

The Bible tells us that there will be a group of people who are taken to meet Jesus without ever experiencing death. The Bible also tells us that we can aim to be a part of this group. God keeps his word, and the promise made to the Israelites is still to be fulfilled. While we are mortal we have the potential to follow God’s way of life and hope for the life of our body.📖

“This present world is not the end; the full glory does not remain in it; therefore those who were strong prayed for the weak. But the day of judgment will be the end of this age and the beginning of the immortal age to come, in which corruption has passed away, sinful indulgence has come to an end, unbelief has been cut off, and righteousness has increased and truth has appeared...For what good is it to us, if an immortal time has been promised to us, but we have done deeds that bring death? And what good is it that an everlasting hope has been promised to us, but we have miserably failed?”

2nd Esdras 7:42, 44, 119, 120.

Growth

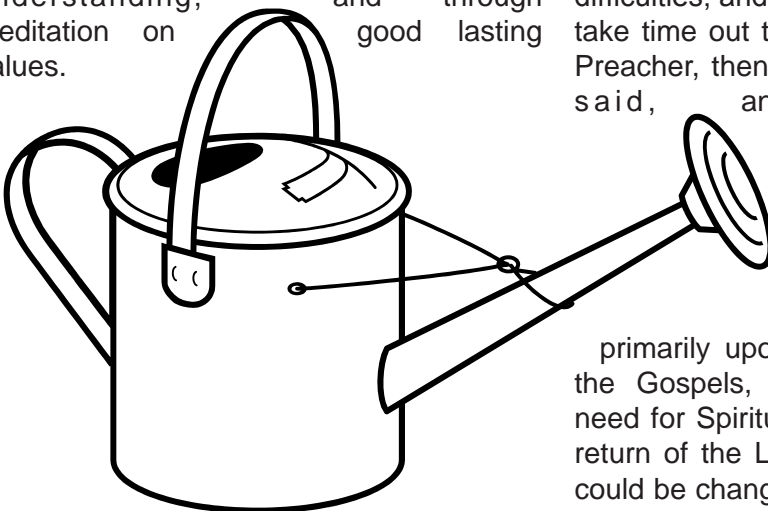
– the past - the present - the future.

by Paul GRAY

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither” Psalm 1:1-3.

I like gardening, seeing small plants grow, but in the early stage when the seeds are just starting to grow, and the little plants are struggling to exist, if they are not watered, protected and sometimes shaded, depending on the season, and weeded, they can lose the struggle for their existence.

We are like a little plant. I liken our faith to the help we need to receive to survive. We need to attach to a source of continual moisture and nourishment if we are going to survive and develop, and the level of nourishment comes from the degree to which we accept and develop our life in the simple pattern that is given by our Master Gardener. It is not a complex pattern that requires “major surgery” every day, but we are required to communicate with our source, through reading the Word of God and through prayer, asking for guidance and understanding, and through meditation on good lasting values.



Development is not through a spurt on one day a week, but through receiving nourishment continually each day, so that we can withstand the difficulties as they keep coming along. Going to Church one day a week without any nourishment in between will not produce a well developed Christian understanding.

I have often pondered the reason behind some things that have happened. What is it that has caused people in generation after generation to seek to God? Why is it that some individuals spend time thinking about specific religious values? Where would you and I be today if there had not been a religious revival during the 19th century? I do not get clear answers, but I do get thoughts, positive thoughts, that help and encourage me to continually aspire in my own life in this generation.

Recently the Christian Israelite Church in Singleton has been remembering the founding of the Church and its teachings in the district 150 years ago. Why did those hard working individuals who first accepted these beliefs, who like you and me would have been struggling for existence against great difficulties, and under pioneering conditions, take time out to even listen to a Travelling Preacher, then to meditate upon what was said, and then have the conviction to follow the teachings that were expounded?

Perhaps they were sincere Christian people who appreciated that the teachings were based primarily upon the Books of Moses and the Gospels, with an emphasis on the need for Spiritual Help, to be ready for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ when they could be changed from this mortal life to an

Immortal Life, without physical death. Whilst many churches may have similar beliefs in some of these aspects, these people also undertook a regular commitment of worship and lifestyle, and they had the desire to seek to understand what God has allowed to happen in this world. They took time out to study the Scriptures.

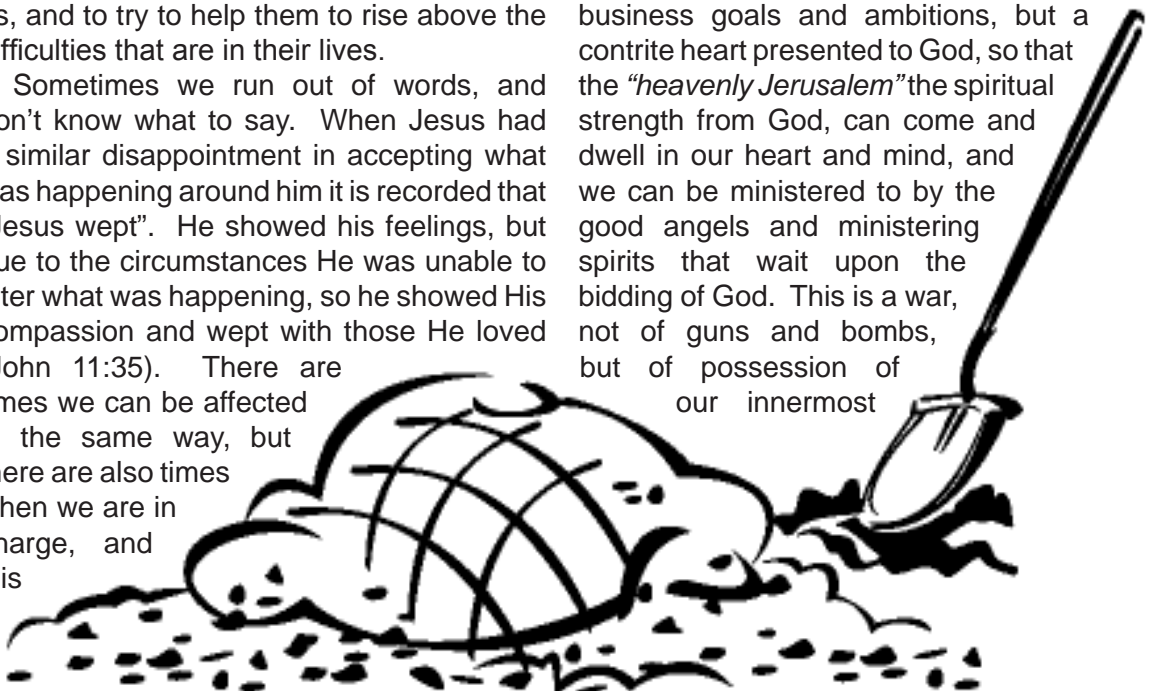
I like to challenge my own thinking, so I went back to Hebrews chapters 11 and 12 which deal with Faith across past generations. *“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen...”* Hebrews 11:1. Religion requires us to believe in something that we cannot see. We need to maintain a positive hope, have trust in the direction we are going, and support the goal for which we are striving.

This contrasts with the material world which uses only cold facts and figures when it calculates its direction. In business we are encouraged to plan for a specific goal, to work toward profits, and often to tread on those who get in our way in the process. We are sometimes encouraged to become self centred, striving for our own good at all times. This contrasts with the Christian principles that Jesus gave us, in which we are encouraged to think of others, to be kind, helpful, and encouraging to those around us, and to try to help them to rise above the difficulties that are in their lives.

Sometimes we run out of words, and don't know what to say. When Jesus had a similar disappointment in accepting what was happening around him it is recorded that “Jesus wept”. He showed his feelings, but due to the circumstances He was unable to alter what was happening, so he showed His compassion and wept with those He loved (John 11:35). There are times we can be affected in the same way, but there are also times when we are in charge, and it is

up to us to make take decisive action. We know, and can be encouraged by the fact, that if we do, we can receive spiritual strength to encourage and help us in our stand. Don't be misled though, because the harder we try, the more opposition will grow, until we make a stand of being firm, resolute and determined; then the opposition will begin to wither, and spiritual strength will start to nourish us, until we ultimately come to the point where it will be easier for us to do right than to do wrong.

In Hebrews chapter 12, note the contrast between verses 18 and 22. Verse 18 is reminding us of the past when Israel as a nation was before Mount Zion, full of hope and ambition, but they wanted to do things their way, so barriers had to be set up on the mountain to keep the people contained. They wanted action, now! They liked to see the smoke and fire because to them this represented power and Presence. Verse 22 reminds us that the calling of Jesus, *“If ye love me keep my commandments”* John 14:15, is calling us to a real and living God who wants to be present in our lives. We are being called to *“... the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels”*. Our support team is not physical manifestations; our support team is not business goals and ambitions, but a contrite heart presented to God, so that the *“heavenly Jerusalem”* the spiritual strength from God, can come and dwell in our heart and mind, and we can be ministered to by the good angels and ministering spirits that wait upon the bidding of God. This is a war, not of guns and bombs, but of possession of our innermost



being, our spirit that drives our thinking and actions. This is where “*The Comforter*” as it is called in other parts of the Bible, will help us to control our life and our actions.

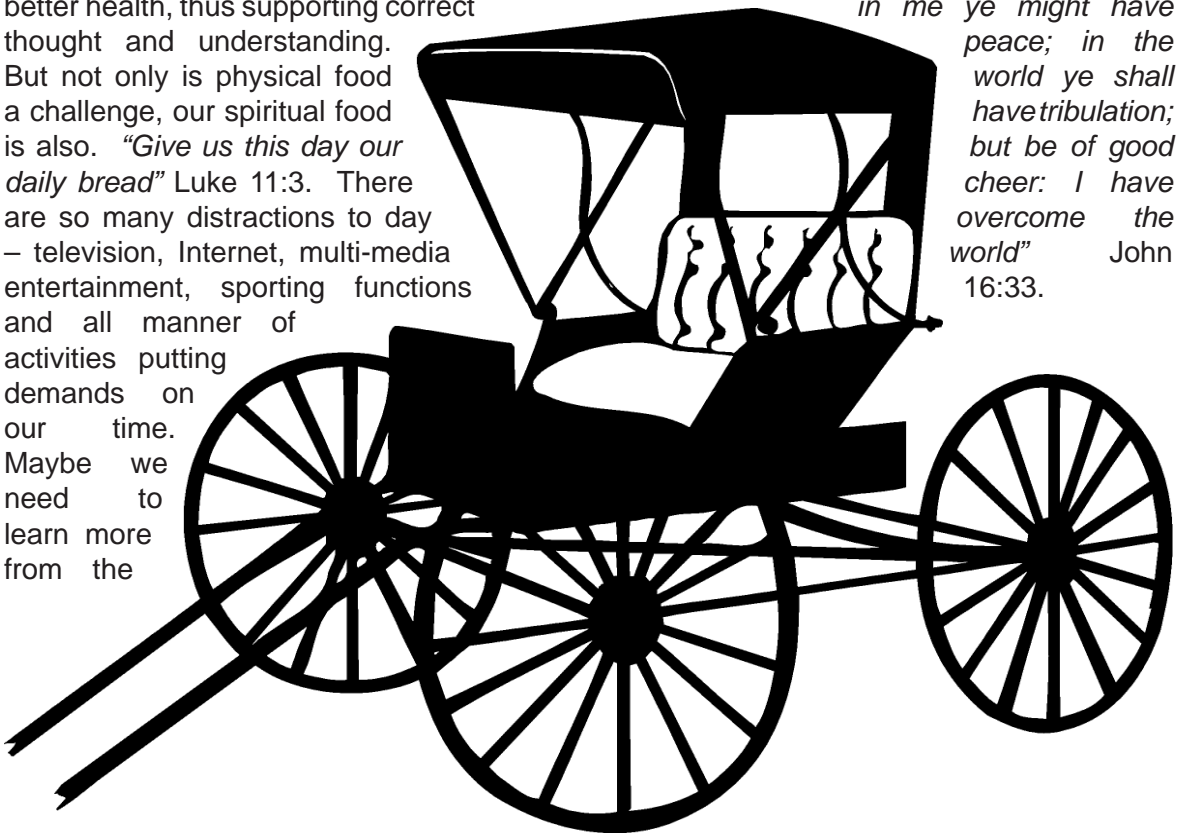
Don’t allow the negative experiences to grow! The little plant needs constant positive nurturing if it is to grow and survive. Cast out wrong thoughts, like pulling up weeds, before they develop and take control in our mind, and the spiritual strength will help the little seedling survive.

One of the insidious things that makes the task of growing strong in the ways of God difficult is that we are allowed to be robbed of our clear thinking and our ability to reason, by our health. Many of the foods we eat today don’t provide the nourishment and physical enrichment that the body requires to help our mind stay pure and strong. There are many synthetic foods, and they are made to taste good and for us to enjoy, but they do not adequately nourish our mental development. But don’t despair, God knows this, and if we seek and ask, we can and will be led to the right foods, to help our body into better health, thus supporting correct thought and understanding. But not only is physical food a challenge, our spiritual food is also. “*Give us this day our daily bread*” Luke 11:3. There are so many distractions to day – television, Internet, multi-media entertainment, sporting functions and all manner of activities putting demands on our time. Maybe we need to learn more from the

Pioneers – they worked hard and long, but then rested. In many ways today people do not stop and rest, but go from one activity to another, never stopping to listen for God amidst their busy schedule.


I often think that our pioneers, who would have been using virgin soils and natural fertilizers, would have had an advantage over us in this respect, and that their foods may have contained more nutrition, which would have helped their mental and physical condition to have been inclined to a better spiritual insight and outlook.

“And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect” Hebrews 11:39-40. We, me and you, need to work out our own faith, and we will receive a blessing, through the wonderful powerful grace of God. We may not receive a specific blessing that we ask for at a particular time, but we will be blessed, and we shall receive peace as Jesus said, *“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace; in the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world”* John 16:33.



The return of Jesus Christ to this earth is getting closer. Like the plant that relies on someone to provide its nourishment and protection, so we, through our faith, rely upon God to give us nourishment, strength and courage. As Hebrews 12:22 reads, we have come unto the *"heavenly Jerusalem"* and to an innumerable *"company of angels."* So let us 'tap into' this strength, and grow in love and understanding in the sure promises of God. Jesus prayed, "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" John 17:15-16.

Our potential to grow is great, but we need

also to recognize our limitations, and not to allow external circumstances to dominate our situation. We need to seek for spiritual help so that we as little seedlings can grow to maturity in Christ. Those plants which fully grow have the potential of preservation of spirit and soul and body to receive the change promised when Jesus returns, for "mortal to put on Immortality" 1st Corinthians 15:51-57. This is the goal which many have sought over the ages, and which will be fulfilled at God's appointed time. *"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ"* Ephesians 4:13. 

Plant the Word

by Wilma PENDERGRAFT

We are not expected
To germinate the seed -
Jesus said to plant it,
The world's a field in need.

God does not expect us
To cause the seed to sprout -
He just said to plant it,
And plant it all about.

Jesus never told us
To make the seed to grow -
He just said to plant it,
To plant it where we go.

God does not expect us
To make the seed bear fruit -
Jesus said to plant it,
And pray that it will root.

Jesus does expect us
To plant the Gospel Seed,
Plant it, plant it, plant it,
The world's in desperate need.

Plant the seed, and sow it,
Get much seed in the soil,
Jesus said the harvest
Will compensate the toil.

Debug Your Bible: Prayer

by Kerion FELLOWES

What does the Bible teach us about prayer? The Bible can teach us how to pray, what to pray for and give us examples of many wonderful prayers.

What is prayer? Prayer can be defined as the act of attempting to communicate, commonly with a deity or spirit for the purpose of worship, requesting guidance, confessing sins, or to express the supplicant's thoughts and emotions. The words of a prayer may take the form of a hymn, mantra or a spontaneous utterance in the praying person's words. The most common and universal prayer among Christians is the Lord's Prayer (Luke 11:34), which is how Jesus taught his disciples to pray.

The first mention of prayer is found in Genesis chapter 4. Genesis 4:26, And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the LORD. The Prophets, Kings, leaders and children of Israel established a pattern of calling on the Lord or praying, throughout the many books of the Old Testament. The New Testament continues with the importance of prayer. The Apostles regarded prayer as an important part of their spiritual life (Acts 6:4; Romans 1:9; Colossians 1:9). As such, The Apostles frequently incorporated verses from Psalms into their writings: for example, Romans 3:10-18 is borrowed from Psalms 14:1-3 and other psalms. Thus, due to this emphasis on prayer in the Early Church, lengthy passages of the New Testament are prayers such as the Prayer for forgiveness (Mark 11:25-26), the Lord's Prayer, the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55), Jesus' prayer to the one true God (John 17), Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:3-14), the Believers' Prayer (Acts 4:23-31), may this cup be taken from

me (Matthew 26:36-44), Pray that you will not fall into temptation (Luke 22:39-46), Stephen's Prayer (Acts 7:59-60), pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men (2nd Thessalonians 3:1-2).

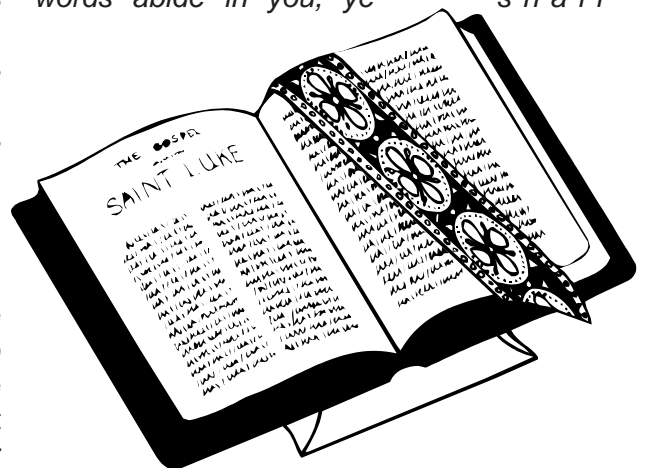
Why Should We Pray?

Prayer develops our relationship with God. If we never speak to our spouse, family or friends or never listen to anything they might have to say to us, our relationships will quickly deteriorate. It is the same with God. The act of Prayer - communicating with God - helps us grow closer and more intimately connected with God and as that relationship develops and matures we are better able to recognise His will in our lives. Prayer in the New Testament is presented as a positive action.

Zechariah 13:9, And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.

Colossians 4:2, Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.

John 15:7, *"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall*



ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

The Lord Instructed Us to Pray

One of the simplest and greatest reasons to spend time in prayer is because the Lord instructed us to pray. If we are striving to be obedient disciples in all that the Lord has commanded then we should obey the instruction to pray. I believe that it is also much simpler than that, if we have a relationship with our Lord that is that of a Father/Lover then we naturally want to spend time in conversation with God. I believe that God listens to each and every one of our prayers because He loves and knows us all individually.

Matthew 26:41, *"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

Luke 18:1, *"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint."*

Ephesians 6:18, *"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."*

Is there any correct posture for prayer?

There is no correct or certain posture for prayer. In the Bible people prayed in many different ways; on their knees (1st Kings 8:45), bowing (Exodus 4:31), on their faces before God (2nd Chronicles 20:18; Matthew 26:39), and standing (1st Kings 8:22). However you choose to pray it helps if you are comfortable and with the least distraction, however, everyone can pray wherever they are. I have often spoken with people who pray daily while walking in the morning, sitting in the magnificent Australian outback working or wherever they are when they feel the need to pray.

What words should I use when I pray to God?

Your prayers do not need to be wordy or impressive. So long as the words that you use come from your heart there are no "wrong" words to use in prayer. Obviously

the words that we use in our prayers reflect our relationship with God and should be respectful. The Bible gives us some guidelines on how to pray.

Matthew 6:7, *"But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking."*

Ecclesiastes 5:2, *"Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few."*

The Holy Spirit will help you in prayer when you don't know how to pray or those times when the words just won't come. If we just open ourselves up to the influence of the Spirit and ask God, who knows every little thing that we want to bring to Him, to help us.

Romans 8:26-27, *"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."*

What can be achieved through prayer?

Throughout the Bible, Prayer is shown to be God's appointed method by which we obtain what He has to bestow (Daniel 9:3; Matthew 9:24-29; Luke 11:13). The Apostles were completely convicted about the power of prayer and that God would answer their prayers, if asked with a humble heart.

Matthew 7:7-8, *"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."*

1st John 5:14 – 15, *"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."*

The Book of James (chapter 4) explains that attitude that is required when we pray. We cannot pray with a selfish heart or in a frame of mind that is focused on the world.

Private Prayer or Public Prayer?

When Jesus gave thanks to the Lord for a miracle, this was performed in public. The practice of a communal meal was one of the features of his ministry and of the early Christian church and this was one of the major miracles recorded in the New Testament. The feeding of 5,000 men, their wives and children by Jesus is reported in all four gospels - Matthew 14:13-23, Mark 6:32-46, Luke 9:10-18, and John 6:1-15. Jesus is recorded as performing the miracle, by feeding a crowd which may have totalled as many as 15,000 adults and children with only 5 loaves and two fish. During and following this miracle, Jesus thanked God for the food and later prayed to God.

It is notable that Jesus blessed the food in public. All four Gospels describe this event. In chronological order:

Mark 6:41, *“And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.”*

Matthew 14:19, *“...took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.”*

Luke 9:16, *“Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.”*

John 6:11, *“And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as*

much as they would.”

According to Luke (6:12), Jesus frequently prayed alone, for hours at a time, as is most pointedly described before Jesus was betrayed in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus encouraged the disciples to pray in secret in their private rooms as a humble response to the prayer practices of the time. Two of the largest Jewish religious movements in 1st century Palestine were the Pharisees and Sadducees. Jesus is recorded as having repeatedly criticized both - often with rather strong language. Much of Jesus' anger may have been motivated by their prayer methods which were very public.

Jesus believed that prayers are to be an intensely personal event between a person and God; prayer to Jesus was a private matter.

Jesus condemns prayers in situations where the reason for the prayer is for public recognition, for example: Matthew 6:5-6, *“And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the*

hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men...when thou prayest, enter into thy closet and when thou has shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret...”

The reference to go into thy closet has been translated in other versions of the Bible as “go into your inner room”, “go away by yourself”, “all alone”, “your private room”, “enter into thy chamber”, and “go into your room.”

But then Jesus wanted to pray. So, he went off by himself to pray in private. All four gospel writers emphasize that Jesus prayed alone:

Mark 6:46, *“And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray.”*

Matthew 14:23, *“And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain*

**Jesus prayed alone,
and sometimes for hours
at a time**

apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone

Luke 9:18, *“And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him...”*

John 6:15, *“...he departed again into a mountain himself alone.”*

Jesus’ message, displayed by His actions, appears to be that it is acceptable, perhaps even desirable to give thanks to God at important occasions. But prayer -- communion with God -- is to be performed privately, in isolation from other persons. “Prayer is the earnest of the heart, offered to God” (Christian Israelite Church Catechism, Question No. 220).

1st Thessalonians 5:16–18, *“Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”*

Many Americans Use Prayer for Health Concerns From JAMA News Release

Spirituality and Better Health Outcomes Noted an estimated one-third of adults use prayer, in addition to conventional medical care and complementary and alternative therapies, for health concerns, according to an article in the April 26, 2004 issue of The Archives of Internal Medicine, one of the JAMA/Archives journals.

According to the article, many Americans believe in the healing power of prayer. While there is no proven therapeutic efficacy of prayer, associations between spirituality and better health outcomes have been described, the article states.


Anne M. McCaffrey, M.D., of Harvard Medical School, Boston, and colleagues investigated the prevalence and patterns of the use of prayer for health concerns.

The researchers conducted a national survey of 2,055 people (age 18 or older) between October 1997 and February 1998 on the use of prayer.

Data were also collected on socio-demographics, use of conventional medicine, and use of complementary and

alternative medical therapies.

The researchers found that 35% of respondents used prayer for health concerns, and that 75% of these people prayed for wellness, and 22% prayed for specific medical conditions. Of those praying for specific medical conditions, 69% found prayer very helpful. Participants who were older than 33 years, female, attained an education beyond high school, and had depression; chronic headaches, back and/or neck pain, digestive problems or allergies were all more likely to use prayer.

‘In summary, we found that prayer for health concerns is a highly prevalent practice,’ the authors write. ‘Prayer is most often directed toward wellness and used in conjunction with conventional medical care. People who use prayer for health concerns report high levels of perceived helpfulness but rarely discuss their use of prayer with their physicians. Physicians should consider exploring their patients’ spiritual practice to enhance their understanding of their patients’ response to illness and health.’

What Is Prayer?

Gale HARRIS

Prayer
Is Asking
A God
Who replies.

Prayer
Is seeking
For fire
From the skies.

Prayer
Is knocking
‘Till Christ
Opens the door.

Prayer
Is believing
In faith -
Nothing more.

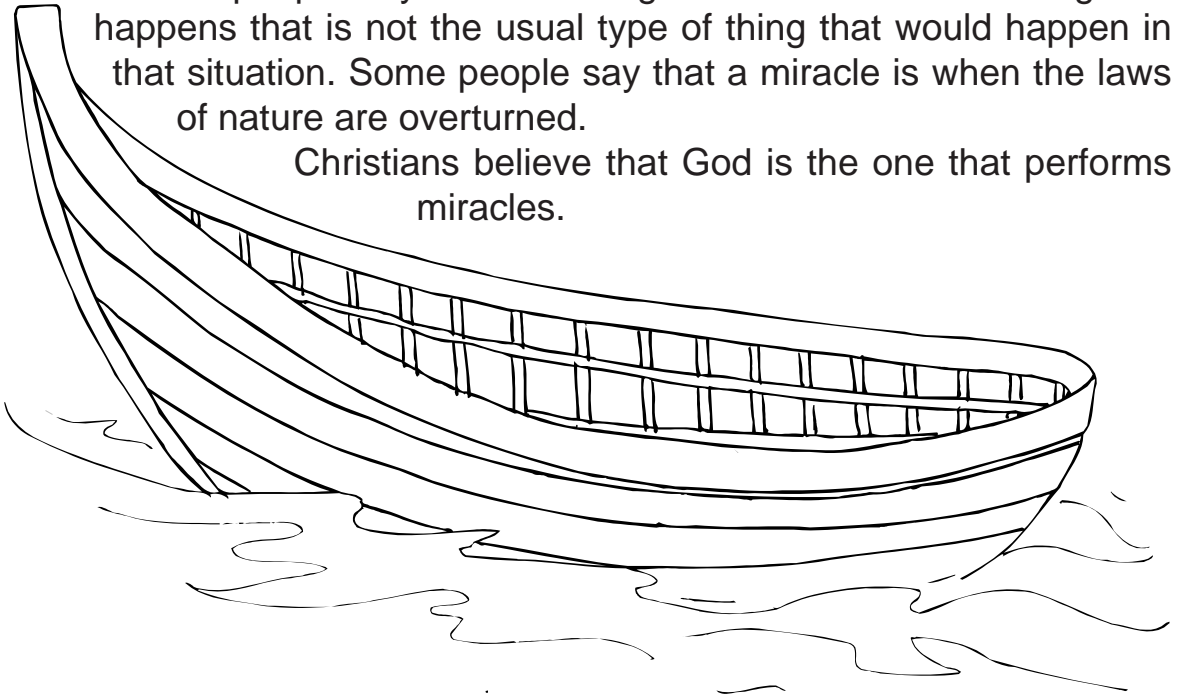
Children's Story: **God's Miracles**

by Heather KNIGHT

Do you know what a miracle is?

Some people say that it is magic. A miracle is something that happens that is not the usual type of thing that would happen in that situation. Some people say that a miracle is when the laws of nature are overturned.

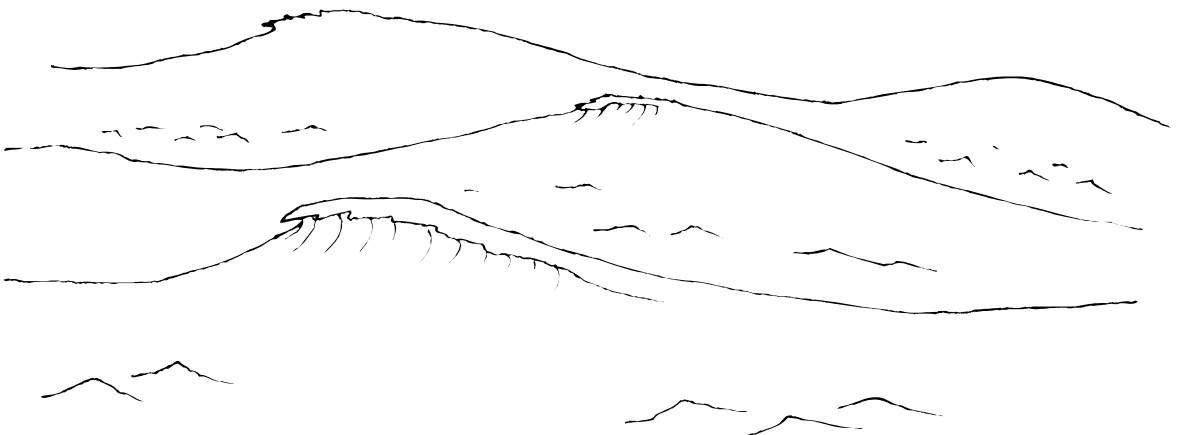
Christians believe that God is the one that performs miracles.



survive under these circumstances.

The people of Nineveh were very evil they did not do anything that God told them. This made God very unhappy but as God always does He wanted to give the people a second chance.

God told Jonah that He needed Jonah to go to Nineveh to tell the



people that if they didn't stop sinning that He would destroy them. Now Jonah had heard how terrible the people of Nineveh were. He was frightened of these people. He didn't want to follow what God had said. So instead of catching a boat to Nineveh he caught a boat to go in the other direction.

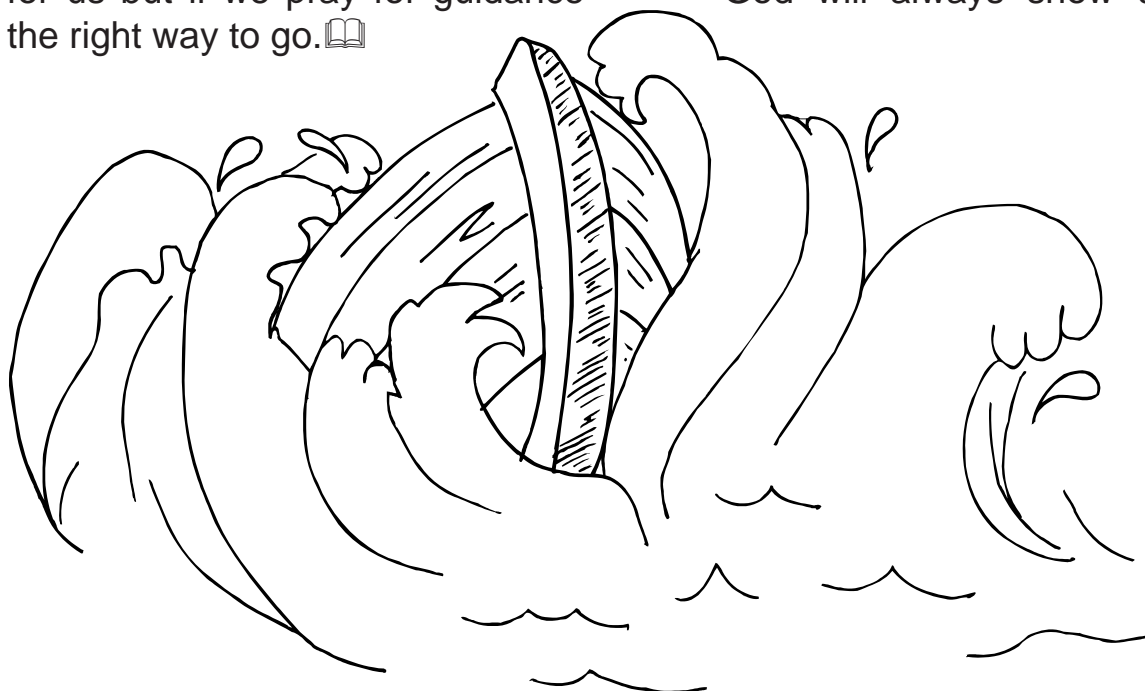
Of course this made God very angry. God sent a storm, possibly like some of the awful storms that we have seen on the news lately. The waves were so high the water was going right over the deck of the ship. Of course the sailors and Jonah's friends were terrified.

Jonah realised that it was his fault for not following God's instructions so he told the sailors to throw him overboard. The sailors didn't want Jonah to die so they got as close to the land as possible without a pier before they threw him overboard and they also prayed that God would look after him. God heard their prayer and of course wanted the people of Nineveh to know that He would forgive them so He would not destroy Jonah but sent a great fish to swallow him.

Jonah was inside the fish for 3 days and 3 nights and while he was in the fish he realised that he had made a big mistake. He should have done what God said and gone to Nineveh so he prayed to God to forgive him and after 3 days God caused the fish to vomit him up on the beach

Jonah then did what God wished him to do, but he still was not satisfied when the people of Nineveh did what God wanted and became good.

Sometimes we think we know what God wants us to do is not right for us but if we pray for guidance God will always show us the right way to go.📖



God told Jonah to preach to the wicked people of Nineveh. Jonah didn't want to
So instead of walking east to Nineveh, he did the opposite; he took a boat going west.

To correct the sentences below, write in a word that is the opposite of the underlined word.
Draw a line through the underlined word.

Jonah took a plane _____ to Tarshish.

A storm came. The sailors were happy _____.

Jonah was fast awake _____ The captain woke Jonah.

Jonah said, "Throw me on deck _____ and the sea will become
raging _____.

They threw Jonah into the sky _____.

The Lord sent a small bird _____ to swallow Jonah.

Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three nights _____ and three days _____.

Jonah prayed

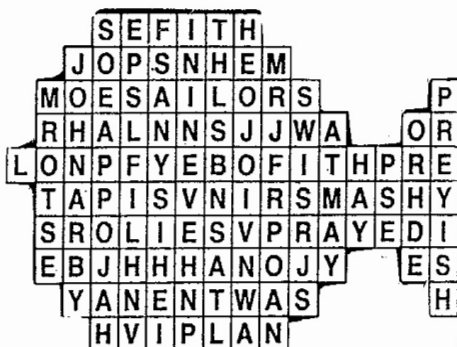
The fish swallowed _____ Jonah upon wet _____ land.

Jonah went to Nineveh and preached to the animals _____.

The people did not _____ believe God and repented.

Word search

FISH	NINEVEH	PRAYED	SORRY
JOPPA	OBEY	SAILORS	STORM
JONAH	PLANT	SEA	WORM



Puzzle Page

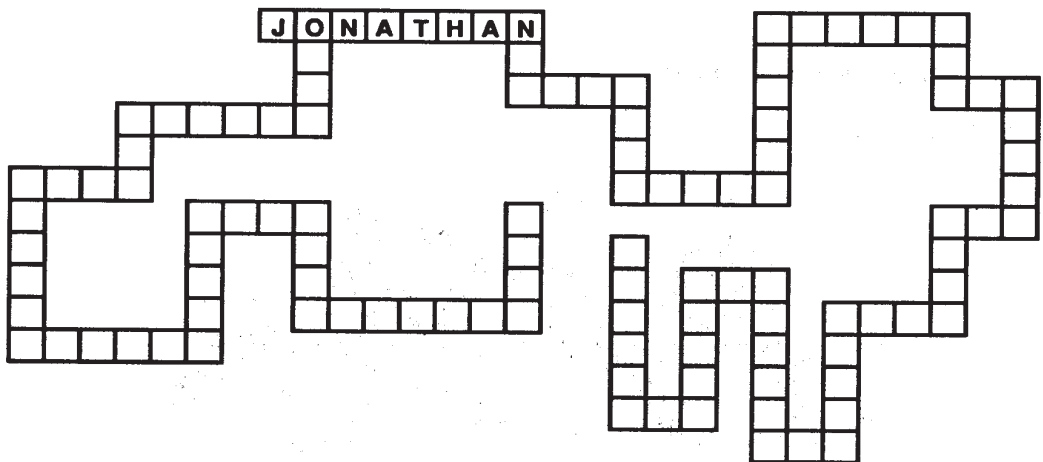
Read 1 Samuel 14 to find out why Jonathan, Saul's son, is called a brave young prince.

The following words are taken from 1 Samuel 14. Fit them into the stack-a-word puzzle.

ARMOUR
DIE
DIPPED
EAT
ELI
ENEMIES
EPHOD
EYES
FAINT
FEARED

FELL
FOOD
GIBEAH
GOD
HONEY
ISRAEL
KISH
LOT
NER
OATH

ROCK
ROD
SAUL
SIN
SLAY
SWORD
TAKEN
TASTED
TWENTY
YOKE



It may be that the LORD will work for us:
for there is no restraint to the LORD
to save us by many or by few.
1 Samuel 14:6b

Mission, Evangelism & Apologetics Yesterday & Today

by Lynne GRAY

In this article I would like to look at three Christian concepts that have clear biblical injunctions: mission, evangelism and apologetics. Mission has to do with spreading the Christian Message, evangelism is challenging people and converting them to Christianity, and apologetics is to do with explaining the Christian Message within a context relevant to the hearer.

Living in a post-Christian, pluralist society many of the traditional understandings and interpretations of mission, evangelism and apologetics and the role they play in the Christian faith have undergone substantial changes. Post-Christian mission and evangelism have to approach the spread of the Christian message in a totally different manner to what it had before. In the contemporary world, unfortunately, Christianity is in crisis. Figures given for the USA and Europe calculate that “53,000 persons are permanently leaving the Christian Church from one Sunday to the next” (Bosch, 1991, p.4). To change this outward flow, Christians need to look at these three areas of Christian life and see what change is needed to make mission, evangelism and apologetics more effective and more pertinent.

To understand the concept of mission, evangelism and apologetics an understanding of the different perceptions of these three words over the course of pre-Christian and Christian history needs to be addressed.

What is mission? Mission is spreading

the Christian Message. Mission in the twentieth century is very different to the approach to mission in the pre-Christian and early Christian periods. Differentiation must also be made between mission (singular) and missions (plural). “The first refers primarily to the *mission Dei* (God’s mission), that is, God’s self revelation as the One who loves the world. *Missiones ecclesiae* (missions) refer to missionary ventures of the church” (Bosch, 1991, p.10).

Biblical understanding of mission should not be limited to the ‘Great Commission’, as there are many other biblical imperatives for mission work: Luke 24:46-48, “*And he said to them, ‘Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things’,*” and Acts 26:22-23, “*To this day I have had help from God, and so I stand here, testifying to both small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would take place: that the Messiah must suffer, and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles*”; see as well Acts 1:8; Isaiah 43:10-12; Acts 13:47, and 1 Peter 3:15.

In the early Christian era, including the first generations after Jesus, Jesus stressed the importance of the powerful call for people to be sent (*apostellein* – to send forth) “to serve and convert the world, to care for

**Mission is spreading
the Christian message to
those that know not of it.**

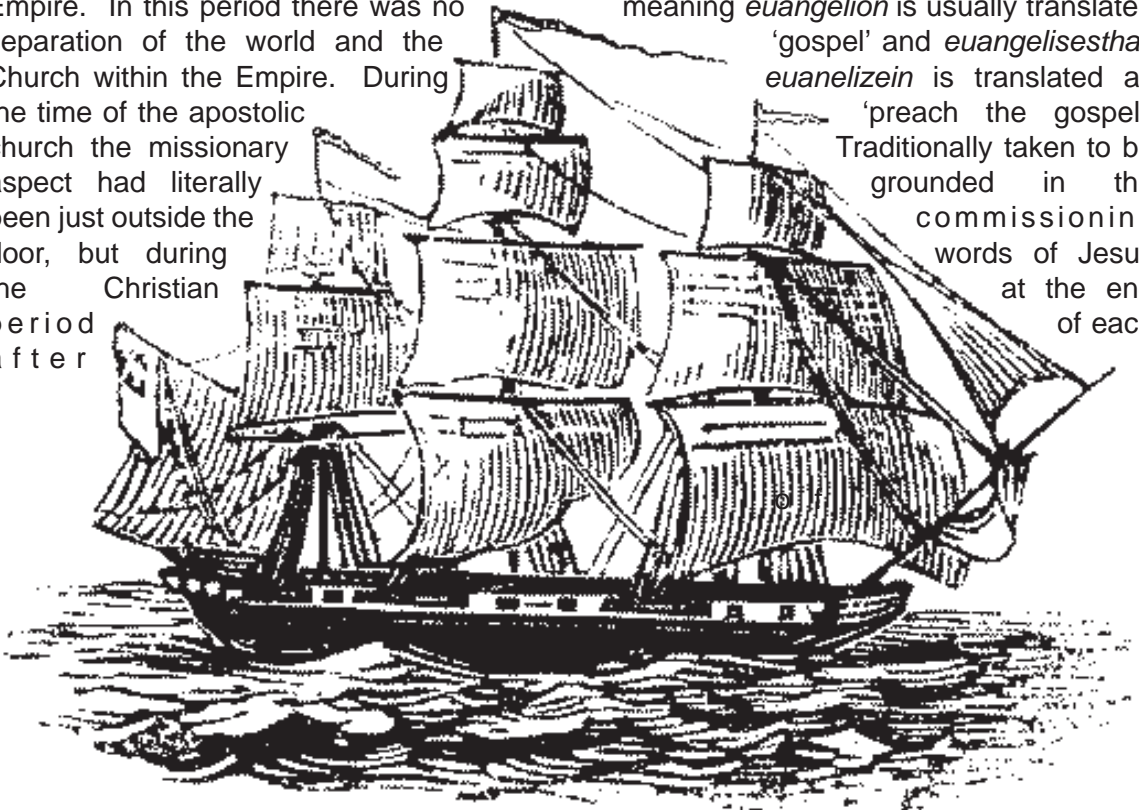
the sick, the prisoner and the widow, the fatherless and the poor” (Mead, 1991, p.9). The early church was aware that they, as believers, were in the minority in the midst of a potentially hostile environment. This early mission work called believers to be evangelists, ie, “those who bear the good news” (Mead, 1991, p.10). Even though the early Christian community lived in a hostile environment believers were called to reach out to the environment. There were clear divisions between Christian (insiders) and non-Christians (outsiders) and the intimacy of fellowship and meeting together held the early Christian groups together in unity against the outside unbelieving world. It was also firmly believed that the power to engage in mission work came from the Holy Spirit.

From the beginning of the fourth century and after the conversion of the Emperor Constantine (313 CE) Christianity became (by law) the official religion of the Roman Empire. In this period there was no separation of the world and the Church within the Empire. During the time of the apostolic church the missionary aspect had literally been just outside the door, but during the Christian period after

Constantine the known world was legally recognized as being Christian (by law), and indeed “citizenship had become identical with one’s religious responsibility” (Mead, 1991, p.14). The structure and form of mission and mission work changed completely. Christianity became a national trait rather than a personal belief.

The Post Christian period, which includes today, is completely different to what has been before. Now Christians are dealing with a community that knows of God’s existence, and the promises of Jesus Christ, but have chosen to reject (or not to accept) these promises. Mission work in the contemporary age has undergone major shifts in emphases to accommodate this new, unique mission audience. The concept of *mission Dei* has had to be reinterpreted so as to realize that God is concerned for the whole of creation and thus any mission work should incorporate the whole of creation.

What is evangelism? At its very basic meaning *euangelion* is usually translated ‘gospel’ and *euangelisesthai/ euanelizein* is translated as ‘preach the gospel’. Traditionally taken to be grounded in the commissioning words of Jesus at the end of each



Many early Christian missionaries travelled on ships such as this to spread the Christian message abroad.

the gospels. See Matthew 28:19-20, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age"; Mark 16:15-18; Luke 24:45-49; John 20:21-23 and Acts 1:6-8. It is the proclamation of salvation in Christ to those who do not believe in him.

The concept of evangelism has undergone changes in the Christian era, as has mission. The early Christians practiced a 'holistic evangelism' confronting the hostile culture they lived in with exclusive claims about lifestyle and wealth that were in direct opposition to the ideals held in the society of which they were a part. Early Christian evangelism knew no limits with regard helping the downtrodden and outcast of their society. Early Christians fed the hungry, cared for the poor people needing burial, cared for slaves, orphans, widows, prisoners, the sick and infirm, extended aid to travellers and gave special help to churches in poverty or peril.

"When a person, or a congregation, understands and has experienced the joyous news of the kingdom of God, evangelization is natural and spontaneous. People cannot keep such news to themselves" (Hunsberger, 2004, p.133). Thus if evangelism is over-institutionalized or over-formalized the spontaneity is taken away and it becomes more an act of obedience to the 'great commission' rather than an act of Spirit-driven spontaneity and a heartfelt need to proclaim the Good News of the change in your life to others. Jesus' statements in the latter parts of the Gospels validate "the experience of being engaged in mission, and in fact evangelism is not here required but authorized" (Hunsberger, 2004, p.135). Evangelism doesn't involve talking 'to' or 'at'

people, but rather to talk 'with' or 'alongside' them. Christians are to meet non-believers at their own level, not in a dictatorial fashion, but rather in a way that reflects on the outside the amazing, joyous change that the Spirit has wrought on the inside.

1st Corinthians 9:14-23 is an articulate detailing of Paul's approach to mission and evangelism. Evangelism consists in losing the gospel, giving it away. Paul counted it to be his greatest reward to offer the gospel free of charge; his greatest freedom in the gospel was to make himself a slave to all. The Corinthians to whom he was addressing the letter, though, had lost their way with regards mission and selfishly kept their 'grip on the gospel so tight that they refused to permit other responses to it or expressions of it'. The Corinthians thought they had a monopoly on the gospel and had maligned it to their own ways. Under these circumstances

mission becomes religious egoism and evangelism becomes recruitment, far removed from the original spirit of the instructions given by Jesus.

In the contemporary world evangelism

has had to be reinterpreted against a contemporary post-Christian society and the unique needs that this poses. The positive, life-changing, joyous change in the life of Christians needs to be shown to unbelievers in a positive light, whereby that positiveness, like a magnet, draws others, they want to 'belong'. "One helpful principle here is to recognize that for many church members their contribution to the work of evangelism may well be in inviting others to such events (births, marriages, and deaths)" (Warren, 1996, p.72), that is, by active demonstration and inclusion of unbelievers in ceremonies that involve celebration. Paul gives a similar instruction in 2nd Corinthians 3:2-3, "You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, to be known and read by all;

Evangelism is the preaching of the Gospel message

and you show that you are a letter of Christ, prepared by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts”.

What is apologetics? Apologetics has two components, one positive and the other negative. It concerns:

1. countering the objections to the Christian faith (negative), and
2. setting out the attractiveness of the gospel (positive) (McGrath, 1998, p.3).

Christians have to be able to counter negative objections to the Christian faith in their everyday lives as well as give non-believers a living example of the positive change that faith (the Spirit) has wrought in their lives. In talking to non-believers, though, Christians must, in the words of CS Lewis, ‘learn the language of our audience. you must translate every bit of your theology into the vernacular...if you cannot translate your own thoughts into uneducated language, then your thoughts are confused’.

Looking at mission, evangelism and apologetics one can observe that the “Christian faith is intrinsically missionary” (Bosch, 1991, p.9), and this being the case, believers have to enter into relationships, not only with God, but also with other believers and non-believers in their social arenas. In explaining the themes of the gospel and the message of Jesus to unbelievers, Christians become more effective evangelists and partake of apologetics. When apologetics and evangelism are not taken seriously, nations suffer, as, in the example of England, when the British felt their nation needed good pastoring and Christian teaching, and that was all (the period prior to the major mission movement in the 18th and early 19th centuries)...there was no sense of urgency about preaching the gospel, and certainly no suggestion that the future survival of

Christianity was in jeopardy. Evangelism is essential to Christianity’s survival and growth, apologetics is an integral part of that program of evangelism.

Apologetics lays the groundwork for evangelism. In the words of Peter, “*Always be prepared to give a defense (apologian) of the hope that is in you*” 1st Peter 3:15 (NRSV). Apologetics means giving reasons for faith, therefore evangelism may be defined as ‘inviting someone to be a Christian’ and apologetics is “clearing the ground for that invitation so that the invitation will receive a positive response” (McGrath, 1998, p.6). Apologetics is the means by which Christians can communicate their faith in an attractive and meaningful way, thereby making the possibility of an invitation being accepted (evangelism) more likely. In the relationship between apologetics and evangelism, apologetics is the non-confrontational

Apologetics counters the objections and paints the Gospel positively

approach, there is no threat. Evangelism, on the other hand, requires a commitment from the recipient, a step of faith, thus making evangelism confrontational in that it confronts people to make a life-choice, a

life altering decision.

The test for mission, evangelism and apologetics and how they effectively inter-relate with each other, comes in this contemporary, ‘culture of modernity’, and how the Church and Christianity in general, reshape and reorient their mission approach to incorporate this new mission field. In this modern age numerous calls to missionary witness have been made by notable Christian leaders such as Pope John Paul II, W. A Visser ‘t Hooft and Lesslie Newbigin (Shenk, 1998, p.75). Pope John Paul II, in particular, appealed to all Catholics to participate in re-evangelization/new evangelization: “I urge you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to make yourselves proclaimers of the Gospel, to spread with all

your might the saving Word”’. The Second Vatican Council forged a new position on mission for Roman Catholics emphasizing the ‘missionary responsibility of the whole people of God’. Western society, in the opinion of many religious leaders, needs to be re-evangelized.

“Jesus ‘was the outsider who became the insider without surrendering his outsider status” (Shenk, 1998, p.74). Mission and evangelism have a natural relationship with each other, and the natural progression of the establishment of any Christian community within a hostile society would be the birth of apologetics within this community as a way of explaining why they have adopted the lifestyle that they have. Imagine the opportunities for apologetics in the early

Christian era while these early Christians were tending to the poor or the sick, the questions those that they helped would ask them, foremost of which would be ‘Why are you doing this?’

Throughout the Bible we read of testimonies and witnesses to God’s mission work with the Creation (the Old Testament) and Jesus Christ’s mission work with His life here on earth (the New Testament), with both Old and New Testaments laying the emphasis on mission (the spread of the knowledge of God and his son Jesus Christ), evangelism (the preaching of this knowledge to those that know not of it) and apologetics (the explanation and defence for believing in a particular way).📖

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“Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ...And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all”

Ephesians 1:9-12,22,23.

Statement of Belief

The Christian Israelite Church beliefs can be fully supported by the Scriptures.

Here is an outline:

We believe...

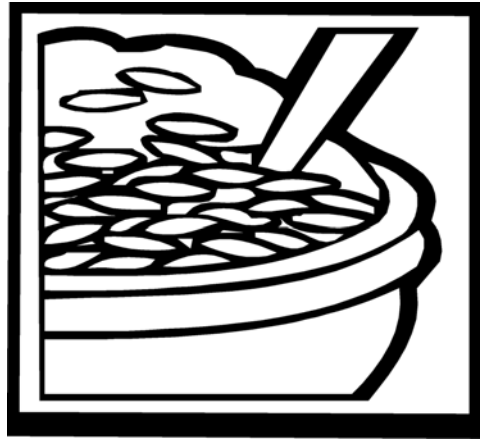
- In God Almighty creator of all things (Genesis 1:1).
- In the existence of Satan, the Devil, in whom God allowed iniquity to be placed (James 2:19; Ezekiel 28:14,15).
- That God created a spirit-existence in which the devil manifested evil and caused some of the spirits to rebel against God (Isaiah 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; 2nd 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 (1st Timothy 4:10; 1st 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 (1st 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 19, 20).
- That the return of Jesus Christ is near and we are living in the period described in Scripture as the latter days (Matthew 24; Mark 13 and Luke 21).
- That there are promises in the Scriptures especially to Israel - God’s chosen people (1st 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 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.

Vegetarian Recipes

Chilli Stew for Vegetarians

130g burghul (cracked wheat)
1 tblspn good olive oil
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 onion, diced
1 tspn chilli powder
2 tspns ground cumin
1/2 tspn ground cinnamon
1 tspn cayenne pepper
750ml vegetable stock
2 x 400g cans crushed tomatoes
1 x 440g can red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
2 x 300g cans chickpeas, rinsed and drained
1 x 310g can corn kernels, drained
2 tblspns tomato paste



Soak the burghul (cracked wheat) in 250ml (1 cup) of hot water for 10 minutes. Heat olive oil in a heavy based pan and cook the diced onion until soft and golden.

Add garlic, chilli powder, cayenne, cumin and cinnamon and cook, stirring constantly for about a minute.

Add tomatoes, stock and burghul. Bring mixture to the boil and simmer for 10 minutes. Then stir in the beans, chickpeas, corn and tomato paste. Simmer the mixture for 20 minutes, stirring often so the mixture doesn't stick to the bottom of the pan.

Serve with corn chips, guacomale and sour cream.

Guacomale Dip

2 ripe avocados
2 tblspns sour cream
couple of drops of Tabasco sauce
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 tblsn lemon juice

Mash avocados well. Add sour cream, garlic, lemon juice and drops of Tabasco to the avocado mix and blend well. Refrigerate for a short time before serving. May be used as a dip or as an accompaniment with Mexican dishes. More garlic and Tabasco may be added and adjusted to taste.