



## ***From the Inkwell***

*This edition of Letter Rain takes a fresh look at "works"! There is clearly a need for us to seek to be obedient to God's commands, and to seek to "do the works" that Jesus did. However to achieve this we must first develop the right attitudes (as detailed in the "be-attitudes"), and then humbly seek for more of God's GRACE to work this obedience in us. Obedience to God's will results from a synergy of attitude and grace - not just from blindly following the rules in a list!*

*Jesus told the young ruler that to enter into life it was needful to keep the commandments. If we can attain to this standard, we may then be among the third group spoken of in Isaiah 44:5 - those who subscribe with their hands unto the Lord, and surname themselves by the name of Israel. The promised life is the preservation of spirit and soul and body to be preserved without death until Jesus Christ returns.*

*"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" 2 Timothy 2:15.*

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# What was Nailed to the Cross?

*“Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross”* Colossians 2:14.

**Firstly**, we are to observe what is nailed to the cross, and in what day it was nailed.

**Secondly**, how long it was to remain nailed.

**Thirdly**, on which day the nail is to be removed.

What was nailed to the cross? The laws with which men said they were burdened, and could not observe – they not having the Spirit – caused them to repent and submit to sacrifices for the salvation of the soul – though the body perished, and these sacrifices and burdens were taken out of the way by being nailed to the cross.

*“Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our father nor we were able to bear?”* Acts 15:10. They being without the Spirit. *“Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days”* Colossians 2:16. *“Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things”* Genesis 9:3. *“Behold, I, Paul, say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing”* Galatians 5:2.

Now the reader is to understand that Paul meant that circumcision availed nothing to the unbeliever, but to the believer. *“As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ”* Galatians 6:12.

*“Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have*

*troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment”* Acts 15:24. They wanting to draw them to keep the law without the gospel. Paul seeing all this darkly, through a glass, and the fullness of the Gentiles not being come, recommends them that if any man be called in uncircumcision let him not be circumcised (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7:18). For he saw it availed nothing until the fullness of the Gentiles, when Israel should return and have the fullness of the Spirit to keep the whole of the law in them.

It is evident by this that the Lord was fulfilling that passage of Scripture, *“I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people”* Deuteronomy 32:21. Instead of giving them the kingdom, which is the life of their bodies by making the immortal, which is more than meat and the body is more than raiment (Luke 12:23) that they should be left to be grafted in by baptism with the Gentiles, to continue in the eating of bread and drinking of wine, as a token of their faith in the atonement made by the death of Jesus, for the salvation of their souls – that they might be justified by His resurrection, they being believers of the Gospel without the Law, until the sixth thousand years, of which the six days in the creation were figurative, each day standing figurative of a thousand years.

Now Paul advised the people not to abuse the grace that God had bestowed upon them – that they should have the salvation of their souls without those things which were nailed to the cross, being the Law.

And Paul, in other parts, testifies of circumcision, saying: *“What advantage then hath the Jew? Or what profit is there of*

*circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God” Romans 3:1,2.*

The question is, what is the oracle of God? The evangelist, John, declares that the oracle of God was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we are witnesses of it (John

1:14). So it is evident that the oracle of

God is the light of life, which is Christ, that is to dwell with the Son of man in the temple, which is his body, and is as the magnet; for whom it toucheth it quickeneth, to do the will of God.

So though the Hebrews had the promise of the life of their bodies, through the keeping of the Law, yet by breaking any part of it they obtained not the fulfilment of that promise: and when the Spirit of God abode on the seed of the woman they refused Him.

The former circumcision, before Christ, stood typical of the latter circumcision, when He should send the fullness of His Spirit to gather together the house of Israel from amongst the Gentiles – whose bodies will receive eternal life, by the Spirit keeping the whole of the Law in them. “*And ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel”* Isaiah 27:12. “*Thus saith the Lord God; No stranger, uncircumcised in heart nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into*

*my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel”* Ezekiel

44:9. For circumcision of the flesh is one part of the Law given to Israel, which it becometh them to keep as a testimony of the circumcision of the heart, like as Jesus was

baptised of John in Jordan, saying, “*Thus it becometh*

*us to fulfil all righteousness”* Matthew 3:15.

But Peter was called to be a minister to the circumcision of the flesh – that is to the Jews – typical of the ingathering of the house of Israel, according to the words, “*And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people”* Isaiah 11:11.

The uncircumcised Gentile, who keeps not the Gospel, will not have a right to the full promises of God, which is the redemption of the body, any more than the circumcised Hebrew had, who kept not the Law; but if he dwell in the Spirit it will not vaunt itself, but will circumcise the foreskin of the heart, and not make void the words of the text. “*Cometh this blessedness then, upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? (the Jew and the Gentile each receiving their own portion) for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned?*

*When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision” Romans 4:9,10. Which is for the salvation of the soul.*

And these are the things which they were to observe and do, *“For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if you keep yourselves, ye shall do well” Acts 15:28,29. “But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul” Hebrews 10:39.*

So it is evident that Paul meant not the life of the body, but the salvation of the soul. *“But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” Romans 4:5. Until the fullness of times, when they should receive the Spirit to dwell in.*

*“Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt” Romans 4:4. His natural body then being due to him.*

It might be asked in what day it was nailed? The fifth day, or fifth thousand years, when Jesus was crucified. But on which day is the nail to be removed? In the sixth day, or sixth thousand years.

*“In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken it” Isaiah 22:25. In the eleventh hour of the sixth thousand year.*

For at that time the Spirit will descend and take away the enmity (Ephesians 2:15,16) that is in the flesh against the commands of God, which Paul testified of when he exclaimed, *“I see another law in my members, warring*

*against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members” Romans 7:23.*

*“For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together” Matthew 24:29. Being the Spirit which is hid with Christ in God (Colossians 3:3) which the Scriptures say is, “With you and shall be in you” John 14:17. For “he that hath the bride is the bridegroom” John 3:29. Which is the life of the bride, the time being come for God to give it to those who are found of Israel – they being hidden from the former Israel, who kept not the Law; and is now hidden from the Gentile who keepeth not the Gospel – in which way and manner it will be given, but those who receive it need no interpreter.*

*“So when even was come, the Lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny” Matthew 20:8,9. Which is the Jew under the Law, or the Gentile under the Gospel without the Law; but they that keep both receive the two pence, which is the redemption of soul and body (Luke 10:35). They being outcasts from the Jew and Gentile churches. “And will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it” Revelation 2:17.*

*“And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money. Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. And he*

*said likewise to him, be thou also over five cities” Luke 19:15-19.*

*“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 2:15. Now the reader must divide those parts of the Scriptures which speak of the incorruptible body from those which speak of the natural immortal body. For now the fullness of time is come for his ambassadors to go forth as sheep among wolves (Matthew 10:16) declaring the everlasting Gospel for the establishment of His kingdom; for “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” Matthew 24:14.*

*“The law and the prophets were until*

*John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth unto it” Luke 16:16. Those that are of Israel press into the Spirit.*

The Law is the rock of New Jerusalem and Christ laid the foundation stone, which was the chief corner, being the body of the woman’s seed, Jesus. And the work that Christ did by Him is the pattern to all men, that whosoever believes in Him should build upon that rock, that when the floods and tempests of the wicked one should arise, they should not be able to throw down the building. “*And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder” Matthew 21:44.*

The natural body. 

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## Hymn No. 51

(John 14:17; Amos 5:18-20; Revelation 22:14; 1st Corinthians 13:12)

The Spirit of Truth from Christ Jesus is come,  
Whom the world can’t receive the Bride of God’s Son;  
To Isr’el she turns, their Preceptor to be  
She shows them the records of their liberty.

The Day of the Lord cannot come as a thief  
On those who do make it their study and chief;  
And how to be ready the Bridegroom to meet,  
That when He shall come He their joys may complete.

O be it their lot, who of these things now sing,  
To drink without measure from that blissful spring,  
Which flows from the throne of Jehovah so free,  
And also to eat of that life-giving tree.

His children no longer will see but in part,  
But fully all things understand with the heart;  
Hence glasses for ever they’ll now lay aside,  
See eye unto eye their Creator and Guide.

# Hope For Israel

J

*“Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen: Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses. 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 44:1-5.

E

S

Just think, this beautiful passage of hope was written between BC740-680.

hope for their generation and for their descendants as well.

H

Isaiah was a prophet to the kingdom of Judah whose people mainly lived at Jerusalem. In this special passage we find God reaffirming His promises to His people. The message is one of salvation, even though God has rebuked them harshly for their disloyalty and betrayal, the children of Israel and Judah still have a very special place in God’s promises and in His overall plan. In the passages just prior to this, God was strict in His rebuke of His people, but in this passage we find that God’s anger has diminished and instead He offers His people

God shows His people that He does not want to abandon them, He will give them yet another chance. God is going to help them. His mood has changed from one of justice to one of paternal love. God does not want to abandon His people – Israel. God tells them, through Isaiah, that His promises are still there and available to any who feel called. Not only did the Lord “*form you from the womb*” but He will help you. The Israelites knew that if they would just leave their evil ways behind them and follow God’s instructions, that their lives would be much better.

U

R

U

N

We are given a sign of the great affection in which God holds Israel by the use of the ‘pet name’ of “*Jeshurun*”. This name means ‘upright one’ and was first used in Deuteronomy 33:26. The Lord still holds the same feelings He has always held for His people. As any parent, just because His children rebel against Him does not mean that He loses His affection and feeling for them. As with any pet name or nickname, the use of the name brings about memories and sentiments that you associate usually with ‘good times’. So too the use of this name in



addressing Israel would have reminded them of the affection in which the Lord held them and the love He felt for them. The use of this word gives us an insight into the emotional side of the Lord as a Father; a side that experiences hurts and hopes the same as any other parent does.

God often uses unbelievers to achieve His purpose. In the Bible there are numerous examples of unbelievers who have been used by God: Hagar, Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus, to name a few. The Lord is preparing King Cyrus as His anointed, even though he is an unbeliever. Cyrus will bring about the downfall of Babylon and release the Israelites from bondage. Israel had been tried and sentenced and now it was Judah's turn to be tried and found guilty. Their Babylonian captivity viewed as their just reward for their rebelliousness. (The ten tribe nation of Israel had been taken captive in 723BC – Judah's turn was coming.) God clearly does not only work through 'Christians', or at that time Jews and Israelites, but through whomsoever He will choose.

We are also shown that there is a hierarchy of believers in God's Plan. The opening statement asks the reader to listen, most especially those people of Israel and Judah. The Lord again promises that He will pour His Spirit on their descendants and blessings on their offspring. We are also forewarned of the coming of Jesus Christ. *"For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessings upon thine offspring"*. What better way to demonstrate the outpouring of God's Spirit than in sending His only begotten Son to mankind to atone for mankind's sins (John 4:7-15; 7:37-53).

The Lord clearly is speaking about three separate and distinct peoples:

1. *"I am the Lord's"* – being Christian believers;
2. *"another shall call himself by the name of Jacob"* – the Jewish nation; and
3. *"And another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel"* – the ten tribes of Israel having accepted Jesus as



their Lord and become Christians as well as being Israelites.

As we all know, it is important for things to have a name. Having a name gives us an identity and a sense of belonging.

We are shown in this passage the importance of fatherhood, be it the love of God for mankind or the love of a father for a child. God shows us that when we are in need and turn to Him, He will answer and supply us with what we need. When the Lord talks of pouring water "*upon him who is thirsty*", He is not talking about a physical thirst but rather about the spiritual thirst that all mankind suffers from. Where there are deserts God can make a lush oasis, be it in the physical or the spiritual. God is in total control.

He offers a promise to Israel that "*their offspring will spring as if amongst the grass*" – in other words there will be ultimately a large number of people who identify with the calling of being God's Special People – Israel. The Lord refers to this offspring as "*willows by the water courses*". The use of the willow as a metaphor is intentional. Of all trees the willow is the one that relies on the waterway on which it is anchored for its very survival. This dependence on the waterway is offset though by the waterway's inter-dependence, in some ways, on the existence of the willows. The willow assists the waterway by holding together the structure of the bank, thus helping to hold the waterways course true and unhindered. Israel, like these willows, need the life source of the Lord (the outpouring of the two Immortal Spirits) to be fully aware of who they are. The 'willows' hold together the foundation. Many Christians will identify with the water/Holy Spirit analogy for the modern


adaptation of this principle is seen in the form of Christian baptism.

We are even given a glimpse into the future when we are told that there will also be great outpourings of the Spirit at times of great tribulation.

The message of the passage is basically that of salvation, and deliverance to Israel. The key ingredient is hope. God has given us His Son to 'wipe our spiritual slates clean'. He also gave us His Son to show us how He wants us to live. Jesus Christ was our role model for a better life. He demonstrated to us how to live our lives in accordance with the wishes of the Father.

There are many aspects of God which humans can identify with. The sense of betrayal and frustration God must have felt at continually admonishing His people to depart from the evil ways they had adopted. The Lord's tone, as with any parent, goes from one of harsh judgment, to one of gentle, loving reconciliation.

We should strive to become as these 'willow trees' who derive their very life source from the outpouring of God's Power (Christ and the Holy Ghost). But in deriving this life source, the 'willows' provide an important function of providing and maintaining the foundation for this outpouring – to be living examples of what God has asked us repeatedly to be – His obedient children.

The dry ground, the grass and the willows – which is it your goal to achieve? The willows are like those who will physically live forever planted in the firm knowledge of the Power of God through Jesus Christ, showing the green growth of good works to all around as they follow the lifestyle recommended by their Maker and are watered spiritually by God's Power. 



*“There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them.”*  
Deuteronomy 33:26,27.

## Look and Live

They wandered on from day to day,  
Those Israelites of old,  
Through wilderness and desert way,  
For many years we're told.

They could have reached the Promised  
Land,  
Much sooner but we read  
They disobeyed the Lord's command,  
His Word they would not heed.

When they were hungry God supplied  
The Manna and the Quails,  
His mercy always will provide,  
His goodness never fails.

Sufficient water, too, we hear,  
By God was always given,  
And when there was no other near,  
By Him the rock was riven.

But still they murmured every day,  
Though nothing did they lack,  
The Promised Land seemed far away,  
They wanted to go back.

At last the Lord sent fiery snakes,  
All who were bitten, died,  
The people now saw their mistakes,  
And soon for mercy cried.

“Make now,” to Moses came the word,  
“A serpent on a pole,  
“Who looks by faith,” thus saith the  
Lord,  
“At once will be made whole.”

As Moses in the wilderness,  
The serpent lifted high,  
So Jesus on the shameful cross,  
For sinners came to die.

If we to Him will look by faith,  
We, too, shall surely live,  
Believing all the Bible saith,  
Our sins God will forgive

Such wondrous peace within our souls  
Will Christ our Saviour give,  
And you, by faith, shall be made whole;  
Will You, then, Look, and Live?

# Grace & More Grace

Paul said in Romans 3:31, “*For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death*”. When we look closely at this verse we see that Paul is talking about being freed from two different things: the law of sin and the law of death. Both will be overcome by the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus.

## **The Law of Sin**

The law of sin relates to the fact that ever since the fall of mankind, we have been separated from God because of sin, and that it is the sacrifice of Jesus that has reconciled us to God. This reconciliation has been undertaken as an act of grace.

God’s grace has been clearly demonstrated toward us in a number of ways which all Christians recognise. These include:

- what Jesus did for us;
- that we are drawn to believe;
- that we do believe.

Paul said again: “*For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse*” Romans 1:20.

Jesus died and rose for us and we can be freed from the law of sin and assured of life in the resurrection. However believers

still see physical death because of the “*dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return*”. Being freed from the law of sin does not automatically free us from the law of death.

## **The Law of Death**

Jesus gave us The Golden Rule (Matthew 7:12, John 13:34,35), which is to love one another. This is the basis of Christian principles. But Jesus also spoke of the greatest commandments, both involving love, in Matthew 22:36-40, “*On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets*”. In Exodus 20:1-17 we read about the giving of the ten commandments. These symbolize a way of life that God recommended to His people to follow “for their good always”.

Now the next step after believing is going on to obey God’s commandments. Some folk may say that Christians do not have to obey God’s commandments, and indeed that is true. Through the sacrifice of Jesus we can be counted as righteous before God and receive forgiveness for our sins (we can be free from the law of sin) by believing in Him. However, to go on to the next step requires even a greater measure of God’s grace. Just as God exercises His grace in forgiveness of our sins, so He may further exercise more grace by giving us the power to go on to be

obedient to His commandments.

There is often theological debate about the relationship between faith and works. In a temporal sense we think about “going on” in two ways. In one way, we go on from something – leaving it behind – for example when a person becomes a Christian they may go on from the life they used to live in the world and take up a Christ filled life – leaving behind the life they used to live, and living a different kind of life. See the way John refers to this in 1 John 2:15-17. In another way we can go on, building on the foundation that has been laid, to build an ever growing building which still incorporates those principles or foundations from which we say we have gone on. This is referred to by Peter when he talks about building the temple of God – see 1 Peter 2:4-6 and also John’s analogy in Revelation 21:12-15. In the sense of “going on” from faith to works we take the latter example. The progression is evolutionary, not revolutionary.

In Zechariah 12:10 we read : “*And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications*” and in 13:1, “*In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness*”. The fountain to wash away sin has been effected through the sacrifice of the blood of Jesus on the cross.

The fountain to wash away uncleanness will come through the power of God that will remove the iniquity of Israel, and give them life without death.

To be able to do the works of God we need to overcome the evil that is within us, and this needs more grace to enable us to go on from salvation to obedience. Through this we can then seek to overcome the law of death.

### **The Two Hopes**

Remember Jesus spoke of two hopes to Martha. She had already professed her belief in the resurrection, and that God would forgive the sins of those that believe, and Jesus went on and said to her: “*He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live* (through being freed from the law of sin); *but he that liveth and believeth on me shall never see death*” – by being freed from the law of death, and being preserved to be changed from mortal to immortal at Jesus Christ’s return.

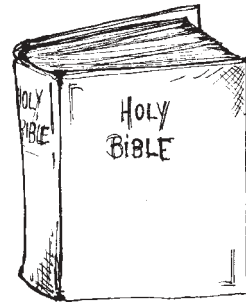
The grace of God is boundless. This is evidenced not only in the forgiveness of our sins that is offered to each one of us, but in the promise of receiving POWER to go on to perfection. We may perform works through this power, and as a result receive a reward for doing so (Revelations 22:12) but the opportunity is only made available because God has given more grace to allow the works to be done. 📖

*or more traditionally*

# **Faith & Works**

# Debug Your Bible:

## The “Be”-Attitudes



One of the first things that struck me when thinking about this article was the word Beatitudes. As shown in the title the Be-attitudes are those attitudes that enable us to **be** the best possible person we can, manifesting in our relationships with God and others, that state of being that we were originally designed to manifest. We are after all human beings not human doings. The Beatitudes are the recipe for a total transformation of the heart and the enhancement of our relationship with God and through spiritual transformation of our own hearts, our relationships with the people and the world around us.

The Beatitudes make up a portion of the Sermon on the Mount which was Jesus' first public sermon; it may have also been the first sermon given to His disciples as well. So this was the first time Jesus would be addressing the general public. The Sermon on the Mount is only recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, so if it wasn't for Matthew we would have no record of the 'sermon

to end all sermons'.

Initially we need to look at the word blessed. Blessed means happy, therefore blessedness must mean happiness. It is a special type of happiness or joy, a sacred joy that can only be felt when one surrenders their heart to God and asks for the help of the Power of His Spirit to dwell within them and help them live a more righteous life. Some of the beatitudes sound rather unusual when the word happy is substituted for blessed. The key though, is to understand that the references are not made to earthly, material things, but rather to mankind's spiritual state and people's relationship with their Creator.

The first four Beatitudes have one major theme in common, they show the progression in spiritual awakening of the believer and the start of the transformation from non-believer to believer – just call it 'spiritual heart surgery'. They involve the

internal changes in man's spirit whereas the latter beatitudes reflect this internal spiritual change in the behaviour of the believer – the latter beatitudes deal with the outward



manifestation demonstrating internal change.

*“Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their’s is the kingdom of heaven”*. The ‘poor’ are not the economic poor but rather those that realise how poor they are in spirit, worthless and with no hope of achieving salvation through themselves. The poor are those that realise they need spiritual help and turn with faith to God asking that the God’s Spirits do the work within them. It is the believer’s acknowledgement that, because of their sinful state, they need a Saviour – the realisation of the power and enormous love involved in the sacrifice of Jesus to reconcile all of us to our Creator, something we could never achieve on our own.

What does it mean to have poverty of spirit or be ‘poor in spirit’? Everyone has heard the expression that he/she is a ‘spirited person’ showing they have a strong, defiant personality,

haughty and self-assured. Obviously then to have ‘poverty of spirit’ must mean the opposite of this – to have a submissive spirit, acknowledging that God is in charge and not yourself and exhibiting humility of spirit. It is allowing God’s Spirit to regenerate our hearts anew with the knowledge of Christ and to reconstruct our attitudes according to the attitudes manifested by Jesus Christ when He was on this earth. It is only through the workings of the Spirit of Christ that the believer becomes consciously aware of their poverty of spirit.

This first of the Beatitudes involves the spiritual step of submission, where one realises their futility knowing that on their own no amount of work will redeem us with God. Now is the time for **confession** of our sins to God and acknowledgement of our sinful state and the desperate plea, from the heart, for spiritual help. We are told in Isaiah 64:6 of the degree of this sinful state, *“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away”*. Nothing we **do** of ourselves (this was the problem with the legalistic Pharisees thinking that by the

outward keeping of the Law they could earn their reward) or **say** (public praying to be seen of others, prayer which isn’t from the heart, etc) is going to reconcile us with God and until we acknowledge this we haven’t even passed the first rung on the ladder on the way to heart

*“Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?”*

James 2:5

regeneration and the spiritual awakening that comes from this regeneration.

The Parable of the Prodigal Son is a good analogy for this first beatitude. Proud and haughty he asks for his inheritance, leaves home, squanders everything and is left with nothing. In ‘poverty of spirit’ he is left eating pig swill and finally realises his sinful state and how completely and utterly helpless he is. Finally he returns back to the Father, but this time submissive and humble in spirit, prepared to ask for help and receive it. These are the characteristics displayed by the ‘poor in

spirit' - humility and servanthood.

And the reward for this 1<sup>st</sup> Beatitude? "*For theirs is the kingdom of heaven*". What is the Kingdom of Heaven? Eden is referred to as Paradise (Heaven) which was the original existence that Adam and Eve had pre-Fall, that is, they were dwelling in God's Spirit. The Kingdom of Heaven is a state of spiritual existence which may be attained in this life by believers wherein they dwell physically in God's Spirit, or after death, in the resurrection it is the state in which their spirit and soul will dwell within God's Spirit, Christ.

*"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted"*. They that mourn are those that acknowledge their sinful state and have sadness at their own inability to combat sin. Without the help

of God's Power we can do nothing of ourselves. To those that mourn the promise is that they will be comforted, meaning that the Power of the Comforter will come and dwell within their hearts, offering them peace. The spiritual step involved here is **repentance** following on from submission and confession in the 1<sup>st</sup> Beatitude. To truly repent one must feel contrite; contrition is part of repentance and through this comes spiritual regeneration where you try with the help of God's Spirit to not sin again. Repentance literally means 'changing one's mind', and biblically it refers to changing the mind concerning sin and evil. Repentance does not just happen once either, it is a life-long activity – a life-time of consciously refusing the evil and

replenishing the good.

God tells us in Isaiah that He lives in a humble and a contrite heart, "*For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones*" Isaiah 57:15 and also in Isaiah 66:2, "*For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord; but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word*".

And the reward for those who mourn? "*...they shall be comforted*". To them will come the Spirit of Truth, The Comforter also known as the Mother Spirit or Female Spirit with the Spirit of Christ (the Father Spirit), to reside

upon them giving them strength to live a righteous life and comforting them of their grieving state. Just as a small child looks for its mother when it is sick, so too will Christians turn to their Spiritual Mother for comfort when they are spiritually sick (or mourning), for only she can make them spiritually well again.

***Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*** In numbers 12:3 Moses is described as being 'very meek' and look at what a great messenger for God he was. God places more store in what is in the heart than in what is demonstrated by works which are done with the wrong motivation. "*But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of*

*"By mercy and truth  
iniquity is purged: and  
by the fear of the Lord  
men depart from evil"*  
Proverbs 16:6



*God of great price*" 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:4.

Meekness is not weakness, rather it is an attribute that allows us closer communion with God as borne out by those who were described as meek and lowly of spirit in the Bible. God can commune in an easier fashion with someone who is meek (humble and of a contrite heart) than with someone puffed up with self-pride. With the meek person they may become puffed up, but puffed up with the Spirit of God, not their own spirit/ego. They manifest and display the works and manners which God directs them to. We all know how much easier it is to deal with a humble person rather than with a proud and haughty person!

*"The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way"* Psalm 25:9. *"But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of*

*peace"* Psalm 37:11. Jesus' hearers would have been familiar with these Old Testament passages from the Psalms, so He used language and analogies that they were familiar with. The meek have always held a special place in God's heart because from God's point of view, they have submitted their wills to Him.

And the reward for this meekness of spirit? – "...they shall inherit the earth". The earth in many biblical analogies is a reference to the physical body, and therefore the meek will have the promise to keep their bodies, or inherit the "the life of the body" - they shall not see physical corruption.

***"Blessed are they which do hunger***

***and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled"***. When one hungers and thirsts they satiate the body by having something to eat and drink. When one hungers and thirst for righteousness, then they would have "the bread and the wine". The bread represents the Law and the Wine the Gospel, thus those that hunger and thirst after righteousness would be those who keep both Law and Gospel with the help of God's Spirits working that righteousness within them.

The reward of being filled is when Christ and The Comforter inhabit the heart of the believers who have surrendered their

spirits to Him, and each believer is comforted or at peace with their Creator. When one accepts the Law and Gospel it then becomes part of them, just as an apple tree naturally bears apples, so too the Law will be an

intrinsic and essential part of their being and their natural tendency will be to keep the Law by action and demonstration – through obedience based on love.

Psalm 24:1-6, *"The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods. Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of my salvation. This is the generation of them*

***"Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another...even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye"***

Colossians 3:13

*that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.*” Clear enough isn’t it who will receive God’s blessing – those with ‘clean hands and a pure heart’.

As stated above the first four of the Beatitudes deal with the awakening of the heart of the believer and the internal transformation worked by God to transform the heart and the believer into a being worthy of becoming “*the temple of God*”. The latter Beatitudes deal with the manifestation of this change through actions and words, demonstrating in our daily lives the transformation in our interaction with God and with the world around us.

***“Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy”.*** What does it mean to be merciful? It comes from the Hebrew word *chanan* meaning to be

gracious, inclined to. To be merciful is to mirror in some small amount the measure and grace with which God deals with us. A merciful person is noticeable because of the complete absence in their heart of revenge. Resentment is the enemy of mercy. Resentment leads to vengeance and we know where that leads us! Mercy, though, displays forgiveness and therefore graciousness – qualities every Christian should strive for. We ask in the Lord’s prayer in Matthew for God to “*Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*” Matthew 6:12, so how can we expect God to deal graciously with us and forgive us our sinfulness, if we cannot mete out to our fellowman a very small measure of this same grace? Note that Luke in his rendition of the Lord’s Prayer in Chapter 11

addresses this point, and records the words of Jesus to the Disciples as being, “*forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us*”.

For Christian Israelites in particular, mercifulness is a necessary attribute. “*He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour*” Proverbs 21:21 and again, “*The merciful man doeth good to his own soul: but he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh*” Proverbs 11:17. Jesus was only repeating instructions that His listeners were familiar with – these guidelines had been around

for hundreds of years.

In Matthew 18:21, Peter approached Jesus and asked Him, “*Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times?*”

Jesus’ reply was to tell the parable of the rich man who forgave a debt of ten thousand talents, only to have the debtor who he had forgiven, pursue someone who owed him money, but he did not show this debtor any mercy even though the amount owed was miniscule compared to the debt that had been forgiven him. The King, of course, is God and the debtor is us. We have to demonstrate mercy in our relationship with others if we expect God to deal mercifully with us.

Their reward - “*they shall obtain mercy*”. God will deal mercifully with them in the next world and the believer’s graciousness to his fellowman will be acknowledged and dealt with accordingly. Judgment will not be as harsh if the believer has attempted to mete out grace in his

***“By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil”***

Proverbs 16:6

relationships with others in this world. How often have we read in the Bible the phrase, *“Praise the Lord, for his mercy endureth forever toward Israel”* 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles 20:21b and Ezra 3:11. God’s mercy knows no limits and neither should ours. The Psalmist knew the value of mercy and truth for he states, *“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever”* Psalm 23:6.

***“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God”***. To be pure means to

be clean, to be clear, so to be pure in heart is to have a clean and clear heart, clean and clear of sin. By ourselves we cannot do this but after the spiritual surgery on the heart that has happened with the earlier Beatitudes, the Christian’s heart has been transformed. Timothy knew the

value of a pure heart, *“Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned”* 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 1:5 and even the Psalmist, David, prayed, *“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me”* Psalm 51:10.

*“Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work*

*reprobate”* Titus 1:15,16. We should be as David, and pray to God for a pure heart so then we can receive the reward.

The reward - *“for they shall see God”*. You cannot face God with sin and the guilt of sin on your heart, but after having gone through the spiritual transformation of the earlier Beatitudes, the believer can change how he lives his life and how he interacts with his society which will in turn manifest positive spiritual aspects in his relationship with God. You have heard it said that when a person is

lying or guilty they cannot look you in the face. You don’t want to approach God ashamed of yourself and how you have let Him down. Those that seek help in attaining a pure heart will not have this barrier between themselves and God, they will **see God** face to

*“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world*

James 1:17

face – even Moses could not look upon the manifestation of God for it burnt (and transformed) his face, demonstrating Moses’ sinful state compared to God’s perfect glory.

*“Seeing God”* could also refer to the believer’s focus. How often have you seen the focus of a Church group change and instead of focussing on God the focus changes to the rituals and ceremonies, or the music, or a particular Pastor or minister. In other words something eclipses God and replaces Him as their reason for being there. This has happened not only to churches,

but also to individuals as well. If you approach worship with a pure heart, and with no ulterior motive other than to commune with God, then your focus will stay true and you will see God.

***“Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God”.***

A peacemaker is someone who sows the seeds of peace. Peace comes from the Hebrew word *shalom* which means completeness, in other words when you are at peace you are complete. To be a peacemaker means that you speak words of praise and compassion, rather than being critical and hurtful. A peacemaker builds

people up rather than tearing them down. We all know people who are difficult to get along with, but we also know someone whose company we seek because, as we might say, they are peaceful to be with – their

company settles you down rather than confronts you. The peacemaker speaks positively but realistically about everything and encourages the lesser to become greater and the under-dog to come through. The peacemaker recognises that words of encouragement will help much more than words of criticism.

Lessons in peacemaking – just read the 4 Gospels, Jesus Christ was the best demonstrator/teacher with regard this trade. He washed His disciples feet, even Judas’, just before Judas was to betray Him. He could have argued with Pontius Pilate, but He peacefully accepted His fate with no remonstrations. With the stoning

of Mary Magdalene for adultery, He stepped in as peacemaker to quash the anger of the mob and to elevate Mary to her new life as a follower of Him. Time and again in His relationships with others Jesus, the peacemaker, was the active element. He was even peaceable towards His enemies, displaying true humility and temperance that all who believe in Him should attempt to emulate.

God doesn’t reward troublemakers, but he will reward the peacemakers. Their reward, *“they shall be called children of God”*, they will have earned, through their behaviour, the right to call God Father, and

be His children.

***“Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for their’s 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,***

***“When a man’s ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him”***

Proverbs 16:7


***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”.*** The last of the Beatitudes and the longest this Beatitude deals with the world’s attitude towards Christians and Christian values. Often, as Christians, we are persecuted in small ways for doing what we believe is right. For example, coming from a Church that believes in keeping the Mosaic Law as a demonstration of our faith we are often persecuted and harassed for our dietary restrictions (I don’t like to use this word for we do not feel restricted but the world would say we are restricted), and the fact

that our menfolk wear long hair (even though the fashion of the world accepts long hair on men) such that the long hair becomes a 'picking point' if it is known to be done for religious reasons. The fact that a Christian keeps a Sabbath and religiously does it every week often leads to criticism from others who do not share the same belief. This is all a form of persecution because individuals choose a Christian lifestyle and peruse Christian ideals.

Although we in the western world aren't called upon to martyr ourselves for our belief, in many societies today people are still losing their lives for their religious beliefs. Many Christians are still martyred in countries where other religions are trying to take over the country or where dictators believe everybody should believe in one religion. In a greater or lesser way, most Christians would have endured some form

of personal or general persecution because of their beliefs and lifestyle. This is what this beatitude is talking about.

The reward, "*For theirs is the kingdom of heaven*". It was explained earlier what the Kingdom of Heaven is, so they will dwell in God's Spirit in this world with God's Spirit dwelling within their bodies (the earth) in the next, or for those who go through the grave, they will dwell as spiritual beings within God's Spirit in the resurrection.

Spiritual heart surgery, cleanse the heart and renew the conviction, demonstrate with your attitude that God is the focus of your life and follow His advice, change your lives thus enabling you to ultimately live. God guides His children with loving guidance and the Beatitudes are God's guide for us to 'be' better children to Him and thus to better represent Him on this earth. Definitely food for thought isn't it? 

## Odes of Solomon No. 20

I am a priest of the Lord,  
and to him I serve as a priest...  
The offering of the Lord is righteousness,  
and purity of heart and lips.  
Offer your inward being faultlessly;  
and do not let your compassion oppress compassion;  
and do not let your soul oppress a soul...  
But put on the grace of the Lord generously,  
and come into his Paradise,  
and make for yourself a crown from his tree.  
Then put it on your head and be refreshed,  
and recline upon his serenity.  
For his glory will go before you;  
and you will receive of his kindness and of his grace;  
and you will be anointed in truth with the praise of his holiness.  
Praise and honour to his name.  
Hallelujah.

# Forgiveness

There was once a man who owed the king a lot of money, more than three billion dollars!. The king wanted his money back, but the man could not afford to pay it, so the king ordered that the man be sold as a slave. The man fell onto his knees and begged the king to be patient and give him more time to get the money. The king felt sorry for the man and said he no longer had to pay the money back, or be sold as a slave- he forgave the man his debt.

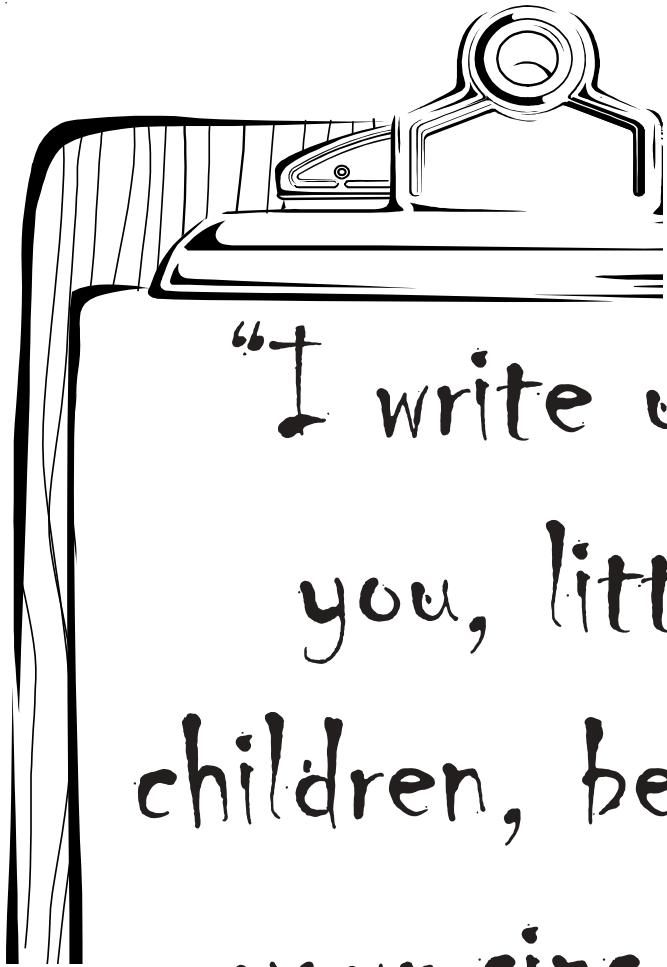
The same man that was just forgiven by the king then went to a fellow worker, who owed him a small amount of money. He grabbed the man and started to choke him, demanding he pay back the money. This man could not afford to pay, and was put into jail.

Other workers who had seen everything went to tell the king. When the king heard he was extremely angry, and sent the man to jail.

Jesus tells us that we need to forgive others, like God forgives us for all the bad things we do. In the story, God is like the king, we owe him a lot, but he forgives us. When we are owed something by someone else, like the man in the story, we need to be like God and show mercy. If we don't we end up like the man in the story, when the king found out what he had done.

One of Jesus disciples asked Jesus how many times he had to keep forgiving his brother, even though his brother still did bad things. Jesus replied seventy times seven, that's more then four hundred times. No matter what anyone here on earth does to us, how much it hurts us or how serious it is it does not compare to what we have done to God when we continue to sin.





“I write unto  
you, little  
children, because  
your sins are  
forgiven you for  
his name’s sake”

1 John 2:12.

PUZZLE PAGE

Psalm 116:1

Color in the letters that have dots to find the words of Psalm 116:1.



# Statement of Belief

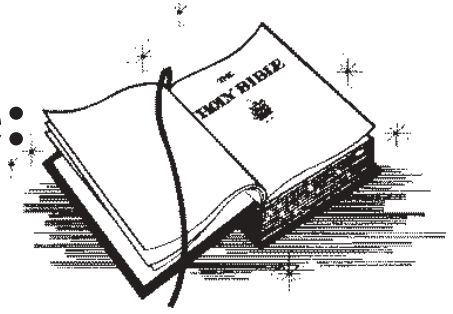
**The Christian Israelite Church beliefs can be fully supported by the Scriptures. Here is an outline:**

## **We Believe**

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

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

# Expand Your Bible: The “Attitudes”



For the Bible references please read Matthew 5:3-12.

Some years ago while on an overseas trip I had the privilege of visiting the country of Israel. How exciting it was to realise that we were actually walking on the very ground upon which Jesus had walked and that we were actually visiting the ancient cities mentioned in Bible history.

One such site was the Mount of Beatitudes, a slight rise between Tabgha and Capernaum where it is thought Jesus preached the “Sermon on the Mount”, which has come to be known as the Beatitudes. Here, on this rise, the Franciscans have built an octagonal church recalling the eight blessings. This building is also apparently a pilgrim hostel. The church is not ornate as many commemorative churches are and is built so that the people inside can look out over the placid blue waters of the lake – Lake Kinneret – the Sea of Galilee. This lake can very quickly and with little warning become very rough, but usually it is quiet and peaceful.

As we sat quietly in the church, one of the sisters read the Beatitudes and it was so easy to see, in the mind’s eye, the crowd eagerly waiting to hear the Master’s words.

And what strange words they were!

One contemporary writer (Max Lucado) describes the Beatitudes as radical reconstruction of the heart. The Beatitudes could almost be renamed the “Attitudes.

Some people have dismissed the instructions as being completely unrealistic  
**Audrey HARRISON**

for earthly living and feel that these high ideals can only be achieved in the future – in God’s Kingdom. But Jesus gave the sermon as a standard – a standard to which all Christians were to aspire, asking, as they tried to reach this standard, for God’s help.

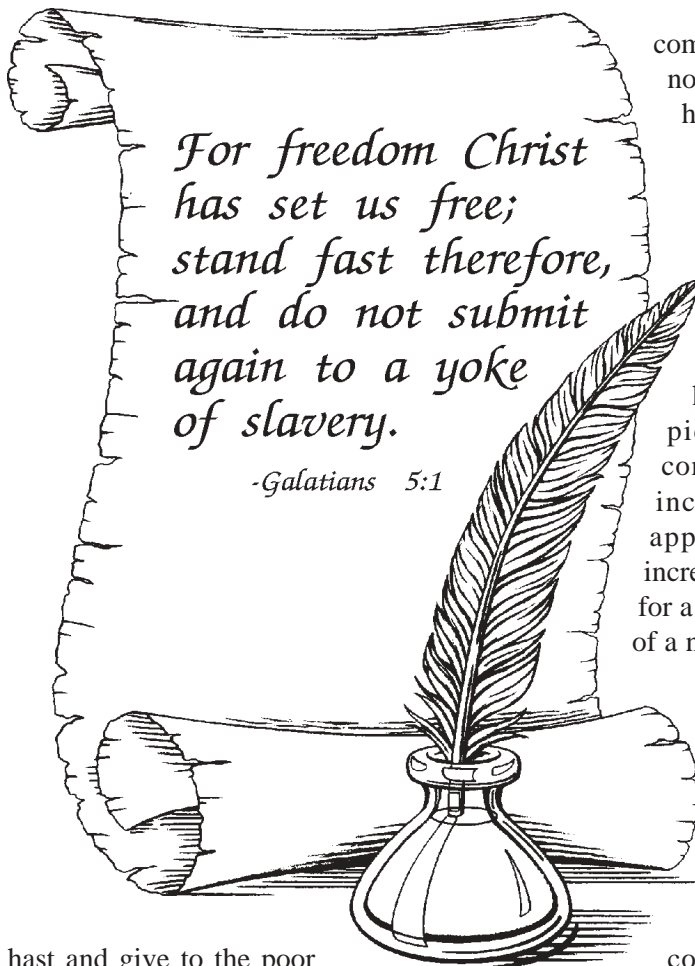
In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is trying to explain to His listeners, that it doesn’t really matter what good works you do, or think you do, unless your heart (or attitude) is right they are of little or no value and will not gain you entry to the Kingdom.

There was a rich young man, a ruler, came to Jesus asking “What good thing must I do to get eternal life?” – thinking no doubt in terms of righteousness by works. It is quite interesting that Jesus first of all set the young man straight that good is not something to be done as deserving in itself. God only is good, Jesus told the young man, and all other goodness is derived from Him. Nevertheless, Jesus added, “If you want to enter into life, obey the commandments.”

The young man eagerly asked, “Which ones?” and was told, “Thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness. Honour thy father and thy mother, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself”.

As Jesus was speaking we can imagine the young man mentally ticking off all these requirements and thinking, “Yes, I’ve done all these things. In fact, I’ve done all those things for all of my life. What else must I do?”

And then came the crunch line – “If thou wilt be perfect go and sell that thou



*For freedom Christ  
has set us free;  
stand fast therefore,  
and do not submit  
again to a yoke  
of slavery.*

*-Galatians 5:1*

hast and give to the poor  
and thou shalt have treasure  
in heaven and come and follow me”.

What??? Sell all his possessions!  
Sell his beautiful mansion and follow Jesus,  
sleeping anywhere and not knowing that a  
tasty, well prepared meal was awaiting you!  
Sell his horses and carriages and WALK  
everywhere! No more rich clothes – no  
more servants! This was too much to ask  
of anyone especially of one who had been  
rich all of his life.

Jesus of course knew the young man’s  
weakness – the same as HE does ours.  
Jesus knew the young man set much store  
by his possessions. They came between  
him and God,

Sadly the young man walked away –  
he would still, no doubt keep the

commandments – he would still,  
no doubt, do good works – but  
his heart was not ‘perfect’ with  
God. Perhaps the rich young  
man was not ‘pure in heart’.

Jesus’ remarks to His  
disciples after this  
incident is an example of  
many of His sayings,  
when He spoke in  
hyperbole – using a  
picturesque exaggeration,  
conjuring a picture of some  
incident that would seem  
apparently impossible or  
incredible. He said, “It is easier  
for a camel to go through the eye  
of a needle than for a rich man to  
enter the Kingdom of  
God”.

There are three  
thoughts in this mental  
picture.

The camel was the  
largest animal found in  
Palestine – the vivid  
contrast between the largest  
animal and the smallest opening  
represents what humanly speaking is  
impossible.

The cable that held a boat was also  
called a ‘camel’ and the thought of this  
cable passing through the eye of a needle  
also seemed impossible.

The small door in the gate in the wall  
around a city was known as “the eye of the  
needle”, and after the city gate had been  
closed late travellers would need to make  
their camels enter the city through the small  
door.

What seems impossible to man is not  
so with God. Salvation is totally the work  
of God and entry to the Kingdom is not  
based on our achievement or merit, but  
rather what God does in us. ☞

# Thoughts - Mind Control

Have you ever considered how many of our words, how many of our sayings, have two meanings? Often both are quite logical, often though they are opposite to one another. In our daily living we represent two sets of values, one physical - which everyone thinks they can see, and one spiritual - our inward thoughts, convictions and set of values. It is the spiritual values which are truly hidden, for example many a man has deceived a maiden with soft and tempting words, only for her to find out afterwards that he has deceived her because he did not speak from his heart.

God created mankind to live in righteousness and happiness, but due to the fall in the Garden of Eden, we now possess an evil nature, one which can deceive others, and which enjoys doing wrong. God in the Old Testament (through Christ) and Jesus Christ in the New Testament, offer spiritual help to overcome and then subdue the evil nature.

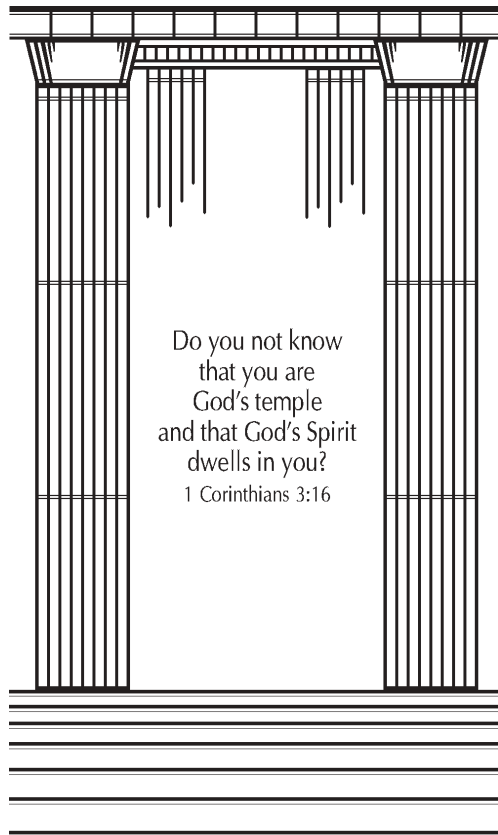
If it were possible, our spiritual values should be reflected in physical actions and words. Then we are in no danger of deceiving anyone, but unfortunately, through Satan and his evil spirits tempting the evil that is within us, we allow wrong thoughts to occur, and we even entertain them before we dismiss them. We know they are not thoughts that will bring harmony and manifest the nature and pattern that Jesus showed, and we should consciously reject them.

The interesting thing is, that we do entertain wrong thoughts; we allow ourselves to think upon them. It is bad enough to get wrong thoughts, but to allow ourselves to think upon them is a trait that we need to seek to overcome, that is if we

want to be like Jesus Christ.

There are many standards of righteousness between what Jesus is like and what the devil is like, but God has offered us to be like His son, His Son being the firstborn of many brethren. So why not aspire to this standard, especially when we have been offered help, spiritual help, through prayer, to achieve that standard?

Have you ever considered a photograph? Have you ever compared the same scene done in black and white, then in colour, then in three dimensions where the depth as well as the width and height are represented? In my mind this could also be a representation of our spiritual values.





All photos show the same scene but each degree of improvement of the camera and the focus, etc., coupled with the increased technology improves the detail of clarity and natural beauty of the picture.

Similarly, any effort we make to do righteousness is good and acceptable to God, but God encourages us to use the tools of prayer, and spiritual help to achieve better righteousness, and then through our own discipline and faith we gain peace of mind, and the courage and strength to achieve greater things.

Eventually we will come to the standard of righteousness that Jesus achieved, where His every action was what God would like Him to do. It has been promised, and those who aspire to what the word of God has promised, will achieve it. What God has promised He will fulfil.


It is when we reach this standard that our physical and our spiritual lives will be in complete harmony. We will have no danger of having a double standard.

There is a life-style which human nature is often tempted to accept; "Its naughty but I like it" or "I am not going to do it, but just think about it", or again, "I know I shouldn't say it, but .....", and people continue to do things they feel inwardly that they should not do. This is human nature. But what is nature? It is the state into which man fell (the state of the natural man), and ultimately brings death. James says, "*And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.*" James 3:6. The course of nature is set on fire by hell, so we need to stand against the course of nature if we want to be like Jesus Christ.

Maybe many think this standard is too high an aspiration, and maybe think it is for someone else; but to those who want to be brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ, this standard, and the sacrifice of so called earthly pleasures, must be sought, and is another of the challenges to be faced.

Christian ethics and spiritual attitudes are something we all need to continually work on. I think upon Jesus' rebuff to the man who said "*All these things have I kept from my youth up; What lack I yet ?*" His reply was, "*If thou wilt be Perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor; and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me*" Matthew 19:20-21. Jesus did not condemn him, neither did He praise him, but He set before him a greater aspiration, a greater ambition, that he could not easily reach, if he really and truly wanted to do all he could for God. I wonder what Jesus' answer to that person would be in today's society? I know the implication would be the same, if not the whole answer.

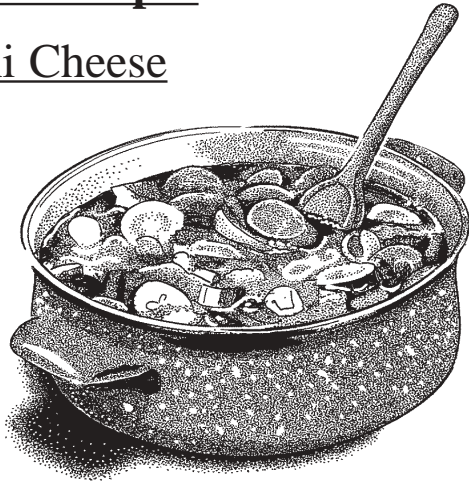
Again we think of Jesus when the servant said he had done all these things that the Master wanted done, Jesus did not say, well you do not need to do any more, but encouraged him to strive for greater excellence (Luke 17:10).

Yes there are often multiple meanings to issues and events surrounding us. Let us look again at the Bible stories and the Bible Parables, and search for the hidden and encouraging messages that they contain. Let us develop and nurture a mind, and a physical conduct, that demonstrates the faith and the desire that God in His love will impart to us what we aspire in our prayer - His presence to dwell within our reformed and glorified temple, as it did in the person of Jesus Christ. 

## Vegetarian Recipes

### Vegetables with Macaroni Cheese

225g carrots  
225g zucchini (courgette)  
4 sticks celery  
175g macaroni  
300ml vegetable stock or water  
50g butter  
50g wholemeal flour  
milk  
100g cheddar cheese  
salt & pepper to taste



Slice vegetables finely. Cook macaroni pasta for about 15 minutes until just tender (al dente). Drain. Place sliced vegetables and stock in a saucepan and bring to the boil. Simmer for 5 minutes then drain, reserving the stock. Make the stock up to 600ml with milk. Melt the butter in a saucepan, stir in the flour and cook for 1 minute to take the rawness out of the flour. Stir in the stock and cook for a few minutes. Take the saucepan off the heat and stir in 75g of cheese and season to taste. Add macaroni and vegetables to the sauce. Spoon into a serving dish, sprinkle with remaining cheese and place under a hot grill until golden. Serves 4.

### Rhubarb Fool

450g rhubarb  
50g raw brown sugar  
50g butter  
284ml thickened cream

Trim and slice rhubarb. Place rhubarb, butter and sugar in a saucepan over gentle heat until the butter melts. Simmer gently until the rhubarb is soft and thick, stirring occasionally. Chill until cold. Whip the cream until it holds its shape. Fold in the rhubarb. Spoon into individual glasses. Serve chilled. Serves 4.