

The Sower

Bulletin & Voice of

THE FIRST SPIRITUAL TEMPLE

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A Season of Reflection and Soul Searching



Lent is upon us. Christians prepare to celebrate the Day of Resurrection and Jews prepare to remember and relive that great moment of personal and national freedom and the passing over of the Angel of Death. This is a time

where we reflect upon the past, engage faith from within, and take further steps along the journey of the soul.

The fact remains clear:

We are all children of faith. We cannot be happy without it. We cannot endure without it. We cannot live without it. Doubt and denial will most assuredly creep into our lives, but they will never satisfy us. Deny it as many will, we cannot live abundantly without an abundant faith.

Personally, I dislike the idea of having to set aside specific times of the year for renewal, rebirth and change. It seems to me that Lent, Easter, Passover, Ramadan, Rosh Hashanah, and Yom Kippur – although commemorated at certain times of the year – should reflect daily rituals of healing and transformation. But, then again, we do seem to need calendar reminders of that which is timeless and of the Spirit. So, there we are!

During this season, we are instructed to look at ourselves, to repent, to forgive, to be forgiven, to atone and, thus, become more at-one. We are instructed to ask God to forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. We are directed to look at the often shat-

tered temples of our lives, ask God for guidance and assistance, earnestly endeavor to reach out and accept that divine guidance, and begin the process of reconstructing and rebuilding. We are asked to walk through this wondrous season, as did Jesus when he entered Jerusalem, in the knowledge that, in order for us to arise on that glorious morning of Resurrection, we — and all that keeps us entombed — must be crucified.

Lent is a time of forgiveness, prayer, and atonement. Why are these things so important to us, as individuals and as members of a global community? What do these days seek to achieve in our lives and in the life of our planet? Very simply this:

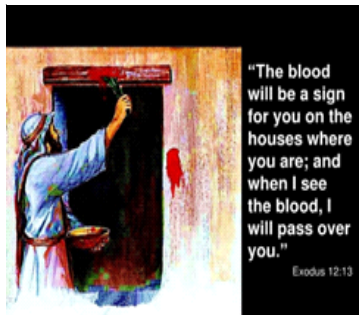


They help us understand the mystical and the cosmic Christ, the Christ within, and how we can each get to that place and space of true Resurrection and Freedom from all that would bound and bind us in personal and collective slavery. Once we release ourselves from bondage; once we experience a true Passover, we can get closer to ourselves, closer to our brothers and sisters, and closer to God.

But, in order for us to get closer, we must first admit that somewhere along the timeline of our lives, we have drifted apart; somewhere along the journey, we have taken a wrong turn; in other words, we have fallen astray and erred - against ourselves, against each other, and against God.

Therefore, we must **return**. Jews refer to this as **Teshuvah**, returning back to the Source. We must return to God. We must return to sound

ethics and standards as preached by Old Testament prophets. We must return to love and decent human behavior, as taught and demonstrated by the Christ. We must return to compassion. We must return to those divinely human qualities and attributes which seem to have been cast aside, over the years, for the sake of our own freedom of personal expression.



We must understand that, in order for us to achieve **personal** freedom, we have enslaved one another and, thus, enslaved ourselves. We simply cannot experience personal freedom if we do not collectively share that

freedom with our brothers and sisters.

Lent and Easter are about a Resurrection of the Spirit, not the ego! Passover is about collective freedom, not simply personal freedom. These wondrous days - indeed, life itself - are about getting back to God and experiencing true freedom of the Spirit.

Getting back to God is not a process reserved solely for the Sabbath. Getting back to God is not something we do only at certain times of the year. Getting back to God is not something we can commence with half a heart, half a conviction, or half a desire. Getting back to God is an **all-or-nothing** process. We are either going to do it, or we are not. We are either going to return **to** God, or walk away **from** God. Unless we choose to remain static - and that's never a good idea - we move either in one direction or the other. We may convince ourselves that we can side-step through life, but when it comes to God, there is no side-stepping; none whatsoever!

When we gossip, we turn away from God. We know this. When we seek to harm another, we turn away from God. We know this. When we speak falsely of another, we turn away from God. We know this. When we hate our enemy, no matter what he or she may have done, we turn away from God. We know this. When we cannot forgive the trespasses of another, we turn away from God. We know this. There is no cause - on earth or in Heaven - which justifies hatred. When we engage in warfare - no matter what unholy cause we may enshrine in holiness - we turn away from God. When we do **anything** which disrupts

the genuine work or flow of Spirit, we turn away from that Spirit.

Does this mean we shall never stumble and fall because of doubt? Of course not. Job doubted. Apostle Paul doubted. The prophets who roamed the country sides, denouncing quite vehemently conventional religious ideas and customs, doubted. All had doubts and misgivings. Moses and Jesus doubted. So, when you fall victim to the temptation of doubt - and we all do, from time to time - remember: **there is always a place for you!** Rekindle the flame of hope and faith. Pray, meditate, and know - not just in mind, but in the Spirit - that there is a place for you in God's Kingdom. And if you are not quite sure how to get yourself to that place, then you can begin that journey by becoming a part of our Temple community.

In that process, there are a few things in which we can believe and upon which we can place our faith, poor though it may be at times:

Let us believe in ourselves! I'm not pleading, here, for conceit. I'm asking that we see who we truly are and what we are truly capable of, both good and bad.

Let us believe in immortality! Perhaps more than anything else, Christ's resurrection shows us that we are not the playthings of physics and chemistry. Christ's resurrection shows us that we are living and eternal spirits; born of God, in Spirit, and eternally one with God, through the Love and Grace of that Spirit. We must believe that all the struggles and all the hardships of life are not endured and suffered in vain, any more than Christ's wrenching crucifixion was suffered in vain.

Not only do we not suffer and struggle in vain, we do not do so alone. Therefore, **let us believe in the fellowship of our Human Family!** Let us walk with each other and with Spirit toward God's Kingdom; that place of true resurrection and freedom.

If you want to change something - perhaps it's an attitude; perhaps it's a family or relationship issue; perhaps it's some source of difficulty at work; perhaps it's a health problem; perhaps it's a financial concern; perhaps it's the world in which we live - if we seek to change something in our lives, then let us engage God's Holy Spirit and allow God to help show us the way.

Pray, meditate, believe in miracles, believe in Spirit, believe in yourself, and begin a course of action that will allow you to awaken on Easter morning, resurrected from all that has kept you entombed. Make the Passover not an ancient historical event, but a living reality; right now, today!

Some time back, spirit *John*, speaking through the trance mediumship of the late Rev. Stephen Fulton, shared with us a wonderful message.

During that message, *John* made the following comment:

“Healing comes from God. It comes from the heart. It comes from your Spirit. It comes by the way you are in life. It comes by who you are in life. Not how much you have; not how much you can do; not how much you have accomplished; not how wise you are with your time; not how wise you are with your money; but who you are.”

For years, I have preached that we have two tools of the Earthly plane that we must use wisely: time and money. As I reflect upon this little bit of wisdom from *John*, I realize that, perhaps, the only tool in life we have is the Spirit which God gave to each of us. Time, money, fame, fortune, and deed will all pass away. It's the Spirit and what we do with the Spirit which God gave to us is, indeed, what marks our journeys.

During this season of Lent, let us contemplate upon these things. Life is so full of hope and promise. A lot can happen in a few short weeks. A lot can happen in one short lifetime. But, then again, with faith, far more can happen in the twinkling of an eye.

~ Rev. Simeon

When the Times Get Tough

Not one of us can deny that times are tough. Between the often-unpleasant tone of the current political scene; war and rumors of war; hurricanes and earthquakes; genocide and political upheavals in various parts of the world; and hunger upon a planet that, in truth, produces sufficient for all, one must ask: “What’s going on, and what can we do?”

Then, there are the recent mass shootings. After so many such tragedies, we often feel as if the

Human Family is headed for a massive collision course with itself.

We can come up with all sorts of answers to “what’s going on?” and the answers can be political, socio-economic, and spiritual. As far as “what can we do?”, so many lift their arms up in frustration and echo a resounding “Nothing; it is all beyond my capacity to do anything.”

During these troubling times, let us never forget the singularly most powerful tool of the Spirit: **prayer**. For many, prayer is an elusive act of faith that may or may not have the impact we wish, and this is true. Prayer always does what it is supposed to do, not necessarily what we want it to do.

Having said this, let us remember: **Prayer always works!** Through prayerful engagement of the Spirit, we can help bring about change, not only amidst the world arena, but within our own lives. Prayer works, if only to give us a bit of added strength and encouragement to take yet another step along our journey. So, let us pray unceasingly, not only during challenging times, but during good times.

**God: First Call, or Last Resort?
Think about this and let us pray.**

THE GREAT INVOCATION (Original Version)

From the point of Light within the Mind of God
Let light stream forth into the minds of men.
Let Light descend on Earth.

From the point of Love within the Heart of God
Let love stream forth into the hearts of men.
May Christ return to Earth.

From the centre where the Will of God is known
Let purpose guide the little wills of men;
The purpose which the Masters know and
serve.

From the centre which we call the race of men
Let the Plan of Love and Light work out.
And may it seal the door where evil dwells.

Let Light and Love and Power restore the
Plan on Earth.