



From the Inkhorn

A number of key articles in this issue of Latter Rain are based on talks given at the Christian Israelite Church 1996 Easter Convention held at Marysville, Victoria. The theme of the Convention was "Is Your Candle Lit?". As the articles in the magazine show, the thrust of the Convention was to exhort each of us to take our relationship with God more seriously and look at how we can let others see God's light through the things we say, speak and do.

All Round Health contains a personal relationship-analysis which was also included in the Convention presentations. This is aimed at helping reduce stress by self-analysis of the environment around us and our reaction with and to it. A complimentary approach to problem-solving and stress reduction is also included - using the Christian Israelite tools of praise, prayer and patience.

Many readers will find the article on Pudens informative. Regular readers will have realised that the 12 Apostle articles were completed last issue, so this section will now contain informative articles based on New Testament characters.

As you read and study the articles in this edition may God light your candle and may you understand more clearly as the light of life allows you to see more of His truth.

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The Importance of

This article is based on a talk delivered at the 1996 Christian Israelite Easter Convention at Marysville, Victoria. The talk was compiled by Colin Eastes and Alan Castles, both members of Melbourne church, and presented by Colin.

Introduction

When we talk of candles it brings different images to different people. We can easily imagine the single candle burning alone on the dining room table, then there is the candle in the candleholder that we use to walk about - these days when the electricity has been hit by lightning or such like - this arrangement is more elaborate as it incorporates a wax drip dish and also a handle for ease of carrying. Besides these household candles there are various scented and fancy shaped candles - these are used as room decorations. Candles that are for external use, such as when one had to go to the out-house in the middle of the night, had a protector to guard the flame against the winds. All of these candles have one purpose - that is to give light where there is none.

One can readily draw the analogy with our Christian lives, that as believers in God Almighty, we need to have our candles lit by His influence if we are going to see the pathway of righteousness and be a light to those around us. The comparison does not stop here. This analogy which was used by Jesus (see Matthew 5:14) has numerous applications in the pursuit of greater purpose and understanding in our personal growth in our relationship with Him.

As Christian Israelites we seek, by asking the Lord for His help and keeping His law, to be guided by God's marvellous light in all we think, speak and do, so as to attain the ultimate reward and become one of God's "*peculiar people*". Peter tells us, "*But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light*" 1 Peter 2:9.

In this article we will show:

- the importance of having our candles lit, both temporally and spiritually;
- who is the source of light and of creation;
- what our candle is;
- how to get our candle lit;
- what hinders us from coming to that light, and
- our personal challenge - to maintain integrity and faith in His promises.

The Importance of having Your Candle Lit.

Looking at the above points we will start with the question:

What do we need a candle for?

We need a candle to give light, that we may see and not stumble. As said above, we need a candle to take away the darkness. A physical light is important for a person to see their way. Jesus said "*Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house*" Matthew 5:15. There is also a spiritual candle for the inner person, so that we can see our way

Having your Candle Lit.



spiritually. Without the lighting of this internal spiritual flame, one's way to knowing God is clouded and dark, unable to be found because of all the diversions and pastimes of this world. This spiritual light cannot be seen by other people, but it can be sensed and noticed in a person's actions and functions they perform for God.

"Are there not twelve hours in a day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth because there is no light in him" John 11:9,10. Jesus here explains exactly what we are talking about. Not only did He tell us that to abide in the light we have to believe in Him, and through this belief we will not stumble, but also that those who do not accept the "light of this world" dwell in spiritual darkness, away from the light of the knowledge of Christ, and their path is full of pitfalls and stumbling blocks.

Christian Israelites believe that those who walk in the day will see God perfectly, being the 144,000 who will be saved without experiencing physical death. Those that walk in the night are those seeking the life of the soul at Jesus' return and regard this as reward enough (see 1 Peter 1:9).

If we want to keep our candles lit we must aspire to do the same work that Jesus Christ did whilst He was here in this world.

John 14:10 says, "*Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.*"

The Source of Light

One may ask, where did Jesus get his light from? If we turn to 1 John 1:5 we are told "*this then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no Darkness.*" God is the ultimate source of all light. The importance of having our candle lit by God Almighty, through His son Jesus Christ, is so that we can recognise troubles and deception, because our spiritual insight with God gives us a deeper, broader understanding of the implications of what is being said or done. There is no 'darkness' in God. Our degree of darkness is dependent on how much we let the spiritual understanding from God into our personal life and thoughts.

John 1:1-5 tells us that God Almighty, through the Spirit Christ, is the Light of the World. We know from our Bible studies that He created all the different lights, both temporal and spiritual. It may prove handy to remind ourselves of this sequence of creation and read Genesis 1:3-5. As we read the sequence we start with the creation of

light and darkness(v3). This was not the sun, moon and stars which we rely on in this world for our day/night cycles - they were created on the fourth day(v14-19). Rather the light was good and the darkness,evil. This is why God saw that the light was good and because it was good He separated it from the darkness. He called the Light - Day and the Darkness - Night. And so the evening and the morning were the first day.

In the same way as the temporal light shines upon the world, so does the power of His spiritual light shine upon us hoping to attract us to seek the knowledge that this light unfolds, ie., that knowledge of God. Because Jesus was in the Father and the Father in Him, we can readily see where the source of Jesus' Inward Light was from.

What Is Your Candle?

Proverbs 20:27 expands further on this point by telling us "*the spirit of man is the candle of the Lord*". God lit the candle of the spirit of Jesus to give light to the world. Jesus Christ has the power to light our candles, those who feel their candles have been extinguished, if we only ask for His leadership and His direction to help us stay on the true path. We need to be able, as Jesus Christ did, to walk firstly in the night without stumbling, using our inward light as our monitor. As our knowledge of God and our relationship with Jesus Christ grows, so too will the intensity of the radiance from our inward light. We can use an analogy here of different wattage light bulbs:

40 watt - at birth

60 watt - when we first become
Christian

100 watt - when the Father is within
us, as He was in Jesus
after the resurrection.

How to get Your Candle Lit.

It is completely up to each individual how bright they want their candle or light to shine - we are the only ones with some degree of control over our relationship with God. If we wish to shine brighter, we have to ask - "*Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened*" Matthew 7:7. How much easier could it be? We all know how to ask for what we want and we all know how to knock at a door, but with God we have the guarantee that if we ask to know Him the door will not be closed. God will not turn His back on us, but will stick by us through thick and through thin, good and bad, rewarding our faithfulness by preserving our candle and letting it so shine before men that we are living representatives of God's will on earth.

What Hinders Us From Coming to that Light?

Unfortunately the pathway to knowledge of God is filled with obstacles. Satan will continually try to draw us away. Worldly desires will attempt to pull us away with worldly commitments, but if our eye remains focussed and our direction aimed towards God, He will give us the strength through the night and bring us to shine forth in radiance in the day.

Most people would say that they want to return to the light of the Lord, but how can I stop sinning? We cannot unless we ask for God's assistance through prayer. God has placed Satan as the Prince of this world, for a time, and the power of Satan is stronger than our spirit and continually bringing our spirit into subjection to him, causing us to sin. If our candle is lit , Satan cannot

penetrate. The prince of this world lives in darkness, so light is the best defence against the influence of this darkness. The evil in our bodies is as darkness, and we must seek to God to take the evil out of us.

Matthew 6:22-24 tells us that *“the light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single (to God), thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil (to Satan), thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”* So, we must make up our minds whether we are going to follow God’s light, or follow the prince of this world into darkness. It is our choice - the Lord reveals Himself to those who ask to know Him.

Our Personal Challenge.

Job faced the choice that we all have to face, and it was no easier for him because it was so long ago. Job is portrayed as being

one of the most righteous and patient men that ever lived (Job 2:3) but that did not stop him having doubts and conflicting thoughts. God was proud of Job, and was asked of by Satan to be permitted to prove Job’s faith, Job lost all his possessions, then his children. But Job withstood Satan’s temptation and did not sin, but stayed loyal to the Lord. Even though Job was afflicted with physical ailments both heinous and painful, he still adhered to his faith in God. Job had his candle lit by God.

If we can show our Faith to God as Job did, by having our candles lit, God has promised us life without the death of this mortal body. We will be changed, made fit to dwell in the Kingdom of God here on earth, the power of Satan being taken away by God, allowing us to return to our Heavenly Father.

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven,”
Matthew 5:16.

Whoso Draws Nigh to God

Whoso draws nigh to God one step
through doubtings dim,
God will advance a mile
in blazing light to him.

Author unknown.

Is Your Candle a

Introduction

There are many different lights (or candles) available to man, and depending on what belief man has, his light will shine according to that belief. This suggests that there can be different degrees of brightness and this is confirmed in 1 Corinthians 15:41, *“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.”*

In this article we are only going to discuss what Paul referred to as the glory of the stars. The glory of the sun and the moon will be covered in later issues of Latter Rain. To help you to better understand our discussion of this passage, it may be a good time to read John 1:4-9 to become familiar with the theme.

John the Baptist

John the Baptist was sent to prepare people for the coming of Jesus Christ. At first it was thought that Jesus came only to the Jews. However, Jesus Christ came also as *“a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel”*, Luke 2:32. This also confirms what Peter was shown in his vision, when he was told that he should not call any man common or

unclean.

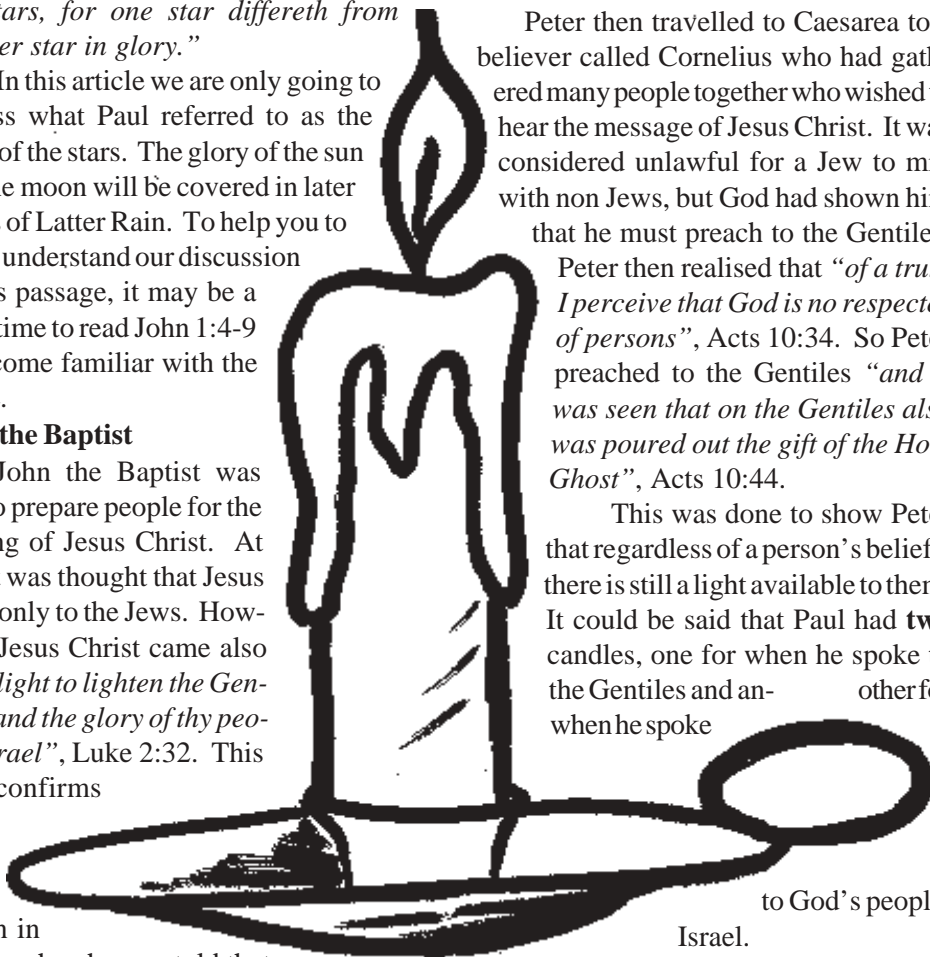
Peter’s Vision in Acts.

This was a dream Peter had while praying on the roof top. He saw all kinds of animals and birds and was told to kill and eat them. Peter answered *“not so Lord, I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean”*. He was told that what God had cleansed should not be called common.

Peter then travelled to Caesarea to a believer called Cornelius who had gathered many people together who wished to hear the message of Jesus Christ. It was considered unlawful for a Jew to mix with non Jews, but God had shown him that he must preach to the Gentiles.

Peter then realised that *“of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons”*, Acts 10:34. So Peter preached to the Gentiles *“and it was seen that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost”*, Acts 10:44.

This was done to show Peter that regardless of a person’s beliefs, there is still a light available to them. It could be said that Paul had **two** candles, one for when he spoke to the Gentiles and another for when he spoke



to God’s people, Israel.

Saul’s Conversion

Saul persecuted all Christian believ-

Bright Light?

ers causing “havoc” in the Church, casting men and women into prison and putting many to death. This treatment scattered Christians around the then known world. Saul continuing in his destruction and slaughter, travelled towards Damascus. As he journeyed, he came near Damascus, and suddenly there shone a bright light from heaven. Saul fell to the earth and heard a voice saying unto him “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” Acts 9:3. Saul was chosen by God to proclaim Jesus Christ to the Gentiles and was filled with the Holy Ghost having his name changed to Paul. However he continued his Israelite beliefs personally, and often spoke of the great destiny that God had planned for Israel (see Romans 10:1-2).

Paul was shown that nobody should be persecuted for their beliefs and, like Peter, realised that all people are loved by God and therefore have a light available to them.

Old Testament Examples.

God’s Spirit was available to people of the Old Testament too. There was :

- Joseph** With the help of God’s Spirit interpreted Pharaoh’s dreams - see Genesis 41:38-39.
- Moses** Was led by God’s Spirit when he took the Israelites out of Egypt - see Exodus 31:3.
- Samson** Had God’s Spirit as well, until he had his haircut, then his candle went out (God’s Spirit left him) (Judges 16).

Samuel It was God’s Spirit that called to Samuel when he was a boy living in the Temple of the Lord with Eli - see 1 Samuel 13:19.

Isaiah Filled with God’s Spirit prophesied that “*there shall be a root out of Jesse, which shall stand for a ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek*”, Isaiah 11:10.

Daniel Also had God’s Spirit with him especially while in the lion’s den - see Daniel 5:14.

Joel Spoke of God’s Spirit being poured out on all flesh - see Joel 2:28.

We believe that this light/Spirit was the Spirit Christ working on the prophets and people of the Old Testament, speaking also to the Apostles including Peter and Paul, causing them to have their candles lit.

The Absence of Light

Now what do we know of Darkness.

In Matthew 6:22-23 we are told that the light of the body is the eye (spirit). “If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness, how great is that darkness!”

Satan causes this darkness by working on the evil in man, which makes man’s light go out. However, by praying to Jesus Christ we can have our candles relit initially for the salvation of the soul.

We must be careful that we ourselves do not cause our fellow man to walk in

darkness by overloading them with our own personal beliefs and opinions. God works with us all differently. As there are many different sized candles, so to our understanding varies from person to person.

The Pharisees placed burdens on people which were too heavy for them to bear by making laws which people were compelled to keep. They then did nothing to help the people with these burdens and made life so hard that they caused the people's lights to go out, thereby shutting up the Kingdom of Heaven against them (see Matthew 23:13).

“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.

How Bright Is Your Light?

Our rewards come individually and we must stand as individuals, with integrity.

Each of us can only answer to God with the understanding that God has placed in us. This understanding comes from God's Spirit dwelling in us as a light or a candle lit.

There is no doubt that these people of God will receive a wonderful glory. However, Paul tells us that they were all as building blocks for God to show His ultimate glory in those who will be alive when Jesus Christ returns. See also Revelation 21:12.

Psalm 4

**Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness:
Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress;
Have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.
O ye sons of men,
How long will ye turn my glory into shame?
How long will ye love vanity,
And seek after leasing? Selah.
But know
That the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself:
The Lord will hear when I call him.
Stand in awe, and sin not:
Commune with your own heart upon your bed,
And be still. Selah.
Offer the sacrifices of righteousness,
And put your trust in the Lord.
There be many that say,
Who will shew us any good?
Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.
Thou hast put gladness in my heart,
More than in the time that their corn and their wine increased.
I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep:
For thou, Lord,
Only makest me dwell in safety.**



Hymn No. 79

The light of life is flowing
The darkness to dispel,
And is in truth revealing
The myst'ries of the fall;
All Isr'el it is bringing
From ev'ry distant shore,
No more will they be mourning,
Their blindness to deplore.

The laws from Zion coming
All Is'el will obey,
The gospel light all shining
Will lead to perfect day:
On th' earth they will be reigning,
The Bridegroom and the Bride,
And in their light, all shining,
The nations shall reside.

That tree of life, once guarded
By swords of flaming fire,
Is now to Is'el offer'd, -
Its fruit they do desire.
The nations will be healed
Throughout this earthly ball,
The man of sin revealed,
And truth receiv'd by all.

"And God said, let there be light....." Genesis 1:3. This was the first act of creation recorded. Nothing could exist without light first. The light is a figure of good - a type of Christ, *"that was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world"* John 1:9.

There have been many lights to guide people through the ages. The angel in Revelations 1:12 had seven golden candlesticks showing a light to each period in the seven thousand years of this creation. However, in the end times in which we believe we are living, God is sending the greatest light - the light to dispel darkness(evil) and show the interpretation of mysteries and parables hitherto sealed up, *"even to the time of the end"* Daniel 12:4.

Throughout the ages we have walked, as it were, in the night, with the lights of the night to guide us - the moon and the stars. The hope has been *"though he were dead, yet shall he live"*, John 11:25. But now the dawn is coming, and the light of the day arising which will fulfil Jesus' words to Martha, *"whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die"* John 11:26.

This is the light of life.

The Wick

This was the third talk at the CIC Easter Convention.

This article is entitled 'The Wick' because the wick is the essence of the candle. It is the bit that can be lit to burn brightly. In short, it is the part of us that the Spirit ignites to cause us to become Sons of God.

Character Types - Friend or Foe

Each one of us is seeking to be a child of God. Something in us craves that closeness and unconditional acceptance He gives. However we may be unaware of it for a long time. God in his love is willing to accept us as we are, but are we that generous towards each other? The social styles character analysis in this issue's All Round Health was useful at the Convention to show that we are all different. Our social style can affect our understanding of God, our approach to his service, and where we appear to be in our spiritual growth to those around us. Our judgment of those around us can stifle both our growth and theirs as well. Acceptance and adaptation to another can enhance it.

Paul recognised differences in people in the early Church. *"With all lowliness, and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"* Ephesians 4:2,3.

Paradox - a mind warp

A paradox is a statement, whether true or not, which seems absurd at first hearing - conflicting with preconceived notions of

the reasonable or possible (Oxford Dictionary). The Bible contains paradoxes such as *"He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loses his life for my sake shall find it"* Matthew 10:39.

Let's set about developing a useful paradox. Within us there are two worlds. The one which we would call 'reality' deals with things we can measure, touch, feel, emotions we experience and so on. The other one which we shall call 'possibility' contains our dreams, hopes and beliefs. It also contains our interpretations of events but that is another story. The world of possibility doesn't actually exist in reality but we often act as though it does. For example, suppose we want to build a house. In our mind we imagine what its rooms look like, how it is laid out, what it is built out of and so on. The house exists in the world of possibility. The house takes the first step to reality as a plan. Now it is more than an idea but still not a reality. Eventually we engage a builder who starts at the foundation, then constructs a shell and finally the inside of the house with all its features and fittings. The house now exists in reality.

In summary a plan or way of being begins in the world of possibility. Sometimes it takes only a framework before it becomes a reality while at other times it may be incomplete after a lifetime. Sometimes the conversion never actually starts. Consider Hebrews 11:1-3.

Transformation - What a Difference.

Transformation is defined as a change

to the form or appearance or character or disposition of something. To alter out of recognition (Oxford Dictionary).

God promises us a transformation. *“Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality”*, 1 Corinthians 15:51,53. This transformation currently only exists for us in the world of possibility. Paul urges us to make the possibility into reality in his words: *“Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind”*, Romans 12:2. Transformation is driven by the change first in our world of possibility by renewing our mind then in reality.

Vision - the Goal drives the Change

Vision is defined as the act or faculty of seeing; a thing seen in a trance or imagination. So vision lives in the world of possibility. The Bible states that *“Where there is no vision the people perish”*, Proverbs 29:18. So vision is essential for life. Our relationship with God is centred around His promise of life and the continuation of our being.

As an exercise, try to define your vision of immortality. Is it tied up with a lifestyle, following laws, loving God or becoming a ‘son of God’? There are many options but we decided that the most powerful one for us was to have such a close and loving relationship with God that we would truly be ‘saved’ as a son of God.

Sons of God - fit to be kings.

There are many references to being sons of God. Paul said, *“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God”* Romans 8:14. But it is not quite this simple. In the world of possibility

we are sons of God while in reality the change has not yet taken place. John said, *“In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother”* 1 John 3:10. When we sin whose ‘sons’ are we? The verse makes it obvious!

So the vision is of being a son of God but the hard work is in connecting possibility to reality. (See also John 1:2 where he promises *“power to become the sons of God”*). The answer lies in God’s healing love.

Love - is it inspiration or perspiration?

“If ye love me keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the spirit of Truth” John 14:15-17.

It is obvious that love is the inspiration to guide us and the perspiration generated by hardwork loving each other, loving God, even when things go wrong, and keeping His commandments although it is unnatural. The inspiration creates the world of possibility where we are sons of God, and the perspiration is generated in turning that world of possibility into reality.

Love is the substance of truth (the Holy Ghost), light (Christ) and Immortality (the final end result in the world of reality). Without it we are nothing and have nothing.

What is your stand for love?

So we challenge you at this moment to look for the transformation of your mind, such that you walk in the possibility of being a son of God.

How high is your wick turned up?

Saying

I would like to talk to the girls and boys today about being thankful. How many of my little readers remember to thank someone when they give them a present, or a drink, or a biscuit, or just when someone does something for them? I'm sure most of you say thank you many times because your Mummy and Daddy have always taught you to say please and thank you.

Sometimes, though, there are times when we should say thank you and we don't. Either we forget, or we don't have time or we just don't think about it. There are lots of times in your lives when you are taken care of and you don't necessarily say thank you. Times when Mummy has done all the washing and ironing giving you clean clothes to wear for the week. Every day Mummy supplies 3 meals a day and cleans up after us. We don't always say thank you for these things do we? In some countries there are children who don't have enough to eat or anyone to look after them like you do. Some of these poor children don't even have clothing to keep them warm and so they just get sicker and sicker. When we think about how some children are a lot worse off than we are, we should say a little prayer thanking God for our Mummy and Daddy and the good job they do of taking care of us. It may help too, sometimes, if you thank Mummy or Daddy for some little thing they have just done for you.

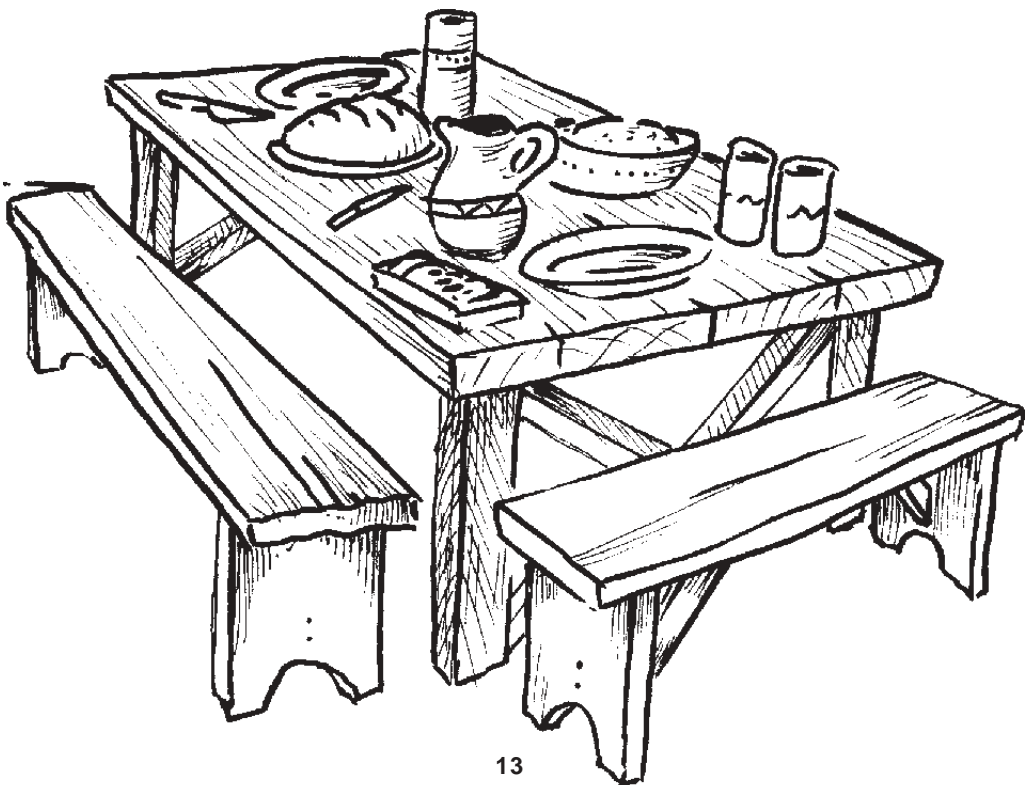
God has done many wonderful things to help us. God sends the rain and the sunshine, the flowers and the animals, the birds and the trees. God also gives us our families, our friends and our loved ones. You must try to remember to say thank you to God for the wonderful way He takes care of us and all the wonderful things He sends us.

Whitsuntide is coming up, and as you children know, people will come from everywhere to celebrate together. You get to meet friends and family members from far and wide all wanting to celebrate and thank

Thank You

God for the gift of His Son, Jesus. Whitsuntide, in the old days, was known as Pentecost and this was the time the tribes of Israel offered thanks to God for taking care of them. God made their crops grow so they could eat, God protected them from disease so they could grow and God looked over them as a Father does his children to protect them. At Whitsuntide we can offer thanks too for the way in which God cares for us. Christians hope, too, that at Whitsuntide God will send His special helper, just as He did for Jesus' disciples, to give strength to those that love and follow Him. We don't just have to look for this special helper to be with us at Whitsuntide, but all throughout the year.

When you go to bed tonight, don't forget to say thank you to God for looking after us all, and ask for His blessing to help us every day.



PUZZLE PAGE - Prophets

O P I A G G A H O M E R
S N Z E P H A N I A H A
G A I A S I A E S L A Z
R H M S M J J P P A B E
D U C E H O S E A C A C
H M R L Z E B S R H K H
A E U H S L P A T I K A
J A T N A O M U D Z U R
I B H E J O N A H I K I
L E A H S Z N O H H A A
E L I S H A Z M I C A H

Read up, down, forward, backward, or diagonally to find the names of these Bible prophets:

Malachi

Obadiah

Joel

Habakkuk

Elijah

Amos

Jonah

Haggai

Micah

Elisha

Jeremiah

Hosea

Zechariah

Isaiah

Zephaniah

Nahum

Debug Your Bible:

Joshua comes in by a Landslide



No doubt we've all heard about the miracle where God parted the Red Sea to allow the Israelites to escape the Egyptians during their exodus from Egypt. But we probably don't remember the time forty years later when God stopped the river Jordan to allow Israel to enter the promised land. It seems that drying up rivers and seas for miraculous crossings was a particular specialty of God.

The first time at the Red Sea was to escape the enemy; the second time at the river Jordan was to conquer the enemy - to invade Canaan and claim the promised land. They also signified the start and the end of Israel's wandering in the wilderness.

The Landslide Theory

Let's just look briefly at a theory behind the stopping of the Jordan River. I don't want to go into the reasons behind the Jordan crossing such as how it was God's undeniable endorsement of Joshua as the new head of Israel, or how it both encouraged Israel's army while psychologically devastating the enemy (although I guess I just did). Instead I just wanted to briefly cover the 'Landslide Theory'.

At the time of this miracle it was the time of harvest (Joshua 3:15), the snows on Mount Hermon were melting, and the Jordan had overflowed its banks. The Jordan had swift currents and could be up to 1 mile wide (and probably was). All in all it was not a good time to try drying it up and crossing it.

The Landslide theory says, basically,

that somewhere up stream from the Israelites there was a landslide which temporarily dammed the Jordan allowing Israel's army to cross into Canaan and begin their invasion. Critics would say that Joshua just took advantage of the situation, but the Bible shows us that Joshua (see Joshua 3:13) prophesied this miracle. In addition the river only stopped when the feet of the priests bearing the Ark of the Covenant entered the water, **AND** the waters returned the instant the priests left the river bed. If this was a coincidence Joshua was a very lucky man (and even more lucky that he was downstream from the landslide).

If for one find it interesting how God uses nature in miracles. If there was a landslide or if the Star of Bethlehem was actually Halley's comet (to quote a completely unrelated miracle) it shows how God can use nature to be His miracles. Some might feel it is less magnificent for God to use nature in such a way, but I believe the opposite. God **knows** what is going to happen so far in advance that He can allow nature to evolve until such point that, just at the right instant, it does something inconceivable - the miracle occurs. This shows God's mastery over time and nature, and also shows how He foreknows and predestines events. That's impressive stuff.

So, if this is how God produced the miracle which allowed Joshua to cross the Jordan, I just have one question left: How **did** Moses part the Red Sea? (I'd better start work on that one.)

Statement of Belief

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

We Believe

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

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

Ten Steps to Problem Solving

How are you? Are you faced with a problem today and wondering what to do?

Relax! Life's like that! Problems large or small come to all of us, more or less, every day of our lives. I read somewhere problems are simply an evidence of life.... in other words, if you didn't have a problem, you'd probably be dead or immortal!

So...what's your problem at the moment? Friends, money, time, family, job, clothing, health, relationship, food, marriage or something else.

Relax! God's been in the problem solving business for thousands of years! Praise God! He has the answer. If you seek Him, He will reveal it to you in His time and way!

So how are you going to handle this problem of yours? That's the crucial key to your peace of mind.

Would you like to consider the following suggested plan of action?

Step 1 - Re-commit your life to God

Confess any unforgiven sin. Be specific. Accept God's forgiveness. Pray, acknowledging Jesus as Your Saviour and placing your life 100% totally and securely in God's care (eg. 'Lord I love thee, All I am and All I have and All my future I give to Thee, Please help take care of me, show me what I should do'.)

Our main aim should be that our lives should glorify Him and He knows just the best way to bring this about.

Now relax! God, in whose hands the planets whirl and spin, is surely able to take care of you. Look at the words of Psalm 124:8., "*Our help is in the Name of the Lord, who made Heaven and Earth*".

Step 2 - Remember God's Goodness and Provision in the past.

Count your blessings name them one by one and it will surprise you what the Lord has done". See Psalm 105:5-45.

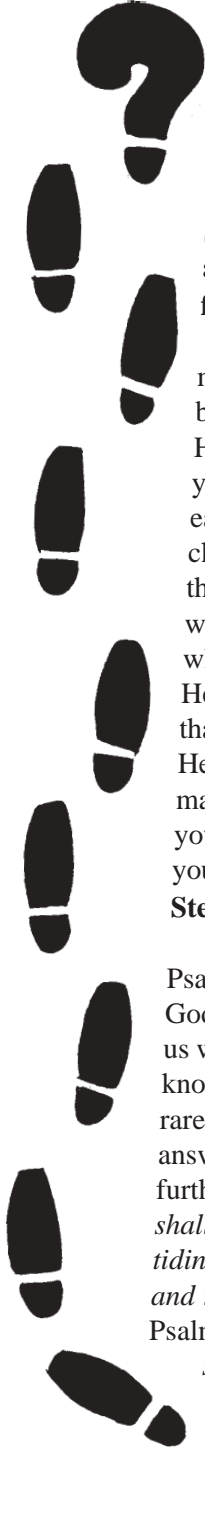
Step 3 - Praise

Praise Him through faith for the blessings He has in store for you in the future. Praise Him NOW for the deliverance which is on its way to you. Celebrate now!

Claim a Bible verse promising God's help. Keep your eyes focused on that promise and not on the calendar. We are usually in a hurry but God, who owns time, is not, but His timing is perfect every time. He has never once been late. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass (see Hosea 6:34). Praise Him now for that which is yet to come.

In Joshua 21:44 the rest at that time included victory "*...the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand*".

Psalm 46:10 says, "*Be still and*



know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth”.

Step 4 - Trust God and Rest in His Love for You

Yes, God who made you knows you far better than anyone else. He has a special plan for your life. Just as an earthly father tells his children what he wants them to do, so too, God will cause you to know what He wants you to do. He knows you even better than you know yourself. He knows just how to make His wishes clear to you and what is best for you.

Step 5 - Wait

Wait on the Lord (see Psalm 37) and if we wait God will make it plain to us what we must do. ‘I know not by what method rare, but this I know, God answers prayer’. And further, in Psalm 112:7 *“He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed and trusting in the Lord.”* Psalm 16:11, *“Thou wilt shew me the path of*

life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”

Step 6 - Get Ready

Prepare your heart for what you have believed for. Be as though you are in possession of it. Pray believingly! Pray in faith and you will not live in doubt. Colossians 4:2 tells us, *“Continue in prayer and watch in the same with thanksgiving”.*

Step 7 - Watch for God’s Leading

Something will fall into place and give you some indication. If you watch and listen, God will show you what He is doing. Isaiah 30:30 tells us, *“And the Lord shall cause His glorious voice to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of His arm”.* God will speak to you in one or more ways.

Some guidance is unconscious (you just ‘happen’ to be in the right place at the right time, eg. Boaz and Ruth) while at other times you feel an inward assurance to follow a certain path. Sometimes people find it helpful to talk things over with others before making their own decision. However we all have our own inward monitor to help us and must ultimately make our own decisions.

God’s word and prayer are our tools and eventually we will know what we should do. Often the answers seem to come at the last minute (ie. we purchase our ticket just before we get on the train). However when we really need to know we will know. God is abundantly able to over-rule everything to

bring this to pass. He always does!

Step 8 - Walk by Faith

“For we walk by faith and not by sight” 2 Corinthians 5:7. God will reveal His will step by step. Generally speaking God leads, Satan pushes. Be wary of any quick fixes or shortcuts. If ever you feel unsure, retrace your steps to where you felt that uncertainty began and re-think your decision at that stage. Maybe you are moving too fast, or in the wrong direction or with pride. Pride is sin. It honours self rather than God and God hates a selfish, proud spirit.

Maybe you have sinned recently and this has brought your lack of peace. Submit yourself to God, humble yourself and He will guide you. *“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time”*. *“Casting all your care upon Him: for He careth for you”*, 1 Peter 5:6,7.

“But the meek shall inherit the earth: and shall delight themselves with the abundance of peace”, Psalm 37:11. Make sure you respond each time the next step is given. When God says NOW - let no man say ‘tomorrow’. Always make sure you have obeyed the last thing He has told you to do. “Obey my voice and I will be your God and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you”, Jeremiah 7:23. Isaiah 30:21 says, “And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying this is the way, walk ye in it when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left”.

Step 9 - Remember to thank God daily for His provision

Remember where God guides He

provides. When God calls He will make the way. Also ‘Great is Thy Faithfulness’ and ‘How Great Thou Art’. Sometimes it seems that all is quiet. That is the time to listen and God will show you what He is doing. Don’t you know it’s time to Praise the Lord? He is making everything work together for your ultimate good (see Romans 8:28).

Whenever we choose to walk God’s way and at His pace we can depend on Him to open the pathway ahead for us in the way that we should follow.

Step 10 - Expect a Miracle

Expect to see God come through with His goodness sometime and praise Him for it. Pause for a moment and think ‘How big is your God?’ Think of the mighty stories and deeds in the Bible. Read Hebrews 11 and Psalms 104 - 107 as well as Job sometime and know Ephesians 3:20. Our God is abundantly able....truly a miracle worker.

But the salvation of the righteous is the Lord (Psalm 37:39). (It is God’s job. the battle is the Lord’s.....it is under His control). He is their strength in the time of trouble.

“And the Lord shall help them, and deliver them: He shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they Trust in Him”

Eventually the answer will come. His love will break through. *“He hath made everything beautiful in His time”* Ecclesiastes 3:11. ‘When the time is right, the opportunity is there and I am ready for it’ (Anonymous).

Micah 7:8 tells us *“when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me.”* Further

in Hosea 6:3, "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: His going forth is prepared as the morning;.....", He will make His will plain to us individually. "When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble" Proverbs 4:12.

In Summary

Maturity is going where God wants you to go, one step at a time.

So "seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you", Matthew 6:33. God will take care of you.

Meanwhile Heart to God, Hand to man! Feed my sheep, Feed my lambs (see Matthew 21). Also strengthen the brethren (see Luke 22:32). Isaiah 58:6-14 is a wonderful reading. Take time to let its message sink deep into your soul.

"And it shall be said in that day

Lo this is our God;

We have waited for Him and

He will save us;

This is the Lord.

We have waited for Him,

We will be glad and rejoice in His salvation" Isaiah 25:9.

Psalm 50:23 exhorts us to speak words of faith. "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God".

So let's attack this problem with a heart of prayer, hope, praise and the theology of expectancy. Expect doors to open and prayers to be answered, miracles to happen. Expect a miracle every day. Expect a miracle when you pray.

In essence, take 5 minutes now or longer, whatever it takes, it will be time well invested. Put on paper your problem as you see it, pray it through daily, (God has time to listen if you have time to pray, anytime, even while you're washing up) asking God to give you hope, wisdom, guidance and strength.

Be prepared to see the Hand of God at work in your life. What a mighty God we serve!

Praise God from whom ALL blessings flow!

Satan's Rebellion and Fall

Lucifer, Satan, when an archangel in Heaven, being puffed up with pride, rebelled against the Creator, influenced and cused the fall of many other spirits, some of which, since called his angels, were driven out of Heaven with him. He is permitted for a season to reign as prince of this world.

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!...For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God....I will be like the Most High" Isaiah 14:12-14.

"I beheld Satan as lightning fall from Heaven" Luke 10:18.

"Angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation" Jude 6.

"The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me" John 14:30.

All Round Health

The Stress Factor!

We have discussed previously how stress has an affect on our well being. In this issue we will take a brief look at a very common cause of stress - our relationships with other people. Hopefully by understanding the problem we will be able to reduce the level of stress and improve our overall health.

Contained in the next few pages is an analysis which we did at the Convention that allows us to determine where we fit into a scale which uses four different character types. There are others which are much more complicated but for our purpose this one is fine.

When you do it, record your answers on a separate piece of paper and get a few other people to do it as well. Compare their answers with yours and you will probably find you are quite different. You might also get other people to fill out the questionnaire as to how they see you, just to see if you appear to them as you appear to yourself. You may be surprised that there is a difference.

When you have worked out what behavioural style you are, flip to the next page and see what characteristics are mostly associated with that style. You will notice that each characteristic has a positive (or 'good') side and a negative (or 'bad') side.

Let's take an example. The driver is a natural leader. Don't try to tell a driver what to do because they won't listen. Driver's are self confident controllers and tend to be impatient and eager to get on with life.

Contrast this to the analyser who wants to analyse a situation. The analyser is thorough, methodical and steadfast. They don't take quickly to change, and in fact may not take quickly to anything. Change is full of the unknown and must be thought out carefully. Can you see the clash? The driver becomes frustrated and the analyser frazzled. The driver may see the analyser as dull, plodding, critical and stubborn, while the analyser sees the driver as domineering (telling me what to do), coercive, impatient and unstable. The positive attributes of a character become negatives.

Likewise we may see a problem between the forceful characteristics of the driver and the passive characteristics of the amiable. The amiable may at first be receptive to the leadership of the driver but in time may come to resent always being controlled. The perfectionist characteristic of the amiable may also have a problem with the critical side of the analyser.

The expressive who is afraid of confrontation will almost certainly have a problem with the initial analyser and the high pressure, coercive driver.

So what do we do?

Firstly there is some power in knowing our own social style because we can see how the way we feel about others is related to the characteristics of our style. For example, if we turned out to be a driver it could explain why we have been impatient with others. On the other hand, an analyser would expect to be critical. An amiable may

be gullible, because of their trusting nature. The power comes in seeing ourselves as different from others.

Secondly, knowing where we are coming from, it is important to know where the other person is coming from. In that way we can 'flex' or alter our reactions or characteristics enough to allow us to communicate.

Thirdly, in knowing our own style and the styles of those we are relating to we can take care to show the positive sides of our characteristics.

Understanding social styles can be a useful tool in reducing stress and improving our daily health. Happy analysing and don't forget your calculator!

BEHAVIOURAL STYLE CHARACTERISTICS

INSTRUCTIONS

Set out below are 26 behavioural contrasts

With each set of contrasts, write on a piece of paper the number you think corresponds with your analysis of this trait in yourself - the numbers work on a sliding scale.

For example: with number 1 if you appear confident in your interaction with other people you would score a 1 but if you are painfully shy you would get a 4. Either side of the degrees, depending whether you tend to shy or the other would be 2 or 3 depending on the lean.

1.	Appears confident	1	2	3	4	Reserved
2.	Passive	1	2	3	4	Aggressive
3.	Responsive	1	2	3	4	Self-controlled
4.	Easy-going	1	2	3	4	Dominant
5.	Takes charge	1	2	3	4	Goes along
6.	Formal	1	2	3	4	Informal
7.	Disciplined	1	2	3	4	Spontaneous
8.	Communicates readily	1	2	3	4	Hesitant communicator
9.	Accepting	1	2	3	4	Challenging
10.	Appears unorganised	1	2	3	4	Appears organised
11.	Initiates social contact	1	2	3	4	Lets others initiate
12.	Asks questions	1	2	3	4	Makes statements
13.	Overbearing	1	2	3	4	Shy
14.	Reserved	1	2	3	4	Fun loving
15.	Appears active	1	2	3	4	Appears thoughtful
16.	Relaxed	1	2	3	4	Assertive
17.	Withholds feeling	1	2	3	4	Expresses feeling
18.	Relationship oriented	1	2	3	4	Task oriented
19.	Pushy	1	2	3	4	Gentle
20.	Discriminating	1	2	3	4	Impulsive
21.	Extrovert	1	2	3	4	Introvert
22.	Warm	1	2	3	4	Cool
23.	Subtle	1	2	3	4	Direct
24.	Distant	1	2	3	4	Close
25.	States information	1	2	3	4	Saves information
26.	Quiet	1	2	3	4	Talkative

To determine which of the four character types best represents you we can process the contrasts as follows:

To locate yourself on the Assertive/Easy Going Scale: place the ratings from the behavioural contrast list on the lines following the corresponding question numbers below:

- | | |
|-----------|--------------|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 8. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 11. _____ | 12. _____ |
| 13. _____ | 16. _____ |
| 15. _____ | 23. _____ |
| 19. _____ | 26. _____ |
| 21. _____ | |
| 25. _____ | Sum #2 _____ |

Sum #1 _____

$(\text{Sum \#1}) + 35 - (\text{Sum \#2}) = \text{_____}$ divided by 16 = _____

Place an X on the following scale corresponding to the score above:

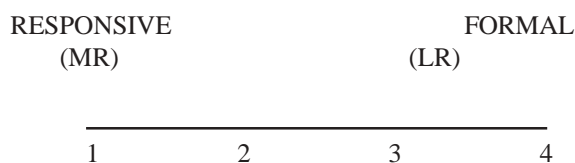


To locate the person on the Formal/Responsive Scale. Place the rating from the behavioural contrast list on the lines following the corresponding question numbers below:

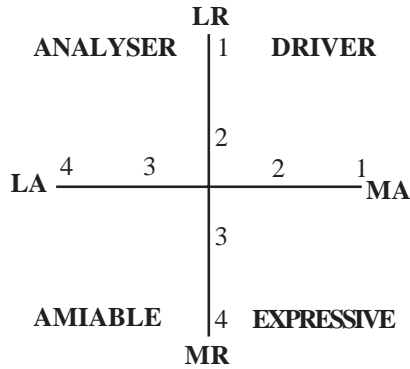
- | | |
|-----------|--------------|
| 6. _____ | 3. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 10. _____ |
| 14. _____ | 18. _____ |
| 17. _____ | 22. _____ |
| 20. _____ | |
| 24. _____ | Sum #2 _____ |

Sum #1 _____

$(\text{Sum \#1}) + 20 - (\text{Sum \#2}) = \text{_____}$ divided by 10 = _____



Plot your result on the axis:



Possible Perceptions of Styles

Each character type has different characteristics which can be weak/negative or powerful/positive characteristics.

<p>ANALYSER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - dull - stingy - unfriendly - compulsive - plodding - critical - stubborn <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + practical + economical + reserved + thorough + methodical + analytical + steadfast 	<p>DRIVER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - domineering - impulsive - arrogant - coercive - high pressure - impatient - unstable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + controlling + quick to act + self confident + forceful + persistent + urgent + eager to change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - impractical - gullible - paternal/maternal - passive - self-deprecating - obligated - perfectionist <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + idealistic + trusting + helpful + receptive + modest + loyal + aspiring <p>AMIABLE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - inconsistent - childlike - agitated - afraid of confrontation - lacking in conviction - manipulative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + flexible + youthful + enthusiastic + tactful + adaptable + socially skilful <p>EXPRESSIVE</p>

Rufus Pudens

There are many characters mentioned in the New Testament that are given but a fleeting mention. It is not until one digs a little deeper into the history books to find the rest of the story that one comes to realise the enormous contributions these early Christians made to the formation of the early Church. Rufus Pudens was one such as these. In 2 Timothy 4:21 we have the only reference to Pudens, “*Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.*”

Our story starts in the Year AD53 with the marriage of Rufus Pudens the daughter (Gladys) of the British king Caractacus. Rome had been trying to conquer Britain for a long time, and during this lengthy attempt to subjugate the Britons, there were truces in the fighting called. These truces allowed the workers to go home and tend their farms, look after their families, etc., and after these chores were done they would resume fighting.

Pudens was a Roman senator as well as a soldier and he was in Britain on assignment as personal aide de camp to the Roman general Aulus Plautius (see Note 1). This same Aulus Plautius also married into the Caractacan family when he married Caractacus' sister (this marriage occurred in AD45). It has been conjectured by many historians that it would have been at this wedding that Pudens first met Gladys. Interestingly, this Gladys is the same person that was taken prisoner along with her father to Rome. The Roman emperor Claudius was particularly fond of her and actually ‘adopted’ her. As a symbol of this adoption,

she was renamed to Claudia. Thus is laid the foundation stone for the first British Christian family dwelling in Rome. They were given a residence, known as the Palatium Britannicum, which was to become the haven for early Christian followers, including Peter and Paul.

The wedding ceremony between Rufus and Gladys/Claudia was performed at the Palatium Britannicum by the Christian pastor, Hermas (Romans 16:14). This shows us that Rufus Pudens was a Christian in AD53 to have undergone a Christian wedding. The marriage eventually produced four children, each of whom were martyred for Christianity (more details later in the article).

The estate of the Palatium Britannicum must have been vast for in the Roman Martyrology, in discussing Pudens, tells us that Pudens brought his servant staff from Umbria to manage the estate. It states, “There were two hundred males and the same number of females, all born on the hereditary of estates of Pudens at Umbri.” This estate was later deeded to the First Christian Church at Rome by Timotheus, their eldest son. It is recorded that these were the only properties owned by the Christian Church at Rome up to the time of the Emperor Constantine.

The records reveal that Pudens stayed in Britain for quite a length of time, at least until AD 52. He was stationed at Regnum, which was the Roman encampment at Chichester. Interestingly, in AD 1723 workers excavating some old foundations at this site, discovered a large stone tablet - this is now known as the ‘Chichester Stone’. It bore a

deeply carved and clear inscription which, after restoration, was able to be clearly read. The inscription states:

'The College of Engineers, and ministers of religion attached to it, by permission of Tiberius Claudius Cogidunus, the king, legate of Augustus in Britain, have dedicated at their own expense in honour of the divine family, this temple to Neptune and Minerva. The site was given by Pudens, son of Pudentinus.'

This proves that Pudens was in Britain until at least the erection of this building (AD 50). The Claudian war didn't actually close till AD 52 and this is when Pudens returned to Rome. So we can see that Pudens was still a pagan god worshipper as late as AD 50 but sometime before his marriage to Claudia in AD 53 he was converted to Christianity.

Life was good at the Palatium. From the works of Roman writers of the same period we read that the home of Pudens rapidly became the most fashionable and cultural centre in Rome. They had such influential visitors as Martial (the Roman epigrammatist who valued the scholarship of the Pudens). Martial tells us in these works of the beauty of Claudia and extols her literary talent. He says, "*Since Claudia, wife of Pudens, comes from the blue set Britons, how is it that she has so won the hearts of the Latin people?*" Claudia was a fluent linguist, and wrote many volumes of odes and poetry in Greek, Latin and her native Cymric. Her works had been treasured for over a thousand years in the great Glastonbury library but perished in the great fire of AD 1184. Copies of her hymns, elegies, etc were contained at Verulum as late as the 13th Century.

As stated earlier, Claudia and Pudens had 4 children, all of whom were baptised in Christ and all of whom were martyred. The children, in order from eldest to youngest, were:

- **Timotheus** - named after one of Claudia's favourite disciples, Timothy the Bishop of Ephesus.

Timotheus had been closely associated with the apostles John and Paul. Paul refers to him as "*The beloved son in Christ.*" Timotheus baptised King Lucius at Winchester in AD 137. Shortly after his return he suffered martyrdom (he was 90 years old) with his fellow worker Marcus.

- **Pudentiana** - this daughter of Pudens was immortalised in the Roman Martyrologies and by Martial, she was executed on the anniversary of the death of her father, AD 107 during the third Roman Christian persecution. The name of the Palatium Britannicum was changed after her death and consecrated by name to her memory.

- **Praxedes** - she was martyred in the same year as Timotheus and the Martyrologies tell us that "*Rome was drunk with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus*". She was the last surviving member of this illustrious Christian family.

- **Novatus** - he was martyred during the fifth Roman persecution, AD 137, while Timotheus was absent in Britain.

Rufus Pudens died a martyr's death in AD 96. His beautiful wife Claudia died the following year, AD 97, at Samnium.

By AD 140 all of this family had been interred by the side of St. Paul in the Via Ostiensis. Priscilla, the mother of Paul and Rufus Pudens, was laid to rest in the underground cemetery nearby. This cemetery is named in her memory as the Catacomb of St. Priscilla.

The Palace of the British, the sanctified church of St. Pudentiana has a memorial carved on its walls which dates back to just after the execution of Praxedes in the 2nd century. Inscribed in these few words is told the tragic story:

“In this sacred and most ancient of churches, known as that of Pastor (Hermas), dedicated by Sanctus Pius Papa (St. Paul), formerly the house of Sanctus Pudens, the Senator, and the home of the holy apostles, repose the remains of t h r e e thousand blessed martyrs which Pudentiana and Praxedes, virgins of Christ, with their own hands interred.”

This little memorial may be found in the Imperial City of Rome along the Mons Sacer Way. The very foundation stone of Christianity, and it is hardly known of, let alone visited by Christian believers. Cardinal Baronius in his *Annales Ecclesias* states, *“It is delivered to us by the firm tradition of our forefathers that the house of Pudens was the first that entertained St. Peter at Rome, and that there the Christians assembling formed the Church, and that of all our churches the oldest is that which is called after the name Pudens.”*

This early Christian church is recorded in Roman history under four different names:

1. Palatium Britannicum
2. Titulus
3. Hospitium Apostolorum
4. St. Pudentiana - in memory

of the martyred daughter of Pudens - it is still known by this name today.

Even the eminent Jesuit Father, the Reverend Robert Parsons in *The Three Conversions of England*, adds, *“Claudia was the first hostess or harbourer both of St. Peter and St. Paul at the time of their coming to Rome.”*

This early Christian home was the haven for many Christian workers and converts. Cardinal Baronius wrote that Justin Martyr made his home with them. Many believe that this is the home that Paul stayed at. Many people take literally the statement of Paul in his epistle to the Romans prior to his coming where he says, *“Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine”*. Some would suggest that Paul was speaking about his spiritual mother, but a spiritual mother is one who has converted the other, and this would be impossible. Paul was converted on the road to Damascus, not by Priscilla, and had not been to Rome since the persecution of AD33. Too long a time had gone by for this to be feasible.

We know from the history annals that Pudens was born on the family estate at Umbri - a Roman state. His father was a Roman Senator. Paul, when he describes his own citizenship, states that he was a Jew (Benjamite) by race. One would assume that his parents must have been Jewish Benjamites, but this is not the case. It could be though that Rufus Pudens was the result of a second marriage and this marriage more than likely to a Roman of distinguished birth. It has to have been a legal marriage for Pudens to have achieved the status he did as well as inherit the property he did from his father.

So, as can be seen, it would not be too

unreasonable for Pudens and Paul to have been half-brothers - having the same mother (Priscilla). In the Roman Martyrologies we are told that, "*The children of Claudia were brought up at the knee of St. Paul.*"

To see the proof of this story and of the existence of the players in this story one just has to look through the pages of any of the following books: *Martyrologies of Rome*, *The Greek Menologies* and the *Martyrologies of Ado, Usuard and Esquilinus*, and read the following regarding Natal Days:

May 17. Natal Day of the Blessed Pudens, father of Praxedes and Pudentiana. He was clothed with Baptism by the Apostles, and watched and kept his robe pure and without wrinkle to the frown of a blameless life.

May 17. Natal Day of St. Pudentiana, the virgin, of the most illustrious descent, daughter of Pudens, and Disciple of the Holy Apostle St. Paul.

June 20. Natal Day of St. Novatus, son of the Blessed Prudens, brother of St. Timotheus the Elder and the Virgins of Christ, Pudentiana and Praxedes. All these were instructed in the faith by the Apostles.

August 22. Natal Day of St. Timotheus, son of St. Pudens, in the Via Oatiensis.

Note 1. Aulus Plautius was a Roman commander who had married the sister of King Caractacus of Britain. Her name was Pomponia Graecina and they are referred to as a Christian family. This Aulus Plautius was the same commander that had determined to get rid of Christianity.

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September 21. Natal Day of St. Praxedes, Virgin of Christ in Rome.

November, 26. Natal Day of St. Linus, first Bishop of Rome.

Thus, the first above ground Christian Church in Rome was the Palatium Britannicum - a British Palace - which had been bequeathed to the Christian Church by Pudens and Claudia. Hermas conducted the services in this early church. The apostles Peter affirms this fact when he says, "*The first Christian Church above ground in Rome, was the Palace of the British. The first Christian Bishop, was a Briton, Linus, son of a Royal King, personally appointed by St. Paul, AD 58.*" Clement tells us that Paul was in constant residence at the Palatium Britannicum and personally instructed Linus for his consecrated office - Linus became the first Bishop of Rome.

Many 'firsts' can be laid at this family's door, the benefits of which we still reap today:

First to house and openly protect the Apostles.

First openly to teach the Christian faith in Rome.

First to found the Christian Church at Rome.

First to suffer martyrdom for the Christian faith at Rome.