

Lectionary
Readings for every day
You Select!



in the HCUC

No. 2

For 22 March 2015

Dear Friends

There is a very ancient tale that is thousands of years old. Older than Methuselah, who was 969 years! According to this legend the ancient gods were arguing over where to hide the secret of life so men and women wouldn't find it.

“Bury it under a mountain”, suggested one god: “They’ll never find it there.” “No”, said the others, “one day they’ll find a way to dig deep into the mountain and they’ll come across the secret.” Another god suggested putting the secret of life in the depths of the deepest ocean. “It will be safe there!” “No” said the others, “one day people will find a way to reach into the very deepest ocean and will discover it.” After a long silence another god said “Put the secret of life inside people. Men and women will never think of looking for it there.” All the gods agreed.

The legend may sound a bit quaint. However it continues to be told. People have never given up looking for the hidden secret. Many in every era have discovered it. When they share their discovery some common elements emerge:

- * The saints and sages, the prophets and seers have discovered that the secret can be found.
- * The secret is an ‘open secret’. Namely it is not hidden like a forbidden treasure. It is waiting for us to find it. But we must be passionate about our wanting to find it.
- * A rather strange thing happens. When those who have discovered the secret and shared their discovery very few listen and even fewer believe them.
- * Jesus’ passion in life was to open our eyes to where the secret of life can be found and what happens to us when we ‘get it’.

A contemporary teacher and writer, puts it this way:- “To get the purpose of life we need to look inward at who we are and why we are here instead of outward at the physical world of things.”

Yes, the Kingdom of Heaven is within us—said Jesus.

Sincerely - Lester

	Psalm	Epistle/OT	Gospel
Monday 23 March:	23	Josh 2:1-14	John 8:1-11
Tuesday 24 March:	102:1-3, 16-23	Numb 21:4-9	John 8:21-30
Wednesday 25 March:	40:5-11	Isa 7:10-14	Luke 1:26-38
Thursday 26 March:	105:4-9	Gen 17:3-9	John 8:51-end
Friday 27 March:	18:1-6	Jer 20:10-13	John 10:31-end
Saturday 28 March:	121	Jer 31:10-13	John 11:45-end
Sunday 29 March <u>Palm Sunday</u>			
Ps 118:1-2,19-29; Isa 50:4-9a; Phil 2:5-11; Mark 11:1-11 or John 12:12-16			

	Psalm	Epistle/OT	Gospel
Holy Week			
Monday 30 March:	36:5-11	Isa 42:1-9	John 12:1-11
Tuesday 31 March:	71:1-14	Isa 49:1-7	John 12:20-36
Wednesday 1 April:	70	Isa 50:4-9a	John 13:21-32
Maundy Thursday 2 April:	116:1,2, 12-19	1 Cor 11:23-26	John 13:1-17 (31b-35)
Good Friday 3 April:	22	Isa 52:13-53:12	John 18:1-19:42
Saturday 4 April:	31:1-4,15,16	1 Peter 4:1-8	John 19:38-42
Sunday 5 April <u>Easter Day</u>			
Ps 118:1-2,14-24; Isa 25:6-9; Acts 10:34-43; John 20:1-18			

	Psalm	Epistle/OT	Gospel
Monday 6 April:	16:1,2,6-end	Acts 2:14,22-32	Matt 28:8-15
Tuesday 7 April:	33:4,5,18-end	Acts 2:36-41	John 20:11-18
Wednesday 8 April:	105:1-9	Acts 3:1-10	Luke 24:13-35
Thursday 9 April:	8	Acts 3:11-end	Luke 24:35-48
Friday 10 April:	118:1-4, 22-26	Acts 4:1-12	John 21:1-14
Saturday 11 April:	118:1-4, 14-21	Acts 4:13-21	Mark 16:9-15
Sunday 12 April <u>Easter 2</u>			
Ps 133; Acts 4:32-35; 1 John 1:1-2:2; John 20:19-31			

KNOWING WHO WE ARE—and WHO WE ARE NOT

Here are some words from others about knowing who we are:-

“Most of us have grown up and come to believe who we are is this body we carry around, or the job we perform, or the religion we practice.” Our lives are daily involved with eternal—relationships, work, money, food, houses, cars, gardens and sports or hobbies. These things are changing, shifting and altering. Yet somewhere inside ourselves we feel the same. When we give attention to this awareness we begin to discover an inner self that never changes. To be aware of this inner self which is not growing old like our body is to be aware in a wonderful way of a dimension of our lives that is constant, dependable and enduring. In the story of the Prodigal son (Luke 15) there is a crucial moment when the son becomes aware of his wretched condition—penniless, hungry, lonely, filthy from the pig sty—and he comes to ‘himself’. In other words, he became aware of that inner self which surfaced from deep within himself and spoke a word of truth and freedom. It was a moment of transformation. He turned and headed home. He discovered his true Self.

Listen to another way of saying this. A current writer says:- “Your inner soul knows you are eternal. When you reach that state, knowing that who you are is the unchanging Self, you will be ‘on purpose’ in your life.”

An ancient scripture says: the true Self is eternal, and is beyond birth and death. What is born will die, what was never born can never die. Our sacred Self was never born! Our sacred Self will never die! This Self cannot be cut by a weapon, burnt by fire, wet by water or dried up by wind. Another way of approaching this mysterious and awesome unseen but vital reality that we are, is to look at what we are not.

- ◇ We are not our name. Our name was given to us. It is a label and can change. It is a handy way to help distinguish our body from other bodies around us, and give others a word to use in referring to us.
- ◇ We are not our body. What we have in this section implies we possess a body. We spend a great deal of our life time (in the body) looking after it—feeding and grooming it, keeping it fit and in good working order so that it enables us to be and do what is important to us. The question is, ‘who is the one who wants the body to be healthy, strong and useful?’ You own the body. It is a precious tool in the hands of your Self.
- ◇ You are not your mind. We think thoughts with our mind. So there are the thoughts and then there is the thinker of the thoughts. Sometimes we say—“I found myself thinking to myself...”. Who is the one who is able to notice the mind at work? The Self!
- ◇ The same is true of our feelings—they come and go and we can notice them and watch them. Who is the one who is watching?

THERE IS A SAYING ...

There is a saying:

When the student is ready the teacher appears.

This means the teacher comes when the Self (sometimes called soul) is ready—not the ego.

The ego is never fully ready. If we had to wait for the ego (sometimes called the small self) to attract the teacher we would be teacherless for life, for the ego likes to be in control and resents any interference. We are blessed because the true Self continues seeking greater awareness, and freedom, regardless of the ever-changing moods and opinions of the ego.

- Clarissa Estes in “Women who Run with the Wolves”

She also says:

“Raven ego is like a child who is watching all the time to see which slice of cake is the biggest, which bed is the softest, which lover is the most handsome.”

“It is not with the ego that we love one another but with the True Unchanging Self.”

Jesus made mention of losing your life and at the same time gaining your life. That sounds tricky. It’s a puzzling paradox and not surprising because life is full of paradox. Maybe he was raising the issue of shifting the emphasis from our small self at the centre of our lives and giving space to our greater Self—our true, unchanging, ever young, loving, wise and divine Being.

Could this be what is meant by “Christ living in me”.

A sort of Footnote

Now that the 2015 series of Shalom is started here is a friendly reminder:

1. To those who get a copy from their congregation—either handed to you by the local distributor or left for you to collect—the price remains at \$5 for the year. This is to cover production costs.
2. For those whose copy is posted to you we ask for \$20 (at least) to cover production costs and ongoing rising postage costs.

Thank you for noting this and actioning it.

Where to pay?

- In congregations—your rep who distributes copies, or into the Parish Office.
- Posted copies? Pay to Parish Office, St Marks, 58 Woburn Road or PO Box 30 529, Lower Hutt.

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