

# The Sower

## Bulletin & Voice of

### THE FIRST SPIRITUAL TEMPLE

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## The Great and Holy Lenten Season ~ In Preparation for Easter ~

The Great Lenten Season is, once again, upon us. It is a time of rebirth and renewal. When Nicodemus approached Jesus concerning his ministry, Jesus said to him: *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God . . . Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.* (JOHN 3:37).

What a statement! What a mystery! And, how it has been ravaged by Fundamentalism!

Even though these words perplexed Nicodemus, to us, they may seem perfectly clear; or do they? What does it mean to be born of water and of the Spirit? That is exactly what I hope this Lenten season will help you understand and appreciate. As we travel the journey from Bethlehem to Golgotha and experience the many trials and tribulations along the way, know, truly, in your heart and soul, that you, too, can awaken on Easter morning, resurrected and born again of the Spirit.

During this wondrously mystical time of year, we should prepare ourselves, physically and spiritually, for the great Day of Resurrection. However, before we celebrate the wonder and mystery of Easter, we must come to understand and experience, in some degree, the night when the Angel of Death passed over. This season of joy talks of freedom: freedom from slavery; freedom from ignorance; freedom from darkness, death, and sin.

Let this season of joy and gladness rekindle the flames of hope and faith in your lives, in the life of your Church, and within our society! With God as our Father, Christ as our beloved guide and shep-

herd, and spirit as our companion, we are all in good hands.

The observance of Lent is intended to accentuate four things:

**Worship:** The whole of the Lenten Season points to Easter. Sunday worship becomes the spiritual focal point of your week. I would encourage you to take time to praise and worship God and God's Holy Spirit in your respective house of worship.

**Penitence:** Like the Jewish Holy Days of Awe, Lent should be a time during which we assess our lives, look at the errors and sins which we have committed, and determine how we shall (with God's help and guidance) change that which needs to be changed. Therefore, Lent should be a time which sees the shattering of that which must pass away (crucifixion), followed by a promise to rebuild (resurrection). What does this accomplish? It frees us and allows the Angel of Death to pass over our houses, as it did over the House of Israel.

**Benevolence:** Lent should be a time of sacrifice; sacrifice for God, for self, and for others. It is a time of devotional reading, meditation, special worship, and intensified prayer, all increasingly reflecting, in ourselves, the holy image of God, while we seek to become more Christ-like.

**Scripture Reading:** If the Bible happens to be your companion guide throughout the year, now is a good time to engage in more active reading of Scripture; any Scripture. The Gospels offer insight into the life of Jesus Christ. Paul's letters are full of answers to some profoundly important questions. The *Book of Isaiah* is a testament to the hope of Humanity and the struggle of giving birth to that seemingly timeless hope. The *Torah* reflects creation, struggle, captivity, dedication, courage, freedom, and wandering.

## Preparation

There are many ways in which the faithful can prepare for the events of Holy Week. Contemplation, reading of Scripture, meditation, prayer, and sacrifice are but a few. Traditionally, the Christian community encourages its people to engage in some form of spiritual fast. Many tend to be confused regarding a religious fast. It is important to keep in mind that fasting is but a means of reaching a spiritual goal and, therefore, an integral part of a broader spiritual effort. Fasting includes more than an abstinence from certain types of foods or other indulgences. It implies prayer, silence, an internal disposition of mind, an attempt to be charitable and kind; in one word: **Humble Spirituality.**

If you choose to engage in a spiritual fast, please remember the following: the degree of fasting is not what is of value, for each person has his or her own measure. However, whatever is the measure of each, fasting must be a total effort of the spirit.

As an Interfaith Church of the Spirit, we recognize and embrace the intimate relationship between Easter and Passover. In truth, we cannot fully appreciate one without the other. For nearly 40 years, the First Spiritual Temple has commemorated this wondrous union of faiths by the observance, on Holy Thursday, of what we call **"The First Seder and the Last Supper."** It truly is an Interfaith experience and commemoration of two historically and inextricably connected events.

You can receive a free copy of this family service by e-mailing me at [revsimeon@fst.org](mailto:revsimeon@fst.org) or surface mailing us your request at: **First Spiritual Temple, 56 John Ewer Rd., Sandwich MA 02563-2605.**

~ Rev. Simeon

## 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.

"The above Invocation or Prayer does not belong to any person or group but to all Humanity. The beauty and the strength of this Invocation lies in its simplicity, and in its expression of certain central truths which all men, innately and normally, accept—the truth of the existence of a basic Intelligence to Whom we vaguely give the name of God; the truth that behind all outer seeming, the motivating power of the universe is Love; the truth that a great Individuality came to earth, called by Christians, the Christ, and embodied that love so that we could understand; the truth that both love and intelligence are effects of what is called the Will of God; and finally the self-evident truth that only through humanity itself can the Divine Plan work out."

~ ALICE A. BAILEY  
[www.lucistrust.org](http://www.lucistrust.org)

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An Interfaith Church of the Spirit



Coexist