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Some Christians need to change their attitude toward Christian education

"Till another king arose, which knew not Joseph. The same dealt subtilly with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, so that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live," Acts 7:18-19.

"And the children of Israel went away, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they. And it came to pass, that at midnight the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle," Exodus 12:28-29.

Last night was the monthly prayer meeting for Kilskeery Independent Christian School. I was asked to conduct it, which I most happily did.

Earlier in the day, I had read 2 Chronicles 1 as part of my daily Bible reading. The verse 7 jumped out at me and I decided to use it in the prayer meeting later that evening.

The verse reads: "In that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said unto him, Ask what I shall give thee." I very briefly (for me!) set out three simple thoughts which occurred to me as I looked at the verse.

1. The Lord invited Solomon to pray and the invitation was without limits or boundaries.

It is our unbelief and not the Lord who limits what we ask of Him in prayer.

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you," John 15:7.

"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight," 1 John 3: "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him," 1 John 5:14-15.

2. It very much pleases the Lord when we pray for the good of His people and not for ourselves.

In the parallel record of this event in 1 Kings 3:10, we read: "And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing."

Tonight we gather to pray for children, especially the children of Christians who are sent to the State school system.

To pray for others and not ourselves is pleasing to the Lord for it reflects the Spirit of His Son, the Lord Jesus. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich," 2 Corinthians 8:9.

3. As the Lord answered Solomon far above his asking, so too will He answer us.

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us," Ephesians 3:20.

And so we got down to pray. As is the custom, the one that is leading the meeting, leads off in the season of prayer and so I prayed.

Amongst the things that came before my mind as I prayed was the sadness that filled the hearts of those engaged in the work of Christian Education within the Free Presbyterian Church and all who truly supported it. As I prayed I referred to Acts 7:18-19, quoted above. Not for the first time I marvelled in sorrow at the spirit of the Israelite parents who could so "cast out their young children, to the end they might not live"!



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It is a long time ago that I first came upon this verse and realised that the attitude of Christian parents toward Christian Education, whereby they refused the opportunity to send their children to a place where the Word of God would be taught to them and where they would be sheltered from the decrees of the modern 'pharaohs' within the state education system which threaten children with spiritual death, was not new but was simply a manifestation of that spirit which moved the parents of Israel to act as they did some 3700 years ago!

But as I continued in prayer, my thoughts moved forward to events some 80 years later, to the instituting of the first Passover and I realised, for the first time, that there was a change in the thinking of the parents of Israel manifested that dreadful night.

The Lord informed Israel: "I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt," Exodus 12:12-13.

That night not one Israelite child perished under the judgment of God. Fathers and mothers obeyed the command of God and had their children all gathered under the blood.

I rejoiced in prayer that the Lord could change the hearts of parents and cause them to obey Him and take the steps that He had ordained whereby the children would be safe from the wrath of God.

After I had prayed and then others began to pray, I reflected upon that which had occurred to me in prayer and resolved to write a little article on the subject.

Here is that article:

I. IT IS SADLY TRUE THAT THE SPIRIT MANIFESTED IN ACTS 7:19 IS TO BE SEEN AT WORK TODAY AMONGST CHRISTIAN PARENTS!

In the days referred to it is clear that the thinking of Israelite parents, faced by the threat of Pharaoh, was one in which they deemed it wiser to comply with the evil monarch and sacrifice their children to his wrath!

Is such a spirit evident today? I believe so, though it will astound many and anger many more that I should say so! Pharaoh dealt 'subtily' with Israel. That is he set out to conquer them by stealth and deceit. Exodus 1:9 says that he sought to act 'wisely' in the face of the perceived threat of an increasing Israelite population. "Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land." At the first, his wisdom directed him to make life as difficult as possible for the Israelites. He made them 'serve with rigour'! But that did not stop the increase of the Israelite people so he took the matter a stage further. "And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one was Shiprah, and the name of the other Puah: and he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see them upon the stools; if it be a son, then ye shall kill him: but if it be a daughter, then she shall live," Exodus 1:-15-16.

Pharaoh's spirit was not new. It has ever been the mind of the ungodly to slay the people of God. In this they are moved by the one who is their 'father' and their 'god'! The Lord Jesus explained this concisely and clearly. "But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it," John 8:40-44. The attitude



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manifested toward the Lord Jesus is that of the world generally toward His people also. "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you," John 15:18-19. The more we are identified with the Lord Jesus the more we will be hated and opposed.

The Israelite parents foolishly concluded that they could appease the hatred of Pharaoh if they complied with his cruel decree and sacrificed their sons. That is what Stephen said in Acts 7! "They cast out their young children, to the end they might not live."

Can I rightly say that such a spirit is at work amongst Christian parents today? I think that I have grounds for saying that.

In the many years since the work started in 1979, I have heard quite a few 'reasons' put forth by parents as excuses for not sending their children to a Christian school.

1. There was of course the matter of cost! We in Kilskeery back in 1979, set our fees a rate which was level with the 'family allowance' or the weekly financial payment the State paid to parents to assist in the care of their children. Thus, in truth, parents should not be paying anything out of their wages to educate their children and safeguard them from the poison they would be fed from a State school curriculum.

There were many who did not see the marvellous providence of God in the state funds thus provided. They preferred to pocket the money and send their children out to face the dangers of the anti-God teachings of evolution and the mind-polluting contents of English literature texts.

2. Another issue that parents considered decisive in this matter was whether their children would ever find employment after a Christian school education. The earthly circumstances of the child were thus considered more important than their eternal well-being.

Even so, the Israelite parents of long ago, put their own physical well-being and social standing before the spiritual well-being of their sons. To 'keep in' with Pharaoh they sacrificed their sons, 'they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live.' They counted the death of their young children better than inciting the wrath of Pharaoh!

So it is still today! To keep in step with the world and not have to face the reproach of friends and neighbours and endanger the 'job prospects' of their offspring, many parents turned their back upon the Biblical requirement of raising our children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," Ephesians 6:4.

It has been the experience of us here in Kilskeery that not one school leaver has failed to find employment. Rather, we have had employers, with whom pupils spent time in 'work experience' contact the school requesting that any pupils who would wish employment with them would be gladly engaged!

3. Of course, not all Israelite parents acted as those referred to by Stephen. Stephen speaks as if they all had acted so but this was because the number that did not act so was small indeed!

There are two incidents recorded which indicate the presence of a spirit of resistance and defiance toward Pharaoh. The first manifestation of resistance is recorded in Exodus 1:15-17. "And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one was Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah: and he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see them upon the stools; if it be a son, then ye shall kill him: but if it be a daughter, then she shall live. But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive."

The second incident is recorded in Exodus 2:1-4 and Hebrews 11:23.

"And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi. And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months. And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch,



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and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink. And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him."

"By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment."

Please note that the influence that made all mentioned here act as they did was that they all had a fear of God and faith in Him. Consequently, they did not fear Pharaoh.

Those two graces were absent or at best, small amongst the rest of the parents and as a consequence they fell in with the demands of Pharaoh.

Is there not a lesson here for today's parents!

II. HOWEVER, IT IS CLEAR THAT A CHANGE WAS WROUGHT IN THE HEARTS OF ISRAEL'S PARENTS

Some eighty years passed from the events recorded in Exodus 2, the birth of Moses, and the going out of Israel from the land of Egypt on the night of the Passover. There had been many years of hardship and persecution for the Hebrews before the Exodus. Out of those hardships had come a realisation that seeking to placate Pharaoh was a futile exercise and it was best to obey God. Exodus 4:30-31 states: "And Aaron spake all the words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. And the people believed: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped."

Sadly this 'faith' wavered! This realisation came about but slowly. Indeed, just before the Exodus, Moses was being harassed by the leaders of Israel regarding what it was he was doing! We read in Exodus 5:21 and 6:9: "And they said unto them, The LORD look upon you, and judge; because ye have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us." "And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage."

Such anguish was necessary to wean Israel away from any ties she had to Egypt. Something of the feelings that would have been resident in the hearts of the people later surfaced during the hardships they brought upon themselves in the journey through the wilderness. "And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick: but now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes," Numbers 11:4-6. This spirit, which reemerged during the wilderness wanderings, was largely subdued by what they had experienced in Egypt as the night of the Passover drew near.

Consequently, when all the family was to be gathered in to the blood-marked home, there was nothing of the spirit manifested by the early generation of Israelites, referred to by Stephen in our text.

The experience of the Israelites which brought about this change of heart has also been the experience of many a generation of God's people in this age. "Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us," Romans 5:3-5. I believe that I can say that such has been the path that many have travelled on in the realm of Christian Education. Patience has been gained as a result of tribulation and that, in turn, caused us to experience something of God's faithfulness which in turn, generated hope out of which there came an unashamed confidence in God's love and grace towards us, wrought in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.

We, in the Christian Education movement, can say humbly but joyfully, that we have come to a place of unashamed confidence in what it is God is doing in our schools, irrespective of the low esteem in which many hold them.



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We look for a day when parents will realise that 'Pharaoh' desires the destruction of their children and that the only safe place for them is in that educational home that is marked by the blood of Christ and which seeks to obey His Word.

III. I CANNOT CONCLUDE THIS STUDY WITHOUT NOTING THAT THE PASSOVER WAS A WONDERFUL PICTURE OF THAT GRAND DELIVERANCE WHICH WILL BE THE EXPERIENCE OF ALL GOD'S PEOPLE WHEN THE LORD RETURNS IN GLORY AND GREAT POWER.

The granting of submission and obedience to the children of Israel to gather their families under the blood, is a portent of the grace, I believe, which will be given to God's people in the last generation of this age.

There can be no doubt that the spirit manifested amongst the Israelites prior to the Exodus, their willing compliance with the evil decree of Pharaoh, their rejection of Moses at the first, their complaining of God's judgments and the irritation they created amongst the Egyptians - all these are paralleled in the attitudes amongst many of God's people today.

- Many are happy to mingle with the ungodly and conform to their thinking and ways, refusing to separate from worldliness.
- Many are unwilling to embrace God's view of the perversions of this day such as sodomy and its various offsprings!
- Many reject the warnings issued about the intensifying corruptions being introduced within schools whereby the unspeakable perversions of sodomy, transgenderism etc, are being taught to children as acceptable lifestyles and for which they must show respect.

This spirit is all too evident amongst Free Presbyterians. There has been a softening of their reaction toward terrorism and murder as a result of the involvement of Free Presbyterians in activities with the Democratic Unionist Party and its entering into a working coalition with the murderous Sinn Fein/IRA party. There is, sadly, a new attitude toward sodomy also for the Democratic Unionist Party was involved in the funding and supporting of sodomite organisations during the days of the Stormont power-sharing regime, a regime which it seems the DUP is very keen to see reestablished once more. The new attitude of the DUP was further imposed upon its members by the acceptance by its hierarchy of a sodomite councillor in May past.

How sad to see Free Presbyterians abandoning the attitudes and beliefs of a past generation and going along with these wicked innovations and embracing and working to further these policies.

They have added to these sins an abusive and malicious attitude toward any that dare to challenge these compromises. Judgment shall surely follow these follies.

Nevertheless we can but hope that, as in the story of the Exodus, there will arise a generation of believers who will recognise the sin of such attitudes and seek to obey God, particularly in the safeguarding of their children, and that in the light of the soon return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.



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Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh," Matthew 25:1-13.

Ivan Foster.

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