

Island Pond March 20, 1991

## Imagine Free Paper

We gathered at the Maples to pass on what we've heard and thought about the Imagine paper. We also set forth direction for those attending to work on. This meeting formed the substance of what we will communicate to our communities to stimulate the writing of articles by the whole body. Attending were:

Island Pond - Shores, Derek Hatsar, Qatan, Gader, David Zerubbabel Burlington - Daniel and Sharon, Abner Lancaster/Bellows Falls - Deshe Westminister Station - Shiprah Boston - Racham and Miriam

On Tuesday Ayil and Racham talked about the free paper. Racham took notes of what Ayil said. He saw that the topic of imagine is not as broad as Eleanor Rigby. Everyone experiences loneliness, but not everyone has a passion for a utopia. Many are content to just live for today.

Its obvious John Lennon didn't know the scriptures. He thought that if you could do away with heaven and hell you could do away with Christianity. But she is not that easy to remove. She will exist right up until the end when the beast turns on the harlot.

Revelation 17:2 says the kings of the earth will fornicate her. She has already lost her purity and been adulterous for nearly 2,000 years. The day will come when once again the kings of the earth will have to cater to world religion to rule. John Lennon imagined a world government without a world religion, but it will not be that way. The song is obviously trying to suppress the instinctive knowledge of God. No heaven implies no God. No heaven or hell implies no morality because it takes away the consequences for one's actions.

**Racham** : In many ways John Lennon succeeded. Many people have thrown out the ideas of heaven and hell and are just living for today. A brother in Boston has already used this song as an evangelistic tool. The man he was speaking to never thought about where the song was coming from or that it was trying to do away with morality. He could see that it was evil.

**Shores** : This is how we can take Yoneq's directive to keep it simple. We don't want to construct a grand edifice tying together communism - world peace - world government - the harlot, etc. that's not simple.

**Derek** : This paper will give us a focus to state everything we said in the Earth Day papers but on a level people can easily relate to.

**Shores** : We can make simple responses to the song like, "C'mon John, what makes you think you can unlock the key to world peace when you can't even get along with three other guys in the band?"

**Abner** : Idealistic 16 year olds can swallow this song, but not older people who've seen so little altruism in the world.

**Deshe** : There was a television show recently the whole country watched, where Paul McCartney said that there had been irreconcilable differences between John Lennon and he. He had come to New York City to try to make things right, but John Lennon would have nothing to do with him. He told him, "Just go off and fill the world with your silly, little love songs." That song was Paul McCartney's response to John Lennon.

**Racham** : We can use this to bring the point home that many who long for peace are full of strife. That strife has to be dealt with before there can ever be peace.

**Deshe** : Ayil said the phrase "brotherhood of man" was a loaded statement, full of different meaning to different people. Yoneq taught on that on the 1980 European Grateful Dead Tour. It doesn't take any imaging to see that people are already living for today.

**David Z.** : Living for today usually means acquiring as much of what feels good as you can. That means as many possessions as possible, which goes right against the song.

**Racham** : Yes, the Rich Young Yuppie article said that is how the earth is being destroyed.

**Shoresh** : This ties right in to the question Ayil raised of, "Will we talk about homosexuality or women in this paper?" This song encourages you to live for today - don't resist your biological urges. Throw off shackles of modern day morality, by which is meant the conscience. This is what homosexuals do.

**Derek** : Sodomy is by definition a crime against nature. People today want everything to be natural except for morality. There they defy nature. Abortion is against nature. Condoms are the result of promiscuous sexuality where all manner of foreign organisms are encountered, overwhelming a person's natural defenses. People are actually destroying the earth with what they do in private.

**Shoresh** : LIVING FOR TODAY is the obvious power of the song. He's hitting at the hypocrisy of the song without having a replacement.

**Gader** : There's a lot of imaging in his song. He imagined himself out of his possessions. He'd bought a quarter million dollar cow, and when he was killed he was walking out of his million dollar house in New York City. The man who killed him, John Chapman, was on a pilgrimage to New York City for peace and truth. He was living on the streets of the city and saw the glaring wealth of the band, in sharp contrast to their songs. A root of bitterness grew up in his heart and one of the reasons he shot him was the hypocrisy of how they lived.

**Qatan** : Let's not focus too much on John Lennon - he's no threat - nor is his philosophy. Let's use the song as a vehicle to talk about the gospel - what we believe in.

**Ayil** : No possessions is a central aspect of John Lennon's brotherhood. But possessions, in reality, have a great hold on people. The Excessive Need teaching talks about this. Satan's greatest inroad into fallen man is his possessions. We can use this to tell people how the true New Social Order is entered, by picking up our cross and dying to ourselves, just as our

Master did. That is the only way the grip of possessions can be released. A seed has to first die, John 12: 24, or else it remains alone. (New Social Order teaching 1988)

**Shoresh** : The Sept. 10, 1992 letter talks about how, in Messiah, and because of the cross, birds of all feathers, will flock together (Matthew 13:31-32; Ezekiel 17:23). That is the brotherhood of man! We're making an appeal to that thing in all men that longs for heaven on earth, but we are going to explain the true way back to the garden, how utopia will really be produced.

**Racham** : The goal of communism is to produce the New socialist man - like producing the Zakar in the flesh. It's the widespread fantasy that man will get better through genetics or education.

**Abner** : Not everyone's idea of utopia is the same. Many people's idea is of a world free of this or that type of people. Everyone's utopia gets back to their own selfish ideas. And many people's idea is to get someone to take care of them (for nothing). This is where the welfare state comes from. Really, people should be responsible for their own actions.

**Sharon Rose** : The whole song is the working of the dialectic - blaming everything on society. It is totally divorced from reality.

**Derek** : I still remember buying the album, going home and listening intently to it. It gave me a wonderful feeling but I was left with a great sense of confusion. How was I to give up all my own possessions who was I to give them to? Why should I be altruistic if there's no heaven anyway? The contradiction here is that there is no motivation to do these things.

**Shoresh** : Unless you want to bring heaven to earth.

**Shiprah** : The fruit of communism in practice is just the opposite. It brings hell to earth. Eastern Europe - what society has ever had to use barbed wire to keep its citizens in? People were killed trying to leave. It is so sad what people went through.

**Shoresh** : The same spirit behind throwing away your conscience is what motivated communism. Imagine there's no heaven, its easy if you try....As if the guilt people feel wasn't coming from a loving God trying to keep them within the bounds of the everlasting covenant to avoid the grave consequences of transgressing them. This song and philosophy does away with judgment, the very gospel Paul proclaims in Romans 2. Christianity has made man cynical. The good news should fire men's imaginations.

John Lennon imagined you could do away with countries (Acts 17). It's as though he believed that there was no good or evil in the world. They did away with religion in communism, there's certainly no killing there.

Someday we will have a polished arrow directed right at Christianity - Revelation 18:23 - about the blood of all those slain on the earth being on her.

**Miriam** : The spirit that was in Cain is in the harlot.

**Derek** : The reality of removing the restraints on people (laws and nations) is that everyone would be at each other's throats. The enmity that is in fallen men - from which he needs to be saved - would be uncovered. Living for today equals living for self. That's the problem with the world today. That is the source of environmental problems.

Religion has become the joke of intellectuals, and it is a joke. Heaven and hell are a bondage because it keeps you from looking for a place where you can give up everything.

Let the sword cut on Christianity, it makes people cynical. Christianity has proclaimed another gospel of being involved in the world. That is a vain message. Christianity has justified people looking elsewhere to find what Messiah came to bring.

We read Ruth's Lost in Space article and saw it had potential. We liked the second half of her Utopia article a lot. Ayil expressed his heart that he would encourage the artists in the community to be drawing in the next two weeks as well. We need to give them incentive and encouragement. They can illustrate ideas or themes from the song just like the writers will be. We also thought of a recent Time magazine article about the loss of an entire generation of artists to AIDS as a vivid example of the fruit of living for today.

**Shiprah** : People do live as if there's no AIDS virus. They are escaping with drugs.

**Shoresh** : There are two parts to the song. The first is the first two verses, the second is the third verse. (Imagine there's no heaven...Living life in peace and imagine no possessions.And the world will be as one.) You can work with the second part to communicate the pure gospel. Those things in the second half are good but you can only do them if you expose the evil of the first half.

Why do people embrace the evil ideas of the first half? Because they are disgusted with what Christianity has communicated about heaven and hell that is so far removed from our God's heart. People wanted to get away from pie in the sky, to something happening today. What they got was an even greater life of self-gratification.

**Derek** : The second verse, where everyone is living life in peace, will only come in with the Kingdom.

**Shoresh** : I walked away from Christianity, but I couldn't forget the Scriptures, which I knew were true. I knew my guilt was real and I couldn't say it wasn't. There I was, trying to do right, and having zilch support. I read the book of Acts and knew it was the farthest thing from the Christian Church of today that I could find. The reaction against Christianity is far stronger in Europe than America. All the Cathedrals built with the blood and sweat of men who were practically slaves. All the rebellion that that produced.

Who fostered all this rebellion against the instinctive knowledge of the truth? Christianity. There are grave consequences against leaving the boundaries set up by a loving God. And for the good moral men who held society together, who should get the credit for them? The Jesus

the knew or the instinctive knowledge of the truth? The life our Master came to produce is far different that the life Christianity produced. People are responsible for chucking their conscience, not Christianity.

Revelation 18:23 - Our God is not going to exonerate her at all. The first Church turned the whole world upside down. Their feet were beautiful. Yoneq has strongly communicated: don't give Jesus any credit. It is such a big thing to pray, "Father, your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven." But Christianity says, "Right now you live like the nations." Ever since man fell there's been something in his heart to get back to the garden.

**Ayil** : Christianity wasn't a benefit to the nations. The only answer I know is that we are the New Social Order, that a man has to pick up his cross and deny himself. We then talked about topics we wanted to work on:

**David Z** : I want to try to expose the Christian reasoning used to hold onto your possessions. People will only give up their possessions for two reasons. One, because they are forced to. Two, because they see something greater then themselves, they see the kingdom.