

The Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter

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In this Issue:

| | | |
|---------|---|------------------------|
| Page 1 | Editorial | Brother Julian Shipley |
| Page 5 | Thus It Becometh Us To Fulfil All Righteousness. | Brother Eric Cave |
| Page 7 | Faith and Works | Brother T. Severn |
| Page 10 | The Day of Yahweh quote from | Joel 2:28-32 |
| Page 10 | Extract From The Christian Lamp | Bro. Edward Turney |
| Page 11 | I Have Got A Friend That's True | Poem |
| Page 12 | Abraham's Faith and Israel's Hope | Brother Phil Parry |
| Page 19 | Young People's Pages | Bro Russell Gregory |

Editorial

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus.

At this time, I know how many there are struggling, even in once prosperous countries. These days are getting more and more difficult, as the plans of wicked men are coming to fruition. We must stand firm in our faith, and trust fully in the Lord.

Our Lord Jesus, whilst struggling with what was to come upon him, suffering great anxiety, said; "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Matthew 26v41)

No doubt, we all examine ourselves, to assess if we are fit for God's kingdom? To self-measure our discipleship in following Jesus. How often do we bury our heads in our hands, full of shame, as we contemplate our short comings in this regard? This is indeed how we should feel! Yet, does this mean we are without hope? In falling short of our high calling in Jesus Christ, are we a total loss?

Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake their ways and the unrighteous their thoughts. Let them turn to the Lord, and He will have mercy on them, and to our God, for He will freely pardon. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55v6-9)

Our heavenly father is kind, He is patient, He is full of grace and mercy towards His children. If we are honest, and do not try to hide our shame, we can come to Him for help. Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy. (Proverbs 28v13)

David said, "My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." (Psalm 73v26)

The Lord said to the Apostle Paul; "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12v9-10).

We do need help, we are weak in our nature, we struggle with our faith, we struggle with our human instincts. Yes, we are always going to fall short, yet, we keep trying.

“Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.” (Isaiah 40V28-29)

We need to be humble, we need to be honest regarding our sins, or how else will we move forward? The Lord knows how weak we are, and though He does get angry with sinners, He will work with those who ask for help. Peter says; "Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." (1 Peter 5v6)

Take heart brethren, and take on board what the Apostle Paul says to us; "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit itself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. (Romans 8v18-28)

All that is happening in this world is already known to God, He is in all, He is over all. As the great tribulation takes hold, we must remember that God knows us and He is with us. Likewise, as we feel ashamed of our lacking, it is HE who will bring us to glory. So long as we do not take the Lord's grace for granted, and eagerly seek out righteousness, He will bring comfort and not forsake us.

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? (Romans 6v1-2)

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain. (1 Cor. 15v58)

“I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.” (2 Cor. 6v18. cf:2 Samuel 7:14; 7:8)

In bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through what he suffered (Jesus). Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters. (Heb. 2v10-11)

We are the "household of faith", and though we be lowly, though we be imperfect, we are justified by our faith, through our Lord Jesus Christ. since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us. (Romans 5v1-5.)

Stay positive! Keep trying! And above all, pray, in humility and with faith.

Much love, in Jesus, Julian

“Thus it Becometh us to Fulfil All Righteousness”

The above was the answer of Jesus in response to John the Baptist’s assertion “I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?”

What did Jesus mean? Mark says “John did baptize in the wilderness and preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.” But Jesus was sinless, He had nothing for which to repent. So why did He seek baptism? John, we read baptised “all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.”

The people came to John to wash away their transgressions by immersion in Jordan and arose from that symbolic ‘death to sin’ cleansed in preparation to receive as John said, “One greater than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to loose” and when Jesus went down into Jordan pure and sinless, I wish to suggest He took upon Himself the one sin of Adam as being the equivalent price for the life lost by Adam. “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” being sin - the sin of the world as singular. Yet we read in John 1:29. God “laid upon him the iniquities of us all” - Isaiah 53:6. Like the Old Testament prophets He acted out in parable the work He was to accomplish at Jerusalem before He began to preach, before He did any miracle to confirm the truth of the gospel. He emphasised His willingness to “lead many sons unto glory” of His own free will “for the joy that was set before him,” and in the full knowledge that the cross must come before the crown.

What was this “sin of the world” that Jesus “took away”? That burden He took upon Himself and carried throughout His ministry until He “nailed it to his cross” at Calvary? We read that “God hath concluded all under “Sin” that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe” (Galatians 3:22), or as in Romans 13:32, “God hath concluded them all in unbelief that he might have mercy on all.” But why should God do that when Ezekiel 18 is so emphatic that every man should die for his own sin, the father shall not die for the sins of the son, nor the son for the sins of the father”?

The answer to this paradox lies in Genesis. When Adam transgressed and alienated himself from his Creator, he became the possession, the property of ‘Sin’ for, “His servants ye are to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey.” He became a bondsman, he surrendered all he himself possessed, for bondsmen cannot own any property - wife, children and all subsequent progeny are technically and legally the property of their new master, whose only wages is ‘death,’ unless the slave is sold to a new master, as Joseph was sold to Potifar. But the Mosaic Law allowed a “near kinsman” to redeem, i.e. to purchase his brother from slavery, whether or not the owner chose to sell. Both Jesus and Adam were “sons of God.” Only Jesus was in a position to redeem Adam and we were all in Adam’s loins when he sinned. Jesus was never in Adam’s loins. God was His Father and no man ever had two fathers. Had He been in Adam, He Himself would have needed redemption, but He wasn’t for ‘When there was no arm to save His (God’s) own arm brought salvation’ and He provided a son who of His own volition chose to redeem the world from ‘Sin’ so that “for those that believe” who keep themselves “in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life” who is able to present us “faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever, Amen. - Jude 21-25.

Jesus was the Buyer; the price, His own precious blood. Not the blood of bulls and goats which only gave a temporary covering of sin for those under the Law. He has redeemed (literally, to purchase out of the forum, to deliver) those who were in bondage. He took away that condemnation for “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” - Romans 8:1.

“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ” - 1 Peter 1:2.

Brother Eric Cave.

“FAITH AND WORKS.”

In Romans chapter three and kindred passages, we believe the Apostle’s real intention was, not the disparaging of works of law, or any other works as works, but rather that principle which was eminently characteristic of the law, viz., “The man which doeth these things shall live by them;” or works wrought with a view of earning life, which gives ground for boasting. Paul contrasts the principle of “works” with the principle of faith; and argues that if Abraham were justified by the former, he had whereof to glory, or boast. This is proof that Paul could not refer to “law-works “exclusively, for Abraham lived four hundred and thirty years before the law was given.

It is difficult to suppose that anyone ever required to be shown that Abraham was justified without “law-works.” By the law of faith, boasting is excluded. The law of works, i.e., “do and live,” and the law of faith, i.e., “believe and live,” are placed in contradistinction to one another. The first is declared invalid; the second is declared to be God’s plan of salvation. Yet we are still taken back by some to be saved in some sense on the principle of the first, and Romans ii., 7, is quoted in support of this procedure. John but reiterates the same when he tells us, “They that have done good shall come forth to a resurrection of life.” These are Scripture truisms which everyone believes. We think we shall see further on that Paul is justified in speaking of the signs, or the steps of faith, as he would of faith itself, just as we should say a person is admitted by ticket to hear a lecture; but, critically, we must allow that it was the money which procured the ticket, which really purchased him the privilege, the ticket being the sign thereof. (“By their fruits ye shall know them”).

In this sense we believe firmly as any one that works are necessary to salvation. We think this is the sense in the passages just mentioned. To say that life is earned by well-doing would bring us into antagonism with other Scriptures of unmistakable import. In Romans x., Paul is contrasting the way in which life is attained under the two heads, Moses and Christ. Verse 5, we read, “Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, ‘that the man which doeth those things shall live by them.’ “But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise. Now if that which follows can, by any mode of reasoning, be made to mean the same as the first, what becomes of Paul’s contrast? Things which are alike cannot be contrasted. That which some have deducted from Romans ii., 7, the Apostle here expressly tells us is a principle which is superseded by another. The law takes cognizance of works, i.e., outward actions; grace takes cognizance of the source from whence they spring. (Matt. v. 27,28; Rom. x 5-10). Many were righteous in the eye of the law; these were entitled to what the law could give, natural life. But eternal life is not to be attained on this principle. Faith, running through the whole of the world’s history, is the silver thread of eternal life.

Faith and works, says one. Well, we think we are justified in taking exception to that phrase, because it is not a Scriptural one. The Apostles content themselves with using simply the word “faith”. Presumably, then, if we think it necessary to add to the Apostle’s word, our view of the word faith differs from theirs. The Scriptural use of the word in this connection is evidence that such an addition is superfluous. What, then, is faith? We are aware that in a certain class of passages like that in Jude, verse 3, the teachings of the Spirit in the aggregate is meant, but in passages such as Hebrews 11, the meaning differs materially. To say that faith in Christ will save a man, is to speak Scripturally. But how obviously erroneous it would be to say that mere assent of the intellect to the truth will save; the intellect is only a portion of the mind. The gospel requires the assent of the whole mind, the will, and the affections, no less than the intellect. “If thou shall believe with thine Heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” This will be living fruit-bearing faith, because action will follow the affections, in whatever direction they may lead.

With this view of faith, the question of works is as clear as the day. We can as easily conceive of boiling water unproductive of steam, or as a gaslight unproductive of illumination, as of Scriptural faith without works, faith without the steps of faith. This is that which lays claim to eternal life; without it, it is impossible to please God.

Hence its prominence in the Scriptures. When contrasted with the principle at law, it shows us that God regards motives and the will, rather than outward actions.

Works are indispensable before men, as the sign of our faith, just as motion is necessary to indicate life.

Man looks to the outward part, but God surveys the secrets of the heart. Justification by works is the human stand-point; justification by faith is God's; in view of this, all the apparently conflicting passages on the subject are seen to be harmonious. Human ken cannot penetrate beyond the range of outward actions, and from these we must argue, hence those passages which urge upon us the necessity of works; but God is limited by no such weakness of vision; the secrets of all hearts are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. He sees in us that which produces those works, and on that account gives us eternal life.

Eternal life must be a free gift in such a sense as to exclude boasting. No flesh may glory in his presence. It is not said merely that it is offered or held out to us by grace, but also, that we receive it by grace, "We are justified freely by God's grace." We are saved by grace, through faith, not through works, lest any man should boast, not of ourselves, it is God's gift. "Not of ourselves;" this surely excludes all works!

At our baptism, faith put us into a definite position; we are accepted, justified, constituted righteous, heirs of eternal life. It is not that we have afterwards to work ourselves up to this position, but being in it, we are to be careful to maintain it. Being already in possession of the right to the tree of life, it is obvious we work, not in order to earn it, but, rather, in order that we may not forfeit it. In closing, we will draw attention to a point which we have never yet heard answered. On reading Romans 5, and testimony on the same subject elsewhere, we must concede that our works bear no relation to natural death, we are judged federally in Adam; in like manner, for the cases are parallel, we receive 'eternal life, not through any act of ours, but on the federal principle, through Christ. When it can be shown that our own works bring upon us the Adamic condemnation, then, indeed, must we reconsider our view of works in their relation to eternal life,

Brother T. Severn.

The Day of Yahweh

Joel 2:28 to 32.

"And it will come to pass afterwards that I will pour out My spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy; your old men will dream dreams; your young men will see visions, and also on the servants and on the handmaids in those days I will pour out My spirit, and I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood and fire and pillars of smoke; the Sun will be turned into darkness and the Moon into blood, before the awesome and terrifying day of Yahweh will come. And it will come to pass that all who call on the name of Yahweh will be saved for there will be a delivered remnant in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, as Yahweh has said, and among the saved whom Yahweh will call."

Extract from The Christian Lamp

The End of Volume Two October 1875

"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Ps. cxix. 105.

Dear Friends, How time flies! It seems but as yesterday that we were sitting in an upper room on the French coast balancing in our mind whether to embark in the doubtful enterprise of publishing the Lamp; after considerable hesitation our resolve turned the scale in favour of a trial. Since then our eyes have been opened to many things of which we had previously no experience, and the months have come and gone with a startling rapidity. Matter has pressed in upon us; some we have had to reject, some to publish though we could not approve it; but we believe in liberty of speech. Two years have passed away: we are preparing for the issue of Vol. III., and shall soon know how far it will be welcomed. Many communications have spoken of the improve-ment of the Lamp; the list of names in our book is more numerous every month, and we see no cause why further advances should not be made in both respects. Our object is the same - the pursuit of truth for its own sake; to confirm that which has been acquired, and to dig out new ideas, test them by Scripture and reason - "prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Those who are disposed to co-operate in this work, "to endure

as seeing Him who is invisible; having respect unto the recompense of the reward," will inform us without delay, so that we may be able to proceed with our arrangements with as little loss as possible. To those who have stood by us we express our gratification and thankfulness, hoping they may be endowed with perseverance to continue to the end, being assured that they shall reap if they faint not.

EDITOR Edward Turney

I have got a friend that's true

I have got a friend that's true, Someone who will see me through,
He guides me in all I do - His Name is Jesus.
When I stumble He is there, all my troubles He will share.
He's the Saviour, the One who cares - His Name is Jesus.

However great the storm, He will make the waters calm,
And through the darkest night Jesus is the guiding light.
I find comfort when I read of the things He's done for me.
Yes, I've got a Friend indeed - His Name is Jesus.

When the road seems hard and long and things keep on going wrong
Someone always makes me strong, - His Name is Jesus.
Sometimes on life's restless waves I'm a ship without a sail.
But my Captain will never fail, - His Name is Jesus-

The joy that He imparts brings a warmness to my heart
That's far beyond compare to the earthly joys I share,
While I walk and talk with Him all my battles He will win,
He helps me in everything, - His Name is Jesus

Friends around me, young and old, don't be orphans in the cold,
Come to One who loves you so, - His Name is Jesus.
Earthly treasures you possess won't give deep down happiness,
Only One will ever do that, - His Name is Jesus.

This modern world today soon can lead your heart astray,
There's so much sin and strife creeping into every life.
Yet there's one sure way you can overcome each sinful plan.
Put your faith and trust in One, - His Name is Jesus.

Abraham's Faith and Israel's Hope **Is it a Dream or a Reality?**

Not being aware that such an interview with the chief Rabbi was being shown on T.V. I was only able to witness a short part of it toward the end but enough to convince me that he was more concerned with the present state of the Jewish people than with the promises God made to Abraham and was more a diplomatic ambassador in the political world of nations, endeavouring to bring about in this way the things they desired, especially peace and prosperity in Israel. He said this was a "dream." A "dream" I suppose that he restricts to Israel only, and rules out the belief in a Messiah who has already come as a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy; Romans 15:8-9. And though Isaiah 49:3 refers to Jesus as Israel, it means here Prince, for He was the Prince of Peace and Heir Apparent to God He was a Prince, but will be King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

However, I shall direct you to this chapter later on in my remarks, but suffice it to say that Israel after the flesh have been ensnared by the idols and Harlot doctrines of the nations by forgetting the words of the true prophets God sent unto their fathers as confirmed in Ezekiel 13 where God speaks of “the false prophets that prophesy out of their own hearts and follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! Ye say “The Lord saith it; albeit I have not spoken saith the Lord, O Israel thy prophets are like the foxes in the desert.”

Paul reminds us of these in his epistle to the Corinthians 2 Corinthians 11 they appear outwardly as ministers of righteousness until the light of the Spirit Word reveals them as ministers of Satan. Israel's downfall was their failure to see a sacrificial Messiah and disbelief that he had come and spoken unto them as the Prophet of the Highest; their rejection of Him brought about their own destruction and the dispersion of the unbelieving survivors into all nations where they have to a great extent preserved and maintained their identity after the flesh but not after the Spirit.

In his epistle to the Romans Paul gives the true and plain assessment of the Jewish position then and now, he both shows the advantage they had by birth and also the difference between the seed of Abraham by descent and through faith. As Paul brings us to his 9th chapter he reminds us of the advantage they had, but that being descendants of Abraham did not make them the children of promise as was Isaac “for in Isaac shall thy seed be called that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God but the children of promise are counted for the seed.”

John the Baptist confirmed this when he addressed his contemporaries, “Think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our fathers, for God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham.” Jesus informed Nicodemus, “Except a man be born again he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.” One has to be both born of the Spirit and become Spirit nature to fulfil those words, and Paul reminds us of this in Romans 8:22-25.

If only the chief Rabbi as well as many more Jews, read more of the words of Paul whose knowledge of the Law could not be questioned, neither his zeal, they would find as the light of interpretation shone through to them that “The Hope of Israel” for which Paul was bound with a chain of iron was no dream, as he declared to the Corinthians (2 Corinthians 1:20) “For all the promises of God in Him (Jesus Christ) are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God...”

I think we are quite safe in saying that the present State of Israel both in the land of Palestine and among the nations is exactly as Paul assessed it in Galatians 4:21, a state of being either still under the Law of Moses by consent, or of being in Christ and Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. Paul says, “For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondwoman and the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from Mount Sinai in Arabia which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar, and answereth (or is in the same rank) with Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. “But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it written, “Rejoice thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not; for the desolate hath many more children that she which hath an husband. Now we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.” In other words, and contrary to what some people believe, Paul puts Jew and Arab after the flesh, in the same category and both yet capable of becoming Abraham's seed of promise through faith which is in Christ Jesus. The exhortation of Paul is, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free...” And how could we have this freedom better explained than in his Epistle to the Romans, especially chapters 5,6,7,& 8? Of Jesus John says, “He came unto His own and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He the right or privilege to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” John and Paul are both in harmony with David and the other Prophets, and bearing in mind Jerusalem which is above or in the heavenlies. Psalm 87 comes into focus and we are forced to the conclusion that the city where God has declared to place His Name consists of more than physical building materials. It is the city Abraham looked for whose builder and maker is God, a city which hath foundations, and we are all aware of what a vast subject can be made of this, with Jesus Christ as the chief corner-stone; Ephesians 2:15-22. The Psalmist declares (87:3) “Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the Highest Himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when He

writeth up the people, that this man was born there.” Ezekiel concludes his prophecy by naming the city from the day of her establishment of the highest, “Yahweh Shammah” - The Lord is there.” David again speaks of a special seed in Psalm 22:30 & 31, “A Seed shall serve Him; It shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come, and shall declare His righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that He hath done this.”

We are assured that God is preparing a people for His Name and that His Name will be the centre of worship in the Holy Hill of Zion when Jerusalem is made a glory and a praise by reason of a nation that shall be born in a day. “Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in a day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travaileth, she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to the birth (or beget), and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord. Thus saith the Lord, “To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and reverences my word; - Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble, or reverence. His word; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My Name's sake, said. Let the Lord be glorified: but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed. (Isaiah 66).

This to me seems to convey a significance of our experiences in this modern day, perhaps it is therefore for that reason and our encouragement. Be that as it may, it is respect for God's word and not man's, that sometimes causes opposition and hate, but Jesus said we must get our priorities right for He had come in His Father's Name, and that Name was in Him as the Word made flesh, “Emmanuel.”

In like manner Israel in the wilderness journey accompanied by the Angel, were exhorted by the Lord God, “Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for My Name is in Him.” (Exodus 23:20 & 21). Here is a great lesson to be learned. Any angel of the Lord sent by Him is authorised to speak or do that for which he has been sent in His Name, and could not go beyond that authorisation. See Isaiah 63:9-12, Ephesians 4:30, Deuteronomy 18:18 & 19. The Prophet like unto Moses was indeed raised up from among Moses' brethren, not from the seed of the serpent who were continually opposing his teaching (John 8:26). Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; (Hebrews 3:5). Those things concerned the Greater Prophet who was a Son though He took upon Him the form of a servant and humbled Himself that He might do the will of Him that sent Him, and as He said to those who boasted in themselves as the fleshly seed of Abraham and never in bondage, this was untrue. Galatians 4:29 & 30 “And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” John 8:36. Therefore Christ is a Son over His own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. Wherefore (as the Holy Spirit saith, today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation in the wilderness”). On the Mount of Transfiguration Peter made certain suggestions that did not include the lost sheep of the house of Israel nor the other sheep that were not of that fold, “but while he yet spake - behold a voice out of the overshadowing cloud, which said, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him.” It is not for man to decide what is good where his eternal well-being is concerned. This reminds me of something our Brother Taylor said recently of some who profess they are on the road to the Kingdom of God but in the course of the journey they find a desirable cafe and decide it is good to remain there and so they fail to finish the course.

‘But He hath shown thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.’ Micah 6:8 God has sent His Son to show us what is right and good, therefore He said, “Hear Him.” Paul exhorts us, “See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh from heaven.” We must also realise that the Father's Name is in Him but that we are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, etc. - but ye are come unto Mount Zion and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

The journey to our promised rest does not end there. Micah says we are to humble ourselves to walk with God and this means continual motion, continual seeking for guidance through prayer and allowing the entrance of His word to give light. Jesus said, “I am the Light of the world, he that believeth on me shall not walk in darkness.” No, we are not come unto the mount of blackness and darkness, but to Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, to the general assembly whose names are written in heaven, to Jesus the Light of the world - He who by the spirit of God shall bring forth judgement to the Gentiles (Not by the sound of a trumpet). He shall not

cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break or dimly burning flax shall He not quench: He shall bring forth judgement unto truth. Isaiah 42. This was the method of the Great Teacher, a gentle persuasiveness, much in parabolic form, to give men time to consider and allow things of the spirit to sink into the heart, and not quench the little feeble light that has already begun to dimly burn. "Never man spake like this man." "To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." We as stones in the spiritual house have to be constantly polished through the chastisement which is the experience of the sons of God, and though we are considered as living, or lively stones, we are the light in various colours but with the same beauty and brilliance which the light of the knowledge of the glory of God has shown to us in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not us. 2 Corinthians 4:6. It is in this way that we can appreciate Paul's words in Ephesians 2:19-22, "Fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God - built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus being the chief cornerstone, fitly framed together - growing unto an holy temple in the Lord, for an habitation of God through the Spirit." The development of character upon these principles will fit us for worthiness to obtain participation with Christ in His reign upon earth and bring in the New Heavens and the New Earth wherein the Holy City the New Jerusalem as a Bride adorned for her husband, and prepared of God, will dwell with Him and He with her.

Nowhere in Biblical History do we find that God built anything in the material sense, The Tabernacle in the wilderness was constructed by man under Moses, but God was the architect and His command to Moses was, "See that thou make it after the pattern shewn to thee in the Mount." The same applies to the Temple which was of more solid construction and had to remain stationary unlike the Tabernacle, but even the Temple was of Devine architecture with most of the materials of stone and wood prepared in advance yet in every way it was fitly framed together. In like manner Jesus by whom and on account of whom the previous patterns were decided and in whom God dwelt by His Spirit and Word was the true Temple, "for in Him dwelt all the fullness of the God-head bodily" so that He could say of His body, "I will (or perhaps it should read, you will) destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

It is obvious that this is the work of God in Christ, the crucifixion and resurrection involving the three days, in the spiritual construction of the Temple of God by growing in grace and unto the fullness of the stature of Christ. Ephesians 4:15. Ephesians 2:21. In every way we look at it there is preparation; Abraham looked for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God - a better country, that is an heavenly, and so God hath prepared for them a city. After the passing away of the first heaven and earth, John saw a new heaven and a new earth, a new order of things for the establishment of the holy city the new Jerusalem prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. All these things were shown to John in signs and symbols and were not material realities, so that vast subject can be made of Revelations chapter 21 which will take too long at this stage, but it is a subject that will harmonise with the scriptures and the Epistles, and of which I have only touched on the fringe. In the garden of Eden God provided Adam with the bride from his side but it never advanced to the spiritual - so God in providing a new man will have produced a bride for him and when fully prepared will be presented for habitation in the true paradise of God wherein dwelleth righteousness. The true seed of Abraham therefore may truly say, of God, "Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer; Thy name is from everlasting." Let us then hear His voice through Isaiah 51:1-6 and Isaiah 52:1-8. Does not this harmonise with Revelation 21 and especially Revelation 3:12? For us who profess to be the seed of the promise by the freewoman, the words of Jesus from Revelation 3:12 are a fitting conclusion, "Hold fast that which thou hast (v.8 explains) that no man take thy crown. Him that overcome-In will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name." "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

Brother P. Parry.

Young People's Pages

Hello everyone, I hope you are all keeping safe. Here in England we have had a cold spring but now summer is coming at last and we are enjoying lots of sunshine. I pray that all is well with you wherever in the world you are.

In our last lesson we heard how the twins, Esau and Jacob, when grown up, quarrelled so badly that Esau wanted to harm his brother and so their parents decided to send Jacob back to his mother's family in Haran to avoid the wrath of his brother Esau; and so it was quickly arranged.

So today I am going to tell you about Jacob going to his mother's brother, Laban, and the dream he had on the first night of his journey. Then about his life and prosperity with Laban and how big his family grew.

Jacob set out from Beersheba, and went towards Haran. In that first day he walked many miles until the sun was setting and there he stayed for the night. He found a suitable stone for a pillow and lay down to sleep. During that first night he dreamed, and what should he see but a ladder was set up on the ground, and the top of it reached to the heavens, and there were angels of the Lord ascending and descending on it. Jacob looked up and there he saw the Lord standing above it, and Lord said to Jacob, "I am the Lord God of your father Abraham, and the God of Isaac. The land on which you are lying I will give to you and to your children. And your children will be as many as the dust of the earth, and they will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south. And in you and in your children all the families of the earth will be blest. And see now, I am with you, and I will protect you in all the places you might go, and I will bring you back into this land, for I will not forsake you until I have surely done what I have promised you."

Then Jacob woke out of his sleep, and he said, "Surely God is in this place, and I did not know." And he was frightened, and he said, "How fearful is this place! This is none other than the House of God; and this is the gate of the heavens."

And Jacob rose early that morning and he took the stone that he had for his pillow and set it upright as a pillar, and he poured oil on top of it. And he called the name of that place Bethel, but the name of the nearby village at first had been Luz.

And Jacob made a solemn promise, or vow, saying, "If God will be with me and keep me in this way that I go, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on, so that I return in peace to my father's house, then God will be my God, and this rock I have set for a pillar will become the House of God. Of everything You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."

After this Jacob had still about 500 miles to go but we are not told of any other events on his journey but we can be sure he must have thought on the dream and the promises God had made to him and his future family for so many years to come.

Eventually Jacob reached the end of his journey to "the land of the people of the East." And he looked and saw, by a well in the field three flocks of sheep lying down waiting for the large stone at the mouth of the well to be taken away so that they could be watered.

Jacob went to the shepherds and said to them "My brothers. Where are you from? And they said "we are from Haram." And he said to them "Do you know Laban the grandson of Nahor?" And they said, "We know him." And he said "Is he well?" and they said, "He is well, and see now, his daughter Rachel is coming with the sheep." And he said "Why don't you water the sheep?" and they said "We cannot until all the sheep are gathered together, then we roll away the stone and water the sheep and then go and feed them.

While he was still talking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep and when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, Jacob drew near and rolled the stone from the well's mouth and he watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. And Jacob raised his voice and wept and told Rachel that he was her father's relative and that he was Rebekah's son, and she ran and told her father.

And it came about, when Laban heard the report of Jacob, his sister's son, that he ran to meet him and embraced him and brought him to his house, and he told Laban all these things. And Laban said to him "Surely you are my bone and my flesh' and he stayed with him a month.

And Laban said to Jacob, "You should not serve me for nothing. Tell me what will your wages be?" And Laban had two daughters the name of the elder one was Leah, and the name of the younger, Rachel. The eyes of Leah were weak but Rachel was of beautiful countenance and appearance. And Jacob loved Rachel and he said, "I will serve you seven years for Rachel, your younger daughter" And Laban said, "Better that I give her to you than that I should give her to another man; so stay with me. And Jacob served seven years for Rachel and they seemed but a few days for the love he had for her. And Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled." Laban gathered all the men of that place and made a feast; for all the guests.

Now it was the custom in the Eastern countries at that time for the bride to be brought to her husband veiled, and Laban deceived Jacob by giving him his older daughter Leah and not Rachel as he expected. Next morning Jacob remonstrated with Laban, saying "What is this you have done to me? Did not I serve you for Rachel? Why then have you beguiled me? And Laban said, "It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger in marriage before the firstborn." And then he said to Jacob, "Fulfil her week, and we will give you Rachel also for the service which you shalt serve with me yet seven more years. And Jacob agreed, and a week later Laban gave him Rachel to Jacob as a wife also. And Laban gave a handmaid named Bilhah to Rachel; and he gave to Leah, Zilpah for a handmaid too.

And Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah. And when Yahweh saw that Leah was loved less, He opened her womb, but Rachel was barren. And Leah conceived and gave birth to a son, and she called his name Reuben. And she conceived again and bare another son and called his name Simeon. Then she conceived a third time and gave birth to a son an called his Name Levi. And she conceived yet again and bore a fourth son and called his name Judah and then she ceased baring children."

After this Rachel was very sad and envious of her sister because she had no children so she gave her handmaid, Bilhah, to Jacob so she could have a child by her to call her own and Jacob agreed to this. Bilhah conceived and bore a son and named him Dan and then she conceived a second son and called him Naphtali.

Because Rachel had given her handmaid to Jacob so she could have children even so Leah gave her handmaid, Zilpah, to Jacob also and he agreed to have children by her also, and so in due course she conceived and bore a son and named him Gad and then, after this one, Zilpah conceived again and bore another son and named him Asher. By this time Jacob now had four sons by Leah; two by Bilhah, and two by Zilpah; that is eight sons so far. But later Leah conceived two more sons and Rachel also at last conceived a son of her own, so now Jacob had eleven sons.

By this time Jacob had served Laban for fourteen years and wanted to move back to his own home in Beersheba and take all his family with him. However Laban had realised just how much God had blessed him with large herds of sheep and cattle and many servants too. He had become very prosperous because of Jacob's hard work and wanted to keep him there.

Genesis 30:25, "And it came about when Rachel had given birth to Joseph that Jacob said to Laban, "Send me away, that that I can go to my own place and to my own country. Give me my wives and my children whom I have served you for, and let me go, for you know my service that I have served you." And Laban said to him. Please, if I have found favour in your eyes, stay, for I have learned that Yahweh has blessed me because of you." And he said, "Specify your wages to me, and I will pay.

And he said to him, "You know how I have served you, and what your livestock has become with me. For it was a little before I came and it has now increased to a multitude, and Yahweh has blessed you. And now when shall I provide for my own?"

And he said, "What shall I give you?" And Jacob said "You will not give me anything if you will do this one thing for me, I will again feed and keep your flocks. I will pass through all your flock today, removing from it all the speckled and spotted sheep, and all the brown sheep from among the lambs, and the spotted and speckled from among the goats as well, and my wages will be from those. So my righteousness will testify for

me in time to come, when it comes before you concerning my wages: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the sheep, will be reckoned as stolen if it is with me.

And Laban said, “Yes, that it truly be in keeping with your word.” And that he removed the male goats that were streaked and spotted, and all the female goats that were speckled and spotted, and each one that had white in it, and all the brown ones among the sheep, and he gave them into the hand of his sons. And he set three days journey between himself and Jacob, and Jacob fed the rest of Laban’s flocks.

And Jacob took for himself rods of green poplar, and of hazel, and of chestnut trees and he peeled white streaks in them, and he made the white appear that was in the rods. And he wet the pods he had peeled in front of the flocks in the gutters in the watering troughs where the flocks came to drink, when they were on heat when they came to drink. And the flocks conceived in front of the rods and they gave birth to young, ring-streaked, speckled and spotted.

And Jacob separated off the lambs and he set the faces towards the ring-streaked, and all the brown in the flocks of Laban and he put his own herds by themselves and he did not put them with the flocks of Laban.

And it so happened that whenever the stronger flocks conceived, Jacob laid the rods in front of the eyes of the in the gutter so that they might conceive among the rods. But when the flocks were feeble, he did not put them in, so that the feeble ones were Laban’s and the stronger ones were Jacob’s.

So Jacob prospered greatly increasing in wealth and had many flocks and maid servants, and men servants, and camels and donkeys.

Next time we will have the story of Jacob’s return home after fourteen years with his uncle Laban. Would his brother Esau still hate him? We will see next time.

Till then may God bless you all and keep you safe in His loving care.

Russell.