

The Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter

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Editorial

CHOOSE THE BEST GIFT

Greetings to you all, in the love and name of our Lord Jesus The Christ.

You may have read, or heard of, the gifts that are given to believers by God, which are the gifts of the Holy Spirit (so, not from our own selves, but specifically given by God). These many and varied, eagerly to be desired, but are GOD'S choice of gift to each, as HE decides is best.

They do NOT make you special, or impervious to sin, nor do they make one better than another. These gifts are to help others, and to build the body (body of believers) of Christ.

God has allotted to each a measure of faith, we are told in the letter to the Romans.

We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us (Gods choice not ours, or anyone else's). Some of these are as follows (but by no means an exhaustive list):

Prophesy (to speak by divine inspiration). Serving. Teaching. To encourage. Giving. To lead. To show mercy' (Romans 12)

There is caveat to this, which must be noted;

No one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12v2).

This, I mention, particularly to Christadelphians, those who say Jesus was indeed "cursed" and defiled, as He was in the flesh (human), and therefore impure, defiled and cursed in that state of being whilst here on earth. Of course, He was not (He is one who is holy, blameless, pure/undefiled, set apart from sinners), and never a more vile statement has been made regarding our Lord. Thankfully, most Christadelphians I have conversed with do NOT believe in, or agree with this horrendous teaching.

However, with that said, we will look further into this gifting from the Lord God. There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them, and to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

To one there is given through the Spirit
a message of wisdom.
to another a message of knowledge.
to another faith.
to another gifts of healing.
to another miraculous powers.
to another prophecy.
to another distinguishing between spirits.

to another speaking in different kinds of tongues (Or languages)
to another the interpretation of tongues.

All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and HE distributes them to each one, just as HE determines.

Now eagerly desire the greater gifts.

We must remember, that LOVE (a gift from God also) is the top priority, not ego not pride not our selfish desires. If I do not have love, I gain nothing! No other gift is more important than love, along with faith. All this, you will find in detail in Paul's first letter to Corinth chapters 12 and 13.

Now, there are the who say, "Aha, the other gifts were to cease, it says so at the end of chapter 13!" Well, not before the end time, which is when Jesus returns (when we see things fully and clearly). How can I say this?? Well, after Ch12 comes Ch 13 (remembering that these chapter and verse divisions are not in the original letter, so this immediately follows on from "these three {love faith hope} remain"); Ch14 of 1 Corinthians (a divided by Bible editors)

"Follow the way of love and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy".

So, we see that he was NOT stating that these gifts ceased in the previous chapter at all!! Anyone claiming such (Christadelphians, please take note) is then saying Paul is now telling us lies in chapter 14!!!! (or is mighty confused at the very least!)

The point of all this is that we are to ask God for what gifts HE has chosen for us, whatever that might be, they are there to build up the body of believers, who are in Christ.

Jesus said, "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.....your Father in heaven give(s) good gifts to those who ask him!"

So, do NOT ask of people "what gift do I have, or should ask for", but ask GOD, and He WILL show you, and abundantly supply you with what you need to serve the body of Christ.

Love to you all, may God bless each of us according to HIS will and good pleasure, with the gifts that we require.

In the name of our Lord Jesus, The Christ, peace be with you all. Julian

DANIEL The Man

Much has been written and discussed about Daniel and probably will not be fully understood until the Lord's return. But I think the time has come to consider his life, but we will not at this time write about his Prophecies; here we will consider Daniel as a person, and in particular, as a man of God.

Three times Daniel is addressed as a man greatly beloved (Daniel 9:23; 10:11; 10:19) and for this reason a little of our time should be well spent in considering what made him so beloved, and to see what we can learn.

The first thing that comes to mind is that he was a man of prayer and acknowledged God in all things. One of his tasks was the interpretation of three dreams to two different rulers. And on all occasions he made it abundantly clear that it was not he, by his own power and wisdom, but God who gave the interpretation.

His first task was especially difficult; He had not only to interpret a dream, but tell the king what the dream was. The king's astrologers and soothsayers must have had some elementary knowledge of God. They realized the existence of higher power as the only source of such wisdom (Daniel 2:11). But how did Daniel deal with the situation? He and his three companions first prayed to God. And after God revealed to him the dream with the interpretation he thanked God. And let us ask ourselves, do we always thank God after a prayer is answered? Then when he went before the king he first of all acknowledged God as the Giver of all revelations (Daniel 2:27,28) "The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king; but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days."

Then follows the well known dream of the great image, and its interpretation. Later, he had another dream to interpret for Nebuchadnezzar, when he became high minded and failed to acknowledge God. His greatness went to his head and he lost his reason for a while.

And his last dream to Belshazzar to interpret the writing on the wall, a phrase which has since become part of our language. On all these occasion he never failed to reveal the source of all wisdom.

Another trait in his character was that the high office which he held under several successive rulers never went to his head, unlike in the case of Nebuchadnezzar who lost his reason over it. But Daniel never got too big for his boots, something which statesmen of our day could well take an example from. In this respect he resembled Samuel, another highly devoted prophet, who never sought gain or advantage for his own benefit. The office which Daniel held was probably equivalent to that of prime minister.

Daniel was a man of prayer, and of supreme trust in God. This he had to demonstrate when Darius, at the instigation of some jealous troublemakers, threw him in the den of lions. It goes to his credit that he kept on praying openly, regardless of the consequences. It put Darius into a nasty quandary. He knew that some jealous trouble makers were the cause of it. Darius also showed some faith in God, for he said to Daniel (Daniel 6:16) "Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee." But his (Darius') faith did not go quite far enough to stand up to the trouble makers; be firm and have the courage to say "No." The fear of making a fool of himself and to be deposed from the throne was the cause of his weakness; a case similar to that of Pilate some five centuries later, who did not really want to give the order to crucify our Lord, but lacked courage to stand up to the Pharisees. And how glad Darius must have been when Daniel came out unharmed, and his trust in God vindicated. This event must have taught Darius a lesson which he remembered for the rest of his life.

Another example of Daniel as a man of prayer. We read in chapter 9, verse 20, that he had a personal sin to confess. We are not told what that sin was, but sometimes I wonder whether God, in His wisdom had a purpose in allowing the fact that Daniel had a sin to confess to be recorded. Was there perhaps the danger that successive generations might look on Daniel as a sort of semi-god? To this day many revere people who pretend to receive messages from the supernatural. More so in ancient times when people had great faith in astrologers, crystal gazers and such like. There were plenty of them at Daniel's time, as we gather from references to them in the book under consideration. And from the point of view of his and subsequent generations, the record of Daniel having sinned might have brought him down to earth a little in man's estimation.

And then the final divine message, the last verse in the Book of Daniel "For thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." What an assurance, what a comfort for ageing Daniel, to know he met with God's approval. And how simple to understand after the many complicated prophecies which Daniel himself sometimes had difficulty to understand. If ever anyone could fall asleep with a peace of mind, Daniel (and later Paul) was one of them.

And what of our position? We have the same assurance in the Scriptures if we do our part and hold fast to the end. But we all must admit that in our daily lives we have a long way to go before we come up to Daniel and other worthies of old. We need God's mercy to forgive us our faults. But we have our High Priest in heaven through whom we can draw nigh to God with a humble spirit of repentance. Daniel lived before Christ's ministry. He was unable to bring the animal sacrifices pointing forward to Christ, as the temple was destroyed and he was in captivity with his fellow countrymen. So he is one of those to whom faith was counted for righteousness

We who live in these last days are just about beginning to see prophecy fulfilled, and perhaps soon shall witness events prophesied by Daniel, but not fully understood by him. What a prospect for us to see such events unfolding! So let us take Daniel's life as an example and let us also take to heart what not to do from the experiences of Nebuchadnezzar who took too much credit to himself, and from Darius who did not have the will power to refuse to throw Daniel to the lions. And in these days of lack of interest in Divine matters, let us not be afraid to dare to be a Daniel when necessary and to stand alone.

Brother Leo Dreiffuss

Let The Dead Bury Their Dead
Matthew 8:22

If the word "dead" in the above quotation, means the same in each case, then we are asked to believe in the impossible. Is it not obvious, therefore, that a correct understanding of the different deaths in Scripture is essential before we can harmonise the same?

We venture to say that if the knowledge of the different states of death be absent, then we can close the good Book and store it away as being incomprehensible.

Dr. Adam Clarke says re this verse, "It was usual for a Jew to consider a man dead who had departed from the precepts of the law, and on this ground every transgressor was reputed, a dead man."

This verse had no difficulty for the Jew – "leave the spiritually dead to bury their naturally dead."

Before one can spiritually die one must have been made spiritually alive. "God is not the God of the dead but of the living." The spiritually dead, though naturally alive, have no life in them, although they had seen and heard the Prince of Life and have done many wonderful things in His name, they will hear those dreaded, words: "depart from me, I never knew you."

"If one died for all, then were all dead." Is this state of death the same as those above (spiritual, or natural)? We believe it is neither, but rather that which passed upon all men by Adam's breach of law.

All men, until enlightenment and acceptance of the Redemption in Christ, are legally dead, being under sentence, or constituted, (by law) sinners. After acceptance of the Redemption in Christ they pass from death to life. If, after enlightenment, the Blood of Christ is trodden underfoot, then they become spiritually dead, or twice dead, plucked, up by the roots; for such there remains no more sacrifice for sin but a certain fearful looking for of judgement which will devour the adversary. None are the children of God, who are without knowledge, neither are those who reject Christ.

From this it should be seen that the dead in the first reference are those who are dead by the one sin of Adam, or those who had been spiritually alive but had fallen from grace; add literal or natural death to these former two and all three could be applied to "God is not the God of the dead." (Matthew 22:32).

The "all dead" of 2 Corinthians 5:14 can only be on the Federal Principle – legally dead by the Law of Sin and Death which passed upon all men and which all are under, until passing from the death sentence to the life sentence in Christ Jesus.

Brother T. Gettliffe

Brother Phil Parry Writes:-

Dear Brethren and Sisters, as beneficiaries of the freedom, through Christ Jesus and not Jews of the Mosaic covenant, we have the option of reading and feeding upon the Holy Scriptures whether written under the old Covenant or the New Covenant, for it is necessary to read the Old Testament or Covenant and gain understanding of its message by a reading of the New.

"For this cause, I Paul the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ): which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Ephesians 3:1-11).

This whole epistle is in fact devoted to those who make up from certain dispensations the members of the Body of Christ Jesus as where Paul concludes chapter 3, verse 21 of Ephesians - "Unto God be glory in the church by Jesus Christ throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." In effect, the Body or Ecclesia of Christ Jesus is motivated to glorify God throughout all ages through its Head, Jesus the Christ, and in confirming this Paul speaks of a world without end. What world can he be speaking of here? Peter speaks of a world that perished, which could not be the material or literal heavens and earth, but the world of ungodly in the days of Noah (2 Peter 3:5-7).

Here in verse 7 Peter speaks of the literal heavens and earth which still exist since Noah, a mixture of good and evil people dwelling upon the earth which has been kept in store reserved unto fire against the Day of Judgment and perdition of ungodly men. This time a judgment by fire not water. While this judgement will affect the ungodly unto destruction, it will not destroy the literal heavens and earth, though these will be involved in some way even as

the literal earth was in the days of Noah by being covered where necessary by the flood. Peter is mindful of some who are waiting in the anti-typical Ark of God's provision (Jesus), impatient of the time of waiting to be rid of those who are opposed to God's Way, and he reminds them of God's longsuffering in giving men warning and opportunity to repent and accept the true way of salvation. Therefore God is not slack concerning His Promise as some count slackness, and it is not His Will that any perish, but nevertheless He fore-knows who will accept His Gracious Gift, and then the door will be shut by Him alone. Remember the Ark? God shut the door, not Noah.

As members of the Body of Christ we should not be anxious for God's judgment upon a world of ungodly that will perish, but for a world without end" of which Paul speaks in Ephesians 3:21, and of which Jesus also spoke to the Sadducees, a "world" that must be pre-obtained by the worthiness of their faith in Him and His Father and which qualifies a resurrection of Life Eternal as the Children of God, equal in nature to the angels neither can they die any more. (Luke 20:34-36).

This brings to mind what Martha said to Jesus regarding the death of her brother Lazarus. "Lord, if thou hadst been here my brother had not died - I know that he will rise at the resurrection at the last day." Jesus had informed her "Thy brother shall rise again." But He did not have in mind the resurrection she spoke of but the resurrection to a continuance of natural life which proves the fact of there being two kinds of resurrection and though meaning a rising from the dead, do not involve what Jesus termed "The resurrection and the Life," for many will rise from the dead, some with the nature of Angels to die no more and others unworthy of obtaining the world to come, with a nature they had before dying, in order that they experience the death Adam was spared, "the death by sin" the second death; having rejected God's gift of His Lamb without spot and without blemish, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious (1 Peter 2:4). If an Israelite was capable under Moses of choosing a special lamb from the flock to save by its blood from the Angel of Death passing over the house, surely the Lord God Himself should not be questioned in His own choice and provision of the anti-type; even by Jew or Gentile professing knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures. Yet sadly this was the case and is certainly the case today. The Jews and their corrupt rulers finally rejected the Messiah of Israel and handed Him over to Pilate to be crucified.

When Jesus expired on the Tree the veil of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom signifying that the Way into The Holiest of All was open, but no longer to the Levitical Priesthood; the Way to God was to be through another Priest after the Order of Melchizedec and therefore under a new Covenant. But I wonder if any noticed the significance of this rending of the veil? It is possible that an attempt was made to repair or replace it but I have read nothing to confirm this. But one thing is certain from the words of Jesus to the Samaritan woman at the well, John 4:21, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father." If the Jewish priest-craft had in mind any replacement of the veil of the Temple and their continuance of the Mosaic Covenant, the prophetic statements of Jesus to this woman and to His own disciples when they looked in awe at this marvellous work, were confirmation that no Temple would be left in which to hang another veil insomuch as He Himself would be its replacement as recorded in Hebrews 10:16-22 ["This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." And please note, the writer of verse 22 in explanation of Baptized believers of the Gospel of Salvation leaves no place for sin-in-the-flesh; the conscience is clean, and the body is clean, legally and morally. The contrast with this position and the Mosaic Law is pointed out by the writer in Hebrews 9:11 to 15, taken from Numbers 19:1 to 10. Neither can it be a reference to the physical flesh when by adherence and good conscience toward God's Law the person can revert to the former position of legal cleanliness and moral relationship without a change of nature being necessary. As Brethren and Sisters of Christ under a New Covenant we have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and it should be noted that His flesh was never a bar to the indwelling of His Father, for as Jesus said, "As the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in himself." John 5:26. No other man could say this. None throughout history from Adam's sin had the right of direct approach to God; this was why Jesus could affirm at all stages of His existence in preaching the Gospel of Salvation, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me." But for that Way to be opened the veil that typified His flesh must be divinely removed even as it was divinely authorized to be placed, first of all in the Tabernacle of Witness and afterwards in the Temples of wood and stone which replaced it.

What exists now is the Spiritual Body of Christ, His Bride to be the Temple of the Living God in which God dwells. Ephesians 2:11-22. (See also at this point my opening quotation from Ephesians 3:1-11). Paul also makes it clear in Romans 3:23-31 where he says, "For all have sinned (federally - or 'by one man') and come short of the

glory of God;" this could not include Jesus because Paul continues "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

What then is this belief in Jesus? Is it to believe that Jesus had condemned sinful flesh and in allowing the mockery and spectacle of Calvary of this flesh of an unblemished Son, God could declare His righteousness and be just and the justifier of him that could believe such a thing? Jesus said "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day and he saw it and was glad." Did Abraham rejoice to see this horrible exhibition on the tree of Calvary, of the One who was to confirm the promises made to him? Not likely, when God even withheld Him from slaying Isaac. How much more then the Son of God whom Abraham knew would willingly confirm in His blood the promises and the covenants that God might justify the nations through faith!

Our justification is indeed free, but it cost God the life of His Son. He need not have caused His birth; He need not have allowed Him to die on the tree.

The alternative was that Christ be born and pay the debt of Adam to the violated law or Adam suffer inflicted death in the day he sinned and all in his loins perish. "God so loved the world." When? Was it in Eden when Adam sinned? Or was it when Jesus was born? If the latter, then all who lived B.C. have perished. Why not then accept the teaching of Paul in Romans 5 on Federal Sin = Adam, and Federal Righteousness = in Christ?

We who are called Nazarenes understand and accept it and regard ourselves as servants of a God who is just, and the justifier of him who believes in the teaching of Jesus who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life (not character) a ransom for all. Matthew 20:28; 1 Timothy 2:6. This bought back natural existence, first for Adam, then for us, who would never have existed had he been put to death. But it did not give us unconditional Eternal Life, for we need to acknowledge by belief, faith and works, through a knowledge of the Truth, why God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish. See 1 Timothy 2:3-7.

I commenced my remarks about a world without end and of which world Jesus said we must be counted worthy to obtain. So in considering Abraham we should be aware of what world Jesus spoke of. In Romans 4:13-18 Paul says, "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all (as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations).

In this context we must take into account Paul's words in Romans 9:1-8. Also Galatians 3:11-18, verses 26 to 29 are most important and why people should disregard the facts I cannot imagine, unless they have been brought up in a doctrine which is biased in favour of Jews who have rejected, through their ancestors' boasting in the law to give life, the Messiah of Israel, Jesus, who brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. We should accept the fact that Jews by natural descent and not in Christ, are not the children of God even though they have descended from Abraham (Romans 9:7,8). Paul knew what he was talking about on this subject and if we choose to make unregenerated Jews the most important focus of our attention rather than the Abrahamic Covenant of heir-ship to the world to come in which we can share through Christ, His coming could be a snare to us even, because we are looking at the wrong places for the signs of His coming, and the wrong events. God is interested in His people, His children, Abraham's seed of promise in Christ of all families of the earth. We have read the proof in the Old Testament books such as Numbers and Deuteronomy that the twelve tribes of Israel under Joshua received the land or lot of their inheritance but the tribe of Levi had no inheritance of land by lot for the Lord was their inheritance, but what of the Abrahamic inheritance by faith through Christ wherein all are considered as One? Reading from Revelation chapter 7 we find that Levi was among the twelve tribes which were sealed, which indicates equality with the others, not a separate inheritance as with the priesthood. But under the new covenant when this sealing took place the Levitical priesthood was ended in Christ so that inheritance was in Him and His Kingdom which would be world-wide, not by the law but by faith where there is neither Jew nor Gentile.

I am not interested in the present modern State of Israel whose policies are temporary meat and drink and the assumed right by fleshly descent from Abraham, to the Promised Land, even by carnal force. God holds the Spiritual Deeds of right for those who inherit the promises of The Kingdom of God through His Son, for as Paul said, "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. In Deuteronomy chapter 30 we read that God set before Israel the blessing and the curse, life or death, under the conditions of His Word, but as a nation blessed of God they failed as Moses said they would. Worse still they got to the degradation of rejecting their Messiah though there had always been a remnant according to faith and God's

election of grace. The final blow to them as a nation represented by the corrupt mixture of sectarian tradition, was struck when Jesus related the parable of the Vineyard and their rejection of Him as the Messiah and Heir of all things

(Matthew 21:42,43), “Therefore say I unto you, The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.” See Matthew 22:11- 14. Also 1 Peter 2:1-10 which clinches the whole object of the New Covenant in Christ “World without end” Amen.

Brother Phil Parry.

A powerful verse: -

“Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of God is not in him.”

1 John 2:15.

**The Names and Their Meanings of
The twelve sons of Jacob in order of birth**

1. Judah = “I will praise the Lord”
2. Reuben = “He has looked on me”
3. Gad = “Granted good fortune”
4. Asher = “Happy am I”
5. Naphtali = “My wrestling”
6. Manasseh = “Making me to forget”
7. Simeon = “God hears me”
8. Levi = “Joined to me”
9. Issachar = “Purchased Me”
10. Zebulun = “Dwelling”
11. Joseph = “God will add to me”
12. Benjamin = “Son of His right hand”

Now notice what happens when the meaning of the names are combined in the same order and into a paragraph:-

“I will praise the Lord (for) He has looked on me (and) granted good fortune. Happy am I (because) my wrestling (God is) making me to forget. God hears me (and is) joined to me. He has purchased me (a) dwelling. God will add me to (the) Son of His Right Hand.”

It can be seen that this is the “Gospel Message” in a nutshell

The scriptures are full of such remarkable information all of which confirm to us that the Scriptures were given to us by God.

From the Internet : - “Believer’s Portal”

A few Thoughts from The Writings of Brother Broughton

In one issue Brother Broughton deals with a question we are often asked by those who believe that Sin is a physical property of human flesh. “How did Jesus bear our sins in his own body on the tree, if it was not by bearing our sin nature?” Bro. Broughton answers the question as follows:

“Jesus bore our sins by suffering the punishment they deserved, and he quotes the following texts illustrating how in Scripture sins are thus “borne.”

Leviticus 20:20. “They shall bear their sin – they shall be childless.”

Leviticus 24:15 “Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin - he shall surely be put to death.”

Numbers 30:8-15 “...The Lord shall forgive her (but her husband) shall bear her iniquity.”

Ezekiel 14:10. "They shall bear the punishment of their iniquity."
Ezekiel 18:20. "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the fathers."
Ezekiel 25:49. "Ye shall bear the sins of your idols."
Lamentations 5:7 "Our fathers have sinned, and we have born their iniquities.

This selection of passages amply illustrates that to bear sin means to suffer the punishment due to sin, either one's own or as can be seen from one or two of the texts, the sins of others. I remember years ago a Christadelphian advancing Ezekiel 18:20 as proof that it was impossible for Jesus to have suffered for the sins of others, but if, as Bro. Broughton shows, the idea of sin-nature or the need for atonement for sin-nature, is entirely foreign to Scripture; if Jesus did not bear the punishment of the sins of others, he died in vain.

The fact is that Ezekiel 18:20 is intended as a prohibition of the practice of punishing the innocent instead of the guilty; a thing which no just person could tolerate. To use it for the purpose of discrediting the sacrificial death of Jesus is blind perversity. Jesus was not punished instead of the guilty. He voluntarily bore the punishment due to sinners in order to set them free and show Divine Love. A person - and there are such - who claims to be unable to see the difference does not deserve to share the benefits involved.

Bro Broughton goes on to show, by a literal example from Scripture, how Jesus bore our sin. He quotes Matthew 8:17. "... He cast out spirits ... that it might be fulfilled... himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses." He says, "Now Jesus took their infirmities by taking them from the people he cured: yet, he himself did not take the evil spirits into himself. He bore our sicknesses like, leprosy, blindness, lameness, the palsy - not by becoming leprous, blind, lame, or palsied, - but by curing those who had such diseases. In like manner Christ took upon himself our sins when God "laid upon him the iniquity of us all" by removing them from us.

But, he adds, there is a difference in the manner, A devil, i.e., a deranged mental state or a disease, could be removed as an act of mercy, pure and simple, by the exercise of Divine power; whereas sins could only be removed by transferring the penalty to himself. And so he suffered, the Just for the unjust, on the Tree, bearing our sins, i.e. the punishment of them, and so God's mercy and forgiveness now abounds to all men.

I think that is a very reasonable answer, and taken in conjunction with the laws of sacrifice in the Old Testament, provides a complete explanation of how Jesus' death took away sins.

Selected by Ernest Brady.

An Altogether Clean and Perfect Sacrifice

In the Scriptures we read of clean and unclean flesh but let us also see that this does not refer to our "physical flesh" but to animals chosen for sacrifice.

The typical animals for sacrifice were required to be clean in two ways: -

- 1). Clean in the Legal sense; e.g. an ass was unclean; the term 'unclean' here has the meaning of 'unclean for sacrifice.'
- 2). Clean or perfect physically; e.g. without scab, or sore, or blemish.

Jesus Christ laid down His life as the perfect sacrifice – "The Just for the unjust" (1 Peter 3:18). Nowhere do we read of an unclean Christ?

Compiled

Young People's Pages

Hello Everyone! I hope you are all well and keeping safe! Here in England, we're having a colder summer than usual, with lots of lovely rain! But other countries are having very very hot summers, with some very nasty wildfires! The climate is changing - but we don't have to be afraid, because we believe that our God ('Yahweh' - our loving Heavenly Father) is in control of everything!

Guess what - this isn't Russell! I'm old - but I'm not quite as old as him! He has asked me to carry on writing to you! I do hope we're going to have a bit of fun together, as time goes on! I might tell you more next time! Or I might keep you guessing!

In our last lesson, we found out about how, when Jacob was grown up, he was sent away from home in Canaan, to travel back to his Dad's relatives, who lived a long way away in Haran, so that he would hopefully meet someone suitable to become his wife. Someone who also believed in the same God, Yahweh! Jacob's parents didn't want him to marry any of the people living in Canaan, because they did not believe in Yahweh.

Another good reason for Jacob to be sent far away for a while, was to get him away from Esau, his brother! Esau was still angry that Jacob had taken his birthright - the special blessing given by their Dad to the eldest - which should have been Esau! And Esau talked about killing Jacob, once their Dad was dead!

Have you ever felt angry like this - that someone else got something that should have been yours? How unfair, you might have thought!

So, we learnt about how Jacob had arrived at last in Haran, and had ended up with TWO wives, and had had 12 sons (and 1 daughter - 'Dinah!') All this while - 14 years - Jacob was still living in Haran with his Uncle Laban. Do you know the names of Jacobs sons? If you read Genesis chapter 29 verse 31 to chapter 30 verse 24, you will see how each of their names were chosen. See if you can learn their names! As we will see later, this is rather important! (Also Genesis 35 verses 16 to 18).

Yahweh had blessed Jacob, and he had become very rich, having many flocks and herds, servants and a large family. Jacob thought it was time to leave Haran and go back home, but Uncle Laban didn't like the idea of losing one of his best workers, and his daughters! He also realised that he too had benefitted from Yahweh's blessings, while Jacob was with him and he wanted this to continue! He tried every trick in the book to get Jacob to stay, so in the end, Jacob decided to leave secretly, with all his animals and family, and get as far away as possible before Laban found out! You can read about this in Genesis chapter 31. It was Yahweh that had told Jacob to leave Laban and return home - but we only find this out, when we read of Jacob's prayer to Yahweh, a little later.

Laban didn't find out till 3 days afterwards, that Jacob, his two daughters – Jacob's wives - and all the family and animals, had left! Laban immediately gathered all his brethren together and began to chase after them - but Yahweh spoke to Laban in a dream, telling him to be very careful what he did, because Yahweh had a very special purpose for Jacob, which no one should interfere with!

So at last, when Laban finally caught up with Jacob, although he was very upset that Jacob had left with everything that he believed was actually still HIS property, he had to obey Yahweh's warning, and let Jacob continue on his way, with everything that he had. Remember, that before Jacob had arrived at Paran, he had nothing! Now, he was a very rich man! Laban thought, "If it wasn't for me, and my daughters, Jacob would STILL have nothing! However, Laban and Jacob made a promise of peace to each other, before Yahweh, and set up a big heap of stones like a pillar, to remind each other of their promise. Then Laban with his brethren, turned and went back to Haran, and Jacob with his family, flocks and herds, continued on his way, towards his old home in Canaan.

Now, there was something else on Jacobs mind! How would Esau react when he saw him again? Had he forgiven him? Was he still angry with him? If so, he might be in danger!

Yahweh wanted to reassure Jacob that he was still with him, so He sent two of His angels to meet Jacob at a place which Jacob called 'Mahanaim' which means 'double camp'.

Then Jacob came up with a plan, just in case Esau was still angry with him. He decided to send some messengers (some of his servants) to the land of Seir, where Esau was living, with the message that he, Jacob, was returning home from Laban, with "oxen, donkeys, flocks, and male and female servants" and asking if Esau would look favourably on him? The messenger's hurried off - but when they came back, they told Jacob, "We came to your brother Esau, and he is also coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him"! Jacob was very scared! He assumed that Esau and his men were coming to make trouble! But he always knew what to do when he was scared - he prayed to Yahweh about it! He reminded Yahweh that it was His idea that he should leave Laban and come back home, and he thanked Yahweh for everything that He had given him. Then he asked Yahweh to keep him safe and protect him from Esau!

Then Jacob had a bright idea - he rounded up a huge selection of hundreds of goats, camels, cows, bulls, and donkeys with their foals, and divided them into more than three groups, with a servant in charge of each one, and sent them all off separately - one after the other - with a distance between them. He told each servant to meet Esau

with the animals and tell Esau that they were a gift for him! He thought that if he swamped Esau with all these gifts, it would surely put him in a better mood!

It's often a good idea to be kind to someone who has been unkind to you, because Yahweh can change people's moods when you do the right thing. This is what Yahweh says in Proverbs that 'everyone wants to be a friend to someone who gives gifts' (19:6), and "a gift in secret pacifies anger" (21:14). When we do something mean to someone who doesn't like us, we make things worse, and this makes Yahweh unhappy!

Jacob had a strange experience that night. He had decided to spend the night alone, and sent everyone else across a ford (a shallow river) called Jabbok. You will see this on the little map I have photo'd for you - also the route Jacob was taking. A strange Man (turned out that he was an angel - see Genesis 32:30 and Hosea 12:4) was wrestling with Jacob till it started getting light! Jacob struggled and wrestled back, and was almost beginning to win - but just then, the Angel touched Jacobs hip socket, putting his hip out of joint - but still Jacob would not give in! The Angel asked him to stop, because it was getting light, but Jacob said, No! I'll not stop until you bless me! So the Angel blessed Jacob by changing his name from 'Jacob' to 'Israel'! Does that name 'Israel' ring a bell? It should do! 'Jacob' means 'deceiver' - not a very nice name, but 'Israel' means 'one who struggled with men and with God, and has won'!

Remember that Jacob had twelve sons? These sons became known as 'the sons of Israel' - Not 'the sons of Jacob' - and this is how the nation of Israel started! But we will hear more about this later.

Now the sun was coming up, and all this time Esau and his four hundred men were getting nearer and nearer! Jacob still feared that even if Esau had accepted his gifts, he might still be in a very bad mood! He must think quickly - what to do next?!

But you will have to wait until next time, to learn what happened!

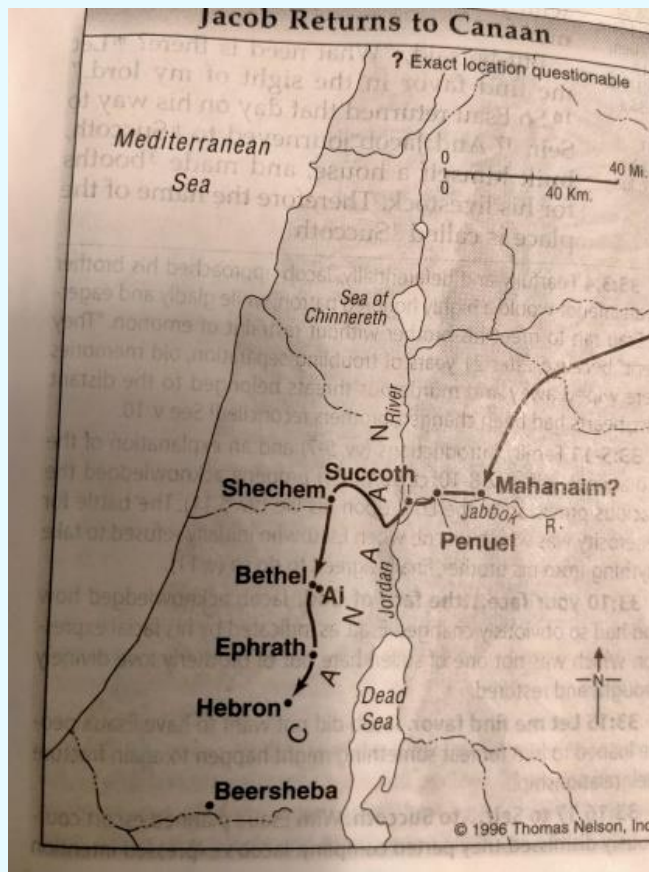
For now, I ask Yahweh to look after you all, keep YOU safely in His care! Goodbye! 🙌

Do you know - that word 'Goodbye' means 'God be with you'!

Dawn .

**Jacobs route from
Haran back to
Canaan.**





Now you can see how
Canaan fits into
the bigger map

