

The Yanes family has reason to rejoice. Mariah is doing well and is on schedule to come home in July. Fran is back to work and Mahala is, as mother's do, living with Mariah in this time of recovery. God is good.

One other note: Tatianna, the 11 year old girl that I mentioned earlier, is making a turn for the better. May be, in a short time, she will be ready for a heart transplant, as well. Remember though, this young girl has two valves that are not functioning. Continue to pray for Mariah and for Tatianna.

GOODNEWS LETTER

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FAITH, IN THE REAR VIEW MIRROR

When it comes to serving God, it has been said, *"If you look back, you'll have an accident ahead."* Well, that's true, if we look at our past mistakes or the old life of worldly pleasure, desiring to go there.

Certainly, as Paul, we should be *"...forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,"* (Phil 3:13).

However, if we are going to understand God's plan of salvation; having that **single view** of how God implemented it - first within Israel and then in His Son, Jesus Christ - we must; not only look back, but **learn** to look back and rely on what took place, as we study the plan of salvation.

The saying, *"A knowledge of the past is the key to the future"* has never been as clear as when we look back to the promises God gave Abraham; and, later, to Israel. As the promises continue forward into the New Covenant, we receive a much clearer understanding of what the promises mean. Soon, we see a transformation of words turn into reality.

It isn't that the picture changes. Rather, it's the change in understanding; going from a black and white picture, to deeper and clearer - full color view of God's blessings and what He has in store for His people.

What happens is that vivid rays of color cause the eyes of our heart to brighten while we watch the promises transform from words, becoming living truths within the heart. But, it's the same promise (s).

It's the same promise (s) that Paul preached in Acts 13:32 & 33. *"And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, 'Thou art my Son, This day have I begotten thee.'"*

Yes! It's the SAME PROMISE (s). Our faith then, has to be built upon God's historical work, as well as, the finished work of Jesus. And, there's harmony in both. Seeing the same promise keeps all of God's of truth together. There is no fragmentation of COVENANTS or splintered PRECEPTS which have led so many into doctrinal error. Israel never kept the Law; neither, do we, etc.

Once we realize that God's promise to Abraham was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, we don't reject the Old Covenant truths of inheriting the land. We believe that God is *"our shield and exceeding great reward,"* just as it was with Abraham, Genesis 15:1.

We also see that Israel remains God's people; from which Jesus was born. Further, God's promises that were given to Israel are secure; once repentance is made and Jesus Christ is accepted as the Messiah.

Didn't everyone of us repent? Didn't we accept Jesus? Amen! We have become members of the family of Israel. We are, as Isaac was, the **"children of promise," Galatians 4:28.**

There's no doing away with the promises, is there now? Looking back to Isaac should thrill us; for God's promises come by faith. Not our faith, but God's consistent, ages of ages, faith. When He calls to repentance; we see that the same promise (s) that was made to Old Covenant believers are given to us within the New.

Romans 2:29 unites faith between the Old and New, making but one single promise. It is, as Paul explains, **"But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."** When you look in your rear view mirror by faith, you can't miss Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They are even waving at us.

There is no doubt that God's promise to Abraham remained the same as it moved from the Old to the New. God's people (Jews, nationally and in heart) are yet alive and soon, the land would become theirs.

Even though the physical nation of Israel will not reign in the Spiritual Kingdom, that nation remains God's people and shall be the head nation at that time; according to Deuteronomy 28:13, **"And the Lord shall make thee the head and not the tail..."**

But, even a quick glance backward shows us that Israel, as a whole, had only physical hearts. They expected to receive the promises through doing the Law. They thought that the Law brought the promises; missing its intent.

And, so it was, when Jesus upgraded the Law, Israel could not accept it. Jesus taught the righteousness of the Law; clearly, showing that it belonged to another creation; the New Creation.

After all, the first generation is rejected and unable to keep any righteous Law, perfectly. That's why Israel sacrificed animals often and we do not, at all. Our cleansing is a once and for all kind; washed in the perfect blood of Jesus.

Therefore, before the promises could be attained, the Law; which stood in the way of the promises, had to be removed. Jesus fulfilled the Law and then died for all people, who did not and could not, fulfill its righteousness by their work (s).

It was fulfilled, however. And, then the shed blood of Jesus cleansed every sinner, making the promise (s) a reality by the Holy Spirit's working when He dispensed the righteousness of the Law to all who believe. He deposited God's righteousness into our heart-bank account. Why, we are rich!

When the Holy Spirit convicts, it pounds the heart. A believer no longer trusts in his doing. He gives up and throws all his failure at the feet of his Savior, Jesus Christ. It is then that the Holy Spirit makes one alive, taking the believer from a physical concept, to a spiritual understanding.

Notice, how the Holy Spirit took what Jesus fulfilled, and what He became (a new creation), unleashing the New Covenant Spiritual laws of reconciliation, justification and sanctification to all who believe.

There's a change! Now, in the New Creation, we may walk in the new life and enjoy the promises. In the mirror, I see the father of faith, Abraham (Rom 4:1-12) scanning out the coming city from heaven. And, I always put my arm on his shoulder and take a long, long look, too.

I can join with Abraham because we have the same salvation - the same promise. Abraham looked forward and we use a rear view mirror to look backward, all the way to Calvary.

On the day that Jesus died on the tree, all of us, Old and New, were saved. At the same time, we all were transformed, simultaneously by His redeeming work. For Abraham, it was faith in God's declarative word. For us, God's declarative word became flesh and we trusted in the Living Word, Jesus.

But, God's word remains the same, bringing our transformation through the shed blood of Christ. In His sacrifice, we receive its conclusive end; that of redemption.

We must get this salvation plan. And, we must get it good! One cannot be saved without the blood; one cannot be saved without the New Covenant blood. And, just as true, one doesn't receive just a portion of the of the blood at salvation, he gets it all. Get it?

And so, looking back at Israel, we see a miniature world. Their freedom came from the slain lamb; just as our freedom comes when we "**Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world,**" John 1:29." Clearly, "**Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness,**" Heb 9:27.

The Bible declares that not all men have faith; even, after they are saved. Some have faith and walk in it, while others return to the old life and its doings, once again. Jesus said firmly, "**Remember Lot's wife**" (Lk 17:32).

I keep my eyes on the rear view mirror, all the time. Looking back allows me to see the beginning of salvation and its continuation through God's people.