

Rays From The Rose Cross Magazine

Jacob Spreads the Teachings by Dagmar Frahme

Jacob mopped his face with his sleeve and urged the reluctant donkey through the narrow streets of Jerusalem. It was already hot, and he was anxious to get home. Suddenly, two familiar figures hurried toward him, and Jacob guided the donkey out of the way.

"Peter! John!" he called. "Where have you been? My parents are worried. They have not seen you since last week."

As the men came closer, Peter seemed not to see Jacob. A strange, far-away expression was on his face as he continued his fast pace, looking straight ahead. John, smiling broadly, slowed his steps for a moment.

"Tell your parents that all is well, my son," he said kindly, "We must go now, but we will speak with all the followers soon. It is truly as the Master said. He lives!"

John hurried after Peter, and soon they were out of sight. Jacob stood looking after them, heedless for the moment of his donkey and other passers-by thronging the road. What did John mean? he wondered. Could it be that Jesus was alive? But that was impossible. Jesus had been crucified just before the big storm on Friday, and then Jacob's father had said it would be safer for all who loved him to go into hiding. The Twelve were in hiding, too, or, at least, all but the one who had betrayed Him. Even Jacob had to stay inside until this morning, when his mother sent him to the market for fruit and cheese.

Father had said that everything was lost because they had killed the Master Who was the Son of God. And now John, the man whom Jesus had loved most in all the world, said that he was alive.

"Such a thing cannot be," Jacob thought, frowning, "A man cannot live after he is dead. I had better tell my parents, like John said. Maybe they will understand."

But Jacob's parents did not understand. His mother's eyes filled with tears as she said, "Oh, the poor man. The tragedy has so grieved him he has lost his reason."

Jacob's father moved impatiently. "Those closest to the Master are wise men. They are not so easily given to illusions, even in the midst of great sorrow. But what does he mean? How can the Master be alive? Would that John were here now, that we might question him."

But John did not come, that day or the next, and life had to go on. Jacob's father went back to work in the Street of Silversmiths, where he heard many rumors. Some said that Peter had been imprisoned and others that he was exiled. Someone even reported that the tomb where they had laid Jesus was empty, and that the Roman guards were trying to keep that fact from the people. Those who had loved the Master, however, hurried about their tasks with averted faces, and were silent.

At the Temple school, where Jacob was learning to read the Torah and recite the Law, the Rabbi forbade anyone to speak of Jesus. He knew that Jacob's parents were followers of the Master, as were the parents of some of the other boys, and he did not want any talk about this radical who had finally been put out of the way. The sooner the events of Friday were forgotten

and things were back to normal, thought the Rabbi, the better.

Jacob and his friends did not forget, however. As they sat outside at noon, eating their lunch of bread and olives, they whispered among themselves. Jacob told them of what John had said, but no one could figure out the meaning of his words. They, too, had heard rumors, and Ephraim's father had seen James very briefly. All James would tell him, though, was, "Soon, soon, you shall know everything. Have patience."

So things gradually did go back to normal. Jacob's mother could often be seen wiping her eyes, but she tended the garden and made honey cakes for Jacob to eat, as always. Jacob's father did not laugh as before, and was sometimes severe, but Jacob understood. He, too, felt sad when he thought about Jesus, but there were lessons to learn and games to play and his donkey to take care of, so he did not have much time to be troubled.

Several weeks went by. Peter, John, and the others had either gone back into hiding or had left town, for no one saw them. Gradually most people lost interest in the crucified Jesus, and turned their attention to other

matters. Rumors died down, and soon it was almost as though he had no lived at all.

Then one day Ephraim arrived breathlessly at Jacob's house. "Peter sent me," he announced to Jacob's father. "He is calling a meeting of the followers this evening. He says that the real Work must now begin, and that he has much to tell about Jesus. We can go, too," he turned to Jacob triumphantly. "Peter says it is important for us to know."

That evening Job and his parents gathered with the others in the small room that was their meeting place. Jacob sat with several of his friends on the floor at one side while their parents crowded together on hastily-provided benches and chairs. All was still as Peter, an imposing figure with a stern, craggy face, began the meeting.

Peter talked for a long time, and Jacob did not understand some of the things he said. One thing was clear, however. *Jesus was alive*, and the Apostles had seen him three times since the Crucifixion. Peter now spoke of him as Christ, however, and Jacob made up his mind to ask his father why, later.

Peter said that Christ had told His followers that they were now to begin the great task of spreading His

Teachings everywhere in the known world. The main thing that people would have to learn would be to love each other — not just the members of their families or tribes, but everybody. Even Jacob knew what a hard job that was going to be! The members of the various tribes that he saw every day in Jerusalem didn't seem to like each other very well, and nobody seemed to like the Roman conquerors, whose soldiers were everywhere. How could they all possibly come to love each other?

Peter also said that the job of spreading the new Gospel was not going to be easy. Many people would try to keep them from spreading the Teachings of Christ and many of His followers would be outcasts and suffer. It was the duty of His followers to tell other people about His Word, however, said Peter. The only way human beings could become better, and the only way there would ever be real peace among all men, was by following Christ's Teachings and living the kind of life that He had lived.

Jacob was quiet most of the way home. His parents thought he was tired — it was very late — but he really was thinking hard. Finally he said, "Why does Peter call Jesus 'Christ' now? We always called him 'Jesus' before."

His father smiled. "I think that is something that people will have a hard time understanding for many years to come. You see, Jacob, Jesus was a man — a human being just as we are. He was a very good man, however, much better than any of the rest of us. Christ is really one of the Archangels — the greatest Archangel of them all. He is the great Spirit in charge of our Earth, and for a long time He has watched men become more and more selfish and turn away from God. He knew that the only way to help them save themselves was to bring them His Gospel of love and peace. But He also knew that He had to appear to them as a man so they could see Him. Archangels don't have physical bodies as we do, so He decided to borrow the body of the best human being, who was Jesus. Jesus was glad to let the great Archangel Christ use his body for a few years. And so, all during the time that Jesus was teaching us, He really should have been called Christ Jesus, because He was really the Archangel Christ in Jesus' body."

Jacob thought about this for a minute and asked, "But then, what happened to Jesus?"

"Jesus is still a human being, and for a long time to come he is going to do his work from the heaven

worlds, and in that way help men spread the Teachings of Christ," answered his father.

"And Christ is still an Archangel in heaven, too?" asked Jacob.

"Christ is still an Archangel," said his father, "but He is more than that besides. He is now what we call our indwelling Planetary Spirit. What happened is that after the Crucifixion, Christ left the body of Jesus and went straight into the center of the Earth. He spread His strong spiritual light everywhere around us. Remember how dark it was that Friday and everyone thought it was the most terrible storm they had ever seen? Really, it wasn't dark at all. It was light — such tremendous light that we were all blinded for a while. That was the pure Christ Light. The same thing happens when you try to look into the Sun. It's so bright that it makes you see black spots, and if you look at it too long, everything becomes black."

"But why did Christ spread light like that?" asked Jacob.

"He did it to help us," answered his father. "If we try to be good, and to do what He taught us, we can use that light to make ourselves stronger and purer, and

the more we do that, the better able we will be to live as He wants us to live. "

"Is Christ still in the center of the Earth?" went on Jacob.

"No, He is now released into the heaven worlds. But He will come back into the Earth every year to spread His light for us. He will do this for many centuries, until men have learned to love each other."

"Many centuries is a long time," said Jacob, thoughtfully.

"Yes, it is," agreed his father. "But it is going to be very hard for people to stop thinking about themselves and start thinking about their neighbors. Most people are very selfish, and it won't be easy for them to change. As long as they are even the least bit selfish, the Christ will have to help us all by giving us His light to work with."

"Will we see Christ when He comes each year?" went on Jacob.

"Not until we have learned to be as good and pure as He wants us to be. Christ will never use another physical body. When He comes back into the Earth each year it is in a spiritual body that men can't see.

But we will be able to feel His presence. His light is that powerful, and the less selfish we learn to be, the more sensitive to it we will become."

That night, Jacob lay awake thinking about all that Peter and his father had said, and wondering what *he* could do to help spread Christ's Teachings. Peter and some of the others had talked about going to far-away places to carry the Message, but Jacob knew that his parents would say he was too young and should stay home and finish school. What could he do right here in Jerusalem? What could he, a schoolboy, do at all?

Jacob was still thinking these things the next morning, and had a hard time paying attention to the Rabbi's lessons. In fact, the Rabbi scolded him for not keeping his mind on his work, which rarely happened.

At noon, when the boys again were eating their lunch under a tree, a beggar came up asking for food. Beggars were common in Jerusalem, as they were everywhere in those days, and people did not pay much attention to them. Jacob's father and the other adults gave alms regularly, Jacob knew, because this was prescribed by law, but nobody liked it when beggars came right among them at mealtime. They were often thrown crusts of bread just to get rid of them, or were simply chased away.

Some of the boys seemed about to do just that when Jacob said, "Welcome. Come and share our lunch. We have only bread and olives, but they are very good."

Ephraim smiled at this, but most of the boys stared open-mouthed at Jacob. Was he crazy, asking a beggar to join them? Nobody ever did that! The beggar himself hesitated. He was rarely treated with kindness, and had never been asked to share a meal by people from whom he was begging.

"Come on, sit down here," Jacob indicated a place next to him on the ground. "It's much cooler in the shade."

The beggar, still hesitating, sat down. He was not a pretty sight. He was dirty, his clothes were torn, his hair and beard were matted and he walked with a funny shuffle that seemed to show how afraid of people he really was. He had good reason to be afraid of people, for many had been cruel to him.

As he sat down, several boys got up. "If Jacob's going to start eating with beggars now," said one, "we'll find someone else to eat with." And they went off. Jacob's throat tightened, and in a sudden instant he realized what Peter had meant about being outcast. Here he was trying to show kindness to someone, as

Christ taught, but, because that person was a beggar, some of his best friends were walking away from him. He knew they would tell the Rabbi, and the Rabbi would be angry, but he was pretty sure, too, that his parents and Peter would approve. He saw that Ephraim and a few of the others still remained with him, and felt better.

The beggar was sorry that he had caused Jacob this trouble, and started to leave. Jacob pulled at his ragged sleeve and held him back. "Stay here," he said firmly, "they'll get over it." Jacob and the boys who were left shared their lunches with him, and they sat together until it was time to go back to school.

Just as Jacob had thought, the Rabbi was angry, and reprimanded him sternly. "Certainly it is good to give alms to beggars," he said, "but my students cannot debase themselves by sitting down with the filthy wretches."

"Do you not think, Sir, " asked Jacob politely, "that it is good to show them kindness and loved Even though they are beggars and filthy, they are our brothers. "

"Love! Brothers!" echoed the Rabbi, hardly believing what he heard. "You are talking just as did the crucified

Galilean. His heresies have contaminated even our children! Your father shall certainly hear of this, Jacob."

Jacob bowed his head respectfully, but smiled to himself when he thought how shocked the Rabbi would be after his father had finished talking to him.

Late that night, Jacob lay in bed listening to the voices in the other room. His father's was firm, but even and patient, while the Rabbi's seemed to be getting angrier and angrier. Finally, the Rabbi left.

"Still awake, Jacob?" asked his father, coming softly into his room.

"Yes, Father," answered Jacob. "The Rabbi was angry, wasn't he?"

Father sighed and sat down on the edge of the straw pallet that was Jacob's bed. "I'm afraid so," he said. "Will you mind very much, Jacob, if you can't go back to school? I can teach you here at home.

Jacob was not too surprised and said, "No, Father. But what about Ephraim and the other boys who stayed with me?"

"I think," said his father, "that all the followers who have children at the school will soon have to take them

out. Perhaps we can form a class of our own. There are wise men among us from whom you can learn many things."

"I would like that, Father," said Jacob. "They can tell us of the things Christ Jesus taught, and that is really the most important thing we have to learn, isn't it?"

"Yes, Jacob, it is," answered his father. "And you have learned much already. We are all very proud of what you did today. "

"But I wish we could follow Christ's Teachings without having other people turn away from us," said Jacob sadly.

His father squeezed his hand. "So do I, my son. But some day they will feel as we do, and everyone in the world will be friends. In the meantime, there will soon be many who will turn to Him. All of His followers can take strength from each other when our jobs become difficult. And He will always be there to strengthen us, if we but pray to Him for guidance."

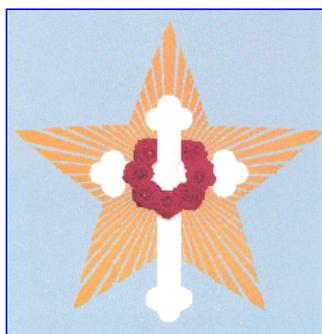
Jacob had more to say, but he could not keep his eyes open. He was almost asleep when he smiled and murmured, "I guess there are many things I can do right here in Jerusalem to spread the Teachings of

Christ. You can do that wherever you are, if you live the right kind of life every day."

—*Rays from the Rose Cross Magazine, May, 1980, p. 236-240*

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