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*Dear Friends,*

***Special New Year Greetings** to you all this month of January, 2014!*

*I pray your Festive Season has been a wonderful time of fun and family celebrations, with just a little thought to what you may achieve throughout this coming **New Year!** I don't want us to waste a moment getting started in **2014** - with a very **definite idea** of what some of our options are, from God's perspective, for each of our lives.*

*I was reading today from Genesis chapter 42 and I want to share the first two verses with you. Let's read from the Amplified version.*

*Gen 42:1 NOW WHEN Jacob learned that there was grain in Egypt, he said to his sons, **Why do you look at one another?***

*Gen 42:2 For, he said, **I have heard that there is grain in Egypt; get down there and buy [grain] for us, that we may live and not die.***

*I actually had a giggle to myself, when I read this, despite the seriousness of the circumstances. I could see Jacob standing there, surveying his very bleak surroundings, with starvation knocking on his door, and his boys all just standing around looking at one another. Therein was the queue to instructions! He basically said, **“never mind the circumstances – just change them.”** And note; there was no wasting time on the pleasantries; the “please” and “thank-you” - either! He simply said... **“I heard there is grain in Egypt; get down there and buy food that we may live and not die.”***

*By now, they would have stood to attention, and prepared to march, straight out the door; all ten of them! Remembering, they had already sold Joseph, the second youngest son, into the*

hands of the Egyptians, prior to this famine in the land. A grieving from which Jacob had never recovered – to the point that, he kept the youngest boy, Benjamin, close by; lest some harm come to him also. So, they needed be aware that their Dad was not about to put up with bad behaviour, **any more than he was prepared to starve to death.** He had ten big burly sons, able bodied enough to go get the job done. So, the visual of all ten of them - knowing that Dad was a little stressed about the serious lack of food in the house, and that they had caused him grief on their last trip - all paints a rather interesting picture!

Jacob was the patriarch of the family, and highly respected in his community. So I figured when Dad spoke with such authority and sternness, they would all stand to attention, awaiting further instruction, before their prompt exit. **His request was rather simple. Go acquire food – that life may be sustained!**

**We** do not know what it is like to go without. We truly live in a blessed country. We have abundance all about us. So, we can only but try to imagine life in famine! Think about that for a moment! There are millions of displaced persons globally, who don't necessarily know from day to day how they will survive. Circumstances of all degrees determine these outcomes, but here we have Jacob saying to these grown men, **“Don't just stand there looking at one another; don't think about the circumstances – just change them.”** In other words, **put some verbs in your sentences, and do something about how we are living right now.** Jacob was elderly, and Benjamin was in his protective custody, and not going anywhere, so these ten big fellows were responsible for the journey and the acquisition of sustenance. I figured by now this band of brothers would have got the message -- loud and clear. So, out the door they went, in search of food from Egypt.

I said back in paragraph one, that I didn't want us to waste any time getting off to a good start in **2014; with some specific plans in hand.** **Jacob only wanted the same thing.** **Don't waste time standing there looking at one another; get going and achieve something of value – life! That is great advice!** Get going - and acquire for us whatever is necessary to sustain life; that we live and not die. **Food! Physical food** is essential to a healthy lifestyle, and Jacob was certainly anticipating a successful return trip to supply just that – **Food!**

**Spiritual Food – is equally as important.** For without it we surely die – spiritually speaking. That reminds me of a beautiful old song: -

“This world is not my home I'm - just a passin' through; If Heaven's not my home, then Lord what would I do?”

Hence, we need that spiritual food as much as we need physical sustenance. Without the daily instruction from our God, we are doomed to **spiritual mal-nourishment!** That leads to an emaciated person who usually views death as a serious possibility. **And if this is a personal choice, it is a very sad picture of death by starvation. Both in the physical and the spiritual, we all need food! We cannot survive without it!** Just like Jacob and his boys – without help from Egypt, **starvation was a very imminent possibility.** Hence, Jacob's responses to those dumb-struck boys, all standing around looking at one another; **go do something, and do it now!**



***This situation required - Action! Now! Don't stand there studying the circumstances – just change them; and quickly!***

*Plenty are the times we have done the same thing, and later looked back in hindsight and said, "If only I had acted sooner, that wouldn't have happened", or "If only I hadn't said that - the outcome would have been entirely different."*

***This is your opportunity to get 2014 off to a great start. Don't just stand there looking at one another! Do something!*** By all means have a glance around you and survey the circumstances. But by now you will know in your heart what action plan is necessary. If there remains any doubt, go back and ask advice from the Lord. But don't be found procrastinating. Remember, ***delayed obedience is dis-obedience!*** And remember what another scripture says: - ***that faith without works (actions to compliment what you are believing for), is dead. It accomplishes nothing!*** What a waste of time; and basic life!

***Jas 2:17 So also faith, if it does not have works (deeds and actions of obedience to back it up), by itself is destitute of power (inoperative, dead).***

***Let's not waste a minute of this year! Let's redeem the time, as Ephesians reminds us!***

***Eph 5:15 Look carefully then how you walk! Live purposefully and worthily and accurately, not as the unwise and witless, but as wise (sensible, intelligent people), Eph 5:16 Making the very most of the time [buying up each opportunity], because the days are evil. Eph 5:17 Therefore do not be vague and thoughtless and foolish, but understanding and firmly grasping what the will of the Lord is.***

The KJV Bible simply says: - ***"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."*** Sounds like perfect advice to me! What about you? I've given you a great opportunity to ***redeem the time*** the Lord has given to you, by this little reminder. Don't be found guilty of wasting it! You don't have time to be found in dis-obedience. His return is nigh! This is your opportunity to spend a few quiet moments with your Lord and seek exactly what he would have you do. Then ***DO IT!*** Amen! And - ***A Very Happy, Blessed and Prosperous New Year for 2014!***

*Be blessed!*

*Till next month*

*From my house to yours*

***Blessings of the abundant kind!***

*Leila Nord.*

