



**Dear Precious Friend,**

*August-September, 2019*

## **Born From Above**

In Acts 7:51, Steven told the religious Jews that they always resist the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit reveals Jesus. No one can say Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit. When Nicodemus came to Jesus by night to find out who He was, Jesus tells Nicodemus that we must be born from above by the Spirit to see the Kingdom of God. Most Christians use the term born again but that's a rare translation of the Greek word, *ἄνωθεν/another*. The primary meaning of the word is from above, from higher up, from the Spirit, from heaven or from the Supreme Being. This same Greek word, is used frequently in the Septuagint (*Gk translation of the OT Hebrew*) to translate the Hebrew words heaven above/*οὐρανός ανωθεν/למעלה שמים*

Nicodemus however comprehends *ἄνωθεν/another* as a return to his mother's physical womb to be born a second time. This is exactly how many believers think today. They have a Nicodemus mind-set and see their "born-again" experience as a second chance at life on planet Earth, but this is not what Jesus meant. Jesus was talking about a birth from above, from heaven, from the Holy Spirit. That's why he declares that what is born of the flesh is flesh, but what is born of the Spirit is Spirit.

But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. Galatians 4:26

The heavenly city above, the New Jerusalem, is called our mother, because it's from her "womb" that we were birthed from above. A woman is not called a mother until she gives birth to children. We were born from our mother, from the Jerusalem which is above. We are free citizens of that eternal city now.

In Acts 7:49, Steven quotes from Isaiah 66:1 saying, Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool. What house will you build for me? Saints - are we building earthly congregations and ministries, when God says His house is so much bigger than that. Heaven is His throne and the earth is His footstool. There are 2 floors in God's great house and Jacob saw the staircase connecting them. Have we been dwelling only on the first floor, when God has already raised us up to dwell in heavenly places with Him on the second floor of His house. We are born from above in order to dwell there now. In Him, we are connected to both heaven and earth.

And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful this place is! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. Genesis 28:17

Jacob was seeing the place where heaven and earth intersect. Two floors of the one giant house of God, heaven and earth, with a staircase in between. When we neglect the 2nd floor of God's house and make our second birth merely earthly again, we lose the awe and fear of God which comes down from above. So he called the place, Bethel (*House of God*).

## **Great News from the Bible lands:**

We believe that we are seeing the beginning of a move of God's Spirit to bring salvation to Thessaloniki. Everywhere we go, we are seeing Greeks and Israeli tourists respond to the gospel! It has never been so easy! Heaven is opening once again over the Bible lands, and people are getting born from above, in restaurants, on

beaches, in stores, on campgrounds. One Greek woman got healed right in the aisle at IKEA! We are seeing tough Greek men cry from their deep heart in repentance and be changed as they confess Jesus. A young student shared about his search to find truth in the wrong places and told us how Jesus suddenly showed up. He prayed with us. Two Israeli families we met on the street, on holiday with their children, joined us one morning for breakfast and we shared our testimonies and lives with them. We immediately became family. Another Israeli joined us for coffee, heard the gospel and received the New Covenant in Hebrew! So many Greeks and Jews are taking the Bible and reading it. Greeks are waking up suddenly to their need for the Messiah. Israelis are visiting in droves, buying land and houses all over Greece. Anti-Semitism is suddenly falling to the ground! God is hearing our prayers!

Thank you so much for praying with us for this Bible region. You are a big part of what is happening here and you will surely receive your reward on that day. Your prayers and support make all this possible! I am so grateful to God for you.

Shalom and Agape,

**Greta**

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