

January 2012

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

The month has come for me to write to you, whatever country you live in. By these few lines I send my greetings and my love to you all who honor God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. You do so by disciplining your lives according to the instructions given to us. You follow the example which our Lord Jesus Christ set when He lived on this earth in a body like ours. You also remember those who manifested a respect for the Truth of God until the end of their lives.

In our corner of the world, we had a beautiful autumn: first, abundant crops; then, trees clothed in gorgeous colors. But now that we have entered the winter months, the vegetation has become totally denuded. We witness such a process with no painful regrets, because we know that the dead season only leads to the time when things come back to life.

That cycle in God's creation is replete with spiritual meaning for mankind. Since flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, we too must be divested of everything on the physical plane before we can be born into the glory of the Son of God. Jesus Christ states the following:

... Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God . . . Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again (John 3:3, 5-7).

God reminds us of those realities year after year through His creation. So the future promised to us is a source of hope and joy which flows more and more abundantly in those who can maintain an objective vision, because through each season, God shows us that what He promised will be realized. We read, "For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations" (Isaiah 61:11). If we truly consider the future as God views it, we find the present difficulties much more bearable, and our behavior becomes more serene as we witness or experience the things which are happening in our tragic times.

However, if the future which God promises is not real in our minds, then it is very easy for us to become affected by the conditions and circumstances of the moment. They make us forget that our future is much more important than the present, and that our destiny will depend on what we do now. Through Jeremiah, God says:

Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will punish all them which are circumcised with the uncircumcised [I will punish all the circumcised who are uncircumcised in heart—*Moffatt Translation*] (Jeremiah 9:23–25).

God can plainly read the heart of every one of us. He requires an active trust on our part. He wants to know whether or not we really believe in the future which He promises. That confidence is manifested in the kind of mastery which we effect in our lives; it is shown in the victories which we gain over the self. That is the purpose of many tests and trials which we go through.

To all those who are obedient to Him, God says not to be afraid of the turmoil which permeates the world in which we live. "For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee" (Isaiah 41:13). Therefore, brethren, what do we need to fear? As physical beings, we are the workmanship of God: we are putting off the old man and putting on the new man. "This is what the Lord says—the Holy One of Israel, and its Maker: Concerning things to come, do you question me about my children, or give me orders about the work of my hands? It is I who made the earth and created mankind on it . . . " (Isaiah 45:11–12, *New International Version*). Thus, God created humankind for a magnificent purpose. We are flesh beings who are subjected to all kinds of natural weaknesses, but according to His will, God is going to deliver us from that bondage. And if, in the process of living the life which God requires of us, a doubt surges in our minds and causes us to ask ourselves how such a thing can be possible, then let us remember the answer which Christ gave to His disciples when they asked Him: "Who can be saved?" Jesus said to them, and He says the same to us, "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26).

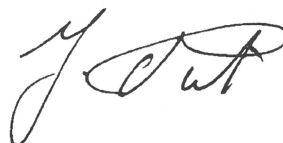
To be born into the Family of God: that is the purpose of God for every human being. That is our future! Can we have that goal engraved on our hearts and minds, and can we have faith in the will of our heavenly Father? If so, then that objective will be achieved, for God is not limited in capability nor in power. Who can give Him orders about His children and about the work of His hands? No one! Because it is impossible for man to attain that

aim—salvation—by himself. Jesus Christ expresses the will of His Father to us, ". . . the will of him who sent me is that I lose none of those who are his gift to me, but that I raise them all up on the last day" (John 6:39, *Moffatt Translation*). So we must accept the fact that God will do for us something which is beyond our power.

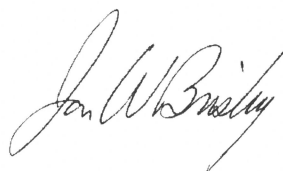
My dear brethren, let us be among those who believe, who live the statements of Christ by faith, who have received the capability of remaining faithful and fulfilling their responsibilities as God expects of His elect. Let us be of those who are to be born of water and of the Spirit in order to be heirs of the Kingdom of God.

To you all, my most sincere and respectful feelings.

Your brother in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'J. Aviolat'.

Jean Aviolat

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Jon W. Brisby'.

Jon W. Brisby