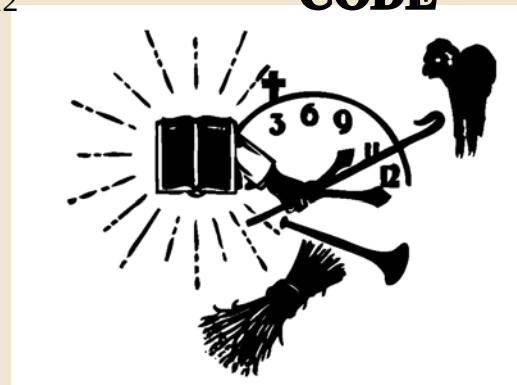
THE SYMBOLIC CODE

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WHAT BRING SUCCESS?

PURPOSE

This publication is dedicated to the mission of conveying to Davidian present truth believers, edifying news and articles of timely significance. This comforter freely gives its time to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation, and neither collects fees nor charges for its service.

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THE SYMBOLIC CODE

Mt. Carmel Center Waco, Texas

WHAT BRING SUCCESS

(The sermon selected for this issue of The Symbolic Code was delivered by Brother V. T. Houteff on May 6, 1944.)

James 4:2, 3 -- "Ye lust, and have not: ye kill and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."

There is a class of people who do everything they can in order to enrich themselves in material wealth perhaps even for a good cause, yet they are poor because they attempt to acquire it in their own wisdom and strength and do not ask God either for the riches or His help to obtain them. Because this class did not ask they received not.

There is also another class who ask, but they ask amiss, wanting only to consume it upon themselves, and therefore they, too, receive nothing.

These are but two reasons why even some of God's Own people are poor. James here deals only with these two reasons, but other Bible writers give additional specific reasons such as poor management, indolence, provi-

dential reverses, and so on.

By inspired testimony we have learned that Abraham and Lot both became so rich that they had to dissolve partnership and occupy separate portions of land. Abraham suggested that Lot should choose first the land he wanted, and Abraham would take what was left. Lot chose all the plains and left the hills for Abraham. Perhaps from a business standpoint Lot's choice was good, but from God's viewpoint it was poor. In making his selection Lot failed to see or take into account the fact that he had been greatly blessed by his having been in partnership with his uncle Abraham. He thought only of his personal, selfish future security. Abraham, nevertheless raised no objections to Lot's choice. He gladly took the hills.

In the process of time Lot moved into the city where he became poorer and poorer. At last the angel of the Lord had to rescue him, and he came out with nothing. In striking contrast to Lot's devastating experience, Abraham steadily became richer and richer and God finally gave him all the land. What was the secret of Abraham's success? -- God Himself made Abraham prosperous when He saw Abraham faithful in everything. When we are faithful in everything He will more abundantly bless us also.

When Joseph started out he, too, was very poor. He was sold by his own brothers and later sold again as a slave. All he possessed at that time were his soul and the clothes on his body. But eventually he became the world's richest man. He held the key to all the riches in Egypt, because whatever he did he put real religion into it. Even Pharaoh recognized his outstanding worth and availed himself of it by appointing Joseph to run his government.

The troubles which came to Joseph in his life were actually for his good and prepared him to become an interpreter of dreams, a king, and doubtless the greatest economist the world has ever seen. God had observed that Joseph did everything as if it were his very own, and, moreover, he was constantly sensible to the fact that God was his Master and that nothing could be hidden from Him. It was this conviction that caused Joseph to understand that regardless what men did to him or said about him, God alone had charge of his life. Therefore, in prosperity and fame Joseph maintained his loyalty and integrity; and in adversity Joseph did not waste his time ascribing to others the cause of his troubles. Instead, he set about to behave in a way that would commend himself even to royalty, for it is not likely that the Ishmaelites would have been able to sell him to Potiphar had he not been a superior person.

"And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.... And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured." Gen. 39:2-4, 6. But again it was his lot to suffer reversals over which he had no control, and he landed in prison where his excellent personality and faithfulness once again won him his freedom, and, moreover, he was promoted to the highest position of the land.

In the meantime Joseph's brothers kept coming down until finally they were reduced to such poverty that they had to leave their country and come to Joseph for their food and living. We should be able to see in this that although God's people may be disgracefully dealt with by jealous associates, still they will not suffer the wrong forever if God is with them. Joseph followed righteousness and no man could prevent God from blessing him with riches and honor. It matters not what men may say or do against you to put you down, if you have God with you you will in the end be on top and they at the bottom. Jealousy may be as cruel as the grave, but sooner or later righteousness is rewarded.

How important it is that God's people have their minds constantly employed in serving Him perfectly in everything!

We can indeed make ourselves the poorest of the poor by concerning ourselves wholly with our own needs and wants instead of working toward the goal of producing all we can for the benefit of others. Doing for others is what brings success and alone makes one in demand.

Job, you remember, was a very rich man because he was perhaps God's best friend on earth at that time. At least the Devil grew jealous of him and told the Lord that Job was not as good a man as the Lord thought, and he could prove it if he were allowed to bring enough trouble and hardship to him. And you remember that the Lord allowed the Devil to do anything he wanted to Job, except to take his life. In the midst of the fires of his many and grievous afflictions Job declared, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." Job 13:15. Because Job did not fail, he in the end was many times richer than he was in the beginning. God's people do not become rich in any respect by playing the fool. Nor does it help for them to give themselves over to self pity in the day of adversity. When a person feels sorry for himself he has at least brought himself to a state of stalemate if not outright defeat. None of the men of God, regardless

how severe were the hardships they were called upon to bear, felt that these sacrifices were too great. Generally speaking, all these men possessed a stabilizing power that is hard to explain other than to say that it is a gift of God which He bestows upon those who are intimately and firmly acquainted and united to Him.

Solomon, too, saw his great personal need, not for his own personal benefit, however, but for the ultimate benefit of his people. And he longed for the fulfillment of his need for their sake. That is why he asked God for the right thing -- wisdom. And God gave him everything, including wisdom.

David was anointed king over Israel because God had daily seen him while he was a shepherd boy faithfully doing all he could to take the very best care of his father's sheep. God knew that if David would give even his life for sheep, he would be the right one to rule the kingdom.

The only lasting fortune man can obtain is gotten through righteousness, through God's way and in His time. The successful life is not that one which gained riches and acquired fame for this life and nothing for the future life. The successful man, on the contrary, insures his eternal riches by daily making straight paths for his feet to walk in, thus

insuring also his present life's success. God controls the distribution of riches and He does not give them to His people as a blessing if they are selfish. If such people obtain wealth it is invariably a curse to them.

Now let us study Jacob's life for a few minutes this afternoon. You remember that he was the son of Isaac whom God had greatly blessed. And when he grew old Jacob coveted the birthright which according to custom was to be Esau's. In desiring it Jacob was not seeking to become rich, he was after the spiritual blessing that it would bring and which Esau did not esteem highly, until in one way or another Jacob had successfully gotten it for himself. If a man wants spiritual blessings bad enough for the right purpose God will give them to him.

After Jacob obtained the birthright he had to leave home and build his life with practically nothing at his uncle Laban's. There Jacob agreed to work for Laban seven years for his daughter Rachel, whom he wanted to marry. During these seven years Jacob had practically taken the business under his control, and God had greatly blessed his efforts, and through it Laban also was blessed. But Laban deceived him at the end of the seven years and gave him the wrong girl! Jacob again agreed to work another seven years for Rachel. During this time

Jacob's work was of the same high quality as it has been before, even though he has been treated wrongly by his uncle.

Since God's people in this age are to endure "the time of Jacob's trouble" and receive the blessing which was promised to his posterity in the latter days, it would be time well spent for us to give further attention to the details as they are recorded in the Bible which describe the faithfulness with which Jacob, our type, discharged his daily responsibilities, and compare ourselves with him to see if we are as diligent and careful and trustworthy as he was. Let us read first

Gen. 30:25-43 -- "And it came to pass, when Rachel had born Joseph, that Jacob said unto Laban, Send me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country. Give me my wives and my children, for whom I have served thee, and let me go: for thou knowest my service which I have done thee. And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thine eyes, tarry: for I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake. And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it. And he said unto him, Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle was with me. For it was little which thou hadst before I came, and it is now increased unto a

multitude; and the Lord hath blessed thee since my coming: and now when shall I provide for mine own house also? And he said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me any thing: if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep thy flock. I will pass through all thy flock to day, removing from thence all the speckled and spotted cattle, and all the brown cattle among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats: and of such shall be my hire. So shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come, when it shall come for my hire before thy face: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the sheep, that shall be counted stolen with me. And Laban said, Behold, I would it might be according to thy word. And he removed that day the he goats that were ringstraked and spotted, and all the she goats that were speckled and spotted and every one that had some white in it and all the brown among the sheep, and gave them into the hand of his sons. And he set three days' journey betwixt himself and Jacob: and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.

"And Jacob took him rods of green poplar, and of the hazel and chestnut tree; and pilled white strakes in them,

and made the white appear which was in the rods. And he set the rods which he had pilled before the flocks in the gutters in the watering troughs when the flocks came to drink, that they should conceive when they came to drink. And the flocks conceived before the rods and brought forth cattle ringstraked speckled, and spotted. And Jacob did separate the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the ringstraked, and all the brown in the flock of Laban; and he put his own flocks by themselves and put them not unto Laban's cattle. And it came to pass, whensoever the stronger cattle did conceive, that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the cattle in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods. But when the cattle were feeble, he put them not in: so the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's. And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses."

When Jacob's fourteen years service to obtain his two wives were over he wanted to move his family and possessions back to his own country whence he came. But Laban knew that he had prospered by having Jacob with him, and for this reason he did not want him to leave. Had Jacob not been enterprising and faithfully producing more than he consumed

you know that Laban would not have wanted Jacob to stay even as long as he did. The thing that makes anyone valuable in the world is his ability to see and fill a need that exists in the world. The valuable man does not gain this reputation by measuring the good he will do by what he expects to receive in return. He is the valuable man, I repeat, because he saw and filled a need that existed in the world.

Gen. 30:27 -- "And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thine eyes, tarry: for I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake."

This is the kind of recommendation the Christian should cause to be said of his religion by those for whom he works. Such a recommendation comes only by putting practical religion and thought into your everyday living and working habits, and by producing more than you consume. The real Christian will never say what I heard a man say one time. He told me that where he was working he was getting only a certain amount per hour which he stipulated in a tone of dissatisfaction, and then he quickly added that that is all the value in work he would give them, too. That is not the way to commend your religion to anyone for whom you intend to continue working. But it is the way to get yourself out the

door sooner or later.

Let us read again

Gen. 30:31-34 -- "And he [Laban] said, What shall I give thee [Jacob]? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me any thing: if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep thy flock. I will pass through all thy flock to day removing from thence all the speckled and spotted cattle, and all the brown cattle among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats: and of such shall be my hire. So shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come when it shall come for my hire before thy face: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the sheep, that shall be counted stolen with me. And Laban said, Behold, I would it might be according to thy word."

In drawing up the new labor contract, Jacob said he did not want Laban to give him anything. He wanted to work for Laban on a purely production basis and what God would give him. Laban listened to Jacob's proposal and agreed to it because he expected the spotted lambs to be fewer than the others. Jacob, on the other hand, proposed this kind of contract because he knew that God was with him and would bless him. He seemed to know also that there is a natural law that we are blessed only when we put forth exertion and thought, for it took both on Jacob's part to prepare the rods and to separate the feeble from the strong cattle when they came to drink. And God did greatly bless him.

Gen. 31:1 -- "And he heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's; and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory."

Laban's sons said Jacob became rich because of Laban; but it was God who made him rich because of his faithfulness and effort.

Gen. 31:2-4 -- "And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it was not toward him as before. And the Lord said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee. And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock."

Though Jacob was rich he was still on the job.

Gen. 31:5, 6 -- And said unto them, I see your father's countenance, that it is not toward me as before; but the God of my father hath been with me. And ye know that with all my power I have served your father."

He served Laban with all his power, and he acknowledged that God had blessed him.

Gen. 31:7-9 -- "And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me. If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bare speckled: and if he said thus, The ringstraked shall be thy hire; then bare all the cattle ringstraked. Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given them to me."

Both of the men charged each other with deceit. In his account to his wives, Jacob recalled that Laban had changed his wages repeatedly, and, furthermore, he pointed out that he could not help it that the cattle came ringstraked and speckled. He had simply put forth his best efforts and God had blessed him.

Gen. 31:10-12 -- "And it came to pass at the time that the cattle conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream and, behold, the rams which leaped upon the cattle were ringstraked, speckled, and grisled. And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob: And I said, Here am I. And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle are ringstraked,

speckled, and grisled: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee."

God revealed to Jacob that He Himself was responsible for Jacob's good fortune. Had Jacob not been faithful, however, do you think God would have blessed him? God blesses us only when we keep busy at our given work, whatever it may be. Moreover, just as God saw all the evil that Laban did toward Jacob, and did not suffer him to hurt Jacob, so also whatever anyone attempts to do against His faithful people today, it will in the end fail to accomplish the intended purpose to injure them, for God will turn it around at last to glorify Himself and to bless His people. And when God wants to bless, someone, no one -- not even the Devil -- can keep Him from doing it.

Gen. 31:14-16 -- "And Rachel and Leah answered and said unto him, Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house? Are we not counted of him strangers? for he hath sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money. For all the riches which God hath taken from our father, that is ours, and our children's: now then, whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do."

Laban's daughters, too, recognized the fact that their father was selfish and a grafter.

They were therefore willing to cooperate with Jacob in whatever God had told him to do.

Gen. 31:17-22 -- "Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon camels; and he carried away all his cattle, and all his goods which he had gotten, the cattle of his getting, which he had gotten in Padanaram, for to go to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan. And Laban went to shear his sheep: and Rachel had stolen the images that were her father's. And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled. So he fled with all that he had; and he rose up, and passed over the river, and set his face toward the Mount Gilead. And it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob was fled."

The fact that Laban was unaware of Jacob's absence until someone informed him of it three days after he left, shows that Jacob had taken care of Laban's work so well that Laban did not have to go every day to check up on Jacob's work.

Gen. 31:23-27 -- "And he took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days' journey; and they overtook him in the Mount Gilead. And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad. Then Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mount: and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mount of Gilead. And Laban said to Jacob, What hast thou done, that thou hast stolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters as captives taken with the sword? Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me; and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth, and with songs, with tabret, and with harp?"

Laban pretended in this, for were he not lying God would not have had to appear to Laban in the dream to warn him to leave Jacob alone.

Gen. 31:28, 29 -- "And hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters? thou hast now done foolishly in so doing. It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt: but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad."

So what could Laban do?

Gen. 31:30-36 -- "And now, though thou wouldest needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house yet wherefore hast thou stolen my gods?

And Jacob answered and said to Laban, Because I was afraid: for I said, Peradventure thou wouldest take by force thy daughters from me. With whomsoever thou findest thy gods let him not live: before our brethren discern thou what is thine with me, and take it to thee. For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them. And Laban went into Jacob's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the two maidservants' tents; but he found them not. Then went he out of Leah's tent, and entered into Rachel's tent. Now Rachel had taken the images, and put them in the camel's furniture, and sat upon them. And Laban searched all the tent, but found them not. And she said to her father, Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise up before thee; for the custom of women is upon me. And he searched but found not the images. And Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban: and Jacob answered and said to Laban What is my trespass? what is my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me?"

Jacob knew that Laban was not saying and doing all these things for nothing, and he demanded that Laban explain his reason for his behaviour. Jacob continues speaking in

Gen. 31:37-42 -- "Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both. This twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy

she goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten. That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night. Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes. Thus have I been twenty years in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages ten times. Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight."

Jacob had kept the cattle in the best possible way so that there was no loss to Laban. Jacob, himself, had suffered the loss of those which happened to be stolen. He had watched and worked diligently both day and night, tending well to his business. And that is the real reason that Laban was after Jacob now. He knew that Jacob was a valuable worker and that he needed him.

We, too, must be diligent and faithful as was Jacob if we are to enter the Kingdom, for the men that are wanted in God's cause

are men who are dependable in whatever the Lord gives them to do.

Gen. 31:43 -- "And Laban answered and said unto Jacob, These daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and these cattle are my cattle and all that thou seest is mine: and what can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children which they have born?"

Poor Laban! Everything was his, yet there was nothing he could do to possess them!

Gen. 31:44-52 -- "Now therefore come thou, let us make covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee. And Jacob took a stone and set it up for a pillar. And Jacob said unto his brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones, and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap. And Laban called it Jegarsahadutha: but Jacob called it Galeed. And Laban said, This heap is a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed; and Mizpah; for he said The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another. If thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take other wives beside my daughters, no man is with us; see, God is witness betwixt me

and thee. And Laban said to Jacob Behold this heap, and behold this pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee: this heap be witness, and this pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm."

Laban finally became convinced that he could do nothing, and being fearful of Jacob, he proposed that they enter into a covenant together for peace.

Gen. 31:53-55 -- "The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us. And Jacob sware by the fear of his father Isaac. Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount. And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them: and Laban departed, and returned unto his place."

Laban had gone after Jacob with the intention of cursing him, but he was obliged to bless him instead.

Now we as Christians must be joined to the Lord even as Jacob was and be diligent in the pursuit of that which God had given each

of us to do if we would be blessed as he was. Diligence and faithfulness characterized all the great men of the world, and it is the only way to gain lasting blessings and be in favor with both God and man. For, says the wise man, "A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent. He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him." Prov. 28:20,

May each of us as children of God be aware that He sees all that we do and reads all our thoughts; may our constant motive be that of serving Him and not ourselves; may we live to bless others and not just to seek the means by which we only may exist; may we realize that no man can put us down if God wants us up; and finally, may we realize that it is God from Whom all blessings flow. Thus may we prepare ourselves for the day when God shall separate the saints and the hypocrites and give each his rightful reward.
