

Copy of a letter from Father
James.

48

13,500

1875

Copy of a letter from Father James
Whittaker to his parents in England.

Parsons near Albany, 20th Feby, 1784.
Jonathan & Ann Whittaker,

May the Grace
and love of God to you be multiplied. I
rejoice and am thankful in remembrance
of your coming out of the works of the
flesh, and your faithfulness God ward.
I love you, not because you were my Pa-
rents after the flesh, but because you
obey God, and my soul doth wish, that
you may renew your obedience and be
adorned with great and heavenly gifts;
It is for your own interest to obey God,
and there is no end, no place to stand
still, nor can any one get so much
of God, that he can get no more.

I greatly desire you to take courage,
and go forward to attain unto a com-
plete stature in the nature and image
of Christ. There is an inexhaustible

fullness before us, and good it is to see God. Comfort, peace, joy, triumph and everlasting renown, is the fruit of faithful obedience, but the contrary service is rewarded with miserable agonies in the conscience in this life, and with devouring fire in the other.

All good things are for them that serve God: they may by faithfulness be filled from the soles of their feet to the crowns of their heads, with the glory of the divine nature. There being therefore such an infinite fulness of transcendent glory for the faithful, I want you to go forward with fortitude of soul, that the word of God may flow in your souls like overflowing ~~waters~~ rivers of living waters.

Go forward and abound in love, in repentance, in meekness, in humility, in brokenness of heart, in patience, in kindness, in ^{the} fullness of all virtue and godliness. Not as though I really believed that you have ^{been} so faithful as you might have been; for had that been the case, I doubt not, but

you would have been like bright Angels by this time, and your savor and utility very extensive.

However, your measurable faithfulness affords no small joy to me, in remembrance thereof, and doth beget kind love in my soul to youward. May your pure minds be stirred up and abound in all good deeds, and labor with ^{great} carefulness, vigilance and zeal, after the divine Nature. The waters of the Sanctuary are risen, and it is to lay aside every weight, that you may swim with freedom in those waters.

Those waters are no other than the Waters of Love and Holiness, the waters of life and happiness, which is the spirit of the God of glory, poured forth in the Church for the salvation of lost men; when therefore I wish you to swim therein, I wish you unspeakable sweet Love, the most transcendent beauty of holiness, and the most invigorating power of Life and happiness.

And now, on my own part, great have been the mercies of God towards me, since

I left England, he hath preserved me from the dangers of the sea, when in company with our blessed Mother; I came over it from thence in a Vessel greatly damaged by striking bottom soon after we came out.

Great peace and joy have I had, and still have in God. I am now in tolerable good health, tho' I am under frequent sufferings in body and soul. God hath committed to my trust the ministry of the gospel, in which I have endeavored to be faithful in all things.

It is not now more than six months, I think, since, in company with Mother and my dear brethren, the other Elders, I returned from a journey of an extensive ministry, of somewhat more than three years continuence, during which time I faithfully preached the gospel, and for it I have been imprisoned, beaten, mocked, calumniated &c. and have been pursued by cruel and desperate mobs, night and day. And once, last summer past, I was

whipped in the most cruel manner, being striped, naked, and my two hands tied up, being stretched up above my head. However God hath preserved me in a wonderful manner, and I am at this time dwelling upon my own place with my dear Mother and Brethren, having enough for food and raiment.

It is a good country where we live, and indeed so is all North America, and any prudent man may make a good living here. And you, John Jackson and Betty Lee, Widow to Charles Lee, as I have a great love and respect for you, so I have a greatly desire to see you in this land. It is a spacious country, and room enough for thousands and millions, yea, for kingdoms & nations; and the soil is good, especially remote from the sea.

But why do I talk of that, as though I would lay a temptation before ^{you} to leave your native soil, and your substance in England? If earthly self prevail with you to come hither, our meeting will not

be sweet: These are better motives than that; God has begun his great and strange work in this land, and is carrying it on by swift degrees, and great are the gifts which come through Mother to the people.

Forsake then your native country for Christs sake, and for the Churches sake. Come and behold the goodly works of God, and enjoy with us rich spiritual gifts of God. If you come with that motive, you will be received into the arms of Love, and on my part I know it will give me great peace and thankfulness to see you here hungering after God and his gifts.

And, you, John Jackson and Betty Lee, may the grace and love of God unto you also be multiplied. I thank God for your sakes and rejoice greatly at the remembrance of your faithfulness. I wish also, above all things, that your souls may be in health and prosper & endure. The same things I write unto you. I have writtens to Jonathan and Ann

Whittaker, my parents after the flesh, so that I need not write the same things over again; but leave you to the perusal of what is already written, and by all means, if it can any way be, forsake your native country, and come over into this country for the gospel's sake: And I am persuaded great will be my joy to see you here, as strangers and foreigners for Christ's sake.

And you, Ralph Whittaker, Jonathan Whittaker, John Whittaker, Ann and Thomas Whittaker, to you jointly, and to each singly, for himself, may God be merciful to you, and not plead against you with his great power. I am sorry at the remembrance of your folly! You have had the ~~gospel~~ glorious gospel preached to you, and great labors have been made taken with you! but how have you improved the one or the other?

Did you ever obey the gospel? Be it what you have, yet when a righteous

man turneth from his righteousness, and doeth wickedly, then his righteousness shall no more be remembered in the day that he turneth from his righteousness, and doeth wickedly, but he shall surely die for his wickedness.

Your obedience hath been like the morning dew and early cloud, it soon passed away; and how wretchedly have you sunk yourselves? Did you but know and properly sense your loss hereby, you would mourn bitterly. Had you trimmed off every member of your bodies, and cast them away, rather than have disobeyed the gospel, your happiness would be infinite, by this time, to what it now is. Why not? For God, in ^{my} obedience of the gospel, hath preserved me: For now am I cleansed from sin, and the very being of Lust; and the divine nature clothes my soul: I daily feel the sweet breezes from Canaan's Banks, and the pearly drops of fragrant dews do frequently refresh my soul:

From time to time I drink of the dia-
mond springs of Lions Golden mountain,
and have access unto the Temple of
the New Jerusalem, at many ~~times~~
seasons I drink wine, good and well
refined, and eat of the goodly manna
plentifully rained down from the
realms of glory.

Upon pleasant mountains do I
ascend, and into spacious vallies do
I descend, which send forth constant-
ly most salutary and odoriferous
exhalations. I have access unto God
my Father, and unto Jesus Christ
my Redeemer; And though I am fre-
quently under great sufferings, yet
I rejoice with joy unspeakable & full
of glory.

But what do you enjoy, or what have
you enjoyed by your disobedience?
Nothing better than the pleasures of
sensuality, which yields you bitterness,
death and sorrow. And what is it
your souls feed upon? The wind, and

The dregs and seed of damnation.
 And what is it in its original? Nothing less than the nature of the Devil; which is a stinking fire and rotten sulphur: It is that damnable evil which stript our first fleshly parents of heavenly glory, and provoked the Holy One to condemn them to painful labours and bitter sorrows: It is that horred monster that put a dagger into the hand of wicked Cain, to slay righteous Abel, his brother, and then turned upon him and made him a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth: it is that giant of murder that spread his renown in the old world by violence and murder, bloodshed and slaughter, and provoked the Almighty to bring in the flood, and destroy all men and every living creature under Heaven.

It is that cursed enemy which slew the thousands of Israel, and made them fall in the wilderness. It is that filthy corrupter that filled the cities of Sodom &

Sodom with abominations, and moved
 God to burn them with fire and brimstone.
 It is that Anakin of mischief which
 did all the mischief among the Israelites,
 and Jews in the land of Canaan, and scat-
 tered them among all Nations to the ends of ^{the}
 earth: It is that Golia the which hath spilt
 the blood of all men from the foundation
 of the world and laid waste all the little
 and great cities that have been laid waste
 upon Earth; he it is that crucified the Lord
 of glory and infuses all disorders into all
 flesh; This is he who spreads all persecu-
 tions among the Saints, and prepares a
 burning Hell for them who serve him.

When he is embraced he meditates
 death and Hell to the embrace, and en-
 ters every part of his body, and draws
 therefrom the seed of life, the essence of
 health and motion. It attacks also the
 soul, separates it from God, and throws it
 into a state of spiritual death. All this
 is by the strength of his motions and e-
 vacuations; What then must his whole

substance be? And under the power of this horrid monster you are, and hold fast by his stinking cords through your disobediences. And he is not far from the disobedient, but is nigh unto them, even within them and united to them in all their actions.

You may then by reason see that your loss is dreadful. Will you then serve this murderer, this butcher any longer? If you will, mountains of lead will sink you into hell! Turn about then speedily, and be cleansed by repentance. And then there will be mercy for you & much love. Be persuaded to turn from sin, from lust, the monster I have been speaking of. I adjure you in much love, to turn from your evil way and live. I have not written these things to discourage you, but to warn you; I have great pity and love for you, and am not willing you should go to Hell.

If you will but turn from sin, lust and the way of the world, repenting for

what you have done, there is great mercy for you: but if you will not forsake wickedness, and lust, you will make your bed with devils soon.

And now to you jointly, and to each singly by himself, both my parents after the flesh, other natural relations, and Believers in the land. Christ is my all. All earthly glory is as dung, and as the blackness of darkness before him, and the splendor of the heavens as smoke without him.

All my sensations are swallowed up in beholding his beauty, and the powers of my soul are captivated in seeing one ray of his transcendent glory. How can Christ be set forth by pen and ink? O his lovely countenance! One glance whereof will turn the firmament into blackness and make the Sun disappear in its Orb. Were I able to set forth a thousandth part of the beauty of Christ, I could astonish all men, and wrap them up in superlative love to him.

O, I love him! I love him! I love him!
 He is the chief among ten thousand
 unto me, and is altogether lovely. His
 brightness, his beauty is so great, that
 the most elegant description that can
 be given of him, by language is mere
 deformity, before him; O ~~how~~ his love,
 how excellent it is & surely they are
 base indeed, who will not love such a
 lovely one, who hath all beauty. Oh,
 how transcendent bright it is! filling
 all things with comeliness, wherever it
 goes; and one gleam of it can happyfy
 ten thousand worlds, and turn Hell
 into paradise.

How happy then will be the overcom-
 ers in the fruition and open vision of
 such an unsearchable Beauty? when
 his beauty will be ^{once} poured forth like
 great and mighty rivers! When all their
 sensations and powers will be ten
~~ten~~ thousand times enlarged, and they
 enabled to swim forever in the Ocean
 of glory, beauty and brightness. Oh!

such a happiness will they enjoy, that it is worth going thro' ten thousand Hells to gain it.

What vast numbers are in the way to enjoy unutterable happiness in this land for the sound of the Gospel hath reached far and wide and thousands of people have obeyed the gospel call. Considering we hold up a whole cross to men, even to deny themselves of the very thought of sensual gratifications of every kind, and a total destruction of the man of sin, it is wonderful that such multitudes have gathered in to us. However, the truth we are determined to maintain if none come in; for we will not lose our souls by flattering the people.

And whereas there are great multitudes gathered in to obedience, we hope to see them in the enjoyment of that unutterable and transcendent happiness in beholding the unequalled beauty of Christ. Oh did they but a thousandth part sense this happiness,

how engaged and violent they would be! and what indignation they would have against their ingratitude and carelessness! And what gratitude is due to God, in visiting such poor defiled creatures, sunk deeply in sin and wickedness! Oh that people did but duly sense God's goodness in this! How would their hearts glow with thankfulness!

For it is beyond all account to set forth how deeply people are sunk in all manner of wickedness and abominations; and it is wonderful beyond description, that so great and glorious a God should condescend to visit such a sunken people. O that people would give glory to God for all his marvellous goodness and mercies which endure forever; and which are admirably manifested in administering comfort, joy, and triumph in all our assemblies! For he doth not forget us, but makes his glory manifest
among us

wherever we go. _____

I now live with my kind Mother
in Israel, Ann Lee, formerly so
called, and the rest, and have all
things in common with others that
have come in to us; and we live in
great love and union, blessing and
praising God, and beautiful Zion
decked with them that believe,
James Whittaker

A List of those heads of families
 who believed in and about New
 Lebanon when the gospel first
 opened, or in the course of a year or ^{two}

Joseph Moacham
 David Darrow
 Hizekiah Hammond
 Israel Chauncy
 Rufus Clark
 Jacoby Spence
 Amos Hammond
 Noah Wheaton
 Gideon Turner
 Samuel Johnson
 Samuel Fitch
 David Chauncy
 John Bishop ^{sr}
 John Shapley
 Israel Talcott ^{sr}
 Israel Talcott ^j
 Job Bishop ^{sr}
 Jonathan Walker
 Alpheus Rude
 Job Salisbury
 Nathan Harrington
 Nathaniel Darrow
 William Seaton
 Richard Treat
 Arthur Hawkins
 John Williams
 Joshua Green
 Aaron Ribbee
 Isaac Harlow
 Absalom Gennings
 Reuben Weight
 George Darrow
 Charles Chauncy
 Charles Chapman
 William Deming
 Eleazer Deming
 Isaac Bishop
 Stephen Smith
 David Shapley
 Thomas Spier
 Simon Higley
 Talnage Bishop
 Benjamin Ellis
 John Tanner
 Asa Tarnum
 Daniel Andrews
 Ezra Sanford
 Abner Pease
 Amos Saxton ^{sr}
 Amos Saxton ^j
 Peabody Mosely
 Gideon Hammon
 Josiah Adams
 John Brackett
 Joel Pratt
 Nathan Cummings

A List of those heads of families
 who believed in and about New
 Lebanon when the gospel first
 opened, or in the course of a year or
 two

79.

Joseph Moacham
 David Darrow
 Hezekiah Hammond
 Israel Chauncey
 Rufus Clark
 Jacoby Spencer
 Amos Hammond
 Noah Wheaton
 Gideon Turner
 Samuel Johnson
 Samuel Fitch
 David Chauncey
 John Bishop ^{sr}
 John Shapley
 Israel Talcott ^{sr}
 Israel Talcott ^j
 Job Bishop ^{sr}
 Jonathan Walker
 Alpheus Rude
 Job Salisbury
 Nathan Harrington
 Nathaniel Darrow
 William Seaton
 Richard Treat
 Arthur Hawkins
 John Williams
 Joshua Green
 Aaron Kibbee
 Isaac Harlow
 Absalom Gennings
 Reuben Wight
 George Darrow
 Charles Chauncey
 Charles Chapman
 William Deming
 Elizer Deming
 Isaac Bishop
 Stephen Smith
 David Shapley
 Thomas Spier
 Simon Higley
 Talnage Bishop
 Benjamin Ellis
 John Tanner
 Asa Tarnum
 Daniel Andrews
 Ezra Sanford
 Abner Pease
 Amos Saxton ^{sr}
 Amos Saxton ^j
 Peabody Moseley
 Gideon Hammon
 Josiah Adams
 John Brackett
 Joel Pratt
 Nathan Cummings

Samuel Hamlin
John Goodrich
John Bishop - son of Job.
Peter Ayres
Preuben Thurston
Timothy Johnson
Jehiel Smith
Thomas House
Joseph Mudge
Seth Watkins
~~John Spires~~
William Spires
~~Jebulum Goodrich~~
Roswell Higley
Isaac Gurnsey

Single men that had been married

Ebenezer Cooley
Timothy Hubbard
Benone Wright
Oliver Woodworth
John Porter
Benjamin Sucket
Ebenezer Thomas
Robert Cunningham
Medad Curtis
~~Thomas House~~
~~Hosford~~
Noah Hosford.