

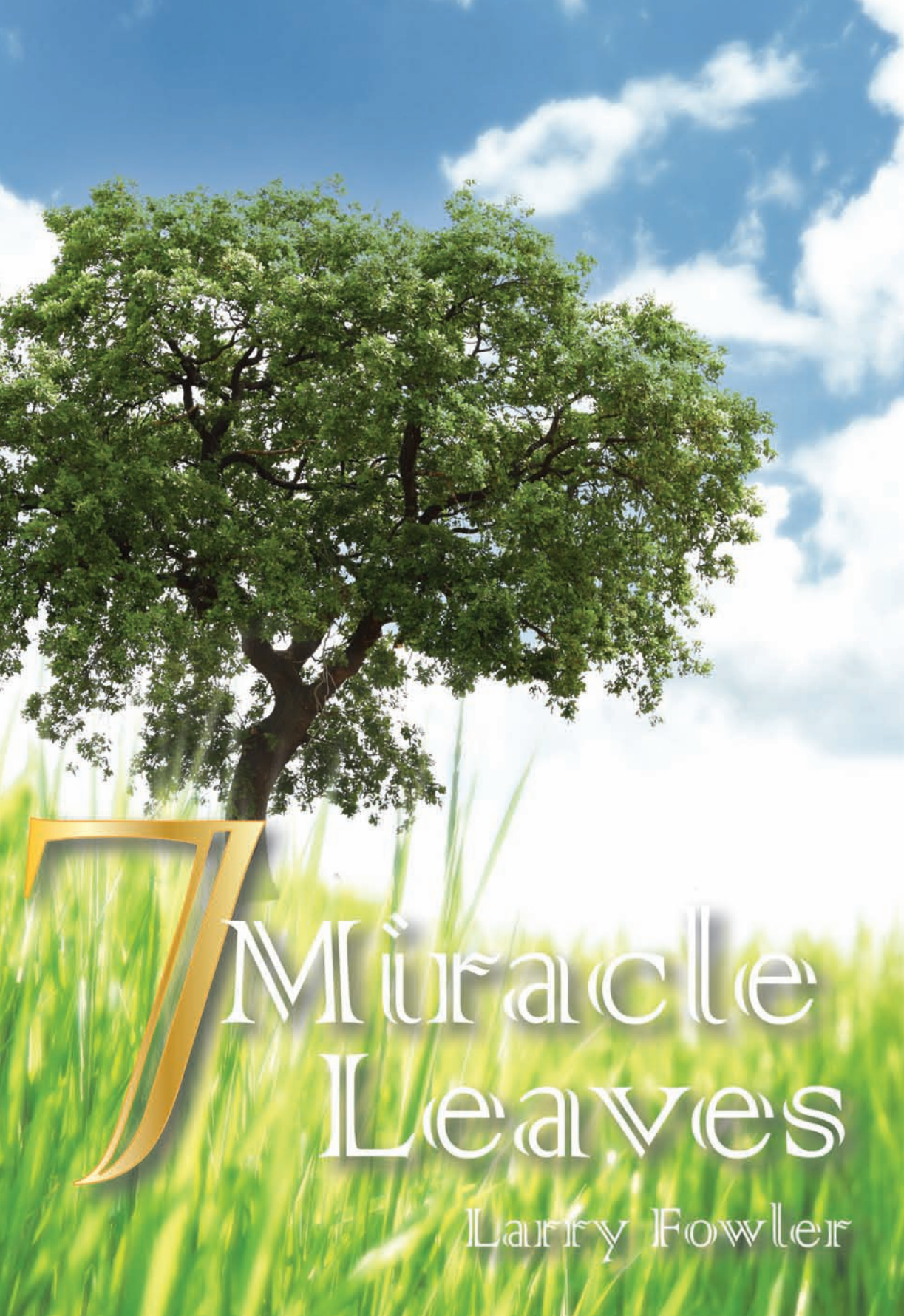
7 Miracle Leaves is fiction. "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." Isaiah 65:17. Through a supernatural phenomenon, Alex physically arrives on the New Earth. He is given a task to complete that involves collecting 7 miracle leaves from the Tree of Life and returning with them to Earth. This book offers reassurance of the hope of an afterlife.

## **7 Miracle Leaves**

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# **T** Miracle Leaves

Larry Fowler

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## CHAPTER 8

I had never crossed the field to the other side and thought that I would do a little bit of exploring and find out what was there. I got up into the big oak tree and looked up and down the field. I saw no animals other than a few deer at the far end of the field. Overhead the sky was filled with flocks of geese honking and making a lot of noise. This is the first time that I had seen geese. There were many birds flying and nesting in the trees; and during the morning and evening hours, I heard the birds chirping and singing.

Again I left the safety of my woods and began to cross the grassy field. I had walked several hundred yards when, off to my right, I saw a person walking in my direction. The sight of a person was comforting and scary at the same time. I chose to be cautious and lay down in the grass. My heart was beating out of my chest and I was afraid to peek over the grass to get a better look at my visitor. I did manage to lift up my head and look at the man coming toward me. He appeared to be wearing a white cloak draped over his shoulders and falling around his ankles. I knew the man hadn't come here via the hole in the sky because of the way he was dressed. As he got closer to me, I could see a golden rope tied around the middle of the cloak and saw that he was carrying a long crooked staff.

I remained lying quietly in the grass as the man approached me. I heard a voice call out, "I saw you and I know you are lying in the grass ahead. I wish to speak with you."

The man's voice had a calming effect on me. The voice was comforting in tone and I was no longer frightened. As I got nearer to the man I noticed he was tall with blond hair, maybe about the age of my father who was 35 years old. The man said, "Please don't be afraid, for I know who you are. We have been expecting your coming."

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This statement was both shocking and confusing. Curiously, I responded, “How do you know me, Sir? How could you expect my coming to this place?”

Then the man said, “Walk with me to the woods and we will find a log to sit upon. There I will answer all of your questions.”

I agreed and as I followed him into the woods, I told him how I had arrived at this place and about some of my experiences so far. I explained how I had been walking down the street in Bath, Maine near my home, and how when I came to the hole in the sky, I stumbled and fell into it. I told him that I had arrived at this place lying face down in a field of yellow grass. Continuing, I shared with him my experience with eating berries and persimmons. I told him how I found the stream in the woods and how the water tasted so wonderful. I described seeing the antelope, deer, and horses in the huge valley and about seeing the pride of lions in the field. When I told him about the lions, I explained how it had surprised me that they didn’t attack the deer that were grazing nearby them. Also, I told him of my experience with the wolves chasing me up a tree and how they ran up to me the following day just to lie down next to me in the grass. “These things didn’t seem normal to me,” I said.

He declared, “You must have been frightened and shocked by all of these experiences. You can ask me any questions you have and I will try to answer them all.”

Of course, the very first question I asked was, “Where am I?”

The man answered, “Do you know about the end of times, the story of the tribulation, and the promise of a New Earth?”

I told him that I had never fully understood the “end of times” prophecy or the tribulation, but I had heard my father preach about them on several occasions.

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The man sat down upon a log and motioned for me to join him. He began to tell me some things that he felt I needed to know. “I will tell you about the end of times,” he said. “The prophecies predict that the host of heaven, meaning the stars and all the planets, will wear away. The sky will be rolled up like a scroll. Their entire host will also wither away as a leaf withers from the vine, or as one withers from the fig tree. The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night, stars and the planets will pass away with a roar, and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat. The Earth and its works will be burned up.”

I sat listening to him intently as he continued, “What might help you to understand this prophecy is that the universe is flat like a piece of paper. These prophecies mean that when the flat universe is rolled up like rolling up a piece of paper, the stars and all the planets will be destroyed with intense heat and the Earth will be burned up. There is a force that is now in the far reaches of the heavens. This force will continue to gain in strength and as it hastens, the stars and planets will pass away. All of the elements will be destroyed by intense heat.”

He laid his staff on the ground, and turned to me and said, “When Jesus Christ was on the cross he said to the thief hanging on the cross next to him, ‘Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise.’ By saying this to the thief with everyone to hear, Jesus Christ was telling everyone within the sound of his voice that the thief would be with Jesus in Paradise that very day. Many people interpreted Jesus Christ’s words in a variety of ways. His words were specific and He meant exactly what He said. He also said, ‘I go to prepare a place for you’. Jesus was telling his disciples and the people listening that He was leaving to prepare a place for His followers. You are now on the New Earth that Jesus Christ has prepared for his followers.”

I looked directly into his eyes and said, “Are you saying that I am on the New Earth that Jesus prepared for his followers?”

The man replied, “Yes, that is where you are now.”

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“Sir, am I dead?” I asked him.

He looked at me very seriously and responded, “No, you are not dead.”

“Sir, am I dreaming?” The man reached over and pinched me very hard on the arm. He just sat there looking at me. “You pinched me! You thought that was funny, didn’t you?” I responded.

The man started to laugh and said, “Yes, you asked me if you were dreaming and I wanted to reassure you that you were not. You were brought here to the New Earth for a specific reason. You have been chosen to perform a mission.”

He continued, “I am going to explain important things to you that you do not presently understand. While you are on the New Earth you will see many wondrous things. You are not now aware of and therefore could not dream of the wonders that you will see. Rest assured in the fact that you are alive and not dreaming. The wondrous things ahead that you will see are very real.”

I knew I must ask him who he was and so I said, “Can you tell me who you are? Can you tell me your name?”

He answered me, “I am a man who lived upon the Earth many years ago. Here, now, I am called Azriel. I am with you because I have been sent by my Lord as a messenger to greet you and welcome you to this place.”

“Are you saying that you have seen the Lord recently?” I asked. “Are you telling me that you have talked with him?”

“Yes,” he answered, “I have recently spoken with the Lord and he sent me to talk to you.”

“Where is the Lord?” I asked. “Is He near here?”

“The Lord God Almighty lives in the Holy City on Mount Zion.”

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“What is Mount Zion and where is the Holy City?” I questioned.

“Mount Zion is the tallest mountain in a range of mountains. You could see it if you walked about 15 days east from this place. Heaven is in the 4<sup>th</sup> dimension and the Holy City is in Heaven. The gates to the Holy City and Heaven are open and the central eastern gate of the Holy City is on the New Earth,” Azriel answered.

Becoming very curious about the fact that my Lord was near and that the Holy City in Heaven was accessible through the central eastern gate on the New Earth, I asked, “Sir, will I meet the Lord while I am a visitor here?”

“No, you will not be able to meet the Lord as you are now. Your present body must be transfigured before you can enter the gates of Heaven or the Holy City to meet the Lord. You could not look upon His face because His radiance would blind you. Your eyes could not withstand the brilliance of His light,” the messenger answered.

“I have explained some things to you and you have felt free to ask questions of me. Are there any of your experiences so far that are puzzling to you, my son?” he asked.

“Well,” I said, “the lions that I saw in the field did not attack and eat the deer. The wolves that surrounded me in the field lost interest and began to eat the grass. These things have made me wonder if the animals that live on this New Earth are a danger to me. Should I fear the animals that I see here?”

He responded, “No, there is no reason to fear the animals here. They all eat grass and plant life. None of them eat meat. The lions eat grass and do not eat the deer here on the New Earth. The wolves eat plants, berries, and grasses; not meat. The only way that you could be harmed by the animals here would be if they would jump upon you and knock you down. They are all playful, so the lion would be a danger to you because he is unaware of his own strength. The wolves that you saw were probably disappointed that you didn’t stay



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around to play with them and join in their fun.” After thinking about the circumstance in which I had been placed and wondering about my home, I asked “Has my Earth already been destroyed by fire? Is my family all gone?”

Azriel responded, “No, my son, the present Earth from where you came has not yet been destroyed by fire. Your family remains as you left them, alive and well.”

“Are my father and mother missing me and are they concerned about where I am? Will they be searching for me?” I asked Azriel.

“No, an Angel has visited both your parents in their dreams. He has told them that you have been chosen by our Lord to perform a mission. He explained to them that you would be gone about 7 months. Both your parents are obedient to God and they understand the message and will pray for you to complete your mission.” answered Azriel.

Suddenly the words, “seven months” rang even louder in my ears than when they had been spoken. I couldn’t help blurting out, “SEVEN MONTHS! Am I going to be here *that* long?”

Azriel, seeing that I was alarmed by this length of time, said that my mission would be completed within 30 days on the New Earth. Although it would only be 30 days for me here, the time would be equivalent to 7 months on Earth.

I began thinking about my brother and my friends missing me. I wondered if I would miss going to my Grandmother’s for Christmas and if I would miss a year at school. Azriel said that my mission was very important and that missing school or being missed by loved ones would soon be concerns of the past. God was in complete control and nothing that I did here would damage me or my family.

“The reason you were chosen to accomplish this mission is to fulfill God’s will for your life and for your family’s life,” Azriel reassured me.

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Next, I asked Azriel if the New Earth was in the same location as my Earth. He said that it wasn't and that the New Earth is located in another universe that God has created. "When the Heavens and Earth have passed away, Christ's followers will live for eternity with Christ on the New Earth. When Christ said to the disciples, 'I go to prepare a place for you', He actually created a new universe and a New Earth for His followers," Azriel explained.

Then he asked me, "Have you noticed that the air you are breathing is not like the thin air on Earth? Have you seen that the sky is different here, and that the moon for this New Earth does not have the same markings as the moon that you have seen every night in the sky during your lifetime on Earth?"

"Yes, you're right. I have noticed all of these differences. Are there people living here on the New Earth other than you?"

He laughed and said, "Yes, there are many people living on the New Earth."

"Where did they come from?" I asked. "Did God create all new people for this place?"

"Yes, God did create these people, but it isn't like what you are thinking," Azriel explained. "The people now living on the New Earth are the righteous people that lived on Earth from the time of Adam and Eve to the time of Christ and the followers of Christ. All the souls of the righteous from the past and all of Christ's followers have been transfigured and now have a new body and spirit. Their Spirit is no longer held captive in their body. Their spirit and body are one; but at their desire, they can transform into their spirit. The souls of the righteous and the followers of Christ never die. At the time of the second death, the people on Earth that are alive at that time will be judged; and Christ's followers will be transfigured and live with Christ for eternity on the New Earth. At the second death the souls of the unrighteous and hell will be cast into the lake of fire. The righteous can decide to live in Heaven or on the New Earth. God gave us talents, gifts, and hidden talents. Some of man's hidden talents are not revealed until their body has been transfigured."

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“Azriel, you mentioned ‘from the time of Adam and Eve’. Did Earth’s caveman have a soul?”

“No, cavemen did not have souls. They were like the animals. Do you not know that Adam was the first man created in God’s image? You can read in the Bible that man was ‘made in God’s image’. This means that Adam and his helpmate, Eve, were the first on Earth to have a soul. With this soul given to them by God, their Creator, they could worship and fellowship with God.”

At this time, I became curious about the Garden of Eden and asked Azriel where it was located. I remembered Dad’s sermons concerning the garden and that it was full of animals. “Where is the Garden of Eden on my Earth?” I asked.

“God created the Garden of Eden containing the Tree of Life on the section of Earth that you now call Africa,” he answered.

“Did you say that the Garden of Eden and the Tree of Life are on Earth in Africa?” excitedly I responded.

“Let me explain something to you,” he responded. “After Christ returned to Heaven, He created the New Heavens and the New Earth for the time when all of His followers would come to be with Him for eternity. The Tree of life had to be protected. So, God brought the Garden of Eden from Earth to the New Earth and the Tree of Life is now within the Holy City on Mt. Zion.”

“How do I get to the Holy City?”

Azriel answered, “To find the Holy City you go to Mount Zion which is about 15 days walk east of here. You will see the Holy City above the clouds on the eastern slope of Mt. Zion. Walk between the opening in the clouds and you will see the central eastern gate of the Holy City. There you will see the Cherub guarding the central eastern gate of the Holy City.”

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“What are Cherubs?” I asked.

“A Cherub is an Angel that has a special mission. The mission of the Cherub that you will see is to guard the central eastern gate of the Holy City. The Cherubs must be prepared to go to war with the Devil and his angels if the need arises. The Cherubs carry the sword of God,” Azriel explained.

The word sword really got my attention, but God’s sword must be the most powerful sword ever made, I thought. “What is the Sword of God?” I asked.

Azriel answered me by saying, “The Sword of God is made from a hard, transparent metal. The sword is blessed by God and when wielded by the Cherubs, it contains the power of God. When they raise the sword toward Heaven and bring it down with a swinging motion, the sword makes a loud humming sound. It is almost as though God is speaking through the sword as it is being used.”

Now I was really enjoying this conversation with Azriel. I wanted to know everything about God’s sword. So, I asked, “What type of metal is the sword made from?”

Azriel knew that I was finding comfort in this visit and that I was very interested in what he was telling me. So, he stayed a while longer and continued to answer my questions. He responded, “The Sword of God that is used by the Cherubs is made of transparent alumina. On the New Earth, transparent alumina is used in many ways. One way that it is used is for the building of tall structures.”

“You mentioned that I have a mission that our Lord wants me to accomplish. I am curious to know more about my mission. Can you please tell me the purpose of my mission?” I asked.

“Your mission will include traveling to the Holy City. There the Cherub at the central eastern gate to the Holy City will give you seven leaves which have

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been picked from the Tree of Life. You must take the seven leaves that you are given and return to this field within 30 days,” explained Azriel.

“How will I be able to keep track of 30 days on the New Earth? If I miss one day, I might fail my mission!” I said.

“I noticed that you have a backpack. Do you have materials for writing and making notes?” Azriel asked.

“Yes, I have a notebook and pencils,” I answered. “In fact I also have extra clothes and scissors in my backpack as well.”

“Now then, it is very important that you keep an accurate account of your daily activities in your notebook. You must keep a record of each passing day and number your days according to the time you spend here. So, 30 days from this day, you must be back in this field with the leaves,” Azriel said.

“Can you go with me on my mission, or can you find someone to accompany me? I really don’t want to go alone,” I said.

“No, this is your mission only and no one can go with you to help you,” Azriel responded. “You must accomplish everything on your own merit.”

“Why is that?” I asked.

Azriel then began explaining to me the stories of Daniel, David and Joseph from the Old Testament of the Bible. He reminded me that King Darius issued an edict whereby for 30 days everyone was to worship the King alone, on penalty of being thrown into a den of lions. Daniel ignored the order and went on praying to the Lord three times a day in front of his window, which faced in the direction of Jerusalem. His enemies reported this to the King, who cast Daniel into the den of lions. The entrance was blocked with a stone and the King’s seal was placed upon it. Early the next morning, the King, who had been pressured into placing Daniel into the den, hurried to the lions’ pit. To

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the King's delight Daniel emerged unscathed. Daniel told the King that God had sent his angel to shut the lions' mouths, and they did not hurt him. God could have spared Daniel from this ordeal but it was a test of Daniel's faith. Many who have heard Daniel's story have been saved.

Azriel continued, "Daniel's faith in God was tested and Daniel proved himself to be steadfast."

Azriel recounted the story of David saying, "Two armies faced each other across a narrow valley through which ran a brook. Neither side would risk an attack across the open ground and up the opposing slope. The Philistines produced a giant soldier from Gath called Goliath. He was clad in heavy brass armor, carrying a great sword and spear and preceded by a shield bearer. Goliath paraded daily between the lines, taunting the Israelites and challenging them to send out a champion against him."

"David bravely declared to the King that he, his servant, would go and fight with the Philistine. King Saul gazed at him in astonishment and brushed aside the idea. He told David that he was just a youth, while Goliath had been a man of war for many years. But David maintained that the Lord, who had helped him to single-handedly slay a lion and a bear, would also protect him against Goliath," explained Azriel.

"Moved by David's faith, Saul decided to let him try. He made David put on armor and a sword; but the boy discarded them, saying he had never worn them before. Instead, he went out equipped only with a staff, a sling, and his shepherd's pouch. Into this pouch, David placed five smooth stones that he had carefully selected from the brook. Goliath could hardly believe his eyes. Lumbering forward, he cried out mockingly that he would carve up the youth and feed his flesh to the birds and beasts. David's sharp tongue mocked the giant, while his nimble feet kept him well out of Goliath's reach. Waiting for the right moment, David hurled a stone from a sling and hit Goliath square in the forehead, so that he fell down stunned. Quick as a cat, David leapt towards Goliath and cut off his head with his own sword. God could have spared

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David from this ordeal but this was a test of David's faith. Many who have heard David's story have been saved," Azriel continued. "David's faith in God was tested and David proved himself to be steadfast."

Then Azriel recounted the story of Joseph saying, "The boy Joseph was pampered by his father, who made him a coat of many colors as a special mark of favor. His older brothers resented this favor and became jealous of Joseph. One day Jacob, his father, sent 17 year-old Joseph to locate his brothers. His brothers were pasturing the flocks and Jacob wished to have word of them. So, Joseph went out to search for his brothers and caught up with them. When they saw him coming, they conspired to get rid of him by telling their father that Joseph had been slain by a wild beast."

"His brothers left Joseph at the bottom of an empty well. Later, they sold him for 20 shekels of silver to a party of Ishmaelites on camels on their way to Egypt. Joseph's brothers dipped Joseph's coat in the blood of a kid and reported to his father that they had found the garment in a field, suggesting that Joseph had been torn to pieces by some wild animal."

"In Egypt, the young Joseph, in the course of time, showed such ability and diligence that he was given great authority. Sometime later, the land of Canaan was struck by crop failures and famine; and Jacob sent his sons to Egypt to buy corn. Joseph saw to it that his father, younger brother Benjamin, and his older brothers received food, even though he had been wronged by his older brothers and sold into slavery. God could have spared Joseph from this ordeal but many that have heard Joseph's story have been saved."

Azriel then said, "So, like Daniel, David, and Joseph you must do this mission yourself and remain steadfast, overcoming temptations and deceit. Your mission is a trial of your faith in our Lord."

"Will I get a ride or do I have to walk to the Holy City?" I asked, hoping to hear that my ride would be here shortly.

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Azriel responded, “No, you will have to walk to the Holy City and back. Other than within the cities there is no means of transportation on the New Earth. To travel for long distances on the New Earth the people, when they choose, travel as a spirit. By walking to the Holy City and back you will experience seeing the New Earth. Through recording your experiences each day, you will be able to relate your story to others on Earth. Our Lord would not have been tempted by Satan if He was never hungry and was never in the wilderness. Christ’s experience required physical endurance just as Daniel had to stay overnight in the lion’s den, David had to throw a stone to slay Goliath, and Joseph had to become a slave. Walking to the Holy City is part of your trial in order for you to complete your mission according to God’s will.”



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