



NAHUM THE CARPENTER, THE EIGHTH EPISTLE

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I should explain how the request to build wagons with seats on them came about. It all happened after the purchase of Yohanan and Miriamme's farm, about two miles outside of Jerusalem. Here is the story!

What was once Nahum's grandfather's little leather shop is now a multi-functional operation.

It all started with a visit by Isaac to Miriamme and Yohanan's. The elderly couple asked Isaac to invite Nahum and Ezra to come to their home for dinner on Friday.

Nahum and Ezra left early with Samuel and Ethan managing the shop. They rode their horses to see Yonanan and Miriamme.

Miriamme had prepared a sumptuous dinner and while the couple was certainly showing their age, they were both able to chat and converse very well.

After dinner, the couple surprised Nahum and Ezra when they presented them with a proposal that neither of them expected.

They told the men that they were now too old to run their farm and would like to sell it to Nahum and his son. They had two conditions, and they believed only Ezra could fulfill these conditions.

So, what are the conditions? Well, number one they wanted to be promised that the course piece of property at the east end of the farm, near the side road, would be the home of a future Christian Church.

Number two, they would like Ezra and Elizabeth to live in the main home and Yohanan and Miriamme would live in the small apartment. They would live separately, but wanted the security of knowing that someone was close by if/when needed. The amount they wanted for the farm was significantly less than the market value, partly because they had no heirs, but mainly because they wanted a Church built on their property.

Nahum and Ezra left with a promise they would return within three days with their answer.

When the two men reached town, they decided to meet with their wives immediately as this was a significant offer and affected all of them. They met at Nahums late into the evening.

The wives were more awe struck than the men! They could not believe they could be blessed with such a kind offer. They all agreed that Nahum should visit the Banker tomorrow morning to secure necessary credit and paper work.

The meeting with the Banker went well, Nahum had saved over the years and Ezra had received large gifts of money at their wedding. Also, Nahum was a respected businessman and member of the community so a small loan was no problem.

Nahum, Ruth, Ezra and Elizabeth returned to the couples home on Monday. Nahum said he would like to accept their offer and he had made arrangements with the Banker Man to transfer the funds into their account. Elizabeth startled the group when she stood and said she had another condition on the offer. Miriamme was quick to reply that the offer they had presented to Nahum was not open for dispute. But Elizabeth stood firm and said she insisted. Ok, Miriamme said what is it??

Elizabeth replied that the deal depended on Miriamme agreeing to teach Elizabeth how to cook and bake. The old woman jumped up and threw her arms around Elizabeth and said you will be my daughter. The deal was completed that night.

Now came the need to sell the old shop which was difficult for Nahum, because it had been handed down for four generations.

One day a well dressed man riding in an elaborate carriage stopped at the shop, looking for Nahum. His name was Jonathon; he was a very wealthy land developer who was looking for property to build an inn. He said he was talking to Banker Man who told him about Nahums shop being for sale.

He thought the site of the old shop was ideal as it was just off the main roadway and stood alone, not too close to any other buildings. Of course Nahum was anxious to sell, even though his heart was still aching about giving up his family property.

The discussions were very short, both parties agreed on a price and a closing date and both parties were happy!

Over the next six months a new shop was built with a modern, clean bright Medical Centre for Elizabeth.

One day just after the new shop opened a carriage stopped out front and Jonathon got out. Nahum welcomed him warmly and invited him for a tour.

Jonathon then said to Nahum and Ezra, within an hour a large wagon would be arriving with something for the new shop. A short time later a four horse team with a huge wagon arrived. The driver parked and two riders proceeded to climb up and open the load. They then dropped down two large crates. Inside was some furniture. Nahum and Ezra went over and shook Jonathon's hand and gave him a warm hug. Jonathon explained that when he was ordering furniture for his new inn, he thought you might like to have some new furniture for your office and lunch room. He added that he appreciated the honest way they had conducted the sale, and for the wonderful job Ezra had done on his lawns. He was very grateful.

While they were dismantling the crates Jonathon asked who the elderly couple was. When Ezra

explained he walked over and introduced himself. Yohanan was so in awe of the carriage that he could hardly speak. He finally said, Mister that is the most beautiful carriage I have ever seen!. Thank you Jonathon replied, would you like to see inside, oh please may we? With that the driver was instructed to show them.

Jonathon then went over and whispered in Ezra's ear. With a huge smile Ezra replied FOR SURE!!!!

When the couple got down Jonathon approached them and said, I am driving to my new inn to oversee the unloading of the wagon, and then I am returning home, would you like to join me? I will drop you off back here in about six hours. We can stop and have dinner on the way back.

The couple looked at each, neither one knowing what to say! They were both in such awe now. Finally Ezra said, ok let's go, I will join you, I can sit with the driver and you two can stay inside. Oh my, Miriamme replied, let us go home for a few minutes to put on nicer clothes. Both men smiled and said take your time!

A few minutes later they returned nicely attired in their best clothes and Miriamme brought along some fresh biscuits she had baked and some cold tea. They were both so excited to ride in such a luxurious carriage. It was a monumental day for the couple.

Elizabeth woke Ezra one early morning and said she was going into labour. Ezra called Miriamme from her sleep and the two of them helped Elizabeth deliver a healthy little boy. They said they would name him Paul, after the disciple Zeke had been working with. The grandparents were delighted.

A few weeks later a baptismal was held and the usual discussion by the grandparents took place with each pair claiming Paul looked like their side of the family. Elizabeth, Ezra and Miriamme all smiled to themselves. It was truly a happy gathering.

During the next year Nahum and Ezra had the good fortune to purchase a blacksmith shop from old friend Seth who wanted to retire and actually move not far from the new shop.

Nahum was always proud at how the ladies in his family could speak freely and be part of any and all discussions. When the discussion of the blacksmith shop came up Elizabeth and Ruth with support from Hannah, said the blacksmith shop should be a separate building away from the main shop and the clinic. Nahum and Ezra were surprised and proud of the ladies for speaking up and making a good point. It was agreed the blacksmith shop would be away from the clinic and downwind too.

The deal went smooth with Seth supervising the transition and relocation. While this was taking place

another friend mentioned to Ezra that his cousin was a blacksmith in Rome but wanted to return home. When Nahum and Ezra were interviewing the young man, Bartholomew or Bart, he asked if they had considered building wagons now that they had a blacksmith shop. They were surprised but said why are you asking? He said that a friend of his who worked at the same large plant in Rome, building wagons, was also looking to move back to the Jerusalem area.

It was not long after that Bartholomew, or Bart and his friend Ethan were members of the Nahum the Carpenter shop and they were now making sandals, repairing harness, fixing implements and building wagons! Much different to the shop of twenty years ago!.

When Joshua heard of this he was so anxious to see Nahum and ask him if he could order a new wagon. He ordered one for himself and two for neighbours. The wagon business had started.

John Thomas Percival continues working with wood and pondering about the early history of Christianity.

The [photo](#) shows, "The Forge of Vulcan," by Francesco Bassano the Younger, painted in the latter part of the 16th century.

