

The Bridge Builder

by

Rocky Fleming

In my allegory, *Journey to the Inner Chamber*, I illustrated the necessity of crossing the “bridge,” which was over an impassible moat, and thereby allowing us to enter God’s kingdom. There was no other way or means except to pass over this bridge. It was explained in the story that the *Bridge* represents Christ our Redeemer, and is an illustration of the necessity of our receiving Christ into our life by our belief in Him, and our request that He forgives us and enters our life. Jesus Himself said, “*I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*” The illustration of Him being the “*Bridge*” came from my Navigator exposure, where we trained people to use *The Bridge Illustration* as a way to share our faith and hope in Jesus Christ, and to help someone else understand the steps to have a relationship with God. Therefore, using a similar illustration was what came to my mind when I wrote the story. I would like to now build on that bridge illustration, or better said, go back to when God’s *Bridge* building project started, and when it was eventually opened for traffic to flow to His Kingdom.

Now to understand the concept of Jesus being the *Bridge*, we should understand that God’s plan to give us a way back to Him started on His side of the great chasm that separates us from Him. He began His divine architecture for the *Bridge* to mankind as many designers do, by explaining His plans to the people before construction began. He began His explanations through the prophets of old and other illustrations that connected His plan to send a *Master Bridge Builder* to construct the project. After the careful preparations through announcements were made through the prophets, the *Bridge* was started in a humble stable in a small town in Palestine. We know that Bethlehem was chosen to be where the *Bridge* building project began. In that humble town and stable, God the Father sent the *Master Bridge Builder* for laying the planks for a *Bridge* from Him to us. That is why I said the project started on God’s side of the *Bridge*, for it has always been His plan to make a way for us, and like Jesus said, *He is the way and the only way.*

Bridges take a lot of time to build, especially if they are designed to hold a lot of weight and must carry heavy loads. The *Bridge* the Father built to us using His Son Jesus as the builder for bridging the great divide, had to hold the entire weight of mankind, or at least all those who would choose to cross over it. Therefore, it took approximately thirty-three years to complete the job that began in that stable in Bethlehem. That is less than half an average lifetime. But, in Jesus’ case, it was His entire lifetime on earth.

When the first delivery of bridge building material was delivered in the form of a newborn baby who would be the builder of the bridge, it would have been hard to look at the baby Jesus in a manger full of animals and think that He would be able to accomplish much in life. After all, He started life in a dirty stable, and only a short while later He had to be taken to Egypt to escape death. This small package was totally vulnerable, and completely dependent on His mom and step-dad to get Him into adulthood.

They didn't have much going for them either, except the best thing. They were completely dependent on the Architect of the *Bridge* building project, and this made them highly qualified for their part in the project. Even though the world's value system would look at Jesus' circumstances and predict that no one from that humble life would be influential enough to accomplish what was required of Him with building the *Bridge*, He sure showed us by His life that it could be done. This gives me hope when I feel that my circumstances limit me, and that there is no hope for getting out or getting up. But, that is what the *Bridge Builder* has done for us. He gives us hope, and this hope in Christ is the first step for crossing the *Bridge* He built. He entered this world in Bethlehem, and the *Bridge Builder* began His construction project from that point.

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." John 1:14 (ESV)

Years pass from Jesus' first entry into the world as a baby. He grew in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man. Although we tend to think of Him simply growing up and into manhood, the fact is He was actually fulfilling His mission along the way with building the *Bridge* that the Father had designed. Remember, the *Bridge* would have to carry a heavy load, and it required of Jesus thirty-three years building it.

"And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man." Luke 2:52(ESV)

The *Bridge* building project took the length of time required, for it had to conform to the design of the Architect. Remember the prophets and their prophecies? All of those prophecies had to be fulfilled. The plan for redemption had been established almost from the time that mankind first agreed with Satan and chose to disobey God. That act by our forefather and foremother could have ended all hope for the rest of mankind, had God not created a deliberate, delicate, and detailed plan for getting us back to Him. His architecture of a *Bridge* gave us a way to return to Him, and the project began in the year 0001. He gave us a hope against all lost hope, and the process of restoration began that day, which we now celebrate as Christmas.

The delicate design of God's plan goes against any plan you and I would create. Would any of you have given up your own begotten Son to be a Sacrificial Lamb for our redemption? I wouldn't, nor would you. But God the Father did what was required. Now I do not fully comprehend the need for such a plan. I can only accept it, and thank God for it. I have no idea of a holiness that is so magnificent that I cannot be in the presence of it, and therefore require a *Bridge and Advocate* to make it possible for me? I am dumbfounded by God's ways, His love and the relationship with Him that I have been graced with. Why did the Father prepare the way with His prophets, unless it was to prepare our hearts for understanding the need for Jesus in our life? Do you understand your need for a Redeemer? Why did God design a plan for mankind before Jesus took His first breath as a human? Why did He work so diligently to help us see our need for Him before Jesus was sent to us? What about you? Is He timing His return in a similar manner for a similar

reason? Do you need to understand that He is holding out hope to the hopeless, and this might be you who needs to know this right now?

"The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance." 2 Peter 3:9 (ESV)

The *Master Bridge Builder* laid every plank needed over the chasm that separates mankind from our Holy God and Creator. The material He used for this *Bridge* was His obedience to the Father, His faithfulness, His servant leadership, His humility, and a demonstration of His power, while at the same time showing us His grace. He built on the work of the prophets as He fulfilled every one of their prophecies. He showed us what true goodness is. He taught us how to live, to laugh, to build relationships that last, and how to live a life of influence. He removed our burdens, and asked us to get in the yoke with Him so that we could walk in step with Him. He gave us an invitation to abide in Him. But, none of these things would be reality in our life without the final section of the *Bridge* that He laid, and which required His life. The construction of the *Bridge* back to the Father for the lost and separated world of mankind was opened for traffic when Jesus became the Sacrificial Lamb of God. With His life crucified and resurrected, He completed the final section of the *Bridge*, and it was opened for traffic to cross it. Another big thing He did? He not only created the *Bridge*, He also paid the crossing fee required to cross it. The crossing fee requires perfection, and He the *Master Bridge Builder*, paid this price with His life so that you and I can cross it. His perfection paid the cost of our imperfection. What a great deal for us!

May we celebrate the birth, the life, the purpose, and the great gift of Jesus who began His life on this earth the first Christmas. May His glory and His birthday be the reason we celebrate. Let us focus our celebration on Him, and the hope He has brought to us, for unto us, in the city of Bethlehem, was born a *Bridge Builder* ... to build a *Bridge* to reach you and me.

Merry Christmas,

