

Journey Through HIStory: God Meets Jacob in a Dream

Text: Genesis 28:10-22

Introduction:

Jacob had left Beersheba and traveled toward Haran to fulfill his father's charge to take a wife from Laban's daughters. As he was traveling, the Lord had met with him in a dream.

I. Jacob's Dream. – Gen. 28:10-17

- A. Jacob arrived at a certain place while on his way to Haran, and spent the night there using a stone that he got from the area as a pillow (which he used later as a pillar).
- B. He dreamed about a ladder that went to heaven which angels ascended and descended from.
- C. The Lord stood above him in the dream and spoke to him.
 1. It was the first time that God had **personally** met with Jacob and introduced Himself to him.
 - *"Jacob had no doubt heard about the great God who appeared to Abraham and to Isaac, but now this same God met Jacob in a personal way. This was a life-changing experience for Jacob."* ^[1] (David Guzik, *Jacob Flees from Esau*)
 2. God reiterated the promise that He gave to Abraham and Isaac to Jacob, including the Promised Land, numerous descendants, and the spiritual blessing for all the families of the earth through his descendants.
 3. God also **promised** Jacob to be with him, to protect him, to bring him back to Canaan, and to never leave him until His promise has been fulfilled.
- D. Jacob awoke and realized that He was in the presence of the Lord and thought that the place where he spent the night was the gateway to heaven.

II. Jacob's Vow. – Gen. 28:18-22

- A. Jacob got up early in the morning and took the stone he used as a pillow and set it up as a pillar, a **monument** to the vision in his dream and consecrated it.
- B. He named that place Bethel, "the house of God."
- C. He did those things as a **reminder** of his meeting with the Lord and His promise.
- D. Jacob made a vow:
 1. To:
 - i. Make the Lord his **God**.
 - ii. Make the stone he set up as a memorial God's house (a sacred place).
 - iii. Give a tenth to God of everything that God would give to him as offering.
 2. If:
 - i. God will be with him and keep him.
 - ii. God will give him food to eat and clothes to wear.
 - iii. God will **return** him to his father's house (in Canaan) in safety.

III. Spiritual Insights and Principles.

- A. Isaac's blessing Jacob with the "blessing of Abraham" was confirmed by God, **Himself**, in the dream that Jacob had.
 - The most important, blessing all the families of the earth through his descendants, had also been verified.
- B. God did not mention anything about their family fiasco concerning the birthright and the

blessing, and merely told Jacob about His promise that will be continued through him, just as He intended.

- Contrary to what others say, God is not **hung** up on our mistakes and failures.
- C. While God had met with Jacob in a specific place, God's presence cannot be limited to a certain area for He is **omnipresent**, therefore, we can come to Him anytime and commune with Him.
- **"How awesome is this place:** *From his unspiritual and perhaps superstitious perspective, Jacob put too much emphasis on a particular **place**. He didn't realize that if the presence of the LORD was not with him in **every** place, then God could never fulfill His promise to him."* ^[1]
- D. Commentaries on Jacob's vow:
1. *"Now Jacob is not really striking a bargain here with God saying, "well, if you do all this for me, then You'll be my God, I will serve You". "If" here is not in the indicative but in the subjunctive case. As in the New Testament when Satan came to Jesus and said, "If thou be the Son of God". Satan wasn't questioning the fact that He was the Son of God, but "if" is in the subjunctive case which should be translated "Since thou art the Son of God." It isn't indicative; it isn't questioning the deity of Christ in an indicative case but the declaration "Since thou art the Son of God."
And the same is true here in the case. He is saying actually, "And since God will be with me", believing the promise of God of the night before, "I will be with you wherever you go. I'm going to bless you. I'm going to bring you back". "And since God is going to do this for me, He will be my God". It is his declaration of commitment, of himself and of his life to God. And a promise to give a tenth of whatever God had blessed him with unto the Lord." ^[2] (Chuck Smith, Verse by Verse Study on Genesis 27-28)*
 2. *"His words are not to be considered as implying a doubt, far less as stating the condition or terms on which he would dedicate himself to God. Let "if" be changed into "since," and the language will appear a proper expression of Jacob's faith--an evidence of his having truly embraced the promise. How edifying often to meditate on Jacob at Beth-el." ^[3] (Robert Jamieson, Commentary on Genesis 28)*

Conclusion/Application:

Meeting personally with God in a vision was truly a magnificent thing, but the most important part of it were the **words** that the Lord had spoken to Jacob. God's promise tell of His faithfulness and character, which should give us comfort and assurance.

Today, we fellowship with God through the study of His written Word and acknowledge His presence as we commune with Him in prayer. All these have been made possible through our **access**, not a ladder extending all the way to heaven, but Jesus Christ in us.

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1. https://www.blueletterbible.org/comm/guzik_david/study-guide/genesis/genesis-28.cfm?a=28001
 2. https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/smith_chuck/c2000_Gen/Gen_027.cfm?a=28001
 3. https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/jfb/Gen/Gen_028.cfm?a=28001