

(Through the Bible) Genesis 27-28

by Chuck Smith

The sermon explores the themes of God's sovereign purposes, election, and the mistake of Jacob and Rebecca in trying to help God out in fulfilling His purpose.

Duration: 56:04

Scripture: Genesis 24:22-23, Genesis 24:30-31, Genesis 28:12-15, John 1:45-51, Hebrews 12:14-15

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of Isaac's servant finding a bride for Isaac. The servant prayed to God for a sign, and the sign was that the woman who offered to give water to his camels would be the chosen bride. Rebekah, the woman who fulfilled this sign, was given gold jewelry as a token of her selection. The preacher then transitions to the story of Jacob's dream, where he saw a ladder reaching to heaven. The preacher emphasizes that God is always present, even in the difficult and uncertain times of life. He also warns against using deceit or manipulation to accomplish God's work, highlighting the importance of genuine faith and trust in God's provision.

Transcript

Shall we turn now in our Bibles to Genesis chapter 27. Now it came to pass, when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dimmed so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son, and he said unto him, Behold, here am I. And he said, Behold, now I am old, I know not the day of my death. Now therefore, take, I pray thee, thy weapons, your quiver, your bow, go out in the field, and get me some venison, make me some savory, barbecued venison, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat, and my soul may bless thee before I die.

It is interesting that at this point, Isaac is becoming feeble, he's pretty much bedfast, he's blinded now, as the result of his age. He feels that death is approaching, but it is interesting that death does not come unto Isaac for many, many years. After this experience, Jacob had fled to Haran, spent 20 years there, came back, and Isaac was still alive.

And so, sometimes you think you've about had it, you think, I'm going fast, but, you know, don't give up, the Lord still allow you to hang on, and, you know, it is appointed unto us once to die, and after that, the judgment, but we don't always know the appointments of God. But indeed, I feel that it is tragic to be in the case of Isaac, to be an invalid for such a long period of time, that indeed is tragic. I think that death is not the worst thing that can happen to a person.

I think that when the body can no longer really function in its God-given manner and purpose, when the body can no longer really express me, what I am, here, confined to a bed, almost blind, or for all practical purposes, blind and all helpless, having to be waited on, and for the Spirit just to remain in the body is a hard thing. It's a hard thing upon the person that is lying there. It is a hard thing on the persons that have to take care of them.

And many times, in cases like this, as far as the person is concerned, much better to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord than to just have your spirit linger on in the body. Why does the spirit linger on? Why doesn't God release the spirit sooner from the body? I don't know. These are the things that are all in the hands of God.

It really isn't mine to question the ways of God. But here is a man that God loved. Here is a man that was a servant of God.

And yet, we find his body incapacitated. And yet, his life continuing for many, many years to come, in this state of semi-invalidism. And so, feeling that he's going to die, calls his son Esau, that he go out and get some venison, fix it, and spice it up and all like he liked it, and bring it to him that he might eat and give him the blessing.

Earlier, Esau cared nothing of the birthright. A profane man, not interested in spiritual things, not interested in the promises of God and the fulfillment of the promises of God. He could care less about the birthright.

But he is interested in the blessing. But the blessing really went with the birthright. The blessing came upon the eldest son.

But he had sold that position, the birthright. But still, he was desiring the blessing of his father. Now, indeed, it was the purpose of God that Jacob should receive the birthright.

And it was also the providence of God, the choice of God, that Jacob should receive the blessing. It is an interesting thing, before the twins were born, when they were striving, fighting with each other in Rebekah's womb. She could not figure out all the activity.

She prayed, and God said, There are two nations striving in your womb. They are diverse from each other. And before they were ever born, God said, And the elder shall serve the younger.

Now, this was declared of God before their birth, that the selection of Jacob might be of the sovereign purposes of God, rather than the deservings of man. God, knowing in advance their nature, their character. Knowing in advance Esau being a profane person, and being a materialist, and not really concerned with spiritual things.

Knowing before they were ever born, the attitudes of their lives. God chose Jacob over Esau. That it might be of election, by God's choice, and not by man's deservings.

Now, the election of God is something that is difficult for us to understand. It is really impossible for us to think as God thinks. I cannot think with that foreknowledge.

I just can't do it. God does. And thus, it's impossible for me to put my mind in God's mind to think as God thinks.

And thus, it's wrong for me to judge God for the way He thinks, because I can't even know how He thinks. Because when God thinks, or when God looks at a situation, He looks at it with this foreknowledge. Knowing already in advance what's going to be.

We don't know that. And thus, when we select someone, we don't know what the outcome is going to be. Say we have someone that comes in for a job interview.

Their resume looks great. It looks like, oh, they'd be just the right... And you hire them. And you go, oh my, this is great.

This is the employee we need. And they turn out to be just horrible. We've made the wrong selection.

Now, if we knew six months, what was going to be in six months, you know, when we hired them, we'd never have hired them. We never selected them. If we had the foreknowledge and knew what was going to happen, because we had selected them for this particular job, we would have never hired them in the first place.

But we don't have that kind of knowledge. And thus, we select, or we elect, and then we hope for the best. Last night, if Gossage would have had foreknowledge and known what that particular pitch that he elected to pitch to Baylor, or whatever was going to happen to it, do you think he'd ever elected that pitch? No.

He would have thrown it out of the park. He'd have rolled it into home plate or something. But you see, we don't know.

So, we think, well, this is what's best. And we fire it, and then, oh man, what a mistake. But God doesn't make mistakes.

Because God knows in advance what the result is going to be. And thus, He elects according to His foreknowledge. Now, if you had the capacity of foreknowledge, wouldn't it be rather stupid to elect a loser? If you had this kind of ability to think with foreknowledge, wouldn't it be sort of dumb to select someone you know is not going to make it? Of course it would be.

So, how can you fault God for the fact that He makes selections? Because He does it according to His foreknowledge. I can't think that way, and I really can't fault God, because He can think that way and makes His elections by His foreknowledge. So, God knew in advance concerning Esau, concerning Jacob.

And according to this advanced knowledge that God had, He selected that the elder should serve the younger, and that through the younger one, His promises for the nation and for the world should be fulfilled. Now, Jacob came to an awareness of this. Of course, his mother knew it before he was ever born.

Because she had prayed, and she said, God, what's going on inside of me? And God said, there are two nations, and He said, the elder should serve the younger. So, when Jacob came out second, she knew that Jacob was the one that God had selected for the blessings, and that the purposes of God would be accomplished through Jacob rather than Esau. Their mother knew that from their birth.

And knowing that, she favored Jacob. But Esau, not really caring about the spiritual things, manifested the very character and nature that God knew he had from the beginning, the reason why God rejected him. Now, Isaac's whole request, go out and get me some nice barbecued venison that I might bless you.

You know, the kind that I really love to eat. What a cheap basis for blessing. Just because this kid can hunt and get good barbecued meat, that's all that Isaac was really caring about.

He was going to give the blessing upon the basis of a savory meat. Where God wanted the blessing to go upon the basis of the purposes of God in the future. So, when Rebecca heard Isaac sending Esau out to get this venison, she called Jacob in.

And she said, now your dad has sent your brother out to get some venison and all. So quickly, get me a couple of goats and kill them and I'll fix the meat. I can barbecue that goat so it tastes just like venison.

Your dad won't know the difference. And you take it into him that you might receive the blessing. Now, notice that this whole deceptive scheme was coming from Rebecca.

But she was putting Jacob up to it. And Jacob objected and said, hey, there's so much difference. There were twins.

There's so much difference between us. They were fraternal instead of identical twins. And so much difference between us that he'll surely discover the fact that I'm not Esau.

That guy's so covered with hair. And if he calls me over to feel me, he'll see that I'm just smooth. And he's just covered with hair.

And we smell different and everything else. There's just no way we can pull it off. And she said, let me take care of that.

And she wrapped some of the goat fur around his arm and around his neck and covered him with dirt to give him an earthy smell. And so he carried in this barbecued goat that she had fixed to taste like venison. And he said, here, Father, I've got the venison for you that you might eat and bless me.

And he said, well, how come you got it so fast? And he said, well, the Lord was with me and the deer just came right across my path and as soon as it got out the door, then there it was and I got it. And he said, are you sure that that is you, my son Esau? And he said, yes, I'm Esau. He said, well, he says, come over here close to me.

And so Jacob went over close and the old man felled his arm and he held out that fur that he had tied around his arm. And he says, yeah, it's the voice of Jacob, but it's sure the hairy arm of Esau. And he ate the venison and he blessed Jacob.

Now, the thing is, was it God's will that Jacob received the blessing? Yes. Did Jacob and Rebecca know that it was God's will that Jacob received the blessing? Yes, they did. But they made a mistake.

And that is, they, knowing what God intended, endeavored to help God out in fulfilling His purpose. And thus went into the deception, which was a ploy of theirs to help God fulfill His will and fulfill His purpose. Why is it that we think that God can't do His work without our help? Why is it that we think that God is so dependent upon us to accomplish His purposes? Such is not the case.

God can accomplish His purposes apart from our help. God will accomplish His purposes apart from us if necessary. You remember when Esther was faced with that dangerous task of going in to her husband, the king, uninvited.

According to the laws of the Medes and the Persians, if she should go in without his asking for her to come, she would be grabbed by the guards and put to death unless he would raise his scepter to her. No one goes in to the king, not even his wife, unless the king has called for them. And to dare to come in to his court without being called, meant instant death unless the king himself at that moment would give you the reprieve by holding up his scepter.

And yet, the people of God were in danger of extermination by a foolish decree that the king had made. And Mordecai came to Esther and he said, look, perhaps God has brought you in to the kingdom for just a time as this or just an hour as this. In other words, maybe your whole life is going to be fulfilled in this one hour that God has brought you to this position just for this purpose.

She explained the difficulty, the law of the Medes and the Persians. He hasn't called me for a long time. I don't know if he's mad at me or whatever.

If I go in there and he doesn't raise his scepter up, my head is gone. It's all over for me. And Mordecai, I said to her, do you think that at this time you can all together escape the edict of the king? You're a Jewess too.

And he said, if you should fail at this time, their deliverance shall arise from another quarter. God will save his people. He's not going to let his people get wiped out.

If you fail, God is still not going to fail. But you, in your failure, will lose your own life. Sort of he who seeks to save his life will lose it.

He will lose his life for my sake, Jesus said, the same will find it. And Esther was in that very position. Mordecai, I said, look, don't think that you're going to escape this decree.

But if you at this time all together fail, their deliverance shall arise. He had that confidence that God will accomplish his purpose. Though you may fail, the purposes of God cannot fail.

But what happens is that you lose out the reward and the blessing that could be yours by being that instrument that God uses to accomplish His work. Now the work of God is going to be accomplished. What God has willed and purposed shall come to pass.

We can be the instruments through which it happens if we yield ourselves to God. He'll work through us. If we fail to yield ourselves, God will still do His work and yet we have lost the reward and the benefit and the joy of being the instrument.

But the work of God is never dependent upon our deception or our conniving or our scheming. We don't have to scheme and connive to get the work of God done. I look around today at people who are endeavoring to do the work of God.

And there are so many people who have great visions for what they can do for God. All they need is the money. And so they've gone into all kinds of schemes to raise money in order to do the work of God.

And when you read their letters the whole insinuation of the letter is here's a glorious work of God that is depending now upon you sending in your contribution. And if you fail, the work of God is not going to be done. And they really lay the heavy ones on you.

You've got to send it in. And here's the work of God and it can't be done unless you respond. If it's the true work of God it's going to be done.

If it is the true work of God then it is worth responding to but yet God is able to do His work independent. God is not dependent upon us ever. We are dependent on Him always.

So their mistake or their fault here was not a fault of not believing God nor was it a fault of not believing the purposes of God. They were both faithful. Believing God believing the purposes of God their mistake was thinking that God couldn't fulfill His purposes without their help.

I know what you want to do God and I just don't see how you can do it without my help. And so I get in there and I start scheming and conniving to help God get His work done. Never.

He doesn't need that kind of help. And so Jacob pulled it off and Esau blessed Jacob. Verse 26.

I mean Isaac. His father Isaac said unto him Come near now and kiss me my son. And he came near and he kissed his father and his father smelled the smell of his raiment.

Looking for that earthy smell. And he blessed him and said see the smell of my son is the smell of the field which the Lord has blessed. It smells like the outdoor fields.

Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven and of the fatness of the earth and plenty of corn and wine and let people serve thee and nations bow down to thee. Be Lord over your brethren and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee. Cursed be everyone that curseth thee and blessed be he that blesseth thee.

So somewhat the blessing that God had pronounced upon Abraham is passed on to him. That is the blessing upon those that would bless him, the curse upon those that would curse him. But giving to him the fatness of the earth, prosperity and servants.

And it came to pass as soon as Isaac had made an end of the blessing of Jacob and Jacob was scarcely gone out from the presence of his father, that he saw his brother came in from his hunting. And he also had made the savory meat. He brought it to his father and he said unto his father, let my father arise and eat of his son's venison that thy soul may bless me.

And Isaac, his father, said unto him, who are you? And he said, well, I'm your son, your firstborn Esau. And Isaac trembled very exceedingly. He began to shake.

He said, who and where is he that has taken the venison and brought it to me and I have eaten all of it before you came and I have blessed him. Yes, he shall be blessed. And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry and said unto his father, bless me, even me also, O my father.

And he said, thy brother came with subtlety and he has taken away your blessing. And he said, is he not rightly called heel catcher? For he hath supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright and behold, now he has taken away my blessing.

And he said, haven't you reserved a blessing for me? And Isaac answered and said to Esau, behold, I have made him thy lord. And all of his brothers have I given to him for servants. And with corn and wine have I sustained him.

And what shall I do now unto thee, my son? And Esau said unto his father, have you not but one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice and wept. Now in Hebrews, the 12th chapter, as we deal with the men of faith in the Old Testament, this particular incident is brought into view.

In verse 16 and 17 of chapter 12, where he's talking about the men of faith in the Old Testament. Actually going back to verse 13 is where the, well 12, we're not, 11 is men of faith, 12 is getting into the chastening of the Lord. And he tells us to follow peace, verse 14, with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you and thereby many be defiled. Now be careful about yourself. Follow after peace with all men.

Don't allow bitterness to fill your heart. Any root of bitterness coming in will trouble you and will defile many people around you. Lest there be any fornicator or profane person as Esau, who for one morsel of meal sold his birthright.

For ye know how that afterward when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears. Now, he sought what carefully? Not repentance. He wasn't crying here repentant tears at all.

What was he crying about? He was crying about the loss of the blessing. Many people get confused. They think, oh poor Esau, he tried to repent and he was crying you know in repentance and he couldn't find a place of repentance, though he sought repentance with tears.

No, he never did seek repentance. What he was seeking was the blessing and what he was crying about was the fact that there was no blessing for him. Had he really repented, then God surely would have done something for him.

God has said that a broken and a contrite spirit, he will not turn away. No man has yet truly repented before God, but what God did not accept him and bless him. But his was not the repentance at all, nor tears of repentance.

And don't get confused thinking, oh the poor guy was just there weeping before God and crying out in repentance, but he couldn't receive it. No, that's not so. You read the story here and the tears were not at all tears of repentance.

Actually, they were tears of anger. They were tears of bitterness. They were tears of a lost blessing that he was desiring.

He really didn't seek spiritual things. He wasn't really seeking God. He was only seeking the blessing of his father and when it was gone, when his brother had taken it, his tears were tears of bitterness, anger, hatred against his brother, but not at all tears of repentance.

There was no place of repentance and that's what the scripture is saying. He didn't really repent at all. There was no change of Esau's heart.

Only a weeping over the fact that he had lost the blessing. And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth and the dew of heaven from above. And by thy

sword shalt thou live and shalt serve thy brother and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.

And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him and Esau said in his heart, The days for mourning for my father are at hand and then will I slay my brother. My dad's soon going to die and as soon as he does, I'm going to kill that brother of mine. Didn't want to do it while his dad was alive because his dad might curse him.

So I'll wait till dad is dead and then I'm going to kill him. Notice the bitterness. This is what Hebrews is warning about.

Lest any root of bitterness. The profane person Esau. He became very embittered over this.

A root of bitterness defiling him. Now this hatred of Esau's descendants for Israel continued. Esau became the father of the Edomites and there was a great hostility through history of the Edomites against the Israelites.

Many times the Edomites sought to invade the land of Israel when the Israelites were coming out of Egypt and needed to pass through the land of the Edomites. The king of Edom met them with his armies and prohibited their passage through the land. The Edomites of course have since passed off of the scene.

The last Edomite that we know is Herod. King Herod of Adamia and his family and there ended the Edomite race. But of course God has preserved Israel to the present time.

Now this threat of Esau was heard by his mother Rebekah and so she called Jacob and she said unto him behold your brother Esau is comforting himself in the thought that he's going to kill you. He's just finding comfort in that right now. He's really mad he's really bitter and he's just comforting himself by his intention to kill you.

Therefore she said obey my voice. Arise and flee to Laban my brother to Haran and tarry with him for a few days until your brother's fury is turned away. Until your brother's anger turns away from you and he forget that which was done to him then will I send and fetch thee from there for why should I be deprived of you both in one day.

And Rebekah said unto Isaac I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth. If Jacob takes a wife from one of these wild girls around here then what good is my life going to be to me. And so she's setting things up so that Isaac will send Jacob away in peace.

Saying that these daughters in law were just really a real vexation and a problem and all and she wanted her son Jacob to go and get a wife from her own family. Now somehow it takes away a little bit from the romance of the story as it goes to realize that at this point Jacob was about 70 years old. Getting ready to run away from home.

But these patriarchs were living to twice the age which is normal today. So you have to really sort of cut the age factor in half. In order that you might totally understand the virility and all of the person at 70 years because they lived to 140 150 years old.

Thus 70 years wasn't really that old to them at that time. But it does sort of throw a different light on the whole thing. You don't picture some teenage kid running off from home at this stage.

He was close to 70 years old. Rebecca said stay there for a few days until your brother's anger has subsided. But Esau did not cool off in a hurry for word never did come to Jacob from his mother to come home because as Jacob was gone, his mother died.

And so he never saw his mother again. Unfortunately and of course the sad byproduct of this bit of deception that they had connived together in is that the mother was deprived of ever seeing her son whom she loved, Jacob, again. She died while Jacob was in Haran.

Now, if you remember the story earlier when the servant had gone to Haran to get a bride for Isaac that Rebecca came out to the well and he said give me a drink and she said sure and I'll get water for your camels too and that was the little thing that he had set up that he would know the will of God for you know the one who was to be the bride of Isaac and how the servant explained this whole thing and he gave to her a gold nose ring and a couple of golden bracelets and she ran home and said oh one of Abraham's servants is here and he's looking you know for, well they didn't know what his purpose was but he's just here and he's visiting and he's got a lot of camels and she showed the gold earrings and the golden nose ring and Laban her brother came running out to meet him and said oh

come stay at our house Laban seeing the gold he was attracted to this and was a very gracious host and all and Laban was active in the negotiations to send Rebecca back she was his sister and so he is the uncle of Jacob and it's important that you sort of fix that relationship in your mind as we move along now in the story Laban is the brother of Jacob's mother the brother of Rebecca and he will be coming soon into our scene so Isaac called Jacob and he blessed him and he charged him and he said unto him thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan arise and go to Pananaram to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father and take thee a wife from there of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother now evidently they were able to keep some kind of a communication perhaps by the

caravans that would travel you give a letter and it would be carried and they would probably deliver mail back and forth because he knew that Laban had had some daughters at this point so you go back and take one of Laban's daughters for your wife and God almighty bless thee and make thee fruitful and multiply thee that you may be a multitude of people and so actually he is continuing now to bless Jacob even giving further blessing the blessing of God upon thee the fruitfulness and becoming a multitude of people and give thee the blessing of Abraham to thee and to thy seed with them that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger which God gave unto Abraham so notice that now Isaac is adding to the previous blessing adding unto Jacob the blessings that God had given unto

Abraham and unto Jacob and his seed this land that God had promised unto Abraham and so there is an extension of the earlier blessing where when Esau said isn't there anything left Jacob couldn't think of anything but now I mean Isaac couldn't think of anything but now when Jacob comes before him there is the added blessing the blessing of Abraham to be passed upon to Jacob and his descendants and Isaac sent Jacob away and he went to Pananarim unto Laban the son of Bethuel the Syrian the brother of Rebekah Jacob and Esau's mother and when Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to take a wife from Pananarim and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge saying you will not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan and that Jacob obeyed his father and mother and was gone to

Pananarim and Esau seeing that the daughters of Canaan did not please Isaac his father then went Esau to Ishmael and took unto the wives which he had Mahalat the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son the sister of Nebajah to be his wife so realizing that his two wives were not pleasing to his parents he took a

third wife and this one from the descendants of Ishmael who were of course Abraham's descendants through Hagar the handmaiden now Jacob went out from Beersheba and he went towards Haran and he lighted upon a certain place and tarried there all night because the sun was set and he took the stones of the place put them for his pillows and he laid down in that place to sleep and he dreamed and behold he saw a ladder set upon the earth and the top of it reached to heaven and behold the

angels of God were ascending and descending on it and behold the Lord stood above it and said I am Jehovah God of Abraham thy father and the God of Isaac and the land where you lie to thee will I give it and to thy seed and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth and you shall spread abroad to the west to the east to the north to the south and in thee and in thy seed seed singular there shall all the families of the earth be blessed and behold I am with thee and will keep thee in all places whether thou goest and will bring thee again into this land for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of so he's had a hard journey traveling to Bethel some 30 miles or so from the area around Beersheba a little more than that 35 miles tired he gets to this rocky

wilderness barren area he's tired the sun is going down put some rocks together for a pillow and he goes to sleep and he starts to dream an interesting dream indeed a ladder from earth reaching up into heaven the angels of God are ascending and descending and the Lord is standing above and the Lord talks to him and the Lord promises to give him first of all the area where he's lying promises to bless him promises to go with him promises to give to the north, east, south and west the land unto his seed and so the Lord is actually repeating unto Jacob the promises that he made to Abraham and then in verse 15 and behold I am with thee and will keep thee in all places whether you go now he didn't know where he was going at this point except back to Haran but he really didn't know where it was

or anything else about it I will bring thee again into this land I will not leave thee until I have done all that I have spoken to thee about so here this dream of Jacob could very well have been prompted by his lying there under this starry sky looking up into the heavens and thinking well God is up there somewhere as we so often think as we look up into the starlit sky well God dwells in heaven but you know if you think of God dwelling in heaven it seems like sometimes God is very far off there's something about looking up in the desert skies that brings almost a consciousness of not the nearness but the distance of God as we have come to a knowledge of the vastness of our universe and somehow through the heavens there is a consciousness of the unapproachableness of God because he is so

vast his universe is so vast you see looking up into the heavens gives to us a true awareness and a consciousness of our self I'm so nothing I'm so small when I think of the universe oh man what am I when I think and compare myself to the universe one of the smaller planets around one of the small stars in a small corner of the vast Milky Way galaxy which has a billion stars in it but the Milky Way galaxy is just one of the galaxies of the billions of galaxies out there in space when Joel was looking at the heavens he came to an awareness not of the nearness of God but of how far God was and how unapproachable God was so that when his friend said hey if you'll just make peace with God everything will be okay buddy he says thanks a lot but how am I going to make peace with God he's so vast

I look up in the heavens and he's so great who am I that I can stand before God and plead my cause so though the heavens make us aware of the glory of God and the power of God and the greatness of God somehow the viewing of the heavens makes us feel distant from God as though God is dwelling there in the heavens and here am I the insignificant little me down here on this little planet earth and I'm so insignificant among those that dwell upon the planet earth and thus looking at heaven always makes us

feel that need of some help in reaching God when Job looked at the heavens and realized the vastness of God and saw how nothing he was he said I need someone to stand between us who will lay his hand on us both God's too vast I can't reach him I'm too small I can't touch him I need someone

who would go between and lay his hand on God and lay his hand on me the vastness between God and myself is too great it can't be bridged and as Jacob was lying there and looking up and thinking about God and thinking about his life perhaps when in his heart there came that desire to reach God but how can you reach God the universe is so vast and so when he went to sleep from his subconscious there came forth a concept on how to reach God a ladder that would reach up into heaven and so he dreamed of a ladder and it was reaching up into heaven and the angels of God were ascending and descending on this ladder alright climb a ladder and the Lord stood above the ladder and began to speak to him as we turn to the New Testament and we find Philip coming to Nathanael and saying behold we have

found the Messiah Jesus of Nazareth Nathanael said can any good thing come out of Nazareth Philip said well come and see and when Nathanael came to Jesus Jesus said well it's nice to meet an Israelite in whom there is no guile then he said how did you know me and he said well when you were over under the fig tree and Philip called you I saw you there well he knew that Jesus was nowhere around and he said truly you are the Messiah the King of Israel and Jesus said you believe that just because I told you I saw you under the fig tree you stick around you're going to see a lot more than that for from henceforth you are going to see the heavens open and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man what is Jesus saying I have come to be the ladder whereby man can reach heaven

whereby man can come to God the ladder of Jacob's dream was none other than Jesus Christ he is the access whereby man can come to God and so Jacob saw it he saw it in a dream and when he awoke from his dream verse 16 he said surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not when I came here last night and was so tired and kicked those rocks together for a pillow and lay down I didn't know God was here I felt so far away from God as I looked up in the sky and I thought oh God you're so far away but God isn't far away he's in this place right here in this place of testing in the place of barrenness the rocky places of life God is there those hard places of life God is there those uncertain places of life God is there when the future seems to be so clouded and you don't know which way to go

God is there surely the Lord is in this place he's not in heaven only he's in this place and it is so important for us that we become aware of the presence of God that we come into this consciousness of the presence of God that truly the Lord is in this place I don't care what that place may be a place of discouragement a place of defeat a place of hopelessness a place of despair God is there learn to recognize the presence of God it will change a place of barrenness and defeat into an altar into a place of worship as you become presence aware of the presence of God it will dispel the fear and it becomes now a place of confidence rather than uncertainty surely the Lord is in this place notice he didn't say the Lord was in this place last night the Lord came down here and was in this place

his consciousness was a now a prevailing attitude the Lord is in this place I don't see the ladder right now I don't see the Lord standing but he's here I know he's here the Lord is in this place and again he said I knew it not I know it now the Lord is in this place I know it now I knew it not last night I didn't know it but now I do I knew it not and he was afraid and he said how awesome is this place this is none other than the house of God this is the gate to heaven and Jacob rose up early in the morning and he took the stone that he had put for his pillows and he set it up for a pillar and he poured oil on the top of it and he called the name of the place the house of God because it used to be called Luz that city at the first so he made the

pillar poured oil on it the place of

barrenness the place of despair hopelessness became an altar unto the Lord a place where he became aware and conscious of the presence of God and Jacob vowed a vow saying if God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go and will give me bread to eat and clothes to wear so that I come again to my father's house in peace then shall Jehovah be my God and this stone which I have set for a pillar shall be God's house and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee now Jacob is not really striking a bargain here with God saying well if you'll 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 the 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

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