

Lessons in the Life of Jacob

by Don Courville

The sermon teaches the importance of trusting in God's sovereignty and submitting to His plan, even when it is difficult or unclear.

Duration: 1:10:11

Scripture: Genesis 28:13

Topics: "Gods Presence", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

This sermon focuses on Jacob's encounter with God at Bethel, highlighting the pillars God builds in his life for leadership: the presence of God, protection, preservation, and the promise of God's continual presence. Jacob's response includes reverence, worship, and making his first vow, signifying a life of grace and learning to be under God's authority. The importance of encountering God, making vows, and relying on God's grace in the midst of life's challenges is emphasized.

Transcript

Let's pray. Our Father, we're back again, and I ask that the Spirit of God would take the Word of God and teach us some more truths. There's so much on this subject, Father, it's a huge subject, and we're just on the footers, really, and then building foundation on that, and you have given so much light to draw out in these principles in the New Testament that we really haven't even gone over and gone through.

You've given us Ephesians 6 about the armor, powerful truths, and now we ask again that you would be glorified, that you would rebuke and bind any spirits hanging around here. If there are any, I'll just invite all of you to go to the presence of Jesus Christ and go where he tells you to go, and Lord, just send them to the pit. We don't need them.

I'll replace your spirits. We thank you that in Christ, we're seated with Christ in the heavenlies, and that you've given us verses like, greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world, and we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. And so, in the name of Jesus, we lift up our families, our loved ones.

Some of us have deep trials, rebellious young people that the enemy has been given ground, and he's certainly taken advantage, but Lord, we stand now for our families, our children, grandchildren, and just ask you to have mercy and rebuke the enemy away from them right now. You said we're two and three are gathered together, and we're quite a few more than that, and so, Father, we believe that right now in the

name of Jesus, the power of the spirit of God is working to rebuke the enemy away and to turn the hearts of the rebels back to you. You know, we cry some of us, Lord.

We bleed some of us, and we thank you now for the victory. Thanks be to God, which gives us a victory in Jesus' name. Amen.

Another thing from Ganahl, January 3rd, head and heart. He who has only a nodding acquaintance with the king, may easily be persuaded to change his allegiance or will at least try to remain neutral in the face of treason. Some professing Christians have only a passing acquaintance with the gospel.

They can hardly give an account of what they hope for or whom they hope in, and if they have some principles they talk, take kindly to, they're so unsettled that every wind blows them away like loose tiles from a housetop. When Satan buffets and temptation washes over you like a tidal wave, you must cling to God's truths. They are your shelter in every raging storm, but you must have them on hand, ready to use.

Do not wait until it is sinking to patch the boat. A feeble commitment has little hope of safety when caught in a tempest. While that flounders and drowns, holy determination grounded in the Lord will lift up its head like a rock in the midst of the highest waves.

Supreme scripture promises that people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits, Daniel 11 32. An angel told Daniel which men would stand and be counted for God when tempted and persecuted by Antiochus. Some would be taken in by the bribery of corrupt men, others would fall victim to intimidation and threats, but a few who were firmly grounded in the attendance of their faith would do great things for God.

That is to say, to flatteries they would be incorruptible and to power and force unconquerable. Head knowledge of the things of Christ is not enough. This following Christ is primarily a matter of the heart.

If your heart is not fixed in its purpose, your principles as good as they may be will hang loose and be of no more use in the heat of battle than an ill-strung bow. Half-hearted resolve will not venture much nor far for Christ. Well, we'll continue on.

I hope you're not getting bored with all this. It's a little frustrating for me. I have this one little notebook, but I've got about a half a dozen and the others have a lot more material in it than this.

I've been a little anxious to get over to some more stuff, but I felt like in praying, God wanted me to go through the foundational work. Now we don't have to talk so much about Obu, who he represents, so much we understand some of those things. Now we're going to see a lot of this is working behind the scenes.

You can draw out a lot of these principles in the New Testament that the Apostle Paul really understood in the spiritual warfare. Job didn't go focusing on the enemy. He was too busy with his friends, really, but he was focused on God and himself and getting into more and more of self.

The more he had to defend himself, which is a real trap of the enemy, the Lord says, vengeance is mine. I will repay. And if he'd just been quiet, which they did pretty good for the first seven days, then they began to assume some things about Job that were not right.

And God's assuming things about, or Job's assuming things about God that's not right. Well, I'm going to take off now on Jacob and again, I'm glad you know a lot about this. I got a little confused on the wells.

I think I repeated one on some of my notes. The title of this one is Lessons in the Life of Jacob. It's going to make a hard decision.

I'm going to be back over around in Genesis 25. We have promises given 19 through 23, which I will mention again, we've already talked about this. There's a battle going on in the womb of Rebekah.

And the Bible says in 21, Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife because she was barren and the Lord was entreated of him and Rebekah, his wife conceived and the children struggled together within her. And she said, if it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the Lord and the Lord said unto her, two nations are in thy womb and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels. And the one people shall be stronger than the other people and the elder shall serve the younger.

Now I'm assuming that Isaac knew about that. Maybe he didn't, but I think it was very clear to Isaac that the elder was to serve the younger. And so whenever we try to reverse God's order for things in our life, we have problems.

And so here we go into the soup deal with Jacob. We know the story. Esau's a hunter and Jacob is more of a domestic man and Isaac is hungry.

So he calls in Esau to make him some of the venison soup that he loves. Rebekah hears about it and says, uh-oh, Isaac's going to give Esau the blessing. Now God has already established that the elder shall serve the younger.

This is not supposed to be. Now Esau had by right the birthright and I'll talk about some of these things. And so we're going to get some principles on this.

Jacob, I believe, was born to be a leader. He was born to be Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, one of the three that we call. You go over to Hebron, there's a grave there and in there is Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

I've stood there and looked at those graves, the old green tapestries. You might have a hard time getting in there now. I think they've done some more buildings over it, but that was a long time ago, back in 1968.

And so he was buried there. He was buried with Abraham and Isaac and God meant him to be a leader. And he's going to go through a process to get there.

And we're going to learn some principles. God wanted him to be a winner, to be an overcomer. And in Christ, that's what God wants us to be, 1 John chapter 5. And so here's some things.

I'll just list some things here. Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of soup and the double portion of all was to go with the birthright. Esau was a low profane fella.

He had no altars in his life that we know of. Hebrew 12, 16 says he was profane. He was a profane person.

He had no zeal for the Lord that we know of, no desire or affinity to God that we can see. But in this birthright, there was the double portion and there was the dignity that went to it and the authority, the power, and the spiritual heritage of the family. He was to become basically the priest over the family.

And so God in his foresight could see that wasn't going to work out with Esau. So he said Jacob needed to have it. And so we get into some interesting things in this.

One of the reasons Jacob's life is important because 40% of the book of Genesis covers his life. 40% of it covers his life. So the foundation of the future, the rest of the Bible, 40% of Genesis, which is a very important book, there's some things here that we might need to learn.

Somewhere along the line, I picked up this statement from Hudson Taylor. I don't know where he got it, but God always gives his best to those who leave the choice to him. So Jacob's going to give us some lessons and choices and making decisions, and he's going to get into some tight places here.

Now, the birthright, this position of authority, what's so special about it? It was nothing to Esau. He was just a, he was a rough mountain type guy. And so the birthright was his and Jacob's going to take it to him.

But the blessing is something else that Isaac's going to give to him. So Jacob, I've understood that he really didn't have a right to take that birthright from him. He, so he, you see, he tricked him.

He didn't really trick him. He just, you know, made a financial deal with him, a fraudulent deal. But he's going to pay a high price for all the things he tries to get for himself and not let God give him.

God always gives his best to those who leave the choice to him. So he said, hey, this is a good deal. You know, I can get his birthright from him.

He doesn't care about it anymore anyway. And then he's going to take the blessing away, which Isaac was going to give to Esau, and he'd been told that he's not supposed to do that. So we got problems, and we'll list these things as we go along.

And he had basically a 20-year vacation away from his brother. Now, a principle here, carnal methods never achieve spiritual goals. Even though there are some things that needed to be done and be done right, it didn't necessarily give Jacob the right to do it.

It's best let God do it, and many times it looks impossible. And like, you know, Abraham and Sarah, it doesn't look like we're going to have a child. I got Plan B over here.

Plan Bs don't really do too good. And here's another principle. Even though he messes up so much, and this is good, grace is going to cover him.

God's grace is going to cover him until he makes it right with Esau 20 years later. And he gets down there with Laban. We're going to look at those things later on, and he has a lot of fun there with Laban.

So moving into spiritual authority, here's a principle. Moving into spiritual authority without proper spiritual authority's blessing usually doesn't work. I've seen a lot of men, I've worked with a lot of pastors, travel around the country, a lot of different places.

I see a lot of times those that have established themselves up as an authority, it doesn't work. For one thing, they are to be qualified. And the Bible teaches that a man that's going to be in a position of eldership or whatever is to be proved.

There's a reason for that. And so there's to be a submission to authority, so authority can establish and recognize you in that area. And I'm not necessarily behind all the ways of man and doing that kind of stuff,

but grace will cover him.

And I've got another question. Maybe you can help me on some of this. Did Rebecca talk to Isaac before she decided to make her decision? Did she check with her husband? I would probably assume, maybe you too.

Nope. She's going to do it herself. Another woman fixing a deal here.

How many deals can we get into? Two wrongs don't make a right. And so what we're going to actually see is wrong to wrong to wrong to wrong. Two wrongs just don't make a right.

Just like years ago, I heard a pastor share a story. He was in the church. He was a pastor in a large church, and he had a Chinese couple in there, and they had a baby.

And he's up there looking through the window at this baby, and the father's there. He's all lit up and got this new little baby, and the pastor turns to Mr. Wong. He says, Mr. Wong, is your baby okay? Well, yes, pastor.

What's wrong? Well, look, he's sort of all yellow. And Mr. Wong, he looked at the pastor. He said, Mr. Pastor, you ever heard of two wrongs making a white? So our two wrongs are not going to make a right or a white.

And so what we have many times is we have a wrong, then we do another wrong to try to fix the other wrong, and then we'll maybe have another wrong about it. So we're going to learn some things and maybe pick up a key principle as we go along. Here's an interesting thing.

Why didn't God reprove Jacob for his deception? Why didn't God reprove Isaac for his fixing to do what he was going to do? There's a principle here that maybe we ought to go over to Jeremiah in chapter 2 in verse 19 and see that this works. Many times I believe God doesn't have to do anything because what we did is going to be punishment enough to what we've done. You ever get yourself in a jam? You know? Oh, Lord, how did I get into this? Would you help me out? Would you help me out? I went into a church one time to help them out.

I was only there eight months, but I went in there to help them out. And I got in there and a guy there said, this is my dad's church. And I said, oh, okay, I took that.

And then somebody in the community, I met another man, that's so-and-so's church. Oh, I thought it was supposed to be the Lord's church, but we'll find out. And sure enough, it was his church.

And I ended up getting thrown out. But this is the thing. What we do, and the church had actually shut down, and I was asked to come in and help them out and stuff.

And so I said, Lord, I'm in trouble. How can you be the Lord of the church? And this guy wants to control and do everything his way. It's got to be done his way.

It's his way or the highway type of thing. And I'm trying to obey you, and he wants me to obey him, which doesn't work out too good. Would you show me the way out? And so I'd go to the deer stand out in the woods, and I'll just pray and get prayed up and come in and preach.

And he'd sit there and just sort of jerk and stuff. And God was working. We saw souls getting saved, people coming in.

And I mean, we had a lot of people one time. He just come up and said, would you just leave? I said, well, sure. It's your church anyway.

I don't know what happened after I left. They're still going. But God dealt with him because I left it to God.

I didn't try to fight with him or whatever. And here's the principle. Thine own wickedness shall correct thee in thy backsliding shall reprove thee.

Know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter that thou has forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of hosts. Now what happened there, it happened a long time ago. And since then I've learned, I've had to try to learn this lesson again.

But my own self-will, my wickedness, shall correct me, and my backsliding shall reprove me. Know therefore, God is saying, see that it's an evil thing and bitter that thou has forsaken the Lord thy God. Now this is a serious thing with Israel, but we just talked about, Lord, would you guide me? Would you give me direction or whatever? I hope it's what I want to do.

Because really, if it's not what I want to do, I'm going to go ahead and do it anyway. You ever do that? Okay. If we're in the same boat, then we'll sink together here.

So the correction, and the chastening, and the instructing, the backsliding, and going into apostasy, and all this stuff comes from us trying to have it our way. Now, what I see in this is Isaac almost failed. He was going to give the blessing to the wrong guy.

He almost failed. And the scripture said, the elder shall serve the other. And I want you to look at 2733.

Get back over to Genesis. And I want to show you something about Isaac. 2733, after he'd, if I've got it right here, in 32, let's do this.

And Isaac, his father, said unto him, who art thou? And he said, I am thy son, thy firstborn Esau. And all of a sudden he realized he gave the blessing to Jacob. And what did he do? The scripture says, and Isaac trembled very exceedingly and said, who, where is he that had taken the venison and brought it to me? I'm taking that of trembling.

Maybe you never even thought about this, but I'm taking it this, it's a shuddering, it's a quaking from the Hebrew. It's used in 42, 28, their heart failed him. In Exodus 19, 16, the same word is used.

The people that were in the camp trembled. I mean, it just starts shaking. And I am just wondering if he all of a sudden realized that he almost made a big, bad mistake.

Now maybe just assuming that on him, but all of a sudden, maybe the light is coming on that he almost made a real big mistake against God. And basically after this time, I think for, I don't know, 50 years, he's, Isaac just sort of goes off the scene. You don't hear much more about him until the death after they get Jacob sent off.

So I just wonder if he realized that God was overruling in this situation. Here's a principle. Somebody said this, neither Isaac's will, nor Esau's pleading, nor Rebecca's scheming, nor Jacob's deceiving could defeat

the purpose of Jehovah.

Man proposes, but God disposes. God is going to get it his way because it's the best way. So no matter how bad we mess up on something, we're going to suffer the consequences, but God's going to keep on moving ahead.

And so he's going to work in this situation. This is actually what you could call a real family mess. You ever seen one of those? He said, yeah, I got one.

Yeah, this is a real family mess. And we're going to see the grace of God working. So we're going to look at some lessons on this.

It's maybe not really highly organized. But Esau, again, in Hebrews 12, 16, 17, 15, he failed. He fell short.

Maybe I ought to go back over that because of the testimony about him. We have a man that God has chosen to be a patriarch. And we have Esau, his brother, who could care less about anything spiritual.

And so Hebrews 12, 15, again, we come back to Esau. And hey, he didn't sort of want that blessing, didn't he? Because then he goes to pleading with his dad to give. And so his dad does give him a blessing, but not the blessing.

He was so low, he sold his birthright. And then he thought he's still going to get the blessing to be over everything. And so here's, it describes him in Hebrews 12, 15, and he's pleading and begging.

And the word of God says, look indeligerly, lest any man fail of the grace of God. Esau failed of the grace of God. Lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you and thereby many be defiled.

Lest there be any fornicator or profane person as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. And then 17, for you know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected, but he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears. I didn't understand that for years until finally this was brought to light that Isaac would not repent and change his mind and give him the blessing.

He wasn't interested in repenting. He was not a repentor. He was just a profane person, but he wanted his dad to turn that around.

And I believe Isaac knew what he did was overruled by God. And he gave the blessing to the right man. And so he was profane.

That's a word for wicked. That's a, that's a word for wicked. So choices, the choices.

Now, Rebecca, she initiated Jacob's deception. And she said, what? If things don't work out, my wrong, your wrong that you do is going to be upon me. And it was upon her.

But the deception that was there, I've often, this is one of the things I want to know when I get to heaven. I said, Lord, what would you have done? Because Isaac was fixing to give the blessing to the wrong guy. And if Rebecca would have stayed out of it, what would you have done? He said, I had it all figured out.

Don't worry. It wasn't a problem. I had a plan.

And, and so, so, uh, Jacob's going to get sent away, this looking out the, and she's never going to see him again, as far as I know. So hard choices. All right.

Choices. God always gives his best to those who leave the choice to him. Sometimes God has to, um, let us go through some hard things for us to understand that he is in control.

I've read the life of Hudson Taylor two times. There's a thick book with fine print. I have to do it with a micro with a magnifying glass.

Now God's man in China. And I read that long time ago. And then I read it again, but there's a story about Hudson Taylor's life.

One day he went out into, you know, his heart was to go out into the inner China. He wanted to move away from the coast and all that, but he wanted to get out there. So one time he went off on a trip.

He took some of his servants with him and he got way out there. And while he's way out there, his servants take all of the food and, and all the supplies. And he's just left with a little money and they abandoned him.

I forget how far away it was. It was a long ways farther than he could make it back with what money he had. And so he started, and he'd come back at night.

He said he would go sleep on the, on the, um, idol temple steps and try to curl up and protect his money so he wouldn't be robbed. And he went like that for days and days. I can't remember how long it was until finally he, he was tired.

He ran out of money and then he's getting tired. He's getting worried. He wasn't a strong man anyway.

And then he ran out of money and then he's, he's getting tired and he's, he's, he gets to a river and he sees a boat going down the river and he's very, very weak. And so he runs and tries to catch that boat and, and he doesn't catch it and he just collapses and passes out. And he wakes up some hours later on another boat.

Another boat had come by and the captain had seen him and pulled over and got him up in the boat and then took off. And the captain of that ship found out where he was wanting to go. I think it was back to Shanghai.

And he took him down the river and he, and he had a junction there and he got off and he paid another captain of another boat to take him to Shanghai and to take him all the way to his doorstep. So when that ship got there, that captain took him all the way to his door and left him there. And Hudson Taylor learned this great lesson.

And that was this, that God is the circumstance in life. He is the one circumstance in life. And that God could take care of him no matter what happened.

Now, Jacob's fixing to go off on this journey. Maybe some of you are in a journey, you've gone on a journey or you're fixing to go on a journey, but whatever you're in and however you're walking with God, God's fixing to fix you. And if you got a problem or you got something in your life that, that you don't like, and you're trying to fix it, let me tell you, God's fixing to fix you with the fix that you're in.

But if you try to fix the fix that you're in with, he'll find another fix to fix you with. So let him have his way with you. Let him do what he wants to do.

So God's going to fix this man, Jacob. And so here we go. Isaac went against God.

Rebecca went against Isaac. He didn't like that. And Jacob went against Esau.

And Esau didn't want God's rule, the spiritual authority. All he wanted was soup and to get the blessings, just have his way. And so here's a principle, a lesson.

Without proper submission to authority, you're not ready for service. Without proper submission to God and to where you're at, you're not ready. You're not ready for God to use you.

And so Jacob is going to be, what do you say, ground to powder? Is he going to get off with another deceiver? Laman. You know, it's like the kid that wants to leave home. And so he runs off and get away from his mother who is just controlling him and trying to direct him right.

He's got a rebellious heart. And so what's he do? He goes off and joins the military and has a drill sergeant just like his mother, you know. So God's going to fix you.

He'll fix you at home or he'll fix you out there. And so you're not ready to serve the Lord until you've learned to be in submission to authority. And so what we see here a lot is behind the scene, underneath these ground, underneath these things, the enemy is always working to try to get us away from the will of God and the blessing of God and the purpose of God.

And God's always counteracting. Now Esau, he was a grief of mind to them. He just lived, he was just a rebel.

He lived in rebellion. All right. Choices.

Choices for the Christian begin at the cross. You'll always make wrong choices in your life until you come to Jesus Christ and you decide to surrender to him and let him be your savior and let him be your Lord. And so the cross is the pivot point in life.

Take up your cross. Think about that. Jesus talking, take up your cross and follow me and I'll make you a picture for the man and stuff.

What did the cross mean? What do you mean take up the cross? We see them butchering people on crosses. What are you talking about? Be crucified. He's talking to them about being crucified with him and following him.

It's never going to be easy, but it's the road to blessing. Now, all four of these seem to choose things for themselves. They wanted to go their way.

Isaac, what he wanted. Rebecca wanted what she wanted. She wanted him to get the blessing, which happened to be God's idea, but she's not doing it necessarily God's way.

And Jacob, he knew this was wrong to save his father. And so Jacob is going to be, he's going to be brought to the cross. It's in the process.

And Jacob took advantage of Esau. And so what's going to happen when he gets with Laban? Laban's going to take advantage of him. So what we sow, we reap.

So if you want blessing, then give blessing and be in a position to be blessed. So it will cost you more. Now, here's a key principle.

I'm going to hit a key one every now and then. It's going to cost you more to refuse the cross than it will for you to choose the cross. As a Christian, the easy way is usually not the cross, but the cross is the path of blessing.

It's the path of power. It's the path of walking with Christ. And so this is the principle that we need to understand.

Another thing here, we must maintain unity in the home. There is division in the home. We must maintain unity in the church.

We must maintain unity with God. This is a key spiritual principle, because the enemy is always working to try to get his way. He doesn't want this Messiah to make it to the throne.

And so the battle all the way goes back to Genesis, again, where we were told that a Messiah would come and he would deal with the enemy. So this is sort of setting it up, to where we're going. Have you ever made a real bad mistake? Have you? I mean, something you wished you could do over again.

Now, Jacob, you know, this is a bad one, and he got through it. It just cost him a lot, and there are a lot of things, but coming to the cross is not easy because it deals with our self-will. I'm going to share with you one of my worst ones that I regretted a thousand times.

And I was just young. I'd just only been a Christian about two years, and I was just growing. I'm just coming back from being overseas.

I was just 20 years old when I went over there. I'm coming back at 22 years old. I've already been in 15 countries, and I stopped off in Rome.

I wanted to see Rome for a few days. And when we left the airport, and I'd done quite a bit of flying. I was in the Air Force.

I could go hop on a plane and go anywhere I wanted if I had to leave, and they had room. And they did something with this plane that you're not supposed to do. And they packed that thing full of people, and they had all their bread, and their sausage, and all their relatives, and everything.

This thing was like a family reunion in there. And we're going down the runway, and we're going down the runway, and we're going down the runway, and we're going down the runway. And I've already flown a lot, and I'm thinking, um, bored.

I think we should have been in the air by now. We're going down the runway, and we're going down the runway, and I'm thinking, this is not really looking too good. But finally, they get the thing off the ground.

It was way overloaded. And so, as a consequence, we get out over the Atlantic Ocean, and the pilots see up there getting something figured out that they're not going to make it. Now, that's going to be a problem.

And so, what they did is, they decided the first time they could come inside of land, they better stop and get some fuel. So, they stopped way up there in Newfoundland. I think it was St. John's or someplace up there, and picked up some more fuel, so they could make it on to JFK.

So, I would have never guessed God was in on this deal. I would have said, then, that was not a good thing to do. But we got to JFK, and we're late.

Now, I was supposed to meet an uncle there in the airport. And this uncle, I was his favorite nephew, and he was my favorite uncle. And he was the type of uncle that was just a cool uncle.

Everybody liked him. They called him, he had the nickname of Uncle Bunny. Bunny was his, because he was so fast as a kid, so they called him Bunny, and he grew up with that.

So, we all called him Uncle Bunny. And he was an executive with Exxon Oil Company. He was up there.

He'd been a painter, and he'd worked his way up to where he could inspect ships and things like that. So, we had a deal we would meet at the airport. And so, when I got there and got to the airport, I'm late, and it took a long time to get on the shuttle.

And finally, when I got there, we only had five minutes. Five minutes. And they're already on the second call.

And we talked a few minutes, and they get the third, the final call. And then he said, why don't you, Donny, why don't you just stay overnight with me and catch a plane tomorrow? I'm thinking, okay, I've been gone for almost a year and a half. Mom and Dad are driving up to Shreveport to get me.

And I made a decision. I said, no, I think I'll just go ahead and go. And I went and got on the plane.

I didn't know that God was in that deal of packing that plane full of Italians. I didn't know that God did all the delaying to get me to stay there with Him because He needed to be saved. And if anybody could reach Him for Christ, I could.

I blew it. I went on my way. It was, I was not probably mature enough to read and understand and to be having a submissive spirit and a surrendering spirit.

And so, that was in 1968, whenever it was, July, when I came back, whatever. Several years later, He was driving home from work He'd been drinking. He hit a bridge abutment, you know, he hit the rail or whatever, and split both these jugular veins in his head.

They put him in the surgery. They flew a surgeon in from California to do the surgery. Nobody in history had ever lived through this type of surgery.

They operated 13 hours on one side and 12 hours on the other side to sew him back up. They had medical students all over the thing, watching this thing. And he lived.

He lived. And after that, he got saved. And I knew that I had blown it.

That God had orchestrated that in my life for me to be used to reach Him. And he got saved. And he'd just break my heart.

He'd say, Don, I pray for you every day. I pray for you. But his memory was damaged.

And so, he was crippled for the rest of his life with his mind because he couldn't remember short-term stuff. I think I got that now. But anyway, I said, Oh God, if I could have that moment over again, what's an extra 24 hours compared to a year and a half? Self-will.

Go to the cross and die. Just go to the cross and die. Now, let's talk about his encounter with God in Genesis.

He's going to leave home now. We know all this story. In chapter 28, Isaac calls Jacob and blessed him and charged him and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

Arise, go to Badan. There again, Rebekah said, There's friction in the home. Esau's going to kill this kid.

Let's get him out of here. And so, Arise, go to Badan, around to the house of Bethuel. Verse 2, Thy mother's father, and take a wife and thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother.

And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people. And give thee the blessing of Abraham to thee, and go unto thy seed with thee, that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave to Abraham. And Isaac sent away Jacob, and he went to Badan-aram, and to Laban, son of Bethuel, the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob, and Esau's mother.

Then to go into Esau, and he saw that. It goes on, and he saw actually in 70, says that he saw when Jacob obeyed his father, his mother has gone up to Badan-aram. Then Esau seeing that the the daughters of Canaan did please not Isaac his father, then went Esau unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had.

And so, it's a rebellion, but Jacob is off, and now he's gonna, he's gonna have a meeting with God. He's gonna come to this place in verse 10, and Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran, and he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set, and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillars. And I've titled this section Pillars for Pillows, it's not the title of the message for you guys that do the title, you can get me afterwards in it.

Anyway, he's gonna sleep there, and he had a dream in 12. Dreamed, behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top, and it reached to the heaven. Behold, the angel of God ascending and descending, and 13, he said, and behold, the Lord, and behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father, the God of Isaac, the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed.

Now, what would you have done if you'd been God? And you showed up, and there's I said, hey, listen, you old rascal, you deceiver, uh-uh, God's not like us. He knows that Jacob's gonna get his own whippin' from the, from his deceiving, he's gonna be deceived with Laban, but here he is, he's saying, Jacob, I love you, I have a plan for your life, let, I wanna be your God, and uh, and all these things, it's just an amazing, and this dream, yeah, 13, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, the God of Isaac, the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed, and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south, and thee, and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And then he says, and behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again unto this land, for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not, and he was afraid, and said, how dreadful is this place, this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. And Jacob arose up from early in the morning, early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it, and he called the name of that place Bethel, and a lot of things happened at Bethel, the house of God, but the name of that city was called Luz at the first, 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 raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord 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 surely will give the tenth unto thee.

Now let's see if we can get some lessons that we read this, he sent out, no man's ready to be in authority until he's learned to be under authority, and so he's going to learn some lessons of being an authority, and here's the principle, we mentioned this a while ago, what God can't get done to us at home, he'll get done out there where we go, so you young people, it's best to learn your lessons at home, because it's going to be a lot harder out there, so he's going to end up and get a wife, or two, and going to have a lot of interesting things happen in his life, and he will learn some lessons from Laban, Jacob the deceiver is now Jacob the wanderer, but God's in the process of bringing him to be Jacob the worshiper, and isn't that how he ended up his life, you go all the way to the end of Genesis, I looked up a verse, I don't see it here, I guess I marked it down later on, I think it was at the point where he saw Joseph's sons, and then it said he worshipped, he was a worshipper, but it took a while, so he's really running, and he's really fleeing from the of Esau, and so he had his mom scheming and everything, now Jacob is a type of the believer, he's a type of us, in a sense, of his life, God's going to make something out of him, he's going to build Christ in his life, Abraham reflected God's sovereignty in his life, and Isaac his sonship, and his submission, but he had some issues, but Jacob is going to be a demonstration of God's grace, over covering his life, and so he's got Isaac's blessing, he's gone, he's meeting with the Lord now, and the order of things natural is not always right, the working in the family things just worked out there, but God's going to work all things after the counsel of his purpose, now I'm going to throw out something to you, back in the back of my Bible, I haven't read all these things that I've learned in traveling around, every church is somebody's kingdom, someone's kingdom, put it on the altar, everything you have should be held like that, because whatever we want to close our hands in on will become an idol, so if God wants to take it away, take away an Isaac or something, we need to hold it like that, Christ is to be preempted in the church, need to have qualified leadership, the foundation must be right, I've talked about some of these things, one of the things that we don't understand is, when Jesus gave, set us off, he said to make disciples, our school system, most of them are programmed backwards from what the scriptures say, they would say, go fill up your churches with people, numbers, and by the way, when I would travel around, I'd hop off a plane, I'd drive into town, I'd meet with these pastors, I'd begin to pick up this pattern, I'd get these two questions, they would say, how big is your church?

Zero, I don't have a church, it's the Lord's church, you know, and what school do you go to? And so the program is for nickels and noses, basically, and so you're measured successful if you've got lots of noses and bringing in a bunch of nickels, and whatever, nobody ever asked, how many disciples are you making? That's what the Lord wants us to make disciples, and so we get off track, everything we do is to be out of prayer, what do we do? We have a meeting, God bless our meeting, okay, do all we want to do this, okay, God bless our plans, instead of going before God and waiting in prayer and the insensitivity to what he wants, these are just some things, and here's another principle, that when God's going to build in your life, and that's what he's doing with Jacob here, many times when he's going to build, he's going to

first tear down all the stuff that we've done, and that sometimes gets us a little excited, you know, when he's going to, oh God, you know, spend a lot of time conniving, and politicking, and advertising, and trying to build up, and you want to tear it all down.

By the way, we were going through some kind of big battle, I know you never know anything about this in our church years ago, and it was going to be quite a mess, and I had done something wrong, spiritually wrong, and allowed the enemy to come in, and he's come in, and so it turned out to be a big bad deal, and I'm crying before the Lord, oh Lord, you see this mess we got, we've got this fight, and everything, and a bunch of people left, and whatever, they try to throw me out, and I'm too stubborn to leave, that you told me to stay, and whatever, but God, what's going on, and he said, I did it, you mean you're destroying this church, he said, yeah, I let the devil in, of course, you opened the door, and I saw, I told him to go in there, I said, why, and he said, because I was not getting the glory anymore, so whatever is in our life, that God doesn't get the glory, it's going to be ground for the enemy to come in, he's going to let him come in.

Old wine bottles, you can't put the new teaching of the crucified life, and the cross, into these old systems, it doesn't work, I tried it two times, and after the second time, and the Lord said, how many times I got to tell you, you can't put the spiritual truths of the cross, and the crucified life, and the powerful spiritual life, into these old systems, they're programmed by the enemy for destruction, and it just don't work, and so these type of things, give honor where honor is due, always honor the Holy Spirit, what a man can't control, he would destroy, and if he does get control, he's going to destroy it anyway, to be one accord, church discipline, which is a hard one, I messed up on that one pretty bad, and different things, but here's one of them, that we have to have, we have

to secure God's blessing, and I mentioned this before, we have to, there have been many times when God was working, and our church got to the point one time, where we have one family a month growing in, and coming in, and they were coming around the country, because they heard that God's blessing was there, we walk away, people walk away, wow, God was here today, that's a rare thing, it's a rare thing, it's not easy to maintain, but it's something the Lord, because I've been in these churches, I'd see this stuff going on here, and I'd say, wow, God's blessing's not here, and these different things, so here's this man Jacob, let me get back, funny trails, sometimes I guess this whole hound dog can get so far from the house, you have to come back around to get back, okay, make sure you have

God's blessing, Isaac lived about another 50 years without anything from him, except his death in 3529, and I just wondered, did this affect his future, you know, we just didn't hear anything from him anymore, and so we have a seeming family tragedy, we have division, diversion of the blessing, deceit, dishonor, insubordination to authority, bitterness, anger, disunity, scheming, you don't live in a family like that, but here we go, and he's gone, and now he's met the Lord, and what God is going to do is transfer the patriarchal blessing onto his life, but he's got to be in a position to be mature enough and strong enough to carry that, and as he gets on later in life, he gets that, just think about his sons, the 12 sons, and what they did to Joseph, and all this stuff, and the things he

went through, okay, secure God's blessing, I'm going to skip this story here, I need to keep moving, skip that, meeting God at Bethel, let's just talk about this a little bit, meeting God at Bethel, you need a Bethel, at Bethel, God is preparing Jacob for leadership, and there are four of what I called pillars for being in authority, to being a leader, and the guys are talking about my southern drawl, I mean, I've been gone a long time, I don't think I have much of it anymore, and I told him my teacher, Abe Pinner, came from Canada, if you happen to know him, in Bible college, you see, he would put me in a corner, my

enunciation is still not too good, a lot of my, my these would be D, D, for the, and stuff like that, and so he's trying to build into me to speak right, God is going to

build into Jacob for him to have these four things in his life that he needs, and so sometimes God has to put us in the corner, and make us give our speeches there, back us off somewhere, now he's fleeing, he's leaving, and he's come to love us, and he's come to the place Bethel, this is the house of God, and here's the principle, for God to work deep into your life, God has to bring you to the place where he separates you from your past, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forward, okay, so the path is all messed up, let's start over, and so he's getting a new start, and so he's a, he has a call to separate from his past, and this is what God did back there in 28, God, God, you know, it's time to leave back there, it's a mess anyway, you're going to get yourself

killed, unless I intervene with Esau, he's hot, and so the latter, it represents a type of Christ, grace extending down to him, grace pouring out onto his life, and he has this realm, it's the first revelation of seven revelations that he gets from God, and here's another principle, and this thing that God is teaching in his life, God always initiates to man for a spiritual relationship with the man, there's none that's good, there's none that seeketh after God, so God is going to initiate it, and God is doing the initiating in his life, and God is coming into your life, he's reaching out, he's reaching down, all the time, because he wants you with him for all eternity to fellowship, he has, he has things to show you, you know, he's, he wants an intimate relationship, he wants you to walk

with him, like Enoch, you know, walked with God, he was not, God, I said, why God would you want to walk with me, he's God, he loves you, and he loves Jacob, and so God always initiates to man for a spiritual relationship, and he's given him the confirmation of the promise that was given to his father Abraham, and 14, that verse 14, in thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south, and in thee and thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed, all of this thing, I have a note here, they spring out of the desire of God to bless Jacob, look at all the things that are going to be his, that comes from God's heart to him, ask God to open up your understanding of what he has for you, don't

live, live a mutiny, a boring life of whatever, you know, I have a little message that I give sometimes, I gave it New Year's, I think, on the seven levels of life, and the last level, the ultimate level, is the level of adventure, now walking with God, I've got to tell you, can be a little bit more exciting than you want sometimes, he can give you some things, but this springs out of the desire of God for Jacob, that he might be a blessing, in other words, we have to be blessed by God, have an encounter with God, and get close to God, so that we can be a blessing, he's got to just basically knock the stuffing out of us many times to get us to that point, and so here's the first pillar, in verse 15, the strength, the thing that he's going to need in his life, is God's presence, and he

says in 15, I am with thee, and will keep thee, Jacob, you need to know that I'm going to be with you, and you need to get this in your mind, get this in your heart, that if you're a Christian, God is with you, he is with you, his presence is with you, and this is the desire of God for us, this is his desire for Jacob to understand, he's communicating, now listen, Jacob has left the influence of his father Isaac for 20 years, and we don't know how much encounter he had with him after he came back 20 years later, there's just not much written there, but now God is going to move into the place of being his father, I don't know if any of you are orphans, but that's a hard thing to grow up, as an orphan, so God moves in there to be your parent himself, so this is God's desire.

Another lesson in this thing of God's presence is, not only has he lost his earthly father's influence, but he has stepped into the realm, there's a verse in John 14, I think it is, the father himself loveth you, he's moving right into the realm of God the father's love and protection, many times you might think, boy, God, if you're loving me, look what Laban's doing to me, and if he could speak back, he would say, yes, I see what he's doing, but you need that, we've got to get this old Jacob out of you, because I'm working on a new Jacob to come out of you, I'm looking, the old Jacob is just nothing but schemes and everything, but the new Jacob, he's not going to be Jacob, he's going to be Christ to come out of your life.

The old Jacob, he doesn't generate blessing, but the new Christ coming out of him is going to produce blessing. So that first pillar there, this desire of God to be his father, here's another thing I wrote down, most all the great moments men and women have had in the presence of God has been when they were alone with God, and Jacob is alone with God. The devil wants to keep you busy, I remember when I was a teenager, I'm listening to the radio, kids, they got noise going all the time and whatever, they can't stand to be still and be quiet.

Why? We begin to hear things, begin to think, and the devil wants to keep you distracted and busy and everything, but if you get along with God, be still, you can hear him speak. I used to love to go out in the woods and hunt. I lived in town, lived down on the edge of town, but we were in town in the subdivision when I grew up, so Friday come, I'd love to just get out in the woods.

I didn't, we'd squirrel hunt down there, I don't know why anybody would want to eat a squirrel. Do you? Have you ever eaten a squirrel? Man, they're tough. They'd make a gumbo out of it.

I mean, it was food, I guess, but you cook it right, you could get it edible, but I wouldn't get many, but I would enjoy being quiet. It's almost like there was a peace there, and so God wants to get us away, and so Jacob is there. Adam and Eve hid themselves from the presence of God and said two things to him in 13.

He said, and behold, the Lord stood above it and said, I am the Lord thy God of Abraham, thy father, and the God of Isaac, the land whereon thou liest to thee will I give it unto thy seed. There are a couple of things here that I get from the value of him being in the presence of God. One is for the first time in his life he can hear.

I believe he's hearing God. We don't have any record really before that, but he can hear. He can hear, and then also he can worship, because what's he do? In 18 and also 22, he's going to give a tenth.

No man's going to give a tenth unless really he's a worshiper of God, and actually if he's a worshiper of God, he'll go beyond that most all the time, but he's going to be a worshiper. Now here's the second pillar. The presence of God, the next pillar, the thing that God's going to build into him for him to be a father, a spiritual leader.

He needs to understand the idea of protection. What God said to Abraham, I am thy shield. I am the shield.

Take the shield. We've got the shield. Jesus is our shield, and so he says in 15, and we'll keep thee.

He said basically what that means in the Hebrew, he's going to hedge him about. I'm going to be a hedge. It's the guard.

It's the same thing that God told Adam in the garden when he said to dress it. That meant to keep it, to guard it. He said, I'm going to be your guard, and not only that, in all places, all places that he goes.

In 15, I am thy shield, Abraham, the protector. He's passing this on. There's a booklet that I have that talks about 11 things to teach our children.

The first one is your children must understand that as long as they are under your authority, they are protected, which is a tough one for kids to understand. To move out from under protection of their parents, you move under the protection of Satan, and he doesn't protect too good. Here's the third pillar, and that's this.

Verse 15, preservation. He's going to preserve him. That doesn't mean he's going to be pickled and put in a jar like that, but he's going to be preserved.

By the way, one of the things we've been looking at and studying about, you need to pray this, that God would keep you from evil. We did a study with our men last Tuesday night when we met and prayed, and we just went through the verses on the evil, how much evil there is, and like Jabez' prayer, one of the things he said, that God would keep them from evil. You need to pray for that, pray that for your church, pray that for your children, and God said, you know, he's going to preserve him, and so, and he'll bring them again.

That was encouraging, so he wouldn't want to spend his whole life with Laban, and then the fourth pillar that God is going to build into his life is a promise. In 15, he said, I will not leave thee. That means to loosen, to relinquish, and when he gets to wrestling over here, he won't let him go, and not only that, when we get to that, Jacob's wrestling him, and the Lord, I believe it's the Jesus, and pre-incarnate wrestling with him, and Jacob said, let me go, and then all of a sudden, it turns around, and then the Lord said, you let me go, and this is what the Lord wanted to do.

He wanted to bring him around to where he would want God's blessing on his life, and we'll get there, some neat things there, but he said, I will not leave thee, just will not leave thee. You know, for Jesus to leave me, he has to break his word. I will not leave you comfortless.

We've got these things. He's got it. Wow, that is a promise, and we live by the promises.

Okay, here's Jacob's response going into this. In 16, he finds that heaven is closer than he thinks, and 17, he has some reverence come into his life, fears a natural response in the presence of God. You know, Revelation 117, John said, when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead, and 18, he's going to make his first altar.

Look at that. He rose up early in the morning, took the stone, and he has his first altar, so God has drawn him in to be a worshiper, and so when you first meet God, and he covenants with you, and you always remember your encounters with God, and so your first baptism, when you're baptized, or your first communion, and he pours oil. This is a dedicating of himself to God, and the offering of himself.

Someone said you, by faith, you can pour your life out. You can pour your life out, turn a pillow of softness into a pillar of strength, or something like that. He makes his first vow in verse 20.

Vow in scripture, his first vow. I think maybe the first vow in scripture, and this is Jacob's, maybe you say a conversion in his life, or whatever, but he begins him in a life of grace. I've got these five things, six things

written down.

He is, this is grace coming down the ladder. It's descending. It's the grace of God, and here's Jacob.

He's running, and be grace sufficient, versus his scheming, and so grace is going to be sufficient for him. He's in grace ruling over his life, versus his deception, so God is moving into his life. Grace instructing, versus his resisting, and grace long-suffering, versus his impatience.

He couldn't wait. Of course, his mom had talked to him, and so Jacob, he starts off high, and God is going to bring him down low. You bring them down low, and then grace trusting in verse 22, and you get down to the end.

Here's a principle that I wrote down about this. If life is hard and dry, you can always go back to Bethel. He's going to have a hard life for 20 years, and what's he do? Comes back to Bethel later on.

Again, a life of learning to, it's the beginning of a life of learning to be under authority by the grace of God. All right, six o'clock, huh? I'm up to another section now. In your outline, it's called Divine Retribution.

I'm wondering if we should take a break right now, how long we've been going. All in favor, a break? All in favor, want to go another hour? Probably getting tired, are you? Let's just take a little break here. Next session starts at six, maybe we can start a little early, get going a little earlier, maybe.

Let's bow for prayer. Lord, we've been going for quite a while here, I think, and I'm just going over some things. I'm trying to move through, and we're going to get into some lessons, the hard lessons in his life.

And we're not really focusing in on the enemy and what he's doing, he's always there behind the scenes. We understand that from other scriptures and whatever, but here we see you moving into the life of a man, you're moving into Jacob's life. And Lord, I just wonder what you want to do with us through these meetings.

Help us not to be satisfied with the status quo, but to reach out to you as you are always reaching out to you. Help us to grab a hold of promises and believe you for those promises. In the battles and the wars that we have, as we mentioned, Father, some of us have some terrific battles.

We're crying and we're weeping and we're groaning, especially some for children. And so help us to grab a hold of some principles and truths that we can use. Now bless our break time here in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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