

The House of God - Part 1

by Stephen Kaung

Stephen Kaung's sermon emphasizes the significance of the house of God as a divine connection between humanity and the divine, urging believers to recognize their responsibilities towards it.

Duration: 47:37

Scripture: Genesis 28:10-22, Matthew 28:20, Romans 12:1-2, Galatians 3:8-9

Topics: "Divine Revelation", "Christ Jesus"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the dream of Jacob as described in the Bible. He emphasizes that Jacob's dream was not a product of his own imagination, but a God-given vision. The preacher highlights the significance of the word 'behold' in the Bible, indicating that something important is about to be revealed. The dream depicts a ladder connecting heaven and earth, with angels ascending and descending on it. God stands at the top of the ladder, symbolizing the union between God and man through Christ Jesus. The preacher emphasizes that there is no other way for God to communicate with humanity except through Jesus. The sermon concludes with a reminder of God's promises to Jacob and his descendants.

Transcript

Will you please turn to Genesis? Genesis chapter 28. Genesis chapter 28. We'll begin with verse 10.

And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went towards Haran. And he laid it on a certain place, and lodged there, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of the place, and made it his pillow, and lay down in that place.

And he dreamed. And behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to the heavens. And behold, angels of God ascended and descended upon it.

And behold, Jehovah stood above it. And he said, I'm Jehovah, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac, the land on which 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 to thee, and to thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And behold, I'm with thee, and will keep thee in all places to which thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land. For I will not leave

thee until I have done what I have spoken to thee of.

And Jacob awoke from the sleep, and said, surely Jehovah 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 rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had made his pillow, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil on the top of it. And he called the name of that place Bethel, but the name of that city was Luz at the first.

And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, if God will be with me, and keep me on this road that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and a garment to put on, and I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall Jehovah be my God. And this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house. And of all that thou will give me, I will without fail give the tenth, give the tenth to thee.

Let's have a word of prayer. Dear Lord, we do want to thank thee once again for all that thou hast done for us. We who were once strangers, sinners, rebels, we had no part with thee.

And yet, Lord, how we praise and thank thee that thou shalt come to seek and to save the lost. We do praise and thank thee that once we were far apart from one another, but now in Christ Jesus, we are one, one body. Oh Lord, it is all thy doing, and we worship thee, we thank thee.

As we continue in thy presence, Lord, we pray that thy spirit will breathe upon thy written word, and make it living and operative in our lives. Dear Lord, we do not want to be those who are dull in hearing, hear and not hear. Lord, open our ears, our hearts, that we may understand what thou art speaking to the churches.

We ask in thy precious name. Amen. Three weeks ago, when our brother Jerry was speaking, he mentioned that how we all are occupied with our own houses, and neglect the house of God.

That word touched my heart. So I began to meditate before the Lord, and this is what I like to share with your dear brothers and sisters this morning. The house of God is an integral part of the eternal purpose of God.

It is not something insignificant. It is not something that God is not very much interested in, and therefore, we do not need to be interested. But actually, according to the word of God, this matter of the house of God is very dear to God's heart.

Even before the foundation of the world, God had this in his heart, and throughout the time, he has been and is still working towards it. And thank God, in that house of God, we have a very, very important part. But when we mention the house of God, I wonder how many really know what the house of God is.

How much should we be involved? What is our relationship to it, and our responsibility? You know, it is very strange. This vision of the house of God was first given to Jacob. I think if it is given to Abraham, that will be just right.

But because Abraham seems to be a worthy person to receive such a revelation. But strangely, and thank God for it, this vision was first given to Jacob. Jacob is a very smooth person, so smooth that he is slippery.

He is tricky, and full of manoeuvring. He always has his own interest at the centre. And he tries his very best to gain what he wants, even though he does seem to have a heart for spiritual things.

At least for blessing. How he longed to have the blessing of the firstborn, a double blessing. And he is willing to do anything, everything to get it.

But when he seems to have that in his hand, he loses it. So, here you'll find in Genesis chapter 28, Jacob left Beersheba, and on his journey to Haran. You know, Jacob is a homely person.

He likes to be at home. But here you'll find he becomes a wanderer. After he cheats his brother of the firstborn privilege, and then again he cheats his father to get the blessing of the firstborn.

Then he loses everything. He doesn't know what the future will be. He's on the way to Haran, and the night has come, and he has to take a stone for a pillow.

Now, I wonder how many of us has ever taken a stone for a pillow? How can you sleep with that hard, cold stone as your pillow? That's how tragic it is. But the end of man is always the beginning of God. Or to put it another way, unless we come to our end, God has no way to begin with us.

Isn't that true with every one of us? He is so tired, he goes to sleep. Amazing. And he dreams.

And this is the dream. It is not out of his mind, because that's the least that could be in his mind. It is a God-given dream, a vision.

Behold, a letter was set on the earth, and it reached to the heaven. Second, behold, and behold, angels of God ascending and descending on the letter. And then third, behold, behold, God stood in the original, it means stationed at the top of the letter.

That's the vision. You know, whenever the Bible used the word behold, it is telling us something is coming that we must see. Don't miss it.

It is something so important that you cannot just take a look at it and forget it. You have to concentrate and see it until it really registers in your heart. Behold, a letter was set on the earth, and the top of it reached heaven.

Now, brothers and sisters, no one knows the distance between heaven and earth. Who can measure the distance between heaven and earth? Who can bridge it? The heaven is so far apart from the earth. It belongs all together to another realm, as the psalmist said.

You know, in Psalm 103, verse 11, I think it is said, as the heaven is above the earth, so the loving kindness of God is great. In other words, God is the only one who can bring heaven and earth together. Two different realms, entirely different in nature, and yet here you find a letter that joins heaven and earth together.

Now, of course, brothers and sisters, we who have read the New Testament, we are aware that in the beginning of the ministry of our Lord Jesus, when Nathanael was brought to the Lord by his friend Philip, you know, Nathanael was a true Israelite. He told Philip, there is no good thing, nothing good out of Nazareth, because Philip told Nathanael, we have found Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth. So Nathanael said, nothing good out of Nazareth.

But when he came to the Lord, the Lord said, behold, a true Israelite. So Nathanael said, now how did you know me? The Lord said, I saw you under the fig tree. Now to us, it may mean nothing, but to Nathanael, that was striking.

Why? Because a fig tree is a type of the nation of Israel, and evidently Nathanael under that fig tree was thinking of the future of the nation of Israel, and the Lord knew his heart. So when our Lord told him that you are a true Israelite, I saw you under the fig tree, immediately he said, you are God and my Lord. And then the Lord Jesus said to him, in John chapter 1 verse 51, you shall see a greater thing, you shall see the angel of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.

So brothers and sisters, today with us we know what that letter represents. It was set on the earth, the word became flesh, and tabernacle among man, full of grace and truth. The Son of God came to this earth to be a man set on the earth, but it reaches heaven.

Heaven. The one who came from heaven and is on earth, he is still in heaven. He is the letter, he is the one who joins heaven with earth.

He is the one who brings heaven to earth, and from earth to heaven. And then behold, angels of God ascending and descending on the letter. Angels.

If you read Hebrews chapter 1, you know angels are ministering spirits. God created angels to minister, and to minister unto those who are to inherit salvation. And the angels ascending and descending means they are very busily engaged, and all their activities are on the letter.

In other words, based upon Christ. All the work of the angels are based upon Christ and what he has done for us. They are bringing what Christ has done for us to those who will inherit the salvation of the Lord.

That refers to us. They bring heaven's news to us, heaven's finished work to us, and bring us in Christ to heaven. And then behold, again, God stood at the top of the ladder.

God stationed himself at the top of the ladder. You know, when you station yourself, there is a reason there. There's a purpose behind it.

So God stationed himself at the top of the ladder in order to speak to one who was lying at the end of the ladder. Brothers and sisters, what is the picture you see? You see God and man. Come together in Christ Jesus.

There is no other way for God to come to man or man to God. There is no other way that God can communicate with man and man with God. There is no other way that man and God can be joined in one.

It is only in Christ Jesus. That it is done. And then God spoke.

He said, I'm Jehovah, the God of your father Abraham and of Isaac. And all that I promised to Abraham, the blessing of Abraham that you sought for, I will give it to you. The land, the seed, and all the nations will be blessed by thee and by thy seed.

And God said, behold, I will be with you wherever you go. And I will not leave you until I have done all I have said to you. So brothers and sisters, this is the vision.

And then Jacob awoke from his sleep. And he was surprised. He said, I did not know that God is here.

He thought he was all by himself, finished. And he didn't know that God was with him. Brothers and sisters, I sometimes feel that we are all Jacobs.

None of us is worthy, even to have a vision of the house of God. The house of God is so glorious. The house of God is a heavenly thing.

But it pleases God to give people such as we are a glimpse of the house of God. And it pleases God to give people such as we are a glimpse of the house of God. Are you surprised that when you think you are alone, deserted, forsaken, coming to the end of your life, and yet God is with you? He has never left you, nor has forsaken you.

In spite of what we do, God is still with us. He is not only surprised, but he was afraid. He said, this is a dreadful place.

Now we think of the house of God as a blessed place. What can be better than God with man? And yet, to Jacob, it was a dreadful place. Why? Because he knew he was unfit.

He knew God was so holy. And he was so earthly. God was so pure, and he was so deceiving, tricky.

He knew he was totally unfit for God. And to be in the presence of God is a dreadful thing. Now if you do not realize it, you may think that to be with God is the most blessed thing.

It is true. But on the other hand, when you think of the holiness of God, the heavenliness of God, the perfection of God, the glory of God, and you begin to realize how unfit you are. It's dreadful.

But still you find, even though he said, how dreadful is this place, and yet he has the understanding that this is the house of God, the gate of heaven. What is the house of God? The house of God is basically where God and man are joined together in Christ Jesus. That's the house of God.

The house of God is where God can be with man. Impossible. So far as man is concerned.

And yet God has made it possible in Christ Jesus. Jacob said this is the gate of heaven. Now he is so earthly, down to earth as we say.

But this is the first time he realized there is a way to heaven. There is a gate there. And by that gate you can reach heaven.

You remember our Lord Jesus said in John chapter 10, I am the door of the sheep. And you remember he also said in Matthew chapter 7, enter into the narrow gate because that will lead you to life. So brothers and sisters, even Jacob at that time, on the one hand he realized that this is the house of God.

This is where God and man are joined together. But at the same time he realized the way is in Christ Jesus. The Lord said I am the way, the truth and the life.

And no one comes to the Father but by me. The way to the house of God. Is through Christ Jesus.

To put it in another way, we are so earthly. The cross of our Lord Jesus has to work in our lives. To bring us out of the earthly to the heavenly.

The cross on the one hand will deal with that which is earthly. Which is carnal, fleshly. Which is of the world.

Which is of the enemy. All these are unfit for God. Unfit to be united to God in Christ Jesus.

Unfit in the house of God. Where God can rest in man. And all these things have to be dealt with.

And all that which is heavenly of Christ, of God, will be added into us. The gate of heaven. So brothers and sisters in the house of God.

That process is going on. God has come to man. God is bringing man back to him.

And God is working by his spirit in each one of us. To deliver us out of all the earthly. To fit us for the heavenly.

That God and man may rest together. Now this is the house of God. And then you know what Jacob did.

He took that stone. That was his pillow. And set it up as a pillar.

And poured oil on it. In other words, even though he knew he was unfit. And yet he accepted what God has revealed to him.

So he set that stone up as a pillar. A pillar in the scripture always speak of testimony. This is my testimony.

And he poured oil on it. And always represent the Holy Spirit. In other words, it is the Holy Spirit that sanctifies everything.

And set it apart for God. So that is his action. But unfortunately you find that he was so limited in his understanding.

And he was so unfit in a sense to rise up to what God has promised to him. So then he began to say, he made a vow. He made a vow to God, not to him.

That was a tremendous vow. But actually to God that is nothing. Because that is far, far below what God has promised to him.

He said, now if God will be with me. And if he will give me food to eat. And a garment to put on.

And bring me back to my father's house. Then I will make him my God. You know he is still bargaining.

That Jacob is still there. And this pillar will become his house. And I will not fail to give one tenth to him.

Now you listen to what his vow is. His vow is number one. He challenged God.

He said, now are you real? Are you really faithful to what you say? That you will be with me? I only want some food to eat. A dress to put on. And the opportunity of coming back to my father's house.

That's all I ask of you. You know how limited we are. We are limited by ourselves.

God is so great. What he has in mind is beyond our understanding. But that's what he is going to do.

He wants to do far more than we have ever thought of. And if God does that. Then I will make this pillar the house of God.

Now brothers and sisters. You remember when David became king. And he had a heart for God.

And he told Nathan the prophet. How can I dwell in a house of cedar? And God's ark is still in the tent. I want to make him a house.

And Nathan said, well, go ahead. You are loved by God. And what you suggest should be alright.

And yet God told Nathan, go back to David. And say to him. I will make you a house first.

Do you think you can do things better than God? Or before God? David has a heart to build God a house. God said, wait a minute. I will build your house first.

And then when your house is built. Then build my house. Now this is always the principle.

Brothers and sisters. Do you realize why God builds our house? Why God bless your family? Is our house, our family the end of everything? I don't say family is not important. Family is very important in the eyes of God.

The world today. Really despise the idea of the family. People become so selfish.

So independent. So self-centered. Not even the family is important.

But thank God. We know that the family is important. And it is God who builds our house.

He said, I will bless you. I will do it to you. But beware.

That we do not use our own house, our own family. As the end. Of everything.

In other words. We put too much emphasis on the family. And neglect.

The family of God. The house of God. We need to remember.

He builds our house. In order that. We may be able.

To build his house. His house. Is the end.

Not. Our houses. You remember.

Haggai. The prophet. God used him to challenge.

The remnant who returned. To Jerusalem. To build a temple.

And yet because of some. Oppositions. Their hands were weakened.

And then they left building. The house of God. And during that period.

They build their own houses. And left. The house of God lies wait.

Waste. So God send. Haggai to challenge.

The people and said. Is it time. For you to build.

Your own. Panel houses. And let the house of God lies wait.

Waste. Is it time for that. And thank God the remnant.

Rose up. And built. The temple.

So brothers and sisters. What are we going to do? Is there a danger. In our midst.

Because we put so much. Emphasis on our house. Our family.

That we neglect. The house of God. We forget that God promised.

But God bless. Our house. For a purpose.

And that purpose is. That the house of God. Might be built.

So I do hope that God will. Show us. His way.

That we may not go to the other extreme. And really. Walk in the way.

Of God. Jacob. In spite of his.

Weakness. At least he understand this. He said now.

If you build my house. That I will build your house. And I will be responsible.

In the house of God. I will give my one chance. Now of course.

Today. As we look at. Jacob.

We said Jacob. You really do not know God. You are still.

You should do more. But where are we? Are we still like Jacob bargaining with God? And only when. We are blessed.

Then we say well. We gave one test to you. What the law requires is.

Our all. By the mercies of God. I beseech you.

To present your bodies. A living sacrifice. Holy.

Acceptable to God. This is. Our reasonable service.

This is. Our spiritual. Worship.

So brothers and sisters. May the Lord. Have mercy upon us.

That we may. Begin to see. What the house of God is.

And having a glimpse. Of that vision. That we may.

Know. How much. We are in it.

And how. Much we should be. Responsible.

To it. So. This morning.

I would like to share this. Just lay a foundation. For what the house of God.

Is. Let us pray. Dear Lord.

We want to thank thee. For thou has been so gracious. Merciful to us.

We thank thee. That thou has been building our houses. Our families.

And we have received so much. From thee. Lord we pray.

That thou will remind us. That the house of God. Is still.

Lying there. In waste. So Lord do pray.

That thou will stir. Our spirit up. That we may rise up.

And by thy grace. Whatever thou has. Bless us.

That we may. Build together. The house of God.

For thee to have a place. To rest. Among man.

And we give thee the glory. In the name of our Lord Jesus.

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