

GENESIS 28

THREE REVELATIONS... TWO DIFFERENT RESPONSES

Have you ever had what some people call a “eureka moment?” You know, that split second in time when something that has eluded you becomes so clear you can't believe that you hadn't figured it out earlier? I can remember when I used to work on cars how sometimes you just couldn't figure out what was wrong. Everything you knew to do you had already done and nothing had worked. I would usually step back, walk around or do something to take my mind off of the problem. Then seemingly out of nowhere like a bolt of lightning it would hit me. The answer had been right in front of me the whole time! I just couldn't see the forest for the trees.

This often happens to us when we lose sight of the things that God has told us or promised us. We usually lose sight of these things by becoming more focused on something else. Like a child who's been given a chore to do, when something shiny in the grass in the distance causes us to veer off course to investigate only to find out that instead of gold at the end of the rainbow it was a caffeine free coke can that someone had thrown out of their car.

If you have been with us for some time you may recall that Isaac had lost focus on who was to succeed him in the lineage that would eventually lead to Jesus. He had let his favoritism towards Esau blind him to the promise and plan of God. After he was tricked into blessing Jacob instead of Esau, he had a revelation, an epiphany, a re-focusing on God's plan instead of his own.

That is where we pick up the story today, with Isaac blessing Jacob and sending him away to his uncle's house.

Let's look at Gen. 28.

Gen 28:1 Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, and said to him: "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan.

Gen 28:2 Arise, go to Padan Aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father; and take yourself a wife from there of the daughters of Laban your mother's brother.

Gen 28:3 "May God Almighty bless you, And make you fruitful and multiply you, That you may be an assembly of peoples;

Gen 28:4 And give you the blessing of Abraham, To you and your descendants with you, That you may inherit the land In which you are a stranger, Which God gave to Abraham."

Gen 28:5 So Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Padan Aram, to Laban the son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.

Isaac had this revelation while coming to the realization that he had been tricked. Look back at Gen. 27:33. Sometimes a "trembling is required to bring us back to reality. (while lot of world shaking, Luke!)

Gen 27:33 Then Isaac trembled exceedingly, and said, "Who? Where *is* the one who hunted game and brought *it* to me? I ate all *of it* before you came, and I have blessed him—*and* indeed he shall be blessed."

Now as we get into chapter 28 we see that Isaac has refocused on God's plan. So he sends Jacob away to take a bride. Just as his father, Abraham had sent him away in order to avoid him taking a wife of the Canaanites.

Some would see this as meddling, but it is for the best of all parties involved that this is done. Marriage was seen not just as a pairing of two people that get along and want to spend their lives together. It was a partnership in that the goal was to raise a family and do that

within the confines of God's will to accomplish God's will. In some cases today it has become a disposable institution where the two individuals stay together as long as they still enjoy the arrangement.

In Biblical times this wasn't the case. It was a life-long commitment to doing the will of God, whether things were fun or not. If Jacob is going to fulfill his mission in God's plan Isaac knows that he is going to have to have a good wife. He is going to have to have a wife of faith and patience, not just the hottest thing to come walking down the street. Therefore he sent him to his uncle's house in order to find a woman that has been raised with the same values.

2Co 6:14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

2Co 6:15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?

If you read through the epistles of John, you will see the basis for fellowship is truth.

Isaac also sent Jacob away with the blessing he had received from him earlier. The same blessing that Abraham had received from God. God had also spoken to each of these men individually so as to reiterate the blessing. This was to let them know that they were handpicked for the job. You have been handpicked for a job also. You just may not know yet what it is.

So Isaac sent Jacob away after having re-focused on God's plan. He had to eat some crow, humble himself and slide back into lockstep with God. We have to do this from time to time ourselves. We have to repent, usually apologize to someone we have wronged and then resume our place in God's plan.

Gen 28:6 Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Padan Aram to take himself a wife from there, *and that* as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan,"

Gen 28:7 and that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and had gone to Padan Aram.

Gen 28:8 Also Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan did not please his father Isaac.

Gen 28:9 So Esau went to Ishmael and took Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife in addition to the wives he had.

Now Esau gets a revelation. He sees that his choice of wives hasn't pleased his father so he chooses another wife from among the daughters of Ishmael. There are two dynamics working here. First dads, we should realize that our children, particularly our sons want to please us. There is just something wired for that. Esau hasn't seen this before, but he does now. We need to take advantage of this fact. WE are to be good examples so that our children want to please us and mimic us.

Next we see that though Esau wants to please his father by choosing a wife not from among the Canaanites, he makes the problem worse by 1) just getting another wife and 2) though he chooses another wife she isn't chosen from among the right group. Esau wants to do the right thing but he doesn't know how. He doesn't know why Jacob is going to Haran.

We can't just mimic others without knowing the reasons for what they do. Motive makes all the difference in the world. We have already seen that Esau doesn't pay attention to spiritual matters. This is why he can't comprehend the motive or reason for what Jacob and Isaac are doing. We should keep this in mind also. The worldling isn't going to understand why you do what you do. They don't know the mind of God, nor can they.

Rom 8:5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live* according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

Rom 8:6 For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace.

Rom 8:7 Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.

Rom 8:8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Rom 8:9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

Now we pick back up with Jacob going to find a wife.

Gen 28:10 Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran.

Gen 28:11 So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep.

Gen 28:12 Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder *was* set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

Gen 28:13 And behold, the LORD stood above it and said: "I *am* the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants.

Gen 28:14 Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Gen 28:15 Behold, I *am* with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you."

In verses 10-15 God comes to Jacob while he is on his journey and reiterates to him the promise to which he is an heir. God has done this

each time the next in line comes of age or is about to receive the baton, so to speak. He wants to confirm things with us also. The Holy Spirit does this in any number of ways. Sometimes it is through another person. Sometimes it is through your reading of the Bible. Sometimes He speaks to you in that still small voice. IF we listen He will confirm things though. That is what He is doing here. He is just letting Jacob know from His own mouth that he, Jacob is the man that God will use in that generation.

Next we see the effect this has on Jacob when he awakes.

Gen 28:16 Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know *it*."

Gen 28:17 And he was afraid and said, "How awesome *is* this place! This *is* none other than the house of God, and this *is* the gate of heaven!"

Gen 28:18 Then Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put at his head, set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on top of it.

Gen 28:19 And he called the name of that place Bethel; but the name of that city had been Luz previously.

Gen 28:20 Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on,

Gen 28:21 so that I come back to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God.

Gen 28:22 And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."

The overall effect on Jacob is that he has now had a revelation. Before that day it is very possible that Jacob's faith was really that of his mother's and father's. I believe that many children today go through this very same thing. It is very important that children are allowed to ask the questions they have regarding faith rather than being force-fed our faith. Then we should have or get the answers to those questions. We should raise them and teach them in Christian households and they should be

subject to the boundaries of a Christian household, but they should be allowed to ask the questions that are relevant to their generation.

Now God has become the God of Jacob. It is now personal instead of paternal. It is real! His life will never be the same. Remember, evidence of a changed life is a changed life.

Jacob got up and made a covenant with God. He anointed a pillar of stone and called it the House of God. He said that if God would provide for him and give him peace he would serve Him.

1Co 3:16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?

1Co 3:17 If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which *temple* you are.

Joh 14:27 **Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.**

Jacob is seeking the same things Jesus promised us. Jacob named a city "House of God." We are the house of God. He resides in us if we are saved. Therefore He is with us all the time. That is how personal our God is.

(Explain the OT idea of holiness, as opposed to our modern moral interpretation)

Now Jacob shows us another institution that God put in place. Y'all know that I don't like talking about money. Preachers get accused of talking too much about money as it is. Y'all know we don't talk about it unless we run across it in scripture. Well here we are.

Jacob states that he will tithe to his God. That is he will give a tenth of all he has to God. Tithe means tenth. This is how things run. This is how the A/C runs and so forth, through our tithes and offerings.

God gives you 10 rows of corn, you give Him one row back. That's a good deal. I also realize that a wallet is the last thing to get saved on a person. As Christians though, our spending habits should change just as our other habits. (JE)

We are to now think eternally. Jesus taught this:

Mat 6:19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;

Mat 6:20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

Mat 6:21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

You will spend your money on the things that you love. We should love God and His work. Therefore we should support that work with our time, our talents and our treasury.

Jacob is putting his money where his mouth is and so should we.

My prayer is that every time you come here God illuminates you to some truth of His. I pray that your life will be changed every time you come through that door.