

The Bible From 20,000 Feet Part 4: Genesis 22-33

Tuesday Night Bible Study, June 17, 2008

--PART 3 OUTLINE:

- FORESHADOW OF CHRIST IN THE LIFE OF ISAAC
- JACOB WITHOUT FAITH
- JACOB TRANSFORMED INTO A MAN OF FAITH

--FORESHADOW OF CHRIST IN THE LIFE OF ISAAC

--Genesis 22:1-5: "Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." 2 Then He said, "**Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah**, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."

--approximately 2000 years later God would send His only Son whom He loved to the land of Moriah to be sacrificed as an offering for sin of all mankind!

--the land of Moriah was the general area where Jerusalem was later build

--the exact "mountain" to which God led Abraham could have been either the location where the temple was built or the location where Jesus was crucified.

--God referred to Isaac as Abraham's "only son" because he was the only son through Abraham's legal wife while his other children came through handmaids.

--Genesis 22:3-5: "So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. 4 **Then on the third day** Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. 5 And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and **we will come back to you.**"

--Abraham stated, "**we** will come back..." thus expressing confidence that God would raise Isaac from the dead.

--if Isaac died then God would have had to raise him from the dead in order to fulfill His covenant with Abraham: "But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year..." (Genesis 17:21)

--the resurrection of Christ was foreshadowed...

--by Abraham's confidence in God's ability to raise Isaac from the dead

--by the uncanny timing of reaching the location God specified "on the third day" after Abraham set out on his journey!

--little did Abraham know that approximately 2000 years later God's promise to him that through him "all the nations of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 26:4) would be fulfilled by God offering His own son as a sacrifice for sin!

--JACOB'S LIFE WITHOUT FAITH

--Abraham sends his chief servant to the city of Nahor in Mesopotamia to find a wife for Isaac among Abraham's family.

--Isaac was about 40 years old at this time

--Abraham's servant prayed that God would give him a sign about who would be chosen to be Isaac's wife

--Rebekah, Abraham's grand-neice, fulfilled the sign Abraham's servant prayed for.

--Jacob's birth and God's promise to fulfill His covenant through Jacob

--before he was born God revealed to Rebekah that He would fulfill through Jacob His covenant to make a great nation out of Abraham's descendants.

--Genesis 25:20-28: "Now Isaac pleaded with the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD granted his plea, and Rebekah his wife conceived. 22 But the children struggled together within her; and she said, "If all is well, why am I like this?" So she went to inquire of the LORD. 23 And the LORD said to her: "Two nations are in your womb, Two peoples shall be separated from your body;

One people shall be stronger than the other, And the older shall serve the younger." 24 So when her days were fulfilled for her to give birth, indeed there were twins in her womb. 25 And the first came out red. He was like a hairy garment all over; so they called his name Esau. 26 Afterward his brother came out, and his hand took hold of Esau's heel; so his name was called Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them. 27 So the boys grew. And Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was a mild man, dwelling in tents. 28 And Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob."

--in the first part of Jacob's life rather than walking by faith and depending on God's provision, he repeatedly depended on his own scheming for selfish gain.

--when Jacob was born he grabbed Esau's heel so he was named Jacob, which means "supplanter".
--this tendency Jacob had as an infant was a foreshadow of his tendency as an adult to supplant and take the possessions of others...

--25:29-34: Jacob took Esau's birthright

--27:1-29: Jacob took Isaac's blessing from Esau

--30:25-43: Jacob took his father-in-law's flocks and herds

--after Isaac gave Jacob the firstborn blessing, he sent him out of the land of Canaan to the same area where Isaac's wife Rachael came from to find a wife...

--Genesis 28:1-2: "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. 2 Arise, go to Padan Aram [*region surrounding Haran where Abraham came from*], 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.'"

--on his way to Padan Aram Jacob has what appears to be his first personal encounter with God...

--Genesis 28:10-17: "Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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." 16 Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it."

--up to this point Jacob lived as if God was absent... depending on his own scheming rather than depending on God.

--in this vision Jacob had a startling reality check that caused him to say – "surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it."

--and that is how it is for every person who does not have a personal relationship with God... He is near them and they don't realize it... He is near them, waiting for them to turn to Him.

--Acts 17:27-28: "God did this [*sovereignty arranged history*] so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. 'For in him we live and move and have our being.'..."

--after his vision Jacob built an altar there to the Lord...

--Genesis 28:17-19: "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!' 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. 19 And he called the name of that place Bethel; but the name of that city had been Luz previously."

--Jacob didn't change overnight...

--this vision was a first step in his relationship with God, but what he said after the vision shows that he still had a long way to go in trusting God...

--Genesis 28:20-22: "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, 21 so that I come back to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God. 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.'"

--God made an unconditional promise, but Jacob made it conditional – "if God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going... then the LORD shall be my God..."

--Jacob married and spent 20 years with his father-in-law before returning back to Canaan...

--Jacob goes to Haran and finds Laban, as Isaac instructed, and then falls in love with Laban's daughter Rachel.

--in that day it was customary to give the father of the bride a dowry, a gift of monetary value or a period of service to compensate for the loss of the daughters help in her father's family.

--Jacob and Laban agreed upon Jacob working for Laban for 7 years before he could take Rachel as his wife.

--after 7 years Laban tricked Jacob into taking his older daughter Leah instead of Rachel and told him that he had to work another 7 years before he could take Rachel as his wife.

--Laban then cheats Jacob in a livestock agreement so Jacob then turns right back around and cheats Laban and then flees the country with Laban chasing after him.

--again, Jacob is depending on his own efforts rather than depending on God, and as he flees God appears to him in a dream... "Then the Angel of God spoke to me in a dream, saying, 'Jacob.' And I said, 'Here I am.' 12 And He said, '... for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you. 13 I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed the pillar and where you made a vow to Me. Now arise, get out of this land, and return to the land of your family.'" (Genesis 30:11-13)

--Laban eventually catches up to Jacob but does him no harm because God warned Laban in a dream to leave Jacob alone...

--here Jacob comes face to face with the reality that it is God who is protecting him rather than his own scheming.

--Laban tells Jacob, "It is in my power to do you harm, but the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, 'Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad.'"

--JACOB TRANSFORMED INTO A MAN OF FAITH

--after parting with Laban in peace Jacob then confronts his brother Esau who he had cheated years earlier...

--Genesis 32:3-8: "Then Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother in the land of Seir, the country of Edom. 4 And he commanded them, saying, "Speak thus to my lord Esau, 'Thus your servant Jacob says: "I have dwelt with Laban and stayed there until now. 5 I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, and male and female servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find favor in your sight.'"" 6 Then the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We came to your brother Esau, and he also is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him." 7 So Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two companies. 8 And he said, 'If Esau comes to the one company and attacks it, then the other company which is left will escape.'"

--Genesis 32:9-12: for the first time we see Jacob praying to God for deliverance... "Then Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the LORD who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your family, and I will deal well with you': 10 I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two companies. 11 Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and attack me and the mother with the children. 12 For You said, 'I will surely treat you well, and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.'"

--Jacob claims God's promise to him by faith for the first time!

--shortly after his prayer God appeared to Jacob in the form of an angel (preincarnate appearance of Christ) ... (Genesis 32:24-32)

--the encounter described could have been a spiritual encounter rather than an actual physical encounter.

--one of the key points is the profound change seen in Jacob's attitude about reliance on God rather than himself.

--on his way to Haran 20 years earlier Jacob's attitude towards God's blessing is that he could take it or leave it, but now in this spiritual wrestling match Jacob said to the angel, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!"

--then God changed Jacob's name to Israel which means, "having power with God."

--during this spiritual encounter Jacob's hip was dislocated and permanently damaged, which would serve as a reminder for the rest of his life not to rely on his own strength but rather on God's strength.

--the history of Israel is an eloquent testimony to dependence on God's strength.... when they walked in obedience and depended on His strength they prevailed, but when they turned from God and depended on their own strength they were defeated.

--finally Jacob and Esau meet, and rather than being angry as Jacob feared, "Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept."

--Jacob finally arrives back at Canaan and built an altar to the Lord at Shechem where Abraham built an altar when he first arrived in Canaan

--Genesis 33:18-20: "Then Jacob came safely to the city of Schechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan Aram; and he pitched his tent before the city. And he bought the parcel of land, where he had pitched his tent, from the children of Hamor, Schechem's father, for one hundred pieces of money. Then he erected an altar there and called it El Elohe Israel [*God, the God of Israel*]."

--upon his return to Canaan, Jacob completed a 20 year circle but at the end of the circle he was a completely new man... in many ways his return to Canaan was his first visit to Canaan... his first time seeing Canaan through the eyes of faith!