

Message Eleven

Jacob (2)–the Vision of Bethel, the House of God, and being Transformed

Scripture reading: Gen. 28:10-22; John 1:51; Gen. 32:28; 35:1, 6-7, 9-15, 27.

- I. Jacob's dream in Genesis 28 was a dream of God's goal, the dream of Bethel, the dream of the house of God, which is the church today and which will consummate in the New Jerusalem as the eternal dwelling place of God and His redeemed elect–Gen. 28:10-22; 1Tim. 3:15; Rev. 21:3, 22.**
- A. God had a dream, and that dream was to have the New Jerusalem, a built-up city, as the consummation of His economy.
 - B. Our dream is to become the New Jerusalem as the consummation of God's economy–Rev. 21:9-10.
 - C. This Jacob's dream is the most crucial point in the whole book of Genesis and the most crucial word in the revelation of God.
 - D. In the account of Jacob's dream, the stone(Gen. 28:11, 18, 22), the pillar(v.18), the house of God(vv.17, 19, 22), and the oil(v.18) are outstanding items and are the basic factors with which the Bible is composed with:
 - 1. The stone symbolizes Christ as the foundation stone, the topstone, and the cornerstone for God's building, His spiritual house–Isa. 28:16; Zech. 4:7; Acts. 4:10-12.
 - 2. The stone also symbolizes the transformed man, who has been constituted with Christ as the transforming element to be material for the building of God's house–Gen. 2:12; Matt. 16:18; John 1:42; 1Cor. 13:12; 1Pet. 2:5; Rev. 21:11, 18-20.
 - 3. Jacob used the stone for a pillow, signifying that the divine element of Christ constituted into our being through our subjective experience of Him becomes a pillow for our rest, the solid support within us–cf. Matt. 11:28.
 - 4. After awaking from his dream, Jacob set up the pillow-stone as a pillar, signifying that the Christ whom we have experienced, who has been wrought into us, and on whom we rest becomes the material and the support for God's building, God's house–cf. 1Kings 7:17, 21; Gal. 2:9; Rev. 3:12.

5. Eventually, Jacob poured oil, a symbol of the Spirit as the consummation of the Triune God reaching man, on the pillar, symbolizing that the transformed man is one with the Triune God and expresses Him—cf. Exo. 30:23-30; Luke 4:18.
 6. That stone became Bethel, the house of God—Gen. 28:17, 19, 22.
- E. The ladder is the center, the focus, of Jacob's dream; this dream is a revelation of Christ, for Christ is the reality of the ladder that Jacob saw—v.12; John 1:51.
1. Christ as the Son of Man, in His humanity, is the ladder set up on earth that brings heaven (God) to earth (man) and joins earth and heaven as one—1:14; 14:6, 20.
 2. Our regenerated spirit, which is God's dwelling place today, is the base on earth where Christ as the heavenly ladder has been set up; hence, whenever we turn to our spirit, we experience Christ as the ladder bringing God to us and us to God—Eph. 2:22; 2Tim. 4:22; cf. Heb. 10:19; 4:16.
- F. Where this ladder is, there are an open heaven, the transformed man, the anointing upon this man, and the building up of the house of God with this man.

II. Jacob, a man under God's transforming hand, represents a life of transformation for God's building—Gen. 32:28; 35:10, 15.

- A. There are three distinct periods in Jacob's life: the period of dealings (chs. 25-32), the period of transformation (chs. 32-36), and the period of maturity (chs. 37-50).
- B. Everything happened to Jacob was for his transformation:
1. In order to be transformed, Jacob had to be pressed into situations that gave him no choice except to undergo a change—31:36-42; 32:28.
 2. From Jacob's experience we see that everything that happens to us is under God's sovereignty for our transformation—Rom. 8:28-29; 12:2.
 3. Jacob's transformation began from the time the Lord came and touched Jacob's strongest part, his thigh, in Genesis 32; from that time onward, the process of transformation continued until chapter 37.

- C. Jacob had been chosen to be the expression of God and a prince of God, and he could become God's expression and a prince of God only through transformation—Gen. 1:26; 32:28; 2Cor. 3:18.
 - 1. God's purpose in dealing with Jacob, a supplanter, was to transform him into Israel, a prince of God, bearing His image to express Him and exercising His dominion to represent Him—Gen. 1:26.
 - 2. Because of the fall, we became distorted clay; God's way is not to reform distorted ones but to transform them into stones for the building up of God's house, Bethel—2:7; John 1:42; 1Pet. 2:4-5.
 - 3. Transformation is not outward correction or adjustment but the metabolic function of the life of God in us, by the addition of the element of the divine life of Christ into our being, so that we may express the image of Christ outwardly—2Cor. 3:18; Rom. 5:10; 12:2; 8:29.
- D. Transformation issues in building up; the building up of the jasper wall of the New Jerusalem goes along with transformation—Rev. 4:3; 21:11, 18-19.

III. In Genesis 35 the vision of Bethel came again; however, this time it did not come as a dream—it came as a reality—vv. 1-15.

- A. We all come into the church life twice; the first time we come in dream, and the second time we come in reality.
- B. At Bethel Jacob's name was changed to Israel, indicating that his being had been changed; now he was Israel at Bethel—32:28; 35:10.
- C. In chapter 35 there is a crucial and radical turn from the individual experience of God to the corporate experience of God—the experience of God as the God of Bethel, El-Bethel—35:7; Eph. 3:17-21; 4:4-6.
- D. The All-sufficient God is revealed for the building of Bethel; only at Bethel is it possible for us to realize the all-sufficiency of our God—Gen. 35:11a.
- E. At Bethel Jacob set up a pillar and poured out a drink offering on it; this indicates that the drink offering is for God's building—v.14.
- F. After experiencing the reality of Bethel, Jacob entered into full fellowship with God at Hebron; the fellowship at Hebron means intimacy, peace, satisfaction, and joy—v.27; 1Cor. 1:9.

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Reference Scripture Verses:

Gen. 28:10-22. **10** And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. **11** And he came to a certain place and spent the night there, because the sun had set; and he took one of the stones of the place and put it under his head, and he lay down in that place. **12** And he dreamed: There was a ladder 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 there was Jehovah, standing above it; and He said, I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie, I will give to you and to your seed. **14** And your seed will be as the dust of the earth, and you will spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and in your seed will all the families of the earth be blessed. **15** And, behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go and will cause you to return to this land, for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you. **16** And Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, Surely Jehovah is in this place, and I did not know it. **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. **18** And Jacob rose up early in the morning and took the stone that he had put under his head, and he 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 the city was Luz previously. **20** 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 garments to put on, **21** So that I return to my father's house in peace, then Jehovah will be my God, **22** And this stone, which I have set up as a pillar, will be God's house; and of all that You give me I will surely give one tenth to You.

John 1:51 And He said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, You shall see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.

Gen. 32:28 And He said, Your name will no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men and have prevailed.

Gen. 35:1 And God said to Jacob, Rise up, go up to Bethel, and dwell there; and make an altar there to the God who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau

Gen. 35:6-7. **6** And Jacob came to Luz (that is, Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him. **7** And he built an altar there and called the place El-bethel, because there God had revealed Himself to him when he fled from his brother.

Gen. 35:9-15. **9** And God appeared to Jacob again when he came from Paddan-aram and blessed him. **10** And God said to him, Your name is Jacob; Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, But Israel shall be your name. Thus He called his name Israel. **11** And God said to him, I am the All-sufficient God: Be fruitful and multiply; A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, And kings shall come forth from your loins. **12** And the land which I gave to Abraham and to Isaac, I will give to you; And I will give the land to your seed after you. **13** Then God went up from him in the place where He had spoken with him. **14** And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where He had spoken with him, a pillar of stone; and he poured out a drink offering on it and poured oil on it. **15** And Jacob called the name of the place where God had spoken with him Bethel.

Gen. 35:27 And Jacob came to Isaac his father at Mamre, at Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and

Isaac had sojourned.

Gen. 35:10 And God said to him, Your name is Jacob; Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, But Israel shall be your name. Thus He called his name Israel.

Gen. 35:15 And Jacob called the name of the place where God had spoken with him Bethel.

I.

1Tim. 3:15 But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.

Rev. 21:3 And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them *and be* their God.

Rev. 21:9-10. **9** And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb. **10** And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

Rev. 21:22 And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

Isa. 28:16 Therefore thus says The Lord Jehovah: Indeed I lay a stone in Zion as a foundation, A tested stone, A precious cornerstone as a foundation firmly established; He who believes will not hasten away.

Zech. 4:7 Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain, and he will bring forth the topstone with shouts of Grace, grace to it.

Acts. 4:10-12. **10** Let it be known to you all and to all the people of Israel that in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified *and* whom God has raised from the dead, in this *name* this man stands before you in good health. **11** This is the stone which was considered as nothing by you, the builders, which has become the head of the corner. **12** And there is salvation in no other, for neither is there another name under heaven given among men in which we must be saved.

Gen. 2:12 And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there.

Matt. 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

John 1:42 He led him to Jesus. Looking at him, Jesus said, You are Simon, the son of John; you shall be called Cephas (which is interpreted, Peter).

1Cor. 13:12 For now we see in a mirror obscurely, but at that time face to face; now I know in part, but at that time I will fully know even as also I was fully known.

1Pet. 2:5 You yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house into a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Rev. 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

Rev. 21:18-20. **18** And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear

glass.**19** The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone: the first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; **20** The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst.

Matt. 11:28 Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest.

1Kings 7:17 There were nets of checker work with wreaths of chain work for the capitals that were at the top of the pillars, seven for the one capital, and seven for the second capital.

1Kings 7:21 And he erected the pillars at the portico of the temple. When he erected the right pillar, he called its name Jachin; and when he erected the left pillar, he called its name Boaz.

Gal. 2:9 And perceiving the grace given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and to Barnabas the right hand of fellowship that we *should go* to the Gentiles, and they, to the circumcision

Rev. 3:12 He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.

Exo.30:23-30. 23 You also take the finest spices: of flowing myrrh five hundred shekels, and of fragrant cinnamon half as much, two hundred fifty shekels, and of fragrant calamus two hundred fifty shekels, **24** And of cassia five hundred shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and a hin of olive oil. **25** And you shall make it a holy anointing oil, a perfume compounded according to the perfumer's art; it shall be a holy anointing oil. **26** And with it you shall anoint the Tent of Meeting and the Ark of the Testimony, **27** And the table and all its utensils, and the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense, **28** And the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the laver and its base. **29** Thus you shall sanctify them that they may be most holy; whatever touches them shall be holy. **30** And you shall anoint Aaron and his sons and sanctify them that they may serve Me as priests.

Luke 4:18 "The spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to announce the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to send away in release those who are oppressed,

John 1:51 And He said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, You shall see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 14:20 In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

Eph. 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.

2Tim. 4:22 The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you

Heb. 10:19 Having therefore, brothers, boldness for entering the *Holy of Holies* in the blood of Jesus,

Heb. 4:16 Let us therefore come forward with boldness to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help.

II.

Rom. 8:28-29. **28** And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose. **29** Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

Rom. 12:2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

Gen. 1:26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

2Cor. 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

Gen.2:7 Jehovah God formed man with the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

1Pet. 2:4-5. **4** Coming to Him, a living stone, rejected by men but with God chosen *and* precious, **5** You yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house into a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Rom. 5:10 For if we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more we will be saved in His life, having been reconciled,

Rom. 12:2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

Rom. 8:29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

Rev. 4:3 And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance, and *there was* a rainbow around the throne like an emerald in appearance.

Rev. 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

Rev. 21:18-19. **18** And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.**19** The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone: the first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald.

III.

Eph. 3:17-21. **17** That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and

grounded in love, **18** May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are **19** And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God. **20** But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us, **21** To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

Eph. 4:4-6. **4** One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling; **5** One Lord, one faith, one baptism; **6** One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

1Cor. 1:9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.