

“At Heaven's Gate”
Genesis 28:10-22
Berean Baptist Church
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INTRODUCTION

Jacobs has “won” the blessing, but now he must flee into the wilderness as a refugee in fear for his life. But while he is sleeping in an open field Jacob will receive his first vision of God and learn that the Lord is faithful. And by God's providence, the place where Jacob sleeps is the very gate of Heaven.

By this history, and what Jesus teaches, we learn that even the most desolate places are near to heaven for God's beloved.

You should live every moment of your life as though you are before the very Gate of Heaven because in Christ you are always in the presence of God! Like Jacob here you should...

Be comforted, be worshipful, be holy, and call on the Lord especially in the wilderness. Because even in the wilderness a Christian is at the Gate of Heaven!

1) GEN 28:10-11, JACOB ON THE ROAD TO HARAN

Jacob had won the birth right but now he was a refugee estranged from the wealth of his father and the tents of his Mother. Esau was the tough hunter, but now it is Jacob who must live outdoors far from home, alone, without comforts, and uncertain about his future.

Have you ever been on the road to Haran? Have you ever found yourself in a desolate place with strife at home, danger where you are, and deep uncertainty about your future? Maybe you are there now even as Jacob is...

Jacob has very little with him, but he carries one thing that makes all difference: the Blessing of the God of Abraham. If you know Christ, whatever you have lost, wherever you are, you have that blessing too!

2) GEN 28:12-15, A DIVINE APPOINTMENT

Vs. 12 Jacob saw a ladder to Heaven and God's angels ascending and descending. The word “ladder” could have the idea of stairs or a mound, the point is that it was some means of going up and down.

Behold! Behold! Behold! - The narrator invites you to behold the ladder (vs 12) and behold the Lord (vs 13). And then when God speaks (vs 15) He tells Jacob (and us!) to behold His marvelous promise.

God blesses Jacob with six promises: 1. Jacob will get the land he is sleeping on, 2. he will have many descendants over all the earth, 3. those descendants will be a blessing to all peoples, 4. God will be with Jacob now, 5. will bless Jacob where ever he goes, and 6. will bring Jacob back to this place, and will never leave Jacob.

Jacob thought he was a refugee in the middle of nowhere, but he was at Heaven's Gate and now he discerns that God is pouring out promises upon him!

Wherever you are in life, know that you are not there by accident! And if you know Christ you have the promise of God's presence like Jacob.

3) GEN 28:16-22, JACOB RESPONDS WITH WORSHIP

vs 16-18 Esau, Jacob's brother, lost the blessing because he did not care about the things of God. Jacob's response here separates him from Esau. When Jacob discerns the presence of God, he is full of holy dread and worship.

Jacob's worships with his words and with sacrifice. For ancient people oil was medicine, food, money, and fuel; it was extremely valuable! For a refugee like Jacob, the oil that he carried could make the difference between life and death. Yet he poured out some of his oil in worship.

You should respond with reverence and sacrificial worship in the presence of God.

Vs 19-22 Jacob swears an oath. What Jacob says could be interpreted in two ways.... Jacob could be trying to make a deal with God, saying "if God will bless me, I will tithe to Him." Or he could be responding in gratitude saying, "because God will bless me, I will tithe to Him."

Jacob was almost certainly not trying to bargain with God here. God honor's Jacob's response to His grace.

Do not bargain with God, but do not be afraid to give to him as he has blessed you. Often the desolate places, and fearful times are the best times to sacrifice to God.

4) JOHN 1:43-51, JESUS MAKES THE WAY CLEAR

Jacob found the link between heaven and earth in the most unexpected place, and he would not be the last one to do this...

In the Gospel of John, we meet Nathaniel, a conscientious and pious Jew. Nathaniel hears about the Messiah Jesus of Nazareth but wonders how the Messiah could come from such an unknown place as Nazareth. When Jesus speaks with Nathaniel he brings up Jacob, and then makes a stunning claim:

51 And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

We see that in the revelation of Jesus the faith of the people of God is perfected. Jacob saw that somehow there was a bridge between Heaven and Earth even in the most unlikely place. In the light of Christ, we understand that this connection between Heaven and Earth is not a human connection or a religious system, but a person; Jesus is saying that He, Himself, is the bridge between heaven and earth!

Later in the Gospel of John.... "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

All that we've said about continually being before Heaven's Gate is encourages us to be strong, and challenges us to be holy, and comforts us in all places, but it is only true of those in Christ.

Jesus is the way, the only way, between Heaven and Earth. If you want to be at the Gate of Heaven you must depend entirely on him!

CONCLUSION

Learn from Jacob that a Christian is not far from God even in a wasteland and that the blessings of the love of God will follow you wherever you go. Even Jacob did not know this, but the reason God was there was Jesus – the only mediator between God and man.

In Christ, we have direct access to Heaven always. You should live like someone continually before Heaven's gate! Let this truth define your life with all its joys and trials.

When tempted to sin or when tried by fear, know that if you are in Christ you are at the very gate of Heaven and help is not far from you.

And always, live with holy joy, thanks giving and awe knowing that if you have Christ in you, then you yourself are Beth-el, "the House of God "because the Spirit of God dwells in you!

1Co 6:19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.