

EXPOSITION OF GENESIS

Message #76

Genesis 35:9-15

Jacob was God's elect and he was certainly not chosen by God because he was so wonderful or stable in his spirituality. The truth of the Bible is Jacob was very sinful but he was God's choice (Genesis 25:23 / Romans 9:11-13).

WHEN A WORLDLY BELIEVER TURNS HIS BACK ON HIS WORLDLINESS AND GOES TO THE PLACE GOD WANTS HIM TO BE, GOD WILL PERSONALLY DO GREAT THINGS FOR HIM AND WITH HIM AND WILL SHOWER HIM WITH WONDERFUL BLESSINGS.

James Strahan, the European Hebrew scholar of the late 1800s, said chapter 34 of Genesis is empty of God, whereas chapter 35 is full of God. Chapter 34 sees a believer whose commitment is half hearted, whereas chapter 35 sees a believer whose commitment is whole hearted. There was an altar in Shechem (33:20), but God's power was not in Shechem, it was in Bethel and when Jacob finally decided to go there, he heard the voice of God (*Hebrew Ideals In Genesis*, p. 269).

GRACIOUS BLESSING #1- Jacob experienced God's presence. 35:9a

The Hebrew word "appear" is one that would suggest that God allowed Himself to be seen by Jacob (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, pp. 748-750). This particular Word was used in connection with Abraham (Genesis 12:7; 17:1; 18:1), Isaac (Genesis 26:2, 24) and with Jacob (Genesis 35:1, 9). God first appeared to Jacob in a dream, at this very spot, Luz, known as Bethel (Genesis 28:19). Now that Jacob is back at the place God wants him to be, he is experiencing God's presence once again.

The matter of God physically appearing to individuals was considered something to be very unique in the N.T. Stephen referred to these very events in his address before the Sanhedrin and he connects them to Jesus Christ (Acts 7:2, 30-32). The writer of Hebrews also connects this to Jesus Christ - in His first coming for sins and in His second coming for deliverance (Hebrews 9:26-28).

Perhaps it has been a while since you have sensed God's presence and power in your life. May I suggest that you go back to the place where God is first in your life and you will experience it all again.

GRACIOUS BLESSING #2 - Jacob experienced God's blessings. 35:9b

The word "blessing" carries with it the idea of pronouncing a very sacred blessing on someone, which tangibly refers to protection, posterity and prosperity (Ibid., p. 142). In this specific case, God, Himself, is pronouncing the blessing, which means God, Himself, is agreeing to protect and prosper Jacob and his lineage.

Jacob's decision to turn from his worldliness was one that eventually gained him the great blessings of God. There is a common grace given by God to all men in which he allows one to prosper. But no worldly believer will ever be prosperous in eternity or blessed by God. In order for God's blessings to come, the believer must bury his filth and leave his worldliness behind (Genesis 35:1-2).

GRACIOUS BLESSING #3 - Jacob experienced a new name. 35:9-10

God had already given Jacob the new name Israel, many years prior to this (Genesis 32:28). However, Jacob looked more like the old Jacob rather than the new Israel, so his old worldly name stuck with him. Now he was with God and had given up the filth and the world and was reaching a new sanctified level and God once again reminds him he has a new name, a new look and a new life. **It is never too late to change and receive God's blessings no matter how long you have been stumbling through life.**

GRACIOUS BLESSING #4 - Jacob experienced great fruitfulness . Genesis 35:11

At the time of this promise, Jacob was somewhere near the age of 120. Isaac was 60 when Jacob was born (25:26) and he was 180 when he died (35:28), which means Jacob was 120. What this means is **that it is never too late to turn from worldliness and turn to God. God can make one fruitful and useable no matter what the age.**

Contextually, Jacob's family had been a mess (Genesis 34). But now, his family will not be multiplied, but will become royalty. Worldliness hinders fruitfulness, but when a believer gets fed up with the filth and gets close to God, great things happen.

GRACIOUS BLESSING #5 - Jacob would inherit God's promised land . 35: 12

Jacob's decision to turn away from his worldliness and turn to the will of God was the best decision he ever made. This one decision linked him to Abraham and Isaac and all of the land promises. Now that he was back with God, God would bless him and he and his seed would live in the property and land specifically given by God to them. This has both personal and prophetic ramifications. From a personal perspective, Jacob would live many of his remaining years in the promised land. From a prophetic standpoint, his seed would one day inherit all of the land.

GRACIOUS BLESSING #6 - Jacob experienced powerful worship. 35: 13-15

He had the presence of God and he offered his offerings in a new clean way that was acceptable to God. His worship went to a whole new wonderful level once he was right with God.

Perhaps you have been wandering in the world like Jacob. Regardless of your age or situation, if you will turn your back on your worldliness and turn back to the will of God, God will personally do many wonderful things with you and for you. God will bless you and your family. Bury the sin, bury the past and get rid of the filth and you will be heading to blessings. That is the story of Jacob's life, the grandson of Abraham.