

JACOB'S LADDER PART 6

Pastor Jose F. Maldonado

Hillburn Drive Grace Baptist Church

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Genesis 28:10-22

We return to our study on **Jacob's Ladder**, this is part 6 in our series. We have seen the essence of Jacob's conversion experience. We have been considering the important application in regards to the gospel in our study, but this morning as we did last week we have started to make references to the church at large. We are not seeking to do away with the literal interpretation here in Genesis, but our concern is the essence of the gospel and its application to the church for us in this 21st century. Remember, according to 1 Corinthians 10:11, "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." Romans 15:4, "*For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.*" There are 6 things we have presented to you:

- I. Jacob's Deception.**
- II. Jacob's Departure.**
- III. Jacob's Dream.**
- IV. Jacob's Discovery.**
- V. Jacob's Delight.**
- VI. Jacob's Dedication.**

We have opened up our fourth point on Jacob's Discovery, regarding the effect God's revelation made upon Jacob.

IV. Jacob's Discovery.

As we said last week before Jacob laid his head on the stone for a pillow on that particular night, he was lost without hope running for his life, exiled from his house, but God met with Jacob, that is, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac met with him and saved his soul. When Jacob woke up he knew something had happened to him and commits and dedicates his life to God in verse 22, "*...then shall the LORD be my God.*" We will deal with this in our last message but here in verses 16 & 17 Jacob shares his experience with God, which such a sober and fearful affect, "*And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not. 17 And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.*" Under this fourth point we have 4 sub-points and we added something this week, not just the presence of God but, the presence of God in His House.

- 1. The Presence of God in His House.**
- 2. The Place of God in His House.**

3. **The Presiding of God in His House.**
4. **The Passageway of God in His House.**

The first thing we saw last week in this particular text is **(1) The Presence of God in His House**, that is, Jacob wakes up and realizes that God was in this place, or if you wish, God's presence was felt, but there is a sense that he missed it or knew it not, but nonetheless he knew God had met with him and was present. Jacob also realized that Divine revelation was given to him in this dream. Jacob awakes out of his dream and says, "...**SURELY THE LORD IS IN THIS PLACE; AND I KNEW IT NOT.**" Now, because the phrase in verse 17 says, "...*this is none other but the house of God ...*" we shall continue to deal and make application regarding the essence of the church, because the church of God is called the HOUSE OF GOD! 1 Timothy 3:15, "*But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*"

We set forth before you 2 sobering messages last Sunday morning and Sunday night regarding our responsibility of being sensitive to the presence of God in His church, else we find ourselves saying like Jacob, "...**SURELY THE LORD IS IN THIS PLACE; AND I KNEW IT NOT.**"

We warned against the tide of mass pragmatism in this post-modern era of compromise and complacency in contrast to the importance of upholding and maintaining the truth of God. Now, regardless of what other Churches do, we must maintain a spiritual integrity so that God's presence might continue to reside in our midst. I remember years ago when Brother Frank Boystund warned the churches regarding the sensitive nature of the Holy Spirit. He warned us that, the Holy Spirit of God is sensitive and it does not take much for the Spirit to remove itself from a place, not in totality like having our candle stick removed, but for that particular service. Remember, this church is not exempt from the Spirit of God removing itself from her. A movement here or there or a lethargic careless attitude, or even cold hearts towards God can cause the Spirit of God to remove itself. God help us to ever be aware of this. Let's us try to be mindful of the PRESENCE of the LORD in His assembly, that again we don't find ourselves saying like Jacob, "...**SURELY THE LORD IS IN THIS PLACE; AND I KNEW IT NOT.**" May I make a suggestion; when we come into this assembly, let us try to be sober and sensitive and seek to keep our conversations in the foyer or in the fellowship hall and come in with a quiet and meek spirit and with a spiritual mindset to prepare our hearts to receive God's Word? Now, I will be the first to confess that I am guilty of coming into this assembly at times with a foolish heart, perhaps too much joking and playing around. I'm not saying we can't do these things, but let's try to do them in the foyer and fellowship hall and be spiritually sober when we enter the assembly or house of God. Just respect for the sanctuary of God. There is nothing sacred about this building, the people are the church, but this is our meeting place, if you wish, our ecclesia, our call out assembly where we gather to meet with our God. The whole essence of what I'm saying is about being sensitive about the presence of

God when we gather together. This is not to anyone in particular, but to all as a whole, Amen? Thus, our first sub-point, **The Presence of God!**

2. The Place of God. By Jacob's own admission and confession, he acknowledged that God was in that particular place; SURELY the LORD is in this PLACE! Again, another assuring promise of God willing and seeking to dwell with His people twofold, as individuals and as a corporate body the CHURCH! Now, let me make a point here that we might understand the importance of God residing in a particular place, turn to Psalm 87:1 & 1, "<<A Psalm or Song for the sons of Korah.>> *His foundation is in the holy mountains. 2 The LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.*" Zion is a type of God's Church, turn to Hebrews 12:18-24. Turn back to the Psalms and chapter 132:1-18. (If time: Ps.16:11, I don't need all the pragmatism to have the joy of the Lord, the fact that God is pleased to dwell with His people is enough to cause me to JOY! I don't need all those other things; I don't need to be entertained to be in church or some spectacular a rock show to be wowed, I'm happy and very much satisfied with the presence of the Lord in our midst.)

Now that we understand something of the presence of God in His church and that God loves the gates of Zion, HIS CHURCH, more than the dwellings of Jacob, let me ask, what place should God have in His church or if you wish, what is the purpose of the church regarding God? The purpose and place of God in the church is for God to be GLORIFIED! The purpose of the church is to glorify God. This is why we gather, we gather not to entertain your fleshly whims, no but to GLORIFY GOD! Consider all the following verses, I have too many and therefore will read them to you and you can write them down if you wish and go read them later: (note these are only NT verses)

- 1 Cor. 10:31, "*Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*"
- 1 Cor. 1:29, "*That no flesh should glory in his presence.*"
- 1 Cor. 1:31, "*That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*"
- Galatians 6:14, "*But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.*"
- Hebrews 13:21, "*Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*"
- Ephesians 3:21, "*Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.*"
- 1 Timothy 1:17, "*Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*"
- Revelation 5:12 & 13, "*Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. 13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*"

- Revelation 19:1, “*And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God.*”
- Revelation 21:23, “*And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.*”

Over and over the duty of God’s people is to give Him glory in everything we do. As a reminder, because of our need to give glory to God in everything we do, this again sets forth for us the regulative principle of worship. How can God then be glorified in our worship of Him if we deviate from the things commanded us in the Scriptures? The presence and place of God in our worship should compel us to maintain the essence of the regulative principle of worship! To some this might not seem important at all, because to them church is but some sort of social gathering to discuss whatever we want, church has become a compromising “seeker-friendly,” or “seeker-sensitive,” type of gathering, where emphases is place upon man and not God. We don’t gather just to gather, we gather to glorify and honor the true and living God, we gather in the presence of a **Sovereign GOD!** We come into the presence of the **Eternal Holy Immutable GOD** and we want to play and entertain in our gathering, I THINK NOT! To understand that this is nothing new, Charles Spurgeon of the 1800’s preached a sermon entitled, “Feeding Sheep or Amusing Goats?” I have a feeling some churches are spending too much time amusing goats. Regardless what goes around us in our day, it is of utmost important that we maintain this frame of worship, which is, seeking to glorified God in our services. I know this will not attract the numbers and that is fine, because we want to please God and not man and you cannot have both because if you please men you will not please God and if you please God you will not please man. Well, I cast my lot in seeking to please GOD! Preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified will always create an offense and we make no apology for this, because we are not interested in tickling your ears or making you feel comfortable, when you leave this place, we want you to know the Word of Truth has been preached to you. We want you to leave this place with your conscience being pricked because of your sins. The last thing we want at Hillburn Drive Grace Baptist Church is for the offence of the cross to cease! Notice Paul’s word to the Galatians, Gal.5:11 “*And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased.*” Romans 9:33, “*As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.*” 1 Peter 2:8, “*And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.*”

Please notice carefully the words of Paul in writing to the Corinthians, 1 Cor.2:1-5, “*And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. 4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.*” My duty is to feed the sheep and not to amuse goats! Acts 20:28, “*Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you*

overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” Notice the words of Paul in verses 21-27 also. 1 Peter 5:2, “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.” The duty of the minister of God is first and foremost to feed the flock of God. Notice the words of the Apostle Paul to the Ephesians, Eph.4:11-16, “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” I don’t read entertainment, amusement, jokers and comedians, no but, evangelists, pastors and teachers. For what purpose? To entertain or amuse, no but for the perfecting, edifying or the equipping of the saints, that is, to FEED THE SHEEP! Regarding the phrase, the perfecting or equipping of the saints, John MacArthur has this to say, “The surest road to a church’s spiritual stagnation, to the pastor’s burnout, or to both is for the pastor to become so engulfed in activities and programs that he has too little time for prayer and the Word. And programs that “succeed” can be even more destructive than those that fail if they are done in the flesh and for human satisfaction rather than the Lord’s glory. It is lack of knowledge of God’s Word and obedience to it (Hos. 4:6), not lack of programs and methods, that destroy His people. When they fail it is not because of weak programs but because of weak teaching. The first concern of the leadership of the church should be for the filled seats, not the empty ones. Spiritual growth does not always involve learning something new. Our most important growth often is in regard to truth we have already heard but have not fully applied.” The word perfecting in the Greek is ‘katartismos,’ which means complete furnishing or equipping. This Greek word comes from ‘katartizo,’ which mean to mend, repair in order to make whole or perfect, like the setting of bones or the mending of nets. KATA means with and ARTIZO means to adjust, to fit, to finish. When combine it gives the idea of making someone completely adequate or sufficient. In this case it’s speaking of the sheep in the flock, that is, the pastor’s duty is to make the sheep under him spiritually complete or mature, that is, the perfecting or equipping of the saints or the sheep. (Continue in verses 13-16) There is so much to teach us and show that when we come together as an assembly we seek to glorify God in our services.

Consider this quote for a church advertizing her services, “Outstanding Music...No choirs or pipe organs here. Our music is crisp, contemporary, professional, and yes, even hot! World Class Drama...Each week our Drama Team, "Showcase", presents a dramatic performance specifically designed to enhance the message.” That, my dear friends will bring in the crowds, but how can God be glorify with this? Well, pastor many will come and we can give them the plan of salvation and so forth they say. But the end does not justify the means; that is the whole essence of pragmatism, whatever works as long as you bring in the crowds. Where will it stop? If we don’t have a governing principle then, anything goes, which is basically the normative principle of worship, that is, if something is not forbidden, then it can be used. The really believe it is worshipping God, but what they are really doing is worshipping the works of your own hands. They provide a cloak, a covering and a

veneer of self-worship, because again they are worshipping the works of their own hands. Look quickly at Jeremiah 1:8-10, 17 & 17; 2:1, 4, 8-13, 19. "My fear in not in thee..." Remember the warning of Christ to the church at Ephesus in Rev. 2:4 & 5, "*Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, **because thou hast left thy first love.** 5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.*" Jer.6:14-17, "*They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. 15 Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD. 16 Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein. 17 Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken.*"

Let me show what happens when you leave the principles of the New Testament Church, Ps.106:34-39. See also Acts 7:40-47.

Notice again the words of Jacob when he came into contact with a triune HOLY God, "*And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not. 17 And **he was afraid**, and said, How **dreadful** is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.*" Hebrew word for afraid and dreadful is, "**YARE.**" It is the same word, which means to fear not in a slavish fear, but with a reverential fear, Jacob was in fearful awe of God, a fear in reverence of God, a godly and holy fear, that causes us to worship God in spirit and in truth and not in all these other things. We come to church to honor and glorify God in a spirit of reverence that is tempered by a holy fear of God, not afraid of God, but a holy reverence before God. This is why we reject any means of pragmatism, because then the offense of the cross ceases and all we have is but a social gathering governed by the works of our own hands instead of being governed by the word of God.

End with the notes in my church study:

Sing Jude 24 & 25