

JACOB'S LADDER PART 5

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Genesis 28:10-22

We return to our study on **Jacob's Ladder**, this is part 5 in our series. We have seen the essence of Jacob's conversion experience. We are considering the important application in regards to the gospel in our study, but this morning we shall start making 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 application to the church of the Living and True God. 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 already seen the first 3 points and shall consider our 4th point this morning on Jacob's Discovery.

IV. **Jacob's Discovery.**

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. Eph.2:4, *"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us."* When he woke up he knew something had happened to him and says gloriously 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 heart with us regarding his experience with 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."* Under this fourth point we will see 4 things:

1. **The Presence of God.**
2. **The Place of God.**
3. **The Presiding of God.**
4. **The Passageway of God.**

The first thing we see in this particular text is **(1) The Presence of God**, 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 ...*" I will be dealing with 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.*" But notice also the stern warning given to the house of God, the church of the living God, 1 Peter 4:17, "*For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?"* (18, "*And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"*)

Regarding the aspect of the house of God or the church of God, there are many in the church that experience what Jacob experienced here in Genesis 28, that is, they don't realize that the presence of God is in the house of God, which is in the presence of His true churches. Of course we need to understand that not every house of worship is the house of God, not every church is the house God. But this does not remove the promise given by God to His church. You see, God has promised His perpetual presence to His Church when He said in Matthew 28:20, "*Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*" Notice what precedes His promise to be present in His church, "...to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you ..." Please understand that this statement sets forth, the REGULATIVE principle of Worship in His church! In other words, we are not allowed to deviate or digress from the things Jesus Christ have commanded us. Many in our day practice, the NORMATIVE principle of worship, that is, they feel that they can worship God anyway they like, by adding and drifting away from the things commanded and thinking that this is fine and still call it CHURCH! Now, we have been given some guidelines to instruct us how we are to worship God and mark this down, the highest form of worship is the PREACHED WORD! But, so sad, this is what most churches dislike, because, they want the programs, the entertainment, interpreted dance, shows, the games, the excitement, pragmatism at its worst! A church here in town just celebrated, super hero Sunday, where many dress in super hero costumes and have the audacity to call it church! Jesus Christ said very clearly without any ambiguousness in John 4:24, "*God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*" It does not say, if they feel like it or if they want to, no, but **MUST** worship him in spirit and in truth.

When God instructed Moses to build His Tabernacle which is a type of the New Testament Church, notice what one of the main purposes for the Tabernacle in Ex.25:8 & 9, in verses 1 – 7 are the materials to be used for building the tabernacle, then it says, "*And let them make me a sanctuary; **that I may dwell among them.** 9 According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it." What if Moses wanted to add some different colors or make a different arrangement to the tabernacle? God presence would not be there, it would just be a physical structure. The purpose was for God to dwell with them, look what it says in Exodus 29:42-46, "*This shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door**

of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD: **where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee.** 43 **And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory.** 44 **And I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar: I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to me in the priest's office.** 45 **And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God.** 46 **And they shall know that I am the LORD their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I am the LORD their God.**” This is clear, there was to be no deviating or digressing from the pattern God gave them. The book of the Acts is the pattern for the New Testament church. Look what happened when they tried to change up things and move away from the instruction given to them in Lev. 9:23 - 10:2, “**And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people.** 24 **And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.** 10:1 **And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not.** 2 **And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.**” Key phrase, “**...offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not.**”

My point is simple, when in this 21st century churches offer strange worship which God has not commanded them, they better be careful, no fire will not come down from heaven to consumed, but His presence will be removed and that place of worship and will be called, ‘ICHABOD,’ the glory of the Lord has departed, that is, God removes His candlestick and they are left in blindness to do whatever they want and will not even know that God has departed or that God was ever in that place. Just read the first 3 chapter of the book of Revelation and notice the stern and sobering warning God gave to His churches and if they did not repent, the candlestick, that is God’s light would be removed.

Do we think it is any different in this post-modern 21st century church age, this compromising and complacent age which has no interest in the TRUTH of God and has exchanged the gospel for psychology? It is so sad to see secular humanism so rampant and pervasive in God’s churches. The church had bought into the ideology that every thing is just relative and the aspect of the politically correct concept. No, I’m sorry to inform you, that everything is not relative, because there is an ABSOLUTE TRUTH and that is the BIBLE you are holding in your hands! Don’t let the college professors and politicians deceive you, you have in your hand, the ABSOLUTE TRUTH!

Some churches look more like the circus or some rock concert, no concern for the Holiness and sacredness of God! Many churches are knee deep and some neck deep in sacrilegious and do not even know it. May God help us to promote the element of truth regardless of the religiosity that is round about us! As it says in all the booklets of the Free Grace Broadcaster, this is also our purpose: “To humble the pride of man, to exalt the grace of God in salvation and to promote real holiness in heart and life.” But let’s make sure that we also understand that Hillburn Drive Grace Baptist Church is not exempt from having “ICHABOD,” written over her doors, may God guard our hearts

and cause us to be spiritually immune from the worldly virus that is invading many of the Lord's churches and may the banner of truth forever fly over this church without apology or without regret. Our purpose is to glorify God not glorify or deify man! Turn quickly to Galatians 1:6-10 a very familiar text, "*I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. 10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." The churches of Galatia were not exempt from having 'ICHABOD,' written over their heads. Notice what Paul says, "*I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel.*" This can happen to any church that lets their guard down. Notice also the stern warning in verse 10, "*For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." You see, we want to promote the things of God and not he things of man, not tradition, not religion, but preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified. As Paul would say in 1 Cor.9:16, "*...I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!*" Oh, my dear brethren may God help us.**

Thus, this is one form of missing the presence of God, that is, "**...SURELY THE LORD IS IN THIS PLACE; AND I KNEW IT NOT.**" I'm speaking of churches, plural as a whole. I'm not talking about some universal church concept, but about, the local, visible New Testament church. I don't mind the term, church universal, that is, the churches of God throughout the whole world.

Then there is also the personal presence of God to an individual wherein He condescends to meet with His people, with His sheep. God does this in various blessings and ways, that is, personal reading of the Scriptures. You've heard the phrase, "We speak to God in prayer and God speaks to us in His Word." In prayer, in witnessing etc. but because of laziness, neglect, cold hearts, disobedience, spiritual sleepiness and sometimes physical sleepiness when the preacher is preaching, being out of the will of God, hardness of heart and sin, we miss the presence of God! When you get away from the things of God, neglect of reading Scriptures, praying, witnessing and being absent from church services which if it becomes an habitual thing, that is, missing church for every little excuse to which you can offer all the excuses you want, but it is also very clear that if your faith can't get you to church don't count on it to get you to heaven!

We give God many reasons to hide Himself from us as a church and as individuals and His presence is missed. We can come to church and God's presence is here, but you can walk out not knowing that: "**...SURELY THE LORD IS IN THIS PLACE; AND I KNEW IT NOT.**"

Again, this can happen two-fold, to a church corporately in like manner as we meet this morning or as an individual, where we can miss the blessing that: “...**SURELY THE LORD IS IN THIS PLACE; AND I KNEW IT NOT.**”

This is just my introduction:

We will look at this two-fold

First as individuals then as a church and members in particular:

1. **Song of Solomon chapter 5.** (The warning of spiritual sleepiness which can cost us to miss God.)
2. **Psalm 80:1-19.**

“...**SURELY THE LORD IS IN THIS PLACE; AND I KNEW IT NOT.**”

May our great God keep our hearts and help us to be faithful to Him in promoting and preaching the glorious truths of the Scriptures, that is, preaching the whole counsel of God. If you are outside Christ, I plead with you this morning get right with Him by coming in repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ!

God help us not to be sleepy and lethargic Christians!
God help us not to be sleepy and lethargic Churches!

This always leads to compromise and complacency which is but the languishing of the Church of the Living and True Church!

Let's conclude with the stern warning of God in Revelation 3 to the church of Sardis and the church of Laodiceans!

Sing: The Churches One Foundation or Psalms 80?