



The Book of Genesis

Lesson Number 56



A MINISTRY INITIATED IN MAY 1993, AND DEDICATED TO STRENGTHENING THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST, BY BUILDING THEIR FAITH, ENHANCING THEIR JOY, AND STABILIZING THEIR HOPE, ENABLING THEM TO WORK OUT THEIR SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.

TRANSLATION LEGEND: ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot m(1992); ALT=Analytical-Literal Translation (2005), AMPLIFIED =Amplified Bible (1965), ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot with Greek Interlinear (2003); ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), BRENT=Brenton's English Septuagint; CEB =Common English Bible (2011); CEV=Contemporary English Version (1995); DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), ERV =English Revised Version (1885), ESV=English Stand Version (2001), GENEVA=Geneva Bible (1599), GNB=Good News (1966), GSNT =Goodspeed (1923), GWN =God's Word (1995), IE= International English (1973), ISV=International Standard Version (1967), JPS=Jewish Publication Society (1917), KJV=King James Version (1611), LITV= Literal Translation of the Bible (1976), LIVING=Living Bible (1971), MESSAGE=The Message (1993), MKJV= Modern KJV (1962), MONTGOMERY=Montgomery's New Testament (2001), MRD=Peshitta-James Murdock Translation (1852), NAB=New American Bible (2002), NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible (1985), NKJV=New King James Version (1979), NLT=New Living Translation (1996), NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), PHILLIPS=J B Phillips New Testament (1962), PNT=Bishop's New Testament (1595), RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakj (1985), WEB=Webster Bible (1833), WEYMOUTH=Weymouth's New Testament (1903), WILLIAMS=William's New Testament (1937), TYNDALE=Tyndale's Bible (1526), WYCLIFFE=Wycliffe New Testament (1382), YLT =Young's Literal Translation (1862)

GREEK LEXICON LEGEND

LEXICON LEGEND: FRIEBERG = Friberg Lexicon, UBS = Barclay-Newman, LOUW-NIDA = Louw-Nida Lexicon, LIDDELL SCOTT

THE INSPIRED RECORD OF THE BEGINNING OF ALL THINGS: THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, MANKIND, SIN, THE FIRST CHOSEN AND BLESSED NATION, THE FIRST CURSE, THE FIRST PROMISE, AND THE FIRST FAITH.

DISCLAIMER: The quoting of other translations is not to be taken as a condoning of them. My purpose is rather to show the remarkable diversity, and sometimes outright contradictions that exist among these various versions of Scripture. Our understanding of the Word of God ultimately depends upon our comprehension of the Lord Himself and His eternal purpose. Where this understanding is not present, we are shut up to scholasticism and conjecture, both of which are of the world, not of God.

JACOB CONFRONTS ESAU

Gen 33:1 "And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids. ² And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Joseph hindermost. ³ And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother. ⁴ And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept. ⁵ And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, Who are those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant. ⁶ Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves. ⁷ And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves. ⁸ And he said, What meanest thou by all this drove which I met? And he said, These are to find grace in the sight of my lord. ⁹ And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself. ¹⁰ And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand: for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me. ¹¹ Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough. And he urged him, and he took it. ¹² And he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee. ¹³ And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me: and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die. ¹⁴ Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children be able to endure, until I come unto my lord unto Seir. ¹⁵ And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee some of the folk that are with me. And he said, What needeth it? let me find grace in the sight of my lord. ¹⁶ So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir. ¹⁷ And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him an house, and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called Succoth. ¹⁸ And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padanaram; and pitched his tent before the city. ¹⁹ And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money. ²⁰ And he erected there an altar, and called it Elelohe-Israel." (Genesis 33:1-20)

After making extensive preparation, Jacob finally confronts Esau; God, however, had softened Esau's heart, and the meeting went well. – Given O. Blakely

INTRODUCTION

CONTENTS

- ▶ INTRODUCTION
- ▶ BEHOLD, ESAU CAME (33:1a)
- ▶ HE DIVIDED THE COMPANY (33:1b-2)
- ▶ HE PASSED OVER BEFORE THEM (33:3)
- ▶ ESAU RAN TO MEET HIM (33:4)
- ▶ ESAU SAW THE WOMEN AND THE CHILDREN (33:5-7)
- ▶ WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY ALL THIS DROVE (33:8)
- ▶ I HAVE ENOUGH (33:9)
- ▶ GOD HAS DEALT GRACIOUSLY WITH ME (33:10-11a)
- ▶ HE URGED HIM AND HE TOOK IT (33:11b)
- ▶ LET US JOURNEY TOGETHER (33:12)
- ▶ THE CHILDREN ARE TENDER (3:12-14)
- ▶ LET ME LEAVE SOME FOLK WITH YOU (33:15-16)
- ▶ JACOB JOURNEYED TO SUCCOTH (33:17)
- ▶ JACOB BUYS A PARCEL OF A FIELD IN CANAAN (33:18-19)
- ▶ JACOB ERECTS AN ALTAR (33:20)
- ▶ CONCLUSION

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

Jacob and Esau finally meet, and there is not a tinge of hostility in their meeting. **The Lord had tempered Esau, and he was glad to see the brother he once determined to slay.** When Jacob presents his gifts to Esau, they were initially declined, with Esau saying he had *“enough.”* However, Jacob pressed him on the matter, and his brother finally accepted his gifts. Esau offered to accompany Jacob, but Jacob declined, saying they would, in such a case, have to move too fast, which would endanger the tender children. Esau then asked Jacob to let him at least send someone with them, and Jacob again declined. The twin brothers then separate, going their individual ways. Jacob finally arrived in Canaan,

and purchased part of a field, building a house, and making provisions for his flocks. The name of that place was then called *“Succoth,”* a place to which the Israelites would journey after they left Egypt (Ex 12:37). Jacob then built an altar, calling it *“Elohe-Israel”* – *“the Mighty God of Israel.”*

THINGS TO REMEMBER

As we proceed through this book, written by Moses, who was faithful in all God’s house (Heb 3:5), there are several important things to keep in mind.

- ▶ This is more than mere history. Like all Scripture, there is a Divinely determined objective being served.
- ▶ The account of creation (Gen 1-2) reveals the setting in which the salvation God had determined would be accomplished.
- ▶ The account of the fall of man (Gen 3) provides a proper view of human weakness, and the consequent need for salvation.
- ▶ The fall of man introduced an environment in which it was confirmed that the progeny cannot rise higher than its progenitor.
- ▶ In the fall of man we are introduced to man’s chief adversary, and his destiny is also announced.
- ▶ The account of the flood provides proof that man could not correct his own condition, a period of over 1,600 years being provided to do so.
- ▶ The account of the flood confirms the affectation sin has upon the Living God.
- ▶ The account of the world after the flood confirms that more than a fresh start was required.
- ▶ Commencing with Abraham, God unveils the kind of environment in which the promised *“Seed”* would be raised.
- ▶ In Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob the means through which salvation would be realized was lived out. One (Abraham) would receive the promise, and it would pass to his succeeding generations.
- ▶ In Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the means through which salvation was introduced through God’s working in them. Revelation took place in progressive stages, and involved their steady movement forward to the realization of the promises vouchsafed to them.
- ▶ Also, throughout the Genesis record it is made clear that God works favorably only in those He has chosen.
- ▶ Those with whom God is working are consistently depicted as paying attention to, and obeying without hesitation, the directives of God.
- ▶ It is also established that those who are chosen by God pass through various trials.

In Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob the means through which salvation would be realized was lived out. One (Abraham) would receive the promise, and it would pass to his succeeding generations.

After making extensive preparation, Jacob finally confronts Esau; God, however, had softened Esau’s heart, and the meeting went well. – Given O. Blakely

➔ God goes through the trials with His chosen ones, monitoring and managing all of their various involvements.

A GOD AT HAND

Thus, our thinking is being shaped concerning God's interest in and participation with those He has chosen. In all instances – the experiences of the elect, as well as the activities of the ungodly – His saying through Jeremiah is fulfilled: **"Am I a God at hand, saith the LORD, and not a God afar off?"** (Jer 23:23). Whether it was Adam and Eve,

Cain, Noah, Abraham, Lot, Sodom, Isaac, Jacob, Pharaoh, Abimelech, the herdmen of Gerar, Chedorlaomer, Laban, or personalities who lived later, God was never *"a God afar off."* He was *"at hand"* as Creator, Judge, and Rewarder. At no point did He abdicate His Throne, or fail to consider and weigh the activities of men.

Further, the church is addressed with this truth in mind, solemnly reminded that its members – all of them – are living under the watchful eye of Almighty God. *"Let us labor therefore to*

enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Heb 4:11-13). **In the accounts covered to this point, this declaration has been revealed in diverse human experiences.**

BEHOLD, ESAU CAME

Gen 33:1a **"And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men."**

JACOB LIFTED UP HIS EYES

"And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked . . ."

It had been twenty years since Jacob last saw Esau, and they parted with Esau resolved to kill him. Will the passage of time have changed the circumstances? Jacob had prayed to the God who had made a covenant with him: *"Deliver me, I pray Thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children"* (Gen 32:11). While the text does not say so, it seems to me that Jacob was trusting the Lord in this matter. He did not prepare himself for war, and was now waiting with his family around him.

BEHOLD, ESAU CAME

" . . . and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men."

Here was a time not to judge according to appearance. Esau has a small army with him. Jacob is surrounded by servants, his wives, and eleven young sons. According to the flesh, it appeared to be a hopeless situation. **However, that view does not take the God of heaven into**

consideration. It does not consider the covenant that God made with Abraham, Isaac, and now Jacob – and the fact that **He did not make a covenant with Esau.** Consider the following.

- ➔ The promises of God have not yet been fulfilled, yet God has affirmed they will be fulfilled, doing so two times (Gen 28:13-15; 31:13).
- ➔ God had protected him from Laban (Gen 31:7).
- ➔ God had taken cattle from Laban and given them to Jacob (Gen 31:9).
- ➔ God had warned Laban not to speak evil to Jacob (Gen 31:24).
- ➔ God had seen Jacob's affliction and favored him (Gen 31:42).
- ➔ Angels had met Jacob during this very trip (Gen 32:1).
- ➔ God had promised to do him good and make his seed as the sand of the sea (Gen 32:9).
- ➔ He had just wrestled with an angel who told him he had *"power with God and with man"* (Gen 32:28).

Although the record does not particularly say Jacob reckoned on the

truth of these things, I do not see how we can avoid believing he did. While he did acknowledge that he was afraid of Esau, it was not a debilitating fear. He will not run from Esau, nor will he set out to resist him. **His very action is a display of the boldness of faith.**

LEARNING FROM THIS EVENT

We must learn from this event how to approach times that suggest danger and promote fear. It is good to master the art of quickly reviewing what the Lord has done for you, and, by faith, setting your circumstance within that context. Ponder how He called you, received you, made you joyous, and protected you. Account for your very presence by tracing things back to the grace of God. Ponder any deliverances you have experienced, and advantages you have received.

Sanctify the present time with holy recollections of the favor of God upon you. Resist the temptation to think in terms of what could happen, choosing to dwell upon the blessing of the Lord that already has happened. Recalling the blessings of the Lord will enhance faith and fuel hope. It will also require considerable effort and discipline of thought. Know that fear will seek to dominate the heart, and will move you to think more of a theoretic harmful future rather the blessings and promises of God Almighty. Many a poor soul

languishes in the dark halls of doubt | rather than in the sunlight of hope. |

HE DIVIDED THE COMPANY

“^{1b} And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids. ² And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost.”

APPARENTLY FREE FROM FEAR

Having wrestled with the angel of the Lord, and been blessed by him, Jacob is apparently free from any debilitating fear. He has a limp, but it is a blessed limp, confirming that he was stronger now than he was on his own.

If there was no other reason than this – to obtain confidence – that is reason enough to wrestle for the blessing, and not cease until it is obtained.

HE GROUPED THE CHILDREN

First, Jacob grouped all of the children with their mothers – eleven sons and one daughter. This way the children would be more at ease, and the mothers would be more sure concerning them. His plan is impressive.

There were three main groups: The handmaids and their children, Leah and her children, and Rachel and Joseph. There was Bilhah and her sons: Dan and Naphtali; Zilpah and her sons: Gad and Asher. Leah and her six sons: “Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun; and her daughter Dinah; and Rachel and Joseph.

He does not yet know whether or not Esau will be hostile, so he does his best to arrange for the preservation of his wives and offspring. **Confidence by no means excludes taking wise precautions.**

Jacob arranged them in order of their relationship to him, putting his favored wife, Rachel, in the rearmost position that was theoretically the most safe. The handmaids were placed in the forefront, and Leah second to last. The

third and fourth children of Levi proved to be the heads of the most prominent tribes. Levi was the tribe from which the priesthood was taken (Deut 18:1; 21:5; 31:9), and Judah was the tribe from which the ultimate Seed, Jesus, would come (Gen 49:10; Heb 7:14; Rev 5:5).

It is possible, as some suppose, that there were four divisions – one for each of the mothers. Others feel there were two groups: the handmaids and the wives. The text suggests there was one group consisting of the handmaids, probably in order of their priority, and another of both wives – Leah and Rachel. At any rate, that is how I will assume they were grouped – two groups, with a specific order in each one. **The arrangement was in the interest of their prioritized safety.**

This was Jacob’s way of ensuring his total offspring would not be destroyed in the event Esau was still hostile against him. He was doing more than being mindful only of himself, putting himself at the greater risk. And his family at the lesser.

Choices Not Yet In Synch

At this point, Jacob’s preferences were not yet in synch with those of his God. That circumstance, however, was not owing to any rebellion on Jacob’s part. It had not yet been revealed that the priesthood would be assigned to the progeny of Levi, or that the promised Seed would come through Judah, else that would no doubt have outweighed his affection for Rachel. It was not until shortly before his death, when he prophesied over his sons, that the prominence of Judah was announced through Divine inspiration (Gen 49:10). Further, the priestly function of the tribe of Israel was not made known until after the giving of the Law (Deut 18:1; 21:5; 31:9).

ASSIGNING VALUE TO MAN’S OPINION

We learn in this, and other Scriptural incidents that there really is little, if, indeed, any at all, value to be found in the opinions of men. The best of men, among whom Jacob was numbered, was limited in the area of reasoning. **The thoughts of men, however cherished they may be, are only as valid as they are in strict synch with the will and revelation of God.** Even then, the true value is on the revealed will of God. Men should make a valiant effort to limit the human tendency to speculate.

It is not that it is always sinful to speculate – as Jacob did in providing for the protection of his family. **However, such plans should be only for the immediate time, and not for the future.** This is an area where men have no right to legislate for others. Each person must learn for themselves how to make plans for the future, doing so in such a manner as not to allow for the entrance of unbelief.

Jesus Addresses the Subject

Jesus addressed this subject in a very practical way. *“Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? . . . Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?”* (Matt 6:31:25,31).

In saying *“take no thought”* Jesus was not forbidding the consideration of tomorrow. He was rather referring to anxious thought – thought that was not based upon trust in God. Thus other versions read, *“do not worry,”* ^{NKJV} *“do not be anxious,”* ^{NASB} and *“do not worry and be anxious.”* ^{AMPLIFIED}

The word from which *“thought”* is

After making extensive preparation, Jacob finally confronts Esau; God, however, had softened Esau’s heart, and the meeting went well. – Given O. Blakely

translated means “1) TO BE ANXIOUS 1A) TO BE TROUBLED WITH CARES,” STRONG’S “HAVE ANXIETY, BE ANXIOUS, BE (UNDULY) CONCERNED,” GINGRICH “TO BE ANXIOUS; TO BE TROUBLED WITH CARES,” THAYER “BE ANXIOUS, BE OVERLY CONCERNED ABOUT, BE WORRIED ABOUT.” FRIBERG **In other words, we are not to live our lives as though there was no God.** I do not doubt that professing Christians who live as though there is no God is

staggering in number. If so, this is a condition that brings great reproach upon the name of the Lord. Such things ought not to be.

Jacob is an excellent example of living with God in mind. He prayed to God. Only after he had prayed did he,

as best as he could, make the sort of plans that actually depended upon Divine protection. If he would have depended **only** upon his own wisdom, he would have armed his servants to fight. But that is not what he did. He prayed first, then made arrangements. That was a wise course of action.

HE PASSED OVER BEFORE THEM

“³ And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.”

HE PASSED OVER BEFORE THEM

“And he passed over before them . . .” Other versions read, *“he crossed over,”* NKJV *“went on ahead,”* NIV *“He himself went in front of them”* CEB *“he advanced himself before them”* SEPTUAGINT *“walked in front of them all,”* CEV *and “went over [the stream] before them.”* AMPLIFIED

Jacob, like a captain, went before his entourage. However, his was a different following than that of Esau. Esau was accompanied by four hundred men – probably an army. **Jacob is followed by woman, children, and servants** (Deut 32:16; 33:1-2). This all appeared to give Esau the upper hand. However, Jacob had prayed *“Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I*

fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children.” (Gen 32:11). Now he goes over the crossing point of the river boldly to confront Esau. He does not have a sword in his hand, but a staff.

The Glorious Type

While the parallel is not exact, it has the faint glow of prophecy within it. We, like Jacob’s wives and children, are following the one to whom (in our case) we are to be betrothed (2 Cor 11:2), and soon to be *“married”* (Rom 7:4).

Like Jacob, Jesus has crossed over before us, and is *“passed into the heavens”* (Heb 4:14), where He is awaiting to take us unto Himself, that where He is, there we may be also (John 14:3).

HE BOWED HIMSELF TO THE GROUND UNTIL HE CAME NEAR TO HIS BROTHER

“ . . . and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.”

The idea is that as Jacob advanced toward Esau, he bowed himself to the ground with short intervals of time between each bowing. This was evidence of respect more than fear – respect because Esau was older, was a leader, and was characterized by some degree of greatness. The Jews have a tradition that says Jacob was *“praying and asking mercies of God”* as he proceeded toward Esau. TARGUM OF JONATHAN Knowing somewhat of the character of Jacob, it is easy to think of him as praying to God as he advanced toward his brother. **If this is the case, he would have been honoring God more than Esau, even though it probably appeared as though he was, in harmony with Eastern custom, merely giving honor to Esau.** I see no reason for any other conclusion.

ESAU RAN TO MEET HIM

“⁴ And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.”

What will Jacob confront? He does not know, yet proceeds forward, trusting, I believe, in the Lord.

ESAU RAN TO MEET HIM

“And Esau ran to meet him, and

embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him . . .”

As Jacob and Esau draw closer together, it seems to me that God worked in the heart of Esau. Twenty years had passed since he had heard his father bestow the coveted blessing upon Jacob instead of himself. The whole incident had so provoked Esau

that he *“said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob”* (Gen 27:41).

Now, Isaac is still alive, not having died as soon as was expected. Esau is at no apparent disadvantage now, according to appearance being better off than Jacob.

Suddenly, Esau breaks into a run, then, reaching Jacob, embraces him, falls on his neck, and kisses him. What has happened? I suppose it could be said he just had a change of mind over the last twenty years. However, I do not think that is a proper conclusion – particularly in view of the fact that the Holy Spirit informs us that Jacob prayed to the Almighty God, *“Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children”* (Gen 32:11). **What would prompt anyone to think that the Spirit would then speak of a change of mind in Esau that was unrelated to that prayer?** How many other *“deliver me”* prayers can be traced to nothing more than a person changing their mind independent of Divine influence? Who delivered David out of the *“paw of the lion and the paw of the bear”* – to say nothing of his deliverance from the will of Goliath of Gath (1 Sam 17:37)? When Job prayed *“Deliver me from the enemy’s hand”* (Job 6:23), was it God that brought him out of Satan’s initiative, or did Satan just give up? When David prayed, *“O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee”* (Psa 25:20), was he not trusting God to do precisely that? When Jesus taught us to pray, *“deliver us from evil”* (Matt 6:13), was that nothing more than religious rhetoric?

I do not see how any thinking person can conclude anything other than the fact that God answered Jacob’s prayer by turning the heart of Esau, as he can do with even kings

(Prov 21:1).

Something to Think About

In a pragmatic society, where men account for things by pointing to happenstance, coincidence, and luck, those in Christ need to think soundly concerning the things for which they pray. When, for example, a friend is diagnosed as having cancer, and, upon further examination it is determined that he does not, is it really proper to account for that by saying there was a mis-diagnosis the first time? Or, when a person prays they will not lose their job, and suddenly is told that the company policy has changed which allows for them to keep their job, are we to give men the credit for that change? If a challenging circumstance looms before one of God’s children, it appears that it is a hopeless situation, and the believer prays for deliverance – what is the person to do if the circumstance suddenly changes, and there is no threat at all? Is the person to think that everything just worked out in their favor – in a world that is governed by the Almighty God, who watches over His children, and delivers them? Is such a thing really possible in a world in which the will of God is the preeminent will that is fulfilled (Dan 4:35). Is God really working *“all things together for the good of those who love Him, and are the called according to His purpose”* (Rom 8:28)? – or is that just a nice saying. What exactly is involved in *“working all things together?”* Could it be working with the minds of men, as with the prison-keeper in charge of Joseph (Gen 39:21), Pharaoh (Ex 4:21), the Egyptians (Ex 3:21; 12:35-36),

Sihon king of Heshbon (Deut 2:30), and the king of Assyria (Ezra 6:22).

When Moses cast a tree into poisonous waters, and they became *“sweet,”* was it because the tree had some healing properties in it (Ex 15:25)? When Elisha cast a cruse of salt into some poison waters and they were permanently *“healed,”* was it because salt possesses some healing properties (2 Kgs 2:21-22)? When Hezekiah fell sick, and was told he was going to die, and Isaiah placed a lump of figs on a lethal boil, and the king was healed, was it because of the medicinal properties of figs (2 Kgs 20:7)? Or was the power of God revealed in these, and similar, cases?

I fear there is a lot of loose and faithless thinking in this area. It seems to me that we need some **insightful people among us who will stand up and give God the glory for answered prayer.**

THEY WEPT

“ . . . and they wept. . . ” Other versions read, *“the two of them were overcome with weeping,”*^{BBE} *“They both cried,”*^{GWN} *“they both wept”*^{NLT} and *“the two brothers started crying.”*^{CEV}

This was not a casual or quiet weeping. The word used is associated with wailing – **a release of strong emotion with tears and loud sounds.** Twenty years ago, Esau had bitter hostility against Jacob. Now, However, these twin sons meet again, and their hearts have been made tender. Esau is no longer hostile, and Jacob is no longer fearful.

ESAU SAW THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN

“⁵ And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, Who are those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant. ⁶ Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves. ⁷ And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after

came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves.”

WHO ARE THESE WITH THEE?

“And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, Who are those with thee? . . . ”

Esau had not traveled with his

wives to see Jacob, but had rather brought, what appeared to be, a small army of four hundred men. Now he beholds at least three women, grouped together with their children: Bilhah with two, Zilpah with two, Leah with seven (six sons and one daughter), and Rachel with one son – sixteen in all. Who are they? And, how will Jacob answer.

After making extensive preparation, Jacob finally confronts Esau; God, however, had softened Esau’s heart, and the meeting went well. – Given O. Blakely

Remember, over twenty years before this, Esau had seen *"that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padanaram, to take him a wife from thence; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan"* (Gen 28:6), and was keenly aware of the fact that his wives, daughters of Canaan, *"pleased not his father Isaac."* At the same time Jacob went to Padanaram to obtain a wife, Esau had gone *"unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife"* (Gen 28:9). Now, he inquires about the women and children with Jacob.

GOD HATH GRACIOUSLY GIVEN

" . . . And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant. . . "

Jacob is not ashamed of his God, nor of the benefits He has graciously given to him. He does not draw Esau's attention to the women, but to their children, then affirms God has given him these children by His grace – eleven sons and one daughter.

Keep in mind that the Law had not yet been given, and Jacob had no written form of the Word of God. He had also had very limited exposure to God (Gen 28:13-15; 31:3,13), and even to holy angels bringing messages from God (Gen 28:12; 31:11; 32:1,24-29). **Yet, Jacob was able to properly assess the situation with his children – at that point, all born while he was, according to appearance, being manipulated by Laban.**

A Consideration

The significant absence of this kind of thinking within the nominal church is indicative of a deplorable spiritual condition. Although it is certainly not fashionable to speak of it, something must be said.

Within the framework of a religious culture and purported service to God, a consciousness of the Lord and His benefits has not been

developed in the Christian masses. We have preachers, teachers, and elders. There are professional religious educational institutions, and a plethora of professed "Christian" books. There are 450,000 churches in the United States, 150,000 of which are Roman Catholic. Catholic members number 64 million, and non-Catholic members are approximately 56 million members. HARFORD INSTITUTE FOR RELIGION RESEARCH **Yet with this deluge of religion, the general religious populous is far less aware of Divine involvements among men than Jacob, who lived during spiritually primitive times.**

How does one account for this circumstance – or is it necessary to account for it at all? Simply stated, the great falling away that was prophesied by Jesus and the apostles has come to pass (Matt 24:12; 2 Thess 2:3; 1 Tim 4:1-3; 2 Tim 3:1-5; 2 Pet 2:1-3). The fulfillment of these words, which appear to be at a crescendo level now, has produced a suffocating spiritual environment. The result is that any appropriation of the things of God is extremely difficult. It is not at all like times when *"the people were in expectation"* during the days of John the Baptist (Luke 3:15). **This, in my judgment, accounts for the deplorable level of spiritual obtuseness that is prevalent during our time.**

Only a great outpouring of the Word of God, which is the exclusive *"sword of the Spirit"* (Eph 6:17), can successfully address this situation. **As long as a steady diet of the wisdom of men, problem resolution, and humanly devised systems and procedures are filling the air, spiritual darkness will dominate.**

HANDMAIDS, LEAH AND RACHEL CAME NEAR

" . . . Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves. And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves."

The children God had graciously given to Jacob drew near with their mothers, doing so in order of their closeness to the heart of Jacob. They all bowed before Esau, showing respect for him. He was the progenitor of the Edomites (Jer 49:7-8), although they were not favored above Jacob. Still, because he was the offspring of Jacob, God later told Israel, *"And command thou the people, saying, Ye are to pass through the coast of your brethren the children of Esau, which dwell in Seir; and they shall be afraid of you: take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore: Meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot breadth; because I have given mount Seir unto Esau for a possession. Ye shall buy meat of them for money, that ye may eat; and ye shall also buy water of them for money, that ye may drink"* (Deut 2:4-6).

In anticipation of this proscription, Jacob's family showed respect for Esau, even though, so far as the promises of God were concerned, he was inferior to Jacob.

We see, then, how Jacob had so tutored his family that they knew how to conduct themselves before those of note – even if they were not the fundamental people. Thus Hananiah [Shadrach], Mishael [Meshach], Azariah [Abednego] had respect for Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 1:7), and Daniel for Darius (Dan 6:21). Luke also had respect for Theophilus (Luke 1:3), and Paul also had respect for Agrippa (Acts 26:1-3). It is good to learn to properly *"honor the king"* (1 Pet 2:17), and others who are occupying a God-ordained office. As it is written, *"For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor"* (Rom 13:1-7). Admittedly, this is difficult for some to do – but it was not so with Jacob's family.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY ALL THIS DROVE?

“⁸ And he said, What meanest thou by all this drove which I met? And he said, These are to find grace in the sight of my lord.”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

“And he said, What meanest thou by all this drove which I met? . . . ” Other versions read, *“all this company I met,”* ^{NKJV} *“all these droves I met,”* ^{NIV} *“all those herds,”* ^{BBE} *“this entire group of animals,”* ^{CEB} *“this procession of droves,”* ^{CJB} *“Why did you send this whole group of people and animals I met?”* ^{GWN} *“all this camp”* ^{JPS} *“all these companies”* ^{LXE} *“What did you intend by sending all these herds to meet me?”* ^{NET} *“all these camps,”* ^{ABP} *“Who were all those people I saw while I was coming here? And what were all those animals for?”* ^{ERV} *and “What do you mean by all this company which I met?”* ^{AMPLIFIED}

I am not sure that the gift Jacob had gathered for Esau included the entire *“encampment,”* as some versions affirm – servants as well as herds. Notwithstanding, I suppose this would be possible, even though it seems to me to be improbable. The context does not suggest Esau would need the servants to help him manage the herds.

Is this the same Esau that vowed to kill Jacob? Now he inquires as a close friend, and even brother. **The answer is that this is not the same Esau. In answer to Jacob’s prayer, he has become docile and friendly in answer to Jacob’s prayer to God (Gen 32:11).**

THESE ARE TO FIND GRACE

“And he said, These are to find grace in the sight of my lord.” Other versions read, *“find favor,”* ^{NKJV} *“ask for my maser’s kindness,”* ^{CEB} *“ensure your friendship,”* ^{NLT} *“to curry your favor,”* ^{LIVING} *“that you would be friendly to me,”*

^{CEV} *“so that you might accept me,”* ^{ERV} *and “pave the way for my master to welcome me.”* ^{MESSAGE}

Jacob had already instructed his servants to tell Esau why they were bringing these herds: *“Then thou shalt say, They be thy servant Jacob’s; it is a present sent unto my lord Esau: and, behold, also he is behind us”* (Gen 32:18). Why, then, would Esau ask Jacob the same question? It has been suggested that it was because he wanted to hear the offer from Jacob himself. ^{JOHN GILL} It is also possible that he had already made the determination to reject them, and therefore was merely setting the stage for a formal rejection of the gift. ^{JOHN CALVIN} I do not doubt that the answer is found in a combination of these two reasons.

The entire picture is one of reasoning – appeals, explanations, etc. All of this was quite different from their last exposure to one another.

A Precious Type Seen

A most precious type of the Lord Himself is seen here. **As the opportunity of salvation becomes prominent, the attention of the hearers is turned to the gifts God offers.** The salvation of God iks replete with gifts and an abundance of needed provisions. There is considerable said about this before a person is translated ionmto the ki9ngdom of God’s dear Son (Col 1:13) Some of them include the following, and a ,lot more after they have been jolined to the Lord. In my judgment much more could ve said on this matter.

➔ **NEVER HUNGER OR THIRST.** *“And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.”* (John

6:35)

- ➔ **HATH EVERLASTING LIFE.** *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.”* (John 6:47)
- ➔ **LIVING WATERS.** *“He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.”* (John 7:38)
- ➔ **NOT ABIDE IN DARKNESS.** *“I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.”* (John 12:46)
- ➔ **GREATER WORKS.** *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.”* (John 14:12)
- ➔ **REMISSION OF SINS AND THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.** *“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”* (Acts 2:38)
- ➔ **REMISSION OF SINS.** *“To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.”* (Acts 10:43)
- ➔ **JUSTIFIED FROM ALL THINGS.** *“And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”* (Acts 13:39)
- ➔ **SHALL BE SAVED.** *“And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”* (Acts 16:31)

I HAVE ENOUGH

“⁹ And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself.”

I HAVE ENOUGH MY BROTHER
“And Esau said, I have enough...”

After making extensive preparation, Jacob finally confronts Esau; God, however, had softened Esau’s heart, and the meeting went well. – Given O. Blakely

my brother " Other versions read, "I have plenty," ^{NASB} "I already have plenty." ^{NIV} "I have much," ^{SEPTUAGINT} "I have abundance," ^{YLT} "there is to me mich," ^{ABP} "I already have so much," ^{ISV} and "I have plenty of everything." ^{MESSAGE}

The word translated "enough" has the following lexical meaning: "ABUNDANT (IN QUANTITY, SIZE, AGE, NUMBER, RANK, QUALITY): — (IN) ABOUND(-ABUNDANCE, ABUNDANTLY) . . . ENOUGH, EXCEEDINGLY, FULL, GREAT, GREATLY . . . INCREASE . . . MANY, THINGS . . . MORE, (TOO, VERY) MUCH, . . . PLENTIFUL . . . SUFFICIENT)." ^{STRONG'S} Roughly speaking, the word means more is possessed than a minimal need – the idea of abundance.

Just as it was true of Israel, and every wealthy person, God had given Esau "power to get wealth" (Deut 8:18). In the wisdom God had given to him Solomon also observed, "Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God" (Eccl 5:19). No man can possibly live or prosper independently of God Almighty. Jacob knew this, but it does not appear as though profane Esau did. Jacob had indicated this kind of perception when he said his children were "The children which God has graciously given thy

servant" (Gen 33:5).

When speaking to the Athenian philosophers, Paul said of the Lord, "He giveth to ALL life, and breath, and all things" (Acts 17:25). He wrote to Timothy concerning the context of wealth, "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Tim 6:17).

Keep in mind, that Esau is the same man who was covetous of the birthright he once sold, and the blessing that accompanied it. In this incident we have the fulfillment of an inspired word that would be written centuries later: "When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him" (Prov 16:7). We conclude from this that notwithstanding the comments of self-appointed critics of Jacob, his ways must have, in fact, pleased the Lord. **We know this because Esau was formerly the avowed enemy of Jacob, but now he speaks peaceable to him, and does not desire what Jacob possessed.**

The last time Esau had referred to Jacob as his "brother," he had said, "The days of mourning for my father

are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob" (Gen 27:41). Now, however, he speaks with the one of affection, and is peaceable. God had turned his heart!

KEEP THAT THOU HAST

; keep that thou hast unto thyself." Other versions read, "Let what you have be your own," ^{NIV} "keep your possessions for yourself," ^{CJB} "you should keep what is yours" ^{NAB} and "let what you have remain yours." ^{TNK}

The work done in Esau is thorough, and for the good of Jacob. God had promised the patriarch, "And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of" (Gen 28:15). And again He promised, "Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee" (Gen 31:3).

Here we have an example of what is involved in the Lord being "with" a person. It means they will not be successfully opposed in their mission. It means they will arrive where God has appointed, their enemies will be subdued and all things will be worked together for their good (Rom 8:18).

GOD HATH DEALT GRACIOUSLY WITH ME

" ¹⁰ And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand: for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me. ^{11a} Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough."

AS THOUGH I HAD SEEN THE FACE OF GOD

"And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand: for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and

thou wast pleased with me. . ." Other versions read, "I see your face as one sees the face of God, and you have received me favorably," ^{NASB} "For to see your face is like seeing the face of God, now that you have received me favorably," ^{NIV} and "for truly to see your face is to me as if I had seen the face of God, and you have received me favorably." ^{AMPLIFIED}

Here was a man who lived his life so thoroughly for the Lord that he was able to see the Lord in the circumstances of life. In his heart and mind Jacob translated the favorable reception of Esau as the answer to his prayer to God. **He saw Esau's**

encouraging disposition as the confirmation of Divine approval. His words are like a sigh of relief, testifying to his conscience that he had done the right thing, had pleased the Lord, and therefore the Lord had interposed Himself into this particular circumstance of his life.

Make the Application

Every child of God can make a proper application of this text. **The eye of faith can behold the working of the Lord, seeing it in the favor of certain men, their willingness to seek our interest, and their unwillingness to cause complications in our lives.**

GOD HAS DEALT GRACIOUSLY WITH ME

“ . . . Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough.”

Jacob had already resolved to part with the gift now being presented to Esau – 530 animals, the nucleus of which could be developed in to an enormous possession of animals. **It was admittedly a generous gift.** Yet, Jacob accounts for his willingness to deliver such an impressive gift by saying, *“God has dealt graciously with me.”* Other versions read, *“has been gracious to me,”* ^{NIV} *“God has been very good to me,”* ^{BBE} *“God has been generous to me,”* ^{CEB} *“God hath given me, who giveth all things,”* ^{DOUAY} *“God has had mercy on me,”* ^{GENEVA} *“God has favored me.”* ^{TNK} and *“God has been kind to me.”* ^{GNB}

Jacob does not account for his goods by saying he conducted himself wisely, making an agreement with Laban to take the newborn animals that were not solid color, then placing peeled stakes before certain animals when they bred. That is, of course, what he did, **but it was not the cause of his prosperity.** God caused him to prosper, and He was gracious in doing so. The use of the word *“graciously”* confirmed that God did not do this out of pity, but because He desired to favor Jacob. He did not do it in honor of Jacob’s action, but was prompted by His own will.

Instruction For Us

Through Jacob, the Spirit is teaching us how to account for prosperity or success in this world. The Spirit is instructing us on how to account for a prosperous situation. **Such benefits cannot properly be traced**

back to working hard, being wise, and always keeping our shoulder to the wheel, so to speak.

The grace of God has an affect upon those who receive and perceive it. Paul was able to the grace his prodigious labors back to the grace of God (1 Cor 15:10b). When he accounted for his marvelous position in the body of Christ he said, *“But by the grace of God I am what I am”*(1 Cor 15:10a).

When we look at wonderful benefits we have realized in Christ Jesus, we can truly say, *“God has dealt graciously with me.”*

It would be well if this confession was more regularly heard from professing Christians.

HE URGED HIM, AND HE TOOK IT

^{11b} **And he urged him, and he took it.** Other versions read, *“so he urged him,”* ^{NKJV} *“Jacob insisted,”* ^{NIV} *“thus he urged him,”* ^{NRSV} *“so at his strong request,”* ^{BBE} *“so Jacob persuaded him,”* ^{CEB} *“earnestly pressing him”* ^{DOUAY} *“so he compelled him,”* ^{GENEVA} *“he constrained him,”* ^{SEPTUAGINT} *“he urged him strongly,”* ^{NAB} *“he presseth on him,”* ^{YLT} *“he forced him,”* ^{ABP} *“Jacob kept insisting,”* ^{CEV} and *“Jacob begged Esau.”* ^{ERV}

The word translated *“urged”* has the following lexical meaning: *“TO PRESS, PUSH”*, ^{STRONG’S}

Jacob was relentless in his insistence that Esau take his gift. He was importunate, and unwilling to give up in his request that Esau take his gift.

On one occasion Paul reasoned with Agrippa with such powerful constraints that the ruler cried out, *“Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian”* (Acts 26:28). I do not doubt that Agrippa had never heard such powerful reasoning as Paul set before him. He

was urging him. When Paul earlier reasoned with Felix concerning righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, such pressure was put upon Felix that he *“trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee”* (Acts 24:25).

Urging is not something that can be taught. There is no intellectual procedure that will bring godly pressure on a person. **Urging is something that comes from the heart.** In Jacob’s heart, he wanted assurance that all was well between him and Esau. Confirmation of that would be realized in Esau receiving the gift brought to him.

The Role of Confirmation

There is a place for confirmation in the dealings of men with one another. Thus it is written, *“For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife”* (Heb 6:16). Men may argue, *“My word is good enough,”* and, indeed there are cases where our *“yes”* or *“no”* is sufficient (Matt 5:37). However, in

critical matters, confirmation is often desired. The Lord Himself. For example, when the apostles went forth in the name of the Lord, He confirmed their word *“with signs following”* (Mk 16:20). Jesus Himself was a confirmation of the truth of the promises made by the prophets (Rom 15:8), in the lives of those in whom, He dwells (1 Cor 1:6). Paul admonished the Corinthians to confirm their love to the repentant fornicator who had returned (2 Cor 9:8). God confirmed *“the immutability of His counsel”* with an oath (Heb 6:17).

Therefore, in keeping with the [principle of confirmation, Jacob urged Esau to receive his gift as a confirmation that there was no hostility between them.

The role of exhortation

There is something to be said about the role of exhortation – urging and pressing for some kind of specific action.

Before the repentant people in

Jerusalem were baptized, it is said of Peter. "with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (Acts 2:40). It was to that word the people responded. As it is written, *"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls"* (Acts 2:41).

When Barnabas came to Antioch and saw the grace of God in the brethren, he *"was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord"* (Acts 11:23).

When certain brethren came from Jerusalem to Antioch, an established church, Judas and Silas, *"being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them"* (Acts 15:32).

When Paul was in Thessalonica, who immediately had received his word, he still *"exhorted and comforted and charged every one"* of them (1 Thess 2:11).

As used in Scripture, the word *"exhort"* means, "CALL FOR, SUMMON . . . BEG, ENTREAT, BESEECH" ^{STRONG'S} "TO BEG, ENTREAT, BESEECH," ^{THAYER} "SPEAKING WITH PERSISTENCE EARNESTLY ASK FOR, IMPLORE, BEG," ^{FRIBERG} "TO ASK FOR SOMETHING EARNESTLY AND WITH PROPRIETY - "TO ASK FOR (EARNESTLY), TO REQUEST, TO PLEAD FOR," ^{LOUW-NIDA} AND "URGE," ^{GINGRICH}

The element of urging, pressing,

and impelling to action is inherent in the word *"exhort."* Exhorting is necessary because of the house of clay in which we reside (2 Cor 4:7), and the other "law" in our members that wars against the law of our minds (Rom 7:23).

Exhorting is not simply trying to talk the saints into doing something. Real exhortation employs reasoning to persuade the saints to act upon what they have heard. The incentives to act are revealed ones, not human methodologies. **It is in view of what God has said and done that we are urged to respond in a godly manner.**

The modern church has not done well in this area. **In order for proper exhortation to be done a great deal of erroneous reasoning will have to be overcome.** Some will be inclined to think we are encroaching upon the will of men, and intruding in their business if we urge them to do this or that. Others may be prone to think the saints will just automatically respond favorably to the call to duty. However, those who think in such a way have forgotten the hindering influence of the earthen vessel, and the other law Rom 7:23).

If God requires something of us, it is right for us to urge, plead, beg, and press the people to do it. It must be done in the proper spirit, and with a very real interest in the people – but it must be done.

Exhortation should **not** be limited

to generalities, like "Let's all do better," or "Do the best you can," etc. Paul pressed the Corinthians to get a fornicator out of their midst (1 Cor 5:1-5). He urged them to take up the collection for the poor saints that they had said they would do (1 Cor 16:-1-2; 2 Cor 9:5). He urged the Colossians to not allow themselves to be spoiled by philosophy and vain deceit (Col 2:8). The Hebrew believers were urged not to allow an *"evil heart of unbelief"* to enter into them (Heb 3:12). Jesus pressed the church in Ephesus to do "the first works" (Rev 2:5). He exhorted several churches to *"repent"* of specific sins (Rev 2:5,16,22; 3:3,19).

The assembly of the saints must be an environment in which those present are urged, pressed, and exhorted to take decisive and particular action concerning living by faith and walking in the Spirit. We dare not assume the people are determined, or that they are living wholeheartedly for the Lord.

This is not to say we are to be suspicious and doubtful concerning their commitment, and we must not speak as though that it the case. Rather we are addressing people who are in the battlefield of life, confronting the powerful forces of darkness, as well as a law of sin within themselves. Sometimes, because they are discouraged or weary, they need to be aroused to action – addressed so as to awaken faith and courage.

LET US JOURNEY TOGETHER

"¹² And he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee."

**LET US TAKE OUR JOURNEY,
I WILL GO BEFORE THEE**

"And he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go and I will go before thee." Other versions read, *"Let us be on our way,"* NIV *"Let us journey on our way,"* ^{NRSV} *"Let us go on our journey together"* ^{BBE} *"Let's break camp*

and set out" ^{CEB} *"Let us go on together"* ^{DRA} and *"Let's set out and travel together."* ^{ISV}

There are quite a variety of views concerning this text, and I find most of them too shallow, and not well thought out. Some feel that Esau was offering to accompany Jacob to his own home in Seir, there to hospitably entertain him (John Gill). Some see it as difficult to determine whether Esau is speaking of

leading Jacob to Seir, or accompanying him to Canaan (Pulpit Commentary). Some ignore the destination altogether (John Calvin). Some feel that the accompaniment was to Canaan, at which time Jacob would return to visit Esau (Albert Barnes).

In order to guarantee their safety, Esau offers to go first, blazing the trail,. So to speak.

Things to Consider

First, Jacob is returning to Canaan, as God had twice instructed him to do (Gen 31:3; 32:9). His meeting with Esau was only because he was in that general vicinity, and sought to establish peace between them. There is no indication in Scripture that Jacob had ever intended to visit Esau at his home.

Second, Esau has no heart for Canaan, and there is no indication that he desired to go there again – although he did return to join Jacob in the burying of Isaac (Gen 35:29).

Third, Jacob's reply clearly suggests that he understood Esau to be saying he would accompany Jacob and his company to Esau's own home. He

refers to those with him enduring the trip *"until I come to my lord in Seir"* (Gen 33:13).

Fourth, Jacob and Esau were of differing natures: Esau being a profane man who thought nothing of mingling with the heathen, and Jacob, who had a mind to do the will of the Lord.

THE CHILDREN ARE TENDER

"¹³ And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me: and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die. ¹⁴ Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children be able to endure, until I come unto my lord unto Seir."

THE CHILDREN ARE TENDER

"And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children are tender..." Other versions read, *"are weak,"* ^{NKJV} *"frail,"* ^{NASB} *"small,"* ^{BBE} *"aren't strong,"* ^{CEB} *"too young,"* ^{NAB} *"traveling is hard on children,"* ^{CEV} and *"tender and delicate and need gentle care."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

1 Jacob is mindful of his children – eleven of them. They are tender, weak, frail, and lacking in strength. This was not owing to illness or physical infirmity, but to their youthfulness – the infirmity of youth. The four hundred men with Esau would want to travel at a brisk pace that would be too difficult for the children. There was probably not any of those children any older than thirteen, with Joseph being a little over six years of age. While some may marvel at the energy of youth, it is certainly not what it appears. They simply cannot hold up under the rigors of adulthood.

THE FLOCKS AND HERDS WITH YOUNG

"... and the flocks and herds with young are with me..."

Besides the children, many of the herds Jacob was leading were with young, and it would not be on the part of wisdom to press them to move along rapidly, and with little rest and refreshment.

IF MEN SHOULD OVERDRIVE THEM

"... and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die..." Other versions read, *"drive them hard one day,"* ^{NKJV} *"push them hard for one day."* ^{CEB} The lexical meaning of *"overdrive"* is *"TO BEAT, KNOCK . . . DRIVE SEVERELY . . . BEAT VIOLENTLY."* ^{STRONG'S}

In order to keep up with Esau's men, it would be necessary to forcefully drive the herds – particularly those who were bearing, or nursing, their young. The animals would simply not be able to survive.

The herds that had been given to Esau would not have the difficulty that Jacob's herd would have, for he had not given young animals to him, only adult males and females.

I WILL LEAD ON SOFTLY

"Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children be able to endure..." Other versions read, *"I will lead on slowly at a pace which the livestock that go before me, and the children, are able to endure..."* ^{NKJV} *"Please let my lord pass on before his servant; and I will proceed at my leisure, according to the pace of the cattle that are before me and according*

to the pace of the children, until I come to my lord at Seir," ^{NASB} and *"I will lead on slowly, governed by [consideration for] the livestock that set the pace before me and the endurance of the children."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

Jacob's gait would be governed by the pace at which the animals and children were able to travel. He would not drive them beyond their ability.

Spiritual Leadership

There are some misconceptions concerning spiritual leadership that see Jacob's approach as a pattern for the church. Thus, they imagine they can feed the flock, or require of them, no more than the youngest among them is able to endure. This may sound wise, but it is not, for the situation with the flock of God is not at all the same as it was with Jacob's flock.

First, there are covenantal benefits for those that are *"with young."* They are not expected to go at the same pace as the flock. It is said of the Savior, *"He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young"* (Isa 40:11). That changes the picture considerably.

Feeding and leading the flock of God bears more of a resemblance to the provision of manna than to Jacob traveling to Canaan with his herds and children. A supply of manna was gathered for the entire household, with an omer being allotted for each person

After making extensive preparation, Jacob finally confronts Esau; God, however, had softened Esau's heart, and the meeting went well. – Given O. Blakely

– regardless of their age or appetite: *“This is the thing which the LORD hath commanded, Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man, according to the number of your persons; take ye every man for them which are in his tents”* (Ex 16:16). Then, when the manna was actually consumed *“he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating”* (Ex 16:18). Those with large appetites had no lack, and those with smaller appetites had sufficient.

So it is with the body of Christ. The meals that are served are complete meals, for the most hearty spiritual appetite. In the process both the advanced and the novice are fed. There is also an aggressive requirement for advancement, with the Lord Himself carrying for those who are with young,

and also carrying the lambs in His bosom. In fact, spiritual life is intended to be maintained in such an environment.

UNTIL I COME UNTO SEIR

“ . . . until I come unto my lord unto Seir.” Other versions read, *“I will meet you at Seir,”* ^{NLT} *“meet you at Seir,”* ^{LIVING} *“We can meet again in the country of Edom,”* ^{CEV} *“until I catch up with you in Edom.”* ^{GNB}

It is clear that Jacob intended to meet Esau in Seir at some time. However, there is no record that he ever again met with Esau until after Isaac died, at which time they joined together in his burial (Gen 35:29).

To me, the absence of any reference to him joining Esau in Seir means that the Lord directed him to do otherwise. In view of God’s promise to

be with him *“in all places whether thou goest,”* bringing him *“again into”* the land of Canaan (Gen 28:15), I do not know how we can conjecture otherwise. I therefore conclude that Jacob was being directed by the Lord, and that the course he took was the result of **that** direction. So far as the purpose of God was concerned, there would have been no advantage for Jacob to establish any long-term relationship with Esau, even though there was no further hostility in Esau.

Something to Learn

In the walk of faith, our path is often altered by Divine providence, so that we do not do the things we intended, even though they once seemed reasonable. Part of living by faith is being prepared to alter our lives when Divine direction is clear. I am persuaded that this is one way we are ever made aware that life in this world is temporary.

LET ME LEAVE SOME FOLK WITH YOU

“¹⁵ And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee some of the folk that are with me. And he said, What needeth it? let me find grace in the sight of my lord. ¹⁶ So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir.”

LET ME LEAVE WITH THEE SOME FOLK

“And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee some of the folk that are with me. . . .” Other versions read, *“let me leave some of my men with you.”* ^{NIV} *“let me assign some of my men to guide and protect you.”* ^{NLT}

Being familiar with the territory, Esau was probably aware of some of the dangers associated with travel there. He had four hundred men with himself, but Jacob had only his wives, children, and some servants to assist with his herds. According to

appearance, there were probably dangers, and thus Esau thought to offer effective protection to his brother – a most noble intention, indeed.

WHAT NEEDETH IT

“ . . . And he said, What needeth it? let me find grace in the sight of my lord. . . .” Other versions read, *“what need is there?”* ^{NKJV} *“But why do that?”* ^{NIV} *“Why should my lord be so kind to me?”* ^{NRSV} *“There is no necessity,”* ^{DOUAY} and *“Why so? it is enough that I have found favor before thee, my lord.”* ^{SEPTUAGINT}

Jacob is seeking no advantage from Esau. He only wants a peaceable association with him. As much as in him lies, he wants to be at peace with him (Rom 12:18).

Actually, this is Jacob’s faith surfacing. God had said He would be

with Jacob in all of his ways, bringing him safely again to Canaan – the promised land. Jacob now relies on that, turning down the offer of protection from Esau.

ESAU RETURNED THAT DAY

“ . . . So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir. . . .”

No further word was needed. Esau consented to Jacob’s reasoning, and returned to Seir without Jacob. He might well have judged from Jacob’s words that he would see him sometime in the near future. However, so far as the record is concerned, that never happened.

The truth of the matter is that Jacob’s future did not have room for continued associations with Esau. He was willing to live with that.

JACOB JOURNEYED TO SUCCOTH

¹⁷And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him an house, and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called Succoth."

JACOB JOURNEYED TO SUCCOTH

"And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him an house, and made booths for his cattle. . ." Other versions read, *"built a place for himself, and shelters for his livestock,"* ^{NIV} and *"he built himself a camp, with pens for his flocks and herds."* ^{LIVING}

Esau traveled due south to the land of Seir, his home, while Jacob traveled west to a place that will later be called "Succoth" – a distance of four or five miles. That is not far from Bethel, where he will eventually reside.

Here Jacob prepared to stay for a while, building himself a house, and booths for his cattle. As Abraham stayed for a season Haran first, and then in Egypt (Gen 12:5,10), and Isaac in Gerar (Gen 16:1-2), so Jacob spends a season in Succoth. Of course, Succoth was in the promised land, which God had told Jacob his seed would inherit (Gen 28:4,13). In fact, that very area would become the habitation of his son Gad (Josh 13:24-27).

The reason for Jacob settling here for a season doubtless has to do with his herds. He had mentioned to Esau that his "flocks and herds" were "with young" (Gen 3:13). It was therefore in order to allow time for the animals to deliver and nurse their young before traveling further. As it turns out, they were there for sufficient time for his flocks and herds to mature.

It seems to me that Jacob was unwilling to unnecessarily settle there, for even any significant period of time, outside of the borders of the promised land. He had spend twenty years in Haran with Laban, and that would suffice for dwelling outside of Canaan for some time – until he went down into Egypt to see Joseph.

A Lesson to Be Learned

It is essential that the children of God give serious consideration to where they spend their time – where they "settle in," so to speak. **One of the considerations is how that place and time impacts upon living by faith and walking in the Spirit.** While the normal duties of life in this world can be lived within the circumference of spiritual life, there are places and activities that cannot. They are like settling outside of

the promised land. **No believer should choose to spend lengthy periods of time where spiritual growth and advancement is not likely to occur.** This is an intensely personal thing that one person cannot resolve for another. Yet, it does require resoluteness and determination, mingled with faith and wisdom, for all of the saints.

THE NAME IS CALLED SUCCOTH

" . . . therefore the name of the place is called Succoth."

The word "succoth" means "booths," or shelters – a house for Jacob and family, and shelters for his livestock.

God once mentioned Succoth when He was declaring His Sovereignty. *"God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth. Gilead is Mine, and Manasseh is Mine; Ephraim also is the strength of Mine head; Judah is My lawgiver; Moab is My washpot; over Edom will I cast out My shoe: Philistia, triumph thou because of Me"* (Psa 60:6-8; 108:7-10). There is no Scriptural reference to Succoth after Psalm 108:7.

JACOB BUYS A PARCEL OF A FIELD IN CANAAN

¹⁸ And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padanaram; and pitched his tent before the city. ¹⁹ And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money."

JACOB CAME TO SHECHEM

"And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padanaram; and pitched his tent before the city. . ." Other versions read, *"came safely to the city of Shechem,"* ^{NKJV} *"arrived safely at the city of Schecum*

[footnote: '<arrived at Shalem>,'" ^{NIV} "came in peace to the city of Shechem," ^{ASV} "passed over to Salem, a city of the Sichemites," ^{DOUAY} "to Salem, a city of Secima," ^{BRENTON} "he came to the town of Shechem," ^{ERV} and "he arrived safely and in peace at the town of Shechem." ^{AMPLIFIED}

While some versions choose to translate the Hebrew word used here ("shalem") "peace" or "safety," I do not believe there is sufficient evidence to justify such an approach. It is not a clear-cut distinction, for language experts are not in agreement on the matter – which confirms some ambiguity in the expression. For whatever it may be worth, Luther,

Calvin, Gill, Matthew Henry, Peele, and Wordsworth take the word to mean a city. Clarke, Onkelos, Saadias, Rashi, Dathius, Rosenmüller, Gesenius, Keil, and Kalisch take the word to mean peace and safety.

HE BOUGHT A PARCEL OF LAND

" . . . And he bought a parcel of a field where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money."

Having journeyed to to Shalem, Jacob prepares to settle in for a season, allowing for the increase of his herds and the growth of his children. He is now in Canaan, and although he is to

he and his seed are to inherit this territory, he, like Abraham before him, must purchase any property therein. Abraham bought a parcel of land to bury Sarah.

Being an agricultural man, Jacob does not purchase a lot in the city, but outside of the city, where he can care for his flocks.

The purchase is made from Hamor, Shechem's father. Joshua reports that Jacob purchased this property for "an hundred pieces of

silver". This was also the place where Joseph was buried "the bones of Joseph," which Israel carried out of Egypt (Josh 24:32). Hamor was Hivite (Gen 34:2), a group of people who would eventually be expelled from the land under the leadership of Joshua (Ex 3:8; Josh 3:10; 24:11). But for then, they were allowed to remain in the country, for "the iniquity of the Amorites" was "not yet full" (Gen 15:16).

A PARALLEL

There is a parallel found in Jacob's

experience and our own. He was then a stranger in the land he would afterward inherit (Heb 11:13). We are presently "strangers" in the earth, which shall inherit (Matt 5:5).

While Jacob was a stranger, he purchased whatever property he needed in the promised land. While we are in the world, we also purchase what we need. We do all of this while we are living unto the Lord, fully aware of our temporary status in this world (James 4:13-15). What an excellent example we have in the patriarch Jacob!

JACOB ERECTS AN ALTAR

"²⁰ And he erected there an altar, and called it Elelohe-Israel."

This is the same place in which Abraham built an altar when he first arrived in Canaan. It is written, "And Abram passed through the land as far as the site of Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. Now the Canaanite was then in the land. And the LORD appeared to Abram and said, 'To your descendants I will give this land.' So he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him" ^{NASB} (Gen 12:6-7). Now, the place will be again hallowed by the building of an altar.

HE ERECTED AN ALTAR

"And he erected there an altar. . ." Other versions read, "set up an altar," ^{NIV} "put up," ^{BBE} "raising an altar," ^{DOUAY} and "built an altar." ^{NLT}

The word from which "erected" is translated has the following lexical meaning: "to stand, be stationed . . . stand firm . . . to station, set, to set up, erect, to cause to stand erect, to fix, establish . . . be stationary." ^{STRONGS} I give this to emphasize what was involved in building an altar. While, from one point of view, it may have been simplistic in appearance, as compared with some form of architecture, it was built deliberately, with a mind of pointing upward to heaven. It was sturdy, and intended to be permanent and stable. When

Abraham built an altar, it was established as a point of reference. As he journeyed "from the south, even unto Bethel," he went "Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD" (Gen 13:4).

An altar marked a place of blessing, or revelation, or commitment to the Lord (Gen 8:20; 12:7,8; 13:18; 22:9; 26:25; 33:20).

HE CALLED IT ELEOHE-ISRAEL

" . . . and called it Elelohe-Israel." Other versions read, "El, the God of Israel," ^{BBE} "God, the God of Israel," ^{CSB} "he invoked upon it the most mighty God of Israel," ^{DRA} "God Is the God of Israel," ^{GWN} "The God of Israel is God," ^{NET} "The Altar to the God of Israel," ^{LIVING} "to honor the God of Israel," ^{CEV} and "and named it El-Elohe-Israel (Mighty Is the God of Israel)." ^{MESSAGE}

This is the first time in Scripture that an altar was named. The name itself is a confession that Jacob is a worshiper of God, and identifies Him as his own God. This kind of confession is one of the aspects of the New Covenant: "I will be their God" (Jer 31:33; Heb 8:10). Paul also describes this as the confession of a holy people, who have separated themselves from the world, avoiding unequal yokes, and not touching the unclean thing: "And

what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." (2 Cor 6:16-17).

WORSHIP AND HOLINESS

It is good to remember that a person **cannot** truly worship God in an unholy state. Of old time it was written, "Give unto the LORD the glory due unto His name: bring an offering, and come before Him: **worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness**" (1 Chron 16:29; Psa 29:2; 96:9).

Paul reminds us that men are to "every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting" (1 Tim 2:8). David vowed, "I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O LORD" (Psa 26:6). A psalmist also declared, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Psa 66:18). Those who make an approach to God are told, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (James 4:8).

One of the marks of Babylon the Great is that it teaches unholy people to

be comfortable in, what they imagine to be, the presence of the Lord. God is being depicted as so eager to hear praise from men that He will not regard

their iniquitous ways. Churches hold “worship services” that are filled with people whose hearts are impure, and whose hands are defiled. God will not

receive worship from such people, and any attempts of such people to draw near to the Lord is in vain. O, how the churches need a revival of holiness!

The Blakely Family: Given, June, Benjamin, and Eva

406 South Sergeant Street, Joplin, MO 64801

Telephone: (417) 782-3063, Email: Given (GivenB@aol.com) June: (JuneE01@aol.com)

ADAH's Webpage: <http://wotruth.com/adah.htm> -- EVA's Webpage: <http://wotruth.com/Eva.htm>

Benjamin (Bensvison@aol.com), Eva (Evablakely@aol.com)

Adah Hutchcraft (adahhutchcraft@hotmail.com), Jason Hutchcraft (hutchcraftj@hotmail.com)

THE WORD OF TRUTH FELLOWSHIP

WORD OF TRUTH FELLOWSHIP Website: <http://wotruth.com/wotf/wotindex.htm>

A place where believers can meet, fellowship, be edified, and express themselves.

Additional Website for Word of Truth Fellowship: <http://www.forministry.com/USMOINDPTWOTFW>

WORD OF TRUTH Website: <http://wotruth.com>

BROTHER BLAKEY'S ON-LINE COMMENTARIES

COMMENTARY on Nehemiah: <http://wotruth.com/nehindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on Daniel: <http://wotruth.com/Daniel.htm>

COMMENTARY on Hosea: <http://wotruth.com/hoseaindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on Romans: <http://wotruth.com/Romans.htm>

COMMENTARY on Second Corinthians: <http://wotruth.com/2Corinthians.htm>

COMMENTARY on Philippians: <http://wotruth.com/philippiansdindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on Colossians: <http://wotruth.com/Colossians.htm>

COMMENTARY on First Thessalonians: <http://wotruth.com/1sthessindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on Second Thessalonians: <http://wotruth.com/2ndthessindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on Hebrews: <http://wotruth.com/hebindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on First Peter: <http://wotruth.com/1stpetindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on First John: <http://wotruth.com/1stjohnindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on Revelation: <http://wotruth.com/revelationindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on Mark: <http://wotruth.com/Mark.htm>

COMMENTARY on Titus: <http://wotruth.com/Titus.htm>

COMMENTARY on Acts: <http://wotruth.com/Acts.htm>

COMMENTARY on Malachi: <http://wotruth.com/Malachi.htm>

COMMENTARY on Galatians: <http://wotruth.com/Galatiansindex-new.htm>

COMMENTARY on Genesis: <http://wotruth.com/Genesis.htm>

COMMENTARY on Ephesians: <http://wotruth.com/Ephesians.htm>