

The Better Way

Volume XXXIX, Issue 26

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SPRING CHURCH OF CHRIST

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY

Bible Study.....9:00 a.m.
Worship.....10:00 a.m.
Afternoon Worship.....1:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study.....7:30 p.m.
(via Zoom Meetings)

ELDERS

David P. Brown
Ken Cohn
John West

DEACONS

Bret Bailey
J. D. Gunter
Eric Paluka

EVANGELIST

David P. Brown

SECRETARY

Sonya West

JACOB, PRINCE OF GOD

W. L. Totty

Text: Genesis 28:18-22; 35:9-12

Jacob, the object of our lesson, is called a prince (Gen. 32:28) because he was an outstanding man of God in his age. Jacob, his father Isaac, and his grandfather Abraham were among the most prominent characters of the patriarchal dispensation. Abraham had such a strong faith in God that he is called, in the New Testament, the father of them that believe (Rom. 4:11); and Isaac was the promised son of Abraham through whom Christ would come; therefore, one would not be surprised to read in the Bible that Jacob was a great man. The twelve tribes of Israel derived their names from the sons of Jacob.

Genesis 28:18-22 records Jacob's trip from his home to Padan-aram. It was necessary that he leave his home because he and his mother Rebekah had deceived his father Isaac and obtained a blessing, which, according to the custom of that time, rightfully belonged to Esau, Jacob's twin brother. The name Jacob means supplanter. After Jacob had deceived Isaac and received the blessing, Esau said, **"Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing"** (Gen. 27:36). The statement of Esau that Jacob had taken away his birthright was not according to the fact, because he willfully relinquished his birthright for a mess of pottage. The Hebrew writer (Heb. 12:15-17) says:

Looking diligently...lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing [birthright], he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

That clearly shows that Isaac, the father of Esau and Jacob, recognized that Esau was not entitled to the birthright because he had sold it, even though he received a pitiable price.

Jacob and his mother seemed to be dexterous in their ability to perpetrate schemes in order to achieve that which they desired. However, Jacob reaped bitterly part of what he had sown by deceiving his father Isaac when he was deceived by Laban when Laban gave him Leah for his wife instead of Rachel, for whom he had worked seven years. This should be a vivid reminder constantly that the New Testament tells us (Gal. 6:7) that **"whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."**

Because they deceived Isaac and obtained his blessing which was intended for Esau, Esau became very angry and planned to kill Jacob. Rebekah, becoming aware of Esau's plan, went to Isaac and cunningly suggested that he send Jacob to the land of Padan-aram to get a wife from her people, lest he would marry a daughter of the sons of Heth.

The suggestion pleased Isaac; so he blessed Jacob and sent him on his way, a journey of approximately four hundred miles.

As far as we know, Jacob walked on that journey, because there is no record of his having any sort of animal with him. Therefore, at the end of the day, he was tired and weary; so, he lay down to sleep, pillowing his head upon a rock. During his sleep, he dreamed that a ladder was set up on the earth which reached into heaven. Angels of God were ascending and descending upon the ladder. When Jacob arose early in the morning, he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place;" so, he took the stone that he had used for his pillow and set them up for a pillar, poured oil upon it, and called the name of the place Bethel. That is a compound word, meaning *house of God*.

Jacob was impressed by the dream and vowed unto God that, if God would take him on his journey safely and give him bread to eat and raiment to wear, so that he could return to the house of his father, he would be his Lord and God. But that is by no means the extent of Jacob's vow, for he promised that he would give to God a tenth of all that God would give to him. Jacob made this vow of his own free will because of his deep appreciation for the things that God had done for him and the realization that God could continue to sustain him. Of course, every Bible student knows that a tenth of the gross income of all the Jews was commanded of God under the Mosaic dispensation; but it had not been a law under the patriarchal dispensation. We under the Christian dispensation would do well to emulate the generosity of the people back under those dispensations, inasmuch as we are blessed so much more abundantly through Jesus Christ than they were blessed. It hardly seems reasonable that a Christian could expect to please God with less than they did in the Old Testament times.

When Jacob arrived in the land of Padan-aram, he came in contact with his uncle Laban, for whom he worked for approximately twenty-one years. During that period of time Laban became rich through God's blessing Jacob. Laban said to Jacob, "**I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake**" (Gen. 30:27). Jacob replied:

Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle was with me. For it was little

which thou hadst before I came, and it is now increased unto a multitude; and the Lord hath blessed thee since my coming: and now when shall I provide for mine own house also (Gen. 30:29-30).

In the course of time, Laban lost his love for and confidence in Jacob, notwithstanding the fact that the Lord had made him rich because of Jacob.

Jacob dwelt in the land of Padan-aram for twenty-one years, during which time God abundantly blessed him by making him rich in cattle and gold. Yet, with all that, he surely must have thought of his early home with remorse. The fact that he had deceived his father and defrauded his brother Esau surely must have troubled him. One should not suppose that God, though He had said (Gen. 25:23) that the elder (Esau) would serve the younger (Jacob), was the author of Rebekah and Jacob's dealings with Isaac and Esau. Neither is it to be concluded that God's promise that the elder would serve the younger was directly referring to Jacob and Esau, but rather to the descendants of the two; that the descendants of Jacob (i.e., the Israelites) would be the recipients of the service of the descendants of Esau.

The time had come for Jacob to depart out of the land of Padan-aram. We find in our lesson text (Gen. 35:9, 10) that God appeared unto Jacob when he came out of Padan-aram and blessed him. Again God said, "**Thy name is Jacob.**" He had made that statement to Jacob previously (Gen. 32:28). God told Jacob that his name from henceforth would be Israel, which means a *prince of God*.

At that particular time, God made some great and wonderful promises to Jacob. He promised Jacob that nations and kings would descend from him and that He would give to him and his descendants the land which He had promised to Abraham and Isaac. God again assured Jacob that He was the God and that He was almighty; that is, there is no limit to His might; and, also, that He would bless Jacob. God's people today have the same assurance from God, which is recorded in the New Testament, the source of all our faith. Jesus said, "**And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven**" (Mat. 8:11).~

Deceased

Vacation Bible School

PARABLES OF JESUS # 1

July 15-17, 2024

Monday-Wednesday

9:00 am—11:00 am

Spring Church of Christ

1327 Spring Cypress Road, Spring, TX 77373

281-353-2707 ~ springcoc@gmail.com

A Study In
THE MAJOR PROPHETS

Jeremiah Ezekiel
Lamentations Daniel
Isaiah

Sunday Morning Bible Class
David P. Brown

A Study Of
1ST JOHN

Teacher:
David P. Brown

WEDNESDAY NIGHT
BIBLE CLASS VIA ZOOM

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.churchesofchrist.com

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- This Tuesday, June 25th:** Ladies' Bible Class. Teacher: Barbara Bailey. Lesson: "The Joy Of Service."
- Next Sunday, June 30th:** Monthly meal & afternoon singing service.
- Mon-Wed, July 15th-17th:** VBS at Spring. Theme: "Parables Of Jesus."
- Saturday, September 28th:** Fall Fellowship at Walker County Fairgrounds, Huntsville, TX.
- Saturday, October 26th:** Fish Hatchery Rd. Lectureship. "James: Practical Christianity Part 3."

THOSE TO SERVE

SUNDAY, JUNE 23, 2024

Announcements	J.D. Gunter
Scripture Reading	Stephen Cohn Rev. 17:1-6
Song Leader	Bret Bailey
Prayer	Stephen Cohn/Zack Nero (AM) Joshua West/Gary Blasingame (PM)
Speaker	David Brown
Lord's Table (AM) (John 19:1-7)	
J.D. Gunter	Andrew Paluka
Steven Johnson	Gary Blasingame
Lord's Table (PM)	
Joshua West	Ben Gunter
Audio/Video Monitor	Jonathan West
Camera/Door Monitor	Bret Bailey
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 2024 (via Zoom Meetings)	
Announcements	Jonathan West
Speaker	Ken Cohn
Bible Class Teacher	David Brown
FOR JUNE	
Prepare Communion	West
Lock Buildings	Bailey
Prepare Bulletin Board	N. Cohn

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

Gayle Barnett, April McCain, Zack Nero, Debbie Brannon, Edith Young, Noah & Glenda Hackworth, Cynthia Jackson, Elnora Oxendine, Charles & Ann Nero, Nathaniel Rimmer, Chuck & Nancy Verkist, Freda Smith, Orlinda Chumbley, and Roelf & Janice Ruffner.

TEST YOUR BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

Of what man was it said that he was worth ten thousands of others?

Answer to last week's question:
Samuel; 1 Samuel 8:3