

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 13



JACOB IN CANAAN

Scripture Text: Genesis 35:1-15

Jacob followed the leading of God. Jacob cleansed his family to prepare to worship God. We must be clean before our worship is acceptable. Jacob worshiped where God first appeared to him. It is good to remember our experiences with God. God blessed Jacob again. God wants to bless us if we will let Him.

Jacob realized that cleanness and holiness are necessary to please a holy God. While he had continued to worship God since committing his life to Him at Bethel years before, yet he had become somewhat slack and allowed worship of images and use of charms in his family. To be fit to meet God in worship, they must be rid of these. God accepts no mixed worship.

MEMORY VERSE: *Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.*
—Matthew 5:8

DAILY READINGS:

Mon.—**Isaiah 45** The sin of worshipping images.

Tue.—**2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Isaiah 52:1-11** To worship God, one must separate from sin.

Wed.—**Deuteronomy 6:1-12** Saints' responsibility to pass on God's Law to their children.

Thu.—**Ephesians 6:1-9** Parents and children relationship.

Fri.—**John 5:19-29** Jesus example of father, son relationship.

Devotional Reading: Psalm 115 The sin of trust in idols.

Put Away the Strange Gods

Genesis 35:1-4 Jacob and his family had lived in Canaan for some time (since coming from Padanaram) when God spoke to him in a command. **Go up to Bethel. Make there an altar.** Why there? Because there God **appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from . . . Esau (Genesis 28:10-22)**. The memory was dear to God as well as to Jacob. He wanted Jacob to have the blessing which going back there would be. **Jacob said unto his household, and to all—he was responsible for those in his care—Put away the strange gods—images, idols, probably brought in from Padanaram—be clean—morally clean from sin—change your garments—a physical cleanness as a symbol of the moral cleanness. Let us go up to Bethel . . . make . . . an altar unto God, who answered me . . . was with me—Jacob was remembering and measuring up to that mercy. They gave unto Jacob all the strange gods . . . their earrings—earrings were put in the same category as strange gods. Why? Because they were objects of superstitious trust to protect from evil powers, giving to them glory that rightfully belonged to God. Jacob hid them under the oak—buried them.**

He and All the People

Genesis 35:5-8 The terror of God was upon the cities . . . and they did not pursue—God protected Jacob from the fierce people of Canaan. **Jacob came to . . . Bethel, he and all the people . . . with him—took his entire household into the worship. Built there an altar, and called the place El-bethel—an addition to the name given before. El means God and El-bethel means the God of the house of God. The altar was a memorial of the time God appeared unto him while he slept on the ground, when he fled from the face of his brother.**

Jacob did not go alone. He included his family and servants in his worship. Are we content to worship alone while the children go their own ways? Would we eat our fill while the family went hungry or sleep comfortably

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in a warm bed while the children wandered in the rain and cold? The best of all blessings is to know God and to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth. Let us not keep these to ourselves but do our best to bring them in.

God Appears Unto Jacob Again

Genesis 35:9-15 God appeared unto Jacob again . . . and blessed him. God came down and talked with Jacob. We know this because he **went up from him (verse 13)**. He repeated the promise made before of many descendants and of giving Canaan to him and his seed, adding, **kings shall come out of thy loins**. The greatest of these is the King of kings, Jesus. **Jacob set up a pillar of stone**, as he had done the first time (**Genesis 28:18**). **He poured a drink offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon**—setting it apart as sacred to God.

After lingering at Bethel where Rebekah's nurse died, they moved on to near Bethlehem, where Benjamin was born and Rachel died, to Edar, and on to Mamre—the **plains of Mamre (Genesis 18:1)** in southern Canaan, to the city of Hebron. Here in Hebron, Jacob's grandfather, Abraham, had lived, and now his father, Isaac, lived here.

Jacob's past experience was not enough. Its influence was fading until he was allowing images, etc., in his house. He needed to be drawn back. He needed, as we do, a continuing contact with God. By continual prayer, Bible study, fellowship with the saints, worship and service of God, our souls are kept flourishing, our love fresh, our hearts tender, and our lives pure. Not what we were in the past, but what we are now is what counts. **He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved (Matthew 24:13)**.

Called the Name Bethel

One cannot meet God and ever be the same again. Always to be dear to Jacob's heart was Bethel, the place of a permanent change in his life, the place where he first met God. God had led him to return to his land (**Genesis 31:13**) and now to worship again at this place, this very spot. The ideal which had there been born in his heart impelled him to cleanse his family of wrong practices to measure to the standard set then.

Let us never forget the God-stirred emotions which accompanied our salvation. Looking back to that time and tasting again of that holy joy, many a one has been strengthened to overcome temptation, trial or discouragement. The memory of that hour brings a renewed determination.

Jacob would later reap the seeds of deception which he sowed in his brother, Esau, through his ten older sons in their selling of their brother, Joseph.

JUST A THOUGHT

**It's a lot more fun to stop adding up your troubles
and to start counting your blessings.**

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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