

Introduction

Most of you have probably never heard of Duncan, Oklahoma. Older people who have been in the oil and gas industry will recognize it as the former home of Halliburton. A few years ago they moved their headquarters from Duncan to Dubai, but Duncan was the headquarters for many years. Duncan was also known for its Labor Day Invitational Golf Tournament. The Duncan Golf and Country Club has hosted this tournament since 1928. When I was at TCU, I was invited to play in the tournament. Right before my sophomore year, I drove up there to play in the event. I played a practice round, and then went to the Chisholm Trail Motor Inn. That night I could not get to sleep. I was pretty excited about the tournament and too keyed up to get to sleep. Being restless, I picked up a copy of a daily devotional that was beside the bed. The first or second article in that devotional caught my attention. It spoke about not being able to sleep. It said that we could experience the peace of God and get to sleep if we have a relationship with Christ. Up until then, I had rejected Christianity. I had been very opposed to Christianity, but God had been working on my heart. That night, God nudged my heart and I got on my knees beside that bed and asked Jesus to come into my heart. I did receive the peace of God, and I was able to get to sleep. Duncan, Oklahoma will always be a special place in my heart because it was there that I came into a personal relationship with God. I had been in church all my life, but had never personally met Christ. That night in Duncan, Oklahoma, my life was forever changed.

In our text today, we don't have Duncan, Oklahoma and it is not about me. It is Jacob's testimony. This is the place that God revealed Himself to Jacob. Let's turn to Genesis 35:7 and see the significance of our text today. *"He built an altar there, and called the place El-bethel, because there God had revealed Himself to him when he fled from his brother."* Our account today is about God revealing Himself to Jacob when he was fleeing from his brother. Esau has born a grudge against him for stealing his blessing, and he is planning on killing him. While fleeing to Haran for safety and to find a wife, he stops at Luz and he has an encounter with God. God revealed Himself to Jacob in a dream and Jacob makes the Lord his God that day. His life was forever changed by that night in Luz. This morning, we will look at the setting, the dream and then Jacob's response. This is his Duncan experience.

Jacob's Testimony

1. The Setting
2. Jacob's Dream
3. Jacob's Response

1. The Setting (Gen 28:10-11)

(Gen 28:10-11) "Then Jacob departed from Beersheba and went toward Haran. {11} He came to a certain place and spent the night there, because the sun had set; and he took one of the stones of the place and put it under his head, and lay down in that place."

A lot has happened. Jacob and Rebekah deceived Isaac so that Jacob could receive the Father's blessing instead of Esau. Esau was greatly upset and offended and bore a grudge against Jacob. He was so angry that he set his heart on killing Jacob after their father died. Rebekah hears of the plan and tells Jacob to arise and flee to her brother Laban's house. Then, she complains to Isaac about Esau's Canaanite wives and prompts him to send Jacob to Paddan-Aram to get a wife from her relatives. So, Isaac charges Jacob to go to Laban and take a wife from Laban's family.

Jacob now has the birthright and the Father's blessing, yet he is now fleeing for his life. From what we can see, he is traveling by himself to a distant land. There are two routes today that can be taken to travel from Beer-sheba to Haran. One route is 612 miles and the other is 663 miles. Our text does not give details about how he traveled, other than he stopped at a place called Luz, which Jacob renamed as Bethel. There were two routes that could be traveled on between Beersheba and Bethel. The mountain path was pretty rugged and it would be much more difficult and slower, but it was only 70 miles, ten miles shorter than the lower route. I believe that Jacob took the lower route. If Jacob was to go by foot, and he was in really good shape, he could do it in three or four days. I used to walk really fast, and my pace was 4.1 mph. I was also in very good shape, but I think 80 miles in two days would have been nearly impossible.

Our text says that he came to a certain place and spent the night there. It appears to me that he made it to Bethel on the first day. How did he do that? I believe that he traveled by camel. When Abraham sent out his servant to find a wife for Isaac, he went by camel. It was the same trip and it makes sense to me that Isaac would have also gone by camel. There are two types of camels and their capabilities and usage is very different. A Bactrian camel can carry up to a 1,000 pounds of cargo and travel about 30 miles per day. An Arabian camel is much less bulky, and is much faster. It cannot carry the cargo, but it can travel at a faster pace and can make 100 miles a day. So, I believe that Jacob went on an Arabian camel and after traveling 80 miles, the sun was setting and he decided to stop for the evening. Traveling by camel was faster, and it was also much safer. Traveling by camel also allowed Jacob to take some water, food, oil, clothes, etc. He would need at least a week to travel by camel to Haran. So, to carry enough water, food, etc. for the trip, going by foot was not feasible. A camel was a great choice because it can go without water for at least five days or 500 miles. If robbers were encountered, Jacob would also be able to escape with his camel. Everything points to travel by camel.

(Gen 24:10) "Then the servant took ten camels from the camels of his master, and set out with a variety of good things of his master's in his hand; and he arose and went to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor."

The text says that he came to or lighted upon a certain place. In the Hebrew it literally reads that he came to the place. In Keil and Delitzsch's commentary, they say that the words, "lighted upon the place" indicate the apparently accidental, yet divinely appointed choice of this place for his night-quarters. The ensuing dream and revelation only confirmed this was a divinely appointed place for him to spend the night. Jacob took one of the stones from that place and used it for a pillow to lay his head on. It was an extra firm pillow for those who want to buy a similar pillow.

2. Jacob's Dream (Gen 28:12-15)

(Gen 28:12-15) "He had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. {13} And behold, the LORD stood above it and said, "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants. {14} "Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed. {15} "Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

Jacob was probably worn out and as soon as his head hit the pillow he found himself dreaming. According to experts, there are four stages of sleep. The first three stages of sleep are non-rapid-eye-movement (NREM), and the fourth stage is rapid-eye-movement (REM). The deepest sleep happens in Stage 3 and most dreams occur in stage four during the REM stage. I get the sense that as soon as he laid his head down he went to sleep and before he knew it the night had passed and he was in the REM stage and dreaming.

In the dream he saw a ladder set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven. There were angels ascending and descending on the ladder and the Lord was standing above it. We have a picture of a sovereign God who is watching over everything that is happening on earth. He has a plan for the redemption of mankind, and He is watching over it. He has made a covenant with Abraham and He has made promises to him, and He is watching over those plans and promises. God has angels or messengers who are doing the work of God. They bring messages down to man and messages back up to God. They do more than bring messages. When God brought destruction on Sodom and Gomorrah, He sent angels down to get Lot and his family out. When the men of Sodom pressed on the door trying to get into his house, the angels struck them with blindness.

(Gen 19:1-11) "Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening as Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom....{9} But they said, "Stand aside." Furthermore, they said, "This one came in as an alien, and already he is acting like a judge; now we will treat you worse than them." So they pressed hard against Lot and came near to break the door. {10} But the men reached out their hands and brought Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. {11} They struck the men who were at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they wearied themselves trying to find the doorway."

Angel carry out the work and plans of God. In Hebrews 1:13-14, God said that angels are ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation. God gives Jacob a dream and he sees these angels ascending and descending and it was a message that God was watching over him and giving him ministering spirits to render service to him. God was going to give Jacob whatever help he needed. It was a great picture, and very encouraging.

(Heb 1:13-14) "But to which of the angels has He ever said, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET"? {14} Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?"

Then, in the dream, he heard God saying, "*I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants. Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.*"

First, God identifies Himself as the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. Notice that He does not identify Himself as the God of Jacob. I believe He was the God of Abraham and Isaac, but I don't think that Jacob has had that personal encounter with the Lord up until now. I believe he knew about God, but that he didn't know God. I believe that God is first revealing Himself to Jacob.

Second, I believe that God is confirming the promises that were given to Abraham and Isaac are going to be fulfilled in his life. The lineage of Abraham would be carried out through him, and all the families of the earth would be blessed by his descendants.

Third, God tells Jacob that He is going to be with him wherever he goes. Jacob is separated from his family. He is alone and probably feeling shut off from the world. He is isolated and lonely. Christmas is the loneliest time of year for many people. Everyone else is around family and they are all by themselves. That is probably how Jacob felt. But, God said that He was going to be with him. God makes the same promise to you. He will be with you at all times. He will never leave or forsake you. God also said that He would not leave him until He did what He promised to do. By the way, the promise of all nations being blessed by his descendants came about in Christ, so God was never going to leave Jacob during his lifetime, or our lifetime. For those of us who have received Christ, He will never leave us here on earth, and when we depart from our earthly life, we will be with Christ in heaven.

3. Jacob's Response (Gen 28:16-22)

(Gen 28:16-22) "Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it." {17} He was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." {18} So Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on its top. {19} He called the name of that place Bethel; however, previously the name of the city had been Luz. {20} Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me and will keep me on this journey that I take, and will give me food to eat and garments to wear, {21} and I return to my father's house in safety, then the LORD will be my God. {22} "This stone, which I have set up as a pillar, will be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."

When Jacob awoke he recognized and acknowledged the presence of God. He said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it." I have felt that way many times. People will say how strong the presence of the Lord was in the service, and I did not know it. I pray for a continual filling of the Holy Spirit and an increased awareness and sensitivity to His Spirit. Then, Jacob declared that this is none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven. In Hebrew, the word for house is bayith and the singular name of God is El, so he named it Bethel, which means house of God. The previous name of that place was Luz, which means almonds. The house of God should be filled with the Holy Spirit and presence of God. In 1 Corinthians, Paul tells the church twice that they are temples of the Holy Spirit. We are the temple of the Holy Spirit, and we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit and presence of God.

(1 Cor 3:16) "Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?"

(1 Cor 6:19-20) "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? {20} For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body."

When Jacob declared that this place was none other than the house of God, he consecrated it. He took the stone that he had slept on and made a pillar. Then, he poured oil upon it. Pouring oil

over people and things was the way that they consecrated things. When kings were set in place, oil was poured on their heads. In Exodus 28:41, God told Moses to consecrate Aaron and his sons. In Exodus 29:7, God gave Moses specific instructions about how to consecrate them. They were sacrifice a bull and two rams as sin offerings. Then, they were to apply the blood of the sin offerings to the altar and to the priests. The Hebrew word for consecrate is qadash, which means to make holy or sanctify. Then, Moses poured oil on their heads. In Exodus 19:10, when God told Moses to consecrate the people, He told them to go wash their clothes. When you come before a holy God, you want to come before Him clean and holy.

(Ex 28:41) "You shall put them on Aaron your brother and on his sons with him; and you shall anoint them and ordain them and consecrate them, that they may serve Me as priests."

(Ex 29:7) "Then you shall take the anointing oil and pour it on his head and anoint him."

Today, when we ordain elders, we anoint them with oil. The oil represents the Holy Spirit and the anointing of God to carry out specific duties or jobs. Kings were anointed by God to rule. Pastors are anointed for the office to care for the flock. The altar and things in the temple were anointed with oil for the services that were to be performed on or in them.

In the presence of a Holy God, what does one do? First, there is a reverence and awe of God. It says that he was afraid and said how awesome is this place. Jacob had a holy fear and awe of God. In Isaiah 6, the prophet had a vision of being in the Lord's presence. He declared, "woe is me, for I'm unclean..." Isaiah had a reverence and awe of God. In some of the liturgical churches, like the one that Karen grew up in, before you went into a row to sit in your seat, you did a bow. There was a reverence for God, even if some of it is more tradition than heart.

Another thing that Jacob did in the presence of God was to respond. Jacob responded to God's message and made some vows. Worship is interactive. The white churches have a lot to learn from the black churches. Their services are full of response. They continually respond to the pastor's message. The organist even responds. As the pastor gets excited, the organ gets louder. Yes, the organ is playing the whole time the word is being preached. The organist responds and the congregation responds. We had a black preacher come to our church in Atlanta, and he took the first five minutes of his time teaching our congregation how to respond during the worship service. But, verbal responses during the message are not the only response. Many churches throughout the years have had altar calls. There is an opportunity for people to come forward and respond to God. Many churches have altars with padded cushions where people can go and respond to God in prayer. They don't have to have the pastor or someone else pray for them; they just need to do business with God. That is a wonderful way to respond. There are other responses that can be done. People could respond to a gospel invitation and receive Christ. Billy Graham always gave altar calls and people would come forward to receive Christ. He had trained counselors to lead people in prayers to receive Christ.

Jacob's response was to make a vow to the Lord. He said, "*If God will be with me and will keep me on this journey that I take, and will give me food to eat and garments to wear, and I return to my father's house in safety, then the LORD will be my God. This stone, which I have set up as a pillar, will be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You.*" Jacob made the Lord his God that day. Jacob knew about God. He knew that God existed and that his grandfather, Abraham, was in a covenant relationship. He knew that his mother and father were

in a covenant relationship. There are many people that know about God, but don't know Him personally. Their parents may know God, but they have never come into a relationship with God. On that day, Jacob came into a personal relationship with God.

I want to go back to the dream that Jacob had. He saw a ladder going from heaven to earth and angels were descending and ascending on that ladder. Now, let's go to the New Testament to see a further explanation of that ladder. In John 1, Jesus is having a conversation with Nathanael. Nathaniel was in awe that Jesus saw him under the fig tree. He recognized that he was in the presence of God and said, Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel." In the presence of God, he was full of reverence and awe. Then, Jesus said to him, "You will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

(John 1:47-51) "Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and *said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!" {48} Nathanael *said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." {49} Nathanael answered Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel." {50} Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you that I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You will see greater things than these." {51} And He *said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

Jacob's dream was a prophetic revelation of the Messiah. Jesus is the fulfillment of that prophetic dream. Jesus is the ladder that Jacob saw in his dream. Jesus is the mediator between heaven and earth. Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 2:5 that "there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all." It is through Jesus that we gain access to heaven. It is through Jesus that God came down to men.

(1 Tim 2:3-6) "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, {4} who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. {5} For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, {6} who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time."

Luke wrote in Acts 4:12 that "there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved." Jesus said in John 14:6 that "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." It is through Christ that the Holy God and Sinful man are joined together. Paul wrote that in Jesus the fullness of deity dwelt in bodily form. It was through the divine nature of Christ, who was fully God and fully man that men were reconciled with God. Jesus is the incarnate God, that is God in the flesh, and He joined the things in heaven to the things on earth.

(John 14:6) "Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

(Acts 4:12) "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

(Col 1:19-20) "For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, {20} and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven."

(Col 2:9) "For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,"

The Lord revealed Himself and his plan for salvation to Jacob in that dream. This prophetic dream was not just for Jacob; it was for all of us. We gain access to heaven through Christ. He is our way or ladder to heaven. We are the living stones that are being built into the house of God. God pours oil on us and seals us with His Holy Spirit. He consecrates us so that we can be holy priests. He tells us that He will be with us until He accomplishes His purposes in our lives. This was a prophetic dream for Jacob and for all of us.

That morning, Jacob made God His Lord. He said in verse 21, "then the Lord will be my God." He came into a covenant relationship with God that morning. Notice what else that Jacob said, "this stone, which I have set up as a pillar, will be God's house. Jesus is the stone that the house of God is built on. He is the chief cornerstone. We are the living stones that are being built into that spiritual house. Peter quotes Isaiah and said that we are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices. God's house is a place to offer up spiritual sacrifices. Hebrews tells us that these sacrifices include our praises, thanksgivings, doing good, and sharing. When we come together in God's house, into the presence of God, we come prepared to offer sacrifices, which would include our tithes and offerings.

(Is 28:16) "Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone, a costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed. He who believes in it will not be disturbed."

(1 Pet 2:4-6) "And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, {5} you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. {6} For this is contained in Scripture: 'BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER stone, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.'"

(Heb 13:15-16) "Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. {16} And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."

Jacob did not stop there, he vowed to give a tenth of everything to God. This is not the first mention of offerings. This is not the first mention of tithes. Let's take a quick look at what we have seen so far.

(Gen 28:22) "This stone, which I have set up as a pillar, will be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."

In Genesis 4, Cain and Abel gave offerings to God. Abel gave the fat portion or the very best that he had, and God was honored. It says that He had regard for Abel's offering. But Cain just gave an offering that God had no regard for. It was not his best. We need to give God our very best.

(Gen 4:3-5) "So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground. {4} Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; {5} but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell."

In Genesis 8, after the flood, Noah built an altar to the Lord and took of every clean animal and bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. It was a soothing aroma to the Lord. We learned that God had told Noah to bring seven of every clean animal. God had given to Noah what he would need to give that offering. The truth is that everything that we have has come from God. Paul wrote, who has first given to God that it should be repaid to him. The answer is no one. Our offerings are just giving back to God a portion of what He has given to us.

(Gen 8:20-21) "Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. {21} The LORD smelled the soothing aroma; and the LORD said to Himself, "I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done."

The other thing we glean from Noah's sacrifices is that they were burnt offerings. God consumed the burnt offerings. The priests never shared the burnt offerings. They ate of the sin and grain offerings, but the burnt offerings were only for God. Noah gave with no expectation of anything for himself. Many people emphasize giving today so that you can get more from God. While the principle is correct, the motive and attitude is not correct. We offer sacrifices to honor God, not to get something back. We offer sacrifices to God of what He has blessed us with.

In Genesis 14, Abraham gave a tithe of the spoils of war to Melchizedek. We learn in Hebrews that Melchizedek had no father, mother, beginning or end. This Melchizedek is the King of Salem, which means King of Peace. This Melchizedek was the King of Righteousness. This Melchizedek had no beginning of days nor end of days; He is eternal. Melchizedek is Jesus, and Abraham gave a tithe to Jesus. Our tithes go to Jesus. Notice what Abraham did and said. He would not take any of the spoils of the war for himself, lest it be said that they made him rich. Abraham acknowledged that it was God who blessed him. It was God who was going to provide for him. Abraham was not trusting in men, but in God for his provision. This is exactly what Jacob concluded. If God is going to provide for me, I will give a tenth of everything that I get to God. Our giving of tithes is not a matter of the law, which some people use to get rid of the tithe. Our giving of tithes is a declaration that the Lord is our God, and He is our Provider.

(Gen 14:19-24) "He blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; {20} And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." He gave him a tenth of all. {21} The king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give the people to me and take the goods for yourself." {22} Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have sworn to the LORD God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth, {23} that I will not take a thread or a sandal thong or anything that is yours, for fear you would say, 'I have made Abram rich.' {24} "I will take nothing except what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their share."

(Heb 7:1-3) "For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, {2} to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all the spoils, was first of all, by the translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace. {3} Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he remains a priest perpetually."

We seen another offering given by Abraham in Genesis 22. God tested Abraham and told him to offer his son as a burnt offering. Abraham went and trusted God to provide the lamb for the sacrifice, which God did. We gain two things from this. First, Abraham knew that everything that He had was from God, and that God would provide the sacrifices. Second, Abraham did not withhold anything from God, even his only Son.

(Gen 22:1-14) "Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." {2} He said, "Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you." ... {3} So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son; and he split wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. {4} On the third day Abraham raised his eyes and saw the place from a distance. {5} Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey, and I and the lad will go over there; and we will worship and return to you." {6} Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son, and he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together. {7} Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." And he said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" {8} Abraham said, "God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." So the two of them walked on together. {9} Then they came to the place of which God had told him; and Abraham built the altar there and arranged the wood, and bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. {10} Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. {11} But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." {12} He said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me." {13} Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the place of his son. {14} Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide, as it is said to this day, "In the mount of the LORD it will be provided."

Conclusion and Applications

This morning, as we come to a close, let me ask some questions. Are you like Jacob whose fathers knew God, but he had not personally come into a relationship with God? Is today your Bethel experience? Is today the day that God has been revealing Himself to you? Is today the day that you will vow that the Lord will be your God and you will serve Him? If God has been revealing Himself to you and tugging on your heart, let me encourage you to respond like Jacob. Make Him your Lord today. Pray something like this, "*Jesus, I believe that You are the way, the only way. There is no other name given among men by which we may be saved. I believe that*

You came and died for my sins, and rose from the dead. This morning I ask You to come into my life and I now confess You to be the Lord of my life. I pray this in Jesus' name."

Maybe you have come here this morning, and you have already received Christ into your life, but you need a fresh consecration. You have not been serving the Lord. You have not washed your clothes and your clothes have the stains of the world on them. God wants us to be a consecrated people. This morning, confess your sins to Him. The sacrifice for sins has already been offered. It was a one-time sacrifice of the Lamb of God for all the sins of the world. Confess your sins and receive His forgiveness and cleansing.

Perhaps you have not been giving God the fat portion of your offerings. Perhaps you have not been tithing and honoring God with the wealth that He has given you. This morning, whatever God has been speaking to you, I encourage you to respond to Him.

Introduction

- 1. The Setting** (Gen 28:10-11, 24:10)
- 2. Jacob's Dream** (Gen 28:12-15, 19:1-11, Heb 1:13-14,
- 3. Jacob's Response** (Gen 28:16-22, 1 Cor 3:16, 6:19-20, Ex 28:41, 29:7, 19:10, John 1:47-51, 1 Tim 2:3-6, Acts 4:12, John 14:6, Col 1:19-20, Col 2:9, Is 28:16, 1 Pet 2:4-6, Heb 13:15-16, Gen 4:3-5, 8:20-21, Gen 14:19-24, Heb 7:1-3)

Conclusion and Applications