

THE BOOK OF BEGINNINGS

"The shortcomings of God's servants like Jacob are amply chronicled throughout the Bible and history. However, God's purpose to expand His presence to fill the earth is not based on the adequacy of His servants, but on the promise of God's presence with those servants." –Beale & Kim, God Dwells Among Us

God & Jacob: From Jacob to Israel

The Background:

- Living up to his name, Jacob had constructed for himself an identity through the actions of his early life. Having secured Esau's birth-right and blessing, however, he was forced to flee to Padan-aram.
- The rest of Jacob's life was characterized by familial strife and conflict. In spite of all of this, Yahweh's interactions with Jacob demonstrate that is always at work in the lives of His people for His own glory and their ultimate good, no matter the situation.

Jacob's First Encounter with Yahweh: Gen. 28:10-22

The Location: Bethel (As he was _____ Canaan)

Jacob's Fears: Jacob was fleeing from Esau who was intent on killing him because of his deceptions. Jacob was also fearful that he had lost all that he sought to gain through his sinful actions.

How God was identified:

And behold, the Lord stood above it and said, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac." –Gen. 28:13a

- God came to Jacob in a vision and identified Himself in relation to Jacob's fathers.

God's Word to Jacob:

Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and your offspring 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." –Gen. 28:14-15

- God's promises to Jacob echoed the promises that He had made to Abraham and to Isaac. God also promised to be with Jacob wherever he went.

Jacob's Response:

So early in the morning Jacob took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. He called the name of that place Bethel, –Gn. 28:18-19a

- Jacob worshipped Yahweh, setting up pillar in honor of what had occurred and anointing it with oil and vowing to serve Him.

Jacob's Second Encounter with Yahweh: Gen. 32:9-12, 22-32

The Location: Penuel/Peniel (North of Edom, the land of Esau, outside of the _____)

Jacob's Fears: By this point in his life Jacob had been blessed by the Lord with great wealth in the form of livestock. He was also accompanied by his many wives and children. Jacob feared that Esau might attack him, stealing his property and perhaps even killing him and his family.

How God was identified:

And Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Lord who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your kindred, that I may do you good,' I am not worthy of the least of all the deeds of steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two camps. Please deliver me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, that he may come and attack me, the mothers with the children. But you said, 'I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.'" –Gen. 32:9-12

Point of Emphasis: Jacob recognized that God had been _____ to keep His promises and he trusts that God will continue to keep them in spite of this situation!

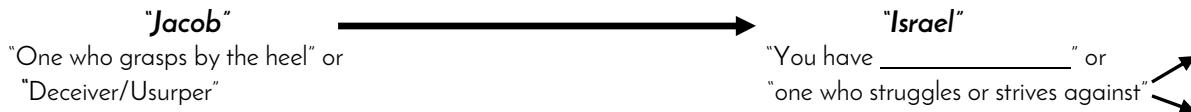
And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." –Gen. 32:24-26

Who was Jacob's Opponent?

God's Word to Jacob:

And he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." Then he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed." Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. –Gen. 32:27-29

- Jacob identified himself to the man, but the man declares that his name will be changed.



Points of Emphasis: In Scripture, a change of name represents a change in _____.

Only someone possessing great _____ has the right to name and to bless!

Jacob's Response:

So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered." The sun rose upon him as he passed Peniel, limping because of his hip. Therefore to this day the people of Israel do not eat the sinew of the thigh that is on the hip socket, because he touched the socket of Jacob's hip on the sinew of the thigh. –Gen. 32:30-32

- Jacob recognized that this was no mere vision (it left him physically injured) and that he had encountered God Himself.

Jacob's Third Encounter with Yahweh: Genesis 35:1-15

The Location: Bethel (_____ the Promised Land)

Jacob's Fears: His sons actions of carrying out revenge against those who had defiled their sister made Jacob concerned that others in the surrounding cities and towns might rise up and destroy them.

God's Word to Jacob:

God appeared to Jacob again, when he came from Paddan-aram, and blessed him. And God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; no longer shall your name be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name." So he called his name Israel. And God said to him, "I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come from your own body. The land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac I will give to you, and I will give the land to your offspring after you." Then God went up from him in the place where he had spoken with him. –Gen. 35:9-13

- God's words to Jacob recall his words to others within the Genesis narrative:

To Adam & Eve → Gen. 1:28

To Noah → Gen. 9:7

To Abraham → Gen. 12:1-3, 17:1, 5-6

To Isaac → Gen. 26:3-6

Jacob's Response:

And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he had spoken with him, a pillar of stone. He poured out a drink offering on it and poured oil on it. So Jacob called the name of the place where God had spoken with him Bethel. –Gen. 35:14-15

Jacob & Jesus

1. Jacob, as an individual, was representative of a _____ (Corporate Solidarity)

Hosea 12:2-6—2 The Lord has an indictment against Judah and will punish Jacob according to his ways; he will repay him according to his deeds.

3 In the womb he took his brother by the heel, and in his manhood he strove with God. 4 He strove with the angel and prevailed; he wept and sought his favor. He met God at Bethel, and there God spoke with us—5 the Lord, the God of hosts, the Lord is his memorial name: 6 "So you, by the help of your God, return, hold fast to love and justice, and wait continually for your God."

2. Jesus, the son of Jacob, is the _____ Jacob!

- Jacob deceived his father, actively working against him so that his will would not be accomplished. (Gen. 27:1-4)

⇒ Jesus, however, came to accomplish the will of His _____.

John 6:38—For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me.

- Jacob conned his brother into forfeiting the inheritance and blessing which were his right (Gen. 25:29-23; 27:35-36)

⇒ Jesus, however, _____ for his brothers an inheritance which they had forfeited and a blessing of which they were undeserving because of their sin.

Hebrews 2:10-18

1 Peter 1:3-5