

Return to Sender

Genesis 28:18-22

Sermon Outline

A. Be Intentional (vs. 18-19):

1. So – God on His own initiative renewed His covenant with Jacob.
2. Jacob rose in the morning – Upon hearing God’s promise Jacob with eagerness got up very early in the morning, broke camp and with no intention of stopping set his mind to building God an altar.
3. Jacob rose in the morning – Jacob on his own initiative eagerly decided to build an altar to God.
4. Took; Receive – Jacob was particularly and strategically selected the stone he slept on to be the altar to God.
5. Put – Jacob had purposefully selected this particular stone to rest his head on.
6. Pour out - Jacob anointed the rock so that it is forever ceremonially an altar to God.
7. He called – Jacob specifically recognized the establishing and anointing of the stone for that place.
8. He called – This name will forever be remembered as the place called Bethel.
9. Name – Bethel will become famous because it forever had the reputation as the place God renewed His covenant with Jacob that He made with Abraham.
10. Name – Seems like Jacob knew his father met God at Bethel.

B. God Protects and Provides (vs. 20-21):

1. Vow – Jacob on his own initiative pledged a promise to God that the Lord will be his God.
2. Saying – Jacob made sure he verbalized what was in his heart in the presence of God.
3. To be – To be represents that as long as the covenant remains in place, which will be forever, the Lord will forever be his God.
4. Keep me; Guard – Jacob needed God’s complete protection on his long journey running from the vengeful fury of his brother who was a man of the field.
5. Journey that I will take – Jacob’s journey is his new life and he recognizes that, so he needs God’s protection so that he can achieve his purpose in life. His brother is angry at him, his father has blessed him and concurred with his mother to go to her brother Laban. His dad added that he needed to find a wife there which means that place is where he starts a new life. With this new purpose this journey is now a new life in a new place.

6. Journey that I will take – Jacob was convinced, especially watching his father, that only God can sustain his life.
7. Journey that I will take – His new life would take years to be established. Only God can providentially provide for him.
8. Given me food to eat and garments to wear - Because of how far the journey was, Jacob was making sure that God took care of him completely by committing to generously provide food and clothing.
9. Given me food to eat and garments to wear – Jacob completely understood that God alone provides.
10. Return – Even though Jacob was leaving his father’s house he needed the protection of God to completely cover him up until he came back home. It is on his way back home that God changed his name to Israel (Genesis 32:24-32). God maintained His covenant.
11. Safety; Peace – The safety Jacob request is not just where no one harms him, especially since his brother was very angry at him, it includes his return to be satisfied both internally and externally so that he is at peace with himself and everyone involved (Genesis 33).
12. The Lord - Yehovah (A special name for God)– Jacob viewed the Lord is the One who supremely maintains His covenant with His people.
13. Be my God - When the Lord maintains His covenant with Jacob, He would endlessly, personally and intimately reverence God as the supreme person who reigns over Jacob’s life.
14. Then the Lord will be my God – Seeing God’s fulfilled purpose and promise creates a need to fully surrender his life.

C. Return His Favor (vs. 22):

1. The stone which I set – will be – When Jacob completed placing the stone at Bethel it was forever the place where God’s house was established.
2. The stone which I set will be God’s house – His dedication to worship God would never change.
3. The stone which I set will be God’s house – This place of worship would last forever because of God’s covenant.
4. God’s house – Jacob called the place where the stone was established at Bethel as the place where God would dwell so that He is revered in worship.
5. All that you give me – (**He did this on his own initiative**) – All that God has generously, permanently and continuously put in place for Jacob, a tenth of it will become a gift before God as worship.
6. All that you give me/give a tenth — When God was revered in worship is when His faithfulness to sustain our daily lives was respected in our giving during worship.
7. All that you give me – Our recognition that God is faithfully sustaining us is demonstrated when we set our hearts to give.

8. All that you give me/give a tenth – God sustains our lives by providing us sustenance to function effectively each day. Respect for His faithfulness is demonstrated when we return a tenth to Him. This is exactly what took place, even though Jacob forgot his promise in chapter 35:1-8.
9. All that you give me – Giving is a reflection of God's choice to love Him first and to faithfully sustain Him.
10. All that you give me/a tenth – Verb, Piel, yiqtol (imperfect), 1st person, singular + energetic noun, active, common – God is revered in worship when His faithfulness to sustain our lives is honored.