

## b. Jacob spoke a vow

- 1) We can look at this vow two ways.
  - a) On the surface, it looks like Jacob was making a deal with God that hinged on God keeping His end of the promise. <sup>Guzik, McGee, Cambridge</sup>
  - b) Alternately, because the word “if” can also mean “since”, many commentators believe that Jacob was in faith sincerely expressing appreciation to God. <sup>Pulpit, Wiersbe, Barnes, Gill, JFB, Utley</sup>
- 2) JFB thoughtfully notes, “But it should be borne in mind that it was in consequence of the vision, and of the promises made to him during the night, in the most unexpected manner, by the Divine Being, that he vowed his vow the next morning – a vow indicative of his profound feelings of gratitude, as well as of reverence, and intended to be simply responsive to the terms in which the grace of his heavenly Benefactor and Guardian was tendered.”
- 3) In his vow, Jacob claimed the promises made by God in his dream. He declared the stone pillar to be God’s house. In return, he promised to give God a tenth of all that He would give to him. Tithing expresses gratefulness.
- 4) What vow does Christ desire from His children today? (Luke 9:23) “*And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.*” (c.f., Ecc 12:13; Mic 6:8; Rom 12:1-2; 2Pe 1:5-7; etc.)

**Conclusion:** Through the important words of Isaac, God and Jacob, we have noted several special truths that we should live out. Never marry an unbeliever. Interact with your children. Trust God’s promises and His faithfulness. Ponder God’s assuring promises. Do not wait to trust Christ until you get a vision from God. Consider what you ought to vow to God after all He’s done for you.

**Song:** After All He’s Done for Me

# Important Words

26 September 2021 PM – Genesis 28 – Gen2021 – Scott Childs

**Introduction:** Of the 800,000 words in the English language, 300,000 are technical terms. The average person knows 10,000 words and uses 5,000 in everyday speech. Though words are important, some are more important than others are.

**Transition:** This evening, I want us to see that God has special truths for us to learn from the important words of three individuals in our text.

## 1. Isaac Spoke Important Words

### a. Isaac spoke about marriage (v.1-2)

- 1) Isaac commanded Jacob not to take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.
- 2) Throughout the Bible, God makes it clear that He does not want believers to marry unbelievers (Gen 6:2; Ge 24:3-4; Ex 34:16; Deu 7:3; Jos 23:12-13; Neh 9:12; 13:25; 1Ki 11:2-4).
- 3) This principle is repeated in the NT (1Co 7:39; 2Co 6:14).
- 4) Isaac sent Jacob to Padanaram to find a wife. (See Map). This required time and much effort, but it was God’s will. God’s words in Amos 3:3, “*Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*”, certainly apply to marriage.

### b. Isaac spoke about God’s blessing (v.3-4)

- 1) This time Isaac willingly blessed Jacob from his heart. He had come to accept that God had chosen Jacob to carry on godly seed promised to Abraham.
- 2) His blessing was fourfold. \*God bless thee! \*God make thee fruitful! \*God multiply thee! \*God give thee the blessing of Abraham! He would inherit the land.
- 3) In a sense, Isaac’s blessing was also a prayer for his son. His desire was that God would truly be able to use his son.
- 4) As parents, we must pray for our children, but we must also interact with them. One author states, “*Training your children to love God must occur within the context of close relationships. It must be part of your daily interactions with them – when greeting your kids at the breakfast table, sitting around the house, having spiritually rich*

conversations in the car or at dinner, [or] praying together before going to sleep each night." S. & A. Kendrick, *The Resolution for Men*, p. 104

## 2. God Spoke Important Words

As Jacob slept under the sky, he dreamed of a ladder extending from earth to heaven (v.12). Angels were going up and down the ladder. Then above the ladder, God stood and spoke to Jacob.

### a. God spoke about Jacob's land (v.13)

- 1) God promised Jacob the land of Canaan.
- 2) He promised that Jacob's seed would inherit it.

### b. God spoke about Jacob's seed (v.14)

- 1) Jacob's seed (i.e., descendants) would be as many as the dust of the earth (i.e., without number).
- 2) His descendants would spread in all directions.
- 3) Through his seed, God would bless all the families of the earth. God first gave this promise to his grandfather Abraham (Gen 12:2-3; 17:8; 22:17). God repeated it to Isaac (Gen 26:3). Now Isaac passed it on to Jacob.
  - a) Years later, Christ would be born of the seed of Abraham. (Hebrews 2:16) "*For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.*"
  - b) Christ died and rose again to pay the debt of every human's sin (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).
  - c) People all over the world have placed their trust in Christ and now enjoy the blessing of His salvation.
- 4) *We must not miss this! God kept His promise. Our God is faithful. His promises are sure.*

### c. God spoke words of assurance (v.15)

- 1) Note God's fourfold assurance.
  - a) God assured Jacob that He was with him.
  - b) God assured him that he would keep him safe wherever he went.
  - c) God assured him that He would bring Jacob back again to this land.
  - d) God assured him that He would not leave him.
- 2) Jacob needed to hear these words. He was going through

a time of great stress. He had deceived his father. He had stolen the family blessing from his brother. His brother vowed to kill him as soon as dad died. He just left home and his life as a rich kid. He would never see his mother alive again. He headed to a foreign land about 790 km to the northeast. As far as we can tell, he travelled alone and perhaps on foot. He had no idea what dangers lay ahead.

- 3) God's words to Jacob were a *great comfort*. That was a dream Jacob never forgot!
- 4) As we face the unknown in this world that is becoming increasingly hostile to Christians, we must memorise and ponder the assuring promises of God (e.g., Ps 84:11; 100:5; Pr 3:5-6; Isa 40:31; Nah 1:7; Jn 3:16; Jn 5:24; Jn 14:1-3; Jn 14:27; Ro 8:32; Ro 8:37-39; Php 4:6-7).

## 3. Jacob Spoke Important Words

### a. Jacob spoke in fear

- 1) When Jacob awoke after the dream in the middle of the night, his first thought was "*surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not*" (v.16).
- 2) His dream greatly frightened him (v.17). He considered the place a dreadful or fearful place because he had heard from God. He called it "*the house of God*" and "*the gate of heaven*".
- 3) When he arose in the morning, he set up his stone pillow as a memorial post and poured oil on it. He then called the memorial "*Bethel*", meaning "*the house of God*".
- 4) Jacob's ladder vision and message from God was a turning point in his life. *Perhaps this is when Jacob personally placed his faith in God.*
- 5) You must not expect God to do some miracle for you before you will place your faith in Him. Remember the words Abraham spoke to the rich man in hell about his unbelieving brothers. (Luke 16:31) "*And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*" You must believe the Scriptures and repent in faith.