

while first, we do not know.

- 3) Isaac died when he was 180 years old. Esau and Jacob, who were then 120 years old, buried him.

- 📖 *When burdens come, we will be tempted to react in the flesh. We must STOP and force ourselves to react biblically. I struggle with this as you may, but we **must** do it. Calm down. Pray, even if we do not feel like it. Follow the James 4:7-10 Victory Steps. Then ask God for wisdom and grace.*
- 📖 *No matter what kind of burdens you are bearing, God wants to give you grace to bear them. Drawing close to the Lord is the best thing any of us can do. Then, when burdens threaten to overwhelm us, we can cast our burdens on the Lord. (Psalm 55:22) “Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.”*

Cast Your Burden on the Lord

Cast your burden on the Lord, and He will keep you,
He has promised He will never ever leave you,
He will always be there ready to uphold you,
Cast your burden on the Lord for Jesus cares.

When discouraged, ask the Lord to make you cheerful,
Seek the comfort of the Lord when you are tearful,
Trust the Lord with all your heart when you are fearful,
Cast your burden on the Lord for Jesus cares.

Conclusion: Are you struggling with burdens? If so, the best thing you can do is follow Jacob's example and draw near to the Lord. Put into practice the Victory Steps found in James 4:7-10. Then cast your burden on the Lord for Jesus cares.

Men, are you fulfilling your spiritual leadership role in your home? If there are things in your home that distance you and your family from God, you need to ask God for wisdom and strength and then lovingly yet firmly to clean house spiritually.

Song: Cast Your Burden on the Lord

Grace for Bearing Burdens

7 November 2021 PM – Genesis 35 – Gen2021 – Scott Childs

Introduction: The Christian life is not a burden-free life. Christians get sick, get Covid, lose loved ones, suffer family problems, face work pressures, and have car troubles like everyone else. In fact, Christians carry the added burden of persecution. “*Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*” (2Ti 3:12) Christian leaders also carry special burdens. “*Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.*” (2Co 11:28)

Jacob certainly had his share of burdens. When we left him in Genesis 34, two of his sons just murdered all the men of Shechem and spoiled the city. Now Jacob feared that the surrounding cities would attack him. He would also soon confront additional painful burdens.

God never promised His people a life of ease, but He did promise to give His sufficient grace.

Transition: As we work our way through this chapter, I want us to learn from Jacob how we can receive the grace to bear our burdens.

1. Jacob went to God for Grace

a. Jacob drew near to God

- 1) Jacob talked to the Lord about his burdens and the Lord instructed him to move down to Bethel [see map 32 km south of Shechem] (v.1). God also told him to build an altar in Bethel. By his actions, it appears that God also told him to clean house spiritually.
- 2) He obeyed God's Word (v.1-8). He had become slack in the spiritual leadership of his home. He knew that some of his family and servants had idols. He knew that idols were wicked, yet he tolerated them to keep family peace. One of the worst offenders may have been his wife Rachel, who stole her father's idols and probably still worshipped them. Jacob now stepped up his spiritual leadership and insisted on change (v.2).
- 3) He ordered his household and all his servants to put away their idols, take baths, and change clothes; they were going to Bethel to build an altar and worship God (v.3).

- a) Bathing and putting on clean clothes were reminders to them of what they were supposed to be doing inwardly.
 - b) While **no husband can force an inward spiritual change** on his household members, he can insist on and monitor outward compliance.
- 4) His family and servants obeyed his command (v.4). They brought all their strange gods and all their earrings. Evidently, it was a heathen practice to wear earrings with idols engraved upon them. Jacob buried them under an oak. **We do not know why he did not destroy them.**
 - 5) They then journeyed from Shechem to Bethel under the protection of the Lord (v.5).

📖 *Husbands, as with Jacob, God holds us accountable for those under our care. We do not have carved idols in our homes, but an idol may be anything that receives more honour than God. Many Christians idolise godless music, pictures of worldly heroes, godless entertainment on TV, video, and Internet, covetous gambling habits, immodest clothing, worldly hairstyles, and idols of the heart like greed and prosperity. We must step up as godly leaders and spiritually clean house. God demands that we separate from our sin before we can come near to Him.*

b. God then drew near to Jacob (v.9-15)

- 1) God demanded that Jacob clean house. God did not lower himself to Jacob's level. This sounds a great deal like the **Victory Steps found in James 4:7-10**. *"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up."*
- 2) Once Jacob submitted to God, drew near to Him, cleansed his hands and heart, mourned over his sin, and humbled himself, **then** God drew near to him (v.10-13).
- 3) Jacob then worshipped the Lord (v.14-15).

📖 *One of our greatest needs today is for revival. My former*

*pastor, Dr. Rick Flanders, defines **revival** as "getting back to normal". The normal Christian life is to walk in the Spirit, to walk in the light, to abide in Christ, and to be in sweet fellowship with God. That is the greatest need in our lives, in our homes, and in our church.*

2. God gave Jacob Grace to Bear his Burdens

Being right with God does **not** eliminate all burdens, but it does assure us of God's grace during burdens. In times like these, we must remember God's words to the Apostle Paul. *"My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness"* (2Co 12:9). God is able to show His strength during our weakness so that He gets all the glory. Jacob was about to face more burdens, but for each the Lord gave him grace.

a. Deborah, a close friend, died (v.8)

- 1) Deborah was the nurse of Jacob's mum. No one knows why she was with Jacob's family. My guess is that after Jacob moved back to Canaan, This very elderly woman went to help him care for his large family.
- 2) Evidently, Deborah had helped to rear Jacob. When she died, he lost a dear friend.

b. Rachel, Jacob's favourite wife, died (v.16-20)

- 1) They travelled southward from Bethel. As they neared Ephrath, which is Bethlehem, Rachel, who was expecting her second child, went into labour. During the birth of her son Benjamin, she died.
- 2) This must have been a hard blow for Jacob. He loved Rachel dearly, and his heart must have grieved greatly. He set up a pillar to mark her grave (v.20).

c. Reuben, Jacob's eldest son, sinned (v.22)

- 1) He slept with Bilhah his father's wife.
- 2) Obviously, this displeased the Lord and grieved Jacob's heart.

d. Isaac, Jacob's father, died (v.27-29)

- 1) Jacob finally arrived with all his possessions at Mamre where his father Isaac lived.
- 2) Whether he arrived just in time to say goodbye to his father before he died, or whether he lived there for a