

HEBREWS CHAPTER 11 – THE HEROES OF FAITH

JACOB

Genesis 27:41; 28-35;49:1 & 33

Hebrews 11:21

“By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.”

In mentioning Jacob in Hebrews 11:21, the Holy Spirit selects a minute fragment of this man’s life with which to illustrate his faith in God. As with all the heroes of faith in Hebrews 11, not all that transpired in their lives is rehearsed. We could say that Hebrews eleven is the chapter of “Honorable Mentions.” Just to be mentioned is an honor!

Although Jacob was in many ways the most illustrious of the Patriarchs, and the one who received from God the name “Israel” and who gave that name to the nation of Israel, he was, in some respects, the least attractive representative of one of God’s Chosen Ones.

Jacob was inconsistent in his walk with God, and perhaps, more than the other Patriarchs, shows that God is a God of grace. Jacob was an up and down individual. Sometimes he walked by faith and sometimes he walked by sight – just like us.

I have given only a general outline of Jacob’s life because there are so many twists and turns in his life that any attempt to cover them all in detail would require quite a volume, therefore, the following is only a summation. Let us review Jacob’s life and see what lessons we can learn, what pitfalls to avoid and what encouragement we can receive as we journey through life. We begin with:

I. JACOB’S FLIGHT FROM HOME.

A. His mother’s warning. Genesis 27:41-45

B. His father’s blessing. 28:1-5

C. His brother’s rebellion. 28:6-9

II. JACOB’S NIGHT UNDER THE STARS.

A. His hard pillow. Genesis 28:10-11

B. His heavenly dream.28:12-15

C. His holy vow. 28:16-22

III. JACOB’S PLIGHT WITH LABAN. Genesis Chapt. 29-30

A. Jacob meets Rachel. Genesis 29:1-12

B. Jacob greets Laban. 29:13-14

C. Jacob toils for love. 29:15-30

D. Jacob sweats for flocks. 30:25-43

E. Jacob leaves Laban. 31:1-55

IV. JACOB'S FRIGHT OF ESAU. Genesis Chapt. 32:1-23 & 33:1-17. *See 32:7,8 especially.

A. The meeting with angels. 32:1-2

B. The meeting with Esau. 32:3-21 & 33:1-17

C. The meeting with God's messenger. 32:24-32

V. JACOB'S FIGHT WITH SHECHEM. Genesis Chapt. 34

A. The rape of his daughter Dinah. 34:1-4

B. The revenge by Jacob's sons. 34:5-29

C. The regret of Jacob. 34:30-31

VI. JACOB'S DELIGHT AT GOD'S BLESSINGS.

A. Jacob returns to Bethel. Genesis 35:1-6

B. Jacob reassured by God. 35:7-15

C. Jacob's sons recorded. 35:22b-26

VII. JACOB'S HEIGHT OF FAITH AT THE END.

A. His dying blessing of Joseph's sons. Genesis 48:8-21

(Heb. 11:21 *"By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff."*)

B. His dying blessing of his sons. 49:1-27

C. His burial instructions. 49:28-32

D. His death. 49:33 & 50:1

In spite of Jacob's failings the principle of faith was constantly at work in His life. He was a man of far-seeing faith, for we read at the end of his life *"By faith Jacob, when he was a dying....worshipped."* Weak in body, strong in faith!

CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON REMARKED:

"My dear hearers, this advice does not apply to all of you, for you are not all Jacobs, nor do you belong to the believing seed. I cannot bid you take your staff, for if you were to take your staff and start off, where would you go? You have no portion in the next world, no promised land, no Canaan flowing with milk and honey. Whither will you go? You must be banished

from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. Alas for you! You cannot worship, for you know not God; you cannot bless others, for you have not been blest yourselves. May the Lord bring you to His dear Son Jesus Christ, and lead you to put your trust in him, and then I shall hope that being saved you will by faith imitate Jacob, and both bless men, worship God; and wait with your staff in your hand, ready to journey to the eternal rest.” (From Spurgeon’s Sermon)

Once Again, Remember:

“WITHOUT FAITH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE GOD”

Hebrews 11:6

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