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GLENLOCK BIBLE CAMP

PREVAILING WITH GOD - A STUDY OF JACOB

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Study #6

He found him in Beth-el - There He spake with us.

Reading: Genesis 35

My dear brethren and sisters and young people, just before we commence our study, just a little personal note, the little girl that cut herself last night has a grin about as wide as the Jordan valley, so you'll be pleased to know that, she's doing very well!

Well, b&s, we come this morning, of course, to the climax of Jacob's life. You may wonder why I made that statement because Jacob lived, of course, many years after he came back to Beth-el for the second time; he lived for another 50 odd years. But when we come to the life of Jacob, there's no doubt about it, b&s, his life is comprehended in the pilgrimage from Beth-el to Beth-el. And you'll notice as you read on from chapter 35 of Genesis, that Jacob becomes a secondary figure in the record, and Joseph from chapter 37 particularly, becomes the key figure in the history; and Jacob, no doubt, plays a very secondary part in that record. But there's no shadow of a doubt, even then, b&s, that when one comes to consider, as I said, Jacob as the primary study, when one comes to read that passionate appeal of Judah, to his brother Joseph, concerning his aged father, the reverence of that father by those sons was absolutely wonderful. The respect they accorded him, the love they accorded him, as the young people endeavoured in their own way to try and show last night, was an absolute wonder, b&s! And if anybody wants to know what sort of a man Jacob was, and what his sons thought of him, you read that speech of Judah's. And Judah was a converted son and he was the son of Leah, the pinnacle of her faith; and he was in the line of Messiah and indeed his brethren would praise him. These things we'll consider together, b&s, and that will be the thrill to it!

This morning we're going to come with Jacob, to what is without a shadow of a doubt, the greatest climax of his whole life! And here in the chapter before us, we have that record of which Hosea speaks; and I want you to turn to Hosea chapter 12 (and I don't want you to lose Genesis 35). We will just compare these records and you'll see what I mean, when I say this is a climax of the pilgrimage of Jacob. Rather wonderful this, b&s, very wonderful indeed, to consider these words of Hosea, and you know we've repeatedly gone back to Hosea because this in effect, is the prophetic comments that

enable us to understand the life of Jacob, because here is due words that Hosea has picked out as it were, the main features of that man's life. So in Hosea chapter 12 and verse 3 again, 'He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and when he grew up, he found he had power with God. Yea, says Hosea, he had power over the angel, when he wept, and made supplication unto him'. And listen to these wonderful words, b&s, 'he found Him in Beth-el, and there He spake with us'. Now they are wonderful words, he found Him in Beth-el, Jacob found God in Beth-el, he found Him at last! And you know, a man's pilgrimage on this earth, whether it be Jacob or his seed, and we are his seed, b&s, in the pilgrimage in search of God, and the more a person lives in the truth, the more that lesson, becomes impressed upon you. I well remember being baptised into the faith, b&s, and I know then what was an inspiration in my life; it was the vision of the kingdom, it was the promises made to the fathers, it was the return of Israel, it was many other pieces of the truth; but as one commences his pilgrimage and walks through life, they all seem to take a very conservative place, b&s, as one great feature outshines them all! And however great those things may be to us, there is something beyond, above, through all and in all and be all, it's God, b&s; a man's life then gradually, inevitably is narrowed down in a search for God. And this I believe, is the goal of our pilgrimage; would it be that Hosea could say of us, that we've found Him, and Jacob found Him, b&s, he never found Him before that, and in all the revelations that Jacob was given, there was something lacking.

You look at that revelation that we considered, don't turn it up, just think about it! When he wrestled with that angel, he couldn't have got closer to that angel, but there was still something lacking, wasn't there? He said, 'what is thy name?' and the angel said, 'never mind'; you see, he didn't know, for all the closeness of that angel wrestling together, 'what is your name? I'm not going to tell you!' and it wasn't until he came to Beth-el, b&s, that there God met him, personally, really met him, and He revealed Himself to Jacob, as was never done before! And it was the end of Jacob's pilgrimage. And when we say that God really met him, of course, we're talking of manifestation, but it was the greatest manifestation, it was a wonderfully personal one! Now you look at the record, what does Hosea say? 'There he found Him and there He spake with us.

Now you look at chapter 35, b&s, and note the personal touches and note that fact of God speaking; for example, in verse 9 we read that 'God appeared unto Jacob, then in verse 10, 'And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name, and He called his name Israel', in other words, He was there to do it, whereas before angels would have stopped short at the phrase, 'but Israel shall be thy name'. Angels would have stopped short at that, but this angel said, 'Israel', He talked to him. And then we read in verse 13, 'that God went up from him (from that place), and that's powerfully significant when we come to consider it in detail. That phrase is full of significance, God went up from him, but God had been forever before that time, coming down to him. Now God goes from him, up from him, because there's an established relationship there, b&s. Now he'd found Him personally and found Him and spake with Him, now you look at the words 'spake with him', verse 13, 'And God went up from him in the place where He talked with him'. And we read over the page, in verse 14, 'And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with

Him'. We read in verse 15, 'And Jacob called the name of the place with God spake with him, Beth-el', so three times in three verses, God talked with him, God talked with him, God talked with him, and that's what Hosea said. So Jacob found Him and they had an intimate and personal conversation at Beth-el; and God was so satisfied that He went up from him and left him on the earth, b&s, as the living representative of God Almighty. That's what he did! He left him on the earth as the living representative of God Almighty; and that was the end of Jacob's pilgrimage, 'I will not leave thee until I have done that whereof I have spoken to thee of'. And 40 years pilgrimage in the land of Padan-aram, b&s, was now ended and God talked to him personally, was satisfied with what He heard, and with what He'd seen, and went up from him! 'I will not leave thee until I have accomplished that whereof I have spoken to thee of', and there upon the earth was the living representative of God Almighty. What a wonderful man, and I believe, it was at that stage that God said to him, 'Israel' and linked him with Abraham and with Isaac and surnamed Himself upon Jacob.

And it's wonderful, b&s, when you come to the end of the 35th chapter of this book of Genesis to read in verse 27, 'And Jacob came unto Isaac his father unto Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, which is Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned'. And immediately after that grand incident what do we find? we find Jacob coming down to the very place of Hebron, where the patriarchs were buried, and Hebron, b&s, means 'fellowship'. And there he was mentioned with Isaac and Abraham; and there was Abraham, Isaac and Jacob joined together in fellowship, although Abraham, of course, was dead, Isaac was about to die, but they weren't dead, and the record leaves them alive, there in Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned. They were living men and Jacob joined them there after God found him in Beth-el, and there the three of them stood. There they were, joined together in fellowship with God's name upon everyone of them! What a magnificent finale to a life of trial and distress, of anxiety and fear, of doubt and wonder! What a magnificent finale, b&s, 'He found him in Beth-el, and there He spake with us!' That's the comment of the prophecy of Hosea!

Now isn't it wonderful, b&s, to have the prophets to help us? Isn't it wonderful to have those little comments which illuminate that record like the sun illuminates the day! and it's all through this study, that we can thank God Almighty, and I do thank Him personally, b&s, for the illumination of the prophets and the psalms upon that record, because all the way through we have never lacked a key to the understanding of it. Just by simple comments taken from those prophets, and there's the key to that chapter! Here's the end of Jacob's pilgrimage. And you know, b&s, when he first came to Beth-el as we said in those notes we gave you, he went there of his own volition; he felt drawn to that place, but he didn't go there of his own volition the second time, as we read in the first verse. 'And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Beth-el and dwell there', so here was not a migration of convenience, b&s, it was a specific command. This now was God going to bring him to this place, a specific command and He was going to meet him. 'Go up to Beth-el' and what was he to do?

'And make there an altar unto El (as our bro. Warrick read that) an altar unto El. He only erected on the first instance a pillar, you remember! He anointed that pillar, true, but he

said this will be God's house, but now he's going to do more than erect a pillar, he's going to make an altar, here's something far more important, more comprehensive, more meaningful, and that altar is going to be built to whom? Not Elohim, not Yahweh even, it is going to be built to the one that Jacob was searching for, through all his life, POWER, that's what he was looking for, and he found that power when he wept and made supplication unto the angel. He got it there, b&s, he was given it there and now God wants to meet him personally and confer that upon him. 'You get up there, He says, and you make an altar unto El'. He went up there, and God says, I want you to go and make that altar, and He sets against the power of God, the weakness of Jacob. He said, 'make an altar unto El who appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother', and here was God calling upon Jacob to come and meet him on the basis of a clear and unmistakable truth, that on the one hand we have power, and on the other hand we have weakness! And that was the basis upon which Jacob was to meet God!

Now you know, Isaiah picks that up and he put it in even more telling language! All that the record says as far as God was concerned was, 'you go and make an altar unto POWER, and you remember, Jacob, that the one who's making the altar is the one that fled from the face of his brother!' Now you turn with me to the 41st chapter of Isaiah and see how Isaiah makes the contrast. Here in Isaiah 41 and verse 8, God is speaking to one He calls there, 'But thou Israel my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen the seed of Abraham my friend', now there's the one He's addressing, b&s, 'thou Israel my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen the seed of Abraham my friend. Now what's He going to tell him? Verse 13, For I, Yahweh thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. Fear not, thou worm Jacob', now there's the contrast! Isaiah saw the point, b&s, and he spake by the inspiration of God, and God spake through him and illuminated that point in Genesis. He said, 'I'm talking to you, Jacob, you're my friend, you're my servant, don't you fear, I'll be on your right hand. Fear not thou maggot, Jacob!' because that's what the word means. He was a maggot, there was his strength according to the flesh, useless, utterly useless, and that word is the same word rendered in Psalm 22, when that man on the cross recognized Himself as a worm, powerless to do anything! depending upon His heavenly Father. What could the Christ do, b&s, upon that cross? He couldn't save Himself! They were calling upon Him, 'Save yourself', but He couldn't in that sense; He could save Himself truly, by laying down a life of perfect obedience, and that commandment He had from the Father, but physically what could he do? He was a worm, a maggot, and He depended entirely upon the power of God. And there was the prophet telling him! And God says, 'you go make an altar to 'Power', and you remember, Jacob, the one making the altar is the one who fled from the face of his brother.

And Jacob went up there in verse 7, and he did exactly what he was told, and the record reads almost identically in verse 7 and says, 'He built there an altar, and called the place the strength of the house of God, because God appeared unto him when he fled from the face of his brother'. And there was clear, unmistakable acknowledgement of the position, and it was on that basis, b&s, that God met him! And when you and I can get to a point in our lives, b&s, when we can without any hypocrisy, when in all

sincerity and honesty, from the bottom of our hearts go to God and call ourselves a maggot, we will find God and we'll never find him until we do! And that was the entire situation that was before Jacob, as God says, 'you come up to Beth-el!

So we find in verse 2, 'that Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you and be clean, and change your garments'. He didn't have to do that on his first occasion because, hurrying up to Beth-el as he did, on his own, a single individual, he never thought about making any special preparation. But now they've got to be made; here's a command to go to Beth-el, God's waiting for him! Now Jacob becomes terribly concerned about his household and about all them that were with them. Two groups of people you'll notice, 'Jacob said unto his household, and to all them that were with him' (that's important, that's terrible important!) There are two groups of people with Jacob, there are those called the house of Jacob, of course, which were his immediate family, but then there was a multitude of people with him, b&s, that had joined themselves to the house of Jacob. Remember the 14th chapter of Isaiah, 'the stranger shall cleave to the house of Jacob' (there they are) and when Jacob came back to Beth-el the second time, he's got a multitude with him, and they're not the seed of Jacob, that is according to the flesh; but every one of them, I'm afraid, would have been the seed of Jacob according to the spirit! But there were nonetheless, two distinct groups there, his house and all them that were with him. Obviously, some of those would have been captives from the city of Shechem, which had just been ransacked by his sons, Levi and Simeon; but some of them also would have been Syrians who had joined his company in Syria. And Jacob went out alone, b&s, and came back a multitude!

And when God called that multitude to go to the house of God, the first thing that Jacob realized must be done before they could be acceptable was to get rid of what he called 'strange gods', 'elohim nekar' (Strong's-5236) 'the gods of foreigners'. And the one who had the gods of foreigners was his beloved, Rachel. There is no record, b&s, of Rachel handing them up; we don't know if they were purged out of her life or not. The prophets would indicate that they were not, and that she clung to them until the very end. I don't know, but the prophets would seem to indicate that; because Jeremiah sets before us, Rachel as being typical of Israel after the flesh, who died in agony before God could ever give glory to Israel; and went into captivity because they refused to let go of idolatry! And it's my guess, as all it could be by the hints that we have, that Rachel took to Beth-el, the gods of foreigners. However, that may be, Jacob did his best to purge that company from the gods that they had; and b&s, there's a New Testament counterpart to this! We've all come to the house of God, we are the seed of Abraham according to the spirit, we are not of his household that is, according to his natural seed, we are strangers that have cleaved to the house of Jacob, and we're all going up to the house of God. Now you look at 2 Timothy chapter 2 and see what Paul's got to say about that in verse 19, just relate this to the experiences of Jacob when he came to the house of God, purging his house of idolatry; Paul says, 'Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and earth; some to

honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work. Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart'. So the apostle told Timothy, in a great house there are many types of vessels, b&s, and when the Lord Jesus Christ comes to the house of God, as present constituted, He will find it not cleansed of all those vessels, which are useless (they'll still be there) but when the final house of God is built, El-beth-el, and the power of the house of God is there, b&s, there will only be vessels unto honour. So Paul told Timothy in that great house, Timothy, if you want to go into that house, then depart from iniquity! and that was the very lesson that Jacob was driving home to his household and to all that were with him. But no doubt, remnants of idolatry went to Beth-el.

They were to put away the strange gods, and they were to be clean and to change their garments, and that's a New Testament symbol for baptism, b&s, they were to be clean and change their garments. And Jews, of course, take the garment as a symbol of the character, which sometimes is spotted with the flesh. In Revelation we are told that the only way you can clean your garments and make them white, is to dip them in red blood. Put them in red blood and they'll come out pure white! says the book of Revelation, 'they washed them in the blood of the Lamb and made them white', of course, it is an anomaly, but it is a fact nonetheless, spiritually, that in the blood of Christ it cleanses us from all sins, and therefore, if we make our pilgrimage, b&s, with Jacob to the house of God, then we have to rid ourselves of 'elohim nekar' the gods of foreigners. And bear this in mind, the word 'elohim' is used there because it's a general word for 'god' and the Syrians, even those related to Abraham's house followed that 'god' and so did Rachel; that was the word in her mouth; but it shows, b&s, that she did not have a true understanding of the fear of Isaac. And we likewise, must have a purity of faith, we must understand what we're doing, we must know who we worship, having this seal that 'the LORD knoweth them that are His', says Paul to Timothy, and we must change our ways, cleanse our garments, wash them in the blood of the Lamb, and then and only then, can we go up to the house of God!

Now there's a marvellous phrase that follows in verse 3, and here's one of those echoes, that echo loudly in the ears of those who are familiar with the prophets and if you're familiar with the prophets and do your daily readings, b&s, year in and year out, following closely your bible, and make a mental exercise of making notes of this, that, and the other, then bible study will become rich for you, because when you read things, they will echo in your mind. Now listen to this in verse 3, 'Let us arise, and go up to Beth-el', now anybody reading that and going past that phrase has missed a rich key to this chapter. You translate the word Beth-el when it's read again; 'let us arise, and go up to the house of God' (now you ask yourself now in your mind if that reminds you of anything?) Let us arise, and go up to the house of God (and I just heard a whisper of someone saying Isaiah, and he's right!) Isaiah chapter 2, have a look at this, and the prophet building upon that phrase, obviously building upon it, says this, (and you know, b&s, we must not make application where they do not apply, but they've got to be solid, the context has got to be solid), have a look at this one. Isaiah says in chapter 2 and

verse 2, 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of Yahweh's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hill; and all nations shall flow unto it, (all nations). And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the house of the God of Jacob: and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths'. Who is saying that, b&s? Who's saying it? Well, the record says 'all nations, many people' and you know what the record of Jacob said, 'let us arise and go up to the house of God, all them that were with him were answering you, and they were saying, 'Come ye, let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the house of the God of Jacob: and He will teach us of His ways, we will walk in His paths'; so the Gentiles that Jacob had with him, were willing to do so! What about his household? Look at the pathetic plea of the prophet in verse 5, 'O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of Yahweh' (they were not so willing, and that's the incredible part about it, b&s) and amongst that household was none other than Rachel his beloved. And so there were two groups, and one was saying to Jacob, 'yes, we will go' and the other were reluctant to go, so Jacob through the prophet here, is represented as appealing to them, 'come ye, and let us walk up, come to the mountain of Yahweh' and Isaiah extracts from that history, b&s, a foundation for a prophecy that he spreads to the future. Spreads to the future, and here we are today, baptized into Christ, 'And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed' and we could go on and say 'then are ye Isaac's seed, and then are ye Jacob's seed, and heirs according to the promise'. And we're going to have the Lord Jesus Christ return soon and He'll say, 'Come ye, arise, and let us go up to the house of God', and Christadelphians all over this world will join with those of past ages, and a great cry will go up, b&s, 'Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the house of the God of Jacob'; true it is that this is Gentiles also in the age to come; we will join with them and Gentiles will join later on in that cry. But those who will be reluctant, tragically enough, will be the house of Jacob itself, and it will mean the greater lives to come and to purge up the rebels before they are fit to enter into the house of God; there will be an occasion that Genesis doesn't give us, but the prophet just illuminates that record, and tells us about the two groups who were the more willing, and the problems that Jacob had with his own house. You see, if you miss those phrases you miss a rich experience in filling out the record of the narrative, because the prophets very often not only quote the narrative, b&s, but they add to it, and tell you what the narrative means, and even sometimes tell you what people are thinking, as the 44th Psalm we saw. The very word 'command deliverances' is the most illuminating reference on chapter 32, it's what it's all about; that very term 'command' tells us what was going on in Jacob's mind, and it wasn't until God reduced him to the point where he says 'I give up; all I can say God, is I leave it entirely in your hands', and all was clear! And as I say, b&s, miss those points and rich experiences are missed in the exposition of the Word of God; it's a wonderful experience to go through the Word and picking out those little points like that and to see what the record is trying to tell us.

And so we come back to Genesis 35, and Jacob comes to this group and he says, 'Let's arise and go up to Beth-el' and then he adds, 'and I will make an altar unto power (El), who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went'. Who answered my in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went,

you see, b&s, he knew what it was all about! From Beth-el to Beth-el, at Beth-el on the first occasion God said, 'I will be with thee in all places whither thou goest'. Jacob said, 'come on, let's go up there because I'm anxious, I want to acknowledge that what God promised, He has performed! But notice this, although the statement 'I will be with thee in the way which I went' is a general statement covering the whole of his experiences, there's one experience above all others that Jacob extracts out of chronological order and puts it first and calls it 'the day of my distress'. And we've already considered what that was, it was the day when he looked up as a cripple, late in the day and saw Esau coming towards him; it was the time of Jacob's trouble, there was none like it, a time of trouble such as never was, says Daniel, when he needed God's help and God answered him. And there was a man, b&s, who couldn't wait to get to Beth-el to thank God for that and to acknowledge the point! Now there's a lesson! You know, I suppose if there is one thing lacking in our community as a group, I say, individually no one can answer but yourselves, but you take as a group, how often do we get together to study the Word of God? Very often, but how often, b&s, how often is it that we really get together to express to God, appreciation and thanks for what he's done for us? And how often is it individually when God had revealed Himself to us, in remarkable circumstances, delivered us from our troubles, enriched our minds, our hearts, our families, in every way enriched us, and we forget all about it? But God calls that man to Beth-el to pay homage to the mighty God who delivered him in the day of his distress and to acknowledge that He had been with him in all the way in which he went. And I can imagine Jacob going up there and going over it in his mind, all the experiences, step by step, every one of them, and thanking God from the bottom of his heart! even to the speckled, spotted and ring-streaked cattle, and then probably feeling a little bit ashamed of himself as he thought about peeling those strips of bark off the timber and wood and sticking them up there, as if it had any influence upon the cattle, and feeling ashamed as God revealed to him in a dream, 'Jacob, I'm doing that!' And all of these things, Jacob would turn over in his mind and go to God with heartfelt thanks and humility, to say that I acknowledge God that you were in it every step of the way and I didn't entirely realize it; I believed you, I had faith in you, but experience has taught me, that you meant exactly what you said; I thank you from the bottom of my heart'. That's what that man wanted to do! That's what made him such a great man, b&s, his very weaknesses made him great; the very fact that we can look down in the record and marvel at these witnesses, that's what made him great, because he saw them, he knew what he was and he came to recognize what God was by comparison, the mighty El! thou worm, Jacob, and there was the contrast.

And so in the 4th verse we read, 'They gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and their earrings which were in their ears; (notice that, it's interesting isn't it? that the gods were associated with their hands and with their ears). We can go through the scriptures if you like on those points, but I don't think it would be properly met because we've got much of the record to consider (but just make a note of it, b&s, they were gods that affected their way of life and the theory that they heard through their ears, things which destroy a human being; so they gave those gods to Jacob, and what did he do with them? He did a remarkable thing with them! Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem. And we'll pause there! Jacob hid them under the oak



which was by Shechem, now bro. Jimmy Rosser talked to us on Sunday morning about the promises of God and he said that the promises were given to men and women on the basis of their separation from the world. Strangely enough on that occasion he was right, and you know, b&s, if ever, if ever there's a principle, a patriarchal principle established anywhere on that principle, it is Shechem!

And you know, it was not for no reason that Moses told Joshua, 'now look, Joshua, you're going to conquer the Land, before ever you conquer that Land, Joshua, I want you to take the tribes up in the north to Shechem'. Have you ever considered, b&s, that when Joshua crossed the river Jordan at Gilgal, he had to fight his way, first of all down to the south, he came back and he fought the centre of the Land, and he conquered the north last! But before ever he started any war, he just marched up to the north and went between Ebal and Gerizim, and nobody worried! Then he had to come back and fight his way up; he took a multitude of people up there before he ever started warring, and he stood them at Shechem. And what do you see at Shechem? Two ideas, Ebal and Gerizim, two mountains and a valley in between, and the very geographical setting of Shechem is, (take your pick) blessing or cursing; and he put 6 tribes on Ebal and 6 tribes on Gerizim, and among the 6 tribes on Ebal were the four sons of the bondwomen, introduced into Jacob's household, initiated by Rachel all up on the mount of cursing, on the other side among the tribes of blessing which included Joseph and Judah, and there Joshua got the priest to chant the blessings and when he finished the blessings, the thundering roar of the tribes on Gerizim, 'AMEN'! When he finished chanting the cursings, the thundering roar of the tribes on Ebal reverberating down that valley, 'AMEN', (take your pick). And why did Joshua do that, b&s? Because years before, years before a weary pilgrim came to that place, a man by the name of Abraham, and it was there at Shechem, b&s, (and this is what the record says in Genesis) and when he came to Shechem, and the Canaanite was then in the land, what does it say that for? because at Shechem Abraham had a choice; he came to Shechem and the Canaanite was then in the land, and God said to him (although it's not recorded there) but no doubt God repeated to him the promise, 'I will bless them that bless thee, and I will curse them that curseth thee'. And there was Abraham and his household, and the Canaanite was then in the land, there were two mountains, there were two classes of people, and you can take your pick. And that was the principle established by the patriarch, Abraham, at Shechem; namely when a person receives the promises of God, they do so on the basis that they are separate from the world. And if you want to run with the world, then you have sold your birthright for a pot of stew; and you'll never receive the promises of God. God does not give you the promises and then call upon you to be separate, the first thing that God said to Abraham was, 'GET OUT' and then he got the promises! And he came to Shechem and there that principle was memorialized, and there we have an oak, b&s, an oak at Shechem; what's an oak tree?

Well, they don't grow in groves, you know, they are singular trees; even today an oak is a singular monument, and Abraham stood there at Shechem as a singular monument to the purpose of God. He was of the stock of Israel, and there he was a singular monument, and the Canaanite was still in the land. So when Joshua took the tribes there in Joshua 24, let's turn to it! What did he do? well, he took them there because of

the patriarchal principle; he could have done this anywhere in the Land but he wanted to underline the point. Let's have a look at what Joshua did, not the first time he took them there but the second time he took them there at the end of his life; so he came to Shechem, Joshua 24 verse 19, 'And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve Yahweh; for He is a holy God; He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. If ye forsake Yahweh, and serve strange gods, then He will turn and do you hurt' (you can't serve God and mammon, he was telling them). Verse 23, 'Now therefore, put away, said He, the strange gods which are among you and incline your heart unto Yahweh God of Israel. And the people said unto Joshua, Yahweh our God will we serve, and His voice will we obey. So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem. And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that was by the sanctuary of Yahweh. And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of Yahweh which He spake unto us; it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God'. Now there was the patriarchal principle! So he wrote this in the Law, and what did he write? He said, 'take your pick, Ebal or Gerizim'; you want to serve Yahweh? well, He's jealous, you stand on one mountain or the other, make up your mind! You've got strange gods among you, well, you don't stand anywhere with God, get rid of them and stand on the right side. The people said, 'well, we'll do that' so what did Joshua do? he wrote in a book, took a great stone, set it there under a great oak, and then he added a strange statement, 'that was by the sanctuary of Yahweh'. The sanctuary of Yahweh was never at Shechem! but the whole place was a sanctuary, b&s, sanctified to the memory of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, sanctified to the memory of the promises of God to Abraham, sanctified by the fact that there Abraham stood alone like a great oak, and would have nothing to do with the Canaanite. And we're Abraham's seed, b&s, and we've got to put away the strange gods that are among us!

And you know, it doesn't finish there, everywhere you go that's the principle of Shechem; we had on one occasion many hundreds of years later, b&s, a weary traveller coming up there, sitting on Jacob's well! His disciples with Him. And His sent His disciples away to get bread and a woman came up, all mixed up about her religion and He told her exactly what Joshua told the people. He said, 'make up your mind, you worship you know not what; I'm telling you, salvation is of the Jews! Now He said that right in that patriarchal spot, so if we're going to sing, b&s, and we will at the end of this session, that like the fathers in the Land, we are strangers and pilgrims, then I would sincerely hope, that there's not one of us who would treasure in our hearts 'elohim nekar' the gods of foreigners, and they are legion, and they press upon our attention everywhere, and if we want to come to Ebal and Gerizim, to the place of the promises, we've got to take our pick! They are two distinct mountains!

And so we pause there, don't we? b&s, and you can just imagine how Jacob would impress that lesson upon those people; he said he hid them under the oak which was by Shechem; but he'd tell people, 'look at that oak, have a look at it, it's a solitary monument; now underneath that oak I'm going to hide out of sight, everything that would deny that solitary oak, that you are separate from the people'. And when that was

done, we read in verse 5, 'they journeyed and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob'. And of course, we could go on and say, 'well, it's just piece of the narrative, and we could read on to verse 6'. Wait, wait, b&s, never read the bible as quickly as that! There's another echo, who heard it? 'And they journeyed and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob; there's an echo there, there's a marvellous echo! but if you just read it like an narrative you would miss the point. Now here's the point, when they were at Shechem, do you remember what happened? Levi and Simeon went down and avenged themselves and their sister Dinah; Levi and Simeon, of course, were the sons of Leah and Dinah was the daughter of Leah. One of the Shechemites had defiled their sister, he wanted to honour the girl, he seemed a nice character, he was an honourable sort of individual, but he was a Hivite and they were a oily race (that was the crowd that crawled along to Joshua and said, 'we've come from a far country, and got into the camp of Israel'; they were those people you know, they're lovely people, they're not Christadelphians but they're lovely people! Oh, they're lovely people), and this young man came along and Jacob was sucked in lock, stock and barrel, and he would have settled down and married his daughter to them; they said 'let's interchange our sons and our daughters; Jacob's caught off balance. We'll trade together, we're a peace-loving people, this is a wonderful locality! And although Levi and Simeon might have been instruments of cruelty, in Yahweh's hands they performed one of the gracious acts of mercy that you could imagine! They saved Jacob from himself! you know, truly great men who are moved by the power of the Word, are men of emotions. There's nothing wrong with that, they were emotional, the Lord Jesus Christ could cry, but they've got to balance that, b&s, with an intelligent comprehension of all that's going on around about them and see that it doesn't run away with them! Jacob was an emotional and he was a mild man; look, look what he took from Laban, and he took it patiently! that's the sort of man he was, and they had him in! And in no time, there would have been nothing on the earth that could have been called the sons of Jacob if they had intermarried. The best and the quickest way to destroy Israel was to give him peace and let him mingle with the nations. The very fact that he'd been persecuted is the fact that he's being kept in the earth as a ..... Now Levi and Simeon went down there and they hacked them all to pieces, and I want you to notice what Jacob said when they came back, in chapter 34 and verse 30, and then we'll pick up our echo from the prophets. In verse 30, 'Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites: and I being few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me; and I shall be destroyed and my house'. Now they're the words of a man who's been wrestling with an angel, he wasn't perfect, b&s! He only said that he and his house would be utterly consumed! with the promises of God ringing in his ears, 'I will make thy seed as the sand of seashore'; now Levi and Simeon didn't act on the basis of that promise, they acted on the basis of a red hot anger against a certain individual who had defiled their sister. They had no faith in the promises either, and they acted in that way because they were instruments in God's hands, I believe, not that He would have instigated that, but He used that evil to bring great good out of it, and to save Jacob from himself. Jacob on this occasion, b&s, talked foolishly, if he wanted to destroy his house, the quickest way for you to destroy

your family is to marry them to the Gentiles. And I wouldn't care if everyone of them had 15 kids, in the finish you would have nothing left that we call Christadelphia. And that's the quickest way to get rid of his household and he said you've made my name to stink; they'll destroy me and destroy my house' and there's no answer from God except in that little narrative which says, 'they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob'.

Why does it say that? and a prophet of God years later, just picked that out of the record and expanded for us to tell us what God may have said to Jacob and the lesson he may have got. And the prophet said this, 'I Yahweh, I don't change, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed'; that was picked out of that record just like that, 'I am Yahweh, Jacob, I don't change; I don't care what Simeon and Levi have done in that sense, Jacob. Whatever flesh does, Jacob, flesh may run rampant in this earth, slaying right, left and centre; flesh may do awful things, Jacob, but I don't change, and therefore, Jacob, the sons of Jacob are not consumed! You're wrong! Malachi said that, didn't he? chapter 3 and verse 6, and if you want proof that Malachi's using that record, in your leisure just go back and have a look at what he's been talking about in the previous verses, and he's talking about purifying the sons of Levi, that they might offer unto Yahweh, an offering in righteousness! and they dragged out of that city of Shechem no doubt, many of those strange gods which they had to purge them from. And that's the context of the prophet, isn't it wonderful, b&s, when you pick those verses up and it illuminates that record doesn't it? and expands what we read in Genesis.

So we read on 'that Jacob came to Lux which is in the land of Canaan, which is Beth-el, and all the people that were with him'.

Now I want to show you another allusion to that phrase, not the phrase so much as on the same principle. Jacob came to Lux which is in the land of Canaan, which is Beth-el, he and all the people that were with him, now in verse 10 Jacob made the point of chapter 32 in verse 10, Jacob said this to God, he said, 'I'm not worthy of the least of all thy mercies, and of all thy truth which thou hast shown unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan and now I've become two bands'. So we find him saying that I came first of all to Beth-el alone, now when he comes back he's got all of these people with him. I want you to turn to the 44th chapter of Isaiah, b&s, a well-known chapter to us, and see what Isaiah's got to say about that! We've already quoted this (we deliberately left out one verse for the purpose of this study, we want to add this verse now). You know the point, don't you? we'll read the whole lot again, verse 1, 'Yet now hear, O Jacob, my servant, and Israel, whom I have chosen: Thus saith Yahweh that made thee and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob my servant, and thou Jesurun whom I have chosen. I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses. One shall say, I am Yahweh's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob and another shall write upon his hand, I'm Yahweh, and surname himself by the name of Israel'. So here are people rushing in from dry ground (Gentiles) growing up like reeds among the water, springing up that quickly, rushing in to identify themselves with Jacob, what does verse 6 say? 'Thus saith Yahweh the King of Israel, and His redeemer the LORD of hosts; I (and I'm now going to quote this according to Dr.

Thomas's own translation) 'I am with the first one, and I will be with the last ones; and beside me there is no God'. And that's exactly what happened in the case of Jacob; he came there alone and God was with him, and he brought a multitude back with him, and God was with them, and they're all the crowd that identified themselves with him!

Well, you might say to me that seems pretty sound; it looks like the context is talking about Jacob and all his household with him. Well, just in order that we might underline that as being a fact, b&s, I'll show you the same thing that Isaiah said about Abraham! Chapter 51, look at this, exactly the same thing and we could spend all the rest of the day on this chapter and the book of Romans; in Isaiah 51 and verse 1, 'Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness (and that's a phrase that Paul quotes in Romans chapter 9) 'ye that seek Yahweh: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham (that is, if you're going to follow after righteousness, it's the righteousness of faith) 'your father, and unto Sarah that bare you; for I called him alone; and blessed him, and increased him' (exactly the same principles) 'and to thy seed which is Christ, and if ye be Christ then are you Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise'. I called him 'alone' and the word in the Hebrew means 'as one' (Strong's-259-echad) or 'unitedly' even, it can mean that! I call him as a unit, unitedly, I blessed him and I increased him, or as in the words of the prophet concerning Jacob, 'I am with the first one that came there and I'm with the last ones that came back with him', and that's Dr. Thomas's exact translation of that verse, as he illuminated for us that particular reference, and there is God manifestation firstly in Jacob and in all those that followed him. Beautiful isn't it? b&s, to see the prophet expanding the record like that!

And so we come to verse 7, (we're moving very slowly this morning through the record, aren't we? so we may have to eliminate some of the matter here, and probably pick up some of the more important features). So in verse 7 he comes down there and he built an altar and called the place, El-Beth-el. Now you remember what he called it on the first occasion, don't you? the house of God; so Jacob saw Beth-el as the house of God, he saw angels ascending and descending, of course, he would have seen a multitude of angels, and he called it the house of God. Now all the experiences of life had taught him, that if you have a house of God, without the strength of God in it, you haven't got anything! And so now he comes back to Beth-el, he just puts in front of that, the word 'power', El-Beth-el, and that was the crowning glory of Jacob's life; you can have a house of God, you can have an ecclesia, b&s, it can be a big ecclesia, you can have sound arranging brethren for that matter, or seemingly so, you can have a thriving Sunday School and they all come up to the Glenlock camp once a year, you can have all sorts of things but if you have not got God in your ecclesia, it's a sounding brass and a tingling cymbal! If our ecclesias are Beth-el, the house of God without El-Beth-el, they are useless, because in a great house as the apostle said, there are many kinds of Beth-el's. But when God enters into that house and strengthens that house, b&s, then, of course, it's a vastly different matter, and so Jacob crowned that house, he crowned it by adding to it, the strength that had been with him through all his life! and he adds that comment when he fled from the face of his brother. Now look here's a most interesting thing, he had no sooner done this, than we read in verse 8, 'that Deborah Rebekah's

nurse died, and she was buried beneath Beth-el under an oak, and the name of it was called Allon-bachuth'. Now here's another oak and it's at Beth-el. Now this is strange, this is rather strange, b&s, why would we have mention of Deborah here? Now it would appear from the record if you read the record just straight through, it would appear that Deborah died in the company of Jacob; but I don't know if that's right! because you see, Deborah was Rebekah's nurse, and in the Hebrew the word 'nurse' means 'a wet nurse' (Strong's-3243) 'yanaq' so she would have been Rebekah's nurse when Rebekah was a baby; and going back to the time when Rebekah came from Padan-aram to marry Isaac, from the time that Rebekah left Padan-aram to this time, was a period (and we can establish this without doubt), of 117 years. So you would have to add to that the years of Rebekah's life that she had lived in Padan-aram, back to the time that she was a baby and at that time she was being nursed by a woman, and a wet nurse was generally an older person. And so if this is Deborah and it can't be of Jacob, she is a very, very aged woman. Furthermore, b&s, how would she get into the company of Jacob? If she came from Padan-aram as Rebekah's nurse, and was with Rebekah in Canaan, and Jacob went alone into Padan-aram and there's a mere 600 miles between him and them! How would she get with him? He had not yet arrived back in the region where she was, did she go to meet them halfway or something? Now I don't think myself, b&s, that she was in Jacob's company at all, I think what we're being told was that it so happened that she did had died and was buried at that spot. But the interesting part of it is, that it's recorded there, why is it recorded there? And you see, the record I think is quite clear, it says this in verse 8, 'Deborah, Rebekah's nurse died and she was buried beneath Beth-el', and what we're being told, b&s, is this, you know what Jeremiah said don't you? 'Hear the word of Yahweh, O ye nations, He that scattered Israel will gather them as a shepherd gathereth his flock'. And then Paul went on to say this, 'Though they make a full end of all nations whither I have driven thee; I will not leave thee altogether unpunished', and Jacob was not left altogether unpunished. Any man living with 4 women at each other's throat in one house, is not being left unpunished; and that man went through dreadful anxiety in the same experience, and when Jacob finally learned that lesson, and he erected that altar and he crowned it by calling it 'the strength of the house of God', he built it right over the top of the last vestige of Syria in his house, his mother's wet nurse!

And there was the full end, 'I will make a full end of all nations'; now you ask yourself the question, well, is that fitting? because we'd like to read there, Deborah, an old lady, a mother in Israel, we'd like to give a different construction to it! but I always have! (anybody who's got any tapes on the book of Judges, for example, better go and rub that part out! because I've got a different view of it now, after having studied this I see this in a different context!) Well, ask yourself the question, why make it Deborah if this is the lesson? Well, here's the lesson, b&s, when Jacob left Canaan, we would all admit, would we not, we would all admit that he went away to be disciplined? to be taught and to be purged of what? Of the things that he was doing! but who was the motivating force in his life? Why was he doing it? You saw the play last night, well done that particular section, when he obeyed his mother! Jacob had certain qualms about that, but they were completely overruled and 'obey my voice'. And he did that, and that's what God had to get out of him, He had to get that spirit out of him where he had to come to obey

God's voice; and that was his mother that did that! But you see, b&s, his mother had succeeded herself, to a very large degree, I believe, in getting that spirit out of herself. It would not have been fitting to build that altar over the bier; all that God could do, I believe in the circumstances, was to pick a woman with whom Rebekah's Syrian spirit would not interlock, what better than a wet nurse, who was with Rebekah in her immaturity! And Jacob built over the top of that woman, El- Beth-el, the strength of the power of God, is greater than all the wiles of Syria! That's how I read them, and I can't figure anything else for it, and as if we were sort of emphasizing that point, they called the name of that place Allon-bacbuth, which means 'the oaks of weeping'. The oaks of weeping, and no doubt Jacob wept when he came to that place in remembrance of his mother (he never saw his mother again, bear that in mind, and bear this in mind, his mother's death is not even recorded) so here we might say is the representative death of his mother as a Syrian, and Jacob would have wept, but the thing is this, b&s, in this context of Jacob returning to El-Beth-el, to the glory of the house of God, it's not a time to be weeping! And that's what the prophet says, Isaiah says, Jeremiah says, Jeremiah said it in chapter 31, when he deals with this context and he calls upon Israel not to weep but to rejoice! And they weren't to weep over the last vestige of Syrian influence, they were to rejoice over the fact that El-Beth-el was established! And that's what I believe is inserted right there, right in that context is the fact, that there Deborah was buried, and there above her (it doesn't say at Beth-el, it doesn't say she was buried at Beth-el, it says she was buried beneath Beth-el, and when you come to consider the Hebrew word for 'buried' Strong's-6912 'qabar') means 'to go underneath' you've got two words emphasizing she was beneath underneath Beth-el. What's God trying to tell us? that out of sight it goes, completely out of sight, and so we have El-Beth-el established, Syria gone!

Then we come, b&s, to the revelation of God to Jacob; He found him in Beth-el. And we read in verse 9, 'That God appeared unto Jacob'; now sometimes when you divide the Word up and underline certain phrases and deal with them as phrases, you sometimes destroy the connection. Now the complete sentence here, which is important, 'And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padan-aram'. That's important! because in effect, that's precisely the step that Abraham took! when he got out of his father's house and from his kindred in Haran. And so God appeared to Jacob and the qualifying word is 'when', when he came out of Padan-aram, and then what does God do? He gives him a blessing which is very much akin to the one He gave Abraham in Genesis chapter 12. So Jacob is experiencing in this stage of his life, almost the identical step that Abraham did, and gets this blessing, where? at Beth-el which was memorialized to the memory of Abraham. So here is a man who came out of Haran, immediately he moved out of Haran, God appeared unto him and blessed him, and that's exactly what Abraham did! And Abraham carried that blessing and memorialized it at a place called Beth-el. Rather wonder that, b&s! and then, of course, God reveals Himself to him as we've seen in a very personal manner in verse 10 (which we won't comment upon now), He then comes in verse 11, and reveals Himself unto him as God Almighty the covenant God of the fathers, tells him he'll be a 'company of nations' the word again, 'a congregation, the ecclesia of nations, and then adds this comment which is not in the other promises, that kings should come out of his loins, and adds to the

comment in chapter 36 (which we can't look at now that Esau had kings long before Jacob had them) therefore, Jacob's kings were kings of the future age and not the present. We, therefore, make the particular point in contrasting the fact that Esau had kings before Jacob; Jacob's kings are, of course, the final kings, when saviours shall come up upon mount Zion and they shall judge the mount of Esau and the kingdom shall be Yahweh's as the last verse of Obadiah's prophecy. That's why the record says that Esau had kings first because Jacob got them last, that's the point he's making, and Jacob will finally rule over Esau!

And then, of course, He gives him the promise of the Land; he sets up a pillar of stone, b&s, and this time he pours oil upon it, he pours a drink offering upon it we read in verse 14, and so what he didn't have before, he now added a drink offering. And we know the Law of Moses was nothing new, but just an expansion of ideas that God had set in motion from the garden of Eden practiced by the patriarchs extended by the legislation of the Law. But here is the foundation of all that the Law had said, here was a drink offering, and you go to the Law of Moses and the drink offering, and what significance did it carry? Several; several, b&s, for example, the drink offering was named by the prophet Joel, it was given a specific meaning when he called it 'a blessing'. So it became a symbol of the blessing and Paul calls it 'a cup of blessing', so it's a blessing. In the 16th Psalm, b&s, the psalm that says, 'Thou will not leave my soul in hell; neither will Thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption', the drink offering is seen as the symbol as that man's inheritance. So here's Jacob pouring out a blessing which is his inheritance and the drink offering as the apostle said in another place, and the Lord Jesus Christ in Luke 22 is also a symbol of fellowship between God and man.

And there, of course, was the end of Jacob's pilgrimage, God met him and talked with him and they entered into a contract of solemn friendship, of fellowship as personalities, God was there in the angels in a specific manifestation, talking with him, naming him personally, calling him by His name, and Jacob took the drink offering; he now had an inheritance, he had a blessing, he was in fellowship with God! and that simple drink offering was eloquent, b&s, of the very facts that were established there!

And then we come to the last section of our consideration together from verses 16 to 21, the death of Rachel. Now I saved this up, b&s, when we were talking about Rachel's character because I didn't want to intrude upon this study, but here is the last ( I don't want to use a colloquialism but really it's very fitting) here is the last nail in Rachel's coffin! because this record laid the line for what Rachel stood for. And whilst she was with Jacob she could never progress; now I'm talking, b&s, of serious matters and I'm talking strongly and I'm aware of that, and I remember what bro. Roberts said you know, concerning these matters, that he was very sensitive, he said, to talk about the patriarchs and the people in the bible, and you have to be very careful when you talk about them, b&s, because although they be dead, we've all got to please each other. I talked this morning on the basis of the voice of the prophets of God, not mine; and those of you, of course, who were with us during the Micah studies, will appreciate what I'm now going to outline to you. Those of you who weren't, I would tell you to take heed because this is probably one of the best sweeps in any prophet concerning the life of Jacob that you're likely ever to see. It's a magnificent thing what Micah does with that



section of Jacob's life.

But let's follow it, just for a few minutes in the details and it says, 'They journey from Beth-el; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath' (and I pointed out to you before, b&s, that Ephrath which is Bethlehem, Rachel did not reach that little town, she didn't quite make it, and so the son of her sorrow which Jacob renamed, 'the son of my right hand', though produced by Rachel, Rachel did not produce him exactly at Bethlehem.) Where the prophet said that He would come out of Bethlehem, and here's a rather unique thing too, that first of all, Bethlehem is called Ephrath which means 'fruitful' (Strong's-672) and Jacob only has the promise ringing in his ears, 'I will make thee fruitful'. That's what God said to him, 'I will make thee fruitful' He told him, 'a multitude of nations'. And God said unto him, 'I am God Almighty, be fruitful and multiply', and that woman, b&s, was a woman that screamed at her husband and said, 'Give me children, or else I die' and she was not fruitful and fell short of that. And then she had a son; when she had a son all she could think about was adding another one to it that she could outstrip her sister, and she said, 'God will add to me another son', and He did! He did, but He made sure, b&s, that the promise of Jacob was not going to be fruitful through that woman! And when they came near to that place of fruitfulness, and Rachel was hard in travail, God made sure, b&s, that that boy was not born there. And Jacob carefully repeated that and Micah's words imply that that's exactly what happened in the promises of God, clearly implied that! 'But thou, Bethlehem-Ephratha, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel'. Benjamin didn't exactly come out of that place, he was still short of that!

And so we come to the next point and it says in verse 17, 'And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also'. Fear not, thou shalt have this son also, that's what Rachel herself said, 'God will add to me another son', and there's the midwife, b&s, in the agony of the moment, in excruciating agony no doubt, that woman died giving birth to that child, and the midwife trying to inspire her with confidence, not to think of herself; that's what the midwife was trying to do it (don't think of yourself, Rachel, get your mind off yourself, the boy will be alright, Rachel; and all she could think about was self, self, self, the son of my sorrow. And you know, b&s, I can't help but compare this experience with the experience of a lesser known woman, a woman who's without name in the bible, that was called the wife of Phineas, one of the sons of Eli. And she died in agony giving birth to a child to, and they spoke to her about the death of her husband and there's a woman dying there in agony giving birth to a child and they come up to her and say, 'Phineas is dead'; now you picture this, sisters, this would appeal to you! in that circumstance, those of you who have had children will know that circumstance. In that circumstance they bring a message into that chamber and tell you that your husband is dead, and all that woman could say, 'The glory of Israel is departed'; the glory of Israel is departed, and she called her son, Ichabod, 'the glory is departed, (Strong's-350). And all this woman could think about, (and her husband was alive and well, and the boy was going to be alright), is her sorrow. And that was the character of Rachel, b&s, and not even the voice of the midwife could rouse her out of her 'sorrow', give me children or else I die'. That was a

terrible fulfillment, wasn't it? God shall add to me another son, and He did! And when that son came, b&s, as natural Israel and Rachel is natural Israel, Jeremiah says that, I don't, and Matthew quoting him to prove it! Jeremiah says, 'Rachel weeping for her children' and he was speaking about natural Israel going into captivity, and Matthew talks about the death of the children that Herod killed, children which were the children of the Israelites, who crucified the Son of God, and he said that was Rachel weeping for her children, and they could think about; oh, they said with their voice, O God, will add to us a son; yes, they said that, God will add to us a son. Why they sang that in their hallowed psalms, they celebrated in their Passover feasts, and when He came, b&s, and He came in a birth of agony, as the nation went through a period of agony, all they could think about was their own sorrow, and they said, 'His blood be upon our heads', the son of our sorrow' they called Him, and they rejected Him out of hand.

And Jacob overruled Rachel's naming of that boy on this occasion, and I want you to notice what the record says, because it doesn't say that Jacob overruled her at all! You read it carefully, verse 18, 'And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, for she died, that she called his name Benoni; but his father called him Benjamin'. It doesn't say Jacob does it, b&s? could have easily said that, but God just thought it would be fitting to say, 'his father'. Why? Well, because it is the only boy that was named by his father and he named him 'the son of my right hand'. And the only boy among the 12 that was named of his father, was 'the son of his right hand', and there we have a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was named of His Father, the Son of My right hand'. Benjamin, Jehoshua, Jesus, Immanuel, power with God! These are the things, b&s, that make that record alive and how did the Lord Jesus Christ appear to the Jewish people? The son of my sorrows, 'a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were, our faces from Him, as being despised and rejected by men and God', that's how the prophet said they saw Him and that's how Rachel saw that boy! But Jacob didn't see it that way, and his father named him, the son of my right hand; and that's the wonder, b&s, of the prophetic testament!

And now we'll just turn to the 4th chapter of Micah (no we won't, I'm sorry, we'll just stay in Genesis a little longer and then we'll go to Micah, otherwise we'll miss our connection). So reading then in verses 19 to 21, and I want you to read carefully 'Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem. And Jacob (I've got that name all coloured in red) set a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day. And Israel journeyed (and I've got that all coloured in yellow), and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar'. Now I want you to see, b&s, Rachel died in agony, the son of my sorrow, the father intervenes and says 'no', the son of my right hand, Rachel's dead so Jacob, the supplanter, the worm, the maggot, the weak man that fled from the face of his brother, the man who had Syrian tendencies in him, scheming, not fully trusting in God, commemorates the death of natural Israel, Rachel, with a pillar. And the very next verse says, Israel spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar. And the 'tower of Edar' means the 'tower of the flock', and wherever have we heard that phrase before, 'the tower of the flock'? And there's a prophetic echo that should echo in the head of anybody who's familiar with the bible, 'the tower of the flock', Micah chapter 4, and have a look at the application of this history, b&s, and I believe, although we've been over this once before, what a grand finale to our studies this is,

because here is Micah's application of that last section of Jacob's life with Rachel, before she expires.

And so here is what Micah has to say, in the 4th chapter of his prophecy beginning at verse 6, he says, 'In that day, saith Yahweh, will I assemble her that halteth (note that) that is limping, and I will gather her that is driven out, her that I have afflicted' (the angel touched his thigh you'll remember) and then the prophet depicts this one, b&s, that came away from Peniel limping upon his thigh, he depicts him gradually rising to greatness. Now notice the way he does it, it's a gradual rise to greatness; he says, 'I will make her that halteth a remnant, and her that was cast off a strong nation; and Yahweh shall reign over them in Mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever. And thou, O tower of the flock (Edar as the margin says) the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion, it shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem'. And that word 'first dominion' b&s, is not the first dominion; the word doesn't mean 'first' in that sense, it means the former dominion, you know, the re-establishment of the kingdom of God and the house of Jacob and El-Beth-el. So we get a picture here of Jacob halting upon his thigh, for now the thigh becomes more strong and strengthened and becomes a remnant of people. Then all of a sudden he becomes stronger and becomes a strong nation, see Yahweh's reigning over them. And now he got himself a position where the kingdom has come to the daughter of Zion, the tower of the flock is built; the shepherd stands in the tower and he rears his flock and he's over the side of the wall and the former dominion that God has spoken of him, is fulfilled, b&s. Fulfilled, Jacob is great in the earth, we're there with him, the kingdom is established, but wait; what had to happen before Jacob could become Israel at the tower of Edar? What stood between him, b&s, and greatness?

What great event in history had to transpire before Israel becomes the mighty nation, the tower of the flock? I'll tell you what it was, the death of Rachel! Listen to the voice of the prophet in verse 9, 'Now why doest thou cry out aloud? is there no king in thee? is thy counselor perished? for pangs have taken thee as a woman in travail. Be in pain, and labour to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail; for now shalt thou go forth out of the city, and thou shalt dwell in the field, and thou shalt go to Babylon; and there shalt thou be delivered; there Yahweh shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies'. In other words, before Jacob can become Israel, b&s, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar, something has to happen? Rachel's got to travail in pain and bring forth, and when she does, she dies in agony in Babylon. But God will redeem them, and so he says in verse 1 of Chapter 5, 'Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops; he hath laid siege against us; they shall smite the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek. But thou Bethlehem Ephratah (and here's Jacob coming back) Though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee' (Mary, the handmaiden of the LORD, b&s, was taken by Joseph into Bethlehem, there was no room in the inn, but they found, they found a place though it be but a stable, they found a place in that city. And in the providence of God, Mary didn't expire in childbirth, b&s, she was the handmaiden of the LORD, blessed among women, and that wonderful woman brought forth out of Bethlehem, Him that was going to be ruler in Israel. And so the prophet underlines the lesson that we've been talking about; is this right? Are we on the right

track? Then listen to what he says in verse 3.

'Therefore, will He give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth, then (and only then) the remnant of his brethren shall return to the children of Israel'. Jacob erected a pillar on Rachel's grave, and then and only then did Israel spread his tents beyond the tower of Edar. What a magnificent sweep, b&s, of Micah's prophecy, and he takes that history and expands it forth, and we've been living witnesses of the death of Rachel. Living witnesses of her death that she died in agony; AD 70 commenced it, b&s, that in her struggling and in her agony, Rachel gave birth to the Son of God (in effect) as Paul says, 'of whom concerning the flesh, Christ came and out of that nation of Israel concerning the flesh, God brought forth His Son born of a woman, and the nation died an excruciating agony giving birth to that boy. And they've been in death ever since wandering among the nations. And because they have died and because they've gone into anti-typical Babylon and because they've been there for years, today we are beginning to see that nation revive. And like Jacob of old, we've seen them come out of the graves of Europe, a cripple; we're watching him grow into a remnant! Tomorrow a strong nation, the day after, the former dominion and then we'll see the great Shepherd-King of Bethlehem standing in His tower with all Jacob's flock around him, b&s, and then it's all over! El-Beth-el!

It's a magnificent vista that's presented before our eyes in the 35th chapter of Genesis and the 4th chapter of Micah. Wonderful, b&s, to see the prophets of God expanding the record like that! So what does it do for us? this is the issue, isn't it? What does it do for you and I? This is the issue, b&s, that every year we've got to face at this camp and every Sunday morning in our own ecclesias, what is it going to do for us? Where are we going in this age and generation? What are we intent on doing as Christadelphians, to arrest the drift that's in our midst, what are you prepared to do personally? in this year? in the immediate future? for your ecclesia? for your children? for your family? Do you even realize, b&s, that something has got to be done. Can you even imagine the horrific picture, of the mother falling upon the children? if you can't then get acquainted with some of the facts, and to see where we can be as a community tomorrow, as we begin to fragment and fight amongst ourselves. As that in itself builds within us, a brittleness of spirit whereby we view everybody with suspicion. And then it becomes a spirit of intolerance for anything, and thereby becomes a spirit, b&s, of mutual distrust; and it won't be long before it blossoms forth into the noxious weeds of hatred. Not possible you say? Well, it's happening right under your nose, and I can see the day coming when places like this, if we don't act and act wisely and well, and strongly and wrestle with the angel, I can see the day coming, b&s, when we're going to have in this place, what other brethren and sisters experience all over this world, of having our children in a situation that if the Lord was to delay, (oh, you say He can't delay) and He's delayed long enough now, and we know not the day nor the hour, b&s, we don't know that, and the situation could arise in our very midst, where we could be in a position where other people are in a position, they have no one but their children to mix with except those outside the truth! And people are coming to this place, and other places because of that fact, and the truth is growing weaker and weaker and so it will as the latter days close upon us, but it doesn't mean to say that we've got to grow weaker, and there can be

pockets of strength. There will be, we believe, a people prepared for the Lord and if our sons mean anything to us, and they've got to mean something to us at this place, we must do something, b&s, what? Who knows! it's a wrestling with God, isn't it? It's trying to find Him in Beth-el and Beth-el is the house of God wherever we meet, whether it be Glenlock, whether it be Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, or Brisbane; Beth-el is wherever we are, b&s, and there we struggle with God, don't we? and we hang grimly to Him and by doing that we're working with God, we're not inactive, we're working, we're seeking, we're planning but we're doing it with God and we appeal to God to help us in a desperate situation. And a desperate situation it is, we have gathered here, b&s, from the commonwealth of Australia; it has been a personal thrill to myself and I know talking to the committee, the committee themselves are thrilled to see at this place, people from all over this country. To see the Melbourne brethren up here last night filling this platform, is a thrilling thing, as we communicate to each other, the faith we have in the promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. **WE MUST FOSTER THAT FOR THE SAKE OF OURSELVES AND OUR CHILDREN!** these are the things that we've got to do, b&s; **WE MUST FIGHT FOR THE FEAR OF ISAAC**, that is, we must discriminate between truth and error, we will never agree with Laban, though he may set up his hill of witness; we will turn our backs upon anything that is less than the God of Abraham and the reverence of Isaac. We will be plain and clear in what we believe, b&s, to be otherwise, is to commit spiritual suicide. But whilst we will do that, we will bring with us all they that were with him, we will endeavour to purge ourselves and everyone around us of the idolatry of this world in doctrine and in practice. We will instil that spirit into our children, we will love with them, b&s, we will even laugh with them, we will Isaac with them, and the name of Isaac rang in loud down through the history of Rebekah and of Isaac. When Esau mocked him the word is 'Isaac'; when Isaac and Rebekah sported together, the word is 'Isaac', his voice was heard everywhere, somebody was scorning but others were laughing with joy! And we will bring into this arena of the patriarchal seed, b&s, the laughter and joy, will we not? **WE'VE GOT TO DO IT**, b&s! it's imperative that we do it, this place at this time, is always a joy to us because we don't drag here our problems; we try and leave them behind us. But forget them, and we'll be doomed! We can't forget them, it's suicide to forget them, they must be faced resolutely, with determination and above all with humility and with kindness; but faced they must be, but here for the moment we're blessed by Almighty God; God Almighty, the God of the patriarchs have brought us here, b&s, and we're here together to study that record. We haven't heard the voice of contention, the voice of hatred, the voice of distrust from this weekend; we've had a lovely time together. Yesterday was a lovely day, we met with our Lord and around His table, we heard the voice, the voice of Jacob speaking to us of his experiences in the past; we rejoiced with our children, we fraternized around the fire, it was a lovely day together, b&s! It will help us immensely to come out of this low despond into which our problems have taken us. I call upon everybody, including myself, to give ourselves unstintingly this year, to the service of our Lord and Master; I call upon the young men particularly to study that record as never before. We all have our vocation in life, b&s, you may have picked it yourself, let God pick it for you; you can do things that you never thought you could do providing you wrestle with God and struggle with Him and hang tightly, and though you may be a cripple naturally, you will be a giant spiritually like Jacob was, if we weep and make supplication to Him. And

young men can study that record, I see it with a future, b&s, because we don't see today, the same spirit of dedication to the record. Young people today are caught up in a vortex of rush and tear, here, hither and thither; where is the young man today that will prepare to go home, and to give up certain activities that hour after hour after hour after hour he might absorb that record, not to inflate his head, but to fill hearts? where is the young man to do that today? There are those young men who are doing it, and we bless them, b&s, we call on our heavenly Father to bless them in their labours. We call upon the young sisters, to live a life of modesty and sobriety, if we are going to be members of the house of God, to purge ourselves from all idolatry, or the words of Paul, 'to renounce the iniquity that we might become a vessel unto honour'. Young sisters can be a 'Leah' in the household of Jacob, b&s, not vindictive, envious and jealous, but clinging to the household of God and not of the world. But a Leah who rejoiced in the face that even if she couldn't get the love of her husband, b&s, she had One that would never forsake her, 'this time will I praise Yahweh', where's the sister that can do that in all circumstances of life? There are sisters here that haven't been able to have families, there are sisters here who haven't got a husband even, there are young sisters who may even despair of being married, never mind, remember Judah, it was through him that the promised seed came, and Leah lived a lifetime, b&s, of heartache, and even when Jacob was come back into the Land and he put all his family in order, poor Leah was only second to last, Rachel ..... tape ended!