

Message Four

Jacob—a Pattern of Becoming Mature in Life through the Process of Transformation to Reign in Life for the Body Life

Scripture Reading: Gen. 28:10-22; 32:28; 47:7; Rom. 5:17, 21; 8:28-29; 9:10-13; 12:1-2

- I. Romans and Genesis use the example of Jacob to show us the revelation of God the Father loving and selecting man and of God the Spirit working in all things for the good of His lovers, transforming man, and making man mature in the divine life so that man may be able to bless all the people, to rule over all the earth, and to satisfy all the people with God the Son as the life supply—Mal. 1:2; Rom. 9:10-13; Gen. 25:22-23; Eph. 1:4; Gen. 27:41; 28:1—35:10; chs. 37, 39—49; Rom. 8:28-29.**
- II. The experience of Jacob is governed by his dream of Bethel, the house of God—Gen. 28:10-22:**
 - A. Jacob's dream was a dream of God's goal, a dream of Bethel, a dream of the house of God, which is the church today as the Body life (1 Tim. 3:15; Rom. 12:1-2) and which will consummate in the New Jerusalem as the eternal dwelling place of God and His redeemed elect (Rev. 21:3, 22).
 - B. In His humanity Christ became a joining ladder to join heaven (God) and earth (man) into one—Gen. 28:12-17; John 1:1, 51.
 - C. Our human spirit is also the dwelling place of God; whenever we turn to our spirit, we sense Christ bringing God (heaven) to us and joining us to God (heaven); thus, Christ as the heavenly ladder is the stairway to bring God to us and join us to God—14:6; Eph. 2:22; Heb. 4:16.
- III. *Israel* means “one who struggles with God” (Gen. 32:28) and “the prince of God”; the Christian life is a life of struggling with God to be transformed by God into a prince of God—cf. Phil. 4:5-7, 11-13:**
 - A. Transformation is the metabolic function of the life of God in the believers, by the addition of the element of the divine life of Christ into our being, to be expressed outwardly in the image of Christ—2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 12:1-2.
 - B. Isaac, Rebekah, and Esau were used to put Jacob into the “oven” of transformation, and Laban and Jacob's wives were the “fire” burning in that oven; Jacob's history shows that God sovereignly arranges each aspect of the environment of His chosen ones so that He may carry out His work of transformation within them—8:28-30.
- IV. The Christian life is a life of being daily transformed in the church life on the unique ground of oneness for the reality of the Body of Christ (12:2); this is a normal Christian life for a normal church life in the following aspects:**
 - A. “Day by day”—2 Cor. 4:16; Psalms 68:19.
 - B. “Brighter and brighter”—Proverbs 4:18.
 - C. “Morning by morning”—Isaiah 50:4.
 - D. “Glory to glory”—2 Cor. 3:18.

- E. "Strength to strength"—Psa. 84:7.
- F. "Grace upon grace"—John 1:16.
- G. "Here a little, there a little"—Isa. 28:13.
- H. "One by one"—1 Cor. 14:31.
- I. "House to house"—Acts 20:20.

V. "All things work together for good to those who love God"—Rom. 8:28:

- A. The good here is not related to physical persons, matters, or things; only One is good—God—Luke 18:19.
- B. All persons, all matters, and all things related to us are the means of the Holy Spirit to work good for us so that we can be loaded with good (Psa. 68:19a), with the Triune God Himself (cf. Gen. 45:5; 50:20).
- C. All persons and all situations related to us are arranged by the Spirit of God to match His work within us so that we may be transformed and conformed to the image of the firstborn Son of God—Matt. 10:29-31; Rom. 8:28-29.

VI. "Moab has been at ease from his youth; / And he is settled on his lees / And has not been emptied from vessel to vessel; / Nor has he gone into exile. / Therefore his taste remains in him, / And his scent is not changed"—Jer. 48:11; Heb. 12:5-7, 9-11; cf. Ezek. 25:8:

- A. For wine to settle on its lees means that the liquid is a mixture; in order to have a clear, pure liquid, one must pour the wine from one vessel to another.
- B. The Lord is pouring us from one vessel to another, allowing this to happen to us today and that to happen to us tomorrow, turning us from one environment to another, from one experience to another, until all our lees are gone, our taste is lost, and our scent is changed—2 Cor. 2:15.
- C. The putting to death of Jesus in our environment cooperates with the indwelling Spirit to kill our natural man and remodel us with resurrection life; this is the discipline of the Holy Spirit under the Lord's sovereign arrangement for our daily transformation through the renewing of our inner man so that we may reign in life for the Body life—Rom. 8:6, 9-10, 36; 2 Cor. 4:10, 16-18; Rom. 5:17, 21; 12:1-2.

VII. Through the process of transformation, Jacob became mature in the divine life to reign in life, his supplanting hands became blessing hands, and his speaking became God's speaking—5:17, 21:

- A. To be transformed is to be metabolically changed in our natural life; to be mature is to be filled with the divine life that changes us—Heb. 6:1a.
- B. Jacob's supplanting hands became blessing hands; blessing is the overflow of life—Gen. 47:7, 10; 48:14-16.
- C. As a God-constituted person, Jacob was saturated with God; thus, his speaking was God's speaking and his word was God's word—49:1; cf. 1 Cor. 14:31.
- D. To bless others is to bring them into the presence of God and to bring God into them as grace, love, and fellowship so that they may enjoy the Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—for the Body life—Gen. 14:18-19; Num. 6:23-27; 2 Cor. 13:14.