

## REVIVAL NEWS

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# THE WONDERS OF THE HOUSE OF GOD

In **Genesis 28** we have the account of Jacob being sent by Isaac to go to his mother's people in Padan Aram to get a wife. Isaac blessed Jacob very powerfully in **verses 3-4**. "*Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran*" (**Gen.28:10**). We are going to study **Genesis 28:11-22** and we will discover the wonders of the House of God.

### 1) A Place – Genesis 28:11

*"So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night"*. The first thing we find out is that Jacob came to a certain place where there were stones – not just any place where there were stones, but a **certain place**. Is there anything that we can know about this place? In **Genesis 12:8** as Abraham came to dwell in the land that God was leading him to, he *"pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to YHWH [LORD] and called on the name of YHWH"*.

Two generations before Jacob, Abraham had come to a place near Bethel and built an altar there to YHWH. In those days an altar was to be made of uncut stones. The altar was the place where God would meet with His people, or with a particular person. We do not know for sure, but the Scripture suggests that Jacob came to a certain place where there were stones, not just any place. It is not impossible to think that Jacob found the place of Abraham's altar and that can help us understand that in this place, Jacob met with the presence of God.

In the New Testament, the church of Jesus Christ is built *"on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit"* **Eph.2:20-22**. The place is the dwelling place of God in the Spirit. The church [assembly, congregation, the gathering of two or three or more in the name of Jesus (**Matt.18:20**)] is meant to be that dwelling place. We will discover that Jacob had an amazing experience of meeting with God in that place and called that place Bethel, the House of God!

➤ **The House of God is a certain place!**

### 2) A Person – Genesis 28:16

When Jacob slept on that particular stone (**v.11**), he dreamed a supernatural dream. He saw *"a ladder set up on the earth and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it"* (**v.12**). This reminds us of what Jesus said to Nathaniel in **John 1:51** *"Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the*

*angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man*". The main point is that heaven was open.

Then the Scripture in **Genesis 28:13** says that Jacob saw YHWH "***And behold YHWH stood above it and said, 'I YHWH God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac'***". God then repeated to Jacob the covenant promises that had been given to Abraham and Isaac, that they would not only inhabit the promised land, but that "***all the families of the earth will be blessed in your seed***" (**Gen.28:14**). That is the promise that brings all the Gentile believers into covenant with God through Christ.

God then promises to go with Jacob, to keep him and to bring him back to the land of inheritance (**v.15**).

***"Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, 'Surely YHWH is in this place and I did not know it'"*** **Gen.28:16**. The House of God is a certain place and the House of God is the house where a certain person dwells. Jacob experienced YHWH in this place.

➤ **The House of God is a person!**

### **3) A Presence – Genesis 28:16 & 17**

In this place Jacob experienced the Presence of God. He awoke saying "***Surely YHWH is in this place***" (**v.16**), and then he said, "***How awesome is this place***" (**v.17**). The KJV says "***How dreadful is this place***". Jacob was both afraid and awestruck at the same time.

God instructed Moses that a sanctuary [tabernacle] should be built "***that I may dwell among them***" (**Exodus 25:8**). In the tabernacle God's Presence dwelt behind the veil and could only be experienced directly by the High Priest, except when the cloud of God's presence/glorious came down over the tabernacle for all to see and experience and then the people worshiped (**Exodus 33:10**).

Through the cross of Jesus Christ, the veil in the temple was rent, signifying that the house of God, the very Presence of God, is able to be experienced by all who come to the fullness of faith in Jesus Christ. The Scripture says, "***But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord***" **2 Corinthians 3:18**. In the New Covenant we can come to know and experience the Presence of God.

➤ **The House of God is the place where the Presence of God is experienced!**

### **4) The Gateway to Heaven – Genesis 28:17**

When Jacob awoke from the dream, he was acutely aware that he had seen into heaven; that he had seen YHWH standing; that he had heard YHWH speaking and he awoke in a state of fear and dreadful awe. Jacob saw the heavens open and there were angels ascending and descending. He then proclaimed that this place was "***the gate of heaven***". Jacob is saying that the house of God, which is the place where God Himself is experienced, 'seen and heard', is actually the gateway to heaven. It is the place where we experience the supernatural manifestations of God.

Our experience of coming into the house of God is that of coming to the gate of heaven. We are able to experience the supernatural presence of God in dreams and prophecy – the voice of God can be heard! When the leaders of the church in Antioch were ministering to the Lord

and fasting *“the Holy Spirit said ...”* (Acts 13:1-2). The voice of prophecy was heard; it was the voice of God and it affected history.

We can expect to experience God in the House of God. The House of God is the gateway to heaven. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are the manifestations of the Spirit in the midst (1 Corinthians 12:7-11). The ascension gift ministries of Ephesians 4:11 function in the House of God. The House of God is the place where we experience the presence of Jesus Christ through the gifts and ministries and activities of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor.12:4-6).

➤ **The House of God is the gateway to heaven!**

### 5) The Pillar of Truth – Genesis 28:18

*“Then Jacob arose early in the morning and took the stone that he had put at his head”*. The stone has many references in the New Testament. Peter refers to Jesus as the stone, *“Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious”* (1 Peter 2:4). Isaiah prophesied about the stone *“Behold I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation”* (Isa.28:16). We are referred to as *“living stones being built up a spiritual house”* (1 Pet.2:5). We are to come to Jesus the ‘Living Stone’ and be built as a spiritual house for Him to indwell.

Jacob took the stone and *“set it up as a pillar”* (Gen.28:18). A pillar is as a memorial; it is something set in place; something that is meant to remain. In writing to Timothy (1Timothy 3:15), Paul says, *“The house of God which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth”*. We see that the pillar of truth is built on the foundation of Jesus Christ (1 Cor.3:11), and the pillar of truth is the mainstay, or that which upholds the church as being the house of God: the place where the truth of God is found.

Paul goes on to declare that the major truth that is to be found in the house of God is the statement of the mystery of godliness: *“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory”* 1 Tim.3:16.

➤ **The pillar of truth is found in the House of God! It is the revelation of God coming in the flesh!**

### 6) The Oil of Anointing – Genesis 28:18

Jacob took *“the stone that he had put at his head, set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on top of it”*. He anointed the pillar with oil. This is the anointing. John tells us that the anointing which we have received from the Holy One *“abides in us and we do not need that anyone teach us. The same anointing teaches us concerning all things and is true”* (1John 2:20&27 with some paraphrasing).

Speaking of Jesus being anointed, Peter told the Gentiles in Cornelius’s house that *“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power”* (Acts 10:38). Jesus Himself declared the anointing that He had received from YHWH, quoting from Isaiah 61, in Luke 4:18.

The anointing of the Holy Spirit, called the Spirit of truth by Jesus in John 14:17, is found in the house of God and this anointing is essential, bearing witness to the truth that is taught in the House of God.

➤ **The oil of anointing is necessary in the House of God!**

## 7) The New Name – Genesis 28:19

Jacob *“called the name of that place Bethel”*. Bethel means ‘House of God’. Jacob changed the name of the place. The place was now called The House of God. Jacob had met with God at Bethel. We can meet with God in the House of God, which is the church of the Living God.

The receiving of a new name is indicative of a change of character and nature. When Abraham had first built an altar in that place, there is no record of God speaking to him or of his experiencing the presence of God. The Scripture says, *“he built an altar to YHWH and called on the name of YHWH” (Gen.12:8)*. But Jacob had a life changing experience with God in that place and he named the place Bethel. The church is the place where we can meet with God and have a life changing experience. Once we have encountered the living God in the House of God we are given a new name, that is, a new character; we become a new person.

➤ **The House of God is where we receive a new character!**

## 8) Commitment to Faithfulness – Genesis 28:20-21

The result of Jacob realising that he was in the House of God was that *“Jacob made a vow”* that if God would look after him and be with him, and bring him back to his father’s house, *“then YHWH shall be my God”*. Jacob was now a believer.

We know that Jacob grew up with a father, Isaac, who was a believer and that he grew up in the heritage of Abraham, the father of faith, but now Jacob had a personal encounter with the living God and he realised that he was in the House of God. Not one of us can live off our parents’ faith or our grandfather’s faith. Each one of us needs a personal experience of the supernatural God and as a result make a personal commitment – a vow – to follow God and to trust Him for everything.

➤ **The House of God is the place of personal commitment to be one of His!**

## 9) The Place of the Tithe – Genesis 28:22

Jacob restates the reality of the House of God that he had discovered: *“And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God’s house” (v.22a)*. The stone is a reference to Jesus. It is only by coming to know Jesus as the truth, that we can come to God (**John 14:6**). In the House of God, Jacob experienced God; he knew it was YHWH the Eternal God. Jacob dreamed of heavenly things – Jacob saw beyond the veil and heard God speaking. Jacob was filled with awe and wonder and even dread. Jacob was filled with the Spirit of revelation to recognise that he was in the House of God. He was in the place of truth.

Jacob’s response to this life changing experience was to commit to become a tithing man: *“Of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth [tithe] to You”*. The tithe is to be brought into the House of God. [See **Malachi 3:10**]. It is important to realise that tithing is an integral part of our relationship with God. It is a response of faith to the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. The tithe is to be used, not to build natural buildings, but to support the work of the ministry in building the House of God [spiritual house] in the earth.

➤ **The House of God is where we place our tithe!**

**In summary, the House of God is:**

- a certain place in the Spirit where we meet with God;

- where we experience God; it is the place of His presence
- where we receive visions and dreams and prophecies and see the form of God.
- The House of God is a place of awe and worship.
- It is the gateway to heaven, where angels are seen ascending and descending.
- It is where we come into committed relationship with God because we have experienced the reality of God in the Spirit and we have heard His word, *“the exceedingly great and precious promises”* (2 Peter 1:4).
- The House of God is where we place our tithe.

We are meant to dwell in the House of God!

*“And I will dwell in the house of YHWH forever”* Psalm 23:6b.