

Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further ***International Bible Lessons***

Genesis 28:10-22

Sunday, November 18, 2018

L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

Some Bible study groups or classes can further discussion by asking some or all of the **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** below. Others may want to send the bulletin size *International Bible Lesson* home with their students for further study in the coming week to encourage continuing Bible study. The *Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further* below are not actually intended to be *the answers* to the discussion questions. These indeed are “hints” a teacher may use to help students think through and discuss the questions in class. The *Class Preparation Guide* includes the questions below, and it can be given to students at the end of the previous class so they can pray, read, and think ahead to prepare for the next week’s Bible class.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. How did God identify himself to Jacob? Why should this way of identification be important to Jacob?

God identified himself using the name that God had revealed to his father and grandfather. Jacob would have known that LORD [Jehovah or Yahweh] was God’s name. The LORD was the God of Abraham and Isaac, and they worshiped and obeyed the LORD. Jacob would have been taught by them to worship and obey the LORD as they had done. God the LORD wanted Jacob to know personally that He would be Jacob’s God also, and He wanted Jacob to worship and obey Him as Abraham and Isaac had obeyed Him. This way of identification was important because Jacob needed to know that he was talking with the true God, the LORD.

2. What did the LORD promise Jacob? Why was this promise important?

The LORD promised Jacob the same promise He had given to Jacob's father and grandfather. The promise included the same land area, and the promise included children. The promise included the same number of descendants that the Lord had promised Abraham: "like the dust of the earth" (see Genesis 13:16 and Genesis 28:14). The promise included the fact that "all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you" (see Genesis 12:3 and Genesis 28:14).

The promise was important to encourage Jacob in many ways. The promise was important so Bible readers could see how God kept His promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to the coming of Jesus the Messiah, whose life, death, and resurrection blesses all the families of the earth. The promise was important so Jacob would know that the blessings he received were not because he had stolen Esau's blessing, but the blessings he received were because God was keeping His promise to Abraham and Isaac through him and his descendants. God was not rewarding Jacob for his deception; instead, God was doing through Jacob what He planned to do before Jacob was born. Later, Jacob would suffer from deception and would learn by experience how Esau must have felt when he deceived his brother. Later, he would seek to make amends to his brother.

3. What did the LORD say He would do specifically and personally for Jacob?

The LORD said He would be with Jacob: He said He would keep or protect Jacob wherever he went (in other words, God would be wherever Jacob was rather than being like the local idols that were tied to certain areas of land or that had to be carried from place to place when people moved to new locations). God said He would bring Jacob back to the land that he was leaving. Since God would not leave Jacob until He had fulfilled His promise, God would never leave him (the promise of God included numerous offspring); however, Jacob would feel abandoned by God in some situations later; such as, situations regarding his sons Joseph and Benjamin. He would need to carry on by faith, despite his feelings.

4. How did Jacob describe the place where God met him? How would you describe the place where you meet with God?

Jacob described the place as awesome, the house of God, the gate of heaven.

Think of places where you have felt or feel exceptionally close to God, describe these places. Even if you do not feel the exceptional presence of God all the time, describe the place where you meet with God.

5. What did Jacob promise God?

The LORD would be his God (as Abraham and Isaac had made the LORD their God); therefore, he would always worship and obey the LORD. He would set aside the place where he met God as a place where he would worship the LORD, as a place he called God's house. He would give one-tenth to the LORD.