

# The Forgotten Vow Of Jacob

**TEXT: Gen. 35:1-7**

## **INTRODUCTION:**

- A. GOD TELLS JACOB TO BUILD AN ALTER IN BETHEL
- B. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:
  - 1. Nearly 30 years before, Jacob had made a vow.
    - a. Made as he was fleeing the wrath of Esau .
    - b. On the way, he stopped at what is now called Bethel (**Gen. 28:10-15**).
    - c. A dream prompted Jacob to make his vow( **Gen. 28:16-22** ).
  - 2. For the next 20 years Jacob dwells in Haran.
    - a. As God promised, He was with Jacob
    - b. Jacob prospered both in family, and in gaining wealth( **Gen. 29-30** ).
    - c. God kept him safe. From Laban, who was pursuing him( **Gen 31** ),. From Esau, who was coming to meet him( **Gen 32-33** ).
  - 3. By the time of our text, Jacob had been back in Canaan 10 years.
    - a. He had settled near the city of Shechem ( **Gen. 33:18** ).
    - b. But he had not bothered to go back to Bethel.
- C. SEVERAL LESSONS CAN BE GLEANED FROM JACOB'S FORGOTTEN VOW.

## **I. GOD EXPECTS US TO KEEP OUR VOWS.**

- A. HE DOES NOT TAKE VOWS LIGHTLY( **Ecc. 5:2-7** ).
- B. HOW DOES HE CLASS COVENANT-BREAKERS( **Rom 1:28-32** ).
- C. WHO WILL GO TO HEAVEN?( **Psa. 15:4** ).
- D. WHAT ABOUT THE VOW WE MADE IN BECOMING CHRISTIANS?

## **II. WE SOMETIMES FORGET OUR VOWS WHEN GOD HAS FULFILLED HIS.**

- A. GOD ALWAYS KEEPS HIS WORD( **Heb. 6:13-19** ).
- B. HE ABIDES FAITHFUL( **2 Tim 2:11-13** )WHEN WE ARE FAITHLESS.
  - 1. This "forgetfulness" occurs often when vows are made in times of trouble.
    - a. Like those made in a foxhole or in an airplane during turbulence.
    - b. Or those made in an effort to solve marital and other problems.
    - c. "If you'll just get me out of this!"
  - 2. But such vows are just as binding as those made upon careful reflection!

## **III. WE FORGET OUR VOWS WHEN THINGS GO WELL.**

- A. JACOB HAD A FAMILY, WEALTH, AND WAS BACK HOME.
- B. TOO MANY CHRISTIANS HAVE TOO LITTLE TIME FOR GOD.
  - 1. The rich farmer( **Luke 12:16-21** ).
  - 2. Dare we forget God in good times( **James 1:17; Luke 17:12-19; Col. 3:15** ).
  - 3. God's warning to Israel against forgetfulness( **Deut. 8:11-20** ).

## **IV. INFLUENCED BY THE WORLD WE FORGET OUR VOWS.**

- A. THE INFLUENCE OF FOREIGN GODS( **Gen 35:2; Josh. 24:2, 14-15** ).
- B. WE FORGET OUR MASTER.
  - 1. Not your own( **1 Cor. 6:19-20** ).
  - 2. Can't serve God and the world( **1 John 2:15; Matt. 6:24** ).
    - a. Many young Christians, zealous at first, but when influenced by peers popular fads in music, etc., humanistic teaching in the schools they often lose interest in spiritual matters( **Matt. 13:22** ).
    - b. Many adult Christians, are influenced by materialism and immorality.
  - 3. There is no excuse for "forgotten vows."( **Luke 9:62** ).

## **V. IF WE HAVE FORGOTTEN OUR VOWS, WE NEED TO GO BACK TO THE BEGINNING.**

- A. JACOB TOLD TO GO BACK TO BETHEL.
- B. THE EPHESIANS TOLD TO GO BACK TO THE BEGINNING( **Rev. 2:4-5** ).
  - 1. They had left their "first love."
  - 2. They were told to "remember...from where you have fallen."
  - 3. And to "repent and do the first works."
- C. WE NEED TO RETURN TO OUR BEGINNINGS( **1 Pet. 2:1-2; 1 John 5:3; John 13:34-35** ).

## **VI. FINALLY, WHEN WE FULFILL OUR FORGOTTEN VOWS, THERE ARE RENEWED BLESSINGS!**

- A. WHEN JACOB FULFILLED HIS VOW( **Gen. 35:9-15** ).
- B. SO IT WILL BE WITH US!
  - 1. It may be that we have forgotten the original commitment we made when we first obeyed the gospel of Christ( **1 John 1:8, 10**, see **verse 6** ).
  - 2. If we will return to Christ in full repentance and prayer and fulfill our vow of

service and devotion to Him all the spiritual blessings that He has to offer can be ours again!( **1 John 1:7, 9** ).

3. What a blessing!( **1 John 3:1** ).

### **CONCLUSION:**

- A. ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN, BUT HAVE FORGOTTEN YOUR VOWS?
- B. LIKE JACOB, YOU NEED TO COME BACK TO THE LORD.
- C. THE BLESSINGS OF HEAVEN ARE YOURS IF YOU DO.
- D. IF YOU HAVEN'T PROMISED GOD ANYTHING, IF YOU ARE NOT YET A CHRISTIAN, THINK OF WHAT YOU ARE MISSING  
( **2 Cor. 6:1-2; Mark 16:15-16** ).