

Articles and Sermons :: Four Reasons For God Blessing Jacob -poonen**Four Reasons For God Blessing Jacob -poonen - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2007/7/26 3:50****Four Reasons For God Blessing Jacob***by Zac Poonen*

Alone with God Jacob was blessed in the place where he was alone with God. He sent everyone else away and was alone (Gen. 32:24). 20th century believers find it difficult to spend much time alone with God. The spirit of the jet-age has got into most of us, and we are in a perpetual state of busyness. The trouble is not with our temperament or our culture. We just don't have our priorities right - that's all. Jesus once said that the one thing needful for a believer was to sit at His feet and listen to Him (Luke 10:42). But we don't believe that any longer and so suffer the disastrous consequences of disregarding Jesus' words. If we are always busy with our various activities and do not know what it is to get alone with God in fasting and prayer, we shall certainly not know God's power or blessing - His real power, I mean (not the cheap counterfeits that many are boasting of).

Broken by God Jacob was blessed in the place where he was broken completely. At Peniel, a Man wrestled with Jacob. God had been wrestling with Jacob for twenty years, but Jacob had refused to yield. God had tried to show him how everything he had put his hand to had gone wrong, despite his cleverness and his planning. But Jacob was still stubborn. Finally God struck Jacob's hip-socket so that his thigh was dislocated (Gen 32: 25). The thigh is the strongest part of the body, and that was the part that God struck.

Hungry for God Jacob was blessed in the place where he was earnest and hungry for God. "I will not leave you", he cries out, "until you bless me" (Gen 32: 26). How God had waited for twenty long years to hear those words from Jacob. He, who had spent his life grabbing the birthright, women, money and property, now lets go of them all and grabs hold of God. This was the point towards which God had been working in Jacob's life all along. It must have delighted God's heart when Jacob at last lost sight of the temporal things of earth and longed and thirsted for God Himself and for His blessing. We are told in Hosea 12:4, that Jacob wept and pleaded for a blessing that night at Peniel. What a different man he was that night compared with his earlier years when he desired only the things of this world. God's dealings with him at last bore fruit! Before God blessed Jacob fully, He tested Jacob's earnestness. He said to Jacob, "Let me go," testing whether Jacob would be satisfied with what he had got or whether he would yearn for more. God tests us too. He can never bless a man fully until the man is in dead earnest for God's best. We need to thirst like Jacob, saying, "Lord, there is more to the Christian life than I've experienced thus far. I'm not satisfied. I want all Thy fullness at any cost." When we come to that point, it is but a short step to the fullness of God's blessing. Notice in the incident at Peniel, that it was when Jacob was in a state of weakness (after his thigh had been dislocated), that he said, "I will not let you go, God." God could easily have left him and gone, but He didn't. For it is when a man is most weak in himself that he has greatest power with God.. It is when Jacob is defeated, broken and utterly weak, that God tells him, "You have now prevailed." One would think that God should have said, "You have at last been defeated." But no. The word is, "You have prevailed. You shall henceforth have power with God and with men" (Gen 32: 28). We prevail, when God has shattered us of our own strength and self-sufficiency.

Honest with God Jacob was blessed in the place where he was honest with God. God asks him, "What is your name?" Twenty years earlier, when his father had asked him the same question, he had lied and said, "I am Esau" (Gen. 27:19). But now he is honest. He says, "Lord, I am Jacob" - or in other words, "Lord, I am a grabber, a deceiver and a bargainer." There was no guile in Jacob now. And so God could bless him. God blessed Jacob there - when he was honest, when he did not want to pretend any more, when he confessed, "Lord I'm a hypocrite. There is shame and pretense in my life." I tell you, it takes real brokenness for a man to acknowledge that from the depths of his heart. Many Christian leaders say words like that with false humility - to gain a reputation for being humble. I am not referring to that type of abomination. What I mean is an honesty that comes out of a truly broken and contrite heart. That is costly. There is so much guile in all of us. May God have mercy on us for pretending to be so sanctified when we are not. Let us covet sincerity and honesty and openness with all of our hearts, and then there will be no limit to God's blessing upon our lives.