

Depths of Beauty

Sermon #36

03/16/25

As we know the stories in the OT are types and shadows of the New, not simply as history but in profound meaning and relationship to our lives today. Today we're going to center on the story known as Jacob's ladder found in Genesis 28. The story covers a remarkable event in the life of Jacob that has been retold to every generation since. It's a story within Jacob's larger story having to do with his search for a mate. It's our story as well as we seek greater meaning in our lives, like Jacob, through identifying "the other" within. We often sense its presence as a beckoning call. The depth of our awareness tells us that we're not alone, nor were we ever created to be. In fact the word for deep in Greek is *dianoia* meaning intellect, imagination, deep thought or understanding. It references a conscious awareness rising from a deeper level, becoming lucid seemingly on their own. It most often entails thoughts and feelings not previously encountered. We read in

Eph 1:18

"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,"

Here the concept is translated as our understanding **being** enlightened. It carries the unmistakable sense of something revealed by a source distinct from oneself. It results in something new, a knowing through a perception or awareness previously not known, at least on a conscious level.

The Greek language communicates in abstract thoughts while the Hebrew is concrete. For example we see in Psalm 42:7

"**Deep** calls to **deep** at the sound of Your waterfalls; All Your breakers and Your waves have rolled over me."

or

Gen 1:2

“The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the **deep**; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.”

In Hebrew the words are picturesque, usually involving action. Here **deep** means a depth or abyss in a state of agitation or roaring. The idea in the Psalms is one that illustrates a powerful conveyance from one entity to another, the symbolism being that of the Ruach or Holy Spirit breaking forth from within, touching our conscious thoughts with His.

In Genesis we see an intimate account of God’s work not just in creation as a whole but I believe in the intimate breath of the Spirit hovering over the lifeless body of man, preparing to call forth image and likeness. God was moving over the face of the waters literally means to brood as a hen over an egg after insemination. The word for waters here is a euphemism for semen. The word **deep** describes the love of God for agape love is a verb.

We read in

1 Cor 2:

“9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

10 But God hath revealed [them] unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searches all things, yea, the **deep** things of God.”

Here the word deep is a reference to the mysteries within the very heart of God. The root of the word search means to utter or speak.

1 Cor 2:

14 “But the natural (carnal) man receives not (root=lambano, to take to oneself) the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know [them], because they are spiritually discerned.”

(The **Mirror Bible** says a performance based mindset cannot access or hear what grace communicates.)

Romans 10:17

“So then faith [cometh] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

The word of God here isn't logos or grapha (scripture) but rhema and it means utterance. It is the **deep** calling from within each of us.

Throughout scripture the word obedience literally means to hear. We read in

Heb 5:

8 “Although he was a Son, he learned obedience (hearing) through what he suffered;

9 And having been made perfect (consummate, complete) He became to all those who obey (hear) Him the source (deep) of eternal salvation,”

Heb 5: MIRROR

8 “Acquainted with sonship He was in the habit of hearing from above...

9 By His perfect hearing He forever freed mankind to hear what He had heard.”

What does obedience whisper? “Love one another even as I (Who Am Love) have loved you.” Not love “and” or love “but”. **I Am love.**

Broken identity is thus reestablished.

Gen 28:7: “...Jacob obeyed his father and his mother and had gone to Paddan-aram.

It wasn't coincidence that Jacob ended up in Haran. He heard his father and mother in an act of obedience concerning taking a wife from Padan-aram, which means the high place. Otherwise he would never have gone there.

In light of this let's examine Jacobs's experience of hearing the deep that was initiated by obedience.

Gen 28:

10 "And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran.

11 And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put [them for] his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.

12 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

13 And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I [am] the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

15 And, behold, I [am] with thee, and will keep thee in all [places] whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done [that] which I have spoken to thee of.

16 And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew [it] not."

This is a remarkable event in the life of Jacob that is retold to every generation since. It's a story within Jacob's larger story having to do with his search for a mate. It's our story as well as we seek greater meaning in our lives. That meaning being the identifying of "the other" within that we are innately aware of. We sense its presence in its beckoning call. We know in our depth of consciousness within that we're not alone, nor were we ever created to be. Let's examine these verses together.

We read in vs 10 he went toward Haran, the meaning of which is to glow or to incite passion. Notice the similarity to Moses' experience of being drawn to a burning (gleaming, shining) bush or Paul telling the Ephesians that their eyes of understanding must be enlightened. Moses had been taking his father-in-law's sheep to this pasture for years and never noticed this flaming bush before. Was it because God decided to ignite it on that particular day? Or had it always glowed yet was invisible to Moses because the eyes of his understanding had not yet been opened. Never doubt that God is continuously leading each of us, uttering rhema truth into our ears, exhorting us to open our eyes and awaken. The Divine consciousness isn't a laser beam specific to unique individuals but never ending oceans of love that pour forth upon all of humanity. Haran, the place of glowing, was both a physical place as well as a metaphor for Jacob's inner self, the subconscious. The place of glowing is our spirit within where deep calls to deep.

Vs 11 tells us he came to a certain place and stayed the night. The KJV says he lighted or impinged upon a certain place. Impinge means to intrude upon an area ostensibly belonging to someone else. He has been led into a place or into a state of being that wasn't familiar to him. He stays there that night because the sun had set and the light had departed. He selected a stone for a pillow. Why? Because that is what is used to mark the headstone of the deceased. Jacob then laid down and slept, the term Jesus used most often to describe the dead.

This event is a description of mankind in death and resurrection to life once more. Notice the similarity to his grandfather Abraham's experience. Just as Jesus would one day tell his disciple "Where I go you cannot come", He puts Abram, who carries the Promised Seed to sleep, as Christ fulfills the everlasting covenant in Himself.

Gen 15:

12 "As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram; and lo, fear and great darkness fell upon him."

It is in this condition that Jacob, just as Abram, entered into the unconscious state of the world of dreams and visions where God so often speaks to man and where any and all things are possible. You don't think you can fly? Try telling that to your dreams.

Vs 12 tells us he dreamed of a ladder that reached from the earth to heaven with the messages (angels) of God ascending and descending upon it. This is a picture of the mind of Christ in man exalted to God even as His Word reaches the depths of our being, making a circuit between brain and spinal cord. It's the double helix of our DNA strands that is bathed in God's light of consciousness. The word ladder can also be translated as staircase. But what I find most interesting is that its root means a mound or to rise up. I believe what Jacob was seeing in his dream was a prophetic vision of the crucifixion with Christ on the cross set atop the hill of Golgotha. He being the new and living way through the veil, raised to heavenly places by exalting the fallen mindset to its original design. Father, Son and Spirit reconciling the world to themselves. Notice the angels ascended before they descended indicating their point of origin as being from earth to heaven making the incarnate Christ the source.

Vs 13 And Yahweh stood over him and once more repeated His covenant saying even as you lie in sleep I will give you this land and will make good my promise to you and your descendants. The land is symbolic of the heart and mind restored from the fallen Adamic mindset. We see in

John 1:

51 "And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

In both Genesis and John's gospel the mind of man is interacting with the Divine. The word angel in Hebrew is defined as messenger whereas in Greek it may mean messenger or "to" messenger, emphasizing the act rather than a being. In any event what was being messaged from the mind of Christ into the heavenly realm was His discourse with the Father while on the cross. And most especially the words "It is finished" marking the ultimate consummation of the ages.

Vs 14 Your descendants shall cover the entire earth and in your seed all the families of the earth will be blessed. What is the seed? Gal 3:16 "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He does not say unto seeds as of many but as of one; and to your Seed

who is Christ." The Seed is Christ for He is the promise of Gen 3:15 "And I will put enmity between your seed and her seed and He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise His heel."

The male sperm submits to the female egg in the womb. The word seed in Greek is sperma, therefore The Word of God submitted to mankind in the womb of a woman. "The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve..."

Vs 15 Behold "I am" is with you and will keep and protect you and bring you again to this land to do what I have spoken. That is the same promise as was made to Abraham, that their descendants would number as the sands of the seas and the stars of heaven. What an incredible promise concerning mankind. The new Webb Telescope has now peered far beyond what Hubble revealed and shown us that every galaxy consists of a trillion stars and that the universe contains at least a trillion galaxies. The numbers are mind boggling but this is what we do know at this point. Could man in his current condition be able to proliferate himself in such astonishing fashion. No, it would be impossible, therefore, when God says I will bring you again to this land it is the word shuwb and means to return to. It's the same as another in Greek, used by Jesus when speaking to Nicodemus in reference to how a man must be born "again" or restored to his original design in order to enter the Kingdom. I believe it will be as the new race of humanity in Christ that the galaxies will belong to man.

Vs 16 Jacob awoke from his sleep of death and said surely Yahweh is in this place and I did not know it. The Midrash, another Jewish translation reads, "The Lord was in this "I" that I did not know."

Very interesting statement especially for that time. First that Yahweh was in me and I had no idea. It echoes Paul's statement in Col 1:26 "the mystery which was hidden from ages and generations but now has been revealed to the saints

27 that is, Christ in you the hope of glory."

He refers to an "I" that he did not know. The fallen mindset of Adam is a distortion and a lie. It is separated from God and shrouded in darkness, thus we are blinded to the nature of God as well as to our true selves.

The prophet proclaimed in

Isa 25:

7 “On this mountain he will swallow up the burial shroud, the shroud over all the peoples, the veil covering all the nations.

8 He will swallow up death once and for all...”

As Jacob honestly stated, he did not know the self in which Yahweh resided because it was unrecognizable. The true heart had been encased in darkness. We do not realize how dark this darkness is until light begins to penetrate it. Nor do we know we've been asleep until we awake. We read in

Psa 17:15 "As for me I will see your face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness."

I will realize complete peace and rest as I awaken from my sleep face to face with You. These were prophetic statements likely from Jacob and later captured by David. True for them in their day and just as true in ours. For most of the world is still shrouded in sleep and completely unaware of the finished work of Christ in their lives.

What is it we come to know in this new life? Do we simply stroll along trying to do the right thing by being moral and ethical? That's what most of the church teaches. We're told to pray for grace in order to keep rules and laws. The law came in that sin might abound. How so? By exposing our loss of identity, our counterfeit existence. It thus became our tutor to reveal our true selves apart from the law. For no man is made righteous by the law but by faith working in love. Jesus Christ is author and finisher of our faith in and by the one law, the Law of Love.

God Himself describes His creation in Genesis 1:31 as being very good. The word not only implies good in the widest sense but also means beautiful and fair reflecting a dimension of life that births behavior. An existence where behavior is the result of who we are, not the cause. There is an undeniable desire within all of us that compels us to beauty, beauty perceived in the widest sense. It includes a desire to know it by experience, even to be

known by it. We read the words of the Beloved to the Shulamite,(the restored one) His future bride in

Song of Songs 7:

1 How graceful are your feet in sandals, O queenly maiden! Your rounded thighs are like jewels, the work of a master hand.

6 How fair and pleasant you are, O loved one, delectable (of delicate delights) maiden!

The Bride of Christ, just like any girl, needs to be told she is pretty. If you don't believe that you are just ask Him. He's promised to reveal it."He has given us beauty for ashes."in

John 16:

24 "Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full."That you of delicate delight may become your reality.

To grasp beauty in our implanted desires is fundamental to seeing God, for He who has created beauty must in Himself possess it in surpassing measure. We are created in His image and likeness, therefore, to behold Him is necessary.

2 Cor 3:

18 "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 Cor 3: MIRROR

18 "Now, we all, with new understanding, see ourselves in him as in a mirror. The days of window-shopping are over. In him every face is unveiled. In gazing with wonder at the likeness of Elohim displayed in human form, we suddenly realize that we are looking into a mirror, where every feature of their image, articulated in the Lord, is reflected within us. The Spirit of the Lord engineers this radical transformation; we are led from an inferior mind-set

to the revealed endorsement of our authentic identity. From the fading glory of our own achievement, to the discovery of the most amazing reality, we are God's glory!"

Colossians tells us that Jesus is the image of the invisible God. The word is icon meaning the exact resemblance or representation. Our words find their greatest fulfillment in symbolizing beauty and their greatest failure in claiming to have captured it. An icon, just like on our computer screens, are symbols of applications much larger than the icon itself. We are invited to step through the wardrobe into Narnia. Idols on the other hand claim to possess the thing they represent. When our words and concepts of God point beyond themselves they become iconic symbols of beauty always holding greater promise. Otherwise, when we believe our words have captured God they become static and a dead end. Idols are produced when we withdraw our gaze in the mirror too quickly, thinking we have captured its meaning. When we continue to behold, however, we discover a gaze focused far more intently upon us. This is the iconic experience of glimpsing that which is infinitely greater than anything we could capture. It is the mystery of the deep revealed in glory, God's opinion of intrinsic worth and value in us. Beauty is the manifestation of God's inner reality.

Consider the following:

Psalm 96:

9 "Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness! Tremble before Him, all the earth."

The description isn't simply one of observation from without but an experience that reveals that which is within. Always know that beauty emanates from within, even with God for He **is** it. The word includes the meaning of splendor and majesty. This beauty cannot be controlled or measured, only submitted to in awareness. The portrayal is one of internal immersion into a face to face encounter with God's radiant splendor. The word translated tremble is *chawl*. Its first meaning isn't to tremble in fear, the idea the translators thought appropriate, but to whirl in dance. Thus the verse should read,

"Behold the Lord Yahweh as you are immersed within the sanctity of His beauty, as you dance face to face!"

The same idea is presented in

Deut 8:

18 “You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth...”

The root of the word for wealth is, once again *chuwl*, to dance. Therefore it is Yahweh who has bestowed our ability to dance in the Perichoresis. For I am my beloved's and He is mine.

Just as Jacob's experience manifested in a dream of oneness with God, so does anyone's who desires to know that **God is Love**. Our experience may lead us to Haran that glows with ethereal light or to the burning bush captivating us in its radiance. Everyone's experience is unique. It will feel like a place that is unfamiliar, even dreamlike, but it is very real. Our uncompromised focus is captured as deep resonates within. It may be an agitation or roaring waves but it will produce an unmistakable sense of connection and transformation. Something like a mirror will appear revealing an unclear image. Allowing the likeness to sustain its gaze will ultimately reveal penetrating eyes filled with love. And as we perceive the reflection in those eyes of limitless depth, we behold ourselves, emanating a beauty formerly unimagined. On closer inspection it becomes undeniable. He speaks leaving no doubt. I am being conformed to the luminous image of Jesus Christ for as He is so am I. The deep reveals His glorious opinion of me. As its truth crystalizes in my heart I finally know that His life and mine are one, confirmed in the depths His beauty.

Amen