

## **Times of Uncertainty: Jacob 3/22/20**

Isolation. Quarantine. Loneliness. These are a requirement for millions of people in a number of states. These are a reality for countless others throughout our nation and the world. Isolation. Quarantine. Loneliness. These are not self-imposed, as if we did something to deserve them. Rather, they have been foisted on our citizens because of a pandemic that's infesting the nations.

That was not the case with Isaac's son, Jacob, who lived about 1900 years before Jesus' birth. His isolation was self-imposed. It came because he was a deceiving conniver. He bilked his older twin brother Esau out of his birthright as the firstborn. Then he duped his father into thinking he was Esau so that he could steal the blessing. This enraged Esau, who planned on murdering Jacob.

Now Jacob was forced to flee for his life. And this was not an easy thing for him. He was a momma's boy. He was a quiet shepherd who stayed among the tents. Now he was forced to leave his beloved mother behind. Now he was forced to leave the safety and security of the tents and flee into the open country. He would travel over 450 miles up north to his uncle Laban's—open to attacks from wild animals—open to attacks from bandits—open to the ravages of weather.

After traveling 50 miles, he came to a place called Luz. There he lay down with nothing but a rock for his pillow. No doubt feeling alone and afraid, he drifted off to sleep. In a dream he saw a stairway reaching up to heaven with the LORD God Almighty perched on top and angels ascending and descending on it. The LORD was assuring him that even in his isolation he was not alone. He would send his angels to attend him on all of his journeys. In addition, the LORD would go with him, protect him, and bring him back to the Promised Land where his descendants would grow into a great nation from whom the Savior of the world would be born.

The LORD fulfilled his promise. He went with him. His angels protected him. He blessed him with great wealth and riches. More importantly, he blessed him with twelve sons and a daughter. His sons would become the forefathers of the Twelve Tribes of Israel. The most important one was Judah, from whom the Savior, Jesus Christ, would be descended.

Isolation. Quarantine. Loneliness. These are a reality to many today. They may be or may become a reality for you. But remember: you are never alone. The angels of God encamp around you. Jesus said, "Surely I am with you always." In addition, you have brothers and sisters in the faith who sympathize with you, because they are enduring the same thing.

Our isolation and separation from each other will end in time. Thank God we're never isolated from him. Through the blood that he shed on the cross, his Son Jesus blotted out from God's sight the sin and iniquity that separated us from our God. Now we are at peace with God today and forever. Soon we will be worshipping him together, rejoicing in his house with our church family, rejoicing that one day we will live in the new heaven and the new earth, the home of righteousness, where nothing or no one will ever be able to separate us again.

Until then, with a phone call or through an e-mail or even snail mail, reach out to your brothers and sisters in Christ who you know are alone and would love to hear from you.

*After reading this devotion with your family, also take time to read with them Genesis chapters 27-28.*

Pastor Zuberbier