

GENESIS 46:1-4 BLESSED ASSURANCE

¹ So Israel set out with all that was his, and when he reached Beersheba, he offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac.

² And God spoke to Israel in a vision at night and said, "Jacob! Jacob!" "Here I am," he replied.

³ "I am God, the God of your father," he said. "Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. ⁴ I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again. And Joseph's own hand will close your eyes."

The last time Jacob left the promised land he was alone and in search of a wife. He was also escaping the danger of an angry older brother. In a vision at night in the wilderness, God said to him: ¹³"I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying...

¹⁵ I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." (Genesis 28:13,15). In spite of Esau and Laban, God was good to his word and Jacob returned and settled in the land.

Now once again necessity dictates that Jacob must leave the land. This time he has a large extended family and many possessions. In addition, he appears to be heading into rather than escaping from danger. Again God appears to him in a vision. He is told to go and promised that God will bring him back again to the land, as a great nation.

By seeing these visions at the beginning and end of Jacob's walk with the Lord, we can know that God has never left Jacob, and that God will always keep his promises.

Unlike the earlier episode, God is here responding to an inquiry. Jacob has started his journey but stops before he leaves the land to offer sacrifices to the Lord. Here is a foretaste of Jesus' statement to all believers:⁷ "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ⁸For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened" (Matthew 7:7-8). If you want assurance from God that you are on the right track according to his will. There is no substitute for asking him directly in prayer.

Father, as I struggle to know your will and the path of my obedience to you, inspire me to fall on my knees and pray. Remind me to seek assurance at its source – your throne. Amen.