

True Prosperity - Genesis 24:29-49

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 19 November 2023

Preacher: Pastor Jared Bromka

[0:00] Lord, we thank you for your word again this morning. We thank you for the reading of your word, Lord, that we are to give ourselves to exhortation, to doctrine, and to reading. Lord, that these things might edify us, that we might have true value in our life, Lord.

Not the value that this world places on things, but true value, which is eternal. And Lord, I think that scripture that says you'll hear a voice behind you saying, turn here to the right hand or turn to the left hand.

And Lord, I thank you that you are there speaking to us, that you are directing our lives. And Lord, I pray this morning, you would direct us in your word. You'd speak to each one of us, whatever word that is that we need to hear, you know.

And Lord, we wanna thank you ahead of time, that our relationship with you is based on love and grace. There is no condemnation. There's only forgiveness and acceptance. So Lord, let us lay aside every weight and the sin that does so easily beset us, so that we may run with patience the race that is set before us.

Jesus, we look to you, we thank you. In your name we pray, amen. Amen. Okay, so the breakdown kind of this chapter, you can see there's like two main parts. Laban comes to the well to meet the servant, and then we get a rehearsal again of the servant's story here.

[1:13] So if you wanted to put an outline to it, you have verse 29 to 33, Laban entertains. He entertains this servant. And then 34 to 49, the rest of this section that we're gonna look at is just the servant tells his story.

But then that's broken down within that story. There's kind of like five parts to it. He tells the reason for his errand. He tells the conditions of that errand. He tells about a prayer that's offered, a prayer that's answered.

And then ultimately at the end of this, there's a response that's required. We're gonna see his response, which we know is to bow down. But then he's expecting a response. The title for today's message is True Prosperity.

True Prosperity. The word prosperity in our dictionary, or at least in the 1812, 18 whatever it is, Webster Dictionary, which is the one I go to, because they haven't woke-ified all the words. Prosperity just means to advance or gain in anything good or desirable. To advance or gain in anything good or desirable. To kind of move forward in something good or desirable. So what is true prosperity?

[2:19] Well, Laban has just heard from Rebecca about this remarkable, you know, day at the office she had, I guess. Day at the well. I don't know what you would call a woman who goes and constantly draws at the well.

You know, my daughter works as a barista, so she'd be a wellista. And she just goes daily, and she's drawn from the well, and then something remarkable happens. And now Laban's heard about this.

And Rebecca had a brother, and his name was Laban. And Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well. Because why? Well, because of what he saw there in verse 30.

He saw the earrings and the bracelets upon his sister's hands. And he heard the words she spoke. And so he runs to the man, and he says to him, O blessed of the Lord.

This seems great, right? The guy is running out to accept Abraham's servant. Well, correct actions can very often hide incorrect motives. What looks like the right thing, what we're going to see behind it is this motive of Laban's, which doesn't quite line up with what his actions portray him to be doing.

[3 : 29] Rebecca the bride, she went to the well for what purpose? She went to serve. She went to get water for her house, right? Laban goes, picture of the world, to the well to be served.

And that is the big difference between Rebecca and her brother, between the church and the world. Because here we're going to see Laban, who represents the world, this part of the world, he's like, I like this. I really like this.

You see, Laban loved the gifts of God. Laban loved the people of God. And Laban loved all that God could do for Laban. But Laban did not love God.

And that's the big difference between him and Rebecca. His underlying motive, we're going to see, is gain, but gain for self, not for God.

In Luke 17, 33, actually we'll look at the one in Mark, Mark 8, 35, I like the one better. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it. But whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospels, the same shall save it.

[4 : 32] Gain, I mean, true prosperity, is gain without loss, right? Gain without loss. Laban, what he's trying to gain is going to cost him a lot.

He's going to lose a lot to gain the world, as we're told there. Whosoever will save his life shall lose it. Well, wait a minute. That's telling me I'm losing something. I thought that true gain isn't loss. Whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospels, the same shall find it. So if I have to lose my life, well, that's a loss. Well, no, it's not, because then you get to true gain. True gain is then what?

The same shall save it. That in losing your life and giving your life away, flinging your life away, literally is a text there, to without thought fling away your life. Don't think about what you're losing. Think about what you're gaining in Christ. And so Laban here, his only view is what he can gain for himself. He's not thinking about what he's losing in the process.

[5 : 35] And so he goes to this man and he says, come in thou blessed of the Lord. In verse 31, wherefore standeth thou without? Why are you standing here? Well, because as a type of the Holy Spirit, he's not gonna go anywhere that he's not invited.

The Holy Spirit only enters in by invitation. And this type of the Holy Spirit, son of his servant, he's standing here waiting to be invited. And Laban says to him, I mean, it just sounds like a car salesman, a used car salesman.

I'm sorry. You know, the way he says that, he says, come in thou blessed of the Lord. Why are you standing without? For I have prepared a place for you and the camels.

Come on. Flattery. What is flattery? Flattery is false praise bestowed for the purpose of gaining favor and influence or to accomplish some purpose.

Flattery. Flattery. False praise for the purpose of gaining. So flattery uses fellowship as a tool for gain.

[6 : 36] That's what we see him doing here. Then the Laban is saying, hey, come with me. Come, come into my house. Come spend time with me. You're blessed to the Lord.

I want to be part of this. Does he? He's just using that as a tool for gain, seeing what he can gain out of this. He's not being genuine. He says, you and your camels, I have prepared a place for you. And the man came into the house and he ungirded, he being Laban. And he, Laban, ungirded his camels and gave straw and provender for the camels and water to wash his feet and the men's feet that were with him.

This looks like a great thing. This is where the unnamed servant wants to be. This is where, if it's Eleazar, Abraham's servant, this is where he's supposed to be. He's been brought in. This is a good thing. And the Holy Spirit will enter into any house that will have him, right?

We're told in Acts chapter 10, Peter, in preaching one of his messages, verse 34 and 35, he'll tell us that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation, he that fears him and works righteousness is accepted with him.

[7 : 39] Sorry, this is when the Gentiles are converted and they get the baptism of the Holy Spirit upon them. He's like, God is no respecter of persons. The Holy Spirit doesn't take into consideration the things we do.

He'll go anywhere he's invited and into any house that he's asked to go into. And here Laban, it looks like, is caring for him. But Laban only cares about the things of himself, doesn't he?

You see, the world assumes that we, as God's people, that we're after the same things they are. He says, well, come on, I'm gonna feed you, I'm gonna clothe you, I'm gonna take care of you, because

that's what you're about, right?

And we saw that with Job. When Satan comes before Job, the two things he kind of throws at God are, well, Job loves you because you've blessed him materially, and he loves you because of his health. That's what he thinks the motivating principle is.

Job, like the man out of all the earth, however many people were there at that time, that God picks and says, this is the guy that I set before the enemy as an example of a man who loves God.

[8 : 42] Satan looks at that and goes, all I can see is the stuff that he's after. So obviously, the enemy has no clue what we really have in Christ. You see that in the world today, and unfortunately, you see it in the church, the materialism and the way the enemy has convinced us that those are things to go after.

But the world, they don't really care for us. It looks like it. You see, the world will care for you without caring about you, hoping to gain from you.

And this is Laban, and this is what we see in the world today. And unfortunately, there's some churches like that, that it seems like they care for us, but they're only hoping to gain. And maybe you've known people like that, like Laban.

Seems so generous. Seems so helpful. Seem like they want to use what they have for the things of God, but you eventually realize they're only involved as long as they get gain from it.

Whether it's own personal gain financially, or whether it's gain in relationships or whatever. They're looking to gain for themselves, and they're just using the things of the Lord or the people of the Lord.

[9 : 49] And I think that's Laban. We're going to see that much later when he eventually has his grandson, Jacob, working for him. Does he love Jacob and love his children? Sure. But he loves even more what they can do for him and the gain that he can get.

And so he puts all this before this servant and he says to him, and there was set meat, so he prepares a feast for him and he set it before him to eat.

And the servant waits now until all this has been done and then he speaks. And the servant then says, I will not eat until I have told my errand. And so Laban says, well, speak on.

Okay, go ahead. What do you got? Jesus. Jesus responded to the disciples when they're asking him about food.

And when he's at the well with the woman at the well, they bring food. And Jesus said unto them, my meat is to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work. In Matthew 26, 29, he says, I will not drink of the fruit of this vine until I drink it again anew in my father's kingdom.

[10 : 59] There's a work to be done that supersedes the need or desire of our fleshly needs. Jesus said, hey, the priority is not that I eat and satisfy myself.

The priority is that I do the will of the father and finish his work. And you can see that reflected here in the servant's attitude towards Laban and the feast he's presented him.

So the servant speaks. He said, I am Abraham's servant. Right away, he declares who he is. He doesn't give his name. He's like, well, I'm so-and-so. You know, you think of where the sons of Sceva went in to cast out the demons and the demon pounced upon them because they said, in the name of Paul who preaches Jesus, we command you to leave.

And they said, Paul we know, Jesus we know, but you we don't. And he stripped him naked and beat him and sent him out the door. And so we don't have any authority. We don't have any authority except what is given us.

But our authority is based on relationship. And our authority with the father, just like Abraham's servant here, his authority comes from his relationship to the father. And he declares that.

[12 : 10] He says, I'm Abraham's servant and I have come with a message. The Lord has blessed my master greatly and he has become great.

He's given him flocks and herds and silver and gold and men's servants and maid servants and camels and donkeys. And Sarah, my master's wife, bear a son to my master when she was old and unto him has he given all that he has.

And so here we see the reason for the errand. He's like, well, this is why I'm here. I'm here because I'm Abraham's servant, because God has blessed him and because there's a son. This is the reason. Laban, I think, stopped at the part where he heard flocks and herds and gold and men's servants and maid servants.

Rebecca's ears, I think, heard and Sarah, my master's wife, bear a son. And we're going to see, not this week, but next week, where the bride has to choose. And the bride chooses the son where Laban's interested in the stuff.

But true blessing is deeper than material. The outward blessing is simply what? It's simply to testify to the inward reality.

[13:19] We don't use the outward blessing to say, well, this man over here is rich, therefore he's blessed by God. Not at all. Not at all. But where there is outward blessing in a life that God is, you know, his true blessing is upon, the blessing of the spirit and the soul, all the outward blessing is doing is testifying to an inward reality.

The outward effect that we have in each other's lives. You should be a blessing in my life, I should be a blessing in your life, that only testifies to an inward reality. You can't keep that up for long. I was thinking of where Tozer or whoever used to say it, that the Holy Spirit left the early church in the book of Acts, 90% of all that was happening would stop.

Where if the Holy Spirit left the church in the modern church, then 90% would keep going. That wouldn't happen here because I wouldn't have anything to say to you. I'd have nothing.

I would have no idea what to say. You know, I rely on the Lord as I study His word and it's wonderful, it's amazing. There's nothing like miraculous happening in the sense that I can tell like, wow, those four verses glowed.

That must be the main point of the message. You know, that doesn't happen. It's just, you just kind of work through it. But I know God's at work because He's the one speaking. I can't come up with these things, it's Him.

[14:33] And I know too the fellowship we have, the koinonia, the friendships we have with one another, they're not based on our likability with one another. They're not based on the fact that we all like to go bowling or play pickleball, right?

It's in Christ. It's a unity in the Spirit. And so if the Holy Spirit left, man, this church wouldn't be anything. We all better go somewhere else, maybe take up pickleball and bowling because what do we have without the Holy Spirit?

So that outward blessing should simply testify to an inward reality. It shouldn't be hypocrisy. It shouldn't be trying to put on air. It shouldn't be like Laban. We show up on Sunday morning, hello, thou blessed of the Lord.

You know, look at these chairs I've set up for you. Come, partake in the name of the Lord. No, that's not what it is. We come in and we're just real with one another. It's like, hey, how you doing? Well, my feet hurt and you know, I didn't sleep well.

But God is good. Anyway, so that's what Laban hears. He hears of the stuff and I think Rebecca hears of the son. You see, they both heard the same thing, didn't they?

[15:37] They both heard the same words spoken to them. But the bride desires the son for himself, not for what he can do. And so John 3, 35 tells us, Jesus says, the father loves the son and has given all things into his hand.

My master had a son and unto him has he given all that he has in verse 36. There was the errand and here we have now the conditions for this errand, the reason and the conditions.

And my master made me swear saying, thou shall not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites in whose land I dwell. But thou shall go into my father's house to my kindred and to take a wife unto my son.

And so now he's relaying what he knows, which Rebecca didn't know. She didn't know this back story and so she's listening to this. And he's just saying, hey, I couldn't take one. I had to go. There was a specific requirement that needed to be met for the bride.

That my master, the father said to go and get a bride. Here are the specific requirements that must be met. And I was thinking about how there's specific requirements for us as the bride, right?

[16:47] As the church. I think that's reflected well in the parable Jesus says or tells in Matthew 22. He says, and when the king came in to see the guests who were at the wedding feast, he saw there a man which had not a wedding garment.

And he said unto him, friend, how came thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Essentially, you didn't get in, you didn't get prepared. You were invited, but you're totally unprepared and unqualified to be here.

Then said the king to the servants, bind him hand and foot and take him away and cast him into outer darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen, prepared, or meet the qualifications of that, which we know what that is, to believe, to receive.

And so for Rebecca, she also has these requirements, these specific requirements she has to meet and that the servant is looking for. And here we see again, he's rehearsing here God's sovereignty and man's responsibility because he says, well, okay, well, what if the woman does not follow? In verse 39, there. What if she doesn't want to come with me? And Abraham, then his master, said unto me, the Lord before whom I walk will send his angel with thee and prosper thy way and thou shalt take a wife from my son of my kindred and of my father's house.

[18:08] And so Abraham responds in complete assurance that the problem is not for lack of a bride. The problem will only come down to willingness. If she's willing to come because I know God's going to send my angel before you.

And here he uses that word now and prosper your way. We said prosperity in our language means to advance or gain in anything that's good or desirable.

Well, in the Hebrew here, it's kind of similar, but it has a couple other meanings. It means to rush or to advance or to bring forward. And so it's something that is brought forward in abundance, quickly and noticeably to rush, to advance and to bring forward.

He said, God is going to prosper your way. God will bring it to pass. When it happens, you're going to know it. It's going to happen in a big way and it's going to be something that is easily identifiable. And so he says, God is going to prosper you.

That word is actually used four times in this chapter. It's used in verse 40, verse 42, verse 21, verse 56. The first time we see, well, not the first time, in verse 40, we see there that what is he saying?

[19:17] It's a promise. The promise of God prospering you. The promise of prosperity. Verse 42, we're going to see again that word and it's the desire for prosperity.

The promise of and the desire for prosperity. And then in verse 56, we'll see the assurance of it. The assurance of it.

So right now in verse 40, there's the promise of prosperity. God will go before you and prosper your way. I promise you that. Then thou shalt be clear, verse 41, from this my oath when thou comes to my kindred.

And if they give not thee one, then thou shalt be clear of my oath. So God will provide a bride, but if she will not go, then you are free of your oath. For the bride must come willingly.

The bride cannot be coerced. The bride cannot be forced. The bride must come willingly. And so he says, he brings it up to the present moment with Laban's family, with Bethuel's family.

[20:18] And he says, And I came this day unto the well and said, O Lord God of my master Abraham, if now you do prosper my way, which I go. Behold, I stand by the well of water and it shall come to pass that when the virgin comes forth to draw water, and I say to her, give me, I pray, the little water of thy pitcher to drink.

And she say to me, both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels. Let the same be the woman whom the Lord has appointed out for my master's son. And you wonder if they all look at Rebecca at that moment and go, you watered his camels?

What were you thinking? You know? Or, you're crazy. Or maybe they're like, there she goes, watering people's camels again. You know? She just keeps, keeps coming, keeps giving and giving and giving.

We tell her, Rebecca, you got other things to do. She's off helping someone. But either way, he tells this story. And he says there in verse 42 that word prosper again where he says, he said, O Lord God, my master Abraham, if now thou do prosper my way, which I go, true prosperity is found only in the way God chooses.

He's like, God, if you prosper my way, the way that you choose, I know I'll find true prosperity. And he's very assured of this too because there's some differences in the actual event and how he relays it.

[21:35] And here he said, where he said that he stands by the well of water and it shall come to pass that when the virgin comes forth to draw water. He's like, well, when the one comes, I only need one and I know God, you're going to provide that one.

So in his prayer, there's such assurance of God answering his prayer. He's like, when that one comes, this is what, Lord, I want you to have her do so I know it's you. You know, it wasn't a, well, Lord, I know you want to do something, but I don't know what it is.

So whatever it is, may your will be done and help us to be kind of a part of it. We don't see prayers like that in scripture. We see very specific, very pointed prayers that expect a response from God. In my life, I know the issue isn't maybe the lack of being specific. It's the lack of expectation of receiving a very specific, specific, knowable, direct answer.

I think, well, God, you can answer if you want to. Instead of knowing, God has answered. I just don't know when I will hear that answer, but I know for sure that he has. And so here we see that the bride has been hand-selected by God.

[22 : 41] He said, God, the one you bring, I want to know what one that is. And then she said to him, drink. Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camel.

Let the same be the woman whom the Lord has appointed for my master's son. This word appointed, we've seen this word before. It means to be in the sunshine, to be clear, to manifest, to appear.

We saw that back in chapter 21, verse 25. And Abraham reproved Abimelech because of a well of water which Abraham, or Abimelech's servants had violently taken away from Abraham.

That word there, reproved, you know, he's bringing it into the light. It's the same idea, to appoint, to be in the sunshine, to be clear, to manifest, to appear. And so he says, Lord, the woman that you have made clear to me.

There's other appointments in scripture. There's an appointment for all men, once to die, and then the judgment. That's an appointment. That's an appointment that God will make very clear to every person.

[23 : 49] Nobody dies and doesn't know it. Everybody knows it. It's a real clear thing. And there's an appointment for us as well beyond death, right?

There's an appointment that we have to eternal life. But Paul tells us something we're not appointed to. He tells us in 1 Thessalonians 5, verse 9, he says, for God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

And so the servant here isn't expecting God to respond in a way, again, that he would know. And so he said, before I had done speaking in my heart, behold, Rebecca came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder, and she went down under the well and drew water, and I said unto her, let me drink, I pray thee.

And so now we see he had his prayer offered to the Lord, expecting an answer, and now the prayer is answered. So the servant met the bride again at the place where she came to be filled. Her desire was fulfilling, and that is where the servant met her.

And Jesus tells us in Matthew 5, blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Just as we as the bride have that same assurance that God will fill us.

[25 : 01] And the bride is assured of her source. She went down unto the well and drew water, and she made haste, and she drew water, enough for all of the camels. So she's assured of her source.

It's not going to run dry. Her source of living water. Just as Jesus said when he stood up on the last day, the great day of the feast, and he said, if any man thirst, let him come unto me. He that believes on me out of his innermost being shall flow forth rivers of living water.

Living water, a continuous source of water, not a stagnant source. It's a well. There's another scripture in the Old Testament kind of parallel to John 7, which I just quoted. Isaiah 58, verse 11, it says, And the Lord shall guide thee continually and satisfy thy soul in drought and make fat thy bones and thou shalt be like a watered garden and like a spring of water whose waters fail not.

It's the promise we have as well as the bride that our waters fail not. We always have a source. We can always be full. And then he relays how she spoke of Nahor, Abraham's brother.

And I asked her and said, Whose daughter art thou? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milca bear unto him. And I put the earring upon her face and the bracelets upon her hands.

[26 : 21] And so the bride also, the bride knows her heritage. She knows where she's from.

Romans 11, verse 23 and 24 says, And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in, speaking of Israel, the true vine.

For God is able to graft them in again. For if thou were cut off, you Gentiles, out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were it grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree, into the blessings of Israel, how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

Very applicable to today. Nowhere in there does it say that the original olive tree was plucked up, rooted out, and the church was put in its place, that you have replaced it. It says we are grafted in. So that, yes, we are the primary growth right now in the method by which God is bringing blessing into the world. We are the primary growth that is grafted in. But he says, how much more, how much more a natural fit is it going to be when Israel is grafted in?

You know when Israel is grafted in? Well, it starts in the seven-year tribulation when 144,000 Jews are grafted in to the vine and know who their Messiah is. And then God will miraculously and supernaturally protect them and they will go out and preach the gospel.

[27 : 41] I mean, imagine preaching the gospel knowing that no matter how direct you are in whatever situation you're in, nobody's going to touch you. They're going to cover a lot of ground. The gospel is going to go forth in the tribulation.

And then they will be grafted in as we go into the millennium, the Jews then. And at that time, as we saw in typology, Sarah, the spouse, and Rebecca, the bride, will then dwell together with the son of promise in the millennium.

But we know our heritage too. Our heritage, salvation, Jesus said, is of the Jews. And that's what it is. And they are God's people, they are our brethren, and they are to be loved.

God's way and will and word lead to worship. Because here we see the man bows down in verse 48. He bows down before the Lord. He's just rehearsed that God led him in the way.

He sought God's will and he knew God's word that was spoken to him by the Father. And that leads him to worship. It leads him to bow down, which is the word, the meaning for worship.

[28 : 47] All men have the opportunity to go the right way, but not all choose it. He's talking, speaking of the Lord after he bows down, blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son.

All men have opportunity to go in the right way, but they must first choose to put themselves in God's way, right? He said, the Lord led me in the right way. Well, we saw last time how he said, I being in the way the Lord led me, right?

So he had to put himself in God's way that he might then be led forth in God's way. And now if you will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me.

And if not, tell me that I may turn to the right hand or to the left. So the servant has just rehearsed again what took place. We saw what took place.

Last time, as he rehearses it again, we saw a few more items that he kind of brought out regarding his situation with the Lord, with Abraham, and with the bride.

[29 : 57] And now he's kind of putting this forth before Laban and Bethuel. We're going to see next week that it's Laban and Bethuel who answer. It seems to be Laban is kind of running the house here. His father, Bethuel, is still there, but Laban kind of has charge at this point.

But the servant here is expecting an answer. He said, tell me. You've heard, you've seen, and you've had rehearsed to you all that God has done.

Now what is your choice? See, the answer being given to the servant wasn't being given to him, was it? He's just a representation of Abraham. The answer is being given to the father.

And so when the unnamed servant puts forth his request for an answer, it's not if they say no, well, just, who's this guy, right? And it's no different with us.

That we are ambassadors for Christ as though Christ did in our stead beseech you be reconciled to God. So when people say no to us or reject us, well, it's like Jesus said.

[30 : 55] Well, they're rejecting me. They're not rejecting you. They're saying no to the father. They just think that because, well, I'm actually dealing with him face to face. But what does the servant do?

He gave every credential and all authority to show who he is and what he's there for. You can't deny that. You can reject it, but you can't deny that.

In Deuteronomy, chapter 30, verse 19 and 20, Moses says this. He says, I call heaven and earth to record this day against you that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing.

Therefore, choose life that both you and your seed may live, that thou mayest love the Lord thy God and that thou mayest obey his voice, that thou mayest cleave unto him, for he is your life and the length of your days, that you may dwell in the land which the Lord swear unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.

I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Choose life. Choose it. Moses, well, I'm going to reject Moses, right?

[32 : 07] No, you're rejecting God. Moses is just the one who's bringing the message, isn't he? The unnamed servant, he's a very faithful messenger. What did he do?

They couldn't deny this because he was a faithful messenger and it put them at a point of decision because he told them his master was great. He told them his master's son was the heir.

He sought one who would leave her old home and live with the master's son and then lastly, he pressed them for a reply. He didn't just leave it. He's like, oh well.

You know, that, I found myself, that's a hard part for me to press someone for a reply. Even these various funerals I've been able to do, had the privilege of doing for people who don't have a pastor or are connected with a church, I get to go and do funerals.

There needs to be a point of decision, right? It's one thing to offer someone hope, offer someone life, but if you don't choose it, then it doesn't mean anything.

[33 : 12] Then it's just an offer. Jesus tells us in Luke, chapter eight, he says, no man when he lights a candle, covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed but sets it on a candlestick.

Nobody for this express purpose of covering a candle lights a candle, right? That makes no sense. Like we think, yes, we don't want to hide our light, but the point he's making here is you do not light a candle specifically to cover a candle.

It makes no sense. You don't do that. So why would you light a candle? That they which enter in may see the light. For nothing is secret that shall not be made manifest, neither anything hid that shall not be known and come abroad.

So what's he saying there? He's saying, well, just like you're not going to light a candle for the express purpose of hiding it, that the things that I'm telling you, I don't want you to just squirrel them away. They're for the purpose of making them known.

They're going to be made known. Anything that's hid is going to be made manifest. It will come forth abroad. In no way, shape, or form is what God gives us meant to be hidden.

[34 : 16] It's meant to bring about a decision. And so as he asks them, he says, tell me, I want to know.

Is my way going to be prosperous? Is my way not going to be prosperous? Am I going to advance forward in this or am I going to go home in this? Remember, prosperity, to advance or gain in anything good or desirable.

True prosperity, it's found only in the way God chooses. This man has walked in the way God chose and now he's wondering, is God going to continue to prosper his way?

And we'll see next week he's going to do that, of course. But Laban has a choice, just as Rebecca has a choice. Which way are they going to go? What are they going to choose? Are you going to choose to be prosperous as God views prosperity or prosperous as the world views prosperity?

True prosperity, what is true prosperity? prosperity? Well, first, true prosperity is of the soul. 3 John, John the Apostle, writes in chapter 1, verse 2, Beloved, I wish above all things that you may prosper and be in health even as thy soul prospers.

[35 : 29] For I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in you even as you walk in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth. He says, Beloved, I wish above all things that you may prosper, that you be in health.

Okay, God wants me to be prosperous and healthy. Yes. But what does he link it to? Even as thy soul prospers. And then he goes on to talk about how they're walking in the truth. So true prosperity starts in the soul.

It's walking in truth. It's feeding ourself on the truth. And then he says, I want you to prosper. Yes, outwardly and in your health, but only so far in the way that your soul does. Well, guess what? If your soul is prospering in God's word and God's will and God's way, what are you not going to desire?

I'm not going to be chasing the things of this world. I'm not going to be chasing prosperity like this world does. I'm going to have another value system. We see over and over through scripture.

We've seen it throughout history, the great men and women of history who have had horrible health and suffering and yet they've prospered in their soul.

So true prosperity is of the soul. True prosperity is found in Christ. Philippians 4 verses 12 and 13. I know both how to be abased and I know how to abound, says Paul.

[36 : 44] Everywhere and all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me. True prosperity is of the soul and true prosperity is found in Christ.

Whether I'm up, whether I'm down, hey, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. True prosperity is not material. It's not something that you're going to find in this world.

1 Peter 1 verses 3 and 4. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ which according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled that fades not away reserved in heaven for you.

We know the material is going to fade because that which is temporal fades. True prosperity is not material. It's an inheritance that's incorruptible, undefiled, and that fades not away because of our what?

Relationship. True prosperity is relationship-based. Romans 8 verses 16 through 18. The spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God and if children, if we have that relationship, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

[38 : 01] That sounds great. That sounds like a lot of prosperity. I mean, I don't know if you're heir to any great fortune. I'm not. If you'd like to pencil me in, go ahead.

But we are heirs of God. So, that means we are entitled to all that is his is ours. You think, well, that's some fantastic prosperity.

Well, joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

And there's that scripture. So, true prosperity is based on our relationship with God. So, it's not about whether I'm super healthy or having a good time because he says we're suffering, that our suffering here is going to result in prosperity somewhere else.

That the hard times we have here in our relationship with God as we go through them in God's way and God's will, they can result in amazing prosperity somewhere else.

[39 : 07] Not in this world, in this life. Now, you may experience that prosperity of the soul, right? But the world may look at that and go, well, that's a lot of suffering. Yeah, but I'm prospering in a way you don't even know of.

So, true prosperity, it's of the soul, it's found in Christ, it's not material, and it's relationship-based. And so, as we close, just as the unnamed servant here says to Laban and Bethuel and his whole house and Rebecca, he says, listen, whatever you're going to do, tell me.

I need to know. Are you going to respond to my master? Are you going to respond to the offer that my father is making? What are you going to respond to? Are you going to respond to my master, to his call, to his son?

Eh, or are you going to respond to this stuff? You know, we're going to see next week Laban is quite happy to receive all that he can, but he's not willing to go anywhere. We're going to see that eventually with Jacob.

He's going to say, no, Jacob, I want you here. Remember, we're going to see next week, he's going to try and get Rebecca to stay, but it's not going to work. Eventually, he's going to have Jacob there, and he's going to convince him to stay, and to stay, and to stay, and to stay, and as long as Jacob's there, Laban's receiving blessing.

[40 : 22] Laban's quite happy to receive all the blessing he can get, but he's not willing to go, and he's also not willing to send on ahead, like we have the opportunity to. We have an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, that fades not away and is reserved in heaven for us.

We also have the opportunity, as we were told in Romans, to recognize that our present sufferings, the things we go through in this world, and they can't be compared to what it's building up in the life to come.

So true prosperity is found in God's way and God's will. I'm going to close in prayer, and then let's just stand and worship the Lord, and we'll just go out with a couple songs, and Kitty will pray us out

after.

So Father, thank you so much for just this picture in your scripture, Lord. The word of God made flesh and dwelt among us was Jesus. And then going back to heaven and sending the Holy Spirit, the unnamed servant, to reveal to us such amazing truths in your word, Lord.

Lord, we could come back next week and study the same chapter and we'd see all new stuff. We could come back the next week and study the same chapter and see all new stuff. Because Lord, there's no end to the source we have to draw from.

[41 : 36] And Lord, please keep us from going to any other source. And Lord, help us also not to expect to see in this world the riches that are stored up for us in the next world. Do we really want to spend it all now?

I don't. I don't want to do that. I want to get to heaven and find that it's there, that when I look back on this life and realize, like Paul said, it's but a vapor. It's just a dream and then I wake up into the reality of life with you.

How much better, Lord, to have everything that's been prepared for us and stored away for us to experience it with you for all of eternity than to try and figure out a way to get some of it now.

Lord, I thank you that you have given us these great and precious, excuse me, promises. But Lord, you've also asked us to choose. You said, this requires a choice.

I've rehearsed everything for you of what I've done on your behalf. Now you've got to choose. And so, Lord, I pray that we would see past the temporal and see past the material and we would see the true prosperity, that which truly advances us forward.

[42 : 44] It's a relationship with you. Fill us with your spirit. And Lord, as we worship you now, may we go out, Lord, just singing our praises to you because you have done great things for us.

In Jesus' name, amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[46 : 34] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[51 : 34] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[56 : 34] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[61 : 04] Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[65 : 04] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[70 : 04] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen.
[75 : 04] Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen.
Amen.