

A New Perception

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[0 : 00] A pastor's reflections, a new perception. Genesis 33, 20. And he erected there an altar and called it El Elohi Israel, God the God of Israel.

John 4, 24. God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. 1 Corinthians 2, 14 and 16.

But the natural man receives not the things of the spirit of God. For they are foolishness unto him. Neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him?

But we have the mind of Christ. Jacob has finally returned to the promised land. Having spent twenty years absent in Haran, and then a short time dwelling just outside the land at Sukkoth, Jacob now crosses the Jordan River with his family, and returns back into the land that God had promised his grandfather Abraham.

As Jacob settles his family near the city of Shechem, he does a remarkable thing. He worships the Lord there by building his first altar. Jacob worships God, the God of Israel.

[1 : 19] But wait a minute. Is Jacob Jacob, or is he Israel? Is God the God of Jacob, as well as of Israel? How can a Jacob worship the God of Israel?

Matthew 22, 29 and 32. Jesus answered and said unto them, You do err, knowing not the scriptures, nor the power of God.

I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. At the brook Jabbok, Jacob was given a new name and a new nature.

In that moment, Jacob gained a spiritual capacity that he had never before possessed. Jacob, as Israel, had come face to face with God and had been forever changed.

He now had a new relationship with God that allowed him to know God and interact with God on a whole new level, as a prince with God.

[2 : 23] But Jacob was also still Jacob. What Jacob had gained in Israel was not perfection before God, but perfect peace with God.

As Israel, a prince with God, Jacob's relationship was no longer about what God could do for Jacob, but about who God was to Jacob.

Jacob, as Israel, had been given spiritual eyes to know and worship God for who God was, the God of Israel. In Christ, we now find ourselves in just as unique a situation as Jacob.

We have been given spiritual standing and spiritual eyes by which we can know and see God. The result of that is a life at perfect peace with God, even though those lives are not perfect themselves. It is not about perfection, but perception. Only those who have been made new, like Jacob, can have spiritual eyes to perceive God.

[3 : 31] And only those who have spiritual eyes can then turn those eyes to God in worship. Today, let's not get hung up by the fact that Israel is still Jacob, but let's instead worship God because Jacob has been made new in Israel.

Father, so often I get discouraged by my old nature and its tendencies. Instead of being encouraged that I have a new nature and new tendencies.

Help me today to not let the Jacob tendencies in me keep me back from worshiping you as Israel, a prince with God. Thank you that you are God of both my Jacob and my Israel.

Amen.