



## THE ORCHARD

### **Series: Finding Peace in the Struggles We Face**

Title: A Photo Gallery of God's Faithful Presence

Passage: Genesis 35:1-29

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#### **Outline:**

1. Jacob's Physical Journey from Schechem to Hebron
2. Jacob's Spiritual Journey: Back to Bethel
3. Jacob's God:
  - a. A God who speaks to his people.
  - b. A God who dwells with his people.
  - c. A God who blesses his people.

#### **Questions:**

1. Based on our study of the life of Jacob over the past 10 weeks, identify some of the attractive and unattractive aspects of Jacob's personality.
2. Why do you think Jacob bargains with God at Bethel in Genesis 28:20-21? What does this suggest about his spiritual condition? Have you ever tried to bargain with God? How did it turn out?
3. What are some of the ways that God changed Jacob during the twenty years that he was in Paddan-aram living with his father-in-law Laban? How does God use hardship and suffering to help us mature as Christian disciples? Can you think of a personal example where this was the case?
4. Reflect on Tim Keller's quotation below. Do you agree with him? How might his insight help you face your struggles today?

"The temptation for those who suffer is to assume that because we can't think of any good purposes God may have for our suffering, there can't be any. If you can't imagine a God infinitely wiser and more loving than you, then you won't be able to trust him and grow in grace. The most basic wisdom is to trust the character of God, who has suffered and died in Jesus Christ for you and who will not withhold anything necessary for your ultimate joy." (Keller, *God's Wisdom for Navigating Life*, p. 201)
5. What are some forms of idolatry that are especially prevalent in Lake County, Illinois in 2025? How can Christians battle these idolatries?
6. The sermon highlighted the fact that Jacob's God speaks to his people; dwells with his people; and blesses his people. Which aspect of God's relationship with Jacob did you find most encouraging? Why?
7. Describe a time when you were struggling and experienced peace by trusting and worshiping God.