

## NAVIGATING TOWARD OUR DESTINY - Part III Navigating Changes

**Text: Genesis 28-33**

**Key Word: Change**

**Key Thought: It's Vital to Navigate the Changes That Enter into Our Lives**

A navigational accident took place on Thursday, June 19, 2015 at 9:15 p.m. at the Eisenhower lock on the St. Lawrence Seaway in Massena, New York near the Canadian border just a short distance from our home in Cornwall, ON. The luxury cruise ship named the Saint Laurent was carrying about 192 French and Swiss passengers along with 82 crew members when it struck a cement pier while trying to navigate into the lock.

The Saint Laurent was on its way from Montreal to Toronto. Rescue workers used ladders, ropes and pulleys to remove the injured to land because the ship was not near a pier. The rest of the passengers and their luggage were removed by crane Friday after spending almost a day on the vessel while it was lodged in the lock. Twenty-seven injured passengers and three injured crew members had to be removed from the ship with the help of fire officials. Two people were seriously hurt, while the rest had minor injuries. They were all treated at the Massena Memorial hospital. All the passengers were removed safely and transported by bus back to Montreal, PC.

The lavish trip ended suddenly. The impact with the wall caused a gash in the boat's hull near the bow making it unworthy to sail with passengers. Operators had to close the doors of the lock and lower the water in the lock to prevent the ship from taking on water.

Other freighters had to wait to pass through the locks in Massena while Seaway traffic was suspended until the cruise ship was moved out of the way. At least 17 vessels were delayed due to the closure. They were allowed entry beginning around 4:00 P.M. on Saturday. No pollution was detected as a result of the collision and there was no significant damage to the lock infrastructure, the development corporation said Saturday.

Divers conducted a survey of the vessel and determined that the damage was to the bow of the vessel and that the vessel could sail under its own power. By Sunday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> the ship (without passengers) carefully made its way back to Quebec City for repairs. The company filed for bankruptcy.

This is a vivid illustration of what can take place when we encounter a change in our life - especially when the options we have begin to narrow quickly. It can happen at any age. Health and finances seem to top the list of problems but we can also have broken relationships, important decisions to make, disasters. Many sports celebrities have had their career ended by making a wrong split second decision. Change is a necessary standard of life. Not every change is

bad for us.

### **I. ENTER CAREFULLY (Genesis 28)**

### **II. ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS (Genesis 29)**

### **III. SLOW DOWN (Genesis 33:13,14)**

### **I. ENTER CAREFULLY (Genesis 28)**

There are many stories in the Bible that I could turn to in order to express this truth. The one I've chosen today walks us through the separation and restoration of Jacob and Esau. Jacob had stolen his older brother's birthright and blessing with the conniving help of their mother Rebecca. Their father Isaac was not able to change the blessing he thought he was passing on to his eldest son.

Jacob fled because he was told by his mother that Esau was going to kill him. She told Jacob to go to the land of Paddan Aram which was located in Northwest Mesopotamia and find her father Bethuel and her brother Laban. It was during this trip that he had a dream and God spoke to Jacob.

*"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.  
14. Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring.  
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*

You would think after hearing the words like this that he wouldn't have a care in the world. After all God was gonna take care of everything. Jacob was not only going to be blessed beyond measure but also eventually return to the land of his forefathers with God's help.

What would you do if God met you and spoke these kinds of words into your life? Would you be out checking the most expensive home and cars? Would you quit your job? Would you enter to be a contestant on The Bachelor to get the best wife you could ever get? Would you buy a one-way ticket to an exotic island? It's during these times that we need to be as careful as can be. **What did Jacob do?**



## I. ENTER CAREFULLY (Genesis 28) (Contd.)

*“Then Jacob made a vow, saying, “If God will be with me and will watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear*

*21. so that I return safely to my father’s household, then the Lord will be my God*

*22. and this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God’s house, and of all that you give me I will give you a tenth.”*

*Genesis 28:20-22*

There are two very important points that Jacob made in this vow. First, he said that the Lord would be his God. Secondly he said that he would give a 10<sup>th</sup> of all God blessed him with as a tithe to God’s house which will be built.

## II. INQUIRE WISELY (Genesis 29-32)

This became the time when Jacob was going to really mature. God helped him to navigate his way right up to the specific watering well that was used by his mother’s family.

*“As soon as Laban heard the news about Jacob, his sister’s son, he hurried to meet him. He embraced him and kissed him and brought him to his home, and there Jacob told him all these things.*

*14 Then Laban said to him, “You are my own flesh and blood.”*

*Genesis 29:13,14*

I’m sure he didn’t tell him everything about what had happened. I don’t believe he would have told Laban about the fact that he was fleeing from his brother because he stalled his birthright and blessing. Jacob was about to meet his match. Laban, his uncle, was the kind of person who was on an even keel when it came to deception.

He had a discussion with Laban and he thought they’d agreed that if he worked for seven years he would get Rachel as his wife. When the seven years ended, Laban revealed his deception. The time of **celebration** ended with the night of **consummation** and then with a morning of **confrontation**. As the night came Leah was sent to the tent instead of Rachel. The **deceptor** had been **deceived**.

## II. INQUIRE WISELY (Genesis 29-32) (Contd.)

What goes around comes around.

*Laban replied, "It is not our custom here to give the younger daughter in marriage before the older one. 27. Finish this daughter's bridal week; then we will give you the younger one also, in return for another seven years of work."*

*Genesis 29: 26,27*

Jacob had to go through the motion of being the husband of Leah not just for one week or the **seven days** of the bridal celebration, but he also had to work for the next **seven years** before he could have Rachel as his wife as well.

**Seven** in the Bible is the number of God's **completeness** but so is the number **ten**. So it took two times the number of completeness in two different ways to lead up to a complete change in the life of Jacob.

*"It was like this for the twenty years I was in your household. I worked for you fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your flocks, and you changed my wages ten times."*

*Genesis 31:41*

Just before entering the final stage of a lifelong change, it was God's time to ask a question in order to magnify the vital character change was about to take place.

*The man asked him, "What is your name?"  
"Jacob, (supplanter, heel, undermines)" he answered.  
28 Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but **Israel**, ("struggles with God")  
because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome."*

*Genesis 32:28*

God knows the right questions to ask to exemplify the change He wishes to make in our life.

### III. MANOEUVRE SLOWLY (Genesis 33)

This is another time that depending upon our personality we may attempt to run ahead of God.

The captain of the Saint Laurent cruise ship needed to slow down as he was navigating the change through the Eisenhower lock. It was a time of narrowing his channel and also his ship was about to be elevated. These are always a challenging times in our lives. The same principle applies when we are about to be abased or brought down.

After the awkward greetings were completed, beginning with Joseph bowing before his brother resolve seven times and ending with Rachel and Joseph bowing a decision had to be made. Esau wanted his brother Jacob to come and live with him and go at his speed. Jacob knew better.

*“But Jacob said to him, “My lord knows that the children are tender and that I must care for the ewes and cows that are nursing their young. If they are driven hard just one day, all the animals will die.*

*14. So let my lord go on ahead of his servant, while I move along slowly at the pace of the flocks and herds before me and the pace of the children, until I come to my lord in Seir.”*

*Genesis 33:13,14*

The Bible shows us an interesting change that happened after their meeting.

*So that day Esau started on his way back to Seir. 17 Jacob, however, went to Sukkoth, where he built a place for himself and made shelters for his livestock. That is why the place is called Sukkoth.”*

*Genesis 33:16,17*

Esau headed back south to Seir while Israel headed for a short trip directly west to Sukkoth. He had already travelled a long way from Haran so it was time to settle down and be considerate fact that there was more to think of then just himself. He now had wives and servants and children and flocks and herds. This doesn't end the changes in his life but it does end this sermon.

**Manoeuvring is a controlled change in movement or direction. Changes are inevitable and how we navigate them will determine our destiny.** There is no time for putting off a good decision.

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Date: March 12/17

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: Change My Heart - C

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**II. INQUIRE WISELY (Genesis 29-32)** - *Genesis 29:13,14; Genesis 29: 26,27; Genesis 31:41; Genesis 32:28*

**III. MANOEUEVER SLOWLY (Genesis 33)** - *Genesis 33:13,14; Genesis 33:16,17*