It is time for Revival!

**Genesis 45:26-28**
*And told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not. 27 And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived: 28 And Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die.*

**Psalms 27:13**
*I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.*

**The Somme Battle**
At 7.30am on Saturday July 1st 1916
- the ‘flower of Britain’s youth’ rose from the trenches
  - along an eighteen mile stretch of the Western Front
  - in the final ‘push’ of the ‘war to end all wars’.
- They had flocked to the recruiting offices in their thousands,
  - most eager to contribute to the war effort.
- They arose from the trenches that day
  - convinced that they would carry the day,
  - that good would triumph over evil.
- By the time that night fell on that fateful July day in 1916
  - nearly 60,000 British soldiers,
  - each a son, a father, a loved one,
  - lay dead and wounded,
  - near a small unassuming river
  - whose name would live in infamy - the River Somme.
- The battle would rage on until late November 1916.
  - During those terrible 142 bloody days
  - more than one million two hundred thousand soldiers
  - from all sides would be killed or wounded.
- According to military historian John Keegan
  - this single day in British history
  - marked the end of an age of vital optimism
  - in the British life that has never been recovered.
- He defines vital optimism
  - as that quality of spirit
  - where there is a persuasion *that the best is yet to be.*
- British society had, for more than 100 years
  - enjoyed an unbridled optimism
  - that continued to believe that the best was still ahead.
- They were anchored by that bedrock belief
  - that, no matter how bad today may be,
• there will always be a better tomorrow.
  • On July 1st of 1916 that all came to an end.
    o Overnight, their vital optimism was lost
      • and it was never recovered.
  • One terrible battle with catastrophic losses
    o caused a cultural momentum that was centuries in the making
    o to come to a screeching halt.
  • In a single moment in history
    o the vital optimism of a nation died
      • to never be revived again.
  • It seems almost too incredible to be true,
    o but time has born out the truth of Keegan’s observation.
      • Hope was lost on that mid-summer’s day.
        • Dreams were forever abandoned.
    o A people who had lived a life based on great expectations
      • would now gravitate towards a life measured by mediocrity
        • and built on little more than obligation.
  • This is exactly where we find Jacob...

Jacob
Jacob is nearing the end of his life.
• It has been an epic journey.
  o Many great and miraculous things have occurred
    • during the life of Jacob.
• He has lived a full and interesting life.
  o He has woken in the middle of the night
    • to find the presence of the Lord hovering over him
      • at a place called Bethel.
  o He has wrestled with God all night
    • at a place called Peniel.
  o He has met with God,
    • Been blessed by God
    • And inherited the promised blessing of Abraham from God.
• He has earned the hand of his beloved Rachel after 14 years of Labor.
  o He has stood on the mountaintop,
    • full of hope and anticipation
  o And he has walked through the low valley
    • where grief was his constant companion.
• If you visit him early in his life
  o you find a young man with a vital optimism about him.
    • The unbridled confidence of youth.
      • He’s a young man that won’t be denied
      • He won’t take no for an answer...
    • He knows what he wants in life
      • and he is bound and determined to get it
Its Time For Revival

o – one way or another!

• This is the Jacob that emerged second from his mother’s womb
  o Even then he was struggling to be first.
    ▪ His little hand was clenched to his brother’s ankle
    • It was almost as if he already knew
      o that the firstborn is the child of blessing.

• He’s the young man that will stop at nothing to achieve his dream.
  o He’ll be blessed of God, no matter what it costs him.

• You’ll find him purchasing a birthright with a bowl of beans.
  o And stealing a blessing by imitating his brother.
    ▪ He knows what he wants
      • and nothing is going to stop him from getting it.

• The world was his,
  o ripe for the taking!
    ▪ He was the master of his own destiny
      • and he was determined to make a life for himself.

• If you could have visited him in those early years
  o you would have seen a bright-eyed young man
    ▪ intoxicated with the grand potential of his life.
      • Reaching, ever reaching, for more and better things.
        o A young man with a dream,
        o A young man with a promise,
        o A young man determined to wrestle success from the grasp of life.

But in Genesis Chapter 45 we find an entirely different man.

• The fire no longer burns in his eyes.
  o His grand dreams and expectations
    ▪ are hollow memories of what could have been.

• Life has had its way with him.
  o His beloved bride is dead,
    ▪ and her firstborn is supposed
      • to have been devoured by a wild beasts.
  o The vital optimism of his youth
    ▪ has faded into a jaded cynicism.
  o He’s a man who feels as if
    ▪ he’s known more defeats than victories,
    ▪ He’s seen more trials than triumphs.
      • And somewhere along the way he’s traded faith for fear.

• There’s more death in him than life.
  o He takes more pleasure in the past than the future.
    ▪ His hopes have been buried,
    ▪ His dreams have been snatched away from him,
      • The fire has burned low

• He’s only a hollow shell today of the man he once was.
Within the context of our text,
- Famine has settled upon all the land
  - and this great Patriarch finds himself
  - unable to provide for his family.
- News comes that there is grain to be had in Egypt
  - so he sends his sons
  - to see if they can find a source
  - of sustenance for the family
  - during this great famine.
- But nothing comes easy for Jacob anymore,
  - The sons return home with a sampling of precious grain
    - but one of their brothers is imprisoned in Egypt.
  - And to make matters worse,
    - there will be no more grain
      - unless Benjamin returns to Egypt with them.
  - You can just see the tremor that runs through Jacob’s soul.
    - No! Not Benjamin,
      - the last remaining son of his beloved Rachel.
        - There’s no way he’s going to let him go.
- So Jacob refuses,
  - but as time passes the famine worsens
    - and the small supply of grain from Egypt is exhausted
  - Finally a broken and desolate Jacob
    - sends his beloved Benjamin to Egypt.
  - You can just imagine the fear that gripped his heart,
    - the anguish that accompanied him day by day
  - As he awaited news of the death
    - of yet another of his precious sons.
  - With despair he greeted each day
    - awaiting reports of his sons...
      - But day upon day,
        - no news was assumed to be the worst of news
          - as, in nervous expectation, Jacob waited.
- Then finally one day there was the thunder of hooves
  - And the ecstatic voices of his sons
    - as they raced to be the first to share
      - the good news with their Dad.
  - With excitement and jubilation
    - they burst in upon their father,
  - No doubt their excitement was perceived as panic
    - And Jacob stilled his heart for the worst of news...
- “Joseph is yet alive!” They cried!
  - The dreamer isn’t Dead!
    - He is governor over all the land of Egypt.
      - God has preserved him.
• In that great moment of revelation
  o as hope tried to break in on despair,
    ▪ Jacob’s heart fainted,
    • for he believed them not

God Isn’t Done With You!
There are some under the sound of my voice that started your journey with a vital optimism.
• You believed with every fiber of your being
  o that you were embarking upon the will of God
    ▪ and nothing could stand in your way.
    • You were determined to see your dreams realized,
    • To reach your world with the glorious revelation of Jesus.
      o To accomplish great things
      o To walk in heavenly places,
  o The promises of God were more than just words to you
    ▪ They were your destiny, your future!
• Nothing could persuade you to be turned aside,
  o With a fierce determination you set out
    ▪ to turn your world upside down
    ▪ for the glory of the name of Jesus.
• If we could visit you only a few years ago
  o we would find a younger man or woman
    ▪ with a fire burning in their eyes.
  o We would find a drive, a desire and unbridled passion
    ▪ for the things of God
    ▪ and the promises of God.
  o We would find men who wrestled with God
    ▪ through long nights
  o We would find women who walked with God
    ▪ in the cool of the day
    ▪ through the garden of his delight.
• If we could journey down the distant path of your life
  o We would find those mountaintop moments
    ▪ when you stood in victory
    ▪ rejoicing in the glory of the Lord
  o And we would find you in those times
    ▪ when you walked through the valley of defeat,
      • when faith was your constant companion,
        o guiding you back to higher ground.
• Tonight we could celebrate the many things that God has done,
  o And we could proclaim the great victories that have already been won.
    ▪ But I’ve come to tell you tonight
      • that God isn’t done with you yet.
Its Time For Revival

There are still mountains to be climbed,
There are still battles to be won and
There are still victories to be savored.

- There are some of you that sit in this place tonight
  - and the fire has gone out in your eyes.
    - Life has happened to you.
      - There seem to have been more trials than triumphs,
      - More tragedies than victories.
      - You've been wearied and wounded
      - The miles are starting to take their toll on you.
  - One man said I started life thinking that I'd hit a home run
    - every time I came to bat
    - but now I just hope I can get through the game
    - without getting beaned on the head by the ball.
  - Perhaps that's how you feel...
- The passion doesn't burn like it once did,
  - The desire isn't quite as strong as it once was
    - The zeal isn't what it used to be,
      - What was once a delight has become a struggle
      - What was once a promise has become a burden.
- But I come to you tonight with a word from heaven.
  - The dream is still alive!
    - God's not finished with you yet...
- The promise is on its way,
  - God is getting ready to do what he promised he would do.
    - Don't give up now,
    - Don't relegate the dream to a dusty corner of your soul
- I've come to challenge you to get a hold of the promise,
  - Dust it off and dare to believe again
    - like you did once before.

Believe.
That was the source of Jacob’s dilemma in our text.
- His heart fainted because he just couldn't find the faith
  - to believe yet again in the promise of God.
- I've come to challenge you tonight to stir up your faith.
  - Don't let the dream die.
    - Don't let the promise fall by the wayside.
      - God is going to do what he said he would do!
- You faint tonight, because faith has faltered.
  - David said in Psalms 27:13
    - “I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD…”
- I want to challenge you tonight to believe that you will see the goodness of God.
The blessings and promises of God are yet before you
  ▪ There’s a promise still waiting for you to claim it.

Like the Psalmist you must dare to believe to see the goodness of God.
  ▪ You must dare to stir faith in your heart.
    • Faith in the goodness of God
    • Faith that you will, indeed, see the goodness of God in your life.

There is a reviving power in faith.
  ▪ Faith brings new strength
    ▪ and fresh grace from heaven.

I’ve come to challenge you tonight to stir your faith again.
  ▪ To dare to believe again
    ▪ that God will do what he said he would do.
  ▪ He didn’t bring you this far to abandon you
    ▪ He didn’t make you a promise
      • only to leave you disappointed.

When faith is stirred up,
  ▪ the fire begins to burn a little brighter

When faith is stirred up,
  ▪ the vision becomes a little clearer.

When faith is stirred up,
  ▪ the promises of God hover within your reach.

It’s high time you stirred your faith,
  ▪ It’s high time you made a conscious declaration,
    ▪ God I don’t know how
    ▪ and I don’t know when
    ▪ and I don’t know where
      • but I BELIEVE you will!!!

As Jacob’s heart fainted
  ▪ and his faith failed him
    ▪ his sons began to share with him
    ▪ the words of Joseph.

They began to tell him about the things
  ▪ that Joseph had said and done.

They began to share with him their own journey
  ▪ that moved them from fear to faith.

As those words began to fall upon Jacob’s ears
  ▪ something began to stir deep within his soul.

The cold grip of doubt began to thaw
  ▪ in the radiant warmth of faith.

A part of him that he thought had long ago died
  ▪ Began to thrive once again
    ▪ as a promise found new life
    ▪ within the confines of his soul,
      • As a blessing was revived.
• As those words of encouragement stirred faith in Jacob's heart,
  o As the final vestiges of dream long forgotten began to awaken in his soul...
• Over the excited roar of his son's voices,
  o there came another sound from outside.
    ▪ Jacob heard the braying of donkeys,
    ▪ And the creaking of wagons
      • Finally he saw the bountiful blessing
        o of the providing hand of God.
• They were wagons loaded with grain and provisions.
  o Heaped to overflowing.
    ▪ It must have been an overwhelming sight,
      • In the midst of a severe famine
        o that held the land in a death grip
  o Here were wagons of precious food.
    ▪ Here was multitude of blessing
      • In a time of barrenness.
• In that moment, faith gripped his heart
  o When he saw the wagons
    ▪ the scripture says that the spirit of Jacob their father revived.

It Is Time For Revival
I believe that God has sent me into this house tonight with words of encouragement to carry you on a journey of faith.
• I believe, this evening, if you will stop and listen
  o you will hear the creaking of wagons
    ▪ sent from the throne room of heaven
      • Bearing the blessings and provisions that you need.
  o I believe that God wants to visit you in this house this evening
    ▪ to give you a personal revival.
  o I believe that God wants to stir your soul
    ▪ with the news that the dream is still alive,
  o He's getting ready to do what he promised he would do.
• It's time for a revival in the house of God.
  o It's time for dreams to be restored,
    ▪ It's time for promises to be renewed,
      • It's time for faith to overtake doubt,
• Lift up your eyes in this house tonight,
  o there are wagons of blessing
    ▪ coming from the throne room of heaven
  o Everything that you need
    ▪ to make it through your journey
      ▪ has been provided by God tonight.
      ▪ If you can dare to believe, God is prepared to provide!
        • It's time to take up the dream again.
• It’s time to revive the vision.
• It’s time to renew the promise of God in your life.
• It is time for your soul to be revived.
  o It is time for you to dream again!

Flying Scotsman
Eric Liddell was fondly called the "flying scotsman."

• He was an outstanding sportsman,
  o who became well known for being the fastest runner in Scotland.
• In 1924 he represented his country in the Paris Olympics.
  o His heroic achievements were later immortalized
    ▪ by the film Chariots of Fire.
• The most famous scene from that cinematic classic
  o occurs when Liddel stumbles and falls
    ▪ in the first turn of the 400 meter event.
• It is a very moving scene,
  o and is historically accurate
    ▪ with the exception that the actual event
      took place a year before the Olympics.
• Just before the first turn of a 400 meter race
  o Liddel lost his footing and fell hard to the infield grass.
• Momentarily shaken Liddle
  o lays prone on the grass for a moment
    ▪ then looks up to see the other runners rounding the curve
      and entering the straightaway.
• At that moment he must answer an obvious question.
  o After such a devastating fall
    ▪ does one bother to get up again?
• Conventional wisdom says give up,
  o throw in the towel,
    ▪ there’s no sense in trying now,
      ▪ you’ve fallen too far behind.
• But Eric Liddell does the unthinkable.
  o Suddenly he springs to his feet
    ▪ and sprints after the other runners.
  o Before the end of the race
    ▪ he recovers his 20 meter deficit,
      ▪ overtakes all of the other runners
        ▪ and collapses across the finish line in victory!
• No one would blame you if you just settled into mediocrity.
  o The world says throw in the towel.
    ▪ Your enemy says there’s no sense in trying now,
      ▪ you’ve lost too much ground.
• But I’m here this evening
  o to encourage you to do the unthinkable...
Notes by Pastor Tony McCall

The Pentecostals of Lake City

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**Get up!**
- Run again,
- Pursue the dream again.
- Remember the promise again...
  - It’s time for your spirit to be revived!
  - It is time for a revival in your soul!

**Close**

Once he had been called “the deceiver” a name that declared his character,
- For indeed he was a deceiver,
  - a charlatan,
    - a con artist...
  - He was going to get whatever he wanted
    - one way or another.
- But that night at Peniel as he wrestled with God it all changed
  - God changed his name,
    - saying to him from now on you shall be called Israel
    - because as a prince you have found favor with God.
- But somewhere along the way
  - Jacob reverted back to his old name
    - and his old nature.
  - I believe that it happened when he let his dream die.
    - I believe that when he gave up hope
    - When he quit believing in his promise
    - When he relegated himself
      - to a desolate life of mediocrity
        - he reassumed his old identity
          - He became Jacob again.
  - He stumbled,
    - he fell,
      - he lost his vital optimism.
        - And he settled for defeat.
        - He said I’ll never be Israel again.
        - Jacob is all I am and Jacob is all I will ever be.
- But something happened on the glorious morning when faith gripped his heart.
  - When Jacob saw the wagons, loaded with blessings,
    - When Jacob heard the news that his dream wasn’t dead,
    - When Jacob dared once again to believe the promise of God
      - He got up again!
      - He decided to pursue the promise again!
- There is a transition that takes place in verse 28.
  - Jacob heard...
  - Jacob saw...
Jacob’s spirit revived...

- And **Israel** said, It is enough!
  - **ISRAEL said...**
    - Finally the promise found a voice.
    - Hope rose up from within.
      - Israel said, I am convinced!
- I need to tell you tonight that,
  - “**God started a good work in you**
    - **and he’s well able to finish it!”**
      - I need someone in this place tonight to be convinced again.
      - It’s high time you embraced again the promises of God, again.
    - It’s high time for Jacob to be put to rest
      - and for Israel to arise and say,
        - It is enough,
        - I am convinced!
    - The promise of God is for me!
      - It is real!
        - I believe that God will do what he said he will do!
- I’ve come to tell someone tonight that it is time for a personal revival!!!
  - It is time to get back into the fight,
    - to take up the mantle,
    - to accept the call,
    - to commit yourself fully
      - to God’s promise for your life!
- Let Israel arise in this place.