

gain with the Almighty, that if God would give to Jacob all that he required *in this world*, then Jacob would promise that the LORD should be his God!!! (*verses 20, 21*). How presuming on God's gracious love, mercy, and forbearance, is the ignorance of the unconverted man.

The angels of God meeting Jacob do not seem to have given him more confidence in God's dealings with him and protection of him; Jacob is fearful of Esau, and with good reason, after his conduct in *chapter xxvii.*; but now, after the promises of God, he sends to his brother Esau in a servile tone of address, very unlike that of a brother, thinking to appease him by a semblance of humility (*verse 4*), "My lord Esau", and "Thy servant Jacob". On hearing of his approach, Jacob begins to plan and scheme as he considers for the best, being "greatly afraid and distressed", so "he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands; and said, if Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape" (*verses 7, 8*). Having taken his own counsel, he prays to God pleading His covenant (*chapter xxviii. 13*), His command (*chapter xxxi. 3*), His mercies and His promises (*chapter xxviii. 13-15*). Jacob's prayer is excellent in its basis, but was it offered in true faith? Surely not, for immediately it is offered he returns to his own plans again, to try and avert that which he has just asked God to do for him. Jacob now puts his faith in the success of his present (*verse 20*)!! "For he said, I WILL APPEASE HIM with the

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