

Jacob's Ladder / Stairway to Heaven (Genesis 28)

Expository Lessons from the Book of Genesis

I. Background, from Prior Lessons (Jacob and Esau)

- a. Twin sons were born to Isaac and Rebekah. Jacob (the younger son) bargains with Esau (the older son), and Esau sells his birthright to Jacob for one meal of red stew. (**Genesis 25:21-33**)
- b. Isaac, thinking that his death is near, asks Esau to hunt game and prepare the kind of food he loves, after which he plans to give Esau his special blessing. Rebekah overhears, and conspires with Jacob (her favorite) to trick his father and gain the blessing through deceit. (**Genesis 26:1-17**)
- c. Jacob tricks his father into giving him the blessing. Part of that blessing is he would be lord over his brethren, and his brother would bow down to him. Esau shows up later, and weeps when he finds out that the blessing intended for him has been stolen by his brother. (**Genesis 26:18-40**)
- d. Esau makes plans to kill his deceitful brother as soon as his father dies. Rebekah discovers the plan, and sends Jacob off to her brother, Laban, in Haran (which is in Mesopotamia). She tells Jacob to "stay with him a few days" until Isaac dies and Esau's anger subsides. (**Genesis 26:41-44**)

II. Jacob Departs; Sent to Find a Wife (Read Genesis 27:41-28:9)

- a. Rebekah (the crafty one) comes up with an excuse to have Isaac send Jacob to Haran.
- b. She tells Isaac that he should send his son to Haran to find a wife there, in Haran, so that he would not marry a Canaanite woman (as Esau had done).
 - i. Recall that *both* Isaac and Rebekah were unhappy with the two Hittite wives that Esau had taken. (**Genesis 26:34-35**)
- c. Isaac blesses Jacob and tells him to go to Haran to take a wife there from among the daughters of Laban, his wife Rebekah's brother. (He would be marrying one of his cousins on his mother's side of the family.)
 - i. Isaac obeys his parents and begins his journey to Haran. The destination: the house of his uncle, Laban.

- ii. Esau sees that his father is giving Jacob yet another blessing, with an implied rebuke to Esau: "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan" (as Esau had done).
- iii. Esau then takes another wife, in an attempt to gain the favor of his parents; from the descendants of Ishmael, the first son of Abraham.

III. The Ladder to Heaven (Read **Genesis 28:10-22**)

a. Elements of the story

- i. On the way to Haran, Jacob lies down at night, with his head resting on a certain stone.
- ii. He has a dream that night:
 - 1. A ladder is set up on earth, with its top reaching heaven.
 - 2. Angels of God ascending and descending on it.
 - 3. The Lord stood above it. He speaks, reiterating to Jacob the promises that had been made to Abraham:
 - a. Many descendants,
 - b. Territory, and
 - c. "In your seed all the tribes of the earth shall be blessed".
 - 4. The Lord also promises:
 - a. He will be with Jacob, and will protect him, and
 - b. He would bring Jacob "back to this land" (Canaan).
 - 5. Jacob awakes from the dream and responds:
 - a. "The Lord is in this place and I did not know it."
 - b. This place is "the house of God"; changes its name from 'Luz' to 'Bethel' (literally, "house of God")
 - c. Jacob says this place is "the gate of heaven".
 - d. Takes the stone he had rested his head on, sets it upright as a pillar, and pours oil on the top of it.
- iii. Jacob makes a vow to God, following the dream.
 - 1. He says that *if God protects him and brings him back to that place*, "this stone I set up as a pillar shall be God's house to me", and

2. He will give the Lord a tenth of his possessions.

b. Background for this story.

- i. This episode occurred about 1950 B.C.
- ii. Story written down by Moses, about 1400 B.C.
- iii. Departs from his parents in Beersheba, heads north, toward the goal of Haran, in Mesopotamia (near modern Turkey/ Syria border)
- iv. Site of the dream, renamed 'Bethel' is in Canaan, about 10 miles north of Jerusalem. Bethel is near what would become the border of the northern tribe of Ephraim and the southern tribe of Benjamin (**Joshua 18:13**). Bethel appears several other times in Old Testament stories.
- v. Jesus would later make reference to this story, in the gospel of John.
- vi. Note that the New Testament references to the Old Testament stories almost always follow the Septuagint (Greek translation made about 200-250 years before Christ, also favored by the early Christians, and commonly abbreviated LXX). That is the main reason I am reading here from a translation based on the LXX, in this case the Orthodox Study Bible.
- vii. Several English versions do render "ladder" as "stairway".

c. Almost everyone recognizes the term 'Jacob's ladder', even those who have never read the story in **Genesis 28**. The term has seeped into popular culture, for example:

- i. The children's toy.
 1. Classic, traditional toy, dating back 300+ years and maybe a lot longer, made of 6 flat wood blocks connected with ribbons. The blocks flip in a way that creates an optical illusion reminiscent of an unending ladder.
- ii. The plant.
 1. Unfortunately, it is relatively short and its top does *not* reach up to heaven!
- iii. Even a cardio workout machine! From the commercial literature, this description:
 1. "Jacobs Ladder provides the most efficient exercise for those serious about conditioning. Unlike most cardio machines, this patented treadmill climber utilizes low impact, high range of motion exercise to provide a superior cardio workout to both

the upper and lower body. Jacobs Ladder is an innovative cardio machine with ladder-type rungs on a non-motorized continuous treadmill. It's self-paced, so the faster you go, the faster it goes. Jacobs Ladder is preferred by pro football teams, the FBI, the Army, the Navy, West Point and numerous Division I universities to improve their strength and conditioning programs."

2. (It sounds to me like a more spiritual version of the *Stairmaster* exercise machine. Except in this case you climb ladder rungs endlessly instead of stairs, to work out both to both the upper body *and* lower parts of your body!)
- iv. The classic old African-American spiritual song, *Jacob's Ladder*, which begins with the line: "We are climbing Jacob's ladder".
- d. However, it should be noted that in several Bible translations, instead of 'ladder' the word is instead translated 'stairway'.
 - i. In six of the Bible translations I checked, which include translations from the Hebrew as well as from the Greek (LXX), it says "stairway". Those versions include: Apostolic Polyglot Bible (LXX), Lexham English Bible, Holman Christian Standard Bible, NIV, NET, and the New American Bible.
 - ii. The word in question (in Hebrew as well as in the Greek of the LXX) refers to an ascending structure, typically with steps. Therefore, it could be used to refer to either a *ladder* or a *stairway*.
 - iii. Consequently, this ladder to heaven also could be called the "*stairway to heaven*". Certainly, that phrase will resonate with some of my own generation and younger, since that was the title of an immensely popular song that has been (over)played by radio stations for decades.
 1. The opening line of that song is, "There's a lady who's sure all that glitters is gold / and she's buying a stairway to heaven."
 2. (Warning: Just hearing that initial line again may bring back a flood of bad memories for some of us who have come out of worldly rock music backgrounds!)
 3. That song was famous, and controversial for many reasons. One of the controversies was a claim that the music for part of the song was 'stolen' from another song written by another group a few years prior. That was never proven. HOWEVER,

4. We can make a pretty good case that the title, first line and the last line of the song, *Stairway to Heaven* were lifted from something Moses wrote, over 3,000 years before!
 - a. While many of the things in the song are nonsense, there is one thing that is right: there is, in fact, a Stairway to Heaven. Jacob discovered it.
 - b. However, even in the first line of that song, there are two mistakes:
 - i. No one can buy this stairway. It is not for sale.
 - ii. It isn't A stairway to heaven (implying that it is just one of many); it is in fact THE stairway to heaven, the original and only one. There is only one stairway leading from earth to heaven.

IV. Symbolism in the Ladder / Stairway to Heaven Story

- a. Lots going on in this dream, many elements!
 - i. A ladder between heaven and earth;
 - ii. "the Lord" speaking;
 - iii. angels ascending and descending;
 - iv. "the house of God";
 - v. "the gate of heaven"; and
 - vi. (last, but not least) an unusual rock that starts out being used as a pillow; at the end Jacob stands it up and pours oil on the top of it.
- b. Let's take another look at that unusual rock. It may hold the key to understanding this dream, and a lot more.
 - i. The pillow/rock is very prominent in the story. Jacob sees it as a lot more than a place where he happened to rest his head to sleep.
 - ii. Jacob credits a lot of this dream/vision to this particular place, and especially to this unusual rock.
- c. **Question:** Why, after he woke up, did Jacob stand the rock up like a pillar, and pour oil upon the top of it? Does it make you think of anything similar, anywhere else in the Bible (pouring oil on the head of someone or something)?
 - i. When Aaron was anointed High Priest, oil was poured on his head.

1. "Moses then poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head and anointed him, to sanctify him." (**Leviticus 8:12**)
- ii. Samuel poured oil on their head of Saul when he was anointed king, and he did the same to David when David was anointed king.
 1. "Then Samuel took a vial of olive oil and poured it on his head, and kissed him and said to him, 'Has not the Lord anointed you as ruler to His people, over Israel? You shall rule among the people of the Lord, and you shall save them from the hand of their enemies round about them. For you, this shall be the sign that the Lord anointed you as a ruler for His inheritance.'" (**1 Samuel 10:1**)
 2. "And the Lord said to Samuel, 'Arise, anointed David; for he is good!' Then Samuel took the horn of olive oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel arose and went to Ramah." (**1 Samuel 17:12-13**)
- iii. Justin Martyr (110-165 AD), an early Christian writer and teacher, in a debate with Trypho, a Jew, pointed to the anointed rock in the story of Jacob's ladder as foreshadowing Christ. Justin writes:
 1. "He (Jacob) said he had seen a ladder, and the Scripture has declared that God stood above it. But that this was not the Father, we have proved from the Scriptures." (*Note: Justin has pointed out that since no one can see the Father, as it clearly says in **John 1:18** and **1 Timothy 6:15-16**, Jacob must have seen the Son of God: who is divine, who came from the Father, who existed before all created things, and who could take on forms that could be seen*)
 2. "And Jacob, having poured oil on a stone in the same place, is testified to by the very God who appeared to him, that he had anointed a pillar to the God who appeared to him. And that the stone symbolically proclaimed Christ, we have also proved by many Scriptures; and that the unguent, whether it was of oil, or of *stacte (myrrh)*, or of any other compounded sweet balsams, had reference to Him, we have also proved, inasmuch as the word says: 'Therefore God, Your God, anointed You with the oil of gladness more than your companions (**Psalms 45:8**).' For indeed all kings and anointed persons obtained from Him their share in the names of kings and anointed: just as He Himself received from the Father the titles of King, and Christ, and Priest, and Angel, and such like other titles which He bears or

did bear.” (Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew*, chapter 85; in Ante-Nicene Fathers vol. 1, p. 242)

iv. Significance of being anointed.

1. Note that: Christ (Greek) = Messiah (Hebrew) = The Anointed One (English)
2. David issued a prophecy about ‘The Anointed One / the Messiah / the Christ’ about 1,000 years before Jesus, when David wrote, “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against His Christ (= Anointed One, Messiah).” (**Psalm 2:2**)

v. Significance of unusual stones or rocks in the Bible as foreshadowing Christ (as Justin asserted to Trypho):

1. **Unusual Stone #1.** The first ‘unusual stone’ in Scripture is the one in **Genesis 28**, the pillow that becomes entryway into another dimension (like the wardrobe in the well-known C.S. Lewis story, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, which is an allegory about Christ). This stone is stood up as a column, and anointed with oil by Jacob.
2. **Unusual Stone #2.** Hundreds of years later, another prophet wrote about another unusual stone: “The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD’s doing; It is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.” (**Psalm 118:22–23**, NKJV)
 - a. Jesus applies this prophecy to himself: “Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: ‘The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?’” (**Matthew 21:42**, NKJV)
 - b. Peter applies this rather pointedly to the Jewish rulers in Acts: “let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. This is the ‘stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.’ Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” (**Acts 4:10–12**, NKJV)

- c. Peter also quotes this prophecy in his first letter:
 “Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, ‘The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone.’” (**1 Peter 2:7**, NKJV)
- 3. **Unusual Stone #3.** Isaiah wrote, about 700 years before Christ, and discussed another unusual stone: “*(To those who trust in the Lord)* He will be as a sanctuary, but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel, as a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.” (**Isaiah 8:14**, NKJV)
 - a. Peter applies this prophecy to Jesus, in **1 Peter 2:8**.
- 4. **Unusual Stone #4.** Isaiah also says, “Therefore, thus says the Lord: ‘Behold, I lay for the foundations of Zion a costly stone, a chosen and precious cornerstone for its foundations, and whoever believes in Him will not be put to shame.’” (**Isaiah 28:16**, LXX, OSB)
 - a. Peter quotes this in **1 Peter 2:6**, where his quote follows the LXX, and applies the prophecy to Christ.
- 5. **Unusual Stone #5.** In the Exodus story, when the people were lacking water in the desert, Moses was told to strike a certain rock with his wooden staff. After Moses did so, water came out of that rock (**Exodus 17:1-7**).
 - a. Moses ultimately got into trouble for striking the rock a second time, in **Numbers 20:1-13**.
 - b. Paul later speaks of the time Israel was in the desert for 40 years of testing as a parallel for the Christian life. Paul says, “(They) all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.” (**1 Corinthians 10:3-4**, NKJV)
 - c. Christ was foreshadowed in that rock: struck only once by the wood (crucified once), and providing water to sustain all (compare **John 4:10-15**) through the desert of this life.
- 6. **Unusual Rock #6.** About 550 years before Christ, during the Babylonian Captivity, Daniel was given divine ability to see and interpret a dream that the king of Babylon had, of a four-part statue that was destroyed.

- a. "As for you, O king, you saw and beheld one great image. That image was very large and its appearance excellent. It stood before you, and its vision was fearful. The image had a head made of fine gold, and its hands, chest, and arms are made of silver, and its stomach and thighs, of copper. Its legs were iron, and its feet were partly iron and partly clay. You saw while a stone was cut out of a mountain without hands, and struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and ground them to powder. Then at once the clay, the iron, the copper, the silver, and the gold were like dust from the summer threshing floor, and a great force of wind blew them away; and their place was not to be found. Then the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled all the earth." (**Daniel 2:31–35**, LXX, OSB)
- b. "Then in the times of those kings, the God of heaven will raise up a kingdom, and it shall never be destroyed. This kingdom shall not be left to another people, but it will break in pieces and crush all these kingdoms; and it will stand forever." (**Daniel 2:44**, LXX, OSB)
 - i. This reference to a 'rock cut out of a mountain but not by hands' in **Daniel 2** is discussed by Irenaeus (c. 130-200 AD; and early Christian writer and bishop in Lyon, in modern-day France). Irenaeus says: "On this account also, Daniel, foreseeing His advent, said that a stone, cut out without hands, came into this world. For this is what 'without hands' means, that His coming into this world was not by the operation of human hands, that is, of those men who are accustomed to stone-cutting; that is, Joseph taking no part with regard to it, but Mary alone co-operating with the pre-arranged plan. For this stone from the earth derives existence from both the power and the wisdom of God. Wherefore also Isaiah says: 'Thus says the Lord, Behold, I deposit in the foundations of Zion a stone, precious, elect, the chief, the corner-one, to be had in honor.' So, then, we understand that His advent in human nature was not by the will of a man, but by the will of God." (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book 3, chapter 21; in Ante-Nicene Fathers vol. 1, p. 453)

- ii. This stone that would ultimately crush all the kingdoms of the earth to powder, would produce God's own kingdom, which would never be destroyed and which would fill the earth. This stone also foreshadowed the coming of Christ, even foreshadowing his divinity and virgin birth.
- 7. Conclusion regarding 'anointed stone' in **Genesis 28**: this established the connection between the Christ (the Anointed One) and the stone, which would be expanded on in prophecies that would follow. Jesus, the rock, the stone who is:
 - a. The Anointed One
 - b. The gate to heaven
 - c. The one who would be rejected by the religious leaders, yet who would become the cornerstone.
 - d. Those who trust in him would be protected, while others (especially most Jews) would stumble because of him.
 - e. The precious cornerstone; those who believe in him will not be put to shame.
 - f. He would be crucified on the wood only once.
 - g. He would sustain us with spiritual water in the desert as we are traveling on the way to the Promised Land.
 - h. His origin would be unusual: not the normal human way; born of a virgin.
 - i. He would found God's kingdom: a kingdom that would fill the earth, bringing an end to the kingdoms of this world.
- d. Further insights on the references to the gate, temple and ladder of the story, connected to Christ. Here is a quote from Tertullian, an early Christian writer (c. 160-230 A.D.) from Carthage, North Africa:
 - i. "When Jacob sees in his dream the steps of a ladder set upon the earth, and reaching to heaven, with angels ascending and descending thereon, and the Lord standing above, we shall without hesitation venture to suppose, that by this ladder the Lord has in judgment appointed that the way to heaven is shown to men, whereby some may attain to it, and others fall therefrom. For why, as soon as he awoke out of his sleep, and shook through a dread of the spot, does he

fall to an interpretation of his dream? He exclaims, "How terrible is this place!" And then adds, "This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven!" For he had seen Christ the Lord, the temple of God, and also the gate by whom heaven is entered. Now surely he would not have mentioned the gate of heaven, if heaven is not entered in the dispensation of the Creator. But there is now *a gate provided by Christ, which admits and conducts to glory*. (Tertullian, *Against Marcion*, Book 3, chapter 24; in Ante-Nicene Fathers vol. 3, p. 343)

- ii. Tertullian's conclusion here: Christ is the temple of God and the gate by whom heaven is entered. He provides the way to heaven, revealed to men.

V. Another Look at that Stairway / Ladder (Read **John 1:43-51**)

- a. One verse ties back to the Jacob's ladder story: "And He said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." (John 1:51, NKJV)
 - i. This is the only other place in Scripture that speaks of "the angels of God ascending and descending upon" something. Clearly this is pointing back to **Genesis 28**. But what is Jesus trying to say?
 - ii. Jesus refers to himself repeatedly throughout the New Testament as "the son of man", a reference that goes back to Daniel.
 - 1. "I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed." (**Daniel 7:13-14**, NKJV)
 - 2. "When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" (Matthew 16:13, NKJV)
 - iii. Jesus is equating himself, as the Son of Man, with the stairway between heaven and earth!
 - iv. There are many analogies used in Scripture to capture aspects of Jesus: Passover Lamb, bronze serpent, good shepherd, bread, the light coming to a dark world, the Son of God, and the Son of Man.
- b. **Riddle to ponder:** How is Jesus similar to a stairway or ladder? Consider:

- i. He connects two levels: heaven and earth. Jesus is indeed connected to both, as a ladder or stairway connects two floors.
- ii. He ascends and descends, like a ladder or stairway. There are many references to Jesus descending from heaven to become man, ascending to heaven after his resurrection, and that he will descend from heaven again on the Last Day.
 - 1. "What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before?" (**John 6:62**, NKJV)
 - 2. "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first." (**1 Thessalonians 4:16**, NKJV)
- c. **Another question:** What did Jesus mean when he told Nathaniel that he would see the angels of God ascending and descending on Him? I'm not sure about that one! A few possibilities:
 - i. Power of God (angels) working through Jesus, in miracles.
 - ii. Interaction with angels coming down and going up at Jesus' passion, death and resurrection (two angels at his head and feet where his body had been) (**John 20:12**).
 - iii. When He returns on the Day of Judgment, with the angels.
 - 1. "For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works." (**Matthew 16:27**, NKJV)

VI. Thoughts on Reaching Out to the World with the Gospel Today

- a. Paul, a Jew in Athens in **Acts 17**, was distressed that the city was full of idols. He taught uncompromisingly against the sin of idolatry. (In **1 Corinthians 10:14** Paul warns the Corinthians, "flee from idolatry", for example.)
- b. However, he made reference to the idolatry of Athens
 - i. "Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, 'Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you:' (**Acts 17:22-23**, NKJV)

- ii. Paul even quoted a pagan poet to introduce a point. Paul said, “for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring.’” (**Acts 17:28**, NKJV)
- iii. He wasted no time, after using their idolatry and pagan poetry, however, to call them to repentance.
 - 1. “Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent,” (**Acts 17:30**, NKJV)
 - 2. Then he preaches judgment and the resurrection of Jesus.
- c. What might Paul’s approach in Athens look like today, in Boston? One possibility:
 - i. “Men of Boston: I heard a song you were listening to, ‘Stairway to Heaven’. Let me tell you about that stairway!”
 - 1. Then talk about Jesus, the true and only stairway leading from earth to heaven.
 - ii. “As some of your own poets have said, ‘Yes, there are two paths you can go by’, and ‘There’s still time to change the road you’re on.’”
 - 1. That could naturally introduce a call to repentance, to change and get onto the narrow road that leads to life.

VII. Epilogue – The Song, ‘Jacob’s Ladder’

- a. This song goes back to the days of slavery in the US, well before the Civil War. Lyrics of an early version follow, from *Lift Every Voice and Sing II, an African-American Hymnal*, #220. Please note that in the second verse, “every round goes higher, higher”, the word ‘round’ refers to *a step of a ladder*. (This is an older meaning of the word.)
 - i. “We are climbing Jacob’s ladder,
We are climbing Jacob’s ladder,
We are climbing Jacob’s ladder,
Soldiers of the cross.
 - ii. Ev’ry round goes higher, higher,
Ev’ry round goes higher, higher,
Ev’ry round goes higher, higher,
Soldiers of the cross.
 - iii. Sinner, do you love your Jesus?
Sinner, do you love your Jesus?
Sinner, do you love your Jesus?
Soldiers of the cross.

- iv. If you love Him, why not serve Him?
If you love Him, why not serve Him?
If you love Him, why not serve Him?
Soldiers of the cross.
- v. Rise, shine, give God glory,
Rise, shine, give God glory,
Rise, shine, give God glory,
Soldiers of the cross.”
- b. You may notice that this old song is not like modern, popular Christian songs performed in large popular Protestant churches, or featured at well-attended concerts that often focus only on God’s mercy and the blessings that God wants to shower on us.
- c. This song goes back to a people who better understood suffering, and its place in the life of a Christian.
 - i. Recall that Jesus associated Jacob’s ladder with his own body.
 - ii. Jesus said that road to life is narrow and difficult. In this song it is portrayed as climbing a ladder higher and higher, overcoming.
 - iii. We are reminded in every verse that following Jesus means becoming a soldier *of the cross*, following in the footsteps of the suffering servant, Jesus.
 - iv. Those singing remind one another that we are sinners; and that if we really do love Jesus, we need to heed the call of discipleship and to *serve Him*.