
Jacob 6 — Cleave Unto God — Jacob's Allegorical Exhortation and the Pleasing Bar of the Great Jehovah

Jacob's exhortation after the olive-tree allegory; cleave unto God; the pleasing bar; thirteen verses, c. 544 BC.

The chapter is Jacob's-pastoral-exhortation after the long allegory of ch. 5. Having quoted Zenos at length, Jacob now lifts the people's-eyes from the allegory to their own day and their own choice. Three movements: (1) conclusion of the allegory and the harvest-binary (vv. 1–7); (2) the cleave-unto-God exhortation with catalog of rejections (vv. 8–12); (3) the pleasing-bar farewell (v. 13). Center: v. 5 — *cleave unto God as he cleaveth unto you* — reciprocal-davaq-marriage-grammar. The chapter establishes the pleasing-bar tradition that runs Nephi (2 Ne. 33:11) → Jacob (v. 13) → Moroni (10:34).

Ten Insights

- 1. Zenos' allegory must come to pass (v. 1).** *The things which this prophet Zenos spake, concerning the house of Israel... must surely come to pass.* Jacob's-prophetic-confirmation of Zenos anchors the allegory in the latter-day-fulfillment (2 Pet. 1:19).
- 2. The Lord sets his hand the second time (v. 2).** *The day that he shall set his hand again the second time to recover his people, is the day, yea, even the last time, that the servants of the Lord shall go forth in his power.* Pre-Restoration citation of Isa. 11:11; identifies the Restoration as the second-time-recovery.
- 3. Blessed are they who labor; cursed are the cast-out (v. 3).** *How blessed are they who have labored diligently in his vineyard; and how cursed are they who shall be cast out into their own place.* The harvest-binary is labor-conditional. *Avad* vs. *lo'avad* (cf. Matt. 13:42–43; Matt. 25:14–30).
- 4. Stretches forth his hands all the day long (v. 4).** *He stretches forth his hands unto them all the day long; and they are a stiffnecked and a gainsaying people.* Pre-Pauline citation of Isa. 65:2 / Rom. 10:21. Heart-conditional salvation, not ethnic-status-conditional.
- 5. Cleave unto God as he cleaveth unto you (v. 5).** *Repent, and come with full purpose of heart, and cleave unto God as he cleaveth unto you.* The master-cleaving-verse. *Davaq*-grammar of Gen. 2:24's marital-cleaving applied to discipleship; Deut. 10:20; Acts 11:23.
- 6. Today if ye will hear his voice (v. 6).** *Yea, today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts; for why will ye die?* Pre-Hebrews citation of Ps. 95:7–8 / Ezek. 33:11. The day-of-decision is now, not later (2 Cor. 6:2).
- 7. Nourished, yet bringing forth evil fruit (v. 7).** *After ye have been nourished by the good word of God all the day long, will ye bring forth evil fruit, that ye must be hewn down and cast into the fire?* Pre-Matthean articulation of Matt. 3:10's axe at the root; nourishment-conditional-on-fruit.
- 8. Catalog of rejections — quench the Holy Spirit (v. 8).** *Will ye reject the words of the prophets... deny the good word of Christ, and the power of God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, and quench the Holy Spirit, and make a mock of the great plan of redemption.* Pre-Hebrews articulation of Heb. 6:4–6's falling-away; 1 Thes. 5:19's quench not the Spirit.
- 9. Lake of fire, smoke ascending forever (vv. 9–10).** *Justice cannot be denied, ye must go away into that lake of fire and brimstone, whose flames are unquenchable, and whose smoke ascendeth up forever and ever.* Direct pre-Apocalyptic citation of Rev. 14:11. The bar's bifurcating-effect.
- 10. The pleasing bar of God (v. 13).** *I bid you farewell, until I shall meet you before the pleasing bar of God, which bar striketh the wicked with awful dread and fear.* Pleasing-bar tradition — Nephi (2 Ne. 33:11), Jacob (here), Moroni (10:34). Three prophets, one bar, one Lord, three appointments.

Cross-References

Gen. 2:24 (cleave unto his wife — direct background v. 5); Deut. 6:5 (love with all heart); Deut. 10:20 (cleave unto him — direct parallel v. 5); Deut. 11:22 (cleave unto him); Deut. 30:19 (choose life); Josh. 22:5 (cleave unto him); Josh. 24:15 (choose you this day); 1 Ki. 18:21 (how long halt ye between two opinions); Ps. 24:3–6 (who shall ascend); Ps. 63:8 (my soul followeth hard after thee — direct background v. 5); Ps. 95:7–11 (today if ye will hear his voice — direct parallel v. 6); Prov. 4:13 (take fast hold of instruction); Prov. 18:24 (a friend that sticketh closer than a brother); Isa. 5:1–7 (vineyard); Isa. 11:11–12 (set hand again the second time — direct parallel v. 2); Isa. 55:6–7 (seek ye the Lord while he may be found); Isa. 65:2 (stretched forth my hands — direct parallel v. 4); Jer. 4:1 (if thou wilt return); Ezek. 18:23 (any pleasure that the wicked should die); Ezek. 18:30–32 (turn yourselves); Ezek. 33:11 (why will ye die — direct parallel v. 6); Mal. 3:7 (return unto me); Matt. 3:10 (axe laid unto the root — direct parallel v. 7); Matt. 7:13–14 (strait gate, narrow way — direct parallel v. 11); Matt. 7:19 (every tree hewn down — direct parallel v. 7); Matt. 11:28 (come unto me); Matt. 13:42 (furnace of fire); Matt. 22:14 (many are called, few chosen); Matt. 25:14–30 (talents); Matt. 25:46 (everlasting punishment); Lk. 13:24 (strive to enter in at the strait gate); Lk. 16:31 (if they hear not Moses); Jn. 3:36 (he that believeth not the Son shall not see life); Jn. 6:53 (eat the flesh of the Son of man); Jn. 6:68 (to whom shall we go?); Acts 11:23 (cleave unto the Lord — direct parallel v. 5); Rom. 2:5 (treasure up wrath); Rom. 10:21 (stretched forth my hands — direct parallel v. 4); 2 Cor. 2:16 (savour of death; savour of life — direct parallel v. 13); 2 Cor. 6:2 (now is the accepted time); Gal. 6:7–9 (whatsoever a man soweth); Eph. 4:30 (grieve not the Holy Spirit — direct parallel v. 8); Eph. 5:31–32 (this is a great mystery — direct parallel v. 5); 1 Thes. 5:19 (quench not the Spirit — direct parallel v. 8); 2 Thes. 1:8–9 (everlasting destruction); Heb. 3:7–4:11 (today if ye will hear — direct parallel v. 6); Heb. 6:4–6 (falling away — direct parallel v. 8); Heb. 10:26–29 (sin wilfully — direct parallel v. 8); Heb. 12:1 (cloud of witnesses); Jas. 4:8 (draw nigh to God — direct parallel v. 5); 1 Pet. 4:17–18 (judgment begin at the house of God); Rev. 14:11 (smoke ascendeth up for ever — direct parallel v. 10); Rev. 20:10 (lake of fire); Rev. 21:8 (lake which burneth — direct parallel v. 10); 1 Ne. 8:30 (continual feasting); 1 Ne. 10:14 (set hand again the second time); 2 Ne. 21:11 (set hand again the second time); 2 Ne. 28:32 (extend mine arm); 2 Ne. 31:18 (strait and narrow path); 2 Ne. 33:11 (face to face before his bar — direct parallel v. 13); Jacob 1 (Jacob's commission); Jacob 2 (Jacob's rebuke); Jacob 3 (Lamanite contrast); Jacob 4 (looking beyond the mark); Jacob 5 (allegory — direct context); Jacob 7:25 (cleave unto the Lord); Mosiah 16:9 (light which is endless); Alma 5:14 (born again); Alma 13:21 (do not procrastinate); Alma 34:31–34 (this life is the day); Hel. 5:9–12 (rock of Redeemer); 3 Ne. 12:19–20 (broken heart, contrite spirit); 4 Ne. 1:3 (all things common); Moro. 10:34 (pleasing bar of the great Jehovah — direct parallel v. 13); D&C 1:11–14 (voice of warning); D&C 19:4–12 (endless and eternal punishment); D&C 33:7 (open mouth); D&C 45:9 (standard for the people); D&C 76:43–48 (perdition); D&C 88:118 (study and faith); D&C 93:1 (every soul who forsaketh his sins); D&C 110:11 (Moses delivered keys of gathering); Articles of Faith 10 (literal gathering of Israel — direct parallel v. 2).

Apocryphal Correlations

Sirach 21:1–7. Hast thou sinned? do so no more — direct vv. 5, 11 repentance-call parallel.

Wisdom 5:14–23. Hope of the ungodly is like dust... the righteous live forever — direct vv. 9–10 bar-binary parallel.

4 Ezra 7:127–131. The contest which every man shall wage — direct vv. 11–13 contest-of-the-bar parallel.

2 Baruch 51:1–6. Aspect of those proved righteous will be glorified — direct v. 13 pleasing-bar parallel.

1 Enoch 108:11–15. Great distinction between the righteous and the sinners — direct v. 13 bifurcating-bar parallel.

Testament of Judah 25:1–5. Eternal joy with our Father Abraham — direct v. 13 pleasing-bar parallel.

1QS 4:11–14. Eternal damnation by the avenging wrath in the fire — direct vv. 9–10 lake-of-fire parallel.

Psalms of Solomon 14:6–10. The portion of God is Israel; sinners shall perish — direct vv. 3–4 binary parallel.

Hebrew Word Studies

davaq (דָּבַק, **cleave, cling**) — v. 5. Gen. 2:24's marriage-cleaving-verb; the disciple-Lord-relationship as davaq-marriage.

be-khol-levav (בְּכָל-לֵבָב, **with the whole heart**) — v. 5. Deut. 6:5's Shema-grammar; cleaving be-khol-levav.

avad (עָבַד, **work, serve, labor**) — v. 3. The Sabbath-verb (Ex. 20:9 — six days shalt thou labor); the laborer-class blessed.

kashah (קָשָׁה, **harden — heart**) — vv. 4, 5, 6. The stiff-necked-grammar of Ex. 33:3, 5; Acts 7:51; Heb. 3:8.

esh kol'ah (אֵשׁ כֹּלֵאֵה, **consuming fire**) — v. 10. Heb. 12:29 — our God is a consuming fire; the lake-of-fire grammar.

kisei ha-mishpat (כִּסֵּי הַמִּשְׁפָּט, **throne of judgment**) — v. 13. The eschatological-bar; pleasing for the disciple, awful for the rejecter.

Personal Application

Three practices. First, cleave to the Lord as he cleaves to you. Examine your day — has anything competed with the Lord for your dawaq?; if so, identify and release it (Heb. 12:1's lay aside every weight). Second, labor diligently in his vineyard. Whatever stewardship is yours — ministering, family, calling, civic, professional — labor diligently as a vineyard-laborer, not as a spectator (D&C 4:3–4). Third, prepare for the pleasing bar. Live each day as preparation for the bar; let the daily-decisions be shaped by the bar-anticipation (Heb. 12:1).