

Jacob, Jacob

“And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I” (Genesis 46:2).

One of the greatest influences in my life was my mother. Her life was one of constant patience, humility and kindness. When my dad passed away, she was left to live in her house by herself. However, with her health failing, she was limited in what she could do. If one of the family members could not be with her, we had to make sure someone was there to assist her with her meals and personal care.

On several occasions, there were small gaps of time when she was left alone. In those times, she would think that no one was coming and would usually call one of us. If she called once, we would try to assist her by phone, and assure her that one of us would be there soon. But if she called twice, we knew she needed more than our words. She needed someone to be with her right then! And, we would quickly respond to her double-call.

We come now to the second double-call of the Bible, and the second double-call in the book of Genesis. As Abraham received a double-call from God, so his grandson, Jacob, received one also. The fact that the two names of this patriarch are used in this text reminds us that God knew him well. First, we read that “God spake unto Israel.” Then, we are told that He said unto him, “Jacob, Jacob.” Several lessons are set forth in this double-call to Jacob.

The double-call to Jacob shows how God gets our attention! Hearing that Joseph was yet alive, Jacob began to move toward Egypt to see his special son. While he rested at Beersheba from a long day’s journey, the Lord made Himself known to him “in the visions of the night.” As is always the case, there was no mistake concerning the one whom God was addressing. Personally and pointedly, He called out his name, “Jacob, Jacob.”

The double-call to Jacob shows how God gives us assurance! As Jacob responded to the call, saying, “Here am I,” the Lord gave him some calming words. First, He emphasized that He was the God of the covenant, saying, “I am God, the God of thy father” (46:3). Then the Lord, Who often calms His people with blessed assurance in their dark nights, declared to him, “fear not to go down into Egypt” (46:3).

The double-call to Jacob shows how God guides our aims! Another great plus for Jacob was the promise, “I will there make of thee a great nation” (46:3). In other words, He was saying, “Jacob, this is just part of my plan!” Showing how He guides His people in His plan, the Lord also promised, “I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again; and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes” (46:4).