

Here — I Raise My Ebenezer

Hope, Comfort, Life — He Keeps His Promises

Join me as we agree with David, and what he penned in Psalm 119:49-50, and we'll unearth some eternal gold from Genesis 35. Wednesday evening's teaching at the Chapel (3.6.2024).

Can I testify?

The irreplaceable value of ebenezers — moments you never want to forget.

My grandmother, several years before I was old enough to legally drive, promised me her car. And she never lied to us. As far as I knew, when she said she was gonna do something, she did it. And when I was about 13 years old, she promised me her car. She had the car — it was hers — and I knew it was mine. It was a 1979 Thunderbird. One big long car that stretched from here to the double back there and it was peach in color. We called it the Batmobile. We could fit 15 people in there and at times we had it loaded out. She promised me the car when I was around 13 years old, that it was mine and she'd give it to me when I turned 15. And I believe her. Because whatever she told me she was gonna give me in the past, she always gave it to me. I used to tell people when I was in junior high that I had a call ready. You know why I told them I had a call ready because I knew it was mine. It was already mine. It belonged to me. She was just holding it till I turned 15. And guess what? The day I turned 15. She gave me the keys to it. It was my car.

I encourage you not to miss this: We — YOU — must TEACH them or someone else will do it for you. Teach and reteach... as often as needed. WHY? If someone else does it, who doesn't live and breathe and serve the same convictions and values that you embrace, they will teach and lead them, but it won't be for you.

Granted, what others may invest and teach them may be on the same playing field or at least in the same ballpark, as you, but the majority of the time it will be subtle deviations here and there, but just foreign enough, that over time, what they plant in them might as well be from another planet. ... And you'll look at your own child and wonder, where in the world did they ever come up with that kind of thinking? It didn't happen accidentally... it happened irresponsibly. Kids are sponges... they soak up whatever they see, hear, read, imagine, and do. And if all the experience is corruption that's what they repeat and reproduce.

If we neglect that responsibility, leaving it entirely up to their teachers and friends and their friend's parents and coaches and instructors and preachers and pastors and youth pastors and entertainers

and music and TV and games and books and the internet we are setting ourselves and them up for trouble upon trouble.

We have to face the reality that we are shapers. We are shaping those we've been given to steward and steer in the right direction as they learn how to navigate life and its stressors. And we MUST come to grips with this inescapable reality. May we raise our Ebenezers.

#nestingwithjesus #genesis #genesis35 #genesis34 #genesis27 #genesis28 #genesis24 #jacob #bethel #Rebekah #Deborah #Dinah #joshua14and10 #joshua1and8thru9 #psalm119and49 #proverbs16and3 #unlearningisharder #kingdomlearning #kingdomevers #caleb #eversince #everleaning #everlearning #everlistening #everlonging #everloving #everliving #everleading #mygrandmotherpromised #my79thunderbird

## Transcript

Those Ebenezers are important in your life, those stones of remembrance. There's things where God done something in your life that you just don't want to forget, that you don't want to let it go. Remember when Joshua and Caleb, and Caleb had that Ebenezer? God told him, you can have that mountain. So 45 years later, he's 85 years old, and he said, look, 45 years ago, God told me I can have this mountain. And ever since he said that, That's been a stone of remembrance for me. I'm as strong today as I was then, and God sustained me all these years because he gave me something to hope in. A stone of remembrance, an Ebenezer. No different than Psalm 119.49, where David says, your word has been my hope. Let's read it before we go. Psalm 119.49, one of my favorite verses. Can you depend on the Lord? even when it don't look like it. One, 1949. Remember, remember. Mark, Lord, mark it. Remember the word to your servant, upon which you have caused me to what? Hope. This word that you've caused me to hope in, this message from you, this life-transferring, transforming word is my comfort in my what? Affliction. For your word has given me life. When God does a work, a moment that you never wanna forget what he's done in you, you raise an Ebenezer. A stone of remembrance. You mark it and it's up to you to teach your kids about it. It's up to

you to teach another generation about it. That's why the stones were placed there. Remember when Joshua and them crossed the Jordan and they got on the other side, God told them to raise up 12 stones. Why? Because those stones were to always be memorialized of what God did at the Jordan. What God did at Bethel, what God did at the Red Sea, what God did here, and what God did there. And throughout the Word, Pam, it says that. Come and see. Come and see the invitation. Come and see what God did here. Come and see what God did there. Come and see what God did. Because the same God that did this is the same God that we're walking with today. And we don't wanna forget what he's done. We wanna remember it because his message to us is what builds hope in us. And that hope will be your comfort in the most difficult, troublesome days of your life. And that hope and that comfort, that message, that word that he gave you will be life to you because you can count on it. You know, I illustrate that with my grandmother. how my grandmother promised me a car when I was nowhere near the age to even have a car. But she told me that when I got my driver's license, that 1979 Thunderbird that wouldn't fit in between this wall and that wall, it was such a big, long car, that it was my car. So when I would go to school and people would ask, do you have a car? I told them I had a car. They said, Nicky Holden, you lying, you ain't got no car. So I'm telling you, I got a car. I got a car. Well, let me see that car. I don't have it yet, but my grandma promised it to me. And my grandma's never lied to me before, and anything she's ever told me before, she always come through with it. So I tell everybody I got a car. And sure enough, when I turned 15, my grandma gave me those keys to that car. So when I showed up to school, I said, I told y'all big dummies I had a car. Y'all didn't believe me, but I had a car. I told y'all I had a car. You'll believe me next time I tell you something. But she did. She gave me that car when I turned 15 years old. So for two to three years before that, I was telling people I had a car. Even though it wasn't in my driveway, even though I didn't have the keys to it, My grandma promised me that I had a car. Well, my grandma ain't near as

reliable, ain't even on the same page as the faithfulness and trustworthiness of the Lord. So when he makes you a promise and he gives you a word, you cling to it with all that you got. And you can tell everybody that you have what he said, even if it don't look like it right now, amen. You have it, it's yours. And it will be your hope, it will be your comfort, it will give you life, it'll give you life. So you cling to it. One of those words for me, y'all know, was Proverbs 16, three, commit your works to the Lord and I'll establish your thinking. I'll think for you, I'll teach you, I'll put my thoughts in you. I clung to it. I cling to it today. Today. It's a word I don't have any intentions of letting go of. It's mine. I'm clinging to it. I believe it. So if I want to think like him and see things that I couldn't see, he's got to give it to me. And I believe if I yield to him day to day and say, Lord, you got to show me this, I'll never see it apart from you. I may forget stuff, but you can bring it back to memory. And I don't want to forget things. So I want to have markers in my life. So I write a lot of notes in my Bible. I have markers, those stones. that are stones of remembrance of what God taught me, what he showed me, what he spoke to me, what I got, so that I can always go through and pull them out and look, you did exactly what you said you was gonna do. And I wanna see life the way he said it's gonna be, amen? These stones of remembrance. All right, let's jump in this. We're gonna run out of time tonight. We've had good talking. I'm glad we can and fellowship with one another. We don't get to see one another enough in a given week, so I always enjoy the catch up and getting to share and listen to you and all, but at the same time, we do wanna get in and hear something that the Lord would have for us. So is there anything that's just stuck out and spoke to you? that's encouraged you, helped you. Of course, it doesn't have to be where we are in Genesis, you know that. As good as anybody would know, tell us what the Lord has been blessing you with, wherever that may be. I always am ready, can run in what we have or jump on and get back on something that you've

seen somewhere. We're up to chapter what, 35?  
Is that where we are? He sure is good, Carolyn, right  
now, right now, and all the time, all the time. He changeth not,  
right? Jesus is the same today, yesterday,  
and forever. And He is the Almighty. And they  
say that in our passage today in chapter 35, that He is the  
El Shaddai, God Almighty. Y'all remember that song, El  
Shaddai? I can remember Stephanie singing that song. Who was that  
that come out with that song? Y'all remember? Amy Grant, back  
in the day, back in the 80s. El Shaddai, El Shaddai. All those names that we find  
in the word that are toward God. That is gonna be spoken in verse  
number 11 of 35. And Elohim, God, said, I am God  
Almighty, the El Shaddai, the all-powerful God who has kept  
you and who can produce in you what you can't produce in yourself.  
El Shaddai, the all-powerful God. Chapter 35, anybody glean  
anything? We talked about it Sunday morning.  
Some things out of 35. Some of you wasn't in here because  
you was working in the back. Some of you were out of town.  
So not all of you would have been unless you listened to it  
online. But we were in 35 dealing with  
Bethel. We usually say Bethel, but they  
would probably pronounce it Bethel, meaning house of God. Jacob's  
second trip to Bethel because God told him to go there. First  
time he was there we talked about it Sunday and last Wednesday  
we talked about his first time there he was fleeing and it's  
even brought to light in this passage. You was fleeing in the  
face of your brother. He was running from something. He was  
running from someone. You were running from a problem.  
You were running from trouble. You were running from something  
and you ran to the house of God, Bethel. But this time that he  
goes to Bethel, he's not running from something, he's running  
towards someone. He's following the shepherd.  
He's not fleeing, he's following. And that's what we talked about  
Sunday. And I just referred to it in my own personal life when  
I started going to the house of God. I was like Jacob. I didn't  
have the same plans that God had for me going to the house  
of God, but he changed those plans. And where you went initially,  
like mama and then brought you and you got around people and

you was brought to the house of God by somebody who loves you and cared for you, But your intentions and their intentions and God's intentions to that were not always on line with one another. Just like Jacob's first visit to the house of God, Bethel, which was named Luz by the Canaanites. And the word Luz means separation. The separation or the separated place. Well, he changed that name to Bethel because God showed himself to him. Something to note, the first time Jacob went there, he saw God in a dream. God spoke to him in a dream. Why? The man's destined for grace, but he still don't understand grace yet. He knows what has been told to him. Remember, he's 70 plus years old the first time he goes. He's over 90 now, the second time around. First time, he's throwing all these conditions out that if God would do this, if God would do that, if God would do this, if God would do that, then I will let him be my God. That's what a natural man would do that don't understand who he's dealing with, doesn't understand the grace of God. But now he's been changed. He's been touched by the Lord. Remember in chapter 32, we saw that he wrestled with God. Now, after this incident that you find in chapter number 34, which is a crazy deal, when you see what happened, remember Shechem? Remember what the boy did to Dinah? how he took her and took advantage of her, he violated her. He damaged her, that's the ideal, to violate. He defiled her. He took her, he had intimate sexual relations with her, kept her to himself, was so enraptured with her that he went to his dad who was the quote unquote ruler of the place and said whatever you have to do I need you to negotiate terms for me to have this woman. I got to have her and I'll do anything for her. I want her. That was unbecoming of the way he treated her. He didn't go through the proper means of going and talking to her dad and going through a courtship and going through all that, bringing a dowry, how they would operate. He defiled her and ruined her in their eyes and what he did, he damaged her. The idea of violate is the idea of violence and when you're violent, you damage stuff. She was damaged goods. Now, who would want her? She's been defiled by another man. Her legal brothers, when I say

legal brothers, they had the same mama, Simon and Levi. When they hear about it, they conceive a plan in their heart, and that is, let's do this. Let's tell these men that we are joining in with them, but they've got to get circumcised if they want to be part of us. So they go through with it. He is so bent on having this woman, he's willing to do anything for, and then he goes and sells it to the people of Shechem. Sells it to the man, the man says, we'll go through it. He pitched it on them, man, look at the wealth that's here. Look at the women that are here. Look at all the resources that we can have. What's theirs will be yours.

You take their daughters, you take them, that'll be yours now. And they bought into it, circumcised, and on the third day when they were the sorest and couldn't move, what did Simeon and Levi do? They walked into each tent or each home and they cut their throat. They killed every one of them. And then the rest of the brothers, the rest of the family, What did they do? They went and plundered the houses and took all their goods, took their women and children and all their resources. I think that's where some of these idols are gonna come from. Remember how Jacob told them when they was going to meet with God, he said, look, give me all the idols. Give me all the idols. And you gotta what? Purify yourself, get some clean garments on, we're going to meet with the Lord. And he took those idols, and what did he do with them? Y'all remember? What did he do with them? He did something. He buried them. You know, in chapter 35, we see four burials in this one chapter. Four burials. The first burial is the idols. It's a picture of putting it to death. putting it in the ground, it's died to us. Some of the idols most likely came from Haran when they left Perdam around. Because remember, one of them took an idol. Remember, one of his wives took a wife. Yeah, she had it. But others had stuff too. Some of the servants, because remember, they were idol worshipers. They didn't serve the same God. We talked about that Sunday night, didn't we? Remember when Laban come and they made that covenant agreement there that I won't go beyond this and you won't go beyond that for my harm. And he says, I swear by the God of Abraham and the God of Nahor. And Jacob says, well, I swear by the fear of Isaac. Why? Because he was making a

distinction. We're not talking about the same God. They serve a pagan God. Abraham used to serve a pagan God, but God changed him. God gave him a new mission, came to him, spoke to him, rescued him, brought him to life, and then started a nation through him. So we see him burying Abraham. these idols under the Terabith tree because that has to die to us. That can't be part of us. We've got to kill this and put it in the ground. It's got to die. So we buried it. Who's the next person they buried? Deborah. Deborah. Who is Deborah? Rebecca. Who's Rebecca? That's right, that would be Jacob's mother. We find Deborah back in Genesis 24. Remember when Abraham sent Eliezer, his steward, to go get a wife for his son? He said, my son can't go back over there, but you're gonna go over there and you're gonna go get a wife. He says, well, what if she don't wanna follow me? You'll be free. You don't have to worry about that. You just go tell my people that I have a son and my son needs a bride. And if they show you favor, you bring her on back to my son. Well, that's where Rebecca comes from. And Rebecca had a nurse and her name was? Deborah. That meant... As a nurse, the likelihood of this Deborah is the one who took care of Rebecca all her life. Meaning she nursed her in the sense that she was her private personal nurse as a child. She would be motherly to her. You're talking about how Pam, you're talking about Dunk. You said Dunk through the years has what, nursed Many people took care of, raised, worked with, a lot of people in her 101, nearly 102 years. Well, Deborah was a nurse who most likely reared Rebecca So when Rebekah leaves with Eliezer, they send her nurse, who she's most familiar with, like a mama figure to her, who's taking care of her, sends her back with Eliezer to go meet Isaac, and she's gonna be with Rebekah from here on out. So she leaves her homeland to go with Rebekah. Well, how in the world did this nurse, Deborah, Think about it, help me here. How did she get over there with Jacob? Because when Jacob left, he went by himself. When he left, he left in a hurry. Why did he have to leave? Who was he fleeing? He was fleeing Esau. But look, go back to chapter



number, go to 27, 27 and looking about Verse number 41. Let me start there. Y'all just, let me read this and we'll see that this is a, at some point we'll see how maybe Deborah made her way to Badan Aram and is now with Jacob. Let's see, verse 41 says, so Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing which his father had blessed him. And Esau said in his heart, the days of mourning for my father at hand. Then I will kill my brother Jacob. Now you gotta keep in mind, Isaac lived to be 180 years old. So he had quite a few years left. Even though he was old, even though he was dim in his eyes, he still lived for quite some time. I think he lived nearly another 50 years after that. So he lived near about my lifetime afterwards. Verse 42, and the words of Esau, her older son, were told to who? Rebecca. Now, Rebecca had a nurse, right? What was her name? Deborah. So she sent and she called for Jacob her younger son and she said to him surely your brother Esau comforts himself concerning you by intending to kill you. That is he's getting relief in the fact that he didn't get this blessing you got his blessing in his mind but he is comforted by the fact that he's got plans that when daddy dies you gonna die too, he's gonna kill you. Verse 43, now therefore my son, obey my voice, arise, flee to my brother Laban in Haran and stay with him there a few days until your brother's fury turns away. until your brother's anger turns away from you and he forgets what you have done to him. And when it happens, I will send and bring you from there. Why should I be bereaved also of you both in one day? So she said when she recognizes that you are not a soured look in the eyes of Esau, I'll send back for you to tell you it's time to come home. I think that could have been Doesn't tell us but it does tell us that she had plans the sin word Because remember when Jacob eventually meets Esau Esau is not threatened by Jacob anymore. He didn't want to kill him, right? And that just didn't happen overnight So somewhere in there, Mama Rebecca recognizes that Esau ain't talking about killing Jacob no more. That ain't a problem. Why? Because Esau's getting everything Esau wanted. He's got lands, he's got people, he's got servants, he's got flocks, he is consumed with what he has and you're not even a problem to him anymore. So she takes a group of her people, her nurse Deborah, most likely

one of them, who would have been if she was motherly to Rebecca, what would she have been to Jacob? Oh like a grandma. So she takes grandma along with some others and sends them on a 500 plus mile journey to go let Jacob know it's okay to come home now. Your brother's not angry with you. And it was also a way of her being kind that Deborah would get to go home and see some of her people and pedan around. So she's showing her some kindness she knows she's going to see after them and what and in Rebecca's eyes she's thinking my son has got a ride now and you will know who these family members are because you were you were with us in that they're gonna need somebody or grandma to nourish them on the way back and you be there for their kids so she sends her back potentially. The Bible doesn't tell us that but it does tell us. And I think that's most likely when she went back. So now they journey in back some 20 years later from when Jacob left. Don't know how long Deborah's been over there, but on the journey, she's an older woman. Obviously, she had to be an older woman if she was a nurse to Rebecca. Now Jacob's 90 years old and she's still alive. And they're on their way back and in chapter 35, she dies. And what does it say in 35? Y'all see that? Is that pretty clear? I think that's most likely when she got over there. Cause she didn't go with Jacob initially. Jacob was by himself when he encountered the Lord there at Bethel or in Luz. So look again at verse number eight of chapter 35. Now Deborah, Rebecca's nurse died and she was buried below Bethel under the Terebinth tree. So the name of it was called what? Which means Oaks of Weeping. Jacob and his people wept for this sweet older woman who was like a grandma to him. And that's what he names the place. the tear beneath all the oaks of weeping. So there was a burial that happened there. There was a funeral that took place and it was a sad funeral. There was weeping that went on because here's a woman that he's known her for 90 plus years of his life. and she's loved him and took care of him and nursed him and blessed him and she was frail and feeble and here she is, she passes away and his heart was grieved so they bury her on the journey. Verse nine, then God

appeared to Jacob. When he came from Paddan Aram and he blessed him. And God said to him, your name is Jacob. Your name shall not be called Jacob anymore, but Israel shall be your name. So he called his name Israel. Now we already see that, didn't we? That already happened when he wrestled with him, huh? But see, the first time in chapter, what, 32, when he wrestled with Jacob and he told him the same thing, what was God doing? He was changing the man. He was changing the man. This encounter here is more about what he's gonna do through the man's descendants. That they're not gonna be called Jacob, they're gonna be called the descendants are gonna be called what? Israel. And this is how the nation is brought forth. Listen to the wording, verse 11. Then God says he's gonna do something in all his power, the El Shaddai. I am God Almighty, what did he tell him to be? fruitful and multiply. Well, Jacob's already had all his sons, right? Doesn't he? He's got one in the womb, one's gonna be born, but the last one's gonna be born, the twelfth one's gonna be born, Rachel's gonna die when he's born, right? That's when Benjamin is born. So he's not necessarily telling Jacob to be fruitful and multiply, the word is toward Jacob's sons, the nation, the company, See, he was dealing with Jacob's character when he changed his name at Peniel when he wrestled with him. Now he's changing the company's name, the nation's name. And they would be fruitful and multiply and become a great nation. And he tells him that, look, what's gonna happen? Be fruitful, multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you and kings shall come from your body. Well, in the same chapter, we get a list of all 12 of these sons, right? All 12 of the sons. Then God went up from him in the place where they were at, where he had talked with him. Important note, chapter 28, when he was at Bethel, how did God show himself to him? In a dream. This time, Brother Shannon, he came down and met with him. Why? He's a different man. He's a different person. The first time God was letting him know that you're destined for grace. This time we see this grace being applied in the fact that he's actually meeting with El Shaddai

and God came down to him and it wasn't in a dream. Why? Because God's changed him. What did he do? Man, he buried some things of the past, didn't he? He buried those idols. He told them, we fixing to go worship God. So you got to purify your heart. You got to purify yourself. We fixing to meet with God here. And you got to put on some new fresh garments to meet with him because this is a holy God we're about to meet in the house of God. And then what did he do? He built an altar there. And when you build an altar, what would he do on that altar? He would sacrifice on it. he would sacrifice on that altar before God. God meets with him, brother Shannon, because he, what, put the idols away. They purified their hearts and they cleaned their clothes and laid the sacrifice upon the altar. This is only a second altar he's ever built. But then notice what he goes through. Verse number 13, I'll read it again. Then God went up from him and the place where he talked with him. So Jacob set up a? A pillar. A pillar. In the place where he talked with him, a pillar of stone, and he poured a drink offering on it, and he poured oil on it, and Jacob called the name of the place where God spoke with him, Bethel. Now, the pillar is not the same thing as the altar. Two different things. A pillar of stone is an Ebenezer. He set up a stone of remembrance that the significance of this encounter in this place with God is to forever be remembered. It's not to be forgotten. It's not to be forgotten. It's a pillar of stone. It's an Ebenezer, stones of remembrance that we've met with God at Bethel, that God did what he promised he would do. What did God promise the first time we met with him? That he would keep me, that he would bless me, that he would use me. that he would bless all the nations of the earth through me. He's been faithful to me. The enemy tried to hurt me, but he wouldn't let him harm me. He tried to deceive me, but he wouldn't let him do it. Matter of fact, he got to the point where he got so big and outgrowing him that his father-in-law's sons, his wife's brothers, started envying him, and God came to him and said, it's time to leave. So he leaves. He's 90 years old, and now he's setting up a pillar there, a stone of remembrance of these stones. Why? Because this is something that can't be forgotten. that you'll tell your children's

children about this event and about this moment and about this time. And that's what he set up. That's what the difference is. For an example, look in verse number six. So Jacob came to Luz, that is Bethel, which is in the land of Canaan. He and all the people who were with him and he built what? An altar. there and called the place El Bethel because there God appeared to him when he fled from the face of his brother. He built an altar. But in verse number 14, it says that he set up a pillar of stones, something that would intended to be there for a long period of time. Now Bethel ain't the first time God encountered one of these men. Remember when Abraham came out of Haran the first time? And he went down to Shechem and then he came to Bethel and that is where Abraham built an altar unto the Lord. The first time is at Bethel. So these altars have been built there and this has been a place God's been meeting with his people in the land of Canaan, but just a whole different setting. The first time it's in the dream and he sees God at the top of the ladder. Now God comes down on the earth and meets with him. Why? Because God's changed the man. And God's now not only doing something in the man, but his commitment is to do something in the man's descendants and build a nation out of them that they be fruitful and multiply. And then we see from there, they go on, they have Benjamin and who dies? Rachel. So we got another barrel, right? Number three. And then it gives the list of the sons that were born to him and then verse 27, Goes on to say, then Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre in Kirjath Arba, that is Hebron, or Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac had dwelt. Now the days of Isaac were 180 years old, so Isaac breathed his last and died and gathered to his people, being old and full of days, and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him. So we see what? Four barrels in this chapter. buried the idols, buried Deborah, buried Rachel, and we see a burial of Isaac. Now, the thing is, is that Isaac lived for a pretty good amount of time. It's just showing it here. Why? Because we see in the transition, The scene is moving away from Jacob and the emphasis now will be on Jacob's children. Esau is going to be brought up

and his clans in chapter 36, but then it's going to start shifting to the 12 sons because we're going to get into what they did with Joseph. And what we're doing is starting to look at the descendants and God working in them. The transition is happening. Same way with Abraham. When Abraham, it says he died, but Abraham still lived for some period of time. It's just saying God was shifting to Isaac and then from Isaac to Jacob, now from Jacob to Jacob's sons. Because God's purpose, his redeeming purpose, is gonna carry on when men die. Because men are gonna die. Abraham died. Isaac's gonna die. Jacob's gonna die. Israel as a whole is gonna die. But you know what? God's purpose and plan never dies. He's going to fulfill what he promised and he's going to continue that and he's always going to be our dwelling through every generation. So there's a lot of good things in this particular chapter that we can just continue to glean from again and again. Those Ebenezers are important in your life. Those stones of remembrance. There's things where God done something in your life that you just don't want to forget. that you don't want to let it go. Remember when Joshua and Caleb and Caleb had that Ebenezer, God told him you can have that mountain. So 45 years later, he's 85 years old. And he said, look, 45 years ago, God told me I can have this mountain. And ever since he said that, that's been a stone of remembrance for me. I'm as strong today as I was then. And God sustained me all these years because he gave me something to hope in. stone of remembrance and Ebenezer. Anybody got anything about any of this right here? Does that kind of help you a little bit on some of the ideas with Deborah and Rebecca and Jacob and the fact that he met with the Lord the first time? because he was fleeing. But this time he met with him because he was following his instruction. God told him to go to Bethel and that he would meet with him there. But Psalm 119 49, remember the word to your servant, upon which you have caused me to what? Hope. This word that you've caused me to hope in, This message from you, this life transferring, transforming word is my comfort in my what? Affliction. For your word has given me life. When God does a work, a moment

that you never wanna forget what he's done in you, you raise an Ebenezer. A stone of remembrance, you mark it and it's up to you to teach your kids about it. It's up to you to teach another generation about it. That's why the stones were placed there. Remember when Joshua and them crossed the Jordan and they got on the other side, God told them to raise up 12 stones, why? Because those stones were to always be memorialized of what God did at the Jordan. What God did at Bethel, what God did at the Red Sea, what God did here, and what God did there. And throughout the Word, Pam, it says that. Come and see. Come and see the invitation. Come and see what God did here. Come and see what God did there. Come and see what God did. Because the same God that did this is the same God that we're walking with today. And we don't want to forget what he's done. We want to remember it because his message to us is what builds hope in us. And that hope will be your comfort in the most difficult, troublesome days of your life. And that hope and that comfort, that message, that word that he gave you will be life to you because you can count on it. You know, I illustrate that with my grandmother. How my grandmother promised me a car when I was nowhere near the age to even have a car. But she told me that when I got my driver's license, that 1979 Thunderbird that wouldn't fit in between this wall and that wall, it was such a big, long car, that it was my car. So when I would go to school and people would ask, do you have a car? I told them I had a car. They said, Nicky Holden, you lying, you ain't got no car. I said, I'm telling you, I got a car. I got a car. Well, let me see that car. I don't have it yet, but my grandma promised it to me. And my grandma's never lied to me before, and anything she's ever told me before, she always come through with it. So I tell everybody I got a car. And sure enough, when I turned 15, my grandma gave me those keys to that car. So when I showed up to school, I said, I told y'all big dummies I had a car. Y'all didn't believe me, but I had a car. I told y'all I had a car. You'll believe me next time I tell you something. She did. She gave me that car when I turned 15 years old. So for two to three

years before that, I was telling people I had a car. Even though it wasn't in my driveway, even though I didn't have the keys to it, My grandma promised me that I had a car. Well, my grandma ain't near as reliable, ain't even on the same page as the faithfulness and trustworthiness of the Lord. So when he makes you a promise and he gives you a word, you cling to it with all that you got. And you can tell everybody that you have what he said, even if it don't look like it right now, amen. You have it, it's yours. And it will be your hope, it will be your comfort, it will give you life, it'll give you life. So you cling to it. One of those words for me, y'all know, was Proverbs 16, three, commit your works to the Lord and I'll establish your thinking. I'll think for you, I'll teach you, I'll put my thoughts in you. I clung to it. I cling to it today. Today. It's a word I don't have any intentions of letting go of. It's mine. I'm clinging to it. I believe it. So if I want to think like him and see things that I couldn't see, he's got to give it to me. And I believe if I yield to him day to day and say, Lord, you got to show me this, I'll never see it apart from you. I may forget stuff, but you can bring it back to memory. And I don't want to forget things. So I want to have markers in my life. So I'll write a lot of notes in my Bible, have markers, those stones. that are stones of remembrance of what God taught me, what he showed me, what he spoke to me, what I got, so that I can always go through and pull them out and look, you did exactly what you said you was gonna do. And I wanna see life the way he said it's gonna be, amen? These stones of remembrance. A lot of it begins from morning to morning, but it's always gonna include the house of God with his people, amen? Father, we bless you tonight. We thank you for this time we've had together. We ask you to help us, help us, help us with these things. We know that we're utterly dependent upon you. So I pray more than anything, you would teach us just how trustworthy you are, how untrustworthy we are. So therefore, we wanna lean totally upon you to bring us through. So we're gonna look to you tonight and thank you so much for your kindness. We bless you and pray



for those around us that need you tonight in ways that they don't even fathom, in some cases, how desperately they need you. We want to intercede for them. So thank you for your grace. Thank you for your kindness. Thank you for teaching us. In Jesus' name, amen. Love y'all. Y'all have a good night.