

Title: The Face of God
Text: Genesis 32: 24-32
Date: April 25, 2010
Place: PA

Genesis 32: 24: And Jacob was left alone;

I. GOD BRINGS ALL WHOM HE SAVES TO SEE THEIR WRETCHED HELPLESS CONDITON.

Jacob's own wisdom had brought him to this place.

He had experienced nothing but tribulation all his life. He was not the firstborn son, but born second to Esau. Esau was a courageous man's man; Jacob was a momma's boy. Jacob's father preferred Esau over Jacob. Jacob's mother counseled him to deceive his blind father, in order to steal the birthright from his brother, Esau. When Esau threatened to kill Jacob for doing it, Jacob had to flee from his country. His uncle Laban deceived him, like Jacob deceived his father, and he wound up marrying a woman he did not want.

So God told him to go back home and on the way, Jacob gets word that his brother Esau is coming to meet him with 400 men. Jacob is terrified. So divided his men and Jacob sent those nearest him with a large sum as a gift to try to make reconciliation with the brother who is pursuing him. So now the host of his men have gone out, **Genesis 32: 24: And Jacob was left alone;** absolutely, totally, alone.

Point: The goodness and mercy of God effectually makes sinners to abhor themselves and cry out to God for mercy. But this is his goodness and mercy.

Psalm 107: 1: O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. 2: Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy; 3: And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south. 4: They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in. 5: Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. 6: Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses. 7: And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation. 8: Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! 9: For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.

II. CHRIST MUST COME TO HIS CHILDREN IN POWER.

Genesis 32: 24: and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.

Who was this man?

Jacob is about to come to God the Father and no man cometh to the Father but by Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord appeared many times in human form, prior to his incarnation--it was a pledge of his coming in human flesh. Jacob tells us it was the Lord:

Genesis 32: 30: And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face

Jacob was an object of God's mercy by God's electing grace.

Genesis 25: 21: And Isaac intreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren: and the LORD was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. 22: And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the LORD. 23: And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated

from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.

Romans 9: 10: And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; 11: (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) 12: It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. 13: As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. 14: What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. 15: For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 16: So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

Where it not for God coming to you in Christ, you and I would have no hope.

- Nothing Jacob had done had profited him.
- God emptied Jacob
- God brought him to the end of himself
- Then Jacob cried out.

III. HIS PEOPLE SHALL BE WILLING IN THE DAY OF HIS POWER.

Notice it was the Lord who wrestled with Jacob, not the other way around. The elect child will be wrestled with by our Lord so that the sinner is made willing to hang on and plead for a blessing from Christ.

Genesis 32: 25: And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.

The Lord could have prevailed at any moment with Jacob but he is performing his operation of grace upon this sinner. He touched Jacob in a way no one or no thing ever had--in power. He pinned Jacob to the mat, as we would say in wrestling terms. Doing so, he made Jacob to know that he is King of kings and Lord of lords.

Point: When God saves you he will make you willing to confess Christ is Lord of lords and King of kings. He does it by striking a death blow to every fleshly strength you have so that you know without a shadow of a doubt this he is the effectual, sovereign Lord. You don't make Christ Lord. Some tried to take him by force and make him king and he departed from them. No, he comes to his worthless, supplanters and he touches you so that you will never walk the same again. And by that he makes you lay hold of him for all your salvation.

Ps 110:3: Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power,

The Lord proves he has given Jacob this willingness, this sincere desire by withdrawing from Jacob and watch Jacob's reaction.

Genesis 32: 26: And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

Now, it is Jacob holding on to the Lord.

- He needed righteousness in Christ
- He needed sanctification in Christ
- He needed to be redeemed from this awful curse he was under

- He needed someone to represent him in Power and Wisdom before God.

In Hoshea 12: 4 we find that Jacob had power over the angel and prevailed, but not that he usurped some power in himself, but see that this power was by a contrite spirit and a broken heart which the Lord gave him by touching him in power:

Hoshea 12: 4 Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him:

Jacob wept and made supplication, he cried out for mercy, saying, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."

Mt 11:12: And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

Illustration: How do I know I am a chosen child of God? Can you come to Christ--better yet--can you stay away from Christ?

Illustration: Blind Bartemaues--

Mark 10: 47: And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. 48: And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. 49: And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called.

Jacob said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me!" That is what it is to take the kingdom of heaven by force--to lay hold of Christ and not let go.

Hebrews 3:6: But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

IV. THIS WILLINGNESS WILL BE MANIFEST IN YOUR CONFESSION ABOUT YOURSELF.

Genesis 32: 27: And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob.

A. Before he used deception and when he was asked his name by his father, "He lied. And said Esau."

B. After the Lord has touched him in power and made him willing

Now, he says, "my name is Jacob.

- I'm a cheat.
- I'm a deceiver.
- I have been worshipping my own will trying to obtain the blessing of God, by my own craftiness.
- Enough of that, I'm a liar.
- Only you can be merciful to me the sinner, Lord."

Luke 18: 11: The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. 12: I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. 13: And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. 14: I tell you, this man

went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

V. THE LORD WILL BLESS THOSE WHO LAY HOLD OF HIM.

Genesis 32: 28: And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

Illustration: You name your child on the day they are born. Jacob was born many years before when he was born of his father Isaac, a son of Adam--dead and in trespasses and in sins. But this was Israel's birthday.

For as a prince hast thou power with God and men, and hast prevailed.

He had Christ the Prince of Peace, who makes us kings and priest unto God. He had Christ the Power and Wisdom of God--before God and men--he had acceptance in Christ, union in Christ, and sonship in Christ Here is one of God's chosen nothing's who has been made a prince with God to bring to nothing them that think they are really something.

1 Corinthians 1:31: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

VI. LESSONS ABOUT FAITH

1. Faith is Being Satisfied with Christ Alone.

Genesis 32: 29: And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name.

Those who have been blessed of God want to know all they can about their Master and their Savior. But we learn a good lesson here. The Lord did not tell him his name. And he blessed him there.

Genesis 32: 29:...And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.

But the lesson here is: Faith is trusting God in Christ as he has been pleased to reveal himself to us, demanding nothing more. The Lord would not reveal himself in the fullness of light that we have now, because of the time in which Jacob lived, the fullness of time had not come for Christ to be revealed but only by shadows and various manners such as this. But that was not Jacob's business, it was Jacob's business to trust the Lord to save him and teach him and guide him.

Point: multitudes question themselves out of believing.

2 Timothy 3:7: Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

The will of God is that you believe on his Son, that you walk in the Spirit, not lean to your own understanding, to your searching to try to find out God. But believing him, ye shall be taught and shall know the doctrine.

John 7: 14: Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. 15: And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? 16: Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. 17: If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine,

2. Faith is Rejoicing in the Face of God

Genesis 32: 30: And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. 31: And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh.

2 Corinthians 4:6: For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

A new day had dawned. Jacob would never walk the same again--grace makes a new creature from the inside and it affects the walk on the outside

Conclusion:

What about Esau who he was so worried about?

Before Jacob was terrified because Esau was coming with a host of men. Our Lord is returning with a host no man can number. But after the Lord wrestled with Jacob and blessed him. Here we see the reception that shall be between the Lord Jesus Christ and all the children of God our Father.

Genesis 33: 1: And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men...3: And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother. 4: And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.

So shall it be when every believer meets our Lord, our Savior, our Elder Brother, the Firstborn of many brethren!

Amen!