

# The God of Jacob

by Robert Constable

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*The sermon explores the unique relationship between Jacob and God, emphasizing trust, discipline, and God's unwavering faithfulness despite human flaws.*

**Duration:** 45:58

**Scripture:** Genesis 25:21-22, Genesis 27:36, Genesis 47:7, Exodus 1:8, Matthew 22:39, 1 Timothy 6:17

**Topics:** "Jacob"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker recounts the story of Jacob from the Bible. Jacob had worked for seven years to marry Rachel, but on the wedding day, he discovered that he had been deceived and married her sister Leah instead. Despite this, Jacob agreed to work another seven years to marry Rachel. Jacob then encountered God and had a life-changing experience where he realized his connection to the God of heaven. The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding our significance in relation to God and trusting in His guidance.

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## Transcript

We may trust him fully, all for us to do. The God of Abraham, he wants us to trust him fully. He demands our obedience, our trust.

The God of Isaac, the giving God, the God who wants to do it all, just to pour himself out for us, and he wants us just to take it. Don't work at it, just receive it. One of the favorite names of God that the psalmist David had was the God of Jacob.

He loved to use that term. In the 46th chapter of the 46th psalm, he uses it again and again. The God of Jacob is our refuge.

The God of Jacob. A different God than the God of Abraham. A different God than the God of Isaac.

Different because Jacob was different than these two men. Isaac was very different from Abraham. Jacob was very different from Isaac.

So, they each had their own dealings with God and found God to meet them in their circumstances. Turn to Genesis chapter 25. Genesis chapter 25.

We begin to read at verse 19, And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son. Abraham begat Isaac. And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Paganerim, the sister to Laban the Syrian.

And Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren. And the Lord was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. And the children struggled together within her, and she said, if it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the Lord.

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. And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb, and the first came out red all over like a hairy garment, and they called his name Esau. After that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel, and his name was called Jacob.

And Isaac was sixty years old when she bare them. And the boys grew, and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field, and Jacob was a plain man dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

I guess that's as far as we need to read for right now. Two manner of people. Esau grew up to be a profane man, a man, that is to say, who didn't bother about God.

His concern was the things of the world. He was a good hunter. He was a very nice man.

I think I could have liked Esau. He was a man's man, and he, you know, tale fellow well met. He liked to hunt, and he liked to fish, and he liked to do these outdoors things, and he couldn't carry a grudge across the street.

That kind of a person. Jacob, oh, he was rather a different type. He was not profane.

That is to say, he had a high sense of the value of things. He put spiritual things first, but I think he liked to play chess, you know. He was this kind of a fellow.

He was an indoors man. He was a thinker. He was a scheming type.

He was not extrovert at all like his brother Esau. And it says here that Isaac loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob. That's rather typical that this should be like this, but the first mention in the word of God of a divided home.

This is where it's divided, in their love for their children. Well, Esau went out and got married, and he married one of the girls in a place, you know, that he saw around, and oh, that upset Isaac and Rebekah something fearsome. They were not happy about this.

Now, you notice that in what we read, that the Lord said to Rebekah what was going to happen, that she was going to have two children, and that they were going to be different kinds of people, and that the younger would rule over the elder. It was going to be a reversal of what is normally expected. So, Rebekah knew from the beginning that Jacob was the one upon whom the blessing of God was to be.

And the boys grew up, and she saw that, you know, Esau was the favorite of her husband. And she'd think about this, and she'd say, you know, I have to watch this thing, because if I'm not careful, Isaac is going to bless Esau, and he's not supposed to do that. But the blessing gets on Jacob, and she liked Jacob better

anyway, and she wanted Jacob to get the blessing.

And so she'd think about this, and she'd talk about it to Jacob. And so Jacob got very sensitive about this. And then one day when Esau came in from hunting, you know that story? He came in, and he was tired and wanted something to eat.

And so Jacob said, well, I'll give you some of this stew if you sell me your birthright. And Esau said, whew, that's a birthright to me. Let's have some stew.

And so he sat down, and he ate the stew that he had sold his birthright. And, you know, Jacob was just making progress, he thought. And then later on came the time when it looked, for the moment at least, that maybe Isaac was not long for this world, and that he ought to be passing the blessing of God on to his son.

Actually, he lived about 30 years after this. He said to Esau, you go out and get me some venison, you know, the kind I like, and bring it in, and I'll bless you. And Rebekah heard this, and she said to Jacob, now look, we've got to move fast.

Esau's gone out into the field, and he's going to get some venison for your father, and he's going to bless him. Now, let's get to work here, and you take in the venison. I'll fix it, and you take it in, and you get the blessing.

And Jacob said, hold the phone. You know, I go in there, and my father will know that it is I. Oh no, she said, I'll fix it all up for you. She put this goat hair on his arms and across the back of his neck and everything, so that he'd feel like Esau.

Told him what to say, and he went in, and he deceived his father and stole the blessing, because Isaac blessed him. And a little while later, Esau came in, and he was roaring mad because of what happened. And he said, I'll get that fellow when my father dies, and it won't be long.

I'm going to get even with him. And Rebekah heard this, and she said to Jacob, you'd better get out of here for a while. You'd better get out of here for a while.

Esau is so upset that he's threatened to kill you, and I think perhaps you'd better go to where my brother lives and spend a few days with him. And you know Esau, he'll get over this rage that he's in now, and you can come back home and everything will be all right. But for the time being, you must leave.

And Jacob said, fine. Well, Rebekah put a different face on it with Isaac. She said to him, you know the problem we've had with Esau marrying this girl here and everything? We don't want that to happen to Jacob.

We want him to marry one of the family. Now, let's send him back to my brother, and he'll meet a nice girl back there. And Isaac said, well, that sounds like a good idea.

All right, we'll send him back. And they proceeded to do this. They sent Jacob back, and he started for the old country to go to be with his uncle.

Now, I'm going over this rather fast and quickly, because we have a long ways to go, and I could be reading you the episode, but it would take too long this morning. So, Jacob started out to go back to his mother's brother's home. In the meantime, Rebekah is, quotation marks, helping God.

Helping God. She passed this bad habit along to her son, Jacob. This is the characteristic thing about Jacob.

He was always helping God. Sometimes we get involved in helping God. And really what it turns out to be is that we're meddling.

You know, God has his program. God is able to carry through what he wants. He would have gotten the blessing to Jacob on a perfectly legitimate basis.

They didn't need to be worrying about this. But they thought that because God had said this, they had to help him accomplish this. That's why we have the record here, I guess, to remind us that we're not to meddle with God.

Rebekah knew what was right. She was offended by Esau, and now she's frightened. She's frightened that everything's going to fall in.

That Esau's going to kill Jacob, her favorite. And she said, why should I lose both of my sons? Why should I lose my son? And so she sent him away. And she lost him.

That's the last she ever saw Jacob. Rebekah never saw her favorite son. She said, you go away for a few days.

He was gone for over 20 years. We never know what the hidden message is. Because he went to school.

She thought she was sending him back to her brother, and that he'd find a nice girl back there and come home. She didn't realize she was sending him off to the university. The school of God.

This is the God of Jacob. Somebody said after our meeting the other day that Abraham was the prototype father. He is the father, and so he knows God as father.

And he dealt with Isaac as a father deals with his son. Well, this is the way God deals with all of these people, is like a father. In the one case, he wants to be trusted like a father is trusted.

There's nothing a father appreciates more than that his children trust him and obey him. The same with Isaac. God wanted Isaac to know him as a father.

That is, one who would supply all his needs. This is a function of a father. And so it is with Jacob.

God wants Jacob to know him as a father, and one of the functions of a father is to discipline. And so Jacob's going to learn about God the disciplinarian. God the teacher.

Sometimes we put a wrong emphasis on the word discipline, you know, and we think of it as punishment. But we're thinking of discipline in the sense that it's a teaching. And so as Jacob goes away from home, he is hardly out of sight of the place when he gets started in school.

And God met him, chapter 28. Now, you know, he's going away from home under pretty bad circumstances here. He's been a cheat, a conniver, a schemer, and he's running away from his brother.

He knows he's wrong about the whole thing. Verse five. And Isaac sent away Jacob, and he went to Padanarim unto Laban, the son of Bethuel, Assyrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Padnerim to take him a wife from Thames, and that as he blessed him, he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan, and that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padnerim. Esau, seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father, he went into Ishmael and took unto the wives which he had. Nahalath, the daughter of Ishmael, Abram's son, the sister of Nebijah, to be his wife.

And Jacob went up from Beersheba and went to Haran, toward Haran. And he lighted on a certain place and tarried there all night, because the sun was set. And he took of the stones of that place and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.

And he dreamed. And behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold, the angels of God ascending and descending upon it.

And behold, the Lord stood above it and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac. The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed, and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth. Thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south.

And in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land. For I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." Now, this is surprising, isn't it? You would think that God would have had something to say about this deceiving of his father.

You'd think that God would have said, now what's going on here? I want you to learn something. God doesn't do it that way. I think maybe that's the way some of us fathers might have done it.

But God didn't do it that way. God came to him, and he gave him the promise of Abraham and Isaac, and the addition that wherever he went, God would be with him, God would accomplish his purpose in him, bring him back, provide everything he needed. How could God do that to a rascal like Jacob? Well, God knew what he was doing.

God knew that he was just entering school, and God knew what he was going to be like when he got out of school. God could look down the twenty years, and see the Jacob that came back to Bethel. God knew how he was going to bring him back.

And so he assured him at the beginning, I've got a program for your life. You're going to go to school now for a few years. But whatever happens to you, I want you to be confident and assured that I am with you, I'm going to stay with you, and I'm going to bring you back.

You know, Mrs. Grace, all that the young people of our day could get this concept of God, that he is going to stay with them no matter what it looks like, no matter what the circumstances may be, no matter how difficult the training, that our lives are in the hands of a God who loves us, and who will accomplish his purpose. So he gives Jacob this assurance, and Jacob woke up in the morning, and he was shook. This is how terrible a place to be.

Ah, God is in this place. And he built an altar there, and he set up stones and poured oil and worshiped God. Ah, this is tremendous.

And he had an altogether new concept of his own life from that day on. From now on, he realizes, as he never did before, that God is in charge of his life. He saw angels going up and down on the ladder.

He had a visual demonstration of what the Word says in the book of Hebrews. Are they not all ministers sent forth to minister to us who are the heirs of salvation? He knew that God had plenty of resources by which to direct his way, and by which to keep him in his way. And he had a new concept.

He realized that God was going to go with him. He saw heaven. He had a new concept of space, as it were.

That is, that his life was not just limited to this little sphere in which he had lived before, nor even the little sphere of where he lived, plus where his uncle lived. He had a new concept of the fact that his life was related to the God of heaven. And this is one of the things we need, is a concept of the fact that we are related to the God of heaven.

That it is not just this little realm that we go through day by day down here. Our lives are far more significant than that. That's one of the things that Jacob learned on this occasion when God met him.

He never was quite the same after this experience, although he didn't change too much. He was afraid, but he was humbled. Now, we can't be too critical, you know, of Jacob.

We are inclined to be critical of Jacob. Whenever we think Jacob, we remember the name means a schemer, and right away we begin to find fault with Jacob. But Jacob is very much like the rest of us.

We too must meet with God, and we too must enter into covenant with God. That's the beginning, entering into a covenant with God. In the end, God will accomplish his purpose, and our lives will be fruitful, as Jacob's life was fruitful.

But that fruitfulness will be the result of the discipline of God. Now, first we have Jacob as he was, a schemer and a crook. Then we have him tested and disciplined by God.

Then we have the dislocation of his natural life, and then the years of fruitfulness. He began as a schemer, wily, clever, confident. It wasn't just that what Jacob did was wrong, he just wasn't suited by nature for God any more than any of us was.

You know, old nature just isn't suited for God. And Jacob was a carnal man. He was very much conscious of his own strength, and he was strong.

He desired the will of God, but when it didn't seem to happen, he used every device he could think of to make it happen. He was impatient. Sometimes we are impatient.

Well, we've been talking about Jacob in some of his earlier aspects right now, but it does remind us of ourselves, doesn't it? Don't you sometimes have a feeling of disappointment in the kind of a Christian you are? Don't you sometimes say to the Lord, Lord, you've got a bad feel when you saved me? There's so many nice people who really would have amounted to something for you, and what do you do but pick me up? You know. We have a sense of the fact that we're very much like Jacob. Well, I hope that this morning our consideration will help us to accept this and to realize that God is not disappointed with us.

He's never disappointed with us. However disappointed we get with ourselves, he isn't disappointed. He knows what he's doing, and he's going to bring us to the end that he has in mind.

Jacob must contrive. He must do something, and the result is he has to leave home. Now, isn't this risky for God to do this at the start of his life, to tell him all this blessing that's going to come to him? You know,

maybe now that Jacob won't be so careful.

He'll just live fast and loose. And this is like people saying, you know, you can't know you're saved. It's bad to believe that God has got you in his hands permanently, because if you believed that, you'd live like you wanted to live.

No such thing. It's God we're dealing with, the God of Jacob who's able to bring us through. May I remind you that Jacob was God's choice? That God wanted Jacob? Jacob didn't choose God.

God chose Jacob. You didn't choose God either. God chose you.

The Lord Jesus said, you haven't chosen me. I have chosen you and ordained you that you should go and bring forth fruit. Just as was the case with Jacob.

God has put his love upon us, and he's going to accomplish something with us in our lives. And he's going to do it in spite of us, and if it's necessary, he's going to keep us in school until he gets us there. This is what he does with Jacob.

God chose him. God was going to work. In Isaiah 43, the Lord says, I will work, and who will hinder it? When the Lord makes up his mind to do something, he does it.

Nobody gets in his way, not even us. Well, all Jacob got was discipline, and clever people get a lot of discipline. Clever people get a lot of discipline, because clever people are apt to figure that they can figure things out, and that they can direct their lives very well, and that they can do a good job with their careers.

And so they get a lot of discipline. God comes in and works in the lives of men and women like that. And as I pointed out before, God didn't rebuke him because of the past.

Now, you know why God didn't rebuke him? What in the world good would it have done? What good would it have done? Jacob would have gotten defensive. He would have explained, you know, how this all came about and what he had to do, and it wouldn't have changed Jacob one bit for God to have rebuked him. He was just like us.

The easiest thing we do, except maybe breathing, is rationalize. We rationalize everything we do. We can explain it away, and we're always right.

And God knew this. He knew if he rebuked Jacob, all he'd get was an argument. Because Jacob could not change Jacob.

Jacob could not change Jacob. And you cannot change you. Have you noticed? My wife says, the older we get, the more we get like ourselves.

No, we don't change ourselves, but God could change him. God had a process that was going to change this man. So why bother to rebuke him? Let's go to work on him, God says.

Twenty-one years later, when he came to Bethel, he was a different man altogether, and God knew that he would be. There was nothing in what God said to Jacob about, if you do this, I'll do the other. There's nothing conditional about what God said to Jacob.

He said, I'm going to do this with you and for you, period. And he has said that to you and me, too. The book is filled with promises of what God is going to do with us, and for us, and through us, and they are such wonderful things.

And so from Bethel on, Jacob is in school. God has got some very poor material to work with. When Jacob's starting out, you know, I can just see an angel saying, God has really taken himself on a job with this guy.

But, you know, God's work is perfect. The material may not be any good, but the work is perfect, and he knows how to do it. Well, he was on the mountaintop at Bethel, and we have often in our careers reached a place where we're on the mountaintop, and our concepts are enlarged, and we get a sense of God, and our hearts are bowed in worship, and we sort of rededicate our lives and everything.

Then we start out again and come right down the mountain, don't we? Well, that's the way it was with Jacob. And so he got to Bethel. I mean, he got to his uncle's place, Laban's place.

And when he got there, the first thing he saw was a beautiful girl. And I can understand this. I don't blame him for this, you know.

Rachel must have been a beauty. And he fell in love with her, and he stuck around for about a month. Now, he'd gone there for a few days, but he stuck around for about a month around Laban's house, just mooning over Rachel.

And this is all right. Laban says, you're welcome here, I'm glad to have you here. But he begins to think, you know, I have to feed this fellow all the time.

I wish he'd get to work. And so he said to Jacob, you know, Jacob, I ought not to be having you do all this work you're doing around here, and not pay you for it. So let's enter into an agreement that you'll get certain wages.

Isn't this a nice, devious way to say get to work? Well, this is the kind of person Laban was, too. And so Jacob said, he said, what would you like for me to pay you if you work around here? And Jacob said, well, I'll tell you what, I'll work for you for seven years if I can marry Rachel. Great! No money out of pocket.

This is a good deal for Laban. He wanted to marry his daughter off anyway, and here was the opportunity. Man, this is great.

So Jacob went to work. And he worked for seven years. And you know this story.

At the end of the seven years, he said to Laban, okay, I've been working for seven years now for Rachel. And, you know, he'd been courting her, and they'd been out together, and they'd had dates one after the other. And by now, after seven years, they know each other pretty well, and they are very much in love.

And so comes the day of the wedding. And I don't know if you've been to this wedding or not. They're a very fascinating situation.

They have all the celebration and everything. And, you know, there they didn't have electric lights like we do. It wasn't bright at night like daytime like it is here.

Everything is dark, and they did everything by the light of a candle or an oil lamp. And so after the wedding, Jacob goes to the tent with his bride. Great, you know.

They're absolutely great until morning. And he wakes up in the morning, and here is Rachel. Can you imagine the way Jacob looked that morning when he came roaring out of the tent over to his father-in-law, and he said, what's going on here? Man, he worked seven years, and he got the wrong one.

You know, if this fellow was a cheater, I mean Jacob, he was a third-class cheater. His father-in-law was the prize. And the cheater got cheated like he never dreamed he could be cheated.

And Laban, you know, smooth as oil. He says, down boy, just relax. In our country, we can't marry the younger girl before we marry the older girl.

Relax. You can, you know, be with her now for a week, and I'll give you Rachel, all right, and you can work for me for another seven years for Rachel. Well, he was so relieved that he was going to ultimately get Rachel at least, that I guess it didn't occur to him he had another seven years' work to put in.

And he accepted the proposition, and a week later, he was married to Rachel. And then he started his second seven years of work for this father-in-law he had. And the second seven years were pretty rugged.

You know, it's different working after you've got the prize than it is when you're working for it. And so, he sees the need now. He's got a wife, and he's beginning to get a family, and he has to support them.

And so, old Jacob begins to come out, and he gets ideas, you know, about what he needs to do in order to get rich. And he begins cheating on Laban. And, of course, he's dealing with an expert.

Laban starts cheating on him. And as he says later, Laban changed his way just ten times in the course of this working for his bride. Oh, man, they were a pair, this pair, Jacob and Laban.

Well, this is what went on. So, the word of the Lord came to Jacob, and he said, I want you to go back home. Now, Joseph had just been born.

Joseph was born while they were there in Laban's house. And they'd had several children, of course, but they were all Leah's children. They weren't Rachel's.

She didn't have any children. But now she did. She had Joseph.

And, you know, oh, is he proud of Joseph. Here is the child by the wife he loved. Oh, boy, isn't he great? And he wants to take Joseph home and show him to the folks.

And so he says to Laban, I want to go home. Give me my stuff and everything. I'm going to move out of here.

And Laban says, but then I'll let this happen. And so he begins to work out schemes to keep Jacob there. And Jacob finds himself involved in this and then involved in that until finally his impatience overcomes him.

And he says, I'm going to go, and I'm going to go and not say anything to Laban. And so he gathered his things together. He took his family and away he went.

And when Laban came home that night, his family was gone. That is, his daughter Rachel and Leah and their children and Jacob. And so he called his other sons together and said, let's go after him and bring him back, which they did.

They went after him, that is to say. But when they caught up to him, Jacob said to Laban, I'm not going back. And the Lord supported him in this.

Because the day before Laban caught up to Jacob, the Lord came and talked to Laban. And he said, when you catch up to Jacob tomorrow, I don't want you to say anything good or bad to him. I want you to let him go.

And Laban realized the thing was out of his hands. So he caught up to Jacob and they talked things over. They had a feast together.

They parted on good terms because God had undertaken for him to get him loose from Laban. And Jacob went on his way. Then Jacob came very near home and he heard his brother Esau had come out to meet him with 400 men.

Well, now in Jacob's place, you'd have been worried too. 400 men, what you got to come out with 400 men for? And my little family here, and he's come out to get even with me because I stole the blessing. And Jacob is worried sick.

Oh, she worried sick. And so he divides his family up. He sends part of them over this way and part of them over this way.

And he says, if Esau meets with this group, this group will know it and they can get away. And, you know, all this kind of scheming and so on. And he sent them away and he was there all by himself.

And he was the most worried man on earth. He was worried sick. And in all his concern, he reminded God of what he'd said.

You said that you'd take care of me, that you would bring me back. God came and wrestled with Jacob that night. Oh, how they wrestled.

God said, in effect, yes, I said I would bring you back. And I'm bringing you back. But you keep meddling all the time.

And Jacob wrestled with God all night. And it says God did not prevail. You ever have a wrestling match like that with God? You work the problem over all night with God, and in the morning you are still going to do what you want to do.

You are still going to run the show. That's exactly the way it was with Jacob. After wrestling with God all night, Jacob was still hanging in there.

He was going to have something to say about it. And just before morning, when God saw that he wasn't getting anywhere with Jacob, isn't that a strange thing to say? Maybe God hasn't been getting anywhere with you. Maybe God hasn't been getting anywhere with me.

And when he sees he's not getting anywhere with him, he reached out and he touched his thigh, the point of his greatest strength in this wrestling match. And Jacob is done. He can't put any leverage anymore.

He's been ruined, you know, so far as Jacob is concerned. All his natural strength and ability, which was very great, very great. Jacob was a man who knew the score.

Jacob was a man who was able to do things. God touched him, and all his natural ability drained out. And then he grabbed hold of the Lord and said, I'm not going to let you go unless you bless me.

And God brought him that night to the place where he could bless. It was on that occasion that God said, your name is no longer Jacob. It's Israel.

Because you are a prince with God, and you have prevailed. Now, how did he prevail? By surrendering. By hanging on.

By saying, I'm finished. I'm done. And you and I are going to prevail in our life with God when we reach the brook Jabbok.

When we come to the place where God touches our lives and all our natural ideas, our strength, all the things we depend on, we let them go. We hang on to God. We say, if anything's going to be accomplished, you are going to have to accomplish it.

When we do that, we prevail, like Jacob prevailed. And from then on, Jacob's life, oh, it wasn't without its problems, but the problems were not the problems of Jacob's making anymore. Jacob went on trusting God, depending on the Lord, and he entered into the fruitful thirty years of his life.

We haven't got time to go into this, I wish we did. But how fruitful and how wonderful, how Jacob suddenly became conscious of other people, became interested in other people, began to love other people, began to be concerned about other people. How his family followed in his train and got away from all the crookedness.

And he was a great blessing. And he went down into Egypt later on with his family, and down in Egypt was the greatest king in the earth in those days, the Pharaoh of Egypt. Do you know what it says? It says, Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

Not Pharaoh blessed Jacob. And the lesser is blessed of the greater. And God is saying in that, that the man who has found that he can do nothing in his natural strength, but leaves it all with God, becomes greater than the greatest that the earth can produce.

That's what Jesus meant when he said that John the Baptist was the greatest man that ever lived. Now, we all have that potential, potential to meet and to know and to walk with the God of Jacob. The God of Jacob is the disciplining Father who brings us through all the circumstances of our lives into all his gracious will.

God, give us all to know him better. Shall we pray? O Lord, we thank thee that in wonderful grace you chose us. And you have chosen to work in our lives in such a way as to accomplish all your gracious purpose in having chosen us.

And you are taking us on in spite of us. In spite of our meddling, in spite of our obstinacy, in spite of our intransigency, you are taking us on in thy will. O help us, we pray thee, to keep our hands off and to trust thee that we may know the accomplishment of thy gracious purpose in each of our lives and that our lives may be fruitful and a blessing as Jacob's life was in his later years.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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