

God, the God of Israel

by Ron Reed

Ron Reed's sermon explores Jacob's transformation through prayer and wrestling with God, emphasizing reliance on divine grace over personal strength.

Duration: 39:36

Scripture: Genesis 21:22-34, Genesis 29:15-30, Genesis 32:13-21, Genesis 32:24-26, Genesis 33:9-11, John 4:10-14, Ephesians 2:1

Topics: "Israel"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the story of Jacob wrestling with God and how it relates to our own struggles with God. The preacher highlights how Jacob initially wanted to serve God on his own terms and was not willing to reach out and disciple others. However, after wrestling with God and experiencing pain, Jacob finally admits his true self and asks God for a blessing. The preacher also mentions how Jacob is a promise bearer and how God used even the deception of Laban to bring about His plans. Additionally, the preacher discusses how Jacob prepares to meet his brother Esau, showing humility and sending gifts as a way to reconcile.

Transcript

The Lord is so good. Last couple of days, Megan Caroon, formerly Megan Coleman, was supposed to have a baby shower, but instead she had a baby. So congratulations for a nice little boy.

Boston Ryan. So we'll be seeing him, I'm sure, soon in church. So congratulations to that family.

Well, I was praying fervently that I would be through with my cold by today, but I'm not, so would you all pray fervently for me as I attempt to cover some ground here in Genesis chapter 32. Let's start with prayer. Dear Father, we're so thankful that we can assemble here today and as we gather in your name that you're here with us.

And Lord, what you had to say is more important than anything else that we might be thinking of or that we might even think to say. And so Lord, we ask that your Holy Spirit will speak clearly and that we would have ears to hear what the Spirit says to the churches. Lord, we ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen. We are in Genesis chapter 32. Verse one, the continuing story of Jacob and his family.

Verse one reads, So Jacob went on his way and the angels of God met him. When Jacob saw them, he said, this is God's camp. And he called the name of that place Mahanaam or Mahanaam.

Two camps is what this means. And so at this place where he would set up his camp, the Lord had sent his angels already, his army of angels, to meet him there. And can you imagine that, Jacob, a man who is kind of coming along in his faith.

He has a great heritage, right? Abraham, his grandfather, Isaac, his dad. Abraham and Isaac went up to that altar, you know, and God provided a sacrifice to substitute for Isaac. But now, Jacob, many years later, has had one encounter with God, has seen God bless him tremendously, and now he's on his way home.

And as he gets close to home, the angels of God were there with him. Now, we may not think of this, and we shouldn't think of it too much, because the danger of us worshiping angels is very real. We kind of go through these paths throughout history.

And even yet today, among many of the Jewish religious people, angels are a big part of their religion. And it was a real problem even in the days of the New Testament with angel worship. And we dare not worship angels.

When we first moved here, it was big, it was huge. Everybody was into angels, everybody was selling angels. And we met someone who said that they were praying fervently every day that they could discover the name of their angel.

And I'm assuming it's so that they could carry on some sort of conversation with this being. And that's just downright dangerous. We're not given that.

The secret things belong to God. And so, they are messengers of God and ministers to the saints, but their ministry to us is most of the time invisible. But isn't it comforting to know that they're nearby? As a matter of fact, have you ever noticed when the praises are ascending from His people and the spirit begins to move, it just almost sounds like you can hear someone else singing with you? I think that the angels begin to praise and worship with us and delight to do so.

But again, that's not for us to focus on. But we are shown here, and Jacob was able to see that he wasn't in this alone. God had promised that He would be with him, and all of a sudden He reveals to him how big He was with him, how much He was with him.

And do you realize how big God is and how much He is with you? So often we try to do things in our own strength, in our own power. But God is with us. So often we think we have to figure this out.

We have to muscle this through. We've got to win the wrestling match. But God is with us, and God is huge.

And do you realize that this morning? And so Jacob went and he sees the angels. Then Jacob sends his messengers before him to Esau's brother in the land of Seir, the country of Edom. And he commanded him, saying, Speak thus to my lord Esau.

Thus your servant Jacob says, I have dwelt with Laban and stayed there until now. I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, and male and female servants, and I have sent to tell my lord that I may find favor in your sight.

Then the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to your brother Esau, and he also is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him.

So Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed, and divided the people that were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels into two companies. Now in spite of the fact that he noticed that the Lord was camped with him, Jacob is still using his own wits, and actually it's a pretty good strategy here. Now this way only half of them get killed.

If Esau comes and attacks, he thinks. Verse eight, he said, If Esau comes to one company and attacks it, then the other company, which is left, will escape. Then Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the Lord who said to me, Return to your country and to your family, and I will deal well with you.

I'm not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which you have shown your servant, for I have crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now have become two companies. Do you notice that as he starts to pray, that suddenly Jacob, the heel grabber, has become a humble man. He says, I'm not worthy.

And when he prays, he doesn't just kind of pray to the air like he did at Bethel, and say, you know, if this God who said these things will do this stuff, then he can be my God. He doesn't take that approach at all. He comes and he cries out to God.

He says, O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the Lord who said to me, Return and I will be with you. He says, I'm not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth you have shown your servant. Now this is an essential place that a man of faith must come to, and the understanding is that you're not worthy of the mercies of God, but God in his grace gives those mercies to you.

It's God who does this work in your life. And so Jacob here has a time of confession as he comes before the Lord, and then he has some praise. He said, hey, when I came this way before, all I had with me was a staff, you know, a walking stick, and now I've become two companies.

Now I don't know how big these companies were, but as we'll see the present that he sends to his brother Esau, it must have been a very, very large retinue of animals and servants. And of course, we know that he had four wives and 11 children. So a very large band indeed.

And he continues to pray verse 11. Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him lest he come and attack me and the mother with the children. For you said, I will surely treat you well and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.

So what does Jacob do? He reminds God what God had said earlier. He said, you're the God who told me to return here. And you said, I will treat you well, and I'll give you many descendants as the sand of the sea that cannot be numbered.

God, do you remember what you said? Some are kind of critical when you see a prayer like this, that someone would dare to remind God what he had promised. But oh, doesn't it give me hope when I remind God what he's promised me? I find myself doing that all the time. When discouragement comes and I begin to pray, I say, Lord, you're the one who gave me this to pray for.

You're the one who told me to stay here. You're the one. And I just go through.

And, of course, I'm telling God that as I'm telling him, I'm telling me. And his spirit just begins to make my spirit more alive somehow. And I begin to worship the Lord.

And so Jacob is doing this. There's something spiritual happening to this very carnal man. There's something in his spirit that's beginning to take place.

There's a brokenness. There's a humility that we haven't seen yet in this man. There's a communion with God that is beginning to open up.

Jacob is actually beginning to turn into a spiritual man. He's moving from simply being a religious man to being a godly man. Let me explain what I mean by this.

Somehow, even before he was born, he got the religion thing down pretty good. He wrestled with his brother for the birthrights because he saw the value. Now, how does an infant in the womb see the value? I don't understand.

But there's something about that. It was given in a prophecy to their mother. And somehow, whether it was instinctively or spirit-driven or just his soul in his own strength, which I think it was at that point, he was wrestling for the blessing.

There's a lot of carnal men and women in the church that are wrestling for the blessing. They're not really having a spirit-led life at all. They're not walking with the Lord at all.

What they're doing is they're wrestling for the blessing. You might wonder, what do you mean by that, Ron? Well, they've got a lot of head knowledge. It's all up here.

They can quote it to you chapter and verse. They can give you correct soteriology and eschatology. They can talk to you at length about the hypostatic union.

They can name the various systems of theology and what that kind of view does to the Scripture when you understand the Scripture from that viewpoint. They can talk salvation out their ears. But they're just Jacobs.

They're living for God on their own strength. And the church is full of guys like that. Guys doing it on their own.

Women doing it on their own. But finally we see something spiritual happening with Jacob. Let me ask you this morning, is there something spiritual happening with you? Is the Lord dealing with your life on a spiritual level or is it still all of your intellect and all of your soul and all about you and all about how you are holding everything together? Because if that's all you have, then all you have is Jacob before this moment.

But at this moment, Jacob, somehow something has happened and the Spirit is coming alive in him and God is dealing with his life. And that's, my friend, what true conversion is all about. When you who are dead, he hath quickened or he makes alive so that you begin to understand things in your spirit but not just with your own person, with your own force, with your own soul.

It's God dealing with you in that part that's been dead since creation fell as he makes you alive. So he reminded God. And he lodged there at Angel's Camp.

And he took what came to his hand as a present for he saw his brother, 200 female goats and 20 male goats and 200 ewes and 20 rams and so forth. And it says they came to his hand. Now, I don't know what that means.

It doesn't really matter what that means. I have to tell you, those of you that have been taking the Inductive Bible Study course, this is irrelevant, really. This is not something to dwell on, but I can't help it.

I just, what does it mean? And you know what I thought and what I think it may mean? Is later on in the law, they'll hold the rod out and every animal that comes under the rod belongs to the Lord. And I wonder if every tenth animal that came under his hand as they passed before him didn't go to his brother Esau. In fact, I wonder if he didn't pay the tithe that he promised God at Bethel to his brother Esau.

Now, we don't see God directing him to do this, although God may well have directed. And maybe now that he is becoming a spiritual man, this is a spirit-led decision. I honestly don't know.

I mean, I think this could go either way. This could be Jacob just reverting to his normal self and doing his normal thing. Or this could actually be something that the Lord is showing him to do because the net result of what he's doing here is a humble man bowing before his brother.

A humble man sending gifts to his brother that probably still couldn't buy back the blessing that he had stolen. Verse 16, And then he delivered them to the hand of his servants. Every drove by itself and said to his servants, Pass over before me and put some distance between successive droves.

And he commanded the first one, saying, When Esau, my brother, meets you and asks you, saying, To whom do you belong and where are you going? Whose are these in front of you? Then you shall say, They are your servant Jacob's. It is a present sent to my lord Esau. And behold, he also is behind us.

So he commanded the second, the third, and all who followed in the drove, saying, In this manner you shall speak to Esau when you find him. And also say, Behold, your servant Jacob is behind us. For he said, I will appease him with the present that goes before me, and afterward I will see his face.

Perhaps he will accept me. You know what I thought of when I read this verse? Perhaps he will accept me. I thought of Leah, who with the birth of each child, except Judah, kept thinking, Maybe now my husband will love me.

Maybe now my husband will accept me. Maybe now my husband will be bound to me. Maybe now my husband will cling to me.

But now it is Jacob who is hoping that his brother will accept him. So the present went on before him, and he himself lodged that night in the camp. And he arose that night and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven sons and crossed over the ford of Jabbok and sent them over the brook and sent over what he had.

And then Jacob was left alone. Now, when he settles in for the night, he's already sent ahead the presents for his brother Esau, and he's settled here beside this little river, this little brook Jabbok. And one would think from the way it's written at this place, that before he crossed the river, he had settled in at the camp.

But later on, he passes on before his family, as Esau finally shows up, and it's the same idea, he's passing across this brook. So he actually is sending his family back across the brook and putting himself in the

place of danger. Now, I've always kind of read that the other way, but I'm quite certain that that's what Jacob is doing.

There's been a change in this man. Something has happened to this man, that he's willing to put his own life on the line before he's willing to put his family's life on the line. And we're going to see an even more glaring example of that in just a moment.

And so he sends them over to the other side. He does this in the night, by the way. Isn't this interesting? In the middle of the night, he breaks camp, he gets the family up, he sends them over in the darkness across this river.

And then he's left alone, it says. Verse 24, he's left alone. I've tried to put myself in Jacob's sandals and consider what was going on in his heart and mind.

He's had this spiritual awakening, this grace awakening in his heart. But there's still all the fears of Jacob, 97 years worth that he's living with. He thinks back behind him, his Uncle Laban.

And there's a pillar that's been put up that he's not supposed to cross, especially to do harm. But I think the idea is just don't even come back here. And his brother Esau is coming from the other direction, probably the direction that he's facing.

And he's thinking, I'm between Laban and Esau. Here I am. I'm stuck here.

What am I going to do? And he'd already prayed, but I just want to think that now that he's alive spiritually that there's something going on in his spirit and he's beginning to call out to the Lord. And if you can imagine that in the dead of the night with your family and your camp and your animals and all your servants across the brook and you're there by yourself and you're lonely and you're scared and you're hoping that things are going to turn out OK. And suddenly a hand touches you.

Just think how frightening that would be. Jacob was left alone and a man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. At this point it doesn't say Jacob was wrestling with a man.

It says the man wrestled with him. He's standing there alone expecting his brother Esau, hoping his brother won't come and kill him. And all of a sudden there's a man wrestling with him.

Now he started out wrestling in the womb, remember? And he wrestled the birthright from his brother. And he wrestled the blessing from his father. And he wrestled two wives and two concubines from his father-in-law.

And he wrestled his father's herd. He knew how to wrestle. Ninety-seven years of wrestling experience.

The guy was good at it. He wrestled. This man came and wrestled with him until the break of day.

I have been thinking about this a lot. Because several of you over the last several weeks have been asking me, what does it mean that he wrestled with God? What does that mean? That's a great question. So I've been thinking and praying and considering.

And I was thinking about Rachel, who said that she wrestled with her sister. You know, she's in this wrestling match with her sister, this competition to have children. And so she named that particular child wrestling or struggling.

And then I was thinking of Psalm 18. To the deceitful you will show yourself shrewd. Or in the King James, to the froward you will show yourself froward.

He uses froward there twice in the King James, but it's actually two different Hebrew words. And the second Hebrew word there means wrestling. To the froward, to the deceitful, you will wrestle.

You'll come and wrestle with that man. And you can imagine my disappointment when I discovered that that's not the same word that's used here. It would have been such a nice, tidy little thing for a sermon, wouldn't it? All of you preachers out there know exactly what I mean.

But that's not what it meant. In fact, the word that's used here for wrestling is used differently every other place that you find it in the Scripture. In this place alone, it's used to describe a wrestling match between this man, who's yet to be identified in this verse, and Jacob.

And here's what the word means in Hebrew. It's a primitive root. This is right out of Strong's, which means to float away as a vapor.

But it comes from, or it's used in another word, which is Abak, which means light particles, dust, powder. He was wrestling with light particles. He was wrestling with dust.

He was wrestling with a shadow. In the darkness, I think he hardly knew it, but even in the darkness, if there's any light at all, you can see there's something different about this one that's wrestling with you. God came and wrestled with this man.

Why did God have to do that? Because Jacob didn't know how to receive a blessing any other way. Why did God wrestle with this guy? Because he did not know how to receive a blessing any other way. How about you? If you're Jacob, if you're that good religious person, the only way God can bless you is to put you flat on your back.

Because you won't receive it any other way. You still think you've got to earn it. You don't get it, the grace of God.

You don't really comprehend yet the real mercy of God. Because somehow or another, you think that you've got to earn it, you've got to be good enough, or you are already good enough, and God's lucky to have you, but you're Jacob. The only way that God could bless Jacob was to wrestle a blessing.

And so it goes on. It says, the man wrestled him until the break of day. Now when he saw that he did not prevail against him, that is, this man was not prevailing against Jacob, he touched the socket of his hip, and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as he wrestled with him.

Even when he touched his hip, Jacob continued to wrestle. I mean, that shows tenacity. All of you coaches know when you have an athlete that will play even when injured, you know two things about that guy.

He's really stupid, and he's really competitive. And he said, this is the man, let me go for the day breaks. The vapor would have been revealed.

But he said, Jacob says, I will not let you go unless you bless me. Remember, Jacob is a guy who has to wrestle a blessing. And he doesn't feel like he's been blessed yet.

He says, I'm not going to let you go until you bless me. He said to him, what is your name? Remember when he crept into the tent, his daddy's tent, twenty years before this, dressed in goat hair? His father said, who are you? I am Esau, your son. I'm Harry.

That's Esau's name, Harry. I'm Harry. Are you sure you're Harry? Come here, let me touch you, let me smell you.

Touched him, smelled him, smelled like a goat. It's got to be my son. It's Esau.

By the time he wrestled with this man, though, I'm sure he knew it wasn't Esau because he didn't smell like a goat. Didn't feel all that hair all over him. And he understands he's wrestling with God.

He says, God says to him, what is your name? He says, Heel Grabber. Usurper. Cheat.

He admitted what his name was. He admitted his character. He didn't do that to his father.

But he does that with God. And he said, God said, your name shall no longer be Jacob but Israel for you have struggled with God and with men and have prevailed. Now, it would look as though that Jacob has once again won the wrestling match and has been able to wrestle a blessing out of God and he's prevailed over God.

And so Israel means Prince of God. Therefore, Israel was even able to overcome God. But let's read what the Prophet Hosea says.

In chapter 12, verse 2. The Lord also brings a charge against Judah and will punish Jacob according to his ways. According to his deeds, he will recompense him. He took his brother by the heel in the womb.

And in his strength, he struggled with God. That's a charge against Jacob. Not just the man, Jacob.

But ultimately, all the people who are Jacob. All of Israel. Because the character continues in them.

And every religious man and woman sitting in this room today or listening to this broadcast any other time. Every one of you that are religious in your own right. You're just Jacob.

And here's the charge against you. In your strength, you struggle with God. Instead of just giving in and yielding and saying, God, have your own way, Lord.

Have your own way. Thou art the potter. I am the clay.

Mold me and make me after thy will. While I am yielded, humble and still. You say, Lord, I'll only serve you on my own terms.

I'm willing to minister when it's convenient. I'm not willing to reach out of my comfort zone and disciple people because they might find out what I'm really like. And I'm not willing that they would find out what I'm really like.

And so, I'm not willing to reach out and disciple others. You struggle with God. God will serve you on my own terms.

And that's it. Nothing more and probably something less. Verse 4, yes, he struggled with the angel and prevailed.

He wept and sought favor from him. Now we see what really happened. Once the angel touched him, once the muscle shrank in his hip, once the pain came but he didn't want to give up, he begins to cry and weep before he finally lost the wrestling match with God.

And he says, God, please bless me. I won't let you go until you bless me. And that's really the only time the real blessing comes is when you've lost the match.

When he's touched you in some way that wounds you. When you've admitted to God who you really are. And then you weep and say, God, will you bless me? Oh, yes.

Because he came to save the humble. He comes to rescue those who are humble before him. Confession and repentance are just the beginnings of a changed life.

When we can face the reality of who we are, then we can experience the reality of God's mercy and of his grace and of his love. Verse 29, Jacob asked, saying, tell me your name, I pray. And he said, why is it that you ask about my name? And he blessed him there.

I'm not exactly sure what that means. I think it means something like this. Hey, you know who I am.

So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, for I've seen the face of God and my life is preserved. Just as he crossed over Penuel, the sun rose on him and he limped on his hip. Jacob's wrestling days were over.

And for the rest of his days, he would limp on his hip. They just called him gimpy after that. Therefore, to this day, the children of Israel denied the muscle that shrank, which is on the hip socket because he touched the socket of Jacob's hip and the muscle shrank.

Now Jacob lifted his eyes and looked and there Esau was coming. And with him, 400 men. So he divided the children among Leah, Rachel and the two maidservants.

And he put the maidservants and the children in front. Leah and her children behind and Rachel and Joseph last. And he crossed over before them and bowed himself to the ground seven times until he came near his brother.

But Esau ran to meet him and embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him. And they wept. Now, remember that he had heard that Esau was on his way with 400 men.

The messengers that he had sent had come back and said Esau is on his way with 400 men. I want to just point out something that I think that when these men were able to come back safely, it meant that Esau already had a change of heart because he let him come back. He could have prevented them from returning.

He could have prevented them from coming back and spoiling the surprise of the attack with 400 men. But not only did he let these men return, but somehow or another he delayed his coming long enough that those messengers could return and an entire night could pass before Esau even arrived. And so even though he's coming with 400 men, I think to show strength to his brother, he's had a change of heart toward his brother.

God has done this because Jacob humbled himself before the Lord. And now we see that he's humbling himself. He's bowing seven times before his brother.

Now Esau runs and embraces him and kissed him and they wept together. In verse five, he lifted his eyes and saw the women and children and said, Who are these with you? So he said, The children whom God has graciously given your servant. Then the maidservants came near they and their children and bowed down.

And Leah also came near with her children and they bowed down afterward. Joseph and Rachel came near and they bowed down. And Esau said, What do you mean by all this company which I met? And he said, These are to find favor in the sight of my Lord.

But Esau said, I have enough, my brother. Keep what you have for yourself. And Jacob said, No, please.

If I have now found favor in your sight, then receive my present from my hand. Inasmuch as I have seen your face as though I had seen the face of God and you were pleased with me. Please take my blessing that I brought to you.

Do you get that? Remember, this is the guy that came into his daddy's tent and took the blessing. And now he's saying to his brother. And I don't know.

Maybe this added up to more than what he actually stole. If he had been successful in taking this stuff, which he wasn't. Please take my blessing.

Please take it. Because God has dealt graciously with me because I have enough. So he urged him and he took it.

Then Esau said, Let us take our journey. Let us go and I will go before you. And Jacob said to him, My Lord knows that the children are weak.

And the flocks and herds, which are nursing, are with me. And if the men should drive them hard one day, all the flock will die. Please let my Lord go on ahead.

Before his servant, I will lead on slowly at a pace, which the livestock that go before me and the children are able to endure until I come to my Lord and see here. And Esau said, Now let me leave with you some of the people who are with me. But he said, What need is there? Let me find favor in the sight of my Lord.

So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir and Jacob journeyed to Sukkoth, built himself a house and made booths for his livestock. Therefore, the name of the place is called Sukkoth, which simply means booths or or taking some sticks and building kind of a lean to sort of a fashion. So the animals could get a break from the wind.

So he sends his brother away. And as soon as his brother is gone, he goes on a short distance from there and he settles in for a while, long enough to build a house. Let us see how long he was here, but long enough that he built the house and he built some shelters for his animals.

And it was a time to let the animals in the family heal from the arduous journey of hundreds of miles, which had taken their toll from the stress of the attack of Laban and the almost attack of Esau, neither of which attacked because God was with Jacob. Verse 18, Then Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem. Many of us have been calling that Shechem for years.

Shechem is probably the right way to say it, which is in the land of Canaan. And he came from Paddan Aram and pitched his tent before the city. Now, this same place is known as Sychar in John chapter four.

It's a place where Jacob has dug a well, and it's the place where the Samaritan woman met with Jesus at that well. And I've often thought of this. It's really interesting that when the servant of Abraham went over to to get a bride for Isaac, that he came there in Haran to a well and he saw Rebecca.

And then you fast forward 70 some years later, 90 some years later, and Jacob is there, probably the same well. And he sees Rachel, which will become his wife. And in the case of Jacob, Jacob rolls the stone away and lets the flocks be watered, especially his uncle's flock.

And then we'll see later on at a different well that Moses will come to the rescue of the daughters of Jethro and will water the flock there at a well. And now we see Jesus many, many, many years after this coming to this very place where Jacob first settles to a well with a woman. And he begins to share with her the living water.

Isn't it amazing how that that particular element is a common theme among these men? And Jacob, who is a promise bearer, is one of those who is sort of a prefigure of Christ. He's bringing life by opening the well for water. And then he leaves a well here that many years later Jesus can use as an illustration.

If you only knew who you were talking to, that he could give you water. And if you drank of that water, you would never thirst again. How that the Lord has has tied all these things together.

Jacob is a promise bearer. God, in his mercy, even used the deception of Laban and the first wife of Jacob, Leah, as the one through whom the Christ will come. Finally, they're back in Canaan.

And he bought a parcel of land, verse 19, where he pitched his tent from the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for 100 pieces of money. Then he erected an altar there and called it El Elo Israel. God, the God of Israel.

Do you see how he's come from being a carnal, soulish man? And now he says, God is the God of Israel. God is my God. Now, that's the whole point of our message this morning.

Is his God your God? Are you simply a religious man or woman who show up here from time to time to keep your religious commitment so that it can be thought of you? At least that you're a nice, decent person doing the right thing. And are you struggling with God when you want a blessing? You go wrestle with him until you feel like you have a breakthrough. Or have you come to that place of life where you say, God is my God.

The Lord is my shepherd. I will obey him. I'm not worthy of the great things he's done for me.

He's given me life. He's given me hope. He's given me help.

Which one are you? Are you Jacob? Are you Esau? Or are you Israel? Are you ruled over by God? Would you bow your heads with me this morning? Father, I thank you so much for your word. And how that your word touches our hearts and lives and draws us close to you. And Lord, we ask that you will do what only you can do.

And that is make us alive spiritually. Some of us are soul men or soul women, Lord. We have this great counterfeit spiritual force.

We seem to be able to do or say amazing things. But Lord, we're doing it in our own strength. And Lord, Jacob needs to die that Israel might come forth.

And Lord, I pray for each of us today that as we are at this place of wrestling, that we will finally come to that place of tears and say, please bless me. And that you will awaken us in ways that we've never been awakened before. So that we are alive in Christ.

So that we are truly disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. And that we're reaching out and helping others to learn to walk with the Lord. And not that they're just a follower of me, but that they're really walking with Jesus.

And they're out sharing the gospel. They're out making disciples themselves. Lord, this is our hope, our vision.

This is what you've directed us. Lord, this is what we ask today. In Jesus' name, amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/20/SID20372.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ron-reed/god-the-god-of-israel/>

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