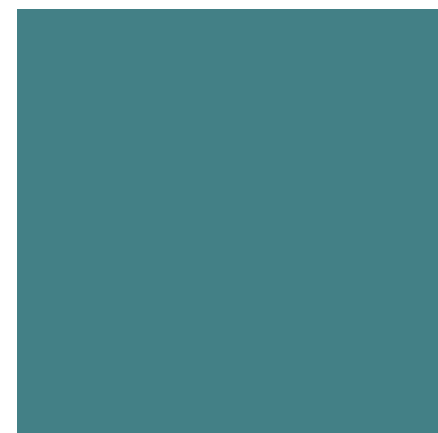
A paved path lined with trees and a hedge in autumn. The path is covered with fallen yellow and orange leaves. The trees have green and yellow foliage, and a dense green hedge runs along the right side of the path.

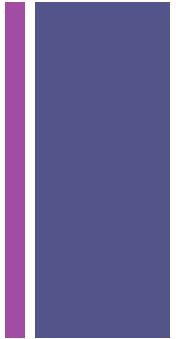
Seven Prayers
that Changed the
World and Can
Change Your
Life



**Good News: God Is on
Your Side
Genesis 32:22-32**



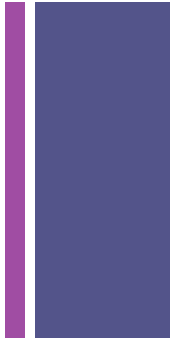
Genesis 32:22-31



- That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two female servants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. ²³ After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. ²⁴ So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. ²⁵ When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. ²⁶ Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak." But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."



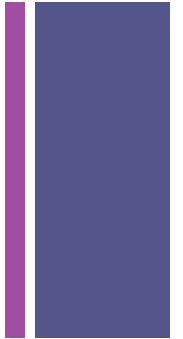
Genesis 32:22-31, continued



²⁷ The man asked him, “What is your name?” “Jacob,” he answered. ²⁸ Then the man said, “Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.” ²⁹ Jacob said, “Please tell me your name.” But he replied, “Why do you ask my name?” Then he blessed him there. ³⁰ So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, “It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared.” ³¹ The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel, and he was limping because of his hip.



Hosea 12:3-6



In the womb he grasped his brother's heel;
as a man he struggled with God.

⁴ He struggled with the angel and overcame him;
he wept and begged for his favor.

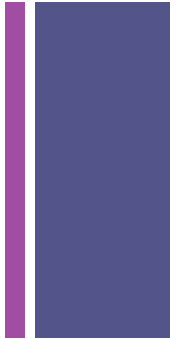
He found him at Bethel
and talked with him there—

⁵ the LORD God Almighty,
the LORD is his name!

⁶ But you must return to your God;
maintain love and justice,
and wait for your God always.



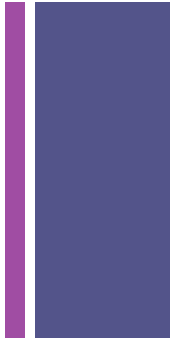
Jacob: a man in a pivotal role at a key time in the plan of God



- Jacob means “Heel snatcher” or “manipulator”
- He manipulated his brother and his father Isaac
- He was manipulated by his Uncle Laban and by his two wives: Leah and Rachel
- He assumed God was a manipulator, and that he had to manipulate God
- This event occurred on the eve of his meeting his brother Esau who had years earlier said he would kill him. Jacob spent the night alone – just him and God.



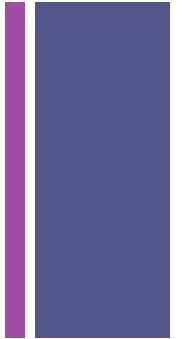
A key issue of life: Can we trust God?



- “When you pray, do not keep babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard by their many words... Your Father knows what you need before you ask him” (Matthew 6:7-8).
- Pagan belief: God is unaware, distant, uncaring, and we need to convince him to help us.
- Christian faith: God has all knowledge, is close, and cares about us.

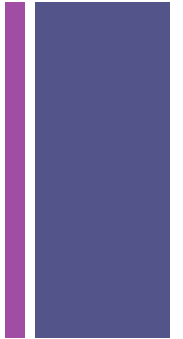


A prayer that will change your life:



- **“Lord, I trust You with the details of my life. Bless me according to Your will and plan.”**
- This means that I trust that He knows what is best for me.
- This means that I trust that He is active in my life and world.
- This means that I trust that He cares about me.
- Anything less is not true trust or faith in God.

+ How did Jacob journey to pray this prayer?

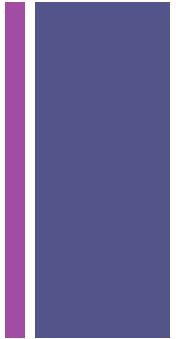


This was first and foremost a spiritual experience. The angels are ministering spirits, so this was more of a spiritual battle than a physical one.

- **His past experience in Bethel: God had a plan, had watched over him and was close to him.**
- **Wrestling with the angel: God understood his experiences in life and called him to follow His plan.**
- **A changed attitude: He trusted that God was not a manipulator and put his life in His hands.**



1. The look back: what happened at Bethel, Genesis 28:10-22



- Jacob was fleeing from his brother Esau – alone, vulnerable
- “Jacob’s Ladder”: angels were going up and down – **God is active** in this world.
- **God had a plan**, and said: “I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you” (Genesis 28:15).
- Jacob said: “Surely the LORD was in this place and I was not aware of it” (Genesis 28:16). Jacob said: “Then the LORD will be my God” (Genesis 28:21). Jacob’s life began to be about God’s plan, and not just Jacob’s.

+ The power of the promise of God

- Jacob had received the blessing of his father Isaac and the birthright of his elder brother Esau through deception and manipulation.
- What Jacob had stolen through manipulation God promised to give him by His grace.

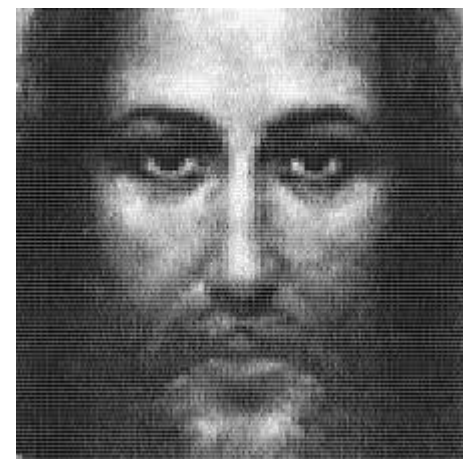


+ 2. Lessons learned in wrestling an angel



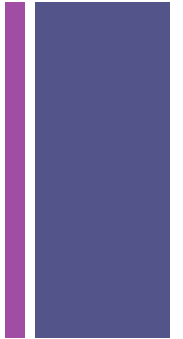
- Jacob felt the need to fight and manipulate the one Person with all knowledge, all power, and all love.
- Who was this angel? The pre-incarnate Lord Jesus, the mysterious Old Testament Angel of the Lord?
- Have you ever wanted to take on God? To fight Him face to face, hand to hand?
- Has God ever placed Himself in our world, in a vulnerable state? Does He know and understand what we are facing?

+ Jesus of Nazareth



- Born under suspicious circumstances into a poor family of an oppressed nation.
- Lost His earthly “father” at a young age. His mother and brothers never understood Him.
- “But we have one who who was tempted in every way, just as we are – yet was without sin” (Heb 4:15).
- Despite His teachings, miracles, and counseling, He was betrayed by one close to Him and crucified as a common criminal. Yet He forgave those who crucified Him.

+ How did Jacob prevail?



- Mankind cannot prevail against God. “Would [God] plead against me with his great power? No, but he would put *strength* in me. There the righteous might reason with him...” (Job 23:6b-7a, Geneva Bible).
- Jacob could only prevail against God in God’s power. God had promised to him by grace what he had sought to steal.
- Power in prayer is found in agreement with the plans, purposes, and ways of God. Jacob was beginning to see things God’s way.

+ Why did God cripple Jacob?

- “And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me...” (2 Cor. 12:7 NKJV).
- Yours and my weaknesses may be allowed by God so we will continue to feel our need of Him, and depend on His power.
- Jacob’s helplessness revealed the strength of God. It emphasized the grace of God, not the work of man. Could a cripple fight 500?



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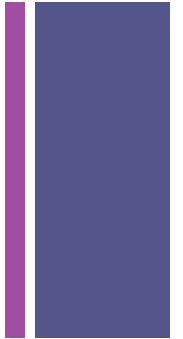
3. A Changed Attitude: Jacob opted for God's will

- “I will not let you go until you bless me.”
What he truly needed he could never steal from God.
- “Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel because you struggled with God and with men and have overcome.”
- A new power came into Jacob's (Israel's) life, that despite of its ups and downs kept him within the will of God. God redeemed his circumstance.
- After seeing Joseph in Egypt, “Israel worshipped as he leaned on the top of his staff” (Gen 47:31).



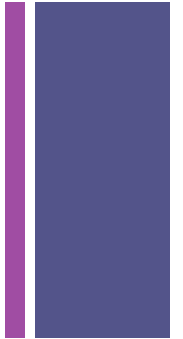


Are you fighting against God?



- God desires to bless you. He is able to help you.
- Are you trying to gain the best life possible without going God's way, or doing things God's way?
- You cannot be saved except God's way – grace. God will bless you and help you if you cease fighting Him and trust Him to do with your life whatever He wants.
- We have a God who has put on our flesh and has been tried in all ways like we are – who suffered for us.

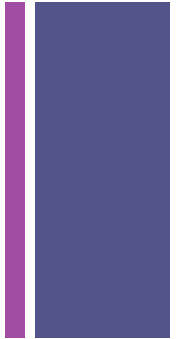
+ G. Campbell Morgan,
The Crises of the Christ



It is impossible to pass from this contemplation of the ascension of Jesus to the centre of all [heavenly] government, and to see in Him man's wounded God, without becoming conscious of a great comfort and of a great strength. The comfort ever comes as we behold on the throne of the Eternal, One Who bears amid the dazzling splendour, marks that tell of His having suffered and died for us men, that He might bring us into union with His unending joy and eternal Love.

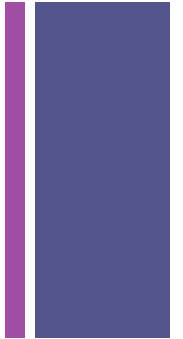


G. Campbell Morgan, *The Crises of the Christ, cont.*



Moreover when the work presses, and the battle thickens, and the day seems long in coming, it is good for the heart to remember that the present conflict is with defeated foes, and that there is no room for question as to the final issue, for the Man of Nazareth is not only seated in the place of authority, He carries forward the work of active administration... High over the throne of earth, stands that throne of the Eternal, and seated on it is the ascended Man, watching, ordering, preventing, and through all the apparent chaos, moving surely towards the ultimate triumph of the Infinite Love.

+ A prayer that changes us



- **Lord, I trust You with the details of my life. Bless me according to Your will and plan.**
- All that Israel had sought to achieve through deception and manipulation only caused his own and others misery.
- When he began to live in faith, then he found he was able to be used of God – He prevailed with God (prayer) and with men (service).