

# GENESIS

## Why The Beginning Matters

STUDY 21  
JACOB WRESTLES  
WITH GOD  
GENESIS 30-32



# JACOB COMMANDED TO LEAVE

Gen 31:3 Then the Lord said to Jacob,

“Return to the land of your fathers and to your kindred, and I will be with you.”



# JACOB RETURNS

Gen 32: 1 Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. When Jacob saw them he said, "This is God's camp!" So he called the name of that place Mahanaim.



## *DANGEROUS CALLING OF GOD*

Genesis 27:4 Now Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him, and Esau said to himself, “The days of mourning for my father are approaching; then I will kill my brother Jacob.



# WHAT IS JACOB'S PLAN TO MEET HIS BROTHER ESAU?

Gen 32: 3 And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother in the land of Seir, the country of Edom, 4 instructing them, “Thus you shall say to my lord Esau: Thus says your servant Jacob, ‘I have sojourned with Laban and stayed until now. 5 I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, male servants, and female servants. I have sent to tell my lord, in order that I may find favor in your sight.’ ”



# WHAT CAN WE CONCLUDE FROM THE MESSENGERS NEWS?

What is Jacob's reaction and plan?

Gen 32: 6 And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, “We came to your brother Esau, and he is coming to meet you, and there are four hundred men with him.”





THE OLD JACOB



# THE TRANSFORMED JACOB

Gen 32: 9 And Jacob said, “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Lord who said to me, ‘Return to your country and to your kindred, that I may do you good,’ 10 I am not worthy of the least of all the deeds of steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two camps.



## A. IDENTIFICATION AND STANDING

Gen 32: 9 And Jacob said, “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Lord who said to me, ‘Return to your country and to your kindred, that I may do you good,’ 10 I am not worthy of the least of all the deeds of steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two camps.



## OUR IDENTIFICATION

Romans 8:14–17 (ESV) For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.



# DECLARED RIGHTEOUS BY GOD HIMSELF

Romans 8:31–33 (ESV) What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? 33 Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.



## B. GOD'S WILL AND PLAN

Gen 32: 9 And Jacob said, “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Lord who said to me, ‘Return to your country and to your kindred, that I may do you good,’ 10 I am not worthy of the least of all the deeds of steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two camps.



# NOT OUR PERCEPTION OF HIS PLAN

Ps Creflo Dollar



“When we pray, believing that we have already received what we are praying, God has no choice but to make our prayer. God is subservient to our faith It is a way of getting results as a Christian.”



## C. SENSE OF UNWORTHINESS OF GOD'S GRACE AND FAITHFULNESS

Gen 32: 9 And Jacob said, “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Lord who said to me, ‘Return to your country and to your kindred, that I may do you good,’ 10 I am not worthy of the least of all the deeds of steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two camps.



## D. PETITION FOR DELIVERANCE BASED ON HIS PROMISES-COVENANTAL FAITHFULNESS

Not based on any of our intrinsic value but on the value of His promises

11 Please deliver me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, that he may come and attack me, the mothers with the children. 12 But you said, 'I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.' ”



## E. EXPRESSION OF EMOTION-FEAR

11 Please deliver me from the hand of my brother,  
from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, that he  
may come and attack me, the mothers with the  
children.

Intimacy and Lament



## F. FAITH IN GOD' PROMISES

Trusting Gods power in His promises

12 But you said, 'I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.' ”



## CONTRAST PREVIOUS PRAYER

Genesis 28:20–21 (ESV) Then Jacob made a vow, saying, “If God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, 21 so that I come again to my father’s house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God,

Genesis 28:22 (ESV) and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God’s house. And of all that you give me I will give a full tenth to



JACOB'S  
ACTION

Safety



Divine intervention



Appeasement





# BASIS OF HIS ACTION FAITH IN GODS PROMISES

Gen 32:9 And Jacob said, “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Lord who said to me, ‘Return to your country and to your kindred, that I may do you good,



# WRESTLING WITH GOD

1. Wrestling is a personal encounter with  
GOD

2. Break through occurs when we move from  
trying to overcome to refusing to let go

3. Brokenness comes before blessings



Genesis 32:24–26 And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. 25 When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. 26 Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."



A man in silhouette is shown from the side, looking out over a vast landscape at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright, glowing light that fills the sky with soft, golden clouds. The man's hands are clasped in front of him, and his posture suggests a moment of reflection or contemplation. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

# WRESTLING ALONE

Most major crisis in life face alone  
The personal calling of Jacob



# NEED TO MEET GOD ALONE

Overshadowed but not penetrated





A black and white photograph capturing a moment of intense physical struggle between two men. The man in the foreground is being held in a tight grip, his face contorted in a grimace of pain or exertion. His eyes are squeezed shut, and his mouth is open, showing his teeth. The background man's hands are firmly planted on the first man's shoulders and neck area. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the textures of their skin and the intensity of the moment.

WHO IS HE? AND WHY  
WRESTLE



## JACOB DECLARES IT WAS GOD

Genesis 32:28–30 Then he said, “Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed.” 29 Then Jacob asked him, “Please tell me your name.” But he said, “Why is it that you ask my name?” And there he blessed him. 30 So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, “For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered.”



# *WHEN GOD SMACKS YOU DOWN*



- Comfort and convenient
- Benign God you can manipulate
- One dimensional view of God





## JONI EARECKSON

*“What good is it if we only trust the Lord when we understand his ways? That only guarantees a life filled with doubts.”*



# WHEN GOD SMACKS YOU DOWN



Divine intruder  
Gets pain and  
maiming  
To break his self  
dependance

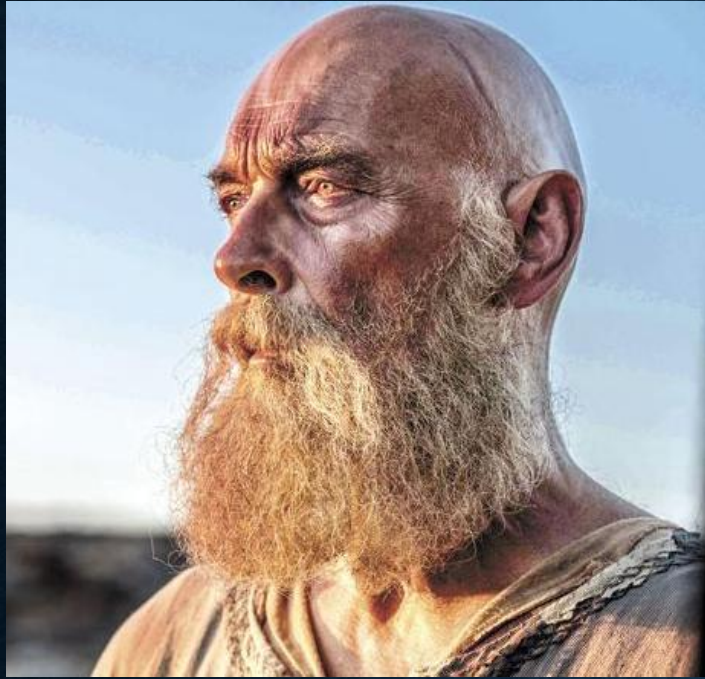




WRESTLED ALL NIGHT

God let him  
wrestle all night  
so that Jacob  
could see how  
strong his  
self- will really  
was..





# WRESTLING MOMENTS





## WRESTLING PRODUCES SELF DISCOVERY

Job 42:5-6 I had heard  
of you by the hearing  
of the ear, but now my  
eye sees you; 6  
therefore I despise  
myself, and repent in  
dust and ashes



## KEY MOMENT

Genesis 32:25–26 When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. 26 Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."





Andrew Bonar in the highlands of Scotland

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# TRANSFORMATION BY PAIN

Fighting God



Hanging on  
to God

Opposing  
Insisting on own goals  
Insisting on own blessings

Acquiescence to His will  
Insisting on God's blessings



# SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION PROCESS

Our struggle is the pursuit of our own heart's desires outside of His will

“I will not  
let you go  
unless you  
bless me  
Gen 32



Delight  
yourself in the  
Lord, and he  
will give you  
the desires of  
your heart  
Ps 37:4

Your heart's delight is found in Him



# CHARLES FINNEY



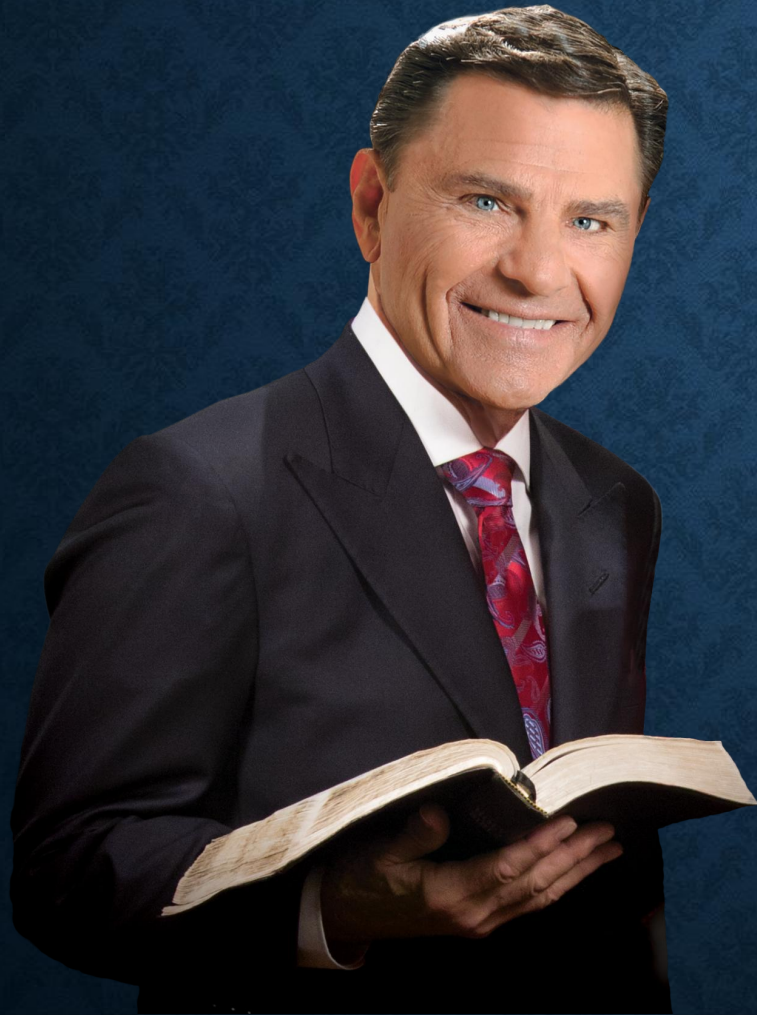
Breakthrough

- Center of our affection
- Desire communion and eternal union with Him
- Satisfaction with Him
- Confidence in Him
- Glad submission to Him
- Deep interest in His glory and honor



# CONTRAST WITH KENNETH COPELAND

Trusting the power of our faith to gain the desires of our heart

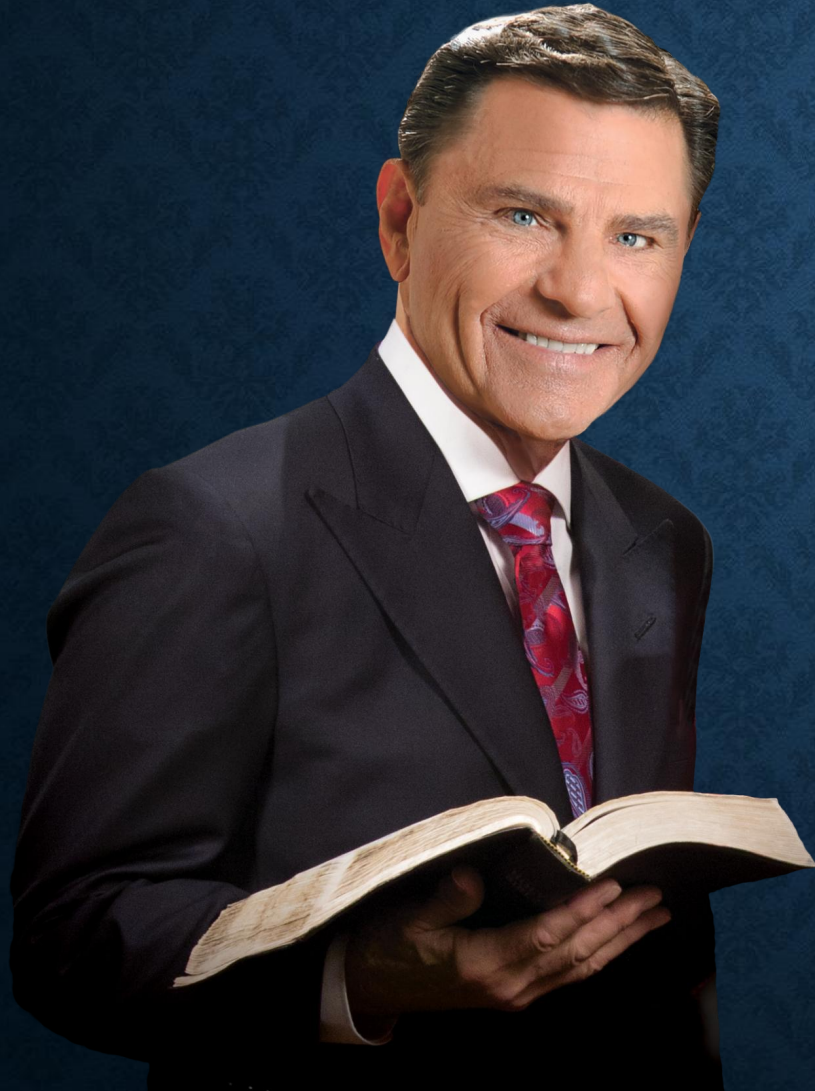


*“Faith is a spiritual force, a spiritual energy, a spiritual power. It is this force of faith which makes the laws of the spirit world function,”*



# KENNETH COPELAND

The focus is on our faith not his promises



*“There are certain laws governing prosperity revealed in God’s Word. Faith causes them to function.”*

Completely bypasses God  
God is only a means to our end



# PANTHEISTIC CONCEPT



THE FORCE BE WITH  
YOU  
LEARN HOW TO USE  
THE FORCE





## JOHN PIPER

*Christian joy is a good feeling in the soul, produced by the Holy Spirit, as he causes us to see the beauty of Christ in the Word and in the world.*



# WE WON'T LOOK TILL WE ARE BROKEN

2 Cor 3:18 And we all, with unveiled face,  
beholding the glory of the Lord, are being  
transformed into the same image from one degree of  
glory to another



# JACOB-BROKEN BUT BLESSED

Totally dependant..repentant

Totally Transformed  
Israel - God fights, strives







Healing now

Victory now

Power now

Change now

THEOLOGY OF GLORY





**BROKEN BUT BITTER**





## AFTER STRUGGLING WITH GOD

*“Oh, God, I can’t live this way! Please, if I’m not going to die, show me how to live!”*”





## CONTRARY TO OUR BELIEFS ABOUT QUADRIPLÉGIA

*“And if God’s glory shines brightest through our weakness—which it does—then our inabilities become the best platform for God’s highest glory. That makes for great quality of life.”*



# *THE SECRET TO TRANSFORMATION*

Our strength lies in our tenacity in hanging on and depending on Him  
We do not fight to overcome circumstances or enemies but we fight to hold on to our faith in Him..



# BROKENNESS BEFORE BLESSING



*“Jesus does not come to rearrange the outside of our life the way we want it . He comes to rearrange the inside of our life the way God wants”*



Paul



Joseph



Moses



**BROKENNESS BEFORE BLESSING**



*“Jacob wrestled with God and prevailed in the sense of hanging on until God blessed him. But, first, God prevailed over Jacob by crippling his stubborn self-dependence. Jacob’s prevailing with men is a prediction of how God will now conquer Jacob’s enemies (the most pressing being Esau) by His power rather than through Jacob’s conniving ways.”*

Steven J Cole

*Flagstaff Christian Fellowship, Flagstaff, Arizona*



## *SELF DISCOVERY BEFORE NAME CHANGE*

Genesis 32:27–28 (ESV) And he said to him, “What is your name?” And he said, “Jacob.” 28 Then he said, “Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed.”



# *NAME CHANGE*

Jacob

Israel



Supplanter

He who strives with God  
God strives



## WIN-WIN SITUATION

JACOB WRESTLED WITH GOD AND  
PREVAILED IN THE SENSE OF HANGING  
ON UNTIL GOD BLESSED HIM.

GOD PREVAILED OVER JACOB BY  
CRIPPLING HIS STUBBORN SELF-  
DEPENDENCE.



# BLESSED

- Poor in spirit
- Mourn
- Meek
- Hunger and thirst for righteousness
- Merciful
- Pure in heart
- Peace makers
- Persecuted





## TRANSFORMATION COMPLETE FEAR OF GOD -RECONCILIATION

Genesis 33:10-11 Jacob said, “No, please, if I have found favor in your sight, then accept my present from my hand. For I have seen your face, which is like seeing the face of God, and you have accepted me. 11 Please accept my blessing that is brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough.” Thus he urged him, and he took it.





His new name, does not shield Jacob from the obstacles and tragedies of life—loss of Joseph

Gen 33



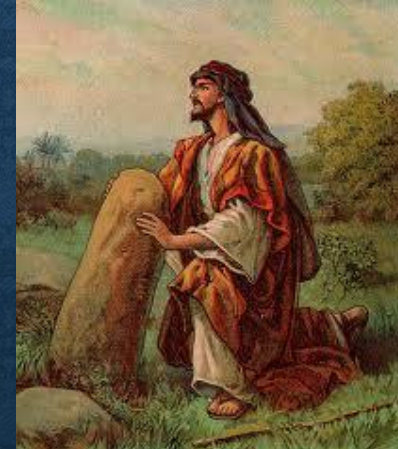
Reconciliation

Gen 34



Rape of Dinah  
Massacre  
Shechem  
Force Jacob to  
leave land he  
bought there

Gen 35



Altar at Bethel  
Covenant renewal  
Birth of Benjamin  
Death of Rebekah and Isaac  
Reuben has sex with Bilhah

Gen 36

Genealogy  
Esau  
family  
Edomites



A landscape photograph featuring a stack of several large, light-colored rocks in the foreground on the right side. The background shows a vast, hazy mountain range under a sky with soft, wispy clouds. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow. The overall scene is serene and majestic.

## Beth-El - the house of God

God-fearing man feels a healthy “fear”  
within him that constrains him to do right  
and restrains him from doing wrong.





## 52 YEARS LATER

- Wheel chair
- Chronic pain
- Breast cancer . . surgery
- Chemotherapy
- Recurrence – surgery



A close-up, profile view of a woman with short, layered blonde hair. She is looking towards the right side of the frame with a thoughtful or reflective expression. She is wearing a green ribbed turtleneck sweater and a gold hoop earring. The background is dark and out of focus, showing the back of another person's head with grey hair.

## IF THE ACCIDENT NEVER HAPPENED

- Drifted through life
- Marriage
- Divorce
- Dissatisfied and  
Disillusioned
- Always acted selfishly  
in school
- Never built life on  
any long lasting value



This is  
**My  
Story**



ARE YOU HAPPY?

*I wouldn't change my  
life for  
anything. ...I'm  
really thankful He  
did something to get  
my attention and  
change me.*



# COVENANTS

Noahic

Abrahamic

Creation

Davidic

New

God's Saving Action  
Through Scripture

Mosaic

