

- Our Word for 2022:

Fathers

Atmosphere – Awareness – Anticipation

Mothers

Investment - Involvement - Interaction

Look Around!

You

SHOW US THE FATHER

- **John 14:1-12** 8 Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." 9 Jesus replied, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and yet you still don't know who I am? **Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father!** So why are you asking me to show him to you?"
- **Very different contrast:**
- What is God really like? Some people think the most important question of life is "Do you believe in God?" But a more important question is "What kind of God do you believe in?"
 - Some people picture God as a task master who gets great joy out of disciplining His people when they make a mistake. He has a bunch of rules in force that no one believes they can accomplish so they feel that He is always mad at us and correcting us.
 - Others picture God as a buddy. He will forgive anything no matter what you do or how you act. In the end, all go to heaven because a loving God "would never send anyone to hell"

Wrestling With A Holy God

- God is Holy, Holy, Holy, He is high above us, He is superior in every way, there is nothing and no one to compare Him!
- **Jacob** – His name means “supplanter”.
 - We can share the stories of our encounters, but unless people have an encounter of their own, our transcendent God can seem ions away!
- **The Dream - Genesis 28:12-16**
- The stairway in the dream was a contact point.
- **Genesis 28:20-22** - God’s presence doesn’t always result in conversion.
 - If God does what he said, THEN the Lord will be my God!
 - How many people still approach the Lord in this way?

I believe, **BUT**

- Genesis 31:3 Then the Lord said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your father and grandfather and to your relatives there, and I will be with you."
 - It wasn't Jacob's idea to return. It was at the Lord's instruction.
- Genesis 31:38 "For twenty years I have been with you, caring for your flocks.

Let's rehearse:

Promise

- **Genesis 28:13b-15** The ground you are lying on belongs to you. I am giving it to you and your descendants. 14 Your descendants will be as numerous as the dust of the earth! They will spread out in all directions—to the west and the east, to the north and the south. And all the families of the earth will be blessed through you and your descendants. 15 What's more, I am with you, and I will protect you wherever you go. One day I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have finished giving you everything, I have promised you."

Protection Promised

- 20 years later – Return and I will be with you! (Genesis 31:3)
- **Genesis 32:1-2** As Jacob started on his way again, angels of God came to meet him. 2 When Jacob saw them, he exclaimed, "This is God's camp!" So he named the place Mahanaim.

Preparation

- **Genesis 32:3-5** Then Jacob sent messengers ahead to his brother, Esau, who was living in the region of Seir in the land of Edom. 4 He told them, "Give this message to my master Esau: 'Humble greetings from your servant Jacob. Until now I have been living with Uncle Laban, 5 and now I own cattle, donkeys, flocks of sheep and goats, and many servants, both men and women. I have sent these messengers to inform my lord of my coming, hoping that you will be friendly to me.'"
- "A brother offended is harder to win than a strong city" (Proverbs 18:19, NKJV)

Plotting

- **Genesis 32:6** After delivering the message, the messengers returned to Jacob and reported, "We met your brother, Esau, and he is already on his way to meet you—with an army of 400 men!" 7 Jacob was terrified at the news. He divided his household, along with the flocks and herds and camels, into two groups. 8 He thought, "If Esau meets one group and attacks it, perhaps the other group can escape."
 - Fear often times results in our own feeble attempts to fulfill the promises God has made.

Praying

- **Genesis 32:9-12** Then Jacob prayed, "O God of my grandfather Abraham, and God of my father, Isaac—O Lord, you told me, 'Return to your own land and to your relatives.' And you promised me, 'I will treat you kindly.' 10 I am not worthy of all the unfailing love and faithfulness you have shown to me, your servant. When I left home and crossed the Jordan River, I owned nothing except a walking stick. Now my household fills two large camps! 11 O Lord, please rescue me from the hand of my brother, Esau. I am afraid that he is coming to attack me, along with my wives and children. 12 But you promised me, 'I will surely treat you kindly, and I will multiply your descendants until they become as numerous as the sands along the seashore—too many to count.'"

Great Prayer – Weak Faith

- "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24, NKJV)
- Note the components of Jacob's prayer:
 - God's Covenant (v. 9a)
 - God's Command (v.9b)
 - God's Care (v. 10)
 - God's Purpose (v.11)
 - God's Promise (v.12)
- While we don't want to imitate Jacob's fear, unbelief, scheming, and his proneness to jump to conclusions, we would do well to pray the way he prayed. He claimed God's promises, remembered God's goodness, and rested completely on God's character and covenant.
- **The Bible Exposition Commentary: Old Testament © 2001-2004 by Warren W.Wiersbe.**

Pleasing or Appeasing

- **Genesis 32:13-21** Jacob stayed where he was for the night. Then he selected these gifts from his possessions to present to his brother, Esau: 14 200 female goats, 20 male goats, 200 ewes, 20 rams, 15 30 female camels with their young, 40 cows, 10 bulls, 20 female donkeys, and 10 male donkeys. 16 He divided these animals into herds and assigned each to different servants. Then he told his servants, "Go ahead of me with the animals, but keep some distance between the herds." 17 He gave these instructions to the men leading the first group: "When my brother, Esau, meets you, he will ask, 'Whose servants are you? Where are you going? Who owns these animals?' 18 You must reply, 'They belong to your servant Jacob, but they are a gift for his master Esau. Look, he is coming right behind us.'" 19 Jacob gave the same instructions to the second and third herdsmen and to all who followed behind the herds: "You must say the same thing to Esau when you meet him. 20 And be sure to say, 'Look, your servant Jacob is right behind us.'" **Jacob thought, "I will try to appease him by sending gifts ahead of me. When I see him in person, perhaps he will be friendly to me."** 21 So the gifts were sent on ahead, while Jacob himself spent that night in the camp.

Alone and Wrestling

- Genesis 32:24-32 This left Jacob all alone in the camp, and a man came and wrestled with him until the dawn began to break. 25 When the man saw that he would not win the match, he touched Jacob's hip and wrenched it out of its socket. 26 Then the man said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking!" But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." 27 "What is your name?" the man asked. He replied, "Jacob."
- 28 "Your name will no longer be Jacob," the man told him. "From now on you will be called Israel, because you have fought with God and with men and have won."
- 29 "Please tell me your name," Jacob said. "Why do you want to know my name?" the man replied. Then he blessed Jacob there.

The Bible Exposition Commentary: Old Testament © 2001-2004

by Warren W. Wiersbe.

- British essayist Walter Savage Landor called solitude "the audience-chamber of God,"
- God meets us at whatever level He finds us in order to lift us to where He wants us to be.

- During that "dark night of the soul," Jacob discovered that he'd spent his life fighting God and resisting His will, and that the only way to victory was through surrender.
 - A.W.Tozer said, "The Lord cannot fully bless a man until He has first conquered him." God conquered Jacob by weakening him.
- **Jacob met himself** (vv. 27-32). More than anything else, Jacob wanted the blessing of the Lord on his life; and for this holy desire, he's to be commended.
 - But before we can begin to be like the Lord, we have to face ourselves and admit what we are in ourselves.
- **"What is your name?"**
 - Are you going to continue living up to your name, deceiving yourself and others; or will you admit what you are and let Me change you?
 - The new name God gave him was "Israel," from a Hebrew word that means "to struggle"
 - He lost the battle but won the victory! By seeking God's blessing and finally being weakened and forced to yield, he had become a "God-empowered prince."

- G. Campbell Morgan called Jacob's experience "the crippling that crowns" and interpreted "Israel" to mean "a God-mastered man."
- When God rules our lives, then He can trust us with His power; for only those who are under His authority have the right to exercise His authority.
- **Genesis 28:30-32** Jacob named the place Peniel (which means "face of God"), for he said, "I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been spared." 31 The sun was rising as Jacob left Peniel, and he was limping because of the injury to his hip. 32 (Even today the people of Israel don't eat the tendon near the hip socket because of what happened that night when the man strained the tendon of Jacob's hip.)
- It was the dawning of a new day for Israel/Jacob (v. 31):
 - He had a new name; he had a new walk (he was limping); and he had a new relationship with God that would help him face and solve any problem, if only he would exercise faith.
- The great test was about to come, for Esau had arrived on the scene.

