

Jacob's (Re)turn

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[0 : 00] If you guys have a copy of the Scriptures with you, I'd like you to open up to the book of Genesis this morning.

We are going to begin in Genesis chapter 32. We'll work our way down through the end of Genesis chapter 33. And if that frightens you, then know that these two chapters combined are actually shorter than chapter 31, which we covered last week.

But we're going to read this morning from the middle of chapter 32 what is sort of the pivot point, not only in these two chapters, but really in the life of Jacob himself.

This is the moment, this is the most crucial event that takes place in his entire life. And so we'll begin in verse 22 of chapter 32 and read down through verse 30.

And I'm going to invite you all to stand to your feet and honor the Word of God as we read. Moses tells us, The same night he arose and took his two wives, his two female servants and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok.

[1 : 19] He took them and sent them across the stream and everything else that he had. And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of day.

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. Then he said, Let me go for the day has broken.

But Jacob said, I will not let you go unless you bless me. And he said to him, What is your name? And he said, Jacob. 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.

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. So Jacob called the name of the place Pineal, saying, For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered.

Father, we long to see you face to face. We long to see your Son and the radiance of His glory face to face.

[2 : 31] But like Jacob, it would be a miracle if we were to survive that encounter. But a miracle has occurred for us.

The blood of Jesus has been shed for us. So that we might come before you, not in our own stained and dirty robes, that we might come to you clothed in the righteousness of Jesus.

And now as we look at this event and the events that surround it in the life of Jacob, I pray, Father, that you would teach us, show us what it means to turn from a life of selfishness, from a life of sin, from a life that is centered around our own cares and concerns and desires, to a life that is centered upon Christ and the great promises of your word.

Teach us, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. You guys take a seat. Of all the parables that Jesus told, and there are many of them recorded in the Gospels, and we assume many, many more that He spoke that the Spirit of God did not inspire the writers of the Gospel to write down, but of all the parables that Jesus spoke and that are recorded for us in the Gospels, there is probably none more familiar both to believers and to those who just have a passing acquaintance with the teachings of Jesus than the parable of the prodigal son.

The parable that teaches us about a son who wanders into a far away country, wants to take what is his and go away from the presence of his father and his family so that he might do whatever it is that he wants to do, and then who finds himself in misery and discomfort having spent all that he has, and finally returns home to be welcomed in the arms of his father, returning back from that far away land from the far country to come home.

[4 : 44] And in many ways, the life of Jacob mirrors the parable of the prodigal son. Jacob, who has been given great promises, Jacob, who has received, albeit by way of his own cunning and

scheming, he has been guaranteed an inheritance, he has received a blessing.

Jacob, who is forced to flee from his home country and from the promised land into a far away country where he toils for two decades, Jacob is now returning home.

He's coming back to the promised land. But the one thing that has not happened quite yet for Jacob is that moment in the pigsty.

The moment when the prodigal son realizes that he would be better in the arms of his father, he would be better there even if he were deprived of all else, than to be where he has found himself, where his sin, where his selfishness have taken him.

Now, Jacob has learned a lot of lessons. His life does not perfectly parallel that of the prodigal son, because he has learned a number of lessons along the way. And we can say that at this point in the story, Jacob is a greatly improved man.

[5 : 57] He's much better than who he once was. He is no longer primarily defined by his scheming and his tricks. He has become a hard worker.

He has become one who has earned a living for his family, who has gained many things. He's learned a lot. But as we open in chapter 32, we realize that there is something still absent from Jacob.

A confession that he's not yet made that is telling within the context of the story of the life of Jacob in the book of Genesis. So let's pick up here at the beginning of chapter 32.

Jacob has just forged this covenant with his father-in-law and therefore broken ranks with his father-in-law and his father-in-law's family. And he is truly now returning home.

And we are told that as he went on his way in verse 1, the angels of God met him. And when he saw them, he confessed and said that this is God's camp. And so he called the name of this particular place Mahanaim, which means literally two camps.

[7 : 06] And that is significant because as we walk through the story in just a handful of verses, we're going to see Jacob then divide his own family, his own camp into two separate camps.

His thinking being that as he returns home, he is surely at some point going to meet with his brother Esau. And Esau's anger will probably still persist. And if Esau should attack, if Esau should come to destroy Jacob and his family, if he's divided into two camps, it may be that Esau only destroys half of his camp, half of his family.

And the other half might yet survive. Now when you're thinking in those terms, you're in a dark place. If you're just thinking, what can I do to save half of my family?

You're in a bad place. And that's where Jacob is. He has improved. His lot in life has certainly improved. He went away from the promised land empty handed.

He returns now a wealthy man. But he returns essentially with the same fear with which he left. He left in fear for his life because of his brother's anger toward him.

[8 : 13] He returns in fear for his life and the lives of his family because of his fear of his brother Esau. So that has not changed. And now as he approaches, God is beginning to go before him though and prepare the way signaled by the fact that here he now meets with the messengers, with the angels of God.

We don't know precisely what occurred at that meeting. We don't know what they told him. We only know the story as it progresses. We only know what happens next. And the most significant thing that Jacob does in the first half of chapter 32, after having met with these angels, after deciding that he's going to divide up his family, he's going to try to do everything he can, he goes to the Lord to pray.

I mean, this is a time of desperation for him. He doesn't know what else to do. And if he has learned at least one thing, it is that God is faithful to his promises. God has been with him just as God said he would be with him even during his waywardness.

God was always there, always protecting, always turning events for the good of Jacob. So he comes to him, verse 9, and we read that he says, 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.

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 door Jordan and now I have become two camps.

[9 : 51] 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. 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.

So he's calling upon the promises of God. He's saying, I'm afraid that he's going to attack me and my wives and my children and we'll all be slaughtered. But you said that I would turn you into a multitude.

That cannot happen. If a slaughter takes place. So he has no other recourse but to call upon God, to call upon God's promises and essentially say to God exactly what he's been saying to God from the beginning.

Alright God, show yourself to be true. You promised me this. Do it. It's exactly what he said when he had that dream on his way out of the promised land.

Where he saw the stairway into heaven and God appeared to him and gave him these great promises. Jacob said, okay, if you fulfill your word then I will do this. In other words, he's constantly saying to God, here are your promises.

[11 : 01] I hear you. Now prove it to me. But God has been faithful. He acknowledges that. God has proven himself to be true. And now one more time he says, you promised this so now protect me and show yourself to continuously be faithful.

But what is most telling in this prayer is the way that Jacob addresses God. Oh God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac.

God is still in Jacob's mind. He is the God of Abraham. He is the God of Isaac. Not one time throughout the entire story of Jacob's life has Jacob ever referred thus far to God in any way as being his God.

He has found himself dependent upon God. He has found himself at the mercy of God. He has found himself in great need of God to be faithful to his promises. But Jacob has not, we have not yet seen him despite his growth, we have not yet seen him refer to God in any way or address God in any way that would make us think that Jacob owns God as his own God.

He is the God of Abraham. He is the God of Isaac. He knows who he is. But there is a barrier. There is something missing here. A key piece of the puzzle is not there for Jacob.

[12 : 29] But it will soon be put into place. Because as the events unfold, he sends his family across the Jabbok, which was at the time a fairly large tributary feeding into the Jordan River.

So he sends them across this, essentially a large stream or a river feeding into a river. He sends them across. And then he himself comes back. We are not told why he comes back.

We are not told what his thinking is. But he comes back and he is going to spend the night alone and by himself. Verse 21, So the present passed on ahead of him and he himself stayed that night in the camp.

We don't know exactly what's going through his mind. We know a part of it is that he wants himself to be separated from his family. And it may be that he's thinking, perhaps he'll come for me and me alone.

If I'm by myself, perhaps my brother will come for me. And maybe that's what he's thinking. We don't know with any certainty. That could be it. We know he's already sent ahead numerous gifts, animals and servants to be given to his brother in chunks, piece by piece, to try to win over his brother before he ever encounters him.

[13 : 43] We don't know everything that's going on in his mind. If he is thinking, perhaps I can be alone and deal with my brother, then the next verse following that statement that he was alone is a crucial verse.

Now, most of us are somewhat familiar with this story. And so we don't read through it with the kind of anticipation that we might if we had never heard the story.

You see, in the context of the story, if you don't know it well, then Jacob is afraid of his brother. He's alone now back in his home country. He's vulnerable now by himself.

His brother could show up at any time. And next we read that in the middle of the night, verse 22, that same night he arose and took his wives, his two female servants, his eleven children.

He crossed the ford of the Jabbok. He took them. He sent them across the stream and everything else. And he was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. Who is this man?

[14 : 46] Is this Esau? Has Esau finally come to deal with him? Now, if you know the story, you know that's not the case. But if this were the first time you were reading this, that's probably what's going to be at the forefront of your mind.

Because we're told that a man came and wrestled with him. Strange event. Wrestling out by the Jabbik. There are a lot of word plays going on in chapter 32 and 33.

You have that camp named Two Camps and then he divides his family into two camps. Now here, the word for wrestle sounds very much like the word for Jabbik. And so he's Jabbiking next to the Jabbik.

I mean, it's really, there are a lot of these word plays to draw our attention to the events as they unfold. But there's some mystery here. Despite the help that we're given by the word plays, there's some mystery here.

Who is the man? Why has he come to deal, to wrestle with Jacob in the middle of the night? Now one thing that helps us as we kind of picture this and imagine this is to be reminded that they don't have sort of artificial lighting, right?

[15 : 51] So he's not out there with a camp light or anything like that. So as this man comes to him to wrestle him, not only are we, the reader at this point, left in the dark as to the identity of the man, but so is Jacob.

He doesn't know who the man is and that's shown to us as he asks. He wants to know who this man is. He doesn't know, but he comes to realize as we work through the story, he comes to realize who it is.

There's a strange statement in verse 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.

Now, what kind of man can't beat another man in a wrestling match if he has the capability of touching him in the hip and dislocating his hip?

I don't know anybody who's capable of that. I know some people who are some big guys and they might be capable if they wrestle me to the ground. They could probably wrench my leg out, but they can't just touch me.

[16 : 54] They can't just barely strike me and suddenly my hip is out of joint to the point that when Jacob finishes this fight, he limps away and it's implied that that limp remains with him for the rest of his life.

This is a significant touch. What kind of man has that kind of strength and yet doesn't prevail in the wrestling match? The kind of man who doesn't have it in mind to defeat Jacob.

A man who has it in mind to transform Jacob. Had he come to win a fight, it would have been over with very quickly. You apply that kind of touch to the head or the neck and the fight is over.

This man hasn't come to defeat Jacob. No, but he has come to win him over in a sense. And as we read through the story, it becomes clear who the man is.

Verse 26, the man speaks and says, let me go for the day has broken. In other words, the light is about to dawn and you will see my face. Let me go. The day has broken.

[17 : 59] And Jacob responds, Jacob, I think, having realized at this point who it is with whom he wrestles, I will not let you go unless you bless me. Now Jacob is beginning to...

Now he understands. The person with whom I wrestle in the middle of the night is capable of giving me a blessing. Who is this great figure? I will not let you go.

To which the man responds, then he said, your name shall no longer be called Jacob. No longer shall you be known as the one who grabs by the heel or the one who deceives.

Those things that have defined most of his life. You'll not be Jacob. You're not the deceiver. You're not the trickster anymore. I'll give you a new name. Your name is Israel.

For you have striven with God and with men. To name Israel, though it's debated somewhat among scholars, we know it's a combination of two words. To wrestle or to struggle or to fight.

[19 : 01] And then a shortened form of the word God. You can hear it at the end. El is short for Elohim, the Hebrew word for God. And so the name that he's given to him indicates the identity with clarity of who this is with whom he wrestles.

This is God himself. Your name will be Israel because you wrestled with me. You wrestled with men. And you prevailed in a sense. You are receiving the blessing that you've asked for from me. You're going to receive it. You're going to get it. Jacob, please tell me your name. But he said, why do you ask my name? And there he blessed him. He receives the blessing.

And then Jacob makes a statement. 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. He knows. He understands with clarity now. This is God. I have been wrestling and striving with God. And in a real sense, he has been wrestling and striving with God his entire life.

[20 : 07] But now there has been a turn. Now there has been a significant change. Now he is a new man. He's not Jacob anymore. He's Israel now.

A fundamental change of his identity and of his heart have occurred because of his encounter with God. Now we think, why does he call him, why is he referred to as a man?

What? I mean, this is weird. Why would you use this language? Why not just begin by saying it was God? Well, on the one hand, it's so that we can experience, if we were first time readers, we can experience the same kind of feelings of tension and not knowing and being in the dark that Jacob experiences.

But it's also in keeping with the way that God tends to appear to the patriarchs and others throughout the book of Genesis. I'll give you one example. Turn back in Genesis to the life of Abraham, back to chapter 18 in Abraham's life.

Where we are told in chapter 18, verse 1, we are told ahead of time, unlike the event with Jacob, we the readers are told, the Lord appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre.

[21 : 16] So we are given insight from the narrator, from Moses himself, the Lord appeared to Abraham. But then what do we read from Abraham?

Verse 2, He lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing in front of him. Now we learn later on in chapter 19, verse 1, that two of those three men were angels.

And they leave, and Abraham is left alone with the Lord. So here, God appears to Abraham as a man, but it is clearly the Lord.

Earlier in Genesis, in chapter 16, something similar happens. But there, instead of appearing as a man, God appears to Hagar as the angel of the Lord, and it's revealed later on in the passage that the angel of the Lord is actually the Lord Himself.

Which is not as confusing if you remember that the word angel simply means messenger. God is fully capable of delivering His own messages when He chooses, and that's one of the times when He chooses to do so.

[22 : 17] So at times when God appears to people in the book of Genesis, and even outside of Genesis, we can see it in Exodus chapter 3, the burning bush. At times, He appears as the angel of the Lord. At times, He appears merely as a man, but it is revealed either beforehand to the reader, or eventually to the people experiencing the events, that this is actually God Himself appearing, and coming, and meeting with them.

And Jacob sees, and Jacob knows now. I've seen God face to face, and wonder of wonders, my life has been delivered. In other words, Jacob now can enter into a kind of relationship with God.

He can be brought into God's presence, and he doesn't die. That's significant, because everybody dies who comes into the direct presence of God unless your sins are washed away.

unless you have the kind of forgiveness that Isaiah experienced. It was pictured for Isaiah when the angels touched a coal to his lips and said, your sins have been atoned for.

Unless your sins have been atoned for, you don't get to be in God's presence and survive. And here Jacob stands having survived his encounter with God.

[23 : 37] He has been forgiven. He has been transformed. On his return to the land, Jacob has turned into a new man.

Now, finally, we will see that God has become his God. Now, we don't get to see that stated as clearly until we get to the end of chapter 33.

And chapter 33 continues to show us God's faithfulness. And there we see in chapter 33 some great discontinuities between the story of Jacob and his return home and the story of the prodigal as the prodigal son returns home in Jesus' story.

You remember the story of the prodigal son? When he returns home, he's welcomed with open arms by his father, but his brother rejects him. His brother is angry that his father would welcome him back.

Now, that's what Jacob is expecting to receive from Esau. He's expecting to encounter an angry Esau and perhaps lose his life or at least be harmed significantly in some way.

[24 : 47] That's what he fully expects. But 20 years have passed. 20 long years have passed. And more importantly than that, God has promised him, I will be with you and that's not just true in Paddan Aram when he deals with Laban.

God has gone ahead of him and been with him and prepared the way and even prepared Esau for Jacob's arrival. Because what we see is it's incredible.

It's astounding. Jacob learns first that Esau is approaching and he's got 400 men with him. That's a bad sign. That's a very bad sign.

He hasn't come out by himself. He's got what appears to be an army with him. He has reason to be afraid. And so once again, he's going to divide up his camp.

But he does something different this time. He doesn't stay behind. He divides them up and he goes on ahead of them. So he can encounter the danger firsthand himself.

[25 : 55] So he can face his brother and plead for the lives of his wives and his children and his servants behind him. I'm telling you this is a different man in chapter 33.

He has been transformed by his night with God. Look down. You can see some of the details.

Verse 1 of chapter 33. Jacob lifted up his eyes and looked and behold, Esau was coming and 400 men with him.

So he divided the children among Leah and Rachel and the two female servants. And he put the servants with their children in front. Then Leah with all her children and Rachel and Joseph last of all. He himself went on before them bowing himself to the ground seven times until he came near to his brother.

Now one of the things that I think is important and it helps us to see the transformation that has taken place in Jacob and how he's able to humble himself. But it also shows us how he knows how to approach his brother.

He knows what he must do. Remember the promise from the very beginning. The prediction about the lives of these two brothers. The older will serve the younger.

[27 : 02] That must have echoed and reverberated through Esau's life. That must have been a terribly irritating thing for him to know and be aware of. It's probably part of the reason that he seems to have almost always hated Jacob.

because he was destined to serve his younger brother. Well, here comes Jacob or Israel understanding that dynamic and knowing what's happening and repeatedly he refers to himself as Esau's servant.

Over and over. You can see it there at the end of verse 5. Jacob said, the children whom God has graciously given your servant. In verse 8, he refers to Esau as my Lord.

In verse 14 again, let my Lord pass on ahead of his servant. So he's willing to humble himself. He's not going to come as the old Jacob would have done to drive the knife in and remind him, you're my servant.

That's not who he is anymore. He can humble himself now. He can fall down and bow before his brother Esau. He can take what's coming to him.

[28 : 18] And yet what's coming to him is a shock and a surprise. Verse 4, But Esau ran to meet him and embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him and they wept.

That's not the homecoming he was expecting. That's not what he thought would occur. Esau, this rough man, this man of the wilderness, this man who has defied his parents over and over by marrying women who were driving his parents crazy.

That's the last we heard of Esau. Last thing we heard about Esau, he wanted to kill Jacob and he was intentionally marrying women that would make his parents' lives miserable. That's the Esau we left. Now here we see an Esau weeping and embracing the brother that he once hated.

We don't know what happened over those 20 years. We don't know, we don't, we shouldn't assume that Esau like Jacob has had some kind of encounter with God and he has been converted and transformed like Jacob because Esau stands in the New Testament for those who stand under God's condemnation.

So he's not, he's not put his faith in God, but yet God has still worked the change in him. God, God can work in the lives of the unregenerate or unbelievers in such a way that they can become relative to who they once were or the cultural, they can become better people relatively.

[29 : 38] And he's done that in the life of Esau. What I think is probably more significant either than that, as Jacob continues to refer to Esau as my Lord and himself as his servant, look at verse 9.

He's offered him all sorts of gifts and this is Esau's response. Esau said, I have enough, my brother. In other words, I don't, you're not my servant.

I'm not your Lord. I'm not, I'm not here to conquer you. I'm not here to win. You're my brother. What a remarkable change.

He wanted to kill him and take his life, but God promised Jacob, I will be with you. I will not let any harm befall you as you return home to the promised land.

It won't happen. And so the most dangerous person in all of the life of Jacob embraces him once again as his brother and weeps tears of joy as they are reunited.

[30 : 37] This is a miraculous event. This is God continuing to prove his faithfulness to all of his promises to Jacob, now Israel.

Two brothers eventually part. Jacob convinces Esau to take the gifts and they go separate ways. And so far as we know, they don't have any direct interactions with one another either more. Now practically speaking, perhaps they did. And it's just not recorded for us in the Scriptures. But so far as we know, their lives are not intertwined from that moment on. This is just God sovereignly, providentially protecting Jacob.

But after the events unfold, after they part ways, Jacob finally settles into a spot. And there are two highly significant things that happen at the very end of this story in the life of Jacob, now Israel, that are clear signals to us that he is indeed a new man.

And that God is beginning to fulfill his promises. Look down in verse 18. Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, on his way from Paddan Aram, and he camped before the city.

[31 : 59] And from the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father, he bought for a hundred pieces of money the piece of land on which he pitched his tent. Now God promised all of Canaan to Abraham and his descendants.

But up to this point in time, the only piece of land in the possession of Abraham's descendants owned by them is burial ground.

It's a cave that serves as a cemetery for Abraham and for Sarah and for others from the promised land. It's all they have. It's all they have. But what does Jacob do when he arrives back in?

He purchases land. This is just in seed form. The people of Israel, the descendants of Jacob, will still go to the land of Egypt for 400 years, over 400 years.

It will take them some time to return. And when they come back, they'll have to battle for the land. All that's got to take place. Yes. So this is just a glimpse.

[33 : 02] But this is a signal that the land promises will be fulfilled in Jacob's descendants. Jacob knows that. Jacob believes that.

Jacob purchased his land. But that pales in comparison to the other detail that takes up a very short verse at the end. Verse 20.

There he, that's Jacob, Israel. There he erected an altar. And he called it El Elohei Israel.

Israel. Israel. Some of your translations may translate that for you. Others, like what I'm reading from, has a footnote at the bottom. But what is significant about that statement is that the name that he gives to this place of worship is called God.

The God of Israel. See at the beginning, chapter 32, beginning of 32, it's the God of Abraham. Abraham. He's the God of Isaac.

[34 : 05] And now, finally, here, he is the God of Israel. Not even merely the God of Jacob as he will be referred to frequently later on in the Old Testament.

But Jacob here makes it clear. He recognizes he is a new man and now God is his own God. This place shall be called God. The God of Israel. He is my God.

He owns him as his own. He has made that turn. He has repented from whom he once was. And he has now trusted, not merely known cognitively the promises of God, but he trusts and believes in those promises signaled by his buying of a plot of land.

And God is now finally, after all this time, near the end of the story of Jacob, God is owned by Jacob, by Israel, as his own God.

God, this is the most significant verse in the entire story of the life of Jacob tucked in at the very end of chapter 33.

[35 : 10] This is the signal and the sign to us, the readers, that he has repented and that he has trusted in God himself. And the story of Jacob, I think, really is intended to be a wake-up call for

Israel as they read the story and they look back upon their forefather who had the promises and yet was wayward and distant until finally they submitted to him and clung to him and received his blessing and repented of their sin.

I think it's a reminder for the nation of Israel and for the individual Israelite that just because, just because you're descended from Abraham, that does not mean that God is automatically your God. He wasn't the God of Jacob until he wrestled with him and he clung to him. You want him to be your God? You repent and you cling to him. It's not just for Israel. It's for us to be reminded that we can have all the information that we want from the Bible.

There are thousands of Bible scholars. Thousands of them. Many of their books on my shelf. Many of their books available in libraries and bookstores.

And they spend their lives learning and teaching the Bible and they do not believe. They don't believe. They can tell you the promises.

[36 : 38] They can read them in the ancient languages. They can interpret the text for you. And they do not believe the promises of God. They do not believe in this God. He is not their God.

It is entirely possible to have a grand and great knowledge of the things of God and not know God. And there's a danger always present within the church.

That from one generation to the next we would pass on the information that the new birth would not take place. Not cling to this God as their own God.

And it is a reminder for us always to look at ourselves to do as Paul says to test yourself to see if you're in the faith to ask ourselves do I really believe in and trust in this God?

Do I love Him? Do I own Him as my own? Will I cling to Him in the dark night? It doesn't mean that you continue perfectly. We get one chapter later and Jacob like his grandfather Abraham acts like a fool.

[37 : 43] There's no perfection present here. Trusting in God and following after Him doesn't immediately bring moral perfection or limitless wisdom into your life.

It doesn't. Oh, but there must be there must be a clinging to and a trusting in God without which we don't have the hope of the promises of God being fulfilled toward us because they are not ours.

Let me read one more set of verses to you and this is from the book of Hosea as the prophet Hosea centuries later looks back upon the life of Jacob. And I just want you to hear what he says.

Sort of surveying the whole life of Jacob in Hosea chapter 12 verse 3 we read this in the womb he took his brother by the heel and in his manhood he strove with God he strove with the angel and there's that language of being able to go back and forth between angel and God but still God. He strove with the angel and prevailed. He wept and sought his favor. That's repentance and faith. Move down to verse 6.

[39 : 00] So you by the help of your God. So he cites the life of Jacob and then he turns his attention to Israel the people of Israel. So you by the help of your God return.

Return. Now this word return is the same word used over and over in the Old Testament and often times translated repent. So you return or repent. Hold fast to love and justice and wait continually for your God.

In other words there is an application here. So you like Jacob by the help of God this is not something you're going to do on your own. God comes to Jacob in the night.

by the help of your God return or repent. And then let your life be characterized by the fact that you hold fast to love and justice and that you continually wait for your God.

This is what the life of those who have made God their own God ought to look like. Continual repentance. Holding fast to love holding fast to justice and waiting.

[40 : 20] Waiting for the final and ultimate fulfillment of the promises. Waiting for your God. We're told in the book of Hebrews that all the patriarchs Jacob included they didn't receive the full measure of the fulfillment of the promises of God in their lifetime.

They didn't. They never the patriarchs never occupied all the promised land. This is the only bit of land they ever own outside of the cave where people are buried. This is it. So the promises don't come to their full fulfillment in the life of Abraham or Isaac or Jacob but the writer of Hebrews tells us but they were looking to a better land.

They were looking further ahead for something better. In other words they waited on God for a better day and we are called to do the same.

If we have trusted in Christ and we know that His blood covers us and we our sin and we have repented and turned away from that sin that does not mean that all of our life will be sorted out for us immediately because we are a waiting people.

We wait for the day when we shall see Him face to face. We wait for the day when every tear is wiped away, when there is no more death, when there is no more pain and in the meantime we have to be a people who are clinging to love and justice in our lives and in our church and in our community and in the world around us.

[41 : 48] People clinging to love and justice. Let's pray. do you