

The God of Jacob is With Us

#0688

Study given by W.D. Frazee—November 27, 1964

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof”
Psalms 46:1-3.

“The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge”
Ibid., verse 7.

“There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early. The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. [Selah.] Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations He hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; He burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge” Ibid., verses 4-11.

This battle song of the hosts of God as they march to the last battle is for us to learn today. I've been meditating especially of late on that expression, “the God of Jacob is our refuge.” And I would like to have us mediate this vesper hour a bit on this expression, “the God of Jacob.”

I wonder why He's called “the God of Jacob” here. I wonder why He *allows* Himself to be called “the God of Jacob.” I think there are some people that, at least a good part of Jacob's life, would just as soon have disowned connection with him. The very name Jacob, you know, means ‘supplanter.’ Jacob was a very human individual. He was a schemer. He was a mixture of good and bad. There might be some like that here tonight. I know at least one. And oh, my dear friends, I'm so glad that God is willing to be called “the God of Jacob.”

Now, as you are acquainted with, and as we shall doubtless refer to tonight, there came a time in the experience of this man where, after long years of bitter conflict with others and with himself, he came to the experience where God Himself gave him a *new* name, and you remember what it was. [Audience responds: Israel.] Israel. That's a much better sounding name. It has a better meaning. It means 'God rules', and in connection with it, Jacob was named as a 'prince of God.' And from that day to this, Israel has been the name not only of Jacob but of his descendants. Paul applies it to those who have accepted Jesus and have become members of the Christian commonwealth.

Nevertheless, God goes back of that experience and associates Himself with the man Jacob: the man of failures, the man of inconsistencies, the man of contradictions. That's what gives me hope tonight, my friends. And if there's somebody here tonight that should need hope, this is for *you*: "...the God of Jacob is our refuge" (Psalm 46:7).

You remember that Jacob was the son of Isaac, who in turn was the son of Abraham. It's interesting to study in the very *true* record in the Bible. The Bible, you know, written by inspiration, paints the portraits of men just as they were. It's interesting to note the heredity that Jacob received. His grandfather, Abraham, was not above lying on certain occasions. (Too bad. We're certainly not proud of it, are we? No.) Yet God called Himself the God of Abraham. That doesn't mean that God condones lying. No.

Interesting thing: the Bible sets down the story that Abraham failed on that same point more than once—not only on the point of lying, but lying about the same thing. Do you remember that? And interestingly enough, his son Isaac, many years later, did the same thing. And the weakness cropped out in *his* son, Jacob, in deceiving; all with a good motive, in a sense (if you can think of lying with a good motive).

I'm sure there are many people today who would say that Abraham and Isaac and Jacob all had *reasons* for their deceit. But I want you to notice something, friends. The same Bible that tells in plain language the record of their failures, tells two other things: it shows the sad results of transgression. With unerring accuracy, it traces the results of disobedience to the law of God.

Take this man Jacob whom we're looking at tonight. He wanted the birthright. He wanted the spiritual blessing that went with it. He schemed and got the pledge from his brother on it, and he deceived and received the blessing from his father. Interestingly enough, it's plain that if he had only been willing to trust God and leave everything with God, he could have gotten it fair and square at the right time. But he couldn't do that. (At least, he *didn't* do it, I should say.)

He deceived and, you remember, he got the blessing from his father, first through pretending that he was Esau by putting on Esau's clothes and covering his hands and arms with the hair from a goat that had been killed. (Esau must have been *really* hairy, mustn't he? [Laughter.] Yes.)

But my point is this, that when Jacob, *acting out* that deception, found himself in the presence of Isaac, he was forced in the position where he had to acknowledge his identity or plain lie, and acting, in that case, led to lying. Acting leads people to lying today, my friends. That's why *acting* has no place in the Christian life. *Truth* doesn't need any acting.

But having been led into plain lying, it was only a matter of a little while until Jacob began to reap the bitter results for, of course, everybody found out the deception. And his father was bitterly disappointed, and Esau was angry and ready to kill him. So there was nothing for Jacob to do but flee. And the mother, that through her unwise love for Jacob had led him into the deception, told him goodbye, never to see him again, my friends. Off he went with staff in hand, far across the country to the home of Laban, his mother's brother.

Well, you remember that first night out. And there he was, friends. I suppose he didn't know whether at any time some messenger from Esau might overtake him and take his life. But having traveled all day, he was so weary that he lay down with nothing but a stone for a pillow.

As he slept, there was a dream, and there the ladder stretched from earth to heaven. He saw the angels of God coming down and going up. Above the ladder he heard the voice of God say, "I'm the God of Abraham, and I'm the God of Isaac. And I'll be *your* God."

Jacob was so thankful when he woke up that he called that place where he lay that night 'Beth-El', the house of God. He made a vow to God.

Well, God appreciated Jacob's response. My point is: God saw the poor, weary man and helped him where he was. He helped him where he was. God knew that in Jacob's heart, with *all* his scheming, Jacob wanted to serve God.

God said, "I'm your God, Jacob" as if He'd say, "Jacob, I'm disappointed with the way you do things, but I love you, and I'm not going to wait till you get perfect. I'm going to help you right now, where you are."

But now watch. You know, if men were writing this story, everything would have been nice from then on for Jacob. But, oh no. His troubles had just begun. If there's any lesson the Bible teaches, it's this (and you can read it out in the cornfield or the wheat field or the weed field):

“...Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap”
Galatians 6:7.

Some people fail to get the connection for two reasons (and you can read it in nature or in life): you do not reap, as a rule, the same day you sow. True, if you put your finger on the fire you'll get burnt, but that's not sowing and reaping—that's

immediate consequences. You sow in the spring; you reap in the fall, maybe. (But with some crops, you sow this year and you don't reap for years.)

And the other reason that some people have difficulty in associating sowing and reaping is that usually you get which, less or more, of what you sow? [Audience responds: More.] We like that when it's wheat or corn or apples, don't we? But believe me, we *don't* like it when it's cockle burs or Johnson grass, do we? But does it work that way? Do we get *more* than we sow? Oh, yes.

And so Jacob goes to Laban, and a schemer meets a schemer. And Jacob learns the hard way what it is to be on the receiving end. He who had schemed against his brother finds his own uncle conspiring. After seven years of faithful service for the beloved Rachel, he finds that father conspiring to slip in the older sister. By and by he gets Rachel, and each of them in turn presents him with a handmaiden. After a number of years, he finds himself in a polygamous situation, children growing up all around. A very happy family, wasn't it? No. Polygamy doesn't make people happy. The law of God is clear—one man, one woman.

But does God abandon Jacob? No. He is learning the hard way what *scheming* brings. He is learning the hard way what *rationalizing* means. He is learning the hard way that the way of the transgressor is hard. And may I say to you, friends, that he never *stopped* drinking of that cup *all* his life. All his life. But does God abandon him? No. God's with him.

And Jacob—all the while leading the shepherd's life out there with the burning Syrian sun down upon him during the day and the frost by night, out there at all hours caring for the flocks and the herds—he learns some of the lessons that Moses learned in Midian.

And meanwhile those children are growing up. Oh, how his father's heart is drawn out toward them. They're influenced by some of the relatives who are in the area. Finally Jacob, wondering what in the world he's going to do, hears the voice of God in a dream at night that says, "Arise and go back to your father's country. Go back to Canaan." And soon he's on his way.

But ah, my friends, the seeds of sin that had been sown in the hearts of those boys growing up in a semi-heathen atmosphere were bearing a crop too. They go to Shechem, and soon many of the citizens of that town are killed, executed by the righteous indignation (so *they* would have called it) of Simeon and Levi over the dishonor of their sister.

Jacob *again* is forced to drink the bitter cup of sorrow as he sees his children doing just what *he* had done years before—taking things in their own hands and finding *their* way of solving a problem.

He pleads with his household to put away the strange gods and go up to Bethel. There at that place, where alone years before he had knelt after the night of sleep and

the dream of the ladder, he dedicates them all to God. And they're drawn nearer to heaven.

But ah, friends, *still* the battle goes on. Joseph is growing up, nearly the youngest of all his children. And oh, how he loves Joseph because Joseph *responds*. Joseph seems to love what *Jacob* loves—he seems to love God. But ah, that very partiality creates jealousy on the part of others. And Reuben, the first born, and Judah, a natural leader, and Simeon and Levi, *these* men of action—they all look upon that lad with that coat of many colors his father has made for him. They look upon him with jealous hearts, and they wait for the day of vengeance.

And it comes. It comes. Unknown to the father, they plot and talk. And finally, you remember, way off there at Dothan, as Joseph brings the message and food from home, he's seized by those angry brothers, put in the pit, and finally sold as a slave to the Ishmaelites and carried down to Egypt. The father, meanwhile, is told that probably the son is killed because here's his coat, stained with blood.

Oh, my friends, the bitterness of it all! The sorrow of it all! The *one* boy that responded to the father's love and the father's heart, taken away, and those ten unrepentant, growing up (yes, already grown), and bringing down the poor old man's head with sorrow to the grave.

But is God with him through all that? Yes. God is "the God of Jacob." And notice: it doesn't mean, friends, that God takes the cup of sorrow out of his hands, but it means that God is tenderly watching over him all the way through. All the way through.

You remember that finally, as the result of those very maneuverings, Joseph is brought in the providence of God to Potipher's house, then to the dungeon, and finally to the throne of Egypt as next to the king. You remember how He saved the nation from famine and in the providence of God becomes the savior of his own family. You remember how those very brothers that, years before, had sold him as a slave come now kneeling before him, little realizing that that prince upon the throne is their rejected brother. And you remember how that Joseph, testing them, puts Simeon in prison and sends them home to get that younger brother they had spoken of.

Now, friends, I want you to notice an expression that comes from Jacob's lips as they come and they tell him, "We've been down to Egypt, and that man down there that runs the country in the time of famine, he's told us that we can't even see his face and get any grain unless we bring our younger brother with us. And he's got Simeon back there in jail." I want you to notice what Jacob says in Genesis 42:36:

"And Jacob their father said unto them, Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me" Genesis 42:36.

Were they? [Audience responds: No.] But listen: if you'd been there that day and couldn't see any more than Jacob saw, what would you have said? I rather think, friends, we would have voted with Jacob if we had depended upon sight. It is only *faith* that can sing in the storm. And while Jacob had *some* faith, he didn't have *perfect* faith. He said, "All these things are" what? [Audience responds: Against me.] "Against me."

And I ask again: were they? How many of them were against him? Not one, my friends, not one. They were all working *for* him. And you and I know what Paul wrote down centuries later, that *all* things do what? "...Work together for good to them that love God..." (Romans 8:28).

Was Jacob reaping some of the results of his earlier sowing? Was the sowing good? No. And the reaping wasn't good, but it was working *for* good. That's the marvelous thing. And that's what you and I need to recognize as the particular and peculiar power of the God of Jacob. The God of Jacob is able to take the mistakes of Jacob and out of them work two things: a lesson for Jacob that teaches him not to keep on sowing transgression and a blessing that shall endure forever more.

Why friends, you know that within just a short time of these very words, "all these things are against me," Jacob sees the wagons coming and hears the wonderful news that that man that they were all afraid of is Joseph.

"Oh," he says, "I can't believe it!" But we're told that when he saw the wagons he said, "It must be so. If that man has sent all these wagons up here to get me and my things, nobody but Joseph would do that. I'll go."

And so they got ready and all went down there. Well, you know it was a wonderful homecoming. Meanwhile, Joseph, of course, had become fully satisfied that those..."(boys" I was going to call them, but they were grown men with children, some of them with grandchildren) had been converted, praise the Lord.

Now, friends, I want you to hear another testimony of Jacob. This is good. Put this along side this one where he said, "All these things are against me."

Genesis 48. Here he's talking to Joseph. One day, long after what we've just read, after he was down there in Egypt and he was drawing near the close of his life, he said to Joseph, "I want you to bring those two boys of yours, Ephraim and Manasseh. I want you to bring them over here. I want to bless them. And I want them to have a part with Reuben and Simeon and Levi and Judah. I want you to have that double portion." So he put his hands upon them. The dear old grandfather put his hands upon Ephraim and Manasseh. And also he blessed Joseph, the 15th verse, 48th chapter:

"And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on

them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac...”
Genesis 48:15-16.

Ah, that's it:

“The Angel which redeemed me from all evil...” Genesis
48:16.

“...The God which fed me all my life long...” Ibid., verse 15.

You see, Jacob is near the close of his life. He can look back now and what does he see? Ah, as looking from a vessel, we discern the wake—we see that foam where the boat has come through the water—so Jacob, looking back over his life, sees that God has led him all the way.

Has he had a choice? Oh, yes. Has he sometimes chosen wrong? Yes. And when he put the figures 2 and 1 on the adding machine and that's what he punched, did God make it 2 and 2 and make it 4? No. It was just 3. God does not annul His laws, my friends. God doesn't make white black and black white merely because people shed a few tears. Oh, He changes the records in heaven and writes pardon opposite our names. But God in His wonderful love gives us time to learn by sad experience that it is the way of obedience that brings life and joy, and that every transgression and disobedience receives its just recompense of reward. But Jacob now sees that, and he's contented and happy with God's leading.

Now, friends, I want to hasten on through hundreds, yes, thousands of years, for when Jesus was here and looking ahead, He said that the day was coming in the kingdom when Abraham and Isaac and Jacob are going to be in the kingdom of God and the children of God with them.

When you and I, with all the other children of God, come from the four corners of the earth and make that wonderful trip after Jesus' coming up to the Holy City, as we come to that city... (You remember its description there in Revelation—beautiful jasper walls, beautiful golden streets and what, three on each side? [Audience responds: Gates.] Gates. Made of what? [Audience responds: Pearls.] Pearls.)

And listen: as we walk up toward those gates, we're going to see a name on a gate. What is it? Judah.

“Judah? You mean he got there?”

Oh, yes.

“And you mean his name is on the gate?”

Yes.

“Oh, I don’t know. I don’t think I’d like to go under that gate. Wasn’t he a child of a polygamous marriage?”

Yes.

“I think I’ll go in some other gate. And another thing: didn’t Judah himself get involved in some things that weren’t very ‘nice?’”

Yes. The Bible tells about that too.

“I don’t think I belong to Judah. I think I’ll go in some other gate.”

Well, walk around the city a little and who do you see? Well, there’s Ruben.

“Oh, my! Do you mean *he* got there?”

Yes.

“And do you mean there’s a gate with his name on it?”

That’s right.

“Well, I think Ruben was worse than Judah was, wasn’t he?”

Yes, I’m afraid he was.

“Well, I don’t think I’ll go in through *his* gate.”

Well, you go on around, friends, pick one out.

Listen: the God of Jacob has seen fit, in His infinite wisdom, to fill that nameplate on every gate in that city with one of those 12 sons of Jacob.

And somebody would say, “Couldn’t He find any better material than that?”

But my friends, that’s the *glory* of our God, for if He wants perfect people, He’s got a universe full of them. They live on those millions and millions and millions of worlds that fill the universe. But it is in *this* world that He has found the wonderful opportunity to take poor, weak men (yes, rebellious men), and so transform them by the Gospel of His grace, by the melting power of love, that like Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, they can be transformed from sinners to saints, from failures to successes. Oh friends, I thank God for a God like that, don’t you? [Audience responds: Amen!] The God of... [Audience responds: Jacob.] Jacob!

No wonder that the remnant who live down here when things are at their worst, when environment has hit an all time low, no wonder that they turn with hope to the God of Jacob to take them through.

“The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge”
Psalm 46:7.

I want to read you two or three wonderful comments from this book *Education*, given, we believe, by inspiration. Here is a comment on the life of Jacob. Read these two pages, 146-148, and then note this marvelous comment:

“God does not annul His laws. He does not work contrary to them. The work of sin He does not undo. But He transforms. Through His grace the curse works out blessing” *Education*, page 148.

Isn't that nice? So listen, friends: it matters not what your failure has been—you're going to reap some sad and painful result from it. *But* if you come to God, failure and all, God will not only *save* you in the eternal kingdom, but even in *this* life, He will work some good out of your failure. Yes, He will. He can do that. That's “the God of Jacob.”

Now, that same thought should fill our hearts not only with courage for ourselves but courage for others. Dear ones, as medical missionaries, you and I are called to meet hard situations. And the world is filling up with more and more difficult situations, isn't it? Over in the Congo? Yes. Down in Southeast Asia? Yes. But closer home than that. Day by day, you and I meet problems. And we say, “Oh, what good can come out of this? How can we take *this* situation and *do* anything with it? We've got to change *everything* here.” But wait a minute:

“...The God of Jacob is our refuge” Psalms 46:7.

And God can meet Jacob at Bethel. He can meet him over there by the well at Haran. He can meet him by the brook Jabbok. He can wrestle with him through the night and put his thigh out of joint. He can teach him the lesson of victory through surrender. And He can lead him at last to fall suppliant upon the Savior's breast.

“...The God of Jacob is our refuge” *Ibid*.

As you come into contact with human woe—human misery brought on by human transgression—remember, friends, there is no situation too hard for God. There is no problem too difficult for God. And God is looking for people who, like Him, will move into hard situations and *do* something for people that are in those hard situations. That's the medical missionary work. That can be *you*.

“[God] works through those who discern mercy in misery, gain in the loss of all things. When the Light of the world passes by, privileges appear in all hardships, order in confusion, the success and wisdom of God in that which has seemed to be failure.

“...Treat of calamities as disguised blessings, of woes as mercies” *Gospel Workers*, page 37.

If you want something on that that will thrill your heart, this same book, *Education*, page 270—it’s the vision that God would present before the minds of the remnant that will enable them to do the *best* work of the ages in the *worst* time of history; to go out in many cases with nothing but bare hands, but loving hearts, and meet the woes of a sad, sad world. Why?

“The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge”
Psalms 46:11.

Oh, let’s sing it, friends.

The Lord of hosts is with us;
The God of Jacob is our refuge.
The Lord of hosts is with us;
The God of Jacob is our refuge.

Ah, friends, there’s hope for me. And for you. Am I right? [Audience responds: Amen.]

Is there anybody here that would like to send the dear Lord tonight the message that you appreciate a love like His and that you’re willing and anxious for Him to do for you what He did for Jacob and finish it? Would you like to send Him that message tonight? It will cheer His heart, my friends. It will cheer His heart. I know it has.

Now, Brother, I wish you’d lead us in a song, *All the Way My Savior Leads Me*:

All the way my Savior leads me;
What have I to ask beside?
Can I doubt His tender mercy,
Who through life has been my guide?

[Elder Frazee mentions his upcoming travels and meetings and then makes the following comments.]

...I want to tell you something, friends: the God of Jacob gives the richer gift as we near the close. And however blessed November has been, December is going to be more blessed... As I told you last Friday night, when this chapel gets too small, the Lord will give us a bigger one, won’t He? That’s right. So we’ll continue to crowd in.

And now we'll sing *All the Way My Savior Leads Me*, and then we're going to have a wonderful treat. (I wish I had known it a week ago and I would have told you all in advance, but I find that God has two ways of making people happy: one's by anticipating wonderful things and the other is surprising them. I like some of both, do you? [Audience responds: Yes!]) All right, well, after we have sung this song, Pastor Vandeman is going to bring us... I'll let him tell you. [Laughter.]

[Congregation joins Elder Frazee in singing closing hymn.]

[Excerpts from Elder George Vandeman's comments]:

...The tapes that have been so generously supplied because, I imagine, Elder Frazee, that far more myriads of people enjoy these Friday night services than ever sit here. I know they do around the circle of the earth. And I wish you would join me in praying that the way will open to have these messages put into print, not just a few little pamphlets for you to give out and send out, but for some of these books that should go out by the tens and hundreds of thousands because what is given here Friday nights, I think *you* know, is worthy of hearing throughout the entire cause.

In my association with you dear people, I've been asked on several occasions to do something that we finally did. You requested it several times and I succumbed.

[Elder Frazee]: Good! [Laughter.]

Evidently, we don't have many televisions sets here around the grounds [laughter] for which we must be very, very grateful. (We don't have one in *our* home either.)

[Elder Frazee]: Praise the Lord!

But television will be used by the Lord in these last days [Audience responds: Amen.] to take His message to the ends of the earth. It'll be used in a way undreamed of. We learned recently about an election that was lost by a man who *thought* he was going to win, and they tell us that one of the most responsible newspapers in North America called the National Observer (it's the Sunday edition of the Wallstreet Journal) said that it lost partially because of a little commercial that was put on the air on television, just a 45-second commercial written by the man who writes the ads for Volkswagens, these cute little ads you see everywhere for Volkswagens? It was about a man tearing up his social security card. In other words, if you vote for Mr. Goldwater, you won't have any social security. That's what it told. Whether it's true or not, it got a message across, and it said that 15 million people saw it and acted upon it.

Then someone said, "Well, why couldn't he tell the world it was a lie?"

And the paper went on to say that if he had spoken to 5,000 people every night for 30 years, he couldn't talk to as many people as saw that 45-second commercial. Thirty-five thousand people for 30 years! I supposed that Brother Fagel and Brother Richards and myself have talked to 50, 75, maybe 100, maybe 1,000 times more people than Jesus or the Apostle Paul had ever spoken to.

Now this is a tremendous responsibility, and one that we tremble before. We've been in the process of a \$200,000 filming program, completely re-filming all of our messages, either updating them or bringing new ones to the screen, and I brought two along tonight if you want to see them in color. One was done eight years ago so my hair is black. [Laughter]. The other came off the assembly line 48 hours before we ate the Thanksgiving dinner here, so my hair isn't black. But the one with the hair that's black, I thought I'd prepare you for it because you'll gasp when you see the difference so soon. (People usually see them a week apart and they don't notice the difference.)

I tell you this simply because we have taken the older one and updated it. It is just as new as the other as far as format is concerned, although the message is the same. We just couldn't take a message that is that valuable and redo it because it costs so much money—\$4,500 to do every one of these, but they are \$20,000 films. We do it this way because we do it Wildwood's way—we do it the 'economy way'; we do our work for ourselves. We try to do it ourselves and that's why we're able to put these films out.

The first one is about Pitcairn Island. "Captain's Blythe's Bible" is the name. And the second one is *my* favorite, just off the assembly line: "30 Pieces of Silver." Now, you don't have to stay for this. You can go home if you like. [Laughter.] The meeting is over but if we could just sing another stanza of *All the Way My Savior Leads Me*, we'll be able to set this down and then proceed. We ought to put our machine way back in the hallway because it will take that long a distance.

[Congregation sings *All the Way My Savior Leads Me*.]

[Tape ends.]

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