

The Power of Reconciliation
Genesis 33:1-20

“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue.” (2Pe 1:2-3)

“The grace and peace of God can be multiplied toward our lives-multiplied in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. The more we get to know the Lord, the more His grace and peace are multiplied toward us. God has given us everything that pertains to life and godliness. We are already given all we need to live life God's way and to grow in godliness. But how do we avail ourselves of all of that? How do we tap into all of that? How do we draw on that? Note verse 3, “through the knowledge of Him.”

The more we get to know the Lord, the more we draw on, and live by, all things that He is given that pertain to life and godliness. Knowing God is all about the grace of God and it is by grace that God even allows us to know Him. By understanding His grace, we naturally grow in knowing God and rejoicing in God. And it is the grace of God at work on us, in us, and through us that make us to abound in the knowledge of the Lord. We are to grow in the grace and the knowledge of the Lord; they go together. They are a mutual growth experience and the highest calling we have on earth.
Bob Hoekstra

- I. Jacob’s fears, no doubt, consumed him up to the point of meeting his twin brother Esau. He just spent the night wrestling with God himself, exhausted, defeated, broken, and surrendered. And at that very moment, when God left him with the incredible experience of being changed by Him, he looks up and sees Esau and four hundred men coming toward him. Timing is everything, and God’s timing in this matter forced Jacob to go forth in God’s strength. The Lord gave him everything he needed, the reassurance of His word, the reassurance of His ongoing presence in his life, the conviction of a life changed by Him, and the overwhelming evidence of His grace as he looked back over the years and saw the unmistakable proof of what he had been given. Jacob was swimming in the wonder of God’s grace when he looked up and saw Esau. And now the Lord was about to show Israel that His power can change anyone’s heart, no matter how wicked.

Gen. 33:1-4

Heb. 13:6

Ps. 118:6

Gen. 27:41-45

1 Tim. 2:1-6

Eph. 2:3-4

Psalm 56:4 *In God, whose word I praise—in God I trust and am not afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?*

- II. Jesus, who was hated and murdered for being God the Son, set the ultimate example of how to respond to those who hated Him. He responded by offering them grace instead of treating them as their sins deserved (Ps. 103:10). Grace is an essential part of what it means to love our enemies without compromising to their godless ways. What occurred when Jacob and Esau embraced each other the way they did shows the power of how God's grace and peace, changed hatred into forgiveness and reconciliation. Though godless, Esau bears testimony of letting go of his bitterness toward his brother. Perhaps he realized that the grip anger and bitterness had on him was not worth holding onto. Instead, he chose to offer grace and peace through forgiveness to show Jacob that even a man like himself can change. God could have skipped this encounter altogether in His Word, but instead gave us a powerful illustration of what reconciliation could like for those who struggle with unforgiveness.

Gen. 33:4-11
Hos. 12:4
Eph. 4:26
2 Cor. 5:16-21

“Sometimes it is better to forget about the past particularly if God has given each of the parties a genuine ability to do so. This meeting should be an encouragement for any who have suffered strained relations with someone else. The rift may be deep. But God who is at work in your heart can also work in him or her—in fact, can be expected to do so. Our duty is to see that our own hearts are right.” Boice

- III. The changes that come about in our hearts through the power of the Holy Spirit conforming us into the likeness of Christ must be guarded from the power of the sin nature's desire to control us. It takes determination to guard the heart, honesty about our weaknesses, an examining of self to make sure we are in the faith (2 Cor. 3:5) and a willingness to work out our salvation (Phil. 2:12) so that we don't allow our own reasoning and desires to supersede God's will. What Jacob did by lying once again to his brother is a warning to us on different levels to make sure we trust and obey God even in the midst of being blessed by Him, lest we think we have license to sin, and God will overlook it.

Gen. 33:12-20
Rom. 7:7-25
Eph. 4:22-24
Phil. 1:27-28
1 Peter 5:5b-9a
Gen. 31:13

Prov. 4:23 *Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.*

“We recall that the angel of the Lord had changed his name from Jacob, which means ‘cheat’ or ‘supplanter,’ to Israel, which means ‘God rules (or conquers).’ God had changed Jacob’s name... it is significant that from this point on in Genesis, Jacob is called ‘Jacob’ twice as often as he is called ‘Israel.’ When Abraham’s name was changed from Abram to Abraham, the second name was used consistently thereafter. But in Genesis 33-50 we find ‘Jacob’ forty-five times and ‘Israel’ only twenty-three times. Apparently there was still a lot of the ‘old man’ in the ‘new’ patriarch.” Boice