

Supplicating the Lord in difficulty (Quality: Good)

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Preacher: Roe, Norman (1939 - 2021)

[0 : 00] The Lord may help me and I shall attention to the book of Genesis chapter 32 and verses 9 to 12.

Genesis chapter 32 and verses 9 to 12. And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee.

I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which thou hast showed unto thy servant, for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands.

Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children.

And thou sayst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as a sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.

[1 : 22] This portion of the word of God, no doubt we have read, has been read in our hearing many times, and also many sermons as well, are preached from what is found and set before us in this chapter that I have read to you this evening.

And in bringing, as held these words before you, I do not claim to be able to bring anything particularly new from these verses that I have read, as I am sure in one sense we are all familiar with this prayer of Jacob.

But what, as we come to the word of God, surely, I trust, is our desire and concern, not that we might in that sense hear or receive something new, but oh, that those things that are revealed and set before us therein may come under the blessing of the Holy Spirit with power and with the realisation of the preciousness both of the word of the Lord and of the Lord himself unto us.

Oh, but let us not forget that though the events described here took place as so many generations ago, and that Jacob himself obviously has long been there in glory, and yet, as the Apostle Paul reminds us in what he wrote, his epistle to the Romans, that whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

And what is surely a blessed and glorious truth, as much for us today, as it was obviously for Jacob in his day, that the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living, the one and only true God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and God, who has revealed himself, even as Jacob was blessed with, and most surely, as it is so as it concerns, the church and people of God still, has revealed himself, in the person of our Lord, and Saviour Jesus Christ, in the glorious truth of the same, which is found and sent forth, in the gospel of his grace.

[4 : 41] Oh, that then as we look, as help, at these words here before us this evening, we may have that witness, in our own souls.

Is it, can we say, is our concern an exercise? Is that with which, we have come here, with a, I trust, with a longing and desire, that we might know, the blessedness of this, and that is, not only that the God of Abraham, the God of Jacob, Isaac and the God of Jacob, is the God, not of the dead, but of the living, but that he is our God.

Ah, and that realized, for the gracious witness, of the Holy Spirit, with our spirit. For though, as we look at this prayer, of Jacob here, and the circumstances, surrounding it, and obviously, the trouble, the distress, the fear, of this man of God, I say, as we consider, these things, oh, what a mercy to none, and that for ourselves, as I have indicated, that this God, is our God, forever and ever, and will be our guide, even unto death, and that this same, glorious God, that revealed himself, as he did here to Jacob, revealed himself, in the person, of our Lord Jesus Christ, is not only, the same God still, but that through, the riches of his grace, we ourselves, need it, sinners indeed, assured it is true, of each one of us, oh, that we have, and I say, may we know the witness, the Holy Spirit, with our spirit, regard to the, reality of the same, that we have, that access, and acceptance, with him, that like, here with Jacob, we are brought, to call, upon his great, and his holy name, ah, see here, then, we look at the, circumstances, of Jacob, yes, he had been, for 20, just over 20 years, there, sojourning, with Laban, and you know, all the vicissitudes, of Jacob's life, during, of those, 20 years, he spent, with Laban, but, as the, as the, but as, under the word, that the Lord, has spoken, to him,

Jacob, Jacob, Jacob, leaves, Laban, and, begins, a journey, back again, to his, father's house, he makes, a particular, reference, to that, obviously, in these, words, of our text, this evening, Jacob says, oh God, of my, father Abraham, God, of my, father Isaac, the Lord, that said to me, return, unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I, will deal, well with thee, yes, the journey, upon which, Abraham, was engaged, that was, that, wherein, the Lord, had directed him, the point, I hear, I just want, to make, is this, that, that, Jacob, does not, go, does not, undertake, that journey, at his own, volition, true, there were, obviously, very, real, difficulties, still, in his, sojourning, there with,

Laban, and, increasingly, so, as the Lord, obviously, blessed, Jacob, and when, his flocks, and his herds, thus, increased, as they did, yes, difficulties, in his, situation, increased, but, and, it may, well, be so, friends, with ourselves, we may, be in, circumstances, or in, situations, in which, are very, trying, and, very, trying, to us, wherein, questions, arise, as to, how, whether, we can, continue, in the same, also, what, we should, do, with regard, to, the, to, to, to, what, has arisen, notice, what, we find, here, oh, may, we know, what, it is, to be, enabled, to, wait, upon, the Lord, to, seek, friends, his, direction, not, to, go, forward, in, what, as it were, in, our, own, volition, but, as we have, of the word, of the Lord, to do so, surely, if we are, the recipients, of his grace, and his mercy, that, the most important thing, for us, in, every situation, in which, we may be found, and particularly, where difficulties arise, that, that, that, that, that is this,

[10:28] Lord, what will, thou, have me to do, and I'm sure, as we are brought, to wait upon the Lord, and to wait for him, the Lord will, and does, not only, indicate the way, but that way, will also, be opened up, for us, and for notice here, as it was, with Jacob, as well, that, that, leaving, Laban, yes, he had, the direction, of the Lord, with regard, to it, and yet, friends, did he not, meet, fresh, difficulties, in the way, were not, did not, dangers, beset him, even, with the pursuit, of Laban, after him, and also, even though, the Lord, so graciously, and in a sense, wondrously, intervened, in delivering him, out of the hand, of Laban, and also, as we find, recorded in the opening, verses of this chapter, had given him, that gracious, indication, in that, which Jacob, saw, that at that place, which he, after, which he called, may, and a name, him, the Lord, giving him, that very clear, and distinct, testimony, that he was, that he was, under the care, and the protection, of his God, you know, how that, well, is reminded, of the same, in what the apostle, wrote, his epistle, to the Hebrews, speaking, as he does, both, of the spiritual,

Israel of God, and even, with regard, to the angels, of God, when, as Jacob, was, was, was favored, at that place, which he calls, may, and a name, as Paul, writing, in that, opening part, to the epistle, to the Hebrews, as sets forth, the greatness, and the glory, of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and that, which exceeds, even, not only men, but the angels, of God, speaking, of the angels, he says, are they not, ministering spirits, sent forth, to minister, to them, that are the heirs, of salvation, ah, there are friends, deep, and precious things, as set before us, in that statement, I would not, begin, to speculate, upon what, might in that sense, be considered, as the, ministry of angels, and in what, that is involved, as it concerns, the living, family of God, but surely, there, at that place, may, and may him,

Jacob, had that, clear testimony, that he was, that he was, journeying, in the way, and path, of the Lord's, appointments, for him, so he was, under the care, and protection, of his God, and so, that is true, as it concerns, the living, family of God, ah, remember, again, the words, of the psalmist, sweet confirmation, of this truth, and our, and our friends, so often, we are, look, we are forgetful, of the same, the psalmist, expresses it thus, I will lift up, mine eyes, unto the hills, from whence, cometh my help, ah, what a question, is that, from whence, cometh my help, he can testify, my help, cometh from the Lord, which made, heaven and earth, and he, that keepeth Israel, he says, shall neither, slumber nor sleep, oh, the watchfulness, of the Lord, over, and towards his own, ah, friends, how, little, in a sense, we are, not only aware, but we appreciate, the glorious, reality, of the same, that the eye, of the Lord, in that sense, is ever, upon his people, ah, that, that, that, that as a believer, through grace, we're never, outside, of the circle, of his love, here, in all the, vicissitudes, of Jacob's life, and situation, ah, was anything, there, outside, either, the control, of his God, or that, which was according, to the appointments, of God, and of which, the Lord, would, and did, overrule, and use, both, for his own glory, and for the good, of his servant,

Jacob, my times, are in his hand, as says, the, as says, the psalmist, oh, what cause, are we surely, to bless God, that it is so, but as, Jacob then, journeys, he delivered, from Laban, ah, he has, the encouragement, in what is shown him, of May and Nahum, and yet, very shortly, he receives, and receives, the news, of the intention, of his brother, Esau, and though, Jacob has sent, informing, Esau, of his return, to there, and as, the messenger, that he has sent, comes with the news, that Esau, is coming, and 400 men, with him, Jacob, does not, misunderstand, what was obviously, the intent, of Esau, is it not, friends, a remarkable thing, and yet, surely, if we know, anything, of fallen, human nature, of what we, ourselves, also, are capable of, apart, from, divine grace,

I said, is it not, a remarkable thing, and yet, in one sense, not so, remarkable, that, even though, twenty years, had passed, the enmity, and the envy, of Esau, against his brother, had not diminished, are the news, of his brother's return, have brought, all the things, again, afresh, to his mind, and stirs up, of the enmity, of his heart, against his brother, and what, also, is evidenced, indeed, in his coming, with four hundred men, was intent, once, and at last, to have his, as he thought, revenge, upon his brother, oh, the awful, and solemn reality, of what, is found, and rooted, in fallen, human nature, and our, would, and ever, does manifest, itself, apart, from the, restraining, hand of God, and indeed, friends, with the living, family of God, oh, how indebted, we are, to that, sovereign, distinguishing, grace,

[18 : 38] Esau, comes, full of, hatred, to his brother, to meet, his brother, ah, Jacob, is obviously, greatly distressed, of what he, what he, what he realises, is thus, the intent, of his brother, what should he do, where should he turn, ah, is he, has he, the ability, of himself, to deal, with the situation, true, he's now, a considerably, wealthy man, his flocks, and herds, women's servants, and men's servants, as a, numerous, family as well, but he has not, friends, the ability, to, defend himself, against, the evil intention, of his brother, Esau, yes, we find, Jacob, taking, a certain, steps, he divides, the, company, he divides, his possessions, into two bands, he says, if one, he shall come, to one company, and smite it, then, there's a possibility, that the other, will escape, he would not, lose all, his possessions, ah, but do we, find him, putting his, confidence there, and his trust, yes, he uses me, subsequently, we find him, send in a very, generous present, to his brother, to go before him, ah, and, though he takes, these particular steps, let us not forget, in the Lord's, ways, and, his appointments, for us, it is, it is, it is right, that we should use, the means, that the Lord, provides, for us, but the important, thing is this, as we see it, here with Jacob, that our trust, and our confidence, is not placed, in the same, ah, that is, the very, tendency, with us, and particularly, so, if left, to ourselves, as one says, to trust in self, or something, based, instead of, trusting, sovereign grace, here,

Jacob, makes, these provisions, but his trust, and his confidence, is in the, in the Lord, his God, see, as he comes here, as indicated, in these words, of our text, to pour out, his heart, before the Lord, ah, friends, does not, this, speak to us, I trust, I trust, also, whatever is, the path, and situation, in which, we are found, what does, the Lord, say, through his servant, the psalmist, as, as the David, expresses it there, from his own, personal, experience, my soul, he says, wait thou, only upon God, for my expectation, is from him, or again, trust in him, at all times, ye people, pour out, your heart, before him,

God is, a refuge, for us, oh, what a wondrous, is the truth, of this, that that way, of access, and acceptance, with our God, is that way, that he himself, has opened up, and it has never, friends, been closed, and never will be closed, against a needy, exercise, and burdened soul, that through his grace, is brought to call, upon his name, oh, see how again, the apostle opens up, the very truth, of the same, he says, seeing then, that we have, a great high priest, over the house of God, Jesus, the son of God, Jacob comes here, to his covenant God, the God of Abraham, his father Abraham, the God of his father Isaac, oh, a God who had revealed, himself to him as well, as his God, in that, that night, when he, when he first had left, his father's house, and a journey, towards,

Adam, Iran, oh, so friends, with the, living family of God, oh, Paul says, seeing then, that we have, a great high priest, over the house of God, Jesus, the son of God, let us hold fast, our profession, but we have not, a high priest, which cannot be touched, with the feeling, of our infirmities, but was in all points, tempted like, as we are, yet without sin, see here, our Jacob, pours out his heart, before his God, we find him, pleading, the word, that God has spoken, indeed, expressing, a deep sense, of thankfulness, for all, that he received, at the hands, of the Lord, thus far, and indeed, expressing, and not afraid, nor ashamed, as he comes, before his God, to there, there tell out, the very things, that troubled him, the fears, that he had, deliver me, from the hand, of my brother, from the hand, of Esau, for I fear him,

I fear what he will, what he, and only is capable, of doing, for what he may, well do, ah, and he pleads, a promise, that God, has spoken, unto him, no less, so friends, is it, for the child, of God still, to try, burden, and exercise, needy sinner, oh, it is, no less, so, than it was, for Jacob, ah, for with us, as it, reveals it, before us, in the glorious, truth, of the gospel, as I've just indicated, we have, a great, high priest, sent into the heavens, Jesus, the son of God, oh, wherefore, says the apostle, let us come, boldly, to the throne, of grace, that we, may obtain, mercy, and find, grace, to help, in time, of need, and in that, very coming, as we find, here, with Jacob, our coming, coming, not friends, with bringing, something, in our hand, as it were, to commend, ourselves, unto the Lord, but coming, as ever, we must come, and will come, as taught, of God, the Holy Spirit, and that is, as a needy, and a guilty sinner, as those, that are holy, dependent, upon the Lord, and brought, to look, to him alone, as Jacob, does here, ah, and remember, this coming, unto the Lord, as it was, here, with Jacob, like, as our Lord,

[26 : 43] Jesus, himself, declared, when, speaking, as he did, to the Jews, in that, discourse, as recorded, in John, chapter 6, and amongst, the very, many, blessed things, that the Lord, test sets forth, in that, discourse, is this, he says, all, that the Father, giveth me, shall come, to me, and him, that cometh, to me, I will, in no wise, cast out, oh, friends, I love, the shalls, and the wills, of our God, ah, men may tell us, what, the sinner, should, or should not, do of themselves, ah, I love, the shalls, and the wills, of our covenant God, our Lord, Jesus says, they shall come, and indeed, they do come, and that, as a very fruit, and effect, not, of human, volition, but of the, sovereign grace, of God, for the gracious, ministry, of the Holy Spirit, quickening, awakening, convincing, drawing, of the sinner, indeed, thus, to the Lord,

Jesus Christ, but the, what I'm just, wanting to emphasize, is this, he says, all that, he says, they shall come, and him, that cometh, to me, I will in no wise, cast out, notice that word there, it doesn't just say, that they, shall come, but him, that cometh, ah, an expressive, of this, of that, which is a, continuing, thing, in the very life, of every, child of God, as it was here, with Jacob, ah, Jacob, and no, he acknowledges, the blessing, there's a, this, that, even as he looks, back over the way, the Lord, had brought him, oh, had he not, known again, and again, what it was, to come, unto the Lord, from that, very, first, time, when the Lord, came to him, and met with him, in that place, which afterwards, he called Bethel, and ah, arising from that, the very fruit, and effect of it, in Jacob's life, we see him, not only coming, initially, but it is that, which is characteristic, of the life, of a believer, as here with Jacob, it's him, that cometh, it is a, continual coming, ah, coming to him, as it was here, with Jacob, even as the fresh, difficulties, needs, and distresses, arise, coming, to him, as the only, refuge, of our soul, where else, can a child, of God, turn, to whom, as the apostle,

Peter said, in reply, those words, of the Lord Jesus, to whom, can we go, thou hast the words, of eternal life, but notice this also, friends, not only is there, a coming to him, but oh, there's a ready, welcome there, for every, needy, exercise soul, did ever, mourner, plead with thee, and thou, refuse that, mourner's plea, does not thy word, still, remain, that none, shall seek his face, in vain, glorious, true, see here, with Jacob, did he cry, unto the Lord, in vain, was the Lord, able to help, gloriously, true, he indeed, did, see what, God hath wrought, for his servant, Jacob, both, in this, particular, in this, not only, that the Lord, hears his cry, but the Lord, comes himself, unto Jacob, that Jacob, is left alone, and there, wrestles with him, and that night, a man, ah, surely, in what is, recorded there, is the Lord, himself, coming to Jacob, not only, that Saint Jacob, lay in hold, of the Lord, but the Lord, lay in hold, of him, and ah, see thee, prevailing, through grace, of Jacob, with his God, and with his Saviour, look at the, look at the outcome, of these things, here, does the prayer, of Jacob, go unheeded, did ever the cry, of a needy sinner, ever, friends, go unheeded, by our God, or unanswered, by him, in his own, appointed time, and when, now, ah, so here, with Jacob, see how, the Lord, not only, came to him, but indeed, the Lord, delivered him, from the hand, of his brother, as they met, the next day, oh, what a transformation, instead of Esau, falling upon him, with the sword, he falls upon him, and kisses him, what does Jacob say, look again, read again, the following chapter, about, what Jacob says, about meeting, with Esau, and it is remarkable, he says, as he urges,

Esau, to take the present, that he has sent, over before him, he says, for I have seen, thy face, as I have seen, the face of God, and thou, was pleased with me, whatever, can Jacob mean, is he merely, flattering his brother, no, far from it, that he sees, in what, that change, attitude, of Esau there, how God, had gone before him, that this, was the work, of God, and it is, and it is, with thankfulness, to the Lord, he expresses, the same, of the wonders, of his goodness, to him, he says, in these words, before us, I am not, worthy of the least, of all the mercy, and truth, which thou hast shown, unto thy servant, my staff, I passed over, this Jordan, now, I am become, to bounds, looking back, is it not, friends, good, and profitable, times, to be able, to look back, you know, when brought, into fresh, trying, circumstances, true, we need, the Lord's, gracious, appearing, for us, and unto us, as Jacob here, but even, in the trying, circumstances, it is, profitable, to be enabled, to look back, and remember, what the Lord, has done, for us, in the past, true, we may have lost, much of it, with the comfort, of it, but what God, has done, can never, friends, be undone, you remember, how David, expresses it, he says, in one of his psalms, oh my God, my soul, is cast down, within me, ah, yet, will I remember thee, from the land, of Jordan, from the Hermonites, from the hill miser, yes, find him, to draw encouragement, from this, of what God, had done, and what he, manifested, of himself, in time past, and as we, sometimes sing, he that hath, helped me, hitherto, will help me, all my journey, through, and give me, daily calls, to raise, new Ebenezer, to his praise, the Lord, of blessing, he says here, when I, journeyed, first, from my father's house, all I had, was the staff, in my hand, as I passed, this way, originally, now, for the Lord's blessing, oh, how, he had been, favoured, and, indeed, blessed, both, in providence, true, but oh, how, especially, the realisation, of the blessings, of pardoning mercy, to his own soul, ah, now, and become, two bands,

I'm not worthy, of it, Lord, one thing, friends, grace will, and ever does, is that, which not only, brings us love, but keeps us low, at the Saviour's feet, ah, what have we, ever to glory in, of our own, what have we, that we have not received, and of what, we're not holding, indebted unto the Lord, for, oh, to know, more the blessing, the true spirit, of thankfulness, Jacob goes on, to plead, as he does, Lord, deliver me, see, he come, true to his God, and in his prayer, there is urgency, there is, straightforwardness, in his asking, as well, there is a confession, of his felt need, but the very fears, that, that, that, that, that, as it were, prevail with him, ah, but see him, casting, and seeking, to commit, all, into the Lord's hand, what is still, then, the word of the Lord, unto us, my soul, wait thou only, upon God, for my expectation, is from him, here we find, with Jacob, one last brought, true through grace, to seek unto, to commit all, unto him, ah, did he seek there, was his trust, and confidence, is God, misplaced, no, ah, see how, he was brought, to the realisation, of blessing this, not only, of the Lord's, appearing, for him, as he did, his dealings, with Esau, but how, the Lord, appeared, unto him, as well, what a blessing, he received, that night, as the Lord, wrestled with him, he blessed him there, ah, may we know, that blessing, of the Lord, which maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow, with it, but I'll leave, the remarks there, may the Lord, and his blessing,

[38 : 30] Amen.