



The Power of a Father!

As men, in a culture under attack, we need an understanding of mature masculinity—a vision and direction we can pursue with our sons! We need tools, methods, and ideas to help us become Godly men and from which to equip our sons. We need to grow up!

Jacob – the patriarch of Israel – the father of a nation—is a troubling character in the Old Testament. He is so much like us -- with very human strengths and weaknesses, but a man with a striving for spiritual things. From this imperfect man we learn important lessons of faith. Especially, we learn about God's grace. Time to engage—enjoy the Adventure!

Highland Colony Men's Roundtable
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THE POWER OF A FATHER – Generational Sin or Dysfunction Junction!
 We need an understanding of mature masculinity—a vision and direction
 to help us become Godly men

March 16, 2023

Bible Verses: Genesis 26:24, Genesis 28:13, Genesis 32:9, Genesis 32:24
Music: Johnny Cash - Hurt - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8AHCfZTRGiI>
Video: The Judge - The Middle Son <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bp2nKKsIr-M>
Resources: JACOB – Following God Without Looking Back by Gene A. Getz.
Raising A Modern-Day Knight – A Father's Role in Guiding His Son to Authentic Manhood by Robert Lewis.

Generational Dysfunction & Epigenetics

That night the LORD appeared to him and said, "I am the God of **your father** Abraham. Fear not, for I am with you, and I will bless you and increase your offspring for the sake of My servant Abraham." Genesis 26:24

There above it stood the Lord, and he said: "I am the Lord, the God of **your father** Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying."
 Genesis 28:13

Then Jacob prayed, "O God of **my father Abraham**, God of my father Isaac, Lord, you who said to me, 'Go back to your country and your relatives, and I will make you prosper...' " Genesis 32:9

- _____ → It only happens three times - the text says that God is the God of Abraham, the father of Jacob. But we all know that Abraham is *not* the father of Jacob. For some reason, God's account skips Isaac. In 32:10 Jacob refers to both Abraham and Isaac as father, but in 28:13 God names Abraham as Jacob's father and in 26:24 Isaac is simply absent. This is especially significant when *God is the speaker*. The references to grandfather in biblical Hebrew are typically "father's father." These verses don't use "father's father." They suggest something deeper, that somehow Jacob is next in line after Abraham. It is apparent the text is hinting at deeper family dynamics.
- _____ → The field of epigenetics is discovering that descendants of trauma survivors carry the physical and emotional symptoms of traumas they have not directly experienced. The mother's emotions, such as fear, anger, love, hope among others, can biochemically alter the genetic expression of her offspring. In a sense, a child who experienced a stressful in utero environment can become reactive in a similarly stressful situation.
- _____ → Jacob is a descendent of a trauma survivor. Who experienced the initial trauma? Isaac, of course. Never suspecting that his father intended to slaughter him in a religious ritual, Isaac instantly discovers that his father can't be trusted, his father's God can't be trusted, and his father lied to him all his life about how important he was. So Isaac flees from his father, joining the other family his father Abraham left to die in the wilderness. In fact, Isaac's relationship with God is permanently fractured by the event, so much so that Isaac never really recovers. Now the trauma is passed on to Isaac's son, Jacob, and it is Jacob who is directly linked to the trauma event in his biological father's life. The emotional connection is not to Isaac, the father whose **absence** in Jacob's life created the generational rift. It's Abraham. Abraham is the one that Jacob mimics. The deception, the manipulation of circumstances, the negotiating, the attempt to forge his own destiny, the spiritual vacuum—these Jacob shares with Abraham, not with Isaac.
- _____ → *Then Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak.* Genesis 32:24 / This very unusual story has a deep psychological element. No explanation of who this strange opponent is really satisfies until we recognize that Jacob is in an intense battle with himself. It is his new persona who fights for control while Jacob wrestles to regain the world that is slipping away. Unexpectedly, we find that Jacob must be defeated in order to progress. If you've ever felt the pull of your past clawing to keep you in the rut you've lived with while you hope to step across your Jabbok, then you'll identify with Jacob's night long battle.
- _____ → It took a midnight struggle for Jacob to understand his own story, and when he understood it, his life didn't suddenly get better. In fact, in many ways it got worse. What Jacob gained was not peace and tranquility. What he gained was purpose. When we finally discover that we too are left alone, the fight isn't about getting back what we think we have lost. The fight is about realizing why we are here, what we are about, who we are in God's scheme of things. But it takes a particular kind of midnight struggle to deal with our defenses, to deal with the way we want the world to work. *Not my will but Yours!* Luke 22:42

Human beings will do virtually anything to avoid this place. It is unraveling and uncomfortable. We are hardwired for connection, and Jacob has come to an emotional, mental, and physical place of being isolated alone, and disconnected. Addiction is simply humanity's attempt to avoid Jabbok (the river symbolizes the dark night of the soul). Perhaps that's why the story is crucial. Israel does not exist without the internal fight and ultimate surrender of Jacob. No man can find his purpose until he faces the stranger in the night.

ACTION: Journal This!

Until a man has faced his false self, dealt with his generational sin and knows who he is, what he's about, his mission & purpose - he's not going to be able to help a son walk with God in a real way - speed of the leader, speed of the team! So WHERE ARE YOU?

1. Are you aware of your own father's shortcomings & character defects? Your grandfather?
2. Can you be open and honest about your own hurts, habits, and hang-ups?
3. What has been your midnight at the Jabbok River?

"Hurt" by Johnny Cash

<p>I hurt myself today To see if I still feel I focus on the pain The only thing that's real The needle tears a hole The old familiar sting Try to kill it all away But I remember everything What have I become? My sweetest friend Everyone I know goes away In the end</p>	<p>And you could have it all My empire of dirt I will let you down I will make you hurt I wear this crown of thorns Upon my liar's chair Full of broken thoughts I cannot repair Beneath the stains of time The feelings disappear You are someone else I'm still right here</p>	<p>What have I become? My sweetest friend Everyone I know goes away In the end And you could have it all My empire of dirt I will let you down I will make you hurt If I could start again A million miles away I would keep myself I would find a way</p>
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Bible Verses – The Message

<p>Genesis 26:24 - 24 That very night God appeared to him and said, I am the God of Abraham your father; don't fear a thing because I'm with you. I'll bless you and make your children flourish because of Abraham my servant. Genesis 28:13 - 13 Then God was right before him, saying, "I am God, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. I'm giving the ground on which you are sleeping to you and to your descendants.</p>	<p>Genesis 32:9 - 9 And then Jacob prayed, "God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, God who told me, 'Go back to your parents' homeland and I'll treat you well.' Genesis 32:24 - 24 But Jacob stayed behind by himself, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak.</p>
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