

# A WORD ON WORSHIP

## Review of Message from March 19, 2017

BY PASTOR ANDREW KIKKERT, SUNRISE COMMUNITY CHURCH

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### Genesis 32:9-10

*Jacob said, "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 relatives, and I will prosper you,' I am unworthy of all the lovingkindness and of all the faithfulness which You have shown to Your servant..."*



The prayer of Jacob in Genesis 32 is one of the greatest lessons in prayer in all of Scripture. Even before Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, Jacob gives us an outstanding template to approach our Heavenly Father in our time of need. Reflecting on Jacob's prayer, I see four elements for us to implement in our prayer lives. First, Jacob addressed the Lord as the God of his "father Abraham" and his "father Isaac." This is significant. Jacob was beginning to understand more fully his place in God's divine plan. His prayer is the divine pattern of many biblical prayers - to acknowledge who God really is. When Nehemiah prayed about the sad condition of his people in Jerusalem, he lifted up his voice to God and said, "I beseech You, O LORD God of heaven, the great and awesome God" (Nehemiah 1:5a). He is a king to be honored and we must acknowledge Him as such.

Jacob prays on the basis of two things: God told him to return to his homeland, and God promised to bless him. He isn't appealing to God on the basis of his own performance, but solely on the basis of God's promises. Jacob stands on the promises of God because he knows that God keeps His Word. Many of our prayers fall short because there is none of God's Word within them. This is because there is so little of God's Word in us. Yet, both prayer and God's Word are essential.

Now Jacob's arrogant self-confidence is gone and he finally acknowledges that he is completely unworthy of God's lovingkindness and faithfulness. This is a big step for Jacob. He has come to the point of recognizing that he stands by God's mercy alone. Sometimes we have to hit bottom before we can see our true condition. Only as we recognize that we stand by mercy will we be prepared to act mercifully toward others. When you pray to the Lord, it is critical that you confess your sin, keep short accounts with Him, and acknowledge that you are undeserving and nothing without Him.

Finally, Jacob asks God to specifically save him from the hand of his brother. He doesn't mince words; he's clear and specific. Unlike his actions before going to live with Laban, when he took matters into his own hands to wrest away Isaac's blessing from Esau, Jacob now realizes that he must depend totally on God in order to secure his own well-being. It is worth noting that Jacob requests God's protection for himself and his family. He's showing some semblance of concern for someone other than himself. We must follow Jacob's example and learn to pray specific requests. When we do so, God tends to respond with specific answers. Today, will you make a commitment to pray for yourself and others in this way? Will you also pray first, instead of as a last resort? As you do, it will go well with you.

**Sunrise Community Church**  
*Come acknowledge the Lord in our midst*  
**EVERY SUNDAY BEGINNING AT 8:45 A.M.**

9642 Live Oak Ave. • Temple City, CA 91780

(626) 287-6120 • [PastorAndy@SunriseTC.org](mailto:PastorAndy@SunriseTC.org) • [www.SunriseTC.org](http://www.SunriseTC.org)