



water from rock

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen- June 11, 2024

The Lord be with you.

I want to begin today with a question for you. Which is greater, your sins or God's grace? Which is greater, more powerful, more commanding the, the sum total of all of your sins or God's grace?

Well, looking at the Bible, we can say that the answer is obvious. It is clear that God's grace in your life in my life is always greater than our sin. In the book of Romans chapter five, the Apostle Paul is looking at the human condition. He is surveying the story of the human race and he writes over it in Romans five verse 20. These words where sin increased grace abounded all the more the original Greek text of this verse says it like this, that, that where sin increase grace super abounded.

You can take all the things that you've done, but you shouldn't have done all the things that you didn't do that you should have done when it's our sins versus God's grace. Grace always wins hands down. That is the gospel truth that your sins do not have the last say in your life. Your sins do not define you. They do not determine your destiny. God's grace super abounds and has the last word we see this throughout scripture.

But for today, today, I want to illustrate the super abounding power of God's grace. I want to illustrate it from the life of Jacob in the Old Testament. In the juxtaposition of two stories about Jacob. The side by side telling of a story about Jacob's sin as it is followed by a story about God's overwhelming grace.

These are two stories that are often told in children's Sunday school class. The first story is in Genesis 27, where we see Jacob tricking, deceiving his elderly blind father, Isaac. He deceives his father into bestowing on him. The blessing that was to go to the oldest son. By the way, the name Jacob in Hebrew, it means a swindler, a supplanter one who takes the place of another. And here Jacob true to his name. He is swindling. He is deceiving his aged blind father to give to him the blessing, the inheritance that should have gone to the firstborn son, Esau. And of course, his deceit causes a deep division in the family years of estrangement and, and Esau vows to kill Jacob and Jacob flees for his life. He flees into the unknown, which takes us to the next chapter in Genesis.

Genesis chapter 28. And it is a chapter of God's grace. As here, Jacob is on the run Genesis 28 verse 10. I read, Jacob came to a certain place and he stayed there for the night because the sun had set, taking one of the stones of the place. He put it under his head and lay down in that place. And Jacob dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven and the angels of God were ascending and



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descending on it. And the Lord stood beside Jacob and said, I am the Lord, the God of Abraham, your father and the God of Isaac know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go. Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, surely the Lord is in this place and I did not know it.

I remember when, as a, when I was a little boy in Sunday school, seeing a picture of this ladder between heaven and earth and the angels of God ascending and descending on the ladder as it represents the constant connection between heaven and earth, the flow of God's blessing. God's involvement in our lives. And God's promise to Jacob often repeated to this sinner know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go. The context. The context of this astonishing scene is important as it happens as Jacob is fleeing his brother Esau fleeing home after his despicable deception of their father Isaac to obtain his blessing. But right in the middle of Jacob's sinning, God doesn't give up on Jacob. God does not abandon Jacob, but he comes to him in a dream and in a promise that God will be with Him and keep Him wherever He goes.

And you know, when, when, when we come over to the New Testament, we, we see what was true of Jacob. It, it's true for you and me, even in our sin, our failings, our missteps. God goes with us in His forgiveness, his presence, His guidance, we can't lose. I, I don't know where you are today in your life journey, but know that sin does not have the last word, no matter how far you have fallen, how far you have wandered from God's will. God's grace is always, always greater. God's grace knows no boundaries, no limits. Look at the cross.

I'm thankful for an old hymn that, that I learned, well, just about the time I first learned the stories of Jacob's sin and God's grace. The words of the hymn go like this marvelous grace of our loving Lord. Grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt. Yonder and Calvary's mount out poured there where the blood of the lamb was spilt grace. Grace, God's grace, grace that will pardon and cleanse within grace, grace. God's grace, grace that is greater than all our sin. When it comes to your sin. God's grace always wins hands down.

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler. Thank you for listening. Until next time