

Sunday, November 14, 2021
"The Gospel Lives of Isaac & Jacob"
Summary of "The Great Contender"
Genesis 32:22-32
Wayne Shelton

On the banks of the River Jabbok, God finally finds Jacob in a situation in which his sense of self-sufficiency is crumbling. Jacob is unable to provide for the security of his family. It is one thing to put yourself in harm's way with the hope that you can find your way out. Jacob has successfully navigated through the maze of rocky relationships with Esau, Laban, and his wives. But in those it was only his own health and welfare hanging in the balance. Now he has his whole family to think about, and he recognizes his inability to vouchsafe their security. This is what finally brings him to his knees. That night, as Jacob stood alone by the river Jabbok, God met him. There were hours of desperate, agonized conflict, spiritual and, as it seemed to Jacob, physical also. Jacob had hold of God, he wanted a blessing, an assurance of divine favor and protection in this crisis, but he could not get what he sought. Jacob would 'prevail;' but "The nature of Jacob's 'prevailing' with God was simply that he held on to God while God weakened him, and wrought in him the spirit of submission and self-distrust, that he had desired God's blessing so much that he clung to God through all this painful humbling, till he came low enough for God to raise him up by speaking peace to him and assuring him that he need not fear about Esau anymore" (J. I. Packer).

