

Discovering God for Yourself

May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and increase your numbers until you become a community of peoples. May he give you and your descendants the blessing given to Abraham, so that you may take possession of the land ... **—Genesis 28:3-4**

Do you remember the time when you discovered God for yourself? I don't necessarily mean remembering the time and place where you were converted, but remembering the intense power of that experience. There's nothing like discovering God so powerfully for yourself that if every other person in the world renounces their faith, and you were the only believer left, you would still trust Him.

Jacob had been so dependent on his parents, especially upon his mother; he had never wandered far from home. He was not like Esau, who was a man of the fields. Jacob had never done anything like this before, so he must have been afraid.

Here was a man scared to death, having to leave home because his brother wanted to kill him. Perhaps you are away from home. You've been thrust out and are wondering what life is all about and what is happening to you. Yet, perhaps God has set this up so you may learn to know Him and to discover Him for yourself for the first time.

At this time in Jacob's life, if he had any relationship with God at all, it was secondhand. Are you like Jacob? Is your religion secondhand? Maybe you were spoon-fed something from your parents or from your grandparents and have a long Christian background.

Could it be that you are wrestling with the question, does God exist? "If He does," you may say, "He certainly wouldn't like me because of all the wicked things I have done."

Jesus died for those who have a guilty conscience, who know

they don't deserve anything good. The only way you can come to know God is to recognize you are a sinner and repent and ask God for mercy. Perhaps you were never willing to hear the gospel before, but God has you in such a state you are hemmed in and willing to listen now. God may have brought events to such a situation where all you can do is just see His mercy.

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