

**Jacob:
Only
by grace.**

Abraham & Jacob & Joseph & Moses & Joshua.



Abraham: “Flawed but Faithful”

- Have an Abrahamic Faith
- Hallow the Abrahamic Future
- Honour your Abrahamic Family

**When you think about Jacob,
what comes to mind?**

**Most biblical figures
have something about them
that is worth emulating.**

What about Jacob?

What about Jacob?



Genesis 25:18-26 – At war with Esau even from the womb

**“Two nations are in your womb,
and two peoples from within you will be separated;
one people will be stronger than the other,
and the older will serve the younger.”**

Hence his name Jacob.

“Takes hold by the heel” or “He will supplant the other”

What about Jacob?

Jacob at war with Esau in the womb

Genesis 25:27-34 – Jacob takes Esau's birthright

30 Esau said to Jacob, “Quick, let me have some of that red stew! I’m famished!”

31 Jacob replied, “First sell me your birthright.”

What about Jacob?

Jacob at war with Esau in the womb

Jacob takes Esau's birthright

Genesis 27 – Jacob takes Esau's blessing

34 When Esau heard his father's words, he burst out with a loud and bitter cry and said to his father, "Bless me—me too, my father!"

35 But Isaac said, "Your brother came deceitfully and took your blessing."

What about Jacob?

Jacob at war with Esau in the womb

Jacob takes Esau's birthright

Jacob takes Esau's blessing

Genesis 29 – Jacob, cause of Leah's misery

31 When the Lord saw Leah was not loved, he enabled her to conceive, but Rachel remained childless.

- Reuben = "He has seen my misery"
- Simeon = "God has heard (that I am not loved)"

What about Jacob?

Jacob at war with Esau in the womb

Jacob takes Esau's birthright

Jacob takes Esau's blessing

Jacob, cause of Leah's misery

Genesis 30-31 – Outfoxes even Laban!

30:42 So the weak animals went to Laban and the strong ones to Jacob.

31:1 Jacob heard that Laban's sons were saying, "Jacob has taken everything our father owned and has gained all this wealth from what belonged to our father."

**What kind of
“hero of faith”
is Jacob,
anyway?!**

Jacob at war with Esau in the womb ●

Jacob takes Esau’s birthright ●

Jacob takes Esau’s blessing ●

Jacob, cause of Leah’s misery ●

Jacob outfoxes even Laban ●



What kind of
“hero of faith”
is Jacob,
anyway?!

Yet God’s
blessings
remained on
Jacob! Why?!

Let's examine this.

When we read of

God's blessings for Jacob,

why does God bless Jacob?

(Because of Jacob's faithfulness?)

Why does God bless Jacob?

Genesis 25:23

The Lord said to Rebekah ...

**“One people will be stronger than the other,
and the older will serve the younger.”**

**✘ Nothing to do with Jacob's
faithfulness**

Why does God bless Jacob?

Genesis 28:12-15

Jacob had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. 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. Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.”

**✘ Nothing to do with Jacob's
faithfulness**

Why does God bless Jacob?

✘ Nothing to do with Jacob's
... ~~faithfulness~~ ~~and Jacob~~ knew it!

Genesis 32:9-10

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,' **am unworthy** of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servant."

**! Everything to do with God's
faithfulness**

Why does God bless Jacob?

Everything to do with God's faithfulness!

It wouldn't be faithfulness if it was merely reciprocal, a calculated transaction.
~~God's faithfulness~~ is extended to us on the basis of His Character, *not* ours.

Similarly, why did God choose Israel?

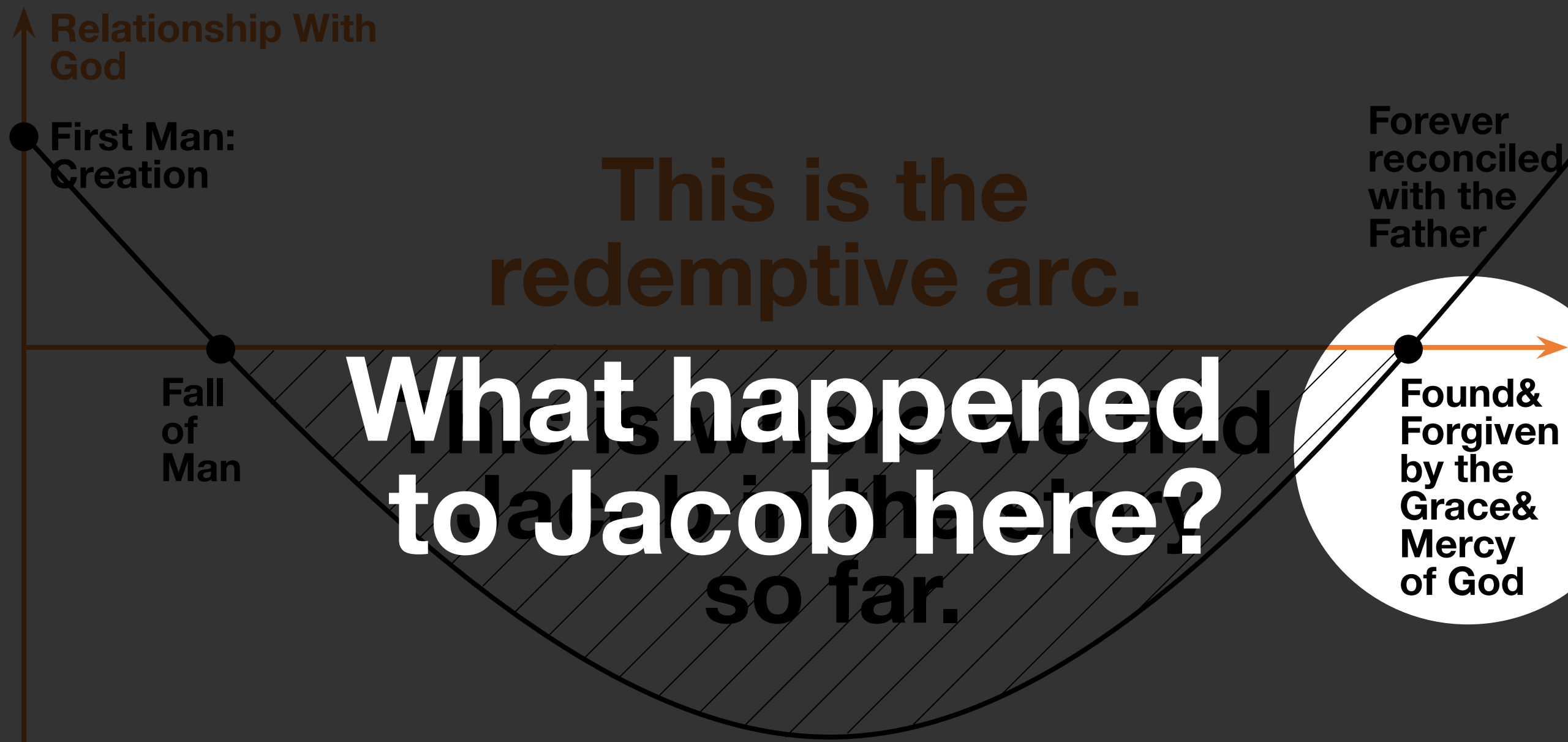
Deuteronomy 9:4-5

“Do not say in your heart ... ‘It is because of my righteousness that the LORD has brought me in to possess this land.’ ... Not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart are you going in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations the LORD your God is driving them out from before you, and that he may confirm the word that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”

- 1. Not because of Israel’s righteousness but God’s righteousness.**
- 2. Not because of Israel’s piety but God’s promise.**
- 3. Not because of Israel’s forefathers but the God of Israel’s**

Q: Given his flaws, how can we reconcile Jacob as a central figure of our faith?

A: We need to understand the concept of the redemptive arc.



Relationship With God

First Man: Creation

This is the redemptive arc.

Forever reconciled with the Father

Fall of Man

What happened to Jacob here?

Found & Forgiven by the Grace & Mercy of God

so far.

**What was the turning point
of Jacob's life?**

The breaking & remaking of Jacob.

Genesis 32:6-12

6 The messengers returned to Jacob and said, “We went to your brother Esau, and now he is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him.” 7 **In great fear and distress** ... 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’ ...

11 **Save me, I pray**, from the hand of my brother Esau, **for I am afraid**

he will come and attack me, and also the mothers with their children. 12 **But you have said**, ‘I will surely make you prosper

The breaking & remaking of Jacob

1. Jacob's past had caught up with him.

From how he treated Esau, to many years labouring under Laban.

2. Jacob could run and scheme no longer.

His only plan was to split his camp so Esau wouldn't attack his half.

3. Jacob had reached the end of himself. He was broken.

Tired and out of ideas, he was now in "great fear & distress".

4. Jacob realised he had only one hope: The promises of God.

Was he worthy? No. But how else would the promise be

The breaking & remaking of Jacob.

Genesis 32:24-31

24 Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. 25 When the man saw he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man.

26 The man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak." But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." 27 The man asked him, "What is your name?" "Jacob," he answered.

The breaking & remaking of Jacob.

Genesis 32:24-31

28 The man said, “Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.” (In Hebrew *yakol* = endured) ...

29 Then he blessed him.

30 Jacob called the place Peniel (“Face of God”), saying, “It is because I saw God face to face, yet my life was spared.”

31 The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel, and he was limping because of his hip.

Same God, changed man.

Same God. Same Promise.

“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.’”

But a new name for Jacob ...

“Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel.”

And a new understanding of God – a God of Grace & Mercy.

“I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared.”

A new relationship with God.

Before being broken

Genesis 28:18-22

18 **Jacob** took the stone ... and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it. 19 **He** called that place **Bethel** ... 20 **Then Jacob** made a vow, saying, “**If God** will be with me and will watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear 21 so that I return safely to my father’s household, then the Lord will be my God 22 and this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God’s house,

and of all that you give me I will give you a

After being broken

Genesis 35:6-7

Jacob and all the people with him came to Luz (that is, Bethel) in the land of Canaan. There he built an altar, and he called the place **El Bethel** (“House of God”), because it was there that God revealed himself to him.

gratitude

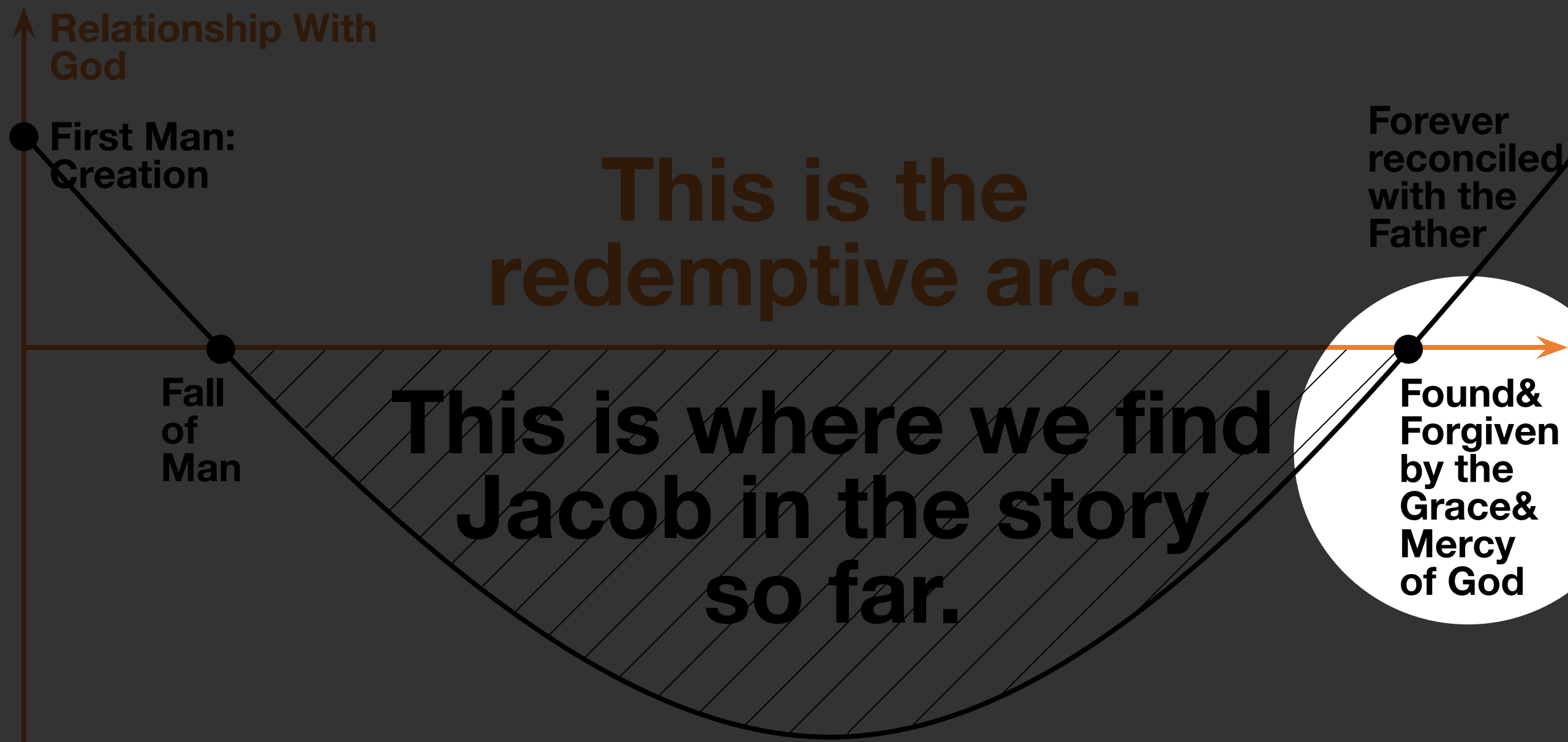
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What saved Jacob?

**Not his scheming, cunning, cheating,
chasing, striving, labour ...**

He'd tried all that. And failed.

**He discovered that his only hope
of surviving & thriving was
coming face to face with God
and experiencing His grace & mercy.**



Relationship With God

First Man: Creation

Fall of Man

Forever reconciled with the Father

Found & Forgiven by the Grace & Mercy of God

This is the redemptive arc.

This is where we find Jacob in the story so far.

What are the Grace & Mercy of God?

Grace is the unmerited favour of God.

We don't merit/deserve it, yet He pours out His love, favour & blessings on us.

Mercy is the unwarranted forgiveness of God.

We merit/deserve punishment for our wrongdoing, but God paid the price through

What are the Grace & Mercy of God?

Grace is absolutely unfair!

Justice/fairness would mean we get what we deserve – punishment for our sins.

Grace is absolutely needed.

For there is nothing we can do to save ourselves.

What are the Grace & Mercy of God?

Just like Jacob, none of us is “deserving” or “worthy” of a relationship with God.

But just like Jacob, though we are unworthy, we are reconciled with God – not by good works of our own, but only by His Grace & Mercy.

**When you think about Jacob,
what comes to mind?**

I am Jacob.