



## GENESIS

*Grace from the Beginning*

**27/28 October 2018**

Vol. 40, No. 42

# Anvil of Adversity

*Genesis 32-33*

**English Services**  
(8 & 10:30 a.m., & 5:30 p.m.)

Prelude  
Call to Worship  
Worship through Praise  
Worship through Fellowship  
Testimony  
Scripture Reading  
Pastoral Prayer  
Worship in the Word  
*Elder Ed Trono*  
Worship through Giving  
Response Song  
Benediction

**Filipino Service**  
(3 n.h.)

Paghahanda  
Tawag sa Pagsamba  
Pagsamba sa Pag-aawitan  
Pagkilala sa mga Bisita  
Patotoo  
Pagbasa ng Salita ng Diyos  
Panalanging Pastoral  
Pakikinig sa Salita ng Diyos  
*Pastor Dags Miguel*  
Pagsamba sa Pagbibigay  
Tugon na Awit  
Bendisyon

See inset inside for the **Traditional Service (Sat., 6 p.m.)** program.



# Anvil of Adversity

Today's Message (27/28 October 2018) /  
*Genesis 32-33*

God has His good purposes for Jacob to go through the fear and distress of meeting with Esau. God is in the business of transforming His people. He will shape Jacob through this hard and distressing experience before He returns him to Canaan.

There is a saying that character is formed not in comfort but in the anvil of adversity. As believers, God will allow deep distress in our lives to transform us to become the people He wants us to be. **God uses life's struggles to shape our identity and take us where we ought to be.**

## GENESIS 32:1-21: AFRAID, JACOB PRAYS TO GOD.

- a. Despite God's promises and presence, Jacob's immediate response to the dire news of Esau's approach with 400 men was to act in fear. He immediately divided his people and animals into two groups. In crisis, the natural person's survival instinct acts quickly. The godly person's spiritual instinct prays immediately.
- b. Driven to his knees by great fear, Jacob prayed. In his prayer, he worshipped the God of his fathers. He was humble, completely dependent, unselfish, and confidently reliant on God's promises. Jacob changes from one able to hear God's instruction to a man who will call to the God who hears. Problems make us prayerful.
- c. Crisis prompts believers to claim our identity as God's children. Believers are God's chosen people. We can call on our Father. Crisis takes us to the place where we ought to be—on our knees and before our Father. Life's crises bring us to our knees. Know that when we fear, we have a Father who hears.

GOD USES LIFE'S  
STRUGGLES  
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IDENTITY AND  
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WE OUGHT TO BE.

## GENESIS 32:22-32: ALONE, JACOB STRUGGLES WITH GOD.

- a. Jacob finds himself alone in the dark night, struggling with his fears and distress. God sometimes takes us to be alone with Him in life's darkest moments. He wants us to want and need Him and Him alone.
- b. Jacob has been contending all his life. Jacob's toughness and grasping character was in full display in a protracted weird wrestling match with a mysterious man. As the struggle continued, Jacob would realize he was fighting with someone supernatural. If earlier he was wrestling merely to win, now he was wrestling to get God's blessing. In life's hard places, we persist to find God's blessings.
- c. God gave Jacob the greatest blessing. God gave him the opportunity to realize his sinfulness. God gave Jacob a new name—a new identity marking his victory and reflecting God's purpose for him and His people, Israel. When we are in deep distress, do we only desire a change in our circumstances or to develop the character of Christ?



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- d. In his struggle, Jacob believed he saw God's face and lived. No one can see God's face and live. To survive such encounter is victory. It is only by grace, through faith in Christ, can we face a holy God and live.
- e. His limp is visible to everyone, and Jacob will be asked what happened. People will see how through our crisis God changed us. We will have the opportunity to tell them of Jesus.
- f. After this hard struggle in darkness, at daybreak, Jacob would have a new identity and know God more intimately. Life's struggles are blessings in disguise when we see who we are in Christ.

## GENESIS 33:1-20: ASSURED, JACOB FINDS FAVOR WITH ESAU.

- a. Having received God's blessing and survived his face-to-face encounter with God, Jacob is more certain of God's protection when he meets Esau. Seeing God in our struggles assures us we are safe and sound.
- b. Trusting God's deliverance from Esau's wrath, Jacob acted with wisdom. He planned the approach to Esau wisely. Jacob earnestly and humbly sought Esau's favor. Faith is not a license for imprudence.
- c. Jacob's words and actions express his guilt, repentance, and desire to be forgiven by his brother. To be given Esau's favor is like seeing God who has earlier blessed and given His favor to Jacob. God's greatest favor to man is to provide a way to be forgiven in Christ and be saved from God's wrath.
- d. Greater than Esau's favor is the favor granted by God to Jacob. Ultimately, God was the one who changed Esau's hardened heart. It is only by God's grace that we survive life's struggles.
- e. As God has promised, Jacob arrived safely in Canaan. He erected an altar to the mighty God of Israel in Shechem. Later, Jacob will also erect an altar in Bethel where he praised the God who delivered him in his day of distress (Genesis 35:1-7). **Victory with God in our struggles strengthens our faith and lifts our hearts in praise.**

## CONCLUSION

Life is full of struggles. How we come out of our struggles depends on who is in us. In Christ, we will always come out victorious. He will not fail in transforming us to become more like Him. He will empower us to be worthy of His name. That is the good towards which all things—including suffering—work together for the believer. In life's final struggle, we have His guarantee of blessed victory. On that glorious day, after we breathe our last and all strivings cease, we will be where we are destined to be—face-to-face with God praising Him eternally. His work in us is completed as He has promised. **God uses life's struggles to shape our identity and take us where we ought to be ■**

## NEWLY LAUNCHED SMALL GROUPS *by* Pastor Emer Manaloto

The Disciple-Making Groups (DMG) team is pleased to present two newly launched small groups. While we present and welcome new church members before the



GCF family on a special day, we do the same with our new growth groups.

Today you will hear testimonies from the leaders of **Praise Grads** (top photo, morning services) and **HighLight** GGs (bottom photo, afternoon services). HighLight Growth Group (a mixed group) was launched last July 22 with its leaders, Noel and Flory Bugay, and meets every Sunday, 9:30 a.m. at Room B510. More recently, Praise Grads Growth Group (a young adults' group), which is led by Mike Loanzon and Matt Ong, was launched last September 21 and now gathers biweekly on Fridays, 7:00 p.m. at Room BM04. If you have not joined a Growth Group yet, we encourage you to join any of these two that you prefer.

You may also choose to attend GGEX Extreme featuring "How to Make Choices You Won't Regret" (Lessons on David's Life). More details about this gathering are on the announcements portion of this bulletin, as well as in the flier insert. Through this, we hope that you will have a foretaste of what being in a Growth Group will be like, so that in the future, you will join one that will greatly help you in your spiritual growth.

## HEARTFELT GRATITUDE *by* Pastor Eugene Geanga

Last August 29, my wife, Osie, gave birth to an extremely premature (28 weeks) baby boy, Nathaniel Dave. On October 12, at seven weeks old, baby Nathan was finally released from the Neo-Natal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). And on October 16, he was finally discharged from the hospital and was able to go home with us. It was a joyful moment for us parents, and also for our daughter Carissa.

Nathan has been steadily growing and based on his latest check-up. He is appropriately growing according to his corrected age. He also underwent a hearing test and both his ears are working well. We praise the Lord for these developments, albeit, small steps for Nathan to grow normally as a young boy.

With grateful hearts to our God, we would like to thank you, the GCF community, for journeying with us and supporting Baby Nathan through prayer and other means. Your overwhelming generosity and unwavering support gave us much comfort and peace.

It also granted us the opportunity to focus in caring for Baby Nathan. We are eternally grateful to God for allowing us to experience His faithfulness through you, our spiritual community ■



# Ministry Opportunities + Announcements



## BUDGET BY THE BOOK

*YA Talk on biblical money management*  
 Speaker: Pastor BJ Sebastian  
 Nov. 10 (Sat), 2:00-4:00 p.m., Youth Center  
 Everyone is invited to attend.  
 Please text **0917 532 7741** to register.



## CHANCEL CHOIR RECRUITMENT

*There is joy in serving Jesus!*  
 The Chancel Choir invites church members to consider serving the Lord through singing. Rehearsal schedules: 3 p.m. (Sat), 2 p.m. (Sun). Please contact Josh Capule at **0915 601 1211** if you're interested.



## GGEX EXTREME

*featuring How to Make Decisions You Won't Regret (Lessons on David's Life)*  
*All adults without GG are invited.*  
 Nov. 18 (Sun), 12-3 p.m., Fellowship Hall  
 Free lunch and material will be provided.  
 Please register at the booth at the lobby.  
 Registration is **free** but **limited to first 200**.



## GCF JOB OPPORTUNITY

GCF is looking for a **full-time building engineer** who will be responsible for ensuring compliance with all engineering, mechanical, telecommunication, and electrical requirements of the church. For information on applying, please e-mail [gcfhr@gcf.org.ph](mailto:gcfhr@gcf.org.ph).

**Notice:** Dr. Larry P. Pabiona is with a group of over 40 GCFers in the Holy Land leading them in a spiritual pilgrimage. Vice Chairman Elder Ed Trono ably fills the pulpit for us this weekend.

*The flowers this week are given with praise and thanksgiving to God by the Basilad family and the Messiah College.* Please call 632 1354 to 56 for inquiries on how to participate in this ministry.

## Join a DISCIPLE-MAKING GROUP

### New Growth Group (Mixed)

*Topic: Counting the Real Cost of Being A Disciple*  
 Sundays, 9:30-10:30 a.m.  
 Rm. B124 (Growth Group Center)

### Best Together in Christ

*Group for Couples*  
 Sundays 9:30-11:00 a.m.,  
 at Rm. B508

### Spark Growth Group

Mondays, 6:30-8:30 p.m.  
 Seniors' Room

### Overcomers

*support group for those under any kind of addiction*  
 Thursdays, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

*If you are interested in joining any of the small groups above, fill out the tear-off form of this bulletin, drop it in the offering bag, or submit it at the Growth Group booth at the lobby. For more information, you can text or call us at **0917 532 1921**.*

## Q4 DMG LEADERS' ASSEMBLY

*November 10 (Sat), 4:00-6:00 p.m.  
 at the Fellowship Hall*

## STEWARDSHIP REPORT / October 2018

	October Budget	Received, Oct. 1 to 24	January to October Budget	Received, Jan. 1 to Oct. 24
General Fund	9,505,598	4,454,208	87,822,514	74,683,630
Missions Fund	927,000	442,823	9,270,000	8,166,429

# ABLAZE

*[Jesus] saw a tax collector, Levi son of Alphaeus, sitting in his office. Jesus said to him, "Follow me." Levi got up and followed him. Later on Jesus was having a meal in Levi's house.*

— Mark 2:14-15a (GNT)

**B**ridging the chasm between God's presence and the outcast, Jesus showed a holy devotion willing to cross legalistic boundaries to reconcile humanity to God Himself. While human religiosity focuses on what is acceptable and lawful, the devotion of God seeks those who are in need of love and healing.

Jesus announced, "The kingdom of God is near" with healing and teaching, and he called disciples to join in. With the kingdom's coming, we see how the compartmentalized categories of society collapses. The sick and the possessed are restored, the poor receives the good news, and common folks, even public enemies, are called to be part of the kingdom movement.

In this narrative transition, Mark portrays Jesus withdrawing to the sea for the call of Levi, a tax collector. Similar with the calling of Jesus' first disciples, Levi is simply called to follow, and he immediately left his office, just as the fishermen

immediately left their nets. While the latter were considered second-class citizens, tax collectors were deemed as national traitors. Tax collectors were despised by the Jews for they represent the political and economic oppression of the Jewish nation under the Roman Empire. But once again, Jesus called someone to move past his occupation.

In what followed, we see Jesus dining and having fellowship with the traitors and the corrupt. Unimaginably, we again see how Jesus, Son of God and Son of Man, the Holy and Human One is bringing redemption and new life to the wretched. While human religiosity calls to not associate, much more dine, with 'sinners,' Jesus brought the healing presence and loving fellowship of God to such notorious men.

By sharing a meal with His people's enemies, Jesus crossed a line that welcomed in disreputable people. He also calls such to transformation and participation in God's kingdom. Jesus has shown that no one is out of reach of God's love.

As disciples of Jesus, we are called to transcend our occupations. Our discipleship should be marked by Jesus' life and person, reaching even to the enemies of society. Let us ask, then, for courage to reach out in Jesus' love and name ■

## GCF PRAYER GATHERINGS *at the Chapel*

**The GCF Hour of Prayer**  
Tuesdays, 6-7 a.m.

**Midweek Prayer Service**  
Wednesdays, 7-8:30 p.m.

**ON THE COVER:** *Jacob Wrestling With the Angel* (1865) by French painter Alexandre-Louis Leloir (public domain). Genesis 32 tells that Jacob wrestled with "a man" (v. 24), but in Hosea, where this episode is recounted, Jacob "strove with God" and he "strove with the angel" (12:3-4).



## Greenhills Christian Fellowship

Know Christ and Make Him Known

Ruby cor. Garnet Roads, Ortigas Center, Pasig City 1605  
Tel. Nos. 632 1354 to 56, 635 0078 to 80, 635 0082 to 83 | Fax No. 632 1357  
Mobile No. 0920 961 2964, Mon.-Fri., 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.  
E-mail: [email@gcf.org.ph](mailto:email@gcf.org.ph) • Website: [www.gcf.org.ph](http://www.gcf.org.ph)

# How may we SERVE YOU BETTER?

Fill-out this tear off form and drop it in an offering bag/box or at the Ministry Information Booth. Please check all that is applicable:

- I am a first-time guest.
- I prayed to receive Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord today.
- I would like to know how to become a Christian.
- I am interested in becoming a member of this church.
- I want to join a Growth Group.**  
(Specify age group: \_\_\_\_\_)  
(Specify group composition: \_\_\_\_\_)
- I want to start a Growth Group.
- I want to host a Growth Group.

Please share with us some information about yourself:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_ Landline no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Year of membership: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Growth Group (if you already have one): \_\_\_\_\_

*Today is **27/28 October 2018**, and I attended the 8 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 3:00 p.m., 5:30 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. (Sat) (encircle the time).*

Write below *any* inquiry or prayer item that you want to ask or share.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
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For hospital or house visitation, dedication service, or funeral service requests, please call or text 0917 532 7794.

# God's Way to Heaven

## THE GOSPEL

"Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures."  
*(1 Corinthians 15:3-4).*

## THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD

**God is holy and righteous:** "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty, the whole earth is full of his glory" (*Isaiah 6:3*). **He requires holiness of us as well:** "Be holy, for I am holy" (*1 Peter 1:16*).

## THE TRUTH ABOUT MAN

**Man is sinful:** "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (*Romans 3:23*).  
**Sin demands a penalty:** "For the wages of sin is death" (*Romans 6:23*).

## THE TRUTH ABOUT CHRIST

**Christ is the expression of God's love for us:** "God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (*Romans 5:8*). **Christ paid the penalty of our sins and died for sinners:** "For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God" (*1 Peter 3:18*). **Through Christ, God offers man reconciliation:** "God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them" (*2 Corinthians 5:18*).

## WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

**Believe and receive Jesus as Lord and Savior:** "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (*Romans 10:9*).

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PRAYER: *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner. I believe that you died on the cross in my place, to save me from my sins, and I accept you as my Savior, and the Master of my life forever. Amen.*

## Need someone to talk to?

Visit the Emmaus Road Counseling Center at the GCF Mezzanine floor or contact 632 1354 to 56, 635 0078 to 80 or 0917 532 7794 for inquiries.