

Genesis 32:22-31  
Matthew 14:13-21

## GENEROSITY

Jacob has another remarkable encounter with God after he leaves his family and all their belongings a distance from where he is.

He ends up wrestling all night with one of God's angels, refusing to stop. When God's messenger realizes that Jacob won't give in, he strikes Jacob's hip, putting it out of joint.

He asks to leave, but Jacob insists that he wants to know the messenger's name.

Refusing to answer, the man—who may be God himself—blesses Jacob.

Jacob realizes he has seen God in this place called the face of God and that he has survived.

He is greatly blessed in spite of his wounded hip.

Just as he was greatly blessed at the place he named Bethel, God's house.

God is truly generous.

In Isaiah 55, a call goes out to all people who are thirsty and hungry but are poor and can't buy supplies.

The prophet proclaims, "you that have no money, come, buy and eat!"

It seems ridiculous.

How can you buy anything without money?

God will generously provide what they need, free of charge.

In Psalm 145 we read, “The LORD is gracious and merciful... his compassion is over all that he has made.”

It’s appropriate for us as people of faith to thank God every day for his generous blessings, his love and his compassion.

It’s too easy—and *inappropriate*—for us to be angry at God when we feel forgotten because we didn’t get a particular blessing we asked for.

God’s generosity never ends,  
and it never skips over any of God’s people.

Do you remember the story of the widow’s mite?

People are making their financial offerings to the temple, and the wealthy men are even making a big production out of it to be sure others will notice and admire them.

But a poor widow quietly puts in two coins, something like pennies. As Jesus says, she gave more than all the others because she gave everything she had.

What a beautiful lesson in generosity!

Think too of Joseph, who not only forgave his brothers for their wickedness against them but also generously blessed them with food, drink and shelter in Egypt, where he had the power to do so.

Our reading in Matthew is wonderfully familiar:  
the miracle of the loaves and fishes.

Think about it: if you were there, would you have stayed to see how in the world those tiny loaves and fishes could have fed

more than a few people?

Or would you have left to find food for yourself?

But for those who did stay:

the disciples learned a great lesson in grace and mercy,

and the crowd of listeners learned an unforgettable lesson

about generosity and God's miraculous action on their behalf.

We need to always be aware of and grateful to God for his neverending generosity. How fortunate we are!

Let us pray:

Wherever we are, Lord,

We know we are together, united in faithful prayer.

We are very grateful for our family of faith.

We thank you Father God, Lord Jesus and Holy Spirit,

we glorify you, we worship you,

and we count on you, especially during these devastating times,

to bless us with continuing faith and health.

Equip us always with strong faith and the right words

to adequately tell your story of salvation,

that more souls may be harvested.

And give us wisdom every day to discern good from evil.

You are our Rock and our Redeemer.

You sustain us with your never-ending love.

You encourage us to express with joy our love for you.

In your precious name we pray,

Amen.