



HOW MEN GROW

by G.G. Warren

To rightly estimate any phase in any man's life, we must consider it as a chapter in the process of his growth upward—or downward.

Consider Jacob at Bethel when a ladder came down from Heaven ministering God's love to him.

Some find fault with Jacob's vow at Bethel as being selfish and mercenary. If God will do this for Jacob, then Jacob will do this for God! How much nobler to stay one's self upon God with a generosity such as Abraham's, which trusts all to Him!

But Jacob was at the very beginning of his spiritual life at Bethel. He had just had his first glimpse of the vision which was to shape that life to its close. He naturally rises to no height of self-abandonment. He honestly states the case as it strikes him, and takes God at His word in the practical commonplace way which was characteristic of him.

But at Jabbok, Jacob went further. Once more Divine powers and presences come into his life and this time he has no bargain to make with them. He doesn't ask for safety for himself, or the preservation of his property, or the mollification of his brother's anger. He asks just the blessing which God can bestow, and leaves it to take any shape or to carry any meaning which God may give it. He drives no bargain now, but trusts and adores. Then it was there that his old name Jacob, the Supplanter, ceased to fit the man, and he became Israel, "a Prince of God."

And so God takes us from one stage to another, from narrow and selfish views of our relation to Him, to the hour when of all His gifts we ask nothing but the blessing that expresses His gladness in us, and helps to our gladness in Him. □

