

Hollow and undone,
with prayers reverberating against the vault of heaven
and a spirit acquainted with divine absence,
like Jacob, I wrestled an unseen angel,
pleading for a blessing
while the firmament stayed shut.

But the mountain did not cast me out.

It held me—
in sacred pauses between lectures,
in classmates who saw my trembling
and did not turn away.
Professors wept with me in their offices.
Peers bore my doubts with me as a holy burden.

And slowly,
God returned.
Not with thunder,
but through angels round about me.

My prayers softened.
Faith rekindled.

The blessing I begged for
was passed to me
through laughter, grief,
and quiet communion.

It was here—on this sacred ground—
that silence became revelation,
and community revived my faith.
BYU gave me light:
not as certainty,
but as companionship to doubt and loneliness.

Now I carry that light
into others' Gethsemanes,
into fractured spaces of sorrow and division,
into conversations and communities hungry for healing.

I mourn.
I listen.
I stay.

To whom much is given,
much is required.

The mountain still burns.
It burns within me.
It has become my Peniel
And from its flame, I go forth to serve