

Bible Study – January 20, 2021

Genesis 32:22-32

Question: Why did Jacob wrestle with God?

22 That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two female servants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. **23** After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. **24** So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. **25** When the man saw that 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** Then 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. **28** Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome." **29** Jacob said, "Please tell me your name." But he replied, "Why do you ask my name?" Then he blessed him there. **30** So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared." **31** The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel, and he was limping because of his hip. **32** Therefore to this day the Israelites do not eat the tendon attached to the socket of the hip, because the socket of Jacob's hip was touched near the tendon.

Wrestling With God:

- Verse 9: *Then 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.'* Until Jacob had a divine wrestling match with God, his faith was not his own.
- The wrestling occurred when Jacob was about to cross into the land of promise.
- The darkness symbolized Jacob's situation. He was afraid and uncertain. Daybreak indicated that he had gone through something long and significant.
- The angel touched Jacob so that his hip went out of joint. Though Jacob had deceived and "beaten" people throughout his life, he now encountered someone he could not defeat.
- The angel changed his name. Jacob meant "schemer." Israel meant "God fights." These words were full of hope to the Israelites. If one could contend successfully with God, he could then win the battle with man.

For Us To Consider:

- *"Most likely, we'll not physically wrestle with the Lord as Jacob did—so what does our wrestling look like? We wrestle with him through prayer, talking to him about questions and concerns. We wrestle with him in his Word, searching its pages for truth that speaks to our situation, meditating on relevant passages, and memorizing verses that encourage or convict us. We wrestle with him through the wise counsel of others. As we hear the preached Word, read books and articles, and have intentional conversations, the Spirit speaks through godly people giving us truth and instruction to process and apply."* – Winfree Brisley
- Jacob was broken to be healed and weakened to be strengthened (*With The Word*). Where have you been broken in your life of faith? Where have you been disappointed? Has that caused you to despair or to wrestle with God for a blessing?
- Have you made your faith your own? I don't mean confessing Christ as Lord and Savior specifically, but living according to your own relationship with God vs. the way your relatives or mentors or other people live?