



Encountering God
THROUGH PRAYER

September 29th. through October 4th. 2019

Genesis 32:22-25

22 Now he arose that same night and took his two wives and his two maids and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. 23 He took them and sent them across the stream. And he sent across whatever he had. 24 Then Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. 25 When he saw that he had not prevailed against him, he touched the socket of his thigh; so the socket of Jacob's thigh was dislocated while he wrestled with him.

Genesis 32:26-31

26 Then he said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." But he said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." 27 So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." 28 He said, "Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with God and with men and have prevailed." 29 Then Jacob asked him and said, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And he blessed him there. 30 So Jacob named the place Peniel, for he said, "I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been preserved." 31 Now the sun rose upon him just as he crossed over Penuel, and he was limping on his thigh.

- Jacob was the younger of two sons which meant he wasn't entitled to his father's blessing of being the next patriarch and inheriting the family estate.
 - As we know, neither Jacob or his mother were content with this so they hatched a plan to trick Issac into blessing Jacob rather than Esau.
 - Esau sought to kill Jacob, Jacob fled to his uncle Laban, Jacob prospered and now is coming home.
- But Jacob has heard that His brother Esau is coming out to meet him with 400 men and Jacob is scared, so he hatches another plan.
 - He sends a bunch of his livestock to Esau as a gift and orders his servants to refer to Esau as his lord.
 - Divides the rest of his estate into two groups with the thought that whichever direction Esau goes he'll only get half of his stuff.

Jacob Encountered God Alone (vs. 24)

- Some are raised in a church, always there, love the people of that church and when they move away don't find another church to be a part of.
 - Cultural not personal. They had not met God themselves they only knew Him through others.
- Some are part of a thriving church, love it and are active themselves. When they move and are unable to find an equally encouraging group they stop going or turn to complaining.
 - Their faith was emotional or psychological not personal. Caught up in a movement.
- Some like to talk about the need for God in our culture. They focus on the downfall of society and the need for God in government and are all about "traditional values" and then are found out to be caught up in all kinds of secret sin.
 - Their faith was civil not personal. Built on societies needs, not their own.

When and how does God become personal to you?

Like with Jacob: When God jumps you and punches you in the face repeatedly and refuses to go away.

Jacob Encountered God When He Sought a Blessing (vs. 26)

- Isaac loved Esau more than he loved Jacob and that wounded Jacob beyond what Rebecca's love for him could repair.
 - Jacob had to have known before tricking his father that Isaac and Esau would find out and there would be no real transfer of wealth.
 - Could be that wealth wasn't the point. Maybe Jacob sought hearing his father say "*I delight in you more than anything*". Even if said under false pretenses.
- Here's the point... Even if Isaac had been a great father there still would have been something missing in Jacob that only God could fill.
- Isaac's love couldn't... Rachel's beauty couldn't... His own prosperity couldn't.

How do we know we seek a true blessing from God?

Like with Jacob: We need to realize we need far more from God than information or inspiration.

Any rational person, after having their hip crushed with a touch, would have begged to be set free. Not Jacob.

Instead of another momentary impact, Jacob is transformed by this blessing. Supplanter to One Who Perseveres

Jacob Encountered God When He Was Weakened

- Who wins the wrestling match?
 - Both win through weakness.
 - ▶ God becomes weak in order to bless Jacob.
 - ▶ Jacob is made weak in order to see clearly his need for God.

1 Corinthians 1:25-27

25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 26 For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; 27 but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong,