

Genesis 32

Wrestling with God

The angels command ...

I. In God's Camp

II. An Enemy Approaches

- A. The concept of peace
- B. The Reality of Confrontation
- C. A Miserable Exit Strategy

III. A Humble Appeal to God

- A. Appeal to Faithfulness
- B. Aware of Unworthiness
- C. An Element of Desperation
- D. The Perplexing Scenario

IV. At Night in the Camp

- A. Alone
- B. Grappling with a Mystery Man
- C. Till the Break of Day
- D. One Debilitating Move
- E. Holding tight for a blessing
- F. A New Name
- G. A Profound Non-answer
- H. The Face of God
- I. Cherished Wound

V. Lessons Learned

- A. About Prayer
- B. About Surrender
- C. About Limping

... a humble walk with God.

Children, Listen ...

1. Who did God send to help Jacob?
2. Why was Jacob afraid?
3. What did his fear cause him to do with God?
4. Who is it that Jacob ends up wrestling with? Why is he amazed afterward?
5. What is Jacob's name changed to?

Fighting Hard to Lose

Who ever strives to lose? Who would enter a wrestling match intending to get pinned to the floor? The story of Jacob's wrestling match with God, while having its own unique meaning, may also provide for us a good case in point illustration that will help us with our prayer life. Most illustrations in Scripture that encourage diligence teach us to strive to win, to gain a prize - but in this one the reward comes with losing ... to God. We might call it surrender. When we are intensely struggling with something in life and we bring it into the presence of God in prayer, when we are grappling to discern His will for us, or even if we are having a hard time submitting to His authority it is helpful for us to remember that it is always, in the end, better to lose to Him. When we pray, we don't pray to overcome God, but to be overcome by Him. I think we are allowed to wrestle, to struggle, sometimes intensely with God over life issues, but our goal is never defeat God (that would be impossible any) but to surrender to Him even if we have to be disjoined in the process. That kind of defeat is the sweetest victory of all.