

Jacob the Wrestler

Scripture Reading — Genesis 32:22-32

So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. — Genesis 32:24

Jacob was in a difficult position, and it was mostly his own fault. After deceiving his brother, Esau, Jacob had fled for his life to go and live with his Uncle Laban in Harran. Now, many years later, Jacob was on his way back home, and he was expecting to meet Esau again (see Genesis 27-31).

Jacob plotted and planned how he might smooth things over with Esau. Finally, in desperation and fear, he cried out to God, “Save me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau, for I am afraid he will come and attack” (Genesis 32:11).

The next night—as Jacob waited alone—a stranger came to wrestle with him till dawn. It left Jacob injured but blessed by God. God marked that event by giving Jacob a new name: *Israel*, meaning “he struggles with God.”

Are you wrestling with God and struggling with sin in your life? You may be asking, “Does God really care for me?” Jesus said, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). God sees us; he sees our pride, our selfishness, and our lack of love for others. He also knows when we feel left out.

What’s more, God knows who we are in Christ. Through Jesus we are forgiven and reconciled with God. We are given new life and called to be faithful. Is God renewing your life today?

Prayer

Jesus, you were given the name Immanuel, “God with us.” Thank you for the promise that nothing can separate us from your love. Amen.

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