



Genesis 32  
Jacob Wrestles with Jesus  
From Sermon 3.14.21

Read *Genesis 32:26-31*

Review from Sunday's sermon: After turning the tables on Laban, it's now time for Jacob to go back home. This means a confrontation with his brother Esau after their dramatic separation years ago. Jacob, however, appears to be a very different person. There is a newfound spirituality in him. No longer the mamma's boy, he's ready to do the hard work of following God and making amends. He's still scared.

1. Besides his actions, the change in Jacob is most clearly revealed by his prayer. Read *Genesis 32:9-12*. Note the individual words, phrases, and descriptions that display Jacob's new heart. Various answers, but include contrite, humble, reliant on God, broken, unworthy, acknowledging grace...

2. On Sunday, we compared Jacob's pray to that of the Pharisee and the tax collector in Jesus' parable of *Luke 18:9-14*. Read and discuss this parable in light of today's preaching, church values & goals, approach to evangelism, and so-called Christian TV. Various answers. No one focuses on the holiness and fear of God. Therefore, they get a bad doctrine on the lost/hopeless condition of man. This turns man into the consumer and God into the obligated provider. Jacob and the tax collector recognize their own spiritual bankruptcy and realize God owes them nothing. For us, only Jesus is worthy. We must be "in" Him.

2a. Another point that was added to this was: the modern church has lost the "Fear of God". What does this mean and how is it detrimental? See *Proverbs 9:10*. It's the starting point for all sound doctrine. Get this wrong and the rest will crumble. When I get God's holiness right, it reveals my sinfulness. I then have an even great love and appreciation for election, grace, and salvation.

3. Back in the Jacob account: Who was this man Jacob wrestled with and how do we know this? Jesus. That becomes clear based on what Jacob names the place (see 32:30), what Jesus re-names Jacob (see 32:28), the words of the prophet Hosea (see *Hosea 12:2-5*).

4. What is the difference between a Theophany and a Christophany? A theophany is believed to be a physical appearing (manifestation) of God the Father, specifically in the Old Testament. A Christophany is a physical appearance of Christ in the Old Testament.

Why do we teach that there are no such things as Theophanies? Because Jesus said no one has seen the Father. The Gospel of John reveals Jesus to be the Great I AM, the one who interacted with Abraham, Moses, and Israel. See *John 8:58* & *1 Corinthians 10:1-4*

5. Have you ever spent a night, a situation, or a season wrestling with the Lord? Not physically, but spiritually. Share. Many fought His calling/is offer of new life. Later, others resist His pruning—the surrendering of old lives, habits, sins, provision. We can sometimes fight His mission for us. Review the story of Jonah. [Jonah was thrilled to be a called prophet, but was hoping to be sent to his own nation. God was sending him to a foreign nation—enemies of Israel. Jonah fought the calling and ran. God got his attention.]

6. What is the significance of modern Israel? Yet again, the Bible is proven right and God faithful. Nothing like Israel's rebirth has ever happened in history with any people groups. It shows the Scriptures (specifically prophetic ones) can be taken and interpreted with the same literal approach as narrative portions of the Bible.