

**Magnolia Missionary Baptist Church Beaumont**  
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**Lesson: Deacon Charles Blackmon**  
**Lesson # September 18,2022**

**Unit 1: God calls Abraham's Family**  
**Subject: "Persevere in Times of Difficulty"**  
**Print Passage: Genesis 32:22-32**

**Key Verse:**

[The Man] said, thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed (Genesis 32:28, KJV).

**Key Terme:**

- 1) Alone (verse 24) - A separation; apart; separate.
- 2) Breaks (verse 26) - Go up, ascend, approach, come, breaketh.
- 3) Hip (verse 25) -thigh; loin; side; base.
- 4) Prevailed (verse 25) -to be able, had power, overpower
- 5) Wrestled (verse 24)- grapple with; struggled.

**Introduction:**

One of the most intense and eye-opening struggles is with self, especially against the fear of past failures, sins, and regrets. For believers who learn to submit to God and His authority over their lives, internal struggle can lead to spiritual transformation. Jacob, the schemer, experienced and learned this lesson after struggling with God and himself before he encountered Esau, and his estranged brother. Jacob came into the world clutching his brother's heel. This was symbolic of struggles to come. Jacob contended with his older brother Esau over the birthright and the blessing of their father Isaac. Jacob won, but only through deception. The events in Genesis 32 occur twenty years after Jacob's mother, Rebekah, orchestrated his departure to Mesopotamia as protection from Esau's rage against him for cheating him out of the family blessing (Genesis 28). Jacob vowed to make the Lord his God, he repeatedly fell short of establishing an intimate relationship with God, and continued to be the trickster and schemer. The possibility attack by Esau haunted him. Jacob devised a scheme to reconcile with Esau peaceably and fervently prayed for God's protection (Genesis 32:1-21). Now Jacob was positioned foe a second encounter with God and the struggle that transformed him from schemer to submissive servant.

**Lesson Pointer # 1**

- **Struggling with God (Genesis 32:22-26)**

After scheming to appease Esau with material gifts, Jacob sent the wives, children, and possessions across the Jabbok river flowing westward into the Jordan about twenty miles north of the Dead sea. His fear of Esau's payback for wrongs he inflicted on him to the presence and promise of God's angel army on his side (Genesis 32: 22-23)" Jacob also went on his way, and the angles of God met him. Alone and afraid, Jacob was in the position where the only place to turn was to the God he knew about but did not truly know. For Jacob, going forward meant confronting the brother he suspected was coming for revenge. Jacob had struggled all his life to prevail, first with Esau, then with Laban. Now, as he was about to reenter Canaan, he was shown that it was with God that he must wrestle not with Esau. An assailant attacked Jacob and wrestled with him until daybreak (Genesis 32: 24). God came to him in such a form that Jacob could wrestle with him successfully, yet he showed Jacob that he could disable him at will (Genesis 32: 25). God must break us to fix us when we persist in going our way. A supernatural "blow" crippled Jacob and gave his foe the

advantage, but Jacob refused to let go and held on for a blessing (Genesis 32: 26). Now, Jacob's wrestling match with the man was, initiated by God for, Jacob's good. God will permit spiritual struggles This in our lives and encourage us to realize our need for Him.

#### Lesson Pointer # 2

- Struggling with Self (Genesis 32:27-32)

The disabled, and helpless deceiver was now at the point where he could do nothing but cling to God and plead to be blessed by Him. His request informed God that Jacob was ready to become a submissive servant instead of the deceitful schemer and fighter he had been. "What is your name?" Was a loaded question whose purpose was to allow Jacob the opportunity to confess and acknowledge his true character. Now that Jacob has acknowledged God as the source of blessing and was about to re-enter the promise land, the Lord acknowledged Jacob as his servant by changing his name. Jacob received what he needed: an inner change, a spiritual makeover. His internal change was symbolized by the external change of his name from Jacob to Israel, meaning "God fights" or "God prevails." Jacob had fought with God and men all his life he was a proud and prideful man. God fought against this pride and stubbornness and would fight for him in the future. His new name also foreshadowed the nation of Israel that he would generate and indicate the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise of his descendants becoming a "great" nation. Jacob asked the identity of his opponent, instead of his opponent's revealing his identity, Jacob received a blessing from him (Genesis 32: 29). Jacob named the location of this significant life changing encounter Peniel, meaning "face of God." He realized he had seen God face-to-face and survived (Genesis 32: 30). Yet my life be spared. If Jacob's life was spared in his encounter with God, his prayer for his life to be spared in his encounter with Esau "Save me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau, for I am afraid he will come and attack me, and also the mothers with their children (Genesis 32-11 NIV)." It is impossible to see God and remain the same. Jacob emerged from the encounter with a limp from the shriveled sinew in his thigh," (Genesis 32: 31). His spiritual encounter allowed him to walk in the newness of life as a living testimony to others. (2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV) "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come." The battle with self is an ongoing battle in the believer's life. The first challenge is recognizing the inner and external "opponents" -selfishness, ego, envy, jealousy, sins of the flesh, ungodly ambitions and other forces attempting to possess and control us. The second challenge lie in confessing and turning to God with a submissive and contrite heart. "Turn from sin, turn to God with evidence." The final challenge is to finally persevere with persistent prayer while trusting God's power to assist us in making us victorious.

#### Closing Thought:

- 1) Jacob required an extreme makeover because he could not enter Canaan as he was a deceiver, manipulator, and" heel grabber."
- 2) God allowed Jacob's struggles lead him to acknowledge and repent of who and what he had been.
- 3) Anyone can restore their fellowship with God by accepting God's will.