

"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan

Genesis 32

Genesis thirty-two is the story of Jacob wrestling with God Himself. Jacob had fled from the home of Laban and had taken all his possessions with him. Together with his two wives, Leah and Rachel, Jacob makes his way to the mountains of Gilead and stopped along the way near where his grandfather Abraham would have stopped on his way to the land of Canaan two generations earlier. He sends messengers to Esau, also called Edom, to tell him he is coming back in the land of their father. Jacob is frightened when the messengers return saying Esau is coming and with a contingency of four hundred men. Camping by the River Jabbok that flows from the mountains of Gilead to the Jordan Valley, he divides his camp.

That night before the day of meeting, Jacob thinks the day of reckoning with his brother might end in bloodshed. He begins to wrestle with "a Man" all night. According to the prophet Hosea, Jacob was wrestling with God Himself (See Hosea 12:3-4). That encounter with God left Jacob a cripple for the rest of his life (see vv.25, 31-32). God also blessed Jacob and changed his name from Jacob, which means the one who trips others, supplanter, the one who causes others to stumble. In short Jacob was a manipulator of the worst sort. But after meeting God face to face, "Peniel" the face of God, God changed his nature and changed his name. Instead of Jacob, the one who trips others, he became "Yisra'el". He struggled with God and with man and prevailed.

From this monumental night and his wrestling with God, Jacob became a prince with God and was changed forever. He was not perfect, but radically changed. Meeting God, wrestling with God is a life changer! Jacob was not the same man he was before that night, either spiritually or physically. The change can be seen immediately in the following day's reunion with his estranged brother and from that time forward. Along with his grandfather and grandmother, Abram/Abraham and Sarai/Sarah, Jacob was only the third person we have record of at this point that had a name change after an encounter with God.

Prayer and Action Steps

Have you had an encounter with God that has radically changed you? When was that? Can you write it down in a simple outline? Try writing what your life was like before you met God in a life-changing encounter. Next write down how you met God. Where? When? How? Nothing elaborate must be written, if you don't remember dates, that is not an issue, but a time when you met Him is. What has your life been like since that encounter? Pray and thank God for the memories of meeting Jesus, maybe after great wrestling. Pray for God to search your heart and know beyond doubt that you know God and are walking with Him. If you have walked in disobedience or are away from God presently, seek Him now. Ask for God's forgiveness and cleansing immediately. Read I John 1:9 and follow through!

Date _____ Scripture _____

- *Read the chapter. If you have time, read it again.*
- *Highlight, underline or circle the Key Verse or Verses of the chapter.*
- *Ask yourself these questions as you read through the chapter.*

Is this historical narrative, analogy, metaphor, allegory, or some other element of speech or communicating truth?

Does the passage teach a Biblical Precept; that is, tells you something to be, do or act? _____

What is the Context? Old Testament? New Testament? What is the writer speaking or writing about? To whom is he writing?

Are there principles in this chapter that if followed, would require me to change my attitudes or actions? _____

Is this a clear passage of Scripture (can only be interpreted one way)? Or could the passage be interpreted legitimately, in two or more ways, according to grammar and context? _____

Does the passage give a Biblical Pattern that is followed here and other places in the Bible? _____
