



Isaiah's Reality

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WEEK 5

Biblical Moment

When We Wrestle with God

Please have your team split in partners and read together and answer the questions at the end:

Genesis 32:24 (ESV), "And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day."

The air must have been cold and brittle that night as random thoughts played in his mind continuously. He was worried about the outcome, worried about meeting his brother he had failed and hurt years ago. He must have replayed his mistakes over and over that day when he selfishly pursued his own benefit by stealing his brother's blessing. Soon he would discover how his actions shaped a hurting soul. Soon he would encounter what was owed him just beyond this brook.

Something in his heart prompted him to stay behind as his family continued the journey to safety. Perhaps he needed time to reflect, to cry out to God on behalf of himself and his family. Whatever caused him to remain behind also made him struggle deeper within. He fought all night for his rights, his way, his hurts and the discontentment he had held for so long. He decided to face his failures, pain and resentment that night by the brook. He fought and fought until daybreak, determined to be heard. There was a consequence of permanent impairment to his wrestling but also a name change and a blessing because he realized he couldn't live his life without God.



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No doubt, as Jacob left that place of struggle, the Mightiness of an All-Powerful God who always wins, who never lets up, but keeps fighting with us and for us, so we don't lose sight of His true character, was revealed to him. God always wants to show us His Power in a world that searches for its own.

Jacob was a man of struggle. His tainted ambitions revealed his character unbecoming to a child of God. Only God was able to meet him at his point of need. It's been said that real growth comes with great pain and suffering, because in these moments, our limitations are revealed, and God's Hand is seen.

Many of us struggle with the journey. Sometimes they're short getaways and others they're long extended stays. However long the road, we will eventually intersect to a crossroad. Proverbs 3:5-7 (NLT) says, ***"Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek His will in all you do, and He will show you which path to take. Don't be impressed with your own wisdom. Instead, fear the Lord and turn away from evil."***

In our struggle, like Jacob, our own logic tells us our "will" or "desire" to do what we've been called to do should look exactly like what we had planned. The crisis of belief comes when we release those ideas and plans by trusting God's infallible wisdom. This decision removes the disappointment of our struggle. It affords rest, even though the questions are still present, as we learn to struggle rightly.

I recently read a book by Lysa Terkeurst entitled, "It's Not Supposed to Be This Way," in which she describes a creative way to wrestle well. She writes, "And we must learn to live and love in the imperfect rhythms of our clunky humanity,



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trying to stay on beat within a symphony of divinity. We will get the words to the song wrong sometimes; we will go off-key and offbeat. We will go sharp, and we will fall flat. But if God's symphony continues to play loud and strong as the ultimate soundtrack of our lives, we will sense how to get back on track. We will feel how to get back in rhythm. We will hear how to get back in tune."

She then describes the disadvantages of lowering the volume when singing along with a well-produced track. We let our preferences take hold of the melody and the loudest voice fades, the One Voice we should be hearing above everything else. This causes us to miss the important key changes, which in turn spiral us out of control.

You may be like me. In my struggles, I long to see God's true character revealed even in my deficiency to recognize it.

May we always strive to listen to the loudest voice on the track, knowing we are a work in progress, even with our questions, even in our wrestling.

Questions with your Partner: Are you or have you ever wrestled with God about something? Who won? What did you learn?