



## Lesson 19 – The Night of Wrestling

Based on Genesis 32 and 33

1) Where does our lesson begin today?

**Genesis 31:54-55** Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and \_\_\_\_\_ all night in the mount. And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them: and Laban \_\_\_\_\_, and returned unto his place.

Though Jacob had left Padan-Aram in obedience to the divine direction, it was not without many misgivings that he retraced the road which he had trodden as a fugitive twenty years before. His sin in the deception of his father was ever before him. He knew that his long exile was the direct result of that sin, and he pondered over these things day and night, the reproaches of an accusing conscience making his journey very sad.

As he drew nearer his journey's end, the thought of Esau brought many a troubled foreboding. After the flight of Jacob, Esau had regarded himself as the sole heir of their father's possessions. The news of Jacob's return would excite the fear that he was coming to claim the inheritance. Esau was now able to do his brother great injury, if so disposed, and he might be moved to violence against him.

2) What did God do for Jacob?

**Genesis 32:1-2** And Jacob went on his way, and the \_\_\_\_\_ of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's \_\_\_\_\_: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.

Again, the Lord granted Jacob a token of the Divine care. As he traveled southward from Mount Gilead, two hosts of heavenly angels seemed to encompass him behind and before, advancing with his company, as if for their protection. Jacob remembered the vision at Bethel so long before, and his burdened heart grew lighter at this evidence that the divine messengers who had brought him hope and courage at his flight from Canaan were to be the guardians of his return.

3) Jacob reached out to Esau, what did he tell him?

**Genesis 32:4-5** And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have \_\_\_\_\_ with Laban, and stayed there until now: And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find \_\_\_\_\_ in thy sight.

Jacob felt that he had something to do to secure his own safety. He therefore dispatched messengers with a conciliatory greeting to his brother. He instructed them as to the exact words in which they were to address Esau. It had been foretold before the birth of the two brothers that the elder should serve the younger, and, lest the memory of this should be a cause of bitterness, Jacob told the servants they were sent to "**my lord Esau;**" when brought before him, they were to refer to their master as "**thy servant Jacob;**"

4) What did the returning servants tell Jacob?

**Genesis 32:6** And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and \_\_\_\_\_ men with him.



5) How did Jacob feel about that?

**Genesis 32:7** Then Jacob was greatly \_\_\_\_\_ and distressed: and he \_\_\_\_\_ the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands;

He could not go back, and he feared to advance. His company, unarmed and defenseless, were wholly unprepared for a hostile encounter. He accordingly divided them into two bands, so that if one should be attacked, the other might have an opportunity to escape. He sent from his vast flocks generous presents to Esau, with a friendly message. He did all in his power to atone for the wrong to his brother and to avert the threatened danger, and then in humiliation and repentance he pleaded for divine protection:

6) What was Jacob's prayer?

**Genesis 32:9-10** \_\_\_\_\_ me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and \_\_\_\_\_ me, and the mother with the children.

**Genesis 32:11-12** Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I \_\_\_\_\_ him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee \_\_\_\_\_, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.

7) What did Jacob decide to do?

**Genesis 32:13** And he \_\_\_\_\_ there that same night; and took of that which came to his hand a present for Esau his brother;

**Genesis 32:22-24** And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two womenservants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok. And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and \_\_\_\_\_ over that he had. And Jacob was left \_\_\_\_\_...

He decided to send gifts to Esau, then he would send waves of his family ahead of him while he stayed back to pray to God.

It was in a lonely, mountainous region, the haunt of wild beasts and the lurking place of robbers and murderers. Solitary and unprotected, Jacob bowed in deep distress upon the earth. It was midnight. All that made life dear to him were at a distance, exposed to danger and death. Bitterest of all was the thought that it was his own sin which had brought this peril upon the innocent. With earnest cries and tears he made his prayer before God. Suddenly a strong hand was laid upon him. He thought that an enemy was seeking his life.

8) What was happening?

**Genesis 32:24-25** ...and there wrestled a \_\_\_\_\_ with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of \_\_\_\_\_, as he wrestled with him.

He endeavored to wrest himself from the grasp of his assailant. In the darkness the two struggled for the mastery. Not a word was spoken, but Jacob put forth all his strength and did not relax his efforts for a moment. While he was thus battling for his life, the sense of his guilt pressed upon his soul; his sins rose up before him, to shut him out from God. But in his terrible extremity he remembered God's promises, and his whole heart went out in entreaty for His mercy. The struggle continued until near the break of day, when the stranger placed his finger upon Jacob's thigh, and he was crippled instantly.



9) Who was it?

**Hosea 12:4-5** Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us; Even the \_\_\_\_\_ God of \_\_\_\_\_; the LORD is his memorial.

The patriarch was now disabled and suffering the keenest pain, but he would not loosen his hold. All penitent and broken, he clung to the Angel, pleading for a blessing. He must have the assurance that his sin was pardoned. Physical pain was not sufficient to divert his mind from this object. His determination grew stronger, his faith more earnest and persevering, until the very last.

10) What did the Angel tell Jacob?

**Genesis 32:26** And he said, \_\_\_\_\_, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

Through humiliation, repentance, and self-surrender, this sinful, erring mortal prevailed with the Majesty of heaven. He had fastened his trembling grasp upon the promises of God, and the heart of Infinite Love could not turn away the sinner's plea.

11) What strange question did the Angel of the LORD ask Jacob?

**Genesis 32:27** And he said unto him, What is thy \_\_\_\_\_? And he said, Jacob.

12) What did the Angel of the LORD tell him?

**Genesis 32:28** And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but \_\_\_\_\_: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

As an evidence that he had been forgiven, his name was changed from one that was a reminder of his sin, to one that commemorated his victory.

Jacob had received the blessing for which his soul had longed. His sin as a supplanter and deceiver had been pardoned. The crisis in his life was past. Doubt, perplexity, and remorse had embittered his existence, but now all was changed; and sweet was the peace of reconciliation with God. Jacob no longer feared to meet his brother. God, who had forgiven his sin, could move the heart of Esau also to accept his humiliation and repentance.

In a dream, Esau beheld his brother for twenty years an exile from his father's house; he witnessed his grief at finding his mother dead; he saw him encompassed by the hosts of God. This dream was related by Esau to his soldiers, with the charge not to harm Jacob, for the God of his father was with him.

13) How did the meeting go?

**Genesis 33:4-5** And Esau ran to meet him, and \_\_\_\_\_ him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_; and said, Who are those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant.

14) What was Jacob's time of trouble like?

**Jeremiah 30:5,7** For thus saith the LORD; We have heard a voice of \_\_\_\_\_, of fear, and not of peace... ..Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be \_\_\_\_\_ out of it.



Jacob's experience during that night of wrestling and anguish represents the trial through which the people of God must pass just before Christ's second coming.

15) What will Jesus declare from heaven?

**Revelation 22:11** He that is \_\_\_\_\_, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is \_\_\_\_\_, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

When Christ shall cease His work as mediator in man's behalf, then this time of trouble will begin. Then the case of every soul will have been decided, and there will be no atoning blood to cleanse from sin. Then the restraining Spirit of God is withdrawn from the earth. As Jacob was threatened with death by his angry brother, so the people of God will be in peril from the wicked who are seeking to destroy them. And as the patriarch wrestled all night for deliverance from the hand of Esau, so the righteous will cry to God day and night for deliverance from the enemies that surround them.

16) What did Jesus say in a parable?

**Luke 18:7-8** And shall not God \_\_\_\_\_ his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them \_\_\_\_\_. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

Those who are unwilling to forsake every sin and to seek earnestly for God's blessing, will not obtain it. But all who will lay hold of God's promises as did Jacob, and be as earnest and persevering as he was, will succeed as he succeeded.

**Can you see how the restoration of Jacob can be ours?**

**Would you like to be reunited with God?**

**When is the time to just trust God at His Word?**