Wrestling with God

Questions:

1. Gen 23: 6-12. What was Jacob afraid of? In v10 why wouldn’t God’s promise be enough to assure Jacob?

2. Gen 23:23-25. Jacob was alone and facing danger; what would you be doing if you were he? “The man”, who was God himself based on the text, came to wrestle with Jacob. What were they struggling about till daybreak?

3. Gen 23:26-29. What blessing was Jacob asking for? Israel means “God rules”. How would a new name “God rules” help Jacob face the crisis he had?

4. God did not remove Jacob’s crisis but He help Jacob face it. What does it teach us in our time of challenge?

=== sermon notes ===

(slide 1) Jacob wrestled with fear

Gen 32:6 When the messengers returned to Jacob, they said, “We went to your brother Esau, and now he is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him.” 7 In great fear and distress Jacob divided the people who were with him into two groups, and the flocks and herds and camels as well.

1. “Do not be afraid”
2. some concerns are more real and immediate
3. Jacob cheated Esau

(slide 2) God came to wrestle with Jacob

Gen 32:23 After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. 24 So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak.

1. When you are alone, quiet, and face trial- you hear God
2. Wrestle about what? Jacob’s self-reliance

(slide 3) Jacob wrestled with God to be blessed

Gen 32:26 Then the man said, “Let me go, for it is daybreak.” But Jacob replied, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.”

1. 32:25 When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob’s hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man.
2. 32:9 And Jacob said, “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Lord who said to me, ‘Return to your country and to your kindred, that I may do you good,’ 10 I am not worthy of the least of all the deeds of steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant
3. Jacob can only hold on to the Lord
4. What to bless?
   1. Bless me again with your promise
   2. Remove the trial- (stll met Esau)
   3. Courage, Total reliance- I can’t face Esau alone

(slide 4) Israel means “God rules”

Gen 32:27 The man asked him, “What is your name?” “Jacob,” he answered. 28 Then the man said, “Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel.” 29 Then he blessed him there.

1. Jacob- cheat (for own purpose by own might)
2. Isra (sarah)- Rule, El-God (God’s purpose by God’s might)

(slide 5) The blessed Jacob no longer wrestles with God

Gen 49:28 All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them, giving each the blessing appropriate to him.

1. 33:10 Jacob said, “No, please, if I have found favor in your sight, then accept my present from my hand. For I have seen your face, which is like seeing the face of God, and you have accepted me.
2. 49:2 “Assemble and listen, O sons of Jacob, listen to Israel your father.
3. 49:18 I wait for your salvation, O Lord.
4. Jacob became the line of God’s blessing to bless all nations

(slide 6) God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, David, Jesus

Gen 49:10 The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from his descendants, until the coming of the one to whom it belongs, the one whom all nations will honor.

1. We can wrestle with God our ways, but God’s way is higher
2. Conclusion of God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
3. Next: Family of Jesus