

## **SEEING THE FACE OF GOD**

***Gen 32:30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel [the face of God], saying, For I have seen God face to face, and my life is spared and not snatched away.***

Jacob name means supplanter. In biblical times a name spoke of one's character and nature. By nature Jacob was a chiseler, a deceiver, a swindler, and a self reliant person. Jacob trusted mostly in himself- his own intellect, cleverness, power, and strength. Jacob is really no different than we are in our flesh. We all have a tendency in our flesh to manifest Jacob. Jacob lived most of his life trying in his own efforts to get blessed. This is seen so vividly when one night when he was alone in a place called Jabbok.

***Gen 32:22 But he rose up that [same] night and took his two wives, his two women servants, and his eleven sons and passed over the ford [of the] Jabbok.***

***Gen 32:24 And Jacob was left alone, and a Man wrestled with him until daybreak.***

The name Jabbok means "emptying". This is the place God picked to empty Jacob of his self trust and to cause him to rely on Him. It says a man wrestled with Jacob until daybreak. In [**Hosea 12:4**], we see that this man was actually an angel. This was not just an angel, but He was the Angel of the Lord. This was none other than the pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ. Jacob wrestled with Jesus all night!

***Gen 32:25 And when [the Man] saw that He did not prevail against [Jacob], He touched the hollow of his thigh; and Jacob's thigh was put out of joint as he wrestled with Him.***

**Gen 32:26** *Then He said, Let Me go, for day is breaking. But [Jacob] said, I will not let You go unless You declare a blessing upon me.*

The Lord could not prevail against Jacob. The Lord cannot prevail in the life of a person whose trust is in their own works and effort. The Lord could not prevail with Jacob, but notice that Jacob could not prevail with the Lord. He could not wrestle out of the Lord His blessings. God will not allow a person to manipulate Him into giving blessings by offering their own works and self effort. This would give glory to man and God will not give His glory to another! Since the Lord saw that as long as Jacob had his strength that he would continue to wrestle with him, the Lord touched Jacob's hip and put it out of joint. The hip is the place of strength in the human body. It is where power and leverage comes from. With his hip out of joint Jacob did have the strength to wrestle any longer. All he could do now was cling to the Lord. He had to cling and lean fully upon the Lord. Jacob had to come to the place where he simply asked to be blessed, and the Lord blessed him. He could wrestle no longer. But before He blessed him, the Lord asked Jacob what his name was. Now the Lord knew his name! He wanted Jacob to reflect on the meaning of his name. He said, "My name is Jacob"- My name is chiseler, deceiver, swindler, self-reliant" The Lord said, "You are no longer Jacob, but your name is now Israel, which means one who prevails with God". How did Jacob prevail with God? He stopped wrestling and started to cling to God and asked for His grace. Trusting in God's grace is the point in which a Christian will prevail with God in their life and start seeing the victory of the Lord!

Jacob was so impacted by this encounter that he changed the name of the place from Jabbok- *emptying* to Peniel- *face of God*. The face of God in the Bible means to experience His grace, mercy, and blessing. The change of names reveals a connection between being emptied of self and seeing God face. However, this connection is twisted backwards by those in the flesh and under legalism. They think that in order to see the face of God and experience his blessings that they must empty themselves of self. They think that by self denial and self cleansing they will be able to experience God's face. However, this is exactly opposite to the truth! It is only by experiencing God's face and accepting by faith the grace, mercy,

and blessings of God that will cause us to be emptied of self! It is impossible to try to empty yourself because to do so is to focus on YOURSELF! The only way we can be emptied of self is to look away from yourself and your works unto another and His work- The Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work! It is by looking at the face of God- His grace, mercy, and goodness towards you that your focus on self is removed and you are emptied. Faith empties self. There is no other way! The church is called spiritual Israel, not spiritual Jacob! We prevail with God by receiving from his grace given to us through the righteousness of Jesus Christ! Stop wrestling and start trusting!