

# Going Deeper

Your weekly guide to understanding God with others

## Wrestling with God - Can God see my struggles?

Dale Stephenson

### Introduction

In the Old Testament, we read that Jacob had been through a tough time during his younger years, where he stole his brother Esau's blessing. He left home and met a beautiful lady named Rachel and had to wait for 14 years to marry her. During these years, he had worked hard for Rachel's father, Laban and accumulated some wealth although he was deceived by Laban in his marriage and wages. He decided to go back to his father, Isaac in Canaan with his family after working 20 years for Laban as God told him to.

Along the way, Jacob sent gifts to his brother in the land of Seir hoping to find favour with Esau. In his great distress, he prayed to God to save him and his family from the hands of his brother. It was this night that Jacob wrestled with God face to face and the Lord changed Jacob's name to Israel and blessed him.

In our own circumstances, we may be like Jacob, wrestling with God. He can see our struggles and He is calling us to allow Him to create a new change in us and to bless us.

### Read

Genesis 32:13-32

### Discuss

1. What has your life journey been like? Were there times that you have felt cheated or discouraged? Share with the group some experiences you have had.
2. Read Genesis 32:9-12. Describe Jacob's situation and discuss some of the things he has prayed to God for. Are there any difficult situations you are currently facing? What are some of the barriers you feel in bringing them to God in prayer?

*(continued on next page)*

3. Pastor Dale mentioned that we can set aside time to be alone with God, drop our guard, and be transparent about our situation with Him. Share with the group how your prayer journey has been like and if there are any uplifting moments that you have experienced.
4. From Genesis 32:13-21, we read that Jacob had strategised his giving of gifts to Esau. What would you have done if you were Jacob? Have there been any experiences when you created some strategies and they have worked in your favour?
5. Read Genesis 32:22-32. After Jacob settled the gifts to Esau and found a safe place for his family, he was left alone with a man and had wrestled with him till daybreak. Share with the group how Jacob was able to overcome this man and what might be some reasons for his determination. Are there any struggles you are facing and are wrestling with God? Is there someone you can pray for who is also struggling?
6. Pastor Dale shared that Jacob suffered a dislocated hip and had to limp after his face to face encounter with God. For many of us, it may be uncomfortable for us to align our will to the way of Jesus, our King. God can see our struggles and He has promised that His grace is sufficient for us and His power is made perfect in our weakness. Are there any barriers you have from trusting Jesus? Share with the group if there are new changes God may be prompting you to make and to bring to Him in prayer?

### **Respond**

For this week, pray that you can encounter God in your own struggles and that you will draw strength from the Holy Spirit to overcome any wrestling with God. Pray for someone you know, who is also struggling and think of one thing you can do to encourage this person. Commit to doing it.