

LESSON 8 – A WRESTLING MATCH ON PROMISE ROAD

Genesis 25 - 35

THEME: To show that yielding to the Holy Spirit can bring us victory.

Do men like to wrestle? There are two kinds of wrestling matches in this world: the physical match between people we can see, and the spiritual match which we cannot see. Today as we travel, we shall hear of a very unusual wrestling match between a man and God.

After the death of Abraham, God appeared to Isaac and confirmed to him all the great promises which He had made to his father, Abraham. Genesis 26:2-5. God had promised that He would multiply the descendants of Abraham as the stars of heaven. Isaac believed God and waited.

Twins were born to Isaac and Rebekah. Although they were brothers, Esau and Jacob always struggled with each other, even in the womb. Genesis 25:22,23. Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the field, but Jacob was a peaceful man, living in tents. Genesis 25:27. God had told Rebekah that the older son Esau would serve the younger son Jacob. The family knew God keeps His promises, but no one knew how the promised blessing would pass to Jacob.

First of all, Esau sold his right of the first born to Jacob because he was hungry. Genesis 25:29-34.

Secondly, Jacob was helped by Rebekah to obtain Isaac's blessing by taking advantage of his father's blindness. Because Esau had despised and sold the birthright, he now lost the blessing of Isaac as well. Genesis 27:1-33. As a result Jacob had to flee so that Esau would not kill him after Isaac's death. Isaac and Rebekah wanted him to go to Haran, to Rebekah's brother Laban. And to marry there a wife from the daughters of Laban. On his trip God appeared to Jacob in a dream and promised to go with him, to keep him, and to bring him back to the land of Isaac. The God of grace wanted Jacob to trust Him to work out His purposes and to yield everything to Him.

For 20 years Jacob stayed in Haran at the home of Rebekah's brother. During that time there was a lot of striving between Jacob and his uncle Laban. For example he had to serve Laban for 14 years in order to marry Rachel after 7 years and one week. At last God spoke to Jacob and told him to go back to the land of promise. Genesis 31:3. Jacob took his wives, his 11 sons and 1 daughter, his livestock, all his property and fled because he feared that Laban would have sent him away empty-handed.

Jacob sent messengers before him to his brother Esau in the country of Edom. These returned saying that Esau is coming to meet him with 400 men. Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed. He made a plan to cause Esau's heart to soften toward him and his large family with flocks, herds and camels. Jacob divided his group, then sent them all across the stream at night while he remained alone.

Suddenly a man began to wrestle with him until daybreak. When this man saw that he could not prevail, he caused the dislocation of the socket of Jacob's thigh. Then the man said: "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." But Jacob said: "I will not let you go unless you bless me." The man said to him: "Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with God and with men and have prevailed." And the man blessed him there. So Jacob named the place Peniel, for he said: "I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been preserved." Genesis 32:24-30. And so Jacob had a great spiritual victory.



Source: Sweet Publishing - for illustration purposes of Genesis 32:24 only

Today we live in the dispensation represented by GRACE AIRPORT on the chart. We do not see heavenly beings, but there is an unseen being which we, believers in Christ, are to fight: the devil. Therefore our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Ephesians 6:12. And also we must fight the old nature within us. When we trust the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour from going to hell, His Holy Spirit dwells in us (Romans 8:9), but we still have our old sinful nature. The old nature or flesh is always fighting against the Spirit. Galatians 5:16,17. We must yield to the Spirit if we want victory and blessing in our spiritual lives.

Getting saved and aboard SALVATION LINER makes us like soldiers in the greatest spiritual battle of all time. The devil does not want the true believers in Christ to live a spiritual life of victory, therefore we must put on the full armor of God in order to stand against our enemy. Ephesians 6:11. What is this full armor of God? It is the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, shoes showing the preparation of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. Ephesians 6:14-17.

When unbelievers trust Christ as their personal Saviour from going to hell, they become children of God. Are you already a child of God?

MEMORY VERSE: “Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.” Ephesians 6:13.

LESSON 8 – WORK SHEET

Colossians 3:9,10 teaches us that we, believers in Christ, have laid aside the *Old Self* (old nature) with its evil and that we have put on the *New Self* (new nature) who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him. The old nature or the flesh is always trying to gain control of the new nature or the Spirit. We can tell by the deeds of the flesh or by the fruit of the Spirit, which nature is controlling people. Take the words written below and write them under the nature which they indicate. Galatians 5:19-23.

Love, Drunkenness, Enmities, Faithfulness, Strife,

Peace, Gentleness, Jealousy, Envy, Joy, Immorality, Self-control

OLD SELF

NEW SELF

- | | | |
|----|-------|-------|
| 1. | _____ | _____ |
| 2. | _____ | _____ |
| 3. | _____ | _____ |
| 4. | _____ | _____ |
| 5. | _____ | _____ |
| 6. | _____ | _____ |

7. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have _____ the flesh/Old Self with its passions and desires. Galatians 5:24. That is the only way to have victory over the Old Self.

8. Ephesians 6:12 tells us that our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against:

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____

9. If we want to be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil, we must put on the full _____ of God. Ephesians 6:11.

10. Write Ephesians 6:13: _____

