

Genesis Lesson 55



**IT
USUALLY
NEVER
TURNS OUT
AS BAD AS
YOU
THINK.**

**FEAR IS
ANTICIPATING
THE WORST,
NOT THE BEST
THAT CAN
HAPPEN.**

Genesis 32:

24 Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day.

25 Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him,

**Jacob
wanted
to do
life his
way.**

25 Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him.



**JACOB SHOULD
HAVE
SURRENDERED
HIS SITUATION
TO GOD.
HE DIDN'T.**

**The first step
required for
transformation
is to become
fed up with
your current
situation.**

**You can't
change if
you don't
want to
give up
your sin.**

**Surrender
everything
to Jesus.**

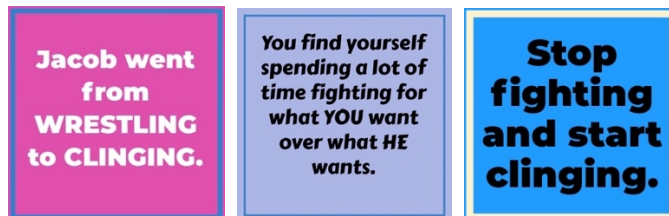
**Transformation
won't come until
your fear of
change is
outweighed by
the pain you're
experiencing.**

Have you ever had your life put out of joint by God? Have you ever had your own little plans dislocated?

Of course you have. You were trying to do something contrary to God's will, and suddenly, out of the blue, God used sickness or a loss of a job or some severe setback or a disappointment –to bring you to the end of yourself and turn to him.

I do not suggest that every sickness, loss, or disappointment comes because we are out of the will of God. God sometimes has other purposes with these things.

But sometimes, sometimes quite often – he uses them to bring us to our senses.



26 And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks."

The inky sky grayed ever so little. It was still too dark to see, but dawn was at least whispering. No words had passed between Jacob and the stranger that long night. Gasps and grunts and Jacob's anguished moan—but no words.

But then the mighty wrestler said the strangest thing: "Let me go, for it is daybreak." What kind of reason is that to break off the fight? Except for the one who lives always out of human sight!

Jacob now knew who he had been wrestling. It was the very God whose blessing he had been scheming to gain all his life. It was the same God whom he had last seen high

and lifted up at the top of the stairs in his dream of the angels' staircase.

God had then been robed in light, and now he was shrouded in darkness. Jacob suddenly knew he was as close to death as the dawn, for who could see God and live?

26...But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!"

Jacob began the night believing his greatest need was to escape from Esau.

He ended the night believing his greatest need was to trust in the blessing of God's promise.

And what changed him from fearing man to trusting God's word was prolonged and painful wrestling with God.

27 So He said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob."

28 And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed."

29 Then Jacob asked, saying, "Tell me Your name, I pray." And He said, "Why is it that you ask about My name?" And He blessed him there.

30 So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."



31 Just as he crossed over Penuel the sun rose on him, and he limped on his hip.

32 Therefore to this day the Israelites do not eat the tendon attached to the socket of the hip, because the socket of Jacob's hip was touched near the tendon.

**With a
new
view of
God.**

**My God is so
big. My God is
so mighty.
There's
nothing my
God cannot
do for YOU!**

As Alexander the Great proceeded down the coast of the eastern Mediterranean Sea conquering city after city on the campaign that would eventually take him to the Indus River – where he would weep, having “no more worlds to conquer” – he paused for seven months in Tyre. (Lebanon)

Tyre was a city which Alexander could not afford to leave behind unconquered. So he besieged it and eventually destroyed it thoroughly. During this campaign he sent to Jerusalem for assistance in arms and supplies. But when Jaddus, the high priest in Jerusalem received Alexander's command, he replied that he could not assist him, having already sworn an oath of allegiance to Alexander's opponent, King Darius of Persia.

Alexander the great was furious, and everyone expected him to attack and destroy Jerusalem when the campaign along the coast was wrapped up. The High Priest Jaddus was terrified. He knew he could not resist Alexander the Great - this brilliant young military strategist. Jaddus thought that Jerusalem would be destroyed.

One night God spoke to Jaddus in a dream and told him not to fear Alexander but rather to go out to meet him, accompanied by the people of the city. All were to be dressed in white, the priests were to be decked out in their full ceremonial robes.

When Alexander the Great approached Jerusalem, Jaddus opened the gates to welcome the Greek warrior. Everyone was dressed just like he was instructed in his dream. All the Greeks expected swift revenge and reprisals. But when Alexander saw the high priest, he bowed down before him, instead of cruelly slaughtering the Jewish people.

Parmenion, the man who was Alexanders next in command, asked why he, the worlds' conqueror, should bow to a Jewish priest.

Alexander explained that before he had begun his campaign, when he was still in Macedonia, a man, dressed as the high priest, had appeared to him in a dream to prophesy that he would eventually conquer Asia.

He had received this as a blessing from the true God, and now, seeing the true God's priest, he worshiped God by bowing to his earthly representative.

HE IS "A" THING NOT
"THE" THING.

HE IS "SORT OF
POWERFUL"

HE IS "SORT OF
PRESENT"

HE IS "SORT OF
HELPING ME"

God steps out
of heaven -
comes to this
earth and
literally
wrestles with
Jacob.

30 So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."

Christophanies.

John 1:

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:14

14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Colossians 1:16–17

16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.

17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

Answers in Genesis:

Question:

I was recently both shocked and confused when reading Genesis 18 because this chapter seems to strongly suggest

that God appeared in human form to Abraham and I know it later occurs when God wrestles with Jacob.

Answer: You aren't alone in thinking it strange that the Lord appeared in human form to Abraham and Jacob as well as many other people in the Old Testament. Let's look at the two passages you mentioned.

Abraham: Genesis 18:1-3

Jacob: *Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day.*

Many theologians refer to the appearances of God in these passages, and others like them, as "theophanies" (Greek: *theos* = "God" + *phaino* = "appear") or "Christophanies."

So these words mean "appearances of God" and "appearances of Christ," respectively.

The Old Testament also mentions "the Angel of the Lord" on several occasions.

Christians generally agree that the above passages and many others that mention "the Angel of the Lord" are appearances of the pre-incarnate Christ (Christ before He came in the flesh).

Let's take a look at some of the characteristics of this "Angel" as given in the various passages.

- The "Angel" is referred to with masculine pronouns (Genesis 16:13; Judges 6:21).
- He is identified as God (Judges 6:11, 14; Zechariah 12:8).
- He performed miracles (Judges 6:21; 13:20).

- Gideon and Manoah thought they would die because they saw the "Angel" face to face (Judges 6:22; 13:22).
- The "Angel" accurately foretold future events (Judges 13:3).
- His name is "wonderful" (Judges 13:18; cf., Isaiah 9:6).
- He destroyed 185,000 soldiers of the Assyrian army in one night (2 Kings 19:35).⁴

While angels have occasionally performed some of these actions, such as miracles and prophecy, there are clear examples when "the Angel of the Lord" cannot be viewed as a normal angel.

He is occasionally identified as God, accepted worship, and at least two people who saw Him thought they would die for seeing Him face to face. These same attributes and activities are clearly attributed to God elsewhere in Scripture.

Also, the "Commander of the army of the Lord" (Joshua 5:14) is likely the same individual as "the Angel of the Lord." Joshua saw this "Commander" holding a sword, and He accepted Joshua's worship, something the holy angels refuse to do (Revelation 19:10, 22:8-9).

These truths have led many students of Scripture to conclude that "the Angel of the Lord" in the Old Testament is none other than Christ Himself.

He is called God, given attributes of God, seen by people, worshiped, and distinguished from the Father and Spirit. They also show the intimacy of God with His creation, unlike the distant god of deism that some people incorrectly associate with the God of the Bible.

Finally, “the Angel of the Lord” does not make any appearances after the birth of Christ in the New Testament, but we do see the risen Jesus who appeared to Saul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1–6; 22:6–10; 26:14–19; 1 Corinthians 9:1; 15:8).

Galatians 1:6–10

6 I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel;
7 which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.
8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!
9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!

