

STRUGGLE: WHEN LIFE MAKES NO SENSE

Happily Ever After? Part 3

Shock – Sorrow – Struggle – Surrender – Sanctification – Service

“Because you (sinned)... all your life you will struggle.”

Genesis 3:17 (NLT)

LIFE IS A STRUGGLE

Jacob’s Example:

WE STRUGGLE WITH OTHER PEOPLE.

Jacob struggled:

with his brother	Gen 25:22, Hosea 12:3
with two wives	Gen. 30:1-24
with his in-laws	Gen. 31:1-2
with his 12 sons	Gen. 37-50

WE STRUGGLE WITH OURSELVES.

“I don't understand myself at all, for I really want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do the very thing I hate... No matter which way I turn, I can't make myself do right. I want to, but I can't...But there is a law at work within me that is at war with my mind.”

Romans 7:15-23 (NLT)

OUR REAL STRUGGLE IS WITH GOD.

“As a man Jacob struggled with God.” Hosea 12:3b

JACOB’S WRESTLING MATCH

“Jacob sent his family across the Jabbok River but he stayed behind, alone. That night, a Man came and wrestled with him until daybreak. When the Man saw that he wasn’t winning the struggle, he hit Jacob on the hip, and it was thrown out of joint. The Man said, ‘Let me go; daylight is coming.’ Jacob said, ‘I won’t let go until you bless me.’ The Man asked ‘What is your name?’ ‘Jacob,’

he replied. The Man said, ‘Your name will no longer be Jacob. You have struggled with God and with men, and you have won; so your name will be Israel...’

Jacob = “deceiver/manipulator”

Israel = “struggled with God /Prince with God”

...Then God blessed him there. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, ‘It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared.’”

Genesis 32:23-30

HOW TO WRESTLE WITH GOD AND GET BLESSED:

1. TELL GOD WHAT YOU THINK IS UNFAIR OR PAINFUL.

“I call to the Lord for help; I plead with Him. I bring all my complaints to Him; I tell Him my troubles. When I’m ready to give up, He knows what I should do.” Psalm 142:1-3 (TEV)

2. APPEAL TO GOD’S NATURE.

3. REMIND GOD OF WHAT HE SAID.

“Then Jacob prayed, ‘O God of my grandfather Abraham and my father, Isaac— You told me to return to my land and to my relatives, and You promised to treat me kindly. I am not worthy of all the faithfulness and unfailing love... but O Lord, please rescue me from my brother, Esau. I am afraid that he is coming to kill me... But you promised to treat me kindly and to multiply my descendants...’” Genesis 32:9-12 (NLT)

4. EXPRESS YOUR TOTAL TRUST IN GOD.

“Though He slay me, yet I will trust in Him.” Job 13:15

“Even though the fig trees have no blossoms, and there are no grapes on the vine; and even though the olive crop fails, and the fields lie empty and barren; and even though the flocks die

*in the fields, and the cattle barns are empty, yet I will still
rejoice in the Lord! I will be joyful in the God of my salvation.
The Sovereign Lord is my strength!”*

Habakkuk 3:17-19 (NLT)