

## --- Pivotal Encounters---

### **Torah Portion:**

Gen 32:3-36:43

Hos: 11:7-12:12

Oba: 1:1-21

Matt: 2:13-23

Every human being goes through life facing **Pivotal Encounters**. In every single encounter, the recipient never knows the outcome until after the fact, and in the majority of times, never knows the moment when one of this **Pivotal Encounters** will take place. In the case of Jacob it was no different.

However, some of the encounters Jacob endured could, and more poignantly, should have been averted. As we navigate this week's **Torah Portion**, we will identify personality traits unbecoming of a faith filled believer. Yahweh allowed each and everyone of these **Pivotal Encounters**, not only so that Jacob could be purged of these personality traits, but for each and everyone of His children. That includes each and everyone of us here at **Kingdom Embassy Ministries!**

As we navigate through chapter 32 of Genesis, and beyond, we will be able to identify moments in Jacob's life journey where his character is stretched through real life circumstances, to be candid and honest, they were **ALL** self inflicted!

### **Genesis 32:1-2 "This is God's Camp"--Caught up in the natural / Overlook the super-natural**

Jacob went on his way, and God's angels met him. When he saw them, Jacob said, "this is God's camp". So he called that place Mahanaim. HCSB

**Psa 34:7** "The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear Him and rescues them" We as believers, are often too distracted to recognize the presence of angels encamping around us. God has prepared angelic beings to protect His children. It appears in this scenario that Jacob is not impressed by this angelic beings. It is almost as if he has already become immune to their endeavors. HCSB

**Heb 13:2** Do not forget hospitality, for by this some unknowingly took in angels as guests. LITV

**Heb 1:14** Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve those who are going to inherit salvation? HCSB

### **Genesis 32: 4-8 "You're to say to my lord Esau"-- Undeserved reverence is a form of cunningness**

He commanded them, "You are to say to my lord Esau, "This is what your servant Jacob says. I have been staying with Laban and have been delayed until now. I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, male and female slaves. I have sent this message to inform my lord, in order to seek your favor." When the messengers returned to Jacob, they said, "We went to your brother Esau, he is coming to meet you--and he has 400 men with him. Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; he divided the people with him into two camps, along with the flocks, cattle, and camels. He thought, "if Esau comes to one camp and attacks it, the remaining one can escape." HCSB

**Cunningness-- noun. skill employed in a shrewd or sly manner, as in deceiving; craftiness; guile. adeptness in performance.**

### **Genesis 32: 9-12 " I am afraid of him"--Dire situations will force our honesty with Yahweh--**

Then Jacob said, "God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the Lord who said to me, "Go back to your land and to your family, and I will cause you to prosper, I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness You have shown your servant. Indeed, I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now have become two camps. Please rescue me from the hand of my brother Esau, for I am afraid of him; otherwise he may come and attack me, the mothers and the children.

You have said I will cause you to prosper , and I will make your offspring like the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted. HCSB

**“The sooner I learn to forget myself in the desire that He may be glorified, the richer will be the blessing that prayer will bring to myself. No one ever loses by what he sacrifices to the Father.”**

**Andrew Murray**

**Genesis 32: 24-25 " A Man wrestled with Jacob"-- God started the match and ended the match!--**

Jacob was left alone, and a Man wrestled with him until daybreak. When the Man saw that He could not defeat him, He struck Jacob's hip socket. HCSB

The Lord had previously taken human form to interact with Abraham. Remarkably the all powerful Lord did not see fit to overcome Jacob, but allowed him cling tenaciously all night. The concept of a Christian wrestling with God, during particularly difficult or fearful times originates in this passage.

In everyone's life were an encounter with God has taken place, there will be visible evidence. In our case, the visible evidence can be manifested in a plethora of ways.

Our views of life will become counter intuitive to what our culture says they should be, our behavior in light of stressful circumstances should be one of peace and self control, we should be willing to develop an attitude of forgiveness towards those who have wronged us. This very short list is just the tip of the iceberg! The more important fact is that our wrestling encounter should be as clearly visible as the limp Jacob developed after this **"Pivotal Encounter"**.

**Genesis 32: 26-29 "I will not let You go unless You bless me"-- The blessing is in the changing of our name--**

But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me". "What is your name?" the Man asked. "Jacob!" he replied. "Your name will no longer be Jacob". He said "it will be Israel because you have struggled with God and men and have prevailed" HCSB

It should go without saying, God allowed Himself to be kept in this "wrestling match" with Jacob. Possibly to allow Jacob to believe that he could have something to do or say about receiving a blessing. The reality is that Jacob did not stand a chance. God's love for Jacob and the fact that He (God) had already determined from eternity past that Jacob would be the recipient of this blessing is the reason why. This display of tenacity in desire to keep God from leaving prior to the blessing is most definitely depicted in God's word for the purpose of reminding His children that they should always strive to receive what God has already promised them in His Word. Not to give up in the face of a struggle. Instead, dig in deeper, hang on tighter and keep fighting.

**Matthew 7:7-8** Keep asking, and it will be given to you. Keep searching and you will find. Keep knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who searches finds, and to the one who knocks the door will be opened. HCSB

**Genesis 33: 3-4 "Kissed him. Then they wept"--Forgiveness spells freedom--**

He himself went on ahead and bowed to the ground seven times until he approached his brother. But Esau ran to meet him, hugged him, threw his arms around him, and kissed him. Then they wept. HCSB

In the New Testament there is a very similar story of two other family members. However different the personages might have been. In the book of **Luke 15:20** we read "But while the son was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion. He ran threw his arms around his neck, and kissed him" HCSB

Forgiveness hits at the very core of everything Christianity. Seemingly though, we encounter time and time again brothers and sisters in the Lord who walk about with a heart of unforgiveness. I'm not hereby saying that

forgiveness is easily attainable, I am saying though, that it is not optional, God Himself tells us it is not optional! Unforgiveness festers into bitterness overtime.

**Hebrews 12:14-15** Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled. ESV

**In every Pivotal Encounter we face, it is for each and everyone of us to be willing to simmer on the circumstances in order to recognize the character trait that Yahweh is either desiring we change or develop. As we just looked at Jacob's Pivotal Encounters and how his character responded to each situation.**

**What does it say about our character when we are faced with similar situations--for instance**

- **What is the depth of our prayer life, and what determines it?**
- **Is it only deep and productive when we find ourselves with our backs against the wall?**
- **Do we find ourselves using cunning tactics in order to get what we want from others?**
- **Do we, maybe not knowingly, try and bribe others in order to gain acceptance or to seek forgiveness?**
- **How does God's timetable affect our willingness to walk steadfast in faith?**
- **Are you holding on to grudges? Living life with bitterness and unforgiveness?**

We at **Kingdom Embassy Ministries** strive to help believers become mature disciples. One of the only ways to accomplish this task is by taking a hard look at ourselves in the light of what Yahweh desires from His ambassadors. We hope this short study in the life of Jacob causes you to look at some of those very same character weaknesses he displayed, in order to correct yours.

**Blessings,**

Manny Fernandez