

**GOD'S LIGHT IN LIFE'S DARK NIGHT**  
**#1 – JACOB: BROKEN IN THE NIGHT, BLESSED IN THE LIGHT**

*Genesis 32:22-32*

*Intro: All of us face dark nights in life, where we feel defeated, hopeless, and alone. God wants to bring His Light into our dark nights. For Jacob, the dark nights were of his own making because he was living life his own way.*

**I. Often We Live Life Our Own Way, Under Our Own Power**

- Jacob was a manipulator, \_\_\_\_\_, and conniver – living his life his own way. He tricked his brother, Esau, out of his birthright and blessing (Genesis 27). Later he cheated his father-in-law, Laban, and was cheated in return. He lived by his own ways, abilities, and rules to make it in the world. The name Jacob means trickster.
- Today, many of us live “Jacob” lives to \_\_\_\_\_ and be happy. We live lives in our own power and according to our own rules. This is called the “self-life”.
- God will allow us to experience the consequences of this self-life without His \_\_\_\_\_ (favor, protection and provision). For Jacob, it meant running away from Esau’s anger and being cheated by his father-in-law, Laban. (Genesis 29:16-29)

*So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak.*

*Genesis 32:24*

**II. God Will Confront Our Self-Life Through Spiritual Struggle**

- The consequences of our self-life without God’s blessing will lead to \_\_\_\_\_. In these dark times of personal crisis, we feel trapped, hopeless and alone in our problems. For Jacob, this dark time was the “home coming” and anticipation of meeting Esau again.
- In these dark times, God will come suddenly, and without warning, \_\_\_\_\_ us in spiritual struggle. For Jacob, it was wrestling with a “man” who represented God (probably Christ Himself in a pre-incarnate appearance – See Genesis 32:30).
- In this struggle, you will be confronted with the real problem in your life – \_\_\_\_\_. God wants to get the “Jacob” – the self-life – out of us. Jacob’s problem was Jacob, not Esau.



*Is every spiritual struggle a struggle with God because of our self-life? NO! Some struggles are satanic attacks to defeat you (Eph. 6:12). God will guide you on which it is.*

*When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob’s hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man.*

*Genesis 32:25*

**III. The Struggle Can Bring Decision and Brokenness**

- In this \_\_\_\_\_, which can go on over a period of time, it is decision time. Do we want to hold on to God more than holding on to our own lives? For Jacob, the man from God could not “overpower” Jacob’s new desire to hold on to God and be blessed, rather than control his own life.
- In this decision time, God will often “break us” of our \_\_\_\_\_ and doing things our own way. Our brokenness leads to dependence on God. We may have to experience brokenness several times in our life as our “Jacob” tries to sneak back. For Jacob, God dislocated his hip to help “break” him and a limp to give a lasting reminder of his struggle and

decision for God. It was only after being broken that Jacob could be \_\_\_\_\_ by God.

- In our brokenness, our life may \_\_\_\_\_ in such areas as family, career, finances, health, and other such personal failure. We may always walk with a limp afterwards.
- During decision time, some will choose to \_\_\_\_\_ of God, and continue in the self-life and experience life's consequences. Which will you choose?

*The man asked him, "What is your name?" "Jacob," he answered. Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with men and have overcome." Jacob said, "Please tell me your name." But he replied, "Why do you ask my name?" Then he blessed him there.* Genesis 32:27-29

#### **IV. When We Decide for God, He Gives Us Blessing and a New Life Purpose**

- In our confrontation with God, we need to \_\_\_\_\_ who we are, where we are, and our Jacob past in life. For Jacob, his name meant admitting his independent, manipulative, conniving self-life.
- Today, your "Jacob" name may be materialism, judgmental-ism, self-centeredness, manipulator, \_\_\_\_\_, addictions, unforgive-ness, ego-centricism – anything that describes your self-life.
- A part of God's blessing is that He gives us a new \_\_\_\_\_ and purpose in Him for our life. For Jacob, it was Israel – father of a great nation for God. For us, our new identity and purpose in Christ will be unique for each of us – and a blessing.

#### ***Do you need to be broken to be blessed?***

**Answers:** I. Cheat; succeed; blessing. II. Dark times; confront; you. III. Struggle; pride; blessed; fall apart; let go. IV. Admit; controller; identity.

#### ***A Test of Brokenness:***

What does it mean to be broken before the Lord? Here is a checklist of questions you can ask yourself as you search your heart and seek God's blessing:

- Am I willing to let go of my dreams and ambitions if such is the will of God for me?
- Am I coveting what others have instead of waiting on God's provision for my life?
- Am I always talking about my rights; that is, rights I have not surrendered to the Lord and given up?
- Am I thinking of others first, out of love?
- Am I praying each day, "God, whatever it takes, I am willing to submit to Your leadership"?
- Am I taking risks in obedience to Christ instead of giving in to fear and denial and pride?