

# Stop Wrestling God for Control!

Genesis 32:22-31

The story of Jacob wrestling with God in Genesis 32 is emblematic of his entire life. While God had great plans for Jacob, he refused to wait for God’s timing. He kept taking matters into his own hands and tried to force their completion. He wrestled with his brother, his father, and his father-in-law and prevailed through trickery. Now he meets someone he cannot overpower. It is only when he was crippled that he yielded control and was ready to receive God’s blessing. Sometimes, God has to “cripple” self-sufficient believers in order to bless them.

<b>Jacob’s Wrestling Match</b>		
	<b>High points</b>	<b>Low points</b>
<b>Round 1</b> <b>Genesis 25-27</b>	<b>Promise of leadership (25:23-28)</b> Before birth, God chose Jacob to lead	<b>Striving for birthright (25:29-34) and blessing (27)</b> Jacob lived up to his name and practiced deceit
<b>Round 2</b> <b>Genesis 28-31</b>	<b>Promise of return to the land (28:10-22)</b> God meets Jacob at Bethel and promises to be with him on his journey and bring him back to the promised land	<b>Striving for prosperity (29-31)</b> As Jacob settles into Uncle Laban’s home, the schemer finds himself temporarily out-schemed
<b>Round 3</b> <b>Genesis 31-32</b>	<b>God’s direction (31:10-13) and presence (32:1-2)</b> God instructs Jacob to return home to the promised land and meets him on the journey	<b>Striving for reconciliation (32:3-21)</b> Fearing for his life, Jacob humbly asks God for deliverance, while at the same time putting a plan into motion
<b>Surrender</b> <b>Genesis 32-34</b>	<b>“Please bless me” (32:22-32)</b> Jacob refuses to surrender until God wounds him Jacob begs God to bless him	<b>Partial obedience leads to conflict (34)</b> God instructed Jacob to go home, but he only goes partway, which leads to trouble and heartache
<b>Victory</b> <b>Genesis 35</b>	<b>Complete dedication (35:1-15)</b> Jacob finally returns to Bethel and gets rid of all his idols	

## Life Lessons:

- When we refuse God’s way or God’s timing, we refuse God’s best
- Sometimes God has to wound us in order to bless us
- God wants to be our daily resource, not our occasional recourse
- Stop wrestling with God and start trusting him!