Blestling Match

Genesis 32:1-32

-**Icebreaker**: Anybody got a good fight story? (a bunch of students from public school told stories)

-**Recap the story of the Bible thus far**: Creation—Adam and Eve—sin—God ready to wipe out everything—Noah (found grace in the eyes of the Lord; God rebuilt with his family)—Abram (God’s promise to him; renamed Abraham)—Isaac (the child of promise)—Esau and Jacob—Jacob on the run

**-Read vss.1-2.** Mahanaim means “double camp.” Named because it was Jacob’s camp and also God’s camp (angels were there—vs.1)

**-Read vss.3-4.** Laban—his father-in-law; a crook. Jacob worked for him 20 years (32:41), fourteen years just to marry the girl of his dreams (Rebecca)! The one that Laban promised he could marry after 7 years of labor.

**-Read vss.5-6.** Again, the last time they saw each other things didn’t go so well. Esau planned to kill Jacob (so that’s never good). Jacob got out of there. And now here is Esau and by the way, he’s got 400 men with him.

**-Read vss.7-8.** Smart thinking I guess!

**-Read vs.9.** Jacob doesn’t have a squeaky-clean reputation. There has been some deception on his part. He has lived up to his nickname: heel-grabber (Genesis 25:26). He deceived his father, Isaac, to receive the blessing; tricked Laban as well.

-But here’s a bright spot in Jacob’s story: even though he had messed up and he wasn’t a man with a squeaky-clean reputation, he was still God’s man. He is bowing his knee in prayer, inquiring of the Lord.

**-Read vs.10. (Life Lesson)** What a beautiful verse! Have you ever felt the way that Jacob describes? Can you identify with him?

**-Read vss.11-21.** What is Jacob doing? Treading lightly. Sending a peace offering. By separating into droves, “If my brother is ticked off and takes vengeance, at least some of what I have can be spared.”

-Who’s left at the end of vs.21?

**-Read vss.22-24a.** Now where is Jacob? All by himself. All alone. Talk about a sleepless night! Here’s Jacob focused on his brother, and then this happens.

**-Read vss.24b-32.** Recap what happens.

-Ok, question time. What in the world do you make of this story? Why is this in here? What’s the takeway? What is the point? (Take 2 minutes and talk it through with the person next to you).

-Tim Martin: This story kind of represents Jacob’s life, but really it would go on to represent Israel’s relationship with God. Jacob, nor Israel were always pure in heart, yet through and through God is faithful.

**(Life Lesson)** And can’t we all relate to that? None of us inside of this room are always pure in heart, yet through and through God is faithful.

-Finally, the story ends in humility. Israel walks with a limp.

“His limp would be a constant reminder that God would be in control of his life.” —Warren Wiersby, With the Word, p.38)