

# Decoding the Torah Season 1: Paul, Jacob, and YOU-Wrestling With God



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## Scripture

- **Genesis 32:9-13, 24-32**

<sup>9</sup>Jacob said, “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O LORD, who said to me, ‘Return to your country and to your relatives, and I will prosper you, I am unworthy of all the lovingkindness and of all the faithfulness which You have shown to Your servant for with my staff only I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two companies. Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, that he will come and attack me and the mothers with the children. So, he spent the night there. Then he selected from what he had with him a present for his brother Esau.

<sup>24</sup>Then Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. When He saw that He had not prevailed against him, He touched the socket of his thigh; so the socket of Jacob’s thigh was dislocated while He wrestled with him. Then He said, “Let me go, for the dawn is breaking.” But he said, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.” So He said to him, “What is your name?” And he said Jacob, “Jacob.” He said, “Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with God and with men and have prevailed.” Then Jacob asked Him and said, “Please tell me your name.” But He said, “Why is it that you ask my name?” And He blessed him there. So Jacob named the place Peniel, for he said, “I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been preserved.” Now the sun rose upon him just as he crossed over Penuel, and he was limping on his thigh.

<sup>32</sup>*Therefore, to this day the sons of Israel do not eat the sinew of the hip, which is on the socket of the thigh, because **he** touched the socket of Jacob’s thigh in the sinew of the hip.*

- **Genesis 31:13**

“I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar, where you made a vow to Me; now arise, leave this land, and return to the land of your birth.”

- **2 Corinthians 12:9-10**

Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ’s sake;; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

## Other Scriptures

- Genesis 25:19-34; 28:10-22
- Ephesians 2:8-9
- Acts 9:3-6
- 2 Corinthians 12:7-

## Main Points

- 613 Laws from Torah: **The prohibition against eating the thigh muscle of any animal.**
- The Hebrew word Bethel means House of El or House of God in English.
- God cannot bless us until He first breaks us of all self-reliance and pride.
- Bereshit Rabbah (Jewish Commentary on the Book of Genesis)
  - The thigh is the seat of pride, the Holy One, blessed be He, said to Jacob, “You rely on your thigh; I will strike it.”
- Our challenges become a metaphoric gateway for spiritual transformation.
- God orchestrates the trials and challenges we face to transform them into a challenge of blessing.

## Questions

1. In your words, what law is Rabbi teaching about?
2. What special dream revelation had God allowed Jacob to have?
3. What spiritual significance does the hip have? Why did God mark Jacob with a hip dislocation and limp?
4. What is the lesson we can apply from this teaching for our own walk with God?
5. How are Jacob and Paul and you similar at times in your own wrestling with God? How do you expect this lesson to impact your future walk with God?