

**Fresh Fire Ministries**  
**The Expository Teaching Ministry of Jay Duane Driver**

**“Don’t Let Go!”**

*Then Jacob was left alone: and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him. And He said, "Let Me go for the day breaks." But he said, "I will not let you go unless You bless me!" Genesis 32:24-26 (King James Version)*

The initial observation of our devotional text today reveals two very striking aspects in this particular episode of Jacob's life. First of all, very little has changed concerning his character. He is still Jacob the supplanter, the schemer, the one who tricked his own brother out of his birthright. (See Genesis 27:36) The good news is that God will reveal himself to Jacob, just the way he is. He is no respecter of persons. Not only is that good news for Jacob, but it is indeed good news for us all. Secondly, and perhaps more revealing than his character is that Jacob is all alone. There comes a time in all of our lives when we must come face to face with God. We must come, all alone and all on our own; no prayer partners, church fellowship, or small group bible studies. Just as with Jacob, there comes a time when we must meet God face to face on His terms. Jesus grants us the access and the privilege to stand before God.

This is the second most significant time in Jacob's life. He is on his way to meet with his brother Esau who had been victimized by Jacob's craftiness. As he journeys toward reconciliation with his brother he encounters God in a way quite unlike his encounter at Bethel. At Bethel he became a "believing" man, now, he would become a "broken" man. It would be a result of wrestling with a man who has been described as an angel in Hosea 12:4, but an even wider view is that Jacob wrestled with God. This encounter is characterized in biblical terms as a "theophany" (*the-oph-any*). It is defined as "a manifestation or appearance of God in human form". It was the desire of God to strip Jacob of "self" and invite him to total "surrender" that in spite of his past failings, God would still be willing to bless him.

Our personal one on one encounters with God don't come without toil and travail. Jacob is willing to contend with God at a time of his most desperate need. He knows that God has willed to bless him, therefore he will settle for nothing less than his full inheritance. Jacob holds on as if it would cost him his very life. If he let's go he will delay the blessing, deny the promise, and greatly impact his destiny that was birthed in the life of his grandfather Abraham. Jacob holds on and God causes him to confess who he is as a trickster and supplanter (v. 27) God then honors Jacob's confession and commitment to hold on by changing his name to Israel. This name in the original text means "God prevails".

While Jacob may have prevailed, God ultimately prevailed. When we have a real encounter with God, we will never ever be the same. Perhaps you can recall the gospel song, "I know I've been changed. I know I've been changed. I know I've been changed the angels in heaven done signed my name." Has He changed your name? If not, don't let go until He blesses you.