

*Daily devotions for
2019*



Day 13
Jacob, part 3

Unfounded fear and a new name

Genesis 32 and 33 v1-11

*“Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel,
because you have struggled with God and with men and have overcome.”
Genesis 32 v28*

It's time to face the music. Twenty years have passed and the Trickster is returning home to face Esau with all that he has accumulated. After all the long years of experiencing Gods faithfulness, blessing and protection, does he approach Esau with confidence of reconciliation? No, he approaches with 'great fear'. He still hasn't got it! Again he prepares to deceive to protect as he divides his family in two and sends gifts ahead of him in an attempt to pacify Esau's expected wrath.

However, he has learned something and this time calls on his God for help. And God meets him - this time as a man, a wrestling man, a man challenging and testing Jacob's strength, a man pushing Jacob to his limits.

This time Jacob does not retreat in fear and is not afraid to face the conflict. Before he lets the man go, he demands a blessing. He shows strength in place of weakness, determination in place of deception, expectation in place of fear. And in return God changes his name to Israel 'the one who struggles with God' - now that's a name! And with his new name Jacob leads his family to meet Esau, prepared for more struggle but is greeted with a hairy hug and twin tears!

Prayer

God longs to give us a new identity and show who we are in him. Perhaps today you could take some time to ask God for a 'new name' and choose to live from this understanding of how God sees you.