

What is Your Name?

Genesis 32:1-33:4

Jacob's name meant "trickster," "deceiver"

Many of you are familiar with the story of how he tricked his brother and his father

Then he spent 20 years deceiving and being deceived by his uncle Laban

So we see at the outset that **Jacob's character was reflected by his name**—"deceiver"

What?

There's hope at the end of your rope

From desperation to transformation—

Jacob comes to the border of the Promised land, and hears that Esau is coming to meet him with 400 men

In fear Jacob divides his camp in two for safety, prays a shallow prayer of desperation, sends a large gift to Esau, in three installments

Only when we **come to the end of our rope** can God step in and do His work

Jacob sends his family and everything he owns on ahead

God chooses this moment, when he is vulnerable, to wrestle him

God was limiting himself, **allowing Jacob to totally come to the end of himself**

The Big Question—What is your name?

The "man" finally touched Jacob's hip and **put it out of joint**

Jacob's legs go out from under him, and he **clings to God**

God's question, "What is your name," is **an invitation to confess his sinfulness**

God renames him Israel, "God rules," because he had contended with God and had **overcome through weakness**

Hosea 12:3-4, ESV—In the womb he took his brother by the heel, and in his manhood he strove with God. He strove with the angel and prevailed; he wept and sought his favor

Connection with Jesus—

Matthew 16:18, ESV—And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it

Jesus renamed him from "Wishy-washy" to "Rock"

So What?

Jacob's pattern was twofold—controlling his life in order to bless himself, and running away from the resulting broken relationships

God **will not allow us to enter into full blessing** until we give up our self-reliance

If we persist, we can expect Him to wrestle us

What does God want? **Humility and repentance**

The final say—the Preacher of Hebrews

Hebrews 12:11, ESV—For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it

Jacob sets a spiritual marker by naming the place "Peniel"

Jacob crosses the Jabbok a different person

The brothers have a tearful and joyful reunion

Now What?

Ask yourself, "What was my old name?"

Liar, manipulator, thief, hater

Ask yourself, "What is my new name?"