

Wrestling Until Dawn

WHAT WE FOUND

- The deceiver is deceived with his own props: darkness, a veil, a switched sibling: and Laban's excuse quotes Jacob's crime to his face: not the younger before the first-born. Genesis disciplines by harvest, not thunderbolt, and Bethel's "I am with you" holds through all twenty years of it.
- God sides with the unloved: He sees Leah. Her first three sons are installments toward a love that never comes; at the fourth she stops auditioning: "This time I will praise the LORD": and names him Judah, "praise." Remember that name.
- At the Jabbok, a mysterious figure, one Jacob will name as God Himself (Gen 32:30), initiates a match the tradition reads as divinely sustained on purpose, and the demanded name is the surgery: the man who once said "I am Esau" for a blessing must now say "Jacob" truly: confession before the new name, Israel. The Church reads this night as the very symbol of prayer: a battle of faith won by not letting go (CCC 2573).
- The blessing leaves a limp: grace marks how you walk. Hosea adds the hidden detail: "he wept and sought his favor": prevailing prayer looks like tears and a grip.
- Esau runs, embraces, kisses, weeps: the same grammar the prodigal's father will use (Luke 15:20). "To see your face is like seeing the face of God": Peniel first, then the brother: reconciliation runs vertical, then horizontal.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

VOICE OF THE CHURCH

St. Ambrose of Milan · *On Jacob and the Happy Life*

Haran and the Jabbok together school the soul: God detaching a man from trickery and fear until his happiness rests on God alone. The study's image: the wrestling is the training's summit, and what passes is the grip that will not let go.

VOICE OF THE CHURCH

St. Teresa of Ávila · *The Way of Perfection*

The one non-negotiable in prayer is a resolute determination never to abandon it, whatever the dryness, however long the night. Heaven is taken by the ones who will not let go.

VOICE OF THE CHURCH

The Church's Tradition of Prayer · CCC 2573, 2725

From the Jabbok the Church draws her enduring symbol: prayer is a battle of faith, and its victory is perseverance, the grip that will not let go.

LIVE IT THIS WEEK

- Take your Jabbok to a holy hour or thirty shut-door minutes: no strategies allowed: and stay until something is confessed. If possible, let the true name be said in confession this week.
- Pray daily for your Esau: the face you dread: asking to see God's face in it.
- Use Leah's key change once this week: mid-performance for unearnable approval, stop and say: "This time I will praise the LORD."
- Read Genesis 37–41: count the garments that carry a lie or a change of fortune, and watch what Judah says at the pit.

MEMORY VERSE

"I will not let you go, unless you bless me." **(Genesis 32:26)**

BEFORE NEXT SESSION

Read Genesis 37–41 before next session.

Catechism references: CCC 2559, 2573, 2725, 2843.