

Bible reading Genesis 28:10-19a

Hymn 467- Singing-The Faith- *I need thee every hour*

Genesis 32:22-30

Jacob Wrestles With God

²² That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two female servants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. ²³ After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. ²⁴ So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. ²⁵ When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. ²⁶ Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak." "But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."²⁷ The man asked him, "What is your name?" "Jacob," he answered.²⁸ Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel,^[a] because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome."²⁹ Jacob said, "Please tell me your name." But he replied, "Why do you ask my name?" Then he blessed him there.³⁰ So Jacob called the place Peniel,^[a] saying, "It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared."³¹ The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel,^[a] and he was limping because of his hip.

New International Version (NIV)

Reflection

I have heard the word wrestle so many times and each time I hear it, I'm reminded of the time I was growing up in Zimbabwe. I used to go to my friend's house Saturday evening to watch professional wrestling because there was no TV in our household. The house would be full of children from the neighbourhood watching wrestling and cheering their contestants. In those days there were wrestlers such as Hulk Hogan, The Rock, Ric Flair, Randy Savage and many others. I remember punching a boy in the back because subconsciously I was wrestling in Hulk Hogan's corner my favourite and was under pressure from Randy Savage. It was a memorable night because Hulk Hogan won the match. The picture comes to my mind each time I read this text about Jacob wrestling with God. I imagined what God looked like and how Jacob had the courage to wrestle God. The dictionary definition of wrestling says grappling with an opponent and trying to throw or hold them down on the ground. Its physical and painful. Was God Jacob's opponent? No! Life situation was Jacob's opponent. Why was Jacob wrestling with God and trying to pin God down. Jacob was grappling with a life situation, grappling with his conscience of deceiving his brother Esau. The time had come for Jacob to come face to face with Esau. Jacob knew Esau was not so happy with what Jacob did. Jacob did not know how he was going to handle the situation, he was

therefore seeking God's divine intervention. Haven't we wept and cried to God when we did not have an answer to situations. Haven't we cried or aren't we still crying to God questioning God about this deadly virus which has shaken the whole world. Our lives have been turned around and inside out. Our lives are longer the same as we come face to face with reality. We have to do risk assessments and deep clean our churches before and after worship. No singing. Yeah! No singing. Jacob knew life was never going to be the same when he came face to face with Esau. There are times we wrestle with God and we are allowed to pray and cry to God and say "father it hurts". Jacob was agonising within himself praying to God because he did not know any other way out. The way Jacob prayed is how we see Jesus praying in the garden in Matthew 26:37-43. Jesus said my soul is exceedingly sorrowful. The hour of suffering had come for Christ. He is therefore crying and praying to vs 39 says Jesus went a little further fell on his face prayed and said if its possible let this cup pass from me. Jesus's soul was agonising and he showed us how it's done. Jacob was a form of Christ therefore what he did was a replica of Christ's pain in the garden. Before today's text Jacob prayed to God in verse 9-12 expressing his fears of coming face to feel with Esau. Therefore the text we have just read is the moment of truth for Jacob. His soul

was exceedingly sorrowful hence his deep prayer. In times of pain, trials and temptations let's us wrestle with God in prayer God will hear us. All we are saying we need you God every day. Amen 🙏 🙏

Prayer

Dear father we need you very hour Oh! gracious God. When we are faced with fear like Jacob you hear us and guide us. We have situations in our lives that scare us and not sure how to deal with them. We come to your oh merciful God for assurance. We are weak and heavy laden, our future is faced with uncertainties. We need you Lord for we cannot do it alone. Our hope and trust lies in you. Strengthen and embolden us with your love. We thank you for all you have done and continue to do. We pray in Jesus's name. Amen!! 🙏 🙏 🙏

*Prepared by **Rev Mary Sachikonye Methodist Minister for (Mile Cross, Costessey, Trinity Thorpe Marriott, Hosford and Drayton) for a time as this. We are a church without walls. We should therefore, continue to proclaim the good news. I will be sending **Words of Hope** every week so that we may continue to nourish our spirits and continue to live in HOPE!***