

How come the Angel of the Lord wrestled with Jacob?

How come the Angel of the Lord (which I now learned was Jesus), wrestled with Jacob?

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Let's Read it first...

24Then Jacob was left alone, and a man (U)wrestled with him until daybreak. 25When he saw that he had not prevailed against him, he touched the socket of his thigh; so the socket of Jacob's thigh was dislocated while he wrestled with him. 26Then he said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." But he said, "(V)I will not let you go unless you bless me." 27So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." 28(W)He said, "Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but [c]Israel; for you have striven with God and with men and have prevailed." 29Then (X)Jacob asked him and said, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And he blessed him there. 30So Jacob named the place [d]Peniel, for he said, "(Y)I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been preserved."

OK, now, what I understand here is what is revealed in verse 28…'for you have striven with God and with men and have prevailed'. (By the way, FYI, the Angel of the Lord is the pre-incarnate Christ, who is Jesus; very important point not to forget!)

I believe that the Lord, having chosen His people the Jews through the patriarch Jacob is strengthening and blessing Jacob spiritually. He is showing him that when you obey God, you will find yourself striving with men, and may even find yourself at times striving with God, but because God loves and cares for you, He does not destroy you as he could have done with Jacob, but He lets you come to a place of blessedness. We strive with men because of the depravity of the human nature.

We strive with God because of our finite understanding of His will and our often times unwillingness to submit to that will. Therefore, we can find ourselves wrestling & striving with the Lord God. God wanted to let Jacob know that even though he had to sometimes strive, that a blessing of having prevailed was always going to be there because of God's unconditional covenant to Abraham (I believe).

It would be good to consult a commentary on this. Let me recommend an excellent one: The Bible Knowledge Commentary of the Old Testament, written by several scholars from Dallas Theological Seminary.