

"PAINT IT BLACK"**Date:** February 21, 2021**Speaker:** Danny Clinton**Song History:**

- "Paint It Black" is a song recorded by the English rock band, The Rolling Stones.
- The song was released as a single on May 7th, 1966, and was written by Mick Jagger and Keith Richards.
- It was included as the opening track on the American version of the band's 1966 studio album, 'Aftermath.'
- It is an up-tempo song with Indian, Middle Eastern, and Eastern European influences, featuring a sitar part played by multi-instrumentalist, Brian Jones.
- Contemporary reviews at the time were mixed, with some music critics believing that its sitar sound was an attempt to copy the Beatles.
- None the less... The song was a chart success for the Stones. The song spent eleven weeks on the US Billboard Hot 100 – including two at number one, and spent a total of 21 weeks on the UK Singles Chart – including one week atop the chart.
- Retrospectively, critics have considered "Paint It Black" more favorably, with Rolling Stone Magazine ranking it one of the greatest songs of all time.

The Song speaks from a place of heavy Struggle and Sadness...

- "The song's written from the viewpoint of a person who is depressed; he wants everything to turn black to match his mood."
- This of course fits quite well seeing as Frustration, Stress, Sadness, and Struggle are some of the primary themes of the last year...
- Nobody needs convincing of this...

Today I want to show you what struggling like this can accomplish...

- And so, I have one goal in mind... "To Stir You"

(Vs) Hebrews 10:24 – "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works..."

There are so many biblical examples of men and women of God struggling in these same ways, even to the point of depression.

David wrote... (Vs) Psalm 56:8 – “You have kept count of my tossing put my tears in your bottle. Are they not in your book?”

- This is David, a “man after God’s own heart!” He does not gloss over his sadness; he expresses it to God!!
- In the same way both Moses and Elijah, two heroes of the faith, confessed to God that they preferred to die than live in their current reality.
- None of these people were rebuked by God for their feelings; rather, all were met with God’s love and provision...
- It’s almost as if... David, Elijah, and Moses all scream... “Life’s terrible right now! Paint it all Black!”
- And then God says in response, “Yeah, let’s do that.”

Over and over, we see that the Bible is not shy about admitting the realities of human emotion...

- “Struggle is part of life, and it is not condemned...”

Jesus himself, said... (Vs) John 16:33 – “I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

“Christians are permitted to call trouble for what it is.”

- And, we should!
- Question: So, what does struggle like this accomplish?

Do you remember the story of Jacob and Esau? Twin Brothers

- When their father Isaac was on his death bed, he asked Esau, the older twin, to kill some wild game for him with the promise that he would then bless his oldest son. (Guaranteeing him a double portion of inheritance.)
- While Esau was out hunting, Jacob tricked his father into blessing him instead. When Esau returned, Jacob had already received the blessing. Esau was furious and vowed to kill him, so Jacob fled...
- After years of living apart, Jacob decided to return to his home and hoped to make peace with his brother. One night on the journey, he sent everyone ahead of him while he stayed behind.

Jacob Wrestles with God...

(Vs) Gen. 32:24-29 – So, Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. 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. Then the man said, “Let me go, for it is daybreak.” But Jacob replied, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.” The man asked him, “What is your name?” “Jacob,” he answered. Then the man said, “Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.” Jacob said, “Please tell me your name.” But he replied, “Why do you ask my name?” Then he blessed him there.”

It's a fascinating passage! But what does it mean???

- There's a little 'clue' verse tucked away right after Jacob's wrestling match: (Vs) Gen. 33:20 – "There he erected an altar and called it El-Elohe-Israel."
- El-Elohe-Israel means "God, the God of Israel"
- So, the result of Jacob—now known as Israel—wrestling with God, is that he built an altar and called it "God, the God of Israel."
- Seems a bit anti-climactic, doesn't it?

Now, let me take you back to a few passages before the divine wrestling match...

Jacob's Dream / Ladder : (Vs) Gen. 28:13 – *"There above it stood the LORD, and he said: "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying."*

- Notice anything? No? Let's try another one...

(Vs) Gen. 32:9 – *And Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Lord who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your kindred, that I may do you good.'"*

- How about now? Not Yet? Here's yet another one...

(Vs) Gen. 31:42a – *"If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had not been on my side, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed."*

There is a common thread throughout these passages...

- We can see clearly mentioned that God is the God of Abraham and that God is the God of Isaac, but, **"It does not say that God is the God of Israel (Jacob) until after he wrestled with God."**
- **Powerful!** – Until Jacob had a divine wrestling match with God—until he had a very personal struggle with God—his faith was not cemented. It was not his own.
- Yes, he knew of his father Isaac's faith. He had most definitely heard the stories of his grandfather Abraham's faith, but he was only living his faith vicariously through their faith; it had not been solidified in his life until after the struggle!

We find a very similar sentiment in the book of Job.

- After literally losing everything—his kids, his wealth, his health—and spending untold hours arguing with God and his friends, Job finally sees things from God's perspective...

He says this: (Vs) Job 42:5 – *"I had heard (rumor) of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you..."*

- And as we know, Job is changed forever!

As we move to the end of Israel's (Jacob's) life, there are a few hints that he experienced a similar change in his relationship with God...

(Vs) Gen 35:3 – “Then let us arise and go up to Bethel, so that I may make there an altar to the God who answers me in the day of my distress and has been with me wherever I have gone.”

- You see the personal relationship, the recognition that God was with him throughout his life.
- Again, as Israel is dying and blessing his grandchildren, we see a tender moment as he reflects on his relationship with God.

(Vs) Gen. 48:15,16a – Then he blessed Joseph and said, “May the God before whom my father's Abraham and Isaac walked faithfully, the God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, the Angel who has delivered me from all harm —may he bless these boys...”

Closing Challenge: Perhaps you are struggling to really know this God we talk about every Sunday...

- Maybe because you're avoiding the struggle? – “Jump in, Paint it Black!”
- Or perhaps you're neck deep in struggle right now, because God is trying to reveal Himself to you?
- **“You better not let him go too early, Paint it Black!”** What if God is actually loving you by keeping you within the very struggle and storm that you're desperately trying to escape?