

THE WRESTLING WITH JACOB.

GENESIS XXXII.

THAT portion of the singular history of Jacob which is contained in this chapter, and which relates to the wrestling of a man with him, is one full of beauty, instruction, and deep spiritual significance.

It seems somewhat remarkable that most biblical commentators should have so overlooked the true teaching of this most interesting passage, attributing a sense to it that not only mars the beauty of the passage, but is altogether at variance with the true character of Jacob. And this has arisen from the singular mistake in taking the converse of the scriptural expression, instead of the Word of God as it stands. Hence it is that Jacob is generally represented as wrestling *with* an angel, and *prevailing*, and therefore he is held up as an example of the efficacy of importunate prayer in gaining its reward. But Scripture affirms that *a man wrestled with Jacob, and prevailed not*,—the very opposite to the view taken by commentators in general. Jacob wrestling with a man, and a man wrestling with Jacob, are two totally different things; in the former case Jacob tries to overcome the man, in the latter case the man tries to overcome Jacob.*

The whole history of Jacob is wonderful, show-

* See *Notes on Genesis*, etc., by C. H. M., an admirable (yet not infallible) work of deep spiritual research, and most useful to every Student of the Word of God. The whole history of Jacob is noticed in this work, with views on this portion of it similar to those above.