

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Let's pray...

[Gen 32:1-32 NKJV] 1 So Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. 2 When Jacob saw them, he said, "This [is] God's camp." And he called the name of that place Mahanaim.

This is the second time that Jacob has encountered angels.

You might remember the dream that he had as he fled Esau where he saw all the angels ascending and descending from the stairway. That was the first time.

Once again God is demonstrating to Jacob that He is with him.

You might remember last week, God told Jacob that He was there protecting him from Laban as Laban changes his wages 10 times.

However, God's hand was upon Jacob – watching over him and protecting him.

So, God is reassuring Jacob once again.

3 Then Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother in the land of Seir, the country of Edom. 4 And he commanded them, saying, "Speak thus to my lord Esau, 'Thus your servant Jacob says: "I have dwelt with Laban and stayed there until now. 5 "I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, and male and female servants; and I

have sent to tell my lord, that I may find favor in your sight." ' "

This is a different Jacob, he is trying to reconcile with his brother – this is something that the old Jacob would have never done.

The deal between Rachel and Jacob was that Rachel was supposed to send for Jacob once Esau cooled off.

However, it has been twenty years already and no word from Rachel.

Jacob doesn't know if his brother is still angry at him.

He doesn't know if his brother is still going to kill him.

So, here Jacob appears to be offering an olive branch toward his brother.

Notice the words that Jacob is using here.

He addresses Esau as lord and he speaks of himself as a servant to him.

6 Then the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We came to your brother Esau, and he also is coming to meet you, and four hundred men [are] with him."

Oh Oh!

These are not the words that Jacob wants to hear.

Not only is Esau coming – he is also bringing four hundred of his guys with him.

Initially Jacob requests peace but when his messengers give him the news that Esau is coming – Jacob begins to panic.

Jacob is literally caught between a rock and a hard place.

Behind him is the pile of rocks that he and Laban set up, a sort of boundary that Jacob couldn't go back and cross over.

In front of him was the hard place, his brother coming, perhaps to finally get even with Jacob and kill him.

7 So Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that [were] with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two companies. 8 And he said, "If Esau comes to the one company and attacks it, then the other company which is left will escape."

His first instinct or his first reaction is to resolve the issue on his own.

So here Jacob responds to his panic by dividing his family and servants and herds into two groups, his thinking being, if

Esau starts attacking one of the groups – the other half can escape.

And we respond in the same way to adversity in our own lives.

However, as we mature in our Christian walk, we will react to challenges with prayer instead of panic.

And here we see Jacob pray to the One who can resolve the situation.

9 Then Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the LORD who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your family, and I will deal well with you': 10 "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown

Your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two companies.

Notice how Jacob prays –

He begins by calling upon the promises of God – the Lord who said to me...

In my own prayer life, I have found that when I pray the promises of God, my faith is strengthened.

I will never leave you or forsake you (Deut 31:6 and Joshua 1:5)– is a promise that we can pray.

[Heb 11:6 NKJV] 6 But without faith [it is] impossible to please [Him], for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and [that] He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Jacob also comes before the Lord in humility as he says that he is not worthy and then he acknowledges what God has done in his life.

11 "Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and attack me [and] the mother with the children. 12 "For You said, 'I will surely treat you well, and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.' " 13 So he lodged there that same night, and took what came to his hand as a present for Esau his brother: 14 two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, 15 thirty milk camels with their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten foals. 16 Then he delivered

[them] to the hand of his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, "Pass over before me, and put some distance between successive droves." 17 And he commanded the first one, saying, "When Esau my brother meets you and asks you, saying, 'To whom do you belong, and where are you going? Whose [are] these in front of you?' 18 "then you shall say, 'They [are] your servant Jacob's. It [is] a present sent to my lord Esau; and behold, he also [is] behind us.' " 19 So he commanded the second, the third, and all who followed the droves, saying, "In this manner you shall speak to Esau when you find him; 20 "and also say, 'Behold, your servant Jacob [is] behind us.' " For he said, "I will appease him with the present that goes before me, and

afterward I will see his face; perhaps he will accept me."

21 So the present went on over before him, but he himself lodged that night in the camp. 22 And he arose that night and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven sons, and crossed over the ford of Jabbok. 23 He took them, sent them over the brook, and sent over what he had.

Jacob finishes praying and then he makes the same mistake that many of us do.

Instead of allowing the Lord to work, he started strategizing some more.

He plans to have the people meet Esau in waves and of course he is going to be the final wave.

We pray about something, we leave it at the foot of the cross – placing our trust in Him and then we take it away from the foot of the cross and start worrying about our circumstances again, losing sleep over how to fix the problem.

Once we lay it at the cross, we leave it at the cross. If we take it away, we are saying I don't trust you Lord anymore, I have to fix it myself.

24 Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. 25 Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him.

Jacob is all alone now, his family is on the other side of the brook, there is no doubt he is thinking about the next day as Esau gets closer and closer.

And that night he wrestles with a Man. Not just any man, Jacob wrestles with Jesus Christ.

Here we have another theophany in the Old Testament. This is another special appearance of Jesus in the Old Testament before His incarnation in Bethlehem. This was God in human form.

Before you conjure up images in your head of Jesus being a luchador or trying to figure out whom was body slamming who.

The scriptures tell us that a man wrestled with Jacob.

you see, God wanted something from Jacob. God wanted to take away Jacob's self-reliance, his fleshly scheming.

At any time God could have easily ended it. The reason that it took so long was that is how much self-reliance Jacob had.

It was at that point that God decided to end it – and he simply touched Jacob's hip joint and dislocated Jacob's hip.

Why the hip??? Because this is what Jacob had done all of his life. He ran – but not anymore.

26 And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!" 27 So He said to him, "What [is] your name?" He said,

"Jacob." 28 And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed." 29 Then Jacob asked, saying, "Tell [me] Your name, I pray." And He said, "Why [is] it [that] you ask about My name?" And He blessed him there. 30 So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." 31 Just as he crossed over Penuel the sun rose on him, and he limped on his hip. 32 Therefore to this day the children of Israel do not eat the muscle that shrank, which [is] on the hip socket, because He touched the socket of Jacob's hip in the muscle that shrank.

Jacob holds on laying there in pain and he wants a blessing – so the Lord asks him, “What is your name?”

The Lord knew Jacob name – the question is does Jacob know it.

It was a few chapters ago when Isaac asked him “Who are you?” and he responded by telling his dad that he was Esau.

Here Jacob answers, I am Jacob – I am “heal catcher” – I am a conniver – I am a con man. That is what the name Jacob means and that is what Jacob was.

So God changes his name to Israel – which means governed by God.

So from now until the end of Genesis, the scriptures will refer to Jacob as both Jacob and Israel.

And we will see that almost every returns to his old ways, the scriptures refer to him as Jacob and when he is abiding by God's will, he is referred to as Israel.

Jacob also asks the man he had wrestled with for his name. But the man simply tells him – why do you ask my name, inferring that Jacob already knew who he was wrestling with.

This past Sunday, as we partook of communion, I mentioned the importance of memorial stones – how communion is our memorial stone that reminds us of the love of Jesus as He died for us on the cross so that we may have eternal life.

Here Jacob, has two new memorial stones –

The first memorial was a name. Jacob named the place Peniel (Face of God), because he did know the name of the

Man who wrestled with him. He was the same One who wrestled with Jacob all his life.

The second memorial was a perpetual limp. Jacob would remember his being conquered by God with every step he took for the rest of his life.

The lesson from chapter 32

This is not going to be a very popular one.

Brokenness is a requirement for blessings

God desires to break us so that we can fully experience the blessings that He has set aside for us.

We cannot do this if we are self-sufficient.

Also, many times we will be left with a reminder of how he broke us so that we will never forget who He is.

Apostle Paul had to live with the thorn in his flesh for his entire life – he prayed that it would be removed.

And God responded by saying,

[2Co 12:9 NKJV] 9 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Chapter 33 -

[Gen 33:1-20 NKJV] 1 Now Jacob lifted his eyes and looked, and there, Esau was coming, and with him were four hundred men. So he divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and the two maidservants. 2 And he put

the maidservants and their children in front, Leah and her children behind, and Rachel and Joseph last.

Jacob positions Rachel and Joseph at the very back because we know that Jacob loved Rachel.

3 Then he crossed over before them and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his

brother. 4 But Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept. 5

And he lifted his eyes and saw the women and children, and said, "Who [are] these with you?" So he said, "The

children whom God has graciously given your servant."

6 Then the maidservants came near, they and their

children, and bowed down. 7 And Leah also came near

with her children, and they bowed down. Afterward

Joseph and Rachel came near, and they bowed down. 8

Then Esau said, "What [do] you [mean by] all this company which I met?" And he said, "[These are] to find

favor in the sight of my lord." 9 But Esau said, "I have enough, my brother; keep what you have for yourself."

10 And Jacob said, "No, please, if I have now found favor in your sight, then receive my present from my

hand, inasmuch as I have seen your face as though I had seen the face of God, and you were pleased with

me. 11 "Please, take my blessing that is brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough." So he urged him, and he took [it].

So Esau and Jacob finally meet and it appears that Esau has forgiven Jacob.

Did you see how many times “grace” was found in this chapter?

In vs. 5 Jacob says that his children were a “grace” from God.

In verse 10, Jacob found favor in Esau’s sight – favor is grace.

In vs. 11 Jacob again recognizes God’s “grace” given to him.

All this “grace” has resulted in Jacob being “gracious” and giving a “gift” to Esau.

Jacob is even hoping that the gift he’s showing will provoke “grace” in Esau. (vs.8)

I think a good way of defining “grace” is to think of it as a “gift”. God’s grace toward us involves all that God “gives” us, even when we don’t deserve it.

If we truly have found God’s grace, it ought to make us a gracious person.

Esau initially denied accepting the gift from Jacob but Jacob rightly presses Esau into accepting them.

You see initially, Jacob offered the gifts in an attempt to find grace from Esau but then in verse 10, Jacob is telling Esau that now he is giving him the gifts in response to the grace that Esau has already shown him.

12 Then Esau said, "Let us take our journey; let us go, and I will go before you." 13 But Jacob said to him, "My lord knows that the children [are] weak, and the flocks

and herds which are nursing [are] with me. And if the men should drive them hard one day, all the flock will die. 14 "Please let my lord go on ahead before his servant. I will lead on slowly at a pace which the livestock that go before me, and the children, are able to endure, until I come to my lord in Seir." 15 And Esau said, "Now let me leave with you [some] of the people who [are] with me." But he said, "What need is there? Let me find favor in the sight of my lord." 16 So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir. 17 And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, built himself a house, and made booths for his livestock. Therefore the name of the place is called Succoth. 18 Then Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which [is] in the land of Canaan, when he

came from Padan Aram; and he pitched his tent before the city. 19 And he bought the parcel of land, where he had pitched his tent, from the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for one hundred pieces of money. 20 Then he erected an altar there and called it El Elohe Israel.

In the second half of chapter 33, we have Esau trying to convince his Jacob to go with him down to Seir.

However, Jacob refuses,

He pretty much tells Esau, “Go ahead – I will catch up with you later” and we never see Jacob go down to Seir.

Esau is a type of the flesh –

Well didn't he stop being angry toward and it even appears that he was happy to see Jacob? Yes

Well didn't he treat Jacob well and extend an invitation to Jacob? Yes

However, there is a big flaw in Esau. I asked you to underline verse 9 because it says

9 But Esau said, "I have enough, my brother; keep what you have for yourself."

Esau's flaw was that he did not have a heart for God, therefore, he did not need God's grace.

Esau was a self-made man. He was a hunter.

Jacob, on the other hand, had a bunch of problems and underneath all those problems, he did have a heart for God

and because he had a heart for God, Jacob embraced grace.

You see, Jacob understood grace – Esau didn't. Esau believed it was all about him and Jacob believed everything was because of what God had provided.

Another reason that Jacob didn't go with Esau was that he was keeping the promise that he had made God back in chapter 28.

[Gen 28:20-21 NKJV] 20 Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on, 21 "so that I come back to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God.

God fulfilled His promise to Jacob – and Jacob responded.

In the same way God has fulfilled His promise to us, by sending Jesus Christ to die for us on the cross.

We need to respond the same way that Jacob did -

[Rom 10:9 NKJV] 9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

Amen

Let's pray...



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