

## **SALT Church**

### **Genesis 33**

#### ***“What Do You See”***

September 2, 2026

#### ***“In the Beginning”***

#### ***Recap:***

- ***Genesis 31 & 32***

- Jacob had left his mothers homeland with all of his wives and 12 children.
- He left with a huge amount of wealth that included livestock and servants.
  - He left while his father-in-law was away tending to his sheep.
  - This prompted Laban to chase after Jacob with a small army of men.
  - After a week of travel, Laban and his men caught up to Jacob and his family but God intervened before anything bad happened.
    - In the end there was a covenant of peace between Jacob and Laban.
      - Both agreed to never pursue each other with the intent of doing harm.

## Once Laban had left Jacob was faced with the reality of his past.

- After 20 years of exile Jacob had to travel home to make things right between himself and his brother.
- But God had intervened and again reassured Jacob that He would be with him and bless him in his return to the promised land.
  - Jacob is now in his 90's and he had been dealt 20 years of humility through his father-in-law Laban.
  - But Jacob's humility needed another dose of reality and **this time it came through the person and work of God the Son.**
    - The scriptures tell us that Jesus came to Jacob in the night and they wrestled until the morning light.
      - Tired, exhausted, and humble, Jacob refuses to let go of God until he blesses him.
        - **Keep in mind that this request was made in the pain of a dislocated hip.**
  - God does bless him with three things:
    - He receives the same blessing (promises) as before
    - He receives a new name, signifying his new nature
      - (Israel = God Fights...)
    - He receives a new way of walking

## The next morning Israel arranges his family for the arrival of Esau.

- He sends five waves of gifts to his brother totaling over 550 animals
  - All of this was done in the hopes that Esau would forgive him for taking advantage of him as well as stealing his blessing by deceiving their father, Isaac.

## *Tonight's text*

### **Genesis 33 (NLT)**

***33 Then Jacob looked up and saw Esau coming with his 400 men.***

- This cannot be good!
  - Why would Esau feel the need to bring 400 men if he did not wish to do his brother any harm?
  - Can you imagine what must have been going on in Jacobs heart

***So he divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and his two servant wives.***

- Pay attention to how he divided his family.
- Ask yourself what kind of an impact this must have had on the children

***<sup>2</sup> He put the servant wives and their children at the front, Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph last.***

- What is Jacob doing?
  - He is making sure that the ones that he cares about the most will have the best chance for survival should things go bad.

***<sup>3</sup> Then Jacob went on ahead.***

- This is a different Jacob
  - This Jacob is at least placing himself between harm's way

***As he approached his brother, he bowed to the ground seven times before him.***

- If you are wondering what that is all about its about honor.
  - This kind of honoring was usually reserved for the Pharaoh's of Egypt.
    - What we should see is a brother who is deeply sorry for what he had done over 20 years ago.

***4 Then Esau ran to meet him and embraced him, threw his arms around his neck, and kissed him. And they both wept.***

- We must remember that these two are twins and twins share a bond that most siblings never get to experience.
- I am sure there was some fear as Jacob had already confessed to the Lord that he feared his brother.
- As Esau ran, I wonder if Jacob thought about running.
  - But God...
    - God was at work in both Jacob and Esau
      - Greeted with a warm embrace and a kiss, followed with tears of joy, Jacob had witnessed the promise of the Lord kept in his brothers reception.

***5 Then Esau looked at the women and children and asked, “Who are these people with you?”***

- What must Jacobs wives and children be thinking?
  - He is an uncle who is larger than life, traveling with 400 men on horse back
    - What a moment!

***“These are the children God has graciously given to me, your servant,” Jacob replied.***

- Humility flows from Jacob as easily as deception once flowed
- God had given Jacob 12 children and there was still one to come.

***<sup>6</sup>Then the servant wives came forward with their children and bowed before him.***

- I wonder what Esau was thinking
  - He had been criticized for marrying two women and later a third and now hear stands the chosen one with four wives and 12 kids.

***<sup>7</sup>Next came Leah with her children, and they bowed before him. Finally, Joseph and Rachel came forward and bowed before him.***

- Jacob had saved the best for last for Rachel and Joseph were clearly his favorites.
  - And everyone knew it

***<sup>8</sup>“And what were all the flocks and herds I met as I came?” Esau asked.***

***Jacob replied, “They are a gift, my lord, to ensure your friendship.”***

***<sup>9</sup>“My brother, I have plenty,” Esau answered. “Keep what you have for yourself.”***

***<sup>10</sup>But Jacob insisted, “No, if I have found favor with you, please accept this gift from me.***

- This sounds very nice but it was custom to refuse a gift and the giver insist and the receiver then accept.
- There is something that struck me
  - Esau brought nothing for Jacob
    - I am guessing that all of this was accepted as payment for the stealing of Esau's blessing.

Let's pay attention to what Jacob says:

***And what a relief to see your friendly smile. It is like seeing the face of God!***

- Jacob had seen the face of Jesus just the day before
- Now he sees the power of God in his brothers face who was once so mad at him that he swore to kill Jacob.
  - But God...
    - God intervened and Israel was protected

***<sup>11</sup> Please take this gift I have brought you, for God has been very gracious to me. I have more than enough.” And because Jacob insisted, Esau finally accepted the gift.***

- God is so good

***<sup>12</sup> “Well,” Esau said, “let's be going. I will lead the way.”***

- It's good to be with family
- I am sure Esau desired that his brother come and stay with him and his family
  - But God...

- Jacob could not go with Esau for God had called him to the promised land.
  - Esau did not live in the promised land and therefore Jacob would have been disobedient if he had followed.
    - But before we start thinking that the old Jacob was completely gone, he shows up in his reply.

***<sup>13</sup> But Jacob replied, “You can see, my lord, that some of the children are very young, and the flocks and herds have their young, too. If they are driven too hard, even for one day, all the animals could die. <sup>14</sup> Please, my lord, go ahead of your servant. We will follow slowly, at a pace that is comfortable for the livestock and the children. I will meet you at Seir.”***

- Jacob never travels to Seir.
  - He never intended to
    - He could have told Esau that God had told him to go to Bethel but he does not,
    - He chose to lie
      - This is not going to work out for Jacob and his family.

***<sup>15</sup> “All right,” Esau said, “but at least let me assign some of my men to guide and protect you.”***

- I think Esau’s concerns were genuine.
- Jacob can’t accept because he has no plans to go to Seir.

***Jacob responded, “That’s not necessary. It’s enough that you’ve received me warmly, my lord!”***

- Kind words from a man that has no intention of being near his brother.

***<sup>16</sup> So Esau turned around and started back to Seir that same day.***

- I wonder if Esau saw the old Jacob within his response
  - We will not see Esau again until Isaac’s funeral
  - He will be mentioned in a genealogy but as far as any substantial commentary within the Bible this is the last we hear of Esau.
    - Sad but a reality
      - Twins from the same house with the same parents but two very different paths and very different Gods.

***<sup>17</sup> Jacob, on the other hand, traveled on to Succoth.***

- This is an odd truth
  - Bethel was where God had instructed Jacob to go and it was just a short distance from where he was but Jacob chose to travel further away to Succoth.
    - Perhaps Jacob thought that he would eventually travel to Bethel after he replenished his herds.
      - Whatever the reason we can clearly see that this was not where God wanted him to be and he and his family will pay dearly.



***There he built himself a house and made shelters for his livestock. That is why the place was named Succoth (which means “shelters”).***

- Later God will call His people to celebrate Succoth but it has nothing to do with this moment.
- That celebration has to do with something that will happen 400 + years from this moment.

***<sup>18</sup> Later, having traveled all the way from Paddan-aram, Jacob arrived safely at the town of Shechem, in the land of Canaan.***

- This is where one of the darkest moments for God’s people is written.
- There will be rape
- Murder
- And God’s people will earn the reputation for being the “stench in the land”

***There he set up camp outside the town. <sup>19</sup> Jacob bought the plot of land where he camped from the family of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for 100 pieces of silver. <sup>20</sup> And there he built an altar and named it El-Elohe-Israel.***

- EL-Elohe-Israel means “The mighty God is the God of Israel”

***What do you see?***

- Israel is not where he is supposed to be.
- He tries to cover-up his disobedience by building an altar for worship which sounds good but it is not what God desires.

- Half-hearted obedience is not obedience at any level.
  - Half-heart obedience is like sitting in the stands of the ballpark when God has called you to get into the game.
- Israel had made many good steps toward who God wanted him to be but, Jacob was still alive and well.
  - In the end, Jacobs disobedience will cost him dearly.

But this is not all that I see!!!!

- I see Gods grace all over Jacob
- I see God allowing his servant to make mistakes but not allowing him to destroy what God has said will happen.
- I see Gods sovereign hand all over all of this while Jacobs willful desires work against what God is doing.

In the end we must remember these words from the Prophet Samuel

***1 Samuel 15:22-23***

***22 But Samuel replied,***

***“What is more pleasing to the Lord:***

***your burnt offerings and sacrifices***

***or your obedience to his voice?***

***Listen! Obedience is better than sacrifice,***

***and submission is better than offering the fat of rams.***

***23 Rebellion is as sinful as witchcraft,***

***and stubbornness as bad as worshiping idols.***