

In the Beginning

Genesis 33:1-20

- Jacob is in the midst of facing a crisis that was left unresolved **20** yrs ago, and if you've ever been involved or associated even mildly in any conflict that has lasted a decade or more you know how extremely difficult it is to bring reconciliation. **Prov 18:19-** says "**a brother offended is harder to win than a strong city, and contentions are like bars of a castle**". You will have more success conquering an armed city than you will winning over a brother, as the conflict built up within them is like the bars of a castle used to keep enemies out Wow!
- This is why you never want to get in this place with anyone because this is not a good place Proverbs is describing it's a fortress of emotional turmoil. It takes these kind of impossible problems in our lives before we truly realize that unless I turn to God in complete surrender I'll continue to be stressed out instead of at peace, which only comes from giving God the battle.

V1-20

- **V1-2** God has changed Jacob's name from "heel catcher" which means schemer, to "Israel" God's fighter, as he is now the Lord's soldier battling not to accomplish his will but the Lord's will. But he still has a lot of the old life left in him as we see him place the people in his company in the order in which he cares about them > **1st Moidservants** Bilhah and Zilpah and their children Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, in the front to take the first hit of the battle, **2nd Leah** and her children Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, and her daughter Dinah, would absorb the **2nd** wave of Esau fury, **3rd Rachel-Joseph**, his favorites way in the back and hopefully safe from harm, showing favoritism will be a perpetual thorn throughout Jacob's family.
- **V3** prior to meeting Esau God has shown Jacob **His favor 31:29, His Angels, His Son**, > **1st** Laban wanted to hurt Jacob but God spoke to him in a dream telling him not to, **2nd** God's Angels are traveling with him protecting and reassuring him that God is with him so Jacob names the place "**Mahanaim**" two camps, double hosts, **3rd** pre-incarnate Jesus shows up changes his name from schemer to the Lord's fighter, and yet when he sees his brother with his **400** men coming near he seems to lose all that he had gained in his struggle with himself and with the Lord.
- It's one thing to be blessed on the mountaintop with God but quite the other to carry that blessing down into the valleys of our everyday life, this is what's happening with Jacob. Jacob wants to give the appearance of a servant bowing in servitude to his brother Esau but this was wrong, God had already told Jacob and Esau that the elder would serve the younger so instead of coming and bowing like this Jacob should have approached him limping on his cane.

- Jacob's strength was in his limp for it was a constant reminder that God had conquered him and that he could trust the Lord to see him through no matter what the situation. For had he limped up to Esau he would have noticed and asked the cause, which would have given Jacob a golden opportunity to share the journey he's been on for the last **20yrs**, culminating in his encounter with the Lord which has resulted in his brokenness that has led to his surrender.
- **V4-7** all the manipulating Jacob was doing was so unnecessary as Esau doesn't care about his bowing as he approaches with his kisses, as he approached you know it probably terrified Jacob at first until he felt the warmth of forgiveness and reconciliation. God had already worked in Esau heart so much so that Esau didn't even feel the need to discuss the past, for to him it was resolved, this is what true forgiveness looks like as its not dependent upon the other person it's all about what God has done in your heart that determines how you act toward the person.
- Esau after greeting his brother asks "**who are all these with you**" the last time he saw Jacob he was alone only caring about himself, now Esau sees **11 sons** and **1 daughter** and it no doubt reminds him of what God said about the promise He had made to Abraham and Isaac, that He would number them as the sand upon the seashore, Esau was ready to accept that the promise was given to Jacob and he's no longer ready to fight-kill Jacob over what God had already said.
- **V8-9** Esau asks Jacob what was he trying to accomplish by sending ahead all the gifts prior to their meeting, **Gen 32:7, 20-** tell us why he did, as he was afraid and distressed and in his thinking without praying he hoped to be able to bribe Esau into not hurting him and his family even though God had already promised to protect him and them he didn't fully believe it. I like how Esau said "to keep it as he has enough" in our day and age there is never enough, we have millionaire's but that's not enough, they want to become billionaire's, and that's not enough to finally they become trillionaire's, and yet we still have poverty, homelessness, and hunger in the world, as people are unwilling to say I have enough or I will make sure that others have enough.
- **V10-12** Jacob insists that he have what he has offered to him as he rightfully says Esau has greeted and treated him more like God than he who knows God has acted. It's a shame when unbelievers act more like Christians than Christians themselves and here is another example of this very thing. Esau wants Jacob to come and live near him, and offers to assist Jacob in his journey, but still acting like the old Jacob instead of the new Israel is not honest with his brother.
- **V13-17** this was gracious of Esau to not only want to accompany his brother but to leave some additional help for him but Jacob again he hasn't fully transitioned over to his new name "Israel" yet so he's still relying on deception instead of honesty and he misses another opportunity to tell his brother how God has changed his heart and life. He lies that he will catch up to him but that the children and animals need to rest up, he's hoping that Esau would get far enough a distance that when he does realize Jacob's not coming he won't come looking for him. Sadly they would not see each other until they come and bury their father together > **Gen 35:28-29**.

- **V18-20** Jacob travels to Shechem in the land of Canaan and there he builds an altar and names it “**El Elohe Israel**, which means > “**God, The God of Israel**” as good as this is what would have been better was if he had listened to what the Lord said return to Bethel and his home where Isaac lived in **Gen 31:13**, but he decided to go a different route and it is going to cost him. He’s out of position practicing Slow bedience which is really disobedience, but it can be masked by other outward things like building altars and giving them names as if you’re doing exactly what the Lord has commanded you when in actuality your really not.