

## In the Beginning

### Genesis 32:1-32

- When Jacob left home his mother said to him in **Gen 27:43-45** “**go to your uncles house in Haran and stay with him a few days until your brother’s Esau anger has gone away and he forgives you then I will send for you to return back home**”. That was twenty years ago and we never read that Jacob ever saw his parents again until he would bury them later on in scripture, this illustrates what **Prov 16:9** “**a man plans his course but the Lord determines what happens**”.
- Jacob now is going back to where God promised to fulfill what He said to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, only he has unfinished and business and unresolved issues with his brother Esau. People think time heals all wounds but that’s not always true, in fact time can cause wounds to get worse if they are not tended to correctly, and for Jacob before he can move on with his family and fulfill what God had promised him he must confront his brother Esau whom he wronged.

### V1-32

- **V1-2** Jacob after dealing with Laban is now met by Angels of God and when he saw them he calls the place “**Mahanaim**” which means this is God’s camp. This is God letting Jacob know that he is with him, it’s so important that wherever we are or whatever we want to do, that God’s presence is where we want to be and where we are or we need to move and go where He is. Too many times were making choices whether the Lord has given confirmation or not and we go there and hope God follows us, we are to never try and unhaul the Lord as were to follow Him
- It’s been twenty years since Jacob had seen the Angels of God and it didn’t happen until he had separated from the worldly man that he is visited again by God’s messengers and hosts. This provided tremendous encouragement to Jacob as it gives him the confidence to now reach out and deal with another major problem and that is his brother Esau. Laban is gone but Hairy is still there, there is a scripture in **2 Cor 10:5-6** once our obedience is fulfilled now it’s time to take care of all other disobedience, but it first starts with doing the right thing ourselves.
- **V3-5** Jacob sends messengers to Esau giving them instructions on how to speak to him, **respect-humility**, he also wants him to know how prosperous he is why? Because he doesn’t want Esau to think that he is coming back for any inheritance as that would just bring up all kinds of bad feelings for that’s what started this mess in the first place Jacob stealing the inheritance of the first born, so he wants Esau to know that he can keep the inheritance as he has plenty.
- **V6-8** to his surprise he’s told that Esau has heard of his return and is on his way with 400 men to meet him, oh oh, Esau is on his way with an army of men to attack me for what I have done to him, I must prepare for what Esau is going to do, and he launches into this strategy motivated by fear and panic. How quickly he had forgotten that Laban wanted to do him harm until the Lord intervened and stopped him, that although Esau has an army he has Angels to protect him.

- Notice it says Jacob is greatly afraid and distressed meaning he's fearful and he's worried and he believes he must do something and do it quickly, I believe we've all been here. Folks old habits are hard to break, Jacob during these times is used to plotting-scheming and carnally prepares for what he thinks is an anger fueled attack from his brother Esau, so he divides his party into two sections so if Esau attacks one side he'll only lose half his company instead of all of it.
- Jacob still hasn't learned to trust God completely despite serving Laban for **20 yrs** and receiving in return pain and discomfort, he still is trying to manipulate and control his circumstances and environment with schemes and intellect because he still hasn't come to the place of brokenness. What is brokenness? Let's start with what it is not! It's not praying or crying out to God only when you deem it necessary, it's not saying you're sorry in order to avoid negative consequences, it's not relying on oneself to figure things out, and it's not examining others to determine the level of remorse needed for them to go easier on you.
- Jacob does all of these things which is a sign of pride the opposite of brokenness. We'll get into what it is a little later on in the chapter after the Lord has dealt with Jacob. **V9-12** Jacob finally rightly goes to God in prayer but this should have been the first thing he did before he put a plan in place, see he wants to u-haul God into what he thinks He should do. So the prayer is self motivated and not God glorifying, notice he says God You wanted me to return and now Esau is coming to get me, God You said You would deal well with me and now an army is on my trail, I know I am not worthy of the minimum of Your mercy but I came over at Your Word with a unified group and now I've been divided into two just to preserve my legacy.
- In asking for protection notice he mentions himself first even before Rachel, Leah, and the kids, in dividing them it shows Jacob didn't think the Lord could protect everything he had only some things. **V13-20** he sends bribe gifts from fear as he's still trusting in **plans** and not **prayer** to change things, as he prays to God but he doesn't wait on God as he acts without hearing anything from the Lord, and unfortunately I believe again we've all been here before.
- **V21-23** this is what happens when our emotions control our actions, we run ahead of the Lord and think that we can somehow appease whatever it is that is bothering us. **V24-26** you know for many of us this is what it takes for us to come to the place of brokenness, Jacob has exhausted all his resources from flattery, bribery, planning, plotting, scheming, and now he's left alone to wrestle with God all night long. This is a battle none of us will win thankfully, the wrestling is us wanting our way but God is not giving it to us so we try and outlast Him.
- At anytime Jesus could have crushed Jacob but He doesn't, He even allows Jacob to think he can prevail, but this is what the Lord is willing to do in order to get us His children to trust Him, come down on our level and let us tussle with Him > **Is 1:18-** come let us reason together. Jacob now understands unless the Lord blesses him he won't make it, he's been reduced to holding onto the Lord with everything he has, as he has no more fight in him, this not a bad place to be.

- **V27-29** this is what brokenness looks like, as Jacob has run out of ideas, plans and strength, and come to the end of himself. He won't die until he's **175** so he's at least half that age the equivalent of middle age and he's made a mess of his life and it's time for a change. Brokenness is when your old ways are no longer the path you choose to go down, you've chosen a different path and its of the Lord, it's here in these places that not only are names changed but also character and wills, for we see God change Jacob from deceiver to Israel God's fighter.
- **V30-32** we see Jacob leaving Jesus forever changed > **Spiritually**- as his name is changed from being a deceiver always trying to get his way to now fighting for God's purposes to accomplish His will, **Physically**- he has a permanent limp as a reminder that he is now a broken man. Sometimes God will give us a blessing that comes with a reminder of what it took for us to completely surrender to Him, and although painful embrace it for it represents God's glory.