

## Fear Not! For I am With You! Genesis 32 5.31.2023

Turn in your Bibles tonight to Genesis Chapter 32. As you are turning, we have seen over the past few weeks that Jacob is going to leave Paddan-Aram. Jacob advised Laban he was going to leave and once again, we see deception and Laban plays the game once again of, Let's Make A Deal! If you were here the past few weeks, you saw all that transpired with the breeding of the lambs and goats.

We saw how Laban tried to cheat Jacob. When Jacob did leave, he was not going to leave with any livestock, but God did a miracle and Jacob left with a great number of livestock and a very wealthy man. Because of what transpired, Laban was not very happy with Jacob. So we saw in Genesis 31:3, 13, that God told Jacob to go back to the land of his ancestors, his grandfather Abraham and father Isaac.

As we saw last week, Jacob tricked Laban. Jacob leaves without telling him and gets all his livestock, all his children, his wives, his servants, and they begin the trek back to the land of Canaan. Laban takes after them and once again we see God intervene in a very precarious situation. Laban and Jacob made a covenant that they would not harm each other. Laban goes back to Paddan-Aram and Jacob heads out towards the Land of Canaan. Let's read verses 1 and 2 of Chapter 32.

### ***Genesis 32:1-2***

***<sup>1</sup> Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. <sup>2</sup> And when Jacob saw them he said, "This is God's camp!" So, he called the name of that place Mahanaim.***



Now this is a very simple map, but it shows Jacob's travels from the time he left his home in Beersheba to now, where God has told him to go back to the Land of Canaan. The land that had been promised to his ancestors, beginning with Abraham, and now promised to Jacob and his descendants.

While Jacob is traveling, he is met by two visitors. They are called angels of God! Plural, meaning there were at least two. The Hebrew word used here is, Malak – meaning messenger, angel. We also see God's name, Elohim – meaning, God!

Why are they there? Well, what is the job if you will, of angels? Let's look to Scripture. I am going to have you turn in your Bible tonight. Turn to Hebrews Chapter 1 and let's read verses 13 and 14 together.

### ***Hebrews 1:13-14***

***13 And to which of the angels has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet?" 14 Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?***

Psalm 110 is quoted in those verses. Angels are messengers to minister to those who are saved. They worship God and are to serve according to God's will. We see throughout Scripture, angels are to minister to those who are in need of comfort, they that are to fight for us in the spiritual realm. We see in very specific situations, God used angels to bring very specific messages, to very specific people, for very specific situations. They will also be used to pass out judgment upon the earth during the tribulation.

Let me make a point, angels are not to be worshiped! They are created beings, created by God to do his will. Now, what I have just mentioned is a total study unto itself, but we see angels in their role here with Jacob. We have seen them minister to Jacob before.

In Genesis 28, as Jacob left Beersheba, traveling to Haran, "What did Jacob see in a dream?" This! Look at this picture:



Angels descending and ascending from heaven to earth and from earth back to heaven. So, we see as Jacob is going to Paddan-Aram he is ministered to with this dream. The Lord renews the covenant with Jacob that was given to Abraham and Isaac, to let Jacob know he was going to be with him.

Now, as he is coming from Paddan-Aram, we see God once again stepping in and comforting Jacob as two angels meet him upon his return. Jacob called this place Mahanaim, meaning, two camps, we will talk about that in a moment. Jacob is reminded, if his full trust is in God, then God is always with him.

Do you think in Jacob's journey's of going to Paddan-Aram and returning to the Land of Canaan, he had some anxiety? Maybe there was some fear? Sure! He was running for his life, remember? Don't we all have anxiety, concerns, maybe we can even use the word fear about circumstances in our lives? Sure, we do! May I remind us of the main theme of this study though the rest of Genesis? Here was our first image detailing what we are focusing on.



We started with God of Abraham, and now God of our Fathers, Isaac, and Jacob. Yes, we have looked at the lives of these people, but it was to focus that God in his majesty, his power, his mercy, his grace, his love, and his judgment reveals to us we don't have to fear. We can be comforted; we can sense the power of God in our lives as we battle against spiritual attacks.

Where Jacob is standing, he says this is God's Camp. Meaning God is there! Jacob needed reminding of that and was reminded after he woke up from the dream of the angels ascending and descending the ladder and Jacob says these words, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it." Maybe you need to be reminded of that tonight. ***Psalm 121:8: <sup>8</sup> The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore.***

It is in our suffering, our trials, our tough circumstances that God reminds us that he will never leave us nor forsake us. I am going to do a little play on words here. If you have truly repented of your sins and surrendered your life to Jesus Christ, who takes up residence in your heart. Yes, Jesus, the Holy Spirit! What have we learned on Sunday about the role the Holy Spirit plays in our lives?

1. Convict of Sin
2. Direct to righteousness
3. Judge concerning sin.
4. Lead to all truth

All those things point back towards Jesus Christ!

1. Jesus died for our sins so we could have forgiveness for our sins.
2. Jesus was the perfect, righteous person in his humanity that could save us from our sins, meanwhile still God. Fully God, Fully Man!
3. In that Jesus is righteous, it is his righteousness we need imputed, given to us so we can be looked at as righteous by God.
4. Jesus is the judge of all nations and all peoples. Reminding us to continually repent, as we will sin.
5. Jesus is all truth, in that Jesus is, The Way, The Truth, The Life and we have the written truth, the Bible as well.

Here is my play on words from where Jacob says, “This is God’s Camp!” Also, when Jacob woke up from his dream and said, “God is in this place, and I didn’t even know it!” God isn’t just out there somewhere and as you are living life, you walk upon him and say, “Hey look, there’s God! How about that!”

If you are saved, he actually lives inside you and his heart is towards you and he knows where you are and where you are going, he knows every thought, every concern, every fear, and Jesus says, “Come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest!” Remember the hope that is before you of eternal life!

For the unsaved the same thing goes for you, he is right beside you and he is saying, “Come to me! You know you need to repent, don’t let the fear of people send yourself to hell! Take my gift of forgiveness and cry out to me to save your soul!”

There are times in our life though that we finish one trial in our lives, and we seem to go right into another. Jacob has just come from leaving Laban and all that discombobulated mess and now we see that Jacob has someone else on his mind and in his path as he heads back to the land of Canaan. Look at verses 3 to 8.

### ***Genesis 32:3-8***

***<sup>3</sup> And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother in the land of Seir, the country of Edom, <sup>4</sup> instructing them, “Thus you shall say to my lord Esau: Thus says your servant Jacob, ‘I have sojourned with Laban and stayed until now. <sup>5</sup> I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, male servants, and female servants. I have sent to tell my lord, in order that I may find favor in your sight.’” <sup>6</sup> And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, “We came to your brother Esau, and he is coming to meet you, and there are four hundred men with him.” <sup>7</sup> Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed. He divided the people who were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two camps, <sup>8</sup> thinking, “If Esau comes to the one camp and attacks it, then the camp that is left will escape.”***

Oh yeah! Esau! Remember where we left off with Esau? Esau has threatened to kill Jacob! Wait until Daddy is dead, Jacob! And you are a dead man! It has been 20 years since Jacob has seen his brother, Esau, his Mom and Dad, Isaac and Rebekah! He knew word of his coming back home would get back to Esau eventually. How was Esau going to react? So, Jacob devises a plan.



Where is Jacob? Mahanaim! If you go directly south, you will see that Esau is in Seir in the area of Edom. It looks like where Jacob is from Esau, maybe he could have gotten all the way back home before Esau even knew he was there. But Jacob felt it necessary to let his brother know he is coming home.

Jacob sends two messengers to Esau, and first, Jacob seeks to butter up Esau a little bit. The messengers are to tell Esau, “Your servant Jacob says to his Lord Esau that he is fairly wealthy.” Letting Esau know that he is bringing his own property, he is in need of nothing from Esau or from Isaac.

Jacob does not get the response he was hoping for. As we read the messengers come back and let him know Esau is on his way and he is bringing 400 men with him. Sounds like a battle is about to ensue. Jacob forgets he has just been met by the angels of God to encourage and strengthen him. Jacob becomes fearful and distressed and he goes right back into his scheming ways.

This is where we see the name Mahanaim come into effect. Jacob divides his family and provision into two camps. Since it is obvious Esau is coming to fulfill his threat, maybe Jacob can save half his family as he splits the family into two groups. Not only is Jacob anticipating confrontation, but he is also anticipating defeat.

Isn't that how we can react at times as well when faced with a situation that we are unsure of, or the situation may look insurmountable to us. We can become defeated before we even take the first step towards God to seek him for help. Jacob devises his plan, then he goes before God in prayer and seeking his help. Let's read verses 9 to 12.

**Genesis 32:9-12**

***<sup>9</sup> And Jacob said, “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Lord who said to me, ‘Return to your country and to your kindred, that I may do you good,’ <sup>10</sup> I am not worthy of the least of all***



*the deeds of steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two camps. <sup>11</sup> Please deliver me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, that he may come and attack me, the mothers with the children. <sup>12</sup> But you said, 'I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.'"*

We may have prayed prayers like this in our life as well. How many of you, as you pray, remind God of his promises he has made from Scripture, the Bible, God's Word? Sure! A couple of my favorite!

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. – 1 John 1:9*

*He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High, will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."*

How many of you have a life verse? Think of it right now. Is it a promise? Maybe in the verse there is a command and if you are obedient to that command, we see a promise from God. That is what we see here with Jacob.

God, I am being obedient here. You told me to leave Paddan-Aram and go back to my home and you would do good for me. What was the main promise God gave to Jacob? It was the same as Abraham and Isaac! That there would be a great nation that would come from his descendants. Here he is with his wives, children, and servants and in his eyes, it is not looking too good right now. Esau and 400 men are headed his way right now! What is going to happen?

Jacob does something in this prayer that we all should do from time to time. He remembers! Look at verse 10 again:

***Genesis 32:10***

*<sup>10</sup> I am not worthy of the least of all the deeds of steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two camps.*

That is a good place to start when becoming before God. We are not worthy to even come into the presence of God. But see how wonderful God is! He says come! You have full access to me through Jesus Christ my son! Why did Jacob leave his home? Oh yeah! Esau was going to kill him! He had to get out of Dodge quickly and all he took were the clothes on his back and a staff.

Now he stops and looks at all God had done these past 20 years. He had left with a staff and now he looks at the blessing of family, servants, and wealth but also the protection that God had provided for him in those 20 years of serving Laban.

Sometimes to experience God's comfort and strength all we have to do is pause and remember.

*Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father  
There is no shadow of turning with Thee  
Thou changest not, Thy compassion's, they fail not  
As Thou hast been, Thou forever will be*

*Great is Thy faithfulness  
Great is Thy faithfulness  
Morning by morning new mercies I see  
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided  
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me*

Sometimes, just remember what God has done as you are faced with your next hurdle in this life. Jacob ended the prayer with reminding God of the promise of a great number of offspring, descendants that would come from his family. This is actually quite a beautiful prayer. But, poor Jacob, he goes right back into scheming and continues to devise a plan. You are great Lord, you are holy, you have provided so many times for me but let me help you with this one okay. Look at verses 13-21.

***Genesis 32:13-23***

***<sup>13</sup> So he stayed there that night, and from what he had with him he took a present for his brother Esau, <sup>14</sup> two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, <sup>15</sup> thirty milking camels and their calves, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. <sup>16</sup> These he handed over to his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, "Pass on ahead of me and put a space between drove and drove." <sup>17</sup> He instructed the first, "When Esau my brother meets you and asks you, 'To whom do you belong? Where are you going? And whose are these ahead of you?' <sup>18</sup> then you shall say, 'They belong to your servant Jacob. They are a present sent to my lord Esau. And moreover, he is behind us.'" <sup>19</sup> He likewise instructed the second and the third and all who followed the droves, "You shall say the same thing to Esau when you find him, <sup>20</sup> and you shall say, 'Moreover, your servant Jacob is behind us.'" For he thought, "I may appease him with the present that goes ahead of me, and afterward I shall see his face. Perhaps he will accept me." <sup>21</sup> So the present passed on ahead of him, and he himself stayed that night in the camp. <sup>22</sup> The same night he arose and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. <sup>23</sup> He took them and sent them across the stream, and everything else that he had.***

These verses are pretty self-explanatory. Jacob is thinking maybe he can appease Esau with gifts to keep him from attacking him. Jacob takes a lot of his animals and divides them up into three droves, three groups. This is how I surmise how we split them up.

- 1. 200 Female goats and 20 male goats***
- 2. 200 ewes (female sheep and 20 rams)***
- 3. 30 milking camels and their calves, 40 cows, 10 bulls, 20 female donkeys, 10 male donkeys***

Jacob spreads out each drove that one group would come before Esau and tell Esau something similar to what the two messengers were to tell Esau. Being very careful with their words, telling Esau that his servant Jacob is presenting this gift to his Lord Esau.

I guess Jacob also thought that if the first two gifts would not appease Esau, you know the old saying. Third times the charm!

Well, where is Jacob and his family at this time.



The camp where they were positioned is at Mahanaim. Jacob sends those with the presents to meet Esau and now, he sends his family, and all he had across the river Jabbok. Jacob stays at the camp of Mahanaim alone! Let's read verses 24 to 32.

### ***Genesis 32:24-32***

***<sup>24</sup> And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. <sup>25</sup> When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. <sup>26</sup> Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." <sup>27</sup> And he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." <sup>28</sup> Then he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed." <sup>29</sup> Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. <sup>30</sup> So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered." <sup>31</sup> The sun rose upon him as he passed Peniel, limping because of his hip. <sup>32</sup> Therefore to this day the people of Israel do not eat the sinew of the thigh that is on the hip socket, because he touched the socket of Jacob's hip on the sinew of the thigh.***

We can speculate here, since Jacob has been planning all of these events, he has now sought to be alone and seek God. There had to be a lot of conflict going on in Jacob's soul! As I was reading and meditating over these last few verses, I was drawn to Psalms, specifically Psalms 61, 62, and 63 that David had written. These verses from Psalm 62 really resonated with me.

### ***Psalm 62:1-2***

***<sup>1</sup> For God alone my soul waits in silence; from him comes my salvation. <sup>2</sup> He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken.***



Some 20 years ago Jacob found himself alone as God met him in a dream. In that place God promised Jacob, he would bring him back to his homeland and that he would be with him and never forsake him until he was finished with what God was going to accomplish through Jacob.

Here we are and Jacob finds himself alone again and who shows up? Well, at first these verses say, a man! In Hosea 12:4 it says that Jacob, *He strove with the angel and prevailed; he wept and sought his favor. He met God at Bethel, and there God spoke with us.*

In verse 28 and 30 this person is referred to as, Elohim, the official name of God! More specific it was the preincarnate Christ that came and wrestled with Jacob. This time, this was no vision or dream. This was hand to hand combat. As this wrestling match was going on, God was seeing how much Jacob really wanted him.

Jacob had no real power over God but through the struggle, strength was given to Jacob so that he was able to hold on to the Lord. To show who had the real power the Lord touches the hip of Jacob and knocks it out of socket. The Lord said it is day now, let me go. Even having his hip knocked out of socket, Jacob would not let go and he asked that he be blessed before Jacob let go.

The Lord asks Jacob, “What is your name?” Do you remember the last time Jacob was asked his name? If not, let me remind you. Jacob went into the tent of his father, Isaac, pretending to be someone else. When his father asked who he was, Jacob said, “I am Esau, your firstborn.”

This time what does Jacob say his name is? “My name is Jacob!” Jacob, meaning, he cheats, deceiver. What is Jacob doing by stating his name? We can’t be dogmatic on this, but I believe he is owning up to how he has been living his life. He is finally owning up to his sin, and the Lord says you will now be named Israel, which means, God Prevails!

Jacob before he leaves that place, he calls it, Peniel, which means, Face of God, because Jacob came face to face with God and he was delivered. Jacob was left with a reminder of that day, a reminder that would last with him the rest of his life. Anywhere Jacob walked it was with a limp. Look at verse 31 again.

### ***Genesis 32:31-32***

***<sup>31</sup> The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping because of his hip. <sup>32</sup> Therefore to this day the people of Israel do not eat the sinew of the thigh that is on the hip socket, because he touched the socket of Jacob's hip on the sinew of the thigh.***

Have you ever wrestled with God in prayer? Have you ever been so fervent in prayer that you would not let go of God until you got your answer? No matter the circumstance, God will never leave you nor forsake you! God is there saying, “Come, come and grab hold of me, and I will give you strength!” First, we must say our names. We first must admit who we are.

If you are lost, say your name tonight. I am \_\_\_\_\_ and I am in need of salvation! I need you to save my soul Jesus! I repent and surrender my life to you.

Follower of Jesus! Again, say our names, Hello Lord! It’s me! Dale, sinner saved by grace, desiring to have all of you. There is nothing good in me and I am weak, but God I desire to live Holy, and I desire to serve you with my whole being. Use me Lord, I surrender! In our prayers, we may get weary! Don’t give up! Don’t stop!

Are you praying for boldness to proclaim the Gospel? Are you praying for the healing of someone? Are you praying for the salvation of a family member, a friend, everyone around the world? Pray church! Pray! We may not have our hips knocked out of joint, but if we will not let go of God, we will see reminders throughout our lives of God's power and majesty of his faithfulness in our lives and the glory of seeing people saved!