



Genesis 32 _B

^{32:1} **Review/Summary** – after Laban left, the angels of God met Jacob

- “This is God's camp!” So he called the name of that place **Mahanaim**.
- Jacob sent messengers and gifts to Esau
- Then Jacob **was greatly afraid** and distressed – This is legit fear.
 - 400 men is most likely not a welcoming party!
 - 20 years ago, he left because Esau was planning to kill him [Genesis 27:41-42](#)
 - The messengers would have told Jacob if Esau was happy and joyous.
- **Jacob prayed** – ⁹“**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,’ ¹⁰**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. ¹¹**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. ¹²**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.’”
- **FINALLY!** Someone from Abraham’s family prays about their situation instead of acting out of fear!
 - This is the correct response to fear!
 - Remember, Jacob just saw the host of angels from God, yet now he is terrified.
 - You can have an encounter with God (or His messengers) and still be afraid because of circumstances.
 - We are human (sheep)
- Remember **Jacob’s 1st prayer** 20 years ago: [Genesis 28:19](#) – “**If God will be** with me...**will keep** ...and **will give** me bread...and clothing ... so...I come again to my father's house in peace, **then** the **LORD shall be** my God, ...**I will give** a full tenth to you.”
 - He was still deal-making: “If God will...then...”

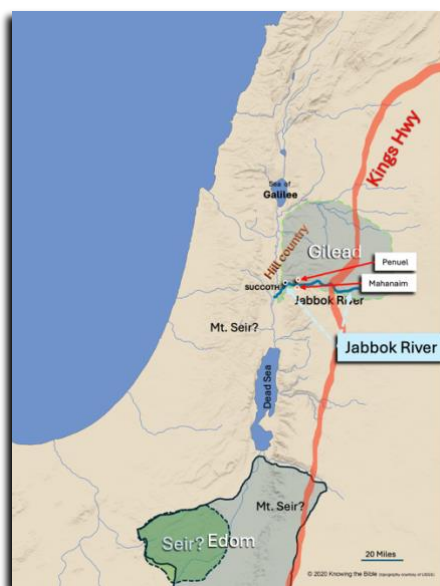
- In this latest prayer, he is broken, no deal-making, just worship and honesty!
- Vs 13-21 He sent 550 animals total to Esau

²¹ So the present passed on ahead of him, and he himself stayed that night in the camp.



Jacob Wrestles with God

²² 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. ²³ He took them and sent them across the stream, and everything else that he had. ²⁴ And Jacob was left alone. **And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day.** ²⁵ 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.**



- Peniel- Mahanaim

²⁵ 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.**

- **He did not prevail?** – Jacob was determined and would not back down. **Hardheaded**
 - Look at his life: He wrestled with Esau in the womb, then with Esau for the birthright, with his father for the blessing, wrestled with Laban for his wife, flock, and his freedom. He prevailed not by strength, but by persistence. He persists and doesn't stop until he achieves his goal – Hardheaded
- **Hip out of Joint?** Remember verse 7 –⁷ *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, ⁸ thinking, “If Esau comes to the one camp and attacks it, **then the camp that is left will escape.**”*
 - Jacob thought he could escape if things went bad with Esau and the 1st group came under attack. But now **he can't even run!**
 - **My recent hamstring injury!**



- - Usually, I think if a gator comes out, he won't catch me!
 - This time, I was acutely aware of my inability to run from a gator.
- Imagine Jacob now unable to stand, having to lean on this man.
 - Jacob got his name from grabbing onto Esau's heel
 - They **wrestled** in the womb
 - Now Jacob is grabbing onto God after **wrestling**.
- “By giving him a permanent limp, God never allowed Jacob to forget that the only way he triumphed was through defeat”¹ – Donald C. Fleming

¹ Fleming, Donald C. "Genesis 32." In Bridgeway Bible Commentary. 1988. StudyLight.org. Cited 19 September 2026. Online: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/bbc/genesis-32.html>.



- *“This is certainly a story of Jacob's victory, but it was a victory won when, conscious of a superior power, he yielded and, with strong crying and tears, out of weakness was made strong. Jacob's limp was a lifelong disability, but it was also the patent of his nobility.”*² – G. Campbell Morgan
- We are strongest when we are empty and leaning on the Lord
 - While there is still gas in the tank we can still work our schemes
 - When the tank is empty, when we are empty, we look to Him!
 - **Maybe** you are on empty right now. **You are strong!**
 - [2 Corinthians 12:10](#) – ¹⁰ For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and **calamities**. For when I am weak, then I am strong.
 - **Calamities?!**
 - [Ephesians 6:10-12](#) ^{KJV} – ¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and **in the power of his might**.
 - You've heard the unbiblical saying, “God helps those who help themselves!”³
 - Jacob was now **helpless**, and here we see that the Lord helps those **who can't** help themselves.
 - [Romans 5:6](#) – ⁶ For while **we were still weak**, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.
 - **God helps** those who **can't** help themselves.
 - **God saves** those who **can't** save themselves.
 - Jacob prevailed by his final weakness and holding onto the Lord.

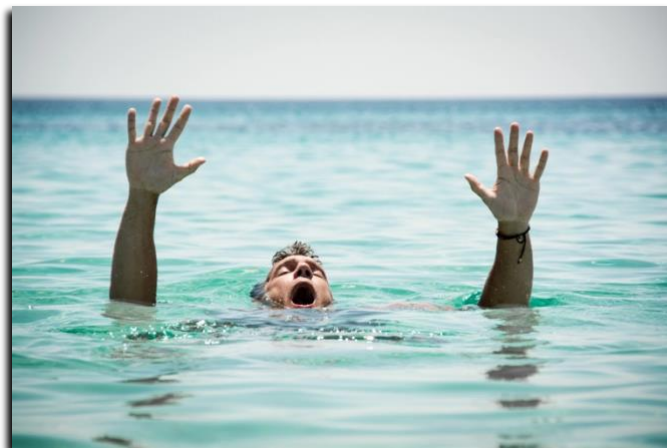
² Morgan, G. Campbell. "Genesis 32." In Morgan's Exposition on the Whole Bible. 1959. StudyLight.org. Cited 19 September 2026. Online: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/gcm/genesis-32.html>.

³ <https://www.gotquestions.org/God-help-themselves.html>

²⁶ Then he said, “Let me go, for the day has broken.” But Jacob said, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.” ²⁷ And he said to him, “**What is your name?**” And he said, “Jacob.” ²⁸ 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.” ²⁹ 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.**

²⁶ Then he said, “**Let me go...**”

- Jacob was strong physically (Remember the stone at the well?) and mentally, and he would not let the man go.
 - Now, as a child, I used to wrestle with my dad all the time.
 - He could break my grip at any time he wanted,
 - but he would say, “Ok let me go”
 - Same here; God is never outpowered by man.
 - God wanted Jacob to surrender.
 - Jacob was determined to hold on until he got what he wanted!





- My dear brother-in-Christ is a lifeguard, and when someone is drowning, he sometimes must let them tire themselves out before trying to save them, because of their adrenaline & strength.
- The drowning person is a danger because of their strength and panic mindset.
- Only when they surrender to the lifeguard can they be saved.
- God wants Jacob to surrender

²⁶ Then he said, “...**What is your name...**”

- **What is your name?** – The “man” knew. This is basically the same question that Jacob’s dad asked over 20 years before:
 - [Genesis 27:18-19](#) –... **Who are you, my son?** ¹⁹ Jacob said to his father, “I am Esau your firstborn. I have done as you told me; now sit up and eat of my game, that your soul may bless me.”



- [Genesis 27:24](#) – ²⁴ He said, “**Are you really my son Esau?**” He answered, “I am.”
- Now he answers honestly: Jacob/ heel catcher/ supplanter
- ***Yisrael* – Israel** = "God prevails"
 - [Strong's 3478](#), *Yisrael*, a proper name, - [Strong's H8280](#), ***sârâh***, a primitive root meaning to place in a row, i.e., to **prevail**; and from [Strong's H410](#), *el*, a concrete noun meaning god or God, hero,
 - He is no longer the shady/heel catcher/supplanter. He is one whose life is **governed by God**
 - From this point, Israel and Jacob will be used for him.
- ²⁶ – **Why do you ask my name?**
- “**Why do you ask my name?**” – Bro?! Don’t you get it?
 - This man/angel essentially let Jacob know He was God by changing his name, and in that new name was the name “El,” which means God.
- **There He blessed him** – The blessing was the new Name from God!

³⁰ 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.” ³¹ **The sun rose upon him** as he passed **Penuel**, **limping because of his hip**. ³² **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.

- **Therefore to this day** – Look at this tradition that arose from this. This is typical of religion.
- **Peniel** / Penuel – "facing God": **Same place**; the name morphed over time into **Penuel**



- פנה – *pânâh* / paw-naw' / to turn toward or face
- אל – *'êl* / ale / God

³⁰ So Jacob called the name of the place **Peniel**, saying, “For **I have seen God face to face**,

- **I have seen God face to face** – No one can see His face and live. [Exodus 33:20](#)
 - Yet here God is seen. How?
 - [John 1:18](#) – ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God; God the only Son, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.
 - He saw Jesus in the OT/ Christophany

Humor me for a minute and check out this story:

- Samson’s parents

[Judges 13](#) – 13:16

¹⁶ And the angel of the LORD said to Manoah, “If you detain me, I will not eat of your food. But if you prepare a burnt offering, then offer it to the LORD.” (For Manoah did not know that he was the angel of the LORD.) ¹⁷ And Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, “**What is your name, so that, when your words come true, we may honor you?**” ¹⁸ And the angel of the LORD said to him, “**Why do you ask my name**, seeing **it is wonderful?**” ¹⁹ So Manoah took the young goat with the grain offering, and offered it on the rock to the LORD, to the one who works wonders, and Manoah and his wife were watching. ²⁰ And when the flame went up toward heaven from the altar, the angel of the Lord went up in the flame of the altar. Now Manoah and his wife were watching, and they fell on their faces to the ground.

²¹ The angel of the LORD appeared no more to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of the LORD. ²² And Manoah said to his wife, “**We shall surely die, for we have seen God.**” ²³ But his wife said to him, “If the LORD had meant to kill us, he would not have accepted a burnt offering and a grain offering at our hands, or shown us all these things, or now announced to us such things as these.” ²⁴ And the woman bore a son and called his name Samson. And the young man grew, and the LORD blessed him.

- [Isaiah 9:6](#) – For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name



shall be called **Wonderful** Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

- [Hosea 12:3-4](#) – ³ In the womb he took his brother by the heel, and in his manhood he strove with God. ⁴ **He strove with the angel** and prevailed; **he wept** and sought his favor. He met God **at Bethel**, and there God spoke with us—
- ³¹ **The sun rose upon him** – This is truly a new day for him. A new name, a new understanding of God!

33:1 And Jacob lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, Esau was coming, and **four** **hundred men** with him. So he divided the children among Leah and Rachel and the two female servants. ² And he put the servants with their children in front, then Leah with her children, and **Rachel and Joseph last of all**. ³ He himself went on before them, bowing himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

- 400 men! Was Esau preparing to finish the [promise he made](#) to kill Jacob?
 - He probably wasn't rolling strong like this to protect Jacob because we will see he leaves.
- **Rachel and Joseph last of all** – Showing favoritism

⁴ But Esau ran to meet him and embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him, **and they wept**. ⁵ And when Esau lifted up his eyes and saw the women and children, he said, “Who are these with you?” Jacob said, “The children whom God has graciously given your servant.” ⁶ Then the servants drew near, they and their children, and bowed down. ⁷ Leah likewise and her children drew near and bowed down. And last Joseph and Rachel drew near, and they bowed down.



- Did God respond to Jacob's prayer? **Yes!**
 - **"¹¹ Please deliver me from the hand of my brother"**
- God intervened with Laban, now Esau.
 - Did God change the heart of Esau while he was on the way to destroy Jacob?
 - We don't know when, but God changed Esau's heart!
 - **Through prayer**, God can soften the hearts of even the most unlikely and seemingly unreachable individuals, leading to their salvation.
 - When God is involved, the outcome can be very different from what we expect.
- Whatever the procedure, the result was favor with God and man (Esau).
- [Proverbs 16:7](#)–⁷ When a person's ways are pleasing to the LORD, He causes even his enemies to make peace with him.

⁸ Esau said, "What do you mean by all this company that I met?" Jacob answered, "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 Jacob said, "No, please, if I have found favor in your sight, then accept my present from my hand. For I have seen your face, which is **like seeing the face of God**, and you have accepted me. ¹¹ Please accept my blessing that is brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough." Thus he urged him, and he took it.

- **"Like seeing the face of God"** – Jacob actually saw the face of God back at the wrestling match.
- The grace/ forgiveness Esau displays is almost like God's

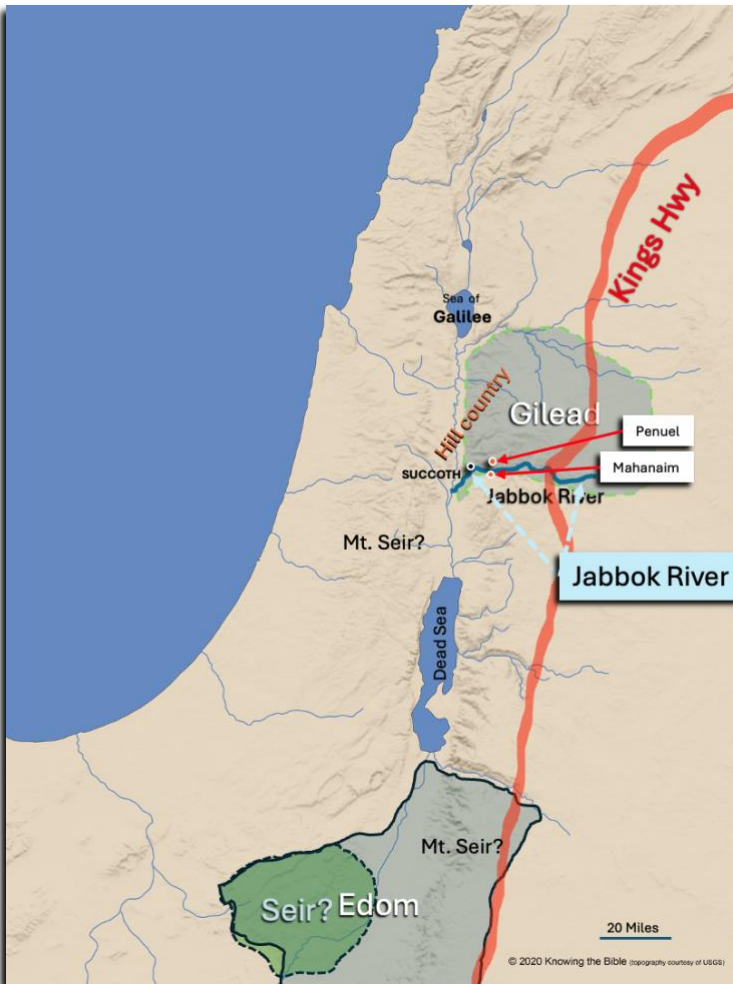


- We were guilty, we were an offense, and yet we are accepted by God because of His Grace!

¹² Then Esau said, “Let us journey on our way, and I will go ahead of you.” ¹³ But Jacob said to him, “My lord knows that the children are frail, and that the nursing flocks and herds are a care to me. If they are driven hard for one day, all the flocks will die. ¹⁴ Let my lord pass on ahead of his servant, and I will lead on slowly, at the pace of the livestock that are ahead of me and at the pace of the children, until I come to my lord in Seir.”

- until I come to my lord in Seir – Hmmm, okay
 - Perhaps he was planning to visit at some point
 - Perhaps he was being shady

¹⁵ So Esau said, “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 But Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built himself a house and made **booths** for his livestock. Therefore the name of the place is called Succoth.



- Vs 14 – “I will lead on slowly”
- Vs 14 – until I come to my lord in Seir –
 - Shadiness again?
- But Jacob journeyed... Succoth...built ... house ...made booths

¹⁸ And Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, on his way from Paddan-aram, and he camped before the city. ¹⁹ And from the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father, he bought for a **hundred pieces** of money the piece of land on which he had pitched his tent. ²⁰ There he erected an altar and called it El-Elohe-Israel.

- Safely or Shalem or Salem?



- [NASB](#) – Now Jacob came **safely** to the city of Shechem...
 - [KJV](#) – And Jacob came to **Shalem**, a city of Shechem...
 - **Safely** – [שָׁלֵם](#) – *shâlêlêm*/ shaw-lame' / complete, safe, peaceful, perfect, whole, full, at peace; Complete; full, perfect; finished; safe, unharmed; peace (of covenant of peace, mind)
 - [שָׁלֵם](#) – *Shâlêlêm*/ shaw-lame' / **proper locative noun** the same as ([H8003](#)) Salem = "peace" – the place of which Melchizedek was king most Jewish commentators affirm that it is the same as Jerusalem
- El-Elohe-Israel – God, the God of **Israel**.
 - Jacob made good on [his promise](#). 20 years later, but still!
 - Israel is back in the land of Canaan!

The LORD bless you and keep you;

²⁵ the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;

²⁶ the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.