

# Genesis

## Chapter 33:1-20

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Last week we read of how Jacob was returning home and he sent his servants to meet his brother Esau and seek his permission to return home. We also found out that Esau was coming with 400 men, which scared Jacob.

Jacob sought the Lord in his times of trouble and the Lord was with him. God also renamed Jacob Israel, which we now know as the nation of Israel and his sons are the twelve tribes of Israel mentioned throughout the bible from Genesis to Revelations.

At the end of last week's study, we read of how Jacob sent his messengers with Gifts to Esau calling him lord and Jacob referring to himself as Esau's servant. So lets get started this week in chapter 33.

✚ **Gen 33:1-3** *<sup>1</sup> Now Jacob lifted his eyes and looked, and there, Esau was coming, and with him were four hundred men. So he divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and the two maidservants. <sup>2</sup> And he put the maidservants and their children in front, Leah and her children behind, and Rachel and Joseph last. <sup>3</sup> Then he crossed over before them and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.*

Here Jacob sees Esau coming, so he put in order the ones of least importance (to himself) first. This would be the maidservants of Rachel and Leah with their children. Then the next group was Leah and her children. Then finally Rachel and Joseph (their only son at this time). So, why would he do something like this?

Well, verse 3 says that Jacob went before them, meaning he would meet Esau first, and just incase Esau decided to kill Jacob and his family, the ones that were first in line would be killed first as the others could possible escape. So Jacob put his favorites in the back, which were Rachel and Joseph.

✚ **Gen 33:4** *But Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept.*

Everything Jacob had feared was all for nothing. God told Jacob that He would be with him and protect him and his family. But somehow he didn't trust God 100%, that's why he put his families in ranks, just incase God wasn't right.

With Esau running to meet Jacob reminds me of a parable that Jesus told concerning a father and son who we know as the prodigal son. I would encourage you to read the whole parable in Luke 15:11-32 if you never have before, or if you have, read it again to remind you of the Lord's love for you even when you mess up. But notice here that the father runs to the son not waiting for the son to totally return to him

‡ **Luke 15:20** *And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.*

That was the same thing that Esau was doing. He was so excited that his brother Jacob had returned home, and by Jacob bowing down seven times before Esau showed that Jacob returned with a repentant heart seeking Esau's forgiveness.

Now we can say, "Jacob, you should have trusted God, after all he spoke to you, you wrestled with him, God renamed you, and you had His word on it." It's so easy to read about these guys in the bible and want to encourage them on, because we know what God does in their lives. But they didn't have the bible to read; they didn't know the future even though they had God's word spoken to them.

We go through the same thing; only after God has done something do we truly believe He can do it.

But that is lack of faith.

‡ **Heb 11:1** *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

The key words here for us today are, "**things not seen**". Jacob had God's promise, but he couldn't see it like we can in the bible. It's like seeing the end of a movie, then going back and watching it from the beginning. Since you saw the end, you know what's going to happen.

But you know what? We have seen the end of the movie, we know what's going to happen to us, whether you're a believer or not. (I pray that you are) If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, and you have read through the whole bible, then you have seen the end of the movie (At least the end here on earth and what will happen to it.) We know that we end up in heaven and will be with the Lord (Read the book of Revelations to see the end of the movie.). That is where our hope and trust in the Lord is.

‡ **Psalms 56:11** *In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?*

‡ **Psalms 118:6** *The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?*

‡ **Heb 13:6** *So we may boldly say: "The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"*

And sad to say, if you are not a believer this next verse is the end that you will face for ALL eternity.

‡ **Mark 9:44** *where 'their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.'*

Jesus says this three times in chapter 9 of the book of Mark, quoting from the book of Isaiah, which is God speaking through the prophet Isaiah.

† **Isaiah 66:24** *"And they shall go forth and look upon the corpses of the men who have transgressed against Me. For their worm does not die, and their fire is not quenched. They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh."*

But then the choice is yours. God will not force you to accept His Son Jesus, and if you refuse to accept Him, then this will be what the end of the movie looks like for you.

*"But I don't want that, I don't like this movie"* you may be thinking.

Well, you do have a choice to change the end of the movie (in a sense). All you have to do is accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior believe on Him and you will be saved.

† **Mark 16:15-16b** *He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."*

The purpose of this bible study and the web site is to preach the good news of Jesus Christ to the world. It doesn't matter who I am, or how good the web site looks, what matters is that the word of God is out there for all, so none will have an excuse when they are before God. I pray everyday for all who come to these studies. I pray that the Lord would speak to you through His word which in every page of this web site. Not my words because His words are truth.

So here are the words of Jesus, they are not mine, but His!

† **John 3:16-18** *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

Now it's up to you whether you believe or not. You just read His word. Which is truth.

† **John 17:17** *"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."*

If you choose to accept it, just tell Him right now; just pray from your heart this prayer or one from your own heart.

*Jesus, I admit I am a sinner. I believe that you died for my sins and rose from the dead. Thank you for opening my eyes to the truth, which is Your word. Please forgive me for my sins and fill me with Your Holy Spirit and make me new. Let me*

*now see the real end of the movie through reading Your word, which is eternal life. Thank You Jesus, I pray this in Your name. Amen!*

If you just prayed that prayer from your heart you are now a Christian. Welcome to the family of God. I would encourage you to read the bible everyday, and I would suggest starting in the book of John. I would also like to encourage you to find a good church in your area and go there this Sunday and share with someone what you just did. And if you don't know of a good church in your area, just E-mail me and I will try and help you find one.

If you didn't pray the prayer, I would encourage you not to wait. No matter how old you are you never know when the end will come. And know that I am still praying for you!

So Jacob and Esau finally get together after 20 years, and it was nothing like Jacob expected. He was ready for the worst, but God gave him the best.

✧ **Gen 33:5-11** <sup>5</sup> *And he lifted his eyes and saw the women and children, and said, "Who are these with you?" So he said, "The children whom God has graciously given your servant."* <sup>6</sup> *Then the maidservants came near, they and their children, and bowed down.* <sup>7</sup> *And Leah also came near with her children, and they bowed down. Afterward Joseph and Rachel came near, and they bowed down.* <sup>8</sup> *Then Esau said, "What do you mean by all this company which I met?" And he said, "These are to find favor in the sight of my lord."* <sup>9</sup> *But Esau said, "I have enough, my brother; keep what you have for yourself."* <sup>10</sup> *And Jacob said, "No, please, if I have now found favor in your sight, then receive my present from my hand, inasmuch as I have seen your face as though I had seen the face of God, and you were pleased with me.* <sup>11</sup> *"Please, take my blessing that is brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough." So he urged him, and he took it.*

After 20 years, Esau sees his brother and wonders who all these people are. After all there were Jacob's two wives with their concubines, 11 sons and at least one daughters. Plus I'm sure Jacob had servants also.

It took 20 years for God to bless Jacob with all that he had, but God wasn't through yet. So don't be anxious wanting to get rich quick with the lotto. Just let God bless in His way and in His time. I think it would be safe to say that if Jacob had to do it all over again, he would because he knew that his blessings were from the Lord.

Even though Esau accepted Jacob and his family, Jacob still gave him the gifts he original had prepared for him. Esau graciously declined but Jacob insisted so Esau took them.

If you make a vow to God or even someone else, don't go back on it when God comes through. God says; ***Better not to vow than to vow and not pay. Eccl 5:5***

We laugh at people at the racetrack, or watching a football game as they say, “*Oh God, if you would just let me win this one time, I will give to the poor.*” But they win and forget their vow to God. Some even laugh it off and say, “*Well God, I’m poor so I’ll just give it to me.*”

Now don’t shake your head at such a person, we have all done things like this before. Maybe not with these words, but in our prayer time we cry out to God and make our vows to Him if He would help us out with this problem. Then God does and we forget what we promised Him.

Also Jacob tried to win Esau’s favor with gifts. We also try to win God’s favor with our gifts of tithes or even service to others. You must realize that God has accepted you as you are; the reason we tithe or do for others is out of love for the Lord and others. If you didn’t tithe or help others, it wouldn’t change God’s love towards you. It wouldn’t be any greater or less. We seem to think of love, as how we know how to love. But God’s love is beyond anything we could ever comprehend. So give your tithe and offerings to the Lord, help and serve others, but don’t do it to receive anything in return. If you do, then you have your reward already.

✠ **Matt 6:2** *Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.*

✠ **Matt 6:16** *Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.*

✠ **Gen 33:12-14** <sup>12</sup> *Then Esau said, "Let us take our journey; let us go, and I will go before you." <sup>13</sup> But Jacob said to him, "My lord knows that the children are weak, and the flocks and herds which are nursing are with me. And if the men should drive them hard one day, all the flock will die. <sup>14</sup> "Please let my lord go on ahead before his servant. I will lead on slowly at a pace which the livestock that go before me, and the children, are able to endure, until I come to my lord in Seir."*

Esau was so excited that Jacob was returning home that he wanted Jacob and his family to come with him right now. But Jacob knew it would be too hard on the children and his flock. Remember that Esau was a rugged man, but Jacob was a timid man. Even though he worked hard for 29 years, he wouldn’t rush his children or his flock along at a pace that was not good for them.

✠ **Gen 33:15-20** <sup>15</sup> *And Esau said, "Now 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." <sup>16</sup> So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir. <sup>17</sup> And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, built himself a house, and made booths for his livestock. Therefore the name of the place is called Succoth.*

***18 Then Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan Aram; and he pitched his tent before the city. 19 And he bought the parcel of land, where he had pitched his tent, from the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for one hundred pieces of money. 20 Then he erected an altar there and called it El Elohe Israel.***

So Jacob was returning home, the only thing is, he didn't make it home yet. Home would be where his father Isaac was, which was Beersheba.

† **Gen 26:23** *Then he went up from there to Beersheba.* (“he” meaning Isaac)

Shechem is the place that Abraham stopped and received the first promise from the Lord.

† **Gen 12:6-7** *6 Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, as far as the terebinth tree of Moreh. And the Canaanites were then in the land. 7 Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him.*

So Jacob was in a sense taking the same route as his grandfather Abraham. If Abraham had built an altar to the Lord here, I have to wonder if it was still there or if the people of the land had torn it down? You see the place where Jacob had stopped, was once again not a good place to live. There was plenty of idol worship there, which had infected Jacob's family, as we will read about.

† **Gen 35:2** *And Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Put away the foreign gods that are among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments.*

Jacob did build another altar and called it: *El Elohe Israel*, which means: *"the mighty God of Israel"* or *"God, The God of Israel"*

Jacob knew this and was proclaiming God as his God to the people by building this altar.

Jacob had stopped in Shechem, which is about 200 miles away from Beersheba. Jacob needed to take his time since he did have his children and livestock to think about. But was he stopping in the right place.

Next week we will see the consequences of Jacob stopping in Shechem, and also doing business with a person who worshipped other gods.

As we have been studying the book of Genesis, we have read of various men who had moved from place to place. Their life consisted of a journey of not only where they would live, but also their journey with God.

We all have moved at one time or another, and will probably end up moving again sometime in our lives.

But we are all on a journey with God being with us. We make right and wrong decisions just as the men in Genesis have done. But have you noticed that God never left them? God will not leave you either when you make a wrong decision. God may say, Go here, but on the journey there, “we” take a side trip and stop somewhere else. This was not God’s will or plan for us, but still we did it anyway. We then find out we should have continued on until we reached the place that God had intended for us.

It would be like going to a restaurant 20 miles away, but we are so hungry that on our trip to this restaurant, we see a sign, which read, “**Best food in town.**” or “**Mom’s home cooking**”. So we end up only going five miles and stopping at this place we never been before. So we order and eat our food thinking that it tastes great. But then that night as you are lying in bed, your stomach starts to grumble and turn, and the room starts spinning. Within moments you are now visiting another small room in your house. What had happened is that you have gotten food poisoning. Why, because you just couldn’t wait another 15 minutes to go to your destination.

That is what we do sometimes when God leads us somewhere. We start on our way, and then read a sign, which tells us that this is better, just like it, but better (in our own minds). So we then go this route instead, and it seems good for a while, but then all of a sudden it doesn’t feel so good. We realize that we made a wrong choice, because we decided to do it our way and not God’s way.

Maybe this is something you have done recently or may be experiencing now. Like the men in Genesis (and throughout the bible) leave that place you are in and continue on the path that the Lord has set before you. How do you know what that is? By reading God’s word!

† ***Psalms 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.***

May God richly bless you in His love grace and mercy!