

## **Day 29 - SUNDAY: November 20<sup>th</sup>**

### Genesis 32

Genesis 32:1-32 NKJV

So Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. When Jacob saw them, he said, "This is God's camp." And he called the name of that place Mahanaim. Then Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother in the land of Seir, the country of Edom. And he commanded them, saying, "Speak thus to my lord Esau, 'Thus your servant Jacob says: "I have dwelt with Laban and stayed there until now. I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, and male and female servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find favor in your sight." ' " Then the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We came to your brother Esau, and he also is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him." So Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two companies. And he said, "If Esau comes to the one company and attacks it, then the other company which is left will escape." Then Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the LORD who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your family, and I will deal well with you': I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two companies. Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and attack me and the mother with the children. For You said, 'I will surely

treat you well, and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.' "

So he lodged there that same night, and took what came to his hand as a present for Esau his brother: two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, thirty milk camels with their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten foals. Then he delivered them to the hand of his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, "Pass over before me, and put some distance between successive droves." And he commanded the first one, saying, "When Esau my brother meets you and asks you, saying, 'To whom do you belong, and where are you going? Whose are these in front of you?' then you shall say, 'They are your servant Jacob's. It is a present sent to my lord Esau; and behold, he also is behind us.' " So he commanded the second, the third, and all who followed the droves, saying, "In this manner you shall speak to Esau when you find him; and also say, 'Behold, your servant Jacob is behind us.' " For he said, "I will appease him with the present that goes before me, and afterward I will see his face; perhaps he will accept me." So the present went on over before him, but he himself lodged that night in the camp. And he arose that night and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven sons, and crossed over the ford of Jabbok. He took them, sent them over the brook, and sent over what he had. Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him. And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks."

But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!" So He said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob." And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed." Then Jacob asked, saying, "Tell me Your name, I pray." And He said, "Why is it that you ask about My name?" And He blessed him there. So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." Just as he crossed over Penuel the sun rose on him, and he limped on his hip. Therefore to this day the children of Israel do not eat the muscle that shrank, which is on the hip socket, because He touched the socket of Jacob's hip in the muscle that shrank.

Daily Deep Dive:

Verse 1 – In our study of Genesis we've already encountered "angels". The Old Testament Hebrew word for Angel is "Malak" and like it's New Testament counterpart (Greek: Aggelos) it means "Messenger or representative". These words (OT: malak or NT: aggelos) can be applied to physical people or spirit beings. When applied to men, the Bible translators typically translate the word "messenger" and when a spirit being is the context, they typically translate it "angel" (taken from the Greek aggelos). Sometimes, by context, we understand that this "Messenger of the Lord or God" is no ordinary "messenger/angel" but is actually the

pre-incarnate Jesus Christ, who was known as “the Word” (a title meaning He was in the role of God’s Spokesman).

Here are some examples where the Angel of the Lord was the Word (pre-incarnate Jesus Christ): Genesis 16:10–

13; Genesis 22:11–12; Exodus 3:2–6; Judges 13:3–22

And here are some examples where the Angel of God was also the Word (Exodus 14:19, Exo 23:20).

Verse 2 – He calls this place “Mahanaim” meaning “double camp” or “two camps” because he understood that both his family and spirit messengers (angels) were there. The name of this place will be used another 12 times in the Old Testament.

Verse 3 – Here in this verse, as well as in verse 6, we again see the word “malak” (angel) but both of these verses it’s left as “messengers” meaning the translators believe these to be physical messengers not spirit messengers. I think this is likely correct, as I’m not sure that Jacob would have had the authority to send spiritual messengers to Esau on his behalf, but I wanted to point this out nonetheless.

Verses 9 through 12 – Jacob is afraid and knows the right thing to do. He prays. In this prayer, he shows humility,

recognizes where his blessings come from, asks for God's deliverance and reminds God of His promises to him.

Verses 13 – 21 – Jacob not only prays for God's help, he then does his part to try to soften Esau's heart toward him.

The UCG reading program states the following about Jacob: "Meeting Esau was a fearsome prospect. Jacob knew his elder brother to be an impetuous man who acted first and thought later. Would his rash nature explode in wrath? Would Esau avenge himself by slaughtering Jacob and all he had? If Esau still entertained thoughts of vengeance, Jacob would attempt to appease him with gifts. Perhaps showing deference and humility before Esau, addressing him as "Lord" and sending him presents, would turn Esau's wrath away. Jacob sent out messengers to respectfully inform Esau of his approach. The messengers returned and told Jacob that Esau was coming—with 400 men! Jacob prepared for the worst, dividing his family and possessions into troops to send out one after the other with himself at the forefront (Genesis 33:3), hoping in this way to preserve as much of his family as possible should Esau attack. Ahead of them he sent troops of men bearing gifts, hoping waves of

gifts would cool Esau's hot head. For the moment, however, Jacob remained at the ford of Jabbok.

What happens next at Jabbok is of profound importance for understanding the character development of Jacob. Before examining the details of the story, though, we must look at Jacob's prayer.

In reading the life of Jacob, we have seen him develop from a cultured and physically imposing young man—who relied on his own cunning and skill to obtain what he wanted, manipulating those around him—into a man who learned that real prosperity, security and peace depends on one's righteousness before God. That in itself is a great growth in character. But by the time Jacob arrives in Jabbok after years of service for Laban's flocks, he has made a quantum leap in character growth. The prayer in verses 9–12 shows that Jacob had now come to see that even complete righteousness before God does not entitle one to God's goodness. "I am not worthy of the least of all the steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant," he confessed (verse 10, New Revised Standard Version). Jacob now sees himself as he truly is—an unworthy man wholly dependent on the mercy and undeserved grace of God. Now, to bring his character to

maturity, while Jacob is alone at Jabbok, the strangest wrestling match in history will be played out in the darkness, without a single spectator.” [END]

Verses 24 & 25 – This is the only place in the bible we find this Hebrew word translated “wrestled” used. It comes from a root word meaning “dust” and here means “to cover with dust” or “get dusty”.

Here’s what the UCG reading states about this Being & wrestling match:

“In the middle of the night, a supernatural Being comes down and wrestles with Jacob. This Being, identified as God, must have been the preincarnate Jesus Christ, who, as the “Word” with God the Father from the beginning, was also God (John 1:1–3, John 1:14). It could not have been God the Father since Jacob saw Him and, as the apostle John later stated, “No one has seen God at any time” (John 1:18)—clearly referring to the Father in this verse. (To learn more about the nature of God the Father and Jesus Christ, request or download our free booklet [\*Who Is God?\*](#))

At first Jacob may not have known who his opponent was— but before the match was over, Jacob discerned His identity, for he later calls Him God (verse 30). Now why did God

want to wrestle Jacob? A better question would be, why did Jacob continue to wrestle once he figured out he was wrestling with God? What would be the point of wrestling with God? God could easily beat His opponent. Or God could simply match His opponent move for move and produce a draw. Or God could deliberately lose. In *any* case, to continue the match would seem pointless. So why did Jacob continue to wrestle? We can't know for sure of course. But perhaps it was simply because *God* wanted to wrestle—as a test of Jacob's perseverance and attitude. The wrestling match, viewed in this context, would seem to have been a test of submission: Would Jacob submit to continuing to wrestle, even when it seemed pointless, just because God wanted it that way? Also, from the conclusion, it is evident that Jacob wanted God's blessing. And God, it seems, wanted to know just how *much* he wanted it. In the end, Jacob demonstrated his deep feeling of total reliance on God's blessing. And he showed that he would hold on to whatever God was doing in his life in order to receive that blessing. In confronting Esau and whatever other obstacles he would later face, his own cunning and ingenuity would not deliver him. He knew that he had to trust in God alone.



As the match progresses, Christ sees that He is not prevailing against Jacob. This does not mean that Jacob was winning and Christ was losing. It simply means that Jacob had not yet given up. He was still wrestling. Then Christ makes it far more difficult for Jacob to continue by striking his hip socket. In pain and even in tears (Hosea 12:3–4), Jacob *still* does not give up. Finally, Christ tells Jacob to release Him as the day is dawning. But Jacob says he will not let go until Christ blesses him. This is almost certainly not disobedience, as it might appear to be. Rather, it is apparent that Jacob understood his holding on until receiving the blessing to be the reason God engaged him in the contest to begin with. In faith, we are to hold God to His promises to bless us until He does so—for that is what He has told us to do. In doing this, Jacob prevailed with God and was renamed Israel, meaning “Prevailer with God.” This does not mean that Jacob won and Christ lost. Indeed, the match ended before either of them was pinned. Of course, Christ could have pinned Jacob at any moment. But that was not His desire—nor was it the point. The point was to see if Jacob could persevere with God in the face of adversity. And he did. So who won the match, Jacob or Christ? The truth is

that both won. God *always* prevails. And now Jacob prevailed *with* Him. It must be the same with us.” [END]