

## Genesis 32

## Jacob's Journey Home

### Background/Context

- Jacob has 12 children while staying with his Uncle Laban
  - 6 sons and 1 daughter through Leah – Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Dinah
  - 2 sons through Rachel's maidservant, Bilhah – Dan, Naphtali
  - 2 sons through Leah's maidservant, Zilpah – Gad, Asher
  - 1 son through Rachel – Joseph
- Jacob realizes Laban is taking advantage of him, and decides to hit the road
  - With God's support – Genesis 31:13 "I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and where you made a vow to me. Now leave this land at once and go back to your native land."
- However, he doesn't notify Laban who tracks him with intent to bring harm to Jacob, but God intervenes. The two make a pact and draw a boundary which neither will cross.
- Jacob continues on his journey home.

### Read 32:1&2

1) On the road home, what spectacular thing happened?

2) Take a minute to read the following passages about the presence and purpose of angels on earth:

- Psalm 34:7 The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them.
- Psalm 91:9 If you make the Most High your dwelling—even the LORD, who is my refuge—10 then no harm will befall you, no disaster will come near your tent. 11 For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; 12 they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.
- Hebrews 1:14 Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation? 13:2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.
- Matthew 18:10 See that do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.

With the people around you, answer the following questions:

- T/F God sends his angels to protect all people on earth.
- T/F Angels are invisible.

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- Someone tells you, "If God sends his angels to protect me, why did I get in a car accident last night?" Respond.
  
- "You see, the Bible *does* contradict itself. It tells stories of angels appearing to people or entertaining them without knowing it. Yet, Jesus tells us that the children's angels will always see the face of God the Father in heaven. Doesn't that mean that they would always be up in heaven then? What do you have to say to that?" Respond.

### Read Verses 3-5

- 1) As far as Jacob knew, what was Esau's attitude toward him?
  
- 2) Why would he tell Esau about his wealth?

### Read Verses 6-8

- 1) What message did Jacob receive when he heard Esau was coming with four hundred men?
  
- 2) How did he try to minimize the damage in case of a conflict?
  
- 3) Agree or Disagree: Jacob acted out of greed by dividing his caravan into two groups.

### Read Verses 9-12

- 1) What was Jacob thankful for?
  
- 2) What was Jacob fearful of more than anything?

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3) With the people around you, explain #1) What the structure of this prayer is (literary feature if you know it), #2) how that brought him a sense of confidence as he prayed, & #3) how that will “enhance” our prayers.

### Skip ahead to Verse 22

- Jacob sends his servants ahead of him in waves to meet Esau with gifts in hopes of “pacifying him” (v 20)

### Read Verses 22-32 (read and answer with the people around you)

- 1) Who was the man that Jacob wrestled with all night long?
- 2) How was this both a physical and spiritual struggle?
- 3) What did God show Jacob by wrenching his hip?
- 4) Why did Jacob refuse to let go of God?
- 5) Of what did the LORD remind Jacob by asking him his name?
- 6) What change did the LORD acknowledge in Jacob by naming him Israel?
- 7) Verse 32 – why????