

Genesis: God and Man

You Said...

Genesis 32

God & Man...

- Adam and Even
- Cain and Abel
- Noah
- Abraham
- Isaac
- Jacob

Previously

- Jacob's birth, twin, birthright, stew
- Deceiving, leaving, cleaving
- Land of Laban, back where Abraham started
- Leah, Rachel, work, rivalry, deceit, barrenness, children, handmaids
- Jacob wants his freedom
- God continues to favor Jacob and his hard work, becomes quite wealthy, servants, camels
- Jacob flees by night, takes the mountain road,
- Rachel steals the idol
- Laban pursues
- Jacob stands up to Laban
- Laban comes out with it and claims it was all always his
- Make a covenant, set up a pillar to have God watch their backs
- Jacob feared the God of Isaac

- **Have you ever felt alone, abandoned, lost?**

- **Facing a great trial from your past?**

- **Dealing with something raw, emotional, deep-seeded, family issues?**

- **Ever having offended (or worse) someone in your past whom you haven't had to deal with, but now it's time to face the music?**

- **Have you ever had God call you to do something or go somewhere? And when you began to follow, things didn't go as planned? The road ahead became dark, scary, even as David said, "the valley of the shadow of death?"**

Well, today Jacob is.

Sometimes I wonder, if we haven't experienced these things yet, maybe we will. Perhaps and hopefully not to the extent of the story today, but I have to wonder, maybe we're not paying attention? Or maybe we've just got life a little more figured out than Jacob...or maybe we just think so.

It's much easier to follow the Lord when everything is smooth sailing...but as we'll see, it's not the easy times that bring us face to face with God.

[pray]

Genesis 32:1-2

So Jacob went on his way

Leaving Laban and the old way behind, the marker between them

Reminds me of baptism, being separated from the old life of flesh and entering into the new life of the Spirit

1Pe 3:21 NKJV - There is also an antitype which now saves us--baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

Continuing back home. Plenty of time to think.

**Not worried about Laban pursuing him anymore,
but now worried about Esau coming out to get him.**

...the angels of God met him

Again, we see Jacob is a bit in tune with things that we take for granted, or discount, or perhaps don't even think is possible...couldn't or wouldn't happen to us

Paga - to encounter, meet, reach, entreat, make intercession

God was with Jacob. Though he was pursued, though he was being approached...both by family whom he did not know what they would do to him

God sent his angels to meet, intercede and minister to Jacob

Do you think God does that for us?

Mat 18:10 NKJV - "Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven."

He's had his angels sent to minister to you since you were little. Always.

This is God's camp (host, military camp)

Jacob had a lot of people with him, but he realized that where he was was where God was encamped

Mahanaim = "two camps", east of the Jordan

:3-8

Jacob sent messengers ahead

Smart, a delegation.

Up east of the Sea of Galilee down to south of the Dead Sea in Edom. Several hundred miles perhaps.

How important it is that you trust your messengers. That they say the right thing. Especially in this situation

Realtor, ambassadors and war

No deceit in this message, in fact, laying it all out

The old Jacob would have said something else perhaps.

Look, I have wealth, I've left Laban. I'm coming in peace. I am bringing gifts back. I don't wish you any harm.

Pro 15:1 NKJV - A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.

Luk 16:9 NKJV - "And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home."

Messengers come back with the fact that Esau is coming with 400 men

Did they really meet with Esau, or did they see the 400 men and figure out that he was coming out to meet Jacob. They don't have a specific response to what Jacob sent them to say

7 So Jacob was afraid and greatly distressed

Can you blame him?

A commentary calls this is carnal plan. And I get that. He prayed *after* forming his plan. His plan came out of fear and distress. But I don't think it was necessarily an unwise plan. In fact, being a shepherd, perhaps this was something he learned about dealing with the flocks and predators. But thinking about it, i don't know that I'd want to split my family up and hope only one of them gets attacked if any. Maybe my possessions for sure.

When faced with uncertainty, we should plan, we should act, we should be shrewd and advisable.

Ecc 11:2 NKJV - Give a serving to seven, and also to eight, For you do not know what evil will be on the earth.

But having said that, **perhaps he would have acted differently if he prayed first.** Maybe he wouldn't have felt the need to split up at all.

He knows, in his own strength, he doesn't stand a chance against the 400 men. But again, he's assuming that esau is coming to attack him (makes sense, the last thing his brother wanted to do was kill him). But also, who's to say 200 men wouldn't go after one camp and the other 200 after Jacob's other camp...perhaps a better plan than nothing, but not foolproof or spiritually guided.

:9-15

Jacob plans, then prays. But he is praying. And I do believe it a sincere prayer.

How many of us are so perfect to pray before everything? We should. Praying late is better than praying not at all.

God of my fathers Abraham and Isaac

THE LORD WHO SAID TO ME

Acknowledging who God is to him but also that God is LORD, is God

Reminding God of what He told him

"Return to your country and to your family, **and I will deal well with you**':"

Laban hadn't dealt well with him, it certainly didn't seem Esau was coming to bless him...so how was God going to deal well with him? **This certainly didn't feel like it. But it was. It all was.**

Jacob is out here, just got done running for a week away from Laban, barely out of that problem and is faced with an even bigger problem. **And all because God told him to leave.**

Have you ever been in that position? *Looking for housing last year, dealing with family or friends after you've chosen to follow the Lord and they don't agree. Even now moving...I know it's all God dealing well with us. I don't know how. It doesn't feel like it. But it can be nothing less.*

But following Jesus, being a believer is not the easy path

Mat 7:13-14 NKJV - "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide [is] the gate and broad [is] the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. "Because narrow [is] the gate and difficult [is] the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

Paul

2Co 11:24-30 NKJV - From the Jews five times I received forty [stripes] minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; [in] journeys often, [in] perils of waters, [in] perils of robbers, [in] perils of [my own] countrymen, [in] perils of the Gentiles, [in] perils in the city, [in] perils in the wilderness, [in] perils in the sea, [in] perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness-- besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn [with indignation]? If I must boast, I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity.

Rom 8:35-39 NKJV - Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? [Shall] tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Jacob is not the same person, physically or spiritually as he was when he last crossed over this area

He acknowledges all that God has done for him and his great need for a savior.
He's crying out for God to save his family.

Reminds God, "FOR YOU SAID" you will surely treat me well.

Reminds God of the Abrahamic promise

that God personally extended to him when he was first on the run from Esau to Laban

He camps there that night

Interesting plan...whatever animals come close, those must be the ones God wants me to give to Esau

He truly trusted God, even in this illogical plan, that everything he had was from God, so no matter how many he had to give up, it was worth it.

He was willing to lose it all to protect his family because he knew it all came from God.

That God was his real provision. That God gave him all these anyway even when he got the short end of stick with Laban in the old deals.

:16-21

Having his servants go out in groups with space between them. Waves of blessing instead of waves of attack. Hoping to kill him with kindness so to speak.

Your servant Jacob's A present

Hoping to soften Esau up, that whatever illwill would be pacified by wave after wave of gift and humility saying that Esau is the one in charge.

The older brother is the older brother. That although Jacob usurped the birthright, he acknowledges his brother as the older.

I will appease him with the present that goes before me, **and afterward I will see his face; perhaps he will accept me.**"

Perhaps he will accept me...can you picture this? Can you imagine how he must be feeling? All that he is going through at this moment? Everything is culminating in these moments. The past few decades of trouble cut off, returning to the first few decades of trouble, worried for his family and his life, his livelihood, his relationship with his brother...

Pro 18:19 NKJV - A brother offended [is harder to win] than a strong city, And contentions [are] like the bars of a castle.

Jacob stayed back again.

Have you ever experienced that? Sent a letter, left a voicemail, did your best to try and make things right...and now you're just hanging back, seeing what happens, what will come in the morning.

All because he was seeking God first. Doing what God told him to do. To make things right. To go back. To face his past.

God had a plan and a purpose. Jacob couldn't inherit the promise of God unless he follow God back to where he was supposed to be...but his brother and 400 men were between here and there.

:22-24

He sent his family over the brook that night. A big deal with no bridge.

Thinking of the Skalkaho Creek behind our house

Jacob was left alone again

I'll bet he felt alone in this situation. No one but God to help him. Even with all he had, his plans in place, he knew it was only God who could deliver him.

It's good to get everything set as much as you can, but also to get that time alone with God.

A Man wrestled with him

Christophany

But again, Jacob having some serious spiritual things going on his life.

Would you ever think the deceiver would be so involved in the spiritual?

His dream, his prayers, children being born to his barren wives, and sticks/speckled/spotted, the altar, the angels ministering, and now this, wrestling with God

man, male (in contrast to woman, female)

husband

human being, person (in contrast to God)

servant

mankind

champion

great man

Wrestle, grapple, get dusty

Grappling, in hand-to-hand combat, is the act of gripping or seizing the opponent, as in wrestling.[1] Grappling is used at close range to gain a physical advantage such as improving

relative position, or to cause injury to the opponent. Grappling covers techniques used in many disciplines, styles and martial arts that are practiced both as combat sports and for self-defense. Grappling contests often involve takedowns and ground control, and may end when a contestant concedes defeat, also known as a submission or **tap out**.

It says A MAN WRESTLED WITH HIM
Jesus showed up for just this purpose.

It's good to wrestle with God about the problems going on, the struggles, the doubts, the fears, the concerns, the problems at hand, our families, drama, ... all night if need be.

It's better to trust, but God will get down and dirty with us if it's where we're at

"You know everything yet you listen
 Through my anxious thoughts with compassion"

:25-28

Getting Jacob to tap out

Dawn was approaching. Interesting that these spiritual things were happening at night and Jesus had other things to do that day, or perhaps didn't want to be seen by anyone else.

He could have touched his hip at any point to make Jacob tap out...but he waited until the last minute. God could easily overpower us, destroy us at any moment, but he wrestles with us. He pursues us. He puts up with us. Yet, he is kind to us. He condescends to our level.

He gets down and dirty, dusty on the ground with the ones he made out of the dust of the ground.

Telling my kids I have to go back to work, I can't play anymore. Not letting go of me.

Can you hear the desperation in Jacob's voice? The pleading? Please God! I can't face today unless you bless me. I can't go on. I can't deal with this. Please take care of us God.

Perhaps he still hadn't learned complete trust (like when God promised to care for him during the dream but Jacob said if you prove yourself to me, when i come back here I will). **But that's exactly why God had him in this situation.**

What is your name? God knew Jacob's name, but he was about to show and do in Jacob something powerful. He asked for a blessing, and this was it.

Deceiver, heal catcher...to governed by God

Self-willed, to spirit led

He prevailed with God, with the birthright, with Laban, with Esau (although he didn't know it yet)

:29-32

Tell me your name I pray

He knew it was God, or maybe he thought it was an angel (messenger) of God, but he needed to know

Why is that you ask about my name? Don't you know who I AM, Jacob?

Jhn 14:7-11 NKJV - "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him." Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own [authority]; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. "Believe Me that I [am] in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.

Peniel - facing God

Jacob realized that was God himself. In the flesh.

God and man.

Exo 33:20 NKJV - But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live."

And he survived. Moses hid in the cleft of the rock and god passed by and we think of him as being a great man of God...but Jacob wrestled. Saw God face to face. As Abraham did when he met God before S&G destroyed

God wants us to see his face. He doesn't want us to be killed. He wants to be personal, intimate with us. He will show up all night during times of trouble. He makes time for us.

Jacob Named that crossing Penuel.

But he walks with a limp.

Interesting that the tradition was to not eat the hip muscle that God shrank in Jacob.

It's funny what traditions come out of truly spiritual moments. And it wasn't a command of God to not eat that...perhaps we remember and take away the wrong things from spiritual times.

But sincerely...

Luk 18:9-14 NKJV - Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men--extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. 'I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' "And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise [his] eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified [rather] than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

When we truly seek God, we may end up wrestling with him...or rather Him with us

Jacob saw God and lived, but he now had a limp. He no longer could trust in his flesh, and in fact his flesh got in the way. (Paul and the thorn...)

When we truly meet with God, our dignity will suffer, perhaps our lives will become handicapped to what they could have been (sacrificed a business, a career, a relationship, reputation among the world)

Our names and personalities will be changed.

We will be forever identified with God.

We will get up justified.

We will limp away blessed.

The situation wasn't over...but Jacob had all that he needed.