

A Word from Kathy

We all make plans, but if they do not match God's plan, then we will never enjoy the fulfilled life that God intended. In the two chapters we are reading this week, we see Jacob arrive at a place where he must get to know God in a new way, as El Elohe Israel. He had met God when he was at Bethel, many years before, as the God of Abraham and Isaac. But now God desires to work in Jacob and change him into the patriarch God knows he can be. God often sees in us what we cannot see in ourselves. Pray as you read these chapters over and ask God to move in a new way in your heart and life.

Observation

1. Verse 1 says Jacob met the angels of God while he was camped. Why do you believe God sent angels to Jacob?
We may not be able to say definitively what God's reason was, but we can certainly see how it affected Jacob. What did he call this place?
2. What emotions do you believe Jacob might have been struggling with when he thought about meeting Esau again?
3. What prized possessions had Jacob cheated and deceived to gain (Gen. 27:1-41)?
4. What feelings had Esau expressed the last time they were together?
5. Jacob sent messengers ahead to find Esau. How were they to refer to Jacob? How were they to refer to Esau?
6. When Jacob's messengers returned, what news did they give him (Vs. 6)?
What did his imagination do with this news (Vs. 7)?
7. What two steps did Jacob take to try to save some of his family and herds?
8. Read Jacob's prayer in verses 9-12; what does he remind God of as he prayed?
9. When our prayers are based on God's promises, what can we be sure of?

10. While Jacob was camped that night, he decided to send gifts to Esau.

Fill in the blanks with the gifts he sent Esau.

Herds

#1	_____	_____
#2	_____	_____
#3	_____	_____
#4	_____	_____
#5	_____	_____

11. What specific instructions does he give his servants concerning these gifts?

How are they instructed them to refer to Jacob?

How are they instructed to refer to Esau?

12. Jacob has given Esau some time to adjust to the idea of his return; he has prayed and asked God to bless him and his descendants when they meet Esau, and he has showered Esau with gifts. What is left to be done?

13. Jacob sent his family across the Jabbok, and he spent the night alone. What does the scripture say he did all night?

14. The truth is, Jacob had been wrestling with God all his life. What were God's plans for Jacob even before he was born (Gen. 25:23)?

Genesis 33

15. Who does Jacob see coming in the morning, and who is with him?

16. What does Jacob do to try to protect his family, flocks and herds?

17. What does Jacob do when he meets Esau face to face?

18. What surprise does Jacob get when Esau comes near?

19. What was Esau's response to the gifts from Jacob?

20. Esau was ready to have Jacob home. Typical of an older brother, Esau wants to protect Jacob as he finishes his journey, but what does Jacob instruct him to do? What truth has Jacob learned? The brothers once again separate, but what is different this time?
21. What does Jacob do while he is in Shechem?
22. What does El Elohe Israel mean?

Application

23. Jacob has been delivered from his 20+years with Laban and his deceitful ways. He has traveled many miles to return as God had instructed him. But he still has several lessons to learn. Have you been in a difficult trial for a long period of time? Do you hear God calling you? Are you, like Jacob, seeing there are still many lessons that God is trying to teach you? Are you afraid of what might await you? Jacob had every reason to be afraid, but God had gone before him. God has no favorite children. God went before him and with him in all that lay ahead. Read the verses below and meditate on them for awhile.

Prov. 16:7 When a man's ways are pleasing to the LORD, he makes even his enemies live at peace with him.

Prov. 16:20 Whoever gives heed to instruction prospers, and blessed is he who trusts in the LORD.

Prov. 28:26 He who trusts in himself is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom is kept safe.

Prov. 29:25 Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe.

Prov. 30:5 "Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

24. Have you ever been alone and wrestled with God over an issue of obedience to His lordship?
25. Jacob tried to manipulate the events of his life instead of allowing God to orchestrate his will. What plans does God have for your life? Jer. 29:11-14 *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. 12 Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. 13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. 14 I will be found by you," declares the LORD,..."*

Read Ps. 139 also. It is a Psalm written by King David

Are you ever afraid to let others get to know you for fear that if they knew you completely they would not like you? We do not have to fear this with God. God already knows everything about us. He not only knows us, but he loves us. God is everywhere all the time; he is omnipresent. He sees us; we can never be lost from his sight. This should give us great comfort. We have been created in his likeness and his image. We are of great value

to him. We are not junk. We have been wonderfully created by the Sovereign God of the universe. In Ps. 139:23-24, David asks God to search him and show him anything that was offensive in his life and heart so that he could confess it and forsake it and purify himself before God. Why not make this your prayer also today. Ask God to reveal any sin in your heart or thoughts so that you can forsake it and live for Him. God made some changes in Jacob that night. It is very significant that Jacob had his name changed. Any time God changed a name, it was for a specific purpose and blessing. God wanted Jacob to see himself in a different light. He was no longer Jacob "the deceiver," but Israel "God prevails." I do not know what is going on in your heart and life, but if you are struggling with the Lord, he will meet you too and make the changes needed if you will let him.

26. When Esau ran to embrace Jacob and threw his arms around him, kissed him, and wept, what did Jacob know for sure in his heart?

27. Is there anything as sweet as forgiveness?

There are few feelings a wonderful as when we think we are going to get judgment and we receive mercy.

28. Jacob had learned that he could safely trust in God and His plan.

Read Romans 8:28-39; what do these verses say to the child of God?

Rom. 8:28-39 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. 29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified. 31 What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? 33 Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? 36 As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.