

- Sitting here with all of you facing me, looking at me with **anticipation for instructions** and to be fed honestly feels like a **real responsibility** because it is **life or death**,
- What if i give you a wrong instruction?
- You really do look like sheep... No insult intended. But **can you imagine how it looked for Moses** standing on the mountain and seeing hundreds of thousands of people and the burden was his..... But he had God with him.
- And we will see that **Jacob was a changed man** after his encounter with God and he immediately began to step up in his role as a good shepherd. **He looked at his people and saw the responsibility is his**. But he was a typical human who **did not always get it right**, we see him imitate those he looked upto, **Jacob imitates Abraham just like isaac** did before him.
- Children imitate their **parents and grandparents** so it is important to teach our children rightly. **I dont have children**, but i joined this church and therefore as an adult the children of the church is **my responsibility**, so i realised something... I need to **stop being childish** if I am going to teach children rightly... As adults we need to **put away childish things**, yet we still need to retain the **faith like a child's to get into Heaven** because that is what Jesus said to us.... So we can also **learn from these little Children** something that can save us.

RECAP

Last week we saw how Jacob wrestled all night with God face to face because God came to visit Jacob in an observable form, as a Man - and God blessed Jacob, because Jacob endured throughout even after God touched his hip causing it to become dislocated - so God blessed Jacob. But I want us to look briefly at what happened before God visited Jacob to wrestle with him.

You see, Jacob had just been chased by his angry father in law Laban who was behind him, and this bothered Jacob so God showed Jacob something amazing, God showed Jacob that on God's instruction he had a whole host of angels surrounding him! God had angels behind Jacob and in front of Jacob. This means God went before Jacob and after him. Jacob was truly protected. And just like Jacob you also have angels protecting you, children are very precious to God, and Jesus said **"a child's angel always sees the face of My Father who is in heaven"**. - so you are blessed.

Now Jacob must have been close to 100 years old and wanted to go and see his brother Esau, just as God instructed him to. So Jacob sent messengers ahead of him to go to his brother Esau to let him know he is coming, but when his servants returned they said to him "your brother Esau is also on his way to you with 400 men!" and Jacob got scared. Despite having seen how he was protected by God, that an entire host of Angels were surrounding him he still feared what man can do to him. Jacob feeling in despair turns to God in Prayer. It is often the last thing we do when it should be the first...

- 11 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.

What I love about this prayer is that it shows how Jacob was learning to care for his family, he cared about the mothers with children. But what I love even more is how God answered this prayer in a way Jacob never imagined. Jacob wanted to see Esau **face to face and be accepted**, because we read later that he sends a gift of animals to Esau and 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 Jacob sought peace, and if we remember, Jesus said **"Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God."** But what Jacob did not expect was that God would come and speak to Jacob face to face, and Jacob got the acceptance of God and bless him.... Now after this event, Jacob becomes a changed man. We see that Jacob declares **"For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved"**.

If I was Jacob, even with a dodgy hip I would now be thinking "I have seen God face to face and I am alive, what have I got to worry about, Esau is not a problem, what can man do to me? I have God's blessing" - So from this moment on I do not believe Jacob feared Esau. Jacob had nothing to fear anymore because God is greater than Esau and God accepted him. God is greater than all of us, **He is greater than you Chloe, and you Kaitlin, He is greater than everyone.** God made us!

CHAPTER 33

- 1 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.
  - 2 And he put the maidservants and their children in front, Leah and her children behind, and Rachel and Joseph last.
- By dividing his people into groups and putting some ahead of others Jacob is actually **imitating what he saw God doing** with the host of angels we mentioned earlier. Jacob was learning how to be organised, responsible and caring as a shepherd and he recognised the people with him were given to him by God.

But in what manner will Esau greet Jacob? With revenge in his heart? Or will he meet Jacob and show mercy?

## CHAPTER 33

- 3 Then he crossed over before them and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother. Jacob was being very humble and he kept bowing all the way until they were close enough to one another to touch. He understood he is in Esau's territory, so he honored Esau as a king. Jacob was not yet in Canaan where God had instructed him to go as he still needed to reach the river Jordan and cross over.
- 4 But Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept. Jacob must have wondered if Esau ran to kill him, but we see how God went far and beyond in answering Jacobs prayer. God met Jacob face to face and accepted Jacob, but now he allows Jacob to meet Esau face to face and be accepted by his brother, tears were flowing after so many years of being apart, after having departed in such a bitter way but now embracing each other with open arms and a kiss.
- 5 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." Because Jacob learned to recognise that all he has is a gift from God, his wives are a gift from God and little Children are a gift from God.
- 6 Then the maidservants came near, they and their children, and bowed down.
- 7 And Leah also came near with her children, and they bowed down. Afterward Joseph and Rachel came near, and they bowed down. And so we see how Jacobs wives and Children imitate their husband and father and how Jacob is learning to lead by example to be a wise and good leader and father of a multitude.
- 8 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."
- 9 But Esau said, "I have enough, my brother; keep what you have for yourself."
- 10 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.** And I believe Jacob is recalling his prayer to God and recognises that Esau receiving him so graciously is an intervention of God and an answer to prayer. God that not so long ago had just been wrestling with Jacob face to face and accepted him. God gets the Glory.
- 11 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. By Esau taking this gift showed forgiveness and peace from what took place many years prior with the stealing of the birth right and blessing.

And we see Esau asking Jacob to travel with him to his own dwelling, but Jacob declines humbly, because he needs to care for his people. Esau makes another offer.

- 12 Then Esau said, "Let us take our journey; let us go, and I will go before you."
- 13 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.
- 14 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."
- 15 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." So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir. Esau was concerned for Jacob's welfare, but Jacob has no need for Esau's escort when he has a host of angels.
- 17 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 Eloe Israel.

Succoth to Shechem is only a days journey. Succoth is in Jordan on the wrong side of the river, but Shechem is in Canaan which is the land that Jacob was told to go. So what does Jacob do in **verse 17**? interestingly we see Jacob building a house and stables and so delaying his journey and this is exactly what I am saying about imitating your parents, because Abraham is his grandfather and Abraham was told to travel to Canaan just like Jacob and Abraham also delayed his Journey. **Genesis 12:6-7** Even more interesting is that Jacob goes to Shechem, because guess what? The first place Abraham went after entering Canaan was Shechem, and Abraham built an alter there, just like Jacob does right now. But praise God, Jacob eventually got there, Jacob eventually got back to Canaan and the story continues, because look at the size of this Bible... and we are only in the first book... the argument between Jacob and Esau ends, they are friends once again and the chapter has closure.