

Genesis 32

1 Angels are sent to minister to those who are to be heirs of salvation. Jacob is about to meet Jesus.

2 Fascinating! The camp of angels and his camp. Certainly this should have alleviated any fears he may have had. If God's army is here, what is Esau's 400 men? Is that why God allowed him to see them? Are they preparing him for his encounter with Jesus?

3-5 Butter him up and hope his attitude has changed or can be changed. Jacob is not going to try to get around seeing him, like he did with Laban. He is going directly to meet him and face his fear.

6 Where did he get all these guys? Are these his allies or his servants? Did he already take possession of his father's estate?

7 He is still not trusting the Lord or his word. Fear causes him to return to reliance upon self. The sight of the angels was not enough to allay his fears.

8 Scheming and planning, he is willing to sacrifice those who he is not as close to. He and Rachel are in the rear of the rear group. Come on Israel, go to the front!

9,10 His last resort is to pray. At least he knows enough to pray when you are afraid. Fear can bring out the honesty of our relation with God. He realizes that success has not been his scheming but the kindness and faithfulness of God. He does not have the attitude of "you can be my God" but that of "your unworthy servant". He remembers how much God has done for him in the face of all his self-centeredness. Is this his conversion experience? It is a new attitude.

11 Save me! Only God can. God will do more than spare their physical life.

12 He quotes God's promise to assure himself and to place before God His own words. That is a faith building prayer.

13-16 Another idea to soften him up. Since he stole the birthright, he would show that he was willing to share it with him. Actually this could have been restitution that the Spirit of God laid on his heart. What about all those nights out in the cold? He paid for these with his labor, but the abundance is the blessing of God. As a co-laborer with God he has the restitution for his past sin against Esau.

17-21 Jacob is ever the cunning planner, but He is about to meet One who is designs the future, the Sovereign Lord.

22-24 The Son of Man? A Christophany is the physical appearance of Christ on earth before the incarnation. The physical manifestation of God in human form is Christ Jesus. Did Christ limit his strength to be equal to Jacob's so that Jacob would be able to express his determination to be blessed. Israel as a nation did and does wrestle with God. They have been blessed but they are limping without accepting the Messiah. Jacob had been wrestling with God for 20yrs as God showed him his own heart in Laban. Jacob is now a broken man and we will see a very different person.

25 Just a touch to show his true power. The touch crippled him but made him more dependant upon God and less reliant upon self.

26-28 Overcome can be translated 'are enduring'. That is the sense of the imperfect tense. It is a work in progress. Israel has not defeated God but is enduring in his struggle with God (to be a changed person) and men (including Laban and self) and learning through it all. No longer the Deceiver, he is now the one who endures with God's dealings with him. A change of name implies a change of character.

29 So what is your character, he asks the Being? It was not time for the name of Jesus to be revealed.

30-32 Jews refer to Christophanies as the Prince of the Countenance. Since no one can see God who is Spirit, what is it that they see? Christ is the manifestation of the invisible God.