

## Genesis Chapter 33 Commentary

**1** And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids. **2** And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost. **3** And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother. **4** And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.

We see Esau, and his show of might (the four hundred men), coming, and we see the blessing of his father being fulfilled. *Ge 27:39-40; 39 "And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; 40 And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck."* Esau was given the blessings of the earth and has much earthly wealth. Esau was to live by the sword; therefore, coming with the company of four hundred men; is indicative of the greatness of power he has gained since Jacob left. We shall see the contrast in the two brothers in this chapter; Esau in earthliness and Israel (formerly Jacob) in godliness.

We remember in the previous chapter that Jacob divided his possession into two bands and sent them over the river. He sent over his wives and children so that he is last to go over the brook. He is changed by the angel from Jacob to Israel before he crosses over.

Now Israel puts himself in the front, not the back, and leads the way to meet Esau. The only thing ahead of him is that which he has sent as the gift for Esau, Jacob's peace offering, ahead of himself.

**"and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him"** It was a custom of the time to hug & kiss those whom you loved. If they were an enemy you didn't hug or kiss them. This indicated to Jacob that Esau has left off any qualms he may have had in the past. How could this have come to pass, you ask? Well, there is some scripture given that testifies how it came to be, seen in: *Pr 16:7 "When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."* We know that Jacob (Israel) is a different person than he was, when he departed from the presence of Esau. Jacob is now a changed man; who has yielded himself fully to God. God is, in return, fulfilling his promise to Jacob by protecting him, and giving him favor in the eyes of his brother Esau.

**5** And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, Who are those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant. **6** Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves. **7** And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves.

Esau meets Jacob's family for the first time. They have been separated for these twenty years.

**8** And he said, What meanest thou by all this drove which I met? And he said, These are to find grace in the sight of my lord. **9** And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself. **10** And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at

**my hand: for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me. 11 Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough. And he urged him, and he took it.**

**"As though I had seen the face of God."** Jacob gives Esau much stature in this statement, realizing that if Esau so chose, he may yet devour Jacob. However, this statement puts Esau in the setting that he recognizes that Jacob is subjecting himself unto him and he is in the place of judgment. Jacob is telling Esau; I see your face and I see favor in your eyes toward me, not the former hate when I fled from you. It is, in a manner, as pleasant a sight to me, as the sight of God himself, because in thy reconciled face, I see the face and favour of God thus manifested unto me.

In this age, if you accepted a gift from another, you were accepting that person and all that he has, and taking upon yourself the protection and care for them as long as you were together. This is why Jacob pressed Esau to take the gift; it was a sign of complete absolution of any wrong doing or feeling of hurt.

Remember our scripture text given earlier? **Pr 16:7 "When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."** When you think about it; it all makes sense. Esau only wanted the natural things that his father possessed to start with. He was not the Lord's chosen to whom the blessing was conferred, and since he possessed all that Isaac had, and recognized that Jacob wasn't there to take anything away, he was quite happy and content to leave the past in the past.

**12 And he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee. 13 And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me: and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die. 14 Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children be able to endure, until I come unto my lord unto Seir. 15 And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee some of the folk that are with me. And he said, What needeth it? let me find grace in the sight of my lord. 16 So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir.**

God has made, and manifested, peace between Esau and Israel (formerly Jacob). Esau generously offers to ride along with Israel and give him protection on their journey. Israel, knowing God is his protector, kindly refuses the offer with such reasonable humility, that Esau is forced to accept the refusal of his protection. Israel tells Esau, I will meet with you when I have made my journey to my destination.

**17 And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him an house, and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called Succoth. 18 And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padanaram; and pitched his tent before the city. 19 And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money.**

Jacob stopped at Succoth for a while and then journeyed on to Shalem, where he purchases property. I would remind us all; Jacob's vow to God was at Bethel, which is in the land of promise. Succoth and Shalem are not inside the boundaries of the land of promise. This reminds us; Jacob has got to move on down the road to fulfill his vow to God.

Although, this property that Jacob is purchasing is not in the land of promise boundaries, it is land that will be given to Israel on this side Jordan and occupied by Gad, Reuben, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

Why would Jacob purchase property, when the property was to be the possession of Israel? The promise of God is not to Israel (Jacob) personally, but rather, it is to Israel the nation. It will be many years before the nation Israel comes to possession, of this land of promise, as promised by God. Wherefore, until the time of the fulfilling of the promise from God, Jacob must purchase his own property.

This scenario gives us a prophetic picture of our salvation in time, versus our eternal salvation. Having to pay for the land here reminds us that our eternal salvation is free to us, but in this world we must "***purchase***" our possession by acting upon the promise of God, as we see in scripture in: ***Php 2:12*** "***Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.***" Christ has furnished us the land of promise, the church. Being born again by the power of God, just as Jacob was changed to Israel, we must take action to enter into the land of promise, believing that God has made a place for us there. Our salvation begins here on earth, but the free and full possession, of the land of promise, will not be manifested, until we reach the eternal land of promise as one body in Christ. This is the same picture as all of Israel, as a nation, entering the land of promise.

## **20 And he erected there an altar, and called it Elelohe-Israel.**

Israel is beginning to partially fulfill the vow he made as Jacob, when he left the land, seen in: ***Ge 28:20-22; 20 "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, 21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God: 22 And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."***

Jacob (now Israel) erects an altar, and establishes a visible view of his worship of God. Look at the name he gives the altar: Elelohe-Israel is from the Hebrew word 'El 'elohey Yisra'el (pronounced; ale el-o-hay' yis-raw-ale' and means; *the mighty God of Israel*. It is as though Israel has founded a church, such as Mars Hill, which is my church home today where I live. He is putting God on display as his God, and the one true and living God.

We notice that Jacob, in making his vow to God, begins a practice of giving voluntary tithes to God, in the amount of one tenth of all the blessings that God bestows upon him. I ask you this question, as I ask it of myself; do you voluntarily give one tenth of what God has blessed you with, back to God in some kind of service to God?

Take time for instance; do you devote at least one tenth of your life (each second, minute, hour, and day, of your life, is an amount of time given to you by God) to God in worship, and devotion of thanks, for his multitude of blessing in your life? Do you spend at least one tenth of the monetary gifts God bestows upon you to help others in need, such as the poor, the widows, and the orphans? There are many ways to tithe to God of what we possess, as demonstrated in scripture in: ***Mt 25:31-46; 31***

*"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 For I was an hungry, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. 37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungry, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. 41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 For I was an hungry, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: 43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. 44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungry, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? 45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. 46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."*

This giving of voluntary tithes can also be seen in living your spiritual, born again, lives. Are you blessing others by sharing what great things the Lord and Saviour has done for you? Are you sharing the revelations of God's word of truth to others? Are you being an encouragement to your brothers and sisters in Christ? Are you singing songs of praise and glory to God?

All these things are examples to us all, to many of which I can say that I have failed miserably, and these examples should serve as reprimands to us, to be more faithful in our service to our Saviour and Lord, Jesus, the Christ. God be praised for the continuation of pouring out blessings upon us in this life.

Praise the Lord for the land of promise, the church of Salvation by Grace, here in time! Praise the Lord, for the eternal hope of our eternal land of promise in heaven and immortal glory! Hallelujah! Praise ye the Lord!