



The Book of GENESIS

Chapter 31 – 32

“Independence, Idols & Israel”

Go for God!

Intro: In chapters 31 and 32 we have five “C’s” to overcome “CONFLICTS”:

Chapter 31 – “Jacob, it’s Time to Go!”

> **“C” #1 – COUNSEL!** - (v1-13) Jacob it’s time to leave *“Return to your fathers and to your family, and I will be with.”*

- During the years of Jacob’s servitude, Jacob sees God’s hand of **provision and protection** upon him; in verse 7, *“but God did not allow him to hurt me.”* (New Testament relevance 1 Peter 2:15-25.)

- In verse 9 we discover that **God is our provider!** **Colossians 3:22-25** – *Bondservants (employees), obey in all things your masters (employers) according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. **And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.** But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality.*

- **Jacob listens to God’s voice and responds to God’s counsel, Jacob is becoming a man of faith.**

> **“C” #2 – CONFRONTATION!** - (v14-32) Jacob and his family leave secretly, this again is a character flaw, Jacob continues to fear man instead of fully trusting God. In life it’s best to be upfront with people, confront the situation, whereas to resolve the issues.

> **“C” #3 – CORRECTION!** - (v33-42) Jacob gets fired up and let’s Laban have it regarding his deception, greed, and treatment of him for twenty years. You go Jacob! Jacob also knows and reveals that God has been with him through it all.

> **“C” #4 – COVENANT!** - (v43-55) Jacob and Laban make a covenant of separation. Laban call’s the place *Jegar Sahdutha*, which is Aramaic for “*a heap of witness*”; Jacob call’s the place Galeed in Hebrew, which is “*a heap of witness*”. **“Mizpah”** literally means *watchtower*, for God has watched this covenant between Jacob and Laban.

After this event Jacob goes and worships God through sacrifice and gathers his people together.

> **“C” #5 – CONSECRATION - Chapter 32 – “Jacob becomes Israel”**

(v1-6) Angels meet Jacob on the journey back home, he says *“This is God’s camp”* and the place he named *Mahanaim*, which means *two hosts or bands*, the visible band, Jacob and his servants; the invisible band God’s angels.

(v7-12) Fear, the unknown, and desperation has a way of breaking a man; not breaking him to destroy him, but to make him into the man of God he should be. **Here we see Jacob in heartfelt prayer, calling upon God and depending upon His promises.**

- Let’s learn from Jacob’s prayer:

(v9a) *Jacob prays to the only true God of His Fathers, Abraham and Isaac!*

(9b) *Jacob remembers God’s counsel!*

(10a) *Jacob comes to God in humble repentance!*

(v10b) *Jacob knows the character of God, He is merciful and true!*

(v11) *Jacob knows that God is his deliverer and only hope!*

(v12) *Jacob asks God to keep His promises!*

(v13-21) **Jacob is attempting to persuade, purchase if you will, peace with his brother Esau.**

(v22-32) **Jacob is 97 years old engaging in all night wrestling match with a Man.** Who's he wrestling with? In verse 28 the wrestler says *"Your name shall no longer be called Jacob ("supplanter"), but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed."*

- The name **ISRAEL** has been interpreted by different scholars as *"prince with God," "he strives with God," "let God rule,"* or *"God strives."* The name **"ISRAEL"** was later applied to the descendants of Jacob, the **HEBREW or JEWISH people**. The twelve tribes were called *"Israelites," "children of Israel,"* and *"house of Israel,"* identifying them clearly as the descendants of Israel through his sons and grandsons

(v30) **Peniel means "the face of God"** – C.I. Scofield writes, "The concept of seeing the face of God is not always the same in Scripture. In Exodus 33:20 God said to Moses, *"You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live,"* but at that time God did reveal Himself to Moses by a manifestation of His glory.

- When Jacob said that he had seen the LORD face to face, he simply meant that he had looked upon a divine Being, the **Angel of the LORD**, not that he beheld God in all of His resplendent glory, which no man could look upon, even as we cannot look upon the sun without being blinded.

- All these passages imply, which culminates in man beholding the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (cp. Ps. 27:8)."

- **John MacArthur** writes, *"The site name, Peniel, or "face of God,"* given by Jacob (v. 30) and the commentary given by Hosea (Hos. 12:4) identifies this Man with whom Jacob wrestled as the **Angel of the Lord** who is also identified as God, a **pre-incarnate appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ . . .**

- Jacob's personal name changed from one meaning *"heel-catcher" or "deceiver"* to one meaning *"God's fighter" or "he struggles with God"* (cf. 35:10). . . An amazing evaluation of what Jacob had accomplished, i.e., emerging victorious from the struggle.

- **In the record of Jacob's life, "struggle" did indeed dominate:**

1) with his brother Esau (chaps. 25–27);

2) with his father (chap. 27);

3) with his father-in-law (chaps. 29–31);

4) with his wives (chap. 30); and 5) with God at Peniel (v. 28). "

- **What are your struggles? If you stay with God you will PREVAIL!**

- Jacob has been personally and physically touched by God for now he walks with a limp, because of the shrunken hip muscle, a walk that memorializes his new life with God.

- **How about you?** Can you think of a moment in your life that may have solidified your walk of faith! Things will happen in life, good and bad, either you will draw close to Christ in greater dependency, or you will walk away from God in utter despondency. Make the right choice, trust God and follow Jesus Christ!

Conclusion: Let's finish with Paul's example in 2 Corinthians Ch. 4.