

Whom Are You Fighting?

Genesis 32:1- 33:20

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What will we learn?

- ❖ We all strive for significance.
- ❖ God is the only source of ultimate blessing.
- ❖ A loving God opposes rebels.
- ❖ We encounter God alone.
- ❖ God's people achieve victory through weakness.
- ❖ When we surrender to God, he fights for us.

Chiasm (first part)

Conflict w/ Esau (25:19-34; 27:1-45; 27:46-28:9)

❖ Jacob and God at Bethel (28:10-22)

❖ Conflict w/ Laban (29:1-30)

❖ Birth of the children (29:31-30:24)

Chiasm (last part)

- ❖ Birth of the children (29:31-30:24)
- ❖ Conflict/covenant w/ Laban (30:25-31:55)
- ❖ Jacob and God at Penu'el (32:22-32)
- ❖ Reconciliation w/ Esau (32:3-21; 33:1-17)

Genesis 32-33

- ❖ Jacob fears Esau (32:1-21)
- ❖ Jacob wrestles with “a man” (32:22-32)
- ❖ Jacob meets Esau (33:1-20)

Genesis 32:1-2

Jacob also went on his way, and the angels of God met him. When Jacob saw them, he said, "This is the camp of God!" So he named that place Mahanaim.

Genesis 28:12

He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

Psalm 34:4-5

I sought the Lord, and he answered me;
he delivered me from all my fears.
Those who look to him are radiant;
their faces are never covered with shame.

Psalm 34:6-8

This poor man called, and the LORD heard him;
he saved him out of all his troubles.
The angel of the LORD encamps around those
who fear him,
and he delivers them.
Taste and see that the LORD is good;
blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.

Genesis 32:3

Jacob sent messengers ahead of him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom.

Genesis 32:4-5

He instructed them: "This is what you are to say to my lord Esau: 'Your servant Jacob says, I have been staying with Laban and have remained there till now. I have cattle and donkeys, sheep and goats, male and female servants. Now I am sending this message to my lord, that I may find favor in your eyes.'"

Genesis 32:6

When the messengers returned to Jacob, they said, “We went to your brother Esau, and now he is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him.”

Genesis 32:7-8

In great fear and distress Jacob divided the people who were with him into two groups, and the flocks and herds and camels as well. He thought, "If Esau comes and attacks one group, the group that is left may escape."

Genesis 32:9

Then Jacob prayed, “O God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, LORD, you who said to me, ‘Go back to your country and your relatives, and I will make you prosper,’

Genesis 32:10

“I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servant. I had only my staff when I crossed this Jordan, but now I have become two camps.

Genesis 32:11-12

“Save me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau, for I am afraid he will come and attack me, and also the mothers with their children. But you have said, ‘I will surely make you prosper and will make your descendants like the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted.’”

Genesis 28:13

There above it stood the LORD, and he said:
“I am the LORD, the God of your father
Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give
you and your descendants the land
on which you are lying.

Genesis 28:14

“Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring.

Genesis 28:15

“I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.”

Genesis 28:20-21

Then Jacob made a vow, saying, “If God will be with me and will watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear so that I return safely to my father’s household, then the LORD will be my God

Genesis 28:22

“and this stone that I have set up as a pillar
will be God’s house, and of all that
you give me I will give you a tenth.”

Genesis 32:13-15

He spent the night there, and from what he had with him he selected a gift for his brother Esau: two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, thirty female camels with their young, forty cows and ten bulls, and twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys.

Genesis 32:16

He put them in the care of his servants, each herd by itself, and said to his servants, "Go ahead of me, and keep some space between the herds."

Genesis 32:17-18

He instructed the one in the lead: “When my brother Esau meets you and asks, ‘Who do you belong to, and where are you going, and who owns all these animals in front of you?’ then you are to say, ‘They belong to your servant Jacob. They are a gift sent to my lord Esau, and he is coming behind us.’”

Genesis 32:19-20

He also instructed the second, the third and all the others who followed the herds: "You are to say the same thing to Esau when you meet him. And be sure to say, 'Your servant Jacob is coming behind us.'" For he thought, "I will pacify him with these gifts I am sending on ahead; later, when I see him, perhaps he will receive me."

Genesis 32:21

So Jacob's gifts went on ahead of him, but he himself spent the night in the camp.



Genesis 32:22-23

That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two female servants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions.

Genesis 32:24-25

So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man.

Hebrew wordplay:

- ❖ Jacob
- ❖ wrestle
- ❖ Jabbok

Genesis 32:26-27

Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak." But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." The man asked him, "What is your name?" "Jacob," he answered.

Jacob's struggles:

- ❖ Isaac
- ❖ Esau
- ❖ Laban
- ❖ God

Genesis 32:28-29

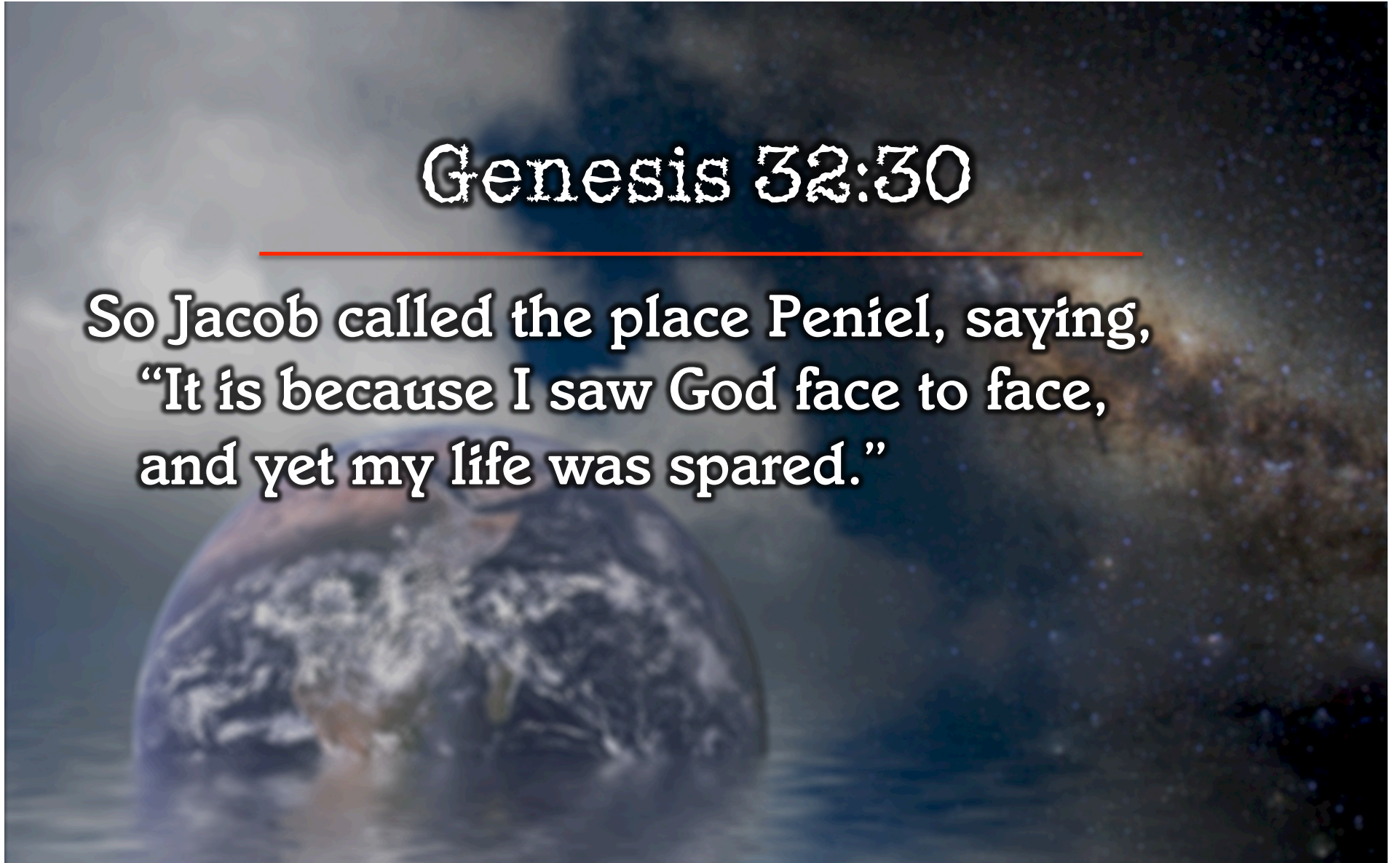
Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome." Jacob said, "Please tell me your name." But he replied, "Why do you ask my name?" Then he blessed him there.

What's in a name?

- ❖ Jacob = heel-grabber, supplanter, deceiver
- ❖ Israel = God fights, striver with God, prince of God

Genesis 32:30

So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying,
“It is because I saw God face to face,
and yet my life was spared.”



Genesis 32:31-32

The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel, and he was limping because of his hip. Therefore to this day the Israelites do not eat the tendon attached to the socket of the hip, because the socket of Jacob's hip was touched near the tendon.



C. S. Lewis:

“God whispers to us in our pleasures,
speaks to us in our conscience,
but shouts in our pains.”

Genesis 33:1-2

Jacob looked up and there was Esau, coming with his four hundred men; so he divided the children among Leah, Rachel and the two female servants. He put the female servants and their children in front, Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph in the rear.

Genesis 33:3

He himself went on ahead and bowed down to the ground seven times as he approached his brother.

Genesis 33:4-5

But Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; he threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. And they wept. Then Esau looked up and saw the women and children. "Who are these with you?" he asked. Jacob answered, "They are the children God has graciously given your servant."

Genesis 33:6-7

Then the female servants and their children approached and bowed down. Next, Leah and her children came and bowed down. Last of all came Joseph and Rachel, and they too bowed down.

Genesis 33:8-9

Esau asked, “What’s the meaning of all these flocks and herds I met?” “To find favor in your eyes, my lord,” he said. But Esau said, “I already have plenty, my brother. Keep what you have for yourself.”

Genesis 25:23

The LORD said to her,

“Two nations are in your womb,
and two peoples from within you will be separated;
one people will be stronger than the other,
and the older will serve the younger.”

Genesis 27:29

[Isaac to Jacob]:

“May nations serve you
and peoples bow down to you.

Be lord over your brothers,

and may the sons of your mother bow down to you.

May those who curse you be cursed

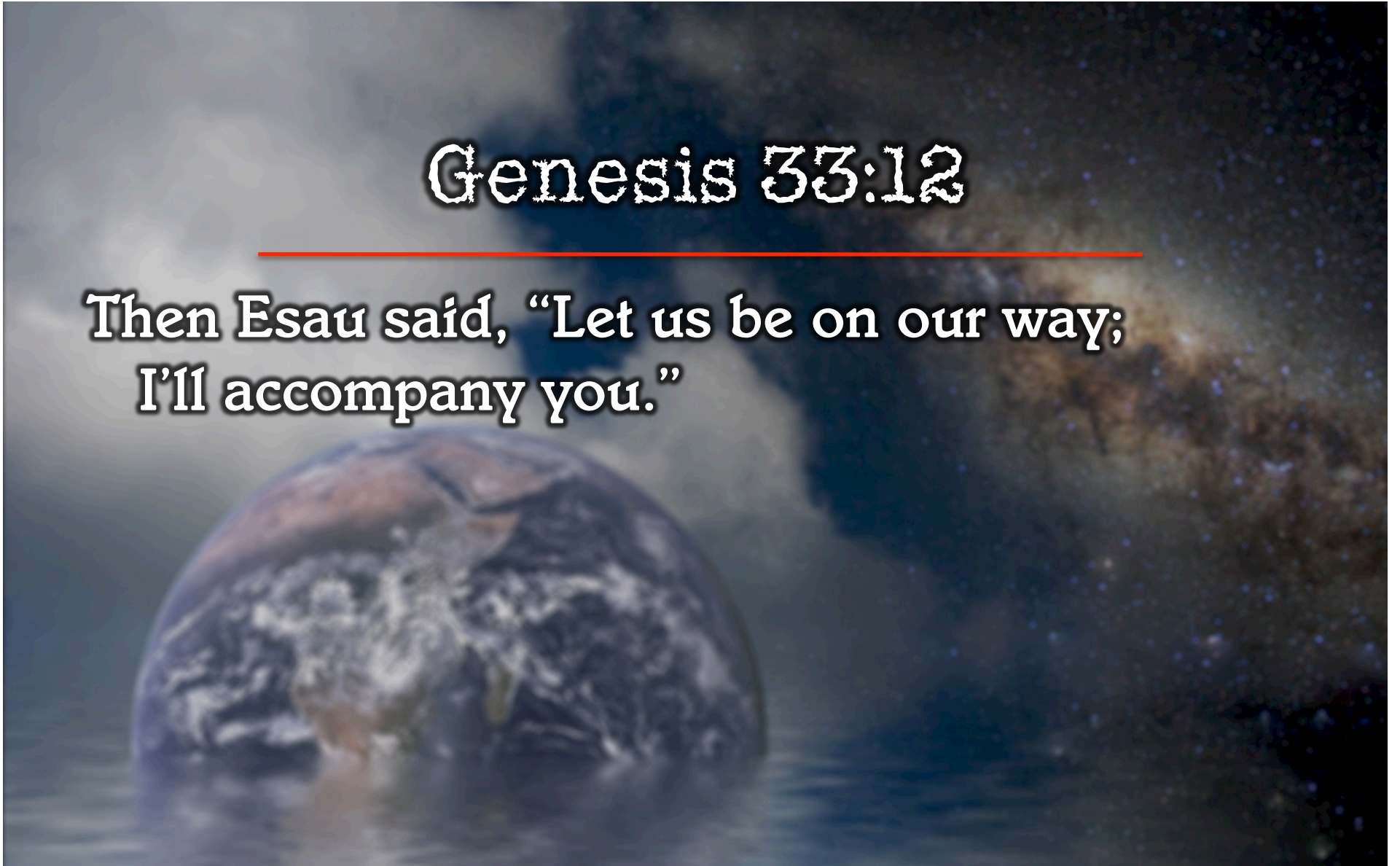
and those who bless you be blessed.”

Genesis 33:10-11

“No, please!” said Jacob. “If I have found favor in your eyes, accept this gift from me. For to see your face is like seeing the face of God, now that you have received me favorably. Please accept the present that was brought to you, for God has been gracious to me and I have all I need.”
And because Jacob insisted, Esau accepted it.

Genesis 33:12

Then Esau said, "Let us be on our way;
I'll accompany you."



Genesis 33:13

But Jacob said to him, “My lord knows that the children are tender and that I must care for the ewes and cows that are nursing their young. If they are driven hard just one day, all the animals will die.

Genesis 33:14

“So let my lord go on ahead of his servant, while I move along slowly at the pace of the flocks and herds before me and the pace of the children, until I come to my lord in Seir.”

Genesis 33:15

Esau said, "Then let me leave some of my men with you." "But why do that?" Jacob asked. "Just let me find favor in the eyes of my lord."

Genesis 33:16-17

So that day Esau started on his way back to Seir. Jacob, however, went to Sukkoth, where he built a place for himself and made shelters for his livestock. That is why the place is called Sukkoth.

Genesis 33:18-20

After Jacob came from Paddan Aram, he arrived safely at the city of Shechem in Canaan and camped within sight of the city. For a hundred pieces of silver, he bought from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, the plot of ground where he pitched his tent. There he set up an altar and called it El Elohe Israel.

1 John 4:20-21

Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.

Galatians 3:14

He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

What have we learned?

- ❖ We all strive for significance.
- ❖ God is the only source of ultimate blessing.
- ❖ A loving God opposes rebels.
- ❖ We encounter God alone.
- ❖ God's people achieve victory through weakness.
- ❖ When we surrender to God, he fights for us.



Are you being called?

- ❖ To receive Christ
- ❖ To become a member of Melbourne Community Church
- ❖ To pray / to receive prayer
- ❖ To affirm or reaffirm a commitment
- ❖ To receive the LORD's Supper