



Lesson 25

JACOB IS RECONCILED WITH ESAU

Story Elements

- **TEXT:** Gen. 33:1-20
- **Setting:** circa 1800 B.C. in modern-day Jordan, near Jabbok (now known as Zarqa River)
- **Main Characters:** God, Jacob, and Esau
- **Plot:** Jacob is peacefully reconciled with his estranged brother Esau.
- **Key word(s):** “_____” (vv 8, 10, 15)
- **Climax:** *Genesis 33:3 And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.*

Reunion

- 1) (vv 1-2) Having spent the previous night wrestling with an angel (Hos. 12:4), Jacob pressed on towards Canaan. On the horizon, he sees Esau approaching with ___ men.
 - a) He prepared for the dreaded reunion by dividing his family into three groups: the handmaids in the front, Leah in the middle, and Rachel in the back. We catch a glimpse of _____ place of privilege by his being placed in the very back.
 - b) By so ordering his family, Jacob covers all bases: if things get violent, his wives have a better chance of _____; if things become friendly, the families will be introduced in ascending order.
- 2) (v 3) As Esau approached, Jacob bowed himself down ___ times. Jacob was wise, and he knew that in spite of his birthright it was best to approach Esau as a subordinate.

Proverbs 15:1 A soft answer turneth away wrath: But grievous words stir up anger.

Reconciliation

- 3) (v 4) Esau ran to meet Jacob, and the two brothers embraced and wept. Their twenty-one years of estrangement had ended. God had answered Jacob’s prayers and made his brother a _____ again. Truly, Jacob had “power with God and with men, and hadst prevailed.” (cf. 33:28)
- 4) (vv 5-7) Then Jacob introduced his family to Esau, beginning with the handmaidens, and ending with _____ and Joseph.
- 5) (vv 8-11) Esau asked about the gifts that were sent ahead (see 32:13-20) and indicated his reluctance to receive them.
 - a) Jacob insisted that Esau take the gifts, saying, “...receive my present at my hand: for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of _____...”

- i) This phrase alludes to what Jacob said in the previous chapter after wrestling with the angel: “I have seen God face to face, and my life is _____.” (33:30)
 - ii) I understand this to mean that just as Jacob had seen God face to face and lived, so he had seen _____ face to face and lived. It was in the first meeting that the second meeting was possible – first Jacob prevailed with God, and then he prevailed with man. (cf. 33:28)
- b) After a gracious back-and-forth, Esau agreed to accept Jacob’s generosity.
- 6) (vv 12-17) The brothers had become so united in heart that Esau wanted Jacob to travel with him back to his home in _____, but Jacob declined and stayed in a place he named Succoth.

Renewal

- 7) (v 18) After staying in Succoth, Jacob relocated in _____, which lies about 65 miles north of Jerusalem.
- 8) (v 19) In Shechem, Jacob purchased a field for one hundred pieces of money. On that property he erected an altar and named it Elelohe-Israel, which means “God the God of Israel.” Though not stated in the text, we presume Jacob offered unto God a _____ of all his substance on the altar. (cf. 28:20-22) In this way, Jacob renewed his vow that “then shall the LORD be my God.” (28:21)

Application

- 9) Jacob prevailed with God and with men – not through deception or trickery – but through _____. No person can know God without first becoming acquainted with humility. Even salvation is first brought to the soul through humble, repentant faith.

James 4:6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

- 10) We see Jacob’s humility by how he ascribed every blessing to God’s _____, including his children (v 5) and material possessions (v 11).

Answer Key

Key word(s): grace | 1) 400; a) Joseph’s; b) survival | 2) seven | 3) friend | 4) Rachel | 5) a) God i) preserved; ii) Esau | 6) Mt. Seir | 7) Shechem | 8) Tithe | 9) humility | 10) grace