

# The Crippling that Crowns

Genesis 32:1 And **Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.** 2 And when Jacob saw them, he said, This *is* **God's host:** and he called the name of that place Mahanaim. 3 And **Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau** his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom. 4 And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; **Thy servant Jacob** saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now: 5 And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, **that I may find grace in thy sight.** 6 And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother **Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.** 7 Then **Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed:** and he divided the people that *was* with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands; 8 And said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape. 9 **And Jacob**

**said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me,** Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: **10 I am not worthy** of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. **11 Deliver me,** I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, *and* the mother with the children. **12 And thou**

**saidst,** I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude. **13** And he lodged there that same night; and took of that which came to his hand **a present for Esau** his brother; **14** Two hundred she goats, and twenty he goats, two hundred ewes, and twenty rams, **15** Thirty milch camels with their colts, forty kine, and ten bulls, twenty she asses, and ten foals. **16** And he delivered *them* into the hand of his servants, every drove by themselves; and said unto his servants, Pass

over before me, and **put a space betwixt drove and drove.**

**17** And he commanded the foremost, saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose *art* thou? and whither goest thou? and whose *are* these before thee? **18** Then thou shalt say, *They be* thy servant Jacob's; *it is* a present sent unto my lord Esau: and, behold, also he *is* behind us. **19** And so commanded he the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying, On this manner shall ye speak unto Esau, when ye find him. **20** And say ye moreover, Behold, thy servant Jacob *is* behind us. For he said, **I will appease him with the present** that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; **peradventure he will accept of me.** **21** So went the present over before him: and himself lodged that night in the company. **22** And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two women servants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok. **23** And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had.

**24** And **Jacob was left alone;** and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. **25** And when he saw that **he prevailed not against him,** he touched the

hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. 26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. 27 And he said unto him, What *is* thy name? And he said, Jacob. 28 And he said, Thy name shall be called **no more Jacob, but Israel:** for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. 29 And Jacob asked *him*, and said, Tell *me*, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore *is* it *that* thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. 30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for **I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.** 31 And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and **he halted upon his thigh.** 32 Therefore the children of Israel eat not *of* the sinew which shrank, which *is* upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew that shrank.

- Jacob is on his way back home. He is afraid. He is glad to be free from Laban but now he must face his brother that he offended over 20 years before **Proverbs 18:19** **A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city: And their contentions are like the bars of a castle.**

- There are prayer lessons in this passage that we need to learn
- There is also a lesson about believing and acting on what we know. Jacob knows God is with him, sees the angels but still doubts
- Most of all Jacob needs to come to the end of himself and will
- You too are on your way and can fully expect for the man, Jesus, to grab you and wrestle with you until you are crippled

1. Jacob meets the angels and God's army **32:1** **And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.** **2** **And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host:** and he called the name of that place **Mahanaim.**

- a. Jacob meets the angels and realizes that God's army is there with him
- b. He even names the place where they are staying Mahanaim which means "double camp!"

- c. He realizes that he is not alone but that God's army is camped around him
- d. Obviously the God who told him to return to his land is with him
- e. He has nothing to fear **Romans 8:31** *What shall we then say to these things? If God **be** for us, who **can be** against us?*
- f. It must have thrilled Jacob to know that he wasn't alone. He has God with him and prepared to fight
- g. Even though Jacob knows God is there he still tries to use his abilities to save himself **5** *And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, **that I may find grace in thy sight.***
- i.
  - ii. He sent his messengers
  - iii. He is probably hoping that time has healed the wound
  - iii. God has forgiven him so maybe Esau has forgiven him and or forgotten all that happened
- h. Word gets back that Esau has already heard and is on his way to meet him with 400 soldiers **6** *And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother **Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.***

- i. Do you ever see God's hand in your life, know His promises and yet refuse to believe and act on them?

2. In Jacob's fear he cries out to God in prayer **7 Then**

**Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed:**

**and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands;**

- a. Jacob is terrified. A guilty conscience often makes us see the darkest possible picture.
- b. Even before he prays he schemes some more. When faith is crowded out by fear, we're prone to start scheming and trusting our own resources. **8 And said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.**
- c. There are great lessons to learn from Jacob's prayer
  - i. He knew how to pray
  - ii. He knew who he was praying to
  - iii. He prays not in faith but in desperation which is a lesson in what not to do
  - iv. He wasn't praying believing God and what God had already shown him

d. He begins his prayer based on who he is and who God is

**9 And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee:**

i. He prays to his God, the God of his grandfather and his dad

ii. He knows that He is Lord

iii. He reminds God that he, Jacob, is doing what God told him to do

iv. He reminds God that God had said He would deal well with him

v. This prayer starts very much like the model prayer.

vi. However instead of going on to say thy kingdom come he prays that God would help him with his life

e. Jacob fully recognizes that he is not deserving of God hearing and answering his prayer **10 I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I**



passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.

- i. We never go before the Lord in a position of strength
  - ii. We do not command, we plead
  - iii. We know that it is only grace that makes us get anything from God
- f. He still boldly asks God to work in his life **11 Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children.**
- i. He prays for himself and his family
  - ii. Nothing wrong with asking to be delivered
  - iii. But he might of asked God what to do instead of asking him only to bless his plans
- g. He asks God based on what God had promised him **12**

**And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.**

- i. When you go before the Lord in prayer you can go with the promises of God
- ii. We ask based on what we know He has promised

iii. We do not just ask because we feel like He should answer

h. Notice that he asks God for help but never asked Him what His will was

3. Prayer is not enough trap! 20 And say ye moreover, Behold, thy servant Jacob *is* behind us. For he said, **I will appease him with the present** that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; **peradventure he will accept of me.**

a. Jacob prays but doesn't really believe God

b. He has been told by God that he will be cared for

c. He has seen the angels of God there with him

d. But now he sends all the gifts ahead of himself hoping to appease Esau

e. He says, maybe, just maybe Esau will accept my gifts and not be mad at me

f. He is not saying that God is going to take care of him

g. Remember that "faith is living without scheming!"

h. How often have I prayed and then used my schemes and resources

- i. Don't forget here that the real problem isn't Esau, it is Jacob
  - j. This is the story of God bringing Jacob to the end of himself. Jacob will soon know that he can't do what needs done and that he must trust God
4. Jacob is finally left alone! He is at the end of himself. [24](#)
- And Jacob was left alone;** and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.
- a. Notice that the man is the one that started the fight, not Jacob
    - i. This is not Jacob trying to get a hold of God
    - ii. This is not Jacob praying
    - iii. It is God working in Jacob's life to break him
    - iv. Jacob will become, be made into, the man of God that God wants
  - b. The fight or wrestling lasts all night
    - i. The point of this fight is Jacob finally running out of himself
    - ii. Jacob will get to the point that he knows that he can't. He will lose again but this time losing will be winning

iii. A.W. Tozer said, "The Lord cannot fully bless a man until He has first conquered him."

c. Jacob refuses to break as always **25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.**

i. Jacob has held on to who he is

ii. He is not willing to lose his dignity

iii. He is not willing to face who he is and see himself like he really is

iv. So the man, Jesus, touches him and knocks his thigh out of joint

v. Notice that this is the Lord Jesus Himself at work in Jacob's life

vi. We call this a Christophany

d. Jacob doesn't want to leave the fight until he has the blessing of God on himself **26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.**

i. The truth is that Jacob is not winning this fight

ii. Jacob does not have the upper hand

iii. God is working in his life

- iv. God is about to show him who he is
- e. What is your name? **27** And he said unto him, *What is thy name? And he said, Jacob.*
  - i. This time maybe he will tell the truth
  - ii. By the way, Jacob means deceiver, trickster
  - iii. Jacob is the guy who lies and says he is Esau
  - iv. Jacob is the old man
  - v. God will give him a new name representing his new life and walk
- f. New name, new man, new strength in weakness **28** And he said, Thy name shall be called **no more Jacob, but Israel:** for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.
  - i. Jacob will now be called Israel
  - ii. G. Campbell Morgan called this "the crippling that crowns" and interpreted "Israel" to mean "a God-mastered man."
- g. Jacob will never be the same **29** And Jacob asked *him*, and said, Tell *me*, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, *Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.* **30** And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for **I have seen God face to face, and my**

**life is preserved.** 31 And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and **he halted upon his thigh.** 32 Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which *is* upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew that shrank.

- i. He wanted to know the man's name.
- ii. He knew that he was fighting with God
- iii. He had seen God and had not died
- iv. He will limp the rest of his life but he now knows that God is at work in his life

- Remember that this wrestling match was not about getting something from God
- Rather it was about Jacob defending himself and refusing to yield to God
- We will not see ourselves until we have seen the Lord
- Jacob will walk with a limp the rest of his life but rather than being weaker he will be stronger than ever
- Give up more than your goats. Jacob sent the things ahead in the order of priority, if I have to lose anything let it start with this and let me be last