

## Introduction

The media is constantly attacking our President. This week a man came into my office and accused President Trump of constantly lying. That same person thinks CNN is neutral. Trump is not the only one accused of lying. This week I thought back about President Bush. He was accused of lying to us about the chemical weapons in Iraq. The military and intelligence agencies had told Bush that Saddam Hussain had chemical weapons. Bush acted upon the intelligence reports that were given to him. Our troops were trained and prepared for chemical warfare when they went into Iraq. When they had gone in, they found bunkers and underground storage sites for chemical weapons, but they did not find any chemical weapons. They had feared and prepared for the worst, only to be pleasantly surprised that they did not find any.

In the oil and gas industry, we are required to do a lot of contingency planning. In order to get permits to drill a well, a company has to show what the highest surface pressure they will have and plan for the right-sized blow-out prevention equipment that can handle those pressures. We prepare for the worst case, and hope that we never have to use it.

Jacob would have been a good engineer in our business. He would also have made a great commander. He prepared for the worst. Last week we saw that he sent out a delegation to make peace with Esau. When he heard that Esau was coming with four hundred men, he divided up into two companies. Diversification is a good defensive strategy. Then, Jacob cried out to the Lord for help. He was transparent and vulnerable, telling the Lord that he was afraid that Esau would kill him, his wives and his children. Then, Jacob sent a half-million dollars worth of livestock to Esau as a present. Then, he led his family across the Jabbok stream and he stayed behind and wrestled all night with God. Jacob prepared for the worst case scenario and prepared the best way he could.

In today's message, Jacob meets up with Esau. He has prepared, but he is still scared to death of what will happen. His delegation has warned him that Esau is coming with four hundred men. In other words, there are chemical weapons ready to be used against you. The reports were both true and false. Esau had four hundred men with him, but he was not coming to attack Jacob. Instead, Esau embraces Jacob and kisses him. He offers to help him relocate back home. He tells him that the large gift of livestock is unnecessary. Jacob found favor with Esau and nothing that he feared and prepared for materialized. That is the overview of the text today.

Karen and I were sitting in our bedroom talking earlier this week. I mentioned how much I have enjoyed going through the book of Genesis. I mentioned that when you study a passage you gain so much more insight and understanding than just reading the passage. I have read Genesis many times, but I now have a much deeper understanding. This week we are in Genesis 33. I knew the story, but I never really understood the significance of it until now. We are going to cover the story today, but I believe that you will also have a better understanding of some very important principles as we take a deeper look at Jacob Meeting Esau.

### 1. Jacob Approaches Esau (Gen 33:1-3)

(Gen 33:1-3) "Then Jacob lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, Esau was coming, and four hundred men with him. So he divided the children among Leah and Rachel and the two maids. {2} He put the maids and their children in front, and Leah and her children next, and

Rachel and Joseph last. {3} But he himself passed on ahead of them and bowed down to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.”

Jacob has been wrestling all night with the Lord. It was dawn and the Lord asked Jacob to let go of Him. Jacob refused to let go without a blessing. So, after the blessing, Jacob lets go and looks up. What does he see? He sees Esau coming with four hundred men with him. He sees an army coming at him at daybreak. So, he acts quickly and divides up his children among Leah, Rachel and the two maids. He puts them in a certain order, with the maids in front, Leah and her children next, and then Rachel and Joseph last. Rachel is the love of his life and he puts her last. Every woman wants to feel like Rachel, that she is the love of her husband’s life. Husbands, we need to make sure that we order and arrange things in our lives so that our wives know that they are the love of our life. We need to tell them that we love them, and we need to show it in tangible ways.

Then, Jacob passed on ahead of them and bowed down to the ground seven times until he came near to his brother. The number seven is significant, in that it means complete or perfect. While Esau is approaching, Jacob completely humbles himself before Esau by bowing to the ground seven times. I say that bowing is a way of humbling yourself. Generally, a person bows before a king, dignitary or person of higher rank. The Hebrew word is shachah (Strong’s H7812), which means to bow down. It is used 220 times in the Old Testament.

In Genesis 18:2, Abraham ran from the tent door and bowed before the Lord and the two angels. It was a bow that showed honor and respect to the Lord. We honor the Lord with our tithes and offerings. We can also honor God by standing before. Mark Altrogge wrote one of my favorite songs, “I Stand In Awe.” When the President goes into the congressional chamber next week to give the SOTU address, everyone will stand as he enters. It is a show of honor. One of our core values is honor. We are to honor the Lord, and we are to honor other people. Esau honored his brother by bowing before him seven times.

(Gen 18:2) “When he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth.”

We also honor the Lord by bowing before him, as Abraham did. In Psalm 5:7, David wrote, “*at Your holy temple I will bow in reverence for You.*” The KJV says, “in Thy fear will I worship toward Thy holy temple.” Frequently in the book of Psalms it is translated as worship. Jacob did not worship his brother, but he did bow before him in reverence and honor. We can honor him in worship by bowing before Him.

(Ps 5:7 NASB) “But as for me, by Your abundant lovingkindness I will enter Your house, At Your holy temple I will bow in reverence for You.”

(Ps 5:7 KJV) “But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.

In Psalm 29:2, we are exhorted to ascribe to the Lord the glory due to His name, and to worship the Lord in holy array. Again, the word shachah is used. We are to bow down and worship the Lord in holy array.

(Ps 29:2) “Ascribe to the LORD the glory due to His name; worship the LORD in holy array.”

In Psalm 45:11, the sons of Korah taught us to forget our people and our father’s house. Then, they said the King will desire your beauty. Because He is our Lord, we should bow down to Him. The use of the word Lord shows authority and we are to have reverent submission to Him. In worship, we need to forget about everything else. We need to focus on the King of Kings and worship Him. We are to have undistracted worship and we are to bow down in submission and reverence to Him.

(Ps 45:11) “Then the King will desire your beauty. Because He is your Lord, bow down to Him.”

In Psalm 95:6, we are exhorted, “Come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.” Again, the act of bowing was part of worship, and it is just one way of honoring someone, particularly someone of great position, like the King of Kings. Esau showed great humility, and he greatly honored his brother by bowing down before him seven times.

(Ps 95:6) “Come, let us worship and bow down, Let us kneel before the LORD our Maker.”

## **2. Esau Greets Jacob And His Family (Gen 33:4-7)**

(Gen 33:4-7) “Then Esau ran to meet him and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept. {5} He lifted his eyes and saw the women and the children, and said, "Who are these with you?" So he said, "The children whom God has graciously given your servant." {6} Then the maids came near with their children, and they bowed down. {7} Leah likewise came near with her children, and they bowed down; and afterward Joseph came near with Rachel, and they bowed down.”

In response to Jacob, Esau ran to meet Jacob. It has been twenty years since he has seen his brother, but he knows that it is Jacob. Jacob’s messengers, his peace delegation, has already announced that Jacob is coming. All the leaders of the droves have told Esau that Jacob is coming and that these animals are a present to Esau. Esau very much knows that this is Jacob, and he ran to meet him. Then, Esau embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him. Some cultures greet with hugs, which is very prevalent in the U.S. Some cultures greet with a kiss, which is very prevalent in Europe. Esau embraces and kisses him. It is a greeting of love. In the New Testament, we are commanded to greet one another with a holy kiss four times and with a kiss of love one time. The earmark of the church is love, and our greetings should reflect the love that we have for one another. Esau embraced and kissed Jacob, showing love and affection.

(Rom 16:16) “Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.”

(1 Cor 16:20) “All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.”

(2 Cor 13:12) “Greet one another with a holy kiss.”

(1 Thess 5:26) “Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss.”

(1 Pet 5:14) “Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace be to you all who are in Christ.”

The next thing that we see is that they wept. This is an emotional time. They have been separated for twenty years, and they have tears of joy when they see each other. These are men who are weeping, not women. It is okay for men to cry and to show emotion. In authentic relationships, we embrace one another, and we also are not afraid to show emotions. In Romans 12:15, we are told to weep with those who weep. In John 11:35, "Jesus wept" when he saw Mary and Martha and others weeping. He knew what He was about to do, but He wept with those who were weeping.

Then, Esau lifted his eyes and saw the women and the children. Jacob had gone ahead of them and they had caught up to them by this time. When he saw them, he asked, "Who are these with you?" Jacob responded, "The children whom God has graciously given your servant." Jacob knew that God was the One that opens and closes wombs. He knew that children are a gift from the Lord. He knew that children are a reward. He knew that God was the One that formed them in the womb. Jacob knew some things that our culture today does not know or accept. The mayor of New York could learn some things from Jacob. The laws that they just announced in New York are an abomination. Children are gracious gifts from God.

Jacob had put his family in an order. The maids and their children came first and they bowed down. The children honored Esau just like their father had honored him. Fathers need to set good examples of honoring others. Fathers need to honor their wives. Peter tells husbands to grant their wives honor as joint heirs. The children are watching their fathers honor their wives by opening doors for them, serving them, honoring them with their words. Children are watching their fathers honor their parents, and others. It is in the home that children learn to honor their mother and father. As a father, I made sure that my children honored Karen. I had some pretty strong words with one of my daughters one time. I told her that she would not talk to my wife that way, ever again. On one occasion a man yelled at my wife over something that she had not even done. The man was a weight lifter and a big man. That made no difference to me. I got in his face and I told him that he was never to talk to my wife again. I made sure that people honored my wife. In Ephesians 6:1-2, Paul quoted Exodus 20:12, and taught children to honor their mothers and fathers. In 1 Timothy 5:1-2, Paul taught us to honor older men as fathers and older women as mothers. Paul knew that we learn how to honor one another in the home. Our children learn from our example, and Jacob's children followed the example of Jacob and bowed before Esau.

After the maids, Leah and her children came and bowed down. Afterwards, Rachel and Joseph came and bowed down. Three times in this paragraph the word shachah is used. When a word is continually used in a passage it is a strong indication that this is the main idea of the passage. Jacob and his family bowed down and honored Esau when they met up with him.

### 3. **Esau Accepts Jacob's Gift** (Gen 33:8-11)

(Gen 33:8-11) "And he said, "What do you mean by all this company which I have met?" And he said, "To find favor in the sight of my lord." {9} But Esau said, "I have plenty, my brother; let what you have be your own." {10} Jacob said, "No, please, if now I have found favor in your sight, then take my present from my hand, for I see your face as one sees the face of God, and you have received me favorably. {11} "Please take my gift which has been brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me and because I have plenty." Thus he urged him and he took it."

After an embrace and a kiss, Esau asked Jacob, “What do you mean by all this company which I have met?” Jacob had divided up his gift of livestock into droves and sent them ahead with the specific intent of gaining favor. Jacob is very forthright in his response, saying, “to find favor in the sight of my lord.” Esau initially turns down the gift from Jacob, saying that he had plenty. But Jacob said “if I have found favor in your sight, then take my present from my hand.” For Jacob, favor with people was more important than expensive gift he was giving to his brother. Last week I had calculated the present day value of the gift and found it to be more than half a million dollars. Favor was more important to him than the half million dollar gift.

In many cultures, it is customary to give a gift when you go to someone’s house. I have not found that practiced in the United States. One year we had a man from Poland come to our class in Albuquerque. He brought me a Polish mug as a gift. That is their custom. They take gifts and give them to the people they meet. We did a class for twenty-five Chinese people that worked for Baker Hughes. They brought all of the instructors pewter plates. It is customary to do this. When we had Europeans over for dinner, they nearly always brought a gift to my parents. They never came empty handed. Their gifts were intended to bless and cause you to receive them favorably. That was Jacob’s intent. He gave gifts so that Esau would receive him favorably.

In Luke 16:1-9, Jesus told a parable to His disciples about a manager who squandered his master’s possessions. When the rich master heard of it, he called the manager in and asked him to give an account. The manager knew that his days were numbered, so he went to all the people that owed his master money, and he reduced their debt. When the master heard of this he praised the steward. This parable bothered me until I understood the main point of the parable. Look how Jesus summarized it. “And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings.” We are to use our temporary wealth for eternal purposes. Jacob was like this steward. He took temporal wealth and used it to gain favor with his brother. Jacob had acted shrewdly and his brother accepted him with favor.

(Luke 16:1-9) “Now He was also saying to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and this manager was reported to him as squandering his possessions. {2} "And he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an accounting of your management, for you can no longer be manager.' {3} "The manager said to himself, 'What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig; I am ashamed to beg. {4} "I know what I shall do, so that when I am removed from the management people will welcome me into their homes.' {5} "And he summoned each one of his master's debtors, and he began saying to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' {6} "And he said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' {7} "Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' And he said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' He \*said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.' {8} "And his master praised the unrighteous manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light. {9} "**And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings.**”

Jacob said one other thing to his brother that really stands out to me. He said, “For I see your face as one sees the face of God, and you have received me favorably. Please take my gift which has been brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me and because I have plenty.” Jacob had prayed that God would move on Esau’s heart and that he would receive him favorably.

Jacob had obtained the answer that he had asked of God. Jacob saw Esau's favor as favor from God.

There is a principle in Scripture that we are to look at the face of others as the face of God. Here are some examples. In Ephesians 5:22, Paul wrote, "*Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.*" When a wife is submissive or subject to her husband, it is unto the Lord. An example of this is found in 1 Peter 3:6 where Sarah called Abraham, "Lord." She was submissive to Abraham as unto the Lord. When we are submissive and respectful to our authorities, it is unto God. It is not just for wives, it is for all of us. In Matthew 25, Jesus told about separating the sheep from the goats. He talked about how the righteous had given Jesus something to drink when He was thirsty, and had visited Him in prison. They asked, when did we do this? In Matthew 25:40, He answered, "*Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.*" We are to treat people as unto the Lord. Jacob treated Esau as unto the Lord. When he honored Esau with his gift, he was ultimately honoring God.

#### 4. **Esau Offers To Accompany Jacob** (Gen 33:12-16)

(Gen 33:12-16) "Then Esau said, "Let us take our journey and go, and I will go before you." {13} But he said to him, "My lord knows that the children are frail and that the flocks and herds which are nursing are a care to me. And if they are driven hard one day, all the flocks will die. {14} "Please let my lord pass on before his servant, and I will proceed at my leisure, according to the pace of the cattle that are before me and according to the pace of the children, until I come to my lord at Seir." {15} Esau said, "Please let me leave with you some of the people who are with me." But he said, "What need is there? Let me find favor in the sight of my lord." {16} So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir."

Esau offered to travel with Jacob. He has four hundred men with him, and it is more like a military escort. However, Jacob replied that he would like to proceed according to the pace of the cattle and his children. He has lambs, kids, and baby camels that need to go at a slower pace. So Esau returned to Seir and left Jacob to go at his own pace.

I have often used this passage in my approach to pastoring. I believe every shepherd needs to consider the pace of the flock when considering anything. This is particularly true with changes in direction, vision, and major projects. It is important to get everyone on board. It is especially important to make sure the leadership is all on board. When a leader goes too fast, there will be losses to the flock. Jacob has spent his entire life shepherding and he knows what is best for the flock.

#### 5. **Jacob Builds An Altar** (Gen 33:17-20)

(Gen 33:17-20) "Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built for himself a house and made booths for his livestock; therefore the place is named Succoth. {18} Now Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Paddan-aram, and camped before the city. {19} He bought the piece of land where he had pitched his tent from the hand of the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father, for one hundred pieces of money. {20} Then he erected there an altar and called it El-Elohe-Israel."

Jacob journeyed to Succoth and built a house and made booths for his livestock. The Hebrew word for booths is sukka (Strong's H5521). The root word means to weave together. A booth was a bunch of vines and brush that had been woven together to make an enclosure. He named the place Succoth, which is the plural of sukka.

We do not know how long he stayed at Succoth. He may have been there a week, a month, or even a year. You would think that it would take some time to build a house. It seems likely to me that he built a temporary house and was there for just a short time.

Then, he traveled on to Shechem, in the land of Canaan, and he camped before the city. He has lots of livestock with him, so he is not going to leave them to go into the city. He bought the land from the sons of Hamor for one hundred pieces of money. The Hebrew word is qesita, which means pieces. It does not say silver, gold, or money; it just says one hundred pieces. The money is implied.

Once he has bought the land, the first thing that he does is to build an altar, which he called El-Elohe-Israel. The meaning of the altar is God, the God of Israel. Jacob met God at Bethel on his way to Paddan-aram. God told him that He was going to be with him and would stay with him until he returned. Jacob made a vow to give a tenth of everything to God. God has been with Jacob and he has returned safely. Jacob has just had an all-night wrestling match with God at Peniel. He is walking with a limp, and he is a changed man. It is no longer just the God of Abraham or the God of Isaac. God is now his God, so he aptly names the altar El-Elohe-Israel.

An altar was for presenting sacrifices. Abel, Noah, and Abraham had built altars and presented sacrifices. Jacob has vowed to tithe to the Lord. He needs a place to present his offerings to the Lord. My accountant asked me who Jacob gave his tithes to. I answered that I did not know. There are lots of things that we don't know. We see dimly about many things. I look forward to knowing fully, and that day will come. We know that Abraham gave a tenth to Melchizedek. We know from the book of Hebrews that He was the pre-incarnate Christ. He had no beginning of days, no mother or father, and so Melchizedek had to be God. We know now where we are to give our tithes.

In the law, God said that the tithes belong to Him, and that we are to give them to the Levite and priests. The rest of the tribes received an inheritance, but the Levites received the tithes.

(Num 18:21) "To the sons of Levi, behold, I have given all the tithe in Israel for an inheritance, in return for their service which they perform, the service of the tent of meeting."

In Malachi the Lord said bring the whole tithe into the storehouse so that there would be food in His house. They were to bring their tithes of grain and everything else to the temple so that the Levites and priests would have food.

(Mal 3:10) "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows."

In the New Testament we find the same principle. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 9 that those who plant a vineyard should eat the fruit of it, and those who tend the flock should use the milk of the flock. He talked about the plowman and the thresher hoping for a share of the crops. Then, he

summarized by saying in 1 Corinthians 9:11, “If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we reap material things from you?” Paul had a right to receive the tithes and offerings because he was sowing spiritually into them. Paul did not use his right. He worked day and night so that he did not have to receive use their offerings. Paul did all things for the sake of the gospel. But, the principle of honoring pastors was well established. When he wrote Timothy about how to conduct yourself in the house of God, he wrote about honoring pastors, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. The tithes in the Old Testament went to the workers in God’s house, and the tithes and offerings in the New Testament go to the workers in the house. We don’t know who received Jacob’s tithes. He vowed to give God a tenth of all, and the first thing that he did was to build an altar so that he could offer sacrifices to God. Jacob honored God with his sacrifices.

### **Conclusion and Applications**

As we come to a close, I want to sum this chapter up with one word: HONOR. Jacob honored Esau by bowing down before him. Jacob honored Esau by giving a very generous offering to him. Jacob honored him with his words, calling him lord. Jacob’s maids, wives, and children all honored Esau by bowing down before him.

Esau honored Jacob by embracing him and kissing him. He honored him by receiving him favorably. He honored him by offering to escort him. When Jacob requested to go at his own pace, Esau honored his request and went on.

The first thing that Jacob does when he arrived is to build an altar. What was the purpose of the altar? The purpose was a place where sacrifices were made that honored God. Jacob honored God with his first fruits. Jacob honored God by giving a tenth of everything that God gave him.

It is my desire that the Connection Church be a place like El-Elohe-Israel. We want to be a place that has an altar and people come here to honor God. We honor God with our tithes and offerings. We honor God with our thanksgivings and praises. We honor God by the way that we treat people, and in the way that we do unto the least of the brethren. We honor God by living upright lives that glorify God. Jacob honored God and he honored other people. Honor is one of our core values at the Connection Church.

This morning, I pray that God has been speaking to you. I pray that the word has been encouraging to you and has stimulated you to love and good deeds. If God has spoken to you about joining and becoming a member of Connection Church, let me know after the service.

If you have a need for prayer, after the Communion, I will be happy to pray with you.



## **Introduction**

- 1. Jacob Approaches Esau** (Gen 33:1-3, Gen 18:2, Ps 5:7, Ps 29:2, Ps 45:11, Ps 95:6)
- 2. Esau Greet Jacob And His Family** (Gen 33:4-7, Rom 16:16, 1 Cor 16:20, 2 Cor 13:12, 1 Thess 5:26, 1 Pet 5:14, Rom 12:15, John 11:35, Eph 6:1-2, Ex 20:12, 1 Tim 5:1-2)
- 3. Esau Accepts Jacob's Gift** (Gen 33:8-11, Luke 16:1-9, Eph 5:22, 1 Pet 3:6, Matt 25:40)
- 4. Esau Offers To Accompany Jacob** (Gen 33:12-16)
- 5. Jacob Builds An Altar** (Gen 33:17-20, Num 18:21, Mal 3:10, 1 Cor 9:11)

## **Conclusion and Applications**