

## REUNITED

Genesis 33: 1-20

January 2, 2000

After twenty years in the land of Haran, God told Jacob to return to his homeland. As far as Jacob knew, his brother Esau still wanted to kill him. Jacob was afraid, but in obedience to God, he began the long journey home. Jacob took his wives and children, all his flocks and herds, and servants. Along the way Jacob stopped and asked for God's protection and reminded God of his promise to make Jacob a great nation. Because Jacob obeyed the Lord and fought for God's blessing, the Lord changed Jacob's name to Israel, which means prince of God.

The morning after Jacob received the blessing and his new name, he looked up to see Esau and his four hundred horsemen approaching. Jacob divided the children to their mothers, Leah, Rachel, and the handmaids. Then he crossed in front of them and went to meet his brother. He did not know what would happen, but he trusted God for protection. As Jacob approached Esau he bowed seven times, showing respect. Esau got down off his horse and ran to meet Jacob. He gathered him into his arms and embraced him. The two brothers kissed each other and they wept together. What a wonderful and happy reunion God had arranged for the two brothers.

As he looked around Esau saw Jacob's family, and asked "Who do you have with you?"

Jacob answered, "They are the children which God has graciously given to your servant."

Then the handmaids and their children came near and bowed before Esau. Leah also came with her children and bowed before Esau. Then last of all, Rachel and Joseph came and bowed before Esau.

Esau said, "What do you mean by sending all these animals towards me?"

Jacob replied, "They are to find grace in the eyes of my lord."

"I have enough my brother. Keep your things for yourself", said Esau.

Jacob said, "No, I beg you, if now I have found grace in your sight, accept this present from me. For I have seen your face, and you are pleased with me. Please take this gift from me. Because God has shown me grace, and I have enough."

So Esau honored the wishes of Jacob and took the gifts that Jacob had sent his way.

Then Esau said, "Let us begin the journey towards home. I will ride before you."

But Jacob replied, "You know that the children are young, and the flocks and herds have young with them, so let us travel at our own pace. You go on ahead, and we will follow at the pace that is best for everyone."

Again Esau said, "Well, let me at least leave some men for your protection."

Jacob answered, "It is not necessary."

So Esau headed back to his home in Seir with his men, and Jacob traveled on to Succoth. There he stopped for awhile and built a house, and shelters for his animals.

How differently things could have gone for Jacob, but the Lord had gone ahead and changed the heart of Esau. Esau, who hated his brother so much that he wanted to kill him, had now come to love his brother. God is still in the business of changing people's hearts. He changes people from enemies of God into those who love and serve him. No matter how difficult things may seem, remember that nothing is impossible with God.

**PRINCIPLE:** Nothing is too hard for God.

**LEARN:** Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

II Corinthians 5:17



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2 Corinthians 5:17





