



# **THE BEGINNINGS!**

**The Book of Genesis**

## **Faith and Reconciliation!**

**Genesis 33:1-20**

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**Sunday Morning Service**

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# Faith and Reconciliation!

## Genesis 33:1-20

### Opening Comments

- Good morning – we will be in **Genesis 33**
- Today we continue our journey through **Genesis: THE BEGINNINGS!**
- One of the sad realities of human nature is that we are not always friendly
- We are not always nice to one another
- You have found that to be true, right? Maybe, just me!
- Even with the people we say we love deeply we sometimes do things that threaten the relationship
- I am guessing that everyone here, watching online, or listening to this as a podcast can think of at least one relationship in your life that is broken
- Whether you are the one who broke it, or they did, or it was a case of mutually assured destruction – the relationship is not good or nonexistent
- In our text for today Jacob is on his way back to Canaan
- Twenty years earlier he fled for his life away from his twin brother Esau who intended to kill Jacob for stealing his birthright and blessing
- Jacob knows he is going to have to face Esau and reconcile with him
- It is my goal to help you see that reconciliation is what God's people are called to
- Not so that you can have more friends, but so that others can be reconciled to God
- Reconciliation to God and others is a part of the abundant life Jesus promised
- Let's pray and ask the Holy Spirit to open our hearts more fully to God on this topic
- **Pray**

### Teaching

- **Faith and Reconciliation!**

- Very few people enjoy conflict – though some act like they do
- Conflict in life is inevitable – reconciliation is not – must be intentional
- We left off last time with Jacob having a radical encounter with the pre-incarnate Christ
- Now it is time for Jacob to face his past
- **Genesis 33:1-3**
- Notice first, ‘he crossed over before them’
- Jacob wasn’t certain what Esau’s intentions were – still angry?
- So, Jacob places himself between his family and the possible danger
- Jacob bows seven before his brother – an act of great humility
- In the last chapter Jacob prayed **Genesis 32:11**  
**Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and attack me and the mother with the children.**
- God answered his prayer long before he prayed it
- **Genesis 33:4**
- Twenty years earlier, Jacob had connived and schemed to get Esau’s birthright and blessing
- Esau was so upset about it that he planned to kill Jacob after their father Isaac died
- Jacob was returning to Canaan a changed man – Esau had changed too
- The past was the past and all that was left was the love of two brothers
- **Genesis 33:5-7**
- Jacob witnesses of God’s grace to his lost brother
- **Genesis 33:8-11**
- Notice the phrase, ‘my brother’ – affection and acceptance
- ‘I have enough’ – in fact, Esau is rich – 400 men
- Even though Esau did not need the gift he accepted it because he could see that would please his brother and put him at ease.
- Accepting the gift was equivalent to accepting the person.
- **Genesis 33:12-16**
- Esau offers to take them his home in Seir
- Seir is in the desert east of Canaan – modern-day Jordan
- That was not where God told Jacob to go and so he wisely declines Esau’s offer

- It is implied in verse 14 that Jacob would visit his brother in Seir.
- It is not known if he ever did.
- The next time they are described together in the Bible is when they are burying their father Isaac
- Then Jacob does something that seems odd
- **Genesis 33:17**
- He stops in Succoth – on the east side of the Jordan River – not in Canaan
- And he stays there for quite a while – at least ten years – long enough for his daughter Dinah to come of age
- Builds a house – first patriarch to live in a house
- No explanation or commentary is given – seems like a mistake
- **Genesis 33:18-20**
- Jacob eventually gets into Canaan but then he stops again
- Shechem is in the central part of Canaan
- His father Isaac is in the southern part of Canaan in Hebron
- No explanation given why he stops
- In the next chapter we will see that it probably was a big mistake
- But we will talk about that when we get to the next chapter
- In our text today we saw the beautiful account of Jacob being reconciled to his twin brother Esau
- And that should remind us, as believers, we have been reconciled
- And we needed to be reconciled because we had a problem **Romans 8:6-8**

For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace.  
<sup>7</sup> Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. <sup>8</sup> So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

- As enemies we followed our own desires, passions, thoughts
- **ZOOM CAMERA OUT SO THAT TRASH CANS ARE VISIBLE**
- When you do what you want and not what God commands, He calls it sin – we have all done it **Romans 3:23**
- ...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...
- A terrifying reality is that God knows every sin that every person has ever committed
- Unless you are listening to this message as a podcast you may have noticed a trash can here beside the pulpit

- Everyone has sinned – I have sinned – and every time I sinned; a record of that sin was stored in my can
- I carry this can around with me everywhere I go and it impacts everything I do
- Well, that is a problem because there is a spiritual cost for sin

### **Romans 6:23**

... the wages of sin *is* death...

- The cost of sin is everlasting spiritual death
- Imagine check-out counter of life
- Bring can filled with every sin I ever committed
- Run sin over scanner – beep – death!
- Took cookie mom told me not to – beep – death
- Pinched my sisters – beep, beep, beep, beep – did it a lot - death
- Cheated on that math test – beep – death
- Didn't go where I told my parents – beep – death
- Fooled around with that girl – beep – death
- Cheated a little on my taxes – beep – death
- Little white lie – beep – death
- Every sin, little or big – beep, beep, beep
- Total comes up 29,735 deaths please
- Look into my wallet – only one death there **Hebrews 9:27**

**And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment...**

- Still short 29,734 – you can't pay it – hopeless
- You were created by God to glorify Him and to be the object of His love and grace
- But sin has separated you from God – became an enemy of God
- Need reconciliation – helpless to do it on our own
- God looked down on our helpless state and did something about it

### **John 3:16**

**For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**

- Jesus comes along – one drop His blood erases debt
- Can't even tell there was debt – no record – never will be
- That's forgiveness – debt erased – need someone to act as Holy Spirit – take this can away
- Turn in your Bible to **2 Corinthians 5**

- Now, if you were being very observant, you noticed a second trash can up here
- The first trash can contained the sins I committed against God and others
- The second one contains the sin others have committed against me
- Every wrong done to me – every hurt – every abuse – every betrayal – every time someone lied to me – every neglect – every time someone took advantage of me – all of the filthy, ugly things that have touched my life
- When I received Christ, by faith, God forgave me of all my sins against Him and against others – the first can is empty and gone
- **2 Corinthians 5:17**
- We use this verse during baptisms because it symbolizes the forgiveness of God making us new with God
- But this can remains – filled with all the wrong things done to me by others
- I carry this can with me everywhere I go
- I carry it into every encounter with other humans
- I drag it with me as I interact with strangers
- I pull it around as I hang out with friends
- I push it around as I play with my grandchildren
- It is there as I spend time with my children
- It is there even during my most intimate times with my wife
- All of the hurts, wrongs, evil, wicked things ever done to me are always there fouling and stinking up my life
- In our account, Jacob is headed back to Canaan and when he hears that Esau is coming with 400 men – believes Esau is still carrying the sins Jacob had committed against him
- When they meet there is no sign that Esau is carrying Jacob’s sins
- Esau had forgiven Jacob – that made reconciliation possible
- Reconciliation is only possible where forgiveness has happened
- Listen to what Paul said
- **2 Corinthians 5:18-19**
- At the same time God reconciled you to Himself through Christ He gave you a ministry – the ministry of reconciliation

- A ministry is simply what you do to serve God
- I serve God as a pastor – Jeremie – sound – David – worship/children
- We are each unique in how we serve God
- But according to this verse we all have at least one ministry in common – the ministry of reconciliation
- Every saved person is called by God to help Him reconcile the rest of the world to God through faith in Jesus Christ
- But you can't do that ministry while you are dragging around a can full of other people's sins against you
- Not to mention you are living something far less than the abundant life
- Try to imagine carrying a stinking, nasty, foul trash can around with you throughout your day – can't see it but it is there
- Jacob was able to reconcile with Esau because Esau had forgiven Jacob
- The key to reconciliation is forgiveness which then enables you to live the abundant life
- Most of the world is in bondage to their sin and to the death their sin brings
- But through Christ we are freed from the bondage of our sin **John 8:36**

**Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.**

- The question is, do you want to free from other people's sins against you – if yes – forgive them – for everything
- If you don't, you may be free from the bondage of your sins – you are choosing to be in bondage to the sins others
- And you will not be able to live the abundant life and you will not be able to play a role in the ministry of reconciliation to God
- If you want to be truly free – open up that trash can of other people's sins against you and start forgiving
- And you keep doing it until it is empty
- Who knows – maybe there will be an Esau and Jacob moment if you do
- **Invitation/Prayer!**
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