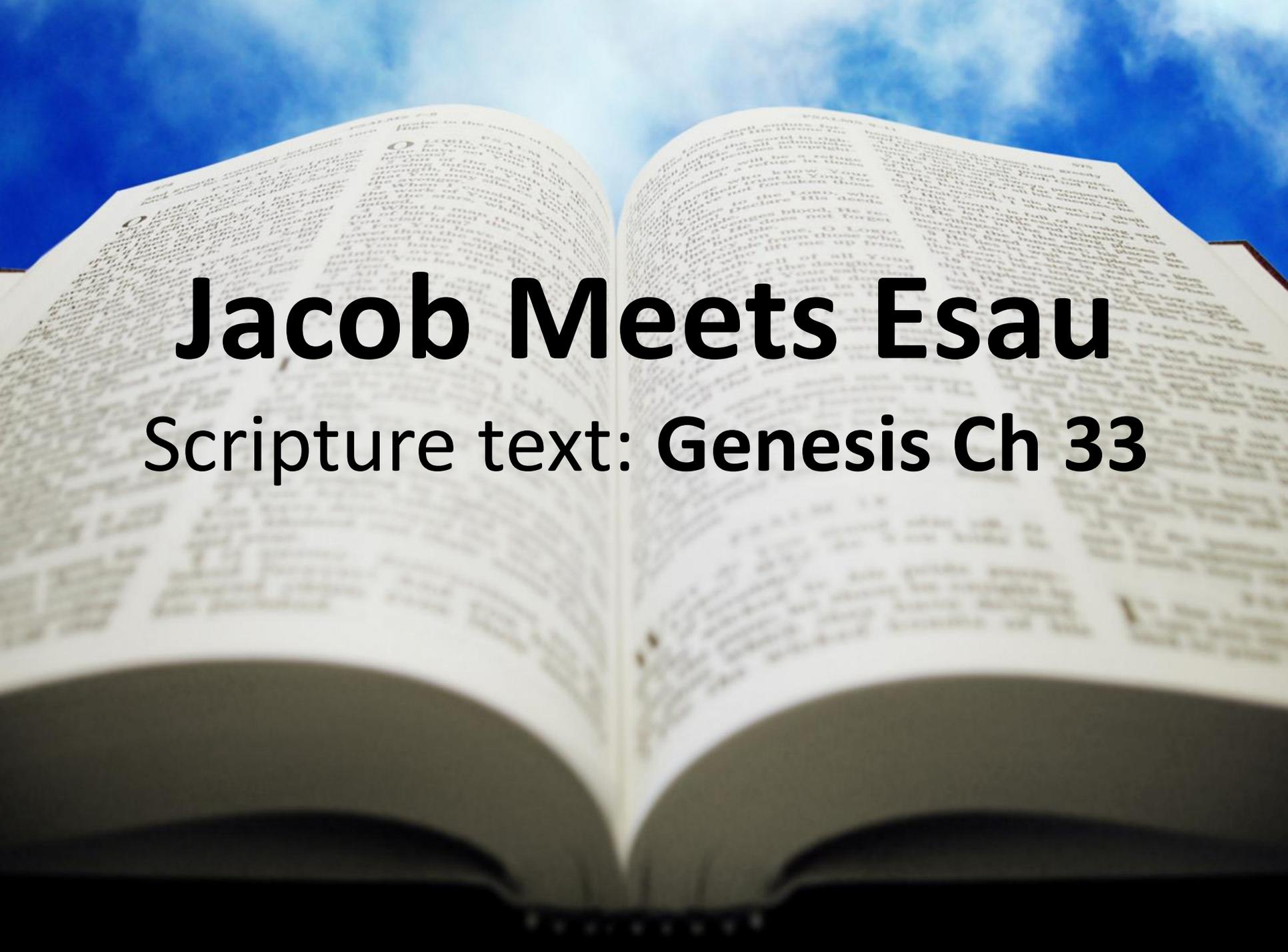


Welcome to Promise Land Bible Church
We're glad you're here!



An open Bible is shown from a low angle, looking up at the pages. The pages are filled with text, but it is out of focus. The background is a bright blue sky with some light clouds. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

Jacob Meets Esau

Scripture text: **Genesis Ch 33**

Genesis 33:1-3 And **Jacob** lifted up 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 female servants. And he put the servants with their children in front, then Leah with her children, and Rachel and Joseph last of all. He himself went on before them, bowing himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

**Notice the name that is being used, Jacob?
What is his focus or who did he see?**

Psalm 121 A Song of Ascents. **I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.** He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, **he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.** The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade on your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore.

Was Jacob a backslider? One perspective:

It would have been wonderful had Jacob lived up to his new name and new position with God, but he did not. The chapter begins with “Jacob” the old name, not “Israel” the new name, and we see him “lifting up his eyes”—**walking by sight, not by faith.**

See what Jacob lost because he did not claim his spiritual privileges:

His limp (33:3).

He bowed before Esau instead of walking (limping) and faced him man-to-man. **It is always tragic when a “prince with God” cringes before a man of the world!** Better to limp by faith than to bow in self-trust.

Proverb 6:3 then do this, my son, and save yourself, **for you have come into the hand of your neighbor: go, hasten, and plead urgently with your neighbor.**

His power (33:1–2, 8–11).

See **Jacob scheming again**, bargaining with the enemy. **Did God not assure him of His power?** Had God not promised to see him through?

His testimony (33:12–17).

Jacob lied to Esau about the flocks and traveled in the opposite direction. The two never did meet until they buried their father. **No doubt, at that meeting, Esau asked Jacob what had happened to him after they parted.**

His tent (33:17).

Jacob built a house and settled down in Succoth.

His vision (33:19).

He moved again and **pitched his tent toward the city of Shechem**, not unlike Lot (13:12).

Genesis 13:12 Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while **Lot settled among the cities of the valley and moved his tent as far as Sodom.**

He lost the vision of God's city (Heb. 11:13–16).

Hebrews 11:13-16 These all died **in faith**, not having received the things promised, but **having seen them and greeted them from afar**, and having acknowledged that **they were strangers and exiles on the earth**. For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, **they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one**. Therefore **God is not ashamed to be called their God**, for he has prepared for them a city.

Another Perspective: Whatever Esau's original intention, when he actually met Jacob, the encounter was a friendly one, **with all past offenses forgotten.** Had Esau had a change of mind during the night while Jacob was wrestling with the angel? Or had Jacob's abundant gifts swayed him? However it occurred, **it is obvious that God had been working with him as well as with Jacob, whether he was aware of it or not.** Such forgiveness as that offered by Esau is hardly a possible virtue without the providence of God.

The great preacher Martyn Lloyd-Jones was once asked, “**What does a person look like who has truly met God?**” Alluding to Genesis 32:31, he replied, “**He walks with a limp.**” That is incredibly perceptive, isn’t it? After **encountering the living Christ**, Jacob was forever crippled—**both physically and in regard to his ego**. He could no longer strut around arrogantly as he had done before. His pride turned to lowliness (33:3). His greed turned to generosity (33:10–11). And his self-reliance had turned into worship (33:20). So we who are professing believers must ask ourselves: **Have these things happened to me? Have my habits changed? Have I met the Lord?**

The contrasts between the two brothers, as they met after 20 years, are interesting.

Jacob bowed down to the ground seven times in homage (v. 3), thus halting on his way toward Esau.

Esau, however, eagerly ran to meet Jacob and embraced him ... kissed him, and they both wept.

What a change is made when “God fights” in His way. In talking with Esau, Jacob constantly referred to himself as **your servant** or “**his servant**” (vv. 5, 14) and to his brother as “**my lord**” (vv. 8, 13–15) whereas **Esau simply called Jacob “my brother”** (v. 9).

This contrasts with their father's blessing when Isaac made Jacob Esau's lord (Gen 27:29). Jacob definitely approached Esau cautiously and humbly, in an effort to ward off any possible retaliatory spirit.

Genesis 27:29 Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, and blessed be everyone who blesses you!"

Genesis 33:10 Jacob said, "No, please, if I have found favor in your sight, then accept my present from my hand. **For I have seen your face, which is like seeing the face of God,** and you have accepted me.

Jacob pressed Esau to accept the gift of 550 animals (cf. 32:13–15). When Esau hesitated to accept the livestock, **Jacob insisted**. He said, Accept this (lit., “my”) gift (*minḥātî*, the same word he used in 32:13). Then Jacob added, Accept the (lit., “my”) present (*birkātî*). The word “present” comes from *bāarak*, “to bless.” By using *birkātî*, **Jacob showed that he was deliberately wanting to share his blessing with Esau, trying to soften his earlier actions.**

Jacob's explanation, that **seeing Esau's face was like seeing the face of God**, showed he knew **this deliverance from harm by Esau was of God**. At Peniel Jacob had seen the face of God and was delivered (32:30). Having lived through that, he then survived Esau. Thus Esau's favorable reaction was God's gracious dealing.

Peniel (pe-ni'-el) = The face of God; God's face; (root = to behold). Turn ye (to) God.

The exhaustive dictionary of Bible names

Look closely at Genesis 33:20. **Here we see Jacob building an altar to the Lord**—just as his father and grandfather had done. Why did they build altars? To offer sacrifices. And why did they offer sacrifices? **So that the blood of those bulls and goats could remind them of how much they needed a Savior.** Jacob had finally realized that he needed someone to die for his sins. And **Jacob had also finally decided that the Lord would be his God.**

UNREDEEMED DESPITE REDEMPTION

Now I could see that there was something wrong in my life of faith. Certainly I knew about the sacrifice of Jesus. As the Lamb of God He redeemed us so that we might "**walk in newness of life**". But it was merely knowledge. It does not do us any good to have money in the bank, **if we do not go and claim it**. Nor does it do any good to know about the sacrifice and blood of Jesus, **if we do not claim them**. So the great grace that had been offered to me remained "**dead capital**".

I realized then that knowledge about Jesus' sacrifice does not make us new men. **Only living faith, which is put into action in a battle of faith, can do this.** Holy Scripture says, "**Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of eternal life**" 1 Timothy 6:12. If I am supposed to take hold of something, I have to do something myself. If I am supposed to fight, I have to make an all-out effort. And I had not made this effort. The Apostle Peter wrote-and it was directed to believers-that the "adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking some one to devour" 1 Peter 5:8.

I had not reckoned with the truth of this fact. It means that I am in danger, even if I can show my "spiritual credentials": being baptized, converted or filled with the Spirit. I have an enemy who is always on my heels, **ready to fight and get me down. He wants to have me as his prey.** If the enemy is not only threatening me but has already begun to fight, **I will be lost unless I take hold of weapons myself and enter the battlefield.**

So it is not left to our fancy whether we would like to fight the battle of faith or not, but it is a matter of absolute necessity. Otherwise we are irretrievably lost. We cannot afford to be passive and not do anything, unless, of course, we are not interested in whether we become the enemy's prey.

In the face of these facts I now realized that I had been building castles in the sky, because I had not taken seriously what Jesus and the apostles said so clearly in the Holy Scriptures.

So it was no wonder that there was no victory in my life. The Holy Scriptures are permeated with the call to fight against sin so that we can overcome and attain the victory wreath. In the Book of Revelation Jesus says to the churches, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things" Rev 21:7 AV.).

Revelation 21:6-7 And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. **The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.**

You may have noticed how, up to this point, Jacob always **referred to the Lord as “the God of my father Isaac.”** He never once called him **“the Lord my God.”** But now, in the naming of this altar, he did so. He called it **“El-Elohe-Israel,”** which means **“God, the God of Israel.”**

His name was now Israel. And his God was now the Lord. Jacob finally began to worship the Lord.