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English Sermons

A Tale of Two Camps (Genesis 32:1-32)

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Sermon Outline

- Jacob Named the Place Mahanaim (God's Double Camp), 32:1-2
- Deceiver's Self Dependence
 - Plan to Spy, 32:3-5
 - Plot for Retreat, 32:6-8
 - Prayer for Blessings, 32:9-12
 - Present to Entice, 32:13-21
- Deceiver's Wrestle with God
 - "Prevailed" Against God, 32:22-25a
 - Subdued by God, 32:25b
 - Clung on to God, 32:26
 - Blessed by God, 32:27-29
- Jacob Named the Place Peniel (I've Seen God and Lived), 32:30-32

God's Camp vs. Man's Camp

- Mahanaim – Meaning Double Camp
- So Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. When Jacob saw them, he said, “This is God’s camp.” And he called the name of that place Mahanaim (v. 32:1-2)
- So Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two camps, Ishney Mahanowt (v. 32:7)

Jacob Planned & Jacob Plotted

- Plan to Spy, 32:3-5
 - Jacob instructed his messenger to refer to Esau as “My lord Esau” and to Jacob as “your servant”.
 - Tell Esau that Jacob has oxen, donkeys, flocks, and male and female servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find favor in your sight.”
- Plot for Retreat, 32:6-8
 - Jacob divided the people that *were* with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two companies (two camps).

A Deceiver's Prayer

A) O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac,

B) the Lord who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your family, and I will deal well with you' (v.9)

C) I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant;

D) for I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two companies. (v.10)

D) Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for

C) I fear him, lest he come and attack me and the mother with the children (v. 11)

B) For You said, 'I will surely treat you well,

A) and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude' (v.12)

Present to Entice

- Jacob said, “I will appease him with the present that goes before me, and afterward I will see his face; perhaps he will accept me” (v.32:20)
 - 200 female goats
 - 20 male goats
 - 200 hundred female sheep
 - 20 rams,
 - 30 milk camels with their colts,
 - 40 cows and
 - 10 bulls,
 - 20 female donkeys and
 - 10 foals.

Question 1

- v.24- Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day.
- v.30- So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: “For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.”

The first question is, did he wrestle with a man or did he wrestle with God?

Question 2

- Jacob said he saw God and lived (Genesis 32:30)
- The Bible tells us no one can see God (1 Timothy 6:16, 1 John 4:12, 1 John 4:20) and live (Exodus 33:20)

Is the Bible contradicting itself? Whom did Jacob see?

Answers

- **Answer 1- Jesus is the God-Man**
 - Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross (Philippians 2:5-8)
- **Answer 2- Jesus is God in Flesh**
 - No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known (1 John 1:18)

It was Jesus who wrestled with Jacob

Rely Not on Self but God

Proverbs 3:5-7

- Trust in the LORD with all your heart and *lean not on your own understanding*; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight

Proverbs 28:26

- He who trusts in himself is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom is kept safe.

Proverbs 22:17-19

- Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, And apply your heart to my knowledge; For it is a pleasant thing if you keep them within you; Let them all be fixed upon your lips, So that your trust may be in the Lord; I have instructed you today, even you.

Rely Not on Self but God

Jeremiah 9:23-24

- This is what the Lord says: “Let not the wise boast of their wisdom or the strong boast of their strength or the rich boast of their riches, but let the one who boasts boast about this: that they have the understanding to know me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight,” declares the Lord.

Conclusions

In our daily lives, we are constantly faced with the decision of two camps, our own camp and God's camp. Do we treat God's camp as the second camp and rely on our own scheme and planning, like Jacob, or do we honor God by treating His camp as the first Camp, draw from him, and do the right thing when things are not going our way?

Other Sermons by Dr. Sidney Yuan

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