

# The Great Divide Foretold

## Israeli/Jewish and Arab/Muslim Conflict

### Part 12

We pick up the story of Jacob after getting married, and now, he has to face his brother, Esau. Though twenty years had passed since they had last seen each other, the memory of Esau's threat to kill Jacob had never left him.

#### **Genesis 32:11 AMPC**

*11 Deliver me, I pray You, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and smite [us all], the mothers with the children.*

#### **Genesis 32:11 GNT**

*11 Save me, I pray, from my brother Esau. I am afraid—afraid that he is coming to attack us and destroy us all, even the women and children.*

Remember, Jacob and Esau represent 2 people groups. The Jewish or Israeli people and the Arab people.

#### **Genesis 25:23 GNT**

23 The Lord said to her, "Two nations are within you; You will give birth to two rival peoples. One will be stronger than the other; The older will serve the younger."

Isaac and Ishmael represent the religions of Judaism/Christianity vs Islam regarding the descendants they follow.

#### **Genesis 16:12 GNT**

12 But your son will live like a wild donkey; he will be against everyone, and everyone will be against him. He will live apart from all his relatives."

Jacob sent messengers ahead of him with gifts, instructing them to tell Esau that he was coming back. The messengers returned to Jacob, telling him that Esau was coming to meet him along with four hundred men. Jacob prayed for God to save him, reminding God that He had sent Jacob back to the land of Abraham and had promised to make him prosper and his descendants numerous. (Genesis 28:15)

### **Genesis 32:9-12 AMPC**

*3 And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother in the land of Seir, the country of Edom.*

*4 And he commanded them, Say this to my lord Esau: Your servant Jacob says this: I have been living temporarily with Laban and have stayed there till now.*

*5 And I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, menservants, and women servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find mercy and kindness in your sight.*

*6 And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, **We came to your brother Esau; and now he is [on the way] to meet you, and four hundred men are with him.***

*7 Then **Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed;** and he divided the people who were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two groups,*

*8 Thinking, If Esau comes to the one group and smites it, then the other group which is left will escape.*

*9 Jacob said, **O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the Lord Who said to me, Return to your country and to your people and I will do you good,** 10 **I am not worthy** of the least of all the mercy and loving-kindness and all the faithfulness which You have shown to Your servant, for with [only] my staff I passed over this Jordan [long ago], and now I have become two companies.*

*11 Deliver me, I pray You, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; **for I fear him, lest he come and smite [us all], the mothers with the children.***

*12 And **You said,** I will surely do you good and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.*

As you continue to read Genesis chapter 32, God's Word tells us in preparation to meet Esau, Jacob gathered together gifts for Esau, **which he sent ahead with servants in waves, hoping to pacify Esau.**

**Genesis 32:13-15 AMPC**

*13 And Jacob lodged there that night and took from what he had with him as a present for his brother Esau:*

*14 Two hundred she-goats, 20 he-goats, 200 ewes, 20 rams,*

*15 Thirty milk camels with their colts, 40 cows, 10 bulls, 20 she-donkeys, and 10 [donkey] colts.*

Jacob sent these gifts ahead of meeting with his brother Esau (representing two people groups - Jewish people and Arab people) and the night before meeting with him he sent his wives and sons away from him as well. While alone, in the middle of the night and afraid for his life, Jacob wrestled with a man who he later learned was God.

**Genesis 32:24-31 KJV**

*24 And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.*

*25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.*

**26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.**

**27 And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob.**

**28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.**

**29 And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.**

**30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.**

**31 And as he passed over Peniel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh.**

**Note: *God halted upon his thigh...*** Why did God hurt Jacob's hip?

The Lord withholds His full might for a time to let Jacob think he is winning. But just when the patriarch thinks he has the upper hand, God puts his hip out of joint (v. 25). The Almighty did not tear Jacob's leg from its socket, as the Hebrew indicates he was wounded by a soft touch.

**Genesis 32:22-31 AMPC**

26 Then He said, Let Me go, for day is breaking. But [Jacob] said, I will not let You go unless You declare a blessing upon me.

27 [The Man] asked him, What is your name? And [in shock of realization, whispering] he said, Jacob [supplanter, schemer, trickster, swindler]!

28 And He said, Your name shall be called no more Jacob [supplanter], but Israel [contender with God]; for you have contended and have power with God and with men and have prevailed.

**Genesis 32:26-31 GNT**

26 The man said, "Let me go; daylight is coming."

"I won't, unless you bless me," Jacob answered.

27 "What is your name?" the man asked.

"Jacob," he answered.

28 The man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob. You have struggled with God and with men, and you have won; so your name will be Israel."

29 Jacob said, "Now tell me your name."

But he answered, "Why do you want to know my name?" Then he blessed Jacob.

30 Jacob said, "I have seen God face-to-face, and I am still alive"; so he named the place Peniel.

31 The sun rose as Jacob was leaving Peniel, and he was limping because of his hip.

God touched Jacob's hip, putting it out of socket, but at daybreak Jacob still refused to let the Him go. He asked for a blessing and was told, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome" (Genesis 32:28).

Jacob knew with whom he wrestled - it was God, and then Jacob receives what he wanted: a blessing (Genesis 32:29). Jacob limped for the rest of his life, but he "saw God face to face" (Genesis 32:30) and received God's blessing. In his weakness, he was strong.

The reunion with Esau was not the attack he had feared: "Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; he threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. And they wept" (Genesis 33:4). Esau offered to accompany Jacob the rest of the way. Jacob refused, citing the size of his family. Jacob also refused Esau's offer to leave some of his men with the group.

It seems that Jacob did not fully trust his brother Esau, and so, instead of meeting Esau in Seir (Location of the Edomites where Jesus saves the Jewish people prior to us coming back in Revelation 19), Jacob took his family another route where they finally purchased a plot of land and settled in El Eloe Israel or "Mighty is the God of Israel."

Though he had been given a new name, Jacob the deceiver was still wary of others who might be trying to deceive him. Here we see that the mind of those who plot to deceive is always suspicious of the motives of others and can never fully be at rest.

To know Jacob's story is to know his life was a never-ending struggle. Jacob's family was characterized by deep-seated hostility. Jacob was a con artist who had been conned, a liar who had been lied to, and a manipulator who had been manipulated. In many ways, he lived up to his name Jacob, which literally means "heel-catcher" and carries the sense of "one who follows after to supplant or deceive."

Remember, just because you got right or righteous with Jesus doesn't mean there are not consequences to your previous actions. Also, when you are following Jesus, an imitator of Him doesn't mean everyone else around you is righteous.

Also, why didn't Esau destroy him at this time? God's timing. The time of the Gentiles had not yet come... (Romans 11:25, Luke 21:24, but this is still a foreshadowing of what will happen at the Time of the End when they say "peace" but it will only be for a short while. This will take place during the time of Jacob's Trouble.

In obedience to God's guidance, Jacob moved his family back to Bethel (Genesis 35:1) where God reappeared to Jacob and confirmed His blessing.

### **Genesis 35:9-13 AMPC**

*9 And God [in a distinctly visible manifestation] appeared to Jacob again when he came out of Padan-aram, and declared a blessing on him.*

*10 Again God said to him, Your name is Jacob [supplanter]; you shall not be called Jacob any longer, but Israel shall be your name. So He called him Israel [contender with God].*

*11 And God said to him, I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall come from you and kings shall be born of your stock;*

*12 The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac I will give to you, and to your descendants after you I will give the land.*

*13 Then God ascended from him in the place where He talked with him.*

In Jacob's meeting with God, he received the promise that kings and many nations would come from him and that the land God had promised his forefathers would be his inheritance. Jacob and his family later moved from Bethel to Eder. On the way, Rachel gave birth to her second son, Jacob's twelfth—Benjamin. Rachel died in childbirth. Jacob was reunited with his father, Isaac, in Mamre. When his father died, **both Jacob and Esau buried him.**

Similar to his mother, Jacob also had favorites. Rachel was his favorite wife, and her children, Joseph and Benjamin, were his favorite sons. In fact, Joseph was so favored that his brothers became jealous and sold him into slavery. But God was with Joseph, and he prospered in Egypt and rescued his family, Jacob included, from famine.

Jacob died in Egypt and was embalmed at Joseph's request. Joseph and his brothers took Jacob's body back to Canaan to be buried alongside Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, and Leah.

**Genesis 49:29-50:3 AMPC**

*29 He charged them and said to them, I am to be gathered to my [departed] people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite,*

*30 In the cave in the field at Machpelah, east of Mamre in the land of Canaan, that Abraham bought, along with the field of Ephron the Hittite, to possess as a cemetery.*

*31 There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife, there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah.*

*32 The purchase of the field and the cave that is in it was from the sons of Heth. 33 When Jacob had finished commanding his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed and breathed his last and was gathered to his [departed] people.*

*50 Then Joseph fell upon his father's face and wept over him and kissed him.*

*2 And Joseph ordered his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel.*

*3 **Then forty days were devoted [to this purpose] for him,** for that is the customary number of days required for those who are embalmed. **And the Egyptians wept and bemoaned him [as they would for royalty] for seventy days.***

Pharaohs too were mourned for seventy days in an elaborate ceremony. Meaning he was given a state funeral. The Egyptians mourned for Jacob so intensely because he was the father of Joseph, the grand vizier who had saved them from famine.

Prior to his death, Jacob had blessed his twelve sons and requested to be buried in the cave that Abraham had bought for burial. Jacob had also blessed Joseph's two sons, giving the blessing of the firstborn to the younger son. Unlike his father who had been deceived into giving the blessing of the firstborn to Jacob, Jacob crossed his hands to purposefully give the unc customary blessing.

**Genesis 49:1-10 AMPC**

*1 And Jacob called for his sons and said, Gather yourselves together [around me], that I may tell you what shall befall you [a]in the latter or last days.*

*2 Gather yourselves together and hear, you sons of Jacob; and hearken to Israel your father.*

*3 Reuben, you are my [b]firstborn, my might, the beginning (the firstfruits) of my manly strength and vigor; [your birthright gave you] the preeminence in dignity and the preeminence in power.*

*4 But unstable and boiling over like water, you shall [c]not excel and have the preeminence [of the firstborn], because you went to your father's bed; you defiled it—he went to my couch!*

*5 Simeon and Levi are brothers [equally headstrong, deceitful, vindictive, and cruel]; their swords are weapons of violence.*

*6 O my soul, come not into their secret council; unto their assembly let not my honor be united [for I knew nothing of their plot], because in their anger they slew men [an honored man, Shechem, and the Shechemites], and in their self-will they disabled oxen.*

*7 Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce, and their wrath, for it was cruel. I will divide them in Jacob and [d]scatter them in Israel.*

*8 Judah, you are the one whom your brothers shall praise; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons shall bow down to you.*

*9 Judah, a lion's cub! With the prey, my son, you have gone high up [the mountain]. He stooped down, he crouched like a lion, and like a lioness—who dares provoke and rouse him?*

*10 The scepter or leadership shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh [the Messiah, the Peaceful One] comes to Whom it belongs, and to Him shall be the obedience of the people.*

**Scepter defined:** a staff or rod. As a symbol of authority, the use of the scepter originated in the idea that the ruler was as a shepherd of his people.

**Shiloh defined:** Messiah, gift from God, Peaceful One

**Revelation 5:1-10 AMPC**

*1 And I saw lying on the open hand of Him Who was seated on the throne a scroll (book) written within and on the back, closed and sealed with seven seals;*

*2 And I saw a strong angel announcing in a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the scroll? And [who is entitled and deserves and is morally fit] to break its seals?*

*3 And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth [in the realm of the dead, Hades] was able to open the scroll or to take a [single] look at its contents.*

*4 And I wept audibly and bitterly because no one was found fit to open the scroll or to inspect it.*

*5 Then one of the elders [of the heavenly Sanhedrin] said to me, Stop weeping! **See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root (Source) of David, has won (has overcome and conquered)! He can open the scroll and break its seven seals!***

*6 And there between the throne and the four living creatures (beings) and among the elders [[c]of the heavenly Sanhedrin] **I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, ...***

*9 And [now] they sing a new song, saying, You are worthy to take the scroll and to break the seals that are on it, **for You were slain (sacrificed), and with Your blood You purchased men unto God from every tribe and language and people and nation.***

*10 And You have made them a kingdom (royal race) and priests to our God, and they shall reign [as kings] over the earth!*

## Back to Jacob's blessing in Genesis 49...

### **Genesis 49:11-28 AMPC**

*11 Binding His foal to the vine and His donkey's colt to the choice vine, He washes His garments in wine and His clothes in the blood of grapes.*

*12 His eyes are darker and more sparkling than wine, and His teeth whiter than milk.*

*13 Zebulun shall live toward the seashore, and he shall be a haven and a landing place for ships; and his border shall be toward Sidon.*

*14 Issachar is a strong-boned donkey crouching down between the sheepfolds.*

*15 And he saw that rest was good and that the land was pleasant; and he bowed his shoulder to bear [his burdens] and became a servant to tribute [subjected to forced labor].*

*16 Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel.*

*17 Dan shall be a serpent by the way, a horned snake in the path, that bites at the horse's heels, so that his rider falls backward.*

*18 I wait for Your salvation, O Lord.*

*19 Gad—a raiding troop shall raid him, but he shall raid at their heels and assault them [victoriously].*

*20 Asher's food [supply] shall be rich and fat, and he shall yield and deliver royal delights.*

*21 Naphtali is a hind let loose which yields lovely fawns.*

*22 **Joseph is a fruitful bough,** a fruitful bough by a well (spring or fountain), whose branches run over the wall.*

*23 Skilled archers have bitterly attacked and sorely worried him; they have shot at him and persecuted him.*

*24 But **his bow remained strong and steady and rested in the Strength that does not fail him, for the arms of his hands were made strong and active by the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob, by the name of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel,***

*25 By the God of your father, Who will help you, and by the Almighty, Who will bless you with blessings of the heavens above, blessings lying in the deep beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb.*

26 The blessings of your father [on you] are greater than the blessings of my forefathers [Abraham and Isaac on me] and are as lasting as the bounties of the eternal hills; they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him who was the consecrated one and the one separated from his brethren and [the one who] is prince among them.

27 Benjamin is a [e]ravenous wolf, in the morning devouring the prey and at night dividing the spoil.

28 All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them as he blessed them, blessing each one according to the blessing suited to him.

What does Benjamin mean as a “ravenous wolf”?

This wolf symbolism has been interpreted to refer to several elements of the Tribe of Benjamin, including its heroic members like King Saul and Mordecai, the tribe's often warlike nature, and the tribe's jurisdiction over the Temple in Jerusalem in which sacrifices were 'devoured' by flame.

In addition, 'Benjamin is a ravenous wolf' refers directly to Paul, who was a wolf to the wolves and snatched all souls away from the evil one, and 'in the evening he will divide what he seizes', that is, at the end of the world he will rest with a reward greater than his labors.

### Philippians 3:4-8 AMPC

4 Though for myself I have [at least grounds] to rely on the flesh. If any other man considers that he has or seems to have reason to rely on the flesh and his physical and outward advantages, I have still more!

5 Circumcised when I was eight days old, of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew [and the son] of Hebrews; as to the observance of the Law I was of [the party of] the Pharisees,

6 As to my zeal, I was a persecutor of the church, and by the Law's standard of righteousness (supposed justice, uprightness, and right standing with God) I was proven to be blameless and no fault was found with me.

7 But whatever former things I had that might have been gains to me, I have come to consider as [one combined] loss for Christ's sake.

8 Yes, furthermore, I count everything as loss compared to the possession of the priceless privilege (the overwhelming preciousness, the surpassing worth, and supreme advantage) of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord and of progressively becoming more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him [of perceiving and recognizing and understanding Him more fully and clearly]. For His sake I have lost everything and consider it all to be mere rubbish (refuse, dregs), in order that I may win (gain) Christ (the Anointed One),

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There is much in the Bible regarding the blessing of Benjamin and Joseph. Moses' blessing of Benjamin in Deuteronomy 33:12–17 is significant because it establishes a "before and after" experience for Benjamin and his descendants. The blessing has three parts: two time frames (morning and evening), two actions (devouring and dividing), and two outcomes (prey and spoil). Moses also says that the High God surrounds Benjamin all day and dwells between his shoulders, and that he kept Benjamin and Joseph as his "favorites" until last.

### **Deuteronomy 33:12-17 AMPC**

*12 Of Benjamin he said: The beloved of the Lord shall [a]dwell in safety by Him; He covers him all the day long, and makes His dwelling between his shoulders.*

*13 And of Joseph he said: Blessed by the Lord be his land, with the precious gifts of heaven from the dew and from the deep that couches beneath,*

*14 With the precious things of the fruits of the sun and with the precious yield of the months, 15 With the chief products of the ancient mountains and with the precious things of the everlasting hills,*

*16 With the precious things of the earth and its fullness and the favor and goodwill of Him Who dwelt in the bush. Let these blessings come upon the head of Joseph, upon the crown of the head of him who was separate and prince among his brothers.*

*17 Like a firstling young bull his majesty is, and his horns like the horns of the wild ox; with them he shall push the peoples, all of them, to the ends of the earth. And they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh.*

The descendants of Benjamin eventually settled near to Jerusalem and remained more faithful to God than the other tribes who later broke away to set up a separate Northern Kingdom. The tribe of Benjamin experienced a great measure of God's love and care. In many ways it was a physical blessing of abundant harvests.

The similarities in the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are unmistakable. In their stories we see the importance of family and the influence of example that can carry over good and bad. Themes like deceit, favoritism, family strife, unexpected blessing, reconciliation, and faith flow through the all their stories.

Ultimately, we see that God is faithful to His promises. He chooses to accomplish His kingdom purposes through sinful people who are willing to believe Him, repent, be habitually righteous in order to receive the Promise. God can make those sinful people new—giving Abram the name Abraham, Jacob the name Israel, and making those who believe in Jesus Christ new creations.

### **2 Corinthians 5:17 AMPC**

*17 Therefore if any person is [ingrafted] in Christ (the Messiah) he is a new creation (a new creature altogether); the old [previous moral and spiritual condition] has passed away. Behold, the fresh and new has come!*

Sometimes, our sinful patterns might still plague us but, in Christ we find forgiveness for our sins as well as power to overcome and stop sinning habitually. Although Jacob's name, "deceiver," characterized much of Jacob's life, he wrestled with his past, he repented, followed God and became Israel, one to whom God made promises to which He remained faithful. God appeared to Jacob, and Jacob believed God's promises. Despite Jacob's faults, God chose him to be the leader of a great nation that still bears his name today.



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