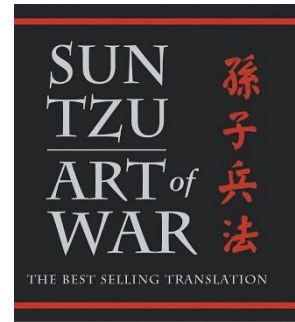


Genesis 32:1–22 Jacob Prepares to Meet Esau

Brown Community Group June 2, 2019

Background:

1. In a lopsided deal, Jacob took Esau's birthright
2. Jacob deceived Isaac into receiving his blessing
3. Jacob fled to Laban to marry and avoid Esau
4. Jacob worked for Laban over 20 years to for his wives
5. Jacob managed to become wealthy at Laban's expense
6. Jacob leaves Laban and begins his return to his homeland and his family



Genesis 32:1-2 Jacob also went on his way, and the angels of God met him.² When Jacob saw them, he said, "This is the camp of God!" So he named that place Mahanaim.

Genesis 28:11-15 When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep.¹² He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. ¹³ There above it^[c] stood the LORD, and he said: "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. ¹⁴ Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. ¹⁵ I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

Genesis 31:3 Then the LORD said to Jacob, "Go back to the land of your fathers and to your relatives, and I will be with you."

Genesis 31:11-13 The angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob.' I answered, 'Here I am.' ¹² And he said, 'Look up and see that all the male goats mating with the flock are streaked, speckled or spotted, for I have seen all that Laban has been doing to you. ¹³ I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and where you made a vow to me. Now leave this land at once and go back to your native land.'"

"Mahanaim" literally means "two camps." He could have named it this for several reasons including

1. He saw the angels as a second camp along with his own
2. He later divides his family into two camps (vs. 7,10)

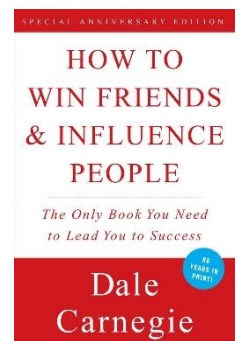
Although the answer could be either of these explanations or even others, I tend to believe the first because he says it in response to seeing the camp of God. If this is the case, it should illustrate how angels were seen, not as cherubs singing and playing harps but a military encampment.

Genesis 32:3 Jacob sent messengers ahead of him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom.

Edom was the new name given to Esau and means "red" in Hebrew. His descendants/tribe would be the Edomites just as Jacob would be Israel and his descendants/tribe would be the Israelites. The Edomites were always a proof that the Bible was fiction until archaeology found their civilization in 2002.

One other note, Mahanaim is over 400 miles southwest of where Jacob began and near his destination. Edom is 150-200 miles further south, not on the way to anywhere.

Genesis 32:4-21 He instructed them: "This is what you are to say to my lord Esau: 'Your servant Jacob says, I have been staying with Laban and have remained there till now. ⁵ I have cattle and donkeys, sheep and goats, male and female servants. Now I am sending this message to my lord, that I may find favor in your eyes.'"



⁶ When the messengers returned to Jacob, they said, "We went to your brother Esau, and now he is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him."

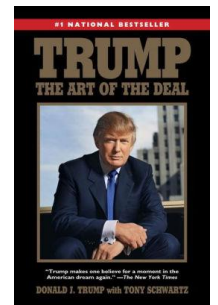
⁷ In great fear and distress Jacob divided the people who were with him into two groups, and the flocks and herds and camels as well. ⁸ He thought, "If Esau comes and attacks one group, the group that is left may escape."

⁹ Then Jacob prayed, "O God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, LORD, you who said to me, 'Go back to your country and your relatives, and I will make you prosper,' ¹⁰ I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servant. I had only my staff when I crossed this Jordan, but now I have become two camps. ¹¹ Save me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau, for I am afraid he will come and attack me, and also the mothers with their children. ¹² But you have said, 'I will surely make you prosper and will make your descendants like the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted.'"

¹³ He spent the night there, and from what he had with him he selected a gift for his brother Esau: ¹⁴ two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, ¹⁵ thirty female camels with their young, forty cows and ten bulls, and twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. ¹⁶ He put them in the care of his servants, each herd by itself, and said to his servants, "Go ahead of me, and keep some space between the herds."

¹⁷ He instructed the one in the lead: "When my brother Esau meets you and asks, 'Who do you belong to, and where are you going, and who owns all these animals in front of you?' ¹⁸ then you are to say, 'They belong to your servant Jacob. They are a gift sent to my lord Esau, and he is coming behind us.'"

¹⁹ He also instructed the second, the third and all the others who followed the herds: "You are to say the same thing to Esau when you meet him. ²⁰ And be sure to say, 'Your servant Jacob is coming behind us.'" For he thought, "I will pacify him with these gifts I am sending on ahead; later, when I see him, perhaps he will receive me." ²¹ So Jacob's gifts went on ahead of him, but he himself spent the night in the camp.



Steps Jacob Took:

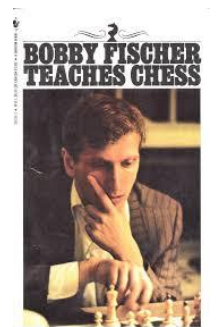
1. Thought through the situation
2. Sent diplomatic message to Esau (Opening move)
3. Divides his camp
4. Prayed
5. Slept on it
6. Sent waves of gifts (End game)

This would have been over 550 head of livestock and at least five herds.

BROTHERS

Brothers in stressful situations can react in three ways:

1. They can grow apart and combative
2. They can grow together and stronger
3. They can oscillate between closeness and distance



Apart

Cain and Abel

Adolph and Rudolph Dassler – Adidas and Puma

Theo and Karl Albrecht – Aldi and Trader Joes

Together

Peter and Andrew; James and John

Wright Brothers, Cohen Brothers, Everly Brothers

James Carville and Mary Matalin

Come and Go

Isaac and Ismael

John Adams and Thomas Jefferson

Mike and Cale Gundy