33

*33:1-20* **Jacob Reconciles With Esau And Settles In Shechem**

Gen 33:1**Then Jacob lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, Esau was coming, and with him 400 men. Then he divided the children among Leah and Rachel and the two maidservants.**

**Then Jacob lifted his eyes and looked,**

“Then Jacob looked up and saw” or “Then Jacob looked {ahead of him} and saw”. Make sure your translation of this idiom does not mean that Jacob looked straight up, rather he probably looked carefully to the south (the direction that his brother was coming from). (See: figs-idiom)

**and behold, Esau was coming,**

“{in the distance} that Esau was coming {toward him},” or “that Esau was {in the distance} coming/heading {his direction/way},” Esau was still a fair distance away, which gave Jacob time to do everything that he does in verses 1-3.

**and with him 400 men.**

“and with him {were} 400 men!” or “with 400 men!” or “and that he had 400 men with him!”

**Then he divided the children among Leah and Rachel and the two maidservants.**

“Then/So he/Jacob {quickly} separated/put his children into groups with {their own mothers,} Leah, Rachel and {his} two servant wives.” or “Then/So he/Jacob had his children {quickly} gather/stand with their own mothers, so that Leah, Rachel and {his} two concubines were each with her own children.” Each of the women had her own children with her (verse 2). See how you translated “divided” in Gen 32:7 and “his two maidservants” in Gen 32:22.

Gen 33:2**And he put the maidservants and their children first, and Leah and her children after them, and Rachel and Joseph after them.**

**And he put the maidservants and their children**

“He put his {two} servant wives and/with their children” or “He put the group that had/included his {two} servant wives and their children”. See how you translated “his two maidservants” in Gen 32:22.

**first,**

“first {in line},” or “in front {of all the others},” For some languages it is more natural to put phrases like “first” and “after them” at the beginning of their clauses and say, “First {in line} he put his {two} servant wives and/with their children. Behind them {he put} Leah and/with her children, and last {of all} {he put} Rachel and/with {her son} Joseph.” Do what is best in your language. (See: figs-infostructure)

**and Leah and her children**

“then {he put} Leah and/with her children”

**after them,**

“behind them,” or “next,”

**and Rachel and Joseph**

“and {he put} Rachel and/with {her son} Joseph”

**after them.**

“behind them {all}.” or “last.” or “in the rear.”

Gen 33:3**Then he himself went before them, and he bowed to the ground seven times as he came near to his brother.**

**Then he himself went before them,**

“Then Jacob himself went/walked ahead of them {all} {toward his brother},” or “Then he/Jacob started going/walking {toward his brother} ahead of them {all},”

**and he bowed to the ground seven times as he came near to his brother.**

“and he bowed {with his face} to the ground seven times {to show respect} as he went/got closer to him/Esau.” or “and as he approached him/Esau, he prostrated himself {with his face} to the ground seven times {to show respect}.” See how you translated “bow down” in Gen 27:29. (See: translate-symaction)

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Gen 33:4**But Esau ran to meet him and embraced him, and he fell on his neck and kissed him, and they cried.**

**But Esau ran to meet him and embraced him,**

“But Esau ran to greet Jacob and hugged him”. This sentence shows a contrast between what Jacob was expecting and what actually happened. (See: grammar-connect-logic-contrast)

**and he fell on his neck and kissed him,**

“and he threw/put his arms around his neck/shoulders and kissed him,” or “He held him/Jacob tightly and kissed him {on the cheeks},” See how you translated “hugged him...and kissed him {on the cheeks}” in Gen 29:13. Make sure the way you translate “fell on his neck” does not imply that Esau accidentally fell. Rather, this is an idiom that means he embraced Jacob warmly, with much emotion. (See: figs-idiom)

**and they cried.**

“and/as they {both} cried {for joy}.” or “Both of them cried {because they were so happy to see each other again}.” Consider whether or not to begin a new sentence here in your language. Also, some languages have a dual pronoun for “they” that could be used here. Do what is best in your language. (See: figs-youdual)

Gen 33:5**Then he lifted his eyes and saw the women and the children, and he said, “Who {are} these with you?” And he said, “The children whom God has graciously given to your servant.”**

**Then he lifted his eyes**

“Then Esau looked up/ahead”. See how you translated the idiom “lifted...eyes” in verse 1 and Gen 31:10. It may be necessary to translate this idiom in different ways, depending on the context. (See: figs-idiom)

**and saw the women and the children,**

“and saw/noticed the women and children {who were there} {with/behind Jacob},”

**and he said,**

“so he asked {him/Jacob},” (See: writing-quotations)

**“Who {are} these with you?”**

“Who {are} these {people}? {Do they belong} to you?” or “How are these people related to you?” Esau wants to know if these people are Jacob’s family members or his servants or someone else; he is not asking what their names are.

**And he said,**

“He/Jacob answered {him/Esau},” Make sure it is clear in your translation who is speaking to whom here. (See: writing-pronouns)

**“The children**

“{They are} the children {and the wives}” or “{They are} {the/my wives and} the/my children”

**whom God has graciously given to your servant.”**

“whom God has graciously/kindly given to {me,} your servant.” or “whom God has graciously/kindly given to me, sir.” Jacob uses the phrase “your servant” to be polite and show respect to Esau; he was not actually Esau’s servant. For some languages it is more natural to put the honorific title first in this sentence and say, “Sir, {they are} the {wives and} children whom God has graciously given to me.” Do what is best in your language. (See: figs-infostructure)

Gen 33:6**Then the maidservants came near, they and their children, and they bowed down.**

**Then the maidservants came near, they and their children,**

“Then the {two} maidservants came closer {to Esau} {along} with their children,” or “Then the/Jacob’s {two} servant wives and their childrencame/went closer/forward,” See how you translated “maidservants” in verses 1-2.

**and they bowed down.**

“and they {all} bowed {to the ground} {in front of Esau/him} {to show respect}.” See how you translated “bowed down” in verse 3. (See: translate-symaction)

Gen 33:7**Then Leah also came near, and her children, and they bowed down. Then after {that}, Joseph came near, and Rachel, and they bowed down.**

**Then Leah also came near, and her children,**

“Then Leah also came closer {to Esau} {along} with her children” or “Next Leah and her children also came closer/forward”

**and they bowed down.**

“and bowed {to the ground}.” (See: translate-symaction)

**Then after {that}, Joseph came near, and Rachel,**

“Then last {of all}, Joseph and {his mother} Rachel came closer/forward,”

**and they bowed down.**

“and they {also} bowed {to the ground}.” Some languages have a dual pronoun for “they” that fits here well. See what you did in verse 4. (See: figs-theydual)

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Gen 33:8**Then he said, “What to you {are} all these groups that I met?” And he said, “To find favor in the eyes of my lord.”**

**Then he said,**

“Then Esau said {to Jacob},” or “Then Esau asked {Jacob},” (See: writing-quotations)

**“What to you {are}**

“What do you mean/intend by” or “Why did you send” or “What is the meaning/purpose of”

**all these groups**

“all those groups/herds {of livestock/animals}”

**that I met?”**

“that I encountered/saw {on my way here}?” or “that came to me {on my way here}?”

**And he said,**

“Jacob said {to him},” or “Jacob answered {him},” (See: writing-quotations)

**“To find favor in the eyes of my lord.”**

“{I sent them} so that you would be gracious/kind to me, sir.” or “{They are gifts for you} so that you would be pleased with me, sir.” See how you translated “my lord” and the idiom “find favor in...eyes” in Gen 32:5. (See: figs-idiom)

Gen 33:9**Then Esau said, “I have plenty, my brother. Let what {belongs} to you be yours.”**

**Then Esau said,**

“But Esau replied,” or “Esau said/replied {to him},” What Esau says is in contrast to what Jacob said, but it may not be necessary to use a conjunction here at all. Do what is best in your language. (See: writing-quotations)

**“I have plenty, my brother.**

“My brother, I {already} have/own enough {livestock/animals}”. For some languages it is more natural to put the address “my brother” first in this quote. Some languages also have a special term for “younger brother” that fits well here. Do what is best in your language. (See: figs-infostructure)

**Let what {belongs} to you be yours.”**

“Keep what you have/own for yourself.” or “{so} keep your livestock/animals for yourself.” or “{so} keep them for yourself.”

Gen 33:10 **But Jacob said, “No, please. If, please, I have found favor in your eyes, then take my gift from my hand. For indeed I have seen your face, {which is} like seeing the face of God, and you have received me.**

**But Jacob said,**

“But Jacob responded/insisted {to him},” (See: writing-quotations)

**“No, please.**

“No, I beg you.” or “Please don’t refuse {my gift}.” In verses 10 and 11, Jacob speaks urgently to Esau, because in that culture if Esau accepts Jacob’s gift, he is committing himself to treat Jacob as a friend.

**If, please, I have found favor in your eyes, then**

“{Rather} if you are pleased with me,” or “{Rather} if you want to be gracious/kind to me, then”. See how you translated the idiom “find/gain favor in your eyes” in verse 8.

**take my gift from my hand.**

“{please} accept these gifts from me.” or “{please} accept from me what I have given {you}.” (See: figs-synecdoche)

**For indeed**

“After all,” or “The fact is,”

**I have seen your face, {which is} like seeing the face of God, and**

“for me to see your face is like seeing God’s face, especially since” or “{I thought you were still angry at me, so} I was afraid of seeing/meeting you again in person, just as I would be afraid of seeing/meeting God in person, but”. In Old Testament times it was terrifying for someone to see God in person, because normally people could not see God’s face and live (Exodus 33:20). However, God had been gracious to Jacob and allowed him to live (Genesis 32:30). In the same way, it was a terrifying thing for Jacob to see Esau who had 400 men with him, but Esau was gracious to him (33:4). (See: figs-simile)

**you have received me.**

“you have received/welcomed me {so kindly/warmly}.” or “you {forgave me and} welcomed me!” See how you translated a different Hebrew word that means “receive” or “welcome” in Gen 32:20.

Gen 33:11**Please take my blessing that was brought to you, because God has been gracious to me, and because I have everything.” And he urged him, so he took {it}.**

**Please take my blessing that was brought to you,**

“{So} please accept my gift {of livestock/animals} that my servants brought to you,” or “{So} please accept the livestock/animals from me that I sent/gave to you,” (See: figs-activepassive)

**because God has been gracious to me,**

“because God has been kind/generous to me” or “because God has blessed me”

**and because I have everything.”**

“and has given me everything {that I need}.” or “so that I have/own all/everything {that I need/want}.”

**And he urged him,**

“He/Jacob kept urging him/Esau {to accept his gift}” or “He/Jacob kept insisting {that he/Esau accept the gift/livestock/animals from him}”. Make sure it is clear in your translation who and what is being referred to at every point in this sentence. (See: writing-pronouns)

**so he took {it}.**

“until {finally} he/Esau accepted {it/them}.”

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Gen 33:12**Then he said, “Let’s travel and go, and I will go in front of you.”**

**Then he said,**

“Then Esau said/suggested {to Jacob},”

**“Let’s travel and go,**

“Let’s start traveling/heading {home},”

**and I will go in front of you.”**

“and I will lead/accompany/escort you.” Esau is suggesting that he would accompany or escort Jacob and his family, not that he would go far ahead of them.

Gen 33:13 **But he said to him, “My lord knows that the children {are} tender and the flock{s} and the herd{s} {that} are nursing {are} with me. And if they drive them one day, then all the flock{s} will die.**

**But he said to him,**

“But he/Jacob replied to him,” (See: writing-pronouns)

**“My lord knows that**

“Sir, you know that” or “Sir, as you know,” See how you translated “my lord” in verse 8.

**the children {are} tender**

“my children {are} fragile/frail/delicate/weak”

**and the flock{s} and the herd{s} {that} are nursing {are} with me.**

“and some of my sheep and cattle are nursing {their young}.” or “and I need {to be careful with} {all} the sheep and cattle that are nursing {their young}.” See how you translated “flock{s} and herd{s}” in Gen 12:16.

**And if they drive them one day,**

“If my servants/men drive the livestock/animals {too hard/far} in one day,” or “If I force the livestock/animals to go/travel too far/fast {for} {even} one day,”

**then all the flock{s} will die.**

“then all the flock{s} {and herds} will die.” or “then all of them will die.” This phrase especially refers to the sheep and cattle that were nursing, but Jacob is probably using hyperbole here (“all”) to emphasize that he does not want to travel too fast. (See: figs-hyperbole)

Gen 33:14**Please let my lord go on before his servant, and I will lead them on at my gentle pace, at the pace of the livestock that {are} ahead of me and at the pace of the children, until I come to my lord in Seir.”**

**Please let my lord go on before his servant,**

“{So then,} sir, please go on {home} ahead of me, sir.” See how you translated Jacob’s use of “my lord” (in verse 8) and “servant” (in verse 5) to show respect and deference to Esau. Here he uses both terms for emphasis. (See: figs-honorifics)

**and I will lead them on at my gentle pace, at the pace of the livestock that {are} ahead of me and at the pace of the children,**

“Then/Meanwhile I will travel along slowly at a pace/speed {that is safe/good} for the livestock/animals and children that are with me,”

**until I come to my lord**

“until we reach you, sir,” or “We will catch up to you later, sir,”

**in Seir.”**

“in {the land/region of} Seir.” See how you translated “the land of Seir” in Gen 32:3. The land of Seir was a mountainous region southeast of the land of Canaan (and the Dead Sea) and was where Esau had settled. It was also called “Edom” (Gen 32:3), which was Esau’s nickname (Gen 25:30). You could put some of that information in a footnote.

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Gen 33:15**And Esau said, “Please let me leave with you some of the people who {are} with me.” But he said, “Why {do} that? Let me find favor in the eyes of my lord.”**

**And Esau said,**

“So/Then Esau said/responded {to Jacob/him},”

**“Please let me leave with you some of the people who {are} with me.”**

“{Okay,} {then} please let me leave you some of my men {to escort/accompany you}.” or “{Okay,} {then} may I leave some of my men with you {to escort/accompany you}?”

**But he said,**

“But Jacob replied,” or “Jacob said/replied {to him},” or “Jacob answered {him},” Make sure the way you translate this quote margin fits with how you translate the previous and following sentences. (See: writing-quotations)

**“Why {do} that?**

“There’s no need for that.” or “There is no need {for you} to do that.” Jacob uses a rhetorical question here to emphasize that there is no need for Esau to leave any of his men with him. For some languages it is clearer and more natural to use a statement here instead. Do what is best in your language. (See: figs-rquestion)

**Let me find favor in the eyes of my lord.”**

“{Just} please {continue to} be gracious/kind to me, sir.” or “Sir, please {just} {continue to} treat me kindly.” Consider again how you translated “my lord” in verses 8,13-15. For some languages it is more natural to put this address earlier in this quote. Do what is best in your language. Also see how you translated the idiom “find favor in the eyes of” in verse 8. (See: figs-honorifics)

Gen 33:16 **So on that day Esau went on his way back to Seir.**

**So on that day**

“So that {very/same} day”

**Esau went on his way**

“Esau {and his men} started on their way” or “Esau {and his men} left and headed”

**back to Seir.**

“back {home} to {the land/region of} Seir.” See how you translated “Seir” in verse 14.

Gen 33:17**And Jacob traveled to Succoth, and he built a house for himself, and for his livestock he made shelters. For that {reason} he called the name of the place Succoth.**

**And Jacob traveled to Succoth,**

“But Jacob traveled/went to {the town of} Succoth {instead}” or “Meanwhile, {instead of going to Seir,} Jacob {and his family} traveled/went to {the town of} Succoth”. Jacob went northwest to Succoth, instead of going south to the region of Seir as he had said he would do (verse 14). Also see how you translated “travel” in verse 12. (See: grammar-connect-logic-contrast)

**and he built a house for himself,**

“There he {and his men/servants} built a house for himself {and his family/household},” or “where he {and his men/servants} built a house for his family/household,” Consider whether or not it is best in your language to begin a new sentence here.

**and for his livestock he made shelters.**

“and they {also} built {some} shelters for his livestock/animals.” or “and shelters for his livestock/animals.” The term “livestock” is general here and includes all of Jacob’s animals.

**For that {reason}**

“That is why” or “Because of that,” See how you translated this phrase in Gen 32:32.

**he called the name of the place Succoth.**

“the name of that place/town is {called} Succoth, {which means “shelters.”}” or “they/people call that place/town Succoth, {which means “shelters.”}” The phrase “he called” could refer to Jacob, or it could refer to people in general, as in Gen 11:9; 16:14; 21:31; 25:30; 27:36; 29:34; 31:48. If you include the meaning of the name Succoth in your translation or in a footnote, make sure it matches the way you translate “shelters” earlier in this verse. (See: translate-names)

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Gen 33:18 **Then Jacob came {in} peace {to} the city of Shechem, which {was} in the land of Canaan, when he came from Paddan Aram, and he camped before the city.**

**Then Jacob came {in} peace {to} the city of Shechem, which {was} in the land of Canaan, when he came from Paddan Aram,**

“Later Jacob {and his family} arrived safely at the city of Shechem in the land/region of Canaan, as he/they continued traveling {home} from {the land/region of} Paddan Aram,” or “{After that,} Jacob {and his family} continued their journey {home} from {the land/region of} Paddan Aram, until {eventually} they arrived safely at the city of Shechem in the land/region of Canaan,” Jacob and his family had left Paddan Aram and had been traveling back to the land of his ancestors in Canaan (Gen 31:3, 13, 18). See how you translated “in peace” in Gen 28:21.

**and he camped**

“and he/they set up camp {in a field}” or “Then he/they set up his/their tents {in a field}”. Consider whether or not it is best in your language to begin a new sentence here. See how you translated “camped” in Gen 26:17.

**before the city.**

“near/beside the/that city.” or “on the edge/outskirts of the/that city.”

Gen 33:19**And he bought the portion of the field where he pitched his tent{s} from the hand{s} of the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for a hundred kesitahs.**

**And he bought the portion of the field**

“Then he bought the plot/piece of land” or “{While he was there,} he bought the land”

**where he pitched his tent{s}**

“where they had set up their tents/camp” or “where he/they were camping/staying”

**from the hand{s} of the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for a hundred kesitahs.**

“from the sons of Hamor for one hundred pieces {of silver/money}. One of Hamor’s sons was named Shechem.” or “for/with one hundred pieces {of silver/money} from the sons of Hamor {who was} the father of Shechem.” The weight and value of a hundred kesitahs of silver is not known. Some ancient translations (including the LXX and Latin Vulgate) have “a hundred lambs” here, but most modern translations have “a hundred pieces of silver/money”. (See: translate-unknown)

Gen 33:20**And there he set up an altar, and he called it El Elohe Israel.**

**And there he set up an altar,**

“On that land he/Jacob {also} built a {stone} altar,” or “Jacob {also} built/made an altar {out of stones} on that land,”See how you translated “altar” in Gen 26:25.

**and he called it El Elohe Israel.**

“and he named it El Elohe Israel, {which means “God is the God of Israel.”}” The name “El Elohe Israel” could also mean “Powerful/Mighty is the God of Israel” because the Hebrew word “el” can mean “God” or “powerful”. You could put that information in a footnote. (See: translate-names)