

GENESIS

The Book of Foundations

Biblical Foundation School Genesis Series Lesson 14

Jacob – A Blessed Man (Genesis 27-36)



Introduction

Jacob's life is one that is blessed by God in many ways. He is given spiritual as well as material blessings. Though a person with many shortcomings and failures, Jacob experiences God's faithfulness unconditionally. God the master craftsman polishes and chips away Jacob's rough edges.

BIRTHRIGHT — a right, privilege, or possession to which a person, especially the firstborn son, was entitled by birth in Bible times. In Israel, as in the rest of the ancient world, the firstborn son enjoyed a favored position. His birthright included a double portion of his father's assets upon his death (Deut. 21:17). Part of the firstborn's benefits also was a special blessing from the father (Gen. 27:27) and the privilege of leadership of the family (Gen. 43:33).

BLESSING — the act of declaring, or wishing, favor and goodness upon others. The blessing is not only the good effect of words; it also has the power to bring them to pass.

Jacob's Position - Stealing Esau's Blessings (27)

- Why did God choose Jacob over Esau? Was it because Jacob was a "better" person?
- Why does God choose us to be His children?
- Predestination: Calvinism versus Arminianism
 - Romans 8:29-30: For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.
 - Ephesians 1:4-5: For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will--
 - Calvinism – God chooses based on solely on His sovereign will
 - Arminianism – God chooses based on the foreknowledge of our response to Him
- Romans 9:10-15 tells us that it is all by God's sovereign will and mercy that some are saved.
- Double predestination says that God is responsible for election and reprobation – God actively calls the elect but leaves the reprobate in his sins.
- God blesses us in spite of our weaknesses, not because of our strengths.



- Was it wrong for Jacob to desire the blessing of God?
- Jacob used deceitful methods to get Isaac's blessing and even used God's name in his scheme.
- God's hand and His blessings in Jacob's life will become more and more evident later in his life and in history.

Jacob's Family - Blessing through Leah and Rachel (29 and 30)



- He was willing to wait on God to provide the descendants necessary to fulfill God's promise to Abraham (15; 22:17) and reaffirmed to Isaac (26:4).
- God blessed Jacob with 12 sons and 1 daughter. (See attached chart)
- God is able to work through Laban's deception and the conflict between Jacob's wives and concubines to establish the nation of Israel.

Jacob's Possession - Flocks Increase (30)

- When God blesses someone, the results very obvious to everyone. Laban said many times: "The Lord has blessed me because of you."
- Jacob acknowledges that it is not what he did, but it's purely God's provision (31:7b-9).
- When God works, we can start in an inferior position (spotted and speckled sheep), but God will ensure our ultimate success – Trickery and slight of hand are not necessary to accomplish what God wants for us.

Jacob Meets Esau (32 and 33)

- "Your servant Jacob" humbles himself before "my master Esau" by sending gifts (32:3-5)
- Though still a schemer, Jacob is truly humbled after working for Laban for 20 years. God had polished Jacob during this time.
- Jacob tries to be reconciled to Esau knowing the mistakes of his youth.
- God gives sufficient grace when we deal with others especially our enemies.
- Jacob obeys God in spite of fear of Esau:
 - Obedience to God does not mean no trouble in life
 - Part of God's blessing is to train us and strengthen our faith in Him
 - Encountering problems in life does not mean we are out of God's blessing
- Jacob's response: Pray (32:9-12)
 - Jacob acknowledges that God alone can help him
 - Jacob recalls God's command and promise
 - Jacob humbles himself before God and confesses his unworthiness and fear
 - Jacob counts his blessings
 - Jacob makes his request to God
 - Important ingredients in Jacob's effective prayer
 - Begins and ends his prayer with focus on God
 - He recalls God's promises and commands
 - He acknowledges God faithfulness and character



- He confesses his own weaknesses
- He presents his requests to God

Jacob Wrestles with God (32)

- **Read 32:22-32**
- Jacob the “supplanter” has been wrestling with several men in his life with his own strength and smarts: First Esau for the birthright and blessings, then with Laban over his wives and cattle.
- He still has to learn the lesson to contend with God. Jacob struggles with an angel (Hosea 12:3-4) to get his blessings.
- “I will not let you go unless you bless me” – Jacob understands the value and significance of having God’s blessings and takes hold of the precious opportunity to get blessing.
- God uses this encounter to teach Jacob a lesson:
 - God uses the physical disability of a dislocated hip joint to humble him.
 - Jacob the supplanter is now Israel the one who perseveres with God.
- Do you ever wrestle with God to get his blessings? Or do we wrestle to get material possessions from him?
- God can use certain physical sufferings to cause us to be humbled and reminded of our need for His grace – 2 Corinthians 12:9-10.
- In the latter part of his life, Jacob is finally willing to submit to God and is able to live at peace with others.

Assignment

1. How would you respond to someone who says God is unfair because He has predestined and chosen only some and not all people?

2. As God’s chosen people and as His children, God has promised to bless us beyond our expectations. List the blessings, big and small, God has shown you in the past week.

3. Describe your Peniel experience when you had to wrestle with God and he had to break you. What was the outcome? How did the experience cause you to grow?

Sons of Jacob	Meaning of Name	Mother	Birth Verse
01-Reuben	See, a son	Leah	So Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben; for she said, "The LORD has surely seen my affliction. Now therefore, my husband will love me." Gen 29.32
02-Simeon	Hearing	Leah	Then she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the LORD has heard that I am unloved, He has therefore given me this son also." And she called his name Simeon. Gen 29.33
03-Levi	Joined; attached	Leah	She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Now this time my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." Therefore his name was called Levi. Gen 29.34
04-Judah	Yahweh be praised	Leah	And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Now I will praise Yahweh." Therefore she called his name Judah. Then she stopped bearing. Gen 29.35
05-Dan	Judge	Bilhah (Rachel's servant)	Then Rachel said, "God has judged my case; and He has also heard my voice and given me a son." Therefore she called his name Dan. Gen 30.6
06-Naphtali	My wrestling	Bilhah (Rachel's servant)	Rachel said, "With great wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, and indeed I have prevailed." So she called him Naphtali. Gen 30.6
07-Gad	Troop; invader; good fortune	Zilpah (Leah's servant)	Then Leah said, "A troop comes!" So she called his name Gad. Gen 30.11
08-Asher	Happy	Zilpah (Leah's servant)	Then Leah said, "I am happy, for the daughters will call me blessed." So she called his name Asher. Gen 30.13
09-Issachar	Man of hire	Leah	Leah said, "God has given me my hire [wages] because I have given my maid to my husband." So she called his name Issachar. Gen 30.18
10-Zebulun	Dwelling	Leah	Leah said, "...now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons." So she called his name Zebulun. Gen 30.20b
11-Joseph	Increaser	Rachel	So she called his name Joseph, and said, "The LORD shall add to me another son." Gen 30.24
12-Benjamin	Son of the right hand	Rachel	As her soul was departing (for she died), she called his name Ben-Oni [son of my sorrow]; but his father called him Ben-Jamin. Gen 35.18