

Appreciating God's Discipline

Genesis 25-35

Objectives:

- 1.) Observe the way sins were passed down to and from Jacob's life.
- 2.) See and understand the consequences that always follow sin.
- 3.) Make decisions to uncover our own sins and repent from them.
- 4.) Search for other infected areas in our lives.
- 5.) Better appreciate God's grace in working with Jacob who later became Israel.

There are two unbiblical major views of behavior. The one blames the shaping of the environment; the other the passing on of genes. It is sufficient for us to know that the world naturally comes up with 'blame' systems. They develop a thought that excuses man of his own sin. The Bible agrees to the importance of both of these shaping influences but at the same time hold man accountable for what he does. The scriptures go beyond this categories and include the spiritual aspect.

Man has insisted on excluding God's participation in the shaping of mankind. The reason is obvious. If God is involved, then man is responsible for what he does. The scriptures give us an astonishingly clear perspective of how God works in the live of each person. If we are not careful though, we will miss the hand and voice of our Creator.

Numerous scriptural observations of Jacob with his parents, brother Esau and his children allow us to see the effect of sin in a life, family and society. When skimming over these chapters, one can hardly but draw the conclusion that God is showing us these weaknesses on purpose!

Genesis 25	Genesis 27	Genesis 28	Genesis 29	Genesis 30	Genesis 31	Genesis 32	Genesis 33	Genesis 34	Genesis 35
Birth; Esau trades birth-right	Jacob steals blessing	Jacob is sent away; promise of God	Love at first sight; Jacob is tricked by Laban	Jacob's wives struggle; Laban cheats Jacob	Jacob escapes Laban; God blesses Jacob	Jacob fears Esau; Humbled by God	Jacob restored to Esau at great cost	Jacob's daughter raped; vengeance	Jacob's new name is Israel

When God gets His holy hand on a man's life, God is determined to bring him through 'purging' incidents so that he will no longer tolerate sin's presence in his life. Of course, we must look beyond the actual discipline to its end result. God is making us holy like Himself so that we can enjoy fellowship with Him and that He can more mightily exert His power through our lives (1 Peter 1:16).

God keeps confronting and challenging Jacob through his life. By carefully looking at Jacob's life and seeing the effect of sin and God's grace upon his life, we too will be better able to discern and appreciate how God gets involved in our own lives as His children.

Influence in the Family

Parent me

Influence

My family

Exodus 20:5

"... Visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me..."

Bad → Bad

Good → Good

"But showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments."

Exodus 20:6

"Who will render to each man according to his deeds."
(Romans 2:6)

We tend to be more familiar with societal degeneration than societal reformation.

Having a family is the means by which we reproduce ourselves. We are not just-multiplying our our presence, but also our passions and beliefs.

Ready for Marriage?

The most important question in seeking a marriage mate is not whether, "I like him or her." Far more important is whether you have matured and will pass on godly passions, values, perspectives and problems to your children.

God & Man's Sin

God catches all of our moral weaknesses. Not one innocently passes by. Even if we are God's people, God judges our sins.

Unfortunately some believers have reasoned that since they are a believer and are forgiven that the Lord doesn't judge their sins. Because they are ignorant of how thoroughly God deals with His people's sins, they will make costly mistakes in their Christian walk.

Perhaps you have met such a Christian or you yourself even have such false notions. The way God deals with His people and those who are not His people quite differently.

* God, Judgment and the Unbeliever

Unbelievers will perish in their sin. They will be fully judged for all their wrong doings. **Esau** serves as a case example for this (Genesis 36 Esau ends).

* God, Judgment and the Believer

Believers, however, are a different case. Yahweh deals with them quite differently. God "begins with us first." Judgment begins with the household of God (cf. 1 Peter 4:17). **Jacob** serves as a clear example of this (Genesis 37 starts).

A Christian is not judged in the sense if he is accepted by God or not. Justification by faith teaches us His children are saved by faith in Christ. Every believer is on the path of sanctification.

God says that He scourges every child of His. This is a mark of belonging that we might be holy like our Father (cf. Hebrews 12:6). In Deuteronomy 28 we see a whole list of things that God will bring upon His people if they don't do **all** that He says.

SANCTIFICATION



Get Away with Divorce?

Divorce among Christians is tragic. Some have suggested that they even get away with marrying the person they wanted by divorcing.

The Lord however carefully traces the lustful eye, the bitter words and selfish deeds. Divorce only reveals the couples' frustration, loneliness, bitterness, and hatred. People never escape divorce. Divorces only perpetuate their pain.

Definitely Not!

15* By no means let any of you suffer as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler;

16* but if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, let him not feel ashamed, but in that name let him glorify God.

17* For *it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God*; and if *it begins* with us first, what *will be* the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? (1 Peter 4:15-17)

"Whatever a man sows, this he will also reap."

The foolish do not understand the consequences of their actions. They do not see the connection with their choices and what happens.

The wise understand the implications of their choice upon their life both for the present and future.

Sowing has the effect of multiplying the affects of what is done. Evil is multiplied, but so is good.

"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life."

Galatians 6:7-8

Let's now see what we can learn through how God showed His love for Jacob by working closely in his life. In the previous lesson we have seen how God brought special experiences of grace into Jacob's life. That goodness was nothing but grace. Jacob never deserved any special appearances of God except as Judge.

In these lessons we will begin to trace the Lord's steps as to how He cleverly blends those spiritual experiences with difficulties in life to awaken His people to His true nature.

A. Inherited Sin Nature

Jacob was a conniver from the start. His name meant 'supplanter' because at birth he held his twin brother's foot. Esau was the first born, but Jacob was right behind holding his heel.



We all are born sinners. Our sinful natures are inherited through Adam ultimately though immediately passed through our fathers. Mankind has a natural bent toward selfishness which apart from God's grace ultimately destroys every one of them.

Only by being born again (Jacob was born second) is a new spiritual nature imparted. God's choice of the second born is what Jesus expected Nicodemus to know as a Teacher (John 3:1-10).

"How can these things be?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not understand these things?" (John 3:9-10).

B. The Sinful Nature: Two Lost Treasures

The two brothers' sinful nature is clearly revealed in their lives. Esau's problem was rooted in the way he despised his godly inheritance and Isaac's refusal to do what was proper. Jacob sinned both against his father and brother from which he would pay good and long.

Esau was tricked two times, or at least he says so. We don't notice him, however, saying that he despised his birthright by trading it for a bowl of lentils. He showed his preference of earthly over heavenly.

The birthright was the right of a double portion of the inheritance. If there were two sons, the property would be divided into thirds and the eldest would get 2 portions, the younger one portion. (De 21:15-17)

The blessing accompanied the actual property. The father's blessing is the pronouncement of goodness upon his sons near his death. It seems that the father would gain a certain amount of God's promises and he could then bestow them upon his sons as he saw fit.

"Is he not rightly named Jacob, for he has supplanted me these two times? He took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing." And he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" (Genesis 27:36)

"That there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal. (Hebrews 12:16)

And Esau said to his father, "Do you have only one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father." So Esau lifted his voice and wept. (Genesis 27:38)

C. Determining Responsibility

Esau fell against hard times. This does not mean that God's curse caused him to be this way but that he had shown his fleshly heart by his worldly decisions.

Esau shows what happens when a man gets what he deserves. Jacob shows what happens when he didn't get the judgment that he deserved. God is under no compulsion to show grace. Giving grace is solely God's choice.

Bad decision: Sold his birthright for porridge (Genesis 25:32)

Bad decision: Married Hittite women (Genesis 26:34-35)

Bad decision: Married an Ishmaelite to spite his Dad (Gen 28:8-9).

Interworkings of Election

And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father Isaac; for though the twins were not yet born, and had not done anything good or bad, in order that God's purpose according to His choice might stand, not because of works, but because of Him who calls, it was said to her, "THE OLDER WILL SERVE THE YOUNGER." Just as it is written, "JACOB I LOVED, BUT ESAU I HATED." What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! For He says to Moses, "I WILL HAVE MERCY ON WHOM I HAVE MERCY, AND I WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON WHOM I HAVE COMPASSION." So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. (Romans 9:10-16)

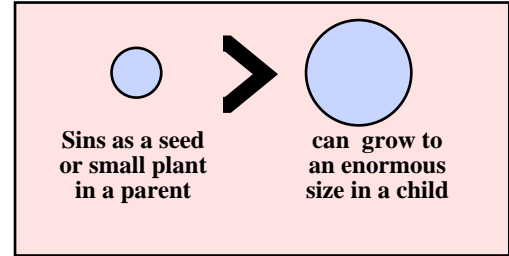
And when Esau was forty years old he married Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite; and they brought grief to Isaac and Rebekah. (Genesis 26:34-35)

So Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan displeased his father Isaac; and Esau went to Ishmael, and married ...

Karma is an Indian religious term that describes the bad things one gets from the result of a former life - this is an unscriptural perspective. Even though influenced by Isaac, Esau got what he deserved from the bad decisions he made in his one life with eternal consequences.

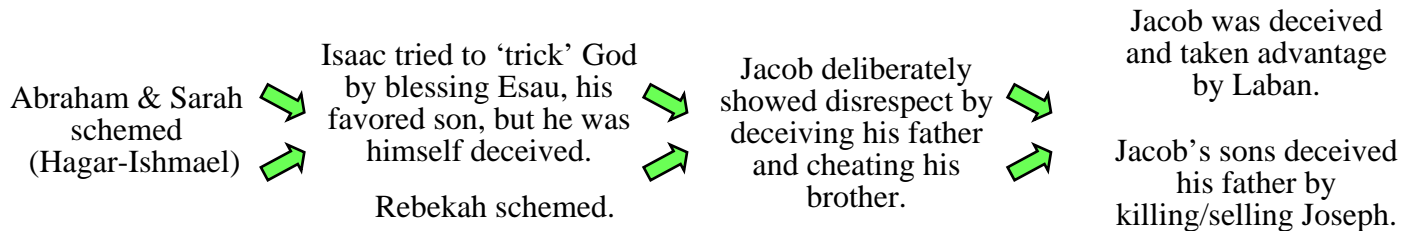
The parents' sins greatly affect their child's life. The worse situation occurs when a seed of a sin in a parent is joined with a child's predominant moral weakness. This is what happened with Isaac.

Note on the chart to the right that this area of deceit grew out of control in Jacob. Because of Laban and Abram's relationship, it is very possible that their forefather also worked deceitfully in some matters)



1) Deceitful Scheming

Disrespect, scheming and deceit go hand in hand. It ultimately is a sign of a person trying to get what they need by their own self-designed tactics.

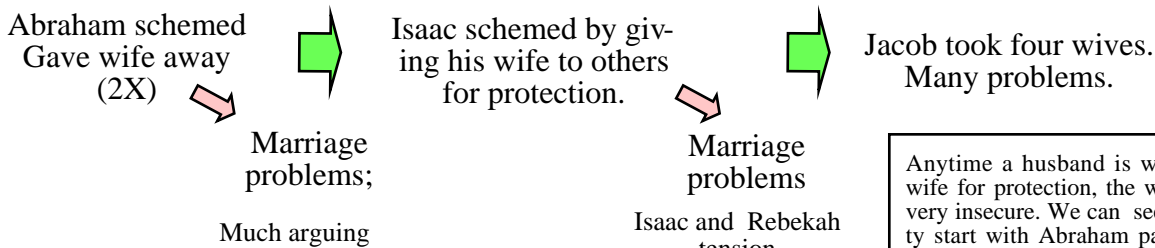


How should Jacob have responded to his mother's suggestion?

2) Divided Devotions

A person's love for God can not go beyond his love for his spouse. Marriage problems reveal more than spouse-spouse friction; they also have 'God' problem.

Weak Marriages



Anytime a husband is willing to pawn off his wife for protection, the wife is unloved and gets very insecure. We can see this marriage instability start with Abraham passed to Isaac and later explode in Jacob. Spiritual principle: One can only love God as much as he truly loves his wife.

Impure Devotion

Isaac had a love for earthly things (food). Isaac liked the earthy. Although he knew that he should have blessed Jacob (25:23), he was willing to violate God's revelation. He was willing to mix spiritual blessing with earthly desires.

- ➔ His son Esau was lost to the world.
- ➔ His son Jacob was lost but rescued by God's grace.

Assignments

Please answer question 1 and then at least question #2 or #3.

1. Map out the sins of your parents and detect which ones you have or need to deal with.
2. Explain a sin that has been passed on down to your life because of your parents. Have you sufficiently dealt with it.
3. How do you respond when God disciplines you? How should a Christian respond? Why?