

# 2021 R12.2 Conference Callaway Gardens

## Jacob & Esau Genesis 25:19-36

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# Key Concepts in Jacob and Esau

- **God's Sovereignty**
  - God is carrying out a plan that creates circumstances to which man must respond
- **God's Methods**
  - How God carries out His good plan and teaches us along the way
- **God's Values**
  - What God tells us He values in our behavior

# God's Sovereignty

- “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.” - Revelation 22:13
- “I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.” - Isaiah 45:7
- Romans 9:21-24
  - God creates objects of wrath to show his power;
  - To make known the riches of His glory on objects of mercy
- Romans 9:13
  - God made his choice before Jacob and Esau were born, so that God's purpose would stand
- “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” - Romans 8:28

# God's Methods (Seen in Jacobs story)

1. Prophecies
2. Angels
3. The Weak / Unlikely
4. Commands
5. Consequences
6. Growth through Tribulation

# God's Values

## 1. Faithful Obedience

1. Romans 4:3  
Abraham believed God, as the father of all those that would be saved through faith.
2. James 2:17-18  
Faith without works is dead
3. John 14:23-24  
Those who love Christ, obey Him
4. 1 John 2:3-5  
Those that say they know Him, and don't keep His commands is a liar

## 2. Relationships (Matt 22:36-40)

1. With God: Love God with all your heart, mind and soul
2. With Man: Love your neighbor as yourself

## 3. Relationships Intertwined (Matt 6:14-15)

1. If you forgive men their trespasses, God will forgive you. If you do not forgive men their trespasses, God will not forgive you. \*The unmerciful servant.

# Why tell these stories?

1. Teach us about the character of God
  1. He has an eternal plan and He is making it happen
  2. He is long-suffering and gives us ample proof
  3. He is a jealous God, He wants our hearts
2. Teach us about the character of Man
  1. We have a temporal plan, consumes us
  2. Heart of man is evil, selfish by nature
  3. We want control to define good and evil
  4. We have a great capacity for Faith

# What is God doing here?

## Setting the stage for the Messiah

1. Establishing His Nation, Israel
2. Royal Bloodline
3. Law and Prophets
4. Geography and Timing
5. A Relationship with Man

# Relational Construct in the Bible

## God's Sovereign Actions

- Creates man's circumstances and exposes us to truths

## Man's Response

- Affects our relationships
- Reflects our values
- Impacts our eternity



# Jacob: 10 Key Events

1. Prophecy and Birth
2. Trades for Birthright
3. Deceives for Blessing
4. Escapes from Esau
5. Deceived by Laban
6. Works for Laban
7. Flees from Laban
8. Wrestles with an Angel (Israel)
9. Reunion with Esau
10. Buries Rachel and Isaac

# Prophecy and Birth (Gen 25:21-26)

- Rebekah was barren for 20 years
- Lord's Prophecy:
  - 2 nations in her womb; one is stronger
  - The older will serve the younger
- Esau: Red and Hairy
- Jacob: Grasping Esau's Heel
- Issac: 60 yrs old

# Brothers as Men (Gen 25:27-28)

- Esau: A hunter, outdoorsman
  - Isaac's favorite because he had a taste for wild game
- Jacob: Plain man, tent-dweller
  - Rachel's favorite

# Trade for Birthright (Gen 25:29-34)

- Sells his birthright to Jacob for some red pottage (Edom)
  - "I am about to die, what good is my birthright?"
  - "Esau despised his birthright."
  - Esau trades a lifetime of provisions for a single meal

# Despising Birthright (Heb 12:16)

- Hebrews 12
  - Set aside sin and run the race with patience
  - Look unto Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith
  - Struggle against sin to the point of shedding blood
  - Endure hardships as discipline, God treats you like sons
- Hebrews 12:16 (14-17)

”Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.”

# Our Inheritance (Heb 12:16)

- Ephesians 1:10-11: “In whom [Christ] also we have obtained an **inheritance**...”
- 1 Peter 1:3-4: “...to an **inheritance** incorruptible..”
- Colossians 3:23-24: “..ye shall receive the reward of the **inheritance**...”
- Trading Our Inheritance
  - Matthew 7: 21-23: “Maybe will say to me that day, Lord, Lord...and then I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

# Deception for Blessing (Gen 27:1-41)

- Jacob and Esau > 40 yrs old (Gen 26:34)
  - Isaac > 100 yrs old
- Rebekah convinces Jacob to deceive Isaac.
- Isaac questions his speed and voice, and checks his touch and smell
- Jacob is blessed and leaves as Esau comes
- Isaac and Esau realize the deception, but Jacob's blessing is not revoked
- Isaac prophesizes that Esau will serve his brother but will eventually break that yoke.

# Escape from Esau (Gen: 27:41 – 29:14)

- Esau in his anger intends to kill Jacob
- Rebekah hears about his intent and convinces Isaac to send Jacob to her brother (Laban) to find a wife.
- Tells Jacob she will send word when Esau's anger subsides and it's safe to return
- Jacob travels ~450 miles to Haran



# Impact of Deception

- Rebekah heard the Lord's prophecy, yet took matters in her own hands
- Lied to her husband
- Saw her favorite son exiled for 20 years (negating inheritance)
- Deprived her sons of a relationship with each other
- Deprived her son a relationship with his Father, who doesn't die for another 80 yrs.

# Jacob's Ladder (Gen: 28:10 – 28:22)

- Abrahamic Covenant (28:13-15)
  - Jacob has a dream about a stairway to heaven
  - Promises:
    - The land where he lies will be his
    - His seed will be like dust
    - The world will be blessed through his seed
    - I will be with you and will bring you back to this land
- Jacob makes a vow (28:20-22)
  - If you take care of me and bring me home, you will be my God.

# Deceived by Laban (Gen: 29:15-30)

- Jacob makes a deal with Laban to work for 7 years to marry his youngest daughter Rachel
- After 7 years are up, Laban throws a big feast, and that night he swaps Leah for Rachel
- Jacob must work another 7 years for Rachel

# Works for Laban (Gen: 30:24-43)

- Jacob is ready to leave, but Laban asks him to stay, and what his wages would be.
- Jacob asks for the speckled or spotted sheep, lamb or goat from Laban's herd.
- Laban agrees, but immediately removes all such animals from his flock.
- Jacob then puts a breeding system in place where his speckled and spotted animals end up the stronger compared to Laban's

# Jacob's System Explained (Gen: 31:1-13)

- Jacob explains in vs 31:7-13 that God delivered the flocks to him.
- Laban had not only removed the original spotted and speckled livestock, but then changed his wages 10 times.
- According to Jacob, it was God who changed the animals to be born according to the wages that Laban had specified.

# Jacob Flees from Laban (Gen: 31:14-55)

- Jacob has become extremely wealthy, Laban's family becomes jealous
- God tells Jacob that it's time to go home.
- Jacob takes his livestock and family and leaves for home after 20 yrs
  - Jacob and Esau > 60 yrs old
  - Issac > 120 yrs old
- Jacob deceived Laban by not telling him that he was leaving & Rachel stole her father's household gods
- Laban chases Jacob down, but God warns Laban not to say anything good or bad.
- Laban searches Jacob's tents and doesn't find his idols in Rachel's tent
- Jacob and Laban take an oath to leave each other alone and Laban tells Jacob about God's command.

# Impact of Deception

- Laban repeatedly deceives Jacob
  - Rachel vs Leah
  - Hides his spotted and speckled flocks
  - Changes Jacob's wages 10 times
- Laban loses his daughters and grandchildren

# Jacob Prepares to meet Esau (Gen: 29 – 31)

- On his way, angels of God met him. (2<sup>nd</sup> assurance from God)
- Jacob sends messengers to Esau, and they report Esau is on his way with 400 men
- Jacob remembers God's promise, but still fears for his life.
- Fearful, Jacob splits his family and possessions into 2 groups.
- He also sends a large gift of livestock ahead of his family to Esau



# Wrestles with an Angel (Gen: 32:22-32)

- Jacob sends his family and possessions across a ford of Jabbok (a large tributary of the Jordan River)
- Alone, a man wrestles with him until daybreak
- Unable to overpower Jacob, the man touches Jacob's hip and dislocates it
- Jacob still refuses to let go until he is blessed
- The angel names him Israel, then blesses him

# Wrestles with an Angel (Observations)

- It is likely Jacob had no idea it was an angel until the angel touched his hip. (Compared to Gen 32:1-2)
- “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”
- “I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved”

# Reunion with Esau (Gen: 33)

- Even after God's Covenant, Command and Blessing, Esau fears for his life when he goes to meet Esau.
- Jacob meets Esau, risking all he has on God's commandment and promise.
- Even after a heart-felt reunion, Jacob does not trust Esau's intentions
  - Will not accompany Esau home or allow any of his men to stay with Jacob's family
  - Jacob doesn't even go home with Esau but settles in another region

# Jacob before and after Exile

Before	After
Quiet, dwelling in tents	Capable of wrestling with an angel all night
Empty handed	Wealthy: camels, livestock, goods
Alone	Large family, 2 wives, maidservants, 12 children
Jacob	Israel: strived with man and god, prevailed
Deceiver	Man of character
Follows his mother	Follower of God (God told him to return)

# Retirement (Gen: 32 – 33)

- Dinah and the Shechemites
- Rachel dies after giving birth to Benjamin
  - Buried on the way to Ephrath (Bethlehem)
- Jacob now has 12 sons / 12 tribes
- Jacob finally returns home to Hebron
- Jacob and Esau (120y) bury Isaac (180y)

# Jacob and Esau (Observations)

## 1. Jacob

1. Never blamed anyone for his circumstances
2. Maintained his faith through tribulation
3. Obeys every command God gives him
4. Established in the bloodline of Christ, named Isreal

## 2. Esau

1. Dis-honored his parents with his wives
2. Despised his birthright, trading it for a meal
3. Lashed out at Isaac by taking Canaanite wives
4. Establishes nation of Edom, named for his mistake

# Rachel and Leah

- Rachel
  - Beautiful and favored
  - Sells a night with Jacob to Leah for a bundle of mandrakes
  - Steals and hides idols from Laban and Jacob
  - Buried on the road to Ephrath after giving birth the Benjamin
- Leah
  - Tender eyed
  - Never revered or honored as much as Rachel until the end of her life.
  - Gen 49:31: Leah is buried in the family tomb (Cave of Machpelah, purchased by Abraham)
  - The mother of the 2 tribes of Israel that played the most significant roles in history
    - Levi the tribe of the priesthood
    - Judah the tribe of royalty in the line of Christ
- Proverbs: 31:30: "Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman who feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."

# Concluding Observations: Responses

1. God determined that Esau would serve Jacob
  1. Rachel and Jacob tried to control that outcome and destroyed their family
  2. Esau rebelled against his circumstances dishonoring his parents and God; despised his inheritance
  3. Jacob obeyed God every time without complaint

1 Corinthians 3:13: Our works will be revealed by fire. For what remains we will receive rewards and for what is burned we will suffer loss...



# Concluding Observations: The Unlikely

- Jacob is the physically weaker brother, quiet and among the tents. It is Jacob that God uses to establish Israel.
- Leah was less attractive, and least preferred. It is Leah that is included in the royal bloodline and buried with the family.

1 Cor 1:27 “But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;”

# Concluding Observations: Tribulations

Jacob is exiled from his family, but God uses this time to transform Jacob:

- Physical strength
- Family
- Wealth
- Character

Romans 5: 3-4 "...we also celebrate in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope"

# Conclusion

1. God is establishing His eternal kingdom as the author of history
2. God determines our circumstances and the outcomes of our efforts
3. Our responses reflect our values and affect our relationship with God and those around me

# Conclusion

1. “...all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” (Rom 8:28)
2. We can be thankful for all things, allowing the Peace of God which surpasses all understand to keep our heart and mind. (1 Thess. 5:18; Phil 4:6-7)
3. Empowers us to put aside fear, anger, jealousy, anxiety, greed...
4. Enables us to respond in alignment with God’s values: obediently loving God and our neighbor as ourselves. (Matt 22)
5. Producing a hope that will not disappoint (Rom 5) that makes us salt of the earth and a light to the world (Matt 5)