

OT-OV

Lesson 57

1. Last week I taught in part the Doctrine of Jacob; when time expired we were studying the life of Jacob in Mesopotamia.
2. I want to review some of that learned and then continue our analysis of Jacob in Mesopotamia.
3. In Hebrew the name Ya'aqob means "heel catcher," "trickster," or "supplanter."
4. Jacob was the younger twin son of Isaac and Rebekah; he is later called Israel.
 - 4.1 The birth of Jacob and Esau is recorded in (Gen 25:21-26).
 - 4.2 Rebekah, like Sarah (cf. Gen 11:30; 16:1-2), was barren. Isaac's prayer for his wife was heard and rewarded. She gave birth to twin boys, who wrestled in the womb as they would do later in life.
 - 4.3 These twins struggled in the womb before birth. (Gen 25:22)
 - 4.4 At birth Jacob seized Esau's heel, indicating further the locked struggle of the future between these brothers and their posterities, the Israelites (the sons of Jacob) and the Edomites (the sons of Esau, compare Deu 2:4-6).
 - 4.5 Jacob and his mother Rebekah revealed an eagerness from the first to gain advantage of his brother.
 - 4.6 Esau was the firstborn, but Jacob would be his master. This prophecy is reiterated by other Jacob-Esau passages. (Mal 1:2-3 and Rom 9:10-13)
 - 4.7 Esau cordially welcomed his brother, although Jacob was dubious of Esau's complete forgiveness. Gen 33:12-18
 - 4.8 The old animosity was buried after the last meeting of the twin brothers, however it was soon resurrected and handed down from generation to generation by their descendants.
 - 4.9 From c. 1000 B.C. under King David to c. 120 B.C. under the Hasmoneans, Israel was at war with Edom.
5. Now let's return to our study of the life of Jacob in Mesopotamia. (Gen 28-30)

5.1 As noted when the full impact of Rebekah and Jacob's plot was uncovered, Jacob was sent away to his relatives in Haran.

5.2 In route from Beer-sheba Jacob, as a weary, troubled, and sinful fugitive, spent his first night near the ancient Canaanite sanctuary of Luz, later to be called Bethel.

5.3 In a night vision God revealed Himself to this wanderer as the God of his father. God also reminded Jacob that Abraham's promises were his.

5.3.1 God also renewed the covenant blessings, appointed him to a universal mission, and assured him of divine guidance and a prosperous life, Jacob responded with a personal vow renaming the place Bethel. Gen 28:10-15

Gen 28:10 And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran.

Gen 28:11 And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.

Gen 28:12 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

Gen 28:13 And, behold, the LORD stood above it and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

Gen 28:14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

Gen 28:15 And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

5.4 Jacob arrived in his mother's homeland where he met Rachel at the well and it was love at first sight.

Gen 29:4 Jacob asked the shepherds, "My brothers, where are you from?" "We're from Haran," they replied.

Gen 29:5 He said to them, "Do you know Laban, Nahor's grandson?" "Yes, we know him," they answered.

Gen 29:6 Then Jacob asked them, "Is he well?" "Yes, he is," they said, "and here comes his daughter Rachel with the sheep ..."

Gen 29:9 While he was still talking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherdess.

Gen 29:10 When Jacob saw Rachel daughter of Laban, his mother's brother, and Laban's sheep, he went over and rolled the stone away from the mouth of the well and watered his uncle's sheep.

Gen 29:11 Then Jacob kissed Rachel and began to weep aloud.

Gen 29:12 He had told Rachel that he was a relative of her father and a son of Rebekah. So she ran and told her father.

Gen 29:13 As soon as Laban heard the news about Jacob, his sister's son, he hurried to meet him. He embraced him and kissed him and brought him to his home, and there Jacob told him all these things.

5.5 She in turn brought Jacob to her father's house and introduced him to Laban, Jacob's uncle. (Gen 29:18-20)

Gen 29:18 Jacob was in love with Rachel and said, "I'll work for you seven years in return for your younger daughter Rachel."

Gen 29:19 Laban said, "It's better that I give her to you than to some other man. Stay here with me."

Gen 29:20 So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her.

5.6 Jacob's love for Rachel resulted in his slave like employment with Laban. Jacob worked to gain her as wife for seven years.

5.7 The morning after the marriage ceremony he discovered that instead of his beautiful Rachel, he had married her rather plain looking sister Leah.

5.8 The deceitful Laban was equal to Jacob's anger and agreed to give him Rachel after the customary one week's marriage festivities if Jacob would serve him another seven years.

5.9 Jacob brought his father-in-law great prosperity (Gen 30:30), and shrewd Laban recognized a bargain when he saw one.

Gen 30:30 The little you had before I came has increased greatly, and the LORD has blessed you wherever I have been. But now, when may I do something for my own household?"

5.10 Twelve children were born to Jacob in Mesopotamia. The order of their birth and their mothers were:

5.10.1 To Leah were born Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah.

Gen 29:31 When the LORD saw that Leah was not loved, he opened her womb, but Rachel was barren.

Gen 29:32 "Leah" became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him "Reuben," for she said, "It is because the LORD has seen my misery. Surely my husband will love me now."

Gen 29:33 She conceived again, and when she gave birth to a son she said, "Because the LORD heard that I am not loved, he gave me this one too." So she named him "Simeon."

Gen 29:34 Again she conceived, and when she gave birth to a son she said, "Now at last my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." So he was named "Levi."

Gen 29:35 She conceived again, and when she gave birth to a son she said, "This time I will praise the LORD." So she named him "Judah." Then she stopped having children.

5.10.2 Rachel's servant Bilhah gave birth to Dan.

Gen 30:4 So she gave him her servant Bilhah as a wife. Jacob slept with her,

Gen 30:5 and she became pregnant and bore him a son.

Gen 30:6 Then Rachel said, "God has vindicated me; he has listened to my plea and given me a son." Because of this she named him "Dan".

5.10.3 Bilhah then gave birth to Naphtali.

Gen 30:7 Rachel's servant Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son.

Gen 30:8 Then Rachel said, "I have had a great struggle with my sister, and I have won." So she named him Naphtali.

5.10.4 Zilpah, Leah's maid servant then gave birth to Gad.

Gen 30:10 Leah's servant Zilpah bore Jacob a son.

Gen 30:11 Then Leah said, "What good fortune!" So she named him "Gad."

5.10.5 Zilpah then gave birth to Asher.

Gen 30:12 Leah's servant Zilpah bore Jacob a second son.

Gen 30:13 Then Leah said, "How happy I am! The women will call me happy." So she named him Asher.

5.10.6 Leah then gave birth to first Issachar and then Zebulun.

Gen 30:17 God listened to Leah, and she became pregnant and bore Jacob a fifth son.

Gen 30:18 Then Leah said, "God has rewarded me for giving my maidservant to my husband." So she named him "Issachar."

Gen 30:19 Leah conceived again and bore Jacob a sixth son.

Gen 30:20 Then Leah said, "God has presented me with a precious gift. This time my husband will treat me with honor, because I have borne him six sons." So she named him "Zebulun."

5.10.7 Finally God opened Rachel's womb and she bore Joseph and later on in Canaan, Benjamin. (Gen 30:22-24; 35:16-18)

Gen 30:22 Then God remembered Rachel; he listened to her and opened her womb.
Gen 30:23 She became pregnant and gave birth to a son and said, "God has taken away my disgrace."

Gen 30:24 She named him Joseph, and said, "May the LORD add to me another son."

Gen 35:16 Then they moved on from Bethel. While they were still some distance from Ephratah, Rachel began to give birth and had great difficulty.

Gen 35:17 And as she was having great difficulty in childbirth, the midwife said to her, "Don't be afraid, for you have another son."

Gen 35:18 As she breathed her last-- for she was dying-- she named her son Ben-Oni. But his father named him Benjamin.

Gen 35:19 So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephratah (that is, Bethlehem).

5.11 Realizing his prosperity came because of Jacob, Laban urged Jacob to stay (Gen 30:27) but the Lord instructed Jacob to go back home. (Gen 31:3, 11-13)

Gen 30:27 But Laban said to him, "If I have found favor in your eyes, please stay. I have learned by divination that the LORD has blessed me because of you."

Gen 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."

Gen 31:11 The angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob.' I answered, 'Here I am.'

Gen 31:12 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.'

Gen 31:13 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.'"

5.12 Jacob talked with his wives and they agreed the family should return to Palestine.

5.13 They crossed the Euphrates River and headed toward Gilead.

6. The return to Palestine is described in Genesis chapters 32 and 33.

7. Twenty years had elapsed since Jacob had deceived Isaac and stolen Esau's blessing.

8. As Jacob drew near to the land of his heart, an angelic band met him (Gen 32:9-2), assuring him once again of God's protection as if to welcome and congratulate him on his auspicious return.

Gen 32:9 Then Jacob prayed, "O God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, O LORD, who said to me, 'Go back to your country and your relatives, and I will make you prosper,'"

Gen 32:10 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 groups.

Gen 32:11 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.

Gen 32:12 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.'"

9. Jacob's meeting with Esau is recorded in Gen 33:1-16.

Gen 33:1 Jacob looked up and there was Esau, coming with his four hundred men; so he divided the children among Leah, Rachel and the two maidservants.

Gen 33:2 He put the maidservants and their children in front, Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph in the rear.

Gen 33:3 He himself went on ahead and bowed down to the ground seven times as he approached his brother.

Gen 33:4 But Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; he threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. And they wept.

Gen 33:5 Then Esau looked up and saw the women and children. "Who are these with you?" he asked. Jacob answered, "They are the children God has graciously given your servant."

Gen 33:6 Then the maidservants and their children approached and bowed down.

Gen 33:7 Next, Leah and her children came and bowed down. Last of all came Joseph and Rachel, and they too bowed down.

Gen 33:8 Esau asked, "What do you mean by all these droves I met?" "To find favor in your eyes, my lord," he said.

Gen 33:9 But Esau said, "I already have plenty, my brother. Keep what you have for yourself."

Gen 33:10 "No, please!" said Jacob. "If I have found favor in your eyes, accept this gift from me. For to see your face is like seeing the face of God, now that you have received me favorably.

Gen 33:11 Please accept the present ... for God has been gracious to me and I have all I need." And because Jacob insisted, Esau accepted it.

10. Amid the tangled mess of human actions, Jacob recognized the need of the Lord's hand. He not only won God's favor, but Esau's.

11. Jacob's life in Palestine (the second time) is described in Gen 33:17-45:5.

12. Esau went to Seir and there sired a nation (Gen 33:16); the fulfillment of the promise of Gen 25:23; 27:39-40.

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

Gen 25:23 The LORD said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you will be separated; one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger."

Gen 27:39 His father Isaac answered him, "Your dwelling will be away from the earth's richness, away from the dew of heaven above.

Gen 27:40 You will live by the sword and you will serve your brother. But when you grow restless, you will throw his yoke from off your neck."

13. Jacob resided in Canaan to assume his inheritance. He was now indeed the patriarch.

14. Jacob remained east of Jordan and camped near Succoth; then to Shechem where he purchased ground and reconstructed an altar (Gen 33:17-20).

Gen 33:17 Jacob, however, went to Succoth, where he built a place for himself and made shelters for his livestock. That is why the place is called Succoth.

Gen 33:18 After Jacob came from Paddan Aram, he arrived safely at the city of Shechem in Canaan and camped within sight of the city.

Gen 33:19 For a hundred pieces of silver, he bought from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, the plot of ground where he pitched his tent.

Gen 33:20 There he set up an altar and called it El Elohe Israel.

15. Under God's order, he went to Bethel and there he built an altar to God and made all those in his party rid themselves of their idols. Gen 35:1-7

Gen 35:1 Then God said to Jacob, "Go up to Bethel and settle there, and build an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you were fleeing from your brother Esau."

Gen 35:2 So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Get rid of the foreign gods you have with you, and purify yourselves and change your clothes.

Gen 35:3 Then come, let us go up to Bethel, where I will build an altar to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and who has been with me wherever I have gone."

Gen 35:4 So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods they had and the rings in their ears, and Jacob buried them under the oak at Shechem.

Gen 35:5 Then they set out, and the terror of God fell upon the towns all around them so that no one pursued them.

Gen 35:6 Jacob and all the people with him came to Luz (that is, Bethel) in the land of Canaan.

Gen 35:7 There he built an altar, and he called the place El Bethel, because it was there that God revealed himself to him when he was fleeing from his brother.

End Lesson