



Provided by the Church of the Lutheran Confession - Board of Missions

Old Testament Survey

Lesson 5 – God’s Training of Isaac and Jacob (Genesis 24-32)

God’s Training

Both Isaac, Abraham’s son, and Jacob, Abraham’s grandson, had serious weaknesses that had to be corrected by God’s training.

Isaac’s weakness was his desire to give the blessing of the firstborn to his favorite son Esau despite God’s clear word that Jacob was to receive the blessing. God Himself overruled Isaac’s desires by permitting him to be tricked by Jacob and Rebekah. Then Isaac knew his desires had been wrong, and he repeated the full blessing to his son Jacob.

Jacob’s weakness was his tendency to try to gain God’s blessing by his own cleverness and deceit. God trained him by letting his uncle Laban deceive and cheat him again and again until Jacob learned to trust in God alone. Jacob’s lesson was finally learned when he wrestled with God and his name was changed from Jacob (which means: “supplanter”) to Israel (which means: “he struggles with God” or “prince with God”).

Read Genesis chapters 24-32 along with the notes below. If you have any questions, please ask them.

Genesis 24 – Finding a Wife for Isaac

Abraham sends his servant to Haran to fetch a wife for Isaac (vv. 1-9).

The servant puts his task into God’s hands (vv. 10-14).

God directs him to the beautiful Rebekah (vv. 15-49).

Bethuel, Laban, and Rebekah consent to God’s guiding (vv. 50-60).

Isaac meets Rebekah and loves her (vv. 61-67).

Genesis 25 – Abraham’s Death, Ishmael’s Family, the Birth of Twins

Abraham dies and is buried in the Cave of Machpelah (vv. 1-11).

Ishmael’s family (12-18)

Isaac and Rebekah have twin sons, Esau and Jacob (vv. 19-28).

Notice God’s promise: **“The older (Esau) shall serve the younger (Jacob)”** (v. ____ Then we read: **“Isaac loved Esau...but Rebekah loved Jacob”** (v. ____

Esau sells to Jacob his rights as the firstborn (vv. 29-34).

Genesis 26 – Isaac’s Life

God renews the Promise to Isaac (vv. 1-5)

“In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed” (v. __ – the Promise of JESUS.

Isaac repeats his father’s lie about his wife to Abimelech (vv. 6-11).

God blesses Isaac in his dealings with Abimelech of the Philistines (vv. 12-33).

Esau marries heathen wives (vv. 34-35).

Genesis 27 – The Struggle between Esau and Jacob for God's Blessing

Isaac decides to bless Esau, contrary to God's will (vv. 1-5).

Rebekah and Jacob try to gain the blessing for Jacob by lies and deceit (vv. 6-29).

Isaac repents of his sin and repeats his blessing of Jacob (vv. 30-33).

Isaac blesses Esau with a lesser blessing (vv. 34-40).

Esau's anger forces Jacob to leave home (vv. 41-46).

Genesis 28 – Jacob Receives the Promise Again

Isaac blesses Jacob before his departure (vv. 1-5)

"May God...give you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to your descendants" (vv. ____)

Esau marries a new wife (vv. 6-9).

Jacob hears God's promise in a dream at Bethel and vows to serve Him (vv. 10-22).

God's Promise: **"In your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed"** (v. ____)

Jacob's vow: **"I will surely give a tenth to You"** (v. ____)

Genesis 29 – The Tricky Jacob Is Tricked by Laban

Jacob meets Rachel and her father Laban (vv. 1-14).

Jacob serves 14 years for two wives, Leah and Rachel (vv. 15-30).

Notice: Rachel was Jacob's choice, but Leah was God's choice, as it was Leah who gave birth to Judah through whom God's promised Savior, Jesus, would come.

The Lord gives four sons to Leah: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah (vv. 31-35).

Genesis 30 – The Unholy Contest for Children between Rachel and Leah

Rachel's maid Bilhah bears two sons: Dan, Naphtali (vv. 1-8).

Leah's maid Zilpah bears two sons: Gad, Asher (vv. 9-13).

Rachel and Leah bargain for Jacob's love, and Leah bears two more sons: Issachar, Zebulun (vv. 14-21).

Rachel finally bears a son: Joseph (vv. 22-24).

God blesses Jacob in his dealings with Laban (vv. 25-43).

Genesis 31 – The Parting of Jacob from Laban

God directs Jacob to leave Laban and so he does (vv. 1-21).

God prevents Laban from harming Jacob (vv. 22-42).

Jacob and Laban make a treaty with each other (vv. 43-54).

Notice: Jacob now realizes that his success is due to the Lord's blessing.

Genesis 32 – Jacob Becomes ISRAEL

Jacob prepares to meet Esau by plan and prayer (vv. 1-23).

Jacob's prayer: **"I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant... Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother"** (vv. ____)

Jacob wrestles with God and receives the Promise by prayer (vv. 24-32).

Jacob says: **"I will not let You go unless You bless me"** (v. ____)

God says: **“Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel”** (v. ____)

Probable Dates:

Isaac was born in 2067 BC. His mother Sarah died when he was 37 years old. He married Rebekah when he was 40. The twins Jacob and Esau were born to him when he was 60 years old. His father Abraham died when Isaac was 75 and Abraham was 175 and Jacob and Esau were 15 years old. Jacob and Esau were born in 2007 BC. Esau was married at the age of 40, but Jacob remained unmarried for a time. Jacob was 77 years old when he deceived his blind father and stole Esau’s blessing. Jacob was 84 years old when he found himself married to two wives: Rachel and Leah. His eleventh son, Joseph, was born when Jacob was 91. Six years later, when Jacob was 97, he left Laban and returned to Canaan, the land of his fathers.

Questions

1. Why did Isaac prefer Esau over Jacob? How did this lead to sin on his part?
2. What was Jacob’s chief goal in the first part of his life?
3. How did his mother help him achieve this goal?
4. When did Isaac recognize that he had gone contrary to God’s will?
5. How did God comfort Jacob as he was fleeing from Esau?
6. How did Laban take advantage of Jacob over and over again?
7. What lesson did Jacob learn while he was working for Laban?
8. What problems arose because Jacob had two wives?
9. How did Jacob learn that he was wrestling with God?
10. What promise must we keep in mind as we read this portion of Scripture?