

17-18 Bible Study

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Genesis 26-28

Genesis 26

- **Genesis 26:1-3**

- Once again there is a famine (as with Abraham) and *Isaac* decided to go to *Gerar* in the land of *Abimelech*
- Look at the many parallelisms
 - “Do not go down to Egypt”
 - We can see where this story is heading
 - There were two ways to go the Egypt, through the wilderness of Shur or down the coastal road through the Gaza strip where the Philistines were living
- God directs *Isaac* to remain in the land of the *Philistines* which He had given to him (the Promised Land)*

Genesis 26 (Cont)

- **Genesis 26:4-16**

- We have already heard this promise from God
- The *Philistine King Abimelech* has also heard this story about a wife being presented as a sister
- *Abimelech* directed his people to avoid any contact with *Rebekah*
- *Isaac* and his clan became very wealthy and powerful causing the *Philistines* to envy his success *

Genesis 26 (Cont)

- **Genesis 26:17-25**

- *Isaac* departed and moved to the *Valley of Gerar* where he dug other wells which led to more quarrels
- Once again the issue leading to conflict between *Isaac's* herdsmen and *Abimelech's* herdsmen was over water rights (wells)
- *Isaac* dug a well at *Rehoboth* over which they did not quarrel
- *Isaac* then moved back down to *Beer-sheba* meaning the place of the swearing, the place of the oath, or the place of seven
- There he built an altar to the LORD *

Genesis 26 (Cont)

- **Genesis 26:26-33**

- King *Abimelech* came to *Isaac* seeking another covenant
 - The word covenant
 - A meal
 - An oath
- *Isaac's* servants continue to find water at *Beer-sheba* *

Genesis 26 (Cont)

- **Genesis 26:34**

- Here the text shifts back to give us an update on *Esau* who at 40 years of age:
 - Married two Hittite wives
 - Made life bitter for his parents Isaac and Rebekah *

Genesis 27

Genesis 27

- **Genesis 27:1-8**

- Here we see the aged *Isaac* calling on his firstborn son, asking for one last favorite meal before he gave him the final spiritual blessing
- Listening to what *Rebekah* said, we realize that something was wrong
- Why would she say, “obey my voice”?

Genesis 27 (Cont)

- **Genesis 27:9-20**

- *Jacob* got a goat and *Rebekah* prepared the meal
- Certainly, *Jacob* should not have brought God into this situation
- He was lying to his father about a very spiritual matter
- He wanted his father to bless him in the name of *Yahweh* and he even uses *Yahweh's* name in this lie
- This was his second opportunity to repent for what he was doing, but he did not take it

Genesis 27 (Cont)

- **Genesis 27:21-29**

- This happened before the discovery of “Tide”
- Can you imagine just how bad *Esau’s* garments must have smelled?
- Notice that *Jacob* had another opportunity to admit who he was but did not take it
- Each time he lied to his father
- Look at this blessing given to the one *Isaac* believed was his firstborn

Genesis 27 (Cont)

- **Genesis 27:30-35**

- Suddenly *Esau* showed up with his meal
- Here we see the second reference to the firstborn (**Genesis 27:19 and 32**)
- This is the issue being discussed in this passage
- *Jacob* came before his father with “guile” – trickery
- That is what makes his name *Jacob* so relevant
- He had just “*Jacobed* his father twice
- Upon realizing what had just happened *Esau* cried out and asked his father for a blessing

Genesis 27 (Cont)

- **Genesis 27:36-38**

- Notice that there are two things going on:
 - The birthright for a bowl of lentils
 - The blessing after the goat meal
- In both episodes *Jacob* tricked (*Jacobed*) his brother
- The first was for the material rights and the second for the spiritual blessing
- *Esau* should have inherited both from his father since he was the firstborn
- This will play out in a significant way as we continue to look at the rest of Genesis
- *Esau* cries out to his father for a blessing

Genesis 27 (Cont)

- **Genesis 27:39-41**

- This was not much of a blessing, as he will have to serve his brother *Jacob*
- At this point *Esau* hated his brother *Jacob*
- He decided to wait until his father died before he would kill his brother

Genesis 27 (Cont)

- **Genesis 27:42-46**

- *Rebekah* received word of *Esau's* plan to kill *Jacob* so she directed him to flee to her brother's house in *Haran*
- “Obey my voice” similar to “obey my word” in **Genesis 27:8**
- *Jacob* got himself in a great deal of trouble by following this command earlier
- *Rebeca* worried that when *Isaac* died she would also lose *Jacob*
- Further, she does not want *Jacob* to marry one of the local pagan *Hittite* women like *Esau* had done in **Genesis 26:34** when he entered a polygamous relationship with two wives

Genesis 28

Genesis 28

- **Genesis 28:1**

- Earlier, *Rebekah* told *Isaac* of her concern that *Jacob* not marry one of the *Hittite* woman
- Here *Isaac* tells *Jacob* not to marry a *Canaanite* woman
 - The Hittites were sons of *Heth*, who also descended from Canaan
 - The Amorites were also descendants of Ham
 - Even though there were specific tribes, the term Amorites and Canaanites were often used to describe the people of the land
 - This is one of the places where the word Canaanite gets used to mean the “people of the land”
- Thus, *Isaac’s* command was meant to imply “one of the women of the land” (*Hittite, Philistine* or anyone else)

Genesis 28 (Cont)

- **Genesis 28:2-5**

- *Isaac* directed *Jacob* to go to the house of his brother-in-law, *Laban* in *Paddan-aram*
- He also gives him the blessing of *Abraham*
- It looks like *Jacob* got off scot-free at this point
- He stole his brother's birthright and blessing, and was sent away on vacation to find a wife!
- He was sent back to the place where *Abraham* came from
- Remember that *Abraham* did not send *Isaac* back to his ancestral homeland

Genesis 28 (Cont)

- He sent a servant to bring a woman from the east back to him in the west
- Something very different was happening here
- *Jacob* was sent away from the promised land and the place of the blessing back to the place of *Abraham's* origin
- We can see from the narrative that *Jacob* had made some serious mistakes
- He had stolen two major things from his brother in a very deceptive way as he lied to his poor, blind father in his old age

Genesis 28 (Cont)

- This was pretty bad
- So when he arrived, things did not go very well for him
- God watched out for him, but he had a very rough time based on what had happened here
- This helps us understand the relationship of Jacob being “sent away”

Genesis 28 (Cont)

- **Genesis 28: 6-9**

- It would appear that *Esau* obtained another wife to spite his father
- At that point he had two *Hittite* wives and here he added an *Ishmaelite* wife
- He married the sister of *Nebaioth* son of *Ishmael*
- Remember what happened to polygamist and murderers in the Pentateuch?
 - Lamech
 - Pharaoh
 - Abimelech
- None of them were ever truly successful

Genesis 28 (Cont)

- **Genesis 28:10-15**

- Meanwhile *Jacob* headed to *Haran* as directed by his mother and father
- As we have discovered, leaving the “Promised Land” was always a problem
- It was implied that he would return
- While enroute he experienced a dream (*Jacob’s ladder*) during the night
- He also heard God reinforcing the promises given to Abraham

Genesis 28 (Cont)

- So who is this Jesus discussed in **John 1**?
- He is the “anointed one”, “Messiah”, “Christ”
- Remember that *Jacob* “anointed” the rock with oil at *Bethel*?
- Jesus is the anointed rock and the ladder
- He is the place (***Bethel***), the House of God on earth
- In some iconographic traditions we may also see Mary being referred to as *Jacob’s* ladder through which God became man
- The vehicle through which God descended to the earth

Genesis 28 (Cont)

- **Genesis 28:16-22**

- *Bethel* means “House of God”
- The entire story of *Jacob’s* ladder appears in **John 1:43-51**
 - Remember the question of Nathanael who asked, “can anything good come out of Nazareth?”
 - Jesus speaks of Nathanael as being “an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!”
 - He was not like Jacob as he spoke his mind clearly and without deception
 - Jesus then told him that he would see things greater than this, “you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man”