

Genesis 12-36

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- In this lesson, we will be covering several events from Genesis 12-36
 - In this lesson, we're primarily going to be dealing with the promises made to Abraham, the meat of the Patriarchal Age (so to speak – Abraham, Isaac, Jacob), and relate all of these to Christ
- **Genesis 12:1-3**
 - 3 things God tells Abraham here
 - 1 – Go to this land that I will show you
 - I'm giving you a new land
 - You are going to leave this land that you currently live in and dwell in the land that I will show you
 - Of course, Abraham displayed great faith here in doing as God commanded
 - But only in his execution did he display his faith (**Hebrews 11:8-10**)
 - Just like we talked about with Noah, Abraham could have said "I believe you'll give me this land"
 - And if Abraham would have stayed where he was even though he believed God, we wouldn't be talking about him today
 - Sounds a lot like James 2 & 3
 - Faith without works is dead and if this is what you're teaching, then watch your tongue – because you are going to lead many people astray and their blood is going to be on your hands (how great a ship is guided by such a small rudder)
 - 2 – I will make you a great nation
 - You will be a blessing
 - I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you
 - God is going to take care of Abraham
 - Descendants as numerous as the stars (Genesis 15:5)
 - 3 – in you all the families of the earth will be blessed
 - Let's look at each of these promises in a little more detail
 - **Land**
 - **Genesis 12:5** – *"Then Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people whom they had acquired in Haran, and they departed to go to the land of Canaan. So they came to the land of Canaan."*
 - This land was revealed to be the land of Canaan
 - For those of you who are familiar with the land of Canaan, this is rich both physically and spiritually
 - **What do we know of the land of Canaan?**
 - 1 - Think in the story of Sodom and Gomorrah
 - Genesis 13:12 (Lot's choice of Sodom) – Sodom here clearly represents the bad choice made by Lot here
 - The city full of wickedness, whereas the land of Canaan that Abraham dwelt in is contrasted with that

- Spiritually speaking today, we have a choice to make today as well
- The crowns that this life has to offer (Sodom) or maybe we won't set our eyes upon earthly things in this life and strive for the real crown (Canaan)
- 2 - Also, think of the Israelites in the wilderness after they left Egypt
- They spent 40 years in the wilderness and then ended up back in the land of Canaan
- And in the NT we have the full symbology of this land revealed to us
- **Hebrews 3:16-4:1, 8-11**
 - The Hebrew writer here is comparing the land of Canaan with the rest that God has promised us today
 - Canaan – the rest that God provided through Joshua vs heaven – the rest that God provides through Christ
 - Now Joshua provided these folks great rest – especially to those of the land East of the Jordan
 - These folks who settled East of the Jordan – they dropped their families off and then immediately had to go West to help the rest of Israel in the fighting
 - And when they returned – what a rest that must have been
 - But the Hebrew writer says if you think that is good – you haven't seen anything yet
 - The rest that the Christian has through Christ is not even comparable with that
 - This is simply the best way the Hebrew writer can describe this rest to our feeble human minds
- So the land of Canaan is very significant for numerous reasons
- **So if Abraham dwelt in this land for much of his life, why did God just not keep His people there?**
 - Certainly we all remember the story of Joseph
 - How the Israelites had to go to Egypt because of famine – but think even before this (this was not coincidental)
 - **Genesis 15:12-16**
 - There were some things that had to happen first
 - God says that Abraham's descendants must go to Egypt
 - As Abraham did
 - As Moses did
 - And as Jesus later would
 - But they must go to Egypt – there they will be enslaved
 - After this, Egypt will be judged – Israel will plunder them
 - And then in the 4th generation they'll get to return to this land
 - The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete
 - They're wicked, ungodly people (Isaiah 6 would equate these as people with unclean lips) – but God gives them a little more time to repent

- How patient is God?
- 2 Peter 3:9 – *“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is long-suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”*
- God is very patient with us and He always has been this way with mankind as evident by His patience with the Amorites of the land of Canaan

- **Nation**

- Matthew 1:2 – *“Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers.”*
- 10 of the 12 tribes of Israel would go on to be named after Judah and his brothers
- Genesis 17:4 – *“...you shall be a father of many nations.”*
- Physical Israel
- Romans 9 – God used physical Israel to bring about the Christ
- Unfortunately, the biggest portion of the Israelites rejected God, but God used them to bring about Christ
- God can use folks who do not want to be used by Him
- He used Pharaoh, He used Israel, and He even used Satan himself
- God’s kingdom of the new testament is the church
- It is no longer physical Israel as there is no restriction for Jew nor Greek (Romans)
- **Daniel 2:44**
- In the midst of the greatest physical kingdoms this earth has ever known (Persia, Greece, Rome, Babylon), God will establish a new kingdom
- A spiritual kingdom that crushes even the strongest earthly kingdoms
- This kingdom of course is the church
- The spiritual Israel that is the church today is represented here in God’s nation promise to Abraham

- **Seed**

- Matthew traces his lineage of Jesus all the way back to Abraham because lineages were important to the Jews of the NT
- Matthew’s target audience was the Jews
- To try and get them to realize that Christ is the promised Messiah – He is who He says He is
- **Galatians 3:16**
 - God told Abraham that the Messiah would come through the lineage of Abraham
 - Immediately, this promise looked like Isaac, but this promise was ultimately fulfilled in Christ

- **So why are these 3 promises significant? Land, Nation, Seed**

- These promises represent heaven, the church, and Christ

- If you want to get to heaven (God's land), you must enter the church (God's nation) through the blood of Christ (God's Son, the chosen seed)
 - Acts 8:12
 - These are the basics – heaven, church, Christ
 - The great thing about the Bible is that you can see concepts in the NT that originate in the OT
 - Heaven, the church, Jesus – teach people this
 - We have the promises made to Abraham to show us these core truths as well as the flood example
 - Noah and his family were saved by the flood waters as they were enclosed in the shelter of the ark (the church)
 - We have the NT here to reveal to us the spiritual meaning shown in all of these OT historical stories
- The Promise of Isaac
 - Genesis 15:1-6
 - So since we read about God's promises to Abraham in Genesis 12, a few things have happened
 - 1 – Abraham leaves Canaan to go to Egypt due to a famine (end of CH 12)
 - 2 – Abraham and Lot split (CH 13)
 - Lot goes toward Sodom and Gomorrah
 - To the beautiful land physically, but ultimately lead to destruction (think Matthew 7:13-14)
 - Abraham goes to Hebron in Canaan
 - 3 – War breaks out in the Sodom/Gomorrah region (CH 14)
 - Sodom and Gomorrah and their allies lose
 - The victors plunder Sodom and Gomorrah and they even take Lot as prisoner
 - Abraham saves the day – spoils the plunder of the victors, freeing Lot in the process
 - And then we have the highly symbolic instance of Abraham paying tithes to Melchizedek as is further spoken of in Hebrews 5-8
 - And now as we open chapter 15, we have God reassuring Abraham
 - God is the shield of Abraham – his great reward
 - Sounds similar to Psalm 84:11 – *"For the Lord God is a sun and shield; The Lord will give grace and glory; No good thing will He withhold From those who walk uprightly."*
 - A statement that you and I can take great comfort in – the promise He made to Abraham here, He has also made to us
 - We sing numerous songs about how God is our shield, our buckler, our defender, etc. – do so boldly and with great confidence
 - For He will protect you and reward you at the end of a faithful life of service to Him
 - Do not take this lightly nor for granted

- Abraham did not – He tells the Lord “you’ve promised me descendants as numerous as the stars, yet I’m childless”
- Abraham was not doubting God as we read in vs 6, but rather Abraham was just making an observation as it would appear
- Lord, what’s going on?
- But in chapter 16, we read of how Ishmael was born – Abraham’s first son
 - Abraham and Sarah attempt to take the matter into their own hands
 - **There’s a lot of significance here too. What is the significance of this?**
 - **Galatians 4:21-31**
 - Remember, the letter to the Galatians was concerning another gospel
 - Some were teaching that circumcision was necessary for salvation under the gospel system and Paul must get this situation in order
 - And he writes here in vs 21 rhetorically – “*Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law?*”
 - He uses their own documentation (the law) to disprove what they are now teaching
 - Ishmael was born to Abraham as a result of his and Sarai’s lack of faith – this was fleshly, this was not the child of promise
 - God knew it was going to happen of course (He is omniscient) and He used it to illustrate a point here for us in the NT, but this is not the way that God had in mind to bring forth the Messiah
 - This was not the lineage that He would descend from
 - And Ishmael was born as a child of a bondwoman (Hagar)
 - She was a slave
 - Sarai on the other hand, was a free woman – her child (Isaac) is the promised child
 - Free from the bondage of slavery
 - So in the illustration of Ishmael and Isaac, we have a direct reference to the old law and the new law
 - Ishmael – bondservant – old law
 - Isaac – free – new law
 - So churches of Galatia – why would you want to revert back to the old law?
- **Genesis 17:1, 15-21**
 - God here directly promises Abraham a son with Sarah
 - Abraham at 99, and Sarah at 90 when this is revealed to them in chapter 17
 - Nothing is impossible for God
 - God assures him that this will be the child of promise – not Ishmael
- And God delivers on this promise (**Genesis 21:1-3**)
 - Rejoice – the child of promise is here
 - Abraham at the old age of 100, now had his child of promise

- All of this makes what we are about to read even more significant
 - Any thoughts on the promise of Isaac?
- Sacrifice of Isaac
 - Genesis 22:1-4
 - Notice that God tells Abraham to take his only son Isaac and sacrifice him – what happened to Ishmael?
 - Quite frankly – Sarah gets a little jealous
 - Ishmael was born due to a lack of faith from Abraham and Sarah, and now Sarah appears to be paying for that
 - *“Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac.”* Genesis 21:10
 - Does God condone jealousy or a lack of faith? Certainly not
 - And rightly so or not, this was God’s plan
 - Isaac was the child of promise as we just discussed
 - This still didn’t really strike Abraham very well as he was displeased about the entire situation (Genesis 21:11)
 - God assures Abraham that Hagar and Ishmael will be taken care of and that this must happen and Abraham sends them on their way
 - We said that Ishmael and Isaac represent the bondage of the law vs the freedom we have in Christ
 - So I want you to notice that though Abraham was displeased, he listened to God – he sent Ishmael and Hagar away in favor of Sarah and Isaac
 - This was Abraham’s first born – you could see why he would be displeased
 - “I have to send my firstborn son away because my wife Sarah is jealous?”
 - When Christ came with the new law, some of the Jews followed Him as Abraham displayed here
 - Doing so was not an easy decision – following Christ is a major decision
 - But many of them were unwilling to part with the law – God’s first law with mankind
 - They killed Christ as a result – they refused to part ways with their first
 - Notice their attitude vs the attitude of Abraham here – Abraham was willing to part with the first for the second according to God’s instruction
 - Where is Moriah? What is the significance of this location for this event?
 - 2 Chronicles 3:1
 - Mount Moriah is in Jerusalem
 - Not only that, but this is the location on which Solomon built the first temple
 - And not only that, but this is the same place that David had prepared at the instruction of God

- 1 Chronicles 21:18-27

- So here we have a destroying angel, David, and God
- Doesn't sound like a good recipe
- David took a census of Israel and God was displeased as we read earlier in chapter 21
- As punishment, God sent a plague amongst Israel – a destroying angel who killed 70,000 men
- David made burnt offerings and peace offerings on an altar he built in this same location – and God called off the angel
- There were a lot of things that happened here
- This is Jerusalem – what would later become the center for Judaism
- Not only that, but it was the place that Christ would later be crucified
- It's only appropriate that this event happen in this location

- Genesis 22:5-8

- When Abraham, Isaac, and the traveling party get close to the location, Abraham and Isaac split from the group
- Just Abraham and Isaac – Father and Son
- How many times do we read of Jesus praying – just Him and the Father
- Sometimes, you just need time alone in prayer with the Father
- Notice Abraham's faith in vs 7 and 8
- When Isaac asked where the lamb is, Abraham answers *"God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering."*
- Amazing faith displayed here
- He just sent off his firstborn son, and now he's about to sacrifice the only son he has left
- And not only that, but he has to answer to his only son about the sacrifice that he's about to make
- But let's look at what Hebrews 11:17-19 says of this situation
 - Abraham had faith that God was going to raise Isaac from the dead
 - in the mind of Abraham, Isaac had already been sacrificed
 - What an amazing amount of faith did Abraham have in God here

- Genesis 22:9-13

- As Abraham stretched out his hand with knife in hand to slay his son, he was stopped
- And he was right – God did provide the sacrifice
- And we have a foreshadowing of what would later happen with God and His Son
- Now even though Abraham considered Isaac sacrificed and in receiving him back, in a sense – Isaac was raised from the dead
- In the case of God and His Son – His Son actually was crucified and He was rose from the dead

- Christ's was much more literal
- **Any thoughts on the sacrifice of Isaac?**
- **Isaac**
 - Though we don't know as much of Isaac's life as we know of Abraham (his father) nor Jacob (his son), we do know several things about Isaac
 - We read of his birth in Genesis 21 (how he was the son of promise)
 - We read of his sacrifice in Genesis 22 (and how this resembles the sacrifice of Jesus a couple thousand years later)
 - We read of his marriage to Rebekah in Genesis 24 and how she was barren just as Sarah was with Abraham earlier
 - We read of some of his genealogy in Genesis 25
 - We read of his faith in God (much like his father had) in Genesis 26
 - We read how he blessed Jacob instead of Esau in Genesis 27
 - And we read of his death in Genesis 35
 - **Genesis 25:21-28**
 - Rebekah was barren
 - But Isaac knew of the promise God made with Abraham – Scripture doesn't directly say it, but no doubt Isaac had faith in God to deliver on that promise
 - And he pleads with the Lord on behalf of he and his wife as a result
 - And of course, this was granted
 - But the boys struggled with one another, even while in the womb
 - And something interesting is said for us in vs 23
 - *"Two nations are in your womb, Two peoples shall be separated from your body; One people shall be stronger than the other, And the older shall serve the younger."*
 - **What is the significance of this statement?**
 - Jacob and Esau – Esau was the older, so he would be the one to serve Jacob rather than vice versa – **how was this fulfilled?**
 - Immediately, this looked like Jacob getting Esau's birthright (material blessing)
 - Immediately, this looked like Jacob getting Esau's blessing (spiritual blessing)
 - But there is more to this
 - Isaac even tells Esau specifically in Genesis 27
 - Vs 37 – *"Indeed I have made him your master,..."*
 - Vs 40 – *"And you shall serve your brother..."*
 - This was a big deal
 - We may read into this lightly today because our culture is a little different, but this was such a big deal that Esau hated Jacob (Genesis 27:41)
 - He even vowed to kill Jacob over this (Genesis 27:41)
 - What Rebekah and Jacob did here was quite frankly a little dirty – does God condone deceit? Certainly not
 - But God knew that it was going to happen – His will was done despite man's imperfections

- Christ descended through the lineage of Jacob, not Esau – ultimately, this is the fulfillment
- **Romans 9:10-13**
 - God's will is going to be done despite man's best efforts to stop it
 - We see this displayed in the lineage of Christ – there are some very wicked people in the lineage of Christ
 - But Christ came anyways
 - And we see that displayed with Jacob and Esau as well
 - Esau was the firstborn – he had a physical right to get the birthright and Isaac's blessing
 - But he didn't – God's will prevailed
 - God still loved Esau – he just loved him less in the sense that He knew that Christ would descend from Jacob
- The nation of Israel was physically born through Jacob
- Esau fathered the nation of Edom
- **What is significant of the struggles between Edom and Israel?**
 - These nations would grow to hate each other – here are some of the events that happened between the two of them
 - #1 – Edom would not allow Israel to pass during the Exodus in Numbers 20:14-21
 - #2 – David subdued Edom in 2 Samuel 8:1-14
 - Edom would later regain independence, but we're specifically told the following in 2 Samuel 8:14 – “...and all the Edomites became David's servants...”
 - #3 – Edom sided with Babylon during the first destruction of Jerusalem, however God condemned them for that and took care of Edom as a result (Obadiah) – entirely cut off (vs 10), no survivors (vs 18)
 - #4 – After Babylon conquered Edom as prophesied in Obadiah, Edom largely faded from historical relevancy
 - However, Herod the Great who was “King of the Jews” instilled by Rome during the time just before Jesus was born, was of Idumean descent (father was Antipater the Idumean)
 - Though it didn't always look like it (Herod ruled over Israel, and Edom helped Babylon conquer Jerusalem) – Christ descended through Israel
 - We can see through the rest of the Bible that the older truly did serve the younger
- **Any further thoughts on Isaac?**
- **Jacob steals the birthright**
 - **Genesis 25:28-34**
 - Going back to Genesis 25:28, we find that Esau was a hunter, but Jacob dwelled in tents (part of his responsibilities included cooking as evident by this account)
 - Isaac loved Esau because that's where he got his meals from (he was a hunter)
 - But Rebekah loved Jacob – Jacob was at least in part a cook, Rebekah would have spent much more time with Jacob as a result

- So the parents had their favorites – Isaac favored Esau, Rebekah favored Jacob
- And in these verses that we just read, we find Esau coming in from a day's work – whatever work he was doing did not profit him with any food as he was weary
- And he longed for the stew that Jacob cooked
- So Jacob exchanged stew for the birthright that rightfully belonged to Esau
- Thus Esau despised his birthright (vs 34)
- Hebrews 12:17 (which we will read from shortly) indicates that Esau wanted his birthright and the blessing that Jacob would later also steal back, but Jacob wouldn't do it
- We begin to see the reason that Jacob's name means *supplanter*
- Trickery and not in a lighthearted manner – he very much displayed the behavior of a swindler
- This behavior (deception, lying, trickery, etc.) is very much disapproved of by God all throughout the NT – Jacob displays very poor behavior here quite frankly
- But again, God knew it was going to happen and that it had to happen
- **What's the significance of this though? Why would Jacob go for the birthright first instead of the blessing (which he would later go after as a result of his mother's deceit as well)?**
- Earthly blessings – money, power, fame (illegitimate) as we would put it today
- Greed, dishonest ambition, power hungry – this is what Jacob wanted
- Seeking the rewards of this life vs the rewards of the next life – we have Matthew 6 and other passages to warn us of the fruits of this behavior
- If you chase after the riches of this life, maybe you'll be successful, maybe you won't, but whatever you get you better enjoy while you can because God is not going to reward you for that behavior
- The birthright represented patriarchal leadership and all the fame and fortune that come with it
- By birth, it should have went to Esau – he was the oldest (albeit only by a few minutes, seconds, or so)
- This was a big deal – Jacob displays a great deal of greed and blind/dishonest ambition to even think of committing this deceit
- And Esau displays neglect – seeking momentary cravings over long term gain
- And the funny thing is: Esau could have went to Isaac and said "I'm hungry, and Jacob is blackmailing me with food in exchange for my birthright!" and Isaac would have had the opportunity to advise
- How many times are we not solving problems the way that we should because we don't take the time to consult with our Father?
- Do these sound like NT principles? Warnings against greed, ambitious earthly behavior, misplaced values (valuing physical over spiritual)
- **Hebrews 12:12-17**
- Beginning in Hebrews 12:12, the Hebrews writer transitions from a theoretical argument to a practical, application based response

- He is demonstrating the application to the theory that he has spent the entire time discussing thus far into the book – Christ is better)
- And he tells his audience in these verses to be disciplined, strengthen yourselves
- He likens this to a path in vs 13 and reference Jacob's spat with the Man of God in Genesis 32:22-32
- Remember how the Man of God touched the hip of Jacob and caused it to fall out of socket
- And the Hebrew writer says in Hebrews 12:13 – if you are running a path with your hip dislocated, run the path that's going to heal it instead of continuing with it dislocated/lame
- And the writer illustrates this point with 3 examples: Esau, Mt. Sinai with a reference to Cain, and an example from Haggai
- Esau was not disciplined – he sought worldly things (food) over his birthright
- How Christlike are we going to be if we are constantly shooting from the hip? Take the time to think about the consequences of your decisions before you act
- Consult with the Father, and endure the things of this life for the sake of Christ
- Do not be undisciplined as Esau was and experience regret at the conclusion of your poor decisions (vs 17)
- We see in this story the beginning of the fulfillment of the Lord's words in Genesis 25:23 – *"Two nations are in your womb, Two peoples shall be separated from your body; One people shall be stronger than the other, And the older shall serve the younger."*

○ **Any further thoughts on Jacob Steals the Birthright?**

● **Jacob steals the blessing**

○ **Genesis 27**

- In this chapter, we read of the event that will cause numerous years of strife between these 2 nations
- All the events that occur between Edom and Israel that we discussed a moment ago during our section on Isaac stem from this event
- This is the critical event in Israelite and Edomite history concerning their struggles with one another
- **If someone would, please give me a brief rundown of what we just read?**
- 1st – notice the deceit exhibited by both Jacob and his mother Rebekah
 - Isaac was old – could not see (vs 1)
 - Isaac was also close to death
 - Spiritually – we know this had to happen – Christ was going to descend from Jacob, not Esau
 - But look at this physically for a moment – rather than comforting Isaac and supporting Esau as the older son (he was supposed to get this blessing) – Rebekah used this as an opportunity to perform some trickery
 - Quite frankly, she hatched a plot to take advantage of Isaac's weak physical state

- She tells Jacob “you’ve already got Esau’s birthright. If you trick dad again, you can also get Esau’s blessing.”
- That promise from God to Abraham in Genesis 12 – God gave that to Isaac as well in Genesis 26:3
- And despite these deceptive actions, God would give this promise to Jacob as well in Genesis 28:14 (descendants as numerous as the dust of the earth)
- She got Jacob involved and he was all in
- Jacob and even Rebekah in this instance – don’t sound like the greatest of people – we see them taking advantage of their husband and father at the expense of their son and brother
- But again – God loved Jacob and loved Esau less (Romans 9:13)
- And the older was going to serve the younger (Genesis 27:23)
- Though the circumstances were not pleasant from man’s perspective – God’s will is done anyways
- Look at Pharaoh in Egypt in Romans 9
 - What would have happened had Pharaoh responded to the plagues and let Israel go? Israel would have left Egypt
 - What happened despite Pharaoh not listening to God’s commands? Israel left Egypt
 - God’s will is done despite man’s efforts to stop it
 - As further proof by the lineage of Christ in Matthew 1:1-17
 - Solomon born as a result of David and Bathsheba’s sin, Manasseh, Amon, etc. – these folks did some wicked things
 - But Christ prevailed anyways
- Despite Rebekah and Jacob’s deception and even through their deception, Christ descended from Judah
- 2nd – look at the blessing that Jacob received that was rightfully Esau’s from a physical perspective (vs 27-29)
 - vs 27-28 - *“Surely, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed. Therefore may God give you Of the dew of heaven, Of the fatness of the earth, And plenty of grain and wine.”*
 - **What do you notice of this first statement?**
 - The field which the Lord has blessed
 - Matthew 9:37-38 - *“Then He said to His disciples, ‘The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.’”*
 - Physically speaking, this tells us that Jacob would be blessed with agricultural success as we’ll talk about more later
 - But spiritually speaking, there are some applications as well
 - The work that is going to be done through Jacob (the bringing of the Messiah through his bloodline, not Esau’s) is God approved
 - We’ve mentioned it numerous times up to this point, but even though Jacob/Rebekah lied and performed a terrible act of

deceit towards Isaac, God intends to bring the Messiah through Jacob's bloodline

- Now does this mean that God approves of lies and deceit – certainly not
- There are numerous passages we can go to that prove that God condemns this behavior
- But as we stated earlier, God's will will be accomplished regardless of mankind's decisions
- Did God use Jacob and Rebekah's deceit to bring about the Christ? Certainly
- Jesus descended from Judah who was a son of Jacob
- But God is not going to permit this behavior for us today – this Scripture is not to be used to say that lying and/or deceit is God approved
- There are fields that are ripe for harvest (Matthew 9) – if you want God's spiritual blessings then you need to be found a laborer when your time on earth is up
- And to be a laborer of God, He requires our yes to be yes and our no to be no (Matthew 5:37)
- vs 29 - *"Let peoples serve you, And nations bow down to you. Be master over your brethren, And let your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, And blessed be those who bless you!"*
 - **What do you notice of this statement?**
 - **How would all nations serve Jacob?**
 - We are told in Genesis 35:5 that there were several nations and cities that would not pursue Jacob as he returned to Bethel from Shechem because they knew that God was on his side
 - Likely the very same reason that the Canaanites and Perizzites never came after Jacob nor his family after the incident with Simeon, Levi, and Dinah in Genesis 34 – that was a big deal
 - I'm not excusing Shechem's actions (Shechem was a Canaanite prince), but Simeon and Levi put them through some awful trickery – but the Canaanites did not retaliate
 - So you can clearly see that all nations did serve Jacob physically, however this Scripture has deeper meanings
 - Again, Christ came through Jacob and all nations certainly serve Christ
 - All knees will bow before Him or they will be forced to before Him (Romans 14)
- The fact that Jacob received this blessing instead of Esau tells us that regardless of our earthly status – serving God is required
 - You will not earn your way to heaven on your own regardless of your earthly status

- In fact, the exact opposite is true – if you think you can get to heaven by your own merit, consider the following
- Proverbs 14:12 – *“There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.”*
- A verse that is repeated verbatim for us in Proverbs 16:25
- Remember, we learned in Lesson 1 that the old law taught us 2 things
 - 1 – what sin is, therefore we can deduce what holiness is
 - 2 – we can’t attain the prize on our own
- Job spent the largest part of the book named after him wondering why God was punishing him – Job was a righteous man
- He says “I did nothing wrong” but his friends say “yes you did”
- And this goes on for ~30 chapters and over the course of those 30 chapters Job evolved from “I did nothing wrong and I don’t know why this is happening” to “Because I did nothing wrong and I don’t know why this is happening, I am owed an answer from God”
- God didn’t answer to Job why he was suffering – rather...
 - Where were you Job when I laid the foundations of the earth?
 - Where were you when I defined the boundaries of the seas?
 - Where are you when I cause the sun to rise and set?
 - Where were you when I separated light from darkness?
 - Where were you when I mapped the weather patterns for the snow, rain, sleet, and hail?
 - Where were you when I paved the paths for the lightning to follow?
 - Where were you when I taught the lions how to hunt?
 - Where are you to feed the ravens when they get hungry?
 - Where were you when I told the deer how to give birth?
 - And on and on and on
- God answers to no man
- Esau could have said “God – that blessing is mine” – and God would have probably drilled him as well
- The Messiah came through Jacob, not Esau – and Esau, you’re just going to have to be OK with that
- The fact that you are the older brother matters not – because you are going to submit to him
- The same can be said of us today – regardless of our identity in this life, we will submit to God
- 3rd – look at the blessing that Esau received (vs 39-40)

- Does this sound like a blessing?
- Esau, you are going to serve your younger brother
- You are going to work for the fatness of the earth in the dew of the heavens that God is going to give to Jacob
- You are going to live by the sword
- And he's going to have a yoke on your neck
- Hebrews 11:20 - *"By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come."*
- Though it may not sound like it, this was a blessing
- Esau just didn't realize it yet
- **What does this tell us today?**
- When we are told to give our lives to Christ, conforming to His will and not the will of the world in Romans 12 – that is a blessing
- When we are told to carry the spiritual sword and live by it in Ephesians 6 – that is a blessing
- And when we are told to be yoked with Him in Matthew 11 – that is a blessing
- Because though it may not seem like it now (the broad road looks awfully good right now, doesn't it) – the yoke of Christ is easy and His burden is light
- Because He has already done the heavy lifting – you and I just need to tag along
- Esau hated his brother after this, but only for a time
- They reunite after some time in Genesis 33 and have a good visit with one another
- Esau didn't die in his hatred of Jacob
- The world may hate you, and if you are being the Christian you should be, the world will hate you (2 Timothy 3:12) – but the world hated Christ too
- Embrace being a peculiar people, because the peculiar people are God's people (1 Peter 2:9) – His kingdom is not of this world (John 19)
- Consider it a blessing when you suffer persecution for Christ, stay on the straight and narrow, and pray that the world will eventually overcome their hatred and submit themselves to God's will
- **Any further thoughts on Jacob Steals the Blessing?**
- **Jacob's ladder**
 - **Genesis 28:10-22**
 - After the events of Genesis 27, Esau vows to kill Jacob and Jacob flees to find a wife
 - Not from amongst the women of Canaan though based on instructions from Isaac
 - Esau, noticing the instruction given to Jacob does the exact opposite – he intentionally marries a Canaanite woman

- Esau is somewhat living in rebellion at this point
- Birthright stealing and blessing don't look so bad now
 - Jacob is being obedient, Esau is not
 - It's as if God knew
- Almost reminds you of the prodigal son and his older brother in Luke 15
 - The younger son openly defied and rejected his father, whereas the older son remained faithful
 - Despite that though – it was the younger son who got rewarded when he came back
 - And the older brother was not pleased
 - Jacob and Rebekah committed a deceitful action against Isaac and against Esau
 - But despite that – Jacob was blessed
 - Now, we don't know the fate of the older brother in that story because it closes with him in a state of displeasure
- But we do have the continuation of the story of Esau – and at first, we see that he became rebellious (no different than the prodigal son in Luke 15 originally)
- But in verses 10-22, we read of an interesting encounter
- Jacob was going in the direction of Haran
- **What is significant of Haran?**
- Haran was Lot's father (Abraham's brother) (Genesis 11:27-32)
- Abraham was in Haran before being told to leave for the land of Canaan (Genesis 11 & 12)
- Not only that, but numerous years later, Haran would be defeated by Assyria when Assyria was at their peak (2 Kings 19:11-12)
- Haran was NE of the land of Canaan, just South of present day Turkey, and due East of what would later become Syrian Antioch (the home congregation of Paul in his NT missionary journeys)
- So that is the direction that Jacob is moving towards, but he's still in Canaan at this very moment
- And he falls asleep
- In his dreams, he sees a ladder reaching from earth to heaven
- He sees angels descending and ascending on it
- And the Lord appears and greets Jacob with the same promises the He made to both Isaac and Abraham
 - Your descendants will inhabit the land of Canaan (vs 13)
 - Your descendants will be as numerous as the dust of the earth (vs 14)
 - And through you, all nations on earth will be blessed (vs 14)
 - We know that all 3 of these came true and they are still coming true today
 - You and I are blessed because of the lineage of Jacob
 - This is the first recorded instance of the Lord speaking with Jacob – stealing the birthright and the blessing doesn't look so bad in this moment

- And Jacob vows to serve the Lord – what a remarkable turn of events for Jacob
 - This occurred at Bethel as is revealed to us in vs 19
 - **What is the significance of Bethel?**
 - Outside of Jerusalem, this was probably the most prominent city in Canaan in the OT
 - Abraham built an altar to God here (Genesis 12:8)
 - We obviously have this instance with Jacob that occurred here
 - Unfortunately, Jeroboam would later desecrate Bethel by establishing a false god here and telling the people “*Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!*” (1 Kings 12)
 - There would later be a school of prophets here (2 Kings 2)
 - So this was somewhat of a religious center
 - **More importantly, what do we see here as we think of making applications today from this story?**
 - **John 1:51**
 - Jesus says this statement to Philip and Nathanael after they decide to follow after Him
 - But we can see that just as Jacob saw this vision, you and I can as well because all nations were blessed through him in the form of the promised Messiah Jesus
 - And through Him, we may inherit eternal life someday
- **Any thoughts on Jacob’s Ladder?**
- **Jacob builds his family**
 - We won’t read all of this, but we’ll be covering the information in Genesis 29-30
 - 1 – Jacob gets married
 - Going back to Genesis 27, we read of Jacob fleeing Esau, Isaac, Rebekah, etc. in search of a wife
 - Based on instructions from Isaac – he was not to marry a Canaanite
 - So he made it his goal to get to Padan Aram (Haran)
 - **What was in Padan Aram (Haran)?**
 - Laban was there – **who is Laban?**
 - Laban is Rebekah’s brother, so he is Jacob and Esau’s uncle
 - What is the significance of the relationship between Laban and Jacob?
 - Their relationship started off well
 - **Genesis 29:15-20**
 - Laban employed Jacob
 - 7 years – and his wages were his daughter Rachel
 - Rachel is specified in vs 18-19
 - However, Laban did not stay true to his word
 - Jacob says “trickery is only fun when I do it”
 - Laban makes him work another 7 years, and this time he does get Rachel as his wife
 - Jacob had to work to get his reward
 - And even after he worked hard for 7 years, his work was still not enough
 - **What applications can we learn from this?**

- The fact that God rested after the creation implied that He did work
- The fact that anyone rests implies that they have done work
- If you wish to gain the heavenly reward that we all want – there's work to be done (Matthew 9:37-38)
- Remember the Israelites in Hebrews 4 – those men that settled East of the Jordan had to work for their rest
- They had to go across the Jordan into Jericho and throughout all of Canaan until their Western brothers could rest as well
- They had to work for their rest
- The fields are ripe for harvest – do you pray that the Lord send workers out?
- Do you pray that you are one of those workers?
- **Luke 17:5-10**
- The OT taught us that we cannot attain perfection on our own
- 1 sin is all that it takes for us to become lost
- And even when we've been completely obedient, we're still worthy of death
- Lucky for us, the blood of Christ covers us
- Jacob learned this lesson the hard way
- And I'm not excusing Laban – the agreed deal was 7 years, and Jacob gets Rachel
- Laban didn't honor that – there's a good chance that he never intended to do that, not as long as Leah was around at least
- But Jacob worked his 7 years and thought his work got him where he wanted to be
- But we are going to see why this is a good thing here in a moment
- 2 – Jacob starts to have children
 - Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah
 - Genesis 29:31 goes as far as to say that Leah was unloved
 - But God still used her
 - Jacob worked 7 years in pursuit of Rachel but got Leah instead
 - Leah gave birth to Jacob's first 4 sons
 - **Who are they?**
 - Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah
 - **Genesis 29:31-35**
 - Leah bores Reuben, **what does she say?**
 - Leah bores Simeon, **what does she say?**
 - Leah bores Levi, **what does she say?**
 - Leah bores Judah, **what does she say?**
 - **Why would she complain that she is unloved in the birth of her first 3 sons, but then change tune all of a sudden after the birth of her fourth son?**
 - **What do we know of Judah?**
 - **Hebrews 7:12-16**
 - Theme of Hebrews: Christ is better
 - Levi (Leah's 3rd son) is who God developed the OT priesthood through
 - Moses was a Levite, Aaron was a Levite

- Jesus came from Judah though
- The Hebrew writer uses this point to say that because Jesus was from Judah, the law had to change – why can't you all realize this? Follow Christ. He is better than what you are trying to do
- For right now, I'm going to leave that there, but we'll talk more about Judah and Levi momentarily
- Leah may have felt unloved at this time – but she was the one who gave birth to Judah (God had a purpose for her)
- And the lineage of Jesus runs through Judah
- Not only that, but the OT priesthood ran through Levi
- Leah may have been unloved by Jacob, but not by God
- Now, I'm not discrediting Jacob's other children because as we'll find out later on, they played a major part too
- But Christ came through Leah – I think it's safe to say that God blessed her tremendously whether she realized it in her lifetime or not
- Jacob would go on to have 8 more boys and 1 girl
 - Dan (Bilhah) – Rachel's maid
 - Naphtali (Bilhah)
 - Gad (Zilpah) – Leah's maid
 - Asher (Zilpah)
 - Isaachar (Leah)
 - Zebulun (Leah)
 - Dinah (Leah)
 - Joseph (Rachel)
 - Benjamin (Rachel)
 - Each of these boys played a pivotal role in the Israelite nation
 - Dinah did as well and we'll talk about her more shortly
- **Any thoughts on Jacob builds his family?**
- **Jacob builds his wealth**
 - **Genesis 30:25-43**
 - The time comes when Jacob wants to take what is his and leave Laban
 - Jacob worked for Laban for 20 years (Genesis 31:38)
 - So Jacob and Laban obviously knew each other well by this point
 - And Laban says in vs 27 – *"...Please stay, if I have found favor in your eyes, for I have learned by experience that the Lord has blessed me for your sake."*
 - Laban could see a difference in Jacob
 - God loved Jacob – and it was evident to Laban that he had received blessings solely because he was involved with Jacob
 - There's a point here to be made with us
 - When the world looks at us, they should see what Laban saw in Jacob
 - Do not leave me, for God loves you and I want God to love me as well
 - **1 Peter 2:9-10**
 - God says here that the Christians are a chosen people
 - No different than Jacob – God chose Jacob over Esau

- God chooses the church over the world
- To the world, you will appear to be a stranger
- You will not be of this world
- They will see a difference in you
- Quite frankly, if the world looks at you as just another one of them, then you may need to consider some of the things you are participating in
- Quite frankly, if the Christian had their choice, they wouldn't be in the world
- But if he or she is going to be there – we're going to make it known that we don't agree with what they're doing, we will not participate, and we'll even go so far as to pull people out of the fire
- That's the Christian – that is the behavior of God's chosen – that was Jacob in Laban's eyes
- That should be us in someone else's eyes
- **Philippians 1:21-26**
- This was Paul's attitude
- It should be ours as well
- If I had my choice, I'd get out of the world
- But quite frankly, we're needed here to show people that there is a way of escape from the fire – that escape of course is Christ
- That was Jacob in Laban's eyes and Laban begs him to stay
- But Jacob couldn't stay
 - He had at least 4 women that he was responsible for, 11 kids at this point, numerous livestock, etc.
 - For the same reasons that Lot and Abraham had to separate, Laban and Jacob now have to separate
 - Jacob needs to provide for his own at this point (a NT principle as well **2 Thessalonians 3:10**)
- So they work out a deal
 - Of the flocks of Laban, any that were speckled, spotted, or brown – Jacob
 - Whatever is left – Laban
 - Laban agrees to this deal, but Jacob had 1 final trick in him and God on his side
 - He rigged the game again to where he came out with many of Laban's flocks – selective breeding techniques
 - And thus he became prosperous by the hand of God (Genesis 31:7-18)
 - Then he left for Canaan at the instruction of God in Genesis 31:1-21 without telling Laban
- **Thoughts on Jacob builds his wealth?**
- **Jacob returns to Canaan**
 - We obviously are not going to cover all the details of this, but if you'd like to read all of it, it is found in Genesis 31:22 – 35

- We will simply try to cover the highlights together
- 1 – Jacob and Laban make a covenant (**Genesis 31:51-55**)
 - Laban comes after Jacob after he flees in secrecy and says “What are you doing? You didn’t even give me time to say goodbye to my family. Not only that, but you stole my gods.” – Laban clearly participated in some sort of paganism
 - Laban searches the camp of Jacob and though Rachel stole the gods, Laban was unable to find them
 - So Jacob rebukes back and says “Why do you accuse me of something I didn’t do?”
 - He did not know Rachel had the gods
 - Nothing good comes from false gods – put it aside
 - Whatever is in your way of serving God, you need to part with it
 - Then Jacob and Laban make this covenant of which we just read about
- 2 – Jacob and Esau meet (Genesis 32-33)
 - This was truly a highly anticipated meeting
 - As Jacob was on his way back to Canaan, he sends a message to Esau and the messenger replies that Esau is coming to see you
 - Now remember that when they were younger, Esau was the hunter and Jacob was not
 - Jacob becomes very afraid of what’s going to happen when Esau sees him
 - If you remember, they did not separate on good terms – they separated right after Jacob stole Esau’s blessing from his father
 - This shows Jacob’s lack of faith at this time in his life though because Jacob had the camp of God on his side (Genesis 32:1-2) – yet was still scared of Esau
 - **Genesis 33:1-4**
 - Esau vowed to kill Jacob in Genesis 27
 - After ~20 years or so had passed, it’s safe to say that Esau either forgot that vow or he never really had any intention to deliver on that vow
 - Sometimes we say things we don’t mean when we’re mad
 - Ephesians 4:26 - “*Be angry and do not sin*”
 - Let’s all strive to live those words
 - Esau was happy to see his younger brother
 - Happy to see that the Lord had blessed Jacob as He had also blessed Esau
 - If only this relationship between Edom and Israel would last – as we’ve talked about up to this point numerous times, this peaceful relationship between the nations of these brothers would not last
 - But with the 2 brothers themselves, things ended on good terms
- 3 – Jacob’s name changed to Israel (Genesis 32 & 35)
 - Genesis 35:10 - “*And God said to him, ‘Your name is Jacob; your name shall not be called Jacob anymore, but Israel shall be your name.’ So He called his name Israel.*”
 - **Genesis 32:22-32**
 - Jacob has had quite a life to say the least – he had displayed the behavior of a liar and a con artist at various times in his life, his brother once vowed to kill him

as a result, his uncle then scammed him, his wives were sisters and he loved one and the other, not so much, his children would grow up to play a major trick on him that would cause him years of suffering and mourning

- Now we find him alone (he sent his wives, servants, and sons away for the night)
- And the next thing we read is of him wrestling with a Man (vs 24)
- He had parted ways with all of his earthly possessions and finds himself alone with God
- Was this actually one of the members of the godhead? We don't know, I would argue likely not because of what we're told in Hosea 12:3-5 (Hosea refers to Him as the Angel)
- Whoever this was specifically, Jacob demanded a blessing (vs 26 – so we know he is some sort of a divine being) and He wouldn't reveal His name (vs 29)
- vs 27-30 say that Jacob wrestled with God and prevailed – again was this actually God Himself or someone visiting Jacob on behalf of God? We don't know
- **Either way – what's the point of this?**
- 1 – God spared him (vs 30), so to say that Jacob is as strong or stronger than whoever he struggled with is false
- Jacob only hung on because he was allowed to
- Self-reliance for Jacob is no longer an option
- True, 100% dependence upon God is now required
- Our old selves are beaten, broken, dislocated before coming to God
- But we do not have to live in that struggle with God – we can turn to Him in our weakness and lean on Him
- **Matthew 21:44**
 - If we allow Christ to change our lives, it will hurt
 - You'll be broken (Jacob dislocated a hip)
 - But this is better than the alternative
 - The alternative is that you will be grinded to powder
 - There is no recovery from this
- 2 – According to vs 25, Jacob suffered a hip injury (dislocation)
- **Hebrews 12:12-13**
- Beginning in Hebrews 12:12, the Hebrews writer transitions from a theoretical argument to a practical, application based response
- He is demonstrating the application to the theory that he has spent the entire time discussing thus far into the book
- And he tells his audience in these verses to be disciplined, strengthen yourselves
- He likens this to a path in vs 13 and reference Jacob's spat with the Man of God in these verses
- And the Hebrew writer says in Hebrews 12:13 – if you are running a path with your hip dislocated, run the path that's going to heal it instead of continuing with it dislocated/lame
- So despite this injury, he stuck with God – he persevered through it

- And for that, his name was changed to Israel and he was blessed
- When he met Esau shortly after, Esau did not kill him as he vowed to earlier
- To apply this to us today, whatever is in our way or whatever we struggle with – do not forsake God
- And you will also eventually be blessed
- Israel's 12 boys would become the heads of the 12 tribes of the nation of Israel
- Through Israel, Christ descended – all nations were blessed
- Instead of Joseph and Levi having tribes named after them, Joseph's boys – Ephraim and Manasseh took their place – Joseph received (2) tribal allotments
- We read in Genesis 48 of how Israel blesses Joseph's sons and for this, he is remembered in Hebrews 11:21
- 4 – Rachel dies Genesis 35:16-20
 - She died in childbirth to Jacob's youngest son Benjamin
 - We'll see shortly the importance of Benjamin
- 5 – Isaac dies in Genesis 35:27-29
 - Jacob and Esau bury their father
- Before we close on Jacob/Israel, let's skip ahead to his death (Genesis 49:1-12)
- A lot has happened since the conclusion of what we just got finished discussing, but we'll be covering a lot of that in lesson 4
- For now, I want to look at a few of these blessings
- vs 1-4 focus on Reuben – Reuben would not excel because of his actions in Genesis 35:22
- **vs 5-7 focuses on Simeon and Levi – why would Jacob address these 2 together?**
- These 2 caused a lot of trouble in Genesis 34
 - Shechem, the prince of the Hivite country, committed terrible actions against Dinah (Jacob's daughter, Simeon/Levi's sister)
 - Shechem requests to have Dinah as his wife
 - Simeon and Levi take matter into their own hands
 - They tricked the Shechem, his father, and the men of their city and then slaughtered them
 - **What should Simeon and Levi have done?**
 - Stayed out of it – let Jacob handle the situation
 - Do we sometimes not let the father handle situations?
 - Romans 12:19 – *“Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord.”*
- I'm not excusing the actions of what provoked Simeon and Levi (it was an evil deed) – but Jacob cursed Simeon and Levi for their actions, so I will focus on that
- They lost their temper – and in their anger, they sinned contrary to what we are supposed to do (Ephesians 4:26) – their deed was just as evil
- vs 8-12 describe Judah
- Judah was not perfect
 - He played a role in selling his brother into slavery – it even appears that he was part of the group of brothers that wanted to kill him had Reuben not stepped in
 - He did some bad things in Genesis 38

- Yet, look at how many Messianic prophecies we have in these 5 verses
 - Your brothers will praise you
 - Your father's children will bow down to you
 - You are a lion's whelp
 - The scepter shall not depart from you
 - You will wash your garments in wine and your clothes in the blood of grapes
- Despite Judah's weaknesses, we are told in the NT that Christ descended through Judah
- As a result, it is only fitting as to what we read in Genesis 44
 - If you remember, after Joseph rose to prominence in Egypt, his brothers come to him with Benjamin
 - Benjamin – Jacob's youngest by far (he was significantly younger than his other children), representing Jacob's last memories of Rachel
 - Joseph knew this
 - And as they left from Joseph's house following their meal together, Benjamin left with the cup (Benjamin didn't steal it – it was placed with his belongings), but Benjamin left with it
 - Young, defenseless, helpless Benjamin received the cup of Joseph's wrath
 - The same cup of wrath that all the nations in Jeremiah 25 received and were forced to drink (Egypt, Uz, the Phillistines, Arabia, Babylon, Edom, Jerusalem) and the same cup of wrath that Jesus received and drank
 - But we find out that Benjamin did not have to drink of this cup of wrath so to speak – he did not have to face death
 - Because despite all of Judah's shortcomings, he stood up for his brother in Genesis 44:18-34
 - Young, defenseless, helpless Benjamin – and Judah stood up for him
- As the Hebrew writer points out for us throughout the book, it is only fitting that Jesus descended through Judah
- Christ does the same for us – defenseless, helpless you and I – yet Jesus stood up for us
- The book of Genesis has a lot to say about Jacob, so rightly so – we spent a considerable time discussing him in Lesson 3
- Jacob was not perfect as we found out – to put it frankly, he played the role of a deceiver numerous times
- But he was God's chosen
- You and I are not perfect – but if we're Christians, we are God's chosen
- Let us live in a way that reflects this
- In summary of this lesson, we've looked at the promises made to Abraham by God in Genesis 12
 - These promises of course are repeated to Abraham throughout his life in various other locations
 - And we looked at various events of the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and how they relate to us spiritually today