

JACOB'S STORY: FROM DECEIVER TO PATRIARCH Genesis 25-46



The purpose of this study is to show God's love, patience, and promise keeping. It demonstrates how God can make a mercurial character such as Jacob into a patriarch, a man who played a leading role in the story of God's chosen people. God not only changed his name but gave him the opportunity to change his ways. It is a story that gives each one of us hope. Not one of us, whatever we have done wrong in our past, is beyond the grace and forgiveness of God.

WEEK TWO – AN ENCOUNTER WITH GOD

Read Genesis 27:41 to 28:22

One of the interesting factors of this study series is how so many of the characters scheme and plot to achieve their own agendas without allowing God into the situation. We saw this with Rebekah who was bent on making her favourite son Isaac's heir. Nevertheless, we also see that God uses their scheming to achieve what he wants. Earlier in chapter 27 we read how distraught Esau was when he realised what had happened. The NLT v.33 says that Isaac began to tremble uncontrollably ... and he then told Esau that the blessing he had given to Jacob was irrevocable. Not surprisingly Esau was bitter and cried out, *"O my father, bless me, too!" he begged. But Isaac said, "Your brother was here, and he tricked me. He has carried away your blessing."* One's heart goes out to Esau when he pleads: *"Not one blessing left for me? O my father bless me, too! Then he broke down and wept."*

- What does Isaac say about Esau's future?
- What did Esau promise himself?

Rebekah was very much the schemer behind the scenes, and on hearing Esau's threat, she told Jacob to flee to his uncle Laban who lived in Haran. She then connived to put a seed thought into Isaac's mind.

- What seed did she sow?

- Its easy to be critical of others but do we try and manipulate people or situations to suit our own ends? It's easy to convince ourselves that our motives are right. However, we should bring all things to God in prayer and ensure we have a peace about what we are going.

Read verses 30-46 and 28:1-4

Again, Rebekah deceives Isaac in order to give Jacob an excuse to escape the anger of his brother.

- How had Rebekah sown the seeds by which she would deceive Isaac yet again in telling him that Jacob needed to leave and go to his uncle, to find a wife?
- How did Esau respond to this?

There is a well-known saying: *"To every man who sins comes a nemesis"* meaning a downfall will always follow, the person will get what they deserve. The New Testament in [Galatians 6:7-8](#) tell us: *"Don't be misled. Remember that you can't ignore God and get away with it. You will always reap what you sow! Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful desires will harvest the consequences of decay and death. But those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit."*

- So then, how does Galatians show how we can avoid our nemesis?
- Read Psalm 103:12
- The New Testament says a lot about love and forgiveness and sometimes we forget that God hasn't changed. He was still willing to extend his love under the Old Testament covenant.
- How was Isaac an example of this in chapter 28?
- What can we learn from this?
- Jacob had to flee from his brother and leave his family because of his deceit.

Read verses 10-22

Bearing in mind all that we have learned about Jacob, we come to these remarkable verses. We've all heard, no doubt, about **Jacob's ladder**, but do we understand what happened at Bethel?

- What did the Lord say to Jacob, as he stood above the ladder?
- In what context have you previously heard these promises?
- What does this tell us about God?
- God makes a wonderful promise in verse 15.
- Why do you think Jacob was afraid?

- What is the significance of the stone and the oil in verse 18?
- What does the name *Bethel* mean?
- In Verses 20-21, does it sound as if Jacob is saying that he's not sure that God will keep his promises to him?
- Are we confident that God keeps his promises? Think of examples in your life.
- What does Jacob promise to give God?

In our prayers this week, let us ask God to keep us focused on his word and to protect us and guide us in all our ways.



Prayer:

Father God, we pray that you will protect us as promised in your word.

Psalm 23:

- 1 A Psalm of David. The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
- 2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.
- 3 He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.
- 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil;
For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me
- 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.
- 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the Lord Forever.

FOR THOSE INTENDING TO TAKE PART IN THE ZOOM STUDY FOR WEEK THREE, PLEASE TRY AND READ GENESIS CHAPTERS 29 TO 31 BEFORE WE MEET. THANKS.