

HE WRESTLES WITH GOD

Jacob part 4 - Out of the frying pan...

Let's talk:

- 1) When have you “Fled from a lion only to meet a bear?” (Amos 5:19)
- 2) How often have you seen (or entered) a contract with the fine print, “Terms and conditions subject to change at any time, with or without notice”? Is such a contract fair?
- 3) Why do we give people nicknames?

IV) Jacob on the run

A) Fleeing from Laban (Gen. 31:1-21)

- 1) Was there any grounds to the charge against Jacob?
- 2) How did Laban feel about all this and why?
- 3) How many times did Laban change Jacob's wages? (7)
- 4) Explain Jacob's dream
- 5) What was the reaction of his wives?
- 6) What did Rachel do that would come back to “bite” Jacob?
- 7) How did Jacob “trick” Laban?

B) The mizpah (31:22-55)

- 1) What did the LORD's message to Laban mean?
- 2) Why was Laban upset with Jacob?
- 3) What was the accusation? Why was this important?
- 4) What was Rachel's ruse?
- 5) How long was Jacob working for Laban?
- 6) What is “the Fear of Isaac”?
- 7) According to verse 43, did Laban have any claim on Jacob's property?
- 8) How do they establish a covenant?
* How is this *very* different from the Mizpah jewelry in vogue a while ago?
- 9) What was the purpose of the stone pile?

C) ...and into the fire. Meeting Esau (32:121)

- 1) Who met Jacob on the road? Why is this important?
- 2) Why does Jacob send messengers to Esau?

- 3) What did Jacob do when he heard Esau was coming to meet him with 400 men?
- 4) How does Jacob's prayer show both trust and fear?
- 5) What do think of Jacob's "bribe"?
- 6) How many "droves" did Jacob send?
- 7) What did Jaoc hope to accomplish by appeasing his brother?

D) He wrestles with God (Gen. 32:22-32)

- 1) Why did Jacob remain alone?
- 2) Where did this "man" with whom Jacob wrestled come from?
- 3) What injury dd Jacob sustain in verse 25?
- 4) Why would Jacob not let the man go?
- 5) Why would the "man" need to depart at daybreak?
- 6) How is receiving a new name a blessing?
- 7) What does "Israel" mean? How did this play out in his descendants' history?
- 8) Why would "the man" not reveal his (His) name?
- 9) How did this encounter shape Jewish dietary laws for millenia?

E) That went better than I thought. Meeting Esau (Gen. 33:1-20)

- 1) Why did Jacob bow seven times?
- 2) What was Esau's reaction to seeing this brother he had sworn to kill?
- 3) What was his reaction to Jacob's large family?
- 4) Why was Esau confused by the bribe / gift?
 - * Why does Esau not desire this substantial gift?
 - * How does Jacob persuade him to accept it?
 - * What would acceoting the gift mean for Jacob's future travels?
- 5) Why doesn't Jacob want to travel with Esau and his men?
- 6) Where did Jacob go instead of to Seir?
- 7) Where did Jacob finish his journey?

Next week: Dinah's disgrace and the transition to Joseph (Genesis 34 & 35)

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A Study of the Patriarch Jacob

Part V - Jacob's last days

Let's talk about it:

- 1) Do you have any final requests?
 - What's the strangest thing you've seen or heard of in a will?
- 2) What legacy do you hope to leave?
- 3) Do you have a place or manner of burial in mind?

V) Jacob finally "settles down"

A) From Shechem to Bethel - Genesis 35:1-15

- 1) Why did God want Jacob to uproot and move again?
- 2) What was so special about Beth-El?
- 3) Why does God appear again to Jacob / Israel?

B) Israel - the next generation - Genesis 35:16-29

- 1) What is Ephrath better known as today?
- 2) Why does Israel rename Ben-oni?
- 3) How common was it for a woman to die in childbirth in Israel's day?
- 4) What is the "to this day" of verse 20?
- 5) Why the note about Reuben's "indiscretion" in verse 22?
- 6) Why repeat the lineage from each wife and concubine?
- 7) Where was Isaac living?
- 8) How old was Isaac when he "breathed his last"?
- 9) Does verse 29 show the feud being over?
 - Do funerals still bring siblings together today?

C) The skipped chapters

- 1) 34 - The rape of Dinah
- 2) 36 - Esau's descendants
- 3) 37- Joseph; part 1 (coat - sold to Potiphar)
- 4) 38 - Judah and Tamar's tryst
- 5) 39:1-45:25 - the story of Joseph in Egypt

D) One more ride! - Genesis 46:1-47:12

- 1) Why was Jacob reluctant to make such a long journey?
- 2) How did Joseph “foresee” this difficulty?
- 3) How does the genealogy of 46:8-25 differ from earlier ones?
- 4) What was the total number of those who went down to Egypt?
- 5) How did the Egyptians feel about Israel’s “vocation”?
- 6) Where was Goshen in the Kingdom of Egypt?
- 7) What further “honor” des Pharaoh bestow on Joseph and his family?

E) The blessing of Israel - 48:1-49:27

- 1) What was Israel’s / Jacob’s physical condition by this time?
- 2) How did the blessings of Ephraim and Manasseh “echo” Jacob and Esau’s?
- 3) What does it mean that these two are “Jacob’s” and the others “Joseph’s”?
- 4) What “inheritance” does Joseph receive?
- 5) Summarize the blessings to each of the children of Israel:

Reuben: _____

Simeon: _____

Levi: _____

Judah: _____

Zebulun: _____

Issachar: _____

Dan: _____

Gad: _____

Asher: _____

Naphtali: _____

Joseph: _____

Benjamin: _____

- 6) How do we see these “blessings” play out in the history of Israel?
- 7) How is the tribe Joseph remembered later in history (Joshua 13-22)

F) The death and burial of Jacob - Genesis 49:28-50:14

- 1) What “final instructions” does Jacob give his children in verse 29?
- 2) What do we learned about Leah in verse 31?
- 3) How old was Jacob when he died? (47:9)
- 4) Is Joseph guilty of “cultural appropriation” on 50:2-3?
- 5) Why did Joseph have to ask permission to bury his father?
- 6) Why did all the “nobles” of Egypt go with Joseph and family?
- 7) What was the reaction of the Canaanites?
- 8) What does it mean to be “beyond the Jordan”?
- 9) How does 50:14 segue us into the next part of Israel’s history?

This concludes our biographical study for this year. We will take a few weeks off. Due to vacations, VBS, and other Summer activities, we have done a non-consecutive topical study over the summer months. Are there any topics or a series of topics you’d like to examine over the summer. I am also not opposed to taking a break until after Labor Day.