

BETWEEN THE LINES™

DEEPER LOOK STUDY GUIDE

JACOB • One Of God's Favorites

Bible Names: It's difficult (particularly in the Old Testament) to do a really serious study without coming into confrontation with the fact that names in the Bible era carried much more implication than they do in our culture today. You certainly can't tackle the biography of Jacob without considering this.

We've looked at this issue in a number of our series (most particularly **BTL 5101- Bible Names** and **BTL 5164 on Birth Rituals**). But let's touch it again for those listeners who may have only recently joined us or have not received those *Deeper Look Study Guides*. Here's a nice listing of many Bible Names and their meanings...

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adam, from <i>Adamah</i>, "Red Earth"... • Abihu, "He is my Father". • Abner, "Father of light". • Abimelech, "Father of the King". • Adonijah, "My Lord is Jah". • Isaac, "Laughter"... God's inside joke! • Esau, "Hairy"... even as a baby? • Joshua, "Jah is my salvation". • Joel, "Jah is God". • David, "Well beloved". • Jeremiah, "Jah has appointed". • Obadiah, "Servant of Jah". • Micah, "Who is like Jah?" • Habakkuk, "Embrace". • Zephaniah, "Hidden/Treasured by Jah". • Malachi, "Of the King." | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aaron, "Enlightened/Lofty". • Abraham, "Father of the multitude". • Absalom, "Father of peace". • Abijah, "Jah is my Father". • Adonizedek, "The Lord is justice". • Jacob, "Supplanter/Deceiver"... yuck! • Moses, "Drawn" from the water • Samuel, "Heard/answered by God". • Daniel, "God is judge". • Solomon, "Peaceful". • Ezekiel, "Strength of God". • Jonah, "Dove". • Nahum, "Consolation". • Haggai, "Festive". • Zechariah, "Remembered by Jah". • Jerusalem, "Dwelling of peace". |
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The Birthright

As we have discussed, there were three issues related to the "rights of primogeniture"...

- A double portion of the father's property (compared to brothers),
- The line of family priesthood/spiritual leadership, and
- (In Abraham's line) The promise of the Messiah among your lineage.

Numbers 7, 11, and 15 speak of those "rights of primogeniture" but, do you remember a family in the Bible where it ever worked the way it was supposed to? Hardly! Think of all the times that it didn't. Either the eldest son "despised" it (like Esau) or a younger brother received it for other reasons. Let's consider a few where we see the father, the eldest son, and the eventual "heir" of the birthright...

<u>Father</u>	<u>Firstborn Son</u>	<u>Eventual Heir</u>
Adam	Cain	Seth
Abraham	Ishmael	Isaac
Jacob	Reuben	Joseph -- property Levi -- priesthood Judah -- Messiah
Joseph	Manasseh	Ephraim
David	Amnon	Solomon

Conclusion

It might actually be a shorter list to consider the Bible families where the “rights of primogeniture” *did* come to pass the way you might have expected.

Jacob's Soap Opera

One way to simply clarify the mess that Jacob created is to take a look at the names of the various sons from the wives and servant women who shared that tent in **Genesis 29 & 30...**

Leah's sons

- Reuben, “Behold! A son!”... the first born.
- Simeon, “God has heard”... from Hebrew word *Sbema* (related to hearing).
- Levi, “Joined”... “I hope that Jacob will now love me”... from Genesis 29:34.
- Judah, “Praised”.

Bilhah's sons

- Dan, “Judge”.
- Naphtali, “Wrestling”... “I’m tired of the struggle with my sister!!!”.

Zilpah's sons

- Gad, “A troop”.
- Asher, “Blessed”.

Leah's last two sons

- Issachar, “Rewarded”.
- Zebulun, “A dwelling place”.

Rachel's sons (finally!)

- Joseph, “Increase”... A lot of years waiting for this one.
- Benjamin, “Son of privilege”... changed from Benoni, “son of sorrow”.

Two Watershed Events

It might be a really positive effort for you to invest time in finding the parallels between the two great episodes of Jacob's life -- **Genesis 28** and **Genesis 32**

Let me trigger you with only a few...

- Esau is the common denominator of threat.
- **Jacob** is carrying the awareness of his own guilt.
- Jacob is all alone... even as the father of a large tribe.
- The future is completely uncertain.
- God reaches out to the refugee and to the returnee.
- God does not come for the purpose of rejection.

Conclusion

In youthful arrogance (I was only 29) I published my first book. Though I hope that I've grown a lot in the intervening years, and though *Episodes At The Olive Press* is now out of print, I still stand on the premise that I first proposed there...

All great saints all are led through Gethsemane.