

Part One

who
is

ISRAEL?

MEET JACOB: God's Plan and His Story



JACOB'S JOURNEY

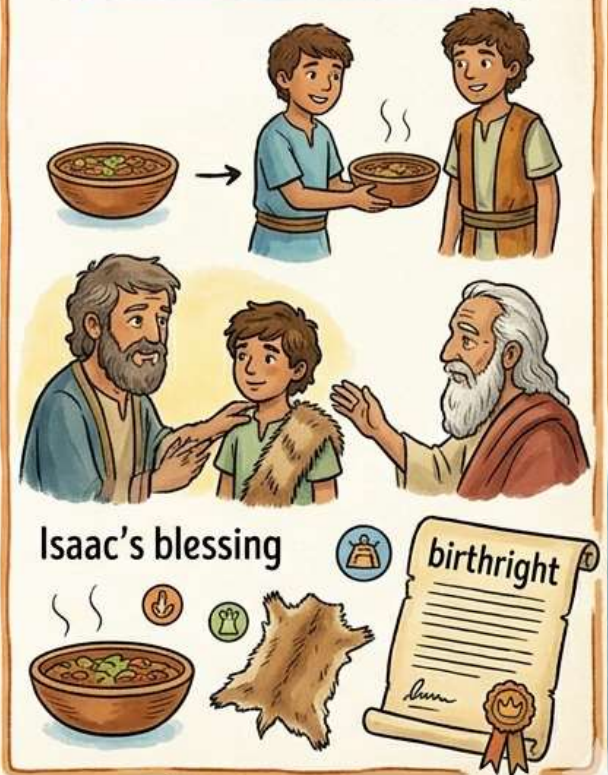


GOD'S SPECIAL PROMISE

1. A Great Nation
2. A New Name:
3. Always With Him



IMPORTANT DETAILS



Meet Jacob!

LONG AGO, THERE WAS A MAN NAMED JACOB. HE WAS THE GRANDSON OF ABRAHAM. JACOB WAS A SHEPHERD WHO TOOK CARE OF SHEEP AND TRAVELED TO MANY PLACES. HE WAS PART OF A VERY SPECIAL PLAN YEHOVAH HAD FOR THE WHOLE WORLD!

THE STRUGGLE:

EVEN BEFORE JACOB WAS BORN, THE BIBLE MENTIONS THAT HE AND HIS TWIN BROTHER ESAU STRUGGLED TOGETHER IN THE WOMB OF THEIR MOTHER REBEKAH.

THE PROPHECY:

WHEN REBEKAH ASKED GOD WHY THIS WAS HAPPENING, SHE WAS TOLD THAT TWO NATIONS WERE IN HER WOMB AND THAT "THE ELDER SHALL SERVE THE YOUNGER" (GENESIS 25:23)

THE MEANING OF THE NAME:

FROM "HEEL CATCHER" TO "GOD PREVAILS" JACOB WAS BORN HOLDING HIS TWIN BROTHER ESAU'S HEEL AND LATER LIVED UP TO HIS NAME BY TRICKING ESAU OUT OF HIS BIRTHRIGHT AND BLESSING. AFTER WRESTLING WITH AN ANGEL OF YEHOVAH UNTIL DAWN, HE SHIFTED FROM RELYING ON HIS OWN PLANS TO TRUSTING IN YEHOVAH'S POWER.



A Deal for Dinner

JACOB OFFERED A BOWL OF LENTIL SOUP TO HIS HUNGRY BROTHER, ESAU, IN EXCHANGE FOR HIS BIRTHRIGHT. THE BIRTHRIGHT WAS THE SPECIAL BLESSING FROM GOD FOR THE OLDEST CHILD.



- JACOB VALUED YEHOVAH'S SPECIAL PROMISE.
- ESAU CARED MORE ABOUT HIS HUNGER THAN HIS FUTURE.
- MISTAKES WERE MADE, BUT YEHOVAH WAS STILL WORKING!

AND JACOB COOKED POTTAGE, AND ESAU CAME FROM THE PLAIN, FAINTING. AND ESAU SAID TO JACOB, "LET ME TASTE OF THAT RED POTTAGE, BECAUSE I AM FAINTING"; THEREFORE HIS NAME WAS CALLED EDOM. AND JACOB SAID TO ESAU, "SELL ME THIS DAY YOUR BIRTHRIGHT." AND ESAU SAID, "BEHOLD, I AM GOING TO DIE, AND FOR WHAT GOOD DOES THIS BIRTHRIGHT BELONG TO ME?" AND JACOB SAID TO HIM, "SWEAR TO ME THIS DAY"; AND HE SWORE TO HIM; AND ESAU SOLD HIS BIRTHRIGHT TO JACOB. AND JACOB GAVE BREAD TO ESAU, AND POTTAGE OF LENTILES; AND HE ATE AND DRANK, AND HE AROSE AND DEPARTED; SO ESAU DESPISED HIS BIRTHRIGHT.

GENESIS 25:29-34

Making a Plan

- JACOB WAS TOLD BY HIS MOTHER TO DRESS UP AS ESAU AND TAKE HIS FATHER MEATS SO HE COULD RECEIVE THE BLESSING



AND IT CAME TO PASS AFTER ISAAC WAS OLD, THAT HIS EYES WERE DIMMED SO THAT HE COULD NOT SEE; AND HE CALLED ESAU, HIS ELDER SON, AND SAID TO HIM, "MY SON"; AND HE SAID, "BEHOLD, I AM HERE." AND HE SAID, "BEHOLD, I AM GROWN OLD, AND KNOW NOT THE DAY OF MY DEATH. NOW THEN TAKE THE WEAPONS, BOTH YOUR QUIVER AND YOUR BOW, AND GO INTO THE PLAIN, AND GET ME VENISON, AND MAKE ME MEATS, AS I LIKE THEM, AND BRING THEM TO ME THAT I MAY EAT, THAT MY SOUL MAY BLESS YOU, BEFORE I DIE." AND REBECCA HEARD ISAAC SPEAKING TO ESAU HIS SON; AND ESAU WENT TO THE PLAIN TO HUNT VENISON FOR HIS FATHER. AND REBECCA SAID TO JACOB HER YOUNGER SON, "BEHOLD, I HEARD YOUR FATHER SPEAKING TO ESAU YOUR BROTHER, SAYING, BRING ME VENISON, AND PREPARE ME MEATS, THAT I MAY EAT AND BLESS YOU BEFORE YEHOVAH BEFORE I DIE. NOW THEN, MY SON, LISTEN TO ME, AS I COMMAND YOU. AND GO TO THE CATTLE AND TAKE FOR ME TWO YOUNG GOATS, TENDER AND GOOD, AND I WILL MAKE THEM MEATS FOR YOUR FATHER, AS HE LIKES. AND YOU SHALL BRING THEM IN TO YOUR FATHER, AND HE SHALL EAT, AND YOUR FATHER MAY BLESS YOU BEFORE HE DIES." AND JACOB SAID TO HIS MOTHER REBECCA, "ESAU MY BROTHER IS A HAIRY MAN, AND I A SMOOTH MAN. PERHAPS MY FATHER MAY FEEL ME, AND I SHALL BE BEFORE HIM AS A DECEIVER, AND I SHALL BRING UPON ME A CURSE, AND NOT A BLESSING." AND HIS MOTHER SAID TO HIM, "ON ME BE YOUR CURSE, SON; ONLY LISTEN TO MY VOICE, AND GO AND BRING THEM TO ME." SO HE WENT AND TOOK AND BROUGHT THEM TO HIS MOTHER; AND HIS MOTHER MADE MEATS, AS HIS FATHER LIKED THEM.

GENESIS 27:1-14

Jacob Receives the Blessing



- JACOB PRETENDS TO BE ESAU SO HE CAN RECEIVE THE BLESSING

AND REBECCA HAVING TAKEN THE FINE RAIMENT OF HER ELDER SON ESAU WHICH WAS WITH HER IN THE HOUSE, PUT IT ON JACOB HER YOUNGER SON. AND SHE PUT ON HIS ARMS THE SKINS OF THE KIDS, AND ON THE BARE PARTS OF HIS NECK. AND SHE GAVE THE MEATS, AND THE LOAVES WHICH SHE HAD PREPARED, INTO THE HANDS OF JACOB HER SON. AND HE BROUGHT THEM TO HIS FATHER, AND SAID, "FATHER"; AND HE SAID, "BEHOLD I AM HERE; WHO ARE YOU, SON?" AND JACOB SAID TO HIS FATHER, "I, ESAU YOUR FIRST BORN, HAVE DONE AS YOU TOLD ME TO DO, RISE, SIT, AND EAT OF MY VENISON, THAT YOUR SOUL MAY BLESS ME." AND ISAAC SAID TO HIS SON, "WHAT IS THIS WHICH YOU HAVE QUICKLY FOUND?" AND HE SAID, "THAT WHICH YEHOVAH YOUR GOD PRESENTED BEFORE ME." AND ISAAC SAID TO JACOB, "DRAW NEAR TO ME, AND I WILL FEEL YOU, SON, IF YOU ARE MY SON ESAU OR NOT." AND JACOB DREW NEAR TO HIS FATHER ISAAC, AND HE FELT HIM, AND SAID, "THE VOICE IS JACOB'S VOICE, BUT THE HANDS ARE THE HANDS OF ESAU." AND HE KNEW HIM NOT, FOR HIS HANDS WERE AS THE HANDS OF HIS BROTHER ESAU, HAIRY; AND HE BLESSED HIM, AND HE SAID, "ARE YOU MY SON ESAU?" AND HE SAID, "I AM." AND HE SAID, "BRING HITHER, AND I WILL EAT OF YOUR VENISON, SON, THAT MY SOUL MAY BLESS YOU"; AND HE BROUGHT IT NEAR TO HIM, AND HE ATE, AND HE BROUGHT HIM WINE, AND HE DRANK. AND ISAAC HIS FATHER SAID TO HIM, "DRAW NEAR TO ME, AND KISS ME, SON." AND HE DREW NEAR AND KISSED HIM, AND SMELLED THE SMELL OF HIS GARMENTS, AND BLESSED HIM, AND SAID, "BEHOLD, THE SMELL OF MY SON IS AS THE SMELL OF AN ABUNDANT FIELD, WHICH YEHOVAH HAS BLESSED. AND MAY GOD GIVE YOU OF THE DEW OF HEAVEN, AND THE FATNESS OF THE EARTH, AND THE ABUNDANCE OF CORN AND WINE. AND LET NATIONS SERVE YOU, AND PRINCES BOW DOWN TO YOU, AND BE YOU LORD OF YOUR BROTHER, AND THE SONS OF YOUR FATHER SHALL DO YOU REVERENCE; ACCURSED IS HE THAT CURSES YOU, AND BLESSED IS HE THAT BLESSES YOU.

GENESIS 27:15-29

AFTER JACOB AND REBECCA SUCCESSFULLY ARRANGED FOR ISAAC TO BLESS JACOB INSTEAD OF ESAU, ESAU WAS CONSUMED WITH ANGER. BECAUSE HIS BROTHER ESAU WAS VERY, VERY ANGRY, JACOB HAD TO RUN FAR AWAY FROM HIS HOME. ONE NIGHT, WHEN HE WAS SLEEPING UNDER THE STARS WITH A ROCK FOR A PILLOW, HE HAD AN AMAZING DREAM! HE SAW A HUGE, GIANT LADDER STRETCHING ALL THE WAY FROM EARTH UP TO HEAVEN. ANGELS WERE GOING UP AND DOWN IT. GOD WAS AT THE VERY TOP, AND HE MADE AN AMAZING PROMISE TO JACOB: "I AM WITH YOU. I WILL PROTECT YOU WHEREVER YOU GO, AND I WILL GIVE YOU THIS LAND." THIS SHOWS THAT EVEN WHEN JACOB WAS ALONE AND AFRAID, GOD WAS ALWAYS WATCHING OVER HIM.

Jacob's Ladder Dream



AND JACOB WENT FORTH FROM THE WELL OF THE OATH, AND DEPARTED INTO HARAN. AND CAME TO A CERTAIN PLACE AND SLEPT THERE, FOR THE SUN HAD GONE DOWN; AND HE TOOK ONE OF THE STONES OF THE PLACE, AND PUT IT AT HIS HEAD, AND LAY DOWN TO SLEEP IN THAT PLACE, AND DREAMED, AND BEHOLD A LADDER FIXED ON THE EARTH, WHOSE TOP REACHED TO HEAVEN, AND THE ANGELS OF YEHOVAH ASCENDED AND DESCENDED ON IT. AND YEHOVAH STOOD UPON IT, AND SAID, "I AM THE GOD OF YOUR FATHER ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, FEAR NOT, THE LAND ON WHICH YOU LIE, I WILL GIVE TO YOU, AND TO YOUR SEED. AND YOUR SEED SHALL BE AS THE SAND OF THE EARTH; AND IT SHALL SPREAD ABROAD TO THE SEA, AND THE SOUTH, AND THE NORTH, AND TO THE EAST; AND IN YOU AND IN YOUR SEED SHALL ALL THE TRIBES OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED. AND BEHOLD, I AM WITH YOU TO PROTECT YOU CONTINUALLY IN ALL THE WAYS WHERE YOU SHALL GO; AND I WILL BRING YOU BACK TO THIS LAND; FOR I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU, UNTIL I HAVE DONE ALL THAT I HAVE SAID TO YOU."

-GENESIS 28:10-15

Working for His Uncle and His Wives

JACOB WENT TO LIVE WITH HIS UNCLE LABAN. HE WORKED REALLY, REALLY HARD TO MARRY LABAN'S BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER, RACHEL, WHOM HE LOVED VERY MUCH. HE HAD TO WORK FOR SEVEN WHOLE YEARS! BUT ON HIS WEDDING NIGHT, HIS UNCLE TRICKED HIM AND GAVE HIM RACHEL'S OLDER SISTER, LEAH, INSTEAD! JACOB HAD TO WORK ANOTHER SEVEN YEARS TO ALSO MARRY RACHEL. JACOB LEARNED HOW IT FEELS TO BE TRICKED. OVER MANY YEARS, JACOB WORKED VERY HARD, AND GOD HELPED HIM GET LOTS OF ANIMALS AND A BIG FAMILY.



A New Name

WRESTLING WITH THE ANGEL

"I WILL NOT LET YOU GO UNLESS YOU BLESS ME"



THE ANGEL TOUCHED THE SOCKET OF JACOB'S HIP, PUTTING IT OUT OF JOINT. THIS WAS A SYMBOLIC ACT: GOD "CRIPPLED" JACOB'S NATURAL STRENGTH SO THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO LEAN ON GOD FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE.

JACOB REFUSES TO LET GO UNTIL HE IS BLESSED. THIS SHOWS A SHIFT IN HIS CHARACTER—HE IS FINALLY SEEKING GOD'S APPROVAL RATHER THAN JUST MATERIAL GAIN.

HIS OLD & NEW NAME

JACOB (Ya'akov):

"HEEL-CATCHER"/
"SUPPLANTER"

ISRAEL (Yisra'el):

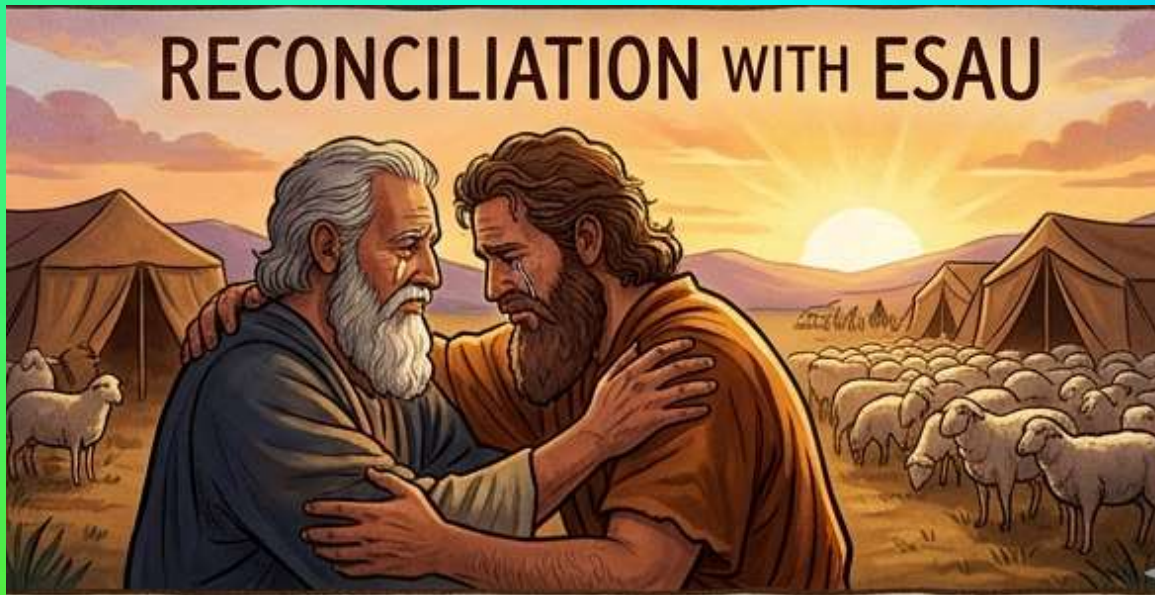
"STRIVES WITH GOD"/
"PRINCE WITH GOD"

AT THIS POINT IN THE STORY, JACOB IS RETURNING HOME AFTER 20 YEARS. HE IS ABOUT TO FACE HIS BROTHER, ESAU, WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY VOWED TO KILL HIM. JACOB IS TERRIFIED, CAUGHT BETWEEN A PAST HE CAN'T FIX AND A FUTURE HE CAN'T CONTROL. ON HIS WAY HOME, JACOB WRESTLED WITH AN ANGEL OF YEHOVAH ALL NIGHT UNTIL DAWN. THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE, JACOB RELIED ON HIS OWN WITS TO GET AHEAD—HE TRICKED HIS FATHER, BARGAINED WITH HIS BROTHER, AND OUTMANEUVERED HIS FATHER-IN-LAW. BY "WRESTLING WITH GOD" (OR HIS MESSENGER), JACOB WAS FINALLY FORCED TO REALIZE THAT HE COULDN'T "SCHEME" HIS WAY INTO GOD'S ULTIMATE BLESSING.

AND JACOB WAS LEFT ALONE; AND THERE WRESTLED A MAN WITH HIM UNTIL THE BREAKING OF THE DAY. AND WHEN HE SAW THAT HE PREVAILED NOT AGAINST HIM, HE TOUCHED THE HOLLOW OF HIS THIGH; AND THE HOLLOW OF JACOB'S THIGH WAS OUT OF JOINT, AS HE WRESTLED WITH HIM. AND HE SAID, "LET ME GO, FOR THE DAY BREAKS." AND HE SAID, "I WILL NOT LET YOU GO, UNLESS YOU BLESS ME." AND HE SAID UNTO HIM, "WHAT IS YOUR NAME?" AND HE SAID, "JACOB." AND HE SAID, "YOUR NAME SHALL BE CALLED NO MORE JACOB, BUT ISRAEL SHALL BE YOUR NAME; FOR YOU HAVE PREVAILED WITH YEHOVAH, AND SHALL BE MIGHTY WITH MEN."

GENESIS 32:24-28

The Power of Forgiveness



FINALLY, JACOB WAS GOING BACK TO MEET HIS BROTHER ESAU. HE WAS SO SCARED! HE SENT LOTS OF GIFTS AHEAD. BUT WHEN THEY FINALLY MET, SOMETHING WONDERFUL HAPPENED. ESAU RAN UP AND HUGGED JACOB! HE DIDN'T WANT TO HURT HIM; HE WAS JUST HAPPY TO SEE HIS BROTHER AGAIN. THIS IS A BEAUTIFUL EXAMPLE OF FORGIVENESS.

AND JACOB LIFTED UP HIS EYES, AND SAW ESAU HIS BROTHER COMING, AND 400 MEN WITH HIM... BUT HE RAN UP TO HIM AND BOWED HIMSELF TO THE GROUND SEVEN TIMES, UNTIL HE CAME NEAR TO HIS BROTHER. AND ESAU RAN ON TO MEET HIM, AND EMBRACED HIM, AND FELL ON HIS NECK, AND KISSED HIM, AND THEY BOTH WEPT.

-GENESIS 33:1-4

The Father of 12 Tribes

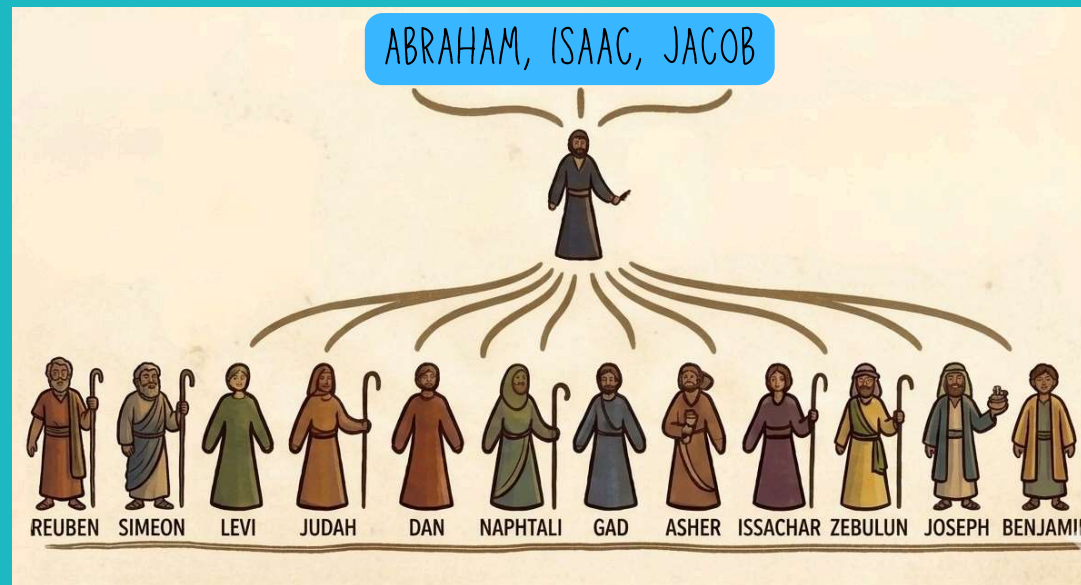
JACOB HAD 12 SONS, AND EACH BECAME A LEADER OF A TRIBE. TOGETHER, THEY ARE THE 12 TRIBES OF ISRAEL.

FROM THE FAMILY OF JACOB'S SON, JUDAH, THE MESSIAH, YESHUA, WOULD EVENTUALLY BE BORN!

THE SCEPTER SHALL NOT DEPART FROM JUDAH, NOR A LAWGIVER FROM BETWEEN HIS FEET, UNTIL SHILOH COME.."
-GENESIS 49:10



The Covenant Reaffirmed



SEEK YEHOVAH, AND HIS STRENGTH: SEEK HIS FACE EVERMORE. REMEMBER HIS MARVELOUS WORKS THAT HE HAS DONE; HIS WONDERS, AND THE JUDGMENTS OF HIS MOUTH; O YOU SEED OF ABRAHAM HIS SERVANT, YOU CHILDREN OF JACOB HIS CHOSEN. HE IS YEHOVAH OUR GOD: HIS JUDGMENTS ARE IN ALL THE EARTH. HE HAS REMEMBERED HIS COVENANT FOREVER, THE WORD WHICH HE COMMANDED TO A THOUSAND GENERATIONS. WHICH COVENANT HE MADE WITH ABRAHAM, AND HIS OATH UNTO ISAAC; AND CONFIRMED THE SAME UNTO JACOB FOR A LAW, AND TO ISRAEL FOR AN EVERLASTING COVENANT

PSALMS 105:4-10

The Loss and Reunion with Joseph

JACOB'S LATER YEARS ARE MARKED BY THE GRIEF OF LOSING HIS FAVORITE SON, JOSEPH, FOLLOWED BY A MIRACULOUS REUNION IN A FOREIGN LAND.

JACOB MOVES HIS ENTIRE FAMILY TO EGYPT DURING A FAMINE TO BE REUNITED WITH JOSEPH.

SCRIPTURE: GENESIS 37 (THE LOSS) AND GENESIS 46:1–7 (THE MOVE TO EGYPT)

Final Blessings & Death

IN HIS FINAL DAYS, JACOB BLESSES HIS SONS AND JOSEPH'S CHILDREN, LOOKING FORWARD TO THE FUTURE OF THE TWELVE TRIBES.

JACOB DIES AT AGE 147 AND IS BURIED IN THE CAVE OF MACHPELAH IN CANAAN.

SCRIPTURE: GENESIS 48–49

Learning Hard Lessons

LOVE & WORK

- JACOB WORKED FOR 7 YEARS TO MARRY RACHEL, BUT HE WAS TRICKED BY LABAN AND GIVEN LEAH INSTEAD! HE LEARNED HOW IT FELT TO BE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF A TRICK.

PERSISTENCE

- HE WORKED FOR ANOTHER 7 YEARS FOR RACHEL. OVER 20 YEARS, YEHOVAH BLESSED JACOB WITH A BIG FAMILY AND MANY ANIMALS BECAUSE OF HIS HARD WORK.

YEHOVAH'S BLESSING

- EVEN IN A FOREIGN LAND, YEHOVAH PROTECTED JACOB AND KEPT HIS PROMISE THAT HE MADE AT THE LADDER. JACOB WAS BECOMING A DIFFERENT MAN.

Why is Jacob Important?

HE IS THE FATHER OF A NATION: THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART! JACOB HAD 12 SONS. EACH OF THOSE SONS BECAME THE LEADER OF A HUGE, FAMILY GROUP CALLED A TRIBE. TOGETHER, THESE 12 GROUPS OF PEOPLE WERE CALLED THE 12 TRIBES OF ISRAEL (NAMED AFTER JACOB'S NEW NAME!). THIS WHOLE GROUP OF PEOPLE, THE ISRAELITES, BECAME GOD'S SPECIAL PEOPLE, CHOSEN TO SHOW EVERYONE WHAT GOD IS LIKE.

HIS NAME MEANS A LOT: BECAUSE GOD CHANGED HIS NAME, "ISRAEL" CAME TO REPRESENT ALL OF GOD'S SPECIAL PEOPLE, BOTH THEN AND NOW. SO, WHEN THEY HEAR ABOUT "ISRAEL" IN STORIES, THEY ARE HEARING ABOUT THE FAMILY JACOB STARTED!

HE IS AN EXAMPLE OF GOD'S LOVE: HIS STORY SHOWS US THAT GOD'S PLAN IS POWERFUL AND THAT GOD LOVES AND USES ALL PEOPLE. EVEN WHEN JACOB MADE MISTAKES, OR RAN AWAY, OR WAS TRICKED, GOD WAS WITH HIM, PROTECTING HIM, AND WORKING TO MAKE HIM A BETTER PERSON. IT TELLS US THAT GOD CAN USE US TOO, EVEN WHEN WE MAKE MISTAKES, IF WE LEARN TO FOLLOW HIM.

TO LEAD THE NATION THAT WOULD BEAR HIS NAME, JACOB HAD TO MOVE FROM A MAN WHO GRABBED HEELS TO A MAN WHO CLUNG TO GOD. HE WALKED AWAY FROM THE RIVER WITH A LIMP, BUT ALSO WITH A NEW PURPOSE.