

Jacob's Days Of Trouble

Sunday AM 02/27/22

Introduction:

The life of Jacob is a big part of Genesis. Toward the end of it, Jacob meets with Pharaoh in Egypt. **Genesis 47:8** *Pharaoh said to Jacob, "How old are you?" 9 And Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are one hundred and thirty years; few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage."* We might think of 130 years as a long time but Abraham lived 175 years (**Genesis 25**) and Isaac lived 180 years (**Genesis 35.28**). Jacob attributed his shorter life span to the difficult days he experienced.

I) Jacob's Troubles

A) His birth- being born a twin.

Genesis 25:21 *Now Isaac pleaded with the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD granted his plea, and Rebekah his wife conceived. 22 But the children struggled together within her; and she said, "If all is well, why am I like this?" So she went to inquire of the LORD. 23 And the LORD said to her: "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." 24 So when her days were fulfilled for her to give birth, indeed there were twins in her womb. 25 And the first came out red. He was like a hairy garment all over; so they called his name Esau.*

1. They were twins which can be good or bad.
2. At the very beginning we see their relationship inside the womb as they struggled against each other.
3. Jacob's name means "one who takes the heel, or supplanter.
4. They were very different.

Genesis 25:27 *So the boys grew. And Esau was a skillful*

hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was a mild man, dwelling in tents.

B) Their parents played favorites.

Genesis 25:28 *And Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.*

1. Should not be thought of as detesting or despising the other child but they loved their favorite more than the other.
2. Such creates a rivalry between siblings, trying to take advantage of one parent.

C) Esau sells his birthright for a bowl of stew.

Genesis 25:29 *Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary. 30 And Esau said to Jacob, "Please feed me with that same red stew, for I am weary." Therefore his name was called Edom. 31 But Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright as of this day." 32 And Esau said, "Look, I am about to die; so what is this birthright to me?" 33 Then Jacob said, "Swear to me as of this day." So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. 34 And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; then he ate and drank, arose, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.*

1. One can argue Jacob was not being very brotherly, but we also see how little Esau treasured his birthright.
2. After Esau got through eating, he despised his birthright.

D) Jacob Tricks Isaac for Esau's blessing. Genesis 27

1. Isaac instructs Esau to go out, find game, cook it, and bring it back to him.
2. Rebekah hears this.

Genesis 27:6 *So Rebekah spoke to Jacob her son, saying, "Indeed I heard your father speak to Esau your brother, saying, 7 'Bring me game and make savory food for me, that*

I may eat it and bless you in the presence of the LORD before my death.' 8 "Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to what I command you. 9 "Go now to the flock and bring me from there two choice kids of the goats, and I will make savory food from them for your father, such as he loves. 10 "Then you shall take it to your father, that he may eat it, and that he may bless you before his death."

3. Rebekah's plan works except for the next part.

Genesis 27:41 *So Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him, and Esau said in his heart, "The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then I will kill my brother Jacob."*

4. Jacob is forced to leave home.

E) Jacob Works for Rachel but Gets Leah

Genesis 29:16 *Now Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. 17 Leah's eyes were delicate, but Rachel was beautiful of form and appearance. 18 Now Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, "I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter." 19 And Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to another man. Stay with me." 20 So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed only a few days to him because of the love he had for her.*

Genesis 29:23 *Now it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her.*

1. Jacob works another seven years for Rachel but now has two wives.
2. Plus two handmaids, Bilhah and Zilpah.
3. This created a lot of strife between the two sisters/wives.

Genesis 29:30 *Then Jacob also went in to Rachel, and he*

also loved Rachel more than Leah. And he served with Laban still another seven years.

4. The sisters get into a competition with each other over having babies, even to the point of using their handmaids as surrogate mothers.

Genesis 29:32 So Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben; for she said, "The LORD has surely looked on my affliction. Now therefore, my husband will love me." 33 Then she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the LORD has heard that I am unloved, He has therefore given me this son also." And she called his name Simeon. 34 She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Now this time my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." Therefore his name was called Levi.

5. Rachel blames Jacob for not getting her pregnant.

Genesis 30:1 Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and said to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die!" 2 And Jacob's anger was aroused against Rachel, and he said, "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?"

6. To the point of bargaining over some mandrakes Reuben picks which Rachel wants.

Genesis 30:14 Now Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes." 15 But she said to her, "Is it a small matter that you have taken away my husband? Would you take away my son's mandrakes also?" And Rachel said, "Therefore he will lie with you tonight for your son's mandrakes." 16 When Jacob came out of the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, "You must come in to me, for I have surely hired you with my son's

mandrakes." And he lay with her that night.

F) Jacob's relationship with Laban

1. Laban deceives Jacob with Leah for Rachel.
2. As business partners neither one trusted the other.

Genesis 31:38 *"These twenty years I have been with you; your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried their young, and I have not eaten the rams of your flock. 39 "That which was torn by beasts I did not bring to you; I bore the loss of it. You required it from my hand, whether stolen by day or stolen by night. 40 "There I was! In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night, and my sleep departed from my eyes. 41 "Thus I have been in your house twenty years; I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times. 42 "Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God has seen my affliction and the labor of my hands, and rebuked you last night."*

G) Jacob's Sons

1. Dinah is raped in **Genesis 34**.
2. Simeon and Levi kill all the men of Shechem.

Genesis 34:30 *Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have troubled me by making me obnoxious among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites; and since I am few in number, they will gather themselves together against me and kill me. I shall be destroyed, my household and I." 31 But they said, "Should he treat our sister like a harlot?"*

3. They sell Joseph into slavery and then mislead Jacob.

Genesis 37:31 *So they took Joseph's tunic, killed a kid of*

the goats, and dipped the tunic in the blood. 32 Then they sent the tunic of many colors, and they brought it to their father and said, "We have found this. Do you know whether it is your son's tunic or not?" 33 And he recognized it and said, "It is my son's tunic. A wild beast has devoured him. Without doubt Joseph is torn to pieces." 34 Then Jacob tore his clothes, put sackcloth on his waist, and mourned for his son many days.

4. Imagine the years of mourning Jacob did for Joseph.

II) Lessons We Can Learn from Jacob's Days of Trouble.

A) A lot of problems originate in the home.

1. Parents playing favorites leads to resentment
2. Recognize the difference between children and the needs of each child.
3. Do not love one more than another.

B) The danger of deception

1. Eventually the truth comes out.

Numbers 32:23 "But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the LORD; and be sure your sin will find you out."

2. How did Jacob and Rebekah think their deception was going to end?

C) Marriage is a one-to-one relationship

1. This needs to be understood today with so many divorces and children growing up in unstable homes.
2. Many of the problem children in schools, in trouble with the law come from problem homes.

D) God can use the imperfect to do His will.

1. Through out the Bible we see God in His providence using man to accomplish His will.
2. We see this with Jacob.
 - a. Twelve tribes of Israel
 - b. Joseph bringing his family to Egypt
 - c. The beginning of the nation of Israel.

Conclusion:

You have days of trouble? You are not alone but see the good which can come about.