



Repentance Tabernacle Church

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From Jacob to Israel!

Lesson Text: Genesis 25-36

Focus Verses: Genesis 32:27-28 -²⁷ And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. ²⁸ And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

Truth About Covenant: God changed Jacob and called him to be the unlikely leader of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Genesis 25-36 shares the account of a long-running feud between two men, Jacob and Esau. The roots of their conflict are recorded in Genesis 25:21-26. God miraculously opened Rebekah womb, “the children struggled together within her (Genesis 25:22). Rebekah asked God for insight. He told her: *“Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger”* (Genesis 25:33).

Isaac and Rebekah’s favoritism intensified the brothers’ rivalry. Jacob stole Esau’s blessing. When Esau discovered his younger brother’s trickery, he was furious. His only comfort was the thought he would soon murder Jacob and reclaim what his crafty baby brother had stolen. Jacob was at war with himself, he could run from his brother, but he could not outrun his own character flaws. However, Jacob—the con man, deceiver, trickster, huckster, supplanter—was about to meet his match. His wily uncle Laban showed his nephew how it felt to be on the receiving end of those dirty tricks. Most importantly, Jacob learned that schemes and manipulation may seem to help you get ahead in the short term, but only God can give you blessings that truly satisfy.

God engaged Jacob in a divine wrestling match and it changed his life and aligned him with the covenant God had made with his father, Isaac, and his grandfather Abraham. God asked him: *“What is thy name?”* and he said: My name is Jacob. His honest response transformed history. “And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed” (Genesis 32:28).

When sibling relationships go south, things can get ugly in a hurry. Perhaps it is not surprising that the first recorded murder was between two brothers. Cain ended his brother Abel’s life in an apparent jealous rage when God accepted Abel and his sacrifice while rejecting Cain and his sacrifice. Rather than repenting, Cain surrendered to his darkest impulses. This account warns us that sin, such as jealousy and pride—when left unrepented—has disastrous consequences and ruins even the closest relationship.

When God promises something. He does not need our help to fulfill His word, especially when our idea of “help” includes unethical and immoral actions such as lying and deceit. He asks for our faith, but He doesn’t need us to speed Him up (like Abraham tried) or to trick and deceive (like Jacob tried). Part of walking by faith is trusting that God knows what He’s doing, even when we don’t, and that He will keep His word in His time. As we live in covenant with God, trust God. The one who made you a promise will keep His promise because He is our covenant-making, covenant-keeping God.

Jesus was the ultimate fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham that all the nations of the earth would be blessed through the patriarch (Genesis 22:18). We have the privilege of entering into covenant with Jesus through the blood He shed for us at Calvary (Hebrews 13:20). He graciously gives us a new name—His name—when we are baptized, and He empowers us with new life through His Holy Spirit.

Because of Jesus, our sin and accompanying shame are erased and replaced with hope for today and the promise of an even greater tomorrow. As we embrace and live out what God’s Word says about us, we will recognize we are sons and daughters of the King of kings—royal children who have power with God. We are no longer who we were; by God’s grace, we are living to be who our Creator created us to be.