

**Union United Methodist Church**  
Fall FOCUS Bible School, 2022  
FOCUS: Followers Of Christ Understanding Scripture  
Study: Book of Genesis

**Week 7: November 9, 2022**

**Abrahamic Covenants: Second Generation - Jacob & Esau**

This Week's Study: **Genesis chapters 26 through 30**

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## 1. Recap & Reminder

- **Overview of Genesis**

The table below gives a breakdown of the chapters of Genesis, with themes that we shall be exploring in this study. We shall cover one theme per week. Our next week's study is Genesis 25 through 30 for the week.

<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Theme</b>
1	4	Creation & The Fall, Original Sin
5	10	Adam through Noah: Judgement & New Covenant
11	14	Babel, A New Beginning in Abram
15	17	Abrahamic Covenants
18	20	Intercession & Judgement: Sodom & Gomorrah
21	25	Isaac - A Promise Fulfilled; Faithfulness Proven
<b>26</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>Abrahamic Covenants: Second Generation - Jacob &amp; Esau</b>
31	36	Jacob's Family; Reconciliation with Esau
37	41	Abrahamic Covenants: Third Generation - Jacob's Children
42	47	Joseph & Migration to Egypt
48	50	Israel in Egypt, Death of Jacob

Please refer to last five weeks' outline and lectures for more background and to catch up. You can find these on our website: <https://unionumcnc.com>

## 2. Genesis 25:19 to 30 Overview

In Genesis 24 we examined the story of how Isaac and Rebekah became man and wife. In this week's study we how the second generation after Abraham conducted their affairs even as they inherited God's covenant with Abraham and Sarah and sought to pass it on to their descendants.

- **Genesis 25:19-28 Birth of Jacob & Esau; Parental Favoritism**

Isaac and Rebekah had only two children: Jacob and Esau. The birth narrative of the two sons has many points of interest and lessons for us. So does the sibling rivalry between the brothers and how the parents dealt with that.

- **Rebekah's Bareness & Pregnancy**

Isaac married at age 40 - v20

Like Sarah before her, Rebekah was also barren.

It is interesting how Isaac reacted to this situation.

21 Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord granted his prayer, and his wife Rebekah conceived. NRSV

**"Isaac pleaded with יהוה on behalf of his wife, because she was barren; and יהוה responded to his plea, and his wife Rebekah conceived."**

Tanakh, Contemporary Torah, JPS, 2006 - sefaria.org

Interesting Rabbi Ibn Ezra commentary from Sefaria.com:

**"Isaac Entreated. It's meaning is that Isaac appeased God with his prayers. And the Lord let himself be entreated - he was appeased."**

- **Revelation about Esau & Jacob before birth**

Much to learn from Rebekah's reaction to pregnancy discomfort:

**22 The babies jostled each other within her, and she said, "Why is this happening to me?" So she went to inquire of the Lord.**

**23 The Lord said to her,**

**"Two nations are in your womb,  
and two peoples from within you will be separated;  
one people will be stronger than the other,  
and the older will serve the younger."**

How do we react to things we don't understand?

Brings to mind:

**"Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known. " Jeremiah 33:3 NRSV**

- **Parental Favoritism**

Isaac and Sarah had their favorites, and this created many problems down the line.

27The boys grew up, and Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the open country, while Jacob was content to stay at home among the tents. 28Isaac, who had a taste for wild game, loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob. NIV

- **Genesis 25:29-34 Esau Sells Birthright; Esau's Choices**

"29Once when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came in from the open country, famished. 30He said to Jacob, "Quick, let me have some of that red stew! I'm famished!" (That is why he was also called Edom.)

31Jacob replied, "First sell me your birthright."

32"Look, I am about to die," Esau said. "What good is the birthright to me?"

33But Jacob said, "Swear to me first." So he swore an oath to him, selling his birthright to Jacob.

34Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and some lentil stew. He ate and drank, and then got up and left.

- **Importance of Birthright**

Birthright meant that Esau had first place in the family pecking order. He didn't seem to value it or see value in it in his time of need.

**Who Values the Birthright?**

Jacob clearly knew and valued the birthright more than Esau.

"So Esau despised his birthright."

- **Consequences of Not Valuing Birthright**

**Note: this was a deal done with words between the brothers, but it was still valid!**

- **Genesis 26 Isaac's Challenges; Like Father, Like Son**

We see here an example of someone seeing God's blessing in Abraham's life and seeking to benefit from it.

- **Obedience to God**

In a time of famine, the Lord asked Isaac not to go to Egypt but to remain in Canaan. Isaac Obeyed.

2The Lord appeared to Isaac and said, **"Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land where I tell you to live. 3Stay in this land for a while, and I will be with you and will bless you.** For to you and your descendants I will give all these lands and will confirm the oath I swore to your father Abraham. 4I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, **5because Abraham obeyed me and did everything I required of him, keeping my commands, my decrees and my instructions."** 6So Isaac stayed in Gerar.

- **"She is my sister" - Fear**

Isaac emulated his father by calling his wife his sister to save his skin

- **Seedtime & Harvest - Even in Famine**

**12 Isaac planted crops in that land and the same year reaped a hundredfold, because the Lord blessed him. 13The man became rich, and his wealth continued to grow until he became very wealthy. NIV**

- **Avoiding Strife**

Like Abraham, Isaac did his best to avoid strife.

16Then Abimelek said to Isaac, **"Move away from us; you have become too powerful for us."**

17So Isaac moved away from there and encamped in the Valley of Gerar, where he settled.

- **Genesis 27: Isaac Transfers Covenant Blessing to Jacob**

The focus of this chapter is Abraham's test by God, and how he fared.

- **Isaac & Rebekah: Couple Discord - Favoritism Shows Up!**

1After these things **God tested Abraham**. He said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." 2He said, "**Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you.**"

- **Jacob's Deception: Aided & Abetted by Rebekah - v 5-17**

- **Dependence on Feelings: Isaac Deceived**

22Jacob went close to his father Isaac, who touched him and said, "The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau." 23He did not recognize him, for his hands were hairy like those of his brother Esau; so he proceeded to bless him. NIV

- **Isaac To Jacob: The Blessing**

Jacob passed on Abraham's blessings to Jacob through the words he spoke.

- **Genesis 27:27-29**

- **Genesis 28:3-4**

- **Esau: Lost Blessing, Pain, Fury - Genesis 27:41-45**

- **Seeks Blessings with Tears**

- **Situation Cannot be Reversed**

- **In Fury, Threatens to Kill Jacob**

- **Genesis 28: Jacob's Journey & Dream at Bethel**

- **Genesis 27:46 - 28:2 Rebekah Plots Jacob's Escape**

Again, Rebekah uses her wiles to get her way and protect Jacob:

27:46 Then Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am weary of my life because of the Hittite women. If Jacob marries one of the Hittite women such as these, one of the women of the land, what good will my life be to me?"

28:1 1 Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, "You shall not marry one of the Canaanite women. 2 Go at once to Paddan-aram to the house of Bethuel, your mother's father; and take as wife from there one of the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother.

- **In Dream, The Lord Affirms Covenant Blessing to Jacob**

12 And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. 13 And the Lord stood beside him and said, "**I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; 14 and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. 15 Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.**"

- **Bethel: Jacob Builds Altar In Response**

18 So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. **19 He called that place Bethel;** but the name of the city was Luz at the first. 20 Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "**If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, 21 so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God, 22 and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that you give me I will surely give one tenth to you.**"

- **Genesis 29:1-14 Jacob Meets Rachel, and Laban**

- **Jacob Meets Rachel**

- Rachel was the first-person Jacob met from his uncle Laban's household.
- Rachel was a shepherdess - seems quite an unusual occupation for a lady in those times.

"Rachel came with her father's sheep; for she kept them." -v9 NRSV

- **Laban Welcomes Jacob**

Laban welcomed Jacob with open arms.

13When Laban heard the news about his sister's son Jacob, he ran to meet him; he embraced him and kissed him, and brought him to his house.

Jacob told Laban all these things, 14and **Laban said to him, "Surely you are my bone and my flesh!"** And he stayed with him a month." NRSV

- **Genesis: 29:15-30 Jacob's Marriages**

- **Laban's First Deal with Jacob**

15Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my kinsman, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?"

- **Jacob & Rachel - Love at first sight?**

This seems to be the case.

16Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. 17Leah's eyes were lovely, and Rachel was graceful and beautiful. **18Jacob loved Rachel"** NRSV

- **7-Year Indentured Servitude**

18Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel." 19Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me." 20So

Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her.

- **Laban Agreed; Jacob served**

19Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me." 20So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her.

- **Jacob Deceived by Laban**

- **On Wedding Night, Leah Given Instead of Rachel**

21Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed." 22So Laban gathered together all the people of the place, and made a feast. 23But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her.

25When morning came, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?"

*Is this how we should treat our relations?*

*What do we learn about sowing and reaping from this passage?*

- **2<sup>nd</sup> Deal: Jacob Agrees to Serve for another 7 Years.**

26Laban said, "This is not done in our country—giving the younger before the firstborn. 27Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years." 28Jacob did so, and completed her week; then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel as a wife.

Do people need to read the fine print when they do deals with us?

Would a handshake do?

How should we treat others who trust us?



### 3. Daily Study Schedule & Questions

- **Day 1: Genesis 25:19-28 Birth of Jacob & Esau; Parental Favoritism**

As you read and study the verses, here are some suggestions of themes to reflect on - see the cross-references in other scripture:

- How Isaac dealt with the issue of his wife's bareness
- How Rebekah reacted to her discomfort during pregnancy and what the Lord revealed to her as a result.
- The importance of prayer in our family affairs
- The dangers of parental favoritism among our children

- **Day 2: Genesis 25:29-34 Esau Sells Birthright; Esau's Choices**

Suggested reflection themes:

- How Esau treated his birthright
- The consequences of Esau despising his birthright
- What is the equivalent for us Christians?
- Esau's choices and how they cost him - not only this passage but cross-reference Hebrews 12:14-17, his choice of wives (search for references to Esau's life in Genesis 25-30)

- **Day 3: Genesis 26 Isaac's Challenges; Like Father, Like Son**

Suggested reflection themes:

- How Isaac emulated Abraham
- Isaac's obedience and the result
- Isaac's attitude to strife
- Isaac's faithfulness to covenant requirements

- **Day 4: Genesis 27: Isaac Transfers Covenant Blessing to Jacob; Genesis 28: Jacob's Journey & Dream at Bethel**

Suggested reflection themes:

- What did Jacob and Esau fight over?
- What is the importance of the blessing?

- How was the blessing transferred to the next generation
  - How do you think Isaac learnt to do this?
  - Did God honor the blessing of Jacob? How?
- Day 5: **Genesis: 29:15-30 Jacob's Marriages**  
Suggested reflection themes
    - The relationship between Isaac and Laban and what that teaches us
    - Jacob's faithfulness
    - Did Jacob reap what he sowed? How?
    - Love in relationships and faithfulness.