

OT History for Juniors: Lesson 8, "JACOB"

**I. REVIEW**

**A. God promised to send the Seed of the woman, the Saviour. He promised that the Seed would come thru Abraham's son, Isaac.**

1. Last week we saw Abraham great faith in offering Isaac to God. *How did God save Isaac?*
2. But Isaac needed a wife, and *where* did he find one? Abraham sent his servant to get him one. *How did the servant know which woman to choose for Isaac?* He met her at the well. Her name was Rebekah. How did Isaac and Rebekah meet? Isaac stayed in Canaan and Rebekah came back.

**B. But Rebekah was not able to have any children so Isaac prayed to God for her.**

1. When she was pregnant she felt a strange struggling in her womb, and she asked the Lord what this meant. He told her that she had twins, two babies, "*The elder shall serve the younger.*"
2. And when the two boys were born, Esau came out first, but hanging on to his heel was Jacob; Jacob wanted to be born first because the firstborn has a special blessing.

**II. JACOB IN CANAAN**

**A. The blessing of the birthright.**

**1. In the OT, the firstborn son had a special position in the family, and he had a special blessing.**

- a. The blessing was *first* that he would have double the father's goods when the father died.
- b. The blessing was *second* that he would be lord or master over all his other siblings.
- c. The blessing was *third* that God would continue His covenant with him. What is the covenant? Friendship with God: God is our God, we are His people, He loves us, He forgives our sins, He gives us eternal life.
- d. But here God had said that the blessing of the birthright was not the firstborn's but it belonged to the younger son. Esau would not be blessed, Jacob would.

**2. Isaac and Rebekah knew what God had said, and so did Jacob and Esau.**

- a. Isaac liked Esau, his firstborn, b/c Esau was a hunter and brought him venison to eat.
- b. Rebekah liked Jacob, b/c he stayed at home, and b/c she believed God's blessing was for Jacob.
- c. Esau wanted to have the earthly benefits of the blessing but he did not care about God's covenant. *He showed this by marrying two Canaanite women who were a grief of mind* to Isaac and Rebekah.
- d. So, one day, Esau came in after hunting and had caught nothing. He was tired and very hungry and found Jacob cooking some stew. He asked Jacob for some stew, and Jacob said, "*Sell me your birthright.*" Esau sold him his birthright for a bowl of stew, so little did he care about it.

**B. The plot to get the blessing**

**1. Later, when Isaac was old and blind, he called his son Esau into his tent and asked him to go hunting, bring him some venison so that Isaac could bless him.**

- a. Isaac was wrong. He knew that God had promised the blessing to Jacob, not Esau, but he tried to hide his plans from everyone. *Did he think God did not know?*
- b. Esau was wrong too. He knew that the blessing was not for him; and he had also sold the birthright to Jacob, but he wanted the good things of this life and agreed to Isaac's plan.
- c. Rebekah heard what Isaac and Esau were planning. *What should she have done?* She should have stopped Isaac by talking to him. But instead she had her own plan. *She did not trust God.* Her plan was for Jacob to pretend to be Esau. She dressed Jacob in Esau's clothes, put skins upon Jacob to make him seem hairy.
- d. Jacob agreed to his mother's plan even though it was sin: he lied to his father many times (count them).

**2. While Esau was out hunting, Jacob went to Isaac and brought him some meat, pretending that it was venison that he had just hunted.**

- a. Isaac was surprised that his son had found, killed and cooked the deer so quickly, so he asked, "Who are you." Jacob replied, "I am Esau, your firstborn. Isaac asked him to come closer so he could feel him; he was confused, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau."
- b. Isaac then asked his son to bring the venison and he ate the food and smelled his son's clothes. They smelled like a hunter's clothes and Isaac pronounced the blessing. Read Gen. 27:27-29
- c. But as soon as Jacob had left the tent, Esau arrived. "Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me."

**3. Isaac was surprised, Who art thou? And Esau answered, "I am thy son, thy firstborn Esau."**

- a. Poor Isaac started shaking with fear and shock: *But who is the one who just brought me venison? I blessed him. Yea, and he shall be blessed.* God had stopped him blessing Esau. He made him bless Jacob instead.
- b. But Esau was furious because the blessing was lost forever. He asked Isaac to bless him, but Isaac said that there was no blessing for him. Esau planned to kill Jacob, but Rebekah heard him.

### III. JACOB IN HARAN

- A. **Jacob had tricked his brother and father, but now he must leave home. He went to Isaac again, and Isaac blessed him again, and sent him away to his mother's family in Haran to find a wife.**
- 1. On the way to Haran, he stopped in a place and slept with a rock for a pillow. While he slept he dreamed and saw a ladder on the earth with angels going up and down on it.**
    - a. God appeared to him and blessed him. Read Gen 28:13-15.
    - b. God promised to give Jacob the land of Canaan, to give him a large family which would spread west, east, north and south, and to send the promised Seed of the woman thru him.
    - c. He also promised to be with Jacob and to bring him back. He needed to hear that!
  - 2. When he arrived in Haran, he sat down at a well, and saw a beautiful young woman.**
    - a. Her name was Rachel and she was the daughter of his uncle Laban, his mother's brother.
    - b. When he saw her, he fell in love, and she brought him home to meet her family.
    - c. Jacob stayed in his uncle's house for a month, and after a month Laban asked him what his pay should be for working on the farm. Jacob's answer was: *I will work for 7 years for Rachel.*
  - 3. But Laban knew how to play tricks too. When the time came for Jacob's wedding to Rachel, Laban played an evil trick on him.**
    - a. The wedding happened at evening and the bride wore a veil, and the new husband and wife slept together in the tent, but when Jacob woke up the next morning he was married to Leah!
    - b. Jacob was very angry, but *what was his uncle's excuse?* Jacob agreed to work for another 7 years for Rachel. In total he had work 14 years on Laban's farm without pay.
    - c. It was wrong for Laban to trick Jacob (just as it had been wrong for Jacob to trick Isaac) but Jacob made it worse by marrying two wives.
    - d. Having two wives made life very difficult for Jacob. The two sisters were very jealous of one another. Leah gave Jacob four sons (**Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah**); but Rachel could not have any children, so she gave Jacob her servant girl (Bilhah) and she gave Jacob two more sons (**Dan, Naphtali**), then Leah gave Jacob her servant girl (Zilpah) gave Jacob two more sons (**Gad, Asher**); then Leah gave Jacob two more sons and a daughter (**Issachar, Zebulun, Dinah**), and finally, Rachel was able to have a son, called **Joseph** (later she gave him **Benjamin**). (LEARN THE TWELVE SONS IN ORDER).
- B. **Laban tricked Jacob in his wives: now he had 2 wives, 2 servant girls, 11 boys and 1 girl, but no money, because he had worked for free for fourteen years.**
- 1. Jacob wanted to leave but Laban wanted to keep him on the farm, so he offered him pay.**
    - a. This time, Jacob made a strange request: *"My wages shall be all the spotted and speckled cattle which are born from this day."* Laban agreed and removed all the spotted and speckled cattle from his flock. *Why did he do that?*
    - b. But God was against greedy Laban and for his servant Jacob, so he caused the flocks of Laban to breed many spotted and speckled cattle, so Jacob was able to keep them. So, Laban changed the bargain to a diff. kind of cattle. But it did not matter: God always caused the cattle to breed in a way that helped Jacob. Laban changed the bargain 10 times and at the end, all of Laban's cattle belonged to Jacob. Laban was angry with Jacob, and God told him it was time to leave.
  - 2. After 20 years Canaan is rich with cattle (Laban's cattle) and a large family, but he waits until Laban is away before he leaves.**
    - a. Laban chases after Jacob. He wants to take him back and make him his slave, but God appears to Laban to warn him not to harm Jacob.
    - b. But Jacob still must meet his brother Esau. What will Esau be like after 20 years?
    - c. Jacob sent messengers to Esau to tell him that his brother was coming. They came back and said, Esau is coming to meet you with four hundred men. Jacob was frightened and he split his family into two groups. If Esau attacks one, the other will be safe, he thinks. But what was God's promise?
  - 3. Jacob prays to God all night, and a man appears to him, and he wrestles with him all night.**
    - a. But that man was God, and Jacob wrestled with God. He said to God that he would not let him go until he blessed him.
    - b. Jacob had learned that the blessing does not come through tricks but through faith in God's promises. In wrestling with God in prayer he learned this and God changed his name from Jacob to Israel.
    - c. And as he meets Esau that morning, Esau is not angry with him, and does not kill him. Instead Esau and Jacob hug and Jacob lives in the land of Canaan with his family, but in Canaan, Rachel dies giving birth to Benjamin. *But in Canaan there will be even more trouble in his family.*