

Character Study: Jacob

Part 1 – Jacob’s Dream

Genesis 25-28

What’s happening?

- Jacob was the second son of Isaac and Rebekah. He had a twin brother, named Esau, with whom he made a deal to get his birthright. Through trickery, he even received a blessing Isaac meant for Esau. Despite the lack of faith, God’s hand was working during Jacob’s early years to set the stage for the role he would have among God’s chosen people. (25:21-27:29) (Review details from our “Isaac” study, Part 2 and 3.)
- Because of the growing family issues, and Esau’s desire to kill Jacob in particular, Jacob’s mother advised him to go stay at her brother’s house in Haran. (27:41-28:4)
- On his journey, Jacob stopped for a night of rest. Using a stone as a pillow, Jacob fell asleep. He had a dream of a ladder that reached up to heaven on which angels went up and came down. Jacob saw the Lord at the top, who confirmed to him that the covenant made with Abraham would continue to be fulfilled through him now. (28:10-15)
- Jacob awoke and was amazed that he was in God’s presence. He named that place “Bethel,” which means “this is the house of God.” He built a memorial and vowed to tithe of all God would give him. (28:16-22)

What’s God doing?

> Through Jacob’s schemes, he brought much pain on himself and his family. Yet God was graceful as He moved forward in His plan to work through Jacob. God promised to be with Jacob and protect him wherever he went, showing the commitment He has to His people.

What’s to learn?

→ God had chosen to work through an unlikely person. Jacob was a liar and deceiver, and even bargained with God (28:20-21). Yet God’s blessing on him is a picture of the same unmerited grace He shows us.

→ God’s presence resulted in worship from Jacob. His promises to protect and provide for Jacob impacted him as well. Do you realize that God has promised the same to you? This includes His continual presence (Heb. 13:5)! Jacob’s worship was focused on obedience, giving of offerings, and even setting up a memorial to remember God’s goodness. How has God’s presence, protection, and provision resulted in worship from you?