

## **GENESIS: Where Grace Begins**

### **The Covenant with Jacob – Genesis 28**

#### **Aftermath of the great deception:**

*41 Now Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him, and Esau said to himself, “The days of mourning for my father are approaching; then I will kill my brother Jacob.”*

**Genesis 27:41**

#### **Rebekah’s (scheming) response:**

*42 But the words of Esau her older son were told to Rebekah. So she sent and called Jacob her younger son and said to him, “Behold, your brother Esau comforts himself about you by planning to kill you. <sup>43</sup> Now therefore, my son, obey my voice. Arise, flee to Laban my brother in Haran <sup>44</sup> and stay with him a while, until your brother’s fury turns away— <sup>45</sup> until your brother’s anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him. Then I will send and bring you from there. Why should I be bereft of you both in one day?”*

*46 Then Rebekah said to Isaac, “I loathe my life because of the Hittite women. If Jacob marries one of the Hittite women like these, one of the women of the land, what good will my life be to me?”*

**Genesis 27:42-46**

#### **Note a few things:**

1. Rebekah is still \_\_\_\_\_ ...
2. Esau is still \_\_\_\_\_ ...
3. Jacob isn’t yet \_\_\_\_\_ ...
4. Isaac still isn’t \_\_\_\_\_ ...

#### **Isaac and the blessing:**

*28 Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him and directed him, “You must not take a wife from the Canaanite women. <sup>2</sup> Arise, go to Paddan-aram to the house of Bethuel your mother’s father, and take as your wife from there one of the daughters of Laban your mother’s brother. <sup>3</sup> God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may become a company of peoples. <sup>4</sup> May he give the blessing of Abraham to you and to your offspring with you, that you may take possession of the land of your sojournings that God gave to Abraham!” <sup>5</sup> Thus Isaac sent Jacob away. And he went to Paddan-aram, to Laban, the son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob’s and Esau’s mother.*

**Genesis 28:1-5**

Isaac has finally come around to what God had said long before: The blessing – by God’s will – belongs to \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ Jacob received the blessing was not His will, however (and both Rebekah and Jacob would pay a steep price for their deceptions).

**The lesson** – You can’t reach a God-honoring \_\_\_\_\_ through sinful \_\_\_\_\_.

#### **Esau - too little, too late:**

*6 Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Paddan-aram to take a wife from there, and that as he blessed him he directed him, “You must not take a wife from the Canaanite women,” <sup>7</sup> and that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and gone to Paddan-aram. <sup>8</sup> So when Esau saw that the Canaanite women did not please Isaac his father, <sup>9</sup> Esau went to Ishmael and took as his wife, besides the wives he had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham’s son, the sister of Nebaioth.*

**Genesis 28:6-9**

Esau never did connect the dots. The one who never valued spiritual things – God’s blessing or God’s Covenant – now thought that he might regain his father’s blessing by imitating Jacob.

He never seemed to understand what God was really about.

**The lesson:** You can't \_\_\_\_\_ your way back into \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Jacob's Covenant moment:**

<sup>10</sup> Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. <sup>11</sup> He reached a certain place and spent the night there because the sun had set. He took one of the stones from the place, put it there at his head, and lay down in that place.

<sup>12</sup> And he dreamed: A stairway was set on the ground with its top reaching the sky, and God's angels were going up and down on it. <sup>13</sup> The Lord was standing there beside him, saying, "I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your offspring the land on which you are lying. <sup>14</sup> Your offspring will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out toward the west, the east, the north, and the south. All the peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. <sup>15</sup> Look, I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go. I will bring you back to this land, for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

<sup>16</sup> When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it." <sup>17</sup> He was afraid and said, "What an awesome place this is! This is none other than the house of God. This is the gate of heaven."

<sup>18</sup> Early in the morning Jacob took the stone that was near his head and set it up as a marker. He poured oil on top of it <sup>19</sup> and named the place Bethel, though previously the city was named Luz.

<sup>20</sup> Then Jacob made a vow: "If God will be with me and watch over me during this journey I'm making, if he provides me with food to eat and clothing to wear, <sup>21</sup> and if I return safely to my father's family, then the Lord will be my God. <sup>22</sup> This stone that I have set up as a marker will be God's house, and I will give to you a tenth of all that you give me."

### **Genesis 28:10-22**

Jacob lies down exhausted and in desperate solitude on a stone pillow as he flees his past and runs towards a rocky future. Look at what has been lost: family, security, stability – and for what?

Then, he meets God in a dream ...

**The lesson:** Our covenant with God – like Jacob's and like Abraham's before him – is based solely on God's \_\_\_\_\_.

### **What happened at Bethel:**

1) Jacob encounters the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ God.

He is both \_\_\_\_\_ us ...

*Scripture often speaks of God as "exalted" (Ps. 57:5; 97:9). He dwells "in heaven above" (Deut. 4:39; cf. Eccl. 5:2), even "above the heavens" (Ps. 8:1; 57:5). He is "enthroned on high" (Ps. 113:5); indeed, he is himself the "most high" (Ps. 97:9)*

*John Frame writes:*

*"... to say that God is "high" is not primarily to speak of his presence in any of those places. It is to speak of why he has the right to dwell in such places. They are his thrones, and he sits on them because he is the king. So if we choose to use the term transcendence to refer to God, we should use it to refer to his lordship, to his powers and rights as the king of everything he has made.*

*These lordship rights and powers are his control and his authority (see John Frame, [The Doctrine of God](#)).*

*... we can define transcendence as God's lordship over his world with particular reference to his royal prerogatives of control and authority. So understood, God's transcendence does not imply that he is hidden from people; quite the contrary. Indeed, since his transcendence governs all the events of creation and his authority governs all his creatures, he is certainly the most visible being in the universe. As Paul says, his revelation is clear (Rom. 1:20).*

And He is \_\_\_\_\_ us ...

Frame:

"God's transcendence is a way of referring to his lordship over the world, but lordship does not confine God to a sphere beyond our knowledge. Indeed, it often refers to the way he rules the world of our history and experience. He controls the events of nature and history, including the course of our salvation from sin. And he expresses his authority by proclaiming to us his commands.

Indeed, God's lordship is his covenant relation to the world he has made, particularly to the persons in it. It is not just a relationship of control and authority, but also of presence with his covenant partners. The heart of the covenant is a relationship of intimacy. The chief promise of the covenant is the Lord's word, "I will be with you" (Gen. 21:22; 26:28; 28:15; 28:20; 31:3, 5; 39:3-4; Exod. 3:11-12; Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:23)."

2) The Abrahamic Covenant is now \_\_\_\_\_ covenant.

His faith is now made \_\_\_\_\_ and not \_\_\_\_\_. The unconditional personal and national promises first made to Abraham were now made to Jacob by the Lord himself.

3) A rogue and a renegade becomes a \_\_\_\_\_ and a \_\_\_\_\_.

God had become the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and now the God of Jacob.

"Before this experience Jacob was a fugitive from the results of his sin, a troubled son in search of his place in life, a shrewd shepherd setting out to find a wife. After this encounter, however, he was a partner with God as a recipient of his covenant promises and a true worshiper. The transformation was due to God's intrusion into the course of his life." (Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing*)

4) This event established the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jacob's faith. (Though his faith is still \_\_\_\_\_)

Do I have a "foundation" for my faith in God?

Jacob's faith began with an \_\_\_\_\_ that included a \_\_\_\_\_ ...

Have I had an encounter?

Have I received a promise?

#### **And look at what God included in the promise:**

- You are desolate and alone – but I am always \_\_\_\_\_.
- You have left family and father – but I am your \_\_\_\_\_.
- You have no 'place' – but I will give you a \_\_\_\_\_.
- You have no wife – but I will make your \_\_\_\_\_ a blessing.
- You are fearful and afraid, running for your life – but I will \_\_\_\_\_.
- You don't know what the future holds – but I do, and I will \_\_\_\_\_ what I am starting.

**And it is all based on \_\_\_\_\_!**