

Wednesday, April 29, 2020

QUESTION #6a – Questions About Jacob – Part One

Gen 25- Gen 34

I am confused about why God favors Jacob. Jacob seems a bit underhanded at times:

--Gen 25: 30-35: Shouldn't Jacob have given Esau soup for nothing if he was hungry? After all they were bothers, but even if they were not, it seems like a pretty unfair proposal, soup for his birthright....

--Gen 27: 18-29: Jacob lied to his father 4 times to steal the blessing (if you count the animal skin on his hands as a lie). No matter it was his mother's idea – he still lied and stole.

--Gen 28:13-15: Right after those performances, God gives Jacob the inheritance of all he promised Abraham. WHY???

--THEN, Gen 30: 31-43 & 1-43 Jacob and Laban. They both seem to accuse the other of cheating. Jacob just appears more clever...The deal with the spotted cattle (30:32-42) does not seem quite right... neither really appears innocent in all this???? But God STILL seems to favor Jacob --

--AND THEN, Gen 34: Seems like Levi and Simeon went back on the deal they made with Hamor and killed his whole family , and Jacob's only concern about this (34:30) was that it made him look bad and that he might be a target himself as a result. He did not seem the least bit concerned that Levi and Simeon broke the bargain and murdered everyone. BUT EVEN SO, Jacob is blessed again in 35:10.

Gen 32: 24-32: What is the meaning of the wrestling match? Pastor Bloxton says Jacob's opponent is pre-incarnate Jesus.... What is the contest for? Why does Jacob end up blessed (32:28-30)- AGAIN??

JACOB – Background

- Son of Isaac and twin brother of Esau – Genesis 25:24-26
- Name means: *one that supplants, undermines*

- “Supplant” means = to trip up the heels; to remove or displace by strategy; to displace and take the place of
- OR – another word for “supplanter” would be *DECEIVER*
- Grandson of Abraham

PART ONE:

--Gen 25: 30-35: Shouldn't Jacob have given Esau soup for nothing if he was hungry? After all they were bothers, but even if they were not, it seems like a pretty unfair proposal, soup for his birthright....

ANSWER:

- Sure – it would have been the RIGHT, or *brotherly*, thing to do but Jacob being Jacob (the deceiver, the supplanter) saw an opportunity for selfish gain.
- Esau, being the oldest, possessed the birthright.
 - BIRTHRIGHT:
 - Jewish custom that granted special privileges and advantages (a place of honor) to the firstborn son.
 - They got a bigger portion of their inheritance.
 - Eventually, the first in line to the throne went to the firstborn (a practice that continues today in modern monarchies).
 - Even the title “first born” was one of honor.
- It was definitely an unfair as far as Esau would be concerned, but there is a couple of lessons:
 - When the flesh is involved, logic and morality usually are not considered.
 - There are consequences for making poor decisions.
 - Esau DID NOT have to sell his birthright for a bowl of soup
 - Jacob simply made the proposal
 - But – Esau made a long-term decision based on a moment's situation

PART TWO:

--Gen 27: 18-29: Jacob lied to his father 4 times to steal the blessing (if you count the animal skin on his hands as a lie). No matter it was his mother's idea – he still lied and stole.

--Gen 28:13-15: Right after those performances, God gives Jacob the inheritance of all he promised Abraham. WHY???

ANSWER:

- Jacob lying four times:
 1. v. 18-19
 2. v. 20
 3. v. 21
 4. v. 24
- Yes – it was a plan schemed by his mother, Rebekah
- The Abrahamic Covenant – Genesis 12:1-3
- Any promises or blessings promised to Abraham, would be passed down through the firstborn son – *THE BIRTHRIGHT*.
- REASONS WHY JACOB RECEIVED THE PROMISE:
 - God placed high value on vows & covenants.
 - Jacob was the legal possessor of the birth right (Esau willingly gave – or sold – it.)
 - He may have gotten it deceitfully, but Esau did not have to sell it.

Even though Jacob was a deceiver, the tradition of vows, covenants and blessings were taken very serious and highly upheld in Jewish custom.

PROOF: Genesis 27:30-35

PART THREE

--THEN, Gen 30: 31-43 & 1-43 Jacob and Laban. They both seem to accuse the other of cheating. Jacob just appears more clever...The deal with the spotted cattle (30:32-42) does not seem quite right... neither really appears innocent in all this???? But God STILL seems to favor Jacob --

✚ **ANSWER:**

- The story of Jacob and Laban is a classic case of Jacob getting a taste of his own medicine.
- It may even be God trying to show Jacob something about his character to help him with it.
- Jacob obviously does not get the message.
- Genesis 31:7,41 – Jacob is upset with Laban for changing his wages ten times.
 - Jacob didn't like being deceived!
- **THE SPOTTED CATTLE:**
 - 30:31-34
 - Jacob makes a deal he would only take the spotted, or mixed-colored, cattle
 - Laban would keep all of the better cattle
 - v. 41-43 – The spotted cattle started producing spotted cattle which started producing spotless and stronger cattle.
 - Jacob started keeping the stronger offspring for himself
- With Jacob and Laban – it is a “*battle of the deceivers*”.

PART FOUR:

--AND THEN, Gen 34: Seems like Levi and Simeon went back on the deal they made with Hamor and killed his whole family , and Jacob's only concern about this (34:30) was that it made him look bad and that he might be a target himself as a result. He did not seem the least bit concerned that Levi and Simeon broke the bargain and murdered everyone. BUT EVEN SO, Jacob is blessed again in 35:10.

ANSWER:

- Genesis 34 – the story of Shechem defiling one of Jacob's daughters – Dinah.
- v. 13 – Technically Simeon and Levi didn't go back on their deal – their plan all along was to avenge the defilement of their sister (Dinah).
 - IMPORTANT VERSES:
 - v. 7
 - v. 27
- REGARDING JACOB NOT BEING CONCERNED ABOUT IT:
 - Two things about a deceiver:
 - ✓ It is always “all about them”.
 - ✓ They do not like confrontation.
 - This deal with Hamor and Shechem ruined Jacob's “peace and quiet”
 - Deceivers do not like to be inconvenienced

CLOSING:

- With each part of these accounts, the question remains as to why God would still bless and multiply “Jacob the deceiver”.
 - God promised to make of Abraham a great nation.
 - That promise could have been fulfilled through Esau, being the firstborn son of Isaac.
 - But Esau gave up his promised birthright to Jacob.

- Abraham promised the blessing to Jacob – yes, through the deception of Jacob – but a promise in Jewish custom could not be gone back on.
- God was still going to fulfil his promise, even though Jacob was deceptive and manipulative.

SOME GOOD PRACTICAL LESSONS FROM THE STORY OF JACOB:

- ❖ It reveals more of God's _____ than Jacob's.
- ❖ God was still going to _____ His _____.
- ❖ God will fulfill His _____, _____, and promise through _____ and _____ He chooses.

- **Next week:** we will look at the past part of the question regarding the wrestling match between the angel and Jacob in Genesis 32.