

Genesis 28

Read Genesis 28:1-5: Holiness is being unwilling to compromise the things that you have dedicated to God. Everything in our life will one day be destroyed; except what has been dedicated to God. Isaac realized that the future of his family tree now rested in Jacob's decisions. He passes on Abraham's blessing to Jacob. It is a very sobering thought to realize that as your children mature, your hand is coming off the wheel. Whatever you have set into motion is all that you can do. It is ultimately in the hands of the Holy Spirit. The power of prayer becomes more apparent the older and weaker that you become. We all have a legacy on earth that tells the story of our commitment to God. We may feel like our children either have amplified our life and blessings with God...or they are living in a more diminished spiritual life. We are not responsible for any results; just efforts and prayers. Our most-important connection with the future is how we walk with God now. What Abraham had with God was special. So much so, that God repeatedly refers to the cause behind Israel's blessings much later in time.

I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” (Genesis 12)

Without a special son, this blessing could not continue. Likewise, Isaac would pass this on to his son. Throughout the Bible the son chosen to carry the main blessing varied, and was often not the expected one. We cannot see all the reasons for God's emphasis on peculiar things; but God sees around the corner.

The Muslims claim that they have the rights given to Abraham, since the Arabs are also descendants of Abraham. That is why God is very specific that all of his promises to Abraham went to Isaac. Ishmael was another son, by his wife's handmaid who was blessed, but sent away without inheritance. Abraham had a child with Hagar as surrogate (because of Sarah's infertility), his wife's Egyptian handmaid.

¹⁵ Then God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶ And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her.” ¹⁷ Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, “Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall

Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" 18 And Abraham said to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!" 19 Then God said: "No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him. 20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. 21 But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year." 22 Then He finished talking with him, and God went up from Abraham. (Genesis 17)

In addition, Abraham re-married (to Keturah) after Sarah died. They had sons including: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah. These became the Saudi Arabians. These sons did not inherit Abraham's blessings from God either.

Abraham again took a wife, and her name was Keturah. 2 And she bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. 3 Jokshan begot Sheba and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim. 4 And the sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abidah, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah. 5 And Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac. 6 But Abraham gave gifts to the sons of the concubines which Abraham had; and while he was still living he sent them eastward, away from Isaac his son, to the country of the east. (Genesis 25)

Next, this inheritance passed from Isaac to his son Jacob; not Esau. Jacobs family were Hebrews, and Esau's family were hateful unbelieving Edomites. This is why the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob can only be the God of the Jews. There can be no confusion.

Genesis 27:28-29: "May God give you of the dew of heaven and of the fatness of the earth and plenty of grain and wine. Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, and blessed be everyone who blesses you!"

Moreover He said, "I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God. (Exodus 3)

Esau's descendants have all died or assimilated.

Today, the true ownership of Israel is being challenged. God gave it to Abraham's descendants many years ago as a perpetually owned property. The Muslims also try to say that the God of Abraham was Allah. It is not.

Now the LORD had said to Abram: “Get out of your country, From your family And from your father’s house, To a land that I will show you. ²I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” (Genesis 12)

God actually gave the Hebrews an area much bigger than the current Israel national boundary.

On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: “To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates— (Genesis 15:18)



When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. ²And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly.” ³Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying: ⁴“As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. ⁸Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger,

all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God
(Genesis 17)

Isaac understands that the future of a spiritual nation is at stake here. Esau was entertaining and a source of parental bragging; but he was not right with God. Isaac knows that marrying a local idolatrous woman would ruin the faith legacy on earth. There are times when I give myself too much latitude for my behavior, but I am reminded of how this will play out with my family.

Isaac's extended relatives were not perfect either, but they were at least *warm* towards the real God. Isaac tells Jacob to find a wife amongst his cousins far away in Padan Aram. Abraham's original faith journey must have been impactful on his formerly idolatrous relatives. Somehow, they came to some level of belief in God. Abram originally left Ur from an idolatrous family on his faith journey to Israel. Surely his passing through Padan Aram in his faith quest affected his cousins. Now those seeds that were sown will benefit his own grandson.



And Joshua said to all the people, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘Your fathers, including Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of the River in old times; and they served other gods. (Joshua 24)

Genesis 24:50: "Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, 'The thing has come from the Lord; we cannot speak to you bad or good."

What is in a Blessing?

Isaac sent away Jacob with a blessing. Jacob experienced some hardships as he lived in that *blessing*. Aren't blessings supposed to be times of joy? Unfortunately, mere information is not the only requirement to transform a man to a better state of

living. Jacob means *heel catcher* (he knew how to get what he wanted by hook or by crook). We can convince ourselves that good intentions justify questionable methods. That path will eventually lead you away from God's grace; and will bring the anxiety of needing to *make it happen* ourselves. God lets us experience the same treatment that we are known for to see ourselves more clearly. Jacob's father-in-law, Laban, was a double-dealing deceiver. He took advantage of Jacob's predicament. Laban concocted a plan to make Jacob marry both of his daughters. That produced all kinds of animosity and family infighting.

Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and said to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die!"² And Jacob's anger was aroused against Rachel, and he said, "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?" (Genesis 30)

Laban changed the deal many times to his own advantage, but God helped Jacob make gains.

These twenty years I have been with you; your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried their young, and I have not eaten the rams of your flock.³⁹ That which was torn by beasts I did not bring to you; I bore the loss of it. You required it from my hand, whether stolen by day or stolen by night.⁴⁰ There I was! In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night, and my sleep departed from my eyes.⁴¹ Thus I have been in your house twenty years; I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times.⁴² Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God has seen my affliction and the labor of my hands, and rebuked you last night." (Genesis 31)

In the end, Jacob's own sons deceived him, as they mistreated Joseph. Jacob's life was not that fulfilling. He saw a lot of his own *sown seeds* come back to him in other ways. Jacob is an example of the average believer. We have a lot of *this world in us*. We might be forgiven, but our choices can put us on a painful path.

And Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are one hundred and thirty years; few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage."¹⁰ So Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh. (Genesis 47)

They say that we can either pray or worry. My dad had a coffee cup that said worrying about won't help. We can be blessed and live anxiously or more freely. Here are the top 11 anxiety triggers:

- Health issues
- Medications
- Caffeine
- Skipping meals
- Negative thinking
- Financial concerns
- Parties and social events
- Conflict
- Stress
 - Sleep deprivation
 - Alcohol
 - Skipping meals, etc..
- Public events or performances, and
- Personal triggers, etc..

When I have a good prayer time in the morning, everything else works out. When I shortchange my quiet time things get jumbled.

Read Genesis 28:6-9: Esau saw that he had come to disfavor with his parents over his loose morals. He tried to do a reasonably-moral thing to shift his reputation as a stand-up kind of guy. Like Jacob, he too married into his own family clan. Unfortunately, he missed the whole point. There is nothing righteous about marrying your second cousin. The issue was marrying *a believer* to produce holy seed. Believers should never marry unbelievers. The beauty wears off and a lifetime of squabbling and disappointment will follow. This reminds me a little of how formal religion works. “Show me that you are *flying right* to be accepted here”.

Just like Cain, Esau made up his own solutions. Unfortunately, they were based on logic, not faith in God. Window dressing does not help.

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.
(Hebrews 11:6)

Read Genesis 28: 10-22: This is the famous *stairway to heaven* account. It is important to note that Jacob could not climb this ladder. The angels had to come down. Pyramids and Ziggurats were all built to try to get men up to the heavenly places.

This is where God passes the blessing from Abraham to Isaac to Jacob. He is called the God of the Jews. This again is where God uses Abraham and now Jacob to create a legacy on earth.