



A Summary of the Old Testament

within the word

Lesson Three | Isaac & Jacob

Last week, we looked at the patriarch, Abraham.

God called him and gave him some amazing promises. Abraham was a man who loved and obeyed God. This week, we will look at his son Isaac and grandson, Jacob. Often in the Bible, we see all three are mentioned together; *“the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.”*

Day One

1. In Genesis 17:19-21, we see God was about to answer the longtime prayer of Abraham and Sarah. God promised them a son. God even gave them a name for this son, Isaac.

Did you notice the details of this promise?
What specifically did God promise to do through Isaac?

2. Next, we see Abraham received a visit from three strangers. Abraham was a very hospitable man, as were many during this period. Believers are encouraged to show hospitality as well.

According to Hebrews 13:2, what is the possible benefit for showing hospitality?

3. Genesis 21 tells the story of Isaac’s birth. Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90 when Isaac was born.

Look up the name Isaac to find its meaning.

4. Who would have thought this 100-year-old man and his 90-year old wife would not only conceive and give birth to a son, but live to raise him to manhood?

What big problem are you facing that seems impossible?
What have you been praying about so long that you might be growing weary?

Our God excels in the impossible.

5. Last week, we looked at Genesis 22, God calling Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac. However, we looked at it from Abraham’s perspective.

Let’s consider Isaac this week. Isaac was old enough to go on a three-day journey with his father. He was old enough to carry the wood up the mountain for the burnt offering. We get a bit of an insight into what he was thinking when we read Genesis 22:7.

What question did he pose to his father?

6. Abraham's answer might suffice for the walk up the mountain. However, when they came to the place and Abraham built an altar and bound Isaac hands and feet.

What do you think he was thinking then?

We could suppose all kinds of things but there is nothing recorded in God's word to imply Isaac was anything other than a willing sacrifice.

7. As we mentioned last week, Isaac's mother, Sarah had died and was buried near Mamre. Abraham sent a servant to find a wife for Isaac, from among his own people. This would require a long journey. But he did not want him to marry a Canaanite woman.

Read Genesis 24:10-14

What do you see the servant do when he arrives at the city of Nahor?

8. How did the servant say he would know which woman to choose for Isaac's bride?

Day Two

1. Rebekah came to the well and everything happened just as the servant had prayed. He went to her home to seek and sought permission from her father. When her father, Bethuel, and her brother, Laban, heard all the details, permission was granted for her to marry Isaac. Her family blessed her and said goodbye.

Read Genesis 24:62-67.

Where was Isaac?

What was he doing when the servant returned with Rebekah?

The Bible does not give us Rebekah's age at the time of her journey, but she probably was a young teenage girl. She would have been old enough to do heavy work, because she watered the servant's camels, until they were satisfied. You might want to look at a map to see just how long this journey was from Haran to Beer-laai-roi to meet Isaac.



2. Genesis 24:67 tells us they married. It had been 3 years since his mother, Sarah had died but Isaac was obviously still grieving the loss.

What does the scripture tell us Rebekah was able to do for Isaac?

What are some ways a wife can be a comfort to her husband as he is going through a difficult season?

3. As we saw last week, Abraham lived 175 years. He died and was buried in the same cave as Sarah. In Genesis 25:19 we see Isaac was 40 years old when he married Rebekah. The scripture tells us she suffered like Sarah with infertility.

Read Genesis 25:26.

How long did Rebekah struggle with infertility?

4. Have you or a friend ever struggled with infertility?
If so, what were some of the emotional problems associated with this issue?
5. Eventually, Rebekah became pregnant and gave birth to fraternal twin boys, Esau and Jacob.

Read Genesis 25:28.

What was a major problem in this home?

6. Read Genesis 25:29-34.

It is easy to look at this event and think little of Jacob for taking advantage of his brother when he was in a weakened condition. But Esau's lack of appreciation for the birthright is really the bigger problem. Even though he was the firstborn, he easily dismissed his birthright for a bowl of stew. There will be times when even though we have a need we must remain faithful to our position of leadership.

What did this event reveal about Esau's character?

7. In Genesis 27 we see Isaac is getting very old; he could hardly see anymore. He knew the end was near and, as was the custom of that day, he wanted to give a blessing to his firstborn son.

He called Esau in and asked him to go hunting and bring back something delicious, so they could eat a good meal together. Then, Isaac would give him the blessing. While Esau was hunting, Rebekah and Jacob together deceived Isaac. He blessed Jacob, thinking it was Esau. When Esau came home, cooked a meal and came in for his blessing. He was devastated to hear Isaac had already blessed someone, thinking it was his firstborn. (If you are not familiar with this story read Genesis 27.)

Read Genesis 27:36,41.

How did Esau feel when he found out the blessing had been stolen by deceit?

8. Rebekah overhears Esau's murderous plan. She once again manipulates the situation to get her way. She has Jacob sent far away, under the pretense of finding a wife from among their family. While on his journey from Beersheba to Haran he stops for the night to rest. He had a dream.

List the facts you read about this dream from Genesis 28:12-15.

Day Three

1. Jacob heard a voice in his dream.

Whose voice did he hear?

What was he told?

2. According to Genesis 28: 16-22, what did Jacob do in the morning?
3. Have you ever received a clear word from the LORD about a matter? If so, what was your response?
4. Genesis 29 contains a beautiful story of love. Jacob stays with his uncle a month and helped with all the work. Laban says he wants to be fair with Jacob and give him something for his labor.

Read Genesis 29:18.

Did Jacob make it clear what he wanted?

5. What was the deal they agreed upon?

Read Genesis 29:20.

Was Jacob faithful to his word?

How did Jacob feel about his time of service to Laban?

6. The day came for the wedding to take place. Sadly, Laban switched the daughters and gave Leah to Jacob, to consummate the marriage. In the light of morning, Jacob realized what had happened. This deceiver had himself been deceived. Jacob confronts Laban.

Read Genesis 29:25-30.

How did they solve this issue?

What does Laban say his reason was for the switch?

7. In today's market, we would call this the 'bait and switch.' It is an illegal practice today.

Have you ever felt you were baited into something, only to find out you had been deceived? How did the deception make you feel?

8. Read Genesis 29:31.

Because of the way things came about, I am sure it made it difficult for Jacob to love Leah. It also placed a wedge between these two sisters. Satan is overjoyed when his plans to disrupt a family grow into discord. The scripture says Leah was "hated." She was treated as if she were the enemy in her own family. Like Hagar, El Roi is the God who sees.

What did God do for her?

9. Do you see a shift in Leah's focus in Genesis 29:32-35? (Pay close attention to her words in these verses.)

Who is she focusing on in the first three statements?

Who is the focus of her fourth statement?

- a. *"now my husband will love me"*
- b. *"the LORD has heard I am hated"*
- c. *"this time my husband will be attached to me"*
- d. *"This time I will praise the LORD."*

Day Four

1. Read Genesis 30:1 to identify Rachel's problem.

Let's take a few minutes to look at what the Bible says about envy and the believer.

Read 1 Corinthians 13:4; James 3:16; 1 Peter 2:1.

2. Unfortunately, when we see mistakes repeated it seems even sadder. Sarah had tried to take matters in her own hands to solve her barrenness, and here we see Rachel make the same mistake. Rachel gives her handmaiden to Jacob to have children, who would be considered her own.

Bilhah did conceive. Over the course of time, she bore Jacob two sons: Dan and Naphtali. Leah retaliated and gave Jacob her handmaiden, Zilpah. She bore him two sons: Gad and Asher.

Many years later, God once again blessed Leah with two sons, Issachar, and Zebulun. She was even blessed with a daughter, Dinah.

Read Genesis 30:22-24.

Do you think Rachel's prayers changed in wording over the years?

Finally, after many years of family discord, what did the LORD do for Rachel?

If you have prayed for something that only God can do, would you say your prayers changed in the wording?

If so, how have they changed?

3. Jacob longs to return to his home country. God has blessed him to the point it has become an issue for those who care for the herds of Laban and Jacob.

Isn't it funny how discord in leadership tends to filter down and cause even more problems?

Jacob tells Laban he is about to leave to return to his home. (Genesis 30:25) This should have been the end of it, but Laban realizes that God's blessings on Jacob have brought prosperity to him as well. Laban does all he can to thwart Jacob leaving.

Eventually, Jacob has had enough. While Laban is off shearing his sheep, Jacob leaves with all his family, herds, and belongings to return to the hill country of Gilead. When it is told to Laban, he follows him in hot pursuit.

Read Genesis 31:24 to see how God intervened.

Have you experienced anything like this?

Someone wants to control you; they are ready to give you a piece of their mind when suddenly God intervenes. Or, perhaps it was you and God spoke to your heart reminding you that he is in control and we do not fight our battles alone.

Read Genesis 31:43-55.

What were the details of their actions and words that day?

How did God work out the details of this disagreement between Laban and Jacob?

4. Jacob's problems are far from over. He is headed home, but who knows how that will go. He did not leave on the best of terms. As a matter of fact, his brother Esau was just waiting for the right moment to kill him. While Jacob is camped along the way, he sends messengers ahead to speak to Esau on his behalf. Jacob is testing the waters.

Read Genesis 32:1-6.

How does Jacob refer to himself?

5. The servants return to Jacob and tell him Esau is headed to see you...and oh by the way, he's bringing 400 men with him.

How did hearing this affect Jacob? Genesis 32:7

6. Jacob divides his family into two camps of people and possessions; then he prays.

Read Jacob's prayer in Genesis 32:9-12.

What were the specifics of Jacob's prayer?

Do you believe this is a good pattern for our prayers today?

7. Jacob attempts to appease Esau. Make a list of the items he sent ahead with his servants as gifts in five waves to his brother, Esau.

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.

What were his servants instructed to say to Esau?

8. The next day, before meeting with Esau, he sent his family across the brook, Jabbok, and spent the night alone. It is often a good idea to spend some time alone with God prior to a big confrontation.

Jacob knew he had done Esau very poorly when he traded a mere bowl of stew for the birthright. He knew he had deceived his father and stolen the blessing. He remembered clearly running for his life so Esau would not complete his threat to kill him. He has lived with Laban and his family for 20 years (Genesis 31:41).

Jacob chose to spend this night alone in prayer. The scripture tells us he wrestled with the angel of God. We may not understand all the details of this strange experience, but one thing is clear: Jacob wanted God's blessing.

How important is the blessing of God to you?

Have you ever stayed up all night seeking His blessing?

9. The next morning, Jacob looked and saw Esau coming with his four hundred men.

Read Genesis 33:1-3.

What did Jacob do in preparation for Esau's arrival?

Led the way	_____
First maid and children	_____
Second maid and her children	_____
First wife and her children	_____
Second wife and her children	_____

Day Five

1. Reconciliation and restoration—aren't those just the most beautiful words?

Jacob feared the worst.

What had God done long before Jacob and his family arrived?

2. Esau questions the meaning of all the waves of animals and servants.

Do you really think he did not understand?

Hadn't the servants made it abundantly clear in the five waves of gifts and the messages they shared?

3. The birthright would have been a double portion of the inheritance. In humility and love, Jacob insists on giving Esau his gifts.

Do you believe this is God's way of showing Esau he was able to bless whomever he chooses?

When we feel cheated by someone we need not hold on to the hurt and fret about it. We should forgive and align ourselves for God's blessing.

Have you ever experienced something like this?

4. Read Genesis 35:9-15.

God meets with Jacob again and reminds him of the transformation he has gone through in his character. He is no longer Jacob, the deceiver; he is Israel, which means God prevails.

What do you see Jacob do as a result of this meeting with God?

He named this place Bethel. What does that name mean?

5. Our lives are often seasoned with heartache; Jacob's life was no different. In Genesis 35:16, we see Rachel is about to give birth to her second son and something goes terribly wrong. Rachel would never hold this baby boy; she

died giving birth to him. She instructed that he would be named Ben-oni, which means son of my sorrows. However, his father named him Benjamin which means 'Son of My Right Hand.'

Why do you believe they would have chosen these names?
How many sons is this now for Jacob?

6. This is not all that happened to Jacob in his life. We will look at it more next week as we study Joseph.

Read Genesis 47:28

How old was Jacob when he died?

7. Which of God's character qualities have you seen this week as you have studied his word?
Add them to your list on **The Character of God** page.

Please, do not leave this question unanswered. The purpose of our study is to get to know our God.