


Messy Life:
The Story of Jacob
Part 2
The God "of Jacob"

TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

2025-2-16



A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

Observation—*What do I see?*

- Read Exodus 3:14-15. God's proper name is Yahweh. What does "Yahweh" mean?
What descriptors does Yahweh use of himself here? Does that surprise you? Why or why not?
- How do Exodus 2:11-15 and 3:6-10 reveal Yahweh to be a God of **sovereign, gracious choice**?
- How do Exodus 3:11-12 and 4:1 & 10-13 reveal Yahweh to be a God of **infinite patience**?
- How does Exodus 10:21–29 reveal Yahweh to be a God of **transforming power**?

Interpretation—*What does it mean?*

- In Exodus 3, God talks with Moses about the **exodus** he will lead, liberating the Jews from slavery. In Luke 9:30–31, Moses talks with Jesus about the **exodus** He will lead (in v. 31, "departure" is the Greek word, **exodos**) liberating us from slavery to sin. How do you see the features of **sovereign, gracious choice, infinite patience, and transforming power** at work in **our exodus** from sin?
- How do the features of **sovereign, gracious choice, infinite patience, and transforming power** suggest a divine origin and God-centered nature of our faith, in comparison to other world religions?

Application—*What do I do with this?*

- Man-made religions always have mankind playing a determinative role in his salvation (through good works, performing religious duties, or self denial). According to 1 Corinthians 1:30–31, what contribution do we make to our salvation? Do you find this fact emotionally calming or disturbing—and why?
- Read Exodus 34:6-7. How do you see **infinite patience** in God's self-disclosure?
According to Exodus 34:7, does God's **infinite patience** absolve us of human responsibility? Explain.
- When you look at your growth and change as a Christian, are you ever tempted to despair?
How are you currently seeing God's **transforming power** at work in your life?

Sermon Summary Genesis 25-50

Last week we began a study of the life of Jacob. He was a liar, a cheat, a coward—an unsavory character! Jacob's messy life came from a messy family. The story starts with Abraham and Sarah, who had a son named Isaac, who then married Rebekah. Isaac and Rebekah had twin boys, Jacob and Esau. God gave priority to the younger twin, Isaac—which occasioned a domino-effect of messy events. Jacob married two sisters—more mess—through whom (with the help of two servant girls) he had twelve sons. The messiness multiplied as he favored one of those sons over his brothers. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are referred to as the “patriarchs”—the “father-leaders” of our faith.

Scripture often refers to God as “the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob”. Based on the biblical principle of elders receiving more honor, one would assume that God would be referred to as “the God of Abraham” more often than as the God “of Isaac” or “of Jacob”—but this is not the case. God is called “the God of Abraham” only once, never simply “the God of Isaac”, but fifteen times he is called “the God of Jacob”! Why is this? While I'd assumed that surely Jacob's elders, Abraham and Isaac, would out-shine him—but I was pointing the spotlight in the wrong direction! When the spotlight turns toward God, it becomes clear that God shines more brightly when he's known as “the God of that scoundrel, Jacob!” What do we learn about God, by virtue of the fact that he most often is identified as the God of the most unsavory of these three men?

I. The God of Jacob is the God of SOVEREIGN, GRACIOUS CHOICE. Jacob gives us the clearest illustration of God's sovereign choice. The biblical term for this is “election”. The Bible teaches that the eternal choice of certain individuals for salvation has nothing to do with our worthiness, but flows solely from God's sovereign gracious choice (1 Corinthians 1:27-30a; Romans 9:10-13). The God of Jacob is the God who singles-out the most unlikely and unworthy objects. But election is not, as some imagine, harsh and unjust. It is a merciful action of God, because if he didn't choose some for salvation, all would perish (Romans 9:27-29)! Yes, every believer chooses to believe in God, but election means that God chooses us so that we can chose Him (2 Timothy 2:24-26). We freely choose God because he's chosen us (John 15:16). Election means that we believe because He made us willing and able to believe (1 Corinthians 2:14; John 6:44 & 65; Romans 8:5-8). Aren't you grateful that God is the God of the undeserving? I know I am!

II. The God of Jacob is the God of INFINITE PATIENCE. For most of his life he lived a most God-dishonoring life. He took advantage of his brother Esau when he was hungry and weak. Jacob lied to and tricked his blind father (Leviticus 19:14). Jacob resorted to lying and trickery to obtain what God had already promised. Jacob had more confidence in his own sneaky means to accomplish God's plan. Shame on him—but God was patient with Jacob. Throughout his life Jacob defaulted to human scheming to get his way, but the God of Jacob continued to be patient with this faithless man.

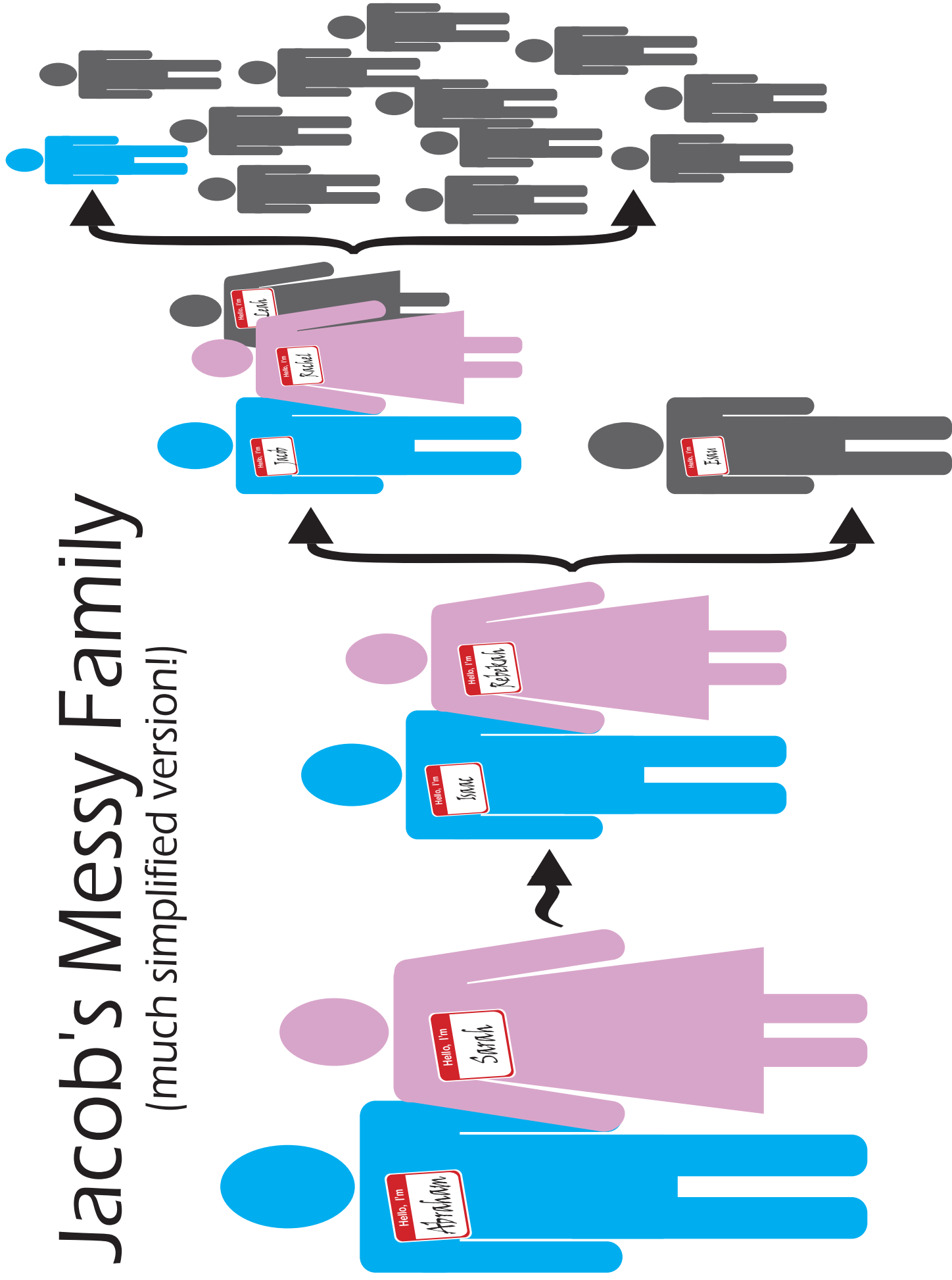
Like Jacob, we are ever planning and scheming, and then asking God to bless our human scheming. Like with Jacob, God has promised us that “nothing can separate us from the love of God”, but we're so slow to learn. I'm grateful that God is a God who is patient with slow learners—like me.

III. The God of Jacob is the God of TRANSFORMING POWER. “The God of Jacob” proved powerful enough to take life-long doubters and scoundrels and transform us into godly, trusting saints. The end of Jacob's life reveals the triumph of God's mighty grace. Jacob became a worshiper (Genesis 46:1 & Hebrews 11:21). Whereas earlier in life Jacob was terrified of his brother, late in life he knew himself to be blessed even above Pharaoh, the most powerful king on earth (Hebrews 7:7).

I'm glad that God is the God who wins in the end, who succeeds in remaking us into his image (Philippians 1:6). God chooses average, flawed people such as us, God patiently puts up with our mediocre performance, and he's the God who eventually transforms all of his true children into the spitting image of his special Son, Jesus. The God of Jacob is the God who sovereignly chooses, not based at all upon our merit or actions. The God of Jacob is the God of infinite patience, bearing with years—decades—of faithlessness on our part. And the God of Jacob is the God who is so powerful that he transforms schemers into saints. Aren't you glad he's your God?!

Jacob's Messy Family

(much simplified version!)



Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

*The Bible teaches that God sovereignly chooses to bless one, and pass over another.
Let's use the "Five Question Bible Study" method to delve into this mystery...*

Monday— Study Romans 9:10–12 & 11:4–6. What do you learn about God's "choice" (ie. "election")?

Tuesday— Study 1 Corinthians 1:26–31. What do you learn about those whom God elects/chooses?

Wednesday— Study Ephesians 1:4–6. When and how does election occur?

Thursday— Study 1 Peter 1:1–2. For what purpose does God elect people to salvation?

Friday— Study 2 Peter 1:2–11. What can we do to "make our calling and election sure"?

Saturday— Study Romans 8:33–39. What do you learn about the elect?

Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]