

The Life of Jacob


Part 1

A Life of Purpose and Meaning

TALKING WALKINGPOINTS

2025-2-9



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

- 1 What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you? ...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why**?

Observation—*What do I see?*

- Read Genesis 25:19-26. Let's observe for what each character had to trust God.
- 2 According to v. 20-21 & 26b, for **what**—and for **how long**—did Isaac have to trust God?
According to v. 22, with what **additional problem** did Rebecca have to trust God?
According to v. 23, for **what** did Esau have to trust God? How about Jacob?
- 3 What struggles do you think each might have had with the concept that God is totally **loving**?
That God is totally **powerful**? That God is totally **wise**?

Interpretation—*What does it mean?*

- 4 Focus now just on v. 23. How do you see the **love** of God evident in that prediction?
How do you see the **power** of God in it? How do you see the **wisdom** of God in it?
- 5 Do any of those three attributes appear **weak or absent** in God's sovereign plan? Explain.

Application—*What do I do with this?*

- 6 Looking back at your responses to the **Observation** questions above, with which of those challenges do **you** most identify **personally**—and **why**? Would you tell us a bit about it?
- 7 It is commonly recognized that **if** we **truly believe** that God is 100% loving, **and** 100% wise, **and** 100% powerful, **then** our struggles in life will be more bearable. How does Romans 8:28 support this assertion?
- 8 Pastor Doug noted that the lesson of Jacob's life is "*Don't grab for it! Don't force it. Don't scheme or plot or maneuver to make it happen.*" Does that mean that we must be passive in life? Why or why not? How can we be both trusting and active? Are you finding that balance in your life?



① Standard “starter question”.

② Isaac *perhaps* had to wait to get married (age 40), but he *certainly* prayed and waited a long time for children (age 60).

Rebecca shared the same 20 years of infertility, but had the additional problem of a difficult pregnancy.

Esau had to trust God with the bad news that his younger brother would have priority in the family.

Jacob had to trust God with the timing and the method for gaining priority in the family.

③ Isaac and Rebecca would have struggled with the concept that God is totally *loving* (due to infertility). Esau would have struggled with the concept that God is totally *loving* (due to his being passed over). Jacob was probably had no struggle believing that God is loving!

Isaac and Rebecca would have struggled with the concept that God is *powerful* (due to infertility). Esau would have struggled with the concept that God is *powerful* (not that he *isn't* powerful, but that God used his power to sovereignly set him aside)!

Jacob clearly struggled with believing that God was powerful enough to fulfill his promise.

Isaac, Rebecca and Esau would have struggled with the concept that God is *wise* (in that he upset family dynamics by choosing the younger brother, thus setting the scene for envy, strife, and deception). Jacob was probably had no struggle believing that God was wise in choosing him!

④ The *love* of God is evident in this prediction in that God chose *either/any* of them—since all are sinners and thus he would be totally justified in rejecting them all.

The *power* of God is evident in that God made a sovereign choice and made it happen.

The *wisdom* of God *probably is not evident* in that God's ways are “inscrutable” (Romans 11:33-36) and are *not* our ways (Isaiah 55:8)!

⑤ Wait for group members to answer. This will give you insight into their biblical understanding.

⑥ ditto

⑦ Obviously, we need to be careful how we define “good” (v. 29 defines it as “becoming like Christ”), but God working all things out for the good of making us resemble Christ is clearly loving, and takes a lot of wisdom and power to accomplish.

⑧ The popular saying, “*Let go and let God!*” is decidedly *not* biblical. We are told to “*work out* our salvation” (Philippians 2:12), so we are to be very *active*—even *strenuous* (1 Corinthians 9:24–27)—in our obedience. Yet we “labor, striving *according to God's power*, which mightily works within us” (Colossians 1:29).

Sermon Summary Genesis 25:19-26

On some level we can all relate to Jacob, for he is "Everyman". Jacob's life is a reminder that our life has purpose and that we all need a Savior! God brought you into the world with a specific purpose in mind and he desires to use you and to bless you, more than you know. The questions become: How do we enter into this blessing? What response will enable us to enjoy his blessing and fulfill his purpose?

Jacob's story begins in Genesis 25:19-26. The phrase, "Now these are the records" is important in the book of Genesis; it organizes the whole book. It identifies the family line that comes from a specific person and what happens to them as God dismisses some from blessing and chooses others. This phrase occurs ten times in Genesis (see 2:4, 5:1, 6:9, 10:1, 11:10, 11:27, 25:12, 25:19, 36:1, and 37:2). Part of God's unfolding plan is to multiply Jacob's descendants and use them to reveal God's truth to the world (25:19). Ultimately, one of these descendants, the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, will bless the world by restoring people to God. This plan and promise, first announced to Jacob's grandfather, Abraham (12:1-3), and reiterated to his descendants, would result in millions of descendants to bless the world! It began with Abraham. In the following generation God chose Isaac, not Ishmael. In the following generation, Jacob was chosen rather than his brother Esau.

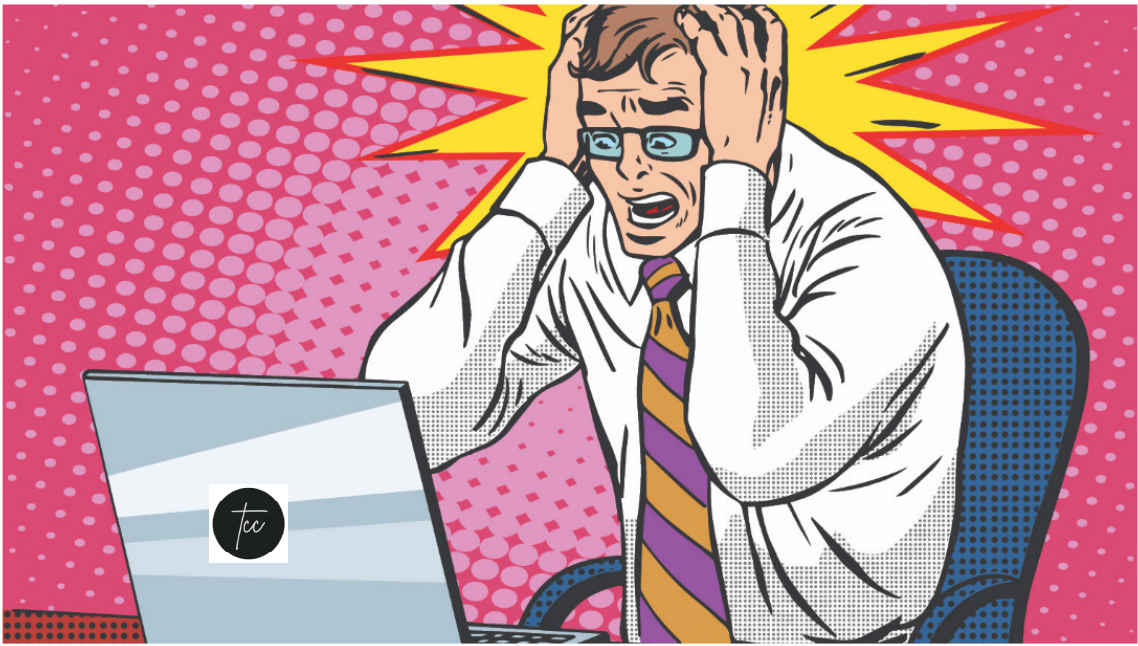
Jacob and Esau were twins, born to Isaac and Rebecca. They struggled so violently in her womb that Rebecca asked God for an explanation (25:23). The first line—"Two nations are in your womb." And these twins will become the ancestors of different nations. Both will have millions of descendants; both will become a nation of people—the Edomites (Genesis 36:9) and the Jews. The second line—These two nations will not be able to live together. The "two peoples within you will be separated." They will act so violently against each other that they will have to live apart. And there was constant warfare between these two groups. The third line—One of the nations, however, will dominate. "And the older shall serve the younger." One of these boys, and the nation or people which descended from him, will be chosen to continue God's plan. One of them will become God's means of blessing the world.

Before they're born, God already knows his plans. Before they are born, God has already decided which one will carry forward his purpose. It is the younger child. God is always defying conventional wisdom! Jacob is the younger twin. When he comes into the world, God already has a specific purpose for his life. But that's not just true of Jacob. It's also true of you, too. God brought you into the world for a specific purpose, and he has a plan to bless you and use you. (Psalm 139:13;15-16, Jeremiah 1:4-5, Galatians 1:13-16, Ephesians 2:10.) The question is, "How do we enter into that plan? What response does God ask from us?" The answer to our question, and more broadly, from Jacob's life is: "Don't grab for it! Don't do anything to force it. Don't scheme or plot or maneuver to make it happen."

Jacob fights that tendency his entire life. He comes into the world with the promise that God will bless him beyond anything he can imagine, but from the moment of his birth, he can't trust God to give it to him. From the beginning, you get the impression that he is trying to pull his brother back into the womb by the heel! "No—me first!" All through his life, Jacob will continue that pattern—not trusting God to give him what he promised. Despite Jacob's sinful scheming, God will keep his promise to Jacob. The blessing God said he would give—it will come! It will come because God is faithful to his promises. God keeps his promises, even if, even when, we break ours! Like Jacob, we are "heel grabbers". We want God's blessing so badly we grab for it. We'll force it because we want it now, and the truth is, we don't trust God to give it to us in our time. The blessing God has for you will not come sooner than God intends. He will not be hurried. We really need to learn that lesson. God will not be hurried. The question is - "Will you trust him??"

Jacob should have known better than to try to force God's hand. He should have learned it from his family history. God gave the original promise to his grandfather, Abraham, when he was seventy-five years old. But after ten years of waiting for the promise, Abraham took matters into his own hands. Jacob's own father, Isaac, also forced God's hand. (Gen. 25:20-21) Jacob should have known from his father, Isaac, and from his grandfather, Abraham, that nothing limits God—not age, not infertility, not social customs. He should have learned from their experience that God fulfills his promises in His time, not ours. Don't grab it. Trust God, and He will give it in his time.

**PLEASE DON'T TELL ME
IT'S TOO LATE TO JOIN
"THE ART AND SKILL OF
REDEMPTIVE RELATIONSHIPS"!**



No—but **soon** it will be!

***You know what
to do with this...***



Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

*How do we learn to "wait on the Lord" to act on our behalf?
Let's use the "Five Question Bible Study" method to see what Psalm 37 says...*

Monday— Today, meditate on Psalm 37:1-6. What do you learn?

Tuesday— Today, meditate on Psalm 37:7-11. What do you learn?

Wednesday— Today, meditate on Psalm 37:12-22. What do you learn?

Thursday— Today, meditate on Psalm 37:23-26. What do you learn?

Friday— Today, meditate on Psalm 37:27-34. What do you learn?

Saturday— Today, meditate on Psalm 37:35-40. What do you learn?

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?]