

Men-Sharpen-Men
September 29, 2017
More Jacob Discussion

Scripture: Try to read as much of Genesis chapters 27 through 49 as you can this week. I am still struggling with this blessing business and have a few more questions. Also, we will look at Rachel's role in this story and Jacob's final blessing to his sons; the twelve tribes of Israel.

Questions:

- 1) It is written that Isaac trembled violently when he realized that he had been duped into blessing Jacob instead of Esau? Why did he tremble violently? Is this the reaction you would expect? Is it hard for you to accept that this blessing was unique?

- 2) When I read Isaac's blessing to Jacob as he was leaving to escape Esau's wrath and find a spouse (Genesis 28:1-4), I believe that it is a superior blessing to the blessing that Isaac gave Jacob that was intended for Esau (Genesis 27:27-29). Do you agree or disagree?

- 3) Discuss what we know about Rachel and her life.
 - Was Rachel the perfect wife for Jacob?
 - Did Rachel feel the same way about Jacob, that he was a perfect husband?
 - How did Rachel react when she did not get to marry Jacob after seven years had passed?
 - How did she get along with Leah?
 - Would you consider Rachel to be a Godly person?
 - How did she die? Was she buried with Jacob?

- 4) Who did Jacob wrestle with in Genesis 32:22-31? Why was Jacob's name changed to Israel? What does this new name mean? Did he physically wrestle or was it a mental wrestling match? Why couldn't the man overpower Jacob?

- 5) Read Jacob's final blessing to his sons (Genesis 49) before his death. Is there anything there that stands out in question or comment?

Isaac's blessing to Jacob:

²⁷ So he went to him and kissed him. When Isaac caught the smell of his clothes, he blessed him and said, "Ah, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field that the LORD has blessed. ²⁸ May God give you heaven's dew and earth's richness — an abundance of grain and new wine. ²⁹ May nations serve

you and peoples bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may the sons of your mother bow down to you. May those who curse you be cursed and those who bless you be blessed.”

Isaacs’ blessing to Esau:

³⁸ Esau said to his father, “Do you have only one blessing, my father? Bless me too, my father!” Then Esau wept aloud. ³⁹ His father Isaac answered him, “Your dwelling will be away from the earth’s richness, away from the dew of heaven above. ⁴⁰ You will live by the sword and you will serve your brother. But when you grow restless, you will throw his yoke from off your neck.”

Isaac’s blessing to Jacob as he was leaving town:

28 So Isaac called for Jacob and blessed him. Then he commanded him: “Do not marry a Canaanite woman. ² Go at once to Paddan Aram, to the house of your mother’s father Bethuel. Take a wife for yourself there, from among the daughters of Laban, your mother’s brother. ³ May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and increase your numbers until you become a community of peoples. ⁴ May he give you and your descendants the blessing given to Abraham, so that you may take possession of the land where you now reside as a foreigner, the land God gave to Abraham.”

Jacob’s Prayer as he prepares for his reunion with Esau:

32 ⁹ Then Jacob prayed, “O God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, LORD, you who said to me, ‘Go back to your country and your relatives, and I will make you prosper,’ ¹⁰ I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servant. I had only my staff when I crossed this Jordan, but now I have become two camps. ¹¹ Save me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau, for I am afraid he will come and attack me, and also the mothers with their children. ¹² But you have said, ‘I will surely make you prosper and will make your descendants like the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted.’”

Jacob and Esau reunited:

33 Jacob looked up and there was Esau, coming with his four hundred men; so he divided the children among Leah, Rachel and the two female servants. ² He put the female servants and their children in front, Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph in the rear. ³ He himself went on ahead and bowed down to the ground seven times as he approached his brother.

⁴ But Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; he threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. And they wept. ⁵ Then Esau looked up and saw the women and children. “Who are these with you?” he asked. Jacob answered, “They are the children God has graciously given your servant.”

⁶ Then the female servants and their children approached and bowed down. ⁷ Next, Leah and her children came and bowed down. Last of all came Joseph and Rachel, and they too bowed down.

⁸ Esau asked, “What’s the meaning of all these flocks and herds I met?”

“To find favor in your eyes, my lord,” he said.

⁹ But Esau said, “I already have plenty, my brother. Keep what you have for yourself.”

¹⁰ “No, please!” said Jacob. “If I have found favor in your eyes, accept this gift from me. For to see your face is like seeing the face of God, now that you have received me favorably. ¹¹ Please accept the present that was brought to you, for God has been gracious to me and I have all I need.” And because Jacob insisted, Esau accepted it

Genesis 49 – Jacob’s blessing to his sons:

49 Then Jacob called for his sons and said: “Gather around so I can tell you what will happen to you in days to come. ² “Assemble and listen, sons of Jacob; listen to your father Israel.

³ “Reuben, you are my firstborn,
my might, the first sign of my strength,
excelling in honor, excelling in power.
⁴ Turbulent as the waters, you will no longer excel,
for you went up onto your father’s bed,
onto my couch and defiled it.
⁵ “Simeon and Levi are brothers—
their swords^[a] are weapons of violence.
⁶ Let me not enter their council,
let me not join their assembly,
for they have killed men in their anger
and hamstringed oxen as they pleased.
⁷ Cursed be their anger, so fierce,
and their fury, so cruel!
I will scatter them in Jacob
and disperse them in Israel.
⁸ “Judah,^[b] your brothers will praise you;
your hand will be on the neck of your enemies;
your father’s sons will bow down to you.
⁹ You are a lion’s cub, Judah;
you return from the prey, my son.
Like a lion he crouches and lies down,
like a lioness—who dares to rouse him?
¹⁰ The scepter will not depart from Judah,
nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet,^[c]
until he to whom it belongs^[d] shall come
and the obedience of the nations shall be his.
¹¹ He will tether his donkey to a vine,
his colt to the choicest branch;
he will wash his garments in wine,
his robes in the blood of grapes.
¹² His eyes will be darker than wine,
his teeth whiter than milk.^[e]
¹³ “Zebulun will live by the seashore
and become a haven for ships;
his border will extend toward Sidon.
¹⁴ “Issachar is a rawboned^[f] donkey
lying down among the sheep pens.^[g]
¹⁵ When he sees how good is his resting place
and how pleasant is his land,
he will bend his shoulder to the burden
and submit to forced labor.
¹⁶ “Dan^[h] will provide justice for his people
as one of the tribes of Israel.
¹⁷ Dan will be a snake by the roadside,
a viper along the path,
that bites the horse’s heels
so that its rider tumbles backward.
¹⁸ “I look for your deliverance, LORD.
¹⁹ “Gad^[i] will be attacked by a band of raiders,
but he will attack them at their heels.
²⁰ “Asher’s food will be rich;
he will provide delicacies fit for a king.
²¹ “Naphtali is a doe set free
that bears beautiful fawns.^[j]

²² “Joseph is a fruitful vine,
a fruitful vine near a spring,
whose branches climb over a wall.^[k]
²³ With bitterness archers attacked him;
they shot at him with hostility.
²⁴ But his bow remained steady,
his strong arms stayed^[l] limber,
because of the hand of the Mighty One of Jacob,
because of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel,
²⁵ because of your father’s God, who helps you,
because of the Almighty,^[m] who blesses you
with blessings of the skies above,
blessings of the deep springs below,
blessings of the breast and womb.
²⁶ Your father’s blessings are greater
than the blessings of the ancient mountains,
than^[n] the bounty of the age-old hills.
Let all these rest on the head of Joseph,
on the brow of the prince among^[o] his brothers.
²⁷ “Benjamin is a ravenous wolf;
in the morning he devours the prey,
in the evening he divides the plunder.”
²⁸ All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them,
giving each the blessing appropriate to him.

The Death of Jacob

²⁹ Then he gave them these instructions: “I am about to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite,³⁰ the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre in Canaan, which Abraham bought along with the field as a burial place from Ephron the Hittite.³¹ There Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried, there Isaac and his wife Rebekah were buried, and there I buried Leah.³² The field and the cave in it were bought from the Hittites.^[p]”
³³ When Jacob had finished giving instructions to his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed, breathed his last and was gathered to his people.