

# The Life of Jacob

## Genesis 27:1 – 36:43

### **JACOB DECEIVED ISAAC.** (27:1-33)

- A. Jacob had already bought the birthright from Esau in Genesis 25:31-34. It was now necessary to get his father to validate the transfer. This he accomplished through deception.
- B. How the deception took place.
1. Isaac was old and his eyesight was bad. (27:1)
  2. Isaac told Esau that he needed to confer the blessing upon him. (27:2-4)
    - a. “I am old, I know not the day of my death.” (27:2)
    - b. Told him to take his weapons into the field and hunt for venison. (27:3)
    - c. “Prepare savory meat, such as I love, and bring it to me.” (27:4)
    - d. “That I may eat; that I may bless you before I die.” (27:4)
  3. Rebekah overheard Isaac’s conversation with Esau. (27:5)
  4. Rebekah plots with Jacob to deceive the aged Isaac. (27:6-13)
    - a. Rebekah told him to get two kid goats from the flock. (27:9)
    - b. Rebekah made savory meat such as Isaac loved. (27:14)
    - c. Rebekah prepared Jacob to appear as Esau. (27:15-16)
      1. Dressed him in Esau’s goodly raiment. (27:15)
      2. Put the skins of the goats on Jacob’s hand and neck. (27:16)
  5. Jacob took the meat and bread into Isaac. (27:17)
  6. Jacob told his father that he was Esau. (27:19)
  7. Isaac asked him how he found the venison so quickly. (27:20)
  8. Jacob replied: “Because the Lord thy God brought it to me.” (27:20)
  9. Jacob wanted to be sure it was Esau. (27:21)
    - a. He asked him to come close so he could feel him. (27:2 1)
    - b. Jacob went near so Isaac could feel him. (27:2 1)
    - c. Isaac’s response: “The voice is Jacob’s voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.” (27:22)
  10. A second time Jacob that he was Esau. (27:24)
  11. Isaac ate the meat and drank the wine. (27:25)
  12. Isaac kissed Jacob and smelled his raiment. (27:26-27)

Isaac gave Jacob the blessing. (27:28-29)

    - a. The Lord blessed him with good crops. (27:28)

- b. "Let people serve you." (25:29)
  - c. "Nations bow down before you." (25:29)
  - d. "Be master over your brethren, and let your mother's sons bow down to you." (27:29)
  - e. "Cursed be everyone who curses you." (27:29)
  - f. "Blessed be those who bless you!" (27:29)
14. Immediately after Jacob went out, Esau came in. (27:30)
- a. Esau and prepared the venison and was ready to be blessed. (27:31)
  - b. Isaac asked who he was. He replied: "Thy firstborn, Esau." (27:32)
  - c. "Isaac trembled very exceedingly." (27:33)
  - d. Esau cried with a bitter cry. (27:34)
  - e. Esau's response:
    - 1. "Is he not rightly named Jacob?" (27:36)
    - 2. "For he has supplanted me these two times." (27:36)
    - 3. "He took away my birthright." (27:36)
    - 4. "Now he has taken away my blessing." (27:36)
  - f. Esau asked for some type of blessing (27:38)
  - g. Isaac gave a blessing to Esau. (27:39-40)
    - 1. God must have given Isaac the predictions in verses 29 and 40, for they did come true.
    - 2. Jacob's descendant did attain a dominant position among the nations, and in time produced the nation that produced Christ.
    - 3. Esau's descendants, the Edomites, were subservient to Israel, and in time, they did throw off Israel's yoke (2 Kings 8:20-22). **2 Kings 8:22** - "Yet Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day."
15. Esau's reaction toward his brother, Jacob.
- a. He hated his brother because of the blessing. (27:41)
  - b. **Genesis 27:41** — "So Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him, and Esau said in his heart, 'The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then I will kill my brother Jacob.'"
16. Rebekah and Jacob became aware of Esau's intentions. (27:42)
17. Rebekah's plan for Jacob's escape." (27:43-46)
- a. Desired to send him to her brother Laban in Haran, some 400 miles northeast of Canaan. 27:43-46)
  - b. **Genesis 27:44** — "And stay with him a few days, until your brother's fury turns away." She had no idea that Jacob would be gone **20** years.
  - c. Convinced Isaac that Jacob should go to Haran to find a wife. (27:46)

18. In evaluating the moral quality of Jacob's act, a number of things need to be considered:

- a. His mother put him up to it.
- b. Jacob earnestly desired the birthright, channel of God's blessing to the whole world.
- c. There was probably no other way he could have obtained it.
- d. Esau cared nothing for it.
- e. Jacob paid dearly for his fraud as is indicated in Genesis 29 with Laban.
- f. God Himself, laying the foundation of gigantic world plans, made the choice before the boys were born.

1. **Genesis 25:23** - "And the LORD said to her: 'Two nations are in your womb, Two peoples shall be separated from your body; One people shall be stronger than the other, And the older shall serve the younger.'"

2. **Romans 9:10-13** - "And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man, even by our father Isaac

11 (for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls),

12 it was said to her, 'The older shall serve the younger.'

13 As it is written, 'Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.'

19. Isaac sent Jacob away to find a wife. (28:1-5)

C. Isaac blessed Jacob and charged him to:

1. "You shall not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan." (28:1)
2. Go to Padanaram to the house of Bethuel, Rebekah's mother (Jacob's grandmother). (28:2)
3. Take a wife from among the daughters of Laban (Jacob's uncle). (28:2)
4. Reminded him of the blessing of Abraham. (28:34)

D. Isaac sent Jacob away on his mission to Padanaram. (28:5)

E. To further spite Isaac, Esau took Mahalath, daughter of Ishmael to wife. (28:8-9)

### **JACOB'S DREAM ABOUT THE LADDER.** (28:10-22)

A. Jacob was on his way from Beersheba to Haran. (28:10)

1. Haran was some **400** miles northeast from Canaan.
2. Jacob is thought to have been about **77** years old at this time.
3. Took stones and made a pillow for his head. (28:10)

B. Jacob's dream.

1. A ladder reaching from earth to heaven. (28:12)
2. The angels of God were ascending and descending upon it. (28:12)
3. The Lord stood at the top of the ladder and spoke to Jacob. (28:23-15)
  - a. "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and God of Isaac." (28:13)
  - b. "Genesis 28:13 – "The land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants."
  - c. "And your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth." (28:14)
  - d. "You shall spread abroad:
    1. "To the west." (28:14)
    2. "To the east." (28:14)
    3. "To the north." (28:14)
    4. "To the south." (28:14)
  - e. "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (28:14)
  - f. "Genesis 28:15 – "I am with you and will keep you wherever you go."
  - g. I "will bring thee again into this land." (28:15)
  - h. I "will not leave you, until I have done what I have spoken to you of." (28:15)

C. Jacob's reaction to the dream.

1. He said, "Surely the Lord is in the place, and I did not know it." (28:16)
2. "He was afraid, and said. . ." (28:17)
  - a. "How awesome is this place!" (28:17)
  - b. "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." (28:17)
3. Jacob took the stone he had used as a pillow, set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on it. (28:18)
4. Called the name of that place Bethel (called Luz at first). (28:19)

D. The transfer of the birthright from Esau to Jacob had been validated by Isaac.

1. It is now validated in heaven by God Himself giving assurance to Jacob a hint that the promises would culminate in something that would bridge Heaven and Earth.
2. Jesus was the true ladder. **John 1:51** — "He said to him, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.'"

**JACOB AT HARAN.** (29:1 - 30:24)

A. Jacob arrived in the area where Laban lived. (29:1)

1. Haran was:

- a. The place from whence Jacob's grandfather, Abraham, migrated from years before after leaving Ur.
  - b. The place where Jacob's mother, Rebekah, had lived.
  - c. The land where Rebekah's brother, Laban, continued to live.
  - d. And where, unknowingly, Jacob would be spending the next **20** years of his life.
2. He conversed with some of the men who lived in that area. (29:2-8)
  3. Jacob rolled away the stone from the well so Rachel could water the sheep. (29:10)
    - a.. Jacob kissed Rachel and wept. (29:11)
    - b. Jacob told Rachel who he was. (29:12)
    - c. Rachel ran and told Laban that Jacob was there. (29:12)
  4. One month later Jacob and Laban entered into a wage agreement. (29:14-18)
    - a. Laban had two daughters.
      1. Leah was the older daughter, "tender eyed." (29:17)
      2. Rachel, the younger daughter, "was beautiful and well favored." (29:17)
    - b. Jacob loved Rachel and agreed to work seven years for her. 29:18)
    - c. **Genesis 29:20** — "And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her."
- B. Laban's deceit of Jacob. (29:20-27)
1. Leah, and not Rachel, was given to Jacob. (29:23-27)
  2. Custom for the older to marry before the younger. (29:26)
  3. Jacob agreed to work another seven years for Rachel. (29:27-30)
- C. Eleven of Jacob's sons were born in Haran.
1. By mother.
    - a. By **Leah**.
      1. Reuben. (29:32)
      2. Simeon. (29:33)
      3. Levi. (29:34)
      4. Judah. (29:35)
      5. Issachar. (29:30)
      6. Zebulun. (30:20)
    - b. By **Zilpah** (Leah's handmaid). (29:24)
      1. Gad. (30:11)
      2. Asher. (30:12)
    - c. By **Bilhah** (Rachel's handmaid). (29:29)

1. Dan. (30:6)

2. Naphtali. (30:8)

d. By **Rachel**.

1. Joseph. (30:25)

2. Benjamin would be born in Canaan (Bethlehem) as Rachel would be dying. (35:18)

2. By order of birth.

1. Reuben — by Leah.

2. Simeon — by Leah.

3. Levi—by Leah.

4. Judah — by Leah.

5. Dan — by Bilhah.

7. Gad — by Zilpah.

8. Asher — by Zilpah.

9. Issachar — by Leah.

10. Zebulun — by Leah.

11. Joseph — by Rachel.

12. Benjamin — by Rachel (in the land of Canaan)

D. Jacob's settlement with Laban. (30:25 - 31:55)

1. After the birth of Joseph, Jacob sought settlement with Laban so he could return to his own country. (30:25)

2. Laban wanted Jacob to stay, but later agreed for a settlement. (30:26-34)

a. From Laban's flocks, Jacob was to have:

a. Speckled and spotted cattle and goats. (30:32)

b. Brown sheep. (30:32)

b. Laban became angry because Jacob's flocks and herds grew larger and larger. (31:1-2)

E. God wanted Jacob to return to Canaan. **Genesis 31:3** — "Then the LORD said to Jacob," Return to the land of your fathers and to your family, and I will be with you."

1. Jacob explained the matter to Rachel and Leah. (31:4-16)

2. Laban had changed his wages ten times. (31:7)

3. God would not let Laban harm Jacob. (31:7)

4. God helped Jacob because of Laban's dishonesty with him. (31:12)

5. Rachel and Leah agreed that they should leave as God had revealed.

**(31:16)** — "Whatever God has said to you, do it."

F. Rachel carried off (stole) certain images (gods) which belonged to Laban. (31:19-20)

1. Three days later Laban was told that Jacob was gone. (31:22)
2. Laban and his brethren pursued Jacob seven days, overtaking him at Mt. Gilead. (31:23)
3. God warned Laban in a dream to be careful how he spoke to Jacob.” (3 1:24)
4. Upon hearing Laban’s accusations about the images, Jacob invited him to search his tents. (31:32)
  - a. Six specific tents are mentioned.
    1. Jacob’s tent. (31:33)
    2. Leah’s tent. (31:33)
    3. Zilpah’s tent. (31:3)
    4. Bilhah’s tent. (31:33)
    5. Rachel’s tent. (31:33)
  - b. Rachel hid his images in the camel’s furniture (saddle) and sat upon them. (31:34)
  - c. Laban searched throughout the camp but did not find them. (3 1:37)
  - d. Jacob had served Laban for twenty years.
    1. 7 years for Rachel, but was given Leah.
    2. 7 years for Rachel.
    3. 6 years for the cattle and sheep. (31:38-41)
5. The meeting ended with covenant being made between Laban and Jacob. (31:44)
  - a. Gathered stones for a stone heap. (31:46)
    1. Jacob called it Jegarshadutha. (31:47)
    2. Jacob called it Galeed. (31:47)
  - b. **Genesis 31:49** - Laban said “. . . The LORD watch between me and you, when we are absent one from another.”
6. The next day Laban and Jacob parted. (3 1:55)
  - a. Laban returned to Haran. (31:55)
  - b. Jacob continued toward Canaan. (32:1)
  - c. Angels of God met him. (32:1)
  - d. Jacob said: “This is God’s host.” (32:2)
  - e. Jacob had seen angels as he was traveling to Haran (28:12), as well as on his return to Canaan. (32:1)
  - f. He called the name of that place Mahanaim.

**THE RECONCILIATION BETWEEN JACOB AND ESAU.** (32:1 - 33:20)

- A. It is now 20 years later. What had changed?
1. Isaac, Jacob's father, was still living.
  2. Abraham had been dead about **100** years.
  3. Jacob left empty-handed **20** years before. Now he returns as:
    - a. A tribal prince.
    - b. Rich in flocks.
    - c. Rich in herds.
    - d. Rich in servants.
- B. Jacob prepares to meet Esau. (32:3-32)
1. Jacob sent messengers to Edom in the land of Seir asking for a peaceful settlement of their past difficulties. (32:3-5)
    - a. The messengers told Esau that Jacob had been with his uncle Laban in Haran for these **20** years. (32:4)
    - b. The messengers told of Jacob's wealth. (32:5)
  2. The messengers returned to tell Jacob that Esau was coming to meet him and was bringing **400** men. (32:6)
  3. **"Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed."** (32:7)
    - a. He divided the people, herds, flocks, and camels into two separate groups. (32:7)
    - b. It was his hope that if Esau attacked one group, the other group would be able to escape. (32:8)
    - c. Jacob sought the Lord's help for deliverance. (32:9-12)
    - d. Jacob selected animals to send ahead to Esau as a present.
      1. **220** goats. (32:14)
      2. **220** sheep. (32:14)
      3. **30** camels with their colts. (32:15)
      4. **50** head of cattle (**40** cows and **10** bulls). (32:15)
      5. **50** donkeys. (32:15)
    - e. Jacob's servants were sent to deliver the present and a message to Esau. (32:16-20)
  4. Jacob took his two wives and eleven sons and moved them over across the Jabbok. (32:22)
  5. During the night Jacob wrestled with an angel. (32:30)
    - a. Jacob's name was changed from "Jacob" to "Israel." (32:24-29)
    - b. "Israel" means "Prince of God." (32:28)



- c. Jacob called the name of that place Penuel. (32:30)
- C. Jacob meets and makes peace with Esau. (33:1-20)
  - 1. Jacob positioned himself out in front of his family. (33:3)
  - 2. Jacob went near to meet Esau and bowed before him seven times as he went. (33:3)
  - 3. Esau ran to Jacob, embraced him and kissed him. (33:4)
  - 4. Esau inquired as to who the women and children were. (33:5)
  - 5. Esau was formally introduced to Jacob's family.
    - a. Esau was brother-in-law to Rachel and Leah.
    - b. Esau was an uncle to the 11 sons.
  - 6. Esau at first declined Jacob's gift of the 570 animals on the basis that he already had enough flocks and herds. Only after Jacob's persistent insistence did Esau accept the gift. (33:8-11)
  - 7. The two brothers parted on good terms.
    - a. Esau returned to Mount Seir in Edom. (33:16)
    - b. Jacob traveled on to Succoth, then to Shalem, a city of Shechem in Canaan. (33:17-18)
      - 1. Bought a field from the children of Hamor for a hundred pieces of money. (33:19)
      - 2. Erected an altar and called it Elelohe-Israel. (33:20)

## THE LATTER DAYS OF JACOB

- A. Jacob's difficulties with Shechem. (34:1-31)
  - 1. Shechem, son of Hamor, fell in love with Dinah, daughter of Jacob and Leah. (34:2-3) Dinah was born to Jacob by Leah sometime after Zebulun, Leah's sixth son, was born. (30:20-21)
    - a. The defilement of Dinah. (34:1-31)
    - b. Shechem defiled Dinah. (34:3)
    - c. Shechem wanted Hamor to arrange for him to marry Dinah. (34:5)
    - d. Jacob's sons were angry over the sexual assault on their sister. (34:7)
    - e. Hamor and Shechem spoke with Jacob and his sons about Shechem marrying Dinah. (34:8-12)
    - f. Jacob's sons answered Shechem and Hamor deceitfully. (34:13)
      - 1. Told them they, and all the other men there, would have to be circumcised. (34:24)
      - 2. Shechem, Hamor, and all the men there agreed and were circumcised. (34:24)

- g. On the third day after the circumcision, while Shechem, Hamor, and the men were sore, Simeon and Levi entered the city and slew all the males and took Dinah out of Shechem's house. (34:25-26)
- h. The sons of Jacob took spoils of the city. (34:27-30)
  - 1. Sheep. (34:28)
  - 2. Oxen. (34:28)
  - 3. Donkeys. (34:28)
  - 4. All their wealth. (34:29)
  - 5. Their children. (34:29)
  - 6. Their wives (captive). (34:29)
- 2. Jacob was grieved over the actions of his sons. **Genesis 34:30** -"Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, 'You have troubled me by making me obnoxious among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites; and since I am few in number, they will gather themselves together against me and kill me. I shall be destroyed, my household and I.'"
- B. Jacob returned to Bethel. ( 35:1-15)
  - 1. God directed Jacob to return to Bethel. (35:1-15)
    - a. Bethel was where:
      - 1. He had the dream of the ladder that reached from earth to heaven some 20 years earlier. (28:12)
      - 2. God had made him heir to the Abrahamic promises. (28:13-15)
      - 3. Set his stone pillow up as a pillar. (28:18)
        - a. Had poured oil on it. (28:18)
        - b. had promised to give God a tenth of all that God would give to him. (28:22)
    - b. Jacob charged his household to:
      - 1. Put away their strange gods. (35:20)
      - 2. Be clean. (35:2)
      - 3. Change their garments. (35:2)
    - c. God prevented the surrounding cities from pursuing Jacob. **Genesis 35:5** — "And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob."
    - d. Jacob erected an altar at Bethel God had directed him to in Genesis 35:1. (35:7)
    - e. Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died and was buried under an oak tree at Bethel. (35:8)
    - f. God renewed His covenant with Jacob. (35:9-12)

## 2. Similarities in the travels of Abraham and Jacob.

- a. Upon entering Canaan, Abraham stopped at Shechem and built an altar. (12:5-9) Upon re-entering Canaan, Jacob stopped at Bethel and built an altar. (33:20)
- b. From Shechem Abraham travel to Bethel and built another altar. (12:8)  
From Shechem Jacob traveled to Bethel and built another altar. (35:7)
- c. From Bethel Abraham traveled to the south. (12:9)  
From Bethel Jacob traveled to Hebron (Mamre (southwest)). (37:27)

## C. The birth of Benjamin to Jacob and Rachel.

## 1. Benjamin was:

- a. Jacob's 12th son.
- b. Rachel's 2nd son (Joseph being her first and Jacob's 11th)
- c. Was born in Ephrath (Bethlehem).

## 2. Rachel died in childbirth. She died while giving birth to Benjamin. (35:18)

- a. **Genesis 31:18**— “And it came to pass as her soul was departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin.”
- b. Rachel was buried in Bethlehem and a pillar was place by her grave. (35:19-20)

## 3. Reuben lay with Bilhah, his father's concubine (Rachel's handmaid). (35:22)

## 4. Jacob now has his full compliment of 12 sons. (35:23-26)

- a. Sons by **Leah**. (35:22)
  1. Reuben
  2. Simeon.
  3. Levi
  4. Judah
  5. Isaachar
  6. Zebulun
- b. Sons by **Rachel**. (35:24)
  1. Joseph.
  2. Benjamin.
- c. Sons by **Bilhah**, Rachel's handmaid. (35:25)
  1. Dan.
  2. Naphtali.
- d. Sons by **Zilpah**, Leah's handmaid. (35:26)
  1. Gad.
  2. Asher.

D. The death of Isaac. (35:27-29)

1. Jacob returned to Hebron to his father, Isaac. (35:27)
2. Isaac died at the age of 180.
3. Jacob and Esau buried Isaac. (35:29)

E. The years of Jacob.

1. Age at various events.
  - a. **15** years old when Abraham died.
  - b. **77** years old when he fled from Esau to Haran.
  - c. **97** years old when he returned to Canaan. (Isaac was **157** years old at this time and would live an additional **23** years)
  - d. **84** years old when he married.
  - e. **90** years old when Joseph was born.
  - f. **107** or **108** years old when Joseph was sold into slavery.
  - g. **120** years old when Isaac died at age **180**.
  - h. **130** years old when he went to live in Egypt.
  - i. **147** years old when he died.
2. During Jacob's life span of **147** years:
  - a. The first **77** years were spent in Canaan.
  - b. The next **20** years spent in Haran.
  - c. The next **33** years spent back in Canaan.
  - d. The last **17** years were spent in Egypt.

F. The history of Esau. (36:1-43)

1. Esau, in personal character, was:
  - a. Profane.
  - b. Irreligious.
  - c. Despised his birthright.
  - d. Was less fit than Jacob to be the father of the Messianic nation.
2. Edomites descended from Esau.
  - a. Always bitter enemies of the Jews, perpetuating the enmity of Esau and Jacob.
  - b. They refused passage to Moses and the Israelites through their territory. Numbers 20:14-21)
  - c. They were always ready to aid an attacking army against Israel.
  - d. Edomites located in Edom.
    1. A rocky range of mountains stretching:
      - a. About **100** miles north to south.
      - b. About **20** miles east to west.

2. Well water with abundant pasturage.
3. Sela (Petra, the “Rose Red City”) was carved out in its mountains.
- e. The Edomites would go out on raiding expeditions of caravans and others, and then retreat to their impregnable strongholds high up in the rocky gorges.
3. The Amalekites were a branch of Esau’s descendants. (36:12)
  - a. They were a wandering tribe, centering mainly about Kadesh in the northern part of the Sinai peninsula.
    1. The roamed in wide circles.
    2. Roamed even into Judah and far to the east.
  - b. When the Israelites departed from Egyptian bondage, the Amalekites were the first to attack them.
  - c. The Amalekites also oppressed Israel during the time of the Judges.
4. “Jobab” (36:34) is thought by some to have been “Job” of the book of Job.
  - a. “Eliphaz” (36:10) is mentioned in the book of Job. (Job 2:11)
    1. Eliphaz is a son of Esau by Adah. He would be Jacob’s nephew.
    2. Teman (grandson of Esau) is one of the five sons of Eliphaz
  - b. Note: **Genesis 36** may supply the setting for the book of Job