

## **Summary of Genesis 24-50**

After many weeks of close examination of the major moments in the life of Abraham in Genesis 12-22, we are going to shift our attention to a broader understanding of the rest of Genesis (chapters 24-50). The rest of Genesis traces the lives of Abraham's offspring, namely Isaac (24-26), Jacob (27-36), and Jacob's sons (37-50).

### **I. Life of Isaac (24-26)**

It is obvious in the story of Genesis that the actual happenings of Isaac are not a major focus in the book. Rather, it is the promise and fulfillment of Isaac that is significant. Nonetheless, Moses does devote 3-4 chapters to the life of Isaac:

1. Rebekah is Chosen for Isaac (24)
2. Death of Abraham (25:1-18)
3. Birth of Jacob & Esau (25:19-34)
4. Isaac encounters Abimelech (26:1-34)

Although brief, the events in the life of Isaac described in Genesis are memorable. Just as Isaac was a son of promise, so he would give birth to a son of promise in Jacob. The account of the prophecy and struggle between Jacob and Esau is famous. God also engages Isaac on a few occasions and emphatically recounts His promise of blessing to him carried forward from Abraham:

**26:1 Now there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Gerar to Abimelech king of the Philistines. 2 And the Lord appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; dwell in the land of which I shall tell you. 3 Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you, for to you and to your offspring I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father. 4 I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, 5 because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws."**

It is also notable that Isaac recycles the same sin committed by his father Abraham when he goes down to Gerar in the Negev and he ends up lying to Abimelech about Rebekah being his sister (compare Gen.26:6-33 & Gen.20:1-18).

### **II. Life of Jacob (27-36)**

As the story transitions to Jacob in Genesis, we are struck with a thoroughly flawed person. Jacob weaseled the inheritance blessing from his brother and has a stand-off relationship with him for most of his life. However, God graciously maintains His blessing to Jacob and He becomes a projection of who Israel would be before God. God even renames Him covenantally to "one who struggles with God".

1. Isaac Blesses Jacob (27:1-46)
2. Jacob Is Sent to Laban (28:1-22)
3. Jacob Marries Leah & Rachel (29:1-30:43)
4. Jacob Flees Laban (31:1-55)
5. Jacob Wrestles with God (32:1-32)
6. Jacob Encounters Esau (33:1-20)
7. Conflict over Dinah and Shechem (34:1-31)
8. God Blesses and Renames Israel (35:1-29)
9. Genealogy of Esau (36:1-42)

The two noteworthy occasions where God encountered Jacob were first in a dream, the well-known “Jacob’s Ladder” story:

**28:10 Jacob left Beersheba and went toward Haran. 11 And he came to a certain place and stayed there that night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place to sleep. 12 And he dreamed, and behold, there was a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it! 13 And behold, the Lord stood above it and said, “I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring. 14 Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 15 Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.” 16 Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it.” 17 And he was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”**

The other occasion was when He wrestled with the angel of the Lord where his hip was put out of joint:

**32:22 The same night he arose and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. 23 He took them and sent them across the stream, and everything else that he had. 24 And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. 25 When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. 26 Then he said, “Let me go, for the day has broken.” But Jacob said, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.” 27 And he said to him, “What is your name?” And he said, “Jacob.” 28 Then he said, “Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed.” 29 Then Jacob asked him, “Please tell me your name.” But he said, “Why is it that you ask my name?” And there he blessed him. 30 So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel,**

saying, “For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered.” 31 The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping because of his hip. 32 Therefore to this day the people of Israel do not eat the sinew of the thigh that is on the hip socket, because he touched the socket of Jacob's hip on the sinew of the thigh.

We can see from that last comment that Jacob, now Israel, sets the pattern for who the children of Israel will be like.

### III. Life of Jacob's Sons – With Special Attention to Joseph (37-50)

The last portion of Genesis moves into the lives of Jacob's sons with a focus on Joseph. What needs to be noticed here is that this section is the immediate backdrop for how the children of Israel get to Egypt as God had told Abraham.

**15:12 As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram. And behold, dreadful and great darkness fell upon him. 13 Then the Lord said to Abram, “Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years. 14 But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions. 15 As for yourself, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. 16 And they shall come back here in the fourth generation, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.”**

1. Joseph Betrayed by His Brothers (37:1-36)
2. Conflict with Judah & Tamar (38:1-30)
3. Joseph Resists Potipher's Wife (39:1-23)
4. Joseph Interprets Dreams and Rises to Power (40:1-41:57)
5. Joseph's Brothers Go to Egypt Due to Famine (42:1-44:34)
6. Joseph Reconciles and Reunites with His Family (45:1-47:31)
7. Jacob Blesses His Sons (48:1-50:26)

In this story we pressed to see God's gracious providence to Jacob, Joseph, and his brothers, even in the midst of their sin. It is summed up well:

**50:15** When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him.” 16 So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, “Your father gave this command before he died, 17 ‘Say to Joseph, Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.’ And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father.” Joseph wept when they spoke to him. 18 His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, “Behold, we are your servants.” 19 But Joseph said to them, “Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? 20 **As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good**, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. 21 So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.” Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.