

## THE FAMILY OF ABRAHAM: JACOB

### NRCOC (8, 15, 22, 29 July 2009)

#### JACOB

##### Hebrew words:

- *Ya'aqov* (Jacob) -- sounds like "he deceives/supplants."
- 380x in the O.T. Compare this to *Isaac* (133x) and *Abraham* (309x).
- *Beth-el* (Bethel) -- house of God                      *Peni'el* (Peniel) -- face of God
- *Ye'abeq* (Jabbok) -- he wrestles                      *Yisr'ael* (Israel) -- God strives

##### Jacob's life:

- Spans most of Genesis (chapters 25-50)—more than any other character.
  - His life falls into 4 periods: Canaan / Aram / Canaan (again) / Egypt.
  - There are also four monuments/pillars/markers: 28:18, 31:45, 35:14, 35:20. What are the "markers" in my own spiritual pilgrimage?
- Deception in Canaan:
  - Birth (25:26)
  - Birthright of Esau (25)
  - Blessing of Esau & Isaac (27)
- Bethel (28:10-22)
  - See John 1:51.
  - "Fear of Isaac" (31:42, 53)
- Marriage[s] in Aram (29:14-28)
  - Sexual purity: contrast Gen 29 (Jacob & Rachel) with Gen 34 (Shechem & Dinah).
  - Triple-deceit!
- Peniel—Wrestling match at the Jabbok (32:22-32).
  - This is often described as his "rebirth," the event that should have taken place at Bethel. He returns to Canaan.
  - But had he profoundly changed? Ch. 33--fear of Esau, 33:14--deceit?, 34:1ff--lack of concern for Dinah, 35--lack of concern for Bilhah (cp. 49:2-3).
- "Death" of Joseph (37)
- Reaffirmation of divine promise and reunion with Joseph (46:2, 29-30)
- Blessing his sons and grandsons (48-49); death (49:33) and burial (50:14).
- Summary
  - Jacob's life not so impressive as his father's and grandfather's lives (47:9).
  - Hard life.
    - Ran away from home.
    - Endured loss of his beloved (favorite) wife and his special (favorite) son.
    - Lack of unity among his children.
  - Still, he kept his eye on the promises, insisting that he be buried in Canaan (49:29-33).

##### Some things we learn about God:

- Even if God appears to us or works in our life in an intense way, our basic personality type will probably remain unaffected. He will not force us to change.
- God does not spare his chosen ones from tragedy.
- We can wrestle the Lord for his blessing, but if he has already given his word, this is wholly unnecessary – exhausting, unproductive, and ultimately faithless.

The lesson + this handout are at the NR website. In addition, a fuller version of these lessons may be found at [www.jacobypremium.com](http://www.jacobypremium.com). Includes podcast (15-25 mins), notes, suggestions for advanced studies, key Hebrew words, what we learn about God and family devotional plan based on character. 10 cents/day. Please sign up!