

Walking Through the Word

Creation to Judges (Week 6)

Story: **Jacob's Move and Brotherly Reconciliation** (E: Laban Tricks Jacob & Jacob and Esau Meet Again, p 47-50)

Location: **Genesis 31:1-55; Genesis 32-35**

Bios & definitions

Laban: the father of Rachel and Leah; father-in-law of Jacob; wealthy sheep breeder; mistreated his daughters and Jacob

Esau: oldest twin born to Isaac and Rebekah; name means "hairy"; also called Edom which means "red"; sold his birthright to his younger twin Jacob for a bowl of stew; the favorite of his father Isaac

Jacob: younger of the twins; name means "he grasps the heel" (figuratively, he deceives); the favorite of his mother Rebekah; fled to Haran after deceptively receiving his father's blessing and thus his brother's birthright; married Leah and Rachel and fathered 13 children (12 sons and 1 daughter) with them and their maidservants; one of the most significant people of the Old Testament along with Abraham and Isaac; his name was later changed to "Israel"

Israel: the name that Jacob received after wrestling with an angel of God during a dream as he was traveling back to his homeland; means "one who struggles with God and overcomes"; can also mean "prince of God"

Story: **Joseph's Story** (E: Joseph Becomes a Slave; Joseph, a Prisoner in Egypt; Joseph, a Ruler in Egypt; Joseph's Dreams Come True; Joseph's Brothers Return to Egypt; and Joseph Makes Himself Known, p 51-66)

Location: **Genesis 37-45:24**

Bios & definitions

Reuben: the oldest son of Jacob (and Leah) who did not want to harm Joseph; had planned to rescue his brother only to find out that his brothers had sold him

Joseph: first son of Jacob and Rachel; the favorite son of Jacob; had two dreams foretelling that he would one day rule over his brothers; was thrown into a pit by his brothers and then sold into slavery for 20 pieces of silver; did not understand God's plan but trusted Him; rose in power from slave to ruler of Egypt; was known for his personal integrity; was a man of spiritual sensitivity (interpreted dreams); prepared a nation to survive a famine

Potiphar: Joseph's master; a very rich man; put Joseph in charge of his household and wealth

Potiphar's Wife: accused Joseph of making advances on her after he refused her advances; was responsible for Joseph going to prison

Benjamin: the youngest son of Jacob; his mother Rachel died during his birth; became Jacob's favorite after Joseph was gone; was not allowed to go to Egypt with his brothers during the famine

Simeon: the second oldest of Jacob; held prisoner by Joseph while the other brothers returned home

Judah: brother who offered to take Benjamin's place when Joseph's gold cup was found in his bag

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Story: **“Israel” Moves to Egypt** (E: Joseph’s Family Moves to Egypt, p 66-69)

Location: **Genesis 45:25-50:26**

Bios & definitions

This brings us to the end of Genesis and the beginning of Exodus.

NOTE: Jacob’s life had four stages, each marked by a personal encounter with God. In the first stage, Jacob lived up to his name, which means “he grasps the heel” (figuratively, “he deceives”). He grabbed Esau’s heel at birth, and by the time he fled from home, he had also grabbed his brother’s birthright and blessing. During his flight, God first appeared to him. Not only did God confirm to Jacob his blessing, but he awakened in Jacob a personal knowledge of himself. In the second stage, Jacob experienced life from the other side, being manipulated and deceived by Laban. But there is a curious change; the Jacob of stage one would simply have left Laban, whereas the Jacob of stage two, after deciding to leave, waited six years for God’s permission. In the third stage, Jacob was in a new role as grabber. This time, by the Jordan River, he grabbed on to God and wouldn’t let go. He realized his dependence on the God who had continued to bless him. His relationship to God became essential to his life, and his name was changed to Israel, “he struggles with God”. Jacob’s last stage of life was to be grabbed – God achieved a firm hold on him. In responding to Joseph’s invitation to come to Egypt, Jacob was clearly unwilling to make a move without God’s approval.