

# THE STORY OF THE WORLD



## The Sovereign Grace of God

Genesis 23-36

### Main Idea

The Sovereign Grace of God works amidst mans unfaithfulness to bring about the Lord's Faithful purposes.

### Overview

(May want to re-read Genesis 17.5-8 to be reminded of the Abrahamic Covenant)

#### **I. Isaac**

- God is faithful to provide Isaac a wife (Gen. 24.26)
  - She is a gift of Gods steadfast love & faithfulness
  
- Genesis 25.19 Isaac is 40 yrs old when he marries Rebekah who is barren (25.21)
  - Isaac prays and the Lord grants life...20 yrs later! (25.26)
    - This happens so that it would be clear this is super natural...authored by God
  - They have two sons (two nations) where the Lord foreordains the younger to serve the older (25.23)
  
- Isaac has the Covenant promises from God spoken and affirmed upon Isaac: (Genesis 26.2-5)
  - The same things are promised as were promised to Abraham:
    - God would have a people
    - God would have them in a place (Land of Canaan)
    - God would be with them as He ruled them
  - God makes this Covenant by His grace...there is nothing in Him that demands this occur, nor is
  - there anything Isaac has done to deserve this
  
- Isaac lies about wife (just as his father did): (Genesis 26.6-7)

#### **II. Jacob**

- Jacob is the second child born amongst the twins (Genesis 25.25-26)
  - Esau is a man of the field loved by Isaac
  - Jacob is a man of the home loved by Rebekah
  - Jacob "steals" Esau's birth right by taking it from a famished Esau who was hungry: (Gen. 25.30-34)
    - The author makes it clear that Esau "despised" his birthright in his actions (Gen. 25.34)
  
- Jacob deceives his father Isaac in getting the blessing by pretending to be Esau: Gen. 27
  - Jacob's name means heel grabber or deceiver...clearly Jacob is living in accordance w/ his name
  - Esau responds in hate wanting to kill his brother: Genesis 27.42

- Esau explicitly rejects the Jacob's command to not marry a Canaanite woman: Gen. 28.6
  - Jacob flees his brother and leaves 'the land' and goes to live with his mother's brother Laban
- At what became known as "Bethel" Jacob is spoken to by the Lord in the vision of the ladder to heaven
  - Genesis 28.12-15 the Covenant is spoken into Jacob by the Lord
    - Same ideas are communicated:
- God will have a ppl through Jacob
- God's ppl will have a place through Jacob
- They will be under the Command of God
- Jacob falls in love with Rachel and has to work 7 yrs to gain her according to Laban where he is deceived himself as Laban sneaks in Leah and Jacob continues the marriage process with her though he is outraged: (Genesis 29.15-27)
  - Jacob works another 7 yrs to gain Rachel whom he does eventually gain
    - Rachel, while beautiful, apparently worships false gods: Gen. 31.19
    - She loves mandrakes more than Leah sleeping with Jacob: 30.15
  - BECAUSE Leah was hated, God opened her womb to birth 6 sons: Gen. 29.31
    - The names of the sons reveal the disdain that she lived within
    - Yet: God even shows grace to Rachel in giving her sons: Gen. 30.22-24
  - Jacob stays w/ Laban another 7 yrs where the Lord gave increase to his livestock: (Gen. 30.27-30)
    - He deceives Laban and leaves without notice
    - Laban takes over Jacob and they have a covenant of peace between one another
- Jacob fears Esau as he begins to come back to the land thinking Esau will want to kill him: Gen. 32.3-5
- Jacob recognizes that God has loved him continually and been faithful to him (when Jacob hasn't been the same to God, presumably): Gen. 32.9-12
  - Jacob calls down the promises of the Covenant in fear of what may happen to him
- Jacob wrestles with "God": Genesis 32.22-32
  - It is apparently a "man" (Gen. 32.24-25)
  - Yet: Jacob recognizes this is something akin to God: (Genesis 32.30)
  - Jacob is stubborn and does not give in until the "man" breaks Jacob's hip while Jacob demands
  - a blessing
  - His name is changed to Israel (struggles with God and men): (Genesis 32.28)
- Jacob finally meets Esau and Esau is kind to his brother: Genesis 33.4
  - Jacob recognizes God has been gracious to him (he hasn't deserved what he has received): (Genesis 33.5)
  - The daughter Dinah is raped: (Genesis 34.1-2)
    - God strikes the fear of Himself to all surrounding nations: (Genesis 35.1-2)
- God re-affirms his covenant with Jacob: (Genesis 35.9-12)
  - This after Jacob has purified his family: (Gen. 35.1-4)
  - Reuben fails: Gen. 35.22
    - Simeon and Levi both kill: (Gen. 34.25)
    - Leaving Judah with the likely hand in continuing the line of the Covenant through him

## Questions

Discussion Starter: *How have you understood the “patriarchs” in the past? “Heroes of the Faith”? How has this series begun to shape your understanding of how and why the Bible is written? (Who’s the hero?)*

1. Read Genesis 25:19-28; 26:1-12, 23-24. Discuss where you see Isaac’s unfaithfulness. Discuss how you see the faithfulness of God amidst Isaac’s unfaithfulness.
2. Read 28:1-5, 13-15. What does this covenant ultimately promise to both Isaac and Jacob? (What’s God up to in this Covenant?) Compare this to Genesis 12:1-3. How do you see this throughout the Scriptures?
3. Read Genesis 25:29-34; 27:1-27. How would you describe Esau? Jacob? How are we like Jacob?
4. Read Genesis 29:30-35. What do these verses tell you about the character of God? How is this different from the world’s ‘character’? In what ways does this challenge?
5. Take a moment and peruse the text and identify all the places where the LORD God is bringing about something. Do the same by identifying places where others are unfaithful. In what ways do you see God’s grace working in this story?

Accountability Question: *In what ways are you attempting to scheme in order to bring about your plans instead of trusting in the Sovereign Lord to bring about His good purposes of your life?*