

# Note

## Genesis 25-50 – Part 1

Era	Characters	Chapters
In the beginning	God create world	<a href="#">Gen 1</a>
Before 4000 BC	Adam Eve	<a href="#">Gen 1~5</a>
Before 3000 BC	Cain Abel Seth	<a href="#">Gen 4~5</a>
Before 2500 BC	Noah	<a href="#">Gen 5~10</a>
About 1500 BC <b>Era of Patriarchs</b>	Abraham Isaac Ishmael Esau Jacob Joseph	<a href="#">Gen 11~50</a> <a href="#">?</a>

# Summary

## **Genesis 25-50 – Part 1 of 1** ..... 3

Lessons from (a) Isaac's life: to guard against favouritism towards our children and (b) Jacob's life: persistence in pleading with God in prayer.

Why God let Joseph and the Isrealites come under Egyptian slavery.

Types (foreshadowing) of Christ in Genesis: Jacob's dream about a ladder going up to heaven and Joseph's life of purity that embodied serving and forgiveness.

# Transcript

## Genesis 25-50 – Part 1 of 1

We now continue our study of Genesis, chapter 25 to 50.

In this study, we will do a quick case study of three lives. Two of them are patriarchs, Isaac, and Jacob. The third one is Joseph.

For Isaac, we don't know much about him, actually very little is written about him, except that he was a miracle child. Abraham was like 100 years old. And Sarah was 90 years old when they were blessed with this miracle child. His name Isaac means 'laughter' because when God told them that they would have a kid, they laughed, this is ridiculous. So we see Hebrew names are really largely descriptive names. You know, actually most cultures for example, the Chinese, our names are actually normal words, often adjectives like virtuous or beautiful, names are usually descriptive, and Isaac simply means 'laughter'. And so when we study the Bible, it's good to sometimes know the meaning of those names. For example, Abram, before he was Abraham he was Abram. And Abram simply means 'Father'. I guess it comes from the Hebrew word, Abba. You know, Papa, the Hebrews if you go to Israel and always you hear kids calling the dad 'Abba'. Abram simply means 'father'. But when God made a covenant with him and said He will bless many people, He changed his name to Abraham. Abraham simply means 'father' also 'Abba', and 'ham' probably means 'many', 'father of many'. Look at the names in the Bible if you can try to find out what those names are.

We don't know much about Isaac's life except that amazing episode at Mount Moriah where he willingly allowed his father to offer him as a burnt sacrifice. That is quite amazing. I mean, it's supernatural. I'll put it this way. How God worked it out, I don't know. But it's definitely not some natural response of a boy waiting to see a knife about to stabbing him, not protesting.

Maybe the only lesson I would say at this point we will pick up from Isaac's life, a case study of Isaac's life is that He made a common mistake that many in the Bible made and many of us make. And that was he had favouritism towards his kids.

Now God blessed Isaac with two kids; a pair of twins, not identical. One was Esau the elder and the younger was Jacob. And the Bible says very clearly, Isaac loved Esau, and his wife, Rachel, loved Jacob. Now this is something so terrible we keep seeing over and over. Later we see Jacob makes the same mistake and he loves Joseph his son, more than his other 11 sons and so many problems arose from that. So we learn one thing - it is so natural to like a certain person, even among our kids. Something about the character that suits us, for example, it says Isaac loved to eat venison. And Esau was a hunter. There was that affinity and he loved Esau.

See when we love one kid more than the other and that's quite natural, we must never show it because that will cause sibling rivalry. Earlier on, we saw sibling rivalry between Isaac and Ishmael. Here we see sibling rivalry between the descendants of Isaac's two twins, Jacob the father of the Israelites, and Esau the father of the Edomites and as we read the history of Israel, there's a lot of fighting between them. Thankfully the fighting has stopped, not because they became friends, but because they are no more

Edomites. The last Edomites that we know recorded in the Bible is King Herod, he was a Edomites. So please be careful case study.

We see a lot of problems from sibling rivalry caused by parental favouritism. If you like one kid more than the other, never show it. It's something personal in your heart. Both are your kids, love them, don't cause sibling rivalry.

Now if you compare the two characters the father and son, Isaac, we can say he was a bland person, nothing much about him is written. Jacob on the other hand, a lot is written about, he is a very colourful person. Jacob was the younger of the two twins, Esau and Jacob. But God favoured Jacob over Esau. We see this over and over again, in a sense, Isaac was favoured over Ishmael, Ishmael was 13 years older. And Jacob was a few seconds younger than Esau, so he's not the firstborn, but yet God favoured him. You see this in the Bible, I think God wants to teach us that we have no natural right to claim God's favour. Every one of us has no natural right. We get God's favour because of His grace, because of His goodness, not because we are older or smarter. Jacob, the younger, from the very beginning, showed his character. He grabbed the heel of Esau as he was not allowing Esau to come out before him. You know, babies usually come out with head first. He grabbed the heel to prevent Esau from coming out. And his name is very interesting - his name Jacob means supplanter, 'a grabber of other people's things'. He liked to grab what was not his. So the name Jacob simply means a supplanter, a grabber of things not his. Later on, we see his character showed through when he and his older brother had a dealing one day. His older brother Esau was starving and Jacob had a bowl of porridge, and his brother said, 'Give it to me'. I will give it to you if you will give me your birth right'. That means 'let me be rightfully the firstborn'. So at a moment of opportunity, he grabbed his brother's birth right.

Then when his father was getting old with a cataract problem, getting blind, and this Papa Isaac wanted to bless his kids. He deceived his blind father and said he was Esau and he got the blessings of his father for the eldest son. So he got Esau's blessings by deceiving his father. Can you imagine what kind of character he is?

Now after this event, the Bible tells us he had to flee from Esau because Esau was about to kill him and you see the kind of Family Feud. Then he runs off. And he looks to his mom's family far away. And then he found a wife, beautiful girl called Rachel and then he asked the hand of Rachel from her dad Laban and Laban said "Sure, I can give you Rachel". But Laban cheated him. And he had to work seven years not for Rachel. But when he thought he got Rachel. In the end, Laban gave him the other daughter, Leah. Now, this is payback time. He had deceived so many people. He finally met his match in Laban, his father in law was just as big a deceiver as him. So anyway, To cut a long story short, he finally married two sisters Leah and Rachel and get to work 14 years for these two sisters. And he finally leaves Laban and goes back.

Now he had certain encounters with God. One very interesting encounter found in Genesis 28 is a dream, he saw a ladder going up to heaven, and the angels of God going up and down this ladder - Genesis, chapter 28. Now actually the Hebrew word for the ladder is not so much the angels walking up the ladder and walking down. It's almost like an escalator as if there was a way between heaven and earth and angels would just go up and down. Probably the first escalator design in the world. Now, what is all this about? What is this ladder about? We see that Jesus said to Nathaniel, in John 1:51, 'hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man', not on the ladder. Jesus was referring to a story that all the Jews were familiar with.

Jews all knew all these stories. They heard the Torah. Every year they heard the Torah in the synagogue, it was read through, read through, read through, they knew these stories really well. And you know what Jesus said to Nathaniel , remember that story about Jacob's dream, angels going up and down this escalator to heaven. Let me tell you who this escalator is. The angels are going to go up on The Son of Man, Me. So what is Jesus telling Nathaniel? I am the way to heaven. The dream that Jacob had a long time ago, he didn't know who that ladder was, I'm telling you, I'm the ladder. So I hope you see that little link there between that very unusual dream. And what it actually is a type 2000 or 1500 years later. In Genesis 31, another interesting story of Jacob, he's got a lot of interesting stories.

Another story says one evening he had to wrestle with someone who came to his tent, and he sensed this was a messenger from God, and he wrestled with possibly what was the pre incarnate Christ. And he wrestled, (I don't know who it is actually but let's just say he wrestled with this messenger of God ), and he would not let this messenger go. He said, 'Unless you bless me I will not let you go'. The Bible says the wrestling was so intense that the hip of Jacob was dislocated at that time. Now we know that the joint, the most stable joint in the human body is the hip joint, because it is a ball and socket joint. It's like it almost cannot be pulled out. You will see wrestling in WWF but don't hear of dislocated hip joints, sometimes shoulder dislocated, elbow, never a hip joint. I've had a dislocated hip joint. Let me tell you it is unbearable, the pain. But even then, he would not let go. He hung on fighting and fighting. And then at the end of this, God gave him a new name. He said, you shall no more be called Jacob. From henceforth your name shall be Israel. Always remember we have here the ' el, el, el' at the end - that's God. Israel means wrestling with God. It means fighting, contending with God. It can also mean triumphing with God.

After this battle with God, asking for God's blessings, "God you've got to bless me", Jacob took on a new name. He had now triumphed with God in spite of all his bad character, his defective, deceitful character. He had one good character - He wanted God's blessings. He really sought for blessings, he wanted his Papa's blessings, he wanted God's blessings. And he did his best to get it - in the beginning, deceitfully; and later, he wrestled with God for it.

Now what is the lesson you and I must take away from this case study of Jacob?

1. Always be careful to love all my kids, show equality to all my kids.

1. We must plead with God. You must beg God in prayer for His blessings.

One thing I've discovered in prayer today is that prayer has become very scholarly. You see pastors pray like they're doing poetry, 'thou, thee, thy', the sentence is perfect, the grammar is perfect. They want to sound so good in prayer, so nice in prayer. Now wrestling is not nice, wrestling is very messy, there's no form, you know, sometimes even certain sports seem to have a certain form. Wrestling seems to me like, no form, you know, that is what prayer should be. It's like pleading with God and I'm afraid that is

lost. Most prayer is almost like just talking to God, telling God or informing God, and I'm afraid that we have lost the art. Now the term used in theology is agonize with God, agonizing prayer. What we have is organized prayer.

So can I recommend you take away this lesson from Jacob's very defective life. He had one redeeming feature - He knew how to pray. And I think if you know how to pray, you will have a totally changed life as

Jacob did. His life was no more the same. He's now called Israel. Now Jacob had 12 sons. Now sad to say, that came from four women, his two wives, and the two wives had two slaves; and they were two sisters who were often competing with each other who could produce the sons. 'How come you got more sons than me?' and told Jacob "go into my slave, so we can get a son through my slave". So you know, you see these two sisters in the end became two competitors and there was very, very terrible marital dynamics in the family. Polygamy always leads to this. Whenever religion allows polygamy, I'm sad to say, that whatever they say about being fair to all your wives! I believe that women will always be fighting because in Genesis chapter three, this is what God said to Eve, "this is your suffering, you will bring forth children in pain and your desire shall be to your husband". There's just one husband, and these two women are fighting for the affection of their husband and two sisters became literally two enemies, it's sad.

The name Israel now became the name of a nation. So Jacob became literally the name of not a person but of a nation - Israelites. Today we use the word Jews. Jews cannot be used at this time. You cannot say these were the Jews. These are not the Jews. These were Israelites.

Why do we today use the term Jews? The term Jews refer to actually one tribe of these 12 sons. These twelve sons became the 12 tribes of Israel. 10 tribes were taken into exile earlier. We call them the Lost Tribes of Israel. We don't know where they are now. They were taken into Assyria and then disappeared from the face of the earth. The last two tribes that were not taken away were Judah and a tiny tribe called Benjamin. Benjamin had been decimated, later we'll see why. So basically, it was 10 tribes gone, two tribes left, but only one was a major tribe - Judah. And that's where the name Jews comes from. So when you say Jews, you don't mean Israelites, Jews mean the remnant. So today when we see the Jews, we're not talking about these original 12 tribes, only one tribe. I hope you understand why the name Jew is used today rather than Israelite because 10 tribes have disappeared from history.

We then move on to the next case study of Joseph. Joseph is very well known because the story of the Prince of Egypt has been seen and done over and over again. It's a great human drama how someone was sold slavery and became the prime minister of the greatest empire in the world at that time.

Why was Joseph sold to slavery? I mean, there are many reasons but I can think of some.

One is God wanted the Israelites to experience slavery, agony, suffering, bondage for 300- 400 years. Why? Because it is a type of us before we are saved, we couldn't get out of our sin. Hard as we tried - moral education, religious education, we couldn't get out of the grip of sin in our lives of pride, lust, tendency to lie, selfishness, ego, so bound up in us just like we are slaves to these. Until, in the case of the Israelites, they were led out by Moses, free

from Egypt. And that's a picture of us, led by Christ, freed from our past life of slavery to be saved. That's probably one reason why Joseph was allowed to go to slavery.

But there's another reason given in Genesis 15:16 - it was a time when God spoke to Abraham and God said I'm going to give you this land, this Promised Land, but not now. I will give it to you after many generations when the iniquity of the Amorites are full. The Amorites were the people living in that land. They were wicked people. They had some of the most horrible practices in their religion of sex. They believe that if you have sex, that fertility increases your crops and makes you richer. So basically, their religion was based on temple prostitutes, male and female. Can you imagine religion is a time you go to the temple to have sex. The temple is a brothel. And of course, another horrible thing about them was they worship with human sacrifice, often their own babies. Now this kind of evil that they had in the land of the Amorites had not reached its fullness. In other words, God said I want to destroy these people but I cannot destroy them now. It's not fair. There is wickedness but it has to reach a certain state until my patience runs out, then I will deal with them. In other words, God just didn't tell the Israelites just go in and take the land, just kill them

Many times when we read the Old Testament, you and I are a bit troubled. I was troubled for a long time. Why would God allow one race of His people, Israelites to destroy another race? Isn't this called ethnic cleansing? Isn't this what we don't like to see nowadays? When one stronger tribe destroys and cleanses another. This is not ethnic cleansing. This is evil cleansing. God was not getting rid of one race by another race. God was getting rid of horrendous evil on Earth, which should never be allowed on this earth. That you kill and burn your own babies, you go to say

worship god by having sex with a prostitute. Now, it makes no sense. It should not be allowed. This is the cancer that should not be allowed to spread from the promised land to other lands. So it was not ethnic cleansing. Please don't get it wrong when you read. It was

God's righteousness against gross evil. Israel at the time when they moved into Egypt had only 70 people . Imagine , 70 of them cannot take the promised land because the promised land was full of cities, properly built up cities full of matured farms, etc. 70 people cannot go and occupy that land. So they went to Egypt so that they will grow in numbers. Later on, we see 2-3 million fill this land and it makes sense.

So why did God allow them to be in Egypt. Why as slaves? Because God wanted them to experience a horrible life without God. And then God wanted them to grow to be sufficient numbers to occupy the land. And also, before He could get rid of the idolatrous races, He had to be fair that they had to be so wicked that they deserve to be removed from the face of this earth

Now Joseph is really a type of Jesus Christ. If you look at his life, we can read of no visible sin recorded in the Bible, though of course he was a sinner like all of us. And he was always wanting to serve other people even in prison, the butler and baker of Pharaoh, he wanted to help them. Then later, when his brothers who had sold him into slavery because of jealousy, because of sibling rivalry came to him, he forgave them completely. And he helped them. Isn't that a type of Christ? Forgive them for they know not what they do. He told them, ' God brought me into Egypt, you didn't send me ,God brought me into Egypt so that you will have food in the famine.' You know, at that time, Egypt had a severe famine, and it's not common in Egypt. As I said before, because of

the Nile River once in a while there was a famine in Egypt, very rare, not common. But in Israel, much more common.

Now, we end by seeing a prophecy as Israel is about to die. He calls all his sons to bless them, one by one, and then prophecy is made on his son, Judah. And this prophecy I believe has a lot of significance for the Israelites. On Judah it was said - remember Judah was the last tribe left by the time of Jesus. The 10 tribes had disappeared. Basically the Jews had only tribe when Jesus died. There were no more Israelites, it was the Jews. The prophecy in Genesis 49:10 'this sceptre shall not depart from Judah, until Shiloh come', for the Jews, they look at this prophecy and this "sceptre" speaks of rule. The rule shall not depart from Judah. All along Judah was the last tribe left. People like King David came from Judah, the Kings all came from Judah. And now there's only tribe left. The rule shall not depart from Judah, till Shiloh come. Now the word Shiloh is kind of mysterious, but it possibly means till the Messiah, the Messenger of God, comes.

Now, what is this prophecy? You see the Jews, even after they came back from exile basically ruled themselves. But just before the Coming of Christ the Romans made Judah a Roman province. And a Roman governor was appointed to rule the Jews. Now when the Jews saw that they were now under Roman rule they anticipated the coming of the Messiah!

Now the book ends very sadly. The last line says Joseph was put into a coffin. The book of Genesis began with a beautiful universe being created. God said It was very good, now it ends with a coffin. This is the story of sin, Fall of Man. Now after this event when Joseph goes into the coffin, there's literally a silence from God. The Jews did not hear from God. The Israelites did not hear from God

in Egypt, totally for hundreds of years, possibly 400 years. No voice from God. Prophetic silence, and then Moses comes up and brings them out of Egypt. After the book of Malachi was written was 400 years total silence, not a word from God to His people, to the Jews. And then Christ comes and delivers them from sin and death. See the type - 400 years of silence in Egypt, Moses comes in, liberates them from bondage; 400 years of silence after Malachi and then Jesus comes and delivers us from sin and death.

May I recommend this - listen to these books, just as the Jews did. They knew the stories well, so anytime they could think through the case because they knew the stories because they heard it umpteen times. May you also have your audio Bibles on, when your drive, when you are cooking, listen to these stories, these case studies .And then at any time you can recall it and learn lessons from it.

So I hope this has been a good study of Genesis, we've taken a long time to do Genesis because there are a lot of truths in it, a lot of foundational truths. God bless you as you listen. if you like to read and you can read very fast, go ahead and read. But for most of us who are not speed readers can I suggest you Listen. God bless you.