



LIFE FROM CHAOS: GENESIS

STUDY 6: THE WRESTLER'S BLESSING

Genesis 25:19-28:9



Key Idea

Jacob needed God's blessing and we do too. But Jacob shows us that we can easily go about trying to get God's blessing in the wrong way.



Listen

This study is written to be used together with the sermon preached at Trinity Church which you can find on our church website.

www.trinitybay.church/sermon-archive/



Talk About

1. Last year at church we went through the first half of Genesis and this year we're finishing off the book with 6 more weeks of sermons and bible studies. Begin by briefly discussing with your group what you can remember, or what you know about the first half of Genesis. It might be useful to watch *The Bible Project's* video on Genesis as a group too - it comes in two parts and part 1 can be found here: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/torah-genesis-1/>

Our first study today covers Genesis 25:19-28:9. In these studies we'll be covering big 'chunks' of scripture, but you won't be instructed to read every part of the passage in your groups. Instead we'll just focus in on parts of the reading for the study. It would definitely be useful, though, to take the time to read the whole chunk in advance.



Explore



Read Genesis 25:19-34

2. What are your first impressions of the story? What marker shows us that we're now into a new section of the book of Genesis?

3. What is revealed to Rebekah about her new babies, before they're even born?

4. How would you describe the beginnings of the relationship between Jacob and Esau? What do you think of the two brothers so far?

Read Genesis 26:34-27:29

5. There are plenty of interesting details in this part of the story. Notice how 27:5-6 attributes the two sons to the two different parents - what do you think this signifies? What does 27:20 reveal about Jacob's faith? What signs does the story give that Isaac is suspicious of Jacob's trickery?

6. What do you think motivates Rebekah and Jacob to try and trick Isaac? What do you think of their behaviour?

Read Genesis 27:30-28:9

7. What do you think of how Isaac reacts here when the trickery is revealed? Why doesn't he just take back his blessing? Why does he go on to bless Jacob again in 28:1-4?

8. How do you feel about Esau's plight here? Where does the incident leave Jacob?

Application

9. Why do we need God's blessing? What blessings has God given us as Christians? Be specific! (You might like to look up Galatians 3:14 to help you think about the relationship between the blessings promised to Abraham and the blessings promised to the Christian.)
10. What can we learn from Jacob and Rebekah about how to go about getting God's blessings?
11. Where might we scheme / deceive / rely on our own actions to try and get God's blessings? How might we guard ourselves against acting this way?

Some Extra Notes

In the past we've often provided some extra notes to help leaders with these studies, but I thought I'd try just giving a few extra notes to everyone. (This isn't a school quiz so cheating to get the answers isn't a possibility!!) As you'll go through the study you'll see we're focusing on the theme of blessing. Blessing is very much the theme of Jacob's life. He's fighting his brother for blessing even before he's born and, to skip forward a bit, the climax of his story involves him wrestling God himself, again fighting for blessing. Blessing is a big theme in Genesis too - it's God's blessing that the broken world needs. It's God's blessing that is promised to Abraham in Genesis 12. And as the Bible story plays out, we see that it's God's blessings that come to Christians through Jesus. But as the study today tries to show - we don't get God's blessing by scheming or plotting or fighting for it - we get God's blessing by simply trusting in God and his promises. I've got a couple of notes on particular questions below:

- Question 4 - It'd be good to notice how Jacob and Esau are fighting for blessing right from the start. In the womb it seems like the jostling and fighting is about who'll be firstborn and earn the 'natural' right to inheriting the blessing that has been promised to this family.
- Question 5 - Don't spend too long here. Just some interesting details that show the complexity of the writing.
- Question 6 - I think Rebekah understands that the blessing Isaac is about to give is meant to be Jacob's, thinking back to what's revealed to her in 25:23. But I don't think that justifies her actions - Jacob and Rebekah would be better off trusting God to sort things - he knows what he's doing.
- Question 7 - I find this a tricky one - just because Isaac has said the words of blessing does that really mean he can't take it back? The passage seems to presume the power of his spoken words - almost like they're prophecy. After the fact, Isaac seems to understand that what's done is done - and God has made his choice - so he goes with it.
- Question 11 - I think it's pretty easy for Christians to perhaps put up a front, pretend to be something we're not, play games, or think that we can scheme our way to a life of blessing. Especially when times are hard we might struggle to trust in God so we do things like bargain with him, or do stupid things to try and get what we want. I think this passage reminds us of the importance of simple trust - God has a bigger plan than we often realize and remembering that he's a good God who's given us amazing promises can help a lot.