

# **Dr. Elaine Phillips, Old Testament Literature,**

## **Lecture 8, Jacob to Joseph**

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Well, good morning. How is it that you say good morning? Does anybody remember good morning? Boker is morning, right? So I'm going to say Boker Tov to you, and you're going to say Boker Or back to me. Splendid.

Splendid. Now we remember. It just needs a little prodding here and there.

Ted, this sounds like it's echoing. Do you want me to turn it down a little bit, or are you okay with the sound? Was that a yes or a no? Down. Right.

Okay, that's one down. That might help, I think. The announcements regarding the exam are up here.

I think they're fairly straightforward. As I said a moment ago, we are going to try today to get through a monumental amount of material so we can catch up, and therefore, we're going to do Isaac Jacob and then the Joseph stuff as well. As I said earlier, Joseph's stories are pretty straightforward.

We're going to make our way into the introduction to those, and then I'm going to trust you to know the details of the narratives. So that's kind of how we're going to work that. In terms of the exam, policies are on Blackboard.

There's been some question in terms of whether you can start at 8.45 or 9. I'll be here by 8.45, all right? So, if you really want to get started early on this, I'll be here, Lord willing, by 8.45. I'd like to have you done by convocation time because Dinesh D'Souza is no mean speaker. He's a very significant individual, and I think the convocation will be quite interesting on that day. So, we'll see what we can do.

At any rate, everything is up through the end of Genesis. I haven't heard any words from anybody on taking it in the Academic Support Center. If you need to do that, you need to let me know today so I can get the exam over there for you.

A question came up in terms of what kinds of maps are going to be on the exam. There is not going to be a map that is visually there in front of you, okay? Nothing like that. But you need to know the contents of the maps, all right? You need to know what we've talked about in terms of the geography of the ancient Near East, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Anatolia, all those things.

You need to know that stuff. So, kind of get that packed in your mind, and then also the things that have to do with the land of Israel and the patriarchs as they're operating in the land of Israel. Those will be important.

Now, are there questions on that? Okay. Yes, Sarah. It's going to incorporate stuff from the ancient Near East, obviously, because that's the background to Abraham.

So, know the material from the ancient Near East map, but there will be some things that will be focused on the Israel one as well. The idea is to know what we went over when we did our historical geography lecture. That I think will help you.

Any other questions on exam content? Yeah, Nick. There are three maps posted on Blackboard in PDF format. You can download those and then work through that map assignment that's also in the course.

Look under course materials. All that stuff is there, okay? So that should help you. Anything else? I want to make sure we're all on the same page getting into this exam.

Well, let's take some time to pray together as we start. Gracious God, our Heavenly Father, as we begin this hour together, again, we offer you our thanks. We know that all the things that we enjoy and so often take for granted are from your good hand.

And even those challenges through which we want to be able by your spirit to persevere are challenges that you bring to grow our character. Father, we do ask that you would teach us, use your word and your spirit to help us learn the things you want us to know this day. And so may our study indeed be worship in your presence.

We ask, as we have before, for people outside of our immediate spheres. We do pray for wisdom for our leaders in the country. We pray again for trouble spots in the world that are so fraught with friction and tension and violence.

Please, by your spirit, overrule those hostilities. Father, now we offer you ourselves, our minds, our hearts. And we ask that your name be honored and blessed on this day.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, let's carry right into just a little bit of a review from last time.

Because to move on to Isaac and Jacob, we need to just remind ourselves of the things that we were talking about with regard to Isaac. We're not going to spend a lot of time with Isaac. But on the other hand, one of the key things that happened to him when we began to talk about this last time was the fact that he willingly offered himself, if you want to put it in those terms when Abraham was commanded by God to offer Isaac as a burnt offering at the region of Moriah.

We talked about some of the possible parallels between Isaac and Jesus going to the region of Moriah, which, as we know, is Jerusalem, and particularly the mountains of Moriah will be in the area where the temple was later built. And then, of course, we have Isaac as very clearly Abraham's son, only son, beloved son, Isaac, coming through in here. And then Isaac even goes so far as to carry the wood as they're going on up there, parallel possibly to Jesus carrying the cross.

Again, how far you want to push these adumbrations is up to you, but I don't think we want to lose sight of them because they're very interesting. And then, of course, there's a key substitution that's made when the ram is substituted as well. This is just one of my many favorite Rembrandt paintings, and I think we'll just charge right along.

We spent a little time admiring that in other sessions, but here we go. Just to get in mind the map stuff that we've been over now multiple times, for our purposes today, what we're really interested in is going to be the area right in here, the Negev area, because, of course, Isaac and Abraham earlier had been kind of located there on the fringes of Canaanite territory. Hebron's going to be important. Shechem, Dothan, and some of these things are right here in our hill country region.

And then, of course, as Jacob flees from the ire of his brother Esau, he's going to go fleeing up this direction, go to Paddan Aram, going back to the old hometown or homeland, if you will. So that's the direction we're going. When we think of Isaac, there's a lot we could say, but for our purposes, since we have so much else to do, I'd like you to think of him as a hinge.

And as you know, a hinge is what kind of holds together, in an extremely critical way, things that are bigger. So, on the one side, you have a door; on the other side, you have a wall, and there's the hinge in between. And if you want to think of that figure, we have Abraham, who is the father of the covenant people, and we've been through that last time in terms of God's articulations of the covenant in an ongoing way to him.

And then, of course, noticing in chapter 23, which we're not going to spend any time on, but just, other than this, just notice that when Sarah, Abraham's wife, dies at the age of 127, Abraham buys a plot of land from Ephron the Hittite. Therefore, he now has land. It's a tiny parcel.

It's a tiny parcel, but nevertheless, it's the beginning of what's going to become the whole huge land grant, if you will. And then, of course, on the other side of the hinge, we've got Jacob, with whom we're going to spend a fair amount of time today. Excuse me.

Jacob, as we're going to see in chapter 32, gets renamed Israel, and there are some interesting issues with regard to that. And then he will have the 12 sons, who will become the tribes of Israel itself. So, you know, two major characters.

Yes, Ginger. Good. Yeah.

And I'll get to that. But yeah, you do want to know them. You do want to know them.

Just to kind of talk about our hinge a little bit more, a couple more minutes here on the hinge, things we want to know about Isaac. Of course, we've been talking already about his being bound on the altar. He also, by arrangement of his father and his father's servant, who makes a trip to find Rebekah, marries Rebekah.

There are about three things I want to say about this narrative. There's a lot more we could be saying, but three things. I think Trevor asked the question, was it you who asked the question last time about this symbolism of putting the hand under the thigh with the oath? Somebody asked that question.

That was you, Andrew. Yeah, okay. What's being said there when Abraham says, put your hand under my thigh and take an oath, is basically, that's a euphemism for your genitals, all right? But what's being said is that next to the source of life, most important, you know, this promise is for seed.

This promise is for progeny. This promise is there is going to be a whole line that's going to be forthcoming. And so, in that context, this oath takes on some fairly significant meaning.

You need to get a wife for my son so that the promise can continue. You know, there's a lot of question, by the way, on how to understand that, but I think that's probably the best way to read it. So, thank you. Sorry, Trevor. It was Andrew.

The second thing I want to say about that marriage chapter is that, did you notice how long it was? This chapter goes on and on and on and on, doesn't it? First of all, you have all the things that happened, and then the servant gets there, and he repeats the whole thing all over again, with lots of detail.

That's not just happenstance. When that kind of thing happens in a narrative, something must be important about it. We're to know that this is by God's design.

One literary way of showing that is by repeating it. It's almost like at the mouth of two witnesses, a theme that we're going to see multiple times again. But the text itself gives multiple witnesses to the fact that this is God's choice in terms of a wife for Isaac.

Now, the third thing we want to say about this—actually, there are four. The third thing we want to say about this is that I hope you also noticed what kind of a woman Rebecca is. When that servant comes, how many camels has he got in his train behind him? Did you notice that little detail? Chelsea? I think it's 10.

Is it 12? I think it's 10. We can go back and check. He's got multiple camels.

Once a camel has been—and by the way, we could spend a lot of time talking about camels because they're such interesting creatures in terms of how they belong so well in that context. But if a camel has been going for a fair amount of time without water, a camel is going to drink up to 25 gallons of water in one fell swoop. So, as the text is saying, she was watering these camels, she's going back and forth and back and forth and back and forth doing this because if it's 10 camels, it's 250 gallons of water.

That takes a little bit of effort. And Rebecca shows right away that she's someone with a certain amount of energy. She's also someone who seems to have a certain amount of adventuresome spirit because she's willing to go right away with these people, often to a land that she doesn't know.

And then, of course, the final thing we want to say about this narrative right at the end of chapter 24, in verse 67, when she gets there, Isaac brings her into the tent of his mother, Sarah. He married her. She became his wife, and he loved her.

That statement doesn't appear very often. I think Dr. Wilson in his book emphasizes that a little bit. He loved her.

And so, we see an interesting marriage relationship. Notice the three patriarchs; this is the one where there's only one wife. The others have other things going on with concubines and multiple wives in Jacob's case.

Well, during Isaac's life, we also renewed the promise several times. In other words, the promise that God made to Abraham is re-articulated to Isaac. So, we know there's an ongoing promise and continuity in this.

And then, of course, we have him participating in the events of Jacob and Esau's lives, at which we're going to look in a moment. Just a quick aside, Abraham does have other sons, as we read in chapter 25. He will father Ishmael and Midian and some other folks as well.

That's going to be important when we start talking about the Ishmaelites and the Midianites, but that will happen. Well, actually, it's going to happen later today. I keep forgetting we're compressing lectures here.

Okay. First off, a focus on Jacob. One of the things that you're going to see as we look through this story is that it's so fraught with tension.

Jacob's story is a story of tension. It's a story of conflict. There's a lot of pain involved in here.

And in essence, you know, all the blessings that appear to be given to Jacob, he doesn't really have for a majority of his life because of all these horrible things that are happening. At the same time, God's going to keep intervening, and he'll confront Jacob at times, certainly with that wrestling thing. So, watch these two factors being interwoven.

This is great narrative. First of all, the birth and the prophecy. First thing you want to say is, here we have a case of a barren woman.

Does this begin to sound like a theme? And it's not the only one. It's going to continue. One of the subtexts here is, I would suggest, that we're to know that this chosen line of chosen people is very clearly by God's design because the women are barren until God intervenes.

There's a prayer offered, and there are some interpretive things in this case. God's intervening here. If I remember correctly, it took 20 years.

Isaac is 40 years old in chapter 25, verse 10. He's 60 years old when Rebekah births the twins. So again, they're waiting for a while.

And as you know from reading this story, even in the birth process, we've got some tension going on, don't we? Verse 24, chapter 25. When the time came for her to give birth, there were twin boys in her womb. The first to come out was red, and his whole body was like a hairy garment.

They named him Esau. After this, his brother came out with his hand grasping Esau's heel. So you can already see the beginnings of tension in terms of grasping in that story from a literary perspective.

The name Jacob is Yaakov in Hebrew, and it means to grasp, grab, or hold onto. It will also come to mean deceit, and both of those fit fairly well.

Well, that gets us to, we've got to back up a little way, the inquiry that Rebecca makes of the Lord. And I want to read this as well. She becomes pregnant after Isaac prays for her.

And in verse 22, the babies jostled each other within her, and she said, why is this happening? So, she goes to inquire. And here's the Lord's statement. Now, maybe you know all this already, but we've got to focus on this a little bit.

Two nations are in your womb. Two peoples from within you will be separated. One will be stronger than the other, and the last line, of course, is the punchline.

The older will serve the younger. The older will serve the younger. Why is that important? There are at least two reasons why it is that important.

Well, there's probably more than that, but at least two reasons from our pursuit that this is an important thing to focus on. Got any ideas, Sarah? Good, and in this case, and it won't be our only one or our last one where the younger is put ahead of the older, but this one's particularly important, and as you know, the Apostle Paul, and I think I say something about Romans 9 here in a moment, don't I? Yes, in Romans 9, Paul makes this very point. He says that in order for God's purposes in the election to stand, Rebecca was told when her children were born that the older would serve the younger so that they wouldn't have any deeds by which to boast.

In other words, someone isn't going to be able to say, oh, I chose God. It's not that kind of thing, or I'm so good that God had to choose me, right? It's before they were born that God makes this choice. So, Paul's going to make a very clear point on that.

That can be about three sentences within your extended essay for Friday. That's a really significant issue when we're talking about election, is what Paul does with it. This statement is also important for another reason.

Trevor. Yeah, he will. He will be with Ephraim and Manasseh, exactly.

But think even of the Isaac and Rebekah context, and look at that statement. Kate. Yeah.

Well, yeah, although in that case, they're not technically full brothers because, of course, Ishmael's been born to Hagar. But keep Isaac on your radar screen, and let's go with that a little bit. I'll just describe a little scenario. We don't have time to look at it specifically, but you kind of get the impression that Isaac and Rebecca have a decent sort of relationship.

I know we're all into talking about relationships, right? There's not a lot of other women around. In addition to that, when Isaac has this interesting situation with the king of the Philistines again, kind of mirroring what Abraham had done earlier that we've already talked about on Monday, there's this place where the Philistine king looks out and sees Isaac caressing Rebecca. Interestingly enough, the word is mitzahek, which goes along with his name, Isaac, Yitzchak.

At any rate, that tells us that there's something kind of intimate about their relationship. Now, why am I saying that? I would suggest that when the Lord has made this very clear declaration to Rebecca with regard to the nature of these two twins that are going to be born, she's probably shared that information with Isaac. It would be kind of hard to keep it quiet.

So, both of them, I know I'm reading between the lines, but I think it's a fair reading between the lines. Both of them, I would suggest, were fully aware of the nature of this prophetic statement made to Rebecca, which is, at the bottom line, the older is going to serve the younger. Now, keep that in mind when we get to chapter 27 and what Isaac does in terms of his attempts to offer the blessing to Esau.

I would suggest he's directly countering what he knew to be the intent of God in that. But we'll get to that in a moment. I need to say a couple other things about Jacob.

First of all, as I said a moment ago, the term Yaakov or Jacob does indeed mean to grasp the heel, but it does come to imply deception. And there is a pattern of lying and deceit throughout most of his adult life. The huge question is, is he a nasty little critter to start with? Well, there's a bunch of debate on that, by the way.

At the same time, I think your NIV doesn't do this justice, if I remember correctly. In chapter 25, verse 7, the boys grew up. Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the open country.

Jacob was a quiet man. That's the NIV's translation of this Hebrew, *ish*, which means man, *tam*, which means whole, complete. Sometimes, a person of integrity is implicated by or intended, excuse me, by *tam*.

So, if that statement is being said with regard to Jacob, and as we know, when his mother first suggests this little scheme to set right Isaac's misguided notion of blessing Esau, Jacob's pretty wary about it, right? He's concerned. Now, maybe it's a concern for his own skin, but nevertheless, he's not altogether in favor of that. She persuades him to do it.

We'll come back to that in a moment. So again, we've got, as we might see, for all of us, we've got a mixture of faith and faithfulness and the *ish*, *tam* kind of thing, but I was wrestling with some of those other fallen parts of our nature. I have to say something about the birthright, too.

This is what's going on at the end of chapter 25. In verse 29, Jacob was cooking some stew. Esau comes in and says, I'm hungry.



Quick, let me have some of that. Well, what does your NIV say? Red stew. Nice translation. I'm trying to get you to take Hebrew, right? That's the deal.

I'm trying to get you to take Hebrew. What Esau is asking for is some of that red, red. Give me some of that red, red.

Now, we learn that Jacob's actually cooking lentil stew. It might have a red color to it. But Esau is asking for some of that red, red, and some commentators suggest that maybe he's thinking that this is something that has to do with some kind of blood sacrificial pagan ritual that he thinks Jacob's involved in, and he's asking to be part of it.

I don't know that. I'm just saying that you know, it's an odd word. It's two, it's twice using that word red, red, and so maybe that's what's going on.

But at any rate, Jacob says, sell me your birthright. And as we see, especially when we read Hebrews 12, Esau says, what good is the birthright to me? Jacob gives him some bread, and then it says he gives him lentil stew, which is not what Esau was asking for. It's not what Esau was asking for.

Anyway, he eats, he drinks, gets up, he leaves, and it says he despises his birthright. What is he despising? Well, here we go. The birthright seemed to involve some of the following things, and hang on to this because it's going to be important not only with Jacob and Esau but also later on.

Double inheritance. That means there are two kids, and there are. The father's inheritance is divided into three parts, and the older gets two of those three parts, and you're thinking, well, that's kind of unfair.

That's a monumental amount of money, right? Leadership, power. Well, here's the deal. In this wider cultural context and Hebrew culture at large, you just didn't have small families.

You had extended families. It's called the bet av, a level right before a clan. So, it's an extended family.

There are servants involved. This is an expensive proposition to be the person who has leadership over this, and part of this double inheritance seems to have been intended in order to make the financial obligations or meet the financial obligations of being that head. So that's part of what's going on there.

It also seems to have involved some religious significance, and, of course, as we see Esau, the closing statement in Chapter 25, Esau despised the birthright, and Hebrews Chapter 12 has some very sobering things to say about Esau's despising the

birthright. You can go look at that a little later on. It leads into some further things towards the end of Chapter 12 that have to do with fearing the Lord.

Okay, got all that? I know I threw that yellow stuff in there on top of your lecture outline, so I'll give you just a minute to get it. Esau despises the birthright. So, we've got both birthright and blessing, and I need to tell you, if you haven't got it figured out yet, they're two separate things.

Birthright and blessing are two separate things. Okay, let's look at the plot to receive the blessing and, for that matter, to give the blessing. First thing we need to keep in our minds is what I was trying to say a little bit earlier.

Neither Isaac nor Rebecca is Lily White in this proposition because, as I suggested, Isaac is intentional about giving a blessing to Esau, and we know that Esau is Isaac's favorite. Why do we say this? If you turn over to Chapter 27, when Jacob comes into Isaac's presence and Isaac thinks that he's Esau, notice what he says. I'm starting at verse 27.

"Ah, the smell of my son." Verse 28, "May God give you heaven's due, earth's riches." Verse 29 is the real key here. "May nations serve you, peoples bow down to you. Be Lord over your brothers." Again, I'm suggesting that even though Isaac knew the content of the prophetic statement in response to Rebecca's inquiry, he makes this statement to the person he thinks is Esau, and so he intends to do that.

It's not just a blessing of blessing. It's a blessing, particularly, to put Esau first. Now, of course, knowing that, Rebecca doesn't get any better because she arranges the whole scheme of deception with the skins and so forth and tells Jacob, you know, I'll cook the stuff.

You just take it in there and you get the blessing because you're supposed to have it. And she knew you were supposed to have it. He was supposed to have it.

So, Jacob participates and begins, if he hasn't already begun, to enter into that life pattern of deceiving people, which he continues to do. It's a very interesting thing. I've read this already.

The blessing pronounced by Isaac to the person he thought was Esau, "Rule over your brothers." That is a pretty sobering statement. Of course, as you know, when Esau does show up, Isaac is, well, he's probably a combination of scared. Notice it says in verse 33 that Isaac trembled violently.

It could be out of anger because he's been duped, or it could be fear, recognizing that something bigger is going on here and that the plans that he had to sort of rearrange God's idea aren't working terribly well. But at any rate, Esau says, "Please

bless me." He also says, "Isn't he rightly named Jacob?' Verse 36, "He's deceived me these two times, "took my birth right now, "he's taken my blessing." Isaac, verse 37, "I've made him lord over you, Esau. "I've made all his relatives his servants, etc.

"What can I do?' Well, Esau pleads for a blessing, and here's the blessing. "Your dwelling will be away from Earth's richest, "away from the dew of heaven. "You're going to live by the sword.

"You're going to serve your brother. "When you grow restless, "you'll throw off his yoke from your neck." Not a very pleasant sort of blessing, is it? Blessings had prophetic significance. They really did back then, and we see the descendants of Esau, the Edomites, certainly carrying on this kind of relationship with the descendants of Jacob, the Israelites, and that will be a source of tension for a long time, so it's not just a brothers' thing.

Well, there is one more thing we need to say in this regard. Of course, Esau is out to get revenge, and the word gets around to Rebekah that Esau would absolutely love to kill Jacob, so she persuades him to flee, obviously to go back and get a wife. That's part of the explanation to Isaac.

But notice the real tragedy here. He's gotten both birthright and blessing, and he's going away entirely empty-handed as a fugitive, and the other sad, very poignant part of this whole thing is he's never going to see his mother again. She'll never see him again.

These circumstances have worked out so that the family fractures at that point because she's going to be dead before Jacob will return. So, it's a real family tragedy all the way around. Yeah, Trevor, that's a great question.

I mean, we don't have any other scenario here, and so I suppose it's very easy for us to say, well, she should have just trusted the Lord that it would all work out right. But most of us know that that's not the way we function, and so, therefore, she has indeed arranged things so that, at least as far as she's concerned and her awareness of what blessing means, that blessing will be uttered over the right person. Is it the right thing? I don't dare make a pronouncement on that.

All I'm going to say to you is that there are places in Scripture where lying to save a life seems to be the appropriate thing to do. Now, we're going to get to those later on. Whether this falls in that category, I'm not sure.

Ginger. I'm sorry, say it again. He's got them in name, but he's fleeing away completely empty-handed, so he's not going to have anything like the double inheritance, which is what that promises.

He doesn't have the leadership in the clan, doesn't have any of those things, in fact. He's got them in his name; he doesn't have them, in fact. And interestingly enough, it's going to be a long time before that blessing of ruling over brothers comes to fruition.

And, in fact, in his life, it won't. It's going to be later on. Chelsea.

It's an excellent question, and I can't answer it. All I can say is, in all of these circumstances, God is working with human beings, and we're frail, and we're fallen, and just in this family favoritism stuff, we see a really interesting lesson being worked out. In favoritisms, which are tragic, have tragic outcomes, and even through those, God can work.

But, you know, we as human beings are free moral agents to make choices, and oftentimes, those choices have pretty hard lessons built into them. Trevor, was that another question? Yeah, that's a statement that the scripture is making. And so the idea is, and by the way, it's going to be repeated in Hebrews 12 as well.

The idea is that Esau's attitude about the birthright didn't take it seriously, despising in that sense. So that's been his sense all along. And it may be, I don't know this, it may be that Isaac determined to give the blessing to Esau to let him have something.

I mean, that might be what's going on to give some sort of a balance here, but it doesn't work. Well, we've got Jacob fleeing. Of course, the next thing that happens is a very interesting encounter.

He goes north. We know the place Bethel already. And as he stops there, he spends the night with his head on a rock.

Verse 12 of chapter 28 says he had a dream, and he saw a stairway resting on the earth with its top reaching heaven, the angels. What are angels in this whole economy of God's servants? Do you know what the word means? I probably asked that question in the most abstruse way possible, but ginger. Yeah, it means messenger.

And so, we've got God's messengers, basically, between heaven and earth descending on this stairway. Part of what Jacob is to see is that God has ways of watching out for him. It's going to involve this kind of protection.

There above it, or perhaps on it, or perhaps beside it, depends on how you translate that Hebrew preposition, stood the Lord, and he makes a promise. I'm the Lord, the God of your father Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob. I will give you and your descendants the land.

And he also talks about numbers of descendants. So, the promise of God is reiterated here. Jacob makes his own fairly interesting quote-unquote promise.

It's kind of conditional. At the end of that chapter, if God will be with me and will watch over me, I'm taken, give me food to eat, clothes to wear, so that I return safely to my father's house. Notice all the conditions.

Then the Lord will be my God. This stone I've set up will be a pillar in God's house. Bethel, by the way, Beth-el means house of God, so we've got an interesting etiology going on there, a story that explains this naming thing.

And of all that you give me, I will give you a tenth. Notice, you know, God's promise is unconditional. He's just saying, this is the way it's going to be.

The promise I made to Abraham, to Isaac, it's going to be carried on through you. Jacob still seems to be a little bit skeptical at this point. Well, we need to also take a quick turn, and this is going to be a quick turn, over to the Gospel of John.

So, you've got your Bibles. Let's look and see what's going on in John chapter 1. Jesus has been baptized. John has said, Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Jesus' first disciples seemed to find him, seek him out, and see what was going on with this person. And Andrew, in verse 40, says We've found the Messiah. And so, then Peter comes.

Then, the next day, starting in verse 43, Jesus decides to leave for Galilee. He says to Philip, Follow me. And then we have Philip, verse 45, who finds Nathanael and tells him, We've found the one Moses wrote about in the Torah, about whom the prophets also wrote, Jesus of Nazareth.

Now, Nathanael's kind of an interesting character. He's a bit of a skeptic. Nazareth? Can anything good come out of Nazareth? Well, there's some reasons why you might say that.

We'll get into that. You'll get into that. You got into that in New Testament, probably.

I keep remembering you're out of sequence here. Notice in verse 47, Jesus says, Here is a true Israelite in whom there is nothing false. Do you catch the allusion there? An Israelite, a descendant of Jacob, has this whole history of deceit built into the national epic, if you will.

And Jesus is saying, This guy, Nathanael, he's an Israelite. Nothing deceitful about him. He says it as it is.

But that, of course, isn't the main point of the story. That's just an aside in terms of the Jacob-Israel connection. When Nathanael says, How do you know me? Jesus says I saw you while you were still standing under the fig tree.

There are all sorts of interesting symbolism there. And then Nathanael says, Wow, you're the son of God. You're the king of Israel.

And Jesus now says, You believe this? You're going to see greater things. Verse 51 is really, again, our punchline here. I tell you, and the word there is plural now.

It's not just Nathanael. I tell you the truth. You're going to see heaven open.

And the angels of God aren't going to be going up and down on a stairway. They're going to be going up and down on the son of man himself. His chosen name for himself.

Basically saying, Jesus is going to be the means of access between heaven and earth. Now, I know there's a lot more to do with that in terms of the New Testament, and you've probably already done it in your New Testament class. But, the connection here is important because of Jacob's dream, its implications, and what Jesus will do with it when he makes that incredible promise with regard to his own mission and ministry.

Well, Jacob's gone. Good, long time. Almost a generation.

Father's a bunch of kids. By the way, as you look at the genealogies, I think it's in Exodus. Jacob seems to have about 33 children.

So, there's a lot of women that are born there as well. The only one we know about is a woman named Dina because she gets herself into an interesting mess with a guy named Shechem. But for our purposes, we're going to focus on the 12 sons in a moment.

There's no question that Jacob, as a deceiver, and we've just seen his deceit along with his mother's, will meet his match in Uncle Laban. Laban not only does this interesting shifting around between Leah and Rachel, which is, of course, deceit enough and certainly hurts that whole family enough, but Laban will change his wages, it says, 10 times. It also indicates that Laban seems to have his own nasty self-serving designs when Jacob proposes this scheme about speckled and spotted and dotted sheep.

The way Laban handles that first is to grab all those things that Jacob said I'll take for myself, and he takes them for himself and moves away for three days, a three-day journey. So, Laban is a crook. He's a crook.

Here's the guys you need to know if you don't know them already. Born to Leah. Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah.

Each one of those has a very distinct importance to them. Reuben, as you know, firstborn. But what happens to him? Why does he lose his firstborn rights? What does he do to lose his firstborn rights? Sleeps with his father's concubine.

Right. Therefore, because he's as turbulent as the waters, as the blessing in Genesis at the end of Genesis says, those rights are removed. To whom do they go? Who takes over the firstborn rights? Joseph.

Yeah. Joseph will get the firstborn rights at this point. In other words, the firstborn son of the next wife.

Not the next in order, but the firstborn son of Rachel then. Simeon and Levi we know because they distinguish themselves, unfortunately, by slaughtering the inhabitants of Shechem, or Shechem, because their sister, who is also born to Leah, so it's a full sister here, has been raped. Now, interestingly enough, the blessing at the end of Genesis is going to refer to all three of these incidents.

It's going to say Reuben loses it because he's been turbulent, defiling his father's bed. Simeon and Levi are going to be scattered, the blessing says, because of what they did in their violence. Interestingly enough, when they land up in the land, Simeon is sort of diffusely settled, not with specific boundaries, sort of diffusely settled in the southern area around the tribe of Judah.

Levi is going to have a set of cities scattered throughout the entirety of the land of Israel. So that blessing, again, becomes a prophetic sort of a statement. Judah.

Well, Judah has some interesting situations as well. As you know from Genesis 38, he's the one who really wrongs his daughter-in-law Tamar because he deprives her of her rightful person who would come in and fulfill the marriage if a brother dies. And, of course, as you know, two of Judah's sons die.

They were her husband's. He should have given her the third one. Judah refuses to do so because he's afraid.

And then, if you remember that narrative, Tamar disguises herself as a temple prostitute. Judah sleeps with her. He's about to have her burned in punishment

when he finds out she's pregnant until she produces the evidence that the child is his.

And, of course, interestingly enough, it's through that line, and again, Genesis 49 is going to tell us that there's something very important about the line of Judah, something very important about the line of Judah. The scepter will not depart from that particular person. So, we know that the king is going to come from the line of Judah.

Well, Issachar and Zebulun don't have nearly as much prominence, so we don't need to say a whole lot about them. Joseph, of course, was born to Rachel after all sorts of anguish in being childless. She finally will have Joseph, and then she will die having Benjamin, her second son.

Born to the handmaids, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. Again, just know who they are. Don't need to know anything particular about them at this point.

When we start talking about settlement patterns with regard to the conquest, which is a way down the pike, we'll do more with that. Well, in terms of leaving, after all these years, we have this interesting scheme with the livestock, and you know what? I don't understand all of how that works, but let me just throw a couple of things into the picture here. You can try to map it out as you will.

First of all, as you read through these couple of chapters, Jacob is going to refer to the fact that Laban uses divination. That shows up. Again, you read the chapter, go back and look at it.

We don't have time to look at it. So, Laban is awash in this whole idea of divination. And that, by the way, is probably linked into the household gods business as well, the teraphim.

Secondly, as I said a moment ago, Laban is also a schemer himself. And so right when this whole deal is kind of made, it seems that Laban makes a real grab for things. I would suggest to you that what Jacob is doing with all this mating in front of the poles and so forth and so on might be appealing to Laban's sense of divination and letting Laban think, hey, you know, this is the mechanism.

It's a divination kind of thing. Of course, we know better, don't we? Because when we read what Jacob says to his wives as they're leaving, he says, I had a dream and God revealed to me. And so, Jacob knows that something else is going on.

It's God who is behind all this. But I think he might be kind of setting it up so Laban gets the idea that it's a divinatory thing. I don't know.



That's a real quick, real quick summary of a much bigger issue. At any rate, as they go, dear Rachel runs off with the teraphim, the household gods. A lot of debate in terms of what this means, back and forth.

Does it really have to do with inheritance? Maybe. Does it really have to do with worship, divination, and power in that sense? Maybe. I don't really know.

It's an interesting study in and of itself. We're going to see that Jacob holds on to those terra themes. They're going to show up again.

There's more that I can say about that. But we need to keep charging on. One last confrontation between these people.

As you know, when Jacob runs, Laban comes after him. It seems like the tendency to lie has sort of infiltrated the family because Rachel will lie to her father in order to maintain these things. In verse 35 of chapter 31, when the tent is being searched, and she's, of course, sitting on these household gods, she says, don't be angry, my lord.

I can't stand up in your presence. I'm having my period. And, of course, that would be unclean.

So, he wouldn't dare touch it in that sense. Therefore, they go trotting off with the household gods. As Jacob leaves, he lets us know, and he also lets Laban know that he's been serving Laban for 20 years.

Verse 38 has been serving him for 20 years. And, of course, all the things that have happened have been a source of friction and tension among them. So, as they go their separate ways, Laban says in verse 44, come on now, let's make a treaty, covenant treaty.

The same word, remember. So now they're making a treaty here between two equal individuals. Let's make a treaty.

You and I, let it serve as a witness between us. So, they set up a pillar. They call it a name.

This is going to be a witness between you and me. And there they go. And so Jacob heads back.

Life is not perfect at this point, however, because he's now got to confront Esau. He knows he's going back in that direction, and this is going to be the second half of chapter 32. Let me read a little bit because this is a fascinating narrative.

Another Rembrandt for you. Chapter 32, verse 22. That night, Jacob got up and took his two wives, two maidservants, and 11 sons, crossed the ford of the Jabbok, sent them across the stream, and sent over all his possessions.

And this is a whole entourage, so it takes some time to get all this done. And then he's left alone, and it says a man wrestled with him until daybreak. When he saw he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip, so his hip was wrenched.

And then the man said, let me go. It's daybreak. Jacob says I'm not going to let you go unless you bless me.

The man says, what's your name? Jacob says, Jacob. And the man says, your name is no longer going to be Jacob. It will be Israel because you have struggled with God and with men, and you've overcome.

Jacob asks his name, doesn't give it, and calls the place Peniel because he knows, Jacob knows, he's seen the face of God. That's what Peniel means: face of or presence of God. And yet my life was spared.

Here are the interesting things to keep in mind here. Lots of fascinating symbolism going on. In fact, Judaism uses this as kind of a paradigm for their ongoing wrestling with God.

If you know Judaism well, and you've studied a little bit, and you've read Heschel and some of these other people, or you've read The Chosen, for that matter, Judaism is a religion that wrestles with its God, questions, wrestles. And this is paradigmatic of what that whole life situation is going to be. The second thing that's really fascinating, in terms of our own thinking about it, this shows that God is willing to limit himself.

From our perspective, even to the point of the Incarnation, where humankind, from the human perspective, prevails over Jesus and puts him to death. So, there are some very interesting adumbrations going on there as well. This wrestling match ends up with the man, who we learn from Hosea, Chapter 12, who is the angel of the Lord, and the Lord allows Jacob to prevail over him.

So that's kind of a foreshadowing of what happens with the son of David if you will. Well, the name change to Israel, the blessing, and then seeing God face-to-face. I know we're racing at a horrible rate.

How you doing? With me? This won't happen again unless we have more snow days. I already kind of mentioned what I'm calling the unsavory activities. Simeon and Levi, the revenge on the city of Shechem.

Reuben's defiles his father's bed by sleeping with his concubine. Then, Genesis, Chapter 36, is a genealogy. And you're thinking, I guess I'll just skip that.

Boring. And true, we may not mind lots of spiritual excitement out of a genealogy. But let me note two things for future reference.

Two things for future reference. Notice, first of all, that Esau, who's going to become Edom, is going to settle on the hill country of Seir. That's down to the south and east of the south end of the Dead Sea, or the Sea of Salt.

And then there are going to be some names that we just want to sort of stick in the back of our minds. You don't need them right away, but put them in the back of your mind. In verse 10, a guy named Eliphaz is mentioned.

That's going to be important for Job. In verse 12, somebody named Amalek, the father of the Amalekites, is also going to be mentioned. So just kind of hang on to those two.

There's other stuff here, too, but hang on to those two. They might be important for us. End of Jacob.

On to Joseph. Let's see if we can do it. This moves to, from your purposes or from your perspective, the next lecture outline.

And just a quick look at something I think we've seen already. These pyramids were already here in Egypt when Abraham went there, so obviously, they're going to be standing when the Israelites show up as well. Well, here's what we're going to pick up on another issue.

You've read about sovereignty if you've read Youngblood faithfully. You've read about it in the Primer. We're going to talk about it here too.

Here comes another paragraph for your essay question. Isn't that fun? Sovereignty, of course, is shot through all of our biblical narratives. I can't help it, but we really see it with Joseph.

We really see it with Joseph. So that's why it's important to bring it out and talk about it a little bit here—thumbnail definition.

Obviously, it can be bigger and expanded, but our thumbnail definition, which is important, and I'd memorize this if I were you. It wouldn't hurt. God's exercising complete control over all circumstances as he directs them according to his goodwill and pleasure.

And, of course, Romans 8:28 comes to our minds. All circumstances, directing them according to his goodwill and pleasure. And, you know, when we get to the end of Genesis, and the brothers of Joseph are scared to death that once their father's off the scene, he's going to be a little bit nasty all of a sudden, Joseph twice is going to reassure them.

And I'd like to read these passages to you. First of all, chapter 45 is not before the death of Jacob, but it's an important one because now he's revealing himself to the brothers. And he says, Don't be disturbed with yourselves for selling me here.

It was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. That's verse 5. And then, in verse 7, he reiterates it. God sent me ahead of you to preserve a remnant on the earth for you and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

Okay, you know, so he's saving them from the famine and to deliver from the famine. But, of course, this is going to be the beginning of a long process that's going to end up with the deliverance at the Exodus and that kind of redemption. So, there's something bigger going on here, obviously.

And Joseph has a little bit of a handle on the implications of what God has done. I'm just reading chapter 50 as well in verse 20, it pretty much says the same thing. You intended to harm me, Joseph says.

God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. So, some important things just theologically to keep in mind with our Joseph narrative. One other thing I want to say, and this is the lesson for today.

If you felt like we're just racing through stuff, here's where we want to just take a little bit of a pause because I can assure you that when you get into situations where forgiveness is absolutely necessary and you don't feel like doing it, and you've all been there and you're probably all going to be there again when hurt takes place and trust is broken and there's a lot of personal anguish, with God's help, if we forgive, that will root out this evil, ugly bitterness that otherwise takes over and only rots away at you and me. So, getting some kind of a handle on what sovereignty means then helps us recognize God is going to use these things for his good purposes, whatever these awful things are. That may nudge us towards forgiveness, and it will certainly pull us out of the pit of bitterness.

Okay. Well, whoops, I don't know why that happened. Well, let's see.

Somebody help me out. Okay, we've got to make some historical geographical connections as well. First of all, historically, we're going to talk a whole lot more

about Egypt, Lord willing, on Monday and what's going on in the whole Egyptian context.

But for our purposes, simply note that second white bullet there. During this time period, there was an increase in people who were coming from the north and the east of Egypt, called Asiatics, into Egypt. So, as we see Joseph going down there, he's not a lonely figure.

There are other Asiatics who are coming as well. And there's all sorts of trade going back and forth. Ishmaelites and Midianites are part of this ongoing commercial stuff.

You may remember when we talked about the historical geography stuff and I tried to mention the importance of spice trade. The spice traders that Joseph got himself sold to were not, you know, strangers. That was an ongoing commercial enterprise.

And so, Joseph is traveling down with spice traders to Egypt. By this time, notice the matter of a couple generations, these descendants of Ishmael, the descendants of Midian, have multiplied. Remember, those were two sons of Abraham.

Enough so that they have a clan that's functioning in this semi-nomadic spice trade enterprise, well, the next thing we're going to do is look at a map. That's coming in a moment because, as you know the narrative, Joseph gets sold off at a place called Dothan.

This is happening again. Something odd. Okay, here's what we want to look at.

Hebron is where the family is located, the big extended family. That's just off the map down right about here. Seems like it's getting to be kind of later summer.

Remember our weather principles? The farther south, the drier it is. The farther east, the drier it is. Therefore, getting on into the summer when there's no rain, you're going to migrate to the north to try and get more crops, etc.

Here's where Shechem is located, right there. That's where Joseph initially tries to find the rest of the brothers. And what's he told? Oh, they've moved on to Dothan.

Here's where Dothan is, right about here. Actually, I should have that arrow down just a little way. So they've gone even farther north and west.

They've moved from Shechem up here to Dothan, right about there. Now, why is that so important? Well, do you remember our International Coastal Highway? Sort of. International Coastal Highway is coming up the coastal plain, coming from Egypt, and making its way.

It's got to get through this Mount Carmel Range. There are three ways to do it. One goes here.

One goes here. The other swings around this way. Then it's going to go off like so.

The second thing you need to remember is Transjordanian Highway. The third thing you need to remember is that you've got a trunk route connecting the Transjordanian Highway with all of the spice trade coming right through like so, swinging past Dothan and on down to Egypt. In God's sovereignty, even the geography works out so that Joseph is sitting there in a cistern because they've decided they'd better not kill him after all and get himself sold off to this caravan of traders on their way to Egypt.

God's sovereign purposes working it for good. A couple literary issues to note. Just hang on to this story.

When we start talking about the Book of Esther, way down the pike, at the end of the semester, we're going to come back and visit this just a little bit. There are some similarities. And then in your Old Testament parallels, there's Anubis and Bata.

I'm not going to wax long on the Judah narrative. In fact, I've said everything I'm going to say about it. Usually, I ask lots of questions in terms of why is it here? Why does it interrupt chapter 37? The story about Joseph as a bratty kid.

And then you've got the Judah narrative in 38, and then it picks up with Joseph. But you can think about that. Wow, it's doing it all the way through this.

Ted, can you help me with why my PowerPoint is doing that? I've never done it before. We've got one minute. I want to think about this in terms of preparation, prisoner.

This is all in your lecture outline. You know these stories. These are the great stories, right, about Joseph.

Think in terms of this long robe. Let's focus on the robe. Remember the stuff about inheritance that we talked about when God clothed Adam and Eve as a signal that he was indeed recognizing them as children? Clothing is important.

This robe is even more than that. It's a special word. It only shows up again in the Hebrew Bible with reference to one of David's daughters in the story we're going to come to later on when we do David.

Something pretty remarkable about this robe, and of course the idea is it's probably symbolic of the fact that Joseph has now gotten the firstborn rights. And that would

not make his brothers terribly happy if he's flaunting it, especially since he has some older brothers. Well, we also have dreams, which indicate that they're all going to be bowing down to them.

That doesn't go over terribly well. Finally, we will see what happens at Dotan. He's also a favored slave of Potiphar when you read those stories and tell, of course, Potiphar's wife likes him so much that she frames him, gets him into trouble, and then he's a prisoner.

And as a prisoner, he has a series of opportunities to interpret dreams again. Notice Joseph in dreams. Notice the two-ness.

There are two witnesses in these two dreams. There were multiple dreams of Pharaoh, multiple dreams of the butler and the baker, and multiple dreams of Joseph earlier.

Advice to Pharaoh an appointment to the ruling position, and we know what happens after that, don't we? The brothers come. You get to know that story. It's ten past ten.

I'm going to see you whenever you show up on Friday morning for the exam. Thank you for being patient and trying to cram two lessons into one. We'll be on target after this.