

Lesson 5 Genesis 25:19 - 36

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Why does Abraham send away for a bride for Isaac? Why would he *not want him to marry a Canaanite? Isaac also wants the same for Jacob (28:2). Note Esau's response to this (24:6 ff).*
2. *Abraham, our father in faith, is presented as a righteous man. What does his name change imply (17:5)? How about Jacob's "righteousness?" His name is also changed, and that new name, Israel, is given to all his descendants. Why? Contrast the character of Esau and Jacob. Esau is the father of whom? Can you guess at the historic situation between Edom and Israel? See Hebrews 12:15 for what was Esau's problem.*
3. *What do you think of Rebekah's actions? Why was Jacob her favorite (25:22-23)? Why was Esau Jacob's favorite(25:28)?*
4. *How are Laban and Jacob related, and how are they "meant for each other?"*

Psalm 75 and prayer.

The patriarchs were given promises. Abraham was promised three things by God (12:1-3 and 13:15) - the land as his, his descendants as many as the stars and the sand, and that he and his descendants would be a blessing to all the nations of the earth. This promise was made to each successive generation. The patriarch was the receiver of this promise in two ways - through the tradition that was passed down from father to son, and more importantly through a direct encounter with God Himself who verified this tradition. When Abraham died, God appeared to Isaac, (Gen 26:3-4) and repeated the promises (Abraham had had them repeated to him on several occasions (15:18, 22:15- 18). An important heritage was being laid, but heritage by itself is not enough.

Each individual has his own divine encounter. After Isaac, Jacob is the son of promise and it is not enough that he be handed the family heritage, but he too had his own personal encounters with God. In Genesis 13 through 15 the promises are given to him directly, person to person. Sometimes we Catholics are approached by Protestants who ask

if we have had a personal experience of God. We know from our parents and from the Church that we are baptized and thus on the way to being saved persons, but when asked about personal experience we aren't always sure. Like sleepers we have not been conscious of His love and promise, and therefore we take the Eucharistic Body and Blood of Jesus, God-present-with-us, offhandedly. We attend half heartedly, we do our "duty," our "obligation," but are cold and may have little interest in the things of God. When invited God will touch every heart with a sense of personal love and promise; and sometimes even when uninvited. We need only pray that we awaken so His Eucharistic love becomes a personal reality.

Righteousness is trusting God. The righteousness of Abraham was not related to keeping Jewish Law which he preceded; even the Ten Commandments were in the future. Rather it was in the obedience, the heeding, and the trust that he had toward God. When God spoke he responded. Abraham's faith was accredited to him as holiness. Holiness or righteousness is being in right relationship with God. Later St. Paul in Romans will hark back to Abraham as the father of the faithful because he believed God. He did not live up to minutia of religious law in order to be righteous; in fact, in many of the facets of his life we see sin which God overlooked because of his obedient faith.

God chooses a people. God makes the promises, declares Himself to be the same and only God who spoke to the fathers of the present generation. But He does not ask them yet to be His People. This will happen when they have become a community of twelve tribes under Moses. At Mt. Sinai they will be asked to pledge themselves to God, "you shall be my people, "in covenant. Yet, with the covenant with Abraham, and the sign of circumcision, these people have been chosen by God as no other people on earth.

These people will be a blessing to the world. "In you all the people of the earth shall bless themselves" has different translations in the New American and Revised Standard. Is the verb active or passive? How will this blessing come? Will it just rub off on all those peoples around, the families of the earth

or will they somehow have to take an active part to obtain this blessing? Both translations are valid and both have something to say to us. First, the blessing of God on this people that makes them fruitful is noticeable to all who live around them. Laban doesn't want Jacob to move on, because while he has been present Laban has become rich. None of the ewes have miscarried; there has been abundant fruitfulness. When the patriarch has plant seed, their increase in reaping is a hundredfold. After a time of walking with God, Abraham has become exceedingly wealthy, and Isaac also prospers. Jacob comes back from twenty years with Laban with great possessions. God's blessing is apparent to those who associate with these families. Abimelech is able to see that God is with these people in a special way. Abimelech's women are barren till Abraham prays for them (20:17). This blessing also touches others around, and they recognize that something is very different with these people. Fruitfulness is a sign of God's presence and blessing from the

first. "You shall know them by their fruits," is a saying of Jesus. That sign is the way he told us to judge; and understood in terms of spiritual fruits it is the one valid sign. But it may be more than a passive blessing that Abraham's association bestows, just a blessing gained by associating with the people God has chosen as His own. It may be that the nations to be blessed must do something about it - come and believe, then follow Israel's God. They will bless themselves by following the spiritual light of Israel. The further spiritual meaning of this world-wide blessing is that the descendant of Israel, Jesus, will bless all the nations of the earth Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel - the good news of Jesus Christ."

The Jews still claim these lands. On one of the mornings we taught this, 150 marines were killed in Lebanon because of the blood feuds of the Arab peoples - the old prophecies still speak. And then there is the attack of 9/11. The former premier of Israel, Menachen Begin, held strongly that all the original lands given to the Jews through Abraham belonged to the Jews in perpetuity. He would not relent on this. After capturing the West Bank, he refused any claim of Jordan and the Arabs

to this land. The struggle has gone on for over thirty years - at this writing, the agony between Arab and Jew was temporarily modified by the amazing peace accord of 1993, which subsequently collapsed. How, or even whether, this will bring peace between the two ancient enemies is yet to be seen.

The first mother of Israel, Sarah, dies, and Abraham buries her in a field he has purchased. This field with its caves, along with the field that Jacob eventually will buy near Shechem, are the only two pieces of property in the promised land that the Israelites have claim to. It is to this cave near Hebron that God's people for several generations will return to bury their dead. There Abraham has sadly buried Sarah, and he will be laid to rest beside her.

A wife is found for Isaac. Before Abraham dies he sends his servant to find a wife for Isaac. A Canaanite woman will not do. These people are set apart; they are to be different from those with whom they live. They must especially maintain their difference from the Canaanites whose debased religion will become a snare to Israel. Wives must be of the heritage of Terah and Abraham. So Eliezar, Abraham's trusted servant, is sent back to Haran to find a wife. This is not to be any woman; it is to be the woman chosen by God. This is clearly seen in the 24th chapter. The servant is told how he will pick out the right woman. The Holy Spirit brings that woman to the well in just the way foretold. This is the woman. We are apt to hear these days that women were merely considered chattel belonging to men. It may have been so in cultures round about, but it was not so for the people of God. We saw that Abraham (and later Isaac) did not always differentiate about these things in God's way, sending their wives into harems in order to appease stronger kings or sheiks. But God in all three cases overruled their blindness and protected the women from degradation, restoring them to their rightful place. (It is interesting to note that St. Peter presents Sarah as a woman who obeyed her husband and let nothing terrify her. I Peter 3:5-6 It would be terrifying to be placed in a harem. Women, once they had slept with the king, even if they never had that "honor" again, were confined the rest of their lives to the harem. But Sarah, says Peter, had trust in God and let nothing terrify her, and she

was protected because of that trust. She was a chosen woman, and God delivered her. In her heart she obeyed Abraham as Lord.

The woman is a chosen woman. A woman in the line of the chosen mothers was not just one of a number of dispensable women - she was a certain woman whose dignity deserved respect. Rebekah was asked if she would go with Abraham's servant and become Isaac's bride. Her will was respected, and her assent required. She was not bartered. But why did God choose someone who was barren? This people is being formed by God, and not lust by the biological passions of man and woman. It takes three to form the people of God - man and woman were to be a sign of the union God desired between Himself and His People. They, therefore, must have equality of worth, the man and the woman, just as Mankind in the Original Order was graced with an amazing equality of worth by the Creator. In time He would make Mankind to be his Beloved spouse once more. Therefore the woman, as a sign, must be seen to be fully equal with an equally honorable roll. The man was given governance, the external rule and law; he ratified the covenant and received the ordinances; he governed and had authority, but the fulfillment of the promise that occasioned this authority was beyond him. It was an intimate miracle of God within the woman of faith that brought all the promises into being. These women God chose were loved by their husbands; they were their soul-mates in an otherwise polygamous culture, and their barrenness was the sign of God's necessary community of love with the man and woman. He would fulfill His promises to the man through the woman.

"Lord, what does this struggle mean?" Rebekah conceived because of the intercession of her husband. God opened her womb in response to Isaac's prayer. The children conceived strove within her and she was so miserable she went to find out what it all meant. To whom did she go? There were no churches down the street. There were no counselors of the religion that was slowly being revealed to them. So Rebekah did what was common to her way of thinking; she went to consult a seer. This was not yet prohibited. Moses was five hundred years in the future, and there were no Ten Commandments. God was stooping to work

within the limits of these people's understanding. He spoke through the pagan seer sought out by Rebekah. An oracle was thus given to Rebekah who wanted supernatural knowledge about what was happening within her. She was told she bore twins and that the child born last, the youngest, would supplant the child born first. From that moment, she threw herself on the side of that message and worked with it. She may have been a controlling woman, but God used her just as she was to further His plan. She worked at it passionately. Esau, God knew, was a venial man of flesh who was interested only in the immediate thing, "I'm hungry, give me some of that" Well, O.K., but give me your birthright." "Take it, who cares about that, I'm hungry!"

Jacob's character is wily. Jacob, on the negative side was a deceitful trickster, but on the positive side he had the ingenuity and resourcefulness that God needed to head His people. He was a very human character with grave faults, but God could use these weaknesses for His purposes. We can see that the scheming disposition of Jacob enriches him during his stay with Laban, and later saves him as he carefully plans the reconciliation ceremony with his brother Esau. He will send planned groups one at a time and psychologically prepare Esau to be friendly. He will impress him with his wealth through generous gifts. Jacob was a conniver who knew how to save his skin, but he was more than just an opportunist. He cared about his spiritual heritage. He does not take up with foreign women like Esau; rather he is sent back to Haran for a wife from the family blood line. And there he finds Rachel and Leah. Rachel is the one he loves, but he is tricked by Laban who is as slippery and deceitful as Jacob. They have the same makeup and each is aware of the character of the other. The Mizpah benediction which they later institute between themselves is a recognition of that fact. (When Laban pursues Jacob after he has slipped away with his flocks and children and wives, he means to do him harm. But God warns Laban and protects Jacob, so they come to a kind of peace by asking God "to watch over them while they are absent one from the other". . because neither of them trusts the other). So for twenty years of work, Jacob has two wives, two concubines and twelve sons. Leah births four: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah. Then she has no more children because jealous Rachel keeps Jacob from sleeping with her. When Reuben brings his mother an aphrodisiac, Rachel

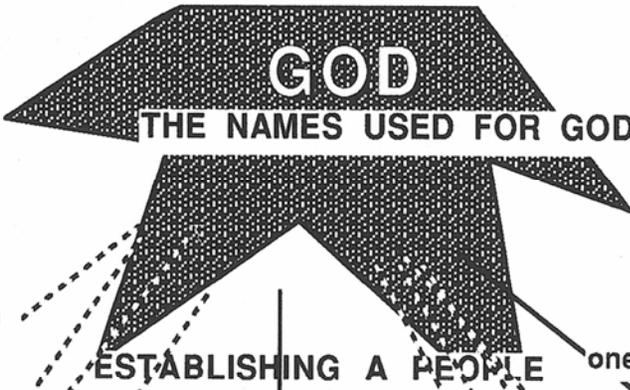
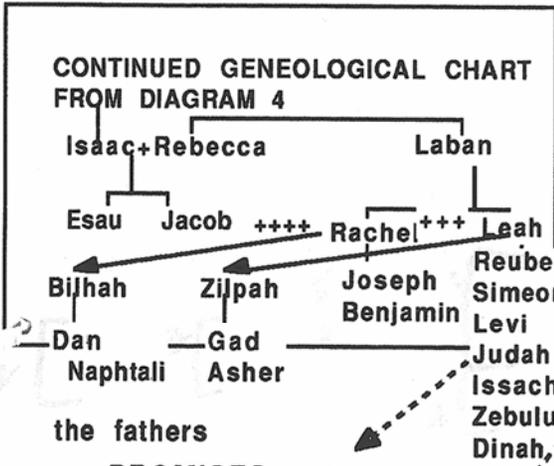
bargains for some of the mandrakes by letting Jacob sleep with Leah again. We see that the loved woman is far from powerless. Yet, Rachel is barren - the little flag tells us that God will do something very special through her. She is the favored one. What is significant about her offspring?

The twelve sons of the four women are to be the heads of tribes. But Joseph, Rachel's first-born, is a special son because he will save the others. He is to be the savior of his brothers. Rachel is the woman of the promise. Joseph has this intuition of his specialness from the first, and his brothers heartily hate him for it. Rachel's child is the one "set apart" from the rest. Again, God works the miracle in the barren woman, and three "persons" bring this favored son into existence, Jacob and Rachel with God. Slowly, carefully God builds a truth into the consciousness of His people.

Rebekah is a chosen woman also. A special blessing is said over Rebekah when she leaves home (24:60) to become Isaac's bride. "May you be the mother of thousands upon thousands, and your descendants take over the gates of their enemies." What these mothers of the people have in common is their great desire to be fruitful for God. They cherish fruitfulness because indelibly written in their consciousness is the ancient prehistoric promise given to Adam and Eve when they were cast out of the garden (Gen 3). Then God said that Satan's head would be crushed by woman's seed, again, woman's seed. It would be The Woman whose seed would eventually undo the evil that had been done. Woman had been the first out of God's plan, and woman, by the grace of God, would be the first back. Therefore, the most important thing was to be a fruitful woman for the Lord. So Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel all cried to the Lord for that fruitfulness, and further, that their seed would overcome the enemy. The enemy, in New Testament parlance, is Satan, who we are promised will not prevail against the Church. The seed of a woman, Mary, will overcome Satan, fulfilling the ancient blessings prayed over Rebekah for fruitfulness. The people themselves did not see the greater meaning of all this; we see it only in hindsight.

How blest we are to have been educated by the Holy Spirit in the Church.

The name of a person means something. As we saw in the last lesson, the name in the O.T. is especially important. As each of the twelve sons is born they are named in a special way - their name means something. "He will be named .." was a little prophecy. It would be fulfilled in the person's life. So Jacob's name meant "He who supplants" and that indeed was what he did taking over the patriarchal seat. The Church still encourages us to name our children after the saints, not "Airy Fairy" or some meaningless name. These names form the human personality, so believed the Hebrew, and therefore they were to speak some truth. Important, therefore, was the change of a name. Abram after the great encounter of God with the establishment of the covenant was renamed by God because his character was changed. After that he was a different person. His purpose in life was different and he was transformed. That was what theophany entailed. The person could not be the same again. The same was true of Jacob. Coming back after twenty years with Laban, he wrestled all night with God and in the morning his hip was forever out of joint, causing him to limp. Wrestling with God in the anguish of his own soul changed his character. He had fear of Esau and fear of Laban; he saw himself as he was that night in the God-encounter. In the morning he was renamed Israel, "he who contends with God." Israel, which well expresses the character of these people, is the name of the covenanted people of God to this day. And "New Israel" is the name given to the Church, God is interlocked in a struggle with us. Not necessarily in contention, but there may be some of that too, for we are locked together in a struggle that is forming a people. We yield slowly like resistant clay in the strong hands of the Lord. But we cannot be embraced by God without being changed. Ancient Israel will contend with God and they will be changed, even when it is against their will.



EI
 EI Shaddai
 Elohim
 YHWH
 EI Elohe Israel

THE FREE WOMAN
 respected and free 25:57-58
 27:13
 loved 24:67
 individual, particular 24:14
 resourceful
 seeker of insight
 protected by God
 decision makers
 to whom their husbands listened

the fathers

**PROMISES
 COVENANT
 GOVERNANCE**

THEOPHANY

ABRAHAM

ISAAC promises repeated

JACOB Bethuel Penuel
 I will be with you

ISRAEL
 contender with God

customs of
THE SEMITES
 upon which God taught principles.

free - nomadic life
 under no rigid authority

mobile - could be separated and formed

patriarchy - a remnant in the fallen world of original order
 name and word and blessing

few cultural laws (blood revenge)

sacredness of blood
 use of altar, sacrifice and circumcision

FRUITFULNESS highly valued

one chosen woman

the mothers

**MIRACLE
 FRUITFULNESS**

Woman's seed to overcome evil Gen.3:15

SARAH barren
 the chosen woman - the FREE woman of worth

REBEKAH barren
 husband intercedes - the oracle

RACHEL barren
 her fruit will save the brothers

LEAH

The first three generations
IT TAKES THREE FOR FRUITFULNESS

Lesson 5 Genesis 25:19 - 36 Synopsis

25. Abraham marries Keturah of seven sons Midian is one Abraham dies at 175 Isaac and Ishmael bury him in the cave of Machpefah Isaac prayed for Rebekah who was barren she conceived the children struggled within her she went to a seer two nations - the elder to serve the younger Esau first, Jacob second Esau, Isaac's favorite, Jacob, Rebekah's favorite Esau gives up his birthright for pottage
26. Isaac receives the promises a famine in the land Isaac dwells in Gerar Abimelech's attentions to Rebekah are punished Isaac sowed and reaped 100 fold quarrel over water appearance of God at Beersheba Isaac built an altar, pitched a tent, dug a well Abirnelech makes a covenant Esau marries Hittite daughters
27. Isaac asks Esau to prepare game for him in preparation for final blessing Rebekah overhears Jacob fetches kids which she prepares

- Jacob disguises himself Isaac takes him to be Esau blesses him with bountiful blessings Esau comes in the subterfuge discovered late Esau's blessing is gone a blessing given of barrenness and fierceness that are to be true of Edom and Amalek Esau plots to kill Jacob Rebekah sends Jacob to Laban in Haran
28. Isaac blesses Jacob charges him not to marry any but of their own people Jacob to inherit the blessings of Abraham Esau tries to please by marrying Ishmaelite women Jacob goes toward Haran dreams of an angelic ladder the God of his fathers reveals Himself to him receives the promises from God names the place Bethel "the house of God" strikes a bargain with God
29. at Haran Jacob meets shepherds at a well "Do you know Laban?" his daughter is coming with the sheep the stone takes many to roll away Jacob does it by himself for Rachel discloses who he is

- Rachel runs to tell Laban Laban's two daughters Rachel and Leah Jacob serves seven years for Rachel the feast is prepared Laban deceives Jacob gives Leah as wife Jacob also receives Rachel , but must serve another seven years Leah was hated Rachel was barren Leah bore four sons Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah
30. Rachel gives her slave girl Bilhah to Jacob Bilhah bears Dan and Naphtali Leah gives her slave girl Zilpah to Jacob Zilpah bears Gad, Asher Reuben takes mandrakes to Leah, Rachel asks for some in return for allowing Leah to sleep with Jacob she bore issachar Zebuiun and Dinah the Lord opened Rachel's womb she bore Joseph Jacob asks to leave Laban agrees he has been blessed by Jacob's stay Jacob's wages to be the irregular lambs born Laban removes irregular adults Jacob puts up streaked rods to cause irregular offspring did this to the strongest

31. developed strong flocks let the weaker breed naturally they were Laban's Laban and his sons are jealous the Lord tells Jacob to return to land of his father Jacob talks to Leah and Rachel their father cheated consistently it was the Lord who gave him the strong irregulars Jacob's bargain of 28:20 has been met Leah and Rachel agree they must do what God has said Jacob puts his sons and wives on camels takes his cattle and livestock to go to Canaan Rachel steals the household gods, and they fled across the Euphrates God warns Laban not to harm Jacob Laban overtakes Jacob why did you sneak away and take my gods? I was afraid you'd take your daughters from me anyone found with your gods will not live Laban searches the tents Rachel sits on the gods they are not found Jacob tells of his life as a nomadic shepherd the daughters did belong to Laban by exogamous law Laban and Jacob covenant the Mizpah benediction

- they don't trust each other but God buffers they eat the covenant meal Laban blesses his daughters and their children and goes home
32. Jacob meets an angelic army at Mahanaim
 Jacob sends Esau messengers
 Esau is coming to meet Jacob with four hundred men
 Jacob is afraid
 distributes his people and goods into two companies
 Jacob prays for help appealing to the promise
 nine droves of animals prepared as a gift
 "These belong to your servant Jacob - they are a present sent to my Lord Esau"
 in the night he takes his wives and children across the Jabok
 that night Jacob alone wrestles with God
 his name is changed to Israel
 his thigh is out of joint - so the place is called Peniel
33. Esau is coming
 arranges the children and women with Rachel and Joseph
 last of all he meets Esau, who ran to meet him
 impressed, Esau takes the gifts
 Jacob begs (another deception) to go slowly to Seir in order to separate from Esau
 Jacob does not go there, but goes away to Succoth
- and then to Shechem
 bought from sons of Hamar a piece of land
 erected an altar and called it El-Elohe-Israel
34. Dinah raped by Shechem
 Jacob hears about it and holds his peace
 Hamor asks Jacob for Dinah
 her brothers are angry
 Shechem offers gifts for Dinah to be his wife
 Dinah can marry only someone circumcised
 Shechem and brothers believe accepting circumcision will put Jacob's wealth in their hands
 agree to circumcision every male in the city when they are sore
 Simeon and Levi slay Hamor and Shechem and all the males plundering the city
 Jacob is worried about reprisals
35. God tells Jacob to go to Bethel
 Jacob has his household put away foreign gods
 purify themselves of cult objects which are put under the oak at Shechem
 they were not pursued at Bethel
 build an altar
 Rebekah's nurse dies
 buried at Bethel
 Jacob is blessed - called Israel
 promises of El Shaddai made again
 a pillar set up in remembrance
 Rachel has hard labor
- calls the son, son of my sorrow
 Benoni, or Benjamin
 Jacob set up a pillar on her grave
 Reuben lies with Bilhah (Rachel's maid)
 Jacob's sons listed by their mothers
 Esau and Jacob bury Isaac who dies after 180 yrs
36. Esau's descendants are listed
 wives are Canaanites
 Esau is Edom and means red

Lesson 5 Genesis 25:19 - 38 Outline

I. God forms a people - see lesson 4

- A. Limitations imposed by the Fall do not obstruct God's use of what is as vehicles of revelation of Himself and His Plan for Man
- B. Traditions and theophanies work together to pass on the revelation which is forming a people who are His own

II. The Fathers of Israel

- A. God establishes a line of patriarchs
 - 1. through theophanies they receive promises and make covenants
 - a. divine encounters with God
 - b. He identifies Himself as the ONE who has spoken earlier to their fathers
 - c. contact with God is direct and external to themselves
 - 2. God encounters Abraham 12:1; 12:7;13:14;15:1,6;17:4-7; 18:1, 22:17
 - a. promises given to him
 - 1) all nations will bless themselves
 - 2) descendants like sand of the sea, stars of the sky
 - 3) a land will belong to the people
 - 4) those who curse you, I will curse, those who bless you I will bless
 - b. he is privileged with the Lord's friendship 18
 - c. he is accounted righteous before God because of faith 15:6
 - d. Abraham's death and burial at Machpelah 25:7
 - 3. God encounters Isaac in stories that are echoes of Abraham
 - a. theophany 26: 3f 4f
 - 1) I will bless you as sojourners in this land
 - 2) to you and your descendants I will give this land
 - 3) I will multiply your descendants
 - 4) all nations of earth shall bless themselves by you
 - 5) I will be with you and bless you 26:24
 - b. incidents with Abimelech at Gerar
 - 1) reiteration of his wife being called sister 26:6
 - a) Abimelech realizes Rebekah is Isaac's wife
 - b) "whoever touches this man or his wife - death."
 - 2) problems over wells 26:17
 - 3) Abimelech asks to make a covenant because God is with Isaac
 - a) a covenant feast celebrated
 - b) an oath taken together
 - c. deception by Rebekah and Jacob 27

- 1) Isaac is to bless his eldest before he dies
- 2) acting according to the oracle, Rebekah sides with Jacob
 - a) she prepares the food Isaac will think is Esau's
 - b) she makes elaborate disguise to fool Isaac
- d. Isaac dies and is buried at Machpelah with Sarah and Abraham 35:2
- 4. God encounters Jacob (his name means *to supplant* 27:36)
 - a. his theophanies 28:10,32:25ff
 - 1) establishment of sanctuary at Bethel, formerly called Luz
 - a) I am the Lord, God of Abraham, God of Isaac
 - b) the land you lie on I will give to you and to your descendants
 - c) your descendants shall be like dust of earth
 - d) all families of earth will bless themselves by you
 - e) I am with you and will go with you
 - f) I will bring you back to this place
 - 2) God recalls this theophany
 - a) He calls Jacob to return home to Canaan 31:13
 - b) all the stipulations in the vows made then have been met
 - 3) at Peniel (or Penuel - meaning the face of God)
 - a) because he had striven with God and prevailed he was renamed Israel
 - (1) name significance - means *to strive, to contend*
 - (2) formation of Israel will be in contention with God
 - b) Jacob limps because of dislocated hip which is the result of the struggle with God
 - 4) visions of angels (previously in 16)
 - a) 32:1 - these angels are God's army
 - b) angels ascend the ladder to heaven in Jacob's dream 28:12
 - b. Jacob contrasted to Esau
 - 1) Esau did not value his birthright; Jacob knew its value and contrived to receive the blessing as well . see Heb.12:15 (God chases one above the other)
 - 2) Esau means red: Edom, a barren land of red rock, is his inheritance while Jacob's blessing forecasts bounty
 - 3) the elder shall serve the younger
 - a) a seer's prophecy given to Rebekah during pregnancy 25:23
 - b) the Divine plan is revealed in this prophecy
 - c) the change of order will happen again - God's will
 - 4) Isaac loved Esau (the game to eat) 25:27 Rebekah loved Jacob

- 5) Esau was a man of the flesh whose thought was for the present moment and not for spiritual or moral concerns
 - a) for bread and lentils he gave away his birthright which was his inheritance as first born
 - b) marries Hittite women who are not his parent's choice 26:34
 - c) when he sees his parent's concern about Jacob's marriage, he turns around and marries Ishmaelite women 28:8
 - 6) Esau's meagre blessing (Edom) 27:39
 - a) away from the fertility and rains
 - b) by your sword shall you live
 - c) you shall serve your brother, but break loose
 - c. Jacob receives the birthright and the blessing of Israel 27:28
 - 1) he has the right to succeed Isaac by holding the birthright
 - 2) the blessing is rich and the words have the power to come to pass
 - a) fatness of earth, plenty of grain and wine
 - b) peoples will serve you
 - c) nations will bow down to you
 - d) be lord over your brothers and mother's sons
 - e) cursed be those who curse you, blessed those who bless you
 - d. his character is manipulative and scheming
 - 1) he bargains with God at his theophany 28:20
 - 2) if you will be with me, the Lord will be my God
 - 3) he deceives his father for the blessing of the first born
 - 4) he outwits Esau for the birthright
 - 5) his dealings with Laban are full of trickery
 - a) in Laban he meets one as deceitful as himself
 - (1) Laban tricks him in the matter of wives
 - (a) the wives and children legally belong to Laban in exogamous marriage (where the husband comes from afar and lives in with his wife's family)
 - (b) he is loathe to let them go
 - (2) he knows he has gotten rich because of Jacob's sojourn and tries to detain him
 - (3) Laban deceives him with the flocks
 - (a) nevertheless, Jacob trusts in God
 - (b) works with his fertility devices
 - (c) grows rich in flocks of irregulars
 - b) he outwits Laban
 - (1) gets away with wives and children which by exogamous marriage law (see above) were rightfully Laban's
 - (2) perhaps Abraham's reluctance about Isaac's going for a bride was this wiliness
 - c) Laban's harangue and threats 31:24 were tempered by God who protects Jacob
 - d) Laban and Jacob make a covenant
 - (1) with a heap of stones as a witness
 - (2) built a watch tower called Mizpah
 - (3) "May the Lord watch between me and thee" - they do not trust each other.
 - (4) they will not pass these stones to hurt each other
 - (5) they make a sacrifice to God and eat the covenant meal
- 6) Jacob plans to appease Esau
 - a) he sends a submissive message - my Lord, I am your servant
 - b) he is afraid and distressed to hear 400 men approach
 - c) he divides his household so one group might survive
 - d) he prays to remind God of His promises 32
 - e) he carefully prepares his big present in stages to temper anger and to prepare Esau to accept and forgive 32:20
- e. Jacob's encounter with Hamor and Shechem (Shechem as a city originated about the time of this story)
 - 1) he bought a piece of land 33:19
 - a) the second piece of land owned by the nomadic patriarchs
 - (1) this one at Shechem
 - (2) and the cave at Machpelah where Sarah, Abraham, Isaac and Rebekah were buried
 - b) erected an altar called El Elohe Israel
 - 2) Dinah is raped by Shechem
 - a) he loves her and wants to marry her 34:3
 - b) Shechem tells Hamor to get her for his wife
 - 3) Jacob is angry but holds his peace
 - a) waits for his sons to come home
 - b) they are angry; such a thing ought not to be done 34:7
 - 4) Hamor wants an alliance and interchange of wives 34:1.0
 - a) believe they can profit from rich Jacob 34:23
 - b) Jacob and sons pretend to consider it.
 - 5) only circumcision can make Hamor's people acceptable 34:15 a) they agree and all are circumcised 34:24

- b) but this is only a subterfuge
- 6) when they are sore, Simeon and Levi kill all males; plunder the city
- 7) Jacob fears reprisal
 - a) he hears God tell him to leave the area 35:1
 - b) tells all his people to purify themselves
 - (1) put away foreign gods - amulets etc. 35:4
 - (2) a change of garments signifies repentance
 - c) God puts terror on those who might avenge
- 8) returns to Bethel (Abraham and Jacob previously worshipped here)
 - a) an altar is at El Bethel (two stories about h are together here)
 - b) there Rebekah's nurse is buried (interesting that she is with Jacob)
 - c) when they go to Hebron, Isaac is still alive -) twenty years earlier he was blind and near death
- f. Jacob tells about the hard life of a shepherd 31:38

III. The Mothers of Israel

A. Woman's seed will bring salvation **Gen.3:15**

1. her seed will bring forth a savior
2. he will overcome the enemy

B. Chosen women bring forth God's chosen people

1. Sarah (see outline for lesson 4)
2. Rebekah, Isaac's wife is a chosen woman
 - a. she has respect and freedom 24:57-58
 - 1) her sons obey her word 27:13
 - b. she is loved 24:67
 - c. she is a particular woman 24:14
 - d. she is barren - with desire for children 25:21
 - 1) blessed for procreation 24:60
 - 2) her husband intercedes
 - e. she seeks spiritual insight
 - 1) goes to a sanctuary to a *seer* for knowledge 25:22
 - 2) acts on this knowledge thereafter
 - f. she is resourceful
 - 1) uses her ingenuity to further prophecy 27:5
 - 2) exceeds what we would call moral, but believed it was God's will
 - g. worth protected by God
 - 1) she too is offered to Abimelech
 - 2) he sees her being fondled by Isaac, and God warns him

- 3) Abimelech warns all not to touch her or Isaac
3. Rachel is the soulmate of Jacob 29:30
 - a. Jacob loves her 29:30
 - 1) Jacob meets his cousin Rachel at the well
 - 2) she is beautiful and lovely
 - 3) asks Laban to marry her and serves for seven years 29:20
 - b. Rachel is barren - the flag over her that marks her specially
 - 1) she desires fruitfulness 30:1 the aphrodisiac 30:14
 - 2) receives her maid's children as her legal right 30:6 Dan, Naphtali
 - 3) God hearkens to Rachel and opens her womb 30:22
 - a) this is the child of special promise - Joseph 30:24
 - b) Rachel is more fruitful than Leah
 - (1) Judah, the head tribe, is Leah's son
 - (a) Judah is "the father" of David, his physical lineage
 - (b) Leah therefore is "the mother of David
 - (c) Judah is not Jesus' father (God is His father)
 - (d) Leah is in His mother's lineage (Mary) therefore according to the flesh, Leah is Jesus' foremother
 - (2) Rachel's fruit is saviour to his brothers
 - (3) Leah is a mother according to the flesh; her sons must be saved
 - (4) Rachel is a mother according to the flesh and the spirit
 - (a) like Jesus, Joseph saves
 - (b) Joseph's *name* does not go forward in Israel according to the flesh. There is no "tribe" of Joseph, his physical lineage takes the names of Ephraim and Manasseh. Jesus has no physical progeny.
 - (c) Rachel is the prototype of Mary
 - (d) Mary and Jesus are exceedingly fruitful in spiritual fruitfulness
- c. Rachel has power over Jacob
 - 1) she keeps him from Leah 30:15
 - 2) then allows him to sleep with Leah for mandrakes
- d. Rachel's resourcefulness to further Jacob
 - 1) she steals the family gods
 - a) this gives Jacob's wives legitimate inheritance of Laban's household

- b) otherwise Laban's daughters and children belong to Laban who did not want Jamb to be his heir
 - a. Rachel's death in childbirth
 - 1) at the birth of Benjamin
 - 2) buried near Bethlehem where Rachel's tomb is today
- 5. Leah the other legal wife of Jacob
 - a. not loved by Jacob
 - b. but a legal wife and a free woman
 - c. she mothered six of the sons who will head the twelve tribes: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun
- 6. Jacob's two concubines, Bilhah and Zilpah, mother sons who head tribes
 - a. Reuben lies with Bilhah (Rachel's maid)
 - b. Bilhah's sons are Dan and Naphtali by Jacob
 - c. Zilpah (Leah's maid) has sons, Gad and Asher, by Jacob

IV. Establishment of a People See diagram with lessons 4 and 5

- A. The family tree - chapter 25
 - 1. incidents concerning Simeon and Levi 34:25
 - 2. and incidents concerning Reuben 35:22 figure in prophecies later on
- B. Pieces of land
 - 1. Abraham's burial site 23
 - 2. Jacob's well and field at Shechem 33
- C. Names and Blessings 27:33
 - 1. He will be named" "he will be called" a prophecy and a blessing
 - 2. A name said something about the human situation, or about the person. A well, a location or a person.
 - 3. Name changes were always significant
 - a. Jacob, he who supplants - to Israel, he who contends with God
 - b. Abram - Sarai to Abraham and Sarah -adding the *ah* from Yahweh
- 4. Names of God in these chapters
 - a. El (Mighty one)
 - b. *El Shaddai* 35:11, 28:3, 17:1 God of the Mountain
 - c. Ehim (plural of El, God) Note how many names end in el
 - d. Yahweh , the divine tetragrammatron YHWH (not revealed in the Bible until Exodus 3 when God gives Moses His name)
 - e. El Elohe Israel (God, the God of Israel)