**Session 5: The Patriarchs, Part 2**

Chapter 25: Jacob and Esau (the older); the blessing is important and who that goes through is also important; we know that parents have favorites (v. 27); we have a couple of incidents when Esau should be receiving the birthright and blessing, but Jacob receives it instead.

Chapter 27: “When Isaac was old and eyes were dim” he is in the darkness, old age of his life; in Chapter 25 Esau was already fooled; now he is about to give up his blessing but does not know it. Remember that not one word is lost in the Hebrew language.

**The birthright and blessing**:

1. The eldest son (leadership of the family); to preserve the family; double portion and larger inheritance comes responsibility for the sake of the tribe (family); giving up this right is like giving up your order; the excuse he gives is that the bowl of (red) stew (prepared by Jacob) is traded for his birthright because he is famished; now Jacob has the birthright (cf Hebrews 12:16-17 tells us that Esau was a profane and unholy man); to treat the holy as “common;” in an unholy way. Esau treats his birthright in this way.
2. The blessing (Rebecca gets in on this); which means prosperity, vitality, fertility, blessing of life and leadership should be in the hands of a good man; Jacob agrees with the plan of Rebecca; they bring in the food in a secretive way; the end result is that Jacob ends with the blessing (by fooling the father). Esau then comes in from the field; much to the confusion to Isaac; now Esau is furious; Jacob has to leave the land and goes to Heron (where Abraham’s family stayed); remember when you leave the lands it is NOT good; it is exile. A theme that is repeated over and over again in the Scriptures.

Was this right or wrong? Did Jacob get the blessing? Yes he did! Not quite the way we would like for things to happen, but it was done. N.B. The way of the Hebrews never just come out and tell you it was wrong; they show you it was wrong. So we have to pay attention what happens to Jacob.

Chapters 28-30; Jacob leaves the land for nearly 20 years; Chapter 28:10-12; Jacob falls asleep (Jacob’s Dream); some translations use “staircase or stairway” which fits in a little better in the future of the Temple’s steps to the Presence of the Lord.

Chapter 29: Jacob falls in love with his first cousin; Rachel (Laben’s daughter); he wants to marry her. However, the next day Lia (Rachel’s older sister) was in the tent; Laben says “I don’t know the custom where you are from, but here, the oldest goes first.” (Culture of alcohol could have been the reason why did not know).

Jacob (remember the root of his name is trickery, playing games, heeler grabber) has been “Jacobed.” The details in the Hebrew writing shows that he was in the same way he fooled his father; in the middle of the night when he did not see. So rejoice in the punishment!

From Jacob and Rachel comes their twelve (12) sons (soon to be known as the 12 Tribes of Israel; which is Jacob’s new name):

1. Reuben
2. Simeon

Lia

Bilhah/Zilpah

Rachel

1. Levi
2. **Judah**
3. Zebulon
4. Issachar
5. Dan
6. Naphtali
7. Gad
8. Asher
9. Joseph
10. Benjamin

Leah has the first four sons; then has problems with fertility, then two handmaids of Rachel; only the 11th and 12th come from Rachel. They were accused of stealing the gods.

After 20 years (or so) Jacob will run into his brother Esau; there he wrestles with the angel of the Lord (at *paneo* “face of God”) “Not until you bless me” I will not let you go; maybe he wondered if he ever had God’s blessing; now his name is changed to Israel (which becomes the name of the nation meaning “strives with God”).

His meeting with Esau works out very well; there seems to be peace.

Chapter 34: they come back into the Promised Land. Now (the younger sister) Dina is raped by the men of Shechem; needed to make a covenant, while they were recovering from circumcision they were wiped out by Simeon and Levi (a designee of Jacob).

Chapter 37; now the focus is on Joseph; shift in the story; the firstborn son of Rachel (11th born of Jacob) Jacob’s favorite son because he was the firstborn of Rachel; he wears the technicolor dream coat to remind others of his favor; this is not liked by his brothers. Joseph has a couple of dreams; of things bowing down to Joseph. The brothers are not happy with this. V. 19 “Here comes the dreamer!” Ruben intervenes not to kill Joseph. They dug a pit and thought about it; and sold him into bondage. Of all the 10 brothers, Judah came up with the idea of selling Joseph, this is **important** because this is not just about Joseph but also about Judah too. This will play a prominent role in the lineage of the Messiah.

Jacob was deceived by his sons; they returned with the ripped up clothing (the coverings); all details are coming back on Jacob.

Chapter 38: Judah (4th son) and his relationship with his daughter in law Tamar mentioned in Jesus’ genealogy (Saint Matthew) who could not have children with Judah’s son; she came up with a plan to play she was a prostitute; and she became pregnant.

Remember God is comparing the righteousness of Joseph (who will be tempted by a woman) and Judah; and you will learn how sub-part Judah is.

Chapter 39: Potifer’s wife takes a liking to Joseph; but he resists (v. 21) he would not sin against his master or against God. Joseph is thrown into the dungeon after being lied about by a woman; he is alone in the dungeon. So much for being the favorite, so much for dreams!

Chapter 40: now Joseph is down in the tip with a butler and a baker; (v.7) Joseph says: “Why are you faces downcast today?” They are sad because they had some dreams as well; he responds: “Do not interpretations belong to God?” Joseph then gives an interpretation to the dreams; the cup-bearer (bulter) will be ok and be restored to the court of Pharaoh and the baker will be killed. Right before the cup-bearer is restored, Joseph asks him to not forget him. Months and months go by and he forgot all about Joseph. (This is when we need to trust in the Lord with all our hearts).

Chapter 41; after 2 years, the butler forgot him; but then Pharaoh has a dream about   
7 thin cows and 7 thick ones, and 7 plump grain and no one can interpret the meaning; then (v.9) then butler remembers after two years the Hebrew in prison; Joseph gives the interpretation of Pharoah’s dream and he is put in charge of the operation (the Prime Minster; the “one who is over the house hold” which is a title) which will see in the future even up to Saint Peter (the Pope).

Chapter 42: *“Alba ba yaet”*(Prime Minister); Joseph will have an opportunity to see his brothers and test them about their youngest brother (Benjamin) and his father. The suffering of the one brother (Joseph) brings about life and growth for the rest of his brothers, but Joseph does not know this.

Synopsis of Joseph and his brothers:

1. They go to Egypt (Chapter 42)
2. But they do not take Benjamin (he stays home)
3. They do not recognize Joseph who has physically changed
4. Joseph accuses them of being spies
5. (v.15) “By this you shall be tested”
6. He took Simeon (#2) hostage until Benjamin (#12) is returned
7. Joseph asks what relationship they had with their father
8. He puts money in the bags; at first seems like a positive gesture but it is not; so when they get back home; Jacob will know two things:
   1. They have money in their bags
   2. You have a brother that is missing
9. The appearance is that they sold their brother (putting doubt in Jacob’s mind)
10. They have to return to Egypt
11. Jacob is very nervous that Benjamin returns with them
12. Joseph puts his chalice in one of their bags (in Benjamin’s)
13. Before they left, Ruben made a promise (v.37) that if they do not return, Jacob can slay his two sons;
14. They are brought back to Joseph
15. Joseph is struggling, began to weep; sat them down in their birth order;
16. The silver cup was taken by one of them
17. One of the brother’s said; “Take me. Make me a slave instead of Benjamin” this was **Judah** (the one who sold Joseph) who grew in holiness because one of this brother’s suffered; this is an incredible turnaround
18. Then Joseph revealed himself
19. Their first thought was “don’t kill us”
20. Chapter 45: 5-8; “God sent me to preserve life; it was God who sent me, not you…” (did not play the blame game);
21. Joseph gives them the directions: “Don’t quarrel with each other on the way home.” God had all of this orchestrated; the mature mind can see how God is in the midst of even all this craziness; God had a plan!
22. The family settles in Egypt; (Chapter 49) the final blessing goes not to Ruben (the firstborn); Simeon and Levi do not get it (because he killed the men of Schechem), but the 4th son Judah got it; we are now following the line of Judah. “The shepherd shall not depart from Judah.”