

## **“The Book of Beginnings”**

### **Section 8**

#### **The Generations of Isaac (25:19–35:29)**

God’s promise is preserved through Isaac. The promise is quoted in 26:3–4, 24; 27:27–29; 28:3–4, 13–14; 32:12; 35:11. The theme is God’s faithfulness to His promise in the midst of undeserving people and overwhelming circumstances.

#### **Phase #1 (25:19–34)**

*The Threat:* Rebekah is barren (v. 21).

*The Solution:* God gives Isaac children (v. 21).

*The Promise:* “The older shall serve the younger ...” (v. 23).

#### **Phase #2 (26:1–13)**

*The Threat:* There’s a famine in the land (v. 1).

*The Solution:* God prospers Isaac (vv. 12–13).

*The Promise:* “I will be with you ...” – the land, offspring, and blessing (vv. 2–5).

#### **Phase #3 (26:14–35)**

*The Threat:* There are enemies in the land (vv. 14, 16, 19–20).

*The Solution:* God protects Isaac (v. 22).

*The Promise:* “Fear not, for I am with you ...” – the offspring and blessing (v. 24).

#### **Phase #4 (27:1–40)**

*The Threat:* Isaac acts foolishly (vv. 1–4).

*The Solution:* God’s providence overrules (vv. 24, 27, 30).

*The Promise:* “May God give you ...” – the land, offspring, and blessing (vv. 27–29).

#### **Phase #5 (27:41–28:9)**

*The Threat:* Esau is determined to murder Jacob (v. 41).

*The Solution:* God’s providence overrules (v. 42).

*The Promise:* “May God give the blessing of Abraham to you ...” (vv. 3–4).

#### **Phase #6 (28:10–32:2)**

*The Threat:* Jacob flees from home (v. 10).

*The Solution:* God is with Jacob (v. 12).

*The Promise:* “God Almighty bless you ...” – the land, the offspring, and the blessing (vv. 3–5, 13–15).

#### **Phase #7 (32:3–33:20)**

*The Threat:* Esau’s intentions are unclear (v. 6).

*The Solution:* God’s providence overrules (v. 11–12).

*The Promise:* “Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed” (v. 28).

When used as a noun, the Hebrew verb for “wrestle” means “dust” (Ex. 9:8–9). To wrestle is to pull down to the dust. God wants Jacob to reach the point where he says with Abraham: “I who am but dust and ashes” (18:27). Jacob resists. And so, God puts his hip socket out of joint. If Jacob lets go, he will fall to

the ground – the dust. At this point, Jacob asks for a blessing. But first he must confess his true character. He must acknowledge that he's dust. It's at this moment that Jacob begins to prevail with God, meaning he seeks His favor with tears (Hos. 12:3–4). Because he does, God changes his name and blesses him.

### **Phase #8 (34:1–35:29)**

*The Threat:* (1) To the offspring: marriage with the Canaanites (v. 2, 9). (2) To the land: war with the Canaanites (v. 30).

*The Solution:* God watches over Jacob (v. 5).

*The Promise:* “I am God Almighty ...” – the land, offspring, and blessing (vv. 10–12).

## **Section 10 The Generations of Jacob (37:2–50:26)**

God's promise is preserved through Jacob. The promise is quoted in 46:2–4; 48:3–4, 21. The theme is God's faithfulness to His promise in the midst of undeserving people and overwhelming circumstances.

### **The Land:**

Jacob is described as a sojourner in the land (47:8–9). See 17:8; 28:4; 36:7; 37:1. When he uses the same word in his conversation with Pharaoh, he says his entire life has been a sojourn in this world (1 Chron. 29:15; Pss. 39:12–13; 119:19; Heb. 11:9–10, 13; 13:4). The land is a token of the heavenly dwelling place prepared in glory for all the people of God.

### **The Offspring:**

God sends Joseph to Egypt, in order to preserve the promised offspring (45:5–8). If Jacob's family were to perish in the famine, the promised seed would be in jeopardy.

The word “offspring” appears in 46:6–7. God appoints Egypt as the place where the offspring will be kept safe. The true offspring (Christ) must come at the appointed time. Thus, His ancestors must be preserved.

The word “offspring” appears in 48:11. Jacob lays hands on Joseph's offspring. He deliberately confers the greater honor on Ephraim, the younger son. This is a prophetic action (v. 19).

The chief point of this section is repeated in 50:19–21. Despite undeserving people and overwhelming circumstances, God preserves and protects His promise.

### **The Blessing:**

The term “blessing” occurs fifteen times in 48:1–49:33. Jacob recalls how God “blessed” him (48:3). He then passes on the blessing to the next generations in the persons of Ephraim and Manasseh (48:9, 15–16, 20). Jacob's blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh was in fact the transfer of the rights of the firstborn from Reuben to Joseph (1 Chron. 5:1–2).

Jacob blesses his twelve sons in their capacity as the heads of the twelve tribes (49:28). The greatest blessing is reserved for Judah – a king would come from his line (49:10; Pss. 78:67–68, 70–71). This is Christ (Heb. 7:14). He's the king from whom the sceptre of authority will never depart (Rev. 5:5).