

This will be *Part 4* of our current series entitled *The Fulfilling of Passover*.

Before we go too far I want to clarify something that I started into last week and then stumbled all over the place because I realize my notes are all messed up here and I didn't write things down properly, I didn't look at it properly when I was finished with the notes I'd taken.

But anyway, last Sabbath we looked at those things that followed in the story flow of how Esau had trampled upon his inheritance, and then how God worked through Isaac in order to begin working through Jacob, which is an awesome process, and I think there are so many things in here we can learn from. To me it's an incredible thing to realize that God works with each one of us in a unique individual manner to produce things in us, to mold and fashion things within us, that it's not to be like everyone else but there are to be differences. So, we go through various things in life in order for those qualities or characteristics or whatever it is to be developed in us.

As I had mentioned in the past here in this series sometimes it's difficult for us to see our lives as something that awesome, that incredible, that God is working with us to mold and fashion something within us with the kind of lives we have. It's like there has to be something greater happening in our life in order for that to be accomplished. It's not the case.

Things we do, relationships, people we come into contact with, various things we experience in life, God will mold and fashion us, and so we see some of these things in these stories, which to me is incredible how God works with that and has great patience, because as we're going to see in the story today sometimes it can take a few decades to learn something that needs to be changed in our thinking, that needs to be addressed in our thinking.

Often we get to learn it by experience because knowledge isn't enough. To learn something, to know something that is true isn't enough. Just to have knowledge of something doesn't get it, we have to have experience, because through the experience we can come to have conviction where it becomes our thinking, our thoughts, our mind.

Knowledge doesn't mean it's your mind. To have knowledge of something doesn't mean this is the way you think. We feel that we agree with something or believe something, but that's not enough. God gives us more when there are certain things that have to be developed within us. So, we're going to see some of that as we go through the story flow.

But anyway, in this particular section here I wanted to address this in the beginning. So, as we were going through some of the story flow, again, I mentioned how Esau was forty years old when he began to take wives who were of the Hittites in that region, and I mentioned how Isaac was one hundred by this time because of the age when the boys were born, Esau and Jacob, and what this brought us to now that this is forty years later.

So again here, Isaac having been sixty at that particular time during their birth, it makes that clear, and then forty years later, obviously, he's a hundred.

So anyway, I'd mentioned to you already here how that I knew that some of this wasn't correct as far as my notes were concerned so I'm going to read this to make sure I get it just right.

It was stated that Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah. Then in Genesis 25 it records that Esau and Jacob were born to Rebekah when Isaac was sixty years old. (There, we got it.) Then the story flow tells how, again here, Esau was taking wives of the Hittites.

Again, to understand the primary thing here that God was concerned about as He worked with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and people they might marry, had to do with matters of God and knowledge of God. It doesn't mean they were perfect in what they were doing, but they weren't delving into (as the other nations were) various kinds of gods and so forth that were totally away from anything having to do with God and their lineage, all the things they'd gone through as far as Noah and on through time.

So again here, their desire was to have someone that they would marry that was of the family line, close enough, with that knowledge.

This is the history of Israel, how that they went with other peoples of other nations. It wasn't a matter of race as some have tried to say in times past, it was a matter of the gods, the things having to do with the truth, a little bit of truth about God or things that were totally delving into superstition and other kinds of gods. That's what God did not want them to have. A good parent, obviously, didn't want them to have that in their life as well.

This was of concern then when they started seeing these things take place, and this enters into the story. So, it was after this that it speaks of Isaac being old and not knowing when he would die, and therefore, he wanted to pass along the inheritance to Esau. The point being in all this is we know that he had to be at least a hundred years old because at this point in time here is when Esau began to do what he was, trying to find a wife or having taken wives of the Hittites. But it does not say that Isaac was specifically one hundred years old when this event took place.

That's why sometimes trying to find the timing of certain things in scripture, you can't. Certain things you can, some things, and this is an example of one that you can't zero in specifically. The point being was, as I'd mentioned, he lived to be 180. So, whenever it was he had more time when he began to lose his hearing little bit and his eyesight was pretty much to a point where he couldn't tell who was who. He was even questioning the sound then of Jacob, if you remember the story last Sabbath, so he knew that something wasn't quite right by what he was hearing.

But we all get old and things like this can happen in life, especially when you get that old. The body breaks down, things in the body begin to break down, eyes, hearing, and so forth.

So the point being is we do know that Jacob was gone for a certain amount of time. He was gone for a full twenty years when we come to that account, and we don't know the specific year of that either. But the point being is he had to be somewhere at a particular point in time before Jacob left and by the time Jacob came back. Jacob was gone twenty years.

So again here, he may have been around 120 to 140 is the point. 100, 120, 140, when we read this account last Sabbath, but he lived to be 180, which I'm glad we don't have to live that long. Being in this carnal physical body knowing what we know is difficult enough time if you want to look at 30, 40, 50 years. When we know what we know about our human nature, that's a long time, so thank God we don't have to go longer.

So, I just wanted to straighten that out a little bit to be more accurate.

So, we're continuing then in *Part 4* of the series here now *The Fulfilling of Passover*, and again, last Sabbath we ended in the middle of the story where Isaac, again, felt he was getting old, he wanted to pass along the inheritance to Esau, the son whom he loved, the firstborn.

But then the story continued on how Jacob deceived his father into believing he was Esau in the account of Esau going out to hunt game to bring it back. So Rebekah, and by her conniving and plotting, convinced Jacob here, told Jacob "Do what I command you," and he did it. He went in to deceive his father, Isaac, with the stew or whatever it was and ever how they cooked it at that particular time, of the meal that Isaac loved. We're going to read verse 30 where we ended last week and then continue on.

Genesis 27:30—Now it happened, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. So, it's incredible here the timing of events, what took place, and already the example there of Isaac asking, "How were you able to do this so quickly," when he asked Jacob about "How were you able to find this game so quickly, then do the cooking of it and then bring it to me?" And he said, "God provided."

And sometimes if we're not careful in life, even within God's Church, we can tell part of a story about something or relate something that has truth in it. In this case here, "God provides." So, a person could say, "I'm not really lying because God provided this." We have to be careful that we don't do things like that, because telling a partial truth or part of a story and yet knowing in our minds we're holding something back and we're shading what is there because we don't want someone else to know the whole story, is lying.

It'd be better not to tell something than to do that. hope you understand what I'm saying. Because I've experienced this a lot in the ministry, because I find out things, I know things, things happen, things are told. Anyway, eventually there are certain things that come out, "Oh, they didn't tell me the whole story. Interesting."

That's not good. It's not being honest with God. It's not being honest with God's ministry, and therefore, not being honest with God. So basically, how can we help, how can we serve

effectively or well if we're not told the truth of a matter? So again, that's a part of human nature that we have to fight, to be open, to be truthful. Sometimes that takes time to learn.

So continuing on in the story now, **Genesis 27:31—He also had made his favorite meal, and brought it to his father, and said to his father, Let my father arise and eat of his son's game, that as you live you may bless me. Then his father Isaac said to him, Who are you? He replied, Your son, your firstborn, Esau.** Here we go. What an incredible event that took place here.

Now, we have to understand here too, that this is not like the environment of the Church. Jacob was not being worked with directly by God yet in the sense of molding and fashioning him. There comes a point in time when He starts that process more directly. But with us, we're called, we make a choice at baptism, and then we come into the Body of Christ, the Church of God and we begin to have fellowship and God begins to work with us in a very unique manner.

We have to be careful when we read stories like this, of not expecting them, all of them to react like or be like someone who is impregnated with God's spirit in the Church of God. Does that make sense? Hopefully, yes. Because sometimes these stories can be read in that fashion, that more is expected of them. Well, God was working with them in a different way and began to work with them at times that aren't always obvious.

Jacob wasn't being worked with in that regard here. He was deceitful. He was a little cunning. But he wanted something, and he believed certain things about God that he'd already heard from his father, from his mother.

Esau was not of the same mind at all. That is clear by some of the story we're already read. And so it is that something was already set there that began to work in them that Jacob was different. God knew that before they were born. They were going to be different; they were intended to be different. God had other things planned for both of them. These things don't just happen by accident and then God looks at it and says, "Now what am I going to do?!"

These concepts that have sometimes been around in the Church need to be gotten rid of. It's not like all of a sudden God somehow reacts to someone, that this can somehow mess up His plan and His purpose. God is all powerful. He brings His plan to pass exactly as He set it out to be before anything was ever created. Awesome to understand that.

He said, I'm your firstborn Esau. Then Isaac being startled, said, Who? Where is the one who hunted game and brought it to me? I ate all of it before you came, and I have blessed him—and indeed he shall be blessed. He's the one who was blessed. When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and forceful bitter cry, saying to his father, Bless me, my father!

He wanted something, but he didn't want it for having done some of the things he should have done, like not selling his birthright the first time around, because of his attitude toward it, and candidly, toward any idea and belief that this was from God. But he wanted something to be

passed along to him. He wanted to receive the inheritance of what he evidently saw and only saw, a physical inheritance that had to do with everything that Isaac had accumulated by this time in his age.

He was a very wealthy man. Abraham was exceedingly wealthy. These things were passed along to Isaac. Isaac was exceedingly wealthy. Then we come to this point in time and Esau wants to be exceedingly wealthy, to receive everything.

And he answered, Your brother came deceitfully and has taken your blessing. And he replied, He is named Jacob, and has now supplanted these two times. He took away my birthright... Which isn't true, is it? He gave it away.

I mean, incredible how the human mind can think sometimes. It's like somebody gets upset at someone and it's like, "Look what they did!" No, look at what you did. Look at what you did. So often and that's so easy to do in our lives spiritually in our relationships with others. It's easy to see what someone else has done or find fault because it doesn't go our way, and we tear them apart, we find fault with them, when in reality we're the ones that cause it or created the problem in the first place. It's hard to look at self, in other words, or see self in it's true light.

He took away my birthright, and now, look, he has also taken away my blessing! So this is the first time, in essence, that the blessing concerning the birthright is going to be given. So, Esau sold it, didn't value it. That's the first time. But the second time here is the time when Isaac is going to pass the blessing along by what he says before God.

So, here Jacob has supplanted twice. Kind of the third time, really, by this point because he first reached out coming out of the womb. I mean, that is such an incredible story, it sticks with everyone. You know, a baby, a twin, and here the firstborn is going out and he grabs the back of his heel. Supplanter.

Then he asked, Have you not reserved a blessing for me? "Isn't there something that I can be blessed with?" in essence. **So Isaac answered and said to Esau, Indeed, I have made him your master—Whew!—over you.** Why? Because everything, everything by inheritance is going to Jacob. "You're here. He's going to be your master. He's going to be over you."

...and all his brethren, and I have given to him as servants; along with grain and wine I have sustained him. What shall I do now for you, my son? So, in other words, everything is going to pass along to Jacob.

Then Esau said to his father, Do you only have one blessing, my father? Bless me—O my father! So Esau lifted up his voice and wept. So when you read later on that Esau wept, in essence, because of his inheritance, it wasn't because he repented. That's what it says. It brings that out. He felt bad, yes, and he wanted the physical part, but to grasp any of the other, he didn't. He didn't see it. He didn't have any idea of what it was all about.

But something was in Jacob, that he saw more because of what had been told to him about the inheritance, that it's more than just the physical things that are here right now, it's about the future as well and what it means for generations to come. Who wouldn't want that for their family line, those kind of awesome things that God had told to Abraham and then Isaac? Then Jacob believed that and that's what he wanted.

It says then in **verse 39—Then Isaac his father answering said to him, Behold, your dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above. By your sword you shall live, and you shall serve your brother; and it shall come to pass, when you wander restlessly, that you shall break his yoke from your neck.** So again, it's kind of an interesting part of the story here as it continues on, of what took place, but even for later on.

So Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him, and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then I will kill my brother Jacob. So, he's going to take the inheritance. That's his attitude. He's going to kill his brother and that's how he's going to resolve this issue because he hated Jacob so much because he didn't get what he wanted and thought he deserved. Incredible.

Then my mind flashes through things of people in times past in the Church who thought they deserved certain things, more, because they didn't grasp how great, how awesome their calling was, and they felt they deserved more now, whatever that might be. Generally had to do with ordinations, various kinds of functions within the Church, because people oftentimes seek power to be in their minds (what they think), of what being elevated is all about. That's not what it's all about.

The fact that we're in God's Church, we have God's holy spirit, we are elevated. We are the children of God! That's an awesome thing! I've seen those things destroy a lot of people. That very thing has destroyed a lot of people, truly has.

Verse 42—Then the words of Esau her older son... Now, I want to back up here because of what it said. It said that "Esau said in his heart." It's kind of awkwardly written sometimes, these things are, because he evidently said some things out loud, whatever, at some point.

So, this is where it starts. It starts in the heart, in the mind, what he's going to do. But at some point, things that come into your heart, into your mind, especially when it has to do with anger or hatred, generally comes out the mouth. It's said to someone. People oftentimes just can't hold it in like they should in order to deal with self and get self right first. But he didn't think that way and so many people don't.

Then it goes on to say, **Then the words of Esau her older son were told to Rebekah.** So at some point he stated what he felt inside of his heart. **So she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said to him, Surely your brother Esau comforts himself concerning you to kill you.** "This is the comfort he's receiving to deal with what's happened here, with what we

have done, and he does so by looking forward to the time he's going to kill you. That's what's in his heart. That's what's in his mind."

Now therefore my son, obey what I say. Well, he already had at one point, and this has happened. ...**and arise to flee to my brother Laban in Haran.** So this is, again, going all the way from where they were here in the lower areas of the upper Negev region, all the way past the areas of what we'd call Jerusalem today, farther north, and then all the way back to where they had settled, where Abraham had gone so long ago before they came south.

And so, saying "Go back up here to relatives in the area." That's what she's telling him. **And stay with him, with Laban, a number of days, until your brother's rage turns away.** So again, it's kind of awkwardly stated here because it's ever how long it might take for your brother's rage. It doesn't mean just a few days. It could be weeks. It could be months. It could be years.

Anyway, going on, **until your brother's anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him; then I will send and bring you from there.** So, that's what was in her mind, of how this was going to be addressed. "I will send for you." That's not what happened finally, but when she was comfortable with thinking Esau is okay now and is not out seeking to kill you, **then I will send and bring you from there. Why should I be bereaved also of you both in one day?**

Then Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth. So, now this is in Rebekah's heart. She wants Jacob to leave. She knows the danger he's in, and so now she goes and tells Isaac because Isaac has to be on board about this in order to make sure that Jacob will leave.

This is what she says, **I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth. If Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth, like these who are the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?** So she, in essence, in her heart and mind is wanting Jacob to continue in the way that he's been receiving certain things that had been told to him, holding on to some of those things that had been told to him. But if he goes out here and starts marrying, this is what always happens. It's the history of Israel, he's going to be gone, other gods, other beliefs, and so forth. She wanted him to be grounded or to stay in this way.

Genesis 28:1—Then Isaac called Jacob, so this is how he responds then to what Rebekah said in the previous verse here. It says here, **Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, saying to him, You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padan Aram, to the house of Bethuel, your mother's father, and take for yourself a wife from there of the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother.** So he already knew and understood that they have this knowledge in this area because of that which Terah, the father of Abraham and the other sons that traveled up to that region, when they travelled up there from the area of Ur where they were located before.

May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you so that you may be multiplied of people. In other words, become a great congregation of people. **In giving you the blessing of Abraham...** So again, it goes back to this heart, what was in there, what was in Isaac's heart, what Abraham passed along to him in knowledge, of what God had told him, and then what God had told to Isaac. Always referring back to this that began with what God Almighty promised to Abraham.

In giving you the blessing of Abraham to you and your descendants with you, so that you may inherit the land in which you are a stranger, which God gave to Abraham. Always bringing God in the picture and being reminded of what God had said to Abraham and then to Isaac, and then because of him passing along that inheritance, now to you, Jacob.

So Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Padan Aram, to Laban the son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, and because of that region of the world and what they were called then, **the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.**

Now Jacob went out from Beersheba... So again, that area, the northern Negev and started going north, **and he went toward Haran. Then he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set, and he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head so he could lay down in that place to sleep.** So again, we know these stories. We've gone through this recently, this particular portion even not too long ago.

Then he dreamed, and a ladder stood up on the earth. Now, this is where God begins to work with Jacob. Now, He had worked with him in different ways but not directly as he was starting to do now. So again, what a marvel. God has worked with different people at different times in different ways, and especially in the first 4,000 years compared to what happened after Christ had been resurrected as our High Priest and the Church began. Then it's been in a more unified, uniform manner, of how God has worked through the Church and in the Church to mold and fashion people. But then, here and there, different ones, not very many. Incredible.

Then he dreamed, and a ladder stood up on the earth and its top reached to heaven; then the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. So they were going up and down this great ladder going up into the heaven.

Now, when it says "heaven," again here, high enough out of reach to where you don't see it anymore. In the mind no one knows where the heaven is of a spirit realm, but it's spoken of. There are different heavens spoken of, that which is in the universe where the stars are and the moon and farther out, then the heaven around the earth. Well, at some point you see something like this and it's going to disappear. That's what he saw.

The Eternal stood above it and said, I am the Eternal God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. So, what an incredible thing. Here you're having this dream, and very powerful. We don't have dreams like this. God was bringing something into his mind that he could see so clearly, so powerfully, and then God speaking to him.

The land on which you lay I will give to you and your descendants. He'd already told this to Abraham and Isaac, now He's telling Jacob: "You've been chosen for this. You've been prepared for this." He didn't understand all that, obviously. It wasn't said to him that way. But that was God's plan, Abraham, Isaac, and then Jacob.

Then in **verse 14** it says, **Even your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth.** Now, how can anyone comprehend that? "Your descendants, it's going to be so great." So to be told something like that from God a person would have to wonder at it, be in awe of it, but not really grasp it fully.

You shall spread abroad to the west, to the east, to the north, and to the south. Every direction you go this is where you're descendants are going to spread. That's saying pretty much they're going to spread everywhere. **In you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.** That's dumbfounding when you know what that's all about. "In you," a physical people, because of things that are going to happen. But what is going to come because of your name, (when that becomes your name), it's going to mean even more. But he didn't know this yet.

He said, "All the families of the earth shall be blessed." That means everyone. Every family on earth had the potential of being blessed because of this, of what God is going to give through this inheritance, an inheritance we talked about last Sabbath, the inheritance we all have in front of us, to be in God's Family. Things of the universe that we cannot comprehend, it's given to God's Family.

Verse 15—Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go. Now, he believed these things as they were told to him. He held on to this. It's incredible, an incredible story. **...and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.** "I'm going to be with you." It became a thing of comfort to him in time, something he reminded God of, in essence, because he believed God and so he referred back to that later on, and knew he needed God's help, wanted God's help. He spoke these words later on. They didn't leave him.

For I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you. He believed that.

God tells us things. He's always there for us. He doesn't leave us. He doesn't forsake us, but people do forsake God, they do leave God. So everyone who has ever been called into God's Church, this is what God lets us know, "I'm not going to leave you nor forsake you." He's called us for a purpose, to be in His Family. He gives us everything we need in order to become part of that family. The only thing that gets in the way is us, our choices.

I've known far more people in droves who have turned against God, who have forsaken God, than those who have held on. The beautiful part are those who hold on, those who fight until their life is over. You fight to the end. This is our life.

How much do we want the inheritance of what God says we can have to be a part of us? To be in Elohim? To be able to live life forever? To, as you get older (and discussing this with some in the beginning here), you have aches and pains. The older you get the more you have oftentimes. Now, some don't have as many, but as a whole we all experience it and it's not a fun process. We become more deeply convicted and have a greater desire as time goes on of what God offers us.

But you have to fight for it. You have to want it with all of your being and have a trust and a confidence and a belief God is there, called us for a purpose. We have it made. It's only our decisions to turn away from God that can get in the way.

To me, that's a hideous thing to be of Esau, to have that kind of a mind, to treat the inheritance with such contempt. Because every person who has ever left God's Church has treated with contempt God Almighty and what He says we can have. To me, that's a hideous thing that the human mind is capable of doing, and yet so many large numbers have done that. It's sad and it's very pathetic, it really is, pathetic. We're pathetic human beings, but we can be very strong as well if we hold on to what God has given us. We can stay close to God, and He'll give us what we need and what we lack to keep moving forward, to go through anything and everything in front of us.

"I will not leave you." Do you believe that about yourself? "I will not leave you until I have done what I have said I would do." What does that mean for each one of us? To be in Elohim. He won't leave us.

Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, Surely the Eternal is in this place. "He's here! He's spoken to me in a dream!" Awesome! He was so moved by this. None of us have ever experienced anything like that. Because it's different; it was a different way that God worked with him.

...and I did not know. How could we, that God was here, but He's here, He's in this place.

Being afraid he said, This place is fearful! "It's a fearful place that God could be here." **This is none other than the house of God,** or the dwelling of God, if you will, **and this is the gate of heaven!** Because God is up there. He spoke at the top, whatever that top was that he saw in the dream, and He said, basically, God was speaking to him, and he heard what He had to say. So, this has to be the gate to where God is.

Verse 18—Then Jacob rose early in the morning, took the stone that he had put at his head, set it up as a pillar, so he moved it upright, heavy as it was, being very heavy, but he was strong, well, stronger than most today, the way they had to grow up back then, the kind of work they had to do. **...and poured oil on top of it.** So, he set it upright, poured oil on it. How did he know to do these things?

Parts of the story sometimes we don't know until we read something like this. It's just like the offering of sacrifice, so the giving of something, or there were certain things that they were taught, Abraham to Isaac to Jacob; they witnessed certain things.

Then the name of the place he called Bethel, which means "the dwelling of God." "El" is God and "beth" here, "the dwelling place," if you will. The dwelling of God.

So, his head was resting there and so to him something very physical, he lifted that stone up that was there and felt that this was a matter of God's presence. "My head was there, this is where I experienced this," and so it became something that tied him to this location, but on a very physical plane. Looked at a rock, a rock that in time became a lot more significant through time. It went with Israel, where Israel went. It went with Judah, where Judah went until it ended up in Scotland. Incredible. All that time, all that journey, things that people sometimes hold on to and don't even understand why.

Just like when you see an ambulance go down the highway and you see this pole and the serpent. They have no idea where they came from. They don't know that that came from hundred and hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years before because of something that happened when the children of Israel were out in the wilderness that forty years and the snakes and the pole that God said to put there with a snake on it, a brazen serpent, and that when people would look upon it they would be healed of a snakebite, they wouldn't die.

Normal human beings began to think it had some kind of power and they started making replicas of it. Seven hundred years later that thing had to be destroyed. But they still had replicas and they were passed down for generations and generations. They're everywhere in pictures and hospitals and ambulances and wherever you go, a serpent with a pole.

So, should a rock be any different upon which kings and queens have been coronated, many of them through time? Awesome. They don't even know why. All the kings and queens of England that have been coronated sitting on top of that rock that's under the throne, that was under the throne at one time. It's not there anymore. But under that throne. Mind-boggling. They didn't know the history of why, but it's passed down as tradition. God's in it too, but they don't understand that. Incredible!

Then the name of the place he called Bethel, but the name of the city had first been called Luz. So again, this was what they called it. So, there are different names in certain locations that different ones have given.

Then Jacob made a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, because God talked to him about, "I'll be with you," so if God will do this, so that I come back to my father's house in peace, because of what God had told to him, told him at this point, then the Eternal shall be my God.

Now, I think of different things that we go through when we're first called, and our mind begins to change, and we begin to make decision about what we're going to do. There is this relationship here and what do I choose in that? We are given incredible knowledge though. We have much to read before we're ever brought to the point of wanting baptism and the things we might experience, but every one of us has to come to a point in time where we make certain decisions about these big changes we have to make in our life - the Sabbath, the Holy Days, tithing.

...then the Eternal shall be my God. In other words, "He'll be my God indeed." **This stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God's dwelling.** It's funny how people relate to something physical like that and how they related it to the tabernacle for so long as a very physical thing. The stones of the temple that some even in traditional Christianity to this day think that "at least a stone or an altar has to be built in Jerusalem or brought into Jerusalem." Or you hear these stories about how these stones have already been cut out, they just haven't been brought in yet. I'm sure there is someone out there who probably has cut out a couple stones, spent the money to get it just shaped so so, and that's going to be the beginning of the temple.

I don't know if you've ever heard stories like that, but they're out there and somebody is always talking about it somewhere, like conspiracy theories, that there is a stone and they're starting this process and they're going to be brought into Jerusalem. Anyway, they want Christ to come so they think of physical things.

Well, this is what was taking place here. Here is a rock. They looked to the temple in time. People to this day still think of a physical temple. There are people who go up to a wall, because the temple is not there, and they bob back and forth against it or toward it at least, and they stick little things in the holes in the cracks in order to reach God.

What an awesome thing to have a peace of mind of knowing all you have to do is go to a place alone in private and God hears you. They don't have that confidence. They feel better if they can go to the wall. They dedicate themselves sometimes, people do, to travelling to certain areas, different religions, because it's very physical in order to somehow feel closer to God.

Now, that doesn't mean you can't feel closer to God about certain things, you can be in awe about certain things. Just like being in Corinth, been to Corinth, been to Jerusalem, been to some of those areas where people have walked. Ephesus. And you think, "Paul was here!" He had to have walked on the same street. It is a moving thing, but it's not to the point you believe that somehow God is in this or that you're somehow closer to God because of that. It can be inspiring and motivating, but we understand where God is. He's in us.

I'll say more. I think of being in Israel, the different times we've been there, especially around Passover, especially when it was just her and me. And you think they call it the holy land, and there is nothing holy about it. Nothing! You go into the area of the city where it's divided into four sections, the old city, and they fight in there over the area of traditional Christianity where they think they have to have certain places to be because supposedly this is where Christ

was killed, or put in the ground, and they actually fight over being able to be in there at certain times, different religions do.

You can't help but be moved by thinking there are two places where God is dwelling while you're there. Not in any of the nation, not in the old city, but in us. That's where God is. You think, what an awesome thing to understand, that wherever we are as God's people that's where God's dwelling place is.

What a peace of mind there is to that to understand such things, to not think you have to be at some wall or to do things in a certain way, to go through a certain routine in order to somehow be close to God. The only routine you have to have is what's in the mind and what's being said to God, and you pray day-by-day-by-day. How blessed are we to have such peace of mind?

We go back to this being very physical and God working with people in different ways and how God began to work with him because he didn't have cassettes or things on the internet he could go listen to, and he didn't have a whole bunch of books or whatever, or *Plain Truth* magazines he could go read.

And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God's dwelling, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You. Awesome! He's going to be faithful to do what he knows he's supposed to do. Where did he learn that? Abraham, Isaac, it's been passed down.

God began revealing Himself to Jacob in order to work with him more directly, to teach and mold him. This is where it started. Now, God was already working with him in certain ways from the moment he was born, before birth. It was all a part of His plan. But to begin working with him directly as an individual, this is where it all began.

Genesis 29:1—So Jacob went on his journey and came to the land of the people of the East. And he looked and saw a well in the field. Now, what does it mean, "people of the East?" Well, his family who had now moved to that area who would come down from Ur of the Chaldees, or come up from that way, who were farther East, who were up here now around Haran.

And he looked and saw a well in the field; and behold there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks. A large stone was on the well's mouth. Now all the flocks would be gathered there; and they would roll the stone from the well's mouth, water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place on the well's mouth. So Jacob said to them, My brethren, where are you from? And they answered, We are from Haran. Then he said to them, Do you know Laban, the grandson of Nahor, Bethuel? Bethuel was the father of Laban in this particular case, so we're reading all these as we go through here.

So, here is the grandson of Nahor, which was Bethuel. **And they said, We know him.** So, he said to them, "Is he well?"

They replied that he was well, And look, his daughter Rachel is coming with the sheep. Sometimes you have to marvel again at the timing of things. It just happens? It just happens that this was what's taking place? No. God's in this. He's making this a special occasion and the right people were there at the right time.

And look, his daughter Rachel is coming with the sheep. Then he said, Look, it is still high day; it is not time for the cattle to be gathered together. Water the sheep and go and feed them. But they said, We cannot until all the flocks are gathered together and they have rolled the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep.

Now while he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherdess. So she was watching the sheep, bringing them up to this point. **And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near and rolled the stone from the well's mouth and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother.** So this had to be a very moving thing for him, to realize where he was and what was taking place.

Then Jacob kissed Rachel. Now, I don't know what kind of a kiss it was, probably on the sides like they do in Europe, I don't know. Maybe it was more. Anyway, it says, **and lifted up his voice and wept.** Why? It was so moving to him. He was so glad to see her knowing who she was from. Everything that had worked out here, it was very emotional. **Then Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's relative and that he was Rebekah's son. And she ran and told her father.**

Then it came to pass, when Laban heard the report about Jacob, his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him and kissed him, and brought him to the house. So he told Laban all these things. Then Laban said to him, Surely you are my bone and my flesh. And he stayed with him for a month. Then Laban said to Jacob, Because you are my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what should your wages be?

So here it begins, and it's drama from this point forward. Jacob is going to have to learn some things that takes him nearly twenty years to really learn it well. Incredible! How long does it take us? Some things can take us twenty, thirty, forty years before God reveals it to us what is in us that we don't see. But we go through various experiences and there are times that God will show us things in ourselves that we come to a moment in time we see, and then we have to make a choice what are we going to do - something that's not right, something that's wrong, in other words.

So he says, **Tell me, what should your wages be? Now, Laban had two daughters.** So, it skips over some of this and goes on in the story and brings things up later. **The name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. Now, Leah's had tender looking eyes, or soft eyes, as it says, but Rachel was beautiful in form and appearance.**

Now, Jacob loved Rachel. So, here it begins. He saw her at the beginning, God made sure that she was the one at the well. She was a shepherdess, brought up the sheep, and this is where it began. He had these feelings toward her in a very strong way. This is where all his emotion began, and as it says here, she was beautiful in form and appearance.

Now, Jacob loved Rachel so he said, I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter. What an incredible thing! "I'll serve you for seven years for your daughter." And Laban said, **It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to another man. Stay with me.** You're a relative, it's far better. You're of the same family.

So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed only a few days, meaning a short time. Didn't seem like seven years to him because of the love he had for her. **Then Jacob said to Laban, Give me my wife (the seven years are up), for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in to her.**

So Laban gathered together all the men of the place and made a feast. So, here it begins, huge drama. **Now, it came to pass in the evening that he, Laban, took Leah his daughter and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her.** Now, he didn't know as the story goes on to show here. In other words, to consummate the marriage.

Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah as a maid. So, it came to pass in the morning that he saw it was Leah. Jacob saw it was Leah. He didn't know that night that it was Leah. **And he said to Laban, What is this you have done to me? Was it not Rachel that I served you for that seven years? Why have you deceived me?** Ah-ha. When you see something happen on the other foot like that you know, you think, hmm. When it happens to us it's amazing how the human mind can all of a sudden see something in somebody else, but it takes a little while even then sometimes to really learn the lesson well so that you learn to hate such things like deception (incredible), or whatever it might be that we might struggle with that's a part of us in our past, whatever.

Then Laban said... He was really good with a comeback. Always good with a comeback. Always had justification and reasons for why he lied and cheated and treated Jacob the way he did. Human nature is very much like that. We can be very much justified in our minds and have what we think are really good reasons for doing what we do even when it's very wrong. We learn those things, and if we don't know them very well we are going to go through things that will help teach us.

Then Laban said, It must not be done in our country to give the younger before the firstborn. "I couldn't do it!" Fulfill her week, and we will give you this one also for the service which you will serve me for yet another seven years. So, you've received her, but now— and you can receive the other now also—but you're going to have to serve me for another seven years. Whew!

So Jacob did so and fulfilled her week. And he gave him his daughter Rachel as wife also. Laban gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as a maid. Then Jacob also went to Rachel... Now, this all becomes important later on because there are a lot of children born, and the handmaids in this particular case are some of the mothers of some of the children of Israel. That's what this is all about. So, this is why they're mentioned up front, that this is what Laban had given to his daughters, and they were a part of their family then but not by marriage. So anyway, the story goes on.

Then Jacob also went, as it says, in to Rachel, and he loved Rachel more than Leah. And he served with Laban yet another seven years. Now, we can only imagine in life. That's why later on as far as the Church was concerned, God helped people to realize there should be two in a marriage. Because this only causes huge problems. It's just a natural physical thing, carnal thing. Jealousies will occur, different things will take place. There will be hatred, oftentimes, as a result, spin off of some of these things, anger spinoff and all kinds of drama.

We should be able to read through a story like this and understand there's a lot of drama going to happen here because of all this.

Verse 31—As the Eternal watched, as it says here, **Leah being unloved,** which is what this is partially about, **He opened her womb; but Rachel was barren.** So, Leah wasn't treated well by Jacob, nor by Rachel. That's the sad part of the story. She was highly ostracized in that respect. This was not pleasing to God in any fashion or form, but it's a part of human nature that something like this would develop, it would happen. There are things to be learned in it.

It says, **Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben,** which became France in time, in Europe. Incredible, some of the stories. When you know who some of the people are and where they are in the world and where they migrated to, it's quite an interesting thing, it truly is. So, long time before France came along, but here is Reuben. So, it basically means "See, a son." That's what Reuben means. "See, a son!"

She was excited about this. It was the first son to be born to Jacob. And she said, **The Eternal has seen my affliction.** Now, incredible here, they brought God into the picture. Why? Because this is what they were taught about God. This is what came up as far when they came out of Ur of the Chaldees, they brought the knowledge of God with them, basically, or highly so the primary people who did. Some of the stories were passed down through this family line.

And candidly, the line of Abraham, then Isaac and Jacob, did it the best. This is where God is working with the most and primarily so for His purpose in the future. But others were still holding on to some of these things by knowledge and they weren't going and seeking after, in that respect, in the same manner that some of the other nations were. They still had the knowledge of God and what had happened in their past.

She said, **The Eternal has seen my affliction. Now, therefore, my husband will love me.** So now she knows that he loves Rachel, but she wants to be loved too. She's married, she desires

that affection, that respect, if you will, in life, in how she's treated and how she's talked to, but she wasn't receiving it from Jacob. And so, she wanted this, that maybe now he will be drawn to me because I've given him a son, his firstborn son, Reuben.

Then she conceived again and bore a son, and said, Because the Eternal has heard me, that I am unloved, He has therefore given me this son also. So, it wasn't enough. She knew that. Nothing had changed because of Reuben being born. Now she was still, it was her hope, her desire that burned inside of her. It would be any person's desire in that situation, any woman, any person.

He has therefore given me this son also, and she called his name Simeon, which literally means "heard," to be heard, in other words. Because this was what was important to her, so she passed along in the name of her son.

She conceived again and bore a son, and said, Now this time my husband will become attached, "to be joined" is what it means, **to me, because I have borne him three sons.** In that world at that time this was exceedingly important in family lines. **Therefore his name was called Levi.** Became the Levitical priesthood in time, which the word means "attached" or "joined." So everything she was feeling and experiencing she passed along names. Not by chance. God was still in this.

Then she conceived again and bore a son, and said, Now I will praise the Eternal, therefore she called his name Judah, the Jewish people. Incredible, these stories and how it all began. So here is the fourth son now born to Leah. Only four children to Jacob at this point in time and the last one here being, or this one here being Judah. Then it says, **Then she stopped bearing.**

Now, when Rachel saw that she could not bear children to Jacob... So, by chance, by accident, or did God have a purpose in it all? It's all by design and an awesome thing that God was working in their lives to mold and fashion things within them that would be unique to them and how they would be used in a future time. Because that's what it's about. It's about Elohim.

Now, when Rachel saw that she could not bear children to Jacob, Rachel envied (was jealous) of her sister. So, things began to change, in that respect. **And said to Jacob, Give me children, or else I die!** "It's better that I die, be dead." **Then Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel.** So something started to change a little bit here because of this because she had an attitude with what she was saying and it's like it's his fault and whatever.

So he said, basically, what should have been there indeed, **Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?** He believed that this was a matter of God, from God, and this is why there are no children.

So she said... So she was moved by this to the point that she wanted to give to him Bilhah, her maid, in order that this then, because it's her handmaid, that this would be here child, in essence. That's how she was thinking. That's kind of the way the world was at that particular point in time. It's like if she can bear this child in my place that this will settle things.

...go into her, and she will bear a child on my knees, that I also may have children by her. So this is the mindset of what's going on. **Then she gave him Bilhah her maid as wife, and Jacob went in to her.** So, it wasn't a marriage per se, but this is how it's recorded, written as far as how people have translated it.

Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. Then Rachel said, God has judged my case and He has also heard my voice and given me a son. Well, it wasn't really hers, but this is what she's holding on to, grasping for, in that respect. **Therefore she called his name Dan,** which means "judge." So, now this is the fifth child then born to Jacob, and Bilhah, her first.

Then Rachel's maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son. And Rachel said... It's not "with great" here. The word "great" is actually the word for God. So why sometimes things are translated in this way is kind of a mystery, how certain ones translate in the manner that they do. But again, it's actually the word "God" and literally translated is **In wrestling with God, I have wrestled with my sister.** That's what she's saying. So, it was her desire then and what was going on in her mind.

So it goes on to say here, **yes/nor I have prevailed.** In other words, "I have prevailed." Interesting word being used here as far as what she has chosen here. **So she called his name Naphtali,** which is a word that means "my wrestling." That's what Naphtali's name means, "my wrestling." So, there is this that she hadn't understood fully, why God hasn't blessed her with a child, and so she gives these names that reflect what she's thinking and what's her struggle, just as it was before with Leah and her struggle. Now this is what she's saying. So, this is the sixth now, because before it was Dan and now it's Naphtali.

Now, when Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took Zilpah her maid and gave her to Jacob as wife. So, they're going through this thing and it's kind of like this competitive thing. Leah can't bear anymore so she wants to receive favor again, she's in that thinking of mind, and so now she's going to do the same thing that Rachel did, and she's going to do the same thing and give Jacob her handmaid. **So she took Zilpah her maid and gave her to Jacob as wife.**

Genesis 30:10—Then Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son. Then Leah said, A troop comes! The word literally means "a troop," or it can even be translated as "a fortune." **So she called his name Gad,** which means "a troop," or "a fortune." So, there's a little bit of discussion when it comes to people who translate as to which it is and who knows. I don't. It may have more to do with the fortune part.

But anyway, **And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a second son. Then Leah said, I am happy, for the daughters will call me blessed.** So, one, another son, and then another son, and so I have the four before and these two because they, the mentality of society at that time, or them, was that these are my children too. It's my handmaid, but it's mine. **So she called his name Asher,** which means "happy."

So every one of them was given a name that reflects something that is in their thinking, in their mind, that affects them mightily in their relationship within the family, relationship with Jacob, relationship with the other sister, etcetera, etcetera. So this is the eighth child now, the second to Zilpah.

Verse 14—Now Reuben went in the days of the wheat harvest and found mandrakes in the field and brought them to his mother Leah. This matter of the mandrakes is a little unknown. Different ones have different ideas, too, so there are some things that aren't fully known what this is all about.

Then Rachel said to Leah, Please give me of your son's mandrakes. They felt it had something to do here in this case with fertility and the like, and may have, I don't know. **But she said to her, Is it a small matter that you have taken away my husband? Would you take away my son's mandrakes also?** So, drama, drama, drama.

So, Rachel said, Therefore, he will lie with you tonight for your son's mandrakes. So, this is what it's going to require in order to receive these.

Then Jacob came out of the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him and said, You are hired to come to me. I have hired you with my son's mandrakes. And he went to lay down with her that night. It says here, **God listened to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son.** Incredible. **Leah said, God has given me my wages, because I have given my maid to my husband. So she called his name Issachar,** which means "wages." So you think of some of the things they went through and tad laughable, in some respects, but it wasn't funny to them. So, this is the ninth son now born to Jacob, the fifth to Leah.

Then Leah conceived again and bore Jacob a sixth son. Incredible, the things that were happening in this family because God had a purpose for who was to be born to whom and why, and it had to do with the future too of a very physical people that were going to be able to receive certain blessings on the earth. Incredible.

Then Leah said, God has endowed me with a good dowry; now my husband will dwell with me. So, there is always this struggle. They're constantly having this struggle of a family and not functioning well. Basically, this may have been the beginning of the word for dysfunctional family. I'm just kidding. Because there is a lot of drama in this. When you have that many wives and children being born, and then the way they were born. It doesn't go through all the things of drama. There is enough there to know that there was a lot going on and there had been. Could have written a whole lot, but it's not here.

...now my husband will dwell with me because I have borne him six sons. That in itself in her mind would seem to require a certain response. It's almost inevitable, it should be. That's in her thinking. **So she called his name Zebulun,** which means "dwelling."

So every case here there is a reason for why the name was chosen, having to do with something that they were experiencing, of why they felt the way they did deep down inside. Incredible!

So, this was the tenth son now to Jacob, and the sixth for Leah. **Afterward she bore a daughter and called her name Dinah.** So all these boys have been born and now Dinah comes along. Incredible. Seven children for Leah. Six sons and one daughter.

Then God remembered... It's a word that means "was mindful of" **Rachel, and God heard her and opened her womb.** So, it had come time that she had gone through a lot to come to this point, and basically, it was saying in another form, that this is the time that God intervened to answer her. It doesn't mean He didn't hear her before, didn't know what she wanted and desired, but now it was time to address this for her because this is a part of God's plan as well.

Then she conceived and bore a son, and said, God has taken away my reproach. So, she went through a lot from the beginning to this point in time to learn from as well, to go through a process where only the handmaidens, handmaids, if you will, could give children, and Leah had a lot of children. But this tore her up inside. She was a beautiful woman, but she didn't receive anything because of the beauty that she wanted, things had to change in her, in her thinking. Over this period of time, she finally came to this point where she said, "My reproach has been taken away." She felt horrible that she couldn't bear children, and this did a lot to her mind and her thinking and her relationship to others around here.

So she conceived and bore a son and said, God has taken away my reproach, so she called his name Joseph. "He will add," that's what the name means. "He will add." And God did. After all the children that were born God is still giving more, and now she was able to bear this child, Joseph, which in time became Ephraim and Manasseh. Incredible stories and the migrations of people on earth and how God used them.

Because God intended to work with Joseph in an awesome way. I mean, what happens in his life, what took place in his life and the lessons that can be learned from this, they're really dumbfounding.

They didn't happen by accident in how God took him into Egypt, how they ended up in Egypt and all of them came together in Egypt, how they had to stay in captivity in Egypt for a long time until finally, not because it just happened by coincidence, or that finally God said, "Oh, I think this is what I'm going to do," it happened to the number of years exactly the way God said it would take place.

When He gave a specific time period, talking about four hundred plus years there, there were specific things that were going to take place before they would be taken out of Egypt. Incredible, the power, the planning, the thinking, the mind of God to build all the way through 6,000 years, to come where we are now.

She called his name, Joseph. "He will add." And said, The Eternal is adding to me another son. Because of her handmaiden, what she said there, but now this one from her.

Then it came to pass, when Rachel had given birth to Joseph, that Jacob said to Laban, Send me away, that I may go to my own place and to my country. Give me my wives and my

children for whom I have served you and let me go; for you know my service which I have done for you. So now he wants to go back to his father, to his mother, to that land once again, to take his entire family with him, and this is his request to Laban.

Then Laban said to him, Please, if I have found favor in your eyes, for I have learned by experience that the Eternal has blessed me for your sake. And He had. So even on a physical plane he could see this. But he was still conniving and not very honest at all.

Then he said, Name me your wages, and I will give it. Oh, he's heard this before, so his trust isn't very strong at all. And so, Jacob is moved to respond in a certain way, as you'll see as we go on here.

So Jacob said to him, You know how I have served you and how your livestock has been with me. For what you had before I came was little, and it was multiplied mightily. So basically Laban has already admitted to some of this because of what favor Jacob has been given and what he did.

For the Eternal has blessed you since my coming. So, he didn't hold back, he added on more to it and said, "That's why this has happened." Just reiterating what Laban had already mentioned.

Now, when will I be able to provide for my own house? That's what he's asking. "This has happened. You've been blessed to receive all this because of what I have done and how God has blessed me while I've been here, and this is how much this has grown to this point in time," so now it's his turn. That's what he's basically telling him. "It's my turn to go on, to be separate from you, and to build up that which is mine and my family."

So he said, What shall I give you? So Jacob said, You shall not give me anything if you will do for me this thing, and I will go back to feed and watch over your flocks. So, "I'm going to do this and it's going to take time, and I'll go back and work for you, for your flocks. But do this thing." So he was offering to work longer in order to build up his own wealth in what he was proposing here, okay?

I will pass through all your flock today, removing from there all the speckled and spotted sheep, and all the brown ones among the lambs, and the spotted and speckled among the goats shall be my wages. My righteousness or honesty is what he's saying here, will be answered or witness, in essence is what he's saying, whenever my wages come before you because every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the lambs, will be seen as stolen if it is with me.

So basically he's saying, "You'll be able to see because of how they all appear. What I have and what is set aside for me, the rest, they're all yours. But these are all mine, and these are my wages that I will take."

Then Laban said, It will be according to your word! So he (Laban) removed that day, as it says here, the male goats that were speckled and the spotted, all the female goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had some white in it, and all the brown ones among the lambs, and gave them into the hand of his sons. Then he put three days' journey between himself and Jacob, and Jacob was feeding the rest of Laban's flocks.

So it basically is saying here that after all this was done, these were removed from around the presence of that which Jacob was going to continue to work for Laban. The ones that didn't have any of these. But Jacob's were going to be removed farther away so that there would be a separation between all of them.

Well, this is just barely getting into the story but there is more to this story that we'll go into, starting there, because there is more to build upon in what takes place there. So, this is a good place to stop.

Just to understand here that this is the beginning of a division where Jacob has now offered to work longer. To add to part of the story, he works for six years to do what he's doing here. He's a little, I can't say fully conniving, but he does some things that get at Laban in a very unique way.

Anyway, we'll go into that. But he learns through all this process or begins to learn even more powerfully here the deceitfulness of Laban and what it's like for twenty years to experience deceit, when he did it in a very great way one time when he went into his father and was deceitful and lied to his father that one time. He had to go through twenty years to have his nose rubbed in this very powerfully so.

Anyway, we'll continue on there next Sabbath.