

JACOB: 'A WINNING FAITH'

GEN 25-50/HEB 11:21

STRIVING FOR BIRTHRIGHT: GEN 25-28

Gen 25:26: *“After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping Esau’s heel; so he was named Jacob...”*

Birth: The struggle between Jacob and his brother, Esau, began in the womb!

1. Jacob was always wrestling and striving to win over those around him.
2. His first goal was to somehow get his brother’s birthright.

Birthright: If he could obtain his family’s Birthright then he would:

1. Become the Spiritual Head of the family.
2. Inherit a double portion of all of his father’s holdings.
3. Receive God’s blessing to be in the lineage of the promised Messiah.

Blessing : The Birthright wasn’t Jacob’s only goal.

1. He also wanted his father’s blessing.
2. God had already promised the blessing to Jacob (Gen. 25) but Jacob couldn’t wait and he conspired with his mother to steal it.

Bolt: After being blessed by Isaac, fearing for his life, Jacob left at once. Jacob **never saw** his father or mother again.

STRIVING FOR BELOVED: GEN 29-31

Gen 28:16-17, *“When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, ‘Surely the LORD is in this place, and I was not aware of it.’ He was afraid and said, ‘How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven.’”* **Gen. 29: 18,** *“Jacob was in love with Rachel and said, ‘I’ll work for you seven years in return for your younger daughter Rachel’”*

Bethel:

1. On his way to safety at his Uncle Laban’s distant sheep ranch, God appeared to Jacob as he slept.
2. As often happens in crisis, God became **real** to Jacob.

Beloved: Jacob, striving again flees his older brother’s anger.

1. When he saw Rachel for the first time, it was love at first sight.
2. Jacob strikes a deal with Laban to put in seven years of labor to get Rachel as his wife.

Betrayed: Jacob’s uncle Laban pulls a “*Jacob*” on him.

Jacob, who deceived his own brother now receives Laban’s first born daughter, Leah, to be his wife instead of his beloved Rachael.

Bargain: If Laban won the first & second round, the third round went to Jacob.

1. Jacob made another bargain with Laban and agreed to work seven more years for Rachel.
2. The result was that in seven years through Jacob’s carefully crafted deception, he becomes a very prosperous man at the expense of Laban!
3. Again, due to his conniving, Jacob has to bolt.

STRIVING FOR BLESSING: GEN. 32-50

Gen 32:24-25, *“So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. ²⁵ When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob’s hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man.”* (NIV)

Brother: Jacob is told by his servants his brother is coming to meet him with 400 men.

Brook:

1. Jacob, at the end of his own resources, is left alone at a brook.
2. That is when God can come to us and do something **in us** and **for us**.

Battle: Jacob wrestled with God and is crippled. God changes Jacob’s name to “*Israel*,” meaning “*Prince with God*.”

Blessing: We see the “*striving*” of Jacob even at the end of life.

1. Now Jacob (Israel) is striving in faith.
2. Jacob wrestled with God and came out with a **Winning Faith**.