

Dr. Ted Hildebrandt, OT History, Lit., and Theology, Lecture 10

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This is Dr. Ted Hildebrandt teaching Old Testament History, Literature and Theology, Lecture 10 on the finishing up of the Jacob stories as well as the introduction and conclusion of the Joseph narrative concluding the book of Genesis.

A. Quiz and Exam Preview [0:00-2:58]

Class let's come to order. We've got a lot of material to cover today. We're going to by hook or by crook finish Genesis today. So we have got a lot of stuff to cover today. You guys are working on Numbers this week in articles and the book of Numbers. We'll have a quiz on Thursday. The following Thursday, a week from Thursday, we're having our first big exam. The exams are over what we've covered in class. There are old study guides up online if you are interested in that. I will produce as of Thursday night/Friday morning a new study guide out Friday morning of this week. But if you want to look at the old ones, there is a lot of it that is the same. Now Kyle has an announcement here about review sessions for the exam. Kyle Lincoln...

Let's open with a word of prayer and then we'll get down into what we are talking about today. Let's begin: *Father, we thank you again for this opportunity to look at your word. We thank you for the great patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and for the many things we can learn from their lives and also that we can learn about you by watching the way you interacted with these people all of whom had problems but all of whom you dealt with and you cared for. We thank you that you haven't given up on us that even when we have problems that you care for us and you love us as demonstrated in your son's love, Jesus Christ, and it's in his name we pray, Amen.*

B. Jacob gets the birthright: Red Stew [2:59-4:27]

Last time we were talking about the deception of Isaac and basically Jacob and his mother Rebekah were tight, and Isaac and Esau were tight. Isaac tells his son Esau, “go out and get me some game that I love. Barbeque it up just like they do in Tennessee.” Then Jacob’s mother overhears that and she’ pulls Jacob aside. She says, “Hey, we’re going to go in and deceive him.” Jacob gets rigged up with these goat hair things and he goes in and deceives his father who is blind. His father grabs him and doesn’t realize it’s the wrong son. So he blesses Jacob. Esau comes in and says, “Dad, you’ve only got one blessing and my brother ripped me off.” Isaac seems to know that he’s done wrong and he says Jacob is to have the blessing. Isaac tells Esau, “the blessing needs to stay with Jacob, I will give you a blessing but you’re going to basically serve your brother.” So you have this deception of Isaac and this parental favoritism, the father favoring one and the mother the other causing this sibling rivalry resulting in Jacob’s lie, his deception. Jacob’s name sounds like “deception,” or “heel grabber.” Heel grabber on the way out of the womb but the Hebrew also sounds like “deceiver.” It’s not from the direct root but it sounds like “deceiver.” So Jacob deceives his father, which is really a bad thing, seeking the power of a father’s word.

C. Consequences of the Deception of Isaac [4:28-10:09]

Now, what I want to suggest is while Jacob lies to his father and gets away with it so to speak, does Jacob’s lie have consequences? It has consequences for Isaac because this guy is a blind old man. Now he realizes everyone that he should be able to trust he can’t, even his own family! Can he trust his wife? His wife has betrayed him, his son has betrayed him, and so now he’s a blind old man realizing he can’t trust any of the people who are closest to him. So Isaac, it says, was trembling. He’s a blind old man and now he’s left with no one to trust.

What happens because of the lie against Esau? Esau starts plotting, saying, “When dad dies, I’m going to kill Jacob.” He’s going to let it go until dad dies, but once dad dies, “I’m going to kill him.” By the way, was Esau the kind of person

that would do something like that? Esau was a hunter, who goes out and kills animals, and Esau would do something like that. So Esau starts plotting the death of his brother

Now Rebekah was also in on the lie, Rebekah was the wife of Isaac and the consequence for Rivkah, or Rebekah is her favorite son is going to leave for 20 years and she is left with whom? Her daughter's-in-law. Esau had married two Hittite women and Rebekah can't stand these women. Have you ever seen a mother-in-law with daughters-in-law, is that a problem? There are all sorts of tensions there that can happen. You've got loyalties to the son. Is the son loyal to his mother or is the son loyal to his wife? So you get this kind of conflicted loyalties in the son/husband. By the way, I've often said when you're out looking for a good man, is one of the things you should look for is how that man treats his mother? The way a guy treats his mother, that's important. Anyway, Rebekah can't stand Esau's wives.

Jacob has to leave for 20 years. He's going to flee to Haran up in northern Mesopotamia. He's not going to see his family for 20 years, even his Internet service is going to be cut off. There's going to be no connection to family for 20 years. So are there consequences for deceiving a father? Were there consequences for everyone involved? Yes. So this is a big deal.

Now Jacob is going to flee because his brother's plotting to kill him. When he flees, where does he go? As he's going, I'm going to use this room as a metaphor of the land of Israel. You guys are the Mediterranean Sea, and you guys are the mountains of Israel. Up there is the Sea of Galilee. In this canyon is the Jordan River, and I'm the Dead Sea. The Dead Sea's about 1270 feet below sea level, which means the water all flows into it. How does the water get out? It doesn't flow out, it has to evaporate. What happens when the water has to evaporate? The sea turns saltier and saltier. The Jews don't call it the Dead Sea they call it the Salt Sea. It's 33% salt is that a high salt concentration? The oceans are generally about 6 or 7 percent. It's 33%. When you get in there, you float

without having to do anything, so you basically can stand upright. When my mother was there, I feel bad saying this on tape but she doesn't have Internet, she'll never watch this. Does fat or muscle float better? Fat floats. My mother goes in the Dead Sea and her legs came out from underneath her and she couldn't get her legs down to stand up so they had to drag her over to the side and have someone stand her up because she couldn't put her feet down because she was buoyant because of the salt. By the way for women they put salt on you to suck bad stuff out of you. They call it Ahava creams from the Dead Sea and you take these mud baths and put it all over you it's supposed to be good for you, I don't know about that. That's the Salt Sea.

What country is this? It's on the other side of the Jordan River. This is the country of Jordan. Today King Hussein, his wife is actually American, he's a good king over there. We'll come back to this in a minute.

D. Jacob's Ladder at Bethel [10:10-18:36]

Where's Jacob going? He's from down south so he goes north into to a place called Bethel. What does "el" mean? *El* means God, *El* is a short form of *Elohim*. "Beth" means "house of." So Bethel means "house of God." You know "Bet" from "Beth-lehem" – "House of bread." So Jacob goes up there and while he's there, this is where Jacob's ladder takes place.

Let me just read chapter 28 verse 12 and following. He goes there and then he goes to sleep. He's fleeing from Esau because he's afraid Esau's going to kill him. He lays down. Do you remember in Sunday school it says he lays down on a rock for a pillow and then he has the Jacob's ladder dream. He had a dream in which he saw "a stairway resting on the earth with its top reaching to heaven and the angels of God ascending and descending on it. There above it stood the Lord and he said, 'I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham, the God of your father Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you're lying.'" As soon as he says, "I'm going to give you the land," what is this? This is the renewal of the covenant. "As I was with Abraham and I gave Abraham the

covenant that you would get this land, that you're seed would multiply as the stars of heavens, and you would be a blessing to all nations. I gave the covenant to Abraham, I reiterated it to Isaac and now I'm giving it to you, Jacob." And it says, "I will give you the land and your descendants will be like the dust of the earth and you will spread out to the west, to the east, to the north, and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you." So that's the land, the seed, and the blessing again reiterated now to Jacob in this time of transition.

So Abraham's God, Isaac's God, now becomes Jacobs's God. God meets him here but what's this stairway to heaven? A lot of people suggest, and I think they're right; that what you have here is a ziggurat. What's a ziggurat? In Mesopotamia a ziggurat is a step pyramid, which is different from what they have in Egypt. Egypt had those slick pyramids that were rectangular. At the front of the step pyramid they had a stairway that went to the top and at the top was the house of the god. So some people believe what Jacob is seeing here is a Mesopotamian ziggurat. The ziggurat was actually like a mountain. The people built a mountain so their god could dwell on top. So God uses that imagery, because Jacob's familiar with that imagery. Jacob's ladder may have been a ziggurat form. Again, we're guessing on that, we aren't sure, but it seems like the stairway going up to God at the top would be a ziggurat configuration.

I want to suggest that this is where Jacob meets God for himself and therefore there's this covenant renewal where Abraham's God now becomes his God. I want to suggest to you that Jacob leaving his family and meeting God for the first time is like the college years. Have some of you grown up in Christian families where you go to church and your parents are religious so you're religious but the question is: are you really religious? Then you leave your family and you get to college and at college can you become whoever you want to become? Now it's not what your parents believed in, it's what you believed in. So at college, in a lot of ways, there's this differentiation where you become your own person. I went through a secular university where I was trying to build up my faith and they

kept trying to tear it down and I had to decide: do I want to accept God? Do I keep the principles that I grew up with or do I become a new person? So I had to make a decision on those things. So in college there's this differentiation in terms of meeting God for yourself. So in a way Jacob going to Bethel is this meeting of God for himself. God is the God of Abraham and Isaac but is God Jacob's God? So Jacob has to answer that question. He meets God at Bethel and that's what happens.

Now Jacob in verse 18 sets up this memorial stone and you're going to see the patriarchs and other people like Moses and Joshua are going to set up these memorial stones to memorialize things. By the way even to this day do we set up memorials. If you go to Washington DC are there memorials? Has anyone been up the Washington monument? Real tall. Did you see they had an earthquake, some guy had a video camera while he was up on the top of the Washington monument showing the whole monument starting to move? Do you think that'd be fun? Anyway they filmed that and apparently they're worried about cracks in the memorial. Washington memorial commemorates Washington, I go to the Vietnam memorial, have you been there? It memorializes those people who died there. My father would go to the Korean War memorial they just built. There's a new Martin Luther King Jr. memorial that has just been built, I haven't seen that yet. It looks pretty interesting so we'll want to go see that the next time we go down. So we memorialize things in stone.

By the way, he is going to come back here in 20 years. He's going to leave and come back to Bethel and it's going to be pretty interesting what happens here at Bethel 20 years later.

Now down just a little bit in verse 22 let me read this: "Now Jacob made a vow, he said, 'if God will be with me and watch over me on this journey I am taking, and if he will give me food to eat and clothing to wear, so that I return in safety to my father's house, then the Lord will be my God.'" Is Jacob making this conditional? He's saying, "God if you bring me back here and give me food and

clothes then you'll be my God." "And this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God's house." Do you get the play on words here? God's house. What is that? Bethel means "God's house." Do you see how he's setting up the stone? He said the stone then would be "God's house." There's this play on the words for Bethel. "And of all that you will give me I will give you a tenth." Where does this tenth come from? Moses will give the law later on and you guys have read the book of Leviticus and other things and it will say a tenth. Is there any commandment in the scriptures so far about a tenth tithe? No. Jacob just seems to know to give God a tenth or tithe. By the way did Abraham also pay Melchizedek a tenth after the battle for Sodom and Gomorrah. So it's pretty interesting both Abraham and Jacob seem to know about this tenth pay or a tithe. He says when you bring me back here I'll give you a tenth of everything I get while I'm gone.

E. Jacob at Haran: Rachel, Leah and Laban [18:37-20:11]

Well what happens next? Jacob takes off from Bethel and he's going to go out the door back there and he's going to go up to Haran in Mesopotamia. When he's in Haran who's going to meet? Where do you meet women in the ancient world? If you're going to meet women where do you hang out? At the well. You meet the woman at the well. Now by the way does this happen with Isaac and Rebekah? Rebekah is out there at the well and the servant pulls and up and says, "if she waters my camels she's the one." What does that mean? She's a good worker. So you always meet women at the well. Where did Moses meet Zipporah, his wife? At the well.

So Jacob's at the well. It says here Laban had two daughters, the name of the older was Leah and the name of the younger was Rachel. Leah had weak eyes. I'm not going to elaborate, but Rachel was lovely in form and beautiful. Jacob was in love with Rachel and said, "I will work seven years in return for your younger daughter Rachel." Couple things, is this bartering for this girl? Saying, "I'll work for you for seven years then you give me your daughter." Is this girl chopped liver? Did she have to agree to it? They usually have the right of refusal. She

agrees to it. Jacob labors for her for seven years.

Jacob and Rachel: nature of love/lust and time [20:12-22:48]

One question I had when I was a younger man is what separates between love and lust. When I grew up in the church they basically taught us that you had agape love, which is what? God's love. You had eros-love which was "sexual attraction love." So it was agape-love and this lust, desire, eros or erotic love. It was always so clear you know agape love was over here and erotic love was over there. Then unfortunately, well fortunately for me, I met my wife and when I met my wife all of a sudden it was like these two things got like this and my question to myself was, and this was a serious question for me, am I erotically in love with this woman because she was beautiful, she's wonderful, she's talented, she's everything I dreamed of but am I in love with her? I lust her but do I love her? Do you see the difference? Do I love her or am I just attracted to her? So I struggled with that whether this was really love or was this lust. I had to sort that stuff out and today nobody probably struggles with this anymore this is old stuff. What I'm saying is I really struggled with that because I wanted to truly love her.

Now Jacob looks at Rachel, he works for her for seven years, at the end of the seven years Rachel looks at this man. Does he love her or not? How many of you guys would work seven years for a girl? Seven years, is that a long time? Does time separate between love and lust? Is lust a consumptive now kind of thing? And let me be really corny, Can love wait? Can love take time? So I'm saying after seven years is Rachel pretty sure this guy loves her? This guy has worked for her for seven years. I'm just saying it's beautiful. The text here is beautiful it's kind of corny but let me just read it because it's so beautiful. But we don't often do beauty, we do better with sarcasm than beauty in our culture. "Jacob was in love with Rachel he said, 'I'll work seven years in return for the younger daughter.' So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel but they seemed only like a few days to him because of his love for her." That's beautiful, in other words, he's saying, the seven years just flew by fast.

F. Jacob and Laban: the deceiver gets deceived [22:49-28:39]

Now is this the end of the story? This is just the beginning of the story because Laban the father-in-law's got a good deal here. So what happens next. Why is it ironic on Jacob's wedding night? So Jacob's out there and they go to the big wedding party. First of all in that culture how much of the woman do you get to see? Does anyone remember those pictures in Sinai when my wife was doing this ball game back and forth with this woman in Sinai. Did anyone see that she had a veil on her like this? It was all gold pieces, we're talking real gold. How much would it be worth today with the price of gold? But anyway she was covered with gold like that? It was actually incredible. In those cultures what you see of the woman is it mostly just her eyes. All of the rest of her covered. So now they're in this wedding scene and you say well he would still know her eyes and it's different because it said Leah had "weak eyes."

Is it possible that the women got switched in the tent situation? Now what's the problem? You guys are at Gordon College, this place is lit 24 hours a day. But when you get out to a place where you don't flip the switch to get the lights on, does it get really really dark at night? And when you're in a Bedouin tent that's made out of black goats hair when you're inside it gets so dark. Have you ever been in the context where you can hold your hand up in front of your face and you can't see it? It gets pitch dark in these places.

So what happens? There's a big switch-a-roo and what's going to happen there? So let me just read the text. "Laban gave his servant girl and when the morning came and Jacob comes out of the tent, when morning came he turns around and there is Leah." Who was he expecting? Rachel. Had he been deceived? Now is it easy to get deceived in the culture by the way when women covered themselves? Possibly, I better walk over here, Kyle, because I don't want to get struck. Possibly, in other words there was a big party, and there would've been talking at the party, but when they went in the tent then there was probably silence in the tent that way in the night, other things were going on. I probably

want to get out of that one.

While I'm over here let me just tell you, my son was in Afghanistan, I told you that before, and they were in a battle with Taliban type people. It was really interesting they were going after three Taliban and all of a sudden the Taliban disappeared. He said they were like ghosts they just disappeared, and then all of a sudden he looks down the road and there are three women walking down the road. In Afghanistan do the women totally cover themselves even over their faces and never walk without a man accompanying them? They have these little things that are like grids that they look out of so you can't even see their eyes. So some individual, who was a marine, starts seeing these three women walking down the road and he tells his commander he says, "Let's shoot them, that's those guys." And the commander says, "Oh, yeah, right we're going to shoot women. Marines don't do that kind of stuff. And my son said, "No, those are the guys." Now question: could they go up and accost these women? You're in Afghanistan, can Marine soldiers go up and accost a woman? No, it violates the culture and the Marine I know swears till this day that was how those three Taliban got away. They dressed up as women and got away. He could also tell by the way they were walking and basically that's how they got away. They weren't able to accost them because they had to have a female interpreter to come up to accost them. They couldn't do that so those guys got away. Was that a pretty slick move, to dress like women and get away? Anyway that actually happened.

Now, so all I'm saying is he wakes up, when I was a younger person I always thought how would you feel, you get married and your wedding night is like the best night of your life. You get up and you turn around and you see Leah. How would you feel as a man? A number of years ago I changed my perspective. How would you feel if you were Leah? You just spent the night with him and he turns around and he looks at you and you see his face, is that terrible? You know what I'm saying do you know what it would feel like to be rejected like that? Now, by the way, Leah's the older sister. Is there something between older and

younger sisters? No, I'm serious I've had to face that in my own family my younger daughter got married first. It's unspoken. I mean I don't think we ever talked about it in those terms. Is there stuff going on when the younger sister gets married first?

What does Laban do? So there's a switch going on there. Why is this ironic? Does the deceiver get deceived? And so all of Jacob's trickery, lying, and deceiving, all of a sudden, on his wedding night the deceiver gets deceived. It kind of suits him. You know what I'm saying, he finally gets what's coming to him. I don't want to make any ethical [lex talionis] evaluation but this is kind of ironic.

G. Jacob and Polygamy: Historical narrative: normative or non-normative?

[28:40-35:15]

Now Jacob is polygamous. What it sets up now is Laban says, "Okay, okay, in our culture you have to marry the older daughter first before you get the younger daughter." So Laban says, "Hey, Jacob, it just costs you another seven years. They'll just seem like a few minutes to you because you love her so much, right? So give me another seven years." Is Jacob going to work 14 years for these two girls? He probably got Rachel after his week with Leah was completed. He's probably given Rachel right after that but he still had to work the 7 years. That's probably how it went down. He works another seven years for the younger one. Now Jacob is polygamous? Is polygamy cool in American culture? Has anyone followed that Warren Jeffords? The guy that had all these wives down in Texas and the guy was put in prison. I think some of the girls he was marrying were like 13 or 14 year olds. Really bad stuff, this guy's bad. It's part of the Mormon tradition way back, Joseph Smith who himself had multiple wives. The Mormons around the turn of the century eliminated polygamy but some of the ones that are going back to the original Mormonism they still have many wives. They push that and a lot of them are silent when it comes to condemnation of that. So you have got to be careful with that. Jacob was polygamous.

Can you use that to say, "Jacob was polygamous therefore we should be

polygamous?” What I want to suggest to you is that when you’re dealing with historical narratives you have to separate between that which is normative and that which is non-normative. In other words, does the Bible sometimes just describe what happened and it’s not putting an approval or disapproval on it. It’s just describing what happened. It’s not meant to be universalized. Jacob lies to his father. Are we supposed to lie to our parents? No. Did Jacob do things that were wrong? Jacob did things that were wrong and therefore you can’t take things directly out of history because the Bible often times is just recording history. It’s what happened--right or wrong tis’ what happened.

By the way, this is one of the reasons why I love the Bible. You say, “because Jacob’s polygamous, you love the Bible?” No, let me explain. In many of the other cultures when you go to Mari and you’re going to talk to Zimri Lin and he’s the big king of Mari when he puts the kings’ annals together does it attempt to make Zimri Lin look like the big shot? Zimri Lin does all these great things, because of Zimri Lin you have a good life, because of Zimri Lin you have water in the canals etc. In the other cultures are the kings portrayed as these people who do all these wonderful things? What’s the problem with Bible? Tell me about the great kings of Israel. You say, “Well, Israel had their big kings too! David was a man after God’s own heart,” and then you start thinking. Yes, David what was her name? Bathsheba. Yes, so you’ve got to back off with David, but David’s really the man. So you say Solomon, well Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived. Solomon was a big king of Israel. Solomon yes, what was it? 700 wives 300 concubines, and then he serves other gods? Okay, so you say Rehoboam? Well, he was a disaster and you start going down the king list. So in the Bible do all the kings, the great men of Israel, Saul the first king of Israel, do they all have warts? Do they all have problems? Does the Bible cover their warts? Does the Bible cover their sin? Or does the Bible tell it how it was? So what I’m saying is the other cultures made their great men look like these great heroes. In the Bible all of their heroes have problems, every one of them. So that’s why I love the scriptures

because, do I have problems too? Those guys all had problems. Did God deal with them and love them and care for them? Yes, I have problems too does that mean God's going to throw me away? No, that means God loves us beyond our faults. So the Bible tells it like it is and that is a rare book in the ancient world. That is really rare.

Jacob's got problems. The fact that Jacob's got two wives now is that going to be a problem? Does polygamy work? The Bible tells you the results. Did it work having two wives? Then they start a competition on who's going to have the most kids. It's very interesting here when you look at this but let me come back to this.

So what I'm suggesting is that when you're reading history you have to be careful about separating that which is normative, that which is for all time, and that which is non-normative. In other words Jacob did this and it wasn't really right but he did it anyway. So it's only meant for that time and that place it was something that he did. He lied to his father that's not meant to be for all time. We are not to lie to our fathers. So you have got to separate when you're dealing with history, between the normative and the non-normative, between description and prescription, that's really important.

Now God comes along and I love this, go down in chapter 29, Jacob's got two wives Rachel and Leah, which one does he love? Rachel. Whose womb does God open? Leah's. God sides with the underdog. You see this over and over again in Scripture. God sides with the unloved wife and God opens her womb. Can Rachel have kids? No, Rachel can't have kids. So Rachel's womb is closed and Leah's womb is open. By the way, Jacob's this cheating deceiver, yet do Jacob and Rachel and Leah build the 12 tribes of Israel? Do you understand? These are where the 12 tribes come from. Jacob and Rachel and Leah and their handmaids basically produce the 12 tribes of Israel. You say if I were going to do the 12 tribes of Israel you'd try to make their mother a little more respectable, make a better story; but it's really this polygamous relationship. God opens the womb of Leah.

Leah then had Reuben, who's the first-born, and many other children afterwards.

H. The Mandrake plants and fertility [35:16-38:18]

We'll see what happens with Rachel. Rachel says, "Hey, I need to have some kids too. So what happens in chapter 30 verse 14 it says, "during the wheat harvest (which is in late spring) Reuben went out into the fields and found some mandrakes." What are these mandrakes? Mandrake plants, we're told are what Reuben, the oldest, brought to his mother Leah. Rachel said to Leah, "please give me some of your son's mandrakes." But Leah said to her, "wasn't it enough that you took away my husband will you take my sons mandrakes too?" Leah gets a little huffy here. Leah says, "Hey, you stole my husband and now you're taking my son's mandrakes." What's the deal with this mandrake plant business? "Very well," Rachel says, "he can sleep with you tonight." So Jacob gets sold for a couple mandrake plants. These women are bartering over whose going to sleep with the husband and they sell him off for a couple of mandrake plants. "He can sleep with you tonight just give me a couple mandrakes." This guy's worth a couple plants, not too good.

You ask what's going on with these mandrake plants? It's believed in the ancient world that these mandrake plants were largely for fertility. If you got these mandrake plants, now there's probably not much to this, but these mandrake plants were viewed by their culture as fertility plants. We would say maybe an aphrodisiac. You take this and it makes you sexually potent. Maybe that's what they call ancient Viagra! I've never had that thought before but this is the ancient form. We better just get out of that but this is how it would have been thought of in the ancient world.

Now what's the problem here. The problem is this. Who is going to give Rachel her child? Is it going to be because she got the mandrakes? The text makes it very clear, she does get the mandrakes but the text also makes it very clear, "God listens to Rachel" and she gets pregnant and had a son. But if you go down to verse 22 it says, "God remembered Rachel and he listened to her and he opened

her womb and she became pregnant and gave birth to her son. And she said, ‘God has taken away my disgrace’ and she named him [her first son]” and this is important, who was Rachel’s first son? Joseph. “God has added, Jehovah has added to me, may the Lord add to me another son.” So Rachel has a son. Who gives Rachel her son? Is it a result of the mandrakes? No. God opened her womb and she has Joseph.

I. Joseph is Rachel’s firstborn [38:19-40:03]

Is Joseph going to be a gem? Joseph is one of the few gems of the Bible, Daniel is the other one in the Old testament. These two guys are above reproach but all the other guys have problems but Joseph’s going to be a really good guy. So her first son Joseph was not a result of the mandrakes God does it.

By the way, Joseph was Rachel’s first son, who was Rachel’s last son? Benjamin. Ben-ya-min this is very important *ben* means “son of”, *yamin* means “right hand.” In those cultures your right hand was the hand of honor. Let me just say this if you’re in an Arab culture and the Arab dude comes up and shakes with his left hand do you understand that’s a major insult? The right hand is the hand of honor and blessing. If he shakes with his left hand what does that mean? They do certain things with their left hand and only their left hand in certain rooms of the house before they flush, if you know what I mean. That is always done with the left hand with or without toilet paper. Okay, now understand you’re Americans but over there they don’t have luxuries sometimes and I’m talking toilet paper. Now, so if a person shakes your hand with his left hand all I’m telling you is that’s a major insult. I’ve had that happen to me by the way before I knew. I thought, “that’s really weird,” and I went back and talked to someone they told me what it meant. So you don’t want to do that. You shake with your right hand, the hand of honor, not the left hand, it’s a big deal. “Son of my right hand,” Benjamin is a beautiful name. My grandson is named Benjamin, “son of my right hand”--son of the blessing, power, and things like that. So Benjamin and Joseph are going to be the two sons of Rachel.

J. Rachel's death at Bethlehem and biblical echoes [40:04-43:39]

Where does Rachel die? She dies having Benjamin at birth. Now do women die in our culture having infants? Usually not in American culture, but in other places in the world women do die having children. It happens all over the place. Rachel is going to die having Benjamin at birth. Now what happens? Where does she die? This becomes significant. Rachel dies but where does she die? She dies just outside a town called Bethlehem. Now why is that significant? Because of her death they set up a memorial to her. They set up a memorial on the major Ridge Route highway that goes down the spine of Israel. They set up a memorial to Rachel outside of Bethlehem and she is viewed as the matriarch of Bethlehem.

Now in the time of Jesus, does anyone remember Rachel gets mentioned in the time of Jesus in Matthew chapter 2 verse 18? And what happens in Matthew chapter 2? Who finds out that Jesus is born in Bethlehem? The wise men come to Herod and Herod says, "Go down to Bethlehem find the young child and when you have found him bring back word to me." Did the wise men ever go back to Herod? No. They skedaddle out of there. When Herod realizes he's been tricked by the wise men, what does Herod do? He goes to Bethlehem and kills all the infants 2 years old and under. Do you remember what the biblical texts say there? Matthew 2:18, this right after the slaying of the infants of Bethlehem it says, "and a voice was heard in Rama (to the north, quite a distance to the north) weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children refusing to be comforted because they are no more." So what you get is this kind of echo. Rachel dies outside of Bethlehem and 2000 years later you get this echo with Jesus. Rachel is weeping for her children, the children of Bethlehem because she's the matriarch of Bethlehem. So basically you get this echo and that's in the time of Jesus.

But you say, "Hildebrandt, you forgot something because Matthew is quoting Jeremiah." Jeremiah says, "Rachel weeping for her children is heard all the way up into Ramah." Why is Jeremiah quoting that since Jeremiah is in the middle between Jacob and Jesus? Why would Jeremiah have said that? Because

that's when the people were taken captive to Babylon. This is the Babylonian exile that Jeremiah is referring to, when Daniel, Shadrak Meshach and Abednego and those guys all get hauled off to Babylon. Jeremiah is referring to the destruction of Jerusalem saying Jerusalem is destroyed and Rachel is weeping for her children as they get hauled off to Babylon.

So you get this echo from Rachel's death outside you get this echo from where the children are exiled to Babylon and to Jesus Christ who is born and those infants are slain. So you get this kind of triad echo though Scripture and it's really kind of interesting with Rachel dying outside of Bethlehem. You can go there to this day and see the a memorial to Rachel outside of Bethlehem to this day.

K. Rachel and the family gods [43:40-46:11]

So Rachel dies now what's going to happen? Let's back up a little, Jacob's going to be leaving Mesopotamia, so he's from outside the door he's going to be leaving Laban. Laban's ripped him off and he's ripped Laban off. They're kind of back and forth and so his family starts to leave but as they start to leave, and this is in chapter 31, Rachel steals one of the family gods. Laban chases after Jacob catches up with Jacob and says, "Jacob, what are you doing? You're running away from me? You stole all my goods, you stole my daughters, you stole my grandkids, I'm never going to see them again. What are you doing Jacob? Moreover, Jacob, you stole my gods too!" Jacob objects, "I didn't steal your gods. Anybody you find with your gods, you can kill. I didn't take your gods. I don't want your stupid gods anyway." Well, he didn't say that because we're going to find out later that Jacob's probably messing with foreign gods too.

What happens? Laban comes in and basically the father approaches his daughter [Rachel]. You know how a father approaches a daughter and the daughter looks at him. Now Laban had gone to shear his sheep and Rachel stole the family gods. Laban pursues and then Rachel says to her father, "don't be angry my lord, I cannot stand up now (let me use the King James Version now because I like it better) "father, I can't stand up now for the manner of women is

upon me.” So she’s sitting on the family gods. She says, “I can’t get up dad, because you know it’s that time of the month. So I can’t get up.” Is that pretty slick?—Rachel lies to her father. By the way you may wonder how big is this god that she’s sitting on? I think you’ve got to remember that you’ve got tribal gods, big ones, but when you’re talking about family gods you’re talking 6 inch gods.

Why did she want the family gods? Some people suggest that whoever had the family gods had the inheritance and so she could show up 20 years later and say, “Dad, see I’m part of this family. Therefore I get part of the inheritance.” So there were some possible inheritance rights involved. Somebody suggested in the last class, it was a very interesting suggestion, that maybe the gods had to do with fertility and Rachel was trying to say she was going to serve the family gods so she could be more fertile. Did the gods really give her children? No, Jehovah gave her children but she may have been playing with other gods. Well, she was playing with other gods but most people thinks it’s inheritance but it was an interesting suggestion in class about the fertility option because there were fertility gods.

L. Jacob at Peniel: Esau Meeting [46:12-57:40]

Now, let’s go to the wrestling match in chapter 32. This is an important chapter. As Jacob is coming down from Mesopotamia from Haran, he passes Damascus. He’s on what they call the King’s Highway. He comes down right to where this fellow with the black shirt is there’s a wadi, a valley, that goes down there is called the Wadi Jabbok. They call it the Jabbok River, I’ll never forget going to the Jabbok River. I go there I’m looking for this Jabbok River right? It was a few feet wide... I’m talking inches deep... Yes, I looked at it and said where I come from that’s a little bit too big for a ditch but I’ve seen ditches bigger than that and I was really disappointed because I was expecting the Jabbok River. I get there and seriously you could’ve jumped over it and it was only about inches deep. So do you understand do they have a lot less water? I grew up on the Niagara River, that’s a real river. These things, when they talk, when I was younger they would say, “I’ve seen the mighty Jordan roll” have you ever seen the

mighty Jordan River is about as wide as this room, it averages 3 feet deep. Now where I come from do we call those rivers? The Niagara was a river, where I grew up they call those “creeks.” So all I’m saying is there a lot less water over there? In America we are used to, Lake Erie, and Lake Superior. Have you ever been out on Lake Superior? Oh, you guys do the ocean here! So what I’m saying is we’ve got a lot more water, over there, there is a lot less.

So what happens? Jacob’s coming down and where’s Esau? This is the Dead Sea; Esau is from down here, in the land of Edom. Esau, with 400 of his men, are going north. Now, is that going to be a problem? Okay, Jacob’s going to be meeting Esau with 400 of his men. Is Jacob scared to death? Does anyone remember Karate Kid 2? Where Sato after all those years was going to get Mr. Miyagi because he was still angry with him for stealing his woman and he was going to kill Miyagi after all these years. Do people harbor anger for decades? Within a family, I’m talking about your own families, do brothers and sisters and fathers and family do they ever harbor anger towards someone for generations, often for 10, 20 years?

I knew a guy named Herb King, I worked in a maximum security prison and Herb was in prison for 35 years for murder. He finally got out, as an old man when he got out, in his late 50s. They gave him his 75 bucks and he caught a bus from Indiana State Prison down to Georgia where he was from. After 35 years he walked in the door of his house, and this is the honest truth, and by the way, I’m using his real name now because it doesn’t matter anymore. He walked in after 35 years in a penitentiary. He’s finally free and he walks into his house and there was a guy with a 12 gauge in there on the day he walked into his house he got blown away. The guy killed him after 35 years, shot him dead. He walked in the front door, bullet to the chest. He’s dead. Question: had that guy been harboring anger toward Herb for 35 years while he was in prison? Herb’s in the graveyard now after 35 years. Do people harbor that kind of resentment?

Is Jacob when he hears that Esau’s coming up with 400 guys scared out of

his mind? The last time that he saw Esau, Esau swore he was going to kill him, and he's got 400 guys with him. Jacob's got what? A bunch of women and children. Can Jacob defend himself? He can't. Now, by the way, is Jacob a man's man? I have a problem with Jacob, there's some stuff here that really bothers me about him. When Esau's coming to him first of all he sends Esau gifts. Is that a really smart thing? Somebody's really angry at you do you give gifts? I try flowers. Gifts work sometimes, not all the time, but sometimes. It's worth a try. Flowers are good, okay. You get about 50/50. Chocolate also works, and you have to work it out. So he sends Esau gifts. Do gifts pacify anger? Sometimes they do.

He's scared. So what does he do? He divides up his family and who does he put first? He's a man's man and so he says, "Hey, it's my brother. He's coming to kill me, I should be the first out there, so you guys hide in the back, if he kills me or goes after me, you guys run for your life." Is that Jacob? No, what does this guy do? He puts Leah and the kids out front and Rachel at the back and where is he? He's in the far back. Is this a man's man? I'm sorry; the word that comes to my mind is "coward." Is this what a father should be doing? Should a father protect his family or should he hide behind his family? Okay, I'm sorry this really bothers me about him, that's about as low as you can get in any book.

So what happens? That night he's at the Jabbok Wadi. He's down there by himself, and all of a sudden he has this wrestling match. Let me see verse 24 here, and check this out. It says, "that night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his maid servants and also Jacob was left alone and a man wrestled with him till day break. And when the man saw that he could not over power him he touched,"—"the man saw that he could *not* overpower him," is very interesting. Is Jacob able to go head to head with this man? So the man could not over power him but then finally the man touched the socket of his hip and puts his hip out. So his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. "Then the man said, 'let me go for it is day break.' And Jacob said, 'I will not let you go until you bless me.'" Is Jacob really into this blessing thing? "I will not let you go unless you bless me.' The man

asked him, ‘what is your name?’ Jacob he answered and the man said, ‘your name is no longer Jacob but Israel.’” First of all, when you’re in trouble do you pray? Jacob’s in trouble, he’s got to face Esau. Do you pray when you’re in trouble? Yes. Jacob makes the prayer.

Let’s talk about Jacob’s name first. Jacob’s name means what? It kind of sounds like “deceiver,” and now he’s going to be given the new name “Israel.” What does Israel mean? Is-ra-el, “El” means “God,” “Israel” means “he who struggles with God.” By the way, the name “Israel” is that descriptive of the Jews for all time? Have the Jews wrestled with God throughout their generations, for millennium on millennium? The Jews have struggled with God and so they are named Israel, “he who struggles with God.” This becomes the beginning of the national name “Israel” that’s given to the 12 tribes, which come out of Jacob. Jacob is given a new name and that’s really kind of a neat thing, he moves from “deceiver” to “he who wrestles” or “struggles with God.”

Now, Jacob names the place Peniel. When you look at this term Peniel, *Peni* means “face,” *El* means “God.” The name of the place means “Face of God.” Why does Jacob name it Peniel? The text tells us explicitly. It says, “I’m going to call it Peniel [or ‘face of God,] because I saw God face to face and my life was spared.” Jacob thought that he was wrestling with whom? A man? No. He says it wasn’t just a man. Yes, he was called a man but “I saw God face to face.” So he names the place Peniel. What people have suggested and I would agree with this is you have what’s called in the Old Testament a “theophany” or a “Christophany.” A “theophany” means that someone saw God. Do you remember on Mount Sinai, God was at the top of the mountain. The mountain is shaking. Moses is up there and his face shines and he comes down. That’s a theophany where God appears. It blows people away and the glory overwhelms people. That’s a theophany, an appearance of God. A Christophany is an appearance of Christ before Christ was actually borne. What I’m suggesting is Jacob wrestled with a man and the man couldn’t defeat him. He couldn’t get away until he touched Jacob’s hip and put it

out. What I'm suggesting is that very likely "the man" was Jesus Christ, in the flesh beforehand. Jesus Christ with just his normal strength was wrestling with Jacob until the morning and then he puts his hip out. So I'm suggesting that this was a Christophany. Jacob concludes this wasn't a normal man, "I saw God face to face" and if "the man" was Jesus then he's God. So does that make sense? That's kind of how I look at this and many other people look at it the same way.

Why did the angel change his name? "Deceiver" to "he who wrestles with God." Now he's seen God face to face and wrestles with him and we're suggesting that's Jesus.

Some people look at chapter 32 verse 32 and let me read this to you first: "The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel and he was limping because of his hip." He's got to meet Esau in the morning. How many of you have ever had dreams and some big guy or something is after and you can always do what, you can always run away? You always run and get away. Now what does God do with Jacob, Jacob's hip is gone. Can Jacob run away from Esau? No. He can't run now, he's got to face Esau. In other words, he cannot be in control and say I'm just going to skedaddle, I'm going to run away from him, at least I can escape him because I'm faster than he is. Now, with his hip out, he's got to face Esau face to face and he can't get away.

Now, in chapter 32 verse 32 it says this, some people think this verse was added later by later editors, "to this day the Israelites do not eat the tendon attached to the socket of the hip because the socket of Jacob's hip was touched near the tendon." So the text says "to this day" they still don't eat that tendon that's by the hip because of Jacob's hip "to this day." Was that statement added later? The narrative is telling you about Jacob. We don't eat that "to this day," seems to be added later. Is Moses much later than Jacob? Yes, at least 400 years. Is it possible Moses wrote we still don't eat the tendon and it was 400 years after? Could this statement in Genesis 32:32 have been written by Moses? Sure it could have. Moses is 400 years after and he puts in this explanatory statement about

why they don't eat the tendon that's by the hip socket. So it doesn't have to be added later, long after the time of Moses. Moses could have written it.

L. Jacob's Meeting and Lie to Esau [57:41-63:31]

Now we come to the meeting with Esau. Family members meeting after years and years and they finally meet. Esau falls on his brother and he's weeping and hugging, finally after all this time. Have you guys ever been away from brothers for a long period of time? You get back there and it's this beautiful thing there's nobody like a brother or sister that you've grown up with. So they meet years later and it's a really beautiful time.

Now does Jacob lie once again to his brother Esau? The answer is that after all this time Jacob is going to lie again. They're meeting at the Wadi Jabbok. Esau comes up with his 400 guys. He tells Jacob, "Jacob, I don't want your gifts, take your gifts back I'm wealthy. Why don't you come down and see my place? I live down by the bottom of the Dead Sea in all these red rocks, Nubian sandstone, Petra it's beautiful down there. Why don't you come down and see me? Jacob says, "Oh, yes, I'll come down and see you." So Esau says, "Well, my guys will protect your sheep and goats for you and we'll go down together." But Jacob says, "No, no my sheep and goats they've got to go slow. So Esau you just go back home and I'll come down and visit you. You just go back home."

Now if you don't know anything about geography you won't know that he lied. Where is Jacob? Jacob's up there. Esau goes back home. The next thing you read in the text, in the next chapter in chapter 34, where is Jacob? Jacob is over here at Shechem and that's where his daughter gets raped. Did Jacob lie to Esau, telling him that he's going to meet him down here, and then he goes in the opposite direction. Is this guy still lying to people? It drives you nuts after all this time he still lies to his brother. By the way, you know that from the geography.

Now here's where Esau gets off and let me just kind of run through this. Esau becomes the father of the Edomites. The Edomites are his descendants. So whenever you see Edom, or Edomites in Scripture, those are Esau's descendants.

By the way, I should say whenever you see Edomites in Scripture the Edomites will always do pretty much do the same thing. What do the Edomites do? They kill Jews. When you see them in Scripture and you see Edomites remember, Hildebrandt says, whenever you see an Edomite he's going to kill a Jew. I'm serious that happens, I'm exaggerating obviously, but most of the time the Edomites are killing Jews. The whole book of Obadiah can be summarized, Obadiah's only one chapter, but the whole book is about the Edomites and how the Edomites killed Jews. Curses come upon them for killing people in a helpless position. So the book of Obadiah the prophet is largely geared against the Edomites.

Now the most famous Edomite that you know is named Herod. Herod was an Idumean. Do you hear the "D" and the "M" it is the same "D" and "M" [Edom]. Herod as an Idumean. That meant that King Herod, the king of the Jews, was an Edomite. Now, how is it that you're an Edomite and you're King over the Jews? Well, if you can't be a Jew what's the next best thing you can do? So when Herod goes to marry someone, what should that person be? A Jewish princess. Have you ever heard of the Maccabees? Herod picks one of the Maccabean Princesses. Her name was Mariamne, and she was a princess in the Maccabean line. Do the Jews revere the Maccabees? Maccabees gave them the feast of Hanukkah. The Jews revere the Maccabees because they were heroes. He marries one of the Maccabee's girls. Now what's the problem with Herod? Does Herod kill people? He kills his own wife, Mariamne. She's a Jewish princess. Is this guy really stupid? Does anyone remember Anthony and Cleopatra? Also you know Marc Anthony because he's still singing. Cleopatra hated Herod.

Herod killed his wife and Herod killed his sons also. Herod built this place down in New Testament Jericho, and I had my son there and it's covered in barbed wire because they don't want you getting in there. But Herod took his own sons into these pools that he made and he had some of his men drown one of his own sons. Is this guy a butcher? So when I went there we climbed through the barbed

wire and I had to get pictures. So I put my son, and he doesn't know any history, he's a computer geek, so I put him in the pool and I took a picture. I was going to put my hand on his head like I was pushing him under or something but I got a picture until they came and chased us away. We weren't supposed to be in there. We got ripped up with the barbwire. You got to be careful with the barb wire it snags you. But if you're going to come all the way from America to a place like that, are you going to let a little barb wire stop you? No. I hope you've got a little more guts than that. But then you'd be able to run fast too, nobody's touching your hip. Somebody says you didn't really do that did you? Yes, I did. He didn't know!

This is the Salt Sea here. You guys call it the Dead Sea, 1270 feet below sea level. Here's the Jordan river and the Sea of Galilee. This is the country Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea. Esau's down here in Edom southeast of the Dead Sea. He comes up here on the Kings' Highway. They meet here, this is where Jacob wrestles with the angel at Peniel by the Jabbok Wadi. Jacob says, "I'm going to follow you back down to Edom Esau," and the next thing we hear, Jacob is over here at Shechem, and his daughter gets raped there.

M. Lot, his daughters and Moab and Ammon [63:32-68:51]

Now there are a couple other things I skipped earlier. Do you know who Moab is? Moab is a story I skipped. The story happens back with Sodom and Gomorrah. Lot was spared from the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah. What happened to Lot's wife? Lot's wife turned back and she turned into a pillar of salt. So now Lot doesn't have a wife, he has two daughters. Do the daughters have any children? No. So what happens is in the cave they get their father drunk and they have sex with their father and they produce then, do you know what "abba" is? "Abba" means father. "Mo-ab" means "from father." The Moabites are "from father." They're Lot's descendants from his daughter. The Moabites--is that a really cool title "from father"? Not a cool title at all. By the way, you know someone who's famous in Moab because there's a book named after her: Ruth, the Moabite. So are the Moabites going to be in the line of David? David's great-

grandmother Ruth is going to come from Moab. So Jesus Christ, the Moabites are going to be in his line.

Ammon was the other one. The other daughter had sex with her father after she got him drunk too producing Ammon. Has anyone ever heard of Ammon Jordan? Till this day Ammon is still there. So one of Lot's descendants was in Jordan in Ammon and the other one was here with Moab.

When I was teaching I taught for a decade in a maximum-security prison in Indiana, and there was a guy in that prison named Probo. Probo was one of the smartest guys I've ever taught in my life. He was an Indian, big guy, nobody ever messed with Probo in the prison. Probo was in the Vietnam war. He was trained as special ops. There was a DMZ, a de-militarized zone, they dropped Probo on the other side of the demilitarized zone with no guns, only a knife and his hands. He was trained to kill people. Why didn't they give him a gun? Because if you sounded a gun they would know you were there, so everything had to be secret. He had a knife and his hands and he killed people on the other side of the DMZ. When he got back to America what did they do? They put all kinds of medals on him and he was a great hero. One night he was in a bar and two guys jumped him. Is he the wrong guy to jump in a bar? Two guys jumped him, what did he do, just instinctively? He did his thing and guess what? There are two dead guys next to him. What happened to Probo? He gets put away for 35 years. When Probo walks through the prison did anybody mess with this guy? No. Everybody knew who he was, what he did, and they knew what he could do. It's Mr. Probo. So anyway this guy is pretty intimidating, he's an old biker kind of guy.

He was in my Old Testament Class and I was teaching Old Testament at night, I'd teach during the day at the college and go over there at night. I'm watching Probo and he didn't take a single note in the class. He was a non-believer and so he would ask all these questions trying to destroy the Bible. We got all into it and it was all cool. I looked at Probo and he didn't take a note in the class and I said, "this first test I'm going to nail that dude. He's going to pay for not taking a

note he wasn't even paying attention." He took the test; he got a 98 on the first test. So I just came to him and I said Probo what's the deal? You didn't take a note, how'd you get a 98 on that test? It turns out that he was trained, he had a photographic ear. Anything I said he could quote it back, he could quote back what I said when I couldn't even remember what I had said. He could quote it back word for word.

Well, we came to the passage about the daughters getting their father drunk and having sex with their father. Probo raises his hand back there, cocky old Probo, and he says, "Uhh professor, when you're drunk like that you can't have sex like that." "This just shows an error in the Bible. I mean obviously that can't be right, that doesn't happen like that." I'm standing there thinking, I'm sorry but the honest truth is I've never been drunk. I was thinking "Holy cow, Hildebrandt he's got you on this one, I mean what can you not do when your drunk. I don't know? And so how do you argue with this guy's experience?" So I'm thinking of all these reasons in my head, my heads going back and forth, usually I've got a smart whippy answer. Now I'm totally stumped. It's this guy's telling me from experience, what do I do?

Luckily for me, providentially for me, old Robert was down front. He was an elderly Black man, sitting down front. He turns around, looks Probo straight in the face and he says, "Probo that ain't right," he says, "I've done that!" I said "Alright, alright." Sometime before the course ends, if I forget and will someone make me come back to Probo, there's a good ending to that story. So Moab and Amon are two important tribal groups we'll see later on.

N. Jacob returns to Bethel [68:51-71:09]

Now, Jacob returns to Bethel, what happens here? In chapter 35 when he comes back to Bethel, this is 20 years later. First of all he gets rid of his foreign gods. What does that tell you about Jacob? Jacob gets rid of his foreign gods. Was Jacob an idolater? Did he worship other gods? So my guess is that Jacob does it like this: "Well, Jehovah is kind of my God, you know the God of Abraham, Isaac,

and Jacob. You know Jehovah's my God, but I like these other gods too because you can never have too many gods. You know you might just need some extra protection." So I think what you have here is Jehovah plus these other gods (henotheism). Jacob's saying he uses them for protection. It's like an added benefit. Jacob gets rid of his foreign gods. He's now back at Bethel and he's got to face the real God, so in chapter 35 he rids himself of his pagan gods.

God then comes and reiterates that his name will be changed from Jacob to Israel. So there is a reiteration of this name change to "he who struggles with God." His name "Israel" is reiterated there. Then what would you expect to be reiterated once again? As he comes back to God at Bethel, God reiterates the covenant to him also. What is the covenant? The covenant is the promise of the land, the seed is multiplied and that he would be a blessing to all nations. So the covenant is reiterated to Jacob now as he comes back to Bethel. Bethel later on in Israel's history will be a place of idolatry. It will be a place where Israel leaves God and it's interesting how the name Bethel gets taken and goes after idolatry. Later on we'll see that as Jerusalem takes center stage.

Rachel dies, we talked about that. Rachel dies after he leaves Bethel. Rachel dies outside Bethlehem on his way down to see his father Isaac. Rachel dies having Benjamin. We said that was echoed at the time of Jesus' birth in the time of the slaying of the infants as well as in Jeremiah about the Babylonian exile. So Rachel's death gets echoed in Jeremiah in the exile and then down to Jesus in the slaying of the infants. So Bethel is going to be a significant place. Bethel is going to be a religious place for Israel. This is a place where they meet God at Bethel--"the house of God."

O. Jacob and the 12 tribes of Israel [71:10-73:45]

Now, first of all, I do not want you to learn all 12 tribes of Israel. I want you to know four of them. You'll see right off which ones I want you to know. They'll be in yellow. First of all you've got, let me just put them all up here. Leah has the bulk of the children. Reuben is the firstborn, but there are two I want you

to know. The first one is Levi. Why is Levi important? Levi becomes the priests. Moses and Aaron come out of the tribe of Levi and Aaron's descendants will be the priests. So the priests and Levites will be out of the tribe of Levi. They will be the kind of the holy tribe given to carry the tabernacle and to minister before the Lord. There will also be Levitical cities later on. Levi is a very important tribe.

The other tribe from Leah that's important is Judah. Now why is Judah important? Who will be from Judah? Jesus will be from there, but before Jesus, who? David. The kings of Israel David, Solomon, Rehoboam, Hezekiah, Josiah, all the kings of the southern kingdom will come from Judah. So Judah will provide the kings as Levi will provide the priests.

Now with Rachel, you need to know both of Rachel's kids. Her firstborn was Joseph. Joseph is going to be a really important character in Genesis. Her other son is Benjamin. Why is Benjamin important? The first king of Israel will be from the tribe of Benjamin. His name will be Saul, but when I say Saul, who do you know in the New Testament named Saul? Paul. And guess what tribe Paul is from? He's also from the tribe of Benjamin. Was Paul the apostle probably named Saul after king Saul from the tribe of Benjamin? Yes. So those are the four I want you to know: Levi, Judah, Joseph and Benjamin. Later on the tribe of Joseph will split, Joseph will be the northern tribes and Judah will be the southern tribe. The country's going to split north and south. Joseph will be in the north; Judah will be in the south. Joseph will actually split into Ephraim and Manasseh his two kids who get an inheritance with the other tribes. Ephraim is going to be the dominant tribe in the northern kingdom and Judah will be the southern kingdom, later on. So those are the 12 tribes of Israel and those four are real important.

P. Rape of Dinah [73:46-77:14]

You will remember there's one girl up there, her name is Dinah. Why is it that Christians skip chapters 34 and 38. I just want to go through the stories and see if you've ever heard sermons preached on these. Why do Christians skip

these? Chapter 34, first of all, is the raping of Dinah. Now “Dinah the daughter of Leah had born to Jacob went out to visit the women of the land. And when Shechem the son of Hamor (I call him the Donkey-man because that’s what his name means “donkey-man”) goes out and meets Shechem the son of (Donkey-man) the ruler of the area saw her, he took her and he violated her” that’s another way for saying what? He raped her. So Dinah gets raped, now why is this guy Shechem really really stupid? Do you mess with a girl who’s got 12 brothers? No. That’s really stupid.

But after he violates her now what happens? When Jacob heard that his daughter Dinah had been violated his sons were in the fields. So Jacob, in a fury and rage got his sword and went out there and went after him. Is that what Jacob did? Is Jacob a man’s man or is he a what? What should he have done as a father? Should he have been out there first? What’s Jacob do? It says, “Jacob kept quiet until they [the brothers] came home.” Does that bother me about Jacob? This Jacob guy, I have a big problems with him. Now, when the brothers get home, is there going to be a problem now? The 12 brothers come and it says, “the brothers were filled with grief for their sister, and fury.” Grief and fury, is that bad combination?

So the 12 brothers go out, now what happens? Jacob tries to keep the peace a little bit, and let me just narrate the story. So he goes to Shechem and Hamor and they say, “My son Shechem has fallen in love with Dinah, he wants to marry her.” And Jacob says, “Okay. But you see we’re Jewish and we’re of the circumcision and you guys ain’t of the circumcision. You’re uncircumcised. So you need to go back and tell your people that they all need to be circumcised.” By the way, do Hamor and Shechem go back and convince the whole town to be circumcised? Is that a big deal? Yes. They say, “We can intermarry with these guys. We can trade with them and they can trade with us. We’ll marry their children and they’ll marry our children. We’ll intermarry with them.” So they agree, “let’s be circumcised.” So they convince the whole town to be circumcised.

You remember the rest of the story. By the way, does it take all 12 brothers? No. Just two brothers go in, Levi and Simeon, those two brothers go in and take out the whole town. Just two brothers and it says on the third day when they were still, I think the text here says, “in pain.” Obviously they’re helpless and I shouldn’t laugh. It’s not good, in other words, this is something that happened that’s defiling to circumcision. This is a bad thing. So anyway this is the storyline of Dinah. Now why is that story in the Bible? Has anyone ever heard a sermon on that? Okay we’ve got one here, that’s interesting.

Q. Judah and Tamar (Gen. 38) [77:15-81:50]

Now go over to the story of Judah and Tamar. That’s in chapter 38. Let me just narrate this story quickly here. First of all, the background of the story: Judah had married a Canaanite woman, is that good or bad? That’s bad. His son Ur had taken this woman Tamar who was also a Canaanite and married her. What happened to Ur? Judah’s son Ur marries Tamar, and his son dies. Now, what’s the second son required to do when the older has son died? He must marry the wife and have a child for his brother. In other words, they’re not his kids he’s to have children for his brother, in honor of his brother. They call it the Levirate marriage and it was part of the culture back then. What happens to the second son, Onan? He marries her but in the process of having sex with her he purposely spills the seed on the ground. God gets so hacked at Onan, God takes him out. So now Ur married Tamar, he’s dead, the second son married Tamar, and now he’s dead; You’ve got your third son, are you going to give your third son to this woman? Everyone the woman touches goes dead. Now this is serious. So Judah says, “My son’s not quite ready yet.” Tamar sees what’s going on. So Tamar puts on the dress of a prostitute. Judah, and you have to be aware of the text; Judah’s wife had died, that is significant. Judah’s wife is dead. So Judah, the father, doesn’t have a wife now, he’s out on the road travelling and he comes up and here’s Tamar decked out like a prostitute covered up so he doesn’t know who it is. She says, “Hey, what do you want big guy.” “How much is it?” And he says, “Do you

take Visa or MasterCard?” And she says, “Well I’ve got either one. I’ll can tell you haven’t got change so what I want from you is your signet ring.” Now, by the way, why is that signet ring important? Is that Judah’s signet ring? That’s what he sticks in the mud that indicates that it’s his. Or as my wife would say, “it’s he.” “So I want your staff and your ring and then you can go get the goat and bring it back to me.” So he goes into her, and she conceives. When he goes to send the a goat in payment, she disappears and he says, “Oh well, she’s gone.”

Now little bit later on, Tamar’s found to be pregnant. “My daughter-in-law she is pregnant, bring her out, she should be burned for defiling our family like that.” Then Tamar comes out and says, “Hey, Judah, you remember these?” And it’s, “Um, um, um, oh, well,” and Judah’s caught. You say, “this story’s in the Bible?” I mean this is what happened. It’s in the Bible. Now is the Bible approving of this story or is it simply telling what happened? It’s telling us what happened (descriptive not prescriptive). By the way is Judah a big tribe of Israel? Judah is David. As a matter of fact Tamar, is in the genealogy of Jesus Christ. In Matthew chapter 1 guess who shows up? Tamar. In the genealogy of Jesus Christ, can you believe it has its background in this story.

Now you say, “Okay, Hildebrandt, what’s going on? Why are these two stories in the Bible?” I’ve got a suggestion and what I’m going to suggest to you is that what you have here is the elimination of the older brothers. Who are the older brothers? In the first story here who gets eliminated? Levi and Simeon, you say Reuben’s the oldest yes--well Reuben slept with his father’s concubine so he’s out of the picture too. So Reuben’s gone, Levi and Simeon are gone, here’s Judah’s gone as well. I think it’s eliminating the older brothers. It’s showing the corruption of the older brothers because who is the focus going to move to? In the end of the book of Genesis the focus is going to move away from the older brothers to whom? Joseph. Joseph is going to be a gem. Joseph and Daniel are your two major winners in the Old Testament. So I think that the text is using this as a literary technique to move you away from the older brothers to focus on

Joseph and I think that's what's going on here.

R. The Joseph Narrative [81:51-84:01]

Now I want to hit the Joseph narrative, this is going to be fast. I want to compare Jacob and Joseph. Jacob and Joseph in the book of Genesis are compared. The two were very different characters but yet have similar lives. For example, in both the Jacob story and the Joseph story you have the supremacy of the younger brother. Jacob is the younger brother, Esau is the older brother. Jacob is supreme. Joseph is the younger brother, the older brothers are all corrupt, Joseph is the winner. So there is the supremacy of the younger brother. In both the Jacob story and the Joseph story you get strife and deception in the family. By the way, you can see deception in the name "Jacob." You can see strife in the name "Israel." Do you remember when I started out Jacob is strife and deception? Those are Jacob's two names: Jacob and Israel. Basically, the parental favoritism leads to sibling rivalry. Did Jacob favor Joseph over the other kids? Do you remember the coat of many colors? So Jacob favored him and whenever you have parental favoritism does it lead to the brothers and sisters duking it out? So, parental favoritism leads to sibling rivalry and strife in the families. In both cases the younger one who was the special one was separated from his family for 20 years. Jacob is separated from his family up in Haran. Joseph is separated from his family down in Egypt. Then, both Jacob and Joseph prosper in a foreign land. Joseph is going to come up so he's right under Pharaoh. Jacob gets all his wealth from Laban. So they both prosper in a foreign land. Finally, lastly here, both of them at the end of their lives are reunited with their estranged brothers. Jacob is reunited with Esau although there are some problems with that, and Joseph is reunited with his brothers. At the end do you remember Joseph and the brothers come together. So the stories of Jacob and Joseph are somewhat parallel in the way the story forms, although they're two totally different characters.

S. Joseph and Wisdom [84:02-85:53]

Now another major shift, I want to compare the Joseph narrative in Genesis

to show a connection to Joseph and wisdom literature by making some comparisons. In order to do that, I want to tell you a story. “Once upon a time,” you know you’re getting a story when you hear that. “Once upon a time there was a person of very high status who had a problem and he went all through his kingdom searching through this kingdom. I want you to think of the story, he goes through all of his kingdom trying to find someone to solve the problem and finally he or she tries, and it fits. The person of low status, solves the king’s problem and she is put over the whole kingdom and they all live happily ever after.” What story am I telling? Some of you say, “Cinderella.” That’s the Cinderella story. I think some of you said “Pretty Woman.” No, no, actually I’m dead serious this is the story of “Pretty Woman” built on the Cinderella story [Aladdin too]? Do you understand there’s a form to this story that’s very similar. Now is that what you have with the Joseph story too? The king had this problem, he’s got these dreams and no one can solve it. He finally goes down to the prison and finds this person in prison who can interpret his dreams. He then interprets the Pharaoh’s dreams correctly and what happens to the person of low status? He’s lifted up to be a person of high status and they all live happily ever after. He does the famine thing and they go 7 years without food and he’s got food for them and they’re good to go. That’s the same kind of structure as the Cinderella story that you have in the Joseph story that’s why the Joseph story is so beautiful, it follows that same kind of narrative pattern.

T. Joseph, Potiphar’s wife and wisdom [85:54-89:19]

Now, does Joseph resist the wild woman? Remember Potiphar’s wife goes after him and by the way if that happened anywhere else in the Bible there would’ve been a very different outcome. But Joseph is a man above reproach. He does not take advantage of Potiphar. Even in his uprightness does he end up in jail? Yes, so this guy is good. In Proverbs, does the proverbial father warn his son not to mess around with wild women like that? Yes. Proverbs chapters 5 and 7 are

major wisdom warnings about wild women. Joseph actually models that.

Are wise men good at interpreting dreams? Daniel is a wise man in Mesopotamia and Daniel too interprets dreams for Nebuchadnezzar. Joseph interprets dreams for Pharaoh. He's considered a wise man and a wise man knows how to interpret dreams--so the seven years of plenty and the seven years of famine. He saves during the seven years of plenty and then has the seven years of famine. He was with the cupbearer and the baker in prison.

Here's another one. In Egyptian wisdom literature the wise man is called the silent man. Now, by the way, in America is the wise man the silent man or is the wise man the one that's always shooting off his mouth? In ancient Egyptian literature, and I'm talking for 2000 years, the wise man was considered the silent man. Did Joseph hide his emotions from his brothers? When he first met his brothers did he hide his feelings and was he silent? He plays this role of this wise sage. He plays the role of the silent man here. When I say wisdom literature, the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom and this fear of God motif actually occurs with Joseph.

Then lastly, and this is my favorite one. Jacob the father dies, and now Joseph is left with his 11 brothers. His 11 brothers are scared to death. What are they afraid of? Joseph is in a position of power, they're in a position of weakness. The brothers come to Joseph and say, "Joseph don't kill us! We really didn't mean to hurt you all those years ago." Joseph says what? "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good." This is a reversal! Does God do the reversals? He takes what's evil and turns it into good? Joseph says, "you intended to harm me but God intended it for good" and the whole thing's changed. This is God's redemptive work, he takes what's bad and turns it into something that's wonderful. He does it with Joseph and he does it with our lives too.

We are done with Genesis! We'll start with Exodus next time. See you Thursday.

Transcribed By Kristen Sawyer
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