

# Foundations Devotional

• FOR THE WEEK OF AUG 23 - AUG 29 •

## MONDAY // GENESIS 27-28

When Isaac was old and blind, Jacob deceived him, causing Isaac to give Jacob the family blessing instead of Esau, the older son to whom it rightfully belonged. Esau responded with anger and murderous thoughts, so Jacob had no choice but to escape and seek refuge with extended family, at which time he also sought out a wife. As God had with Isaac and Abraham, He spoke to Jacob at the start of his journey and reiterated His covenant promises for their family. With that event, Jacob's life took a turn away from the deception and selfishness of his youth and toward his future as a faithful patriarch who would lead his family to trust in the Lord. God's promise to Jacob—"I am with with you and will keep you" (28:15, ESV)—remains His life-changing promise to us today through the once-for-all sacrifice of Jesus.

## TUESDAY // GENESIS 29-30:24

The beginning of Jacob's own family and the birth of several of his children is documented in the next several chapters of Genesis. Deception and envy are two key issues that ran throughout this family's relationships. Jacob deceived his father and his brother, then found himself on the receiving end of deception from Laban, who promised Jacob one daughter in marriage, but tricked him into marrying another. Eventually, Jacob married both Leah and Rachel, and their ability and inability (respectively) to have children became the source of yet more jealousy and envy. As is God's providential nature, from these corrupted relationships came twelve sons who eventually became the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel. Even better, one of those tribes—the tribe of Judah—would eventually bring forth the Messiah, God's promised deliverer of His people, Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

## WEDNESDAY // GENESIS 31-32

As a result of God's grace and power in his life, Jacob experienced great prosperity during these years, which became yet another source of jealousy among his extended family. Again God appeared to Jacob in a dream, this time urging Jacob to take his family and return home to Canaan. When Jacob and his family left, Laban pursued them, but God again proved faithful to protect and deliver Jacob from harm. Unfortunately, "home" did not hold the promise of peace for Jacob either because he was returning to his brother Esau, who in their last encounter threatened to kill Jacob. Genesis 32 highlights the anxiety Jacob felt, which led to an unexpected encounter with God. From Jacob's "wrestling match" with God, we are reminded that God will go to great lengths in order to teach us to depend on Him and trust the sufficiency of His grace.

## THURSDAY // GENESIS 33; 35

The reunion of Jacob and Esau is one of the greatest pictures of reconciliation in the Bible (Gen. 33). Enough time and life experience had passed between the two brothers that the grudges of their youth were forgotten, and Jacob noted, "I have seen your face, and it is like seeing God's face" (33:10). Only the Lord's work in their lives could bring about such change. Through that reunion and some other horrific events described in Genesis 34, Jacob realized that he and his family needed to renew their commitment to the Lord. Genesis 35 describes that renewal of their commitment to God and God's covenant promises to them. Scripture is filled with many promises from God that still apply to His children today. Regularly strengthening our commitment to God and trusting Him to keep His promises is a vital part of following Christ.

## FRIDAY // GENESIS 37

With Genesis 37, the story of God's chosen people shifts from Jacob to his son Joseph, who is the main character throughout the rest of Genesis. Rachel struggled to have children, and Joseph was the first child she was able to bear. Because Rachel was Jacob's favorite wife, Joseph became Jacob's favorite son, which meant blessings from his father and ridicule from his brothers. In what has become one of the most well-known accounts in the Old Testament, Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers, who then lied to their father by telling him Joseph was dead. This set in motion a series of trials Joseph would face over many years, but early on in his story, we see evidence that God was orchestrating the events of Joseph's life. God gave Joseph the power to interpret dreams, a divine gift that would determine the course his life would take to protect God's covenant people.

## WEEKEND

Finish up any you haven't done from above!