

Genesis Chapters 27-28 Summary - John Karmelich

One thing that never ceases to amaze me is how forgiving God is! In these chapters we see "a parade of sins and failures to trust God"! Despite that, God blesses the godly line of the Israel nation founder. It's a reminder that "God chooses who He chooses"! We must accept it and be grateful that we made a commitment to make God the center of our lives and use our lives to glorify Him. Obviously, that's not an excuse to think He'll accept us no matter what! These chapters remind us we can't lose our salvation no matter how much we mess up! I realize most of us believe that already, but these chapters will give us a big reminder of how much God loves us and continues to forgive us no matter how much we mess up! When you see the sins listed in these chapters and the fact God forgave them and still guided their lives for His glory, it gives hope for all of us!

When I go through the stories in these two chapters, it's easy to think, "I'm not that bad!" or "I'm in big trouble now!" if I did any of the things we read about in these chapters! Obviously, I'm not excusing a sin, and I'm not saying there are not consequences for sin (we'll see consequences in these chapters)! I am just saying we can't blow it "bad enough" to lose our salvation, although we can lose rewards when we get to heaven, as that's God's business not ours. God wants us to use our lives as a good witness for Him. Since it will become obvious quickly these chapters are full of bad stories, I'll discuss them not to just know what to avoid, but to realize how much God loves us IN SPITE of the sins we commit!

With that said, let me quickly cover the stories in these chapters, how all the characters violate what He desires for our lives and what we can learn from the mistakes made in these chapters: Chapter 26 told a story about Isaac (son of Abraham and a major character in these chapters), as he liked to dig wells that established a peaceful boundary with the neighbors that existed in Israel then, the Philistines. My point is the chapter break is a good spot as we'll now see Isaac, one of the main characters of this chapter at a much older age. If you're new to the story the main characters are Isaac, his wife Rebecca and their two twin sons Esau (oldest by seconds) and Jacob the youngest. At this chapter both sons are grown. Esau was married to two women as we read in the last chapter. Jacob is still single in these chapters!

Chapter 27 says that Isaac at this point was old and couldn't see well. We'll see in future chapters he is going to live another 40 years! Here in Chapter 27 his eyes were barely working, and his wife Rebecca had to take care of him! Back in Chapter 25, we read that God spoke to Rebecca and told her that she's going to have twins and the younger will rule over the elder! I'm sure she told her husband since it was a message from God. Despite that, Isaac favored his older son because he is a "man's man", who was a hunter! When it came to giving his blessing on his children, despite the fact God said the younger will serve the older, Isaac told the older to go hunt deer, fix dad some stew with what he caught and then he would give Esau his blessing as the favored son!

Meanwhile Isaac's wife Rebecca overheard the conversation. She decided she must help God since He promised Esau's brother Jacob would be the favored one! (You know you're in trouble when you think God needs our help!) She calls Jacob to get two goats, make some stew (Jacob was a momma's boy so he was living there unmarried!) Rebecca then had to do some "fancy sewing" as Jacob had smooth skin and Esau was hairy. She hatches up a plan for Jacob to pretend to be Esau, to wear the skins on his arm and his neck so he'll feel like Esau. She told Jacob to lie to his father about who he was, so he'd get the family blessing (again as if God needs help)!

Bottom line is the ruse worked: Dad wasn't sure because he heard Jacob's voice but he couldn't see that it was his youngest son and Jacob "lied to dad's face" and said he was Esau. Then Isaac broke down to give him the family blessing! The key fact was that he would rule over his brother and be a great leader of many people just as God had promised Isaac and his father Abraham. Then Jacob fled the scene just as Esau got back from hunting and fixing a meal. By the way, Rebecca would die before she got to see her favorite son (Jacob) ever again (when he fled the scene), so this sin cost her a lot in her lifetime!

When Isaac figured out it was all a lie, he didn't say, I take it all back Jacob as you lied to me! Instead, Isaac realized God said that Jacob would rule so in spite of his trickery, Isaac accepted it as God's will! Since Esau's now in the room, Isaac also gave him a secondary blessing in effect telling him Jacob will get all of his stuff and be the leader! In short, the whole family "messed up" in that Rebecca and Jacob lied to Isaac, he went against God's wishes and we read in earlier chapters Esau didn't really care for all the religious stuff as he gave Jacob his birth right a few chapters back! And you're thinking your family has problems!

At this point Esau was really ticked off and vowed to kill his brother! Rebecca, in an effort to save the life of Jacob told him to flee (about 500 miles), to where she grew up to get a wife and wait until things calm down to return back home! Isaac also agreed to send him away despite the lies as he realized that Jacob would return since he was part of God's plan at this point! Remember, Esau was already married to two local women (who Isaac and Jacob didn't like). Then Esau got another wife, the daughter of his uncle Ishmael! Maybe Esau thought he'd be more pleasing to his parents if he took a 3rd wife who was family! Bottom line again, is that this family had significant problems!

At this point we're now in the middle of Chapter 28. Jacob probably ran as fast as possible as he feared his brother killing him. We read of Jacob spending the night roughly 50 miles away from where he was but still in the land of Israel. He then had a strange dream, with angels that ascended and descended on a ladder! In the Gospel of John (1:51) Jesus told his disciples they'd see angels doing the same thing on "the son of man" implying that Jesus is the bridge between heaven and earth! Meanwhile Jacob did not fully comprehend the dream, he just knew it was from God because the message with he dream said he would give Jacob and his descendants this land, just as God promised the exact same thing to his father and his grandfather. Remember Jacob wasn't married at this point, but he will become the father of the twelve boys who will become the 12 tribes of Israel!

OK John, we get that this family is messed up. We get that God blessed Jacob despite all those lies that he told his father! We get the fact God calls who He calls in spite of our mistakes. Of course, it doesn't mean it excuses sin. Remember that Rebecca never got to see her son again because of this. Esau was out of the family's inheritance for marrying nonbelievers, and not caring about God, (given that he sold his birthright a few chapters back). Obviously, God would still have blessed Jacob even if he never did all of those "shenanigans" and those sins still will cost Jacob dearly as we'll see his nature to live by his wits is something God has to work on, the rest of his life!

If there's one thing to learn from these stories is that God never leaves us "where we are". God will use us, faults and all and if we choose to dedicate our lives to serving Him, He will guide us to do His will! I see how God spoke to Jacob in spite all of his sins! We don't see God chewing Jacob out for lying! I am fascinated that God choose this moment to encourage Jacob as he was running scared for his life as he was running away from his brother as much as running to his uncle who he's never met before! All I am saying is despite our faults God uses us as we are. It doesn't excuse sin and we'll still suffer for it as we'll see this family do! It shows God uses imperfect people to accomplish His will! If you think God can't use us because we've "sinned to much" consider the characters in this story. So how do I know if

God choose me? Make the decision to commit your lives to follow Jesus, then you'll know that He did pick you. For those of us who made that commitment, realize as we see this family, if God can work in the lives of this family, He definitely can and will work through us faults and all!

On the same page as this study is a more detailed study I wrote many years back. You are welcome to email me if you want or join my list to the get the latest lesson. Thanks for reading. John