

The God of Jacob

Valleys Family Church Sermon
Sunday 23rd June 2013

Speaker: Robin Vincent

CONVERSATION ONE

"What are you preaching on?"

"One of the best story's of them all"

"The story of Esther, Ruth, David?"

"No it's Jacob"

"Oh I don't like Jacob"

CONVERSATION TWO ON A TRAIN:

- Conversation progressed fairly rapidly on to Buddhism and Christianity.
- He shared his belief system... A life reliant on Good works to earn God's grace
- I shared about Jesus... A life reliant on God's grace that leads to good works
- His response "That's crazy"...
- He was offended, staggered and provoked... That's why it's good news!

THIS CONVERSATION HAS BEEN REPEATED TIME AND TIME AGAIN IN HISTORY

- Everyone who has ever been in the conversation **all want the same...** To be happy

ONE OF THE FIRST TIMES WAS BETWEEN JACOB & HIS OLDER BROTHER ESAU

- Genesis 25... Barren middle-aged woman called Rebekah
- Married to a man called Isaac. Fell pregnant with twins.
- Difficult pregnancy. It was like they were fighting inside.
- Troubled her, so she asked God what was happening?
- **"They will be ... Rivals... One stronger... Older will serve the younger"**
- Birth day came, first one was very hairy. They called him Esau.
- Then the younger grasped the heel of the older!
- They called him **Jacob (grasp or deceiver)**

LIKE OUR FAMILIES - THEY MADE CHOICES THAT LEFT A LASTING IMPACT

- For example: As he was named, so he became... Deceptive

1. Their parents chose favourites

2. Esau rejected his status as older son for a temporary pleasure

Esau killed the game and Jacob cooked it. One day Esau came home hungry and said 30... "I'm starved! Give me some of that red stew!" Jacob saw an opportunity 31 "All right," Jacob replied, "but trade me your rights as the firstborn son." 32 "Look, I'm dying of starvation!" said Esau. "What good is my birthright to me now?" 33 But Jacob said "First you must swear that your birthright is mine." So Esau swore an oath, thereby selling all his rights as the firstborn to his brother, Jacob. 34 Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and lentil stew. Esau ate the meal, then got up and left. Genesis 25

3. The younger son Jacob and his mother planned to steal the final blessing

- Isaac blind & old death
- Asks Esau to get him his best meat for best meal for the best blessing

5 But Rebekah overheard... So she finds Jacob... 8 Now, my son, listen to me. Do exactly as I tell you.

9 Go out to the flocks, and bring me two fine young goats. I'll use them to prepare your father's favourite dish. 10 Then take the food to your father so he can eat it and bless you before he dies."

Genesis 27

15 Then she took Esau's favourite clothes, which were there in the house, and gave them to her younger son, Jacob. 16 She covered his arms and the smooth part of his neck with the skin of the young goats. 17 Then she gave Jacob the delicious meal, including freshly baked bread. 18 So Jacob took the food to his father. "My father?" he said. "Yes, my son," Isaac answered. "Who are you—Esau or Jacob?"

19 Jacob replied, "It's Esau, your firstborn son. I've done as you told me. Here is the wild game. Now sit up and eat it so you can give me your blessing." 20 Isaac asked, "How did you find it so quickly, my son?" "The Lord your God put it in my path!" Jacob replied.

Genesis 27

*21 Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Come closer so I can touch you and make sure that you really are Esau." 22 So Jacob went closer to his father, and Isaac touched him. "The voice is Jacob's, but the hands are Esau's," Isaac said. 23 But he did not recognize Jacob, because Jacob's hands felt hairy just like Esau's. So Isaac prepared to bless Jacob. 24 "But are you really my son Esau?" he asked. "Yes, I am," Jacob replied. **Genesis 27***

He then goes on to bless Jacob with the incredible blessing he had reserved for Esau.

- Esau returns a short while later... Both father and his oldest son were devastated
- They have been deceived by this plan or conspiracy of Rebekah & Jacob

*36 Esau exclaimed, "No wonder his name is Jacob (which meant deceiver or grasper), for now he has cheated me twice. First he took my rights as the firstborn, and now he has stolen my blessing... 41 From that time on, Esau hated Jacob because their father had given Jacob the blessing. And Esau began to scheme: "I will soon be mourning my father's death. Then I will kill my brother, Jacob." **Genesis 27***

- Jacob flees and we say good riddance, but the story takes another twist!
- Jacob receives the same blessing and promise from God of Abraham and Isaac before him

*10 Meanwhile, Jacob left Beersheba and traveled toward Haran. 11 At sundown he arrived at a good place to set up camp and stopped there for the night. Jacob found a stone to rest his head against and lay down to sleep. 12 As he slept, he dreamed of a stairway that reached from the earth up to heaven. And he saw the angels of God going up and down the stairway. 13 At the top of the stairway stood the Lord, and he said, "I am the Lord, the God of your grandfather Abraham, and the God of your father, Isaac. The ground you are lying on belongs to you. I am giving it to you and your descendants. 14 Your descendants will be as numerous as the dust of the earth! They will spread out in all directions—to the west and the east, to the north and the south. And all the families of the earth will be blessed through you and your descendants. 15 What's more, I am with you, and I will protect you wherever you go. One day I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have finished giving you everything I have promised you." **Genesis 28***

JACOB'S NAME WE SHOULD NOT FORGET, BUT ACTIVELY REMEMBER!

- Not the best character or person
- Not the best parents or upbringing
- Not the best relationships
- Not one to remember! Unlike Esau, David, Ruth, Esther
- **BUT** in God's eyes he participates in a blessing that would be fulfilled through Jesus

14 God replied to Moses, "I Am Who I Am. Say this to the people of Israel: I Am has sent me to you." 15 God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel: Yahweh, the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you. This is my eternal name, my name to remember for all generations. Exodus 3

ASSOCIATED WITH GOD'S ETERNAL NAME! THINK OF GOD, REMEMBER JACOB

- Abraham & Isaac - we remember their faithfulness, tough decisions, their obedience...
- BUT then Jacob? Particularly the Jacob of Genesis 27... God associates with him!?
- **He loves Jacob, chose Jacob, calls himself the God of Jacob, God of Bryn Mawr**

WHAT A STORY!

- DESPITE character, circumstances and choices of Jacob .. God chooses him!
- **Repeated in history (age after age, family/family, culture/culture)**

WHICH ONE ARE WE IN THE CONVERSATION?

THE WAY OF ESAU... ARE YOU AN ESAU? LEADS TO ENVY

Rely on performance, skill, status, tradition, goodness... On ourselves

The tragedy: Often just one meal away or just out of our grasp... Deceiving ourselves!!
All his efforts, character, qualifications counted for zero. *I 'stole' a blessing he longed for!*

THE WAY OF JACOB... ARE YOU A JACOB? LEADS TO JESUS

If Abraham was the father of faith... Jacob is the relative few want to talk about! His DNA!

But to understand, embrace & enjoy the promise of Jesus... have to realise... **a bit of Jacob in all of us**

ONE FINAL TWIST

God's blessings and promise not found in a plan of human origin but **in a divine plan!**
Jacob received the promise despite his questionable character & qualities & lack of qualifications
Look elsewhere other than ourselves, where we live, what we do, can do, did or ever will do.

Crazy truth, that is offensive and maddening to all the Esau's who try and earn it!

Beautiful truth - good news for Jacobs' - don't qualify by human tradition, standards or deserve it
Disregards the family background, how your parents treated you, the choices you made

A plan that speaks a better word than that of Jacob & Rebekah **against** the Firstborn & Father.
Planned by the **Firstborn Jesus & the Father** for all the Jacob's & Rebekah's... *the undeserving, unmerited, unworthy - tax collector, prostitute, lowest, loser, least, last & lost*

Where the Jesus and the Father planned to take the Firstborn's best clothes and give them to the younger less deserving brother to wear.

Where the meal that would secure the blessing would be Jesus' own broken, beaten and murdered body which the Father and Son planned to put in our path.

REMEMBER...

- Next time you fall, fail, falter or fool others... Remember your ancestor Jacob
- We all stumble in many ways
- God is happy to be associated with Jacobs... The God of YOU and ME
- We can lie, cheat, deceive, involve ourselves in a lessor plan of grasping...
- Whereas God has called us into a greater plan of grace!

Where we can approach the throne of the Father, and he will **reach out and touch** us and say “**The voice is Robin's, but the hands are Jesus**”

Where when he **catches the smell of our clothes (Genesis 27 v 26)** the Father smells the fragrance of the obedient, perfect life of Jesus.

Where the God of our fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob fulfils the promise by bringing us fully, once for all, into the blessing and status of the Kingdom of his beloved Son.

GOD IS THE GOD OF JACOB'S NOT ESAU'S