



HIGH SCHOOL MINISTRY

April 19, 2020

Main Point: God is merciful to use even the most unlikely people to build His kingdom.

1. Listen to this Spotify playlist

https://open.spotify.com/playlist/2PFq9EG6qySS7pasjKKAxB?_php=1

2. Read this passage two times - Genesis 27:18-29 & 28:10-15

3. Process

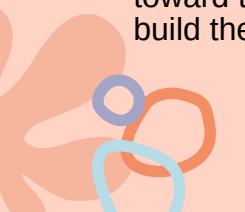
27:18-20 When we read this account and future accounts of Jacob's life, many of us want to say, "Wait a minute. Stop. This is all wrong. None of these people deserve God's blessing! Especially not Jacob. Esau didn't seem to care about spiritual matters, but at least he wasn't a deceiver." Genesis paints an unflattering picture of Abraham and his offspring. They lie, cheat, and manipulate. Abraham and Isaac both claimed their wives were their sisters to take the heat off themselves (Gen. 12:11-13; 26:7). Isaac played favorites with his son Esau, while Rebekah's favorite was Jacob. Rebekah and Jacob were willing to deceive to get what they wanted.

Yes, Jacob was a deceiver. Just like his father, Isaac, and his grandfather, Abraham. Why did God allow the blessing to come through a man like Jacob? God delights in using the ordinary, the weak and flawed, for His redemptive purposes He receives all the credit and glory.

When we look at patriarchs—and things like Jacob's heartless deception and manipulation—we walk away shaking our heads at how God could bring about good through those who acted so sinfully. We do not celebrate sin, but we celebrate a God who brings beauty even from the ashes of our lives.

Jacob was unworthy. Isaac was unworthy. Abraham was unworthy. And that's the point. We are all unworthy to receive God's blessings and to be used by Him. God's mercy and grace are on display in this passage, not man's worthiness. We cling to that mercy and grace, recognizing our unworthiness before a holy God and God's kindness to pour out His mercy and grace upon us without measure through Christ Jesus.

28:12-14 This vision parallels the Tower of Babylon and further reveals God's mercy. God revealed Himself to Jacob and reaffirmed the threefold promise of the covenant He initiated with Abraham—land, descendants, and blessing. But God used an interesting phrase to describe Jacob's descendants: "Your offspring will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out toward the west, the east, the north, and the south" (v. 14a). In Babylon, the people set out to build their tower so they would not be spread out: "let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth" (11:4b). The people in Babylon disobeyed when they built a tower to reach into the sky in defiance of God's commands.



But in Jacob's disobedience, God showed him a stairway reaching into the sky to reveal Himself and reaffirm that God would use him to fulfill His promises, ultimately leading to blessing for all families of the earth. What an act of mercy! What an act of grace! This is exactly what Jacob needed to know in this moment of uncertainty and it is what we need to remember in our time as well.

28:15 Jacob would eventually become the representative head of the nation of Israel, and Israel was called to be a light to the nations. God's redeeming plan would go through Jacob to all the nations of the earth. The saving line would come through the deceitful younger son, Jacob, not Esau.

4. Think About It

- How would you expect God to respond to Jacob because of his deceit? How did God respond?
- Do you think Jacob was right in what he did? How could he have approached the situation differently?
- In what kinds of situations do we find it easiest to lie? What do those situations tell us about what our hearts crave?
- Do you find it easy to accept God's grace and mercy toward Jacob in light of his sin?
- What are some common dysfunctions in families? How can God's grace through the gospel overcome these?

Join Lauren & Nathan in a Zoom Call!

Sunday, April 19 at 7:00 pm

<https://zoom.us/j/4144653655?pwd=SkYyNVVVKaS9OdGQxSTJaeUFpSU5yUT09>

Meeting ID: 414 465 3655

Password: 853104



We are here for you!

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