

Prince of God

(Sermon Notes) By Warren Zehrung 1/7/2017

A “Prince of God,” wouldn’t that be a nice title for you? Well perhaps it is. Today we will begin to take a look at the patriarch Jacob. Jacob is certainly a central figure in the Book of Genesis -- his story spanning the second half of the book – Chapters 25 to 50.

Jacob’s life’s story contains many essential elements of our faith including God’s covenant promise and blessing, faith, conversion and prophecy. It is the study of an Old Testament Christian’s maturing faith. How can Jacob possibly be called a Christian?

What do you know about Jacob? Did he go to Sabbath services every week? Was he baptized? Did he sing in the choir? Did he go up to Jerusalem to keep the Feast?

The Bible reveals a great deal about Jacob’s calling, faith, repentance and ultimate conversion. Jacob had multiple wives, he deceived his own father, Isaac, and he stole his brother’s birthright, and he is not recorded as having been baptized, or keeping the Sabbath or the Holy Days. What can we possibly learn from Jacob?

What makes Jacob so special and such a prominent biblical figure? This is a good study that will help us understand how God works in the life of a Christian. Jacob’s mentioned more times in the Old Testament and the New Testament Scriptures than our father Abraham. Just why is Jacob so prominent in the Scriptural record - being mentioned 27 times in the New Testament as Jacob, and 75 references to Israel?

Abraham is mentioned 300 times in Bible as Abram and Abraham.

Isaac is mentioned 132 times in the Bible

Jacob is mentioned **377** times in the Bible – not including hundreds of references to “**Israel.**” Why so much emphasis on Jacob?

What are we to make of Jacob’s life, and why is his story so important to us today? We will begin an extensive look at Jacob to see how God uses him mightily. The name Jacob means **supplanter**. And true to his name, Jacob tripped-up Esau and beat him out of his lawful birthright.

But God changed Jacob’s name to **Israel, a prince of God**, because he contended with God all night long—and triumphed.

This is a very interesting and unique episode in the Scriptures. Jacob is fleeing for his life—from Esau who has sworn to kill him. And Jacob comes upon this “Man.”

Genesis 32:24 And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a **Man** with him until the breaking of the day.

Who was this Man? It was Jesus Christ, God of the Old Testament as we will see in just a moment, [v.30]

I find it helpful to capitalize He when it refers to Jesus – otherwise it’s a little difficult to follow – and you might not figure out who wins in this struggle.

Genesis 32:25 And when He saw that He prevailed not against him, He **touched** the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with Him.

Touched = is an understatement as Jesus knocked Jacob’s femur out of its hip socket. Ouch!

I don’t know if you’ve ever had a bone out of joint – but there is **serious pain** involved – and yet, Jacob would not give in.

They literally wrestled all night long!

Genesis 32:26 And He said, Let me go, for the day is breaking. And he said, I will not let thee go, unless you bless me.

How did Jacob know that the “Man” had the wherewithal to bless him?

The Bible does not give us the details of how “God” was recognized – but Jacob knew that Jesus was no mere man.

Certainly, Jesus knew Jacob’s name already.

Genesis 32:27 And He said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, “Jacob.”

He said, “Supplanter,” meaning, I am one who catches the heel and I **trip** people up, I cause the **downfall** of people.

Not a pretty name!

The **Title** of this sermon is from this next verse.

Gen 32:28 And He said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but **Israel**: for as a **prince** hast thou power with **God** and with men, and have prevailed.

Prevail means, “you’ve won” – you have met Me face to face in your Christian battle. You have a “card” in the game. You’ve come up to par. You have matured and come into your own.

Jesus could have easily overpowered Jacob in the contest if that were His intention – but He was developing Jacob.

Genesis 32:29 And Jacob asked Him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And He said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And He blessed him there.

Jesus did **not** tell Jacob His name. But He did bless Jacob.

Genesis 32:30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have **seen God** face to face, and my life is preserved.

Jacob was asking God for the blessing of being delivered from his avenging brother, Esau.

Genesis 32:31 And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh.

Jacob won in a wrestling match with Jesus that left him crippled for life and having to rely on a crutch.

Genesis 32:32 Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew that shrank.

What are we to glean from this encounter? We know that Jacob never fully recovered the use of his leg after this bout with Jesus.

If Jacob was the *winner* of that wrestling match – with a leg out of joint – what kind of **shape** must Jesus have been in when they finished their contest? It was a tough contest.

Jesus met Jacob in the form of a “Man” – it was a fair encounter – Jesus was able to say to Jacob – “You beat me fair and square!”

Hebrews 11:21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, **leaning** [supporting himself] upon the top of his staff.

God left Jacob with a remembrance of that occasion – so that he would never forget the situation he was in – and how God delivered him from the clutches of death.

The apostle Paul tells us how he was kept **humble** by a physical reminder.

2Corinthians 12:7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations [get the big-head], there was given to me a **thorn in the flesh**, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

What we are to witness in the life of **Jacob is** God's unrelenting mercy and will to bring Jacob and countless other sons and daughters to glory (Hebrews 2:10).

Jacob had not yet developed the faith that God was going to use him mightily. God allows us win when we do not give up asking Him – He wants us to implore Him – seriously and zealously – and then He enables us.

Matthew 11:12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence [welcomes aggressive zeal], and the forceful ones lay hold on the Kingdom.

Luke 13:24 Strive to enter in at the strait gate: [according to God's will]

Like a salmon going upstream – fight your way into the Kingdom of God. Jesus tells us that Jacob was eventually converted and led by God's Holy Spirit and will be in the Kingdom of God. Jesus said:

Matthew 8:11 I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and **Jacob**, in the Kingdom of Heaven.

As a young Catholic there was a biblical verse that I often heard.

Matthew 27:24 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.

Matthew 27:25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.

The way it was said to me verged on anti-Semitism. "The Jews killed Jesus and said, His blood be on us, and on our children." Actually, the Jews were in the cross-hairs of the enemy long before Jesus was born.

The example of evil Haman

Esther 3:8 And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them.

Esther 3:11 And the king said unto Haman, The silver is given to thee, the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee.

Esther 6:13 And Haman told Zeresh his wife and all his friends everything that had befallen him. Then said his wise men and Zeresh his wife unto him, If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him.

Esther 7:10 So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.

If evil Haman had prevailed - Jesus could not be born a Jew.

We have to keep the BIG PICTURE of God's involvement in **His Plan** – which will come to fruition.

The example of King Herod

Early in the life of Jesus: Herod was killing the Jewish boys – practicing genocide to prevent a Jewish baby from becoming King.

Matthew 2:3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

Fearing that in time Jesus would take over his throne King Herod killed all the Jewish boys up to two years old.

Matthew 2:4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

Matthew 2:5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea [Jews land]: for thus it is written by the prophet,

Acts 12:23 And immediately the angel of the Lord smote [Herod], because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the [breath] ghost.

The example of Adolph Hitler

Another example of those who seek the destruction of all Jews:

On January 14, 1943 the tide of WWII reversed – and the fortunes of war began to close in on Germany – they started losing ground instead of taking it. During that World War Adolph Hitler sought to **annihilate the Jews** – he had not learned from history. Though Six million Jews were slaughtered, Hitler was unsuccessful in eradicating them. The death of Adolf Hitler:

Adolf Hitler killed himself by gunshot on 30 April 1945 in his Führerbunker in Berlin. His wife Eva (née Braun) committed suicide with him by taking cyanide.

When Sharon and I got married there was a popular tune by Peter, Paul and Mary, titled, “Where have all the flowers gone” And there was a line in the song that went,

“When will they ever learn, when will they ever learn?”

The example of President Barak Obama

The world it totally confuse about who Israel is. They think **Israel** is the **Jews** and they think that the Jews are Israel.

Big named evangelists interchange the two without blinking. They interpose Israel when they mean Jews and vise-versa.

As a result they get hopelessly confused on biblical prophecy that applies to Israel. They think Biblical Israel is that little strip of land in the middle east – the homeland of the Jews today.

They think that the prophecies of Israel’s restoration were met in 1948 when Israel became a nation. What took place was this:

Early last century, recognizing "the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine," Great Britain was called upon by the League of Nations to facilitate the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine - the British Mandate of Palestine.

The United Nation General Assembly adopted the resolution to partition Palestine on November 29, 1947. Britain announced the termination of its Mandate over Palestine, and on May 14, 1948, the **State of Israel** was proclaimed. But, we understand that it was a homeland – primarily for the Jewish people.

Last week – thinking about the phrase, “When will they ever learn, when will they ever learn?”

...We witnessed the United States of America’s stunning betrayal of the Jewish homeland, the Nation of Israel at the UN Security Council. The homeland of the Jews is land that does not belong to the Palestinians. It doesn't belong to the U.N. It specifically is the Lord's. Yes, "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." And yet, it is strange to note that there is a very specific parcel of real estate which has been set aside as God’s, and His alone for ever and ever – set apart in an everlasting covenant.

It has been the policy of the U.S. government for decades to veto all **anti-Jewish** resolutions that come before the Security Council. This Security Council resolution calls for a veritable worldwide boycott of the Jewish homeland. Iran, Europe, and the entire world.

For those of us who take the Bible seriously, it is a critical time to be up to date on our homework.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and prominent members of both parties in our US Congress (Senate and House) strongly urged President Barak Obama to veto Security Council resolution 2334, but he went ahead and let it pass anyway.

Because the United States has **veto power** on the UN Security Council, nothing can get passed without our support. Single handedly, the US could have blocked this resolution.

President Barack Obama's administration has been working hard behind the scenes to get this resolution pushed through the Security Council before the end of his presidency.

President Barak Obama has this power to veto, but in the end he ultimately decided to stand against the Jews.

"When will they ever learn, when will they ever learn?"

Prophecies fail because of a lack of comprehension and knowledge of what God has set forth in His word.

God's Promise & the Promised Land

Paul said:

Acts 26:6 And now I stand [before King Agrippa] and am judged for the hope of the **promise** made of God unto our fathers:

Act 26:7 Unto which **promise** our **twelve tribes**, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come.

What is the promise that God made to the Patriarchs? Let's look at that promise.

It seems to me in the in the 53 years since I first heard HWA that there has been an overemphasis on looking for the Ten Kings Of Europe to take shape. I think it would do us well to keep our mind on the prophecies that concern Jacob.

Genesis 12:1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee:

Genesis 12:2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

Genesis 12:3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Genesis 12:7 And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land [Canaan]: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

No one thinks about it – but God's **promise** is still very much in His eye – we should be mindful of it.

Genesis 13:14 And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

Genesis 13:15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed **FOREVER**.

Genesis 13:16 And I will make thy seed [descendants] as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.

Genesis 13:17 Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.

The promise was made to Abraham (Genesis 15:18-21), then confirmed to his son Isaac.

Genesis 17:19 And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name **Isaac**: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed [Jacob] after him.

Genesis 17:21 But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.

...But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, [**not Ishmael or Keturah's** children Genesis 25:1] Notice how God directs the Promise to one and not the others.

The biblical promise is first of land to Abraham and his descendants, but by spiritual extension, the promise is of **salvation and eternal life**.

Genesis 15:18 In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: (sometimes called the flood / plains)

Genesis 17:1 And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

Genesis 17:2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

Genesis 17:3 And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying,

Genesis 17:4 As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

Genesis 17:5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

Genesis 17:6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

Genesis 17:7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

Genesis 17:8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

THIS IS THE PROMISE KNOWN AS THE CIRCUMCISION COVENANT

Genesis 17:15 And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be.

Genesis 17:16 And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.

God tells Abraham to sacrifice Isaac - a type of Christ

Genesis 22:12 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.

Genesis 22:16 ...By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

Genesis 22:17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

Genesis 22:18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Abraham called his head servant - ruler over all and said unto him:

Gen 24:3 And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell:

Gen 24:4 But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.

The head servant prayed:

Gen 24:12 And he said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham.

Gen 24:37 And my master [Abraham] made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell:

Gen 24:38 But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son.

Gen 24:51 Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the LORD hath spoken.

Rebecca's family sent her with Abraham's head servant - with this blessing:

Gen 24:60 And they blessed Rebecca, and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou the **mother of thousands of millions**, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.

We know the saying; The sun never sets on the British Empire.

It meant that the British Empire was so huge and covered so many parts of the globe that it was always daylight somewhere in the empire.

Genesis 26:2 And the LORD appeared unto [**Isaac**] and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of:

Genesis 26:3 Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy **seed**, I will give all these countries, and I will **perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham** thy father;

Isaac had two sons – Esau and Jacob. The Promise is passed to Jacob.

The promise did not go to Esau. Only to Jacob.

Genesis 26:4 And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;

Genesis 26:5 Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

Genesis 26:24 And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will **bless thee, and multiply thy seed** for my servant Abraham's sake.

To **Jacob the Covenant promise** is made:

Genesis 28:13 And, behold, the LORD stood above [the ladder to heaven], and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

Genesis 28:14 And thy seed shall be as the **dust of the earth**, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

God promises to keep His promise.

Genesis 28:15 And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

Genesis 35:9 And God appeared unto Jacob **again**, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him.

Genesis 35:10 And God said unto him, Thy name is *Jacob*: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but **Israel** shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel.

Notice how this time God tells Jacob His name, God Almighty. Back in Genesis 32:29 Jesus did not tell Jacob His name.

Genesis 35:11 And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; **a nation and a company of nations** shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins;

Genesis 35:12 And the land which I gave **Abraham and Isaac**, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land.

We will be back over some of these Scriptures to take a close look at what God reveals to us.

Deuteronomy 7:6 For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.

Deuteronomy 7:7 The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people:

Deuteronomy 7:8 But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Deuteronomy 7:9 Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;

God reiterated the borders to Moses.

Exodus 23:31 And I will set thy bounds from the Red sea even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river:

Birth of Jacob

Genesis 25:19 And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat Isaac:

Genesis 25:20 And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padanaram, the sister to Laban the Syrian.

Genesis 25:21 And Isaac intreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren: and the LORD was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.

Genesis 25:22 And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the LORD.

Understand this basic principle, the rule and the law: The **firstborn** automatically receives the "**Birthright**."

Genesis 25:23 And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and **the elder shall serve the younger**.

God decreed it so. God would have worked it out openly and in all honesty.

For example, Ruben's birthright was forfeited because of misbehavior.

1Chronicles 5:1 Now the sons of Reuben the **firstborn** of Israel, (for he was the firstborn; but, forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his **birthright** was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright.

It was God's plan for Jacob (not Esau) to succeed Isaac. The right to be recognized as firstborn - in effect - becoming the firstborn.

Genesis 25:24 And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb.

Genesis 25:25 And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau.

The Myths of Hercules are believed to have originated in Esau.

Genesis 25:26 And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them.

Genesis 25:27 And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents.

Plain means complete, gentle, upright, peaceable.

Genesis 25:28 And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebecca loved Jacob.

Genesis 25:29 And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint:

God's covenant blessings were to be received by Jacob, not supplanted/stolen. God had said the elder (Esau) will serve the younger (Jacob). God would have made it happen. God's word was lost on Jacob who did not wait on God to perform His word. Jacob wrongly and without faith depended on his own abilities to grasp the birthright he desired.

Jacob took advantage of hungry Esau and got him to trade the birthright for a bowl of his **red beans and rice**. (That happens all the time in Louisiana.)

Genesis 25:30 And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom.

Genesis 25:31 And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.

Genesis 25:32 And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me?

Genesis 25:33 And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob.

Genesis 25:34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.

It is right that Jacob valued the birthright, but it was devious and without faith for him to embezzle it for himself, especially in the underhanded manner he did so. By following the bad help and advice of his mother Rebekah Jacob deceived his father Isaac and subsequently spent a great part of his life as a fugitive.

Hebrews 12:15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

Hebrews 12:16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, **as Esau**, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

Hebrews 12:17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

That was not Godly sorrow on Esau's part. God's covenants are in full force and effect right now.

Next time we will continue to look at what it means to be a Prince of God.

End: Prince of God