

## Home Group Notes 3

### Jacob: Does scheming help God's plan?

#### Introduction

Jacob was a schemer. He believed God's promises to Abraham, yet he often acted as though he needed to be deceitful and scheming in order to see them realised.

#### 1. Read Gen 25:19-28

Do you know of any destructive sibling rivalries?  
Did their parents make things better or worse?  
How far-reaching is the effect of bad parenting?

#### 2. Read Gen 25:29-34

What does this account show us about Jacob?  
What does this account tell us about Esau?

#### 3. Which of these is true of Jacob? True or false?

- ☐ He tricked his father into giving him the birthright blessing, with the help of his mother
- ☐ his mum sent him away to relatives in order to prevent his brother from killing him
- ☐ he was tricked by his relative into a marriage with a different daughter to the one agreed
- ☐ he had two wives and it went swimmingly
- ☐ he treated his younger son as his favourite
- ☐ he tricked Laban into giving him most of his belongings then left with everything overnight

#### 4. Should Jacob have known better than to have two wives? Where would he have learnt this?

What problems came with two wives (29:31ff)?

#### 5. What inspiration do 'Stairway to heaven' and 'Jacob's ladder' have in common?

#### 6. Read 32:1-32 What does v12 show us about even this schemer's belief in the old covenant promises? Why might Israel be a better name for Jacob?

#### 7. How many children did Israel have?

Can you name them without the bible?

#### 8. Why might Israel's children's generation be described as the one where God's promise of a people as numerous as sandgrains on a beach starts to be fulfilled? Do you think this would have happened without Jacob being such a schemer?

#### 9. How might things have been better if he had not been a schemer? Do the ends justify the means? How easily do you resist scheming?

#### 10. (Ch 31) Where did the danger of Israel's family choosing to worship other gods first raise its head? In Ch35, why might being rid of other gods be an important accompaniment of renewing belief in God's covenant?

#### 11. By the burning bush God introduces himself to Moses as the 'God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob'. Why is this a helpful introduction?

#### 12. Is it a good place to start Jesus' family tree?

#### Prayer Points

*Thank God for the promises of God and the patriarchs*

*Pray that we will not go down the road of scheming in order to manipulate what we think are godly results*

*Pray for our lives to be motivated by belief in God's promises through Jesus*

*Pray for our information evening about the Besom Project*

*Pray for the next generation to reject the sins of the last*