

5 BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS: IN THE BEGINNING – GOD! JACOB

The life of Jacob crosses half of Genesis – he is born in chapter 25 and dies in chapter 49! He is a man well known to us by his deceitful name, Jacob, and God-given name, Israel. This study is going to focus on the earlier parts of his life and if you want to read them through in the weeks leading up to the Monday night zoom study, here are the Bible references for the main episodes of his life:

1. Jacob is born (Genesis 25:19-26)
2. The thing with the birth-right (Genesis 25:27-34)
3. The thing with the blessing (Genesis 27:1-41)
4. Jacob leaves home to find a wife (Genesis 27:42-28:5)
5. Jacob has a vision of a stairway to heaven (Genesis 28:10-22)
6. The thing with Rachel and Leah (Genesis 29:1-30)
7. The thing with the sheep (Genesis 30:25-43)
8. Jacob leaves Laban (Genesis 31:1-55)
9. Jacob prepares to meet Esau and prays (Genesis 32:1-21)
10. Jacob wrestles with God (Genesis 32:22-32)
11. Jacob and Esau are reunited (Genesis 33:1-20)

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The life of Jacob is long with many twists and turns. Sometimes he behaves greedily. Sometimes he lies. Sometimes he prays. Sometimes he is cocky. Sometimes he is afraid. He is clearly not an example to follow, yet he is incredibly important because he is part of the family of God and a great-great-great-etc-grandfather of Jesus.

- At his best, Jacob points to Christ.
- At his worst, he points to us and our sinful nature

1. **Look at these specific short passages. What do they reveal about the human heart?**

Genesis 25:27-34, Genesis 27:14-29, Genesis 32:1-16

Throughout the whole story, **God is there**. He is not far away. Even when Jacob seems to be oblivious to it, God is in control and watching over Jacob.

2. **Look at these specific verses and short passages. What do they reveal about God?**

Genesis 28:10-15, Genesis 31:1-3, Genesis 33:1-11

So what are we supposed to take away from this? After all, we are not *exactly* the same as Jacob. Even though we share the same broken sinful nature, Jacob is a little bit special: he is an ancestor of Christ; we are not. We also don't have two wives or a scheming uncle trying to swindle us out of our sheep!

3. **Jacob often behaves badly but even so God blessed him. Read Romans 9:10-16. How does Paul use the life-story of Jacob as a picture of our own Salvation? How does this valuable truth encourage you in your walk today?**

Pray

- Give thanks to God for his unchanging character. He is the same God who was there for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Thank him for his specific care for you in your situation, too.
- Confess where you have lived as though God is not in control and, like Jacob, have greedily sought your own advancement at the cost of others.
- Ask the Lord to fill you with His Spirit so that you respond to his mercy with a life of thanksgiving and love.