

Moving On - Genesis 35:16-29

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[0:00] Okay, so Genesis 37, I mean 36, sorry, next week's 37. We will finish up 36 and then get into do all of 37 next week. Man, 37 has been on my radar for months.

Just thinking, Lord, I mean, I mean, not 37, I'm sorry. We're in 35. Next week will be 36. 36 has been on my radar for months. Like what?

It's just, it's like, it's 43 verses of Esau's descendants and family. I'm like, whoa, what do we do with that? So as I finished studying 35 and I got into 36, what do you know?

There's a lot there in 36. So we'll finish 35 today and then do all of 36 next week, which is just, it's really cool because we will start Joseph's life. We'll start a whole new kind of series, a whole new person to follow as we start in our new location.

So that's just exciting to see how God weaves his plan for us through our decisions and through our lives. So the title for today's message is Moving On.

[1:03] Last week, we looked at how Jacob had returned, returned to Bethel, returned home. God had told him to come back to the house of God, Bethel, and he did. And you can think, well, I'm here.

I obeyed. I came back. I returned. Ah, and now I can just kick back and I'm done. I've done it. And I can just wait until I, you know, go home to glory. Well, no, we returned to the house of God.

We abide in Christ. We abide in him. And we returned to the house as we saw Jacob did. He returned in repentance, in response to God's word.

And then there was renewal and rededication. And that is so then we can launch from there. Jacob is going to now launch from the house of God. That is the starting point. God's house, God's presence is always the starting point then of wherever we launch from.

And Jacob needs to now move on in that. Move on in light of God's house. Move on in faith from God's house. But also like we looked at last time, that now the Lord's home is in me.

[2:06] It dwells in us. So wherever we go, he goes. And so we are always abiding in the presence of the Lord. But it's not so we can just kind of kick back and be like, hey, I'm good now. I'm just going to float until Jesus takes me home.

Today's outline, we'll just do the last verses here in chapter 35. So 16 through 20 is strength and sorrow. So we're going to see where Rebecca, I mean, sorry, Rachel passes off the scene.

21 through 22, stretched in weakness. Jacob is stretched beyond what he's been stretched before. And 23 to 26, fruitful and filled.

And then 27 through 29, a faithful father. As we end this, him coming back home to Isaac.

Remember our theme verse kind of for this section of dealing with Jacob and Esau back and forth is 1 John chapter 2, starting in verse 15.

It says, Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world.

[3:18] And what is the characteristic of the things of the world? And the world passes away. And the lust thereof, or the desires thereof, the fulfillment thereof. But he that does the will of God abides forever.

And so we're going to see with Jacob as God is bringing him to this point where like Abraham and Isaac, his father and forefather before him, they live, they're sojourners, it's temporary. God is bringing Jacob to this place where his heart's there as well.

But we're not to love the things of the world. We're not to hold tightly to them because they're temporary. They're going to be left behind one way or another, no matter what. We saw how last time the next step after failure was grace.

That for everybody, the next step we take after failure is grace, is meant to be grace, whether we choose to walk in it or not. But God who is rich in mercy, Ephesians chapter 2 verse 4, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ.

By grace you are saved. So God is the initiator. We saw that in chapter 35, after Jacob's great failure at Shechem with his family, God initiates.

[4 : 27] He's the one who comes and speaks to Jacob. We are the responders and God is the initiator. We saw Jacob's pillar last time. We're going to see his fourth one. He's at three, right? Remember what the three were?

Of course you do. The first one is having confidence in the flesh. When he leaves to go to Uncle Laban's, he says, I'm going to do this with God's help, but I'm going to do this. And then number two, confidence in God.

No more confidence in the flesh. That's with Laban at the end of those 20 years where he just kind of throws up his hands and he's like, I'm going to let the Lord defend me. And then as we saw last time, coming to Bethel and setting up that pillar, anointing it and a new beginning, reconsecrating himself to what God has next.

And now we're going to see today his fourth pillar. All right. Verse 16. And they journeyed from Bethel.

And there was but a little way to come to Ephrath. And Rachel travailed and she had hard labor. You're going to see that word Ephrath. Other times in scripture, you'll see it written as Ephrath.

[5 : 32] It means an ash heap, but it also means a place of fruitfulness. What a weird meaning. It's got this double meaning. Ash heap. Okay. And place of fruitfulness. They seem mutually exclusive, but they're not.

And we're going to see why. But where is he traveling? He was in Shechem. Right. That's where the boys, Levi and Simeon, in vengeance on Shechem and the men of Shechem, because of what Shechem did to their sister.

They slaughtered everybody, all the males. And now they've moved to Bethel. And from Bethel, they're coming to what will be Bethlehem, which is Ephrathah, on their way to Hebron, which is where Isaac is.

And so they haven't gone too far. You see, it's not that great of a distance between Bethlehem and Bethel. So it's a couple days journey. And lo and behold, all this time we weren't told this, but Rachel is pregnant.

And she's going to give birth here. But Rachel says she travailed and had hard labor. That means her labor was fierce. The word there in the Hebrew for labor is couched between two words, meaning fierce, pointing at labor, meaning this is really, really, really bad.

[6 : 44] She's having a really hard time with this. And it came to pass when she had hard labor or fierce labor that the midwife said unto her, fear not, you shall have this son also. How did the midwife know she was having a son?

I think maybe her fierce labor was perhaps the baby was breached. It's coming out but first, right? She's like, hey, you're going to have this son too. Or maybe the Lord had spoken and they knew this was going to be a son. Or maybe she's just trying to cheer her up.

Hey, it's going to be a boy. You're not going through all this for a girl. I like girls. Wait, that sounded bad. I like my girls. But in this culture, right, the value is placed in the male children.

But either way, it seems like somehow the midwife knows and it kind of would indicate maybe the baby's coming out breached and this isn't a good situation. But here they are at this place, meaning ash heap or place of fruitfulness.

In Isaiah 61, Jesus reads from that. If you remember when he goes into the synagogue shortly after being baptized and then led into the wilderness for 40 days, tempted of the devil, he comes back and he goes into the synagogue and he begins to read.

[7 : 49] They hand him the scroll from Isaiah 61 and he reads this. The spirit of the Lord is upon me because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

Stop. And it says he closed the scroll, gave it to the head guy in the synagogue and sat down. He stopped. And that's where we live right now. We live in that.

We are the comma there in verse two. We are living in that space between to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God. We call that the church age, the age of grace.

That's where we live until the Lord takes us, the bride, out of here and starts up the clock again relating to Israel. And you can see that as the text goes on. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all that mourn, to appoint them, to point unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.

There will be that day of vengeance where God comes for the purpose of responding to the wrong that's been done to his people, Israel, and that he will plant his people to appoint them that mourn in Zion.

[9:16] And what will he give them? Beauty for ashes. At a place where at one time was ashes, they now find fruitfulness, oil of joy for mourning, and a garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

And so as they come to this place, that means ash heap. Well, in the midst of it, there's fruitfulness. And we're going to see that. And that only God is able to do that. So at this place of Ephrata, Rachel has hard labor.

And the midwife says, fear not, you shall have a son. And she will have a son. But we're going to see this amazing picture as we go through this of Jesus in this. We're going to see a son is born, but it's going to cost a life.

We're going to see a son of sorrow become the son of strength. And so at this place, just as we've discovered in our own lives, a birth can take place. A new birth can take place.

But it would cost a life. That birth would cost a life. For us, we live in that. We have new birth in Christ. We are born again. But it costs the life, the life of a son in that instance.

[10:18] And it came to pass in verse 18, Interesting how it phrases that, that her soul was departing.

When you depart from somewhere, what does that indicate? It indicates two things, right? You've left and you're going somewhere. It indicates a direction. Well, they've departed.

That means they've gone somewhere else. They're not here. And that's what death is. It's a departing. Why? Because this isn't the home for our souls. Our souls have a destination. And they're going to depart to them.

This world's temporal. It passes away. So we will depart, just like Rachel. Our soul will depart because this world's not its destination. My body's not going to depart. This is its destination until it's been remade new in the resurrection.

But this isn't the final resting place for my soul. There has a place that it will depart to. The soul's place, the soul's destination is God.

[11:20] That's what it's meant to be. But unfortunately, there is the option for the soul not to go to God. Those who do not respond to the son and choose to reject the invitation of the father to go and be with him.

And they will depart, unfortunately, into everlasting darkness. But Rachel's soul departs and she dies. And she calls Benjamin here, which his father's going to call him, she calls him Benoni. And Benoni means the son of my sorrow. If you remember in Genesis 30, during the baby boom chapter, Leah's had kids and Rachel sees she can't have children. She can't give Jacob children. And it says she envies her sister. She's like, I can't let her get one up on me. I've always been the top dog in this relationship. And she's having children. So she goes to Jacob and says to him, give me children or else I die.

And Jacob's like, what can I do? But here you see Rachel, who is so desperate for her children to be the cause of her death in this situation.

[12:23] And so she says, the son of my sorrow. And I think for Rachel, she didn't want to depart. I think she was holding so tightly to this life that it was a bitter thing. It was a sorrowful thing that I can't believe this, that this is costing me my life.

And I think of that in light of last week being Mother's Day. You know, that we live in a world that encourages moms and dads not to have kids. Because they say, you don't want to do that. That's going to cost you your life, your fun, your entertainment, your plans, your priorities, your dreams.

Man, if you have kids, it's going to cost you your life. Yeah, it will cost you your life. But it's worth it because then that life produces life in another life, in another life, in another life.

And that's how God made it. So Jacob says, no, no, no, no, no. We're not going to call him that. I'm not going to look at this kid for the rest of my life and be like, hey, son of my sorrow. Remembering the sorrow of Rachel's passing, he says, no, I'm going to call him Benjamin, the son of the right hand.

What does that mean? The only like right-handed kids, maybe some that were left-handed. Don't like those left-handed people. No, just meant the strength. The strength was in the right hand. You see that all through scripture. And we'll look at some of those scriptures.

[13:30] How many children of Jacob did Jacob name? Do you remember? Did Jacob name any of his children? It was all Leah and Rachel.

Jacob, this is the only son named of the father. The son of the right hand is the only one the father names. In Matthew 3, Jesus has come to be baptized at the Jordan.

And as John baptizes him against his own will, he's like, I have me to be baptized of you. And Jesus has suffered to be so now that we might fulfill all righteousness. And it says, And so here at this place of birth, A new birth, it's caused sorrow and death.

But yet out of that has come life and strength as well. At the place of the death of the son of sorrow, We see the son of the right hand being born.

At the place of death, the son of sorrow becomes the son of strength. The son of the right hand has overcome death at the word of the father. The son of sorrow becoming the son of the right hand at the place of death, At the instruction of the father.

[15:05] Rachel says, no, no, no, no. He's going to be the son of sorrow. And the father says, no, no. He's the son of the right hand. Hebrews 12.2 says, Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, Despising the shame, the sorrow, And is set down at where?

The right hand of the throne of God. Psalm 110, verse 1. The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

Psalm 138, verse 7. Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me. Thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, And thy right hand shall save me.

Who is at the right hand of the father? Who is his right hand? We say our right hand man. You know, that's the guy who's right there. The one of our strength. Who is at his right hand? So I love that where it says there in verse 7, And thy right hand shall save me.

Who is the father's right hand? It's Jesus. Jesus is there saving us. Colossians 3, verse 1. If you then be risen with Christ. Are you risen with Christ?

[16:14] Seek those things which are above. Where Christ sits on the right hand of God. For Jacob, as he took this little baby and said, No, no, no.

The son of sorrow shall become the son of strength. The son of sorrow shall become the son of the right hand. At this place of death, this place of ashes, There's going to be new life and beauty here. And man, that's the same thing we've discovered At the right hand of the father.

As the son of sorrow took our sorrow on him, Went down into death. And now where does he sit?

On the right hand. And that's what we're to seek. Remember that verse we looked at in 1 John.

We're to seek those things which are above. Why? Because the things of this world are temporal.

They're going to pass. As we're going to see as we continue on through here. And Rachel died and was buried in the way to Ephrath, Which is Bethlehem.

Bethlehem means the house of bread. So Jacob has come from the house of God. He's come now to the house of bread. And there at the house of bread, Rachel passes off the scene.

[17:11] A death happens, but he receives the son of strength, The son of his right hand at this place of the house of bread. So it's very hard for Jacob. You know, I think he thought, Man, my life is great right now.

I'm just, Rachel's pregnant, obviously. I'm at the house of God. I've been renewed, rededicated. And we're just going to, we're going to go forward. And then this happens. Not very easy to deal with.

But this moment in Rachel's life and in Jacob's life, And moment in history is actually referred to Multiple times again in scripture. In Jeremiah 31, verses 15 and 17, it says, Thus says the Lord, A voice was heard in Ramah, Lamentation and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children,

Refused to be comforted for her children, Because they were not.

This is looking back. Rachel losing her children. Rachel weeping, Give me children or I die. But it's also looking forward to another event That will happen in Bethlehem.

Thus says the Lord, Refrain thy voice from weeping, And thine eyes from tears, For thy work shall be rewarded, Saith the Lord, And they shall come again from the land of the enemy. Amazing how all these scriptures, Just talking about Israel being in the land, As we see today, The whole world, like prophesied, Turning against them.

[18 : 31] And there is hope in thine end, Saith the Lord, That thy children shall come again To their own border. So again, In sorrow, The Lord says, Refrain from weeping, For your work shall be rewarded.

This passage also looks forward To another time where there will be weeping. And this passage here in Genesis will be referred to. In the New Testament, After Jesus is born, And the wise men, A couple years after his birth, Come to Bethlehem, And they're looking for him, And Herod wants to use this as an opportunity to kill him.

In verse 16 of chapter 2 in Matthew, It says, Then Herod, When he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, Because they were warned in a dream not to go back, Was exceeding wrath, And sent forth, And slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, And in all the coasts thereof, From two years old and under, According to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men, Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, Saying, In Ramah was there a voice heard, Lamentation and weeping in great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, And would not be comforted, Because they are not.

And there again we see, That as a son comes in the world, It resulted in death. Because that's what sin does. Sin brings death. Even in the moments of our greatest hope, Jesus the son of God himself had to go down into death, To overcome sin.

Rachel's sorrow, At this moment, As she's passing off the scene, Would one day be turned into joy, At the birth of a greater son, Than Benjamin.

[20 : 08] Micah 5, 2, But thou Bethlehem Ephrata, Though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of thee shall come forth unto me, That is, Come forth out of me, That is to be ruler in Israel, Whose going forth, Has been from of old, From everlasting.

And you wonder if when Jesus was there, And when he was born in Bethlehem, If there was still a pillar, Off to the side somewhere, That Jacob had set up. Rachel's pillar. This fourth pillar of Jacob, That he's going to set up.

As he releases the past, And he looks forward to the future. You wonder, If when Jesus was born in the, That out of the way place, And only the shepherds come to see him, In God's heart, Feels like, That has been fulfilled.

That thing Jacob planted, That stone, Has borne fruit. You see, In God, Our greatest tragedies, Can become part of God's greatest blessings. Not necessarily, Our greatest blessing.

My greatest tragedy, May not turn out to be, My greatest blessing. But it can become part of, God's greatest blessings. Rachel's greatest tragedy, And the greatest tragedy for Jacob, To this point, Will become part of God's greatest blessing.

[21 : 18] Will become part of the legacy, Of the prophecy fulfilled, For the Messiah. You know, As Rachel passes off the scene, You think, Man, She was young. You know, There's a scripture that says, The old perished before the young, Or the young perished before the old.

I'm sorry. And you think, Okay, Well, Why? Why does someone like this have to go? There's a little verse tucked away in Isaiah 57, Which is very interesting. It says, The righteous perish, And no man lays it to heart, And merciful men are taken away, None considering, That the righteous is taken away, From the evil to come.

You know, Sometimes it's God's grace, When he says, You know what? I know what's coming, I'm going to take you home. What's going to happen next, On Jacob's history? What's going to happen to his, Beloved son, Joseph.

And they're going to come back, After they sell him, With his coat, All torn, Blood thrown on it, And say he was torn apart, And eaten. Interesting they have his coat, But not his body. Must have been a very hungry lion.

What would that have done to Rachel? What would that have done in the family, Amongst the sisters? And so the Lord, Maybe in his mercy, Said, Come on, Rachel, I need you to come home, For this.

[22 : 31] Jacob, Had returned to his first love, If you remember, Coming back to Bethel, Coming back to the Lord, He's returned, He's obeyed, But now he was being tested, In the loss of his earthly love.

As he turns to God, He has to go through this test. How is he going to, Go through it? What's he going to do? What's his response going to be? Has he become bitter? I don't think so. Because she named him Benoni.

And Jacob could have been like, Yes! This is horrible. But he's like, No, no, no, no, no. I refuse that. I'm not going to believe that. I believe God can bring strength out of this. And what's the next thing he does?

In verse 20. And he set up a pillar upon her grave. That is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day. Every other pillar he set up. The first pillar, It was when God's presence was there.

That's why he set it up, Because I'm in God's house. I think every time Jacob plants a pillar, Is to say, God, I know you're present in this situation. I know you're present here when Laban came to kill me with his sons.

[23 : 29] I see that you worked and you kept me. I know you're present here as I reconsecrate myself at Bethel. And now he sets up another stone. He says, God, I know you're present here at the death of Rachel. Releasing the past for the future.

I know it's a little cliché to say it, But we cannot lay hold of the future while holding tightly to the past. Right? It's very cliché, but it's true.

If you're holding really tightly onto something, You have no capacity then to grab something else. Paul says that in Philippians. In Philippians chapter 3, Paul's towards the end of his life. He's in Rome. He's 20 to 30 years in the ministry now.

He's a prisoner in Rome. And he's writing to the different churches. And he's writing to the church in Philippi. And he says this to them in chapter 3. He says, Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended.

Like, I don't have it all yet grasped, guys. Before that, he said, Hey, I've been apprehended of Christ. In other words, Jesus has laid hold of me completely. But I've not yet grabbed hold of Jesus to the full.

[24 : 28] But man, I'm seeking to do that. And he says, This one thing I do. You think if you're at the church at Philippi, And you're opening this letter, And you're like, The one thing the Apostle Paul does. Like, the key to his success.

I didn't even have to buy the book. It's on the first page. The one key. What does he do? Well, he reads four times a week. You know, he fasts three times a week. He never misses a church service. He serves over here. What is it you do, Paul? He says, This one thing I do. I forget those things which are behind. And I reach forth unto those things which are before.

He forgets them. What are you talking about, Paul? The word forget there means to neglect. And neglect those things. I think, well, you never remember anything from the past? Well, no. He wouldn't have been writing to the church at Philippi.

Well, I forgot about you guys. On to the next. Right? That's not what it means. But it's in comparison. Like, if we don't neglect something, What's the opposite of neglecting? Well, it's caring for. It's watching over.

[25 : 26] It's making sure it's there. Right? So it's always turning back to that thing. Always like, well, I can't let it go. I have to care for it. I can't. And Paul's saying, no, no, no, no. I let it go. I stop caring about it.

I neglect it. I turn away from the thing which is in the past. And I reach forth unto those things which are before. I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

And he says to us, hey, let us, therefore, as as many as be mature. It's a mark of maturity. Being able to let go of what's in your past. Why? Because you're going to have to let go of it anyway.

Everything in this world will be let go of at some point. When we die and we stand before the Lord, it's all let go of. And it's all behind us. It has no value to hold on to it at that point. It's gone. So Paul's saying, I'm not going to spend the rest of my life holding on to something I'm going to have to let go of anyway.

When God is clearly showing me this needs to be let go of so I can grab on to something else. For Jacob, he lost Rachel. That's hard. That's hard. Right? Only God can replace the irreplaceable.

[26 : 26] But if we're not willing to let go of it, then how can God replace it? When God says, here, grab on to this. And we don't want to let go of what's behind. So Paul says, look, if in anything you're otherwise minded, God will reveal this even unto you.

So those areas of my life where the Lord puts his finger on and says, hey, I want you to let go of that. I want you to let go of that dream, that vision, that idea, that plan. Like, oh, no, Lord, I have not neglected to care for that very carefully through my life.

I'm not going to let go of that. Because why? I can't see what's ahead of me. I can't see, you know, what's around the horizon. But the Lord does. He's like, man, I want you to grab on to something else.

Right? I've watched different people in my life who have had opportunity to go forward from where they're at in faith, and they have refused. They're like, nope, I'm good. It's not that they're not believers.

It's not that they don't love the Lord. But you watch as their life just become stagnant, and they're just existing. And it's just they're not moving forward with the Lord. They have no relationship that's progressing in faith. It's just there because they will not release and move forward.

[27 : 33] So I think this is a mark of maturity for Jacob, saying, no, he shall be the son of my right hand. He's not going to be a son of sorrow. We're not going to remember this sorrow forever. Jacob knew what?

He was going to see Rachel again. He's like, man, I can't hold on to you, Rachel. The Lord has decided to take you. I got to move forward. And Israel journeyed, moved forward, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar.

Now, there's a couple words in here. The word spread means to stretch. Beyond means further. And then Edar is an interesting word. It's like a watchtower, a shepherd's watchtower, or the tower of the flock.

So here's Jacob being stretched further than he's ever been stretched before. As he moves forward, he's just lost Rachel. God is stretching him in this place. But how amazing, Jacob's stretching was all under the watchful care of the shepherd, wasn't it?

In the shadow of this watchtower of the shepherd, God brings him to a place where he is stretched beyond his limits. In John 10, Jesus says, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

[28 : 34] And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. Under the watchful care of the shepherd, right? As we are stretched, as we are pressed, as we are tested, we're all in the Lord's hand still.

Not only are we in his hand, he says, My father which gave them me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my father's hands. So it's Jesus' hand and his father's. I picture it like this. Got Jesus' hand and his father's.

Go ahead and try and get out of that. You're not gonna. I and my father are one. And, you know, in light of the church location moving, I've just been praying and praying, and all through all of this. Like, Lord, just plant us somewhere we cannot be plucked up. There's a scripture in Jeremiah 42, where Jeremiah is responding to the nation of Israel. It's the end of Jeremiah.

It's there wanting to leave and flee. And the Lord is responding, saying, No, I want you to stay here. I'll protect you. So Jeremiah comes back, and he says to them, Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, unto whom you sent me to present your supplication before him.

[29 : 37] I'm returning with an answer, boys. If you will still abide in this land, then will I build you, and I'll pull you down, and I'll plant you, and not pluck you up. And in light of, then, the scripture in John 10, where it says, No one can pluck us out of the Father's hand.

I like that. It's like, man, where the Father plants you, you're not gonna get plucked up. He's planted us in his hand. Nothing's gonna pluck us up out of there. And where he plants this church and establishes it, nothing's gonna pluck it up.

So what's our part? My part's not to plant the church. My part's not to make sure it doesn't pluck up. My part is to go forward in faith. Releasing what's behind and pressing on into what's next.

Not forgetting it. Like I said, not like, Oh, I don't know anything that ever happened. But being okay with, All right, I'm gonna neglect that today. I'm not gonna think that over and over again today.

I'm not gonna focus on that today. I'm gonna leave it with the Lord and move forward. And so it came to pass when Israel dwelt in the land. Now we see Jacob, unfortunately, in a moment of

weakness here.

[30 : 40] But if you look at the name change, it's been Jacob, Jacob, Jacob, Jacob. And now all of a sudden, it came to pass when Israel dwelt in the land. That Reuben went and lay with Bilhah. Bilhah, if you remember, means troubled or calamity.

Wonderful girl. He went and lay with Bilhah, his father's concubine. And Israel heard it. Now that was Rachel's handmaid, right?

Rachel has died. And now Reuben goes and does this. Not Zilpah, who was his mother's handmaid. Leah, this is Rachel's.

And Israel heard it. That's it. He doesn't do anything else about it. Reminds me back in Genesis 34, if you remember when he found out about Dinah being defiled by Shechem.

And Jacob heard that he defiled Dinah, his daughter, and didn't do anything about it. Same thing. So here you see Jacob's lack of leadership in his home. It continues and will continue to trouble and unfortunately defile his home.

[31 : 40] Here Reuben goes in and defiles his father, essentially doing this. And Jacob doesn't do anything. And I think this is going to lead directly to the loss of Joseph.

There's a scripture in Ecclesiastes, chapter 8, verse 11, that says, Because judgment is not executed speedily. It's like, wait a minute.

I got away with that. All right. Nothing happened. No consequences. You do the next thing. Hey, I got away with that. So my heart then becomes fully set to do evil because I don't see anything checking that evil.

You see the same thing with Jacob and his sons. Levi, Simeon, in response to Jacob's lack of response about Dinah, they go and murder all the men of Shechem.

No response there. Then you see here again, Reuben. And Jacob just hears it but doesn't do anything. But it's interesting because it uses the name Israel.

[32 : 40] Why is the Lord pointing out to us Israel? Why isn't it Jacob? I think it's this. Jacob has been reborn as Israel. He has. But his weaknesses still remained. He's not perfect.

He still has the same tendencies and weaknesses to struggle with. Paul will write the same thing in 2 Corinthians 12. He says, Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations that were given to me, a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, was sent to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

You got to love the King James. Sent to buffet me. So Paul is saying that it was specifically, God specifically sent this messenger from Satan to trouble me.

For this thing I besought the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong. So Paul realizes, wait a minute, my weakness is opportunity for God's strength.

[33 : 57] Oh, okay. My failure is opportunity for God's grace. Okay. Now, does that mean we run around trying to fail and be weak? Not at all. But I recognize in my weak areas, hey, God can be strong and God can be gracious.

I don't have to be. In Christ, our weaknesses are redeemed, but they're not removed. Like, wait a minute. I thought all things are made new in Christ. They are. We get the fullness of Christ and the newness of Christ, but my weaknesses still remain.

And they're not going to be gone until I have been remade. I've been redeemed, but I've not yet been remade. 1 Corinthians 15, Paul is writing of the resurrection.

And down in verse 50, he says, Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood, that which is weak, that which is failing, that which is sinful, that which is frail, cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

Neither does corruption inherit incorruption.

He's writing to those who have been redeemed, who are new in Christ. And he's saying, hey, you're in corruption, you're corruptible flesh. Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment.

[35 : 01] In the twinkling of an eye, the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortality must put on immortality.

At that time, our weaknesses will be swallowed up in life, right? Our weaknesses will be changed as we receive our new resurrected body. No longer the frailties that go along with this flesh.

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality at that time in the resurrection, then shall be brought to pass the saying that's written, death is swallowed up in victory, and the effects of death.

So here is Jacob held out in front of us as Israel. Man, we all want to be Israel. We all want that new name the Lord gives us, to have that experience with the Lord of renewal.

But he still has these weaknesses. So should he have just been like, oh, well, I'm weak. God will make up the difference. No, no. I recognize, like Paul, I recognize my weakness, and then I recognize the antidote for it.

[36 : 03] And it's not within me. It's God's grace. It's his strength. And then it gives us Jacob's lineage very quickly, because, like I said, the next chapter is going to be all about Esau.

It tells us his 12 sons, and Jacob now returning back home in fruitfulness and fullness. The sons of Leah, Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, Simeon and Levi and Judah and Issachar and Zebulun.

The sons of Rachel, Joseph and Benjamin. The sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid, Dan and Naphtali. What did you think the relationship among the boys was when Dan and Naphtali found out what Reuben did with their mom?

And the sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid, Gad and Asher. These are the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Paddan Aram. Paddan Aram means the field, born to him in the field, out from his home.

Reuben, Simeon, and Levi have now done something, all three of them, in their lives to completely disqualify them from taking place, or from receiving, being the one to receive the blessing.

[37 : 10] Who will be the one to receive the covenant that the Messiah will come through? Judah. Judah. Should have been Reuben. Now he's disqualified himself. Could have been Levi or Simeon.

Simeon and Levi. They've disqualified themselves. And God had a plan. God has this plan because he's like, I got my guy. The lion of the tribe of Judah. Through Judah will the seed come.

You know, I think of when Ruth comes back, or Naomi comes back in the book of Ruth. Remember, she's gone to Moab. And her sons, Malon and Chilion, Puni and Sickly, is what their names mean. They die off.

And then she's going to go home and their two wives come with her. She says, no, no, no, go back to your family. I have nothing for you. I mean, could I bear children? And if I could, how long are you going to wait for them? And so Orpah, the one, she says, okay. And she goes home.

But Ruth says, no, I'm going to go with you. And when Naomi comes back, they say, oh, Naomi, which means blessed. She says, don't call me Naomi. Call me Mara, which means bitter. She's like, for God has dealt bitterly with me.

[38 : 07] When we get to the end of Ruth, those same ladies are going to come to her after Ruth has married Boaz and has had Obed, who is the father of Jesse, who's the father of David, who's the father of Jesus, after she's had married Boaz and had Obed, they said, Naomi, Ruth has proven to be better to you than many sons.

But here in that moment when Ruth is there with Naomi and Naomi comes back and she says, I have nothing. She had Ruth. She didn't know it. But she had the Messiah, the one who the seed of the Messiah would come through right there.

And she didn't know it. And I think that here with Jacob, as he comes home, little did they know there's Judah, just one of the boys. And yet through Judah is going to come the Messiah.

Little did he know the fullness and the potential that was there. And Jacob now comes to Isaac in verse 27. He comes back home to dad, comes unto him to Mamre.

Mamre means strength or fullness to Hebron, which means association or joining. He joins back with his father in strength and fullness. He comes back to Hebron, the city where Abraham and Isaac sojourned.

[39 : 15] Word sojourn means a temporary dwelling place. Hebrews 11 tells us what that was. Picking up in verse 8, it says, Abraham lived a temporary life while pursuing permanency.

He lived here in a temporary existence, but he pursued permanency. He was pursuing a city with a foundation that could not be, that was permanent, that was eternal, that could not be broken down. Whose builder and maker was God. And here now Jacob returns from Paddan Aram, from the field. And look at this picture, returning, the man of the covenant, returning to his father without his bride,

but having gained many sons while sojourning in the field.

That's Jacob now as he comes home. He doesn't have a bride. But he says, man, I was in the field. I went out into the field and I have many sons now. Jesus came into the field of the world.

Remember that He's the pearl of great price. Where the man sold all he had to buy the field that he might gain the pearl of great price. The church, us in the world.

[40 : 44] And right now He's returned back to the father and He doesn't have His bride with Him. Many, many sons and brethren has He gained. But His bride He doesn't yet have. But He will. He will. And what a day that will be.

In Revelation 19, we're told what that looks like. It says, And you and I are there as the bride.

Amazing. Not only are we seated at the right hand currently, positionally with Christ, but we will be seated at that table. And so the son comes home to the father.

And the days of Isaac were 180 years. And Isaac gave up the ghost and died. It was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days. And his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

The promise that God made to Isaac when he appeared to him. He said, And here he comes and he sees his son Jacob.

[42 : 08] And Esau. Hopefully Esau was there before he died. It was kind of traditional. We're going to see that at the end of Jacob's life. He'd call your sons to you. Give them a final farewell blessing. Seeing them and their children and seeing God's faithfulness.

Faithfulness. What did Esau say he was going to do to Jacob when his father died? Remember? In Genesis 27 verse 41. And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him.

And Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand. Then will I slay my brother Jacob. Well, this is 20 years later. And I think this is just further proof that when Jacob and Esau got together and they wept on each other's neck.

And Esau received that gift from Jacob, I think is further proof that there was true reconciliation. That the apology was accepted.

Even though it wasn't spoken. Because dad's dead. And Esau is now like, All right, Jacob, what do you want? Pistols? Whitening knives? Hand-to-hand combat?

[43 : 04] What are we going to do? Are we going to duel this out or what? But here you see the two of them together. So, Jacob has lost, in the last chapter here, he lost Deborah, Rebecca's nurse.

He's lost Rachel. And now he's lost his dad. This is a very hard time for him. But what we don't see is we don't see him holding on to those things. We don't see him giving up.

That he continues to move forward. The son of the right hand in our lives has taken our sorrow, our sin, and our weakness. Right? So that we might partake of his joy, his life, and his strength.

The hard things, the stretching things that happen in our lives, the losses that we have. You know, Jesus has already bore them. We don't have to give up. And we don't have to hold on so tightly to them we can't move forward. That like Jacob, who's experienced all of this, he's able to move forward.

In Jeremiah 9, verse 23, it says, Jeremiah says, Thus says the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might.

[44 : 14] Let not the rich man glory in his riches, but let him that glories glory in this, that he understands and knows me. Maybe you think, I'm not weak. I'm mighty.

Maybe I'm not a foolish thing in the world. I'm smart. I'm wise. Maybe you think, I'm not poor. I'm rich. Whatever you think you have.

Don't glory in that. Glory in that you know and understand the Lord. We have weakness, failure, loss, right?

But in all of those, God is able to bring blessing. Why? Because we know him. We read this in Hebrews 12. We look, said, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

But verse 1, which we didn't read, says, Wherefore, seeing we are also compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, the cloud of witnesses of those that have gone before, we have their witness, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, living temporary lives for eternal purposes, and we have the witness of one another, witnessing our lives, wanting to be a witness to each other.

[45 : 16] Let us lay aside every weight and the sin, the weakness, the frailties, those things, let them go, is what it means. Let go. Lay them aside, which does so easily beset us.

Weigh us down. And let us run with patience the race that is set before us. It means endurance. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. I leave those things, and my target is set on Jesus.

He is the focus. I see him alone. The author and finisher of our faith. I don't have to finish this. As I focus on Jesus, he promises to finish this for me.

Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross. He endured the shame and the death. The son of sorrow. He endured that so he might become the son of strength. So that we might partake of that strength.

Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Like we said, he's at his right hand. And our promise in Ephesians.

[46 : 15] But God, who is rich in mercy for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ. By grace, you are saved. We read that to begin with. After every failure, the next step is grace.

And after grace, look at this. Position. And he has raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Where do we sit?

Where are we seated? We are seated at the right hand of the Father, positionally with Christ. We have all the strength. We have all the life. We have all the access and all the benefits. So I think for Jacob, as he moves through a very hard season of life, God is preparing him for what's next.

And if he held on to Deborah, Rachel, or Isaac, I don't think he would have been able to navigate what's coming next, which is Joseph.

It's going to be very hard. But we also see Jacob's weakness that's going to carry and persist through the rest of his life, unfortunately, where he just passively doesn't take up the responsibility God has given him.

[47 : 17] But it's hard to do that if you hold on to things of the past. I think Jacob was. I think he looked at the situations he was in. He's like, what can I say? Look what I did to Esau. Look what I did to my father. Who am I to speak into these kids' lives?

How can I, what kind of a failure I was? Look at the person I hurt. Man, I can't say anything, right? But we have to let go of that, too. We have to let go of the failures so that we can experience future victory.

And my victory that I experienced may not be for me. Just like we said, God can use our greatest loss for a great blessing, but it might not be for my blessing.

It might be someone else's, like with Rachel. And my victory that God wants me to have over that thing in the past, man, it might not even be for me. It might be for one of you.

And we never know the potential, do we? There's Judah. The lion of the tribe of Judah that Jesus is going to become. Ruth there with Naomi. Naomi, oh, I'm so bitter. And the potential that was in that person.

[48 : 19] Let's pray. Lord, as we bow our heads before you and confess our weaknesses, Lord. See the great potential for failure and harm that is contained in my weak flesh.

Lord, my broken nature. But Lord, you look at me and you call me Israel. You give me a new name. You give me a new birth.

And Lord, along with that comes all of the power and authority and life and strength that is contained in that. The life of Jesus is now the life I can own for myself.

So Lord, I pray that this morning you would redeem our weaknesses, Lord. That you renew our hearts. And that, Lord, you would allow us to let go, Lord, of the past.

So that we might reach forward unto blessing and unto a future, Lord, with you. And that, Lord, together we might seek out ways to be a blessing to one another, Lord.

[49 : 31] Trusting you to complete this faith you've begun. And it's your name we pray. We love you. In Jesus' name. Thank you for being the son of our sorrow so we might experience you as the son of strength.

Amen.