



Stories of Great Influencers (6): Jacob

March 8, 2026; Shalom Ministries International

Announcement

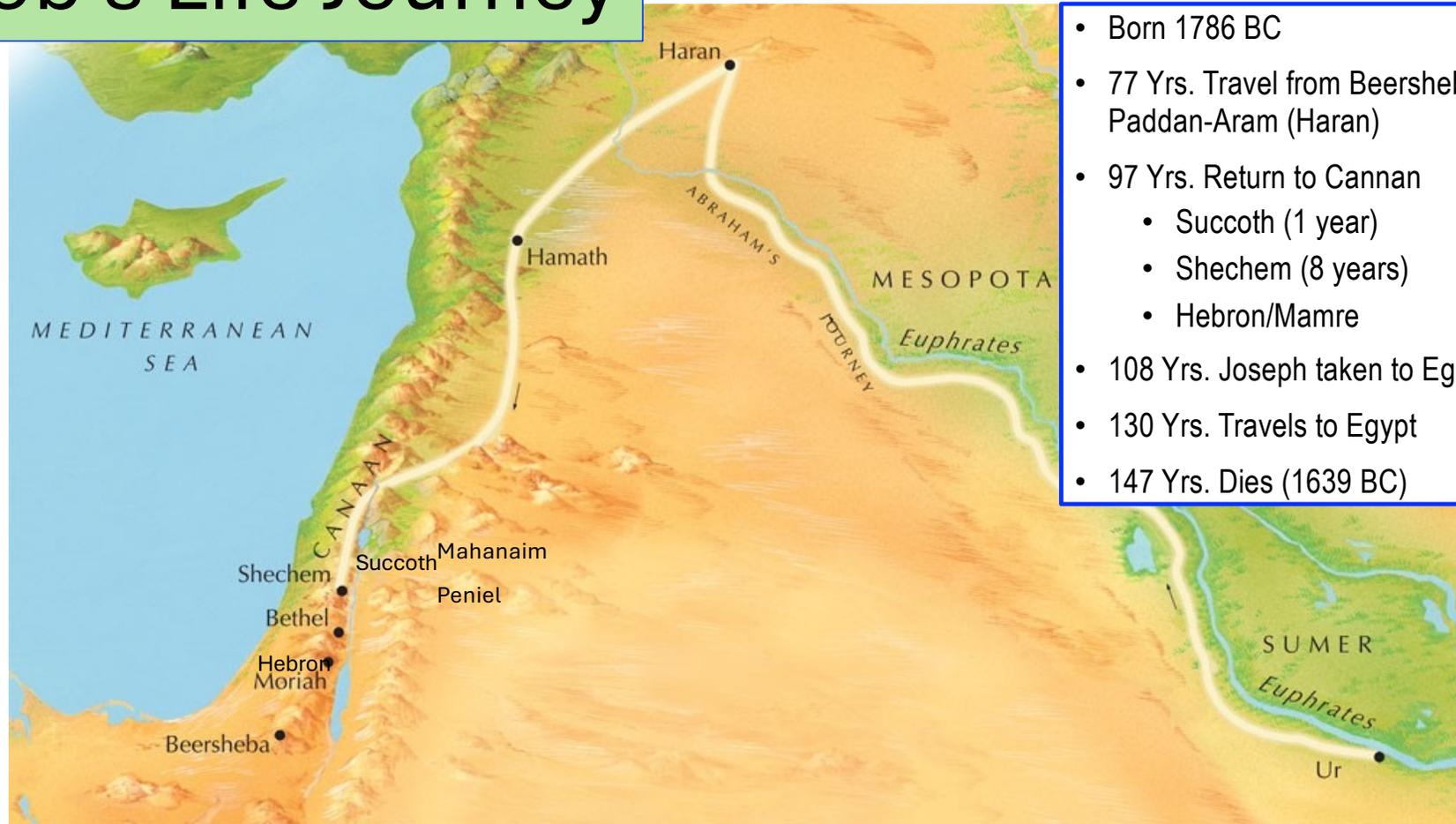
- Please pray for the training programs currently in progress.
 - 5th Ambassador Training Program (for African pastors): January 10-March 28 (12 weeks), 9am Every Saturday
 - The Purpose-driven life Workshop (for Myanmar pastors/Church planters): February 14-April 4 (8 weeks), 4:30am Every Saturday
- SHAPE Seminar
 - Purpose: to discover God-given capacities and to employ them in our ministries for the glory of God.
 - Date: June 22 (Monday) -24 (Wednesday)
 - Place: Lusaka, Zambia



Jacob: A flawed & unrighteous man

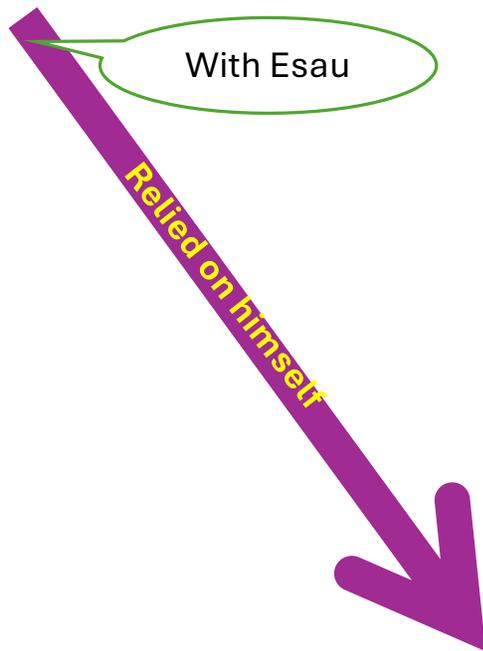
- Who is Jacob?
 - The son of Isaac and Rebecca, known as the father of the 12 tribes of Israel.
- Identity/Character
 - Jacob means supplanter (the deceiver).
 - Do not be afraid, **you worm Jacob**, little Israel, do not fear, for I myself will help you (Isaiah 41:14).
 - His name was changed to Israel (he who struggles with God).
- Legacy
 - Despite his flaws, Jacob is portrayed as a recipient of God's grace, culminating in him wrestling with God and receiving the new name Israel.
 - The progenitor of the nation of Israel.
 - He migrated to Egypt to reunite with his son Joseph, where he eventually died and was buried in Canaan.
 - By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons, and worshipped as he leaned on the top of his staff (Hebrews 11:21).

Jacob's Life Journey



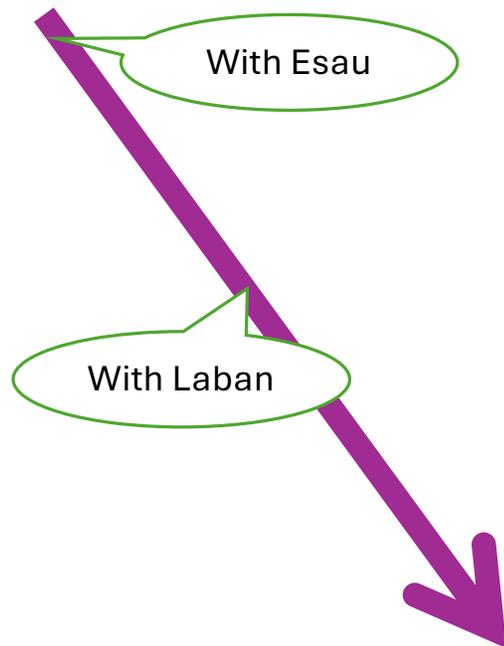
- Born 1786 BC
- 77 Yrs. Travel from Beersheba to Paddan-Aram (Haran)
- 97 Yrs. Return to Canaan
 - Succoth (1 year)
 - Shechem (8 years)
 - Hebron/Mamre
- 108 Yrs. Joseph taken to Egypt
- 130 Yrs. Travels to Egypt
- 147 Yrs. Dies (1639 BC)

Jacob's Struggles with Esau



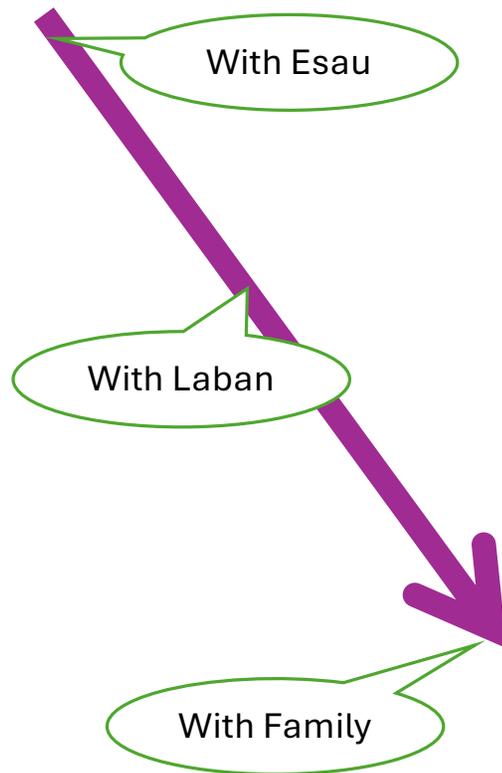
- Inferiority complex
 - The younger, less-favored twin (compared to Esau) and a later deceiver personality.
- Isaac favored Esau
 - Esau was a man of field, hunter, embodying a strong, active persona, whereas Jacob was a quieter dweller of tents.
- What Jacob did
 - His brother came out, with his hand grasping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob (Genesis 25:26).
 - Jacob said, "Swear to me first." So he swore an oath to him, selling his birthright to Jacob (Genesis 25:33).
 - Esau held a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing his father had given him. He said to himself, "The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob" (Genesis 27:41).

Jacob's Struggles with Laban



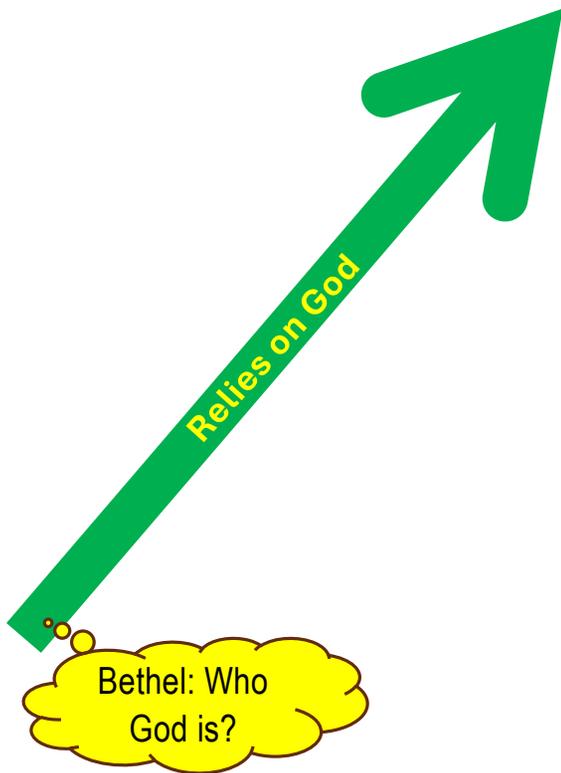
- Jacob spent 20 years working for Laban
 - 14 years to marry Rachell & Leah, 6 years for his own flock.
- Hardship
 - Laban changed Jacob's wages 10 times.
 - Jacob worked through extreme conditions, including heat by day and cold at night, and often went without sleep.
 - Jacob amassed significant wealth before fleeing with his family, leading to a final covenant.
- Results
 - He left secretly with his wives, children, and possessions, prompted by God and the deteriorating relationship with Laban.
 - Laban pursued Jacob, but they made a covenant of peace at Mizpah.

Jacob's Struggles with His Family



- Jacob loves Rachel more than Leah
 - The rivalry between two sisters bringing their servants, Bilhah and Zilpha
 - Leah (a woman of faith) vs. Rachel (a woman of jealousy)
 - When Rachel saw that she was not bearing Jacob any children, she became jealous of her sister. So she said to Jacob, “Give me children, or I’ll die!” (Genesis 30:1).
- Family dysfunction
 - Reuben (He slept with his father’s concubine Bilhah, Genesis 35:22).
 - Dinah (Shechem took her and raped her, Genesis 34:2).
 - Simeon & Levi (They took their swords and attacked the unsuspecting city, killing every male, Genesis 34:25).
 - Judah (Er and Onan were wicked in the LORD’s sight; so the LORD put him to death, Genesis 38:6 & 10).
 - Joseph was favored.

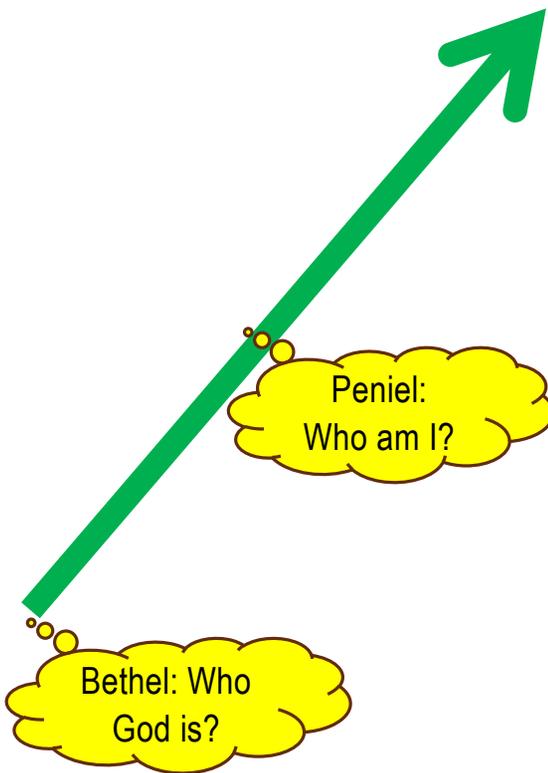
But God changed Jacob (1)



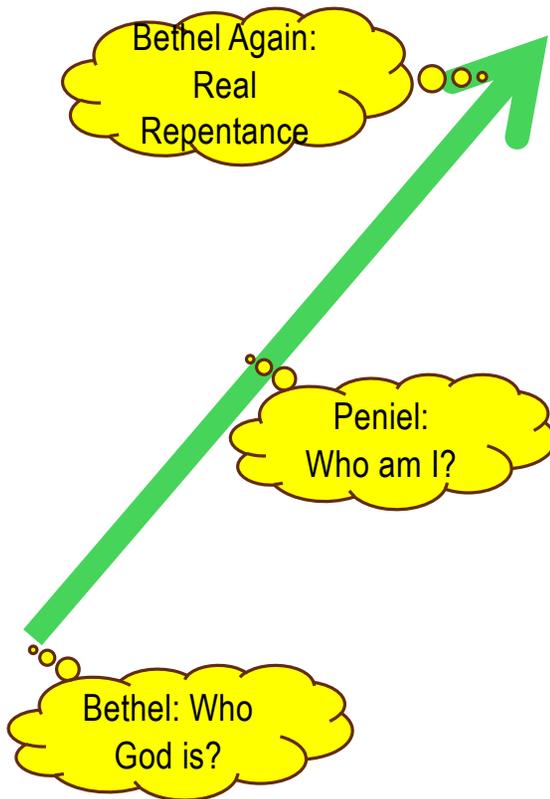
- Jacob's encounter with God at **Bethel** (house of God)
 - While fleeing Esau, he dreamed of a ladder to heaven, receiving promises of protection, land, and descendants.
 - (God to Jacob): "I will give you... the land on which you are lying. Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth... All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land" (Genesis 28:13-15).
 - Jacob's Response: **If** God will be with me and will watch over me on this journey and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear so that I return safely to my father's household, **then** the LORD will be my God and this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God's house, and of all that you give me I will give you a tenth (Genesis 28:20-22).

But God changed Jacob (2)

- Jacob wrestled with a divine figure at **Peniel** (face of God)
 - Jabbok (the place of emptying)
 - Jacob was left alone, and **a man** wrestled with him till daybreak. When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man (Genesis 32:24-25).
- What is your name? (Genesis 32:27)
 - His enemies: Esau, Laban, Shechem, others.
 - The real enemy was his own nature.
 - Your name will no longer be Jacob, but **Israel**, because you have struggled with God and with humans and **have overcome** (Genesis 32:28).



God changed Jacob completely (3)



- Bethel again (real repentance)
 - His partial obedience: Succoth & Shechem for 10 years.
 - Shechem: Convenience/location, Economic opportunity; but spiritual stagnation.
- Jacob is called to return to the place of his first encounter with God.
 - Go up to Bethel and settle there, and build an altar there to God...(Genesis 35:1).
 - Get rid of the foreign gods you have with you, and purify yourselves and change your clothes. Then come, let us go up to Bethel, where I will build an altar to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and who has been with me wherever I have gone (Genesis 35:2).
 - Your name is Jacob, but you will no longer be called Jacob; your name will be Israel (Genesis 35:10).
 - A total redefinition of his character as he moves into his role as a patriarch.

Lesson from Jacob

- Faith at the end of Jacob's life
 - By faith Jacob, when **he was dying**, blessed each of Joseph's sons, and worshiped as he leaned **on the top of his staff** (Hebrews 11:21).
 - Faith in death: Jacob demonstrated trust in God's future promises for his family even while facing his own mortality.
 - Blessing Joseph's sons: He blessed Ephraim and Manasseh, acknowledging God's plan for the next generation.
 - Worship while leaning: The act of leaning on his staff symbolizes his dependence on God and his authority, rather than just physical weakness.
- The life of Jacob (Self-reliance to God -reliance)
 - Relied on himself to obtain physical blessings.
 - God humbled him, realizing that he is nothing apart from God.