

**GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM, ISAAC, AND JACOB****Genesis 25:19–26:5; 28: 35:9-15**

**Memory Verse:** *And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise* (Gal. 3:29 ESV).

**Background Helps:**

This week we continue to study God's covenant with Abraham, only now God extends this covenant to Abraham's offspring: his son, Isaac, and his grandson, Jacob. Notice how the story unfolds:

1. God makes clear to Isaac's wife Rebekah, while her twin sons are still in the womb, that the covenant promises to Abraham would be channeled through Jacob, not Esau (Gen. 25:19-26). Paul reflects on this sovereign, gracious choice of God in Romans 9:10-12.
2. God repeats to Isaac the promises he had made to Abraham of (1) a land (Gen. 26:3-4), (2) offspring (seed) like the stars of heaven in number (26:4); and (3) blessing to all nations through the seed of Isaac (26:5). These are the same three promises God gave to Abraham earlier (see Forecast, Week 3). God mentions the oath he had sworn to Abraham (v. 3), and he cites the reason why he was making these same promises to Isaac: "because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws" (v. 5).
3. In Genesis 28:1-4 Isaac passes along God's promises to his son Jacob, including the multiplication of his seed and the possession of the land. Then, in a dream recorded in Genesis 28:10-15, the LORD himself appears to Jacob and promises (1) the land to him and his offspring (v. 13), (2) offspring in number like the dust of the earth (v. 14a), and (3) blessing to all the families of the earth through Jacob and his seed (v. 14b). Again, the same three promises to Abraham are now repeated to Jacob. In response Jacob vows to make the LORD his God and to give the LORD a tenth of all that God would give to him (28:18-22).
4. In Genesis 35:9-15 God appears again to Jacob, changing his name to Israel, and he repeats many of the same promises of Genesis 28: (1) the multiplication of his offspring including a nation [Israel], a company of nations [the Gentiles], and kings; and (2) the land to Jacob and his offspring. By this time in the story, we see that Jacob has twelve sons (35:22b-26)—the multiplication process is underway!

According to one source, Genesis 12–50 is full of promises associated with God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: "On seven occasions, God repeated His promise to Abraham, becoming increasingly detailed with each one. God said, 'I will . . .'" in 12:1-3 [5 times]; 12:7; 13:14; 15:1; 17:1; 18:1; and 22:1. On seven other occasions in Genesis, God reiterated the promise to Isaac, Jacob, or Jacob's sons. There are over 30 other references to the promise in

other passages. . . In summary, the author of Genesis uses the promise as a central theme and seems to select material on that basis.”<sup>1</sup>

### **Lesson Helps:**


A possible aim: My students will learn about the covenant promises that God made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, so that they will make the LORD their God and give at least a tenth of their possessions to him.

Use material from Background Helps above to study the covenant promises that God made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Show how these promises include us who are believers in Jesus Christ. See the promises to Isaac in Genesis 26:4b (“and in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed”) and to Jacob in Genesis 28:14b (“and in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed”). According to our memory verse (Gal. 3:29), believers in Jesus Christ are included in Abraham’s “offspring.”

Consider some other precious promises made to believers in Christ in the New Testament (your choice). Then ask, “What is your response to all these promises? Will you, like Jacob, make the LORD your God and will give him a portion (a tenth?) of the material possessions he has given to you (Gen. 28:21-22)?” Encourage even the young children to give a portion of their allowance or gifts that they receive from others to the Lord.

In this lesson we are omitting most of the incidents where Jacob shows himself to be a scoundrel, cheating his brother Esau out of his birthright and his blessing. But God’s grace overcomes Jacob’s flaws. The LORD has bound himself to the covenant he made with Abraham, and he sanctifies Jacob through his trials so that increasingly he becomes a man of faith and obedience. Jacob does indeed make the LORD his God.

### **Home Assignment:**

 Read Exodus 1–3; 6:1-8.

 Memorize Hebrews 10:23 ESV.

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<sup>1</sup> Bradford A. Mullen and Jack Layman, *Progress of Redemption: Syllabus and Study Guide* (Columbia, SC: Columbia Biblical Seminary & School of Missions, 1997), 152.