

Discussion October 24 and 25:

1. Read Genesis 24 and Genesis 25.19-34.

Re-read our definition for Grace:

Grace can be seen as God's movement towards the sinner-saint; action that manifests as unmerited kindness towards the sinner-saint.

(*Remember* Kindness plays out more specifically than favor; kindness is specific blessings pertaining to the individual and the specific season they're in.)

Keeping this definition in mind, are you seeing any instances of Grace that you hadn't seen before?

2. Write Genesis 24.3 here:

Why do you think Abraham didn't want Isaac to have a wife from the Canaanites?

3. Write Genesis 24.15 here:

Write Isaiah 65.24 here:

Both of these verses record God answering a prayer before the prayer is concluded. How does this influence your prayer life?

4. Re-read Genesis 24.16-20. What does this say about the character of Rebekah?

5. Write Genesis 24.30 here:

What does Laban notice about Rebekah? Why do you think these things caught Laban's eye?

Re-read Genesis 24.3-33. What is Laban doing? Do you think this is the same kind of hospitality that Abraham has shown in the past...or even the same kind of hospitality that Lot has shown in the past? Why or why not?

6. What similarities do Isaac and Rebekah have with Abraham and Sarah? What are some differences?

7. Re-read Genesis 25.27-28. List all the differences between Jacob and Esau:

8. Read Romans 9.10-13. How could God hate Esau but love Jacob?

9. What did you think of God's Grace before this Bible study? What do you think of it now?

10. Did you incorporate Psalm 119.132 into your prayer during the course of the Grace Bible study? How did the Lord lavish Grace on you in response to this Psalm and your prayer time? Consider keeping a Grace journal during the break and recording all the moments when the Lord lavishes Grace on you. (This journal would be an excellent reminder during any future seasons of suffering of His Grace and that He WILL show up and lavish Grace on you again!)

Psalm 119.132:

Turn to me and be gracious to me, as is your way with those who love your name.

October 24 and 25, 2023: God's Isaac and Introduction to Jacob

I. Recap of Events:

A. God showed Grace to Adam and Eve when He allowed them to participate in the solution to their sin:

Genesis 3.15:

*I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel.*

Adam and Eve's disobedience brought forth sin and curse upon the entire world, but God used them to bring about a Savior that would save from sin. That is Gracious, that is kind.

B. By the time of Cain and Abel (within one generation of humanity's original sin) we devastating sins like:

-Spiritual pride (Genesis 4.2-6)

-Anger (Genesis 4.5-6)

-Jealousy (Genesis 4.4-5)

-Murder (Genesis 4.8)

C. Wickedness increased but Noah and his family are preserved from the Flood because Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord:

Noah 6.5-8:

5 *The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. 7 So the LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them." 8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.*

24.1 *Now Abraham was old, well advanced in years. And the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things. 2 And Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his household, who had charge of all that he had, "Put your hand under my thigh, 3 that I may make you swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell, 4 but will go to my country and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son Isaac." 5 The servant*

said to him, “Perhaps the woman may not be willing to follow me to this land. Must I then take your son back to the land from which you came?” **6** Abraham said to him, “See to it that you do not take my son back there. **7** The Lord, the God of heaven, who took me from my father’s house and from the land of my kindred, and who spoke to me and swore to me, ‘To your offspring I will give this land,’ he will send his angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there. **8** But if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be free from this oath of mine; only you must not take my son back there.” **9** So the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master and swore to him concerning this matter.

i. God’s Grace directs every single event; God moves towards several people to accomplish His will and His pleasure for their lives.

-God showing Grace to Abraham in his last days

-Grace to Eliezer as a faithful servant to Abraham

-Grace to Isaac

-Grace to Rebekah.

ii. Abraham has beheld the Grace of God and he wants to honor that legacy that the Lord started in his life.

Abraham took great care to ensure God was honored by whoever married Isaac. He chose a godly legacy for Isaac.

iii. Abraham is in his last days, and it is certain that he knows it. He stays invested in the life of his son and the generations—the souls and spirits—that will come after him.

iv. Abraham is wholly, totally dependant on God to direct this entire affair as noted by his statement:

The Lord, the God of heaven, who took me from my father’s house and from the land of my kindred, and who spoke to me and swore to me, ‘To your offspring I will give this land,’ he will send his angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there. (v. 7)

Abraham knows he is in the Lord’s will to see a wife for Isaac from his homeland and completely trusts God to direct Eliezer’s steps.

24.10 *Then the servant took ten of his master’s camels and departed, taking all sorts of choice gifts from his master; and he arose and went to Mesopotamia to the city of Nahor. **11** And he made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well of water at the time of evening, the time when women go out to draw water. **12** And he said, “O*

Lord, God of my master Abraham, please grant me success today and show steadfast love to my master Abraham. 13 Behold, I am standing by the spring of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. 14 Let the young woman to whom I shall say, 'Please let down your jar that I may drink,' and who shall say, 'Drink, and I will water your camels'—let her be the one whom you have appointed for your servant Isaac. By this I shall know that you have shown steadfast love to my master." 15 Before he had finished speaking, behold, Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, came out with her water jar on her shoulder. 16 The young woman was very attractive in appearance, a maiden whom no man had known. She went down to the spring and filled her jar and came up. 17 Then the servant ran to meet her and said, "Please give me a little water to drink from your jar." 18 She said, "Drink, my lord." And she quickly let down her jar upon her hand and gave him a drink. 19 When she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking." 20 So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough and ran again to the well to draw water, and she drew for all his camels. 21 The man gazed at her in silence to learn whether the Lord had prospered his journey or not. 22 When the camels had finished drinking, the man took a gold ring weighing a half shekel, and two bracelets for her arms weighing ten gold shekels, 23 and said, "Please tell me whose daughter you are. Is there room in your father's house for us to spend the night?" 24 She said to him, "I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor." 25 She added, "We have plenty of both straw and fodder, and room to spend the night." 26 The man bowed his head and worshiped the Lord 27 and said, "Blessed be the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken his steadfast love and his faithfulness toward my master. As for me, the Lord has led me in the way to the house of my master's kinsmen." 28 Then the young woman ran and told her mother's household about these things.

- i. Eliezer is quick to acknowledge and rely on God during this event. He asks the Lord for a sign; this is a sign to qualify the sort of woman that Eliezer already knows is required for Isaac.

And so he turns to a Gracious and sovereign God that directs every single event and asks for a sign, and that sign is that she will offer to water his camels.

- ii. That is the kind of woman suitable for Isaac. A woman who would draw enough water to care for a stranger's caravan of camels would be rare; such a woman would truly have to be servant-hearted and hard-working.

She knew nothing of Eliezer yet she moved towards him and showed him kindness.

We will bump into people every day and know nothing about them but do we move towards them to show them kindness?

What about those people who don't deserve our kindness? Do we still move towards them?

iii. The Lord answered the prayer before Eliezer finished it. Eliezer sees that the Lord is working towards his prayer, so Eliezer immediately turns to worship.

24.29 *Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban. Laban ran out toward the man, to the spring. 30 As soon as he saw the ring and the bracelets on his sister's arms, and heard the words of Rebekah his sister, "Thus the man spoke to me," he went to the man. And behold, he was standing by the camels at the spring. 31 He said, "Come in, O blessed of the Lord. Why do you stand outside? For I have prepared the house and a place for the camels." 32 So the man came to the house and unharnessed the camels, and gave straw and fodder to the camels, and there was water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him. 33 Then food was set before him to eat. But he said, "I will not eat until I have said what I have to say." He said, "Speak on." 34 So he said, "I am Abraham's servant. 35 The Lord has greatly blessed my master, and he has become great. He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male servants and female servants, camels and donkeys. 36 And Sarah my master's wife bore a son to my master when she was old, and to him he has given all that he has. 37 My master made me swear, saying, 'You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell, 38 but you shall go to my father's house and to my clan and take a wife for my son.' 39 I said to my master, 'Perhaps the woman will not follow me.' 40 But he said to me, 'The Lord, before whom I have walked, will send his angel with you and prosper your way. You shall take a wife for my son from my clan and from my father's house. 41 Then you will be free from my oath, when you come to my clan. And if they will not give her to you, you will be free from my oath.' 42 "I came today to the spring and said, 'O Lord, the God of my master Abraham, if now you are prospering the way that I go, 43 behold, I am standing by the spring of water. Let the virgin who comes out to draw water, to whom I shall say, "Please give me a little water from your jar to drink," 44 and who will say to me, "Drink, and I will draw for your camels also," let her be the woman whom the Lord has appointed for my master's son.' 45 "Before I had finished speaking in my heart, behold, Rebekah came out with her water jar on her shoulder, and she went down to the spring and drew water. I said to her, 'Please let me drink.' 46 She quickly let down her jar from her shoulder and said, 'Drink, and I will give your camels drink also.' So I drank, and she gave the camels drink also. 47 Then I asked her, 'Whose daughter are you?' She said, 'The daughter of*

Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bore to him.' So I put the ring on her nose and the bracelets on her arms. 48 Then I bowed my head and worshiped the Lord and blessed the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me by the right way to take the daughter of my master's kinsman for his son. 49 Now then, if you are going to show steadfast love and faithfulness to my master, tell me; and if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand or to the left." 50 Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, "The thing has come from the Lord; we cannot speak to you bad or good. 51 Behold, Rebekah is before you; take her and go, and let her be the wife of your master's son, as the Lord has spoken." 52 When Abraham's servant heard their words, he bowed himself to the earth before the Lord. 53 And the servant brought out jewelry of silver and of gold, and garments, and gave them to Rebekah. He also gave to her brother and to her mother costly ornaments.

- i. Laban is hesitant to show hospitality until he notices the ring and bracelets Rebekah has been gifted by this generous stranger.
- ii. Eliezer gives a quick run-down of why he's there and he praises God's sovereign providence in all of it.

24.54 *And he and the men who were with him ate and drank, and they spent the night there. When they arose in the morning, he said, "Send me away to my master." 55 Her brother and her mother said, "Let the young woman remain with us a while, at least ten days; after that she may go." 56 But he said to them, "Do not delay me, since the Lord has prospered my way. Send me away that I may go to my master." 57 They said, "Let us call the young woman and ask her." 58 And they called Rebekah and said to her, "Will you go with this man?" She said, "I will go." 59 So they sent away Rebekah their sister and her nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men. 60 And they blessed Rebekah and said to her,*

*"Our sister, may you become
thousands of ten thousands,
and may your offspring possess
the gate of those who hate him!"*

61 *Then Rebekah and her young women arose and rode on the camels and followed the man. Thus the servant took Rebekah and went his way.*

- i. Her family is sad to part with her, so we can assume she was a blessing to her family.
- ii. She will take some servants or attendants with her who don't appear to object to leaving their family, house, or homeland, so they must have had a great deal of affection and loyalty to Rebekah to make such a significant move.

24.62 Now Isaac had returned from Beer-lahai-roi and was dwelling in the Negeb. **63** And Isaac went out to meditate in the field toward evening. And he lifted up his eyes and saw, and behold, there were camels coming. **64** And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she dismounted from the camel **65** and said to the servant, "Who is that man, walking in the field to meet us?" The servant said, "It is my master." So she took her veil and covered herself. **66** And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. **67** Then Isaac brought her into the tent of Sarah his mother and took Rebekah, and she became his wife, and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

This account symbolizes Jesus receiving His Bride:

- Isaac is a type of Christ, and here he is eagerly awaiting his bride.
- A Father deeply desired a Bride for His Son
- A Bride was sovereignly directed to her Husband

25.19 These are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham fathered Isaac, **20** and Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean, to be his wife. **21** And Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she was barren. And the Lord granted his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived. **22** The children struggled together within her, and she said, "If it is thus, why is this happening to me?" So she went to inquire of the Lord. **23** And the Lord said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the older shall serve the younger." **24** When her days to give birth were completed, behold, there were twins in her womb. **25** The first came out red, all his body like a hairy cloak, so they called his name Esau. **26** Afterward his brother came out with his hand holding Esau's heel, so his name was called Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them. **27** When the boys grew up, Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents. **28** Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

i. Isaac knows the calling on his life so he pleads with God to open Rebekah's womb and help them both to trust the Promise Maker as they wait.

ii. This pregnancy was so intense it drove Rebekah to the Lord and He tells her she has quite literally 2 different people within her; their very heart's motives clash with one another.

Romans 9.10-13:

10 And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, **11** though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls— **12** she was told, “The older will serve the younger.” **13** As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”

There's a story of a woman coming up to Charles Spurgeon and telling him “I cannot understand why God should say that He hated Esau.”

Here's how Spurgeon replied: “That is not my difficulty, madam. My trouble is to understand how God could love Jacob.”

iii. He dispenses Grace according to His sovereign will for His glory alone:

Exodus 33:12-20:

12 Moses said to the Lord, “See, you say to me, ‘Bring up this people,’ but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, ‘I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.’ **13** Now therefore, if I have found favor in your sight, please show me now your ways, that I may know you in order to find favor in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people.” **14** And he said, “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” **15** And he said to him, “If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here. **16** For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people? Is it not in your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and your people, from every other people on the face of the earth?” **17** And the Lord said to Moses, “This very thing that you have spoken I will do, for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name.” **18** Moses said, “Please show me your glory.” **19** And he said, “I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name ‘The Lord.’ And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. **20** But,” he said, “you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live.” **21** And the LORD said, “Behold, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock, **22** and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by. **23** Then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back, but my face shall not be seen.”

If the Lord has sovereignly chosen to be Gracious to you it is for His glory alone.

iv. One last thing to note as a warning—each parent seemed to favor a child: Isaac favored Esau while Rebekah favored Jacob. No good comes from these natural alignments.

25.29 *Once when Jacob was cooking stew, Esau came in from the field, and he was exhausted. 30 And Esau said to Jacob, “Let me eat some of that red stew, for I am exhausted!” (Therefore his name was called Edom.) 31 Jacob said, “Sell me your birthright now.” 32 Esau said, “I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?” 33 Jacob said, “Swear to me now.” So he swore to him and sold his birthright to Jacob. 34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank and rose and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.*

i. The importance of birthright:

Deuteronomy 21.17:

But he shall acknowledge the firstborn, the son of the unloved, by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he is the firstfruits of his strength. The right of the firstborn is his.

1 Chronicles 5.1-2:

1 The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel (for he was the firstborn, but because he defiled his father's couch, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph the son of Israel, so that he could not be enrolled as the oldest son; 2 though Judah became strong among his brothers and a chief came from him, yet the birthright belonged to Joseph).

This was not a valid transaction, because Jacob was buying what was already his, and Esau was selling something that didn't belong to him. Martin Luther

ii. Jesus secures birthrights for us too:

Ephesians 1.3-14:

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things

*in him, things in heaven and things on earth. **11** In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, **12** so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. **13** In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, **14** who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.*