

ORCHARD ROAD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

BIBLE FOR ALL (BFA) MATERIAL FOR SMALL GROUPS DISCUSSION

Genesis – Living in Redemptive Grace

Sermon Series

06 November 2022	Genesis 26:1-6	Isaac and God's Faithfulness
13 November 2022	Genesis 46:1-7, 47:7-10	Jacob's Story – Transformed by Grace
20 November 2022	Genesis 50:15-26	Joseph's Unwavering Faith in God

06 November 2022

Genesis 26:1-6

Isaac and God's Faithfulness

If you are asked to describe Isaac, what would you say?

STUDY

Read Genesis 26:1. Isaac was facing a famine in Canaan, just as his father Abraham did.

1. Read Genesis 12:10-20. What did Abraham do at that time, and what happened as a result?

2. Given the similar situation, what would you expect Isaac to do?

Dig Deeper

Think about the difficulty of the decision that Isaac made. Would you have been able to make the same decision that he did? Has there been a situation in your life which was like this (no matter what the decision that you made in the end was)?

Read Genesis 26:2-5. YHWH reveals Himself to Isaac and speaks to him in vv.2-5, giving him instructions and a promise.

3. What was the instruction and what was the promise?

4. What similarities do you see with Abraham's initial call from God in Gen 12:1-3?

Dig Deeper

Why do you think it is necessary for God to make the same promise to Isaac?

The promise made in Gen 26:2-5 particularly echoes the version made to Abraham in Gen 22:15-18. Why do you think this is significant?

Read Genesis 26:6.

5. Why did Isaac remain in Gerar?

Dig Deeper

Continue reading Gen 26. Was Isaac's life in Gerar evidently blessed by God?

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

Do a search for the name "Isaac" in your Bibles. If you own an electronic Bible, use it to do your search. If you are using a hard copy Bible, start reading from Genesis 17.

6. What are the major highlights of Isaac's life?

7. What was exemplary about Isaac, and what were his flaws?

8. What does the New Testament say about Isaac? (cf. Gal 4:28, Heb 11:20)

APPLICATION

9. Consider your answer(s) to Q7. What does this tell you about the life of someone chosen and used by God for His plan?

10. Think about the passage we have just studied. In what way(s) have your thinking and beliefs been renewed? What does God want you to do with what you have learnt?

REFLECTION

Write down a key lesson and a key verse from this study.

How should we pray and change in response to what we have learnt?

DISCIPLESHIP IN COMMUNITY

- **Share:** Take turns to tell your group who your model(s) of faith is/are, and why you look up to this person(s). [This is repeated for the month of November.]

PRAY FOR ORPC – CONGREGATION

- Pray for ORPC to be a community where we seek to know God and to make Him known: we show God's love to one another, encourage each other to grow in godliness and to persevere in our faith, and work together to advance the Gospel, growing our community by reaching out to the lost.

Read Genesis 46:1-7.

3. What was significant about Jacob's stop at Beersheba? (See also Gen 26:32-33)

4. It is particularly important that God spoke to Jacob at Beersheba, telling him that he should not be afraid to go to Egypt. Why would Jacob have been afraid?

5. What does God promise Jacob in vv.3-4? Consider the links with Gen 15:13 and with the events of Exod 1-15?

6. Compare Jacob's journey out of Canaan now with his return to Canaan in Gen 32. What similarities or differences do you see? What does this tell you about how he has changed?

Dig Deeper

Who were the sons of Jacob? List them in order of birth with their mother's name. (cf. Gen 29:31-35, 30:1-24, 35:16-19)

In Gen 45:17-20, Pharaoh told Joseph to tell his brothers to bring his whole family to Egypt without needing to worry about their belongings because Pharaoh will provide for them. Read Gen 46:5-7 again – how closely did they obey this instruction?

Read Genesis 47:7-10.

7. How old was Jacob when he entered Egypt?

8. What was Jacob's outlook on his life? Do you think this is a good summary of his life? Why or why not?

Dig Deeper

Look forward to Gen 48:1-22 and Heb 11:21. What is Jacob's view of God at the end of his life?

PUTTING IT TOGETHER/APPLICATION

9. God's hand was on every aspect of Jacob's life, leading him to a transformed and worshipful life obedient to God and used by God in His plan and promise. Where have you seen God's hand on your life in the past to transform you and bring you closer to Him? Where do you see Him working in your life right now?
10. Think about the passage we have just studied. In what way(s) have your thinking and beliefs been renewed? What does God want you to do with what you have learnt?

REFLECTION

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How should we pray and change in response to what we have learnt?

DISCIPLESHIP IN COMMUNITY

- **Share:** Take turns to tell your group who your model(s) of faith is/are, and why you look up to this person(s). [This is repeated for the month of November.]

PRAY FOR ORPC – CONGREGATION

- Pray for our congregation to reach out to those in need, within and outside of the church, to show care, offer spiritual encouragement, and to offer practical help wherever possible.

20 November 2022

Genesis 50:15-26

Joseph's Unwavering Faith in God

Do you think God is present with us when we experience being wronged by others? What do you look out for that tells you He is present, or not?

STUDY

1. Joseph's life has been full of colour from his birth to where we see him now in the story in Gen 50:15-26. What are the key events in his life so far?

1.	Joseph is born to Rachel after 7 years of barrenness	Gen 30:22-24
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		

2. Where do you see God's sovereign hand at work throughout Joseph's life?

Dig Deeper

Consider each instance where Joseph suffers punishment. Did he do anything to deserve what happened to him?

Look at the events of Joseph's life in Q1. What are the high points and the low points in Joseph's life? What relationship do they have with each other?

What was the perspective that Joseph kept throughout all these events? What would help us to gain and to keep the same perspective through similar experiences in our lives?

Read Genesis 50:15-21.

3. Joseph's brothers asked Joseph for forgiveness (v.17), telling him that his father Jacob also wished for him to forgive them. Why did they do this?

4. What does Joseph's response (vv.19-21) tell you about Joseph's reasons for taking care of his brothers? Consider also his original response in Gen 45:4-13.

5. Consider Acts 2:22-24 and Romans 8:28, along with Joseph's statement in Genesis 50:20. Is it encouraging or discouraging that God can use the wicked actions of others to bring about good things in our lives? Explain.

Dig Deeper

Review Genesis 45. Did Joseph's brothers ask for forgiveness when his identity was first revealed? What do you think they might have thought was the reason Joseph still cared for them and made provision for them then?

Does the fact that God can use evil actions for his good purpose mean that people should not be held responsible for their evil? Explain.

Read Genesis 50:22-26. Joseph lived a long and full life, and he was able to see his line established (v.23). But before he died, he made his brothers promise that they would bring his bones up to Canaan from Egypt when God visits them.

6. Why does Joseph expect God to visit Israel in Egypt, and what does he expect to happen then? (See Gen 15:13-16, 46:4, 48:21. See also Exod 13:19)

7. Why is it important to Joseph that he is not buried permanently in Egypt but will be brought up to Canaan for burial? What does this say about his faith in God? (See also Heb 11:22)

Dig Deeper

The idea of God "visiting" mankind is a theologically significant one. Use an electronic bible and search for "visit", reading the passages that have God doing the visit. What do you notice?

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

8. Has Joseph changed in his relationship with God and his family since he was a youth? Explain.

Dig Deeper

What stands out to you about Joseph's life and the way he dealt with life?

APPLICATION

9. God "broke" Joseph by taking him out of comfortable circumstances and stretching him. God often has to "break" us before He can use us. When has God "broken" you and what effect did it have on your faith? Are you willing to let God do whatever He needs to in your life to make you usable to Him?

10. Think about the passage we have just studied. In what way(s) have your thinking and beliefs been renewed? What does God want you to do with what you have learnt?

REFLECTION

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How should we pray and change in response to what we have learnt?

DISCIPLESHIP IN COMMUNITY

- **Share:** Take turns to tell your group who your model(s) of faith is/are, and why you look up to this person(s). [This is repeated for the month of November.]
- **Daily Sharing:** Through the Advent season, take turns to share with your group every day a point of thankfulness for what Christ has done in your life, and what area of obedience He may be challenging you in for 2023.

PRAY FOR ORPC – ADVENT PREPARATION

- In the coming month, pray for the Holy Spirit to work in each of us so that we can focus on who Christ is, the promise He fulfils, and the work He came to do.
- Pray that as we focus on Christ's coming as a congregation, we will be convicted to follow Him and to obey Him, not only in our personal discipleship but in obedience to His command to make Him known in all nations.