

Sunday, August 17, 2025

Sermon

"You Reap What You Sow – Part 1"

(Elder Larry Shean)

When we were in our late teenage years, my brother Paul and I spent a lot of time working on vehicles together.

And it seemed like one of us would end up getting hurt,

And it normally wasn't me.

I can remember one time we were replacing the rear leaf springs on my Dad's truck.

One nut was rusted to a u-bolt so bad that we couldn't loosen it with just a socket and impact wrench.

Paul got the torch out and heated the nut up till it was cherry red, then I was able to loosen and remove the nut with the impact wrench.

I was standing above Paul and thought it would be funny to scare him, so I held the impact wrench over his shoulder and pressed the button.

To my surprise, the red-hot nut was still in the socket and when it fell out, it landed on his shoulder.

All I could hear was the nut sizzling on his bare skin and him groaning,

I dropped the impact wrench onto the floor and ran out of the garage and up the driveway.

When I noticed that Paul wasn't chasing after me, I stopped and waited about 15 minutes then went back into the garage.

I looked at Paul and told him that I was sorry, then I said I bet that hurt.

He just looked at me and said, you think? You're lucky you're my brother.

There are a couple of stories in the Bible where two brothers didn't always get along.

This particular story is about Jacob and Esau.

The story of Jacob is a twisted story filled with dishonesty, animosity, conspiracy, and deceit.

Jacob was the son of Isaac, and Isaac was the son of Abraham.

The story starts when Rebekah becomes pregnant and is carrying twins.

The twins were wrestling with each other in Rebekah's womb.

And she was wondering what was wrong with her. So, she asked the Lord.

The Lord told her that there was 2 nations in her womb,

And that they will be separated,

One will be stronger than the other,

The older will serve the younger.

When the time came to give birth, the son who was born first was very hairy and he was named Esau.

When the second son was born, he was holding onto Esau's heel and they named him Jacob.

The boys grew up and Esau liked being out in the open country.

We learn from the scriptures that Esau was a skillful hunter.

Since they had such a large herds of animals, did he even need to go hunting since there was plenty to eat right there with them?

We could gather from this that Esau was always out hunting instead of being around home helping with the chores and tending to the animals.

A person could think that Esau was irresponsible.

We do know that Esau was impulsive and lived for the moment,

He proves this when he didn't take his birthright serious and sold it to Jacob just because he was hungry

Jacob, on the other hand, liked staying at home and didn't wander too far away from the tents.

One day Esau came in from hunting and was extremely hungry.

Jacob was making a pot of stew,

So Esau asked him for some of his stew,

But Jacob told Esau that he would give him a bowl of his stew in exchange for Esau's birthright.

I wonder what kind of plan Jacob was scheming up by doing this?

So Esau traded his birthright for some of Jacob's stew.

Afterwards, Esau despised his birthright.

We read in the scriptures that Issac loved Esau more than Jacob,

I'm guessing that's because Isaac liked the taste of wild game,

And Rebekah loved Jacob more than she did Esau,

And here again I'm guessing because Jacob stayed around the tents and helped with the chores.

Later Jacob with the help of his mother Rebekah deceives his father Isaac.

Now I think we see where Jacob gets his craftiness from.

Rebekah overheard Issac telling Esau to go out and kill some wild game and prepare it the way his father liked it and bring it to him, then he will give Esau his blessing.

Lets hold the train here at the station for a second.

Apparently Esau knows how to cook wild game.

So the day that he came in from hunting and traded his birthright for a bowl of Jacob's stew,

He either didn't kill any wild game, or he didn't want to take the time to prepare it.

Well, that was just a thought.

So Rebekah comes up with a deceitful plan and calls for Jacob and tells him what she had overheard, and tells him to go and bring her two young goats so she can prepare them the way Issac likes it .

So Jacob did as his mother asked him to do.

Next, Rebekah hands Jacob some of Esau's clothes and tells him to put them on and covers his hands with goat skin.

Jacob does what his mother told him to do and takes the food to his father.

Their little scam worked because Isaac thinks that Jacob is really Esau, so Isaac gives Jacob his blessing which was supposed to go to Esau.

Isaac doesn't realize what happened until Esau comes in with the food that he prepared for him.

This is the second time that Jacob deceived and cheated his twin brother,

First his birthright, and now his blessing.

Esau held a grudge against Jacob and was planning on killing him.

When Rebekah found out about Esau's plan, she warned Jacob and told him to leave at once and go to her brother Laban's place and stay there until Esau's anger subsided.

Jacob did what his mother had told him to do,

He packs his things and heads off to the land where his uncle Laban lived,

We don't see or hear of any conversations between Jacob and God before Jacob leaves home.

Jacob has had little time for God because he has been busy scheming and conniving and thinking of himself and how to get ahead.

Jacob has been thinking about his problems all day as he has been traveling.

It's now night time and Jacob is tired and decides to stop for the night and get some rest.

Jacob falls asleep unaware that God is about to rock his world and knock him for a loop.

As he is sleeping, God reveals himself to Jacob in a dream.

In this dream, there is a ladder reaching up to heaven, and on this ladder there are messengers of God who are traveling up and down between heaven and earth.

They were delivering petitions from the people to God and returning God's answers back down to them.

God reveals to Jacob in his dream the spiritual workings of heaven itself.

Even though he didn't have a great relationship with God yet, God revealed himself to Jacob,

And gives Jacob his promise that Jacob will be the heir to the promises which God made to his father Isaac and his grandfather Abraham.

God reveals this promise and makes it personal when He says,
“I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac.”

God says, I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying in.
Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth. All the peoples of the earth will be blessed through you and your offspring.

God goes on to tell Jacob, “I am with you, and I will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land.

I will not leave you until I have done what I promised you.

It was purely by God's grace that Jacob has met God.

Jacob wasn't expecting Him, he wasn't even thinking about Him, Jacob was only thinking about getting away from his brother.

Jacob was thinking about where he was going and what was ahead of him.

This whole encounter between God and Jacob reveals something very important about God and how powerful He is.

In Isaiah 65:1 God says, “I reveal myself to those who did not ask for me,

I was found by those who did not seek me,
to a nation that did not call on my name, I said, Here I am, here I am.”

God is good at showing up when we least expect to meet Him.

There are several times in the Bible where God came into people's lives and showed up in unusual ways.

He appeared to Moses in a burning bush as Moses was walking up the mountain.

Although Moses claimed that he didn't speak well,

God used Moses to deliver God's chosen people out of Egypt.

The Lord appeared to Paul as a blinding light on the road to Damascus as he was on his way to persecute Christians.

God stopped Paul dead in his tracks and changed his life forever.

Gideon was busy threshing wheat, secretly I must add, because he was afraid of the Midianites when God revealed Himself to Gideon.

God called Gideon from a place of fear and doubt to become a mighty warrior and leader.

The list of Bible characters goes on and on, but the evidence is there to show us that God sometimes interrupts the normal and usual in our lives to come to us in amazing and incredible ways.

We may not have had a blinding experience like Paul did on the road to Damascus,

But there are still those times when God came unexpectedly into our lives.

It may have been when we were least thinking about it.

Maybe you were driving along just thinking about the day,

Or maybe you were riding your tractor mowing your lawn,

Or maybe you were sitting in your rocking chair,

Or possibly you were just soaking in the bathtub.

It doesn't matter where you are or what you're doing, God always has the perfect timing for revealing himself and his plans for you.

God is the God of the unexpected, He can come knocking on our door when we least expect Him,

He may even come when we feel a sense of shame or unworthiness,

And we feel as if we are separated from God.

I wonder if this is how Jacob felt as he was running away from his brother.

Isaac being a man of God, I'm sure that Jacob and Esau were taught right from wrong.

But it was Jacob's freewill to scam his brother out of his birthright,

And here again, it was Jacob's freewill to go along with his mother's conniving and deceitful plan to steal Esau's blessing

And now he's on the run.

He's running from his brother, but he is also running from God.

But you can't run from God.

If God has a plan for you, you can't hide from him.

Ask Jonah how that worked out for him.

Notice that Jacob did not try to climb the ladder that he seen in his vision,

He knew that he couldn't climb up to God, he had to let God come to him.

Jacob wasn't trying to find God, God was trying to find him

It is evident that in this day and age, people are not trying to find God

Look around,

They took prayer out of the schools,

They are taking the Ten Commandments out of public places,

And the list goes on and on.

But it's God who is seeking to find us.

And He will find us.

He is the God who looks for you and knocks at your heart's door,

All we have to do is answer the door,

Open it up , and let Him in,

And He will change your life in ways you could never imagine.

Amen