

Synthetic Bible Studies

Containing an outline study of every book of the Bible
with suggestions for Sermons, Addresses and
Bible Expositions

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LESSON THREE

GENESIS, CHAPTERS 28-50

If "Isaac" is the sixth great fact in Genesis what is the seventh?

Jacob?

And the eighth?

Joseph?

Just add then these two names to the word outline of the last lesson, and you will discover that the whole of this long book can be easily kept in mind in eight words. I mean as to its great leading facts, of course. How this simplifies Bible study, and stimulates us to go on from book to book!

The History of Jacob

Now please recall the great facts in the life of the patriarch Jacob as in the previous cases, and put them down somewhat like this:

- (1) Birth, chapter 25.
- (2) Purchase of the birthright, chapter 25.

- (3) Deception of his father, chapter 27.
- (4) Flight to Haran, chapter 28.
- (5) Marriage and prosperity, chapters 29, 30.
- (6) Return to Canaan, chapters 31-35.

It will not be difficult to hold these six details in memory, and if you have read the chapters as requested the minor matters can also be recalled. For example, ask yourself these questions:

- who, besides Jacob, was responsible for fact number three?
- what was the chief event in fact number four?
- how was Jacob himself wronged in fact number five?
- what four events give the chief interest to fact number six?

What We May Learn from Jacob

Jacob is not the least interesting of the patriarchs. While not so grand as Abraham or docile as Isaac, he is more like the average man, and that makes his life-story full of peculiar meaning to us.

Notice how it illustrates the sovereignty of GOD. Compare Malachi 1:1-4, and Romans 9:10-13.

But let us not charge GOD foolishly in this case. Remember that the choice as between Jacob and Esau did not necessarily terminate on their heavenly life, but earthly life. It was a question simply of the earthly birthright. Both may be in Heaven for aught we know. Nor did Esau suffer anything serious so far as temporalities were concerned. He was also blessed and led the kind of life he doubtless enjoyed.

Nor was GOD merely arbitrary in His choice and acting without moral reasons. On the contrary what He did greatly magnified His grace, and when rightly viewed, contributes to the hope and comfort of poor lost sinners such as we all are.

The word "hate" as applied to Esau in the passages compared, must not be taken in the common sense of that term, but only as a Hebrew idiom intensifying the idea of choice. We shall have occasion to look into this farther when we reach the Scriptures referred to.

Notice how it illustrates the grace of GOD. Here is rich material for a Bible reading.

Think of the:

- love that chose such a man,
- bore with him, prospered,
- protected, and guided him,
- revealed GOD to him, and
- sanctified him.

The Almighty sometimes speaks of Himself as "**The God of Jacob**," and is there any title that goes very much deeper in sounding the depths of His condescension and willingness to bless!

And His grace is brought out all the stronger by Jacob's plotting and scheming to get that which GOD had promised him, and would have given him without it.

Notice how it illustrates prevailing prayer.

Its secret is not strength but weakness. Jacob was not wrestling with some one, but some One was wrestling with him. GOD was bringing him to see what a poor, worthless creature he was in himself. As C. H. McIntosh says, it was not until the seat of his strength was touched, his thigh put out of joint, that he learned to say, "**I will not let thee go.**"

The new era in his history began then. Up until that time he had held fast by his own plans and schemes, but after that he was ready to hold fast by GOD. Now he receives the name "Israel," one who has prevailed with GOD.

Joseph a Type of CHRIST

There are many points of similarity between Joseph and CHRIST, and as in the previous lesson it will be found fruitful to trace the parallel. Consider the meaning of his name as indicated in the marginal references of your Bible, 30:24, i. e., "*adding*," or "*increase*," or "*fruitfulness*," and compare Isaiah 9:6, 7; Luke 1:31-33; John 3:30.

Consider the effect of his birth upon Rachel, taking away her reproach (30:24), and ask yourself in what particulars CHRIST hath taken away reproach?

- He took away the reproach of sin, did He not? (Colossians 2:13-15; Romans 8:1).
- And also the reproach of the law (Isaiah 42:21), for He fulfilled it and kept it, and in so doing showed it to be holy, and good and true, notwithstanding that men, through sin, had condemned and trampled it under foot.

What is the next great fact in Joseph's life suggesting a likeness to CHRIST?

The peculiar love of his father for him, suggesting Proverbs 8:30, Isaiah 42:1, Matthew 3:17.

And the next fact?

The sufferings endured through the hatred of his brethren, including the sale into slavery, imprisonment in Egypt, etc., bringing into mind Psalm 69:4, and John 15:25.

And the next fact?

His deliverance from prison and exaltation to the throne of Pharaoh, as foreshadowing in some degree CHRIST's resurrection and ascension into glory (compare Acts 2:22-24).

And the next fact?

His marriage to a stranger, as indicating CHRIST taking to Himself the church to be His bride, composed of both Jews and Gentiles, and sharing with Him at once both His rejection and His glory (compare Ephesians 1:3, 4; 2:4-7; 3:1-6; 5:24, 32).

And the last fact?

His interview with, and revelation of himself to his brethren beautifully typical of CHRIST's dealings with Israel in the latter day (Zechariah 12:10; 13:1).

Gather these facts into orderly shape, and a most helpful and stimulating Bible reading will spring into life under your hands.

The Prophecies of CHRIST

Having now finished the word outline of the book, let us go over it again for the purpose of bringing into one view its Messianic references, and at the same time fastening the details still firmer in mind. What prophecies of CHRIST does Genesis contain? In answering the question, you are not called upon to read the book again, but only mentally review the facts already emphasized. Recall the eight words of the outline. Dwell on each one sufficiently long to refresh your recollection as to its details.

Take the word "creation," which covers chapters 1 and 2. As you think over the work of the six days in chapter 1, and the fuller account of the creation of man in chapter 2, no prophecy occurs to you. But when you come to the next word, "fall," instantly "the seed of the woman," 3:15, flashes into your mind.

Pursue the thread through the other words, "deluge," "nations," "Abraham," and there again you meet such a prophecy in 12:3 and 17:7, compared with Galatians 3:16.

In the same way, "Isaac" yields nothing, but "Jacob" in the blessing on his sons, refers to the coming One in chapter 49:10. Observe in this connection the development of Messianic truth.

- at first He is the seed of the woman simply, rather indefinite and undetermined;
- in the second place, the range is narrowed to a particular race of the woman, the line of Abraham; and
- in the third place, the line is drawn still closer to include only the tribe of Judah.

Thus will it be found as we proceed, that the features of the Saviour's personality become more and more clearly indicated and defined by the various prophets, not only stimulating expectation with every generation, but increasing the means by which He may be identified when He comes.

The Human Types of CHRIST

I would now suggest that we again run over the eight words of the outline in order to gather together the human types of CHRIST.

Under the word "creation" Adam suggests himself, for whose typical relation to CHRIST see such places as Romans 5:12-21, and 1 Corinthians 15:21, 22, 45-49.

Under the word "deluge" we think of Noah, whose typical relation is somewhat weaker, except as we think of him in the light of a preacher of righteousness to a gain-saying generation.

Under the word "Abraham" we have already spoken of Melchizedek. Add to these Isaac and Joseph, whose histories have been treated somewhat at length, and we have the principal characters who are referred to in this typical connection, although their number might be multiplied.

The General Types of CHRIST

I would ask you to go over the eight words a third time in the same way, to ascertain the general types of CHRIST as distinguished from the human.

For example:

- under the word "creation," we at once think of light as such a type, compare John 9:5.
- under the "fall," we think of the coats of skins previously spoken of.
- "Deluge" suggests the ark as a type of CHRIST in whom we are saved (Acts 4:12).
- the word "Abraham" brings to mind the ram caught in the thicket.
- "Jacob," the ladder to which CHRIST Himself refers (John 1:51).

These then are the chief Messianic references:-

Prophecies -

The seed of the woman
The seed of Abraham
The seed of Judah

Human Types

Adam
Noah
Melchizedek
Isaac
Joseph

General Types

Light
Coat of skins
Ark
Ram
Ladder

~ end of Lesson 3 ~
