

## *I Need a Hero* (2)

### *Old Testament Characters*

#### *That teach us New Testament Truths*

#### *Jacob, a man who stood up in spite of his past*

*(Gen. 25:24 -26)*

**Introduction:** Jacob was a man of great gifts and glaring faults. By examining the example and life of Jacob, we can see, despite our present faults and past failures, God can still bless and use us.

**I. Jacob's name:** Isaac and Rebekah had waited nearly twenty years for children and when God answered their prayers, Rebekah would experience a difficult pregnancy.

**A. His birth** – Often times events relating to a child's birth influenced parents in their choice of name for the child. (Gen.25:26b)

**B. His beginning** – Jacob's life began with a revelation of God to his mother while he was still in the womb.

1. God chose Jacob to be the one to receive the covenant blessing. (This was a fact his mother knew. (Cf. Gen. 25:23)
2. Jacob was somewhat a victim of his mother's partiality – (Parental influence on children can yield both sweet and sour fruit. This is why it's important as parents that we be careful of the seeds we plant in our children's character.) (Ex. 34:7; 1 Cor. 10:13).

**II. Jacob's nature:** By the time Jacob was an adult he knew the difference between right and wrong.

**A. Jacob was selfish** – He chose to cheat his brother – (Gen. 25:29-34)

**B. Jacob was naturally crafty and deceitful** - He chose to follow his mother's plan and he did so very smoothly – (Gen. 27:1-29)

**C. Jacob was a coward** – He chose to flee from home – (Gen.27:41-46) As bad as all this was – God was still working on Jacob. We be assured, as bad as it gets, God is always there, just waiting on us to turn back to Him too.

**III. Jacob gets a news flash:**

**A. Jacob finds out life is hard without God –(Gen.29-33)**

Even though God had a plan for Jacob's life, Jacob had not yet learned to trust God with his life. (Gen.31:42). This is the case for many today –

**B. Jacob finds out God has a plan for his life** – He is met by a band of angels (32:1,2). (Symbolizing God's protection and encouragement as he headed back to take care of business.) (Heb.13:2b)

1. Jacob prays to God for His help because he realized it was ultimately God who he had to deal with. (Ps.51: Eph. 6:12)
2. It was on this night Jacob would wrestle with God. Do you realize today no one else can wrestle with God for you – you must wrestle with God for yourself!

**IV. Jacob gets a new name: (Gen.32:13-32)** It was through this conflict and wrestling with God, Jacob began to change.

1. God meets us where we are – God always meets us where we are.
2. Jacob wouldn't let go of his opponent until he received a blessing – and the opponent wouldn't bless him until he told him his name.

**V. Jacob gets a new start: (Gen.37-50)** Even though Gen.37-50 revolve around Joseph, Jacob (now Israel) remains a central character. (Things we learn from Jacob)

1. **A new name and new beginning in no way indicates we'll never have another problem.** (Gen. 34:1-31; 38: 1-30)
2. **God didn't choose and bless Jacob because of who he was, but rather because of what he would become.**
3. **God will always meet us where we are and at our greatest point of need.** His plans are to protect and prosper us His way (Jer. 29:11).
4. **God is not hindered by your present failures or your checkered past.** He can give you a new start right where you stand!

**Jacob is our hero today because he serves as a testimony to us –** If we'll stand up to our past, God will change our future!