

# **PASTOR RAY’S BIBLE SCHOOL 201**

## **THE BOOK OF BEGINNINGS**

(How To Apply The Prophetic View Of Scripture To The Book Of Genesis)

### **Session Eleven**

#### **“Finding Your Story In God’s Story”**

##### **I. Going Deeper-Going Higher**

###### **A. The Prophetic/Contextual View Of Scripture**

1. Every course in our school of the Bible trains the student in the skills required to “see” as God sees.

2. What may seem like going “deeper” in the Word might also be described as going “higher”-terms that describe the practice of perspective.

###### **B. Examples**

1. Much of what we find in Genesis provides “seed thoughts” that should be understood and applied at several levels:

- History and Narrative-As we consider the lives of the great Patriarchs of scripture, the basic level is as history. These are the actual stories of actual men and women who walked with God.
- Precepts and Principles-At a deeper (or higher) level, these stories communicate great principles of life and faith. These are the great lessons of truth that have a general application, providing instruction that can be applied to everyone who seeks truth.
- Personal and Vital-But the deepest (or highest) level of revelation comes to us when there is a revelation of personal application of the Word to our own lives.

2. We spent a lot of time considering the fall of the human race in the sin of Adam:

- At the first level of revelation, we are provided with history. The events of Genesis 3 actually happened to a real man and a real woman, Adam and Eve.
- At the second level, there are the great principles or lessons to be learned from the history recorded there. For example: Obedience brings blessing; disobedience brings a curse; the first line of attack is always on the Word of God; man will always have 2 basic choices as to how to live
- But we ought to always seek the deepest (or highest) level of revelation: the application of what the history and the principles to our own lives...the level where we find OUR story in GOD'S story.

3. Or, we might consider it this way: The *information* should bring a *revelation* that results in *application* to our personal lives in the “now”.

- Information-In this sphere we simply read the story. Sadly, this is the level beyond which many Bible readers never go. It's good. But it's only a starting point.
- Revelation\*-At this level we look “deeper” into the information to glean the great lessons or principles that are communicated through the information.
- Application-Here's where we need to go for the Bible to become alive “in” us. This is where we identify with the life that is in the Word of God, where the Word is “made flesh”. At this level, we don't just “get into the Word”...the word gets “into” us!

\*We should not that the entire Word of God is a “revelation” from God in a general sense. But we use the term here to describe the personal or specific revelation that comes to us individually as the Holy Spirit moves us beyond the “acts” of God that we might learn his “ways”.

He made known his *ways* unto Moses, his *acts* unto the children of Israel.  
Psalm 103:7 KJV

All Israel could see what God had done. But Moses saw deeper!

## II. The Word Made Flesh

### A. What We Can Learn From The Old Testament Saints

And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:  
That ye be not slothful, but *followers of them* who through faith and patience inherit the promises.  
Hebrews 6:11-12 KJV

1. The context of these verses shows the writer was referring to the Old Testament Patriarchs.

2. “Followers” is from the Greek word which means to “mimic” or “imitate”—a direct reference to how we are to apply the Old Testament model to our own walk of faith!

3. The most specific model we are told to emulate is Abraham.

**“...that he (Abraham) might be the father (model) of all them that believe (you and me)...(those) who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham..**

Romans 4:11-12 KJV

## B. The 7 Separations Of Abraham

1. Genesis 12-24 focuses on the life of Abraham.

2. While each incident recorded provides us with rich instruction in the life of faith, a prophetic view of his entire life might be summed up in one word: separation.

3. There are at least 7 aspects of the faith of Abraham which, taken as a whole, convey the model of what each believer will experience in his personal walk of faith. Here’s a picture of his journey, seen from this perspective:

### Separations 1 & 2: From “Country” and “Kin”

Now the Lord said to Abram, " Go forth from your country, and from your relatives, and from your father's house, To the land which I will show you;

Genesis 12:1 NASB

- God will “call” all His children after the model of Abraham; it’s a call to destiny
- The call will mean putting God in first place, even if it means separation from “country” and “kin”
- The principle here is that following God means a separation from all that has been “familiar” to us
- The walk of faith does not necessarily mean a literal “leaving” of our father’s house or moving to a foreign country; but it will always involve an attitude of faith that is willing to do so if the Lord commands it.

" Anyone who wants to be my follower must love me far more than he does his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers, or sisters-yes, more than his own life-otherwise he cannot be my disciple. 27 And no one can be my disciple who does not carry his own cross and follow me.

Luke 14:26-27 TLB

### Separation 3: From Egypt

10 And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.

Genesis 12:10 KJV

- Almost immediately after his call, Abram experiences a “famine”, and flees into Egypt
- “Famine” is a spiritual principle connoting a season of trial, lack and testing; Egypt is, throughout scripture, a type of the world and the world system
- The troubles Abraham experienced and God’s dealings with him in Genesis 12 teach the lesson of how we must not run the world system when we encounter difficulty

#### Separation 4: From Lot

In Genesis 13:1-9, we read of how Abraham separated himself from his beloved nephew Lot as the only solution to strife

- Lot is a “righteous” man, but his story indicates how closely he walked with the world
- The lesson here is that there are some people from whom we must separate if we are to go forward in our own walk of faith
- Strife with the brethren must be avoided at all cost, even if it means yielding our own rights

#### Separation 5: From The Love Of Money

In Genesis 14:17-21, we see the initiation of the “tithing” principle of scripture. Abraham is a model of how we are to honor God with the first “tenth” (tithe) of all our increase. This principle is found throughout scripture and signifies a life delivered from the love of money, which is the “root of all evil”

#### Separation 6: From Ishmael

**One of Abraham’s major failures is recorded in Genesis 16, where Abraham yields to Sarah’s scheme to “short-cut” the promise of a son of their own by means of Abraham’s union with Hagar, Sarah’s Egyptian maidservant. Later, in Genesis 16, we see the agony Abraham endured in “casting out” the “bondwoman” (Hagar) and “her son” (Ishmael).**

- The lesson here is that faith requires patience in order to inherit the promises (Hebrews 6:12)
- If we seek to bring about God’s promises by means of our own flesh, what we bring forth will prove to be heartbreak to us

- Most believers will birth an “Ishmael” at some point in their journey; but eventually, we will have to separate ourselves from what we have birthed so that what God has birthed can have proper place

### Separation 7: From Isaac

In Genesis 22, we see **the most agonizing separation of all: the account of God’s command for Abraham to sacrifice his only son Isaac on the altar of faith**

- Isaac represented the fulfillment of all God’s promises to Abraham; He was the “son of promise” for whom the Patriarch had waited 24 long years
- This story teaches the lesson that even the best things God ever does for us must never take precedence over God Himself
- Abraham models a faith in God that is willing to offer up its most precious treasure should God command it
- This story is an obvious type of how God would “so love the world” that He would give “His only Son” as a sacrificial substitute for our sin!

4. The panoramic picture of the life of faith modeled by Abraham carries a theme of sanctification unto God.

- The story itself is just information
- The spiritual principles at work come by revelation
- But the greatest importance of the message only comes with application-as we walk through our journey with God, we will experience the principles modeled here-and that’s where the word is “made flesh” to us...*where we find our story in God’s story!*

## III. The Life Of Jacob

### A. In Pursuit Of The Blessing

1. Jacob is the son of Isaac, grandson of Abraham, and father of 12 sons who become the heads of the 12 tribes of the nation of Israel.

2. Jacob’s life story in Genesis 25-49 might best be described as a faith-model of one in passionate pursuit of God’s blessing.

3. Jacob’s story begins in his mother’s womb and gives us a clue as to his nature:

21 Isaac pleaded with the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was unable to have children. The Lord answered Isaac's prayer, and Rebekah became pregnant with twins. 22 But the two children struggled with each other in her womb. So she went to ask the Lord about it. "Why is this happening to me?" she asked.

23 And the Lord told her, "The sons in your womb will become two nations. From the very beginning, the two nations will be rivals. One nation will be stronger than the other; and your older son will serve your younger son."

24 And when the time came to give birth, Rebekah discovered that she did indeed have twins!  
Genesis 25:21-25 NLT

a. Here we learn that God is at work in our lives before we are born!

1 O Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. 13 You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. 15 You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. 16 You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.

Excerpted Verses from Psalm 139 NLT

- God is the Author of all...sovereignly choosing our parentage, our personality and our portion from the moment of conception
- What a rebuke are these verses to all (including some professing Christians) who would tell us that abortion is acceptable because human life doesn't really begin until birth!
- The Jacob nature is common to ALL believers! We will always be at war with the nature of our "twin" brother Esau, the one who "despises" his (proper) birthright

4. Then during the birth of the twins, Jacob's brother came out first...meaning that his brother would have a special place in the family, called the blessing of the firstborn...but the hand of Jacob was holding onto Esau's foot. Even from the moment of birth Jacob was grasping for the blessing!

24 And when the time came to give birth, Rebekah discovered that she did indeed have twins! 25 The first one was very red at birth and covered with thick hair like a fur coat. So they named him Esau. 26 Then the other twin was born with his hand grasping Esau's heel. So they named him Jacob.

Genesis 25:24-26

- Esau represents the nature of our first 'birth'. Jacob represents the nature of our "second birth".
- We are born of the flesh....but we must be born again.
- The "born again" nature instinctively struggles with our fleshly nature and grasps for its proper place of preeminence

- The Jacob nature ultimately wins the contest, because the “older will serve the younger (verse 23)!

5. They named him Jacob, which means “heel catcher”...and this passion for God, for the blessing of God, would mark his entire life!

6. As a young man, Jacob was so desperate for the blessing of God that he tricked his brother Esau into selling him his birthright. (Genesis 25:27-34)

7. Shortly thereafter, Jacob conspired with his mother to deceive his father Isaac...and they tricked Isaac into laying hands on Jacob instead of Esau, thereby stealing his brother’s birthright. (Genesis 27)

a. Some of this may seem wrong to us. And yet there is much to admire.

b. Jacob, even in his deceptions, had a passionate heart for God. He was “poor in spirit”, he was desperate to experience a place of blessing. This is a heart-attitude that God will always bless.

8. The application for Christ-followers: Grasping for wealth, fame or power was at the root of the fall of Lucifer as well as Adam and Eve. But the passionate pursuit of God and God’s blessing is not only legitimate, it is encouraged in Old and New Testament.

And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the Lord your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul,

Deuteronomy 11:13 KJV

But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the Lord charged you, to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul.

Joshua 22:5 KJV

And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord:

Jeremiah 29:13-14 KJV

Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart.

Psalms 119:2 KJV

And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.

Jeremiah 24:7 KJV

For thus saith the Lord unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live:

Amos 5:4 KJV

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:  
For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.  
Matthew 7:7-8 KJV

And (God) hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath  
determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if  
haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:  
Acts 17:26-27 KJV

9. Spiritual “violence” is the aggressive pursuit of God and the life of Jacob sets the  
example for those who follow, including us.

" And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men  
take it by force.  
Matthew 11:12 NASB

## B. First Mention Of Israel

1. There are many seed-principles to be gleaned from the life of Jacob, but none is more  
valuable than what we learn from the passage where Jacob wrestled with God.

22 Now he arose that same night and took his two wives and his two maids and his eleven children, and  
crossed the ford of the Jabbok. 23 And he took them and sent them across the stream. And he sent across  
whatever he had. 24 Then Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. 25 And when he  
saw that he had not prevailed against him, he touched the socket of his thigh; so the socket of Jacob's thigh  
was dislocated while he wrestled with him. 26 Then he said, " Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." But he  
said, " I will not let you go unless you bless me." 27 So he said to him, " What is your name?" And he said,  
" Jacob." 28 And he said, " Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with God and  
with men and have prevailed." 29 Then Jacob asked him and said, " Please tell me your name." But he said,  
" Why is it that you ask my name?" And he blessed him there. 30 So Jacob named the place Peniel, for he  
said, " I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been preserved." 31 Now the sun rose upon him just as he  
crossed over Peniel, and he was limping on his thigh.  
Genesis 32:22-32 NASB

## Applications For New Testament Believers

- At some point, every believer will experience what Martin Luther called “the dark night of the soul”. In this passage, Jacob is desperate. He is trying to get home. It is “night”. He was “left alone”. These details paint a picture of desperation, isolation and crisis. Jacob has escaped the ruthless oversight of his uncle Laban and cannot stay there. But going home means he will risk a fatal encounter with Esau, from whom he had “stolen” the birthright. The passage is a model for us when we come to the place of our own spiritual crisis.



- Jacob wrestled with “a man” who turned out to be God. Sooner or later, every child of God will “wrestle” with God. We can think we’re wrestling with human personalities or circumstances, but actually we are wrestling with God Himself.
- The wrestling continues until “daybreak”. The Psalmist tells us that “weeping endures for a night, but joy comes in the morning”. (Psalm 30:5) At the end of our struggle, the light of revelation and illumination will arise and we will find ourselves victorious in Christ!
- Jacob’s stubbornness and resolve is a key detail. He says to his opponent, “I will not let you go until you bless me” is a model of the kind of spiritual boldness and tenacity which always results in the blessing of God.
- As the striving intensifies, the issue of identity emerges. God asks for his name. And when Jacob gives an honest answer, “I am Jacob”, it’s more than what’s on his driver’s license. Jacob is confessing his total identity as the “heel catcher” and deceiver who has been running away from home for over 20 years. The application here is that when we can become totally honest and transparent with God, the blessing of God is close at hand. This “face to face” encounter with God implies an intimate moment of identity crisis and Jacob passes the test with his honesty.
- Once Jacob can confess to God who he really is, God reveals who He really is by *re-naming* him. No longer will he be known for who he *was*, (Jacob), but now for who he *is* and *will be* (Israel). Israel literally means “one who has wrestled with God and prevailed”. In this moment, Jacob not only receives a revelation of personal identity, but the name of the “Kingdom Nation” that he will father, the man whose 12 sons would become the heads of the 12 tribes that would become the nation of Israel. We can never know God until we know ourselves. And we can only truly know ourselves when we know God intimately. This “seed principle” is repeated in Matthew 16. When Simon gets the revelation of Jesus and could say, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God”...THEN Jesus could say to him, “And YOU are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church”!
- The climax of the wrestling match comes when God “touches” (“strikes” in Hebrew) Jacob’s thigh. From that moment forth, we are told Jacob “walked with a limp”. The lesson here is that we can never truly encounter God and be the same! A defining moment with God will mark us for life. We can never “walk” (live) the same way. And the evidence of our encounter with God will identify us for the rest of our lives. The application for you and me is that a genuine encounter with God will leave us with a “limp”. Humility replaces pride. We’ll be “leaning” on God the rest of our lives!
- In all of this, Jacob is a model for all believers, the “spiritual Israel” of God throughout the ages!

9. The last mention of Jacob in the Bible is over in the New Testament:

By faith Jacob, as he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.

Hebrews 11:21-22 NASB

a. We have shown the importance of “first mention” in scripture. But “last mention” is sometimes very significant as well.

b. At the end of his life, we find Jacob blessing his sons and worshipping God. The lessons here are:

- The passionate pursuit of God will always end well
- Our children will follow us in the faith
- True worship comes from intimate encounters with God, through which God has “touched” us in a way that will be in evidence even at the end of our lives

10. Jacob “blessed” his sons by giving them a prophetic identification.

a. In Genesis 49, Jacob prophesies over his sons just before his death.

b. Once we know Who God is, and Who we are, we are qualified to bring definition to our family.

11. Jacob’s son Joseph is the central character featured in the closing section of Book of Genesis.

12. In our closing session of this 201 Course, we’ll see how no other Old Testament character prefigures and models Christ more significantly than Joseph!