

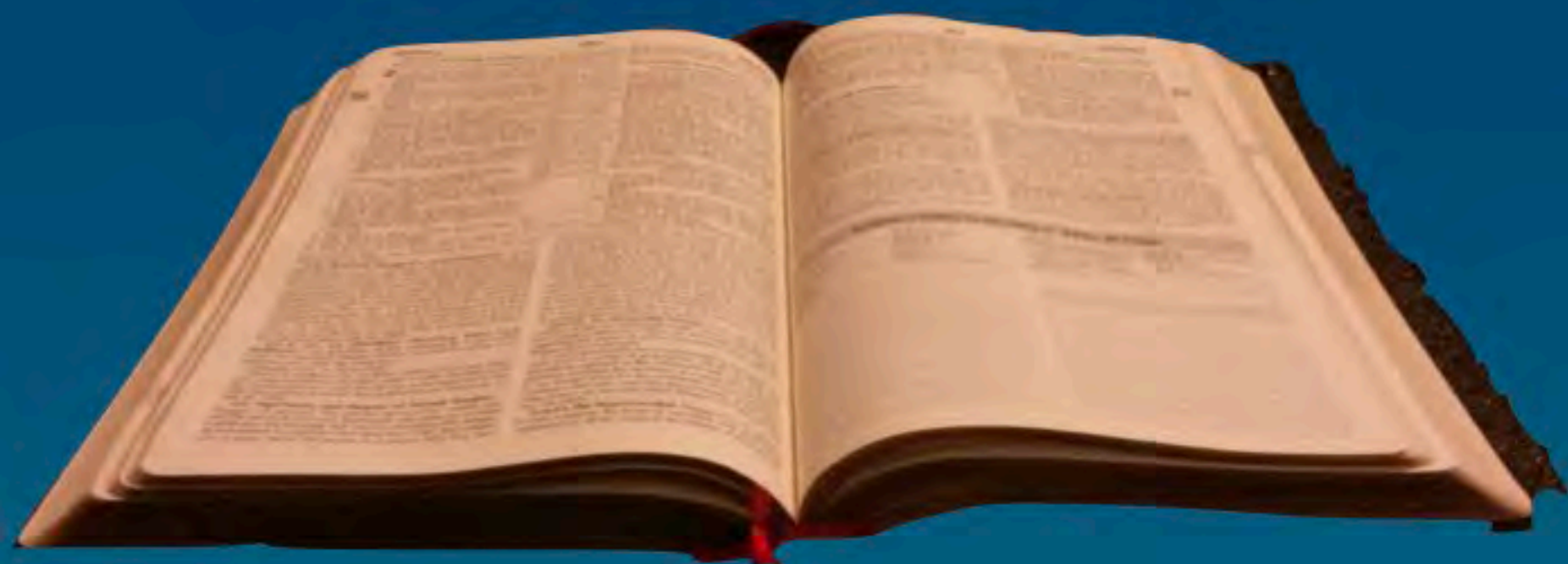
Biblical Characters...

ORDINARY

PEOPLE

EXTRAORDINARY

GOD



WHY ME?

- ❑ We might often ask: 'Why would God choose Me?'
- ❑ The Bible answers: 'Why not?'
- ❑ All Bible heroes, including the unsung ones, are ordinary people serving an extraordinary God!

“27 God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.”

YA'AQOBH

JACOB

**JACOB (YAKOV): A
PATRIARCH TO THE
NATION AND THE
FATHER OF THE 12
TRIBES OF 'ISRAEL'**

'Jacob'

masc. proper name; Old Testament patriarch, son of Isaac and Rebecca and father of the founders of the twelve tribes, from Late Latin *iacobus*, from Greek *iakobos*, from Hebrew *Ya'aqobh*, literally "one that takes by the heel; a supplanter"

- ❑ Jago, Iago, Diego, Giacomo, James, Jaime, Jacques, and Jack are all derived from Latin /Greek Iacobus (us being a masculine ending)
- ❑ James (brother of Jesus) was actually called Ya'aqobh
- ❑ In Spanish Bibles James is called Santiago!

“24 When the time came for her to give birth, there were twin boys in her womb.

25 The first to come out was red, and his whole body was like a hairy garment; so they named him Esau.”

“26 After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping Esau’s heel; so he was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when Rebekah gave birth to them.”

- ❑ You could say he 'came out fighting'
- ❑ This pattern of Jacob's life was indicated even before he took his first breath
- ❑ He had already wrestled his brother in the womb such that she went to inquire of The Lord

“23 The Lord said to her, “Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you will be separated; one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger.””

- ❑ This was an unexpected and certainly unconventional twist
- ❑ Culture would have dictated that the younger brother would serve the older
- ❑ The Lord either chose Jacob for this purpose or foresaw the journey - either way He had spoken

**JACOB WAS A
MANIPULATIVE AND
DECEPTIVE
SCOUNDREL!**

“29 Once when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came in from the open country, famished. 30 He said to Jacob, “Quick, let me have some of that red stew! I’m famished!” (That is why he was also called Edom.)”

“31 Jacob replied,
“First sell me your
birthright.”

32 “Look, I am
about to die,” Esau
said. “What good is
the birthright to
me?” 33 But
Jacob said, “Swear
to me first.” So he
swore an oath to
him, selling his
birthright to
Jacob.”

- ❑ The birthright of the firstborn son of Isaac and Rebekah would have meant headship of the clan and a double portion of the inheritance
- ❑ They were heirs to Abraham's promise
- ❑ Esau despised the birthright that should have been his own

**JACOB (AND HIS
MOTHER) USED
DECEIT TO ACCESS
HIS BLESSING**

“34 When Esau was forty years old, he married Judith daughter of Beerli the Hittite, and also Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittite.

35 They were a source of grief to Isaac and Rebekah.”

- ❑ Esau had known his father's favour as first-born and due to his hunting ability (which Isaac had a taste for wild game)
- ❑ Jacob had his mother's favour as a 'home-bird!'
- ❑ Esau compromised and brought grief to the family

- ❑ Isaac knew his days were ending so told Esau to hunt some game and prepare a meal so he could give him his blessing
- ❑ Rebekah overheard and then plotted with Jacob to deceive Isaac and steal the blessing
- ❑ They knew the power of the blessing of God - do we?

- ❑ Rebekah knew the way to her husband's heart... through his stomach... and prepared a tasty meal
- ❑ Jacob dressed in Esau's smelly clothes, a hairy outfit and lied
- ❑ Do to Isaac's age, confusion and blindness they successfully usurped the blessing

“22 Jacob went close to his father Isaac, who touched him and said, “The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau.””

“23 He did not recognise him, for his hands were hairy like those of his brother Esau; so he proceeded to bless him.

24 “Are you really my son Esau?” he asked. “I am,” he replied.”

JACOB HAD GOD'S BLESSING

“27 So he went to him and kissed him. When Isaac caught the smell of his clothes, he blessed him and said, “Ah, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field that the Lord has blessed. 28 May God give you heaven’s dew and earth’s richness—an abundance of grain and new wine.””

“29 May nations serve you and peoples bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may the sons of your mother bow down to you. May those who curse you be cursed and those who bless you be blessed.”

- ❑ Jacob received the blessing that was meant for the firstborn
- ❑ Esau returns to receive his father's blessing and is understandably and vengefully enraged
- ❑ Jacob is sent to flee to his Uncle Laban by his mother

**JACOB HAD A
REVELATION OF THE
PRESENCE AND
POWER OF GOD**



“11 When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep.

12 He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.”

“13 There above it stood the Lord, and he said: “I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. 14 Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south.””

“All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. 15 I am with you and 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 have promised you.”

- ❑ The main point here is not Jacob's ladder or - it is the promise of God!
- ❑ But Jacob's response was right - he honoured the presence of God with an altar and trusted and promised to be faithful to Him
- ❑ God will always be faithful - will we?

**JACOB REAPED
WHERE HE HAD
SOWN AND HAD TO
DEAL WITH THE
CONSEQUENCES**

- ❑ Jacob fell in love with Laban's second daughter, Rachel worked for 7 years for her hand in marriage
- ❑ The 7 years seemed like just a day to him!
- ❑ But Laban deceived Jacob and sent his elder daughter Leah into him

“25 When morning came, there was Leah! So Jacob said to Laban, “What is this you have done to me? I served you for Rachel, didn’t I? Why have you deceived me?””

- ❑ Jacob had a taste of his own medicine!
- ❑ He was deceived in a way that was similar to how he had deceived his father
- ❑ Within the culture of the day, he was still able to marry Rachel but the knock on effect was great

“26 Laban replied,
“It is not our custom
here to give the
younger daughter in
marriage before the
older one. 27 Finish
this daughter’s
bridal week; then we
will give you the
younger one also, in
return for another
seven years of
work.” 28 And
Jacob did so.”

- ❑ The Lord saw Leah's pain and favoured her with children first
- ❑ But things got complicated - jealousy and desperation meant he servants bore children too
- ❑ God did hear Rachel's plea too - she bore Joseph and Benjamin

**JACOB WAS THE
HEAD OF A RATHER
MESSY FAMILY!**

- ❑ Our minds can often romanticise the idea of the tribes of Israel
- ❑ The reality is that they were always a very human and messy family - from their very beginning!
- ❑ Jealousy, fighting, immorality and deception were family traits, but God is always faithful

- ❑ As Jacob's story continues, he falls out with and flees Laban but had cleverly grown his own family's wealth
- ❑ Laban pursues him and they make an agreement and Jacob heads for Canaan
- ❑ This meant facing Esau again so he sends gifts ahead

“3 Then the Lord said to Jacob, “Go back to the land of your fathers and to your relatives, and I will be with you.””

**JACOB PREVAILED
IN A WRESTLE WITH
GOD - THIS IS A
NAME CHANGER**

“24 So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak.
25 When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob’s hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man.”

“26 Then the man said, “Let me go, for it is daybreak.” But Jacob replied, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.”

27 The man asked him, “What is your name?”

“Jacob,” he answered.”

“28 Then the man said, “Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.””

- ❑ Do not expect God encounters to always be warm and fuzzy!
- ❑ Do expect God to be good and faithful to His promises
- ❑ The ongoing story of the history of this family of Jacob (Israel) is of very complicated but it brings us God's promise in Jesus

'Israel'

Old English Israel, "the Jewish people, the Hebrew nation," from Latin Israel, from Greek, from Hebrew yisra'el "he that striveth with God" - symbolic proper name conferred on Jacob and extended to his descendants, from sara "he fought, contended" + El "God."

**JACOB LED WITH A
LIMP**

- ❑ There is no genuine way a man could win a wrestle with God, and Jacob indeed limped from that day, so what did it mean that he prevailed?
- ❑ He had realised he needed God - His blessing trumps all
- ❑ Will we value God's blessing over all?

“3 He himself went on ahead and bowed down to the ground seven times as he approached his brother. 4 But Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; he threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. And they wept.”

- ❑ Jacob sought to pacify Esau after all these years with material gifts
- ❑ But in this beautiful story we see how maturity can help us to know what is truly important - family relationships
- ❑ Let us be a mature church family

**JACOB'S GREATEST
FAITH MOMENT
WAS NOT WHAT WE
MIGHT IMAGINE!**

“20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau in regard to their future.

21 By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph’s sons, and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff.”



- ❑ In Genesis 48 Jacob deliberately blesses Ephraim over his older brother Manasseh!
- ❑ This was God's plan, not human custom, convention or idea
- ❑ At the end of his journey, Jacob knew that God is faithful, is worthy of worship, and has favour upon the un-favoured

**THE STORY OF
YA'AQOBH / ISRAEL
BRINGS US TO JESUS**

“1 This is the
genealogy of
Jesus the Messiah
the son of David,
the son of
Abraham:

2 Abraham was
the father of
Isaac, Isaac the
father of Jacob,
Jacob the father
of Judah and his
brothers...”

“...16 and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, and Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah.”

GOD CHOOSES YOU...

- ❑ Do not rule yourself, or others, out due to your failures
- ❑ Do not prioritise material things over the blessing of God
- ❑ Do not doubt that God's purposes will be fulfilled

GOD CHOOSES YOU...

- ❑ Do trust in the plans and promises of God
- ❑ Do recognise your own weakness in the light of His strength
- ❑ Do seek the blessing and will of The Lord

LET US PRAY

- ❑ If you want an encounter with the Living God today
- ❑ If you need to keep on wrestling for the blessing
- ❑ For God's people across the the world to trust together in His plan and purpose