

God's Faithfulness and His Grace

1. Intro and Overview

- a. Two attributes of God are highlighted in Genesis 24-36
 - i. The Faithfulness of God
 - ii. The Grace of God

2. The Faithfulness of God

- a. Isaac
 - i. Haran
 - 1. Abraham sends his servant to find a wife for Isaac (24:1-8), because
 - a. Isaac was neither to marry a Canaanite (24:3) nor return to Haran (24:6-8)
 - 2. When God providentially had led the servant to Rebekah, he attributes his successful journey to the faithfulness of God (24:26-27)
 - a. *hesed* = lovingkindness or faithfulness
 - b. *emet* = truth, trustworthiness, or faithfulness
 - c. The combination of the two words express the total trustworthiness of God to keep His word
 - ii. Gerar
 - 1. Background of famine in Canaan and Isaac's intent to go to Egypt
 - 2. The LORD's appearance and message (26:2-4)
 - a. Marks of the Abrahamic covenant
 - i. Personal blessing
 - ii. Land
 - iii. Many descendants
 - iv. Worldwide blessing
 - 3. The LORD's blessing (26:12-14)

- a. Hundredfold harvest
 - b. Flocks and herds
 - c. The Philistines envied him
 - iii. Beersheba
 - 1. The LORD's appearance and message (26:24)
 - a. Blessing
 - b. Many descendants
 - 2. The LORD provided water (26:32)
 - a. Isaac named the well *Shibah* (26:33) which means oath
 - i. There, he and Abimelech exchanged oaths (26:31)
 - b. City is called Beersheba
 - i. *Beer* means "well"
 - ii. Beersheba means
- b. Jacob
 - i. Blessing
 - 1. Isaac gives to Jacob the blessing of Abraham (27:27-29)
 - a. Personal blessing (27:27)
 - b. Great nation (27:28-29a)
 - c. Curse and blessing (27:29b)
 - 2. The blessing seems unlikely since Jacob is leaving his father's house, but God will keep his covenant.
 - ii. Journey
 - 1. Beersheba
 - a. Isaac reiterates the blessing of Abraham to Jacob (27:3-4)
 - i. "God Almighty" (27:3) recalls 17:1
 - ii. Many descendants (27:3)
 - iii. Land (27:4)
 - b. He explicitly refers to the "blessing of Abraham" (27:4)

- c. God does bless Jacob during his journey
 - i. Meant to be a few days (27:44), but it ends up being 20 years (31:38, 41)
 - ii. Marries in Haran
 - iii. Fathers eleven sons
 - iv. Acquires livestock and servants (30:43)

2. Bethel

- a. The LORD Himself confirmed the covenant (28:13-15) highlighting four features of the Abrahamic covenant
 - i. Land
 - ii. Many descendants
 - iii. Worldwide blessing
- b. Jacob names the place Bethel
 - i. *Beth-El* means “house of God”
- c. Jacob makes a promise/pledge also (28:20-22)
 - i. Upon a successful journey
 - ii. “the LORD will be my God” (28:21)
 - iii. “I will surely give a tenth to You” (28:22)
 - 1. Like Abraham’s tithe (14:20)
 - 2. Fulfilled in Levitical instruction (Lev. 27:30, 32)
- d. God provides lavishly during Jacob’s time in Haran (30:43)

3. Mahanaim

- a. *Mahanaim* is a dual form of *Maḥaneh*, which means a camp. *Maḥanaim* means “two camps.”
- b. Here Jacob split his company into two parts to give his family a chance to flee if Esau attacked the first company.
- c. Jacob’s Prayer (32:9-12)

- i. He ascribes all his blessing to the LORD's faithfulness (32:10)
 - 1. "Lovingkindness" and "faithfulness" are *hesed* and *emet*
 - ii. He implores the LORD for deliverance (32:11-12)
 - 1. He asks in accordance to God's promise, "For You said..."
 - d. *Mahanaim* is near Peniel where Jacob wrestled with a man until daybreak, at which point he finally receives God's blessing
 - 4. Bethel
 - a. God calls Jacob to return to Bethel (35:1)
 - b. God reaffirms the covenant (35:10-12)
 - i. Expansion to include many nations (35:11)
 - ii. Land (35:12)
 - iii. God's word of promise endures
 - 1. In contrast to man (1 Pet. 1:24-25)
 - 2. Also declared in Pentateuch (Num. 23:19)
 - 3. Affirmed also in Psalm 12 (Ps. 12:6-7)
 - 4. So wonderful is God's faithfulness, it is sung about (Ps. 89:1-2)
 - iv. Treasure God's word and His promises
 - 1. Not only for eternal life but for this life also
 - a. Matt. 6:25-33
 - b. Luke 12:31-32
 - 2. The LORD is the perfection of faithfulness and truth
 - a. "abounding in lovingkindness and truth" (Ex. 34:6)
 - v. Don't pick and choose from the Bible
 - 1. Augustine:
 - a. "People love truth when it enlightens them, but hate truth when it accuses them."
 - vi. Let it guide every aspect of life

1. Ps. 119:97, "It is my meditation all the day"
2. Ps. 119:105, "a lamp to my feet and a light to my path"

3. The Grace of God

a. God chooses those whom He will bless according to His grace

i. "Unconditional Election"

1. From the Canons of Dort
2. U of T-U-L-I-P

ii. Seen in Gen 24-36 in

1. Pre-birth Election
2. Unmerited Election

iii. Pre-birth Election

1. "the older shall serve the younger" (25:23)
2. Paul makes this a case study in God's gracious election
 - a. "*the twins* were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad... *His* choice would stand, not because of works but because of Him who calls" (Rom. 9:10-12)
3. Later he explains election as not based on anything that man does but solely on the grace of God
 - a. "*does not depend* on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God" (Rom. 9:16)
 - b. "if it [i.e., God's choice] is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace" (Rom. 11:5-6)

iv. Unmerited Election

1. Jacob did not merit his election
 - a. Moses highlights
 - b. Deception (27:18-27)
 - i. Rebekah is the mastermind, but Jacob was the liar who played the part
 - c. We can add to this also:
 - i. Polygamy

- ii. Favoritism of Joseph (Genesis 37)
 - iii. Tolerance of idols in his household
- 2. Unmerited election is also true of Isaac and Abraham
- 3. God chooses for salvation based on His grace, not based on merit
- 4. Also true in the New Covenant
 - a. God chooses for salvation based on His grace, not on merit, from eternity past, those whom He will regenerate, convert, sanctify, and glorify
 - i. “not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace... from all eternity [or, “before time began” (NKJV)]” (2 Tim. 1:9)
 - ii. “before the foundation of the world” (Eph. 1:4)
 - iii. “from the foundation of the world” (Rev. 13:8)
 - b. Not based on good works but for good works
 - i. “we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works” (Eph. 2:10)
 - ii. “the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age... to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds” (Titus 2:11-15)
- 4. Conclusion
 - a. This misunderstanding of the gospel and the New Covenant has been around for hundreds of years
 - i. Reformation of 16th century
 - ii. Also in the 19th century
 - 1. Spurgeon
 - a. We preach salvation from sin; We say that Christ is able to save a man; and we mean by that that he is able to

save him from sin and to make him holy; to make him a new man. No person has any right to say, "I am saved," while he continues in sin as he did before. How can you be saved from sin while you are living in it? A man that is drowning cannot say he is saved from the water while he is sinking in it; a man that is frost-bitten cannot say, with any truth, that he is saved from the cold while he is stiffened in the wintry blast. No, man, Christ did not come to save thee in thy sins, but to save thee from thy sins; not to make the disease so that it should not kill thee, but to let it remain in itself mortal, and, nevertheless, to remove it from thee, and thee from it. (Spurgeon, Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, 11:138.)

iii. No different today

1. God has chosen us not according to our merit, but according to His grace, but He has done so to draw us out of sin and into a life of holiness in conformity to Christ that we would bear much fruit for the glory of God.
2. Those who have come to obedience to the Lord have the Holy Spirit who through His word convicts, teaches, and disciplines you to conformity to Christ. He redeems (frees) you from every lawless deed. He who calls you is faithful; He will do it.
 - a. "He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:5).
3. The LORD who calls you by His grace is faithful to complete the work of salvation in you.