



Was Jacob A Deceiver Or A Dreamer.

Or Was It All About Selective Breeding? Not Racial Breeding, But Spiritual Breeding.

(See a recap analysis of heroes of faith below.)

Almost invariably whenever Jacob is mentioned in any context, he is somehow described as a deceiver or a scandalous person who cheated his brother Esau out of what was rightfully Esau's. I know there are various reasons for this but, in Jacob's defense, I would like to focus on Jacob's life in sum total, in Biblical context, and in light of God's dealing with Jacob, and His people, and the future of God's people.

First of all when I read the whole story of Jacob I reason that he is the only honest person involved in the events of Jacob life. And I say this because without understanding the whole story, we can look at Jacob's life and use human reasoning to judge Jacob.

Esau was born first, be it so briefly before Jacob. Legally Esau did deserve the rights of the first born. And if we examine the events of Esau's life, we do see that he really did receive the 'earthly' inheritance of Isaac (the wealth, the land, running the 'camp'). When Jacob left the camp, all Esau desired was his.

And when and who named Jacob 'deceiver'? Was it at birth? Being named Jacob because he was grasping Esau's heel? Seems to me that two embryos confined to a small space, both looking for a comfortable spot, or two embryos positioned 'head to foot' could be hanging on to each other. I see nothing deceitful about that. In fact I see a character trait in Jacob: he was willing to struggle with God and man and prevail.

And is it legally binding if two young men (or boys?) who probably were consistently addressing the birth order and who was going to be in charge, have lunch together and Esau is starving and Jacob, who 'minded the camp', prepared food and jested that the birthright be sold for stew? Esau just shows a serious disregard (or despised it) for 'his birthright'. Eventually he only brought grief to his parents concerning Esau's poor choice of wives, bad blood if you will, taken from outside the family group.

And it was really Rebekah's fear of having Esau in charge when it came time for Isaac to relinquish command that led to her 'urging or commanding, even threatening' of Jacob to get to Isaac first, even if deceitfully (on her part). It was Esau who, when he thought he had lost it all, named Jacob as 'deceiver'. In reality all Esau lost was the 'spiritual' birthright. Jacob had to leave and Rebekah had to endure Esau's poor leadership.

Even Jacob's uncle Laban, consistently cheated or 'deceived' Jacob, Even up to the time of Jacob's departure, when the two made an agreement about Jacob's wages, the spotted sheep. Laban took the current 'spotted sheep' for himself and Jacob had to breed his own spotted sheep (by the way, the spotted sheep today is known for its desirable traits) which we might compare to a true spiritual leader who breeds and maintains desirable traits among its members.

The story of Dinah in Gen 34 is an ugly chapter and many accuse Jacob of not exercising control in the matter of his daughter being raped by a local resident. Jacob's sons did try to negotiate a solution with the residents but Jacob's sons actually brought the incident to a shameful ending. Jacob was in a bad place by order of God for a purpose that may only be described as judgment on a people and a learning experience for God's people – how do we deal with a pagan world around us?

After Jacob, and among his twelve sons (the future generations), we see Joseph (who had a few dreams of his own) being the next to receive the spiritual blessing of leadership, even though he was far from being the first born of twelve. Joseph isolated God's people away from pagan influences in Egypt, and prepared them for a new isolation in a promised land. Even though future leadership among God's people was suspect at times, the genealogies were preserved, and enough good leadership eventually led to Christ's permanent leadership role. And God did give Jacob a dream about that day: a stairway (or ladder) to heaven.

In the following verses we see 'the respect' that Pharaoh and the Egyptians had for Jacob concerning his burial. We have to ask 'how many Egyptians worshiped the God of Jacob (and Joseph), how many intermarried with the Hebrews, or stood by them during their persecution, or even joined them in their trip to the Promised Land?' Isn't that what evangelism is all about?

Genesis 50:1. And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him. 2. And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel. 3. And forty days were fulfilled for him; for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed: and the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days.

4. And when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying, 5. My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now therefore let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come again. 6. And Pharaoh said, Go up, and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear.

7. And Joseph went up to bury his father: and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, 8. And all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house: only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen. 9. And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company.

10. And they came to the threshingfloor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days. 11. And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians: wherefore the name of it was called Abelmizraim, which is beyond Jordan.

12. And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them: 13. For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought with the field for a possession of a buryingplace of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre. 14. And Joseph returned into Egypt, he, and his brethren, and all that went up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father.

Exodus 12:37. And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children. 38. And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle.



Did Joseph Invent the Grain Futures Market?

And did he profit from ill gotten grain?

Or was it a matter of survival for all those around Joseph; or was it a matter of instituting a ‘provisional’ form of government, or was it a matter of teaching self reliance to citizenry; or was it a matter of instituting a 20 percent flat tax (provide for the common good), or was it a matter of opportunistic Pharaohs who turned servitude into slavery and bring judgment on their own people and themselves; or was it a matter of blessing God’s people for future accomplishments; or was it a matter of God meaning it for good, but man using it for evil, or was it a matter of man meaning it for evil, but God using it for good?

Gen 47:

11. And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.

12. And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families.

13. And there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very sore, so that the land of Egypt and all the land of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine.

14. And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought: and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.

15. And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said, Give us bread: for why should we die in thy presence? for the money faileth.

16. And Joseph said, Give your cattle; and I will give you for your cattle, if money fail.

17. And they brought their cattle unto Joseph: and Joseph gave them bread in exchange for horses, and for the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds, and for the asses: and he fed them with bread for all their cattle for that year.

18. When that year was ended, they came unto him the second year, and said unto him, We will not hide it from my lord, how that our money is spent; my lord also hath our herds of cattle; there is not ought left in the sight of my lord, but our bodies, and our lands:

19. Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land? buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh: and give us seed, that we may live, and not die, that the land be not desolate.

20. And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's.

21. And as for the people, he removed them to cities from one end of the borders of Egypt even to the other end thereof.

22. Only the land of the priests bought he not; for the priests had a portion assigned them of Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them: wherefore they sold not their lands.

23. Then Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh: lo, here is seed for you, and ye shall sow the land.

24. And it shall come to pass in the increase, that ye shall give the fifth part unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones.

25. And they said, Thou hast saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants.

26. And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth part, except the land of the priests only, which became not Pharaoh's.

27. And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly.

28. And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years.

Genesis 50

18. And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants.

19. And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God?

20. But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.

21. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.

Exodus 1

6. And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation.

7. And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them.

8. Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.

9. And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we:

10. Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land.

11. Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses.

12. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel.

13. And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour:

14. And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of

service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigour.

15. And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one was Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah:

16. And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see them upon the stools; if it be a son, then ye shall kill him: but if it be a daughter, then she shall live.

Exodus 12

30. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead.

31. And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the Lord, as ye have said.

32. Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also.

33. And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, We be all dead men.

34. And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneadingtroughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders.

35. And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment:

36. And the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians.

Was Abraham treacherous, was Isaac unaware, did Jacob deceive, did Joseph plunder the Egyptians while in charge, did Moses blow it, did Rahab lie, etc.?

My immediate response would be “let him who is without sin cast the first stone”.

But to be more thoughtful:

Many stones have been thrown, but qualified with “if God can forgive them....” Sounds good but we rarely hear the Hebrews 11 part, or we rarely hear the stories in a context of “walk a mile in my sandals”.

And of course many of the predestination and or holiness philosophy highlight and distort these incidents to prove their point and even minimize Hebrews 11 to distort the ‘faith’ issues of that chapter. Still thoughtful, I hope.

We have already covered Jacob’s (if one takes the time to study Jacob’s life, we see that he is really the victim of all the scandalous people around him) and Joseph’s stellar characters (at least Biblically – we all sin more than we admit).

And we could include Abel, Joshua, etc. in this list. Of course Moses had some faith issues that God was angry about (welcome to the club) but God visibly and indirectly displayed His glory to Moses, because Moses pleased God. We all should be so fortunate. Or even to converse with God personally so many times. The

‘sandal concept’, how about 120 years of the most severe trials of any human? My hat goes off to Moses, who did not pass go, but went directly to the real Promised Land. I can’t wait to meet all these heroes.

And of course Lot did not make the list; he cast his lot with the world and paid the price. Will we see him at the banquet? Not sure. What about Adam and Eve? Not on the list, but after their sin they showed remorse and God slew an animal to cover their body and also their sin. And of course Cain and Abel brought sacrifices which show some kind of family tradition. And of course Seth the replacement for Abel has a special attachment: ‘men began to call on the name of the Lord’. Of course Enoch was special (as was Abel). What about the rest of Adam and Seth’s line? What happened to them before the Flood where God rescued Noah?

What about the post flood patriarchs where Eber historically appears to be Melchizedek (passing the torch to Abraham; later Jethro again passing the torch to Moses)? I suppose the Book of Life would not fit into one of our books. But we have 66 other books to fill in

some gaps for some basic understanding of how to carry a torch.

What about Isaac? If anyone deserves a negative report, it is Isaac. God blessed him, and he did the ‘my sister thing’ but I do not sense an element of faith here. And when it came to bless a son (Esau or Jacob) he certainly liked Esau, even though Esau was described as ‘despising his birthright’. Given that Esau lost it when he found out Jacob got there first, I have to believe he was talking about the material blessing, which he got anyway. The spiritual blessing is what Jacob got. Through foreknowledge and providence God showed his love for Jacob and His hatred for Esau. Anyone of reasonable understanding should appreciate the implications.

Now Rahab was in a difficult position. Either she chooses to tell the truth, out of fear, or she chooses to cast her lot with the Israelites. Sounds like faith in her analysis of the situation. I guess we could say she lied to save her life, much like the Gibeonites who deceived Joshua. Both cases a form of capitulation to a sensible

alternative. And maybe this is analogous to a lot people of 'faith in Christ' who initially reason that eternal life is a whole lot better than eternal death. Then comes the testing to see if 'you are electable' or 'qualify to be one of the chosen'. **Romans 10:9** that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. (or in the OT, faith in the promised sacrifice)" Many people have a hard time with that, having to make the choice, that is.

If we could flash forward to David, for just a second, 50 years a star, 20 years the murderer: found out, confessed, repented, and paid the price, Hebrews 11, next case. Seriously, no way to justify this incident or any incident for that matter. But, next case.

And the next case would be Solomon who, like his father David, was greatly and willingly used by God. And of course suffered from the same human frailty later in life (again, welcome to the club – pride in self or taking God for granted?) not to mention the damaging effects of all their political and spiritual enemies. But, I would put

their accomplishments up against anyone else's. Especially those who are so depraved, they must trash others to make up for their own non-accomplishments.

In fact, we recently had a US President trashed for saying 'we need to make tough choices'. God rewarded us with the worst US President ever. Sound familiar? Nothing new under the sun?

How about Jonah? All we hear was "he was reluctant". If we look at his history we see that he wore out about 36 years' worth of sandals prophesying to deaf ears in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Then God wants him to go to a bunch of pagans with the same message. How many of us would not jump ship at this point. And Jonah is successful in Nineveh. But Jonah is depressed, maybe "why not my own people"?

Not sure if this is true about Jonah, but looking at history, we can add additional insights into Scripture. Instead of knee jerk understanding, or preprogrammed interpretations.

And we do have Daniel who is not mentioned specifically (Heb. 11:33), but through his proper upbringing and devotion, developed special skills to influence 4 Babylonian Kings, Darius the Mede and maybe even Cyrus the Persian to pave the way for the Jews to return to Jerusalem after a 70 year captivity. We talk so much about prophecy we gloss over Daniel's successful witness to the world around him.

Now what about Abraham, the father of the faithful? Seems like he deceived not once but twice, 'she is my sister' (really a half-sister, but...) out of fear for his life? And this involved two powerful men of their day, Pharaoh and Abimelech (Philistine predecessor).

The 'sandal concept' here would be that Abraham was forced to go to an unknown place in a time where lawlessness prevailed. The accusation here is that Abraham jeopardized Sarah's wellbeing. Like Rahab, Abraham had to make a choice and I would not rule out Abraham's faith in God to preserve the choice he thought he had to make. And God is involved in both situations in support of Abraham (Remember

providence? And speaking of, Abraham is blessed with necessary goods in both instances.).

In both instances God worked out the situation by revealing that these two men had respect for the institution of marriage. This had to surprise Abraham and was more of a lesson in interactions with a pagan world.

Abraham later had dealings with Abimelech at least in a political sense. Trust is a big word in any negotiations. This is what we should send to Washington.

And when Joseph went to Egypt he found the same kind of Pharaoh. Again, great interactions with the pagan world.

After Joseph died, my guess is that the Hebrews isolated themselves from the culture, aroused suspicion, and eventually were enslaved by a new Pharaoh. Much like today. We have abandoned the culture and the courts and the pharaoh in the White House are just looking for ways to be our taskmasters.

Why don't we lift up the 'heroes of faith' as Hebrews 11 describes them? We need new heroes to engage the culture, not scapegoats.

What if those who followed Joseph had leadership that would have at least built a standing army to contend with the Egyptians and control their environment, and then march into Canaan, eliminate the opposition, set up an ongoing witness to the world of God's Coming Glory, and then the Gospel could have gone out into all the world from Jerusalem (instead of through Europe, America, etc)? Well, too much to ask for? And, for a lack of consistent leadership, there go we.

Heroes of Faith:

<http://historyreally.org/pitcairn.html>

Name/Years From Creation/BC/Total	2949-3416 BC 1055-588 467 Total Years
David 2949-2990 1055-1015 40 AU	Nathan 2960-2959 BC 1044-1015
Solomon 2989-3029 1015-975 40 AU	Gad 2987 BC 1017 Shemaiah 3029 BC 975
Judah - Southern Kingdom	
Rehoboam 3029-3046 975-958 17	Jeroboam 3029-3050 975-954 22
Ahijah 3046-3049 958-955 3	Nadab 3050-3051 954-953 2
Asa 3049-3090 955-914 41	Baasha 3051-3074 953-930 24
Jehoshaphat 3090-3115 914-889 25	Elah 3074-3075 930-929 2
Jehu 3107	Zimri(7days)Omri 3075-3086 929-918 12
Ahaziah 3119-3120 885-884 1	Ahaz 3086-3107 918-897 22
Athaliah 3120-3126 884-878 6	Ahaziah 3106-3108 895-896 2
Joash 3126-3165 878-839 40	Joram(Jehoram) 3108-3120 896-884 12
Amaziah(Amashiah) 3165-3194 839-810 29	Jehu 3120-3148 884-856 28
Uzziah(Azariah) 3194-3246 810-759 57	Jehoshaphat 3148-3165 856-839 17
Jotham 3246-3262 759-742 16	Jehoash(Joash) 3163-3179 841-825 16
Ahaz 3262-3278 742-726 16	Jeroboam II 3179-3220 825-784 41
Manasseh 3262-3361 698-643 55	No King 3220-3232 784-773 12
Amon 3361-3363 643-641 2	Zedekiah 3277-3306 727-698 29
Josiah 3363-3394 641-610 31	Menahem 3232-3243 773-761 11
Jehoiakim 3395-3405 610-599 10	Pekahiah 3243-3245 761-759 2
Jehoiachin 3405 599 3 mo	Pekah 3245-3265 759-739 20
Zedekiah 3405-3416 599-588 11	No King 3265-3274 739-730 9
	Hoshea 3274-3283 730-721 9

When I retired end of 2011, ME TV was just coming into focus. All the old 50's and early 60's TV I grew up on. Old values, content, meaningful, and great continuity. I thought, maybe revival?

I am still watching Perry Mason and still amazed at the integrity portrayed about the legal profession and conscience of the defendant. Well, again the projection of what should be and in most cases was.

Of course today, ethics and morals are extinct. And personal responsibility has been turned into personal rights and 'you owe me big time'. Law suit city and destruction of business ethics.

As Christians we long for the 'days of yesteryear'. And to see the Lone Ranger and Tonto ride into town and clean out the bad guys. Seems like Jonah was a hero type. Really?

After running away from God's Command and living in a fish for 3 days and night, Jonah went to Nineveh and got not only the populace's attention most importantly got the King's attention. Seems like God got Nineveh ready for Jonah and his warning. I suppose things got so bad, Nineveh was ready for God's solution.

Maybe in churches we should not be trashing Jonah for reluctance, but look at his reasoning for his reluctance and how God used Jonah to change a culture.

At least for that generation, Nineveh was destroyed 60 years later. And the Northern Kingdom went down some 30 years after Jonah.

I think we need a steady supply of heroes and those who support them. And a lot less of those who trash heroes to support their depravity.

Jonah 3 (NKJ)

- Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying,
- "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you."
- So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three-day journey in extent.
- And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day's walk. Then he cried out and said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"
- So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them.
- Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes.
- And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, "Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water.
- "But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands.
- "Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?"
- Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.

Jonah 4 (NKJ)

- But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he became angry.
- So he prayed to the Lord, and said, "Ah, Lord, was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore I fled previously to Tarshish; for I know that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm.
- "Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live!"
- Then the Lord said, "Is it right for you to be angry?"

- So Jonah went out of the city and sat on the east side of the city. There he made himself a shelter and sat under it in the shade, till he might see what would become of the city.
- And the Lord God prepared a plant and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be shade for his head to deliver him from his misery. So Jonah was very grateful for the plant.
- But as morning dawned the next day God prepared a worm, and it so damaged the plant that it withered.
- And it happened, when the sun arose, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat on Jonah's head, so that he grew faint. Then he wished death for himself, and said, "It is better for me to die than to live."
- Then God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?" And he said, "It is right for me to be angry, even to death!"
- But the Lord said, "You have had pity on the plant for which you have not labored, nor made it grow, which came up in a night and perished in a night.
- "And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left, and also much livestock?"

I suspect that Jonah wore out a lot of sandals dealing with the Northern Kingdom's reluctance to return to God's Law and His Commandments. At least 18 years. Inspired me with purpose and resolve, and to not jump ship. Jonah 4:2.

Ussher Annals: 3179c AM, 3889 JP, 825 BC, 15 SK, 1 NK
 552. God used Jeroboam II to deliver Israel. He recaptured Damascus and Hamath, which rightly belonged to the tribe of Judah. (#2Sa 8:6 2Ch 8:3) [E53] He restored the former borders (#Nu 13:21) from the entrance into Hamath to the sea of the plain. This fulfilled the prophecy of the Lord spoken by Jonah, the prophet, the son of Amittai. (#2Ki 14:25,27,28) [L77]
 2 kings 14:25. He restored the territory of Israel from the entrance of Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which He had spoken through His servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet who was from Gath Hepher.

