House Church Series, Lesson 5

JACOB’S FAMILY: STRUGGLING WITH MEN; STRUGGLING WITH GOD

Genesis 32–33,35:1–15 (see also 47:31–49:28; Heb11:21)

Key Verse: 32:28

* STRUGGLING WITH MEN (25:21–34; 27:1–31:55)

1. What was the meaning of Jacob’s name? (25:26a) How did his struggles for his brother’s birthright and his father’s blessing reveal that his name fit him? (25:29–34; 27:27–36; 28:3–4) How did God bless Jacob, and how was this related to Isaac’s blessing? (28:13–15) In his vow, about what was Jacob really concerned? (28:20–22)
2. How did Jacob’s struggles to get Rachel and wealth further reveal his character and his value system? From Leah’s struggle, what can house church wives learn? (29:31–35) After all Jacob’s struggles to get what he wanted, what broken relationships and strife resulted? (27:41–42; 31:1–2,52–53; 30:1–20)

* STRUGGLING WITH GOD (32:1–33:20)

1. Though the angels of God met him, about what was Jacob worried? (32:1–5) How did the news of Esau’s coming with 400 men affect him? (32:7–8) How did he begin to struggle with God in prayer? (32:9–12) Though he prayed, how did he keep trying to solve the problem in his own way? (32:13–21)
2. What is the significance that Jacob was left alone, sending his family and possessions ahead? (32:22–24a) How did God intervene? (32:24b) Describe Jacob’s struggle with God (32:25–26; cf. Hos12:4). What blessing was he seeking? How did God bless him? (32:27–30) With whom should house church leaders struggle, and for what?
3. After meeting God personally, how did Jacob’s view of the world change? (32:30–32) His view of Esau? (33:1–11) What is the significance of his building an altar and calling it “El Elohe Israel”? (33:20)

* WORSHIPING GOD; BLESSING THE TWELVE TRIBES (35:1–15; 47:31–49:28)

[Note Jacob’s attempt to settle at Shechem and Dinah’s event, which made him helpless (33:17–18; 34:1–31).]

1. What direction did God give Jacob? (35:1) How did he prepare his family to worship God at Bethel? (35:2–7) What can house churches learn from this? How did God remind him of his name change? (35:9–10) What did Jacob’s new name, “Israel,” really mean? (32:28; 35:10) What specific promises did God make to him? (35:11–12)
2. How did the author of Hebrews summarize Jacob’s life of faith? (Heb11:21; cf. Ge47:31–48:22) Note how Jacob blessed his sons—especially Judah (49:8–12,28). What is Jacob’s spiritual legacy? What do we learn from the God of Jacob in terms of house church ministry?