



The 12 Sons of Jacob give rise to the 12 Tribes of the Nation of Israel

23-24	25-27	28	29-31	32-33	34-37
SARAH, ISAAC, REBEKAH	FAMILY CONNIVINGS	STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN	JACOB & HIS FAMILY	GIVEN NEW NAME: ISRAEL	RETURNS HOME
Sarah dies	Jacob buys Esau's birthright	Jacob's vision of the ladder to heaven renews the covenant	Jacob marries Leah and Rachel	Wrestled with God on way back to Canaan	Dinah incident
Rebekah draws up a marriage proposal from Isaac	Isaac says his wife is his sister		Jacob's boys	Reconciled with Esau	Rachel dies giving life
	Jacob deceives for a blessing		Jacob dealings with uncle Laban		Isaac dies
					Esau's family

#### Week 4: The Patriarchs — Isaac and Jacob (Genesis 24-37)

Following Sarah's death (23) we read about how Isaac came to get Rebekah as his wife (24). After Abraham's death (25), God reveals that she will give birth to two sons representing two nations. When Rebekah delivers, hairy Esau is born first, with smooth-skinned Jacob next grasping Esau's heel. Esau is a hunter and a brash man. Jacob stays at home, soft-spoken but quick-witted. One day, Esau comes home famished and agrees to give Jacob his inheritance rights in exchange for a bowl of soup.

##### Week Four Reading Plan

24:1-27, 61-67	Ancient eHarmony for Isaac
25:19-34	Jacob's Business Dealings!
27:1-28:22	Jacob's Deceit
29:1-30:24	Jacob's Dozen...almost
32:1-33	Jacob Returns to Canaan
35:1-29	Benjamin Born and Rachel Dies
37:1-36	Joseph's Early Years—Family Feud

Like Abraham, Isaac prospers in Canaan (26) and, despite occasional errors in judgment, enlarges his property. One day, when he is old and blind, Isaac instructs Esau to catch some game in preparation for him to give the elder son his blessing (27). While Esau is gone, Rebekah helps Jacob deceive his father, preparing a separate meal and disguising the younger son with hairy arms and Esau's clothing. When Jacob presents Isaac with the meal, Isaac—smelling Esau's clothing and feeling the hairy body—proceeds to bless Jacob, promising him the inheritance of God's covenant and a greater status than his brother. Esau returns to discover the deception, but it is too late and his father cannot revoke the stolen blessing.

Jacob flees in fear of Esau (28), going to his uncle Laban in Mesopotamia. En route, Jacob dreams of a stairway leading up to heaven, where angels and God reside. In the dream, God promises Jacob the same covenant he previously made with Abraham and Isaac. Jacob arrives at Laban's house (29), where he agrees to work for his uncle in exchange for his daughter Rachel's hand in marriage. Laban deceives Jacob into marrying Leah, Rachel's older sister, before marrying Rachel. The two wives compete for Jacob's favor and, along with their maids, give birth to eleven sons and a daughter (30).

After twenty years, Jacob returns to Canaan (31), taking his family, his flocks, and Laban's idols. Laban tracks down the fleeing clan in the desert and settles his differences with Jacob with God as a witness. As Jacob nears home, he fears an encounter with Esau (32). Jacob prepares gifts to appease his brother and sends his family on ahead. He spends the night alone on the river Jabbok. Jacob meets God, who, disguised as a man, physically wrestles with Jacob until dawn. Jacob demands a blessing from his opponent, and the man blesses Jacob by renaming him *Israel*, meaning, *he struggles with God*.

The next morning, Jacob meets Esau (33), who welcomes his brother. Jacob resettles in Shechem, not far from Esau, who has intermarried with the Canaanites and produced a tribe called the Edomites (36). Jacob and his sons prosper in peace until a conflict arises involving his daughter and a man from Shechem (34). Enraged, Jacob's sons say they will let the Shechemite marry Dinah if all the members of the family are circumcised. The man agrees and, while the greater part of his village is healing from the surgery, Jacob's sons take revenge and kill all the freshly-circumcised men. Isaac and Rachel die soon thereafter (35).