

The (Complicated) Lives of the Patriarchs

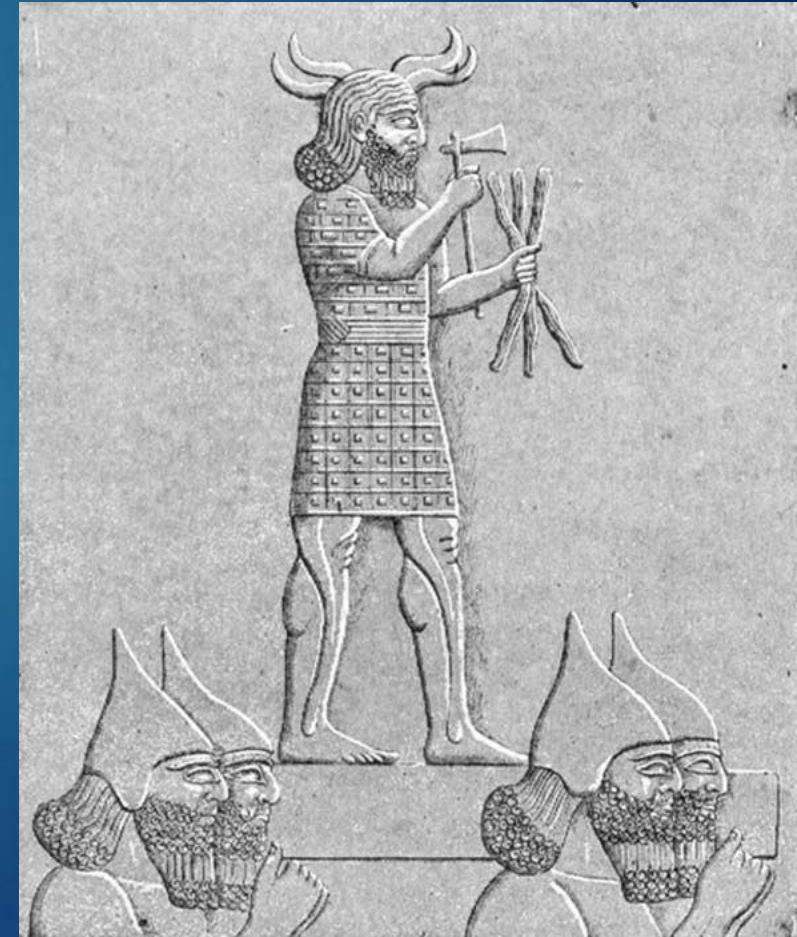
Genesis 22-36

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The Near Sacrifice of Isaac: Some Background

- ▶ The Canaanite god Molek
- ▶ “You shall not give any of your offspring to sacrifice them to Molek and so profane the name of your God.” (Lev 18:21)



The Promise at Risk

- ▶ V. 2– Heb.-- “take your son, your only son, the one that you love, Isaac”
- ▶ “Moriah”-- from the word “to see”
- ▶ V. 8 “God will provide” // “God will see to it”

Genesis 22 and the Cross

Marc Chagall



The Abraham versus Jacob Narratives

Family is the dominant motif across the Patriarchal Narratives

Abraham Narrative:

Promise Drives the Story Line

Jacob Narrative:

Blessing Drives the Story Line

Birthright and Blessing Complex		
Translation	Hebrew Word	Hebrew Root Consonants
Blessing	Berak	b-r-k
Birthright	Bekorah	b-k-r
Firstborn	Berakah	b-k-r
Rebekah	Rivkah	r-b-q

Barrenness to Twins: A Double Threat to the Promise

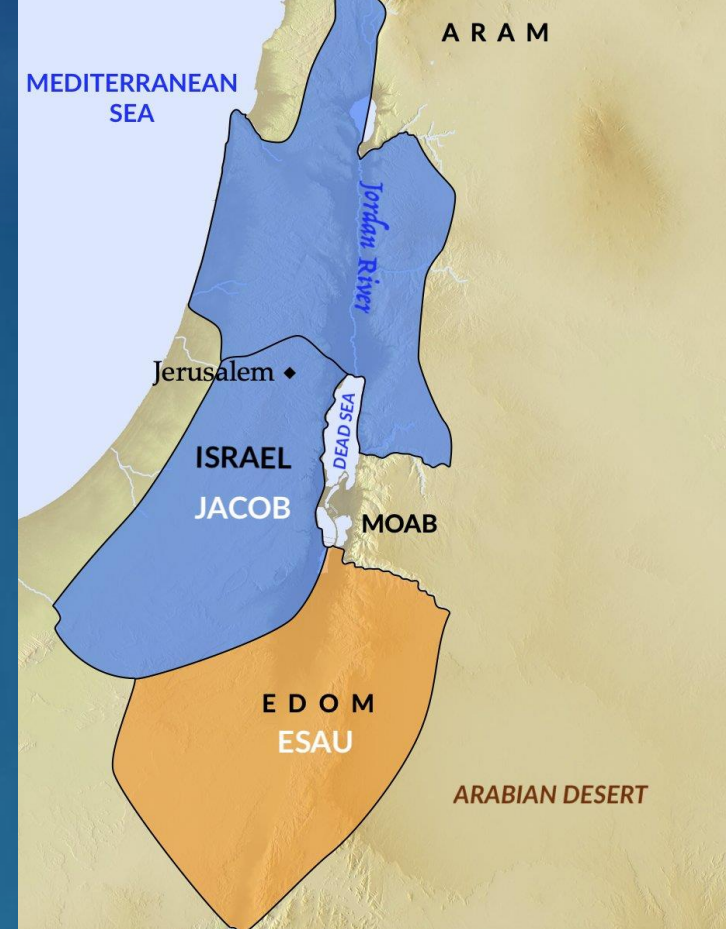


Scenes of Deception 1: The Birthright

Word play:

ya'aqob = "Jacob" → "Israel"
'aqeb = "heel" ("deceiver")

'edômoni from 'edom = "red" → thus "Edom"
śē'ār = "hairy" thus "Seir," region of Edomites



Scenes of Deception: The Birthright 1 (Again)

- ▶ Esau-- “hunter” *za'id*
- ▶ Jacob--“cooking” *zid*
- ▶ V. 30—“let me eat (*la'at*)
some of that red stuff” (*'edom*)



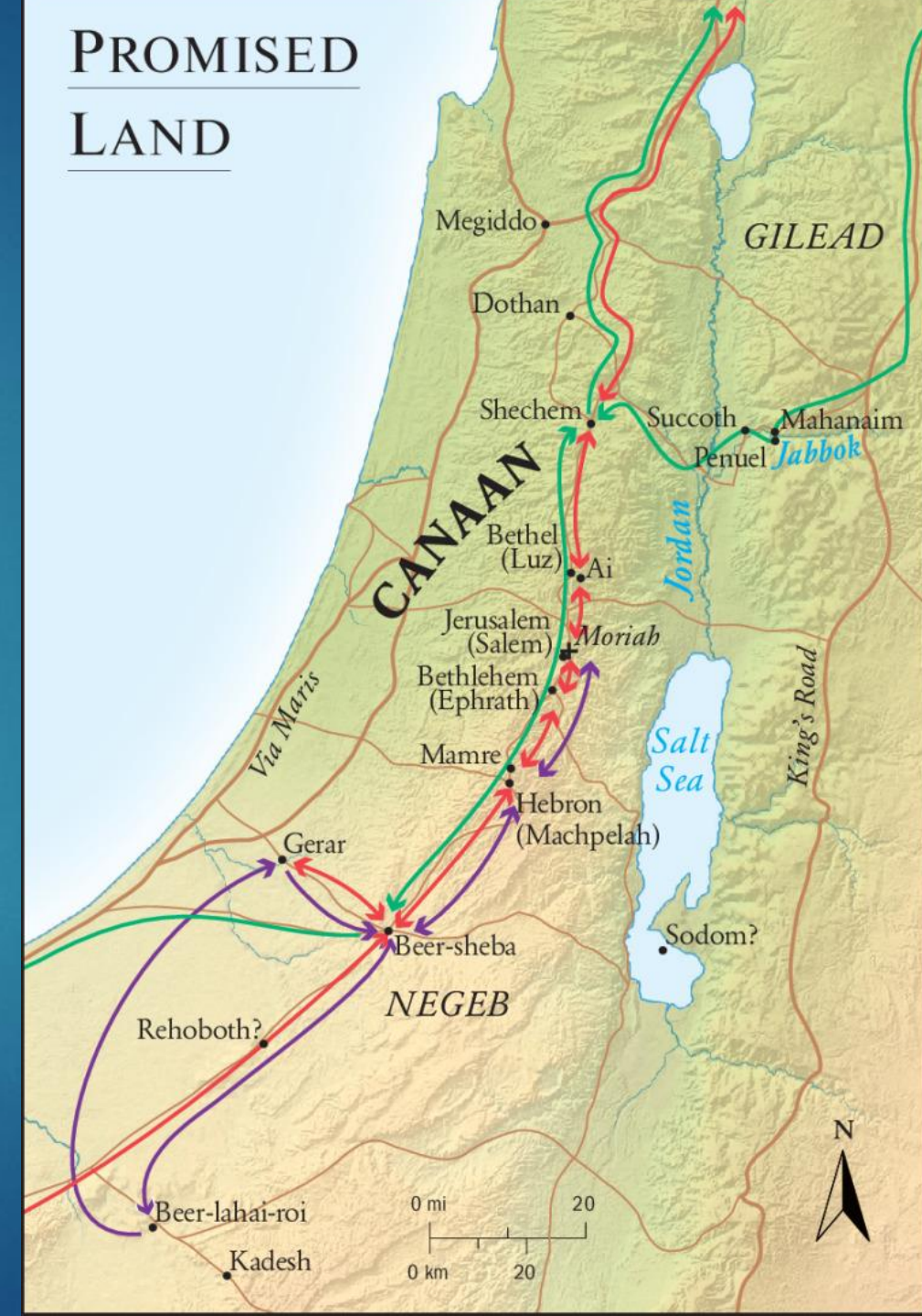
Scenes of Deception 2: The Blessing

- ▶ Genesis 27:1-29
- ▶ Scene 1 (ch. 25): birthright *bkrh*
- ▶ Scene 2 (ch. 27): blessing *brk*
- ▶ Why did Rebekah side with Jacob?
 1. Gen 26:34-35 (endogamy vs. exogamy)
 2. Gen 25:22-23 an oracle from God



The Apple Does Not Fall Far from the Tree

- ▶ Ch. 12 Abraham/Sarah and Pharoah
- ▶ Ch. 20 Abraham/Sarah and King Abimelech of Gerar
- ▶ Ch. 26 Isaac/Rebekah and King Abimelech of Gerar



From Family to Nation

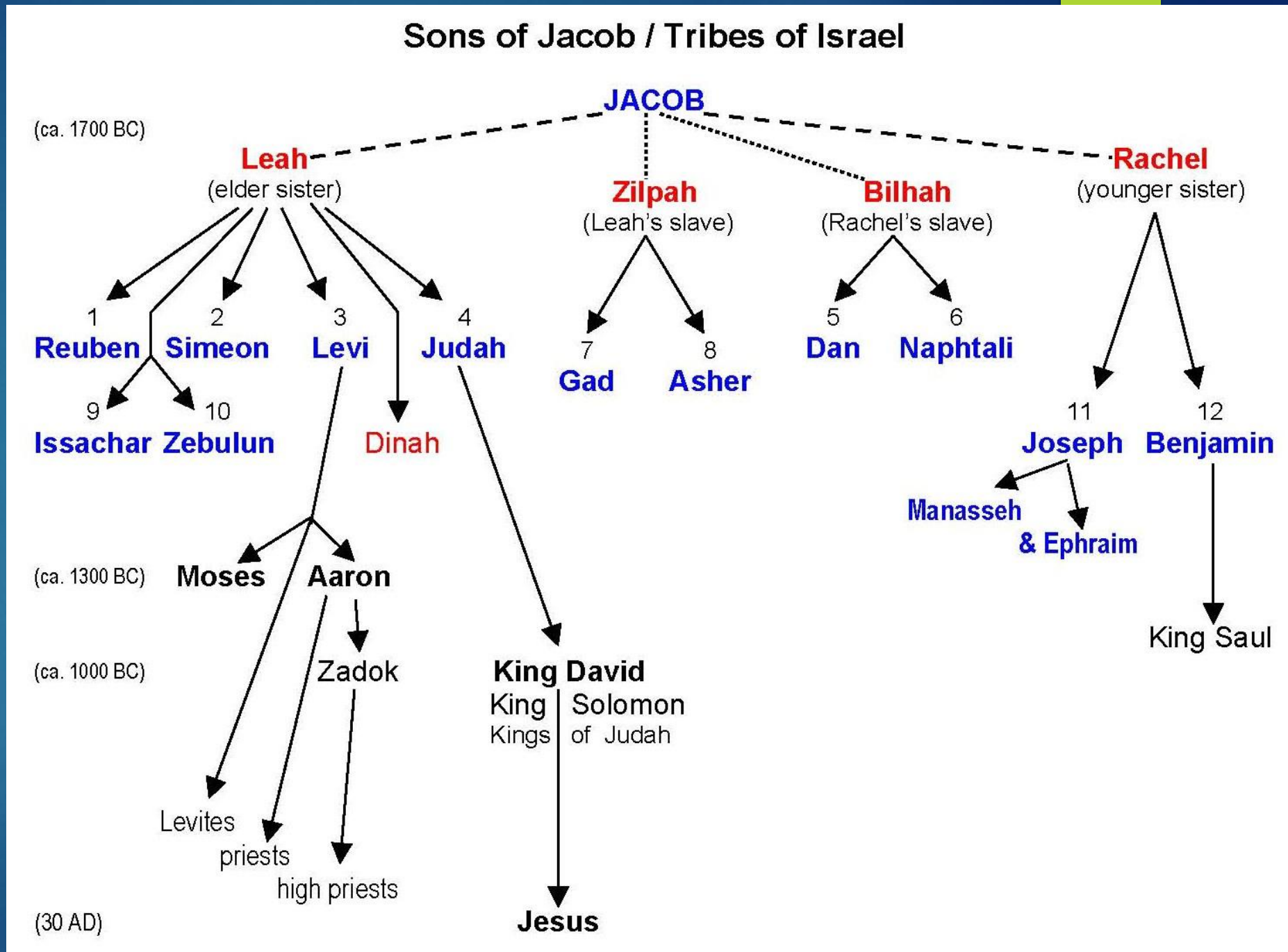
Jacob as Individual



Jacob as Nation
(Israel)

Fulcrum Point
Gen 29:31-30:24

The Twelve Tribes



The Tragic Arrival of Benjamin

Gen 35:16-21

- ▶ V. 18 “As her *nephesh* was departing her...”
- ▶ *Ben Oni*— “son of my sorrow”
- ▶ *Ben Yamin*— “son of my right hand”



Grounding the Jacob Story in Divine Encounter--Genesis 32

- ▶ Symbolism in the text
- ▶ Centrality of blessing in Jacob Narrative
- ▶ Change of name
- ▶ Limp



Concluding Thoughts

- ▶ To borrow a proverb, the stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob reminds us that "God can use a crooked stick to draw a straight line"
- ▶ Like Abraham on Mt. Moriah, sometimes God calls us to come empty-handed in full trust.
- ▶ In a culture like ours that breeds all forms of prosperity gospel—even using the language of "blessing," we need to be reminded of certain truths.