

# *the* Purpose *and* Promises of God

## God's Purpose and Our Suffering

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### Summary

In this passage we see that God is keeping his promises to Jacob. We also see some glimpses of hope in Jacob's life. So far, we have only been aware of Jacob's sin and messiness. However, that begins to shift. God is doing something in Jacob. He is shaping him by his grace even as he fulfills his promises in his life. We will trace out these next scenes of his life by asking: (1) What is God doing (particularly related to his promises)? (2) How is God shaping Jacob? In the end we will see that God always keeps his promises and changes his people along the way.

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### Outline

#### Introduction

God always does what he says he will do. He never fails in his promises. Jacob is up against some significant obstacles, but God brings him through them all. Our confidence can never be in human agency but in God's ability.

Notes:

Personal Application:

### Reflection Questions

1. Read Genesis 28.13-15. Then, identify ways you see God “show up” in the passage. How is God keeping his promises to Jacob?
2. Jacob certainly isn’t perfect, but brainstorm ways you are encouraged by Jacob’s life in this passage? What helps you see spiritual progress in his life?
3. God uses both revelation (when he interacts with Jacob) and suffering to grow Jacob. What revelations about God did Jacob receive and what did he learn about God through them?
4. What hardships and sufferings do you see for Jacob? How might God have used that suffering to grow him spiritually?
5. How has God used both revelation (in his Word) and hardship in your life to grow you? Be as specific as you are comfortable being.
6. According to Romans 5.1-5 and 8.28-29, what does God accomplish in our lives through suffering? What other passages of Scripture encourage you in the midst of suffering? What promises are important to you to remain mindful of?
7. How does II Corinthians 4.16-18 help you with an eternal perspective when it comes to suffering?
8. Share a current struggle or suffering you are walking through. Pray for one another that God would bring fruit out of it such as you have discussed so far.
9. What has changed in the way you think or in how you want to live as a result of this study and discussion?