

Day 9 :: Feb. 11

What did you learn from your mom?

Pretty wide open question, right? But really, if you had to answer it, what would your answer be?

For me, my mom taught me strength. In 2nd grade (and again in 4th, and again in 6th) she taught me to be strong in the face of pain, in my case a series of broken arms. In 4th grade, she prayed with me when I was afraid, and taught me that God can bring us emotional strength, too. And again and again she taught me what strength meant.

For Jacob, his mom taught him to swindle, cheat, and manipulate others. Jacob is synonymous with swindling in biblical history, but Rebekah was his teacher. He begins with stealing his brother's birthright, then his blessing. And while the birthright was completely his own doing, the blessing was all Rebekah. Then came Laban, who matches him swindle for swindle, and happens to be Rebekah's brother. So perhaps this is a family trait tracing back farther yet.

Yet Jacob the swindler is also Jacob the wrestler, and this will ultimately lead to a wrestling match with God Himself, and then to a new name, Israel which literally means "wrestles with God". It seems that what we learn from our mothers, the good and the bad, become a part of us that God can use, weaving it into His mighty pattern of our life.

Thank God for moms.