

- 27:1-40 Jacob gets the Blessing
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- 27:41-46 Jacob flees to Laban
- 28:1-9 Jacob's Dream at Luz / Bethel
- ‡ Dream of the Ladder
- ‡ Rock for a pillow? "...upon this Rock, I build My church..."
- Surely the Lord is in this place.
 - Surely, this is the Gate of Heaven.
 - Christianity is not about riding someone's skirt tails. It is a direct, personal relationship with the God of the universe.
 - The Vow – "if...then the Lord will be my God"
 - Understanding the grace of God must be the basis of vows.
 - Vows can be symbolized by the stacking of rocks to build an altar – something that lasts.
- 29:1-14 Jacob Arrives in Paddan Aram
- ‡ As a stranger, Jacob arrives at a well and meets Rachel. He came to a place where people gathered; a place of opportunity to meet the community.
- ‡ Jacob found out that Rachel was family, the daughter of his uncle. Joyously, he expressed excitement from seeing the faithfulness of God.
- 29:15-30 Jacob Marries Leah and Rachel
- ‡ Why didn't Laban simply include Leah in the contractual agreement?
- ‡ Jacob waited, though the time flew, yet Laban deceived him by giving him Leah first. But realize, the supplanter (Jacob) was simply getting a taste of his own medicine. This is indicative of the Lord's watchfulness – He makes sure we reap what we sow to some degree to get our attention onto issues He desires to deal with.
- 29:31-30:24 Jacob's Children
- ‡ Observe God's compassion for Leah, seeing that she was not loved. The Lord brought her joy through children. Yet frustration continued because of the dysfunctional marriage.
- ‡ Make no mistake that God controls the womb.
- ‡ DISCUSSION: As He opens and closes wombs, what does this say about God?
- ‡ Leah only wanted her husband's love. Yet what can we draw from her perception that children would cause her husband to love her?
- ‡ Consider the change in her perception when she bore Judah, which means "I will praise the Lord." It perhaps no longer became about her but she shifted her emphatic life focus, the internal conversation, to the Lord Almighty.
- ‡ Out of the womb of a woman not loved by her husband who was willing to shift her praise and expectation to God, the Lord brought forth the Messiah. Not through the will of a husband, but by the will of God...

In a world of chaos and pettiness, God's plan still moves forward. The women focused on jealousy and envy. Man's way of love and validation revolved around contention with each other. Dysfunction occurs when lives are not Christ-centered; all things are skewed when the love of God is not central to all our thoughts, desires, and determinations. When

our internal conversations do not focus on praise to the Lord, we end up with much sorrow and bitterness. But God's salvation leads us away from that pattern of existence, and on towards the way of Reconciliation. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."



30:25-43 Jacob's Flocks Increase

✠ The whole deal with branches in the watering troughs was Jacob's way of creating wealth according to his agreement with Laban to have the dark and / or speckled sheep.

✠ Jacob ended up with the strong and virulent while Laban's flocks ended up being weak and sickly. God was with Jacob in this struggle and Jacob overcame in this struggle with Laban.

31:1-21 Jacob Flees from Laban

✠ Laban was a tyrant. He believed he owned Jacob and everything which Jacob had received, wives, children, livestock, etc.

✠ But God was working with both Laban and Jacob to eventually bring them into covenant which prevented further harm and distrust.

31:22-35 Laban Pursues Jacob

31:36-55 Laban and Jacob make a Covenant **

✠ God's grace was manifested by this contractual agreement of mutual respect and protection; an intentional, thoughtful covenant where clear boundaries were communicated and committed to by both parties.

✠ God is the God of reason and not superstition.

32:1-21 Jacob Prepares to Meet Esau

32:22-32 Jacob Wrestles with God

33:1-20 Jacob Meets Esau ***

The act of humbling yourself gets you onto the pathway of peace. God works in the lives of those we are in contention with. Jacob, in preparation to meet Esau, sent all he owned ahead of himself to his brother. In essence, he was putting all he owned, his very life, into the hands of his perceived enemy. This was his act of faith to make peace with his brother. God had been gracious to Esau and blessed him so that hostility had subsided. As a result of the grace of God in the lives of both men, peace resulted.

34:1-31 Dinah and the Shechemites

35:1-15 Jacob Returns to Bethel

35:16-29 The Deaths of Rachel and Isaac