

“Jacob’s Children and Prosperity” (Genesis 29:31 – 30:43)

For the week of October 24, 2021

Read Genesis 29:31-30:24

Observation

Name Leah's first four sons. They are rich in meaning. How do they show the present condition of her faith?

What is the conflict in Genesis 30:1-2?

Name the sons from Bilhah and Zilpah. How did Rachel and Leah respond to the births?

Interpretation

What do the names of Leah's and Rachel's and their concubines' sons tell you about their worries, desires, and relationships?

What are three adjectives you would use to describe Jacob? Explain.

What seems to be the main problem in this mixed-up, messed-up family?

Polygamy was allowed by custom, but it was never God's original plan for marriage. The polygamy between Jacob and Leah, Rachel, and the concubines Bilhah and Zilpah created jealousy, strife, and bitterness that reached into the next generation. Who do you think was at fault in this situation and why?

Why do you think God chose to accomplish so much through such an imperfect family?

Verse 22 reads that “God remembered Rachel.” Had God forgotten Rachel? If not, what does this say about God?

Application

How was there favoritism in our story? How can favoritism hurt a family? What can you do to thwart this?

Did Jacob lead as a godly husband should lead? Why or why not? Describe the characteristics of a godly husband. Men: Is this you? Why or why not?

Read Genesis 30:25-43

Observation

Would there be advantages for Jacob, Rachel, Leah, and their children to stay with Laban in Haran? What are they?

Are there disadvantages? What are they?

What values do you think would influence a decision to stay or leave?

How would you describe Laban's behavior in verses 35-36?

How would you describe Jacob's behavior in verses 37-42? Does Jacob's course of action seem justified? Why or why not?

Interpretation

In our passage the blessings of children and wealth were sought. Does receiving a specifically desired blessing indicate divine favor? Likewise, does not receiving one indicate divine disfavor? Explain.

Notice the superstition with Jacob's peeled branches (verses 37-43) as well as Rachel's mandrakes (verses 14-17). Did the superstition have anything to do with what happened? Why or why not?

Describe some present-day superstitions people adhere to. How is this contrary to God and His will for us?

What does the Bible say about superstitions?

Deuteronomy 4:19

2 Kings 21:6

Isaiah 2:6

Revelation 21:6

How does Colossians 2:8-10 gives us direction on this subject?

Application

Jacob became very wealthy in our passage. Do wealth (or lack thereof) or possessions (or lack thereof) impact your relationship with God? Why or why not?

How does the prayer of Proverbs 30:7-9 model the right attitude about wealth?