
SG020115

The Whole Counsel of God – Genesis 28-30

Got questions? Email Pastor Jason at jasonduff7@gmail.com

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Introduction & Overview of the Section

Introduction

This week we begin our look at the Life of Jacob. He will go on to be a great man of faith, but the road to get there was bumpy and full of set backs. We see many of them tonight.

#1 – Dedication – Genesis 28:1-22

Like for every one of us there needs to be a moment where God becomes our God. Not just the God of our parents or of our church, but really our God. This moment of dedication happened to Jacob at place he would name, Bethel, the house of God.

#2 – Dowry – Genesis 29:1-20

In that culture a man would pay a dowry to a girl's father before he could marry her. It was almost like alimony in advance. Jacob had no money and so worked seven years for Rachel.

#3 – Deception – Genesis 29:21-30

After 7 years, finally the wedding. But before the marriage was consummated, Laban, Jacob's uncle, switched his daughter Leah for Rachel. The deceiver had now been deceived himself.

#4 – Division – Genesis 29:31-30:24

Although Jacob didn't ask for multiple wives, we see in his life story why it is never a good idea to ignore God's Word. The division between Jacob's two sister wives was horrendous.

Key Issues or Words

“So Esau went to Ishmael and took Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, to be his wife in addition to the wives he had.” (28:9) – Unspiritual and immoral Esau was slow to connect the dots. He thought a marriage to a daughter of Abraham's cast out son Ishmael would get him back into blessing. This is so much like the religious efforts of the natural man to reach God. We try our best, but the effort falls short and has nothing to do with what God is really looking for.

Going Deeper

(think it over yourself or discuss with the family)

Questions for the all of us...

#1 – Is there anything wrong with Jacob's vow to God in Genesis 28:20-21? What was right about it? What can you learn for your encounters with God?

#2 – What can we learn about contentment from the story of Leah and Rachel and the kids they bare for Jacob? What are you looking to draw your fulfillment from?

Homework 4 Next Week – Read Genesis 30-33

As you read think about what we can learn from Jacob's encounters with #1 - Laban as a worldly boss (Genesis 30-31), #2 – The Lord (Genesis 32) and #3 – His brother Esau? (Genesis 33)

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Genesis 28-30:24

“The Life of Jacob – part one”

Introduction

- Tonight we are going to continue our study in the foundational book of the Old Testament and really all of the Bible
 - Remember the content is not hard to remember, because the title says it all

The word Genesis means “beginnings”

- And truly so many things in scripture have their beginning in the book of Genesis
 - The universe
 - Life in general
 - Man, marriage
 - Sin and evil
 - Language, government, nations
 - Specifically we will see the nation of Israel
- In fact understanding that this book means and is about beginnings really is a good way to divide up our look at this book as you can see in your book intro sheet

Outline for the Book of Genesis

Chapters 1-11 – The Beginning of all nations

- **Chapters 1-2 – The Creation**
- **Chapter 3 - 5 – The Fall**
- **Chapter 6-9 – The Flood**
- **Chapters 10-11 – The Tables of Nations**

Chapters 12-50 – The Beginning of the Jewish nation

- **Chapters 12-23 – Abraham**
- **Chapters 24-27 – Isaac**
- **Chapters 28-36 – Jacob**
- **Chapters 37-50 – Joseph**

Tonight we move on to the third guy in the list of The Patriarchs of Israel

- a man by the name of Jacob
 - now when we last left our Jacob, he had just deceived his blind father to bless him
 - Jacob was a twin, his brother’s name was Esau
- But even though the two boys were born moments apart they could not be any different
 - **Esau was a hairy man - picture**
 - **Jacob was more mild mannered – picture**
- And because of this their Father Isaac preferred Esau, where as their mother Rebecca preferred Jacob
 - So when Isaac sent Esau out to go get game and then he would bless him
 - Rebecca hatched this plan to fool Isaac who was blind

- She had Jacob get a goat from the flocks, she made it test like venison, and her greatest deception of all was to make Jacob feel and smell like Esau when his dad went in for the smell and feel test

So Rebecca got him ready – we have a picture of that too – He has his cross so he is ready to be blessed!

- And Isaac said, that voice is Jacob's, but the hairy arms and the smelly clothes, that is my boy
 - So he blessed Jacob, thinking it was Esau
- And of course this caused Esau to lose his mind and he began plotting the murder of his brother
 - Rebecca overhears this too, because she has her nose in everyone's business
 - And she sends Jacob away, to her family, for a what she thinks will be a short period of time
 - But as we studied last week – Jacob would only return after her death

But the story of this 22 year journey of Jacob begins tonight, and for those of you taking notes – tonight is brought to you by the letter “D”

The Life of Jacob – Genesis 28-30

#1 - Dedication – Genesis 28:1-22

#2 - Dowry – Genesis 29:1-20

#3 - Deception – Genesis 29:21-30

#4 - Division – Genesis 29:31-30:24

- So let's look at these one at a time tonight

The Life of Jacob – Genesis 28-30

#1 - Dedication – Genesis 28:1-22

- Mostly likely hearing the news from traveling caravans, Isaac hears that Laban, his wife's brother, has some daughters, perfect he thinks – go there my son and get a bride
 - Don't get a bride from these girls of Canaan
 - And although Esau totally misunderstands what his mom and dad are looking for – Jacob heads out

Jacob heads out from everything he has ever known

- Probably feeling pretty alone, probably a little scared
 - And he stops just north of what is Jerusalem today in a place he will name Bethel
 - Jacob grabs a rock for a pillow and grabs some shut eye

But God meets him right there where he is at

- Jacob has this dream of a ladder reaching to heaven
 - And angels ascending and descending on it
 - And God was at the top – saying – I am the God of Abraham, your grandfather and Isaac your father
- And I want to be your God too
 - And I love this – the Lord just meets him

Jacob was certainly more spiritually inclined than his brother Esau, but up to this point in the story Jacob there is no indication of Jacob having a deep relationship with God

- and yet – God just meets him

- He thinks he is alone
- He thinks no one is for him
- And then God shows up and says – I am
- I am with you and I am for you!!!

Ah church we need to remember this – we like Jacob often forget – God is with us!

- We experience trials
 - We experience post holiday blues where once again no matter how much Pastor Jason or Pastor Rob tell you, no present under the tree is going to fulfill you – we think oh but this year
 - And now the tree is coming down and so does our mood
- We think – I am all alone – no one is for me
 - God would say – wait a second, just when did I start to count for no one?

God reveals Himself to Jacob and this becomes Jacob's moment of dedication

- The moment when God became the God of Abraham, Isaac and now Jacob -
 - And friends this must happen to everyone of us
- When we decide for ourselves – you will be my God, not just a god, not just the god of my parents, or my pastors – you will be my God
 - Lord I am responding to you meeting me and revealing yourself to me – Lord you are my God

Now Jacob's dedication is one of a young believer – putting a bunch of “ifs” and “thens” – like God is really impressed with you – if you show up for me God, I will let you be my God – oh wow thanks!!!

I wasn't complete as the Alpha and Omega

- I wasn't complete in the perfect fellowship of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit
 - You are going to let me be your God
 - Woo!

This is a dedication prayer of a young believer

- so much better if you and I will say to the Lord
 - God you are good and I am yours
 - No – if's and but's but simply Yes and Amen Lord
- It's a moment, we all must have in our lives and I believe there are times all throughout our life, where we are dedicated a new a fresh
 - To the one that is simply so wonderful
 - Well that brings us to our second “D”, after dedication...

The Life of Jacob – Genesis 28-30

#1 - Dedication – Genesis 28:1-22

#2 - Dowry – Genesis 29:1-20

- Jacob travels over 1,000 miles over 7 months and comes to the place his grandparents Abraham and Sarah were from, the place where his mom were from, Haran
 - And no doubt he knew the story of how his mom, Rebecca met the servant of Abraham at a well – so once he gets to the land, that is where he begins
 - The well is like E-Harmony for the Patriarchs

- He comes to a well and starts asking questions, anybody know Laban, I am supposed to find Laban
 - And while Jacob is asking questions - he sees her
 - Beautiful in form and appearance – Hebrew hottie – and she had sheep, a symbol of wealth

This is like in our day, seeing a beautiful girl as she steps out of her Maserati, you want to take it for a spin big boy

- this is what happening to Jacob
 - this beautiful girl is right in front of him and she is wealthy with sheep

Rich and beautiful

- And verse 16 contrasts Rachel with her sister
 - Soft eyes – delicate eyes or they made your eyes hurt
 - I think it is the latter because of the contrast, Leah had delicate eyes, but Rachel was beautiful

Studying through the book of Genesis maybe you wonder, think about the Patriarch and who they married

- Abraham married Sarah – was so beautiful Pharaoh wanted her when she was 90
 - Rebecca – the same
 - Rachel – the same
 - I was reading and wondering if these are the founders – why isn't every Jewish person a supermodel – I mean that is great stock
- The answer – Leah
 - Before the night is out we will discover, over half of the tribes of Israel come from Leah, not Rachel
 - They come with the girl who made your eyes hurt, she was so ugly
 - Anyway – just a side note – Jacob wants Rachel
 - Jacob is in love
- He tries to impress her – delicate Jacob, turns into He-man, I just picture him ripping his suit, going incredible hulk all over that well
 - It normally took many men to open, but not today, because Jacob has seen his woman!

Jacob – Mr. Pastel pants, Mr. I own every Mariah Carey Album – He finds the strength to move the stone off the well

- Then he kisses her – now, this is the only occurrence by the way of a man kissing a girl who is not his wife in the scriptures, but to read into it sexual attraction is to read into the scriptures something that is not there – most likely this was a normal greeting, overcome with emotion, I am he is still Jacob now – he would kiss Rachael as he would soon kiss his uncle Laban

Rachel runs to tell her Dad – this man in pastel pants just ripped the stone off the well, and then kissed me – He says he is related to Aunt Rebecca – what should we do Dad?

- Laban then welcomes Jacob into his house, because Laban remember Abraham's servant and how he came with so many gifts – this young kid must be loaded
 - Laban thought - but Jacob was not – He had to escape from his home, no time to bring the family fortune with him

- But a month is, Laban says, you should not work for me for free – name your wage
 - And Jacob says – I want to marry your daughter, but I will work for her for seven years, because I have no money to give as a dowry

In those days if you wanted to marry, you would provide the Father of your bride a dowry and the idea was really alimony in advance

- if you left the girl, she would return to her Father's house and be provided for by the money in your dowry
 - but Jacob had no money and so he worked for seven years to provide one

And the seven years seem like only a few days verse 20 says and every girl in the room says, ah!!!

- Now before we move on – do you see what amazing motivator you ladies can be to a man
 - Jacob who normally prefers to dwell inside, not work hard, not really motivated, remember he like to dwell in tents
 - that is until he meets Rachel – now he is willing to sweat outside for seven years to get his girl
 - It is amazing the motivation a woman can be to a man
- Men will battle it out all day at work, beaten down on every side and it is no problem – why – because there is a woman at home that needs me to provide for her, there is a family
 - It is huge motivation – and ladies don't sell yourself short

So many girls don't realize the motivation they are, so they give up the goods before the man has a job, before he can provide for the family or wants to be committed to her – and all I have to say is ladies don't underestimate your worth

- Jacob works seven years for the girl of his dreams
 - Because He is in love
 - And Love is what church?

“Love is patient...does not seek its own. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all thing, endures all things” – I Corinthians 13:4-7

- Love is patient, and if there is a man telling you, I love you baby, but I just can't wait until we are married
 - The truth is, he in lust with you, but not in love
- And instead of giving in, I encourage you single ladies to see what a huge motivation a pure relationship with you is for a guy to do things right

Jacob works seven years and then, oh man now the story gets good – from a literary standpoint, not from Jacob's standpoint

The Life of Jacob – Genesis 28-30

#1 - Dedication – Genesis 28:1-22

#2 - Dowry – Genesis 29:1-20

#3 - Deception – Genesis 29:21-30

- At the end of seven years, Jacob says, it is time Laban, give me my wife, as the NIV, the not holding anything back version says, give me my wife so I can sleep with her

- Jacob is serious – he doesn't want to talk about his feelings, he doesn't want to a bunch of pomp and circumstances – hey I worked seven years, it is time – give me my wife

And so Laban, throws a party, the wedding takes place

- But when it is time to consummate the marriage, Laban switches out Rachel, the Hebrew Hottie, for Leah, the ow my eyes hurt girl
 - Now how in the world is this possible??

Well understand in that culture, Weddings took place at night, and though I'm sure Rachel was the one at the vows and at the feast, but when it was time to consummate the marriage, again it would have been dark, the bride would have been fully veiled - Jacob probably had a lot to drink, that seems to be a problem for the patriarchs

- And yet when he wakes up in the morning, expecting to roll over and see his Hebrew hottie, what oh no, my eyes hurt – I think I just got punked

And I love it, he runs out to Laban and says, 'why have you deceived me'

- now isn't that poetic – Jacob, whose name means deceiver, who just a few chapters ago, deceived his blind dad into blessing him
 - why did you deceive me? Are you serious?
 - Jacob - what goes around, comes around

God often times does this

- you run into people in your life who irate you to no end
 - and why – because they are just like you
 - and I believe God does this on purpose – to show you what it is like to be around you – so hopefully you can realize it and grow

God puts Jacob the deceiver, right next to Laban an even bigger deceiver and here we go

- Why have you deceived me
 - Oh Jacob – we have a little custom, didn't I tell you
 - It reminds me of the man and his wife who stayed at a hotel for three days and when he was checking out he looked at his bill and said, what is this - \$25 bucks for a fruit basket? – so he says to the clerk, We didn't eat the fruit basket, to which the man replied – well that's not my fault, it was there
 - Hugh, so the man paid his bill and when the clerk look at it, it was \$150 short – hey what the big idea – well I charged you \$50 a day for kissing my wife – kissing your wife, I didn't kiss your wife – well that not my fault – she was there!
 - That is Jacob and Laban for the rest of the story – two con men, pulling one con after another on each other

Laban says, Oh Jacob, didn't I tell you, we have this little custom where I am from that the older girl must be married off before the younger – I didn't mention that???

- But no worries, fulfill Leah's honeymoon week and then I will let you marry Rachel as long as work for me for another seven years

- And friends understand this had been Laban's plan all along – 14 years of free labor – that is some dowry
- 20 times the normal bride price – Laban swindled Mr. Swindler

Now please as we continue don't think in anyway that the Bible here is saying that polygamy is okay

- the Bible is rightly recording what happened to Jacob, it is not condoning what happened to Jacob
 - there will be many problems that will come from the polygamy in Jacob's life
 - I mean can you image? – you and your sister are married to the same man – and your sister who is young and a whole lot better looking than you – do you think that would be uncomfortable?
- It certainly was and we see how much so, in our last section I have entitled – division, as we see a great division between these two sisters as they battle it out for the affection of their husband

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- Much to learn here – I mean can you image? – you are Leah, your sister is your husband favorite, because she is really pretty and you are not
 - But you start having kids

Which by the way ladies, this may not be comfortable to hear, but this chapter should teach you something you need to hear about men

- You associate sex with love, normally for you to be intimate with someone there has to be a deep emotional connection
 - It is why adultery is so devastating to you – how could my husband have a deep connection with another women

But understand – not to in any way excuse adultery, it is sin, its rips apart marriages, it is one of the 10 commandments – men if you are contemplating – you need to repent - Am I clear

- But women what you don't understand, it that for men, an emotional connection is not needed for men to want to be physically with a women
 - The standards for many men, especially men not controlled by the Holy Spirit, well the standard is like is she breathing, not dead is the qualification she must attend to
- Women don't get this and so – Women often times give sex, hoping to get love
 - But its doesn't work – because that is not what the physical act is about for men

You doubt me – just follows the story

- Does Jacob love Leah? – no
 - Is he even attracted to Leah – No
 - Yet what keeps happening??? – she keeps having kids
- Now how does that happen, I know it was just Christmas but it was not immaculate conception

- It is that Jacob and many men like him, have a different standard of who they will be imitate with and it is not, I have to love her, I have to be attracted to her, it is, is she breathing, is she alive?

I say this, not to be crude, but to stop you precious gals from thinking, if I just give him sex, he will love me

- No, sadly he will not
 - Don't get ripped off
 - Love is patient, Love does seek its own

Well But back to the situation – Rachel is loved, Leah is unloved, but she is having kids

- so you can image the holidays
 - ah, is Jacob hanging out with you again, my pretty sister Rachel
 - hum, have you met my brood of children, it would really nice if they had some cousins

No that is not in the text, but don't you know it happened ladies? – You know it did – some of you will pull that

- I mean I just described to you how men are jerks, I am close to understand how women can be mean too? Am I close
 - “Oh where are your kids pretty girl”

Rachel has had it, she comes to Jacob, give me children oh I'll die

- and Jacob gets mad, hey, its not my fault, your sister has plenty of kids, obviously I work
 - you are the problem

But unlike his Father Isaac who faced the same problem with his wife Rebecca, and yet prayed for her that God would open her womb

- Jacob and Rachel go back a generation to grandpa Abraham and grandma Sarah as a model
 - Rachel says – take my handmade, have a child with her and I will raise her
 - So Jacob gets a third wife Bilhah and has two kids with her

Which prompts Leah who realizes she has stopped bearing, to give Jacob a fourth wife, Zilpah and Jacob had two kids with her

- By the way this is an excellent example of how culturally excepted norms were adopted by men and women in the Bible resulting in sin
 - I just did a paper for seminary on this, so if you will indulge me for a second, you see it all the way through the scriptures
- Where things that were culturally excepted norms were adopted and practiced by people of God in the Bible
 - And though the world around them would have said, ya, that is exactly what you do, it was still none the less sin
- It was normal in that culture if you were barren to provide a women for your husband to bear children, that was normal

A Marriage Agreement - “If Gilimninu bears children Shennima shall not take another wife. But if Gilimninu fails to bear children, Gilimninu shall get for Shennima a woman from the Lullu country, a slave girl as a concubine. In that case Gilimninu herself shall have authority over the offspring.” – Nuzi Tablet #67

- It was normal – but that didn't make it any less sin

It was normal for Middle Eastern kings to have multiple wives

- but one little problem – God said not to do it

“When you come to the land which the Lord your God is giving you....you shall surely set a king over you whom the Lord your God chooses; But he shall not multiply wives for himself,...nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself.” – Deuteronomy 17:14-1

It was normal, but that didn't make it any less sinful

- same thing is true when we get to Joseph and Potiphar's wife
 - all indication is that Potiphar was a eunuch
 - and yet eunuch at his position in the government would have wives for ceremonial reasons
 - and those wives, it was normal and expected culturally for them to have relations with the help like Joseph
 - Normal – but still sin – sin that Joseph ran from, praise the Lord
- But David didn't run from the normal practice of having multiple wives, Solomon definitely didn't run
 - Abraham didn't run and neither does his grandson Jacob
 - They do that which was culturally acceptable

And I mention that to you and what I just wrote this paper on was what in our culture is acceptable, that we are tempted to adopt in our lives

- oh we don't provide an alternative wife for our husband
 - we don't condone polygamy or slavery
 - because those things are excepted by our culture
- but what do we accept, what do we allow in our lives?
 - that your neighbors would say – that is normal, that is no problem, don't worry about that
 - the culture wouldn't bat an eye
- but, it is none the less still sin
 - personally I believe something's we put before our eyes, something we allow our families to watch
 - something's we allow in our minds, in our ears, or in our mouth
- the culture would say – that is no big deal

But Spirit would say – I love you, but that breaks my heart and grieves my soul

- and wise will be the Christian man or women – who does not just accept every culture norm like David did, like Solomon did, like Jacob and Rachel did
 - but instead of accepting takes each thing to God and says – the whole world says it is okay
 - is it okay with you? – you who I declare to be my Lord and King – Lord is okay?

Jacob and Rachel do not and this crazy competition continues

- and listen, is God is still at work?
 - Romans 8:28 – God working all things, even our poor choices, for good, is at work here
 - Because these 12 boys from 4 wives, will become the 12 tribes of Israel

But listen just because God can bring beauty from the ashes of our decisions, should not stop us from pausing and learning from Jacob and Leah, and Rachel's mistakes

- Rachel and Leah and trying to find satisfaction in the love of their husband and through kids
 - You see this in the way Leah starts naming them
 - Oh no my husband will love me, I have given him a son, two sons, three sons
- And I think she finally gets it, because she names the fourth son, Judah "I will just praise the Lord"
 - I am never going to find fulfillment in that lug nut Jacob – so Lord I will find my fulfillment in you
 - Leah seems to get it

Rachel does not – she is convinced that what she is missing in her heart are children

- and if she can just have children, then she will be happy and fulfilled

But even when she finally gets a child – she isn't happy, how do I know

- because look at verse 24 - as soon as she has Joseph she says, Lord add to me another son
 - Give me more kids else I die!
- She is not satisfied in fact, she is speaking prophetically
 - Because chapter 35, we won't get there tonight, but God does give her another son
 - And yet, instead of fulfilling the deep longing of her heart, she dies in child birth
 - Never finding her fulfillment in God

Now – I'm not saying she wasn't saved, she won't be in heaven

- Just as much as I am not saying that if you don't find your fulfillment in Jesus, you won't be in heaven
 - I am not saying that, I don't believe that
- But I am saying that if you don't find your fulfillment in Christ
 - Not in a husband, not in a wife, not in children or a job or a ministry
 - Then you when you die, will still go to heaven, assuming you have dealt with your sin
 - But you will have lived a miserable life
- Always looking for something to fulfill you, always thinking you are victim and yet everything you have ever needed for life and fulfillment has been there all along

“Now godliness with contentment is great gain.” – I Timothy 6:6

“His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness” – II Peter 1:3

- Learn this lesson or your life will be painful just like it was for Rachel - Lets pray!