

A Picture Is Worth A Thousand Words - Genesis 29:1-30

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[0 : 00] All right, Genesis 29. I think you all got a timeline that just kind of shows as we go through this, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. I tried to make sure my math was right and my cross-references were right.

So if anybody comes through that and it's not right, I wouldn't be surprised if something was off. But that just, it shows how some of these guys, like we know Jacob and Esau were 15 years overlapping while Abraham was still alive. And they got to know their grandfather, Abraham. We're going to see that Joseph, by the time Jacob comes back around and he's going to go to Haran, that's going to happen today. He's on his way there, remember. He's going to eventually come back 20 years later and there's going to be some overlap where Joseph, as a teenager, will know his grandfather, Isaac, before he passes off the scene. So it's just very interesting the way these things all overlap.

Today's message is, a picture is worth a thousand words. So we're not going to pull out our picture Bibles, but we're going to look at some pretty cool pictures in the Bible as we go through this chapter. This is one of those where this week I just started reading and looking at it and I was like, yep, there it is. It's a Bible. You know, I don't know what's there.

And you just start to read, like, Lord, what is the message here? And then it's like, the Lord's so faithful. Always is. He'll point out one thing and you're like, oh, that's an interesting thing.

[1 : 29] And then it just begins to snowball from there and he just kind of opens the word up. Jacob, if you remember, we left him two weeks ago, poor guy, been traveling back to Haran. And it probably took him that long. The distance from where he was down in Israel up to Haran is 450 to 500 miles.

On foot. That's going from Washington, D.C. to Cincinnati, Ohio. On foot. It's going to take a while. He's 72 years old. A robust 72-year-old man. He's going to live, you know, well, it'll tell you on your timeline how long her live.

But they live, you know, you add decades on their lives. So that skews a little bit our perspective on age. If you're living to 130, you're adding 50 years or, yeah, 50 years onto the average lifespan of a person.

So he's 72. He's finally left his mom's home and he's going out to make a name for himself and traveling up to Haran. Let's just jump right in, in chapter one. Oh, I'm sorry. I do have a brief, very basic outline.

Nothing too crazy. So verses one through 12, we're going to see Jacob finds a bride. That's kind of where he shows up in Haran. He shows up back where Abraham had originally come from, where he left Terah.

[2 : 43] He left his father after he died and he comes down into Haran. It's where he sent the unnamed servant back to find a bride for Isaac. This is where Jacob's going. He's going back home. And that's where he finds Rachel.

Verses 13 through 20 is Jacob makes a deal. That's where he kind of begins to interact with Laban and he makes this deal and goes into business with him. And then verses 21 through 30, Jacob gets a double blessing.

He has two wives at the price of one. And there's two things I want you to remember as we go into this first section. These verses one through 12, we have Jacob, the man of the covenant.

Then we have Rachel, the bride. These are these two pictures that we're going to kind of see.

Jacob is the one carrying the covenant now. Isaac has passed it on to him. He alone is carrying the

promise of Messiah.

One man in all the world. I mean, traveling how many weeks to Haran if he was jumped and murdered and whatever. But God had said that he would be with him wherever he went and that he would keep him.

[3 : 45] And then Rachel, his bride. But verse one, it says, Then Jacob went on his journey and came into the land of the people of the east. And he looked, and behold, a well in the field.

And lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it. For out of that well they watered the flocks, and a great stone was upon the well's mouth.

And so Jacob finally gets there. There's not any signposts, you know, saying, hey, this exit over here is Haran. He sees a well in the field. But I think it's very telling right in the beginning of this chapter where it says, Jacob went on his journey and he looked.

And that's going to kind of set him up for the rest of this chapter. Jacob has had God's promise. Where at the end of 28, the Lord said to him that he would be with him. He said in verse 15, I will not leave you until I've done that which I've spoken of to you.

I'm with you. I will keep you in all places. So Jacob has God's promise. But Jacob is still very much Jacob. Remember, he has God's promise. Then he gets to the end of chapter 28.

[4 : 48] He's like, great deal, Lord. I've got a better one for you. You do what you said. I'm going to give you 10% of everything I have. 10%. Lord, what could you do with 10% of what? He's still trying to, like, work things in his own, according to his own schemes.

And I think you see that here where he went on his journey. Jacob met with God, but it's still very much Jacob going on Jacob's journey. Instead of surrendering to the Lord and being like, Lord, what do you want? What do you want me to do?

But he comes upon this well, and there's three flocks of sheep. There's a bunch of sheep lying around. We're going to find out that this well has a stone on it. It says that they went to water the flock, and there's a stone in the well's mouth.

It was covered by this stone. Now, we're going to find out these shepherds, they can't move the stone. Because he's going to eventually say to them, why don't you move it? I think they must have been younger kids, most likely. Because he's like, hey, we have to all come together, then they move the stone.

So here comes Jacob, and he comes upon this well. So our man of the covenant, remember Jacob, the man of the covenant, has just come upon a field of sheep needing to be watered at a well they can't access.

[5 : 56] Jesus, in John 7, verse 37 to 38, said, In the last day, says of Jesus, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirsts, let him come unto me and drink.

He that believes on me, as the scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. Jesus, the ultimate man of the covenant, says, Hey, you need a source?

I'm your source. Jesus is also our shepherd. In John 10, 10, we know that Jesus says, The thief comes not before to steal and to kill and destroy, but I am come that they might have life.

They might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives his life for the sheep. And so right away we have this picture of Jacob, the man of the covenant, coming upon a well of water surrounded by sheep.

So kind of keep that picture in your mind. And thither were all the flocks gathered. It kind of means, and once. And once all the flocks were gathered. And they rolled the stone from the well's mouth and watered the sheep and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in its place.

[7 : 00] We still do that today. We have what we call well covers because we don't want them contaminated. So this well had a cover to it, whether it was to keep contamination out or whether it was to keep other people from using it and only those in the region whose HOA was paid up got to use this well.

Either way, it says, When all the flocks gathered together, then they came and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth. The well of life-giving water for these sheep was inaccessible until the stone was rolled away.

Mark 16, verses 1 through 3, And when the Sabbath was passed, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome had brought sweet spices that they might come and anoint him.

And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulcher at the rising of the sun and they said among themselves, Wait a minute. Who shall roll away the stone from the

door of the sepulcher?

Who's going to allow us access to this? And so here are the sheep at the source of life-giving water and they can't get to it. Jacob finds them there. The stone is over that well.

[8 : 07] And Jacob then says unto them, He says, My brethren, whence be you? So he comes upon them. He doesn't know where he's at. He's like, I haven't seen any signs for a while. I haven't talked to anybody for a while. And they said, You're in Haran.

We're of Haran. And Jacob's good fortune just goes up from here, he thinks. But Jacob's good fortune was no mistake, wasn't it? We're going to find out. He's going to say, Where are you from? They say, Haran.

Have you heard of Laban? Oh yeah, we know Laban. And here comes his daughter. And he's going to run to Rachel and kiss her. 72-year-old man kissing a 20-year-old girl. But anyway, he's so happy.

He's been, like I said, on foot from Washington, D.C., to Cincinnati, Ohio. And he's like, I made it. He's so happy. But we know his good fortune is not a mistake. God already told him.

And like we said in verse 15 of Genesis 28, And behold, I am with you, and I will keep you in all places where you go. And I will bring you again unto this land. For I will not leave you until I've done that which I've spoken to you of.

[9 : 06] Jacob, of course you're going to make it there. Of course you're going to find what you're looking for. I'm with you. So Jacob is very excited about his good fortune. In verse 5, And he said unto them, Do you know Laban, the son of Nahor?

And they said, Oh yeah, we know him. Dude, everybody knows Laban. Jacob should have taken a hint right there. And he said unto them, Is he well? And they said, Oh yeah, he's well. Oh, and behold, Rachel, his daughter, comes with the sheep.

She's probably the youngest. I mean, probably because she was the youngest. We know she's the youngest daughter. We know Laban has other sons, because eventually when they're going to set out to follow Jacob when he leaves, 20 years later from Haran, he's going to gather all of the sons, his sons, and take them and chase after him.

But it seems like he just has these two daughters, right? Find out Leah and Rachel. Rachel's the youngest. We know David, he kept his father's sheep as the youngest. And so it seems like Rachel, as the youngest, this is kind of her lot, to do that as well.

So here comes, what was she the type of? What was she a picture of? Remember? The man of the covenant and the bride. So here comes the bride. The bride is among the sheep, coming to the well.

[10 : 18] Song of Solomon, chapter 1, verses 7 through 8. Everybody's favorite book of the Bible, of course. It says, Tell me, O thou whom thou my soul loves, where you feed, and where you make your flock to rest at noon.

For why should I be one that turns aside by the flocks of your companion? If you know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock and feed thy kids beside the shepherd's tents.

So she's saying, where is the one? You know, where is he? I don't want to go to another flock. I want to stay at the flock of my beloved. And they said, oh, if you don't know, well, follow in the footsteps of the flock and you'll find him.

And so here comes the bride among the sheep to this well. And Jacob, and he said to these boys or whoever were there, these shepherds, he says to them, well, lo, it's yet high day.

Neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together. Water the sheep and go and feed them. And so here the man of the covenant is instructing the shepherds in the care of their sheep. Revelation 1.20 tells us that the mystery of the seven stars, which you saw in my right hand, says Jesus, and the seven golden candlesticks.

[11 : 30] The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven candlesticks, which you saw, are the seven churches. Here's Jesus giving the interpretation here of who are these seven stars?

Well, there's seven angels. There's seven pastors to the seven churches. And he says, hey, I'm instructing you. He's going to write out those seven letters to the churches at that time in Revelation, the chief shepherd instructing the under shepherds.

And here we have our man of the covenant, Jacob, coming and instructing these shepherds in their care of the sheep as well. And he said to them, guys, it's not time yet.

There is still time to be feeding your flock. It's not time to gather the flocks in and be here at this well and just be done. There is still time that you need to be out feeding the flock. That's the day and age we live in.

There is still time we need to be about feeding the flock. We need to be about shepherding God's people and we need to be about bringing those into the flock of God as well.

[12:28] We know that Jesus will tell the disciples in John 4, 35. He'll say to them, do not say there are yet four months and then comes harvest. And this is after, if you remember last week what Derek taught on with the woman at the well, this is when they come back and they're surprised he's talking with her.

And then he responds to them and says, hey guys, don't say there's yet four months and then comes harvest. There's time. There's time. He said, I say unto you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields for they are white already to harvest.

It's not time yet to take it easy. And I think of what Jesus says about John the Baptist. He says, what went you out to see? A reed shaken in the wilderness? He says, they that wear fancy clothes, they're in king's courts.

But what went you out to see? He said, a prophet and gave more than a prophet. There's not time yet. It's not time to be dwelling in king's houses and putting on your comfortable fancy robes. There will be a time. There will be a time when we are in the king's court and we'll be clothed in righteousness.

We'll be clothed in white. But it's not time yet to take our ease, to kick back. It's time to be those faithful stewards and be about our father's business. And so Jacob, he says to them, why aren't you guys out feeding your sheep?

[13:38] This is, there's still so much time left in the day. You can get those sheep even fatter. And they said, well, we can't until all the flocks are gathered together and until they roll the stone from the well's mouth, then we water the sheep.

So these shepherds, they had no ability on their own to remove the stone and access the life that was behind it. Like we can't. We're stuck. We can't get to this. We'd like to, but we have to wait until we all come together and they rolled it away.

The shepherds on their own could not access the water. And while he spake with them, so here's Jacob having this conversation, well, Rachel comes with her father's sheep, for she kept them, again, I think, as the youngest.

So here's the bride tending the sheep. Interesting. We're going to see a little later in this chapter that says in verse 17, it says, Leah was tender-eyed and we'll look at what that means when we get there, but Rachel is beautiful and well-favored.

That means in form and figure. Like she was really good-looking and the way the wording is here, it was constantly contrasted. There was Leah, oh, and then there was Rachel. And so here's Jacob, so happy to finally be here, finds out here comes a relative of Laban's.

[14:52] His mother specifically told him, go and find a daughter of my brother Laban and here comes Rachel. He's very excited. And it came to pass when Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban, his mother's brother, that Jacob went near and rolled the stone from the well's mouth and watered the flock of Laban, his mother's brother.

So here he sees her coming, this bride, this girl, and he's excited about this. The man of the covenant is able to roll away the stone for the sake of the bride and her flock.

Mark 16, verses 4 through 6. And when they looked, they saw the stone and was rolled away for it was very great. And entering into the sepulcher, they saw a young man sitting on the right side clothed in a long white garment and they were affrighted.

And they said unto him, and he said unto him, I'm sorry, unto them, be not affrighted. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified. He is risen.

He's not here. Behold the place where they laid him. The one you seek is risen. He has a source of life in him. Acts 2.24 says, who God raised up, having loosed the pains of death because it was not possible that he should be holden by it.

[16:06] There's only one that could roll away that stone. There's only one. And it was that God rose up Christ. Yes, the angels rolled away the stone or they found the stone rolled away where the angel took it and threw it.

They never found, at the garden tomb, there is no stone there. There's no stone that would fit it, anywhere near there. But they found one like miles away, like another hilltop. It's almost like the angel went, tossed the thing like a disc and it's gone. But the man of the covenant was able to roll away the stone for the sake of the bride and her flock. So Jacob is very excited about finding Rachel. and in verse 11 says, and Jacob kissed Rachel and lifted up his voice and wept. Again, it is good fortune. I think he was just so excited and so blessed to be here. Rachel's like, what is going on? These shepherds are slap. They're so forward. Oh. And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother and that he was Rebecca's son and she ran and told her father.

[17:14] And it came to pass when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob, his sister's son, that he ran to meet him and embraced him and kissed him and brought him to his house and he told Laban all these things.

If you remember, back in Genesis 24, the unnamed servant has come to Haran, whether it's this well or a different well.

He shows up at a well and he meets Rebecca and she takes the news of who he is, that he's Abraham's servant and that he's here looking for a son, I mean, a bride for his, Abraham's son. And she runs back and the damsel, this being Rebecca, Laban's sister, and told them of her mother's house these things and Rebecca had a brother and his name was Laban. And Laban ran out onto the man onto the well and it came to pass when he saw the earring and the bracelets upon his sister's hand and when he heard the words of Rebecca's sister saying, Thus spake the man unto me that he came unto the man and behold, he stood by the camels at the well and he said, Come in, thou blessed of the Lord.

Why do you stand out here? For I have prepared the house and room for your camels. Good old Laban, happy to receive God's people, happy to welcome them in and yet we find out that Laban was only interested not in God's people or in God, but in what God and God's people could do for him.

[18:35] And here we see again where he runs out and he embraces him and he kisses him and this reminded me so much of in Luke, this looks so much like in the prodigal son where he comes home and it says in the father that he runs to meet him.

There in verse 22, two, but the father said to his servants, bring forth the best robe and put it on him and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it and let us eat and be merry for this my son was dead and is alive again.

He was lost and is found and they began to be merry. Oh, isn't that Laban right here? Isn't it? Well, the difference is you see there that what did the father do there in the story of the prodigal son? He sacrificed on behalf of his son. He gave of himself for his son. Laban is not that guy. Laban wants Jacob to come in but Laban is going to use Jacob.

Laban is a man of outward pleasantries hiding an inward nastiness. There's a fruit. I don't know if you've ever heard of it. It is called the miracle fruit.

[19:48] It's a *synsepalum dulcificum*. That's Latin. Those of you here in CC, you might know that or grew up in that.

But anyway, this miracle fruit, it exists in subtropical climates. It comes from Africa. It can exist in Florida. But it turns very sour foods into those that taste very sweet for about 15 to 30 minutes. It releases a sweetening potency that alters the taste buds for about 15 to 30 minutes. Everything sour is sweet. Lemons lose their zing and taste like candy. This is what I think of when I think of Laban.

That man, he just, it comes across so nice. It's so sweet. And you don't realize that he's feeding you lemons. You're like, this is great. This guy is really, but then it begins, the relationship begins to sour.

Like, ooh, you see how he treated that guy? Oh, that doesn't treat me like that. That was different. And you begin to realize, wow, Laban is really kind of about himself here.

[20:50] And all of a sudden, the relationship loses its sweetness and it begins to sour. I look at Laban as the Old Testament parallel to what Jesus said about the Pharisees. In Matthew 23, verses 23, I mean, 27 and 28, Jesus said, Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, the way to build your church, be alike unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness.

So we, our graves look a lot different than they do in Israel. Israel is just rock. It's very hard to bury people. And the sepulchres would have been like limestone tombs above the ground and they would put them in there, the bodies, and over time, the limestone would eat away the flesh so that all that's left is whited bones.

They would then take them out and bury them somewhere else. You put someone else in the sepulchre. But they would keep them very beautiful, looking very nice. And he said, On the outside, you look great, but inside, you're full of dead men's, of bleached bones, and of all, and Jesus throws that in there.

I think that's just for them. And all uncleanness. Even so, you also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within, you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. And here comes Laban.

He looks righteous on the outside, but inwardly, full of hypocrisy. And Jacob, he tells Rachel, and so here comes Laban, and we see how that parallels very much his same response to what he had when Rebecca came and told him that.

[22 : 19] Laban loved the gifts of God. Laban loved the people of God, but Laban did not love God because Laban was only interested in what God or God's people could do for him.

So that moves us out of that picture, that really cool picture, I thought, of just the man of the covenant and the bride interacting with the flock, a well of water that only this man of the covenant could open up so that the flock and the bride could drink from it.

And here Jacob now has found what he thinks is. He thinks it's his bride, but the two for one deal.

And Laban said to him, Oh, surely you are a bone, my bone and my flesh.

And he abode with him in the space of a month. Laban and Jacob were a whole lot more alike than Jacob could have ever guessed at this point. And Laban, Jacob will see a reflection of himself and it will not be pretty.

We'll get into a little later this idea of like, well, who's, is this because of Jacob's sin? Is this Laban's sin? What's going on here? But Jacob made the mistake of thinking he knew Laban from the time of living with him.

[23 : 27] He lived with him for a month. I know Laban. I know Laban. No problem. 1 Timothy 5 tells us that some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment and some men they follow after.

Likewise, also the good works of some are manifest beforehand and they that are otherwise cannot be hid. Hey, some people you're going to see right away, this guy's crooked and some it's going to take a little time to see that.

Paul will also tell Timothy, he said, hey, don't lay hands on any man too suddenly. Why? Lest you be partakers of their sin. Don't throw in with them too quick. See how things go. And so Laban said unto Jacob, sorry, the wrong thing there.

Laban said unto Jacob, because thou art my brother, should you therefore serve me for nothing?

Tell me, what shall your wages be?

So he's been there a month and they've talked and so now Laban knows Jacob wants to live here. He's like, look, we're brothers. We're relatives. You shouldn't just serve me for nothing. What do you want your wages to be?

[24 : 31] We know that Laban will not stick to this. This is just a setup. Jacob will eventually say to him after he leaves Haran 20 years from now and they meet back up on the way back up to or down to Israel.

In Genesis 31, Jacob will throw this back in Laban's face and he says, I have been 20 years in your house. I've served you 14 years for your two daughters, six years for your cattle and you've changed my wages 10 times.

That's a bad working environment. That's a toxic working environment. Jesus took upon him our wages, right? Once and for all.

Romans 6, 23 tells us the wages of sin is death. The wage we earn by sinning, it has to be paid. It's a wage. You earned that and you're going to get paid that. It's death. It's separation from God.

It's eternal punishment. But the gift of God is eternal life for Jesus Christ, our Lord. When Jesus, therefore, had received the vinegar, he said, it is finished, to tell us that I paid in full, an accounting term.

[25 : 36] The books are clean. It's paid. And he bowed his head and gave up the ghost. So where Laban will change the wages 10 times, Jesus, he paid those wages once and for all and it is done.

You don't ever have to worry about him. Changing the wages. You don't ever have to worry about finding out, I've been saved for 15 years and I just found out I got to do this to stay saved or this next stage of salvation.

Justification is a moment. Sanctification is a lifetime. And Laban had two daughters. Now we find out about his girls. The name of the elder was Leah. And the name of the younger was Rachel. Leah, her name means weary. I don't know what you have to do to name your daughter weary. If it was just, if maybe at the time when her mother gave birth, she's like, I am so weary right now of living with Laban.

Maybe the brothers were older at that point, but her name means weary. And the name of the younger, Rachel, that means a ewe, like a female sheep, like his little lamb.

[26 : 42] Oh, Rachel. Leah was tender-eyed, but Rachel was beautiful and well-favored. Again, like we said, that means in four-man figure.

There's a contrast here. You think, oh, Rachel was, Leah was tender. She was just a tender thing. So soft-spoken. But it's a contrast. But, Rachel was beautiful. Tender-eyed, what does that mean? Nobody's really sure. It means soft. It means weak. It means timid. It could mean that she had blue eyes, which were considered a blemish at that time, but it's some type of undesirable or less desirable trait, and it was like a blemish.

There's something that, in comparing her to Rachel, it's like, oh, Leah, oh, Rachel. Right? And the way the wording is here, this is not good, it's that Leah's situation was made worse by the constant contrast in comparison to her younger sister.

Constantly compared to that. That's what she had to live with. It'd be bad enough if this was my situation, but here I have Miss Goody Two-Shoes and that's who I'm always being compared to.

[27 : 46] The description of these two sisters indicates what was probably a complicated, conflict-filled, and competitive family life and they had Laban as their dad.

Okay? Verse 18, and Jacob loved Rachel. And so this is in response to when Laban says, well, what do you want your wages to be? I think if I was Jacob, I would have said, I'll serve you seven months for your daughter.

He said, I'll serve you seven years for Rachel, your daughter. The man of the covenant, he will go above and beyond for his bride, won't he? Romans 5, 7, and 8, for scarcely will a righteous man die.

Yet peradventure for a good man, some would dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us and that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. We were not the beautiful, well-attractive Rachel.

We were the despised Leah and worse. And Jesus says, I'll go for that one and I'll pay a price above and beyond seven years. I'll give my life for this bride. And Laban said, oh, it's better I give her to you than I should give her to another man.

[28 : 56] Hello, Jacob. Hint, hint. This guy's, yeah, abide with me. What a way to look at his daughters. We're going to see as we go through this. It's not a pretty picture. But there's two characteristics as we get in, as we go through this section now.

We're only going to get down to verse 30. Verse 31 through the end of the chapter goes into the next chapter as the girls begin to have children and then the back and forth there. We'll save that for next time.

But there's two characteristics of Laban we want to know about. One is manipulate. He's a manipulator. And manipulate means to manage or utilize skillfully. That's a good thing, right? Like someone who is really good at, I don't know, let's say they're really good, they run a backhoe. Like man, the way they can manipulate those controls. It's like an extension of their body, right? So that's a good thing to manage or utilize skillfully to control or play upon by artful, unfair, or insidious means, especially to one's own advantage.

So a person who's a manipulator in relationships, they're looking to gain advantage. They're looking to do that through means that are not fair or above board.

[30 : 07] They want to gain an advantage. Laban is one who's a manipulator and he's seeking advantage. Any state, condition, or circumstance favorable to success, interest, or reputation. That's good.

Okay? That's a good thing. Unless you're using other people, manipulating them to gain an advantage. Laban, we're going to see, manipulated his children to gain the maximum advantage for

himself.

Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 12, 14, in speaking kind of about this relationship with parents and children, he's talking about his relationship to the church in Corinth. And he says, Behold, the third time I'm ready to come to you, and I will not be burdensome to you, for I seek not yours, but you. It's not about what you can give me, guys. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. Look, kids, look, children, it's not for you to supply my needs. It's not, it's for me to lay up for you. Parents, our children are not for our advantage, but for God's glory. Psalm 127, verses 3 to 5.

[31 : 13] Lo, children are in heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows in the hand of a mighty man, so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that has his quiver full of them.

They shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with their enemies in the gate. Then Ephesians 2, verses 3 to 5, says, Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lust of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.

This is what we once were. We were by nature the children of wrath, even as others, but God, who is rich in mercy for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, he has quickened us together with Christ.

By grace, you are saved. It is not for us, the children, to lay up for the parents, for our father to take care of us, and he does that well.

But Laban, unfortunately, will be using his children to gain the maximum advantage for himself.

Verse 20, And Jacob served seven years for Rachel, but they seemed unto him a few days for the love he had to her.

[32 : 22] And Jacob said unto Laban, Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled that I may go in unto her. The groom does not delay a moment longer than necessary, does he?

We know Jesus promised us in John 14. Remember, Judas is gone, and Jesus now begins to speak to the disciples things that he has not spoken yet at all until now as he's about to go. He says, Hey guys, this is for the church, this is for you guys.

If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am, there you may be also. That's the promise we have that Jesus is coming to receive us. The groom will not delay a moment longer than necessary.

2 Peter 3, verses 8 and 9, But beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

The Lord is not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

[33 : 24] So it might seem like, Lord, you know, don't, we're told not to be of them that say, my Lord delays his coming. But when we see what looks like the Lord is delaying, he's not. You know, that scripture there, you'll see people like, wow, a day is a thousand years, and a thousand years is a day.

They'll try and apply that to, like, how to look at scripture. In light of what we're looking at, it seems like, the Lord's like, by the time he gets here, he seems like, man, I've been so excited to be here. It went so fast.

I'm so excited to get my bride. But the reason I'm not here yet is because I want to bring in more, because he's so good that all should come to repentance. But we know, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

He will not delay, in a moment, when it's time to go, when the father says, go get your bride, he's going to be here, and he's going to get us. And Laban gathered all the men of the place, in verse 22, and he made a feast.

Like, okay, I'm going to make a feast. And it came to pass in the evening that he took Leah, his daughter, and brought her to Jacob. And he, Jacob, went in unto her, and Laban gave unto his daughter, Leah, Zilpah, his maid, or a handmaid.

[34 : 34] Now, Zilpah, her name means trickling, like a trickling water, like a dripping water. And all I could think of was this proverb. Proverbs 27, 15, a continual dropping in a very rainy day, and a contentious woman are alike.

When he marries Rachel, Jacob's going to give the handmaid Bilhah. Her name means, I think it means, troubled. Thanks, Dad.

What a guy. But either way, Jacob is expecting his bride, his bride Rachel. Laban pulls a fast one, where Jacob, the younger, tricked Isaac that he was the older.

Here we have Laban tricking Jacob that the older is the younger. Jacob, the deceiver, is now being deceived. And it came to pass that in the morning, behold, it was, shocker, Leah.

So in that tradition, she would have had a veil over her face throughout the wedding ceremony. And then, I don't think they would have even been together much at the feast. Then they would have brought them into the bridal chamber to consummate the marriage.

[35 : 42] Then they would continue feasting. And he's going to say here, hey, fulfill her week. And Jacob now gets shocker of shocks. It's Leah. And he runs out and says to Laban, what is it you've done unto me?

Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Wherefore then have you beguiled me? Literally, have you deceived me? Have you thrown me? Man, you threw me, Laban. You threw me off. How could you do this?

Jacob now understands how it feels. In Genesis 27, and Isaac his father said unto him, to Esau, who are you? He said, I'm your son, your firstborn Esau.

And Isaac trembled very exceedingly and said, who? Where is he that's taken venison and brought it me and have eaten all before thou camest and have blessed him and I have blessed him?

Yea, and he shall be blessed. And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry and said unto his father, bless me, even me also, over my, also my father.

[36 : 41] Jacob had tricked his father and left at this point. He wasn't here to see what the result of his decision was upon Isaac and Esau. But now he understands. Now he feels that.

He's crushed. He can't believe this. Just as he crushed his father and Isaac trembled, just as he broke the heart of his brother through that deception. Galatians 6, 7, and 8.

Be not deceived. God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap. For he that sows to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. For he that sows to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.

Jacob is reaping what he sowed. What is the principle of reaping and sowing? You always reap later than you sowed. You always reap greater than what you sowed. You take a handful of seed, throw it in the ground, it takes a while.

It finally comes up. You know, but that corn, those seeds of corn you threw, now you got a stalk with multiple ears with multiple seeds on them. It's later and it's more. And Laban has this wonderful excuse.

[37 : 45] And Laban said, oh, it must be so done in our country. Didn't I tell you that? These seven years and one month that you are here with my family, you mean you never found out that the firstborn has to go and be married first?

I don't think so, Laban. It must be so done in our country to give the younger before the firstborn. Fulfill her week and listen to how he speaks of Rachel. It says about Leah, fulfill her week and we will give you this also for the service which thou shalt serve me yet seven other years.

All right. I got seven years of hard work out of you. 72 years old, he's waiting seven years, he's 79, marries Leah. He says, you work seven more years and I'll give you Rachel.

But first, just fulfill her week. What an awkward week. What a horrible situation this is. Now, what should Jacob have done?

Honestly, I think he should not have married Rachel. God had a bigger plan than this. But I mean, he married the wrong woman, you'll make the best of it. But no, he's going to say, well, I'll take her sister too. That's going to be really fun.

[38 : 50] We're going to find out eventually in this relationship between the two sisters because at the end of 29, Leah's going to start having kids. But we're going to find out in 30 that to get time with Jacob, she has to make bargains with her sister, Rachel.

Like, hey, let me borrow the husband tonight. Right? It's a bad relationship. Bad. It is just really bad. For Laban, though, relationships had become just another commodity for him to use for his own advantage.

I'll give you the other also. Laban had just sacrificed his children for the sake of a business deal. I got 14 years of service out of this. Great. Great. Laban, for 20 years, will live with Jacob, Rachel,

and Leah.

Well, seven years were maybe okay before he married Rachel and Leah. But for these next 13 years, they're going to be pretty rough. But for Laban, he might think, you know, this worked. Oh, it's fine. So I manipulated. So I took advantage of them. You know what? It'll be okay. And unfortunately, relationships that are close to us will take advantage of them and will count on the fact that they're family.

[39 : 59] Well, they're related to me. Well, it's okay. I can, I can, it'll recover. It'll be all right. But you can only put so much weight on a relationship before it snaps. And while maybe Laban thought everything was okay, eventually Jacob's going to come to Rachel and Leah and say, hey, the Lord told me it's time to go back home to my dad.

And Rachel and Leah are going to answer him in Genesis 31, verses 15 and 14. And they're going to say, is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house? Are we not counted of him strangers?

Our relationship is broken down where we might as well be strangers? For he has sold us and has quite devoured also our money, our inheritance, our dowry.

He's just used it all for himself. So the question, I think, as we kind of close this out, we have to ask ourselves here, how do you identify a Laban? How do you know it's a Laban?

Jacob was with him a month. Jacob, couldn't you have told somehow ahead of time? Couldn't you have not dove headfirst into this? So how do I identify a Laban? Well, first, I think, do not judge a Laban by appearances.

[41 : 03] This looked really good to Jacob. This looked great. Hey, he came out, he hugged me, he kissed me, he brought me home to his house, and I've been living here a month. This is good. This is good. He wants me to be part of the family.

1 Samuel 16, 17 says, But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance. This is speaking of when he goes to anoint David. He's looking at Eliab and all the older brothers. Or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him.

For the Lord sees not as man sees. For man looks on the outward appearance, the Lord looks on the heart. Don't look on the outward appearance. How do we not look on the outward appearance? Well, right there. We get the Lord's take on it.

Lord, is this you? This looks like a good situation, but is this you? Number two, a Laban uses relationships for his advantage. Philippians 2, 4 says, Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Laban uses relationships for his advantage. No matter what, even if it's like, oh, look how generous he is. Oh, he's involved in ministry here. He helps this person here. And yet you see behind the scenes, man, it's always about his advantage.

[42 : 08] Yeah, he's willing to be generous when it benefits him. He's willing to be in ministry when he can get something from it. And then lastly, this is the big one, do not judge a Laban by how he treats you, but by how he treats others, especially those closest to him.

1 Timothy 3, 5, Paul's writing to Timothy about those who desire to be in leadership in a church, to be elders and pastors. He says in verse 5 of chapter 3, If a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?

Look, if he can't treat his own home right, don't expect him to treat the church well. 1 Timothy 5, 8, he says, If any provide not for his own, and especially those of his own house, he's denied the faith, and it's worse than an infidel.

Look, if you're around someone and, oh, my word, I can't believe the way he just treated his wife or his children. Oh, my word, that wasn't, but he never treats me that way. I'm sure, that was just a one-off thing.

But well, we've got a different relationship. A man is not going to treat you any better than he treats, especially those closest to him. If he doesn't treat his wife and family well, don't expect him to treat you well. And also, I didn't put this in here, but we know how Laban acted years ago when Rebecca was taken back to Isaac to be the bride.

[43 : 24] And I'm sure there would have been stories and Jacob could have known. Now, wait a minute. This is a lot like he did with my mom back then. So, to identify a Laban, do not judge by outward appearance.

A Laban will use relationships for his advantage and do not judge a Laban by how he treats you but by how he treats others. And Jacob, he listens to Laban now.

He does so. He fulfilled Leah's week, the most awkward week of his life. And Laban gave to Rachel, sorry, I skipped a section.

I would do that. And fulfilled her week and he gave him, Rachel, his daughter, to wife also. The one week, Leah gets to be the only one. Poor Leah. And so then he gives Jacob Rachel.

And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah, his handmaid, to be her maid. Her name means troubled. He's like, man, I finally get rid of some of these women. And this is just going to go from bad to worse eventually because Leah and Rachel within their competitive nature and the situation they're in, it's two wives, they're going to have the great idea that we're going to take our handmaids and bring them into the mix and make them somewhat lesser wives to Jacob as well.

[44 : 42] But he went in unto Rachel and he loved also Rachel more than Leah and he served with Laban yet seven other years. And so for the next seven years he's married to Leah and he's married to Rachel and there again it lets us know that he loved Rachel more than Leah.

And I think Rachel let Leah know that every single day of her life and I think Jacob also showed that as well. Jacob's stolen blessing had resulted in more than he bargained for.

Hadn't it? Manipulation and deception may get us what we want in the short term but they will eventually lead to an unavoidable harvest of pain. Jacob may have thought this is working out great.

I mean, it worked. I had to leave home but I found Rachel. Laban's a good guy. This is good. I've worked here seven years with him. He can be a little jerky to his kids but you know it's seven years and it's been good and then boom in a moment he tricks him and slides in Leah and now he's got this huge mess going on because he wasn't wise enough during that time to see what was going on.

So what do we do? Well we commit our way unto the Lord as it says in Psalm 37. Trust also in him and he shall bring it to pass. He shall bring forth our righteousness as the light and thy judgment as the noonday.

[45 : 54] Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him. Fret not by self because of him who prospers in his way because of the man who brings wicked devices to pass. I don't have to manipulate the situation.

I don't have to try and figure Laban out. I don't need to. I can commit my way to the Lord. Where it says there in verse 7 rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him. I don't want to rest and wait patiently. I want to commit my way to the Lord and see him act now.

Let's do it. Let's go. He says no, no, no. And don't fret because of Laban. Don't fret because of someone who prospers in his own way. Because of a man who seems like he's bringing all his wicked devices to pass.

Further on in that same chapter Psalm 37 verse 16 and 17 says a little that a righteous man has it better than the riches of many wicked. For the arms of the wicked shall be broken but the Lord upholds the righteous.

Now the arms being broken it's like an idiom for strength. They have no strength. I like that picture. It's like the rich man he's got so much stuff but he can't even take a hold of the little bit he's got because his arms are broken.

[46 : 54] It's like oh man where the little you have at least you can hold it. At least it's yours. At least you can enjoy it. Jacob should have learned. He should have learned from his own upbringing.

We know that it says about after the boys were born the twins it says in chapter 25 of Genesis Isaac loved Esau because he did eat of his medicine but Rebecca loved Jacob. Jacob had come from a home where there was this constant favoritism and here he's going to do the same thing.

He's going to do the same thing with his sons with Joseph. Imagine as we go through this you can just begin to imagine the family dynamics. Leah is hated. Rachel is chosen. Rachel's loved.

Leah despised. And Leah's having kids. And kids aren't stupid. You know it's like what Joe Foch says. They have a baloney meter. They know when it's baloney. They know how you're treating mom. They see how Jacob treats Leah.

And then they see oh here's Joseph comes on the scene. Joseph the favored one. No wonder they throw him down the hole. So sin.

[47 : 56] Sin does not result in generational curses. It doesn't. But it can result in generational consequences. We're told that in Ezekiel. Ezekiel 18 20 says the soul that sins it shall die. The son

shall not bear the iniquity of the father.

Neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. My iniquity does not pass to my children. I will bear my iniquity.

But my iniquity can create consequences within my family within my home that can then be passed on and learned by my kids. We see here with Jacob that's what happens. He continues to relate to his family and to his children in the same way and under the same sin that he had grown up with. As we close I want to look at one last picture which I think is really cool. I know it's a little long but let's just do this real quick. In Genesis 24 if you remember the unnamed servant goes to the well. Right? He's outside his country he's at the well and what does he find there? He finds a bride.

Behold I stand here by the well of water and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water and let it come to pass that the damsel to whom I shall say let down your pitcher I pray you that I may drink and she shall say drink and I'll give the camels drink also that the same be she that thou has appointed for thy servant Isaac and thereby shall I know that you have showed kindness unto my master and it came to pass before he had done speaking that behold Rebecca came out who was born to Bethuel son of Milcah the wife of Nahor Abraham's brother with her pitcher upon her shoulder and so here we have Isaac's bride that the unnamed servant was sent outside of his own country and was at the well that he found Isaac's bride as we just saw today in Genesis 29 verses 2 and then 9 he looked and behold a well in the field and lo there were three flocks of sheep lying by it for out of that well they watered the flocks and a great stone was upon the well's mouth and while he yet spake with them Rachel came with her father's sheep for she kept them

[50 : 05] Jacob also finds his bride at a well outside his own country in Exodus chapter 2 Moses is fleeing from Pharaoh now when Pharaoh heard these things he sought to slay Moses Moses had just killed one of the Egyptians trying to be the deliverer in his own strength Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh and dwelt in the land of Midian and he sat down by a well now when the priests of Midian now the priest of Midian who had seven daughters came and drew near and to water and fill the trough to water their father's flock and the shepherds came and drove them away but Moses stood up and helped them and watered their flock and Moses was content to dwell with the man and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter so here Moses is finding his bride at a well outside of his country this is so cool because this just ties in last week Derek was in John chapter 4 Jesus Jesus went outside of his own country and comes to a well and what does he find there I'm sorry that's so small you can just follow along with that or in your Bible in John 4 and he said

I must go through Samaria then came he to the city of Samaria which is called Sychar near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph or Shechem as Derek explained what that was we'll get to that eventually that that will be where Jacob will end up with his family when he leaves Haran now Jacob Jacob's well was there Jesus therefore being wearied with his journey sat thus on the well and it was about the sixth hour there came a woman of Samaria to draw water and Jesus said unto her give me to drink Jesus answered and said unto her whosoever drinks of this water shall thirst again but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life the woman said unto him sir give me this water that I thirst not neither come here again give me something that satisfies because I've not been satisfied Jesus said unto her go call your husband and come here the woman answered and said I don't have a husband Jesus said unto her you said well that you have no husband but you've had five husbands and the one you're with now is not your husband and that you said truly and we think oh this woman she must have like you know not been very faithful and whatever in that culture women were not at the status they are of how we hold them like legally a woman could not divorce a man he had to divorce her so a man divorced her she was divorced five times each time what did she have to compromise on to take the next guy by the time she married the fifth guy what was she willing to just say yeah okay whatever just take care of me marry me whatever deal you want to make what was she compromising on what was that guy like now she's with the sixth guy they're not even married he's not even willing to say yes and sign on the dotted line and be responsible for her and he says hey the one you're with now is not your husband you've said truly and then in verse 23 he says but the hour comes and now is when the true worshipers shall worship the father in spirit and in truth for the father seeks such to worship him God is a spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth there is something that satisfies there's something that satisfies and it's in spirit and in truth you're not going to find it

not going to be something that's going to satisfy you in the way that you look for in this world and the woman said I know that Messiah comes which is called Jesus and when he's come he will tell us all things and Jesus said unto her I that speak unto you am he I'm what you're looking for here I am I'm what you need you've tried all these husbands I'm your husband Isaiah 54 5 says for thy maker is thine husband the Lord of hosts is his name and thy redeemer the Holy One of Israel the God of the whole earth shall he be called and so here we see this amazing picture of all these patriarchs going outside their country to a well and finding a bride and here Jesus goes outside of his country into Samaria and he finds a woman who has had many husbands who's looked for satisfaction and she couldn't find it and then Jesus comes and says hey I'm your satisfaction I'm what you're looking for and it's in spirit and it's in truth and so for those of us today right as we close if we're in Christ then man we have such satisfaction but are we looking for it somewhere else am I still trying to like Laban think that there's something I can deal I can work that maybe I can use this relationship around me a father a son a daughter a mother a sibling that I'm looking to get satisfaction from you from you from you instead of realizing my satisfaction with my relationship with the Lord it's in spirit and truth I'm not going to be satisfied outside of that and if you're not in Christ if you don't know Christ you'll never be satisfied just like this woman with anything this world has to give so when the Lord brings you in contact with a Laban we looked at what a Laban is how to identify him but what if you have to live with a Laban what do you do how do you handle that you run what do you do you go back to this you go back to where you commit your way into the Lord you recognize it's not about Laban it's about Jesus right and Jesus is able to overcome all the Labans in our lives so father we thank you as we close now

Lord and just worship you one more time we've been worshiping you Lord worshiping you with our time Lord worshiping you by listening to your word Lord and thanking you Lord for the pictures that you put before us Lord the picture of the bride coming to the well with the sheep and yet when she gets there how is she going to get the water oh wait here comes the man of the covenant to open up the well and to give her water and then he takes her as his bride Lord and here we see a picture again Jacob yes he takes a beautiful one but he also takes the one that's despised and Lord how gracious you are because you will use Leah she will be the one who will give birth to Judah and out of the tribe of Judah will come Jesus your redemption Lord knows no bounds and then Lord to see this beautiful picture of the Gentile Lord the one outside the covenant the one outside the land and then to see how you send Lord you send your men of covenant and then you yourself Lord to go to the well outside your land to find a bride who's been despised who's been used who has no satisfaction and then to say to her

[56 : 42] I am he I'm the one you've been looking for I pray this morning Lord that we would find our satisfaction in you that Lord whatever our relationships are they're not as bad as Jacob none of us have it that bad but Lord we have hard relationships Lord help us to commit our way unto the Lord to trust also in him and he shall bring it to pass fret not ourselves because of evildoers because of the man who brings to pass wicked devices we have a more sure word Lord we have the hope of your word that tells us that Lord he who began a good work will complete it that Lord all things work together for good to them who are called according to your purpose to those who love you who are called according to your purpose thank you Lord for your word in Jesus name Amen Amen Amen

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