

The
Twenty Year
Trick

Genesis 29:1 – 30



~ The reason our society – and I mean that of the entire world – is in such terrible moral, economic and otherwise cultural crises today can be summed up in one word: sin. Tragically, the church absolutely refuses to call sin what it really is anymore. I know we all say, “...it is what it is” – so, okay, but “it’s” usually SIN! If you can’t even acknowledge it in your life, then you’re not confessing it in prayer, either – because that would literally be impossible. Both in and of the world, God hates sin - and we can change neither the prevalence of sin in nor the influence of sin upon our lives; but sin can sure change us without even the dimmest level of awareness on our part.

In our last report from our Spiritual Safari, we spent the night in Bethel with Jacob. Jacob had to leave home in a hurry you will remember, because of his deceit towards his dad and brother. Jacob took what they call, “French leave” – he could not stay because he would have been killed by Esau. Now, Jacob is out there on the desert and he’s “on his own.” Unfortunately, he’s having to use rocks as pillows. That was likely not comfortable; but he still had that crazy dream about the ladder. We also left off in the account where Jacob had thought about his dreams and yet he still tried to make a deal with God regarding God blessing him and Jacob repaying Him and all that nonsense. Jacob has so far to go. Remember, God had already told Jacob what He was going to do. God has already made it abundantly clear that His promises weren’t contingent upon Jacobs’s abilities or possessions or clever cunning. This demonstrates that if our salvation was dependent upon us – then NONE of us would ever be saved.

Galatians 6: 7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the

flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting ~

~ Have you ever heard the expression “...the chickens are coming home to roost?” Well, Jacob’s chickens will soon be coming home. He’s going to reap the rewards of deceitful dealings. See, this universal law of God that whatever we sow – and we will sow – that’s what we are going to end up with, is immutable. This is the one truth the atheist detests. Sorrow or joy – now is the time to decide, friends. This axiom of reality applies to every area of life. If we plant cotton, we harvest cotton - and if we plant hate we’ll grow hate. Every field we travel across on this so-called safari together will be regulated by this truth.

Pharaoh slew all the male children of the Hebrews and, in return, all the males first-born were slain of the Egyptians. His own son was slain by the angel of death. Ahab slew Naboth in cold blood over a vineyard - and the dogs licked the blood of Ahab right there in that field that Ahab had murdered Naboth in and for. The same place that the dogs licked the blood of Naboth they licked the blood of Ahab. I believe it was the EXACT same spot, too! Elijah told Ahab what was going to happen here. Ahab was deeply disturbed and never even went back to the field he had killed for. Of course, Ahab was taken to that field at random after becoming wounded in a battle; so, Elijah’s prophecy was literally fulfilled by what appeared to be a completely random act. Be not deceived, friends. God says, “...vengeance is Mine I will repay” – and He does.

David found this law as applicable to his life as water is regarding his sin. David had a terrible sin – and more than one - and God forgave him, yes – but David’s own daughter was raped by her brother. That brother was killed by another brother who also led a coup against King David in Jerusalem. Paul the apostle felt the full weight of this law when he consented to the stoning of Stephen. Remember, Paul was later stoned and left for dead! In fact, I think he was dead; and we must consider that Paul, as a Pharisee, went around murdering Christians and putting them in prison. Well, Paul was murdered in a Roman Mamertine prison by the madman Nero. Now, I know this isn’t nice, but Jacob, oh, old Jacob – he is

going to be the supreme classic example of all of this. Jacob is cocky, quick, proud and full of himself at this time....

1 Then Jacob went on his journey, and came into the land of the people of the east.

2 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.

3 And thither were all the flocks 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 his place.

~ Jacob has moved on now from Bethel and, naturally, he's getting a little thirsty. Water is a very valuable resource out there in the middle of the desert and it must be protected. The people kept a huge stone on top of the well to keep it from being poisoned; and they only removed it once each day to let the people draw water and take some home. Everybody watered their sheep together and then the well would be capped off again. Well, only by the providential leading of God has Jacob arrived before they take the stone away from off of the well for the day....

4 And Jacob said unto them, My brethren, whence be ye? And they said, Of Haran are we.

5 And he said unto them, Know ye Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, We know him.

6 And he said unto them, Is he well? And they said, He is well: and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep.

7 And he said, Lo, it is yet high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together: water ye the sheep, and go and feed them.

8 And they said, We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and till they roll the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep.

9 And while he yet spake with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep: for she kept them.

~ Incredibly, Jacob just rolls into town and starts telling everyone how and when to water their sheep. So piously and presumptuously, Jacob breaks all societal protocol and waters Laban's flock. It wasn't time to uncap the well. See, the point is, Jacob is following his own preconceived notions of what to do and when. He's following his own goodness and Jacob is doing what Jacob wants to do when Jacob wants to do it! He's making his own rules and he is his own man! There is no leading from the Lord here at all – and Jacob isn't seeking Him anyways. Of course, that only means that Jacob has a tremendously difficult lesson coming from God in this place – because God loved Jacob – and whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth....

10 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.

11 And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept.

~ That sure sounds strange as a single verse. There are a number of explanations for it but I have yet to hear any that are satisfactory reasons for it to even be in the Bible - but it IS here! So, let's just take it at face value that Jacob, obviously overcome with emotion, grabbed Rachel and kissed her and was just happy to be at his destination. That's another unsatisfactory answer for this verse – it's icky, just, an icky scene in this section of Scripture. It feels about the same as some half drunk man in a five thousand dollar suit that staggers into the restaurant and grabs some young lady and just kisses her out of the clear blue sky. It's obnoxious. It's weird. Today, it's illegal – and they would register Jacob as a sex offender for that little trick, but I guess it was okay back then. Let's move on....

12 And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother (nephew), and that he was Rebekah's son: and she ran and told her father.

13 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.

~ “All these things” he told Uncle Laban all about are how he owned the birthright, how he and his mom had tricked his brother Esau and Isaac his dad, about the trip he made in two days that should have taken at least a week or more, about how special he was to his momma, all about the ladder dream – and all about Jacob. It doesn't matter to Jacob that Jacob is an unexpected house guest. I'm sure Jacob felt an entitlement there for free lodging and hosting. The whole time Jacob is casting eyes in the direction of Rachel. That veil she had was irresistible. Just thinking about taking it off of her was too much for Jacob to handle; and she was looking back at Jacob from the shadows, too....

14 And Laban said to him, Surely thou art my bone and my flesh. And he abode with him the space of a month.

15 And Laban said unto Jacob, Because thou art my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? tell me, what shall thy wages be?

16 And Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel.

17 Leah was tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favored.

~ Well, that month sure went by fast – and who said anything about working? Jacob wasn't interested in getting a job, because he's never worked a day in his life before. Old man Isaac had plenty of money. I guess Jacob thought he was going to just chill on the ranch over at Laban's. After all, when a nephew comes to visit the uncle it's a time of celebration and relaxation, right? Well, Laban is very clever with how he speaks to and deals with Jacob. Friends, you won't live with Laban a month without making some arrangement to pay your room and board, I promise you that.

Laban has, of course, noticed the eye games going on between Rachel and Jacob - but Laban has another daughter we just met, Leah – and Laban wants Jacob to meet Leah, too. Here is a very beautiful Rachel - but Leah was “tender eyed” – and that means she was fair to average. In Greek, particularly Euripides, Aeschylus and Sophocles, it was a compliment for a woman to be called “cow eyed” in that sense of the Greek word for it, which meant, beautiful. It doesn’t sound like much of a compliment – but – have you looked closely into the eye of a cow? They’re quite remarkable and wondrous. The next time you meet a cow – look him in the eye! If that cow has a fifth leg, move away as fast as possible, of course – but I digress. Either way, Laban had one cow eye and one ugly duckling for daughters, apparently, and so to speak....

18 And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter.

19 And Laban said, It is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man: abide with me.

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

~ Verse twenty is the most beautiful verse I can find associated with Jacob and Rachel. It is an outstanding statement of beauty and true love. Laban had Jacob working a whole lot of overtime, I promise you that. Jacob went out every single day in the cold, rain, heat and whatever else – probably never missed one day of work. So, the time is right for Laban’s dirty trick now. In that day the marriage veil was an entire covering – you couldn’t see the woman at all until it was too late! I wonder if Jacob didn’t have an immediate flashback in the tent with Leah about the elder being tricked by the younger. You’ll get what you sow, friends....

21 And Jacob said unto Laban; Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her.

22 And Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast.

23 And it came to pass in the evening that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him; and he went in unto her.

24 And Laban gave unto his daughter Leah Zilpah his maid for an handmaid.

25 And it came to pass, that in the morning, behold, it was Leah: and he said to Laban, What is this thou hast done unto me? Did not I serve with thee for Rachel? Wherefore then hast thou beguiled me?

26 And Laban said, It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn.

27 Fulfil her week (7 years), and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years.

~ So, seven years seemed to be a few days but is quickly turning into fourteen long years now. When Jacob is doing the tricking he's proud of it - but when he is the one who is deceived, then it's criminal. Notice how Laban passes it off as no big deal. Jacob didn't read the fine print of the law and Uncle Laban ate his lunch. See, everything in the life of Jacob is messed up now. Jacob is not calling on the leading of the Lord in his life. How will Jacob be able to have two wives and be in the will of God? This record is just the accurate historical record, friends. God disapproves of what Jacob is going to do and that is made perfectly clear....

28 And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week: and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also.

29 And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah his handmaid to be her maid.

30 And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years.

~ So, we end this leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God with Uncle Laban getting his money's worth out of Jacob - and he also got two daughters married off at the same time. There are myriad lessons for us here today. One is that Jacob should not have two wives. Jacob was tricked into this position. He would have taken Rachel and left seven years ago. Read this chapter again for all of the other lessons because, candidly – we could easily get stuck in the theological mud forevermore right here. God will not approve of sin in our lives, my beloved; and He will make that perfectly clear to us as we continue to search every page of Scripture for our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ ~

