

Jacob's Journey

- Jacob heads to the East, which is always a negative direction in Genesis.
- His story is a repetition of finding a wife at a well.
- He runs into people who know Laban and his daughter Rachel.
- Rachel is a shepherdess who knows about sheep while Jacob does not.
- He rolls away a stone to impress her and waters her sheep.
- He kisses her and weeps, which seems presumptuous.
- We don't get any clues yet as to how she feels about this arrangement.

Meeting Laban

- Laban embraces and greets Jacob and brings him in.
- Jacob appears to update Laban on his family and life so far.
- He is welcomed and stays as a guest for a month.
- He appears to have great success and is blessed by God.

Where is God?

- God is not mentioned anywhere in this passage.
- Jacob does not pray or seek God's guidance but is blessed anyway.
- Jacob's story here intentionally parallel's the previous well encounter, but without any of the prayer and intentional seeking of God.
- We need to recognize that God's blessings do not always come because of our hard work or our own actions.
- Jacob would be mistaken to read the situation as God blessing him because of his schemes.
- God is going to discipline Jacob because of his "sneaky" ways.

Working for Love

- Laban and Jacob begin to negotiate Jacob's pay.
- Laban has two daughters, but the older Leah is not pretty.
- There are parallels between Esau and Jacob.
- Jacob loves the younger daughter and wants to marry her.
- He overpromises how long he will work in order to gain her.
- But the seven years seem to fly by because he is in the honeymoon stage.

The Wedding Night

- After the seven years, Jacob demands Rachel be given to him.
- His actual words seem demeaning to Rachel and viewing her as a sexual object.
- Laban prepares a great wedding feast.
- But at night he switches the daughters and gives Jacob Leah instead.

- Jacob seems to not notice the difference, despite consummating the marriage, until the morning light comes.
- He is angry at being deceived.
- Laban's explanation is a rebuke of Jacobs "country's" ways.
- They negotiate another seven years of service, but Jacob can marry Rachel as well.
- Jacob loves Rachel more than Leah and there will not be a "happily ever after."

Reaping

- Jacob is reaping what he has sown.
- The deceiver who manipulates and robs others is himself deceived and tricked.
- There are parallels between Jacob's previous deceptions.
- Jacob is blinded in the dark as Isaac was.
- The elder sister impersonates her younger as the younger brother impersonated the older in order to gain a blessing.
- The deception takes place around a feast.
- Rachel, the younger, was trying to usurp what the elder sibling should have.
- It appears that God is disciplining Jacob and trying to teach him a lesson.

Is Polyamory Biblical?

- Some will try to argue having multiple spouses is a good and biblical thing.
- Jacob should not have married both of these women.
- Jacob never seeks God's wisdom on finding a wife, as his father did.
- The marriages immediately lead to conflict and strife.
- Jesus comes from the line of Judah, Leah's last son.
- Just because God allows and turns the children into tribes is not endorsement.

Application

- Not every blessing you experience is because of your hard work.
- Some times the misfortune you face is because of God's discipline.
- God does discipline those that He loves.