Jacob's Dream and Marriage

Genesis 29:1 - 30:24

Bible Memory Verse

Romans 12:17 NIV

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody.

Bible Story

Esau is after Jacob. If everything that was rightfully yours was stolen/tricked from you, you'd be pretty upset. Jacob had lied and deceived and tricked his father, Isaac, into giving him all the rightful blessings of the firstborn son to him instead of Esau. Esau, understandably, is on a rampage. Jacob catches wind of Esau's anger and runs.

Under advice from his mother Rebekah, Jacob flees to the house of his uncle Laban. On his way to Laban's place, Jacob had a dream:

> *"...he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. There above it stood the Lord, and he said: 'I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All the peoples of the earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you'" (Genesis 28:12-15).*

Jacob was floored! God was here! he said. Awesome!! He called this place "the gate of heaven" and "the house of God" (Genesis 28:17)... Bethel.

Jacob continued on his journey to his uncle's land. Upon his arrival, Jacob encountered a well where he inquired as to the whereabouts of Laban. The shepherds pointed to Laban's

daughter, Rachel, who had just arrived to water some sheep. Jacob was ecstatic! He had found his uncle!

Jacob began working for Laban for free. His uncle approached him one day and asked what his wages should be. Jacob was in love with Laban's daughter, Rachel, and asked: "I'll work for you seven years in return for your younger daughter, Rachel" (Genesis 29:18). Agreed, said Laban. After the seven years had been completed, Jacob asked for Rachel's hand in marriage. They had an enormous feat and celebration. "But when evening came, [Laban] took his [older] daughter Leah and gave her to Jacob, and Jacob lay with her" (Genesis 29:23). In the morning, Jacob got quite a shock! Laying next to him was not Rachel, but Leah! Laban had tricked him! Sound familiar?

Jacob was upset (much like Esau, probably), and he confronted Laban. Laban argued that it was not custom to give the younger daughter away without giving away the older one first. And, if Jacob worked for another seven years he could have Rachel as well. Jacob had no choice but to accept. He worked another seven years for Rachel. "...and he loved Rachel more than Leah" (Genesis 29:30).

It doesn't take a literary genius to figure this isn't going to turn out well for this family. Jacob and his wives, Leah and Rachel, and their servants, Zilpah and Bilhah, have thirteen children total: twelve boys and one girl.

Life Application

Jacob was a deceiver. But he certainly did not like being on the receiving end of deception. Laban really tricked him! Much like how Jacob tricked Esau and his father Isaac. I wonder if that is a theme for his life?

Maybe the bad choices we make define who we are and are going to be. Maybe the good choices we make define who we are and who we are going to be. Maybe we have the power to choose how our lives go—good or bad or a little bit of both.

Obedience really is about your choices... because it is entirely up to you to decide how you live your life.

What will you decide?

Review Questions

1. Who was furious/mad at Jacob and wanted to kill him? His brother, Esau.
2. To whom did Jacob flee/run to? His uncle, Laban.
3. What did Jacob "experience" on his way to Uncle Laban's home? He had a dream of a stairway from heaven to earth with angels ascending and descending.
4. What did Jacob call the place where he had this special dream and why? Bethel, because it means the "house of God".
5. Who was Jacob in love with? Rachel
6. How long did he work for Rachel? 7 years
7. What happened the day after Jacob thought he had married Rachel? His uncle Laban had actually switched Rachel for her older sister Leah
8. How much longer did Jacob have to work for Laban in order to marry Rachel as well? 7 more years
9. Which wife did Jacob love more? Rachel
10. How many kids did Jacob and his two wives and their servants have? 13 total—12 boys and 1 girl

Coloring Sheet

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