

Jacob's Family

Genesis 29:30 - 31:6

Jacob's Family

Begin with prayer

Read: Genesis 29:30 - 31:6

Listen: THRU the BIBLE: [Genesis 29:30 - 31:6](#)

Dear God,

Thank You that Your grace is greater than our striving.
Help us see that every good thing we have comes from
You, not our own cleverness. Teach us to place ourselves
fully under Your hand and trust Your provision rather
than our own strategies.

Amen.



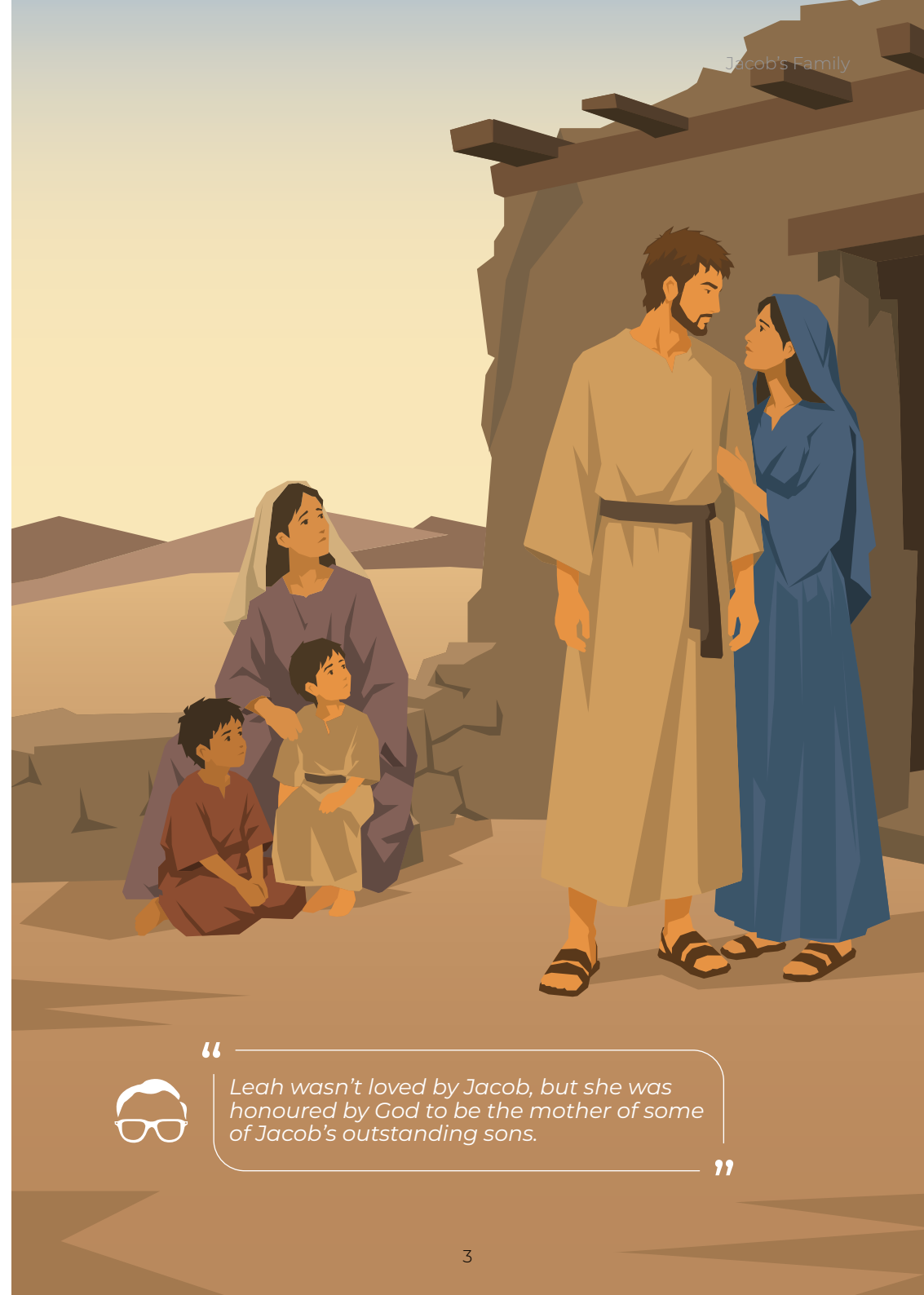
Sons of Jacob



Genesis 29:30 - 31:6

Whether they realize it or not, this young family would become one of the most important families of the Bible. **From these two women and their handmaids will come the 12 sons** (and eventually 12 tribes) of Israel. Jacob's first wife, Leah, is sad because she knows she isn't loved. She hoped that when she had her firstborn, Reuben, Jacob's affections would turn to her. But he continued to only love Rachel.

Reuben is Jacob's firstborn, but the line leading to Christ didn't come through him. **Rather, it was Leah's fourth son, Judah, that began the kingly line.** This is the line that gave us David and, later on, the Lord Jesus Himself. The priestly tribe came from Levi, Leah's son. **Leah wasn't loved by Jacob, but she was honored by God to be the mother of some of Jacob's important sons.**



“ Leah wasn't loved by Jacob, but she was honoured by God to be the mother of some of Jacob's outstanding sons. ”

Meanwhile, Rachel couldn't get pregnant. It led her almost to despair. **In those days, a woman was disgraced if she didn't have any offspring.** The more children she had, the better her position was.

Jacob was frustrated by Rachel's despair, thinking his love should be enough for her. **But Rachel suggested, like Sarah had done generations before, that Jacob have children by her maid.** (God had not approved of it then; He doesn't approve of it now.) Of course, this action brought only trouble.

Jacob's home was filling up with children. Two sons were born through Rachel's handmaid, two sons through Leah's handmaid, and then two more sons were born to Leah.

Then **"God remembered Rachel... and opened her womb"** (*Genesis 30:22*). She had a boy and **named him Joseph.** Later she also gave birth to **Benjamin.**

Jacob had twelve sons in all - the twelve tribes of Israel came from them, and finally the nation of Israel.

Here is the list of Jacob's children:

Born to Leah	Born to Bilhah, Rachel's maid	Born to Zilpah, Leah's maid	Born to Rachel
1. Reuben	1. Dan	1. Gad	1. Joseph
2. Simeon	2. Naphtali	2. Asher	2. Benjamin
3. Levi			
4. Judah			
5. Issachar			
6. Zebulun			
7. Dinah (daughter)			

Jacob's Family Prepares to Leave

When Jacob finally got the courage **to leave Laban and make a home for his own family**, he asked Laban to let them go. He had served him long enough. But Laban wasn't through with them yet. **He had seen how the Lord had blessed them and blessed him for Jacob's sake, and he didn't want to let them go.** He says, **"My boy, don't rush off! I've been blessed because of you. How about I raise your wages?"**

Jacob knew by now that whenever Uncle Laban made a deal, he was the one who would come out as the winner. **Jacob had learned this lesson, and he complained that he had nothing to show for his labor except two wives and a house full of boys.** He says, "God has blessed you, and He has prospered you, but I don't have anything." So Laban said, "Well, let's make a deal."



Jacob's Smart Negotiation with Laban

Jacob, always the strategist, **asked him to give him all the speckled and spotted cattle and all the brown sheep and the spotted and speckled goats.** That would be adequate payment. In other words, the pure breeds will be Laban's, but the off-breeds will be Jacob's.

Jacob said, **"You just let me have these, and they will be my wages."** This seemed a pretty good agreement for Laban. The marking on the cattle would prove what livestock belonged to whom. So Laban agreed to it. **Jacob takes the off-breeds so that only the full breeds would mate and bear offspring, and those would belong to Laban.** The others would be his.

Jacob has made an interesting deal. Laban separated the animals into two groups. He also separated the two flocks by a distance of three days' journey. **Laban's sons oversaw one flock, and Jacob oversaw the other flock. Then Jacob did what he thought would result in his flock bearing additional speckled or spotted or black sheep and goats, and he multiplied his flock.**

God's Grace Amidst Jacob's Self-Reliance

Jacob **displayed ingenuity, either through his own knowledge of animals or through knowledge given to him by God.** He may not have understood the laws of heredity, but he did what he thought would work, and God blessed him. **Whether Jacob was smart or was just guessing, the success of his plan was ultimately God's doing.** Jacob was full of tricks, but God blessed him in spite of them, not because of them.

God blessed Jacob and **made him exceedingly prosperous.** He got more servants, camels, and donkeys, as well as large flocks of sheep and goats. Camels were rare and only for the rich, but Jacob had a lot of them. God allowed him to become wealthy through his own work. **If Jacob had placed himself under God's hand, God would likely have given him even more.** But at this stage of his life, Jacob relied on himself more than on God.



Whether Jacob was smart or guessing, the success of his plan was ultimately God's doing.



God's Eternal Truths

Relevant to us from *Genesis 30*

God's Grace Operates Despite Our Self-Reliance

Jacob was a man full of tricks and ingenuity. He constantly tried to manipulate circumstances, such as the breeding of the flocks, to his advantage. However, the truth is that **God blessed Jacob despite his tricks, not because of them. Jacob's ultimate success and wealth were God's doing, born out of God's grace and promises (Ephesians 2:8-9).** If Jacob had just placed himself under God's hand instead of relying on himself, God likely would have given him even more.



Reflection Questions

Question 1

Reflecting on Self-Reliance: Where in your life are you currently relying more on your own strategies or manipulations, than on God's provision? Do you truly believe that God's grace is the source of your success, or do you take the credit for your successes?

Question 2

Unseen Faithfulness: Leah was unloved by Jacob but deeply honored by God. Are there areas of your life where you feel overlooked or unappreciated? How does Leah's story encourage you to trust that God sees and honors faithfulness even when people do not?

Question 3

Surrendering Control: What is one specific situation today where you need to stop striving in your own strength and instead place yourself fully under God's hand, trusting that His provision through grace will be more than enough?



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