

**LESSON 10**  
**Genesis 28-33**

THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES CALLED  
GENESIS  
CHAPTER 28

*Isaac forbids Jacob to marry a Canaanite—He blesses Jacob and his seed with the blessings of Abraham—Esau marries a daughter of Ishmael—Jacob sees in vision a ladder reaching up into heaven—The Lord promises him seed as the dust of the earth in number—Also, that in him and in his seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed—Jacob covenants to pay tithes.*

- 1 AND Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a <sup>a</sup>wife of the daughters of <sup>b</sup>Canaan. (He must marry inside the covenant or the blessings of Abraham will be lost. If we don't marry in the temple we will also lose the blessings of Abraham.)
- 2 Arise, go to <sup>a</sup>Padan-aram, to the house of <sup>b</sup>Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of <sup>c</sup>Laban thy mother's brother. (Marry one of your cousins.)
- 3 And God <sup>a</sup>Almighty <sup>b</sup>bless thee, and make thee <sup>c</sup>fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a <sup>d</sup>multitude of people;
- 4 And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy <sup>a</sup>seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham. (Isaac confirms the birthright blessing on Jacob.)
- 5 And Isaac sent away Jacob: and he went to Padan-aram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the <sup>a</sup>Syrian, (Heb Aramaean) the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.
- 6 ¶ When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padan-aram, to take him a wife from thence; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan;
- 7 And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padan-aram;
- 8 And Esau seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father;
- 9 Then went Esau unto <sup>a</sup>Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his <sup>b</sup>wife. (Esau marries a cousin but one who could not allow his children to hold the priesthood because they were black)
- 10 ¶ And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran.
- 11 And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put *them for* his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.
- 12 And he <sup>a</sup>dreamed, and behold a ladder (more like a stair not a ladder) set up on the earth, (We approach heaven one step at a time, one ordinance at a time.) and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the <sup>b</sup>angels of God ascending and descending (up) on it.
- 13 And, behold, the <sup>a</sup>LORD stood <sup>b</sup>above (or beside him) it, and said, I *am* the <sup>c</sup>LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the <sup>d</sup>land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;
- 14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the <sup>a</sup>north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy <sup>b</sup>seed shall all the <sup>c</sup>families of the earth be <sup>d</sup>blessed. (This is the same language of the covenant made to Abraham, and to all who enter into the new and everlasting covenant of marriage in the temple.)
- 15 And, behold, <sup>a</sup>**I am with thee**, and will keep thee in all *places* whither thou goest, and will <sup>b</sup>bring thee again into this <sup>c</sup>land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done *that* which I have spoken to thee of. (IT had been a long and weary journey that first day when Jacob left his home at Beersheba.\* More than forty miles had he traveled over the mountains which afterwards were those of Judah, and through what was to become the land of Benjamin. The sun had set, and its last glow faded out from the gray hills of

Ephraim, when he reached "an uneven valley, covered, as with gravestones, by large sheets of bare rock, - some few here and there standing up like the cromlechs of Druidical monuments."\*\* Here, close by a wild ridge, the broad summit of which was covered by an olive grove, was the place where Abraham had first rested for some time on entering the land, and whence he and Lot had, before their separation, taken a survey of the country. There, just before him, lay the Canaanitish Luz; and beyond it, many days' journey, stretched his weary course to Haran.\*\*\* It was a lonely, weird place, this valley of stones, in which to make his first night's quarters. But perhaps it agreed all the better with Jacob's mood, which had made him go on and on, from early morning, forgetful of time and way, till he could no longer pursue his journey. **Yet, accidental as it seemed - for we read that "he lighted upon a certain place," - the selection of the spot was assuredly designed of God.** Presently Jacob prepared for rest. Piling some of the stones, with which the valley was strewn, he made them a pillow, and laid him down to sleep. Then it was, in his dream, that it seemed as if these stones of the valley were being builded together by an unseen hand, step upon step, "a ladder" - **or, probably more correctly, "a stair."** Now, as he watched it, it rose and rose, till it reached the deep blue star-spangled sky, which seemed to cleave for its reception. All along that wondrous track moved angel-forms, "ascending and descending upon it;" and angel-light was shed upon its course, till quite up on the top stood the glorious Jehovah Himself, Who spake to the lonely sleeper below: "I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac." Silent in their ministry, the angels still passed up and down the heaven-built stairs, from where Jacob lay to where Jehovah spake. The vision and the words which the Lord spoke explain each other, the one being the symbol of the other. On that first night, when an outcast from his home, and a fugitive, heavy thoughts, doubts, and fears would crowd around Jacob; when, in every sense, his head was pillowed on stones in the rocky valley of Luz, Jehovah expressly renewed to him, in the fullest manner, the promise and the blessing first given to Abraham, and added to it this comfort, whatever might be before him: "I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." And what Jacob heard, that he also saw in symbolic vision. The promise was the real God-built stair, which reached from the lonely place on which the poor wanderer lay quite up to heaven, right into the very presence of Jehovah; and on which, all silent and unknown by the world, lay the shining track of angel-ministry. **And so still to each one who is truly of Israel is the promise of that mysterious "ladder" which connects earth with heaven. Below lies poor, helpless, forsaken man; above, stands Jehovah Himself, and upon the ladder of promise which joins earth to heaven, the angels of God, in their silent, never-ceasing ministry, descend, bringing help, and ascend, as to fetch new deliverance. Nay, this "ladder" is Christ,\*\*\*\* for by this "ladder" God Himself has come down to us in the Person of His dear Son, Who is, so to speak, the Promise become Reality, as it is written: "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."** (John 1:51) Edersheim, Vol 1, Ch 16)

16 ¶ And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew *it* not.  
 17 And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful *is* this place! *this is none other but the house of God* (Heb., Beth-el), *and this is the gate of <sup>a</sup>heaven.* (Temples on earth are the gates into heaven.)

18 And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put *for* his pillows, and set it up *for* a <sup>a</sup>pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

19 And he called the name of that place <sup>a</sup>Beth-el: (House of God) but the name of that city *was called* <sup>b</sup>Luz at the first. (President Marion G. Romney explained why this vision of heaven was shown in the form of a ladder and why the name of the place where it happened was called Bethel: "When Jacob traveled from Beersheba toward Haran, he had a dream in which he saw himself on the earth at the foot of a ladder that reached to heaven where the Lord stood above it. He beheld angels ascending and descending thereon, and Jacob realized that **the covenants he made with the Lord there were the rungs on the ladder that he himself would have to climb in order to obtain the promised blessings—blessings that would entitle him to enter heaven and associate with the Lord.** "Because

he had met the Lord and entered into covenants with him there, Jacob considered the site so sacred that he named the place Bethel, a contraction of Beth-Elohim, which means literally ‘the House of the Lord.’ He said of it: ‘. . . this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.’ (Gen. 28:17.)

**“Jacob not only passed through the gate of heaven, but by living up to every covenant he also went all the way in. Of him and his forebears Abraham and Isaac, the Lord has said: ‘. . . because they did none other things than that which they were commanded, they have entered into their exaltation, according to the promises, and sit upon thrones, and are not angels but are gods.’**

**(D&C 132:37.)** “Temples are to us all what Bethel was to Jacob. Even more, they are also the gates to heaven for all of our unendowed kindred dead. We should all do our duty in bringing our loved ones through them.” (“Temples—The Gates to Heaven,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1971, p. 16.)

20 And Jacob vowed a <sup>a</sup>vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,

21 So that I come again to my father’s house in peace; then shall the <sup>a</sup>LORD be my God:

22 And (the place of) this stone, which I have set *for* a pillar, shall be (the place of) God’s house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the <sup>a</sup>tenth unto thee. (The law of tithing. It’s around this time that Shem (perhaps Melchizedek), the son of Noah, dies.)

## CHAPTER 29

*Jacob meets Rachel at the well—He serves Laban seven years for her—Laban gives to Jacob, first Leah, then Rachel in marriage—Jacob serves another seven years—Leah bears Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah.*

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.

4 And Jacob said unto them, My brethren, (from) whence ~~be~~ (are) ye? And they said, Of (From) <sup>a</sup>Haran ~~are we~~.

5 And he said unto them, Know ye <sup>a</sup>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 <sup>a</sup>the (Samaritan and Septuagint: the shepherds) 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.

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 <sup>a</sup>watered the flock of Laban his mother’s brother.

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

12 And Jacob told Rachel that he *was* her father’s brother, 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.

14 And Laban said to him, Surely thou *art* my bone and my <sup>a</sup>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?* (No further incident worth recording occurred till Jacob reached the end of his journey in "the land of the people of the East." Here he found himself at a "well," where, contrary to the usual custom, three flocks were already in waiting, long before the usual evening time for watering them. Professor Robinson has made this personal observation, helpful to our understanding of the circumstances: "**Over most of the cisterns is laid a broad and thick flat stone, with a round hole cut in the middle, forming the mouth of the cistern. This hole we found in many cases covered with a heavy stone, which it would require two or three men to roll away.**" We know not whether these flocks were kept waiting till sufficient men had come to roll away the stone, or whether it was the custom to delay till all the flocks had arrived. At any rate, when Jacob had ascertained that the flocks were from Haran, and that the shepherds knew Laban, the brother of Rebekah, and **when he saw the fair Rachel, his own cousin, coming with her flock, he rolled away the stone himself**, watered his uncle's sheep, and in the warmth of his feelings at finding himself not only at the goal of his journey, but apparently God-directed to her whose very appearance could win his affections, he embraced his cousin. Even in this little trait the attentive observer of Jacob's natural character will not fail to recognize "the haste" with which he always anticipated God's leadings. When Laban, Rachel's father, came to hear of all the circumstances, he received Jacob as his relative. A month's trial more than confirmed in the mind of that selfish, covetous man the favorable impression of Jacob's possible use to him as a shepherd, which his first energetic interference at the "well" must have produced. With that apparent frankness and show of liberality under which cunning, selfish people so often disguise their dishonest purposes, Laban urged upon Jacob to name his own "wages." Jacob had learned to love Rachel, Laban's younger daughter. Without consulting the mind of God in the matter, he now **proposed to serve Laban seven years for her hand. This was just the period during which, among the Hebrews, a Jewish slave had to serve; in short, he proposed becoming a bondsman for Rachel. With the same well-feigned candor as before**, Laban agreed: "It is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man (to a stranger)." The bargain thus to sell his daughter was not one founded on the customs of the time, and Laban's daughters themselves felt the degradation which they could not resist, as appears from their after statement, when agreeing to flee from their father's home: "Are we not counted of him strangers? for he has sold us." (Genesis 31:14, 15) Edersheim, Vol 1, Ch 16)

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* <sup>a</sup>beautiful and well <sup>b</sup>favoured. (The Hebrew word translated as "tender" means "soft, delicate, or lovely." The fact that this trait is emphasized for Leah, while **Rachel is described as "beautiful and well-favoured," that is, beautiful in every respect, seems to suggest that Leah's eyes were her most attractive feature.** Institute Manual, 87)

18 And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, I will <sup>a</sup>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 <sup>a</sup>Rachel; and they seemed unto him *but* a few days, for the <sup>b</sup>love he had to her.

21 ¶ And Jacob said unto Laban, Give ~~(unto)~~ *me* my wife, ~~(that I may go and take her,)~~ for my days ~~(of serving thee)~~ are fulfilled, ~~that I may go in unto her.~~

22 And Laban ~~(gave her to Jacob, and)~~ gathered together all the men of the place, and made a <sup>a</sup>feast.

23 And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to ~~him~~ ~~(Jacob);~~ and ~~(s)~~he went in ~~unto her~~ ~~(and slept with him).~~

24 And Laban gave unto his daughter Leah ~~(,)~~ <sup>a</sup>Zilpah his ~~(hand)~~maid ~~for an~~ ~~(to be a)~~ handmaid ~~(for her).~~

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? **(The modern reader may find it hard to believe that Jacob did not discover the switch until it was**

morning; however, the following possibilities could explain the success of Laban's ruse. As sisters, Rachel and Leah may have been quite similar in height, weight, and general appearance. Second, the women of Haran sometimes veiled themselves. Third, Laban was a shepherd. If he was a typical shepherd of ancient times, he dwelt in tents instead of in permanent dwellings. The inside of a tent at night can be very dark. And finally, knowing what the reaction of Jacob would be if he discovered the substitution early, Laban may have told Leah to speak as little as possible so as not to give the deception away before it was too late to change it. Old Testament Student Manual, p. 87. Where was Rachel during this? She must have been obedient to her father, not necessarily her will.)

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

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

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 <sup>a</sup>Bilhah his handmaid to be her maid.

30 And he went in also ~~unto~~ (and slept with) Rachel, and he <sup>a</sup>loved ~~also~~ Rachel (also,) more than Leah, and <sup>b</sup>served with him (Laban) yet seven other years. (Leah and Rachel were first cousins of Jacob. The period of Jacob's servitude seemed to him rapidly to pass, and at the end of the seven years he claimed his bride. **But now Jacob was to experience how his sin had found him out. As he had deceived his father, so Laban now deceived him.** Taking advantage of the Eastern custom that a bride was always brought to her husband veiled, he substituted for Rachel her elder sister Leah. But, as formerly, God had, all unknown to them, overruled the error and sin of Isaac and of Jacob, so He did now also in the case of Laban and Jacob. **For Leah was, so far as we can judge, the one whom God had intended for Jacob, though, for the sake of her beauty, he had preferred Rachel.** From Leah sprang Judah, in whose line the promise to Abraham was to be fulfilled. Leah, as we shall see in the sequel, feared and served Jehovah; while Rachel was attached to the superstitions of her father's house; and even the natural character of the elder sister fitted her better for her new calling than that of the somewhat petulant, peevish, and self-willed, though beautiful younger daughter of Laban. As for the author of this deception, Laban, he shielded himself behind the pretense of a national custom, not to give away a younger before a first born sister. But he readily proposed to give to Jacob Rachel also, in return for other seven years of service. Jacob consented, and the second union was celebrated immediately upon the close of Leah's marriage festivities, which in the East generally last for a week. It were an entire mistake to infer from the silence of Scripture that this double marriage of Jacob received Divine approbation. As always, Scripture states facts, but makes no comment. That sufficiently appears from the lifelong sorrow, disgrace, and trials which, in the retributive providence of God, followed as the consequence of this double union. Edersheim, Vol 1, Ch 16)

31 ¶ And when the LORD saw that Leah *was* hated, (The Hebrew word *sahnay* does not mean "hate" as the term is used today, but rather conveys the idea of "loving less." A better translation would be, "when the Lord saw that Leah was loved less or was not as favored," he opened her womb. InSTITUTE Manual, 87) he opened her womb: but Rachel *was* <sup>a</sup>barren.

32 And <sup>a</sup>Leah conceived, and bare a son, and she called his name <sup>b</sup>Reuben: (Look, a son) for she said, Surely the LORD hath looked upon my affliction; now therefore my husband will love me.

33 And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Because the LORD hath heard that I *was* <sup>a</sup>hated, he hath therefore given me this *son* also: and she called his name <sup>b</sup>Simeon. (hearing)

34 And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Now this time will my husband be joined unto me, because I have born him three sons: therefore was his name called <sup>a</sup>Levi. (Joined or pledged)

35 And she conceived again, and bare a son: and she said, Now will I <sup>a</sup>praise the LORD: therefore she called his name <sup>b</sup>Judah; and left bearing.

## CHAPTER 30

*Jacob marries Bilhah and she bears Dan and Naphtali—He marries Zilpah and she bears Gad and Asher—Leah bears Issachar and Zebulun and a daughter, Dinah—Then Rachel conceives and bears Joseph—Jacob works for Laban for wages of cattle and sheep.*

1 AND when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel <sup>a</sup>envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die.

2 And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said, *Am I in <sup>a</sup>God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?*

3 And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in ~~unto~~ (and lie with) her; and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also <sup>a</sup>have children by her. (Heb be built up by her)

4 And she gave him <sup>a</sup>Bilhah her handmaid to wife: and Jacob went in ~~unto~~ (and lie with) her.

5 And <sup>a</sup>Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a son.

6 And Rachel said, God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son: therefore called she his name <sup>a</sup>**Dan**. (He has judged or vindicated.)

7 And Bilhah Rachel's maid conceived again, and bare Jacob a second son.

8 And Rachel said, <sup>a</sup>With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, (Heb The wrestlings of God have I wrested with my sister.) and I have prevailed: and she called his name <sup>b</sup>**Naphtali**. (my wrestling)

9 When Leah saw that she had left bearing, she took Zilpah her maid, and gave her Jacob to wife.

10 And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a son.

11 And Leah said, A <sup>a</sup>troop cometh: and she called his name <sup>b</sup>**Gad**. (Good fortune (paronomasia on the Heb. Words gedud, "troop" and gad, "fortune")

12 And <sup>a</sup>Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a second son.

13 And Leah said, Happy am I, for the daughters will call me <sup>a</sup>blessed: and she called his name <sup>b</sup>**Asher**. (Happy, blessed)

14 ¶ And Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest, and found <sup>a</sup>mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes.

15 And she said unto her, *Is it a small matter that thou hast <sup>a</sup>taken my husband? and wouldest thou take away my son's mandrakes also? And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with thee to night for thy son's mandrakes. (Although Bible scholars are not sure exactly what plant is meant by the word *mandrake*, the significance of this plant to Rachel and Leah is clear. "The Hebrew name denotes love fruit. The fruit had a pleasant taste and odor, and was supposed to ensure conception." (Bible Dictionary, s.v. "mandrakes.")* In other words, the mandrakes were thought to enhance a woman's fertility and ability to have children. Knowledge of this belief helps explain the interchange between Rachel and Leah. Rachel desired the mandrakes so that she could at last bear children of her own. As has already been seen, there was a fierce competition between the sisters in this regard. Leah's response was, therefore, equally natural. **She indicated that Rachel had already taken her husband, which probably meant only that Rachel had the first place in his affections. (Some scholars, however, believe that this passage means that Jacob actually lived in Rachel's tent rather than in Leah's tent.)** The one advantage Leah had was her ability to bear children, while Rachel could not. In essence she told Rachel that it would be foolish for her to give Rachel her mandrakes and help her have children, for this would only lessen Leah's one advantage (v. 15). So Rachel made a counter offer. She promised that she would encourage Jacob to go to Leah that night if she, Rachel, could have the mandrakes (v. 15). Leah agreed and told Jacob. Out of the agreement Leah conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son (vv. 17–18). She later bore another son and Jacob's daughter Dinah (vv. 19–21). **Although not stated specifically, the record implies that the mandrakes did nothing for Rachel. Finally, Rachel did conceive, but it was not because of mandrakes. Rather, "God hearkened to her, and opened her womb" (v. 22).** Institute Manual, 88)

16 And Jacob came out of the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said, Thou must come in ~~unto~~ (and lie with) me; for surely I have hired thee with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night.

17 And God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth son.

18 And Leah said, God hath given me my <sup>a</sup>hire, (or recompense) because I have given my maiden to my husband: and she called his name <sup>b</sup>Issachar. (IE (perhaps) There is a recompense)

19 And Leah conceived again, and bare Jacob the sixth son.

20 And Leah said, God hath endued me *with* a good dowry; now will my husband <sup>a</sup>dwell with me, (or honor me, exalt me) because I have born him six sons: and she called his name <sup>b</sup>Zebulun. (The Heb. Zevul means exalted abode)

21 And afterwards she bare a daughter, and called her name Dinah. (Other daughters were probably born to Jacob: See Genesis 37:35, and 46:7)

22 ¶ And God <sup>a</sup>remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb.

23 And she conceived, and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away my <sup>a</sup>reproach:

24 And she called his name <sup>a</sup>Joseph; (Joseph relates both the Heb. Root yasaph, to add, and to asaph, meaning both "to take away" and "to gather." The context plays upon all of these meanings) and said, The LORD shall add to me another son.

25 ¶ And it came to pass, when Rachel had born Joseph, that Jacob said unto Laban, Send me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country.

26 Give *me* my wives and my children, for whom I have <sup>a</sup>served thee, and let me go: for thou knowest my service which I have done thee.

27 And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thine eyes, *tarry: for* I have learned by experience that the LORD hath <sup>a</sup>blessed me for thy <sup>b</sup>sake.

28 And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give *it*.

29 And he said unto him, Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle was with me.

30 For *it was* little which thou hadst before I *came*, and it is *now* increased unto a multitude; and the LORD hath blessed thee since my coming: and now when shall I provide for mine own house also?

31 And he said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me any thing: if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed *and* keep thy flock.

32 I will pass through all thy flock to day, removing from thence all the speckled and spotted <sup>a</sup>cattle, (Heb sheep. Cattle is older English for flock or herd as part of one's property or stock) and all the brown cattle among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats: and *of such* shall be my hire.

33 So shall my <sup>a</sup>righteousness answer for me in time to come, when it shall come for my hire before thy face: every one that *is* not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the sheep, that shall be counted stolen with me.

34 And Laban said, Behold, I would it might be according to thy word.

35 And he removed that day the he goats that were ringstraked and spotted, and all the she goats that were speckled and spotted, *and* every one that had *some* white in it, and all the brown among the sheep, and gave *them* into the hand of his sons.

36 And he set three days' journey betwixt himself and Jacob: and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.

37 ¶ And Jacob took him rods of green poplar, and of the <sup>a</sup>hazel (or almond) and chesnut tree; and <sup>b</sup>pilled (Heb peeled) white strakes in them, and made the white appear which *was* in the rods.

38 And he set the rods which he had pilled before the flocks in the gutters in the watering troughs when the flocks came to drink, that they should conceive when they came to drink.

39 And the flocks conceived before the <sup>a</sup>rods, and brought forth cattle ringstraked, speckled, and spotted.

40 And Jacob did separate the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the ringstraked, and all the brown in the flock of Laban; and he put his own flocks by themselves, and put them not unto Laban's cattle.

41 And it came to pass, whensoever the stronger cattle did conceive, that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the cattle in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods.

42 But when the cattle were feeble, he put *them* not in: so the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's. (In his own peculiar fashion Laban, with pretended candor and liberality, now invited Jacob to name his wages for the future. But this time the deceiver was to be deceived. Basing his proposal on the fact that in the East the goats are mostly black and the sheep white, Jacob made what seemed the very modest request, that all that were spotted and speckled in the flock were to be his share. Laban gladly assented, taking care to make the selection himself, and to hand over Jacob's portion to his own sons, while Jacob was to tend the flocks of Laban. Finally, he placed three days' journey betwixt the flocks of Jacob and his own. But even so, Jacob knew how, by an artifice well understood in the East, to circumvent his father-in-law, and to secure that, though ordinarily "the ringstraked, speckled, and spotted" had been an exception, now they were the most numerous and the strongest of the flocks. And the advantage still remained on the side of Jacob, when Laban again and again reversed the conditions of the agreement. (Genesis 31:7) This clearly proved that Jacob's artifice could not have been the sole nor the real reason of his success. In point of fact, immediately after the first agreement with Laban, the angel of God had spoken to Jacob in a dream, assuring him that, even without any such artifices, God would right him in his cause with Laban. (Genesis 31:12, 13) **Once more, then, Jacob acted, as when in his father's house. He "made haste;" he would not wait for the Lord to fulfill his promise; he would use his own means - and employ his cunning and devices - to accomplish the purpose of God, instead of committing his cause unto Him.** And as formerly he had had the excuse of his father's weakness and his brother's violence, so now it might seem as if he were purely on his defense, and as if his deceit were necessary for his protection - the more so as he resorted to his device only in spring, not in autumn, so that the second produce of the year belonged chiefly to his father-in-law. Edersheim, Vol 1, Ch 16)

43 And the man <sup>a</sup>increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses. (Wealth Jacob's peeling of branches and placing them before the animals so that when they conceived they would bear multicolored offspring seems to be a *Typical Middle Eastern sheep* reflection of a common superstition that the conception of offspring is influenced by what the mother experiences or sees at the time of conception. Nothing is known by modern science to explain any relationship between what Jacob did and what happened in the hereditary patterns of the animals. Perhaps something is missing from the text. Perhaps the Lord was just taking advantage of the virility of crossbred animals. Divine intervention certainly played a part. In any event, Jacob's herds grew and the Lord blessed him. Also, Jacob's separation of the flocks (v. 40) follows principles of good animal husbandry and would have increased the likelihood of having multi-colored animals. Institute Manual, 88)

### **Birthright Customs:**

Because the Hebrews followed the custom of primogeniture and practiced polygyny (the practice of a man marrying more than one woman at a time) at the same time, some students of the Bible have become confused as to which of the "firstborn" sons of the various wives and concubines was really the "birthright" son. If the father had only one wife at any one time during his life, then it would be immediately evident which son would be the "firstborn" son. However, if the father had been a polygynist with two or more wives at the same time, the problem of successorship could be more difficult since each of the wives could have a firstborn son. The Hebrews were not confused on this matter, however, as they had developed the custom that the order of the marriage of the wives would be given first consideration in determining the order of the son to succeed the father as head of the family. Thus, the firstborn son of the first wife became the birthright son, if worthy. If the firstborn son of the first wife proved unworthy and if the father had sons from more than one wife, then the firstborn son of



the second wife became the new birthright son, and so on. These practices and customs help explain why Ishmael was first considered to be the birthright son of Abraham: he was the eldest son of Abraham and was the firstborn son of the second wife (Hagar). However, when Isaac was born, he became the new birthright son by the order of primogeniture because he was the firstborn son of the first wife (Sarah). The law or practice of primogeniture also helps explain how Joseph eventually became the head of the house or family of Israel, even though Joseph was the eleventh of the twelve sons of Jacob. Reuben was the initial birthright son of Jacob and was first in line to succeed his father, since he was the firstborn son of the first wife (Leah). However, Reuben lost the right to the birthright when he committed adultery with one of his father's wives (Bilhah). Through application of the law of primogeniture, Joseph then became the new birthright son because he was the firstborn son of the second wife (Rachel). In polygynous marriages, all of the firstborn sons of the various wives would be considered as the new leader before any of the second born or other sons. Only in monogamous marriages would the second born son be immediately considered as the potential new leader if the firstborn son proved unworthy. The Bible is not exactly clear as to why Jacob (the second born son) succeeded Esau (the firstborn son) as the head of Isaac's family, although it does mention that Isaac and Rebekah were sorely displeased and of "a grief of mind" because Esau had married wives of the Hittites (Gen. 26:34-35). Isaac also specifically forbade Jacob to "take a wife of the daughters of Canaan" (Gen. 28:1), and Rebekah lamented "if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these which are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?" (Gen. 27:46.) Evidently the poor marriage choices of Esau disqualified him as the new leader of the house of Isaac, as well as the selling of his birthright for a mess of pottage. (Gen. 25:29-34.) The Bible is even less clear as to why Ephraim (the second born) replaces Manasseh (the firstborn) as the birthright son of Joseph. Evidently Jacob received a vision or revelation from the Lord concerning the fact that Ephraim was to have the birthright. (Gen. 48:8-20.) This is not only substantiated by the Joseph Smith Translation account of this episode, but the Lord himself declared later in the biblical account, "For I am Father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn." (Jer. 31:9.) Companion to Your Study of the Old Testament, Daniel H. Ludlow.

## CHAPTER 31

*The Lord commands Jacob to return to Canaan, and he departs secretly—Laban pursues him; they resolve their differences, and make a covenant of peace—Laban blesses his descendants, and he and Jacob part company.*

- 1 AND he heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that *was* our father's; and of *that* which *was* our father's hath he gotten all this <sup>a</sup>glory. (or wealth)
- 2 And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it *was* not toward him as before.
- 3 And the LORD said unto Jacob, <sup>a</sup>Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and <sup>b</sup>I will be with thee.
- 4 And <sup>a</sup>Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock, (It is significant to note that Jacob counseled with his wives on the important move he was contemplating. Often modern scholars claim that woman in the Old Testament were of low status and were treated as property by their husbands. But this example, and others like it, show that such was not the case. Institute Manual, 88)
- 5 And said unto them, I see your father's countenance, that it *is* not toward me as before; but the God of my father hath been with me.
- 6 And ye know that with all my power I have served your father.
- 7 And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; (The scriptures don't document ten times) but God suffered him not to hurt me. (Jacob has prospered in spite of Laban's attempts to steal from him.)

8 If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bare speckled: and if he said thus, The ringstraked shall be thy hire; then bare all the cattle ringstraked.

9 Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given *them* to me.

10 And it came to pass at the time that the <sup>a</sup>cattle (Heb flock) conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream, and, behold, the rams which leaped upon the cattle *were* ringstraked, speckled, and grisled.

11 And the <sup>a</sup>angel of God spake unto me in a dream, *saying*, Jacob: And I said, Here *am* I.

12 And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the <sup>a</sup>cattle *are* ringstraked, speckled, and grisled: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee.

13 I *am* the <sup>a</sup>God of Beth-el, (The place where Jacob saw the stair ascending into heaven. He saw the heavenly temple.) where thou anointedst the <sup>b</sup>pillar, *and* where thou vowedst a <sup>c</sup>vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred.

14 And Rachel and Leah answered and said unto him, *Is there* yet any portion or <sup>a</sup>inheritance for us in our father's house? (Our father has stolen even our dowry which was supposed to go to Jacob.)

15 Are we not counted of him strangers? for he hath sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money.

16 For all the riches which God hath taken from our father, that *is* ours, and our children's: now then, whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do. (It is interesting that both Rachel and Leah agreed that Jacob was justified in leaving Laban. They also pointed out that they had received nothing from their father, because of his covetous nature. One commentator explained their bitterness: "The dowry was an important part of marriage. We meet it first in Jacob, who worked seven years for Laban to earn a dowry for Rachel (Gen. 29:18). **The pay for this service belonged to the bride as her dowry, and Rachel and Leah could indignantly speak of themselves as having been 'sold' by their father, because he had withheld from them their dowry** (Gen. 31:14, 15). It was the family capital; it represented the wife's security, in case of divorce where the husband was at fault. If she were at fault, she forfeited it. She could not alienate it from her children. **There are indications that the normal dowry was about three years' wages. The dowry thus represented funds provided by the father of the groom, or by the groom through work, used to further the economic life of the new family. If the father of the bride added to this, it was his privilege, and customary, but the basic dowry was from the groom or his family. The dowry was thus the father's blessing on his son's marriage, or a test of the young man's character in working for it.**" (Rushdoony, *Institutes of Biblical Law*, pp. 176–77.) Institute Manual, 88)

17 ¶ Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon camels;

18 And he carried away all his cattle, and all his goods which he had gotten, the cattle of his getting, which he had gotten in Padan-aram, for to go to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan.

19 And Laban went to shear his sheep: (Laban would be gone for three days) and Rachel had stolen the <sup>a</sup>images that *were* her father's. (There is much debate among scholars about what the images were that were stolen by Rachel and what they represented. The Hebrew word which is sometimes used for small images of false gods is *teraphim*. Some translators render the word as "household gods." Was Laban an idolator? If so, why did Jacob go all the way back to Haran to find a wife if they were idolators like the Canaanites? Others believe they were astrological devices used for telling the future. But this suggestion raises the same question. **One scholar theorized that these images were somehow tied in with the legal rights of inheritance** (see Guthrie, *New Bible Commentary*, p. 104). **If this theory is correct, the possessor of the teraphim had the right to inherit the father's property. This circumstance would explain why Rachel stole the images, since her father had "stolen" her inheritance** (see Genesis 31:14–16). It would also explain Laban's extreme agitation over their loss and Jacob's severe penalty offered against the guilty party (see Genesis 31:31). Institute Manual, 89)

20 And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the <sup>a</sup>Syrian, (Heb Aramaean) in that he told him not that he fled.

21 So he fled with all that he had; and he rose up, and passed over the river, and set his face *toward* the mount Gilead.

22 And it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob ~~was~~ (had) fled.

23 And he took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days' journey; and they overtook him in the mount Gilead.

24 And God came to Laban the Syrian in a <sup>a</sup>dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou <sup>b</sup>speak not to Jacob either good or bad.

25 ¶ Then Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mount: and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mount of Gilead.

26 And Laban said to Jacob, What hast thou done, that thou hast stolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters, as captives *taken* with the sword?

27 Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me; and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth, and with songs, with tabret, and with <sup>a</sup>harp?

28 And hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters? thou hast now done foolishly in *so* doing.

29 It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt: but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.

30 And now, *though* thou wouldest needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house, *yet* wherefore hast thou stolen my gods?

31 And Jacob answered and said to Laban, Because I was afraid: for I said, Peradventure thou wouldest take by force thy daughters from me.

32 With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live: before our brethren discern thou what *is* thine with me, and take *it* to thee. For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them.

33 And Laban went into Jacob's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the two maidservants' tents; but he found *them* not. Then went he out of Leah's tent, and entered into Rachel's tent.

34 Now Rachel had taken the images, and put them in the camel's furniture, and sat upon them. And Laban searched all the tent, but found *them* not.

35 And she said to her father, Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise up before thee; for the custom of women *is* upon me. And he searched, but found not the images.

36 ¶ And Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban: and Jacob answered and said to Laban, What *is* my trespass? what *is* my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me?

37 Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? set *it* here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both.

38 This twenty years *have I been* with thee; thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten.

39 That which was <sup>a</sup>torn *of beasts* I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, *whether* stolen by day, or stolen by night.

40 *Thus* I was; in the day the <sup>a</sup>drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes.

41 Thus have I been twenty years in thy house; I <sup>a</sup>served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages ten times.

42 Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the <sup>a</sup>labour of my hands, and rebuked *thee* yesternight.

43 ¶ And Laban answered and said unto Jacob, *These* daughters *are* my daughters, and *these* children *are* my children, and *these* cattle *are* my cattle, and all that thou seest *is* mine: and what can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children which they have born?

44 Now therefore come thou, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee.

45 And Jacob took a stone, and set it up *for* a <sup>a</sup>pillar.

46 And Jacob said unto his brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones, and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap.

47 And Laban called it <sup>a</sup>Jegar-sahadutha: (The heap of witness (in Aramaic)) but Jacob called it <sup>b</sup>Galeed.

48 And Laban said, This heap *is* a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed;

49 And <sup>a</sup>Mizpah; (The look-out point) for he said, The LORD <sup>b</sup>watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another.

50 If thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take *other* wives beside my daughters, no man *is* with us; see, God *is* witness betwixt me and thee.

51 And Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold *this* pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee;

52 This heap *be* witness, and *this* pillar *be* witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm.

53 The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us. And Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac.

54 Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they did eat <sup>a</sup>bread, and tarried all night in the mount.

55 And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them: and Laban departed, and returned unto his place. (The consequences proved very similar to those which followed his deceit in his father's house. The rapidly growing wealth of Jacob during the six years of this bargain so raised the enmity and envy of Laban and of his sons, that Jacob must have felt it necessary for his own safety to remove, even if he had not received Divine direction to that effect. But this put an end to all hesitancy; and having communicated his purpose to his wives, and secured their cordial consent, he left secretly, while Laban was away at the sheep-shearing, which would detain him some time. Three days elapsed before Laban was informed of Jacob's flight. He immediately pursued after him, "with his brethren," his anger being further excited by the theft of his household gods, or "teraphim," which Rachel, unknown, of course, to Jacob, had taken with her. On the seventh day Laban and his relatives overtook Jacob and his caravan in Mount Gilead. The consequences might have been terrible, if God had not interposed to warn Laban in a dream, not to injure nor to hurt Jacob. **Being further foiled in his search after the missing teraphim, through the cunning of his own daughter, Laban, despite his hypocritical professions of how affectionate their leave-taking might have been if Jacob had not "stolen away," stood convicted of selfishness and unkindness.** In fact, if the conduct of Jacob, even in his going away, had been far from straightforward, that of Laban was of the most unprincipled kind. However, peace was restored between them, and a covenant made, in virtue of which neither party was to cross for hostile purposes the memorial pillar which they erected, and to which Laban gave a Chaldee and Jacob a Hebrew name, meaning "the heap of witness." Hypocritically as in the mouth of Laban the additional name of Mizpah sounds, which he gave to this pillar, it is a very significant designation to mark great events in our lives, especially our alliances and our undertakings. For Mizpah means "watchtower," and the words which accompanied the giving of this name were: "Jehovah watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another." Edershiem, Vol 1, Ch 17)

## CHAPTER 32

*Jacob sees angels—He asks God to preserve him from Esau, for whom he prepares presents—He wrestles all night with a messenger of God—Jacob's name is changed to Israel—He sees God face to face.*

1 AND Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.

2 And when Jacob saw them, he said, This *is* God's <sup>a</sup>host: (Heb Mahneh, camp) and he called the name of that place <sup>b</sup>Mahanaim. (Two hosts or camps)

3 And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of <sup>a</sup>Seir, the country of <sup>b</sup>Edom.

4 And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now:

5 And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight.

6 ¶ And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.

7 Then Jacob was greatly afraid and <sup>a</sup>distressed: and he divided the people that *was* with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands; (Jacob goes from one trouble to another. Our lives were not meant to be easy, but to be a test and learning experiences.)

8 And said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.

9 ¶ And Jacob said, O <sup>a</sup>God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the LORD which saidst unto me, <sup>b</sup>Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee:

10 <sup>a</sup>I am not worthy of the least of all the <sup>b</sup>mercies, (or I am unworthy of all the mercies..) and of all the truth, which thou hast <sup>(o)</sup>wed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.

11 <sup>a</sup>Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, *and* the mother with the children. (Jacob trusts in the Lord for his protection.)

12 And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy <sup>a</sup>seed as the <sup>b</sup>sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.

13 ¶ And he lodged there that same night; and took of that which came to his hand a present for Esau his brother;

14 Two hundred she goats, and twenty he goats, two hundred ewes, and twenty rams,

15 Thirty milch camels with their colts, forty kine, and ten bulls, twenty she asses, and ten foals.

16 And he delivered *them* into the hand of his servants, every drove by themselves; and said unto his servants, Pass over before me, and put a space betwixt drove and drove.

17 And he commanded the foremost, saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose *art* thou? and whither goest thou? and whose *are* these before thee?

18 Then thou shalt say, *They be* thy servant Jacob's; *it is* a present sent unto my lord Esau: and, behold, also he *is* behind us.

19 And so commanded he the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying, On this manner shall ye speak unto Esau, when ye find him.

20 And say ye moreover, Behold, thy servant Jacob *is* behind us. For he said, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me.

21 So went the present over before him: and himself lodged that night in the company.

22 And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two womenservants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok.

23 And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had. (Consider the following statement from President Spencer W. Kimball, and then write about how it might apply to some of the things that Jacob did in Genesis 32:1–23. **“If we will sue for peace, taking the initiative in settling differences—if we can forgive and forget with all our hearts—if we can cleanse our own souls of sin, accusations, bitterness, and guilt before we cast a stone at others—if we forgive all real or fancied offenses before we ask forgiveness for our own sins—if we pay our own debts, large or small, before we press our debtors—if we manage to clear our own eyes of the blinding beams**

before we magnify the motes in the eyes of others—what a glorious world this would be!” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1949, 133). Student Manual, 33)

24 ¶ And Jacob was left alone; and there <sup>a</sup>wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. (Most scholars believe Jacob wrestled with an angel, but President Joseph Fielding Smith explained why this explanation could not be true: “Who wrestled with Jacob on Mount Peniel? The scriptures say it was a man. The Bible interpreters say it was an angel. More than likely it was a messenger sent to Jacob to give him the blessing. To think he wrestled and held an angel who couldn’t get away, is out of the question. The term *angel* as used in the scriptures, at times, refers to messengers who are sent with some important instruction. Later in this chapter when Jacob said he had beheld the Lord, that did not have reference to his wrestling.” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:17.) Institute Manual, 89)

25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob’s thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. (Our own strength is not enough in overcoming our difficulties. We must rely fully on the Lord for help.)

26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. (Whenever we face challenges in our lives we should seek a blessing from the Lord. Ask your father for a blessing at the start of the school year, when going away to college, when going on a mission, when getting married. Significant milestones in our lives should be preceded by a blessing.)

27 And he said unto him, What *is* thy name? And he said, Jacob.

28 And he said, Thy <sup>a</sup>name shall be called no more Jacob, but <sup>b</sup>Israel: (He perseveres (with) God; it may also mean, Let God prevail.) <sup>c</sup>for (or for thou hast persevered with God) as a <sup>d</sup>prince hast thou <sup>e</sup>power with God and with men, and hast <sup>f</sup>prevailed.

29 And Jacob asked *him*, and said, Tell *me*, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore *is* it *that* thou dost ask after my <sup>a</sup>name? And he <sup>b</sup>blessed him there.

30 And Jacob called the name of the place <sup>a</sup>Peniel: (The face of God.) for I have <sup>b</sup>seen God <sup>c</sup>face to face, and my life is preserved.

31 And as he passed over <sup>a</sup>Peniel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh. (His leg is still sore so he is limping.)

32 Therefore the children of Israel eat not *of* the sinew which shrank, which *is* upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob’s thigh in the sinew that shrank.

## CHAPTER 33

*Jacob and Esau meet and are reconciled—Esau receives Jacob’s presents—Jacob settles in Canaan, where he builds an altar.*

1 AND Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids.

2 And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost. (Some have criticized Jacob’s arrangement of the camp because it appears that he is putting the handmaids and their children in the most dangerous position. It would be a natural thing, however, in the Middle East for a clan leader to show off his family and possessions in such a way that the best and most highly favored is saved until last (see Clarke, *Bible Commentary*, 1:205). Institute Manual, 89)

3 And he passed over before them, and <sup>a</sup>bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

4 And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.

5 And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, Who *are* those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant.

6 Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves.

7 And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves.

8 And he said, What *meanest* thou by all this drove which I met? And he said, *These are* to find grace in the sight of my lord.

9 And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself.

10 And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand: for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me.

11 Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough. And he urged him, and he took *it*. (Elder Marion D. Hanks of the Seventy: "What is our response when we are offended, misunderstood, unfairly or unkindly treated, or sinned against, made an offender for a word, falsely accused, passed over, hurt by those we love, our offerings rejected? Do we resent, become bitter, hold a grudge? Or do we resolve the problem if we can, forgive, and rid ourselves of the burden? "The nature of our response to such situations may well determine the nature and quality of our lives, here and eternally. . . . " . . . Even if it appears that another may be deserving of our resentment or hatred, none of us can afford to pay the price of resenting or hating, because of what it does to us" ("Forgiveness: The Ultimate Form of Love," Ensign, Jan. 1974, 20, 21).)

12 And he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee.

13 And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children *are* tender, and the flocks and herds with young *are* with me: and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die.

14 Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children be able to endure, until I come unto my lord unto Seir.

15 And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee *some* of the folk that *are* with me. And he said, What needeth it? let me find grace in the sight of my lord. **(As Jacob passed over Jabbok in the early morn, the glittering of spears and lances in the sunlight, among the dark pine forests, betokened the approach of Esau with his four hundred men. But Jacob had nothing more to fear: the only real contest was over. It was necessary, when Jacob returned to take possession of the land and of the promises, that all that was past in his history should be past - it was so! Never, after that night, did Jacob again contend with carnal weapons; and though the old name of Jacob reappears again and again by the side of his new designation, it was to remind both him and us that Jacob, though halting, is not dead, and that there is in us always the twofold nature, alike of Jacob and of Israel. What now followed we cannot tell better than in the words of a recent German writer: "Jacob, who in his contest with the Angel of Jehovah (not an angel but a man) had prevailed by prayer and entreaty, now also prevails by humility and modesty against Esau, who comes to meet him with four hundred men." As already hinted, Esau had probably been just engaged in that warlike expedition to Mount Seir, which resulted in his conquest of the land, where he afterwards settled. (Genesis 36:6, 7) This accounts for his appearance at the head of an armed band. Possibly, he may, at the same time, have wished to have the revenge of giving anxiety to his brother, and of showing him the contrast between their respective positions; or he may to the last have been undecided how to act towards his brother. At any rate, under the overruling guidance of God, and "overcome by the humility of Jacob, and by the kindness of his own heart, Esau fell upon the neck of his brother, embraced and kissed him. With reluctance he accepted the rich presents of Jacob, and he offered to accompany him to the end of his journey with his armed men - a proposition which Jacob declined in a friendly spirit. Thus the two brothers, long separated in affection, were reconciled to each other. Their good understanding remained undisturbed till the day of their death."** Edersheim, Vol 1, Ch 17)

16 ¶ So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir.

17 And Jacob journeyed to <sup>a</sup>Succoth, (Booths) and built him an house, and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called <sup>b</sup>Succoth.

18 ¶ And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which *is* in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan-aram; and pitched his tent before the city. (Centuries from this time, Jesus would give his sermon to the woman at the well which Jacob had dug near this spot.)

19 And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money.

20 And he erected there an altar, and called it <sup>a</sup>El-elohe-Israel. (El (God) is the God of Israel) **(There was nothing in Jacob's language to his brother which, when translated from Eastern to our Western modes of conduct and expression, is inconsistent with proper self-respect. If he declined the offer of an armed guard, it was because he felt he needed not an earthly host to protect him. Besides, it was manifestly impossible for cattle and tender children to keep up with a Bedouin warrior band.** While Esau, therefore, returned to Mount Seir, there to await a visit from his brother, Jacob turned in a north-westerly direction to Succoth, a place still east of Jordan, and afterwards in the possession of the tribe of Gad. Here he probably made a lengthened stay, for we read that "he built him an house, and made booths for his cattle," whence also the name of Succoth, or "booths." At last Jacob once more crossed the Jordan, "and came in peace to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan." The words seem designedly chosen to indicate that God had amply fulfilled what Jacob had asked at Bethel: to "come again in peace." (Genesis 28:21) But great changes had taken place in the country. When Abram entered the land, and made this his first resting-place, there was no city there, and it was only "the place of Shechem." (Genesis 12:6) But now the district was all cultivated and possessed, and a city had been built, probably by "Hamor the Hivite," the father of Shechem, who called it after his son. (Comp. Genesis 4:17) From "the children of Hamor" Jacob bought the field on which he "spread his tent." This was "the portion" which Jacob afterwards gave to his son Joseph (Genesis 48:22), and here the "bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought out of Egypt," were, at least at one time, buried. (Joshua 24:32) Far more interesting than this, **we know that by the well which Jacob there dug, sat, many centuries afterwards, "David's greater Son," to tell the poor sinning woman of Samaria concerning the "well of water springing up unto everlasting life" - the first non-Jewess blessed to taste the water of which "whosoever drinketh" "shall never thirst." (John 4:14) Here Jacob erected an altar, and called it El-elohe-Israel, "God, the God of Israel." Edersheim, Vol 1, Ch 17)**