

LESSON 31

Scripture passage: Genesis 29:1-30

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

Jesus once told a story about a boy who did not want to live as a Christian boy in his parents' Christian home. This means that he did not listen to his parents. That was his first wrong. Next, he left his godly home and then he wasted the money his father had given him on all the wrong things. And God was watching all these sins! Our God is holy and He will not let sin go. He follows sins with troubles. The boy in our story had many troubles: he lost his friends, became so hungry he almost starved, and had hardly anything to wear...until he finally went back to his father and said he was very sorry. The story of Jacob is not exactly like the story Jesus told, but this story also tells about sins in Jacob's family, and all the trouble that came from these sins.

LESSON MATERIAL

Jacob still had a long way to travel before he came to the East, to the country of Haran, where Laban lived. Laban (who was Rebekah's brother) had a wife and a home of his own now, with two girls who were almost grown up already. We will treat the early part of Jacob's stay with Laban in three parts.

1. HIS WELCOME.

- a. Jacob finally saw a well. It was probably the same well where Abraham's faithful servant, Eliezer, had prayed for God to send him a good girl, and God had sent Rebekah, Jacob's own mother! (This will be a good review.)
- b. Jacob saw shepherds and three flocks of sheep there, and asked the shepherds whether they knew Laban.
- c. They not only knew Laban, but they also told him that Laban's daughter, Rachel, was coming with her sheep.
- d. When Rachel came to the well, Jacob rolled away the stone, watered her flock of sheep, and kissed her.
- e. Laban ran out to meet him, kissed him (explain that it was comparable to our hand-shaking) and took him in.
- f. Jacob stayed one month with Laban. In that month, Laban found out that Jacob was a good shepherd, and that he loved Rachel very much. Did Jacob tell his Uncle Laban all the trouble which made him leave home? We do not know. Laban probably asked many questions about why Jacob came, and Jacob could not hide all his troubles from Laban.

2. THE BARGAIN.

- a. Verse 15 sounds pious. Give the children insights into a character who sounds good and generous, but is not. Laban knew Jacob wanted Rachel for a wife. And he was going to make Jacob work for her.
- b. Jacob walked right into Laban's trap. He offered to work 7 years for Rachel. This is called a "bargain" (illustrate "bargaining" at the children's level).
- c. Laban was thinking only of what was best for Laban. He sold his own daughter and hoped to get richer, because he knew he would get a lot of work out of Jacob.
- d. Laban had an older daughter, Leah. Note the differences between these