

# GENESIS II

## THE NEXT CHAPTERS OF GOD'S RELENTLESS PLAN

### Part 9: Searching for Blessing

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#### Genesis 29:1, 15-30

Then Jacob continued on his journey and came to the land of the eastern peoples.

After Jacob had stayed with him for a whole month, <sup>15</sup> Laban said to him, "Just because you are a relative of mine, should you work for me for nothing? Tell me what your wages should be."

<sup>16</sup> Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. <sup>17</sup> Leah had weak eyes, but Rachel had a lovely figure and was beautiful. <sup>18</sup> Jacob was in love with Rachel and said, "I'll work for you seven years in return for your younger daughter Rachel."

<sup>19</sup> Laban said, "It's better that I give her to you than to some other man. Stay here with me." <sup>20</sup> So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her.

<sup>21</sup> Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife. My time is completed, and I want to make love to her."

<sup>22</sup> So Laban brought together all the people of the place and gave a feast.

<sup>23</sup> But when evening came, he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and Jacob made love to her. <sup>24</sup> And Laban gave his servant Zilpah to his daughter as her attendant.

<sup>25</sup> When morning came, there was Leah! So Jacob said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? I served you for Rachel, didn't I? Why have you deceived me?"

<sup>26</sup> Laban replied, "It is not our custom here to give the younger daughter in marriage before the older one. <sup>27</sup> Finish this daughter's bridal week; then we will give you the younger one also, in return for another seven years of work."

<sup>28</sup> And Jacob did so. He finished the week with Leah, and then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife. <sup>29</sup> Laban gave his servant Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as her attendant. <sup>30</sup> Jacob made love to Rachel also, and his love for Rachel was greater than his love for Leah. And he worked for Laban another seven years.

I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty.

I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. - Philippians 4:12

#### Genesis 32:22-31

<sup>22</sup> That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two female servants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. <sup>23</sup> After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. <sup>24</sup> So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. <sup>25</sup> When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. <sup>26</sup> Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak."

But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."

<sup>27</sup> The man asked him, "What is your name?"

"Jacob," he answered.

<sup>28</sup> Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome."

<sup>29</sup> Jacob said, "Please tell me your name."

But he replied, "Why do you ask my name?" Then he blessed him there.

<sup>30</sup> So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared."

<sup>31</sup> The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel, and he was limping because of his hip.

If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! – Matthew 7:11

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. – Romans 8:38-39

## **Lessons From the Life of Jacob**

### **1. Sometimes our biggest failures are an opportunity for God to demonstrate his limitless grace.**

The law was brought in so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more... – Romans 5:20

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? – Romans 6:1-2

### **2. Violating God's principles is never the necessary path to experiencing God's blessing. (Genesis 28:14-15)**

**Jacob + Leah = Judah and Judah = Jesus**

### **3. If we don't trust God's promises, it's easy to overlook God's blessing**

So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. – 2 Corinthians 4:18

## **Small Group Questions**

- 1) The story of Jacob, Leah & Rachel is crazy. Are there any other Bible stories you know that remind you that people have always been pretty messed up?
- 2) Is there a time when God made something good or beautiful come out of a mess in your life? Tell us about it.
- 3) Have you ever wrestled with God, perhaps not physically but spiritually or emotionally? What can you tell us about that?
- 4) Are you struggling in any area where you need to experience God's grace and restoration?
- 5) How can we pray for you right now and throughout the week?