

**In The Beginning: Session 40: A Deal With Laban**

בְּרֵאשִׁית

- Parking lot at Sacred Heart
- Anything you missed you can find at: [www.htchurch.com/genesis](http://www.htchurch.com/genesis)
- Don't forget that our summer reading: *God Meant It For Good*, by RT Kendall.

**Review: Why Study Genesis?** In Hebrew, the name of the book is literally called “In The Beginning.”

- Genesis tells us the story of how God created everything, including Mankind.
- Genesis gives us the framework for how to understand the entire Bible.
- Genesis also shows us the beginnings of God’s dealings with the human race.

**What’s In Genesis?** There are only really five main stories in the book:

- The story of Creation;
- The story of the Fall of Man;
- The story of the Flood;
- The story of the origin of the nations; and,
- The history of the patriarchs, the fathers of the Israelite or Jewish people.

**Salvation History**

- How we were made to walk in fellowship with God, and how we fell through sin.
- How God promised to redeem Mankind through sending a special Seed.
- How God began to work out that plan by calling one particular nation.

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## God's Choice of Israel

By His own sovereign choice, God chose the people of Israel to be the vehicle He would use to reach the world. Why exactly did He choose them?

1. God called Israel to be a witness. God called the people of Israel to give the world the knowledge of the one true God.

2. God called Israel to demonstrate the holiness of God to the world. Israel was called to show the world what godly living looked like.

3. God chose Israel because He needed a people through whom He could introduce the Messiah into the world. Genesis tells us how God narrowed down the candidates for being the Messiah. He picked Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, and so on all the way down the line in order to bring his Son, Jesus Christ, into the world.

## The Patriarchs

A patriarch is simply the male leader, or a father-leader of a group of people. In Genesis we are speaking about Abraham, his son Isaac, and Isaac's son Jacob, who later became known as Israel.

- Jacob, in turn, had 12 sons. These men and their wives are the fathers and mothers of the Jewish people.
- Genesis centers on these three generations of men, and then the 12 sons of Jacob.
- For the remaining 20 chapters of the book, we are mostly looking at the story of Jacob, and the story of Joseph and his brothers.

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## **Covenants With God**

These arrangements with God have responsibilities for each side. Abraham was promised by God several important things by God.

- He was promised a special relationship with God.
- God promised Abraham a multitude of descendants.
- God promised to give the Promised Land to Abraham's family forever.

## **Where We Left Off: Genesis 30**

Jacob is in a stressful situation!

- Jacob is supposed to go back to the Promised Land.
- Before the final chapters of Jacob's life can be written, God will have to do a lot of work in Jacob to shape his character.

## **Time To Go (Gen. 30:25-31)**

*25 And it came to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said to Laban, "Send me away, that I may go to my own place and to my country. 26 Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served you, and let me go; for you know my service which I have done for you." 27 And Laban said to him, "Please stay, if I have found favor in your eyes, for I have learned by experience that the LORD has blessed me for your sake." 28 Then he said, "Name me your wages, and I will give it."*

*29 So Jacob said to him, "You know how I have served you and how your livestock has been with me. 30 For what you had before I came was little, and it has increased to a great amount; the LORD has blessed you since my coming. And now, when shall I also provide for my own house?" 31 So he said, "What shall I give you?" And Jacob said, "You shall not give me anything. If you will do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep your flocks..."*

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- Laban has been able to discern that it is the Lord who is blessing Jacob, and the blessing is coming to his household because of the blessing that's upon Jacob.
- It would seem that Jacob got thought he was being taken advantage of, that it was really past time that he began to work and accumulate some wealth for himself.

*Spiritual Motivations in Jacob's Heart?*

- This happened after Rachel had borne Joseph. Why is this detail important? Perhaps Jacob wants to get Joseph back to the Promised Land. He may have thought there was something about being in the *Land* that made a difference.
- Some Jewish writers say Laban was a more significant person, more dangerous to the Jewish people, than Pharaoh. Working for Laban is a picture of **settling!**

**The Deal (Gen. 30:31-36)**

*31 So he said, "What shall I give you?" And Jacob said, "You shall not give me anything. If you will do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep your flocks: 32 Let me pass through all your flock today, removing from there all the speckled and spotted sheep, and all the brown ones among the lambs, and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and these shall be my wages. 33 So my righteousness will answer for me in time to come, when the subject of my wages comes before you: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the lambs, will be considered stolen, if it is with me."*

*34 And Laban said, "Oh, that it were according to your word!" 35 So he removed that day the male goats that were speckled and spotted, all the female goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had some white in it, and all the brown ones among the lambs, and gave them into the hand of his sons. 36 Then he put three days' journey between himself and Jacob, and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.*

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- Jacob would get to keep certain animals. Laban and Laban's sons immediately go into action to sabotage Jacob.

### **God Blesses Jacob Supernaturally (Gen. 30:37-43)**

*37 Now Jacob took for himself rods of green poplar and of the almond and chestnut trees, peeled white strips in them, and exposed the white which was in the rods. 38 And the rods which he had peeled, he set before the flocks in the gutters, in the watering troughs where the flocks came to drink, so that they should conceive when they came to drink. 39 So the flocks conceived before the rods, and the flocks brought forth streaked, speckled, and spotted. 40 Then Jacob separated the lambs, and made the flocks face toward the streaked and all the brown in the flock of Laban; but he put his own flocks by themselves and did not put them with Laban's flock.*

*41 And it came to pass, whenever the stronger livestock conceived, that Jacob placed the rods before the eyes of the livestock in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods. 42 But when the flocks were feeble, he did not put them in; so the feebler were Laban's and the stronger Jacob's. 43 Thus the man became exceedingly prosperous, and had large flocks, female and male servants, and camels and donkeys.*

- Jacob's understanding of biology is on the level of folklore. But we can see that supernaturally caused these animals to give birth to more desirable offspring.
- God was going to supernaturally enrich Jacob and confound his uncle.

### **It's Good to Be In Partnership With God!**

How can we be encouraged by what the Holy Spirit has recorded for us here?

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1. You also are in a covenant relationship with God!
2. God will be with you and help you even when you are in a mess.
3. God will help you, even when you are outside of your land of promise.
4. God will help you even when you are in a place of strife.
5. God will help you even when you haven't always done it the right way.
6. God will help you, even when others are trying to cheat you and steal from you.
7. God will help you, and prosper you even when you don't know what you're doing.

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