

THE COMMONS LEADER GUIDE

November 4th
Week 2 - Jacob/Israel - Deceived

MAIN SCRIPTURE

Genesis 28; 29:1-30; 30:25-43; 31

MAIN POINTS

- God is faithful to finish the work he starts and fulfill his promises (28:15).
- God protects and provides for his chosen (31:5-6).

BACKGROUND

In Genesis 25 & 27, God chooses Jacob to be heir to his covenant promise with Abraham, but the way Jacob gets his inheritance and blessing is through deceit and trickery. Yet, God chooses Jacob nevertheless, not based on his character or worth, but based on God's mercy and sovereign purpose.

In Ch. 28-31, Jacob experiences a reversal of fortunes. While he initially seems to succeed in his schemes, Jacob becomes a victim of deceit himself. He obeys his father and travels to his uncle Laban's house to take a wife from Laban's daughters. He works for Laban, intending to marry his daughter Rachel. However, Laban deceives Jacob by giving him Leah, Rachel's older sister, as a wife instead. Jacob must then work an additional seven years to marry Rachel.

Throughout his time with Laban, Jacob experiences manipulation and trickery as Laban changes his wages multiple times (31:5, 41). This period serves as a humbling experience for Jacob as he learns what it feels like to be on the receiving end of deception. Yet, through God's guidance and intervention, he moves towards a new chapter in his life. His departure from Laban marks not only a physical journey back to his homeland but also a spiritual journey towards redemption and fulfillment of God's promises.

RESOURCES

Enduring Word Commentary - Genesis
Polygamy in the Bible (and What Jesus Said About It)

UPCOMING COMMONS EVENTS

Commons Gathering - **Nov 18**
Group Giving - **Nov 25**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

READ Genesis 28

1. Why do you think Isaac commands Jacob to not take a wife from the Canaanite women?
2. In v. 10-17, God acknowledges Jacob as heir to the promise. What do these verses reveal about God? How do these promises apply to us as Christians?
3. In v. 20-22, Jacob makes a vow to God. How is Jacob's vow to God different from God's vow to him? (*Jacob's vow is conditional*)

READ Genesis 29:1-30; 30:25-43

1. In previous chapters, Jacob was the deceiver. Now, he is the deceived. How does Jacob respond to Laban's deceit?
2. What does Jacob's perseverance in working and waiting to marry Rachel teach us about patience and waiting in relationships, careers, or dreams?
3. In this passage, Jacob uses branches to influence the breeding of the animals. Do you think Jacob was right to do what he did? How do you see the balance between human effort and divine intervention in achieving our goals?

READ Genesis 31

1. In the passages we've read tonight, what evidence do you see of Jacob's growth compared to the chapters we read last time?
 - *Faithfully worked for Laban and followed through on promise (29:20, 28), worked hard (30:29; 31:38-41), honest (30:33)*
2. How did you see God providing for Jacob in these chapters?

APPLICATION

1. In Ch. 28:20-22, Jacob makes a conditional vow to God. Are there areas of your life where you find yourself conditionally worshiping or following God based on whether or not he gives you what you want? Is there something you need to change in your life to follow God faithfully regardless?
2. God showed up in Jacob's life and provided for him even when things seemed bleak. What can you do this week to reflect on, recognize, and thank God for how he has been providing for you?

