

# 06

GENESIS 30:25-34,41-43

## MULTIPLIED BLESSINGS

### THIS WEEK'S **focus**

There are few smells greater than cookies fresh out of the oven. It's a scent that hooks your senses and reels you in from wherever you are. But have you ever been disappointed by a bad cookie? Whether it's too much salt, not enough sugar, or another missing ingredient, we can tell when a cookie is missing the mark. Each ingredient matters. The details are critical. Just as a baker labors in the kitchen, God labors in our lives. In today's teaching, we will see the Lord at work in the details of Jacob's story. Using various ingredients in Jacob's story, God will bring about spiritual and material blessings as evidence of His commitment to His people. God is present and active in the details of our lives.



### CENTRAL **truth**

God is active in the details of our lives.



EXPLORE

# scripture

GENESIS 30:25-34,41-43

## GENESIS 30:25-30

**25** After Rachel gave birth to Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, “Send me on my way so that I can return to my homeland. **26** Give me my wives and my children that I have worked for, and let me go. You know how hard I have worked for you.” **27** But Laban said to him, “If I have found favor with you, stay. I have learned by divination that the LORD has blessed me because of you.”

**28** Then Laban said, “Name your wages, and I will pay them.” **29** So Jacob said to him, “You know how I have served you and how your herds have fared with me. **30** For you had very little before I came, but now your wealth has increased. The LORD has blessed you because of me. And now, when will I also do something for my own family?”

## GENESIS 30:31-34

**31** Laban asked, “What should I give you?” And Jacob said, “You don’t need to give me anything. If you do this one thing for me, I will continue to shepherd and keep your flock. **32** Let me go through all your sheep today and remove every sheep that is speckled or spotted, every dark-colored sheep among the lambs, and the spotted and speckled among the female

goats. Such will be my wages. **33** In the future when you come to check on my wages, my honesty will testify for me. If I have any female goats that are not speckled or spotted, or any lambs that are not black, they will be considered stolen.” **34** “Good,” said Laban. “Let it be as you have said.”

## GENESIS 30:41-43

**41** Whenever the stronger of the flock were breeding, Jacob placed the branches in the troughs, in full view of the flocks, and they would breed in front of the branches. **42** As for the weaklings of the flocks, he did not put out

the branches. So it turned out that the weak sheep belonged to Laban and the stronger ones to Jacob. **43** And the man became very rich. He had many flocks, female and male slaves, and camels and donkeys.

# 06

GENESIS 30:25-34,41-43

CONVERSATION

## questions

▶ READ GENESIS 30:25-30.

**.01** When you think of God's blessings in your life, what comes to mind? Discuss.

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**.02** Why do you think God blessed Laban even though he had been deceptive?

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**.03** How can God's faithfulness to us in the past encourage us as we trust Him with our future?

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**Q** GIVE AN ANSWER

Scripture doesn't shy away from the reality that Jacob had multiple wives. The act of having multiple spouses at once is called *polygamy*, and there are some who would justify it using examples like this from the Bible. However, it's important for us to keep three things in mind. First, God's vision for marriage has always been between one man and one woman (see Gen. 2:24; Deut. 17:17; Mal. 2:14-15) and this truth is reaffirmed by Jesus and Paul (see Mark 10:2-8; Matt. 19:4-6; 1 Cor. 7:2; Titus 1:6). Second, even when the biblical authors acknowledge the facts of a situation, that doesn't mean God approved or affirmed it. Other notable figures like Abraham and David took multiple wives, and Scripture documents many disastrous results. Third, while polygamy wasn't God's plan, He instituted laws to protect women and children who were subjected to these situations (see Deut. 21:15-17).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ted Cabal, ed., *The Apologetics Study Bible* (Nashville, TN: Holman, 2007), 12.

▶ READ GENESIS 30:31-34.

**.04** Think back to what we've learned about Jacob's past. Why is it noteworthy that he was deceived by Laban?

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**.05** What are some ways that we can practice living honestly, even when our culture encourages us to be deceptive?

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**.06** What makes it difficult to be honest or display integrity?

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▶ READ GENESIS 30:41-43.

**.07** How did Jacob's actions demonstrate his trust in God?

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**.08** How can we be encouraged by God's commitment to bless Jacob?

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**THEOLOGY**

In Jacob's story, part of God's provision in his life looked like financial wealth. However, if our experience looks different, that doesn't mean that God isn't blessing us. While God can and does bless people with financial wealth, it isn't the ultimate indicator of His blessing and care. Scripture assures us that God's greatest act of blessing and generosity will always be found in the person and work of Jesus (see Eph. 3:8). Though God is deeply aware of and attentive to our physical needs (see Matt. 6:25-34), wisdom is not looking first to our wallets for proof of God's blessing, but to the One who is the very blessing of God. Not only is Jesus our ultimate blessing, but He also showed us what it means to truly live a blessed life. He taught that those who are truly blessed are the poor in spirit, the pure in heart, the humble, the merciful, the peacemakers, the and persecuted, and those who mourn (see Matt. 5:2-12). Having a big gold chain or a decked-out chariot didn't make Jesus's list. Though it may seem backward from what we expect, Jesus's kingdom has a different target for what true blessing is.

# 06

GENESIS 30:25-34,41-43

## NOW what?



### CENTRAL truth

God is active in the details of our lives.

**.09** What are some ways we can pay more attention to God's activity in the details of our lives?

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**.10** How does practicing honesty reflect the character of God?

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**.11** How can we purposefully celebrate God's provision?

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**.12** How can we be a blessing to those in our schools or families who do not have relationships with the Lord?

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# DAILY devotions

MEMORIZE GENESIS 30:30

## 7 ARROWS FOR BIBLE READING



What does this passage say?



What does this passage tell us about God?



What did this passage mean to its original audience?



How does this passage change the way I relate to people?



What does this passage tell us about humans?



How does this passage prompt me to pray?



What does this passage demand of me?

day 1

# GENESIS 30:22-24

## DWELL

Rachel had watched her older sister, Leah, as well as Leah's servant, give birth to children. Even Rachel's servants had given birth to children. Jacob now had ten sons and at least one daughter. But Rachel still hadn't been able to bear any children of her own. Finally, after many years of childlessness, God gave her what she had wanted for so long. She gave birth to a boy and named him Joseph, meaning "Jehovah shall add," because God had added another son to the family. Later she would also give birth to Benjamin, Jacob's twelfth son. Again, God was faithful to His promise to build a nation through Abraham's descendants.



What do you learn about God's faithfulness in these verses?



God remembers you. In what way should this change the way you interact with Him?

## MEMORIZE

Write Genesis 30:30 on an index card or sticky note and attach it to your bathroom mirror. Say the verse aloud each day, emphasizing a few different words each time.

## PRAY

Spend some time talking to God about your biggest struggle right now and ask for His help and guidance in that situation.

day 2

# GENESIS 30:25-30

## DWELL

Jacob had to work for a very long time to get to this point, but his father-in-law pointed out something important: God had blessed all that Jacob did—and as a result, Laban was also blessed. Laban now had a bunch of grandchildren, his flocks were growing, and the wealth of his entire household had increased. As a result of God's faithfulness to Jacob and his family, Laban was willing to pay Jacob anything he thought was fair. The way that Jacob found favor with Laban is another sign of God's faithfulness in acting on the behalf of His people.

↔ God has blessed you in a variety of ways. How can you share God's blessings with your friends and family?

↻ How do these verses indicate that Laban was blessed through God's faithfulness to Jacob?

## MEMORIZE

Save Genesis 30:30 as a wallpaper or screensaver on your phone or computer. Read it aloud each time you see it.

## PRAY

Ask God to help you walk in faithfulness to Him in such a way that you'll be a blessing to others.

day 3

# GENESIS 30:31-34

## DWELL

Jacob agreed to continue to work for Laban in exchange for flocks that he would identify in the future. This turned out to be an incredible plan—one that God put into Jacob's mind. At first it may not sound so spectacular, but many years later, this proved to be another huge blessing in Jacob's life. He ended up with a huge flock of sheep through God's faithfulness. God's blessings will not always come in the form of material wealth, but we can trust that whatever God has planned for us is good. We just have to follow His guidance and wait for His timing.

↻ What was significant about the sheep that Jacob was going to separate from the larger flock?

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↔ Why are honesty and integrity important character traits that we should seek to demonstrate as followers of Jesus?

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## MEMORIZE

Say the book, chapter, and verse number for Genesis 30:30 out loud several times. Then read aloud just the first few words of the verse. Do this a few times a day and see if you can memorize more each time.

## PRAY

Pray that God will help you to learn what it means to demonstrate integrity at school, at home, at church, and in your community.



day 4

# GENESIS 30:37-40

## DWELL

The “best” sheep, in Laban’s view, were the pure black or pure white sheep. Jacob’s wages were to be all the sheep that weren’t completely black or white. So God inspired Jacob with a bizarre strategy to produce spotted, speckled, and streaked sheep. Why in the world did this wacky method work? Only God knows. And why did Jacob need all these sheep, anyway? A large flock was part of a family’s wealth. God was growing Jacob’s wealth in this process as an extension of His promise to bless Jacob and his family.

↑ What can we learn about God’s character in the way He cared for Jacob?

↪ What are some unusual ways that God has provided for you or your family as you’ve followed Him? How can you thank Him for this?

## MEMORIZE

Write out Genesis 30:30 on a piece of paper. Circle three to five key words in the verse and consider their importance. Focus on those words and see how much of the verse you can speak from memory.

## PRAY

Take a personal inventory and ask God to reveal anything you seek after that is not what He would have you seek after.

day 5

# GENESIS 30:41-43

## DWELL

God allowed Jacob to prosper as he cared for Laban’s sheep. Jacob had been very careful to only breed the strongest sheep for his share of the flocks. Now he had many flocks of sheep as well as camels and donkeys. The note that Jacob had camels is an indication of his wealth, since camels were particularly expensive. As Jacob prepared to leave Laban, God was faithful to provide all that Jacob needed to start his new life and to begin leading what would become the nation of Israel.

← How do these verses indicate that God set up Jacob and his family well for the journey back to Canaan?

↔ How have you experienced God’s faithfulness in your life in providing what you need? How can you use these blessings to bless others?

## MEMORIZE

Read Genesis 30:30 several times. Then start by trying to memorize the first two or three words. Once you have those words memorized, add a few more words at a time until you can say the whole verse.

## PRAY

Thank God for the way He provides for you and praise Him as *Jehovah Jireh*, the God who provides.