

The Birth of a Nation A Study in Genesis 25-36

Jacob's Hocus Pocus
Genesis 30:25-43
March 21, 2021

As soon as Rachel had borne Joseph, Jacob said to Laban,
"Send me away, that I may go to my own home and country."
- Genesis 30:25

I. A CHEATER'S PARADISE

- As we arrive at verse 25, Jacob has now served Laban for fourteen years. He would serve another six years before leaving (Gen. 31:38).
- In this chapter we see God blessing Jacob with descendants for Abraham (seed), and with flocks and herds (wealth).
- We see in this story a "theme." God's people serving in exile, being blessed, plundering their master, then leaving (Ex. 2:23-25, 3:7-12).
- Laban proves ever deceitful. After agreeing to Jacob's terms, he sets out to secretly cheat him (Gen. 31:35-36).
- Jacob's superstitious attempt at animal husbandry and eugenics is worthless. Nevertheless, God blesses Jacob's efforts (Gen. 30:37-43; 31:9).

II. A SHADOWY SUCCESS

- Our misguided attempts to be "successful," even when well-intentioned, almost always lead to something less than what God honors (John 2:23-25; Acts 8:9-24).
- Jesus spoke truth, even when that truth caused some to walk away. We are called to do the same (John 6:60-66; Eph. 4:11-16).
- Being successful is not necessarily sinful. However, Jesus' model prayer teaches us what we are to seek in this life (Luke 11:1-4).
- Our hearts are deceitful. We should guard ourselves against ourselves, and focus on truth (Jer. 17:9; 1 Tim. 4:11-16).

KNOW: The scheming of human beings does not bring about the kingdom of God. The truth of the gospel prevails, not our mechanisms to bring about what looks like success to us and to our world.

DO: The heart is deceitful. Set your minds fully on the truth of God.

Suggested Reading:

Spiritual Mindedness by John Owen (LifePoint Library #248.4 OWE)

God is the Gospel by John Piper

Questions/Discovery Points for Life Groups/Families

Please Read Genesis 30:25-43

1. So, what's this all about? :)
2. What is Jacob trying to accomplish?
3. Why, do you think, does God bless Jacob when he is clearly trying to deceive Laban? Is his deception justifiable? What is Laban trying to do to Jacob?
4. Jacob wants to leave for home, but stays with Laban anyway. Why? What might his motive have been?
5. We talked about trying to achieve success by worldly means Sunday. Why is that discouraged for believers?
6. How do we measure success in our lives as Christ-followers?
7. What are your take-aways from the message Sunday?