Abraham Becomes a Nation, Pt. 3

Ronald Weinland

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We're going to continue today in the sermon series entitled *Abraham Becomes a Nation*, with this being *Part 3*.

We ended last Sabbath by covering some New Testament examples that were given using some of the same examples that we've been covering here concerning the life of Esau, Isaac, Abraham, Sarah, and Rebecca that are mentioned in those New Testament scriptures. But again, they're examples that build upon things that happened so long ago, but on a spiritual plane, to show what they mean, and we're going through some of these examples as we look at them.

Anyway, I want to pick up the story here in Genesis where we left off before that, before we went through those New Testament examples. And we were in Genesis going through some of the events of Isaac's life. Now, you remember the story where Isaac had sent Esau out to hunt for game and then prepare that special meal that he liked, and then Isaac was going to pronounce over him the inheritance of the promise that God had given to him that had been passed down from Abraham to Isaac, and Isaac was going to pass it on to Esau.

And so, this was the occasion. He realizes he's getting close to the end of his life, and he wants to get this taken care of, a responsibility he has to pass along that particular promise. Then we read where Rebecca learned of this and told Jacob. They were twins, Esau and Jacob. And so, Rebekah learned of this and told Jacob to go before Isaac with that favorite dish that she was going to make and to do that before Esau could get back with his. That she would make that and then he was to go in there before his father, Isaac, and pretend that he was Esau.

So, again here, we can look at examples like this and think, well, why was that allowed, why were they able to do that, and so forth. And just, again, certain things here that come out that show the tenacity, if you will, the belief that Rebecca had concerning God, and the desire she had for her own son, that she had already chosen that it would be Jacob and not Esau. Isaac had different feelings toward Esau, and so they didn't agree on those things, obviously, as to how the sentiment was there.

But Jacob was called what he was for a purpose, and he was a supplanter. And God knew this from the very beginning. Before he was ever born, it was all planned as a part of a process here to teach lessons of, to have people live and experience certain things in relationships that would be inspiring, candidly, to God's people through time as people read and know of certain stories like this, of things that God would work out in His own way, that He is God. Awesome.

And so, He had one that reached up to grab the heel of Esau, and known as the supplanter. So, he was given that particular name, referred to in that respect, because even Esau refers to it later on. And so, we've read through that.

But let's pick it up here now in Genesis 27:41. These are the last verses we read in *Part 1* where we were going through the story in the Old Testament. It says, **Genesis 27:41—So Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him. And Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand**… Meaning that his death was getting closer, and so he knew that was going to take place. He says, **Then**, in essence, **when that time comes, then I'll kill my brother Jacob**. So, you think of the kind of life, the kind of mind that would do something like that, and it reveals a lot about his character.

Then it goes on to say, **Now the words of Esau, her older son, were told to Rebekah**. So someone, servants or whatever, overheard this as he was talking to them, what he was going to do.

So she sent and called Jacob, her younger son, and said to him, Surely your brother Esau comforts himself concerning you to kill you. In other words, "This is what he's holding on to, that he so despises what you have done, that his intention is to kill you after the death of your father."

Now, therefore, my son, obey my voice. Arise, flee to my brother Laban in Haran. So again here, going back to the story all the way to Abraham, when they came down, departed from the area of Haran to the north, which is up into the areas of modern-day Syria today, and they travelled southward into the area that God told him to. And then the story continued on with Isaac's life.

Verse 44—Now stay with him for a time, in other words, with Laban, **until your brother's fury turns away, until your brother's anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you've done to him**. So, in other words, "Let enough time pass by, and surely you'll be able to return." In essence, that was her thought.

Then I will send and bring you from there. Why should I be bereaved also of you both in one day? So again here, loss of life, loss of children and so forth, if that were to happen.

Then Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth. If Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth, like these who are the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me? So, she's passing along to him her desire for Jacob, if you will, and all as a part of this scheme still to have Jacob leave and flee anyway, but now, hopefully then with the permission of or the backing of Isaac as well.

And so, she does it in a kind of a subtle manner, obviously, but she was concerned because she did not want him to marry someone who had different beliefs. Because that was rampant in the area that they had moved to. And she knew, as a whole, by history, by things that had happened to them, even when long before, because even before the time and the stories that went along with Abraham and so forth,

when they left, they saw what was happening to the nations even after the floods and after Noah had died and what people tended to do. They went off, and they worshipped other gods.

But they continued and carried with them belief in God and the stories of things that had happened to them in their history, as far as Noah and so forth. So anyway, that becomes evident as you read these stories that that history was there, and she wanted someone who was a relative who had the same beliefs. That was her heart. It had to do with God, her belief toward God.

So, **Genesis 28:1—Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him**. So, right after that, he's blessed again, if you will, **and charged him and said to him, You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padan Aram, to the house of Bethuel**. So, he's following through now with what she had come to him about, and putting teeth in it, if you will, "You need to go up there and receive a wife from," as he says here, "to the house of Bethuel." And this was the son of Nahor, Abraham's brother, and Milcah; the son of Nahor and Milcah. "Nahor," I think that is how it's pronounced. …**and to the house of Bethuel, your mother's father, and take yourself a wife there from the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother**.

So again, that was the custom in those times, small populations and things that God allowed for a period of time until some of those began to be changed. But again here, it was a matter of a belief in God. They carried that with them, that particular area, that part of the family, and so they wanted him to receive a wife from that region.

May God Almighty bless you. So again, God's always in the picture here in the mindset of Isaac, in the mindset of Rebekah, and this is how they're thinking, and in this case, toward their own son, Jacob, obviously here. **May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you**. So, a follow-up to that original blessing that he gave him, even though he was deceived as to who he was when it was given.

…**and you may become a multitude of people**. So, he knew what he had done; he knew what Jacob had done, what Rebecca had done, and he desired that his own son be able then to prosper and the things of God be fulfilled through him as a family line.

And it goes on to say here in **verse 4—And give you the blessing of Abraham**. So that's what it's all about. **…to you and your descendants with you, so that you may inherit the land of which you are a stranger**. So, in other words, they lived in a land where they were strangers; they were not original in that area. They were migrants, if you will. They were from a different part of the world, and yet they were received in that part of the world.

They had their own trials, as we've gone through and talked about in some of the stories here in some of the story flow. But again here, that's what the word stranger is about. They were a foreigner. They weren't originally from that particular area.

And basically, he's telling them, this is what God is going to give to us, to you… **that you may inherit the land, which God gave to Abraham. So, Isaac sent Jacob away and** [he] **went to Padan Aram, to Laban the son of Bethuel, the Syrian**. Because that's the region. …**the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau**.

Now, Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob. So, whether he was there, heard it, overheard it, or whatever, but here's this continuation of this blessing and what is being said, but there's something added to it now because of the charge that's being given to Jacob.

So, Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Padan Aram to take himself a wife from there, and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge saying, You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan. So, then he hears this. …**and that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and had gone to Padan Aram**.

So again here, Esau's response then to what he overheard. He's still eaten up with jealousy. He's still eaten up inside. And so, it says, **Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan did not please his father Isaac, so Esau went to Ishmael and took Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael**. So again here, this is of Hagar, obviously, the descendant here, children as it goes on here.

So, Esau went to Ishmael. Ishmael was Hagar's son. She was an Egyptian and a servant then to Abraham. So, we know that part of the story that we've read. So that's where Esau went to take a daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son. …**and sister of Nebolyoth, to be his wife in addition to the wives he had**. So, he already had taken some wives from that particular area.

And again here, not of beliefs about God. And that's the problem throughout this history that continues even with Israel later on when they're going into the promised land, and even before that when they're in the wilderness and their desire, so many of them, to take of other women of other areas. But the history is that continually pulled them away from God and they didn't have the same beliefs.

So, it says, **Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went to Haran**. So, he's traveling in that particular direction. Goes back to him now, and his travels to the north as he heads northward.

So, he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. Then he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in the place to sleep. Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven. And there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

So, this was a very powerful dream that was in his mind; what he saw, what he envisioned in that sense, powerful in being realistic in his thought. And again here, this particular area he's in is kind of interesting as well when it brings out here where this actually is. It goes on to explain that a little bit later here.

But **verse 10** it says, **Now, Jacob went out from Beersheba**… I just read that. Beersheba went to Haran. No, I guess I didn't. **Now, Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran**.

So, he came to a certain place and stayed there all night. And because the sun had set, then he took one of the stones of the place at his head, as I'd said there, and this ladder, and the angels—I did read it—going up and down. And it says, **Now, behold, The Eternal stood above it and said, I am the Eternal God of Abraham, your**… So, it's a word here as "**grandfather**," which is okay, but it's just talking about forefather here because it's used in other places and it has to do with forefathers, because it starts with Abraham. …**and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie, I will give it to you and your descendants**.

So, again here, an incredible story that God continually is building a relationship with different ones that the promise is going through. Abraham first, Isaac next, and now Jacob. So, now He's beginning to build this relationship, personal relationship, with Jacob – even through a dream in this particular case.

Also, your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth. What an incredible thing. I mean, God had it all purposed and planned out: what was going to take place, how it was to happen, through whom it was going to happen. He orchestrated it throughout that period of time and the things we continue to read about.

You will spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south, and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth will be blessed. So, again here, sometimes people don't grasp and comprehend what this is all about and take it all physically, but this is a spiritual intent right here in what's being told because all the families of the earth are going to be blessed because of one who's going to be born of this family lineage, speaking of Christ, the Messiah, of who He was to come through.

Because the story of Israel is not about a physical people in the sense of what God's plan and purpose is to fulfill. It's about a spiritual one. But the physical one is used as an example to teach, to guide, to lead, because we learn things physically first and can have those examples to help teach us spiritual things when God's time comes.

Verse 15—Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you. So, in other words, there are things here that are going to be fulfilled to him individually, to a point, and for the descendants that follow.

Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, Surely the Eternal is in this place, and I did not know it. He wasn't aware of it. In essence, he's saying, he said, "This is a place where God is."

Being fearful, he said… So, it was so strong to him that it moved him tremendously. And again, God works with people in different ways at different times and things that are impressed upon their minds for whatever age, for whatever purpose is being done here. But this is what affected Jacob in a very powerful way and he was in awe.

Being fearful, he said, How fearful is this place? This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of or **to heaven**. Because of what he saw, it was so real to him. And then God speaking to him and speaking of things that he knew part of because of the promise that was given from Isaac that had been given to Abraham that he'd been told about. Because he had a special attitude toward that promise – it was something he wanted. Incredible. Esau, not at all. He was willing to sell it.

Then Jacob rose early in the morning and took the stone that he'd put at his head, set it up as a pillar. So, he moved it up on its side. How he did that and how he made it to stand, we don't know. But again here, he put it up on its side so that it was not just flat on the ground, **and poured oil on top of it**.

So, he had learned enough, again, passed down from Abraham and Isaac, of this kind of meaning of… Because they had built altars, different ones had, and things that they offered up to God, and the oil that was poured on it. Not fully knowing what it meant, obviously spiritually, but anyway, knowing that it's a part of something that is holy or has a holy meaning to it because of God's presence.

Then he called the name of the place Bethel, which means house of God. So, when you see the name of that town, "house of God," this is what it means: Bethel.

But the name of the city had been Luz, which means almond tree. That's what it was taken from. So, it was noted for whatever reason, certain things that stood out as places when you travel that were unique and different to that area. This was unique to this particular area, and so it had its name from that.

And so, sometimes things are given names in the Bible of places, but sometimes it's not their original name. Sometimes it uses the name of Bethel, but it wasn't called by that as a whole. And now it is because he called it that. That's where it began; it received its name through Jacob. But before that, it was known as Luz.

Then Jacob made an oath, saying, If God will be with me… So, now here is his promise to God. Here's what he's saying to God because of how he was moved by what had taken place.

If God will be with me and keep me in this way that I am going. And in other words, of following Him, of obeying, of striving to obey Him and live that way of life that had been given to him, passed down from Abraham to Isaac and on. …**and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on, so that I come back to my father's house in peace, then the Eternal will be my God**. **And this stone, which I have set as a pillar, will be as** or **for** (as the word is), **God's house**. In other words, as a representation because of where it is.

And of all that you give me, I will surely give a tenth to you. So, he's promising to follow up on what Abraham started and what Abraham said, that he would give a tenth to God. And so, he's going to follow through and do the same thing.

So again here, when it speaks of Bethel in Genesis 12, this is where God appeared to Abram, when he was still known as Abram, before he was called Abraham. And that's where He said specifically unto him

for the first time, “Unto your seed I will give this land.” So, this was the beginning of the promise and the first time in this particular area when Abram was traveling through that area. And it's here that Abram… It goes on to talk about some of these things in chapter 13 as well of Genesis. But Abraham built an altar to God in the same place.

So, incredible, the meaning of a place and how God used it in relationship to Abraham and then now to Jacob, having special meaning.

Now, by tradition and by some things in history that have been passed down through time, this is a stone that's believed to have been under the coronation chair of the kings and queens of England. And I've talked about this in times past. But it's rather moving when you realize that this stone has been carried around for so long and has such incredible impact and meaning on people, especially in coronations and the like.

And I wish I could remember that picture. There was a plaque underneath it, and I believe it was still there when I was at Ambassador in Brickett Wood. But under the coronation stone… Under the chair, I should say, was a stone placed underneath it. They had built it specially over it, the chair over the particular stone, and it used to have that plaque in front of it, and I think it said *Jacob's Pillar Stone* on it. And then, finally, that was removed because of some of the things, British Israelism and things that were beginning to creep in, and there were people who didn't really want to be known for being descendants of certain people. So anyway, politics and religion and so forth.

So again, this is believed to be that pillar stone, the same one. It's called the Stone of Bethel, the Stone of Scone, the Stone of Destiny. So, it's had many different names associated with it. I'm just going to read a little bit more about it, because I've done this in the past, and to me, it's inspiring.

“The sandstone slab was used by the biblical figure Jacob as a pillow when he dreamed of a ladder reaching to heaven and then brought to Scotland by way of Egypt, Spain, and Ireland. The rock, also known as the Stone of Destiny, was used for centuries in the coronation ceremonies of Scottish monarchs.”[1]

I mean, it's an incredible thing, passed down for so long.

“Following the victory of the Battle of Dunbar in 1296, England's King Edward I seized the Stone of Destiny from Scotland’s Scone Abbey [so that's how it had that particular name], and had it fitted into the base of a specially crafted wooden coronation chair on which English—and later British—monarchs have been crowned inside London's Westminster Abbey ever since.”

So, every king and queen has been coronated on that particular throne over that particular stone. You think of a history of something so powerful in meaning, but they don't know it all. They don't have it all

[1] Christopher Klein, "What is the Stone of Scone?," *History*, A&E Television Networks, 27 May 2025, history.com. Accessed 24 Oct. 2026.

because they've lost so much of it. But for so long they didn't, because things were passed along and things were written and said about it.

“The Stone of Scone was secretly buried underneath the historic abbey for safekeeping during World War II, and a plan for locating it was sent to the Canadian Prime Minister.”

Isn't that incredible, some of the history here?

“...and a plan for locating it was sent to the Canadian Prime Minister. German bombs never damaged the stone, but four University of Scotland students who broke into Westminster Abbey on Christmas Eve of 1950 did. The nearly 400-pound Stone of Scone split in two... [Well, it had a corner broken off. It wasn't split in two.] “...as the Scottish nationalists dislodged it from the Coronation Chair, and brought it back to Scotland in the trunk of a car.”

There's a movie on it. So, if you ever get a chance to look up, put some of those things in there to look up the movie, because I don't remember what it is, but we saw the movie. But because of the things that were said in Scotland, because of this, all these centuries later, there's still this attitude and feeling between the Scottish and the English, and they wanted that stone back because it was taken away.

And so, they wanted it back, and that's been a part of their history. And so, they had an instructor there, that they would talk about these things and build up this Scottish nationalism. And so, four students went down there, decided they were going to steal this thing and bring it back to Scotland, which they did.

“Four months after its disappearance, the repaired stone was discovered…” So, they had a person who worked with stone, stone masonry, and was able to put it back together; cement, whatever it was that bound it together. “...the repaired stone was discovered draped in a Scottish national flag on the high altar of the ruined Arbroath Abbey. No charges were ever brought against the students, and the stone was returned to Westminster Abbey.”

Crazy!

“Seven hundred years after King Edward I removed the Stone of Scone from Scottish soil, British Prime Minister John Major unexpectedly announced its return...”

The sentiment was so strong, it was still there, so he decided they were going to send it back, “…which occurred on November the 15th, 1996. It now resides in Edinburgh Castle, but will be made available for future coronation ceremonies at Westminster Abbey.”

“The Stone of Scone was transported from Edinburgh Castle to Westminster Abbey and used during the coronation of King Charles III on May the 6th, 2023.”

So, incredible history back and forth of things that went on, and to me it's rather dumbfounding that every one of the kings and queens and so forth have been coronated on top of that since all that period of time.

Anyway, going back to Genesis 29.

To me, it's kind of like in Ireland, they have this harp, or here's another word for it [lyre/lute]. I can't think what it is right now. But it's on so many things that are a part of Ireland. It's on their nationals. I think it's even on their flag, but it's on some of their national seals. It's on the back of Ryanair. It's a part of the symbol, and they don't know where it came from. A lot of them think it's, I've asked some people, and they thought maybe it was because of Guinness, because Guinness has it on their label of their beer.

And it's about King David and the harp. And they have no idea the history of how those things became a part of their nationalism and meant so much and been passed down for generations after hundreds and hundreds of years. Incredible.

Anyway, going back to Genesis 29:1.

It's like the snake on a pole. I mean, that's perfect evidence of how something can be passed down for hundreds, and in this case, thousands of years, but hundreds and hundreds of years, and just passed along, and people not know where it came from or its significance. People have no idea today. If you were to ask any, they don't know. It's not in the history books as far as where did that come from? A snake on a pole and having a meaning to do with healing, going back all the way to when the children of Israel were in the wilderness. Mind-boggling.

Genesis 29:1—Now Jacob went on his journey and came to the land of the people of the east, and he looked and saw a well in the field, and behold, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it. So, basically here showing that they had migrated to that particular place going farther west. That's what Abraham first did and those who went with him of the family. And many of them stayed behind when Abraham was told to go farther south.

There were three flocks of sheep lying by it, for out of that well they watered the flocks, and a large stone was on the well's mouth. Now, all the flocks would be gathered there, and they would roll a stone from the well's mouth, water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place on the well's mouth. Now, Jacob said to them, My brethren, where are you from? And they said, We're from Haran. Then he said to them…

They didn't have signs like we do. Today you go anywhere, and you've got signs and maps and everything else, and they didn't have those things, and so they're asking these questions and him not even knowing fully where he is yet, how far north has he gone.

Then he said to them, Do you know Laban, the son of Nahor? And they said, We know him. So, he said to them, Is he well? And they said, He is well. And look, his daughter Rachel is coming with the sheep. Now you read stories like this, and you think, it just happened? God planned these things out. The timing, Rachel coming down there, the time he's going to get to the well, all a part of an incredible story here that we're to receive inspiration from because God's hand is in it and working these things out.

Then he said…

It's not just time and chance. You know, people sometimes read through things like that in the Bible, and it's like, "Well, this is an incredible story." And not realizing, no, it's because God's in it. There are things that God is working out timewise in people's lives over and over again.

Then he said, look, it is still high in the day. It is not time for the cattle to be gathered together. Water the sheep and go and feed them. But they said, We cannot until the flocks are gathered together and they have rolled the stone from the well's mouth. Then we water the sheep. Now, while he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherdess. And it came to pass when Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban, his mother's brother, that Jacob went near and rolled the stone from the well's mouth and watered the flock of Laban, his mother's brother.

So, again here, very moved by what was taking place, so he does these things.

Then Jacob kissed Rachel. So again here, a custom here of generally on the side, and obviously not lip to lip as some people would think it would be. But it says, **Then Jacob kissed Rachel and lifted up his voice and wep**t. So, this is how moving it was because he's finally gotten there; here is their family lineage, and he's had to travel all this distance, finally back to where, again here, his parents originally had come from, the family line.

And especially here, Rebecca's too before. I'll get this out. Rebecca before this, as the story was talking about. And so, here's Rachel, the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban, as it talks about here. And so, they rolled it back, and he's feeding them.

And then it says here, **Then it came to pass when Laban heard the report about Jacob, his sister's son, that he ran to meet him and embraced him and kissed him and brought him to his house**. So again, here, that greeting type of kiss. I know they do that in part in Europe, and it's kind of hard to get used to because it's like on each side, and we don't have that custom here in the States. But if you go over there, oftentimes you're going to be greeted that way.

And so, **then came to pass that he heard the report of Jacob, his sister's son, and ran out to meet him, kissed him, and brought him to his house. So, he told Laban all these things. Then Laban said to him, Surely you are my bone and my flesh. Then he stayed with him for a month**.

Then Laban said to Jacob, Because you are my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me. What should your wages be? So, he's staying there to help out. And he'd been there for a short period, just a month, and so they're having this discussion then about working there, staying there, his desire to live there. He traveled all that distance.

And then it goes on the story. **Now Laban had two daughters. The name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel**, the one that had come to the well. It says **Leah's eyes were tender**. It's a term normally used for "soft, delicate"; don't know fully what that means. **But Rachel had a beautiful form** or figure **and attractive appearance. Now Jacob loved Rachel, so he said, I will serve you seven years for Rachel, your younger daughter**.

So, the timing on this, we don't know. It doesn't mean that it happened immediately at that point as they were discussing wages. But anyway, he talks about some of this and builds upon it, as happens throughout this story.

So, he said, I will serve you seven years for Rachel, your younger daughter. Then Laban said, It is better that I give her to you than I should give her to another man. Stay with me. So, Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed only a few days to him because of the love he had for her. So, unique love story wrapped up in very short order here, but shows what his mind was like and how they felt.

Then Jacob said to Laban, Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, so now the seven years have passed, **that I may go in unto her. So Laban gathered together all the men in the place and made a feast**. Now, Laban's, throughout this story, is pretty deceiving. Jacob's getting a little bit of his own medicine through some of the things he has to learn, through what he's going to experience, through the many years he's going to stay in this particular area.

Verse 23—Now it came to pass in the evening that he took Leah his daughter and brought her to Jacob, and he went in unto her. Now, Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah as a maid. So it came to pass in the morning that, behold, it was Leah. So, it summarizes this in a way that's really quick here, but basically Jacob didn't know that it was Leah that was in the tent.

And so, it goes on to say, **Then he said to Laban, What is this you've done to me?** …in the morning when he finds out. **Was it not Rachel that I served you? Why then have you deceived me?**

So again here, it takes time sometimes to learn certain lessons in life. We go through certain things. But he was very deceitful in what he had done before; he was a part of a scheme in that part, not telling the truth in everything that he had done, not trusting in God. And those are things, again, that are written through a period of time here that they begin to learn as time goes on. And character that's developed in a unique way because of their experiences.

It's not the same in all generations and all times in the way God works with people because of... Sometimes because of knowledge and what they know. Because they didn't know much back then.

And Laban said, It must not be done so in our country. So, he's justifying it and saying, in essence, here, **to give the younger before the firstborn**. So, "I'm in my rights because you can't do that in this country." Now, did he bother telling Jacob that ahead of time? No. So now he dumps it on him and tells him that. **Fulfill her week. And we will give you this one also for the service which you will serve me still, another seven years**. So now you're going to have another seven years. Because to have both…

Then Jacob did so and fulfilled her week. Speaking of Leah. **So, he gave him his daughter Rachel as wife also. Then Laban gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as a maid. Then Jacob also went into Rachel, and he also loved Rachel more than Leah. Now he served with Laban another seven years**. So, this happened right after the marriage of Leah. Then he gave him Rachel, and he still stayed there, fulfilled his part of the contract, in that sense, an agreement that he would work another seven years in order to have both.

…**another seven years**. It says, It goes on to say, **When the Eternal saw that Leah was not loved**… I don't like the wording of that because it's not really a proper flow here as what's being said. It's not like God didn't know. It's not like God was caught off guard by this. God already knew what was in the heart of Jacob and how he thought.

So, it's just saying, **As the Eternal saw that Leah was not loved**… In other words, it was there; it was obvious, and so God was going to act upon that and deal with that accordingly because of that, because of Jacob and his mindset.

…**saw that Leah was not loved, He opened her womb. But Rachel was barren**. So, He didn't allow Rachel to have children yet. Again, God working with him in a very unique way through time to learn.

So, Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben. And she said, The Eternal has surely looked on my affliction. Now, therefore, my husband will love me. Can't imagine the drama here. You think of Abraham and what happened in his life. Sarai, later Sarah, and Hagar. You know that had to be a lot of drama.

We went through the story. Those things can't be peaceful when those kinds of things happen. It's not a part even by nature, in the way that God has created mankind, that those things should be that way. But there are certain things that God allowed, carnal, and has allowed for a long time, carnal human beings to live and do.

But again here, it creates drama when things aren't done properly, done right, done in a good way, and so here's a story that's going to be filled with drama between, if you will, Rachel and Leah. And that causes drama in the marriage and everything else, and unease. It's not a good thing. If you understand how drama is created, this is a sure formula for it, powerfully so. Trouble is coming.

Then she, Leah, **conceived again and bore a son and said, because the Eternal has heard me, that I am not loved**… So, she knew the feelings. She knew what had taken place. She knew that he preferred, from the very beginning, Rachel, because that's who had been promised to him anyway, in essence. That was the agreement that was made after seven years. And then this thing was pulled, and Leah's pushed in there. She knew what had happened to her, what her father had done. So again here, those things began to hurt her inside and her feelings and what she was going through.

Because the Eternal has heard that I am not loved, He has therefore given me this son also, so she called his name Simeon. She conceived again and bore a son and said, Now this time my husband will become united or **joined to me**. So, the point is here: he's still not. He still prefers Rachel. They're primarily living together. I don't know how it was set up exactly, but that's the way it's established here and given as a part of the story flow. And so, they were closer, and it was well known. They all knew it. Again, not a good formula for peace and happiness and well-being in the family.

…**because I have borne him three sons**. So now, surely with three sons, he's going to be drawn to me more. **Therefore, his name was called Levi**. So, sometimes these names here too – I'm not going into all those, but those have certain meanings of things, of why certain names are given.

Then she conceived again and bore a son and said, Now I will praise the Eternal. Therefore she called his name Judah. Then she stopped bearing. So to this point in time, all these children, she's the only one bearing children. Rachel wasn't bearing children. Leah was bearing children.

Now, when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister. You reckon? I mean, those feelings and sentiments began to grow more and more because she's the one bearing the children, even though he's not, even though he's living more with her, as it were. These feelings are still there because he's going off and… Anyway.

…**and said to Jacob, Give me children or else I will die**. Now, this doesn't really capture what was happening here, and it's kind of really hard to grasp this fully, exactly what she might have been indicating or saying. But it riles Jacob up because of what she said.

And, anyway, **So Jacob's anger was aroused against Rachel, and he said, Am I in the place of God who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?** It's like he took it as being this is his fault, and because… And it wasn't the case, so he says this is what's happened.

So, she said, Here is my maid Bilhah. Go in unto her, and she will bear a child on my knees, that I may have children by her. So, this was a thinking. They were servants, and so that would be ownership because it wouldn't be her. So, it's like "This is going to be mine because she's my maid and my servant, so you can have her, and whatever she bears, she's going to be, in essence, my son."

Then she gave him Bilhah, her maid, as wife. And you know that had to create really pleasant things amongst the maids as well, their servants. Obviously it didn't. **Then she gave Bilhah, her maid, as wife,**

and Jacob went in unto her. Now, Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. Then Rachel said, God has judged my case, and He has also heard my voice and given me a son. Therefore, she called his name Dan. So not from her, but from her maid.

Now Rachel's maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son. Then Rachel said, With great wrestling, I have struggled with my sister. Indeed, I have prevailed. So, it's like, in a distorted sort of way, taking some kind of victory in this, of how this was accomplished, and so it's like everything's going to be better because of that. **So she called his name Naphtali**.

When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took Zilpah, her maid, and gave her to Jacob, as wife. So, the pot just gets stirred up more and more, understanding that every instance here it just gets worse and worse as far as a family dynamic. It's not a good formula; it's just one that causes constant problems. And that's what they were living, a lot of drama.

They didn't have to have TV back then, see all the drama on TV and live by that. They had plenty in their own lives. I'll tell you, when you read the story and understand what's taking place and the feelings that were there, the jealousies that were taking place, this was pretty tough. Not a good thing.

And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son. Then Leah said, A troop comes, so she called his name Gad. And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a second son. Then Leah said, I am happy, for the daughters will call me blessed, so she called his name Asher. So again, we don't live in that kind of society, and I can't comprehend a lot of this and their feelings, and why they thought the way they did. But this is what's recorded about what goes through their mind because of the kind of world and society they lived in at that time.

Verse 14—Now Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest and found mandrakes. Now, they couldn't have been very old, so he's still pretty young in this period of time. And again, we don't know the story here of what all this is about, but it's believed to be some kind of aphrodisiac. That's kind of what history records it as, or whatever. Don't know. Or it may have been something else. We really don't know, but it had value to it – so much so that it's used in bargaining here.

So again here, it's hard to comprehend, and people have different ideas out there of what these things are. It may or may not have been that at all, but it had value.

And it goes on to say …**that we're in the field and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, Please give me some of your son's mandrake**. So, whatever it is, it's of great value to them, and she wants this. So, she said she wanted to have that.

But she said to her, Is it a small matter that you have taken away my husband? So, she's going all the way back to the beginning here. "You've taken my husband." He's with her, with Rachel. He's not with Leah as a whole. Even after all the children that were born there, it didn't solve her problems and her feelings.

And it didn't help Rachel because she was very jealous then, envious of Leah because of all the children she had, that she bore.

So, it says, **Is it a small matter that you've taken away my husband? Would you take away my son's mandrakes also?** You want them? **Then Rachel said, Therefore he, speaking of Jacob, will lie down with you tonight for your son's mandrakes**. So, they're making a bargain here of who Jacob's going to stay with because it's like Rachel has the influence or the power over this decision, so she's bargaining here as to what she wants to have and what Leah can have.

So, when Jacob came out of the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, You must come in unto me, for I have surely hired or basically, **paid for you** is what it is, **with my son's mandrakes**. So, in essence, "You owe it to me. I made this bargain. You're to be with me tonight."

Then he went to lie down with her that night. Now, God listened to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son. Leah said, God has given me my wages because I have given my maid to my husband. So she called his name Issachar. You think during this whole time, all these children that are coming along, God's involved, because they're going to be a certain number. Because that's where it's headed because of God's plan and God's purpose and names that are given and so forth; they would be the tribes of Israel as the time goes on here.

Then Leah conceived again and bore Jacob a sixth son. Now Leah said, God has endowed me with a good endowment. Now my husband will dwell with me because I have borne him six sons. So, this whole time, all these years, ever how long this period of time is going on, and all these children being born, and it's like she still hasn't achieved what she felt like she wanted all these years. All that stirred up in her life, that drama that just continually exists, and the tensions that had to be there between all of them.

So, she called his name Zebulun. Afterwards she bore a daughter and called her name Dinah. So, this is the first daughter being born, Dinah.

Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb. So again here, Rachel evidently crying out to God, asking for help to be able to bear a child. So, it says God, in essence, heard her and opened her womb. And God's purpose all along.

Then she conceived and bore a son and said, God has taken away my reproach. So finally, after all these years, ever how long, and some of these years are kind of difficult as time goes on here to be able to know exactly, but there are a lot of different ideas out there. We'll read some of that later on.

"So, she conceived and bore a son and said, God has taken away my reproach." So, now she feels fulfilled because finally, after all this time, after all these other children are born with the maids, handmaidens, and with Leah. **So she called his name Joseph and said, The Eternal shall add to me another son**.

So again here, you go through some of this lineage here of all the children that were born, and you almost have to make a roadmap because it jumps back and forth on a continual basis here of things that were done. Dinah was the eleventh child, but the first girl that was born. The eleventh child of Jacob's. Crazy, crazy.

So it continues then here in **verse 25**. We're finally coming down to another point here of things that continue on. It says, **Then it came to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, and Jacob said to Laban, Let me now depart, that I may go to my own place and to my country**. So, all this period of time, we know at least then fourteen years, some say longer periods of time here.

So he says, Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served you, and let me carry them away. For you know my service which I have done for you. Then Laban said to him, Please stay, if I have found favor in your eyes. For I have learned by experience that the Eternal has blessed me for your sake. Then he said, Name me your wages, and I will give it. So there's still this bargaining going on, and now it's this time here where Jacob is of a mindset he wants to go back, take his entire family with him. And that's his purpose and his goal and his mindset now.

So Jacob said to him, You know how I have served you and how your livestock have been with me. For what you had before I came was little, and it has increased to a great amount. So, he's letting him know, "Look how blessed," in essence, "you are. Look how much you have now from the time that I came." **The Eternal has blessed you since my coming. So, now when shall I provide for my own house?** In other words, be on his own with his family.

So he said, What shall I give you? Then Jacob said, You shall not give me anything if you will do this thing for me. I will again feed and keep your flocks. Let me pass through all your flocks 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. 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's with me.

So, in other words, they're going to make a separation here and go by the appearance of the different animals.

And Laban said, O that it were according to your word. So, he removed that day the male goats that were speckled and spotted, and 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 in the hand of his sons. Then he put three days' journey between himself and Jacob, and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.

So, they're separating all this livestock, if you will, and keeping a certain... quite a long distance between them all, and being separate in that respect, but Jacob's still serving him. And that's what this is about.

And Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks. Now, Jacob took for himself rods of green poplar and of the almond and of the chestnut trees, peeled white strips in them, and exposed the white which is in the rods. 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.

So, the flocks conceived before the rods, and the flocks brought forth streaked, speckled, and spotted. Then Jacob separated the lambs and made the flocks face toward the streaked, and all the brown of the flock of Laban. And he put his own flocks by themselves and did not put them with Laban's flocks.

So again here, some things perhaps he understood and knew that would take place if… How he learned it, how he knew it, don't know, but knew what it would produce in different livestock that were being born. So his flocks were going to be a whole lot larger as time went on here.

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. But when the flocks were feeble, he did not put them in. So, the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger were Jacob's.

So, it had something to do with the strength of the animals. Again here, things that I can't comprehend fully by the way the story is written. Again, a lot of speculation out there of things that took place.

Thus the man became exceedingly prosperous. So, he had been prosperous before. Now he's being blessed even that much more with what he had. …**and had large flocks, female and male servants, and camels and donkeys**.

So, I'm going to pick up the story next Sabbath and continue on.

But it's about a matter of here, how long he's staying, because he stays quite a period of time here, and builds up all these flocks and all this wealth and all these servants and people who are working for him. Because that's what it's about: people who are working for him, people who are servants, and he becomes far greater than what he was before. Because even of this distance that was between them, he was able to do this and keep everything separated.

So, again here, what an incredible story of how God worked with all the different ones, with Abraham, with Isaac, and now Jacob in a unique way, because that's the focus of what takes place. Because this is where, in essence, the beginning of the twelve tribes of Israel emerges, out of these families and out of all this drama that was there, things that we don't fully grasp nor comprehend.

But an incredible story of how God works with people despite our weaknesses, despite our flaws, despite our shortcomings, and yet He will work with us to mold and fashion certain character within us, especially if our heart and attitude is right toward Him. And Jacob's was one, because God was always in the picture. A matter of the Eternal, he talked about Him continually, and that becomes more evident as we go along.