

HOW GOD SUBDUED JACOB

TEXT: *Gen.29,30 (Please read these two chapters now...then review each verse or verses as needed throughout the lesson.)*

INTRO.: A. Jacob had been saved. It is one thing to be saved & another to be subdued or submissive. It will take the next 20 yrs. for Jacob...how long for **YOU**?

B. Jacob makes the long journey to Padan-aram & takes 2 major matters into his own hands: the matter of marriage & the matter of money.

I. HOW GOD SUBDUED JACOB:

A. Jacob's Arrival at Padan-aram: 29:1-12

1. Coming to the well: v.1-3

NOTE: Jacob had left a memorial at Bethel to his salvation, now he had to *"work out his own salvation"...*

- a. After a long (450+ mile) journey Jacob comes to the well at Padan-aram.
- b. This is the fabled land he had heard of from his father & grandfather...where Isaac had gotten his wife.
- c. He comes to the well at Haran & sees some rough looking shepherds (not like those on Christmas cards!); swarthy, fierce-looking men w/daggers in their belts, accustomed to defending their flocks & lives from thieves, wolves, lions & serpents.

2. Confidence at the well: v.4-8

1. He was not bashful & strikes up a conversation.
2. At Bethel Jacob found out what God is like, at Haran he would find out what man is like.
3. He asks about Laban: everyone knew Laban & Jacob would soon find out more than he wanted to know about him.
4. Jacob boldly questions the men about watering the sheep. v.7,8

3. Conquests at the well: v.9-12

1. First he conquered the men at the well: he removed the stone.
2. Next he conquers Rachel by introducing himself & embracing her.

B. Jacob's Arrangements at Padan-aram: 29:13-30-43

NOTE: Throughout these 2 chps. we see the self-confidence of Jacob. He had no thought of asking God His will regarding marital & monetary matters.

1. The matter of his wives:

a. His fervent love: v.13-20

- 1) The two connivers meet. v.13,14
- 2) Jacob doesn't mention a word about his inglorious departure from Hebron.
- 3) A 2 way deal is struck: v.15-18 Jacob would work for Laban, his wages would be Rachel for his wife.
- 4) Jacob's love for Rachel seemed genuine & deep. v.19,20

b. His first lesson: v.21-31

- 1) The demand: v.21,22
- 2) The deception: v.23-25

NOTE: No doubt things were done according to local custom. After the party the groom entered the wedding tent to meet his veiled bride. In the morning Jacob saw the horrible truth! He had consummated the marriage with the wrong woman!!!

3) The just dessert: v.26

NOTE: Laban's deception was no worse than Jacob's w/Isaac! Laban's reminder about the rights of the firstborn must have hit him between the eyes like a hammer! He was reaping what he had sowed. *"The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceedingly fine."*

4) The deal: v.27-29

5) The difficulty: v.30,31

NOTE: Jacob had reckoned w/out God. God loved Leah as much as He loved Rachel no matter what Jacob might feel & he made it impossible for Rachel to bear children & opened the womb of Leah.

c. His family life: 29:32-30:24

NOTE: This lengthy section records the birth of Jacob's children. The record is both happy & tragic. The birth of children is joyous, but the contention in this home was sad. Jacob's two wives fought for his affections. Jacob was torn between his devotion to Rachel & his desire for sons.

1) Reuben, the child of sore distress. v.32

NOTE: Leah is the first one of Jacob's family to confess her faith in the Lord.

2) Simeon, the child of simple disappointment. v.33

NOTE: Leah named her first child "See, a son" now she names the 2nd, "Hearing" due to her perception of the sharp, bitter conversations between Jacob & Rachel about her.

3) Levi, the child of spiritual discouragement: v.34

NOTE: Levi means "joined" reflecting Leah's hope for her husband's association.

4) Judah, the child of splendid destiny: v.35

NOTE: Judah means "the Lord will be praised." Leah was no longer fretting over her sister nor her husband. Now her focus was the Lord. She no longer needed people to make her happy. The Lord was her happiness.

5) Dan, the child of sustained despair: 30:1-6

NOTE: Dan means "judge" or "vindicator". Rachel was mistakenly happy over what she saw as an answer to prayer, but in reality was a fleshly plan. She was not vindicated or judged righteous. It was all rather sad.

6) Naphtali, the child of supposed deliverance: v.7,8

NOTE: Rachel imagined a victory over her sister, but spiritual victories cannot be won in the flesh. Naphtali means "my wrestling".

7) Gad, the child of self-defeat: v.9-11

NOTE: Leah stoops to the fleshly level of her sister. His name means "a troop cometh" as if to threaten Rachel that 2 can play at this game.

8) Asher, the child of sudden delight: v.12,13

NOTE: Asher means "happy". Leah had evened the score, but there was no acknowledgement of the Lord in any of this & true happiness comes from Him.

9) Issachar, the child of snappish dislike: v.14-18

NOTE: The word "mandrake" means "love apples" & was thought to be an aphrodisiac. Rachel strikes a deal w/Leah & gives her Jacob for the night. The "love apples" made Leah, not Rachel fruitful. Leah said: "*God* (not the love apples) *hath given me my hire!*" Issachar means "he will be hired" or "he will bring reward."

10) Zebulun, the child of strong desire: v.19,20

NOTE: Zebulun means "dwelling". But despite Leah's longing for Jacob to move in with her permanently, it did not happen. But when God sent His Son into the world He came to dwell in Nazareth in Zebulun.

11) Dinah, the child of silent dignity: v.21

NOTE: Perhaps Jacob had other daughters but only Dinah was named. Her name, like Dan, means "judge" or "judgment".

12) Joseph, the child of sweet devotion: v.22-24

NOTE: Joseph means "let Him add". The text says God did just that! "***And God remembered Rachel***" and added another son to her. Rachel uses 2 names for the Lord in the passage: God (Elohim) & Lord (Jehovah).

2. The matter of his wages: (30:25-43)

a. How Jacob's convictions were stirred: v.25,26

- 1) He realized that Mesopotamia was not his home.
- 2) His home was far away back in the land of promise, he wanted to return.

b. How Jacob's convictions were stifled: v.27-43

- 1) All Laban had to do was offer him a raise in pay to sidetrack Jacob. (How up-to-date!)
- 2) Laban changed Jacob's wages 10 times - in his own favor.
- 3) Jacob's witness: v.27-30 (Jacob's faith combined w/his business sense had made an impact on Laban)
- 4) Jacob's wages: v.31-36

NOTE: Basically Jacob was willing to start w/nothing, but he would take all future brown sheep born of the white sheep & all the spotted & speckled goats born of the black goats for himself. There was no chance for Jacob to cheat. Laban readily agreed to this super deal. The words in v.3 "***so shall my right. answer for me in time to come***" do doubt fell on deaf ears w/Laban. Laban quickly put 3 days between him & Jacob. v.36

5) Jacob's wives: v.37-43

CONCL.: Jacob soon became a very wealthy & influential man in the land. He later gives God, not himself, the glory for it all. cf. 32:10 etc.