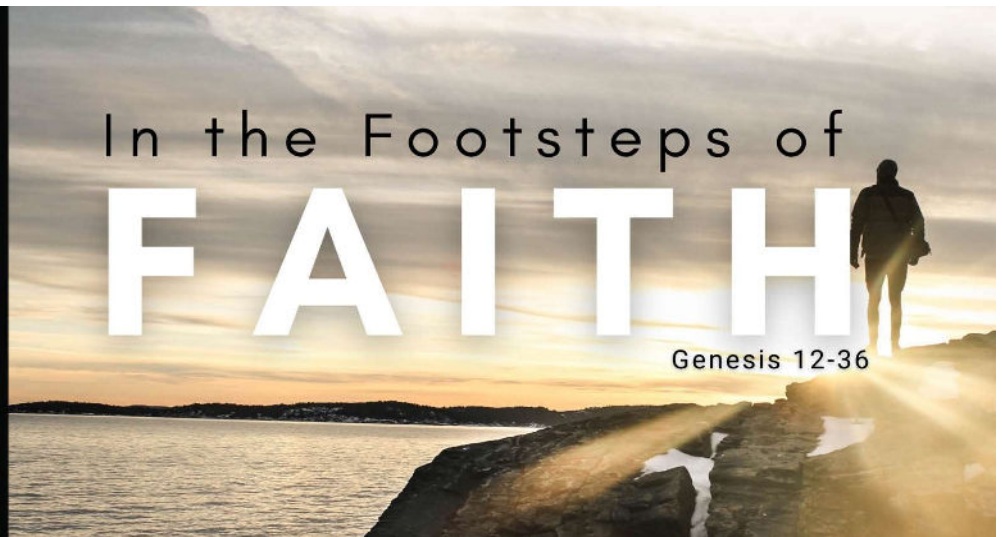




Midweek Study

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The School of Obedience

(Genesis 29:1-30)

After Bethel, Jacob is growing through the “School of Obedience” with the Lord. He is learning:

1. Obedience in the Ordinary (Genesis 29:1)

v.1 - literally, “he lifted up his heels” or today we could say “he kicked up his heels”. He’s been to Bethel. He’s quite excited. Amplified translates this phrase “Jacob went [briskly and cheerfully] on his way...”

In **Deuteronomy 32:10** God refers to Jacob as the “apple of His eye”.

Application: The “Bethels” prepare us for the journey. No one lives at Bethel forever. Jacob leaves that spiritual peak continuing his travel to Haran. Obedience should be seen Monday through Saturday, not simply on Sunday.

Application: See God’s hand in the ordinary events of everyday life.

“The true Christian heart will always love to trace the hand of God in the ordinary everyday experiences of life. For after all, ‘ordinary’ means ‘ordered,’ and it is the joy of the believer to realize that everything is ordered and that ‘all things work together for the good of them that love God.’ The harmonious and beneficent combination of circumstances guided and overruled by the wisdom and will of God constitutes for the Christian soul the joy and cheer of everyday living.”¹

2. Obedience in the Opportunity (Genesis 29:2-14)

V. 5 “we know him” - Dr. Bill Bennett says, “Laban? Why anyone would know this rascal. Yeah, we know him. You know there are some people who are just known, in any county; in any community. Laban was known for his wheeling-dealing. If Dickens had written about this man or dealt with him, he would have said ‘He’s the Ebenezer Scrooge’. Here’s the man who’s always scheming; always plotting; always using the other man. Always undermining; always doing that for #1. What a sad man. You don’t have to introduce that kind of person. People just KNOW. They say, ‘Oh, who doesn’t know Laban. Of course, we know him.’”

¹ W.H. Griffith Thomas, *Genesis: A Devotional Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1953), 272.

V.7 – Jacob’s work ethic is on display here. This will also be evident in the coming years of work that he will perform for Laban.

It is also probable that since Jacob has seen Rachel, he wants all of these other men to water their sheep and go away so he can be alone with her.

Jacob is smitten with Rachel. It is “love at first sight.”

3. Obedience in the Offer (Genesis 29:15-20)

Laban doesn’t expect his nephew to work for nothing. He makes Jacob an offer.

V.16 – Leah means “weary” Rachel means “breath of God”.

V.17 – “delicate eyes” literally means “weak eyes”. New Living reads, “There was no sparkle in Leah’s eyes, but Rachel had a beautiful figure and a lovely face.”

Application: As a family and a society, we should honor and reward hard work.

From this chapter, one can see that Jacob could work. See [Lamentations 3:27](#) and [Proverbs 20:4](#). The principle is still scriptural: “If a man doesn’t work, neither should he eat” (see [2 Thessalonians 3:10](#)).

Adrian Rogers once said, “You cannot legislate the poor into freedom by legislating the industrious out of it. You don’t multiply wealth by dividing it. And government cannot give to anybody anything that it doesn’t first take from somebody else. And when somebody receives something without working for it, somebody else has to work for it without receiving. The worst thing that could happen is for half the people to get the idea they don’t have to work, because somebody else will work for them, and the other half to get the idea it does no good to work, because they don’t get to keep what they work for.”²

4. Obedience in the Obstacles (Genesis 29:21-30)

It seems like Laban is just as clever as his sister, Rebekah. There was a veil over Leah’s head. But, perhaps Laban also dressed Leah in Rachel’s clothes or let Leah wear Rachel’s perfume.

v.25 – literally, “And in the morning, behold – Leah!”

V.29 – Jacob would ultimately work 14 years for Rachel.

Application: True love is unselfish and can wait.

Jacob worked seven years to marry Rachel (v.18-20). Lust cannot wait and is very selfish. Jacob and Rachel had a pure seven years (see v.21). There was passion but also restraint. True love can stand the test of time.

Application: Though forgiven, we still experience consequences for past choices.

Jacob reaped what he had sown. [Galatians 6:7](#) – “God is not mocked. Whatever a man sows, that will he also reap.” This verse is not written to unbelievers, but to believers.

² Adrian Rogers, “Integrity: Don’t Leave Home without It” (Signal Hill, CA: Rogers Family Trust, 2017), Ex 20:15.