

JACOB IS DECEIVED BY LABAN

After Jacob lied to get his father's blessing, Esau wanted to kill him. Jacob escaped to his uncle Laban's place. There he found out what it is like to be tricked.

by Shelby Faith

Jacob had left his home and was going to Haran. That is where his mother's brother, Laban, lived. As the sun was setting, Jacob looked for a place where he could spend the night. He found a stone and put it at his head. He fell asleep.

THE LADDER TO HEAVEN

Then he had a dream. There was a ladder reaching from the ground toward heaven. Angels were going up and down on it. In his dream he heard God speak. "I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. I will give to you and your descendants this land you are lying on.

"Also your descendants shall be as many as the dust of the earth. You will spread to the west and the east, to the north and the south. And through your descendants all the families of the earth will be blessed. I am with you and will keep you wherever you go. I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you."

Jacob woke up. He said, "The LORD is here, and I didn't know it. This is an awesome place. This must be the house of God."

Jacob got up early in the morning. He took the stone and set it up as a pillar. He poured oil on top of it. He called the place Bethel, which means "House of God." He set the pillar up as a memorial to this place where God blessed him.

Then Jacob said, "If God will be with me, so that I can return to my father's house in peace, then the LORD will be my God. I will give back a tenth to You of all that You give me." The Bible calls giving a tenth to God the law of **tithing**.

QUIZ TIME

What did Jacob promise to give to God?

MEETING RACHEL

Then Jacob continued on his journey. He came to a well in a field. Flocks of sheep were lying nearby, waiting to be given water by their shepherds. A large stone covered the top of the well. When the flocks were all gathered there, someone would roll the stone off the top of the well. Then they would give water to the sheep and put the stone back.

Jacob said to the shepherds, "Where are you from?"

And they said, "We're from Haran."

Then he said, "Do you know Laban?"

They said, "Yes, we know him."

Jacob asked, "Is he well?"

And they said, "He is well, and his daughter Rachel is coming now with his sheep."

While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep. When Jacob saw Rachel, he went over to the well and rolled the stone away. Then he gave water to her sheep. Jacob was so happy to find his mother's family. He ran to Rachel and kissed her. He told her who he was.

She ran and told her father. When Laban heard about Jacob, his sister's son, he came out to meet him. He hugged and kissed him. Then he brought Jacob to his house.

Jacob stayed with him and his family. He helped them, caring for the flocks and working in the fields.

WORKING FOR LABAN

One day Laban asked him, "How can I pay you for your work?"

Laban had two daughters. The older one was named Leah, and the younger one was Rachel.

Rachel was beautiful, and Jacob had come to love her.

He told Laban, "I will serve you seven years if you will give me Rachel to be my wife."

Laban agreed to this. So Jacob served seven years for Rachel. After the time had passed, Jacob said to Laban, "Give Rachel to me as my wife, for I have served you these seven years for her."

So Laban gathered everyone together and made a wedding feast. The wedding feast was to last for seven days.

LABAN'S TRICK

In the evening, when it was dark, Laban brought Leah (not Rachel) to Jacob. Jacob thought she was Rachel and spent the night with her.

In the morning Jacob saw that she was Leah. He said to Laban, "What have you done to me? I have served these past seven years for Rachel to be my wife. Why have you deceived me?"

Laban said, "It's not our custom to give the younger daughter as a wife before the older one. If you will stay with Leah for this week, then I will give you Rachel as your wife. But you will have to serve me seven more years for her."

Jacob agreed to this, and Rachel became his wife also.

Jacob had been tricked by Laban. Now he had two wives. God designed marriage to be between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:21-25). Having more than one wife caused many problems for Jacob's family.

Jacob probably remembered how he had deceived Isaac to get the blessing. Now he was learning about how bad lies are. But God still had a purpose for Jacob. God would use all this to take Jacob further on his journey.

QUESTIONS

Here are some questions to think about or talk about as a family:

1. What was Jacob's dream?
2. What did he do with the stone when he woke up?
3. Who came to the well while Jacob was talking to the shepherds?
4. What did Jacob do when he saw Rachel? What did she do when she found out who he was?
5. How long did Jacob have to serve Laban before he could have Rachel as his wife?
6. How did Laban trick Jacob?
7. Since Jacob lied to deceive his father and steal Esau's blessing, do you think God was using this to teach Jacob how harmful lying can be?

This story is found in Genesis 28-29. Read more about Jacob in the Bible Stories "[Esau and Jacob and the Birthright](#)" and "[Jacob and His 12 Sons](#)."



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