

Genesis

Jacob the Supplanter

Lesson #9 for May 28, 2022

Scriptures: Genesis 11:1-9; 25:21-34; 27:36; 28:10-22; 29:1-30; 30:25-32.

1. This lesson will focus on some of the very dysfunctional aspects of Isaac's family and Laban's family. Esau and Jacob were already fighting in Rebecca's/Rebekah's womb!

Genesis 25:21-26: ²¹Because Rebecca had no children, Isaac prayed to the LORD for her. The LORD answered his prayer, and Rebecca became pregnant. ²²She was going to have twins, and **before they were born, they struggled against each other in her womb.** She said, "Why should something like this happen to me?" So she went to ask the LORD for an answer.

²³ The LORD said to her,

"Two nations are within you;

You will give birth to two rival peoples.

One will be stronger than the other;

The older will serve the younger."

²⁴ The time came for her to give birth, and she had twin sons. ²⁵The first one was reddish, and his skin was like a hairy robe, so he was named Esau.

²⁶The second one was born holding on tightly to the heel of Esau, so he was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when they were born.—American Bible Society. (1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation** (2nd ed., Genesis 25:21-26). New York: American Bible Society [abbreviated as *Good News Bible*].^{††} [Why didn't God arrange for Jacob to be born first?][‡]

2. What about the description of Jacob and Esau in Romans 9 and predestination?

Romans 9:10-13: ¹⁰ And this is not all. For Rebecca's two sons had the same father, our ancestor Isaac. ¹¹⁻¹²But in order that the choice of one son might be completely the result of God's own purpose, God said to her, "The elder will serve the younger." He said this before they were born, before they had done anything either good or bad; so God's choice was based on his call, and not on anything they had done. ¹³As the scripture says, "I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau."—*Good News Bible*.*

3. Many Christians, especially those who read only the New Testament, read the brief account of this story in Romans 9:10-13 and conclude that God predestines people and that we/they have no choice in the matter. This is a serious misreading of Romans. One needs to go back to the Old Testament and review the context of the quotations used by Paul to see this error in understanding. God did, indeed, say that Esau and his descendants would serve Jacob and his descendants. However, this was not a moral matter taking away anyone's freedom. The verse stating that God loved Jacob and hated Esau is quoted from Malachi 1:2-3 which was written hundreds of years after the events of Jacob and Esau occurred. When this statement was written, the descendants of Esau had mostly disappeared from this earth; the descendants of Esau were conquered several different times and were, finally, completely overrun by the Nabateans in about 300 B.C.

Thus, this statement was merely a record of what had already taken place and not a *prediction* or a *predestination* of what was to take place.

4. From birth onward, the twin brothers were not alike.

[From the Bible study guide=BSG:] The contrast between the two brothers is immediately fulfilled in their behavior and choices. Like Ishmael (*Gen. 21:20*), Esau is a skillful hunter, a man who loves to be outdoors in the open fields, whereas Jacob is a mild man who prefers dwelling at home. Esau is loved by his father, while Jacob is loved by his mother (*Gen. 25:28*). The spiritual and sensitive nature of Jacob contrasts with the tough and physical nature of Esau. The Hebrew word *tam* (translated “mild”), which qualifies Jacob, is the same word that characterizes Job [*Job 1:8, NKJV*] (*Job 8:20*) and Noah (*Gen. 6:9*). Likewise, the verb *yashab* (translated “dwelling”), meaning “sitting,” suggests the quiet and meditative temperament of Jacob (*compare Ps. 84:4, Ps. 91:1*). This information regarding their characters anticipates the incident of the meal, which will determine their respective priorities (*Gen. 25:29–31*). **Jacob has considered the spiritual significance of the birthright that he wants so passionately to obtain;** Esau, in contrast, does not concern himself with things beyond the present life and is not interested in what could take place after his death. **Unlike Esau, who is present-oriented, Jacob is future-oriented and particularly sensitive to spiritual values, and yet is so eager to secure the birthright at this moment that he uses material means for that purpose.** Ironically, Jacob has enough faith to “see” spiritual values and the future profit of a birthright but not enough faith to trust God for it (*compare Gen. 27:41–45*). **Before the institution of the priesthood, the birthright “included not only an inheritance of worldly wealth but spiritual preeminence. He who received it was to be priest of his family.”**—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 177. Esau’s request (*Gen. 25:30*) suggests that, for him, the birthright had no spiritual significance; he was concerned only with his immediate gratification. Thus, he despised his birthright (*Gen. 25:32, 34; compare Heb. 12:16, 17*).—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 120.†§

Job 1:8: Then the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job, that *there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?*”—*New King James Version*.*†§

Job 8:20: Behold, God will not cast away the **blameless**,
Nor will He uphold the evildoers.—*New King James Version*.*†

Genesis 6:9: These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and **perfect** in his generations, and Noah walked with God.—*King James Version*.*† [In the time of Moses, Hebrew had a very limited vocabulary.]‡

5. Esau demonstrated the fact that his vision was only for the present and his physical enjoyment. On the other hand, Jacob was more concerned about the future blessing, not even the blessing coming to him personally but to his posterity.

Hebrews 12:16-17: ¹⁶Let no one become immoral or unspiritual like Esau, who for a single meal sold his rights as the elder son. ¹⁷Afterwards, you know, he

wanted to receive his father's blessing; but he was turned away, because he could not find any way to change what he had done, even though in tears he looked for it.—*Good News Bible*.*

6. The conflict enhanced when Esau came home very hungry and agreed to sell his birthright for a bowl of soup or stew. This familiar story is found in **Genesis 25:27-34**.
7. We do not know exactly at what point this event took place. What we do know is that at the age of 40, Esau had chosen to marry two Hittite women who made the lives of Isaac and Rebekah miserable. Sometime after that experience, we have these two notes about Esau and his wives.

Genesis 26:34-35: ³⁴ When Esau was forty years old, he married two Hittite women, Judith the daughter of Beerli, and Basemath the daughter of Elon.
³⁵They made life miserable for Isaac and Rebecca.—*Good News Bible*.*

Genesis 27:46: Rebecca said to Isaac, "I am sick and tired of Esau's foreign wives. If Jacob also marries one of these Hittite women, I might as well die."—*Good News Bible*.*

8. Apparently not knowing that Esau had "sold" his birthright to Jacob and about 30 years after Esau married those two women, Isaac, at the age of 130 and blind, called Esau and asked him to get some wild game and prepare it for him so that he could bless Esau with the birthright. This familiar story is found in **Genesis 27**.

The promises made to Abraham and confirmed to his son were held by Isaac and Rebekah as the great object of their desires and hopes. **With these promises Esau and Jacob were familiar. They were taught to regard the birthright as a matter of great importance, for it included not only an inheritance of worldly wealth but spiritual pre-eminence. He who received it was to be the priest of his family, and in the line of his posterity the Redeemer of the world would come.**—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets** 177.3.† [How would you feel if someone who knew told you that One of your Descendants would be *Son of man* and *Son of God*?]‡

9. These problems and differences of opinion led to the great deception of Isaac.

[From the writings of Ellen White=EGW:] **Esau did not tell his father that he had sold his birthright to Jacob, and confirmed it with an oath.** Rebekah heard the words of Isaac, and she remembered the words of the Lord, "The elder shall serve the younger," and she knew that Esau had lightly regarded his birthright and sold it to Jacob. **She persuaded Jacob to deceive his father, and by fraud receive the blessing of his father, which she thought could not be obtained in any other way. Jacob was at first unwilling to practice this deception, but finally consented to his mother's plans.**—Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*,* vol. 1, 106.2-107.0.†† [Jacob and Esau were 70 years old then!]‡

[EGW:] No sooner had Esau departed on his errand than Rebekah set about the accomplishment of her purpose. She told Jacob what had taken place, urging the necessity of immediate action to prevent the bestowal of the blessing, finally and irrevocably, upon Esau. And she assured her son

that if he would follow her directions, he might obtain it as God had promised. Jacob did not readily consent to the plan that she proposed. The thought of deceiving his father caused him great distress. **He felt that such a sin would bring a curse rather than a blessing. But his scruples were overborne, and he proceeded to carry out his mother's suggestions.** It was not his intention to utter a direct falsehood, but once in the presence of his father he seemed to have gone too far to retreat, and he obtained by fraud the coveted blessing.

Jacob and Rebekah succeeded in their purpose, but they gained only trouble and sorrow by their deception. **God had declared that Jacob should receive the birthright, and His word would have been fulfilled in His own time had they waited in faith for Him to work for them.** But like many who now profess to be children of God, **they were unwilling to leave the matter in His hands. Rebekah bitterly repented the wrong counsel she had given her son; it was the means of separating him from her, and she never saw his face again.** From the hour when he received the birthright, Jacob was weighed down with self-condemnation. He had sinned against his father, his brother, his own soul, and against God. In one short hour he had made work for a lifelong repentance. **This scene was vivid before him in afteryears, when the wicked course of his sons oppressed his soul.**—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets** 180.2-3.††

10. What kind of communication took place in that family? Was Isaac the only one who did not know that Esau had sold his birthright? Shouldn't Esau have told his father?
11. It is difficult to know if Isaac was really completely deceived by all of the actions of his wife and Jacob; he was obviously suspicious. (Genesis 27:18-29) In any case, he proceeded to bless Jacob.
12. Review carefully the role of each of the four participants in this saga: Isaac, Rebekah, Esau, and Jacob. Were any of them truly innocent? Review the deeds, the character, and the motives of each of the participants. Look at all the lies and deception involved. What does this teach us about human nature in general and God's grace?

Isaac: Did not consult with his wife, did not recognize the true character of his sons, ignored God's word, and tried to defeat God's plan.

Rebekah: Assumed she understood God's will, argued with her husband, planned deceit, ran ahead of God, and schemed with Jacob to deceive her husband.

Esau: Despised the birthright, did not care about spiritual matters, lived for the moment, and chose to ignore God's promise.

Esau grew up loving self-gratification and centering all his interest in the present. Impatient of restraint, he delighted in the wild freedom of the chase, and early chose the life of a hunter. Yet he was the father's favorite. The quiet, peace-loving shepherd [Isaac] was attracted by the daring and vigor of this elder son, who fearlessly ranged over mountain and desert, returning home with game for his father and with exciting accounts of his adventurous life.—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets** 177.2.‡

Jacob: Lied, schemed, envied, ran ahead of God, deceived his father, and stayed more at home.

Jacob, thoughtful, diligent, and care-taking, ever thinking more of the future than the present, was content to dwell at home, occupied in the care of the flocks and the tillage of the soil. His patient perseverance, thrift, and foresight were valued by the mother. His affections were deep and strong, and his gentle, unremitting attentions added far more to her happiness than did the boisterous and occasional kindnesses of Esau. To Rebekah, Jacob was the dearer son.—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets** 177.2.

13. After the devious and deceptive method of obtaining the birthright and fearing for his life, Jacob fled from the presence of Esau and his parents, never to see his mother again.
14. Jacob must have wondered what his future would be like and what would be his relationship to God if he fled from Canaan. It was the belief of many ancient people that different gods were assigned to different territories on the earth. Jacob may have wondered if he fled to Haran and to the house of his uncle Laban whether he would still be able to receive God's blessing. Certainly, Isaac would have taught him the truth.
15. But, very soon on his journey, he had that experience where he slept in the wild with the stone for a pillow and had that famous dream of "Jacob's ladder."

Genesis 28:10-22: ¹⁰ Jacob left Beersheba and started towards Haran. ¹¹At sunset he came to a holy place and camped there. He lay down to sleep, resting his head on a stone. ¹²He dreamt that he saw a **stairway** reaching from earth to heaven, with angels going up and coming down on it. ¹³And there was **the LORD standing** beside him. "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham and Isaac," he said. "**I will give to you and to your descendants this land on which you are lying.**" ¹⁴They will be as numerous as the specks of dust on the earth. They will extend their territory in all directions, and **through you and your descendants I will bless all the nations.** ¹⁵Remember, **I will be with you and protect you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land.** I will not leave you until I have done all that I have promised you."

¹⁶ Jacob woke up and said, "The LORD is here! He is in this place, and I didn't know it!" ¹⁷He was afraid and said, "What a terrifying place this is! It must be **the house of God; it must be the gate that opens into heaven.**"

¹⁸ Jacob got up early next morning, took the stone that was under his head, and set it up as a memorial. Then he poured olive oil on it to dedicate it to God. ¹⁹He named the place Bethel. (The town there was once known as Luz.) ²⁰Then Jacob made a vow to the LORD: "If you will be with me and protect me on the journey I am making and give me food and clothing, ²¹and if I return safely to my father's home, then you will be my God. ²²This memorial stone which I have set up will be the place where you are worshipped, and **I will give you a tenth of everything you give me.**"—*Good News Bible*.*†

16. What kind of circumstances might lead us to do something like that today? What was the meaning of Jacob's dream of the ladder connecting heaven to earth?

[BSG:] In this dream, Jacob sees an extraordinary ladder that is connected with God. The same Hebrew verb, *natsav*, is used to refer to the ladder that is “set up” (*Gen. 28:12, NKJV*) and the LORD who “stood” (*Gen. 28:13, NKJV*), as if the ladder and the LORD are the same thing.

The ladder is linked to the attempt at Babel to reach heaven. Like the Tower of Babel, the ladder is to reach the “door of heaven.” But while the **Tower of Babel represents the human effort to go up and reach God**, the **ladder of Bethel emphasizes that access to God can be achieved only through God’s coming to us, and not through human effort.**

As for the “stone” on which Jacob has put his head and had his dream, it becomes the symbol of *beth-El*, “the house of God” (*Gen. 28:17; compare with Gen. 28:22*) [both of which we just read], which points to the temple, the sanctuary, the center of God’s saving activity for humanity.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Monday, May 22.^{†§}

17. The story about Jacob sleeping in the wild with the stone for his pillow is quite familiar. (Genesis 20:10-22) Contrast the experience Jacob had on that occasion with the story of the Babel builders in Genesis 11:1-9. Imagine Jacob telling his children this story.

The phrase “gate of heaven,” which occurs only here (*Gen. 28:17*) in the entire Hebrew Bible, is reminiscent of the name “*Bab-El*” (“gate of God”) and thus of the vain enterprise of the men of Babel who never reached the “gate of heaven.” The phrase “the gate of heaven” parallels the phrase “the house of God,” which refers to “this place” that is “the stone” (*Gen. 28:18, 19*); this place, in turn, is the earthly spot of “the ladder” (*Gen. 28:12*) of Jacob’s dream. Therefore, as the heavenly counterpart of the earthly “house of God,” “the gate of heaven” points to the heavenly abode or temple sanctuary.—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 120.[§]

18. It is interesting to note that after the vision of the ladder from heaven, Jacob promised to give a tithe to the LORD. This was not because he was hoping for additional blessing from God, but rather, **because he was thankful for what God had already given him.**

Because God is the God who cares about and takes care of Jacob’s physical needs, and because God is the source of all he has (*Gen. 28:22*), Jacob responds by pledging to give his tithe to God. The biblical text does not indicate that Jacob fulfilled his two vows regarding the sanctuary and tithe. Only God’s part of the deal is recorded in the book of Genesis. Jacob will acknowledge God’s part when he refers to his experience of God’s protection (*Gen. 35:3; compare Gen. 46:3, 4*). Later, Israel’s building of the sanctuary, the sign of the worship of the God of heaven, and the institution of the tithe, the sign of the recognition of the God of the earth, suggest that Jacob also fulfilled his vows.—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 121.^{†§}

[EGW:] Jacob thought to gain a right to the birthright through deception, but he found himself disappointed. He thought he had lost everything, his connection with God, his home, and all, and there he was a disappointed fugitive. But what did God do? He looked upon him in his hopeless condition, He saw his disappointment, and He saw there was material there

that would render back glory to God. No sooner does He see his condition than He presents the mystic **ladder, which represents Jesus Christ**. Here is man, who had lost all connection with God, and the God of heaven looks upon him and consents that Christ shall bridge the gulf which sin has made. We might have looked and said, I long for heaven but how can I reach it? I see no way. That is what Jacob thought, and so God shows him the vision of the ladder, and that ladder connects earth with heaven, with Jesus Christ. A man can climb it, for the base rests upon the earth and the top-most round reaches into heaven.—Ellen G. White, Ellen G. White Comments, *The SDA Bible Commentary*,* vol. 1, 1095.3.^{†‡} Compare *Christ Triumphant* 86.3-4.

19. Finally, Jacob arrived safely at the area of Laban. What was his first experience there?

Genesis 29:1-14: ¹ Jacob continued on his way and went towards the land of the East. ²Suddenly he came upon a well out in the fields with three flocks of sheep lying round it. The flocks were watered from this well, which had a large stone over the opening. ³Whenever all the flocks came together there, the shepherds would roll the stone back and water them. Then they would put the stone back in place.

⁴ Jacob asked the shepherds, “My friends, where are you from?”

“From Haran,” they answered. [Jacob had walked 500 miles from home!]

⁵ He asked, “Do you know Laban, grandson of Nahor?”

“Yes, we do,” they answered.

⁶ “Is he well?” he asked.

“He is well,” they answered. “Look, here comes his daughter Rachel with his flock.”

⁷ Jacob said, “Since it is still broad daylight and not yet time to bring the flocks in, why don’t you water them and take them back to pasture?”

⁸ They answered, “We can’t do that until all the flocks are here and the stone has been rolled back; then we will water the flocks.”

⁹ While Jacob was still talking to them, Rachel arrived with the flock. ¹⁰When Jacob saw Rachel with his uncle Laban’s flock, he went to the well, rolled the stone back, and watered the sheep. ¹¹Then he kissed her and began to cry for joy. ¹²He told her, “I am your father’s relative, the son of Rebecca.” [It is likely that they had been completely cut off from any news.]

She ran to tell her father; ¹³and when he heard the news about his nephew Jacob, he ran to meet him, hugged him and kissed him, and brought him into the house. When Jacob told Laban everything that had happened, ¹⁴Laban said, “Yes, indeed, you are my own flesh and blood.” Jacob stayed there a whole month.—*Good News Bible*.^{*‡}

20. Jacob agreed to work for seven years for the privilege of marrying Laban’s beautiful daughter, Rachel. At the end of that time, somehow, he was deceived into marrying Leah, the older daughter! A week later, he was allowed to marry Rachel under the condition that he would work seven more years for Laban. Where was Rachel during that first wedding?

21. It is hard to imagine from our modern western perspective how this could have happened! Were both Leah and Rachel a part of this deception? Or, was Rachel confined somewhere without having a chance to speak to Jacob about what was being planned?

22. Was Jacob drunk at his wedding and that night?

Though Jacob was the deceiver, he himself was the deceived. How can we learn to trust God when we don't see "justice" being done, when we see people who do evil get away with it, or when we see the innocent suffer?—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Tuesday, May 24.

23. These are the times when it is most important that we have the larger, great-controversy view of history and that we can see the end from the beginning and that the final results will be correct.

Jacob understands now what it means to be the victim of deception. Ironically, God teaches Jacob about his own deception through Laban's deception. Although Jacob as "deceiver" (*Gen. 27:12*) knows well what deception means, he is surprised when he is the victim of deception. Thus, he asks the question, " 'Why . . . have you deceived me?' " (*Gen. 29:25, NKJV*), which shows that he knows deception is wrong.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Tuesday, May 24.[§]

24. Then, Leah began to have children. Six sons arrived one by one, along with a daughter. Four other sons were born to Jacob's two concubines.

25. At the end of those 14 years of working for Laban in order to marry his daughter(s):

Genesis 29:15: Laban said to Jacob, "You shouldn't work for me for nothing just because you are my relative. How much pay do you want?"—*Good News Bible.**

26. This was followed by those very unusual negotiations between Laban and Jacob about what kind of animals Jacob should receive as payment for working for Laban.

27. After the 14 years of working for Rachel and also Leah, his negotiations with Laban led to six more years of working for him, receiving sheep and goats as his payment. During that time, he fathered eleven sons and one daughter. Believe it or not, most of them will have their names written on the gates of the New Jerusalem! (*Revelation 21:12*) Will their mothers all be there also?

28. Do you think God was involved in preventing Rachel from getting pregnant? Who was involved in helping Leah to have many sons? In ancient times, children were regarded as a blessing from the LORD. They had no explanation for why one woman could have multiple children and another could not. Think of the story of Sarah and, later, Hannah.

29. The stories of the children being born to Jacob are recorded in *Genesis 29:31-30:22*.

[BSG:] God opened Leah's womb, and she had a son Reuben, whose name contains the verb *ra'ah*, which means to "see." Because God "saw" that she was unloved by Jacob (*Gen. 29:31*), this child was compensation for her in her pain and suffering.

In addition, she gives the name of Simeon, which contains the verb *shama'*, "heard," to her second son, because God had "heard" (*shama'*) the depth

and the humiliation of her pain and, thus, had pity on her just as He had heard Hagar's affliction (*Gen. 29:33*).

Leah's son "Simeon" also will resonate with the name of Hagar's son "Ishmael," which means "God will hear" (see *Gen. 16:11*). When Leah gives birth to her last son, she calls him Judah, which means "praise." Leah does not refer to her pain or even her blessing anymore. She just focuses on God and praises Him for His grace.

Strangely, it is only when Leah cannot give birth again that God "remembers" Rachel and opens Rachel's womb (*Gen. 30:22*). Rachel, the loved wife, had to wait seven years after her marriage, and 14 years after her betrothal with Jacob, to have her first son (*Gen. 29:18, 27; compare with Gen. 30:25*). She gave him the name of "Joseph" to signify that God had " 'taken away ['asaf] my reproach' " and " 'shall add [yasaf] to me another son' " (*Gen. 30:23, 24, NKJV*). **However wrong some of these situations were, God was still able to use them, even if He didn't condone them, in order to create a nation from the seed of Abraham.**—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Wednesday, May 25.^{†‡§} [Brackets and the content in brackets inside the paragraphs are in the Bible study guide.][‡]

30. Was it ever a part of God's plan for Jacob to have Leah as his wife? Remember that most of her sons will have their names on the gates of the New Jerusalem! And her last son was the ancestor of Jesus!

Genesis 30:22: Then God remembered Rachel; he answered her prayer and made it possible for her to have children.—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

At the birth of Rachel's first son, Joseph, Jacob finally reached the fourteenth year of his "service" to Laban (*Gen. 30:26*), and now considers leaving Laban in order to return to the Promised Land. But Jacob is concerned about providing for his " 'own house' " (*Gen. 30:30*).—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Thursday, May 26.[§]

Genesis 30:25: ²⁵ After the birth of Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, "Let me go, so that I can return home. ²⁶Give me my wives and children that I have earned by working for you, and I will leave. You know how well I have served you."—*Good News Bible*.^{*}

[BSG:] **Jacob's Blessing.** When Jacob proposes the deal that all the speckled and spotted sheep (*Gen. 30:32*) be removed from the flock and considered as his wages, Laban agrees immediately (*Gen. 30:34*). To reach his goal, Jacob uses the poplar, almond, and chestnut trees (*Gen. 30:37*). This system is not accidental, since these three trees contain chemical substances that have various health benefits. **Because hybrid animals are naturally stronger than other breeds, by choosing the stronger ones (*Gen. 30:41*) in accordance with the divine vision, Jacob selects the rams that already have the recessive genes.** Using this method, Jacob is able to produce a large flock composed of strong multicolored sheep and goats. Jacob's method may appear to be superstitious magic; yet, the biblical text informs us that **Jacob proceeded under divine guidance** (*Gen. 31:11, 12*). In addition, scientific studies indicate that Jacob's method

could have been consistent with the law of modern genetics. In the end, Jacob became “exceedingly prosperous” (*Gen. 30:43, NKJV*). This expression recalls Jacob’s qualification of Laban’s wealth (*Gen. 30:30*). This echo between these two evaluations of Jacob’s and Laban’s wealth suggests that Jacob has now become wealthier than Laban and that his prosperity has been acquired from Laban’s prosperity, which was the result of God’s blessing for his sake (*Gen. 30:27*).—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 121-122.†‡§

31. In what ways does this story reveal that God’s purposes will be fulfilled in heaven and on earth in spite of human foibles and errors?
32. It is interesting that Jacob was so willing to cooperate with Laban’s plans. It is important to notice that Jacob was waiting for God’s directions for his life.
33. Laban and his sons became hostile toward Jacob and his family. So, **under God’s direction, Jacob fled, again using deception**. Then, Jacob was afraid ahead of meeting Esau. Finally, God revealed Himself in a dream that reassured the anguished Jacob. Another thing that convinced Jacob to face the wrath of Esau was the hostility of Laban’s sons who felt that Jacob had tricked their father out of his wealth.
34. It is interesting to notice that Abraham fathered eight sons, only one of which was to be the father of the promised inheritance. Then, Isaac fathered two sons; once again, only one of those sons was to be the father of the inheritance. Finally, Jacob gave birth to 12 sons and a daughter, and his sons are recorded as the ancestors of the faithful.

Two mentalities are suggested through the contrast between Jacob and Esau.... Why are the kind of people represented by Jacob the ones who are pleasing to God? Are all the values of Esau (enjoyment of good food, sport, strength, love of his father) less valuable than those cherished by Jacob (meditation, gentleness, love of his mother)?—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 122.

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Last Modified: April 11, 2022