

# **Genesis 30**

## **Genesis 30.1-8**

**V1** – Polygamy never works – we were designed to go through life as husband and wife (one of each)

- What is one problem brought on by polygamy?** Jealousy (especially over the number of children)
- What did Rachael demand?** That Jacob give her children
- Reasonable?** No

**V2** – **What was Jacob’s reply?** “Am I God?”

- Rachel seems rather impulsive – not too level-headed

**V3** – **Rachel’s suggestions?** “Take my maid Bilhah”

- Where else have we seen this practice?** Sarah and Hagar
- Did it work well then?** No – just created more problems

**V4** – Jacob and Bilhah had sexual relations

**V5** – **Results?** Bilhah had a baby

**V6** – **The name Rachel gave the baby boy?** Dan

- Meaning?** – Judge or vindication (i.e., God had rewarded [or vindicated] Rachel)
- Note:** She named the boy, not Bilhah
- Today: surrogate mothers

**V7** – **What happened next?** Bilhah expecting again

**V8** – **How did Rachel take it?** She was happy she had triumphed over her sister Leah

- The right attitude?** No – hateful, vengeful
- Name for Bilhah’s second son?** Naphtali
- Meaning?** – Wrestlings
- Rachel was full of envy toward Leah

## **Genesis 30.9-13**

**V9** – **What did Leah notice?** She was about to be outnumbered by children of Rachel

- What did Leah do?** Gave Jacob her maid Zilpah (“as a wife”)

**V10** – **Result?** Son was born

**V11** – **Name Leah gave him?** Gad – “good fortune”

**V12** – **Next event?** Zilpah pregnant again

**V13** – **His name?** Asher – “blessed”

A real race was on to see who could produce the most children

## **Genesis 30.14-24**

**V 14** – Reuben – Leah’s oldest son (probably still young boy)

- What did Reuben do?** Brought his mother Leah some mandrake plants (probably innocently)
- See *Zondervan Bible Encyclopedia*, IV, 66 - similar to the tomato plant
- There were many superstitions about it in ancient world, mainly that it helped fertility
- It was a very rare plant
- Reuben probably just accidentally found it one day
- What was Rachel’s reaction?** Wanted it
- Rachel seems to be more paganistic than Leah

**V 15** – **Leah’s response?** “You have already taken my husband.”

- Rachel’s response?** A “deal” – “You get Jacob tonight,” in return for the mandrakes
- Such conniving and jealousy
- Jacob seems sort of neutral about all of this (it’s hard to fight four women at once)

**V 16** – **When Jacob came home, what happened?** Leah said, “It’s my turn.” – Sexual relations that night

**V 17** – **Result?** God granted Leah another son (number five)

- Note:** Leah doesn’t seem to have put any faith in the mandrakes (she was a little more spiritual than Rachel was)

**V 18** – **Name of number five?** Issachar – “wages” = based on the deal between Leah and Rachel

**V 19** – Leah conceived again number six

**V 20** – **What does Leah give credit to for children?** God

- Name of her 6<sup>th</sup> son?** Zebulun – “habitation” (according to *Zondervan Bible Dictionary*)
- Now she thought that Jacob would love her (six sons)

**V 21** – **Another child of Leah?** Dinah (only daughter)

**V 22** – **Did the mandrakes help Rachel any?** No – it was God who helped her

**V 23** – She was expecting a child

**V 24** – **Name of Rachel’s 1<sup>st</sup> son?** Joseph – “addition”

- Notice what Rachel said in v 24 – she was asking God for another son (not based on the mandrakes)

## **Genesis 30.25-36**

**V 25 – Request of Jacob to Laban?** Allow me to return to my own country  
-**Meaning?** His 14 years was about up – he had “paid” for his two wives  
-Remember Laban was very sly and tricky

**V 26 – Was Jacob happy with his performance over last 14 years?** Yes

**V 27 – Laban’s reply?** “A special message” from God that Jacob should stay  
-No evidence whatsoever of his serving the true God

**V 28 – Laban:** *“Tell me how much you want in pay, and I will give it.”*

**V 29 – Jacob:** *“You know how hard I have worked for you”*

**V 30 – Notice** who Jacob gives credit to the Lord (“he has blessed you”) – Jacob is maturing spiritually and being trained, etc.

**V 31 – Jacob** had a plan to get even with Laban

**V 32 – Jacob’s plan?** Give me spotted and speckled sheep and black lambs and speckled goats  
-In other words Jacob wanted the off-color sheep and goats to build his flock from

**V 33 – This** would clearly identify his flock later (see v 32)  
-Laban couldn’t cheat Jacob any more

**V 34 – Laban’s response?** Sounds good

**V 35 – But what did Laban do?** Secretly removed a lot of the spotted and speckled sheep and goats  
-This was a very dishonest thing  
-Laban sent these sheep 3 days' journey away so that Jacob couldn’t find them

**V 36 – Jacob** “held his peace”

## **Genesis 30.37-43**

**V 37-38 –** (The goal was to have white sheep, etc.)  
-Jacob put white strips of wood all around the watering troughs (they mated at the drinking troughs)

**V 39 – His** sheep had a lot of lambs born to them  
-He has only striped sheep breeding (which increased his flock and decreased Laban’s flock)

**V 41 – He** only let the stronger sheep breed  
-This is known as “selective breeding” today

**V 42 – Result?** Jacob’s flock got stronger, and Laban’s flock got weaker

V 43 – Jacob’s possessions greatly increased

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