

Jacob's Prosperity

Key Verse: *"In this way the man [Jacob] grew exceedingly prosperous and came to own large flocks, and maidservants and menservants, and camels and donkeys."*

—**Genesis 30:43**,
New International Version

Selected Scripture:
Genesis 30:25-34,43

AFTER HIS SPECIAL DREAM, Jacob continued on his journey and stopped at a well where shepherds from Laban's town were gathered to water their flocks. Laban's daughter, Rachel, arrived at the well with her father's sheep. When Jacob saw her, he rolled away the stone from the mouth of the well and watered Laban's sheep. Then, Jacob kissed Rachel and explained to her that he was her father's nephew.—Gen. 29:1-12

When Laban heard the news about his nephew arriving, he hurried to meet Jacob, embraced and kissed him. Afterward, he brought Jacob to his home, where he stayed for one month, working for Laban. Laban told Jacob, "Just because you are a relative of mine, should you work for me for nothing? Tell me what your wages should be."—vss. 13-15, *NIV*

Laban had two daughters, the older one was Leah and the younger one was Rachel. Because he already loved Rachel, Jacob said to Laban, "I'll work for you seven years in return for your younger daughter Rachel." Seven years seems like a long time, but to Jacob it was not so. "Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him

because of his love for her.”—vss. 16-20, *NIV*

After seven years passed Laban held a feast. Although not stated explicitly, it appears that during the course of the feast Jacob became intoxicated, because when he went into the tent on his wedding night, he evidently did not know who was with him. In the morning Laban’s deception was revealed. Jacob was lying in bed with Leah, not the greatly beloved Rachel. Jacob asked Laban, “Why have you deceived me?”—vss. 21-25, *NIV*

Thus we see that the earlier deception practiced by Rebekah and Jacob was returned to him by Laban. A vital lesson for us is that we reap what we sow. (Gal. 6:7,8; Job 4:8; Hos. 10:12,13) Laban knew that if he is to retain Jacob, he needed to give him Rachel, which he did a week later in return for another seven years of service, to which Jacob agreed.—Gen. 29:26-30

Jacob became very prosperous, as shown in our Key Verse. In harmony with this, God’s promises to him were of an earthly nature, and mention “the land” he dwelt in, and likened his seed to the “dust of the earth.” (Gen. 28:13,14) Thus, Jacob well represents natural Israel. Laban, who was blessed by Jacob’s service, might picture the rest of the world mankind. All, Jew and Gentile, will receive the blessings of God’s earthly kingdom.—Isa. 2:2,3; Ezek. 37:22-28; Zech. 8:22,23

Concerning natural Israel, the Apostle Paul states: “There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.” (Rom. 11:26,27) In contrast to Jacob, God’s promises to his father Isaac were heavenly, “I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven.” (Gen. 26:4) Paul explains that Isaac, Abraham’s seed, represents the spiritual or heavenly seed—that is, Jesus and his faithful footstep followers of the present Gospel Age. (Gal. 3:16,26,29; 4:28) Thus we see the beautiful truth that God’s promised kingdom will encompass both heaven and earth! ■