

GENESIS

בוא וְאֵל בִּלְהָהּ עַל יָלְדָהּ וְאֵל בִּלְהָהּ [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: 'amar; "and she said"; + interj.part: hinneh; "behold!"; + n/com/f/s/constr. w/1cs suff: 'amah; "my female servant/maid"; + proper n: "Bilhah"; + v/qal/imp/m/s: bo'; "go in"; + prep. w/3fs suff: 'el; "into her"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: yalad; "and she will bear"; + prep: -al; "upon"; + n/com/f/dual/constr. w/1cs suff: bereke; "my knees"; + waw conj. + v/Niphal/IPF/1cs/cohort.: banah; "I might build {may have children}; conj: gam; "also"; + pro/1cs: 'anokiy; "I myself"; + prep. w/3fs suff: min; "from her"])

וַתֵּתֶן-לוֹ אֶת-בִּלְהָהּ שְׁפַחְתָּהּ לְאִשָּׁה וַיָּבֵא אֵלֶיהָ וַיֵּקֶב׃^{WTT} Genesis 30:4

^{NAS} Genesis 30:4 So she gave him her maid Bilhah as a wife, and Jacob went in to her. (וַתֵּתֶן לְנָתָן וְאֵל בִּלְהָהּ לְשִׁפְחָהּ בְּלֶהָהּ אֵת לְנָתָן [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: nathan; "and she gave"; + prep. w/3ms suff: lamed; "to him"; sign of d.o. + proper n: "Bilhah"; + n/com/f/s/constr. w/3fs suff: shiphechah; "her maid servant"; + prep: lamed + n/com/f/s/abs: 'ishshah; "for a wife"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: bo' + prep. w/3fs suff: 'el; "and he went in into her"; + proper n: "Jacob"])

וַתֵּהָרַב בְּלֶהָהּ וַתֵּלֶד לְיַעֲקֹב בֵּן׃^{WTT} Genesis 30:5

^{NAS} Genesis 30:5 And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. (וַיֵּלֶד וְבִלְהָהּ הָרָה וַיֵּקֶב לְבֵן יַעֲקֹב [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: harah; "and she conceived"; + proper n: "Bilhah"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: yalad; "and she bore"; + prep: lamed + proper n: "for Jacob"; + n/com/m/s/abs: ben; "a son"])

וַיִּתֵּן-לִי בֶן עַל-כֵּן קָרָאתָ שְׁמוֹ דָּן׃^{WTT} Genesis 30:6

^{NAS} Genesis 30:6 Then Rachel said, "God has vindicated me, and has indeed heard my voice and has given me a son." Therefore she named him Dan. (דִּין רָחֵל אָמַר וַיִּתֵּן לִי בֶן עַל-כֵּן קָרָאתָ שְׁמוֹ דָּן [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: 'amar; "and she said"; + proper n: "Rachel"; + v/qal/PF/3ms w/1cs suff: dayan {lit. judge/plead}; "He has vindicated me"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiym; "God"; + waw conj. + conj: gam; "and indeed"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: shama-; "He has heard"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: qol; "by my voice"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: nathan; "and he gave"; + prep. w/1cs suff: lamed + n/com/m/s/abs: ben; "to me a son"; + prep: -al + adv:

GENESIS

ken; "upon thus/therefore"; + v/qal/PF/3fs: qara' + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: shem; "she called his name"; + proper n: dan; "Dan"])

וַתֵּהָרַם עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בְּלֵהָהָ שְׁפַחַת רָחֵל בֶּן שְׁנֵי לְיַעֲקֹב: ^{WTT} Genesis 30:7

^{NAS} Genesis 30:7 **And Rachel's maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son.**

וַתֵּהָרַם עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בְּלֵהָהָ שְׁפַחַת רָחֵל בֶּן שְׁנֵי לְיַעֲקֹב [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: harah; "and she conceived"; + adv: -od; "again"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: yalad; "and she bore"; + proper n: "Bilhah"; + n/com/f/s/constr: shiphechah; "the maid servant of"; + proper n: "Rachel"; + n/com/m/s/abs: ben; "a son"; + adj/m/s/abs: sheniy; "a second one"; + prep: lamed + proper n: "for Jacob"])

וַתֹּאמֶר רָחֵל נַפְתָּלִי אֱלֹהִים׃ נַפְתָּלְתִּי עִם אָחוֹתִי׃ נָם יִכְלְתִּי וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ נַפְתָּלִי׃ ^{WTT} Genesis 30:8

^{NAS} Genesis 30:8 **So Rachel said, "With mighty wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, and I have indeed prevailed." And she named him Naphtali.** (וַתֹּאמֶר רָחֵל נַפְתָּלִי אֱלֹהִים׃ נַפְתָּלְתִּי עִם אָחוֹתִי׃ נָם יִכְלְתִּי וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ נַפְתָּלִי׃ [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs:

'amar; "and she said"; + proper n: "Rachel"; + n/com/m/pl/constr: naphettuliyim; "wrestlings of" {hapax}; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiyim; "God/mighty"; + v/Niphal/PF/1cs: phathal; "I have been wrestling" {used 4x; Job 5:13; Psa.18:27; Pro.8:8}; prep: -im; "with"; + n/com/f/s/constr. w/1cs suff: 'achoth; "my sister"; + conj: gam; "indeed"; + v/qal/PF/1cs: yakal; "I have prevailed/overcome"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: qara'; "and she called"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: shem; "his name"; + proper n: naphettaliy; "Naphtali"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 1 – 8:

1. After watching Leah give birth to 4 sons (29:31-35) and remaining barren herself for some 42 months after her marriage to **Jacob**, Rachel's STA explodes.
2. She became extremely "jealous of her sister/qana' bet 'achoth" with the Hebrew qana' having also the nuance of "envy" (cp. use Gen.26:14).
3. She became **jealous** in fear of losing her place of prominence in the household and envious of the fertility of Leah.
4. Poor **Rachel**: It was not enough that **Jacob** loved her the most (cp.29:30) but that her **sister** is able to enjoy any part of her marriage becomes unbearable.
5. Rachel's reactions sets the tone for the highly competitive spirit that existed in Laban's household.
6. As we will see, it is "who will outdo the other" between these two sisters.

GENESIS

7. She did not rejoice in her sister's good fortune but instead becomes captive to the sin of jealousy.
8. That is the way it is with the STA as it is never satisfied and will always seek some other way to express itself.
9. Jealousy is a devastating sin when given free reign. Cf.Pro.27:4
10. Some other examples and exhortations to avoid jealousy/envy include: Act.13:45; 1Cor.3:3; 2Cor.12:20; Gal.5:19-20; Jam.3:14-16; 1Cor.13:4; 1Pet.2:1.
11. Envy was the motivator behind the Jewish assault upon Christ. Mat.27:18
12. We then have the only conversation recorded in Genesis between **Rachel and Jacob** and it is a heated exchange.
13. Envy turns to an irrational and emotional anger as **Rachel** takes out her frustration on her husband, "**Give me children, or else I die**/yahab lamed ben waw 'im 'ayin muth 'anokiy".
14. Her words would prove to be prophetic as she would die in childbirth bearing Jacob's youngest son Benjamin (cp.35:18).
15. The English word "**give**" is not the typical Hebrew *nathan* but is *yahab* that has the nuance of giving up something as in a gift (cp.29:21).
16. **Rachel** tries to place the burden of being barren upon **Jacob**.
17. A typical STA maneuver is to transfer the guilt of sin to another in blame.
18. Continual prayer and patience should have been Rachel's response to her situation.
19. Her desperate desire for children and placing the blame on her husband smacks of an attack on **God**.
20. **Jacob** is "not having any" and Rachel's words ignite his emotions as his "**anger burned against Rachel**/charah 'aph bet Rachel" (vs.2).
21. Jacob's words in response suggest righteous indignation as they are spiritually sound and words that should have occupied his wife, "**Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb**/ha tachath 'elohiym 'anokiy 'asher mana- min periy bethen?"
22. She should have gone to **God** with her complaint rather than seek a scapegoat.
23. The irony in this situation is that not until Leah stopped bearing does **Rachel** choose to act out (cf.29:35c).
24. This colors her actions in timing thinking she now has the upper hand to retaliate.
25. The STA trends of Laban's family continue to follow a definite pattern.
26. The phrase "**Am I in the place of God**" has parallel in Gen.50:19 meaning in modern vernacular "Who do you think **I am, God**?"
27. "It is **God** that blesses child bearing or not" paraphrasing the intent of Jacob's final words.
28. Jacob's rebuke of his wife's stupidity bore no "**fruit**" itself as she proceeded to engage in her own solution (vs.3).
29. We have here a clear example of a believer that was unwilling to wait on **God** to bring something to pass.
30. In ancient Near Eastern times the practice of surrogate marriages is well documented.
31. Rachel's offering of **Bilhah** follows the pattern of Sarah with respect to her maid Hagar.
32. In both cases the wives were maladjusted to God's plan unwilling to faith-rest, a dominate theme among the patriarchal families.
33. The euphemistic phrase "**that she may bear on my knees**/yalad -al bereke" simply means "to give a surrogate birth in my place" i.e., the child will be adopted.

GENESIS

34. It also refers to **Rachel** acting as midwife.
35. The phrase “**that through her..children**” is literally in the Hebrew “**that I might build from her (children)/banah min**” emphasizing the importance of the matriarchal role placed on the wife as to the family heritage.
36. **Jacob** for reasons not specified is compliant with his wife’s proposal, “**So she gave him her maid Bilhah as a wife, and Jacob went in to her/waw nathan lamed Bilhah shiphechah lamed ‘ishshah waw bo’ ‘el Jacob**”.
37. **Rachel** uses the Hebrew word ‘*amah* (**maid**) in vs.3 to emphasize Jacob’s authority over the servants (cf.20:17; 21:10,12,13) and *shiphechah* (**maid**) in vs.4 noting the servant’s relationship of **Bilhah** to her mistress having the authority to give her in marriage (cf.16:1,2,3,5,6,8; etc).
38. Like clockwork “**Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son/harah Bilhah yalad lamed Jacob ben**”.
39. **Rachel** is thrilled with the new baby boy in vs.6 accepting him as her own.
40. She draws her happiness from her perceived reasoning as to why the baby was born, “**God has vindicated me, and has indeed heard my voice.../dayan ‘elohiyim waw gam shama-bet qol**”.
41. **Rachel** plays on the Hebrew word *dayan* (**vindicated**) naming the boy “**Dan/dan**”.
42. Vs.6 indicates that **Rachel** had been praying about the matter; however her intent of prayer is suspicious.
43. That is she takes the birth as a sign from **God** that her mental attitude towards her sister and contemptuous approach to **Jacob** was somehow alright.
44. **Rachel** like **her sister** and first-borns leads with the STA and human viewpoint.
45. It was based on self-centered reasoning disregarding the fact that the births are the product of God’s plan to bring on the scene the 12 founders of the 12 tribes of Israel.
46. Again, we see **God** turning actions occurring under His permissive will into fulfilling His sovereign will.
47. **Rachel** is clearly preoccupied with her own happiness and is insensitive to anyone else.
48. Her superficial happiness was bound to be overturned as it was not built on genuine trust in **God**.
49. In rapid succession a **second son** (*ben sheniy*) was born to **Jacob** and his wife **Bilhah** (vs.7).
50. Upon the birth of the 6th patriarch **Rachel** once again espouses human viewpoint and silliness in speech (vs.8).
51. She uses terminology of “**wrestlings/wrestled** (n. *naphettuliyim*; v. *phathal*)” with the noun being a hapax and the verb rare (used 4x).
52. Elsewhere the verb is used to describe “the cunning” (Job 5:13) and “the crooked” (Psa:18:26; Pro.8:8).
53. Only in our verse do we see the idea of “**wrestled**” as **Rachel** views her struggle with Leah as some type of competition, “**I have wrestled with my sister**”.
54. The noun has the root meaning “twist” from *phatal*.
55. The English “**mighty**” is the Hebrew ‘*elohiyim* used qualitatively.
56. Whether intended or not, her words are spiritually satirical as it reveals her STA driven spirit towards her **sister** as “*a twisted god*” denoting her spiritual and emotional struggles together.
57. The meaning of the son’s name “**Naphtali**” is best suited to “struggles”.

GENESIS

58. **Rachel** pictures the believer wrestling in their soul manifested overtly in their maladjustments in life.
59. Her final words, “**I have indeed prevailed**/gam yakal” are not more than wishful thinking.
60. Based on the contest the score is still 4 to 2 in favor of Leah and her sons were not surrogates.
61. The STA not tempered with BD will distort events in life into something beneficial when in reality one is actually on the losing end of life.
62. This **sister** shows just how screwed up and nonsensical a believer becomes when some STA sin takes over and when contentment with one’s circumstance is not left in God’s hands.
63. In fact, one’s thinking can become so distorted they think they are actually representing the side of **God** in a matter.
64. STA examples of believers in the OT are stark warnings for believers today to let BD orient them in life and not let isolated failings become rationalizations otherwise.

GENESIS

proper n: "Zilpah"; + n/com/f/s/constr: shiphecah; "the female servant of"; + proper n: "Leah"; + n/com/m/s/abs: ben + adj/m/s/abs: sheniy; "a son, a second one"; + prep: lamed + proper n: "for Jacob"])

וַתֹּאמֶר לֵאָה בְּאִשְׁרֵי כִי אֲשֶׁרֹנִי בְנֹת וַתִּקְרָא
אֶת־שְׁמוֹ אֲשֶׁר: ^{WTT} Genesis 30:13

^{NAS} Genesis 30:13 **Then Leah said, "Happy am I! For women will call me happy." So she named him Asher.** (וַתֹּאמֶר לֵאָה בְּאִשְׁרֵי כִי אֲשֶׁרֹנִי בְנֹת וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ אֲשֶׁר [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: 'amar: 'and she said"; + proper n: "Leah"; + prep: bet w/n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: 'osher; "by means of happiness/how happy am I"; + conj: ki; "for/because"; + v/Piel/PF/3compl w/1cs suff: "osher; "they will have called me happy"; + n/com/f/pl/abs: bath; "the daughters/women"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: qara'; "and she called"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: shem; "his name"; + proper n: "'asher"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 9 – 13:

1. Though left directly unspoken, Rachel's competitiveness does not go unchallenged.
2. The event picks up from 29:35 whereas **“Leah saw that she had stopped bearing/leah ra’ah kiy –amad min yalad** (the final phrase –*amad min yalad* the same ending 29:35)
3. The verb **“saw”** (*ra’ah*) is when she recognized that further conception was off the table.
4. Her barren state, although temporary (cf.vs.17), lasted for a period of ~20 months some 3 ½ years into the 2nd 7 year contract between Laban and **Jacob** (*see time chart*).
5. This means that the 4 sons birthed by the sisters' maids occurred during the sterile 20 month period and Jacob's first 8 sons were born in just some 5 years and 2 month time frame.
6. Upon recognizing Rachel's strategy, **Leah** joins the ranks offering her own **“maid Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife/shiphecah zilpah waw nathan ‘eth lamed Jacob lamed ishshah”**.
7. **Leah** can not only bear children, she too can play the **maid** card!
8. No background information is supplied as to how she convinced **Jacob** to take a 4th wife.
9. The silence as to Jacob's compliance here further suggests God advancing His plan even under His permissive will.
10. Throughout the first half of the chapter **Jacob** is simply compliant with the manipulations of his two wives.
11. He did not tell **Leah** that she had 4 sons and so should be happy with that and therefore there was no need for her to have surrogate children.
12. This implies a failure of doctrinal orientation on his part.
13. Like clockwork as with Rachel's maids, **“Zilpah bore Jacob a son/yalad zilpah lamed Jacob ben”**.
14. Upon the 7th patriarch of Israel, **Leah** gives a very short declaration with less obvious emphasis on God, **“How fortunate!/bet gad or bo’ gad”**.
15. The kethib (what is written) could be literally rendered **“by means of luck”** (*bet gad*).
16. What is read (qere) softens this translation rendered **“fortune/blessing has come”**.

GENESIS

17. The feminine singular of the Hebrew verb *bo'* (*has come*) suggests the idea of “blessing” or the Hebrew noun *berachah* also feminine (the noun *gad* – *luck* or *fortune* is a masculine gender).
18. Other translations offered include “a troop” (NKJV, NIV footnote); “fortune” (LXX, NASB, NRSB, NRSV, JPS) and “happy” (LXX).
19. Apart from reference to the tribe of **Dan** from which term the name is derived, it is used in a cosmic sense of “luck” further described as an admixture of one’s “tastes” in the chances of destiny in Isa.65:11.
20. The most difficult reading is preferred so the idea of *luck* or *by chance* is understood.
21. **Leah** allowing herself to become enmeshed in her sister’s STA pursuit shows just how easy it is for a believer to fall into the same trappings when staying aloof should be the application. Cp.1Cor.15:33
22. Even though she just recently came to grips in orienting to God being behind her own children (29:35), she now reverts to the cosmic idea of “*good luck*”.
23. She examples just how easily a believer can transition from divine viewpoint to human viewpoint thinking when leading with the STA.
24. She does not give God credit of being involved because she herself is under energy of the flesh and reasons that it is the spirit of the world that has brought the event in her favor.
25. Principle: You remove God from the equation you are only left with human viewpoint thinking. Cf.Eph.2:2; 1Joh.4:1
26. The reality of her situation was that God’s hand was still in it according to Divine design and in spite of her miss-acclimation otherwise.
27. **Leah** again has eyes on self and the naming of her surrogate children reflect that.
28. The 2nd **son** from **Zilpah** more clearly visualizes her STA focus.
29. Her exuberant words “**Happy am I**/bet ‘osher” suggests that she too was trying to build her happiness on her ability to achieve her ends.
30. The second part of her statement, “**For women will call me happy**/kiy ‘osher bath” perceives her vision of a future reputation of being a really “lucky” wife.
31. Rather than let BD establish her reputation, she resorts to the cosmic standards of what is considered as being “blessed” in life as her m/o.
32. The 8th **son Asher** has his name built around this idea of cosmic blessing.
33. As believers we must always remember that there is no such thing as luck and that God is always involved and in control of all circumstances and situations in life.
34. When a believer leads with their STA they can easily become victim to rationalizing the divine viewpoint of the situation displacing it with human viewpoint alternatives.
35. Leah serves here as example that if a believer pursues things in life under their STA, human viewpoint reasoning often accompanies their actions.

GENESIS

THE MANDRAKE BARTER

EXEGESIS VERSES 14 – 21:

WTT Genesis 30:14
 בְּשָׂדֵה וַיִּבֵּא אֹתָם אֶל-לֵאָה אִמּוֹ וַתֹּאמֶר רָחֵל אֶל-לֵאָה
 תְּנִינָא לִי מִדִּוְדָאִי בְּנֵי:

^{NAS} Genesis 30:14 Now in the days of wheat harvest Reuben went and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. (וַיֵּלֶךְ רְאוּבֵן הַלֵּךְ וַיִּמְצֵא דִּוְדָאִים בְּשָׂדֵה וַיִּבֵּא אֹתָם אֶל-לֵאָה אִמּוֹ וַתֹּאמֶר רָחֵל אֶל-לֵאָה תְּנִינָא לִי מִדִּוְדָאִי בְּנֵי) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: halak {lit. walk}; "and he went"; + proper n: "Reuben"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/pl/constr: yom; "in the days of"; + n/com/m/s/constr: qatsiy; "the harvest of"; + n/com/f/pl/abs: chittah; "wheat"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: matsa'; "and he found"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: duda'iy; "mandrakes"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: sadeh; "in the field"; + waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3ms: bo'; "and he caused to bring"; + sign of d.o. w/3ms suff: 'eth; "them"; + prep: 'el; "to"; + proper n: "Leah"; + n/com/f/s/constr. w/3ms suff: 'eth; "his mother"])

Then Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes." (וַתֹּאמֶר רָחֵל לֵאָה נָתַן נָתַן לֵאָה אֶל בְּנֵי דִּוְדָאִים מִן לִי נָתַן נָתַן לֵאָה אֶל) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: 'amar; "and she said"; + proper n: "Rachel"; + prep: 'el + proper n: "to Leah"; + v/qal/imp/f/s: nathan; "give"; + interj.part: na'; "please"; + prep. w/1cs suff: lamed; "to me"; + prep: min; "from"; + n/com/m/pl/constr: duda'iy; "the mandrakes of"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/2fs suff: ben; "your son"])

WTT Genesis 30:15
 אֶת-דִּוְדָאִי בְּנֵי וַתֹּאמֶר רָחֵל לְכֵן יִשְׁכַּב עִמּוֹ הַלַּיְלָה תַּחַת
 דִּוְדָאִי בְּנֵי:

^{NAS} Genesis 30:15 But she said to her, "Is it a small matter for you to take my husband? And would you take my son's mandrakes also?" (וַתֹּאמֶר רָחֵל לְכֵן יִשְׁכַּב עִמּוֹ הַלַּיְלָה תַּחַת דִּוְדָאִי בְּנֵי) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: 'amar + prep. w/3fs suff: lamed; "but she said to her"; + interr.part: ha; "Is it?"; + adj/m/s/abs: me-am; "a small matter"; + v/qal/inf/constr. w/2fs suff: laqach; "your taking"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: 'ish; "my husband"; + waw conj. + prep: lamed w/ v/qal/inf/constr: laqach; "now to take"; + conj: gam; "also"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/pl/constr: duda'iy; "the mandrakes of"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: ben; "my son"])

GENESIS

So Rachel said, "Therefore he may lie with you tonight in return for your son's mandrakes." (בֵּן דְּוֹדָאִים תַּחַת לַיְלָה הִּ עִם שָׁכַב בֶּן ל רָחֵל אָמַר ו) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: 'amar; "so she said"; + proper n: "Rachel"; + prep: lamed + adv: ken; "for thus/therefore"; + v/qal/IPF/3ms: shakab; "he may lie down"; + prep. w/2fs suff: -im; "with you"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: layelah; "this night"; + prep: tachath; "instead of/in return for"; + n/com/m/pl/constr: duda'iyim; "the mandrakes of"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/2fs suff: ben; "your son"])

וַיָּבֹא יַעֲקֹב מִן־הַשָּׂדֶה בְּעֶרְב׃ וַתֵּצֵא לֵאָה
לִקְרָאתוֹ וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלַי תָּבוֹא כִּי שָׂכַר שְׂכָרְתִּיךָ בְּדוּדָאֵי בְנֵי
וַיִּשְׁכַּב עִמָּה בַּלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה׃

^{NAS} Genesis 30:16 When Jacob came in from the field in the evening, then Leah went out to meet him and said, (קָרָא ל לֵאָה יָצָא ו עָרַב הִּ ב שָׂדֶה הִ מִן יַעֲקֹב בּוֹא ו) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: bo'; "when he came in"; + proper n: "Jacob"; + prep: min + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: sadeh; "from the field"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: -ereb; "in the evening"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: yatsa'; "then she went out"; + proper n: "Leah"; + prep: lamed + v/qal/inf/constr. w/3ms suff: qara'; "to encounter/meet him"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: 'amar; "and she said"])

"You must come in to me, for I have surely hired you with my son's mandrakes." So he lay with her that night. (הִ ב עִם שָׁכַב ו בֵּן דְּוֹדָאִים ב שָׂכַר שְׂכָר כִּי בּוֹא אֵל) [prep. w/1cs suff: 'el; "to me"; + v/qal/IPF/2ms: bo'; "you must enter/come in to"; + conj: kiy; "for/because"; + v/qal/inf/abs: shakar; "hiring"; + v/qal/PF/1cs w/2ms suff: shakar; "I have hired you"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/pl/constr: duda'iyim; "with the mandrakes of"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: ben; "my son"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: shakab; "so he laid down"; + prep. w/3fs suff: -im; "with her"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: layelah; "at the night"; + pro/3ms: hu'; "that one"])

וַיִּשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶל־לֵאָה וַתֵּהָר וַתֵּלֶד לְיַעֲקֹב בֶּן
חַמִּישִׁי׃

^{NAS} Genesis 30:17 And God gave heed to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son. (בֵּן חַמִּישִׁי בֵּן יַעֲקֹב ל יֶלֶד ו הָרָה ו לֵאָה אֵל אֱלֹהִים שָׁמַע ו) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: shama-; "and He heard/gave heed to"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiyim; "God"; + prep: 'el + proper n: "to Leah"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: harah; "and she conceived"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: yalad; "and bore"; + prep: lamed + proper n: "to Jacob"; + n/com/m/s/abs: ben; "a son"; + adj/m/s/abs: chamiyshiy; "a fifth one"])

GENESIS

וַתֹּאמֶר לְאָה נָתַן אֱלֹהִים שְׂכָרִי אֲשֶׁר־נָתַתִּי
שִׁפְחָתִי לְאִישִׁי וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ יִשְׁשַׁכָּר׃

^{NAS} Genesis 30:18 Then Leah said, "God has given me my wages, because I gave my maid to my husband." So she named him Issachar. (וַתֹּאמֶר לְאָה נָתַן אֱלֹהִים שְׂכָרִי אֲשֶׁר־נָתַתִּי שִׁפְחָתִי לְאִישִׁי וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ יִשְׁשַׁכָּר [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: 'amar; "and she said"; + proper n: "Leah"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: nathan; "He gave"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiym; "God"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: shakar; "my wages"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "for which"; + v/qal/PF/1cs: nathan; "I gave"; + n/com/f/s/constr. w/1cs suff: shiphechah; "my maid"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: 'ish; "to my husband"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: qara; "and she called"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: shem; "his name"; + proper n: yishshakar; "Issachar"])

וַתֵּהָר עוֹד לְאָה וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן־שֵׁשִׁי לְיַעֲקֹב׃

^{NAS} Genesis 30:19 And Leah conceived again and bore a sixth son to Jacob. (וַתֵּהָר עוֹד לְאָה וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן־שֵׁשִׁי לְיַעֲקֹב [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: harah; "and she conceived"; + adv: -od; "again"; + proper n: "Leah"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: yalad; "and she bore"; + n/com/m/s/abs: ben; "a son"; + adj/m/s/abs: shishshiy; "a sixth one"; + prep: lamed + proper n: "to Jacob"])

וַתֹּאמֶר לְאָה זָבַדְנִי אֱלֹהִים אֲתִי זָבַד טוֹב
הַפְּעַם יִזְבְּלֵנִי אִישִׁי כִּי־יִלְדֵתִי לוֹ שֵׁשָׁה בָנִים וַתִּקְרָא
אֶת־שְׁמוֹ זְבֻלוֹן׃

^{NAS} Genesis 30:20 Then Leah said, "God has endowed me with a good gift; now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons." So she named him Zebulun. (וַתֹּאמֶר לְאָה זָבַדְנִי אֱלֹהִים אֲתִי זָבַד טוֹב הַפְּעַם יִזְבְּלֵנִי אִישִׁי כִּי־יִלְדֵתִי לוֹ שֵׁשָׁה בָנִים וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ זְבֻלוֹן [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: 'amar; "and she said"; + proper n: "Leah"; + v/qal/PF/3ms w/1cs suff: zabad; "He has bestowed upon/endowed me"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiym; "God"; + sign of d.o. w/1cs suff: 'eth; "my"; + n/com/m/s/abs: zeber; "endowment/gift"; + adj/m/s/abs: tob; "a good one"; + d.a. + n/com/f/s/abs: pa-am; {lit. step}; "in turn"; + v/qal/IPF/3ms w/1cs suff: zabal; "he will honor me"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: 'ish; "my husband"; + conj: kiy; "because"; + v/qal/PF/1cs: yalad; "I have borne"; + prep. w/3ms suff: lamed; "to him"; + adj/m/s/abs: shesh; "six"; + n/com/m/pl./abs ben: "sons"; + waw

GENESIS

consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: qara'; "and she called"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: shem; "his name"; + proper N; zebulun; "Zebulun"])

:וַאֲחֵר יֵלְדָהּ בֵּת וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמָהּ דִּינָה: ^{WTT} Genesis 30:21

^{NAS} Genesis 30:21 **And afterward she bore a daughter and named her Dinah.** (וַאֲחֵר יֵלְדָהּ בֵּת וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמָהּ דִּינָה [waw conj: + adv: 'achar; "and afterward"; + v/qal/PF/3fs: yalad; "she bore"; + n/com/f/s/constr: bath; "a daughter of"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: qara'; "and she called"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3fs suff: shem; "her name"; + proper n: diynah; "dinah"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 14 – 21:

1. Some 62 months have passed since Leah conceived her first child **Reuben** (cf.29:32).
2. He would be about 4 years and 5 months of age when the events of vs.14-16 took place.
3. It looks to be late spring or early summer (May – July) when in the Middle East “**the days of wheat harvest**/yom qatsiyr chittah” occurs.
4. The eldest of the 8 boys now born to **Jacob** is seen to be enjoying the outside as boys of his age commonly do “**and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother**/waw matsa’ duda’iym bet ha sadeh waw bo’ ‘eth ‘el ‘eth”.
5. The plant *duda’iym* (**mandrakes**) bears bluish flowers in winter and yellowish plum-sized fruit in summer.
6. Their fruit are of the *Mandragora officinarum*, a member of the *Solanaceae* or potato order, closely allied to the *Atropa belladonna*.
7. It is a common plant all over Palestine flourishing particularly in the spring and ripening early summer.
8. The fruit is tomato-like with its root long and branched.
9. To pull up the plant is considered unlucky (cp. Josephus, BJ, VII, vi, 3).
10. In the Arabic it is called *baid el-jinn*, the “eggs of the jinn”.
11. They have a narcotic smell and sweetish taste, but are too poisonous to be used as food.
12. It was known for its aphrodisiac properties by ancient man.
13. It was considered a fertility drug.
14. Apart from the 3 uses of the plant in our verses (14,15,16), its only other mention in the Bible is SOS 7:13 used in the context of love-making between RM/RW.
15. **Rachel**, still childless, hears of Reuben’s find and politely approaches her sister requesting, “**Please give me some of your son’s mandrakes**/nathan na’ lamed min duda’iym ben”.
16. **Rachel** is desperate to have a child of her own and so resorts to superstition.
17. **Leah** in response to the request vents her long-standing grievance with her sister, “**Is it a small matter for you to take my husband? And would you take my son’s mandrakes also?**/ha me-am laqach ‘ish waw lamed laqach gam duda’iym ben”.
18. While **Leah** was unloved by **Jacob**, her statement of her sister taking her **husband** reveals the hypocrisy often associated with the STA.
19. The reality is that **Leah** took Rachel’s **husband** by deceit (cf.29:23-25).

GENESIS

20. She examples a believer that can be oriented to certain doctrine (God blessing her with children) yet remain maladjusted in other parts of life.
21. She holds to a sense of bitterness over the relationships involved and has since convinced herself that she was the one being wronged.
22. Her STA may have been exacerbated if **Rachel** had indeed manipulated **Jacob** to cut off sexual relations with **Leah** as previously suggested and as our verses now further imply resulting in the 20 month period of barrenness (cf.29:35).
23. But even if so, **Jacob** would have made the final decision, Rachel's participation aside.
24. Again we see an occasion of the STA rationalizing transferring one's guilt to another in denial of one's own sin(s).
25. Principle: The STA is extremely creative in sustaining its lusts using human viewpoint rationalization.
26. Leah's second question referring to the **mandrakes** as her "**son's**" is a subtle dig towards Rachel's continued infertility.
27. It shows a vindictive side to the STA.
28. Rachel's STA then takes advantage of Leah's STA using it as leverage for bartering and responds, "**Therefore he may lie with you tonight in return for your son's mandrakes/lamed ken shakab –im layelah tachath duda'iyim ben**".
29. All Leah's sharp tongue did was to reveal to her sister her sexual and emotional frustration.
30. **Rachel** trades one night's conjugal rights for the **mandrakes**.
31. So contempt meets the superstitious desperate finding agreement.
32. This reflects the nature of the STA finding common ground with human viewpoint with both avoiding the truth in unrighteousness.
33. The deal is done and on that same day **Jacob** "**came in from the field in the evening, then Leah went out to meet him/bo' ha sadeh bet ha –ereb waw yatsa leah lamed qara**".
34. So both **Reuben and Jacob** had been out in the "**field**" (*sadeh*) that day (cf.vs.14a).
35. It makes the reader wonder if **Jacob** was complicit in the matter.
36. Why is a 4 year old alone and picking fertility fruit to begin with?
37. In any case, **Leah** catches **Jacob** even before arriving at the front door and insists, "**You must come in to me, for I have surely hired you with my son's mandrakes/el bo' kiy shaker shaker bet duda'iyim ben**".
38. The infinitive absolute "**I have surely hired you**" is literally in the Hebrew "**hiring, I have hired you**" indicating **Rachel** has agreed to "pimp" **Jacob** out (*hiring*) and thus he is obligated (**I have hired you**).
39. This recognizes Rachel's prominence in the household and Jacob's pliant attitude to his favorite wife.
40. Again we see Jacob's passive agreement with no further explanation, "**So he lay with her that night/waw shakab –im bet ha layelah hu**".
41. It is as if he was almost expecting something like this!
42. The opening phrase of vs.17a "**And God gave heed (heard) to Leah/waw shama' 'elohiym 'el Leah**" suggest she shot up prayer with the sexual opportunity to again have children.
43. **God** always in control answered in the affirmative and she "**bore Jacob a fifth son/yalad lamed Jacob ben chamiyshiy**" from her own womb (9th altogether).
44. **Leah** herself did not rely on superstition and looked to **God** to either bless her or not with children giving reason for His blessing on this occasion.

GENESIS

45. This is further supported as she again gives **God** credit for the pregnancy though she distorts human good for divine, “**God has given me my wages, because I gave my maid to my husband**/nathan ‘elohiyim shaker ‘asher nathan shiphechah lamed ‘ish”.
46. It now appears that she rationalized her previous competitiveness of **maid** birthing as a sacrifice of her own.
47. Yet as we saw, the naming of Zilpah’s two sons pointed to cosmic human viewpoint as her reasoning for their delivery (names emphasized luck and cosmic happiness).
48. The noun “**wages**” (*shaker*) is the cognate of the verbs “**hiring, I have hired you**” in vs.16.
49. **Leah** perceives that what was “due” her was based on her own doings dismissing the principle of God’s grace.
50. She believes she was fulfilling the plan of God on both occasions and doing good and thus why **God** has again blessed her.
51. She examples believers today that mistake their human good as fulfilling God’s plan in their life and the reason He blesses them.
52. This rather than **God** simply gracing them out in spite of their STA malfeasance and human good and that they otherwise will exalt **God** in witness promoting His name.
53. She typifies an immature believer vacillating between human viewpoint and divine; human **good** and divine.
54. The name **Issachar** means something like “man for hire” and a play on the Hebrew *shaker*.
55. It becomes apparent that Leah’s sexual abstinence is over as she “**conceived again and bore a sixth son**/harah –od waw yalad ben shishshiy” (vs.19).
56. Again she gives **God** the credit and the He “**has endowed me with a good gift**/zabad ‘eth zeber tob”.
57. Another transition is Leah’s thinking towards orientation to doctrine is again recognized.
58. She holds to this child as a grace **gift** from **God** based on the divine nature, not human.
59. **God** has “**endowed/gifted** her with a divine **good gift/endowment**” recognizing grace as essential to divine **good** applications.
60. She makes one final statement as to the births of all **six** (*shesh*) of her **sons** as it will impact her relationship with **Jacob**.
61. The phrase “**now my husband will dwell with me**/ha pa-am zabal ‘ish” is literally in the Hebrew “**in turn my husband will honor me**”.
62. Commentaries across the board regard Leah’s words as continued false hope that **Jacob** will now have a change of heart towards her and “**dwell**” with her as an affectionate husband.
63. Yet, this seems to disrupt the pattern we have seen in **Leah** previously setting aside this issue orienting to the fact that grace from **God** is sufficient (cf.29:35).
64. I suggest “**honor**” as the better translation with **Leah** placing her faith in **God** that 6 **sons** will be sufficient evidence for **Jacob** to recognize that **God** has blessed their union in spite of its nefarious beginnings.
65. In this way she is confident that she will hold her rightful place as Jacob’s wife as so intended.
66. This is further supported as she was buried in the patriarchal tombs with **Jacob** (cf.Gen.49:29-31), a fact not true with her sister (cf.Gen.35:18).
67. The name **Zebulan** honors God’s grace bringing about divine **good** making possible the spiritual adjustments on the parts of both **Leah and Jacob** as to God’s will in the matter.
68. In vs.31, **Leah** bears her one and only daughter **Dinah**. Cp.Gen.46:15

GENESIS

69. Dinah's name means "justice" and is a token for Leah's belief in Divine justice associated under the Covenant blessing.
70. It further carries the nuance of "vindication" for Leah's ultimate orientation to Bible doctrine and God's grace.
71. In spite of all of the STA shenanigans involved in Jacob's family, **God** continued to execute His Sovereign will in grace.
72. While **Dinah** was Leah's only daughter, **Jacob** went on and had even more sons and daughters per Gen.37:35, 46:7 and 46:15.
73. The polygamous marriages in Scripture while permitted were fraught with trouble and strife.
74. Yet none of this thwarted the POG advancing His promises of the Abrahamic Covenant.
75. Because Abraham was faithful, grace abounds as extended to his heritage.
76. Adding the 4 **sons** by the maid-wives the grand total at this point in the story is 10 **sons** and 1 **daughter**.

GENESIS

THE BIRTH OF JOSEPH

EXEGESIS VERSES 22 – 24:

וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־רַחֵל וַיִּשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים וַיִּפְתַּח אֶת־רַחֲמָהּ: ^{WTT} Genesis 30:22

^{NAS} Genesis 30:22 **Then God remembered Rachel, and God gave heed to her and opened her womb.** (וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־רַחֵל וַיִּשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים וַיִּפְתַּח אֶת־רַחֲמָהּ [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: zakar; "Then He remembered"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiyim; "God"; + sign of d.o. + proper n: "Rachel"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: shama-; "and He heard/gave heed"; + prep. w/3fs suff: 'el; "to her"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiyim; "God"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: phathah; "and He opened"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/b/s/constr. w/3fs suff: rechem; "her womb"])

וַתֵּהָר וַתֵּלֵד בֶּן וַתֹּאמֶר אֶסְף ^{WTT} Genesis 30:23
אֱלֹהִים אֶת־חַרְפְּתִי:

^{NAS} Genesis 30:23 **So she conceived and bore a son and said, "God has taken away my reproach."** (וַתֵּהָר וַתֵּלֵד בֶּן וַתֹּאמֶר אֶסְף אֱלֹהִים אֶת־חַרְפְּתִי [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: harah; "and she conceived"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: yalad; "and gave birth to/bore"; + n/com/m/s/constr: ben; "a son"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: 'amar; "and she said"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: 'asaph; "He has removed"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiyim; "God"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/f/s/constr. w/1cs suff: cherepah; "my reproach"])

וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ יוֹסֵף לֵאמֹר יִסַּף יְהוָה לִי בֶן אַחֵר: ^{WTT} Genesis 30:24

^{NAS} Genesis 30:24 **And she named him Joseph, saying, "May the LORD give me another son."** (וַתִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ יוֹסֵף לֵאמֹר יִסַּף יְהוָה לִי בֶן אַחֵר [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: qara'; "and she called"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: shem; "his name"; + proper n: yoseph; "Joseph"; + prep: lamed w/ v/qal/inf/constr: 'amar; "saying"; + v/Hiphil/IPF/3ms/jussive: yasaph; "may He increase/do again"; + proper n: yahweh; "the Lord"; + prep. w/1cs suff: lamed; "to me"; + n/com/m/s/abs: ben; "a son"; + adj/m/s/abs: 'acher; "another"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 22 – 24:

1. The scene shifts back to **Rachel**.

GENESIS

2. Finally she is blessed with a child apart from surrogate motherhood or aphrodisiacs.
3. The phrase “**Then God remembered**/waw zakar ‘elohiym” has been previously used 2 times in the exact Hebrew form where **God remembered** the faithfulness of Noah and Abraham. Cf.Gen.8:1; 19:29
4. So it illustrates **God** acting on behalf of the adjusted believer.
5. **Rachel** has apparently put her trust in **God** and quit all her STA antics with respect to having children.
6. **God** in turn extends mercy in light of her past “**and gave heed to her and opened her womb**/waw shama- ‘el waw phathah rechem”.
7. Mercy is grace in action and associates all blessing with grace. Cp.Luk.1:58; Phi.2:27
8. Whereas Leah learned the importance of grace through the continue process of her test, **Rachel** is simply extended mercy on this occasion.
9. The combined lesson of the two teaches continuous blessing by means of grace and knowledge and the occasion of blessing based on God’s extension of mercy/forgiveness.
10. The verb “**gave heed**” is literally in the Hebrew “**heard**”
11. This recognizes that the mercy given was because **Rachel** finally turned to prayer as the antidote for her infertility.
12. This instead of bitching, moaning and groaning and energy of the flesh as reactor factors.
13. God’s power is here displayed as divine mercy considering how badly **Rachel** had acted the 1st six years of marriage and now finally humbling herself before **God**.
14. **God** knows how to bring the best out of a believer even on occasion.
15. **Rachel** finally finds herself with nowhere to turn regarding her problem except towards **God**.
16. So **God** opens **her womb** as he did for Leah beginning the 2nd seven year period (cf.29:31).
17. Upon the birth of her first-born she properly gives credit to **God** in vs.23, “**God has taken away my reproach**/’asaph ‘elohiym cherepah”.
18. To be without child in this time and culture was considered shameful.
19. **God** preserved Rachel’s reputation by removing childlessness from her.
20. She then named the boy **Joseph** explaining (inf. of “**saying**”) its meaning in vs.24; “**May the Lord give me another son**/yasaph yahweh lamed ben ‘acher”.
21. The Hebrew name *Yoseph* is a play on the Hebrew *yasaph* (add) and means “**May God add/increase**”.
22. This prayer would be answered at the cost of her life.
23. We note that the name Yahweh is used bookending the section of these births beginning Gen.29:31 and ending 30:24.
24. The name further marquees the birth of Leah’s first set of sons in 29:32,33,35.
25. The less intimate name Elohiym is used in the section highlighting the baby war. Cf.30:2,6,17,28,29,22,23
26. Not to read too much into it, the change of names seems to highlight times of orientation to covenant grace by the sisters (Yahweh) with Elohiym emphasizing the Covenant grace in spite of their disorientations.
27. As an act of mercy, **God** graced-out **Rachel** with the birth of this famous son; one of the greatest examples of faithfulness to the POG found in all Scripture.
28. *The Doctrine of Happiness.*

GENESIS

GOD PROSPERS JACOB AT LABAN'S EXPENSE VSS.25-43

LABAN SETS HIMSELF UP

EXEGESIS VERSES 25 – 30:

וַיְהִי כַאֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה רָחֵל אֶת־יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב
אֶל־לָבָן שְׁלַחֲנִי וְאֶלְכָה אֶל־מְקוֹמִי וְלְאֶרְצִי׃^{WTT} Genesis 30:25

^{NAS} Genesis 30:25 Now it came about when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said to Laban, (וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר כִּי הָיָה וּ) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: hayah; "Now it came to pass"; + prep: kaph + rel.pro: 'asher; "after which/when"; + v/qal/PF/3fs: yalad; "she gave birth to"; + proper n: "Rachel" + sign of d.o. + proper n: "Joseph"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "then he said"; + proper n: "Jacob"; + prep: 'el + proper n: "to Laban"])

"Send me away, that I may go to my own place and to my own country. (הֲלַךְ וְ שְׁלַח) אֶל־מְקוֹמִי לָךְ וְ אֶרְצִי לִי [v/Piel/imp/m/s w/1cs suff: shalach; "send me away"; + waw conj. + v/qal/IPF/1cs/cohortative: halak {lit. walk}; "and let me go"; + prep: 'el + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: maqom; "to my place"; + waw conj. + prep: lamed + n/com/f/s/constr. w/1cs suff: 'erets; "and to my land"])

תָּנָה אֶת־נַשְׂי וְאֶת־יְלָדֵי אֲשֶׁר עָבַדְתִּי אִתָּךְ בָּהֶן
וְאֶלְכָה כִּי אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ אֶת־עַבְדְּתִי אֲשֶׁר עָבַדְתִּיךָ׃^{WTT} Genesis 30:26

^{NAS} Genesis 30:26 "Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served you, and let me depart; (וְ בָּךְ וְ בְּ אֶת עַבְדְּ אֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה אִתָּה וְ אִשָּׁה אֶת נָתַן) [v/qal/imp/m/s: nathan; "Give"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/f/pl/constr. w/1cs suff: 'ishshah; "my wives"; + waw conj. + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/1cs suff: yeled; "and my children"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "for whom"; + v/qal/PF/1cs: -abad; "I have served"; " sign of d.o. w/2ms suff: 'eth; "you"; + prep. w/3fpl suff: bet; "among them"; + waw conj. + v/qal/IPF/1cs/cohortative: halak {lit. walk}; "and let me depart"])

for you yourself know my service which I have rendered you." (אֶת יָדַע אִתָּה כִּי) אֶת־עַבְדְּתִי עָבַדְתִּי [conj: kiy; "for"; + pro/2ms: 'attah; "you yourself"; + v/qal/PF/2ms: yada-; "know"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/f/s/constr. w/1cs suff: -abodah; "my service"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "which"; + v/qal/PF/1cs w/2ms suff: -abad; "I have served you"])

GENESIS

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו לָבֵן אִם־נָא מָצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ
נַחֲשֵׂתִי וַיְבָרַכְנִי יְהוָה בְּגִלְגָּלְךָ:

^{NAS} Genesis 30:27 **But Laban said to him, "If now it pleases you, stay with me;** (אמר 7)
אֵל לָבֵן אִם־נָא מָצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar + prep. w/3ms
suff: 'el; "but he said to him"; + proper n: "Laban"; + conj: 'im + interj.part: na'; "If now"; +
v/qal/PF/1cs: matsa'; "I have found"; + n/com/m/s/abs: chen; "favor"; + prep: bet +
n/com/b/dual/constr. w/2ms suff: -ayin; "in your eyes" -- "stay with me" {supplied}]

I have divined that the LORD has blessed me on your account. (יהוה ברך ו נחש)
בְּגִלְגָּל [v/Piel/PF/1cs: nachash {lit. divination; used of the Serpent 5x Gen.3:1,2,4,13,14}; "I
have divined"; + waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/3ms w/1cs suff: barak; "that He has bless me"; +
proper n: yahweh; "the Lord"; + prep. w/2ms suff: begelal; "on account of you"])

וַיֹּאמֶר נִקְבֵה שְׂכָרְךָ עָלַי וְאֶתְנָה: ^{WTT} Genesis 30:28

^{NAS} Genesis 30:28 **And he continued, "Name me your wages, and I will give it."** (אמר 7)
נָתַן ו עַל שְׂכָר נִקְבֵה [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said/continued"; +
v/qal/imp/m/s: naqab {lit. pierce, bore}; "Appoint/specify/name"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/2ms
suff: shakar; "your wages"; + prep. w/1cs suff: -al; "upon me"; + waw conj. + v/qal/IPF/1cs:
nathan; "and let me give"])

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ אֵת אֲשֶׁר עָבַדְתִּיךָ וְאֵת
אֲשֶׁר־הָיָה מִקְנֶה אֶתִּי:

^{NAS} Genesis 30:29 **But he said to him, "You yourself know how I have served you and how
your cattle have fared with me.** (אמר 7)
אֵת ו עָבַד אֲשֶׁר אֵת יָדַעְתָּ אֵת אֲשֶׁר אֵל אמר 7) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar + prep. w/3ms suff: 'el; "and he said to
him"; + pro/2ms: 'attah; "you yourself"; + v/qal/PF/2ms: yada-; "know"; + sign of d.o. +
rel.pro: 'asher; "of which/how"; + v/qal/PF/1cs w/2ms suff: -abad; "I have served you"; + waw
conj. + sign of d.o. + rel.pro.; 'asher; "and of which"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: hayah; "it came to
pass/have fared"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/2ms suff: miqeneh; "your cattle"; + prep. w/1cs suff:
'eth; "with me"])

כִּי מָעַט אֲשֶׁר־הָיָה לְךָ לְפָנַי וַיִּפְרֹץ לְרֹב וַיְבָרַךְ
יְהוָה אֶתְךָ לְרִגְלֵי וְעֵתָה מִתִּי אַעֲשֶׂה גַם־אֲנֹכִי לְבֵיתִי:

GENESIS

^{NAS} Genesis 30:30 "For you had little before I came, and it has increased to a multitude; (פִּי לְפָנַי וְפָנָה לְ לִי הָיְתָה אֲשֶׁר מְעַט פִּי) [conj: kiy; "for"; + adj/m/s/abs: me-ath; "little"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "that"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: hayah; "it had become"; + prep. w/2ms suff: lamed; "for you"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/1cs suff: paneh {lit. face}; "before my appearance/before I came"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: pharats {lit. break through}; "and it burst"; + prep: lamed + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: rob; "to an abundance"])

and the LORD has blessed you wherever I turned. (וְיָהוָה בֵּרַךְ אֶת יְהוָה לְ כָל אֲרָצוֹת) [waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/3ms: barak; "and He has blessed"; + proper n: yahweh; "the Lord"; + sign of d.o. w/2ms suff: 'eth; "you"; + prep: lamed + n/com/f/s/constr. w/1cs suff: regel {lit. foot}; "with my every step/wherever I turned"])

But now, when shall I provide for my own household also?" (וְעַתָּה מַתִּי עֵתָהּ אֲנִי) [waw conj. + adv: -attah; "and now"; + interr.part: mathay; "when?"; + v/qal/IPF/1cs: -asah; "will I provide"; + conj: gam; "also"; + pro/1cs: 'anokiy; "myself"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: bayith; "for my household")]

ANALYSIS VERSES 25 – 30:

1. The first 7 years of Jacob's time at his uncle Laban's was uneventful with the love-struck **Jacob** working for the sole purpose of gaining **Rachel** as his wife.
2. The second 7 years was very eventful with the birth of 11 sons to **Jacob** within that short period of time with one daughter Dinah arriving soon afterwards (Hebrew adverb 'achar vs.21).
3. It was after the birth of Jacob's 11th son **Joseph** that marked the ending of the 2nd 7 years presumably immediately after Zebulun's birth being Leah's 6th son per vss.19-20.
4. The challenge for the interpreter is to fit the births of the 11 sons into the 7 year period considering the constraints imposed by the narrative.
5. That as **Jacob** clearly regards his obligation of the 2nd 7 year contract completed with the birth of **Joseph** in vss.25-26.
6. There is no way the pregnancies could have been one after the other as that would require 99 months (9x11) or 8 years 3 months and that with no lapse in between births.
7. Having completed his 2nd 7 years of free labor **Jacob** approaches **Laban** turning in his resignation, "Send me away, that I may go to my own place and to my own country/shalach waw halak 'el maqom waw lamed 'erets".
8. He is not here asking permission as the imperative "send me away" makes clear.
9. Yet he still shows respect for his elder uncle as the cohortative verbal phrase "and let me go" suggests.
10. Where **Jacob** desires to go is back to his home and people in Canaan.
11. This shows that his heart was still connected to the land of the Covenant.
12. The land was his by promise. Cf.Gen.28:4,13
13. This hints to spiritual orientation on Jacob's part.

GENESIS

14. Vs.26a reflects Jacob's expectation for his uncle to live up to his end of the deal, "**Give me my wives and children for whom I have served you, and let me depart**/nathan 'ishshah waw yeled 'asher –abad 'eth bet waw halak.
15. At risk of loss in the contract agreement was not only his wives, but the entire family if he had failed to meet his obligations.
16. **Laban** had not only the authority to marry under the Family Priesthood, but our verses further suggest that legally under contractual terms had power of attorney to annul the marriages and determine child custody as necessary.
17. With this in mind, in vs.26b **Jacob** aggressively defends his end of the terms of contract and places the burden of responsibility on **Laban** to execute justly based on the evidence.
18. This is the force of the clause, "**for you yourself know my service which I have rendered you**/kiy 'attah yada- -abodah 'asher –abad".
19. While the period of contract would have been self-evident (7 years), his work ethics remained open for critique.
20. **Jacob** makes clear that **Laban** was an eye-witness to how his nephew performed on the job.
21. **Jacob** showed that in his work ethics he was no slouch as he took on the fiduciary responsibilities of managing his uncle's assets while working his estate.
22. In fact Jacob's employment of service so excelled that it could not be challenged and indeed did not go unnoticed by his uncle.
23. This leads his uncle to recognize the value of now forming a partnership with his nephew.
24. **Laban** at this point could have simply let his nephew go on the way enjoying the fruits of prosperity **Jacob** had helped bring into his life.
25. But his monetary greed remains in control.
26. Seeing that any further deception at this point would not work, **Laban** appeals to what he thinks motivates others as it motivates him, money/wealth.
27. He begins by buttering **Jacob** up, "**If now it pleases you**/'im na' matsa' chen bet –ayin".
28. The literal Hebrew "**if now I have found favor in your eyes**" is attempt for **Laban** to ingratiate himself to **Jacob** based on their 14 year relationship and familial bond.
29. While his words appear innocent, they ring hollow.
30. The groveling by **Laban** suggests he really isn't such a bad guy after all.
31. In fact, he further attempts to throw out proof of that by giving God credit for his prospering under Jacob's management in the clause, "**I have divined that the Lord has blessed me on your account**/nachash waw barak Yahweh begalal".
32. Though **Laban** throws out Yahweh's name, his intentions/motivation remain suspicious.
33. The verb "**I have divined**" (*nachach*) has been used 5x previously translated as the "*serpent*" in the Garden of Eden in Gen.3:1,2,4,13,14.
34. Further, the verb is only used in the bad sense of "*divination*" in its remaining 3 uses in Genesis. Gen.44:5,15; 49:17
35. "*Divination*" is outlawed in Lev.19:26.
36. It is closely associated with sorcery in 2Chr.33:6.
37. The idea of the word is that one can have supernatural insight of secret things through contact with the spirit world.
38. Whether **Laban** actually practiced divination or not is speculative but not without merit.
39. We do know that he was a religious reversionist mixing idolatry with Biblical truth. Cf.Gen.31:19

GENESIS

40. Laban's embracing of Biblical theology is otherwise referenced in our verse as he alludes to Yahweh.
41. At the very least, **Laban** is here suggesting he has been given divine insight as to Yahweh using **Jacob** to prosper him via blessing by association.
42. However, his "divining" of information was not through God's inspiration.
43. What **Jacob** is to discern from his statement is the inference that Yahweh is blessing their association and thus His will to be at his uncle's.
44. In addition, it is designed to feed any approbation on Jacob's part as someone special (feed his ego).
45. In vs.28, **Laban** then seeks to "close the sale", "**Name me your wages, and I will give it/naqab shaker –al waw nathan**".
46. Laban's thinking: "How can **Jacob** refuse such an offer of partnership in a business already provided "free gratis"?"
47. This and the fact that **Jacob** arrived with nothing and will otherwise leave with same and now with a large family to support Laban's offer only makes sense.
48. In vs.29, we see a maturing **Jacob** that is now discerning as to His uncle's wiles.
49. He takes Laban's attempt to feed his approbation using Yahweh's name to counter the offer for his own benefit.
50. He first amplifies just how successful he has been as Laban's manager, "**You yourself know how I have served you and how your cattle have fared with me/**'attah yada- 'asher –abad waw 'asher hayah miqeneh 'eth".
51. His reference to livestock reveals the area of business that he has set his sights (*miqeneh* used for livestock in general to be sheep and goats cf.31:9).
52. This to tunnel Laban's focus in an area of prospering that would feed his monetary grid as proven through past experience.
53. **Jacob** then emphasizes the reality of Laban's assets before and after his work in vs.30a, "**For you had little before I came, and it has increased to a multitude/kiy me-ath 'asher hayah lamed lamed paneh waw pharats lamed ha rob**".
54. These words put the right perspective on the situation that in other words, **Laban** was nothing before **Jacob** arrived in terms of wealth.
55. This to counter Laban's approach in that business success is dependent upon who and what he has.
56. Its impact is to weaken the aggressive nature **Laban** exercises over his victims when doing deals.
57. **Jacob** then takes his uncles pathetic attempt of religiosity and reiterates it in its correct doctrinal perspective, "**and the Lord has blessed you wherever I turned/waw barak Yahweh 'eth lamed regel**".
58. Jacob's words strongly suggest that he is orienting to his place in the POG and is recognizing God is indeed still with him as it was spoken to him by Yahweh in the dream of Gen.28:15.
59. **Jacob** needs no "divination" to come to that conclusion; only the doctrine.
60. It challenges Laban's supposed divine inspiration with the reality of doctrinal truth leaving no room for reversal of claiming otherwise in the negotiations.
61. He then baits **Laban** by answering his offer to **name his wages** with a question, "**But now, when shall I provide for my own household also?/waw mathay –asah gam 'anokiy lamed bayith**".

GENESIS

62. The bait is **Jacob** might be willing...the catch, but not under Laban's terms.
63. By now his uncle is recognizing that anything he might do to keep **Jacob** is better than nothing.
64. His recognition would have been solidified with Jacob's open claim of Yahweh blessing his "every step" indicating he sees through the subterfuge embedded in Laban's offer.
65. The question further hints as Jacob's real objective and that is going into business for himself.
66. This is the emphasis of the phrase "**for my own household also**".
67. Over the 14 years of working for his uncle, **Jacob** now knows for certain that he does not want to be unequally yoked in business with this charlatan.
68. Further, he has grown spiritually to recognize that God is the one that will bless him apart from any energy of the flesh antics.
69. He would have had good examples of the futility of energy of the flesh from his two wives in the baby experiences.
70. Being the negative type believer that he is **Laban** does not truly factor in the divine intervention on Jacob's behalf even though he gives it lip service.
71. His rejection of doctrine will be the Achilles heel and loss in his investment with **Jacob**.
72. **Laban** examples the reversionist believer that lets his STA's m/o dig its own hole for failure.
73. **Jacob** examples the growing believer that has learned to use doctrine and truth to his advantage in dealing with STA driven believers trying to take advantage. Cp.Mat.10:16

GENESIS

brown/black"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: keseb; "among the lambs"; + waw conj. + v/qal/pass/ptc/m/s/abs: tala'; "and any one being spotted" + waw conj. + adj/m/s/abs: nakod; "and speckled"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/f/pl/abs: -ets; "among the goats"; + waw conj. + v/qal/PF/3ms: hayah; "and it will become"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: shakar; "my wages"])

וְעִנְתָּהּ בִּי צְדָקָתִי בְּיוֹם מָחָר כִּי-תָבוֹא עַל-שְׂכָרִי ^{WTT} Genesis 30:33
 לְפָנַי כָּל אֲשֶׁר-אֵינְנִי נֹקֵד וְטָלוֹא בְּעֵזִים וְחֹמִים בְּפִשְׁבִּים
 גָּנוֹב הוּא אֲתִי:

^{NAS} Genesis 30:33 "So my honesty will answer for me later, when you come concerning my wages. (וְעִנְתָּהּ לְ שְׂכָרִי עַל בּוֹא כִּי מָחָר יוֹם בְּ צְדָקָה בְּ עֵנָה ו) [waw consec. + v/qal/PF/3fs: -anah; "so it will answer"; + prep. w/1cs suff: bet; "for/with me"; + n/com/f/s/constr. w/1cs suff: tsedakah {lit. righteous}; "my honesty"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/abs: yom; "on the day"; + adv: machar; "tomorrow/later"; + conj: kiy + v/qal/IPF/2ms: bo'; "when you will come"; + prep: -al + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: shakar; "concerning my wages"; + prep: lamed + n/com/b/pl/constr. w/2ms suff: paneh {lit. faces}; "before my presence""])

Every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats and black among the lambs, if found with me, will be considered stolen. (וְעַז הֵן בְּ טָלוֹא וְ נֹקֵד אֵינְ אֲשֶׁר כָּל) [n/com/m/s/abs: kol; "each one"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "that"; + adv. w/3ms suff: 'ayin; "is not"; + adj/m/s/abs: nakod; "speckled"; + waw conj. + v/qal/pass/ptc/m/s/abs: tala'; "and being spotted"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/f/pl/abs: -ets; "among the goats"; + waw conj. + adj/m/s/abs: chum; "and black"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: keseb; "among the lambs"; + v/qal/pass/ptc/m/s/abs: ganab {lit. carry away, steal}; "having been stolen"; + pro/3ms: hu' + prep. w/1cs suff: 'eth; "it will be with me""])

וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן הֵן לִּי יְהִי כְדַבְּרֶךָ: ^{WTT} Genesis 30:34

^{NAS} Genesis 30:34 And Laban said, "Good, let it be according to your word." (וְאָמַר לָבָן הֵן לִּי יְהִי כְדַבְּרֶךָ [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + proper n: "Laban"; + interr.part" hen; "behold!/good!"; + prep: lu; "I desire that"; + v/qal/IPF/3ms: hayah; "it will become"; + prep: kaph; "according to"; + v/qal/IPF/3ms/constr. w/2ms suff: dabar; "your word""])

ANALYSIS VERSES 31 – 34:

1. **Laban** is determined to keep **Jacob** even if it means investment of his own resources.

GENESIS

2. He could have let **Jacob** move on with his family being satisfied with the prosperity he now enjoys at Jacob's expense and hard work (cf. vs.29-30ab).
3. Yet greed continues to drive him grasping for the "gold ring" so to speak.
4. **Laban** clearly understood Jacob's terms of going into business for himself ending vs.30.
5. In his mind he now sees another opportunity to have the upper hand.
6. That by means of **Jacob** becoming indebted to him from a loan of assets necessary to start his business and obligations in that vein.
7. **Laban** jumps at the opportunity saying essentially he will front **Jacob** whatever he needs in the phrase "**What shall I give you?**/mah nathan lamed".
8. It is an offer that **Jacob** resists as he responds, "**You shall not give me anything**/lo' nathan lamed me'umah".
9. As tempting as it may be to the STA to be offered anything he wants, **Jacob** has other plans necessary to avoid the folly of ever being indebted to his uncle again.
10. His spiritual growth is seen in the fact that he is no longer willing to be unequally yoked with this reversionistic believer monetarily (contractually).
11. He has learned that accepting anything from **Laban**, as good/beneficial as it may seem otherwise, is nothing less than falling prey to a manipulator giving with strings attached.
12. **Jacob** is an example of one way a believer grows up in life i.e., through the school of hard knocks.
13. The Christian life doesn't have to be that way but often is to the degree believers fail to apply doctrine.
14. Obviously Jacob's words would appeal to his uncle of **not** having to **give up anything** he already has avoiding a personal investment.
15. **Laban** is all ears as **Jacob** then presents his proposal, "**If you will do this one thing for me, I will again pasture and keeps your flock**/'im –asah lamed ha dabar ha zeh shub ra-ah tso'n shamar".
16. The bait enticing **Laban** is that on his part the matter of proposal will be insignificant (on the surface); by accepting, **Jacob** will return to managing his livestock industry.
17. The proposal itself in vs.32 is designed to "reel" **Laban** into complete acceptance at the expense of his rejection of God in his life.
18. The terms are of such that it would seem a "win win" situation to **Laban**.
19. This because he is one that likes to "play the odds" for success in life rather than look to God for true blessing.
20. He will accept the deal walking off thinking once again he has the advantage.
21. **Jacob** then lines out the details.
22. He first proposes to let him "**pass through**/-abar" his uncle's livestock "**removing**/sur" each "**speckled and spotted sheep and black lambs**/naqod waw tala' waw she chum" along with each "**spotted and speckled goats**/tala' waw nakod ha –ets".
23. **Sheep** are typically solid white in color while **goats** are typically **black** in color.
24. Generally no more that 20% of a flock fall into the variegated categories **Jacob** wants to segregate from the "**entire flock**/kol tso'n".
25. The phrase, "**such shall be my wages**/hayah shaker" appears to say that the variegated **flock** is to be given to **Jacob** from which he will make his future profit.
26. However, later text makes clear this is not the case as the variegated livestock are under the control of Laban's sons and **Jacob** is seen caring for the remainder of the herd in vss.35-36.

GENESIS

27. What **Jacob** is actually proposing is that only variegated **sheep and goats** will he keep as a profit and that as only produced by the solid color herds that he will oversee.
28. In other words, he is offering **Laban** the advantage of starting off with only solid color livestock to begin with making the odds seemly out of the park on Laban's behalf.
29. Those variegated offspring are to be his **wages** of self-employment over the next years.
30. As they are born, they will be set aside into Jacob's coffer and at all times will be segregated from the remaining herds.
31. In turn any future solid offspring from the Jacob's variegated herds would be returned back to Laban's herd.
32. In this way, **Jacob** receives nothing free gratis to begin with from his uncle and only reaps what nature may further produce.
33. He essentially is contracting based on commission only with no downside for the business owner.
34. It would be considered more than an equitable wage on behalf of a miserly employer.
35. What are the chances that the solid color animals will produce multicolored specimens?
36. Based on the laws of genetics the results in Laban's favor appear great.
37. To ensure the **honesty** (*tsedakah*) of Jacob's dealing he invites his uncle to check up on him as necessary to validate the proper division of assets (vs.33).
38. **Jacob** is so adamant about his proposal that he is willing to put his reputation on the line.
39. That is if any sheep or **goats** that are not variegated are found among his personal herd, they are to be "**considered stolen/ganab**".
40. **Jacob** will risk a criminal record as a thief as collateral to meet his end of the deal.
41. One's reputation of honesty and good work ethics can carry high value in a business setting.
42. In vs.34, **Laban** accepts the proposal, "**Good (Behold!), let it be according to your word/hen lu hayah kaph dabar**".
43. Implied in his acceptance is a veiled threat that **Laban** will prosecute for theft if the occasion arises as insurance on his part.
44. **Laban** being the underhanded and non-ethical character he is trusts no one as he thinks everyone is the same way to one degree or another.
45. As we will see, his distrust of **Jacob** is further amplified in vss.35-36 even though there is no history of treachery on Jacob's part towards his uncle.

GENESIS

v/qal/ptc/m/s/abs: ra-ah; "pastured/fed"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/b/s/constr: tso-n; "the flock of"; + proper n: "Laban"; + d.a. + v/Niphal/ptc/f/pl/abs: yathar; "the ones remaining"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 35 – 36:

1. These verses make clear that the wages of variegated livestock that Jacob spoke of in vs.32 were to come from only the solid color **flocks** (vs.36b).
2. They further expose the character of Laban in addition to his deceitful and greedy practices.
3. That he himself dealt with people in such manner caused him to be highly suspicious of others.
4. He can't be trusted so distrust colors his relationships.
5. Even though **Jacob** proposed that he himself cull the flocks in vs.32a, without giving a reason why, Laban assumes the responsibility per the phrase "**So he removed on that day...**/waw sur bet ha yom ha hu".
6. Laban comes off as a control "freak" to ensure that he retains advantage in this situation.
7. He separates all of the off-colored animals including "**the striped and spotted male goats and all the speckled and spotted female goats, every one with white in it, and all the black one among the sheep**/ha tayish ha –aqod waw ha tala' waw kol ha –ets ha naqod waw ha tala' kol 'asher laban bet waw kol chum bet ha keseb".
8. Emphasis is placed on both genders of **goats (male and female)** to ensure there were no overt genetics showing that might reproduce the same coloring from either parent.
9. The phrase "**every one with white in it**" suggests Laban scrutinized them with a "fine tooth comb", removing any animal that hinted other than a pure solid color.
10. The removal of all the dark **sheep** would have been the easier task not requiring such scrutiny.
11. His actions thus explain what is omitted specifically as to why Laban did what he did replacing **Jacob** auditing the herds.
12. His distrust in **Jacob** is obvious and lack of grace extending any advantage of doubt towards another absent.
13. Laban then appointed his own flesh and blood (**sons**) to **care** for the culled animals.
14. He can trust them because it is also their own fortune at stake (cp.31:1).
15. Greed serves greed.
16. As additional security, Laban then "**put a distance of three days' journey between himself and Jacob**/siym derek shalash yom bayin waw bayin Jacob" (vs.36).
17. Laban is using his best efforts in planning to avoid any possibility of these animals cross breeding with "**the rest of his flocks**/tso-n yathar".
18. While some may simply see Laban as businesses savvy, his actions reveal a mind-set of overbearing possessiveness and distrust in life looking only to himself for security.
19. In spite of the "best laid plans of mice and men", Laban's greed is his flaw as he only gives God lip service to his prosperity equation in life (cf.vs.27) placing no real trust in Him.
20. He has no idea of whom he is really dealing with i.e., +V and God fulfilling His promises.

GENESIS

JACOB'S TACT TO PROSPERITY

EXEGESIS VERSES 37 – 43:

וַיִּקַּח-לּוֹ יַעֲקֹב מִקֵּל לְבִנְהָ לֶחַד וְלֹזֵז וְעֵרְמוֹן וַיִּפְצֹל בְּהֵן פְּצָלוֹת לְבָנוֹת מַחֲשֵׁף הַלָּבָן אֲשֶׁר עַל-הַמִּקְלוֹת׃^{WTT} Genesis 30:37

^{NAS} Genesis 30:37 Then Jacob took fresh rods of poplar and almond and plane trees, and peeled white stripes in them, exposing the white which was in the rods. (וַיִּקַּח לַ לַקַּח וְ) אֲשֶׁר לָבָן הַ מַחֲשֵׁף לָבָן פְּצָלָהּ בַּ פֶּצַל וְ עֵרְמוֹן וְ לֹזֵז וְ לֶחַד לְבִנְהָ מִקְלָהּ עַל [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: laqach + prep. w/3ms suff: lamed; "and he took for him"; + proper n: "Jacob"; + n/com/m/s/constr: maqqel; "a rod of/staff"; + n/com/m/s/abs: libeneh; "poplar tree"; + adj/m/s/abs: lach; "a fresh/new one"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/abs: luz; "and almond tree"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/abs: -eremon; "the plane-tree"; + waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/3ms: phatsal; "and peeled"; + prep: w/3fpl suff: bet; "in them"; + n/com/f/pl/abs: petsalah; "stripes"; + adj/f/pl/abs: laban; "white ones"; + n/com/m/s/constr: machesoph; "exposing/stripping bare"; + d.a. + adj/m/s/abs: laban; "the white"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "which was"; + prep: -al; "upon/in"; + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: maqqel; "the rods"])

וַיִּצַּג אֶת-הַמִּקְלוֹת אֲשֶׁר פָּצַל בְּרִהָטִים בְּשִׁקְתוֹת הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר תְּבֹאֵן הַצֹּאן לְשִׁתוֹת לְנֹכַח הַצֹּאן וַיַּחַמְנֶה בְּבֹאֵן לְשִׁתוֹת׃^{WTT} Genesis 30:38

^{NAS} Genesis 30:38 (Revised) And he set the rods which he had peeled in the gutters, (וַיִּצַּג אֶת הַמִּקְלֵה אֲשֶׁר פָּצַל בְּרִהָטִים בְּשִׁקְתוֹת הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר תְּבֹאֵן הַצֹּאן לְשִׁתוֹת לְנֹכַח הַצֹּאן וַיַּחַמְנֶה בְּבֹאֵן לְשִׁתוֹת׃) [waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3ms: tatsag; "and he set/placed"; + sign of d.o. + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: maqqel; "the rods"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "which"; + v/Piel/PF/3ms: phatsal; "he had peeled"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/pl/abs: rahath; "in the troughs"])

even in the watering troughs, where the flocks came to drink, in front of the flocks; and they mated when they came to drink. (וַיִּצַּג אֶת הַמִּקְלֵה אֲשֶׁר פָּצַל בְּרִהָטִים בְּשִׁקְתוֹת הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר תְּבֹאֵן הַצֹּאן לְשִׁתוֹת לְנֹכַח הַצֹּאן וַיַּחַמְנֶה בְּבֹאֵן לְשִׁתוֹת׃) [prep: bet + n/com/f/pl/constr: shoqeth; "in the irrigation troughs of"; + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: mayim; "water"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "to which"; + v/qal/IPF/3fpl: bo'; "they came to"; + d.a. + n/com/b/s/abs: tso'n; "the flocks"; + prep. lamed w/ v/qal/inf/constr: shathah; "to drink"; + prep: lamed + prep: nokach; "in front of"; + d.a. + n/com/b/s/abs: tso'n; "the flocks"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fpl: yacham {lit. to be hot}; "and they mated"; + prep: bet + v/qal/inf/constr. w/3fpl suff: bo'; "when they came"; + prep: lamed w/ v/qal/inf/constr: shathah; "to drink"])

GENESIS

וַיַּחֲמוּ הַצֹּאן אֶל־הַמִּקְלָוֹת וְתִלְדוּן הַצֹּאן עֲקָדִים
וְנִקְדָּים וְטֹלְאִים: ^{WTT} Genesis 30:39

^{NAS} Genesis 30:39 **So the flocks mated by the rods, and the flocks brought forth striped, speckled, and spotted.** (וַיַּחֲמוּ הַצֹּאן אֶל הַמִּקְלָוֹת וְתִלְדוּן הַצֹּאן עֲקָדִים וְנִקְדָּים וְטֹלְאִים [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: yacham {lit. to be hot}; “and they mated”; + d.a. + n/com/b/s/abs: tso’n; “the flocks”; + prep: ‘el + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs maqqel; “towards the rods”; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fpl; yalad; “and they gave birth”; + d.a. + n/com/b/s/abs: tso’n; “the flocks”; + adj/m/pl/abs: -aqod; “striped ones”; + adj/m/pl./abs: naqod; “speckled ones”; + waw conj. + v/qal/pass/ptc/m/pl/abs: talah; “and those being spotted”])

וְהַפְּשִׁיבִים הִפְרִירַת יַעֲקֹב וַיִּתֵּן פָּנֵי הַצֹּאן אֶל־עֵקֶד
וְכָל־חֹם בַּצֹּאן לִבָּן וַיִּשְׁתַּלְּוּ עֲדָרִים לְבָדוֹ וְלֹא שָׂתָם
עַל־צֹאן לִבָּן: ^{WTT} Genesis 30:40

^{NAS} Genesis 30:40 **And Jacob separated the lambs, and made the flocks face toward the striped and all the black in the flock of Laban;** (וַיִּפְרֹד יַעֲקֹב פָּרָד כֶּשֶׁב הַיָּחִים לִבָּן צֹאן בַּחֹם כָּל וְעֵקֶד אֶל צֹאן [waw conj. + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: keseb; “and the lambs/sheep”; + v/Hiphil/PF/3ms: pharad; “he caused to separate/divided”; + proper n: “Jacob”; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: nathan; “and he gave”; + n/com/b/pl/constr: paneh {lit. face}; “the presence of”; + d.a. + n/com/b/s/abs: tso’n; “the flocks”; + prep: ‘el + adj/m/s/abs: -aqod; “towards the striped ones”; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/constr: kol + adj/m/s/abs: chum; “and each black one”; + prep: bet + n/com/b/s/constr: tso’n; “in the flock of”; + proper n: “Laban”])

and he put his own herds apart, and did not put them with Laban’s flock. (לְ שֵׁית הַיָּחִים וְלֹא לִבָּן צֹאן עַל שֵׁית לֹא וְפָרָד לְ עֵדָר [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: shiyth; “and he put”; + prep. w/3ms suff: lamed; “for him”; + n/com/m/pl/abs: -eder; “the herds”; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: bad; {lit. alone}; “for itself/apart”; + waw conj. + neg.part: lo’ + v/qal/PF/3ms w/3mpl suff: shiyth; “and did not put them”; + prep: -al + n/com/b/s/constr: tso’n; “next to the flocks of”; + proper n: “Laban”])

וְהָיָה בְּכָל־יָחִם הַצֹּאן הַמְקֻשְׁרוֹת וְשֵׁם יַעֲקֹב
אֶת־הַמִּקְלָוֹת לְעֵינֵי הַצֹּאן בְּרָהֳטִים לְיַחֲמָנָהּ בַּמִּקְלָוֹת: ^{WTT} Genesis 30:41

GENESIS

n/com/b/s/abs: tso'n; "flocks"; + adj/f/pl/abs: rab; "large ones/many"; + waw conj. + n/com/f/pl/abs: shiphechah; "and female servants"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/pl/abs: -ebed: "and male servants"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/pl/abs: gamal; "and camels"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/pl/abs: chamor; "and donkeys"}))

ANALYSIS VERSES 37 – 43:

1. Various suppositions exist regarding Jacob's actions in vss.37-42.
2. That he is engaging in mysticism and sin is a favorite among interpreters.
3. That he had schemed against **Laban** resting on a little known secret of genetic manipulation as his "ace in the hole" is further advanced.
4. The text itself is silent to these matters omitting critique simply exposing the ultimate outcome in vs.43 that **Jacob** became "**exceedingly prosperous**".
5. Why **Jacob** employed these tactics concerning breeding practices among **flocks of goats and sheep** can safely be attributed to a practice of his day.
6. To attribute sin and any particular scheming on Jacob's part is only opinion not textually endorsed.
7. There is nothing wrong for a believer to engage in business practices thought to enhance productivity as long as they are legal and do not omit God from the equation.
8. **Jacob** clearly attributed to Yahweh the previous financial success at the hand of his expertise (vs.30).
9. Later he further and clearly recognizes that Yahweh was the source of all his present endeavors in 31:6ff.
10. To attribute energy of the flesh to **Jacob** no matter how foreign the employed practice is to us today sidesteps the real issue at hand.
11. That is **Jacob** entered into this enterprise with the confidence that God would be with him and bless whatever means he might employ otherwise...which He does.
12. The breeding technique **Jacob** utilizes is based on an assumption that animals, particularly sheep, are susceptible to various prenatal influences.
13. There are those that state that as far as they know there is no evidence that prenatal influence determines the color of sheep and goats.
14. Yet, here the Bible clearly teaches that **Jacob** was successful in his endeavors.
15. The verses are designed to teach that God ultimately blesses the believer; the believer's responsibility is to simply do their work as unto the Lord.
16. Sheep are supposedly especially susceptible to the things that are seen at the time of copulation or during the gestation period.
17. Obviously, men cannot so definitely control the course of genetics among animals in such fashion or everyone would be engaged in this activity.
18. However, if the process at least had seemed successful on other occasions, why not insert its practice as a matter of course?
19. There is an alternate approach to Jacob's actions that dismisses the visual stimulations phenomenon.
20. That is what is called the Mendelian genetic viewpoint or simply selective breeding. *A Mendelian Interpretation of Jacob's Sheep; J.D. Pearson; Science and Christian Belief, Vol.13, No.1, p.51ff*

GENESIS

21. This views that the **rods** used by **Jacob** were not for visual stimulations, but used as a fence to ensure only certain males could serve the females.
22. Experienced shepherds could have learned that certain traits among the livestock would mean certain particulars present in the offspring.
23. However, this does not satisfy the emphasis placed on preparing the bark of particular trees in such specific fashion noted in our verses (if only a fence, why all this visual fuss?).
24. In either case, the method used was relatively straightforward and simple.
25. **Jacob** took branches fairly straight like a **rod** or *staff* (*maqel*) with dark bark and light cambium here from the **trees** of the **poplar, almond and plane-tree** (chestnut) variety.
26. He **peeled** back the bark exposing the **white** layer underneath in a **striped** or patched fashion.
27. He placed these in the area of the **watering troughs** (*shoqeth ha mayim*) or irrigation **gutters** (*rahath*).
28. It was here that the livestock came **to drink** (*lamed shathah*) and **mated** (*yacham*) (vs.38).
29. The theory was that the effect of the tree **rods** would cause the males to bring forth young that were **striped, speckled and spotted**, even if both parents were solid in color.
30. This is precisely what happened.
31. In addition, even when not watering the animals, he would separate the sheep and **face** the flocks towards the variegated and dark colored having emerged within the main herd of **Laban** (vs.40a).
32. When the variegated were old enough they could then be permanently separated from their mothers.
33. Through this process, **Jacob** began to acquire a **flock** of his own that he kept segregated from the main herd (vs.40b).
34. He kept a close eye on the process and the animals involved so that when the more sound, sturdy animals were mating, he would further employ the “rod technique” (vs.41).
35. When weaker animals were involved, he omitted the rods assumingly reproducing the solid colors of goats and white sheep.
36. This over the course of time would result in a genetic strain of the variegated and dark animals being the healthiest and solid colors the most **feeble** (*-athuph*) (vs.42).
37. So Jacob’s “rod” system started the ball rolling to produce a higher percentage than normal of the multi-colored goats and dark sheep and over time started culling the **stronger** from the weaker being the participants in the process.
38. This did not happen “overnight” but in the course of some 6-7 years.
39. The ultimate result was an “explosive” success for Jacob’s asset portfolio (vs.43).
40. The phrase “**so the man**/waw ha ‘ish” seems so impersonal contrasted to the consistent use of his name “**Jacob**” in our verses.
41. This illustrates that he was individualized from the rest of men around him as to his wealth.
42. He was wealthy in the eyes of men based on his physical assets spiritual realities aside.
43. The phrase “**became exceedingly prosperous**” is superlative in the Hebrew as exploding in wealth (*pharats me’od me’od*).
44. His **flocks** prospered to be many and his accompanying business assets acquired **female and male servants and camels and donkeys**.
45. Jacob’s new business blossomed into a successful enterprise with pertinent accruelements.
46. Obviously that God superintended all of this blessing, Jacob’s actions were not of necessity.
47. Neither are they condemned again suggesting a neutral take on judging **Jacob** by appearance.