

Summit Woods Baptist Church
Sermon Study Equipping Class
FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

Genesis 30:25-43

Remember, the “answers” provided below are not intended to be complete. They are to give you a bit of guidance on key elements to highlight in the discussion time and to help clarify the intent of some questions in case it wasn't initially clear. Not every question has an “answer” provided. Consider the comments more as insight and guidance rather than right vs wrong answers.

Remember to ask follow up questions, such as “Explain that further,” or “Who else has an answer?” to prompt additional input from the class or “Where do you see that in the text?” to remind everyone to be getting their answers from the Scriptures.

❖ Discussion (52 min)

Read Genesis 30:25-43 aloud.

1. What does Jacob want from Laban?

He wants Laban to send him and his family away. To be released from his servitude to start off on his own.

2. At the end of verse 26, what is Jacob's reasoning for asking to be sent away?

Laban knows the great service Jacob has rendered to him. Laban knows all that Jacob has done for him over the last couple decades, therefore he should be allowed to go free.

3. Thinking back to previous chapters, what is the “service which I have rendered you?” What service has Jacob rendered to Laban?

Jacob rendered seven years for Rachel, only to be duped by Laban and marrying Leah. He then rendered seven more years of service for Rachel. He continued to work for Laban throughout his years of having children with his wives.

4. Why is Laban hesitant to let Jacob go?

Laban has “divined that the LORD has blessed me on your account.” (v. 27) He doesn't want to let Jacob go, lest the blessing go away.

5. What has happened to Laban because of Jacob's presence, according to verse 30?

“you had little before I came and it has increased to a multitude, and the LORD has blessed you wherever I turned.”

6. Who has brought such blessing?

The LORD. It's not just Jacob's great work, but the LORD has been the one blessing Jacob's work for Laban.

7. What does this tell us about the LORD's relationship with Jacob?

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God is committed to Jacob. He is faithful to Jacob. He is interested in making Jacob prosperous and successful. Jacob will play an integral part of building the nation of Israel.

8. What question does Jacob ask Laban in verse 30? What does Jacob want to be able to do?

“when shall I provide for my own household also?” He already provides for Laban, but wants to be independent and provide for his own family.

9. Why do you think Jacob doesn't want Laban to give him anything?

Not stated explicitly, but perhaps Jacob desires to show how God is the one blessing him, not Laban. Jacob was not successful because of Laban, but because of God's blessing.

10. What does Jacob offer to continue to do?

To continue to pasture and keep his flock.

11. How will Jacob collect herds for himself? What kinds of animals will he take?

Jacob will go through Laban's flock and remove all of the sheep and goats that are speckled, spotted, or black.

12. What will happen if non-speckled and spotted animals are found among Jacob's herds?

They should be considered stolen.

13. What is Laban's response to Jacob's request?

Laban agrees to this deal. He likely thinks that he's getting the better end of things here.

14. Describe Laban's actions in verse 35. How do his actions here match his actions against Jacob in previous chapters?

Having agreed to Jacob's terms, Laban deceives Jacob again by removing all of the spotted and speckled and black lambs and goats from his flocks, so that Jacob won't have any to choose from for his own flock. Laban has a history of deceiving Jacob at every step in their relationship. He deceived Jacob in having him marry Leah instead of Rachel.

15. How many days' journey did Laban put between himself and Jacob?

3 days journey.

16. What kind of trees does Jacob use for his selective breeding?

Poplar, almond, and plane.

17. Where does Jacob place the rods?

“in front of the flocks in the gutters, *even* in the watering troughs” (v. 38)

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18. What was the color of the flocks Jacob was tending? How does this make it so remarkable that the flocks “brought forth striped, speckled, and spotted?”

Jacob was tending white flocks because Laban had gone ahead and removed all of the speckled and spotted ones before Jacob had a chance to pass through it. These pure white lambs and goats began to produce speckled and spotted lambs and goats so that he could build up his own flocks.

19. What was Jacob’s purpose in making the flocks face toward the striped and the black?

Jacob may have been following superstition of the day that believed that when mating, the offspring would look like whatever the parents were looking at when they mated. So in having the flocks face towards the striped, the hope is that the offspring will be striped as well.

20. How else does Jacob selectively breed a better flock for himself, according to verse 41?

By breeding when the flock is stronger.

21. Whose flocks end up the strongest?

Jacob’s

22. What happens to Jacob as a result, according to verse 43?

He “became exceedingly prosperous.” This is the major point of this section, detailing how Jacob came to be so prosperous.

23. How would you summarize the process and results of Jacob’s breeding efforts?

Having been deceived into maintaining flocks of pure white lambs and goats, Jacob takes specific measures to breed spotted and speckled lambs and goats. Furthermore, he bred stronger flocks and weakened Laban’s flocks. It was incredibly successful.

24. Was this successful breeding merely a manipulation of genetics? How is God working in this event?

God is the one blessing Jacob with prosperity. He is the one who makes the genetics work. The breeding that Jacob does would not be successful apart from the hand of God upon him.

25. How is God’s faithfulness shown in this week’s passage?

God is faithful to prosper Jacob, even in the face of Laban’s deceit.