



LIFE FROM CHAOS: GENESIS  
**STUDY 7: THE WRESTLER'S LOVE**  
Genesis 28:10 - 31:55



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 **Key Idea**

God's blessing is found primarily in relationship with him, not in the good gifts he provides.

 **Listen**

This study is written to be used together with the sermon preached at Trinity Church which you can find on our church website.

[www.trinitybay.church/sermon-archive/](http://www.trinitybay.church/sermon-archive/)

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 **Talk About**

1. This is our second week looking at the life of Jacob. The theme of Jacob's life seems to revolve around the search or the 'struggle' to find blessing. Blessing isn't an especially unusual word. If you were to ask everyone on your street what a 'blessed' life looks like, what would be the top answers, do you think?

 **Explore**

As we prepare to get into the story it's worth recapping some context. We're journeying with Jacob who's Abraham's grandson. Back in Genesis 12, God had promised Abraham great blessing, including specifically promising him descendants and land. The promise of descendants was a long time coming, but Abraham finally had a son in his old age, Isaac. Genesis 24 records the story of Abraham finding a wife for Isaac. This was a big deal to Abraham, because he understood that from his children would come a nation. He also particularly wanted to make sure this nation remained separate from the local Canaanites, so in the chapter he sends his servant to the East to get Isaac a wife from his own people. The servant goes, asks for God's help and in a scene which takes place by the local well, God reveals to him that Rebekah is the one. The servant gives lots of gifts to Rebekah's family (including her brother Laban) and brings Rebekah home to Canaan. Now God's promises have come to Isaac and Rebekah's son, Jacob. But Jacob's now on the run, and so knowing he has extended family in the East, he heads there.

 **Read Genesis 29:1-14a**

2. What are your first impressions of the story? What's going on with the well and the stone?

3. Given the context of Genesis 24, what does the narrative leave you thinking will happen next?
4. What role does God play in Jacob's thinking here? How does this contrast Genesis 24? What does this tell you about the state of Jacob's faith at this point?

## Read Genesis 29:14b-30

5. What strikes you about Jacob's proposal in verse 18? What do you think Jacob's motivated by?
6. How does Laban's trick parallel Jacob's deception from last week?
7. Why do you think things aren't going the way Jacob wanted?

## Read Genesis 29:31-30:24

8. How would you describe Leah's journey through the last part of chapter 29? What could Jacob learn from Leah?

9. What strikes you about the rest of the chapter? What do you think of the godliness of the characters? How does God use all this to fulfill his promises?

## Application

10. What does the story tell us about where real blessing is found?

11. Do you think we can tend to look for blessing more in the things God provides, and less in God himself? Do you think this is something you need to address? Share as you feel comfortable.

## Some Extra Notes

I think to get this story properly it's helpful to get into Jacob's headspace a bit. He comes into this story desperately seeking blessing and, now that he's stolen the blessing from his brother, thinking he's going to get it. The way I read it, he comes to the East thinking he's going to have things just like Abraham's servant had in Genesis 24. He's going to get the pretty girl, and begin a great union. After some tough times at home things are finally looking up for Jacob! But as we've seen things don't really go his way. Why? Well it seems God needs to do a bit more work on Jacob. Through Laban's deceit, Jacob is taught the hurtfulness of his earlier deceit. Even more than that, Jacob needs to learn that blessing isn't just about the stuff God provides - it's about a relationship with God himself. This seems to be seriously lacking from Jacob's life at the moment. As the narrative switches to focus on Leah we see that she learns this lesson. But Jacob? He'll have a few more 'wrestles' to go through before he gets it.

- Question 3 - I think the parallels make you think things will go just like Genesis 24. Jacob and Rachel are about to get married and things will go great.
- Question 4 - The stark difference between Genesis 24 and 29 is Jacob's lack of reliance on God. We might not even call him a believer at this point. He knows about God, but there certainly doesn't seem to be much of a relationship there.
- Question 5 - Jacob seems motivated by love, maybe by sex, and definitely I think by the desire to continue building this lineage of Abraham's descendants.
- Question 6 - The line Laban uses very much throws back into Jacob's face what he did in Genesis 27.
- Question 7 - It seems God needs to do a bit more work on Jacob.
- Question 8 - Leah seems to realise that it's God that she really needs a relationship with. He's the one who can fulfill her.
- Question 9 - All through Genesis there are examples of God using sinful humans to bring about his good purposes. Not great behaviour, but from it God's promise of a nation descended from Abraham is quickly being fulfilled.
- Question 10 - Ultimate blessing is not in getting the stuff God provides, but in knowing God himself!