

Life of Jacob



Jacob

1. Immaturity

1. The wrestler (Gen. 25)
2. The usurper (Gen. 27)

2. Instruction

1. The dreamer (Gen. 28)
2. The laborer (Gen. 29 - 30)
3. The fleer (Gen. 31)

3. Experience

1. The wrestler (Gen. 32)
2. The benevolent (Gen. 33)
3. The worshiper (Gen. 35)



Jacob the Wrestler

- Birth of Esau and Jacob (Gen 25: 19-26)
- Struggle from the womb – very intense
 - *“If all is well , why am I this way ?”* (v. 22)
 - If that is the way between the twins, what is the need for such pregnancy?
 - If the womb is unable to accommodate both of them
- Struggle continued and became more intense, and increased in between their descendants: Israel and Edom.
 - Until today: struggle between Israel and Rome, Middle East, all nations (gentiles)
- Struggle between evil and good within the (womb) of the Church.

Two Nations

- *“Two nations are in your womb, two people shall be separated from your body; One people shall be stronger than the other, and the older shall serve the younger” (v. 23)*
- The younger --Jacob -- would become more superior spiritually, and a master to his brother.
 - Out of him will come: prophets, the Messiah.
- The older, Esau, the firstborn: because of the corruption of his heart, would lose his firstborn status and his blessing.
 - The younger, because of his strife and spiritual longing, would, through faith, enjoy the spiritual birthright, and the blessing.
- Old Testament vs. New Testament Church

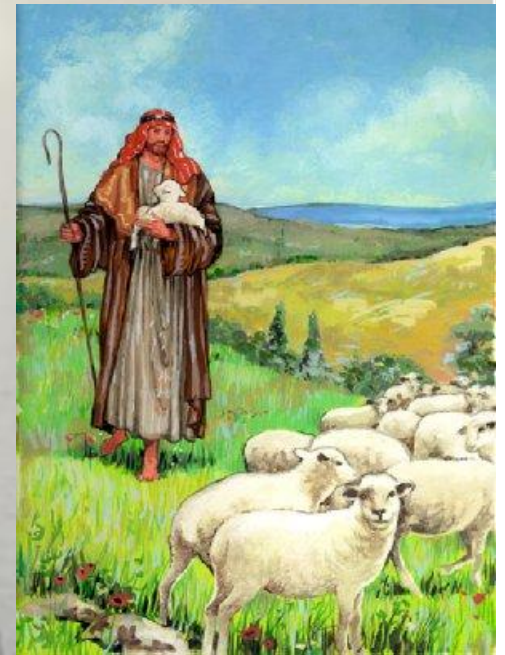
The Birth

- (v. 25-26)
- 'Esau', meaning (hairy or rough), as his body was covered with hair;
- 'Jacob': 'Iakōβ يَعْقُوب : "heel" or "leg-puller"
 - His hand was taking hold of his brother's heel;
 - He remained, all his life chasing him, to take away from him the birthright and the blessing.



The Carnal Man vs. the Spiritual Man

- Esau: hairy, a bond with the flesh;
 - also called 'Edom'', (blood), as he was red in color.
 - He lived as a violent hunter, fond of shedding blood, a character inherited by his descendants 'the Edomites'
 - A man of the wilderness,
- Jacob: chases others to acquire blessings
 - A mild man, dwelling in tents



The Birthright

- Jacob purchases the birthright (v. 27-34)
- Esau the carnal man, sells his birthright to his brother Jacob, for a plate of red stew;
 - His lack of caring:
 - *“Look, I am about to die, so what profit shall this birthright be to me ? ”* (Gen. 25: 32)
 - *“Esau despised his birthright”* (Gen. 25: 34);
 - Jacob sold his stew for a blessing
 - He sold the material for the spiritual
 - *“...give them the incorruptible instead of the corruptible, the heavenly instead of the earthly, and the eternal instead of the temporal”* (Litany of the Sacrifices)

Selling the Birthright

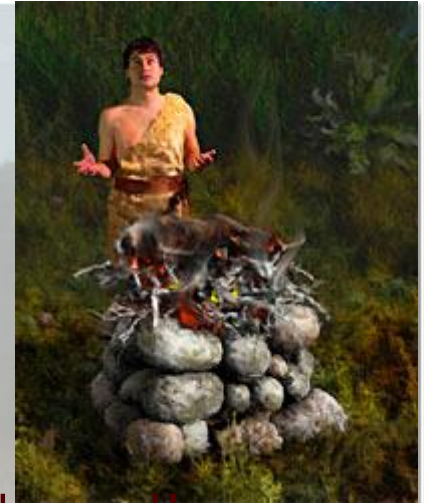
Jacob senses his chance to score and score big.

Genesis 25:19-34



The Birthright

- A son with birthright, used to represent the head of the family
 - inherits from his father the right to 'Priesthood',
 - the one to offer sacrifices on behalf of the family
 - from Jacob's seed, came the tribe of 'Levi' who were assigned the priestly role.
- We enjoy birthright through our union with God in His Firstborn Son
 - we should not despise that, for the sake of food or carnal lusts; but we should rather sell everything to acquire the Firstborn in our life.
 - Parable of the Hidden Treasure (Matt 13:44)



Jacob the Usurper

- Isaac calls Esau (Gen 27:1-4)
- Isaac loved Esau, wanted to bless him, despite:
 - The divine prophecy: *“The older shall serve the younger”*
 - Esau had disgracefully sold his birthrights for a meal of stew
 - Esau took two pagan wives, and was a grief of mind to his parents
- Rebecca interfered in a human way to fulfill the prophecy (Gen 27:5-25)
 - Neither she nor Jacob never felt any remorse;
 - Isaac never rebuked them, after discovering their deceit, but confirmed his blessing for Jacob.
 - He realized that they were right, although they used an unethical way.



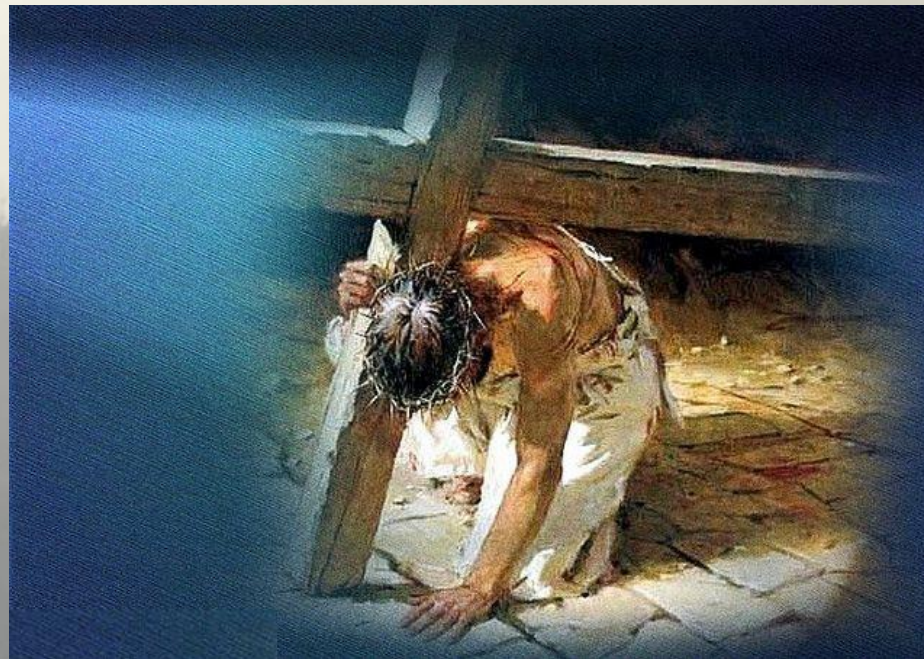
Jacob the Usurper

- Some scholars believe that Esau, as the firstborn, had a priestly garment, that he put on in the days of his father, to offer the sacrifices on behalf of the family;
- The skin put on Jacob's hands and his neck, according to St. Augustine, referred to his carrying the sins of others.



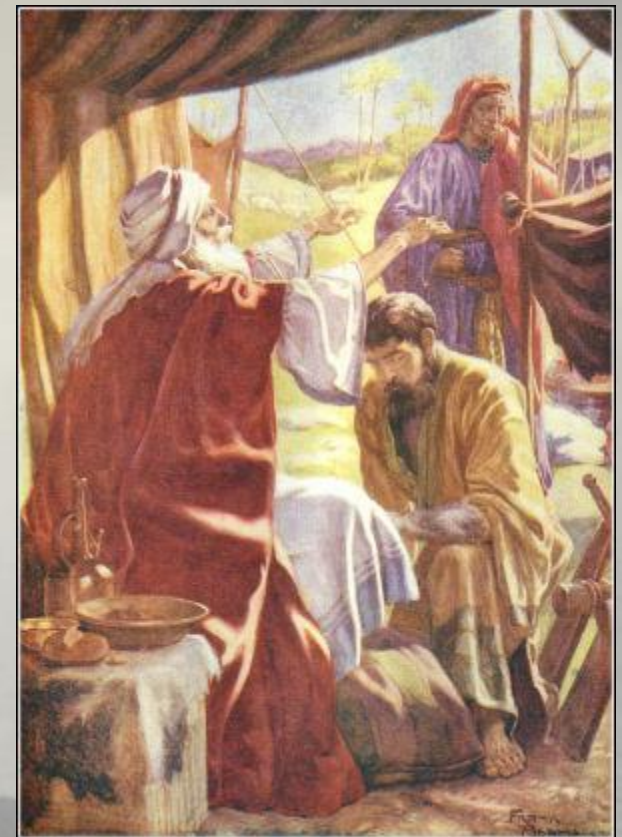
Jacob the Usurper

- Jacob, represents the Lord Christ, who offered his life as a sacrifice of love, a heavenly food, that brings pleasure to the heart of God the Father;
- He put on our clothes and garments, carried our sins, to receive in our name, and for our benefit the eternal glory, and the pleasure of His heavenly Father.



Jacob the Usurper

- *“The voice is Jacob’s voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau” (Gen. 27: 22)*
- Isaac blessed him
 - His voice is that of the Son,
 - yet His hands are ours, as he carried our nature in Him
 - Although being the righteous Jacob, yet He, as Esau, He carried our weaknesses and our sins



Results of the Deception

- Jacob gets his father's blessing (v. 26-29)
- Esau deprived of his father's blessing (v. 30-40)
- Esau holds a grudge against his brother (v. 41-46)
 - Esau vows to kill Jacob (but after Isaac's death)
 - Rebecca tells Jacob to escape to 'Padan Aram' to his Uncle Laban
 - Jacob flees
- Rebecca never sees Jacob again.

Jacob

1. Immaturity

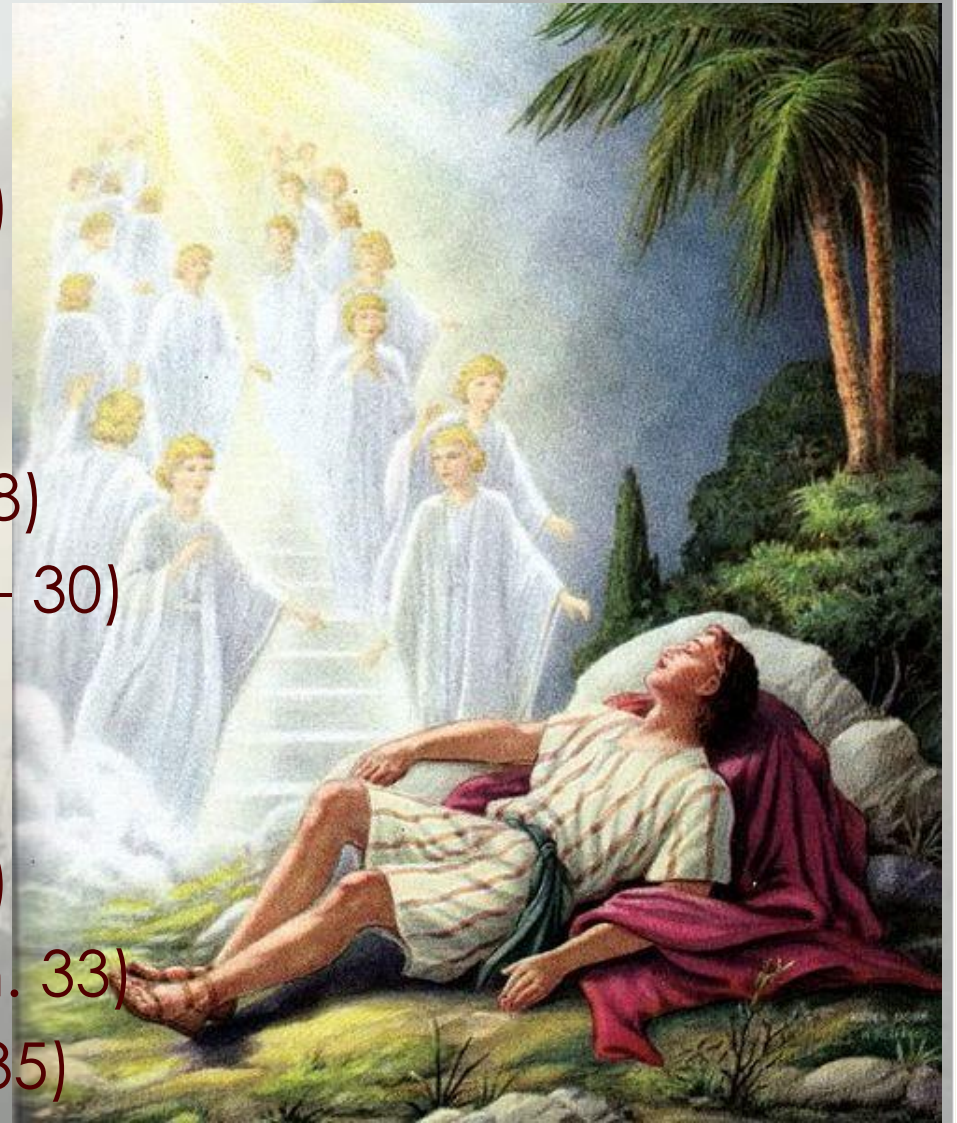
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Jacob the Dreamer

- The heavenly ladder (Gen 28: 10-15)
- Jacob's psychological state:
 - He fled before the face of his brother Esau,
 - deprived of the compassion and care of his parents;
 - On his way, when the sun has set, he found himself alone and prone to many dangers ...;
 - Jacob lay down to sleep, putting his head on one of the stones (no tent, bed, pillow)
- Amid affliction and deprivation, there comes God to respond to any need, and to give in much more abundance than we ask for.

The Stone: Christ

- *“The stone under Jacob’s head is Christ, as he never had a stone under his head, he has one now, at the time he fled before his oppressor. When he was in his father’s house, comfortable according to the flesh, he did not enjoy such a stone under his head. He forsook his home, and became poor and lonely, with nothing in his possession except a cane, to find in the same evening a stone to put under his head; and to find comfort through a vision he saw.” (St. Jerome)*

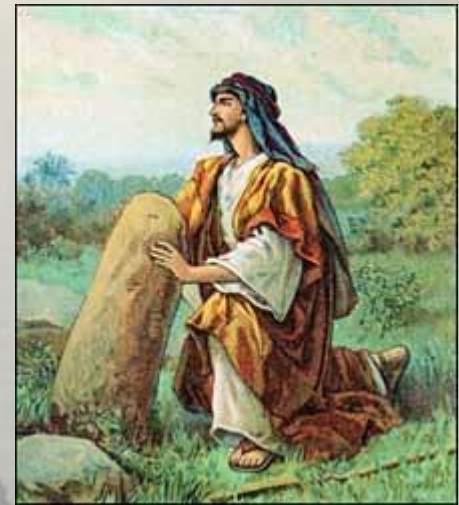
The Ladder

- The ladder is the cross of our Lord Christ:
 - through it, by faith we are lifted up to enjoy heaven itself;
 - through its denial, the Jews descend down to Hades.
 - Its not difficult to ascend through it, as the Lord is there on its top to support us and to lift us up
- God stands at the top of the ladder, and promises Jacob the land of Canaan (salvation)



“Bethel”

- The house of God (Gen 28: 16-22)
 - *“Surely the Lord is in this place ! ... How awesome is this place ! ... This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven !”*
- When Jacob awakes, he anoints the stone with oil and names the place Bethel.
 - "House of El" or "House of God"



“Bethel”

- God reveals two facts of faith to his children:
 - His presence with them
 - “*I am with you*”, at a time when Jacob found no one to support him.
 - Opening of heaven to those on earth
 - Reconciliation through the true ladder (the cross),
 - The Church became the house of God, and the dwelling place of his angels.



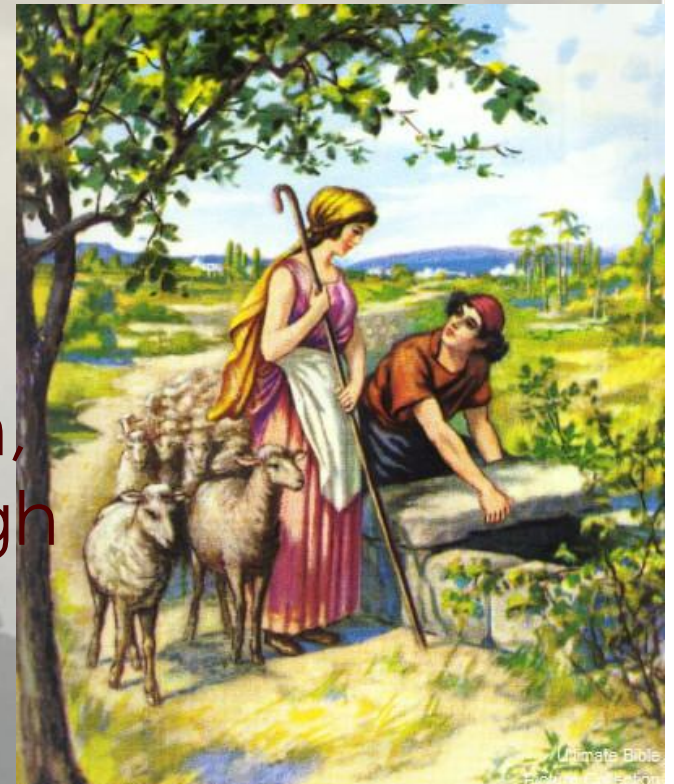
Encounter with Rachel

- (Gen 29:1-14)
 - After the heavenly vision, Jacob was peaceful, encouraged and energized and hastened on his journey, to acquire his bride.
 - *“And he looked, and saw a well in the field; and behold, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks. A large stone was on the well's mouth”*



The Well

- Jacob refers to the Lord Christ, who came to the world to acquire the true Rachel -- the Church of the New Testament
- He came to the field, namely to the world
- The well, that was the closed up is the Baptismal Font; that was in need of Jacob to roll the large stone from its mouth, and to reveal its secret through His coming into it.



The Three Flocks

- The three flocks lying by the well, anticipating its water, and waiting for someone to roll the stone for them, are three groups, lying on the hope of salvation:
 - Fathers preceding the Mosaic law;
 - Fathers of the Mosaic law, who anticipated the Messiah through symbols and commandments;
 - The prophets, whose eyes beheld the Messiah coming in the spirit of prophecy.
- All sat by the well, pointing and inviting, but awaiting the Messiah:
 - The natural law;
 - the Mosaic law, with its symbols;
 - the prophecies



The Dream Girl

- Jacob kissed Rachel, lifted up his voice and wept
 - Practical kiss of love
 - Jesus proclaimed it when He cried out on the cross, as He delivered Himself for the Church's sake.
- Jacob stayed with Laban for a month; as it was the custom at that time to give hospitality for a maximum of one month, after which the guest is to be treated as one of the family, sharing with them their regular daily life, including work, although he earns a wage for it.



Jacob's Encounter with Rachel

- Revelation
 - He encountered with her, after lifting up the shadows and symbols.
- Enlightenment
 - He encountered with her by the water of Baptism, to enjoy sonship to God.
- Salvation
 - He kissed her, lifted up his voice and wept;
 - the kiss of the cross, namely, that of practical love, by which He delivered Himself.



Jacob's Encounter with Rachel

- Fellowship
 - As He proclaimed Himself to her, she accepted Him, and entered with Him into her father's house.
- Eternal Life
 - He stayed for a month in her father's house
 - a sign of our fellowship with Him all days of our life, until He enters with us into His heavens.



Jacob Serves His Uncle

- (Gen. 29: 15 -- 20)
- His wage: marriage to Rachel
 - Jacob: Christ descended to the world as a “guest”, labored hard for his young bride (New Testament Church)
- “...*They seemed but a few days to him, because of the love he had for her*” (Gen. 29: 20).
 - “With love nothing is difficult; Labor is easy to who longs for it” (St. Jerome).

Jacob's Marriage to Leah and Rachel

- (Gen. 29: 26, 27)
- Laban deceives Jacob
 - Jacob deceived his father
 - Laban deceived him in his marriage
 - His sons deceived him in the death of Joseph
- Leah:
 - Jews – weak eyes “seeing they may not see”
- Rachel:
 - Gentiles
- Jacob married both



The Children of Leah

- Leah was un-loved
 - God opened her womb, to bear to Jacob 'Reuben', 'Simeon', 'Levi', then 'Judah'
 - God gave
 - Leah the privilege to be loved by her husband for the sake of her children.
- The Jews (Leah), were fertile; from them came the fathers, the prophets, the priesthood, etc. ...
- The Gentiles (Rachel), were 'barren', with no spiritual fruit, because of paganism.

The Children of Leah

- 'Reuben', the (firstborn)
 - The Jews were the (firstborn), until the Gentiles took away from them the spiritual birthright.
- 'Levi', (the Priesthood)
- 'Judah', (the Messiah)
- Then she stopped bearing;
 - as the Jews rejected the Lord Christ, who came of the tribe of Judah, there was a ceasing of spiritual bearing.



Struggle Between Leah and Rachel

- Gen 30: 1-24
 - Leah, the weak, less beautiful and unloved, was bearing children
 - Rachel, the younger, prettier, loved had no children
 - Jealousy!
 - *“Give me children, or else I die” (Gen. 30: 1).*
- Jacob's soul was very bitter, as he longed to satisfy Rachel whom he loved; and now, she is asking for something he can not provide:
 - *“Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb ? ” (Gen. 30: 2)*

Struggle Between Leah and Rachel

- They each starting giving him their maids
 - More struggle, each competing to get more children than the other
- Jacob's soul had been surely bitter of the struggle between both of them.
 - He realized the bitterness previously felt by his brother Esau, amid their struggle for the birthright and blessing
- God finally opened up Rachel's womb, and granted her a son she called "Joseph", meaning (growth) or (addition)
 - NT Church always grows

Jacob Demands His Wages

- After the birth of Joseph, stability began
- Jacob wished to return home, and asked for his wages:
 - *“Send me away, that I may go to my own place and to my country. Give me my wives and my children, for whom I have served you, and let me go; for you know my service which I have done to you” (Gen. 30: 25, 26)*
- Laban realizing how God blessed his household because of Jacob, said to him:
 - *“Please stay, if I have found favor in your eyes, for I have learned by experience that the Lord has blessed me for your sake; ... Name me your wages, and I will give you”*

Jacob Demands His Wages

- Here, Jacob asked Laban to give him:
 - Every speckled sheep
 - every spotted sheep
 - every black sheep ;
 - all the speckled and spotted among the goats....
 - These kinds of sheep and goats were rare in the East; So he chose the few and left for his uncle the many.
- Laban put three days journey (about 40 miles) between his flocks and those of Jacob (Gen. 30: 36).
 - the extent of wealth that Laban reached, to have to isolate the two flocks by such a distance;



Return To Canaan

- Gen 31:
 - Escape of Jacob 1 -- 21
 - Laban pursues the procession 22 - 25
 - Laban seeks what is his 26 - 42
 - Making a covenant 43 - 54
 - Departure of the two parties 55
- Christ takes his wives (old and new) with their children to Canaan, but Satan does not accept that procession, so he set forth with his hosts to hinder it, but fails completely

Escape of Jacob

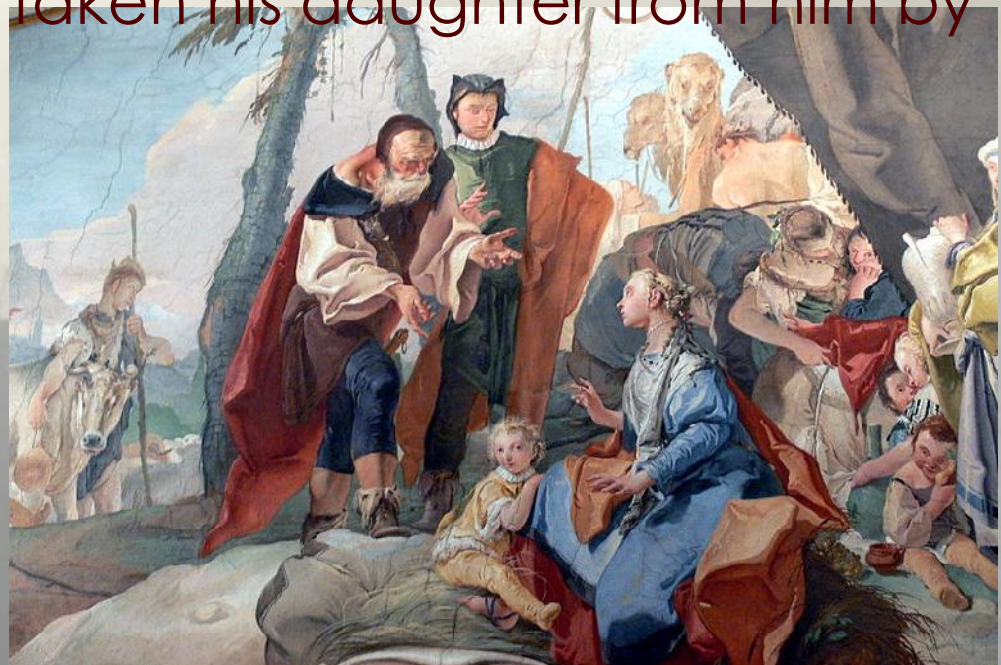
- Laban's sons felt that Jacob has taken away all that was their father's, and acquired all his wealth (Gen. 31: 1)
 - This changed the Laban's feelings toward Jacob
- Jacob has been there for 20 years, and yearned to return to Canaan
 - So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Lea to the field, to his flock, so that seeing the extent of his wealth, they would listen to his counsel, and set forth with him together with their children
 - *“Whatever God has said to you, do it” (Gen. 31: 16)*

Laban Pursues the Procession

- Jacob set forth escaping before Laban's face
 - He was leading the procession of the Church, striving and triumphant.
- While Laban has gone to shear his sheep
 - Rachel stole the household idols that were her father's (Gen. 31: 19)
 - Rachel refers to the Church of the Gentiles, who could steal away his idols from Satan; to destroy the idols of her father, which she had worshipped for such a long time before the coming of the Lord Christ.
 - Laban was told, only on the third day, that Jacob had fled (Gen. 31: 22)

Laban Seeks What is His

- Laban rebuked Jacob for “*carrying away his daughters like captives of war*”, and not letting him kiss them and their children, (Gen. 31: 26, 27)
 - It is obvious that Laban would have hindered him and would have taken his daughter from him by force.

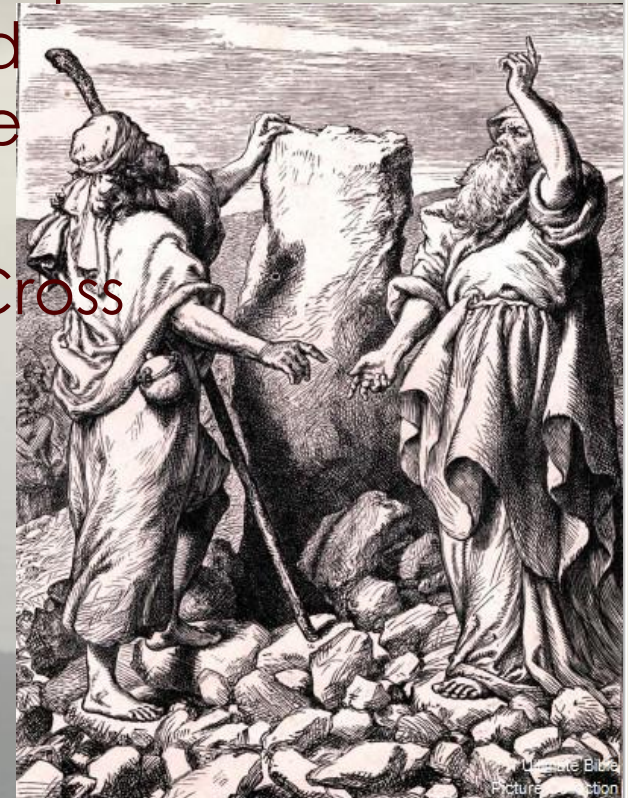


Laban Seeks What is His

- Laban's only question was: *"Why did you steal my gods? (Gen. 31: 30).*
 - *"With whomever you find your gods, do not let him live. In the presence of our brethren, identify what I have of yours, and take it with you" (Gen. 31: 32).*
- Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen her father's gods ..., and now, she had taken the household idols, put them in the camel's saddle, and sat on them, pretending that she could not rise before her father, because of her monthly period.

Making a Covenant

- Laban asked for a covenant to be made between him and Jacob, his son-in-law, so that none of them would harm the other.
 - Jacob took a stone and set it as a pillar; and they made a heap of stones, and they ate on the heap for the sake of reconciliation.
 - covenant of reconciliation: The Cross
 - The Lord offered His Body on it
 - He made peace with us on it



Departure of the two parties

- *“Early in the morning Laban arose, and kissed his sons and daughters and blessed them. Then Laban departed and returned to his place” (Gen. 31: 55)*

Jacob

1. Immaturity

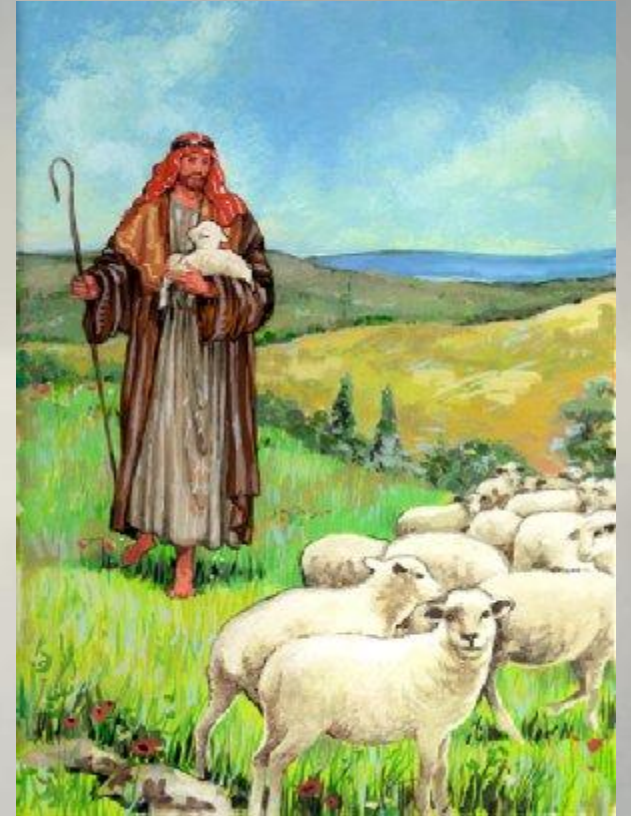
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Jacob the Wrestler

- Jacob returns on his way to Canaan, and must face Esau
- Greatly distressed and afraid of his brother Esau, Jacob resorted to God by prayers.
- Wisely, Jacob sent to his brother a present of love, to put out the flame of wrath that kindled 20 years ago

Jacob Learns to Pray

- Prayer was strong and effective, having the following criteria:
 - (1) A personal relationship, calling Him:
 - *“God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac (Gen. 32: 9).*
 - (2) He reminds God of His promises:
 - *“The Lord who said to me, ‘Return to your country and your kindred, and I will deal well with you’ (Gen. 32: 9)*
 - (3) He feels weak before God’s exalted and rich love; as though he shies from asking for more:
 - *“I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and all the truth which you have shown your servant” (Gen. 32: 10)*

Jacob Wrestles with God

- *“Then Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until the breaking of day” (Gen. 32: 24)*
- *“For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved” (Gen. 32: 30)*
- *“For you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed” (Gen. 32: 28)*
- *“When He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob’s hip was out of joint, as He wrestled with him” (Gen. 32: 25)*

Jacob Wrestles with God

- The angel saw that Jacob, in his struggle, did not surrender, but persisted all night;
 - He lightly touched the socket of Jacob's hip,, Jacob insisted, not to let the angel go "*until He blesses him*" (Gen. 32: 26); realizing that he was dealing with a heavenly Being.



Jacob Wrestles with God

- Why did he wrestle ?
 - “The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force” (Matthew 11:12)
 - In order to take Him by labor; as whatever we get after strife, we hold to it more strongly



Jacob Wrestles with God

- The man defeated the angel;
 - The conqueror persists on holding the angel until He blesses him.
 - The defeated blesses the conqueror !
- The socket of his hip getting out of joint:
 - The passion of the Lord Christ
- The struggle ended with the angel asking Jacob about his name, in order to change it to a new name fit for him as a struggler:
 - Israel: "struggle with God"
 - *"Your name will no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have struggled with God, and with men, and have prevailed" (Gen. 32: 28)*

The Benevolent (Gen 33)

- (Gen. 33: 1 - 3)
- He put his beloved Rachel with her son at the end of the procession, in order to give her more chance to escape, in case of any attack by his brother and his men.
- As for him, he crossed over before all, as though he is offering himself a ransom for all, even for the two maidservants.
 - Lord Christ preceded the flock as a good Shepherd, to deliver Himself for his flock.

The Benevolent (Gen 33)

- Jacob precede the procession, in a Spirit of humility, bowing himself to the ground seven times, as a sign of submission.
 - As to the Lord Christ preceded the procession of conquest by His humility, *“making Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, ... And being found in the appearance of man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross”* (Philippians 2: 7, 8);

The Worshiper (Gen 35)

- Jacob returns to Bethel, where he saw the heavenly ladder, felt the awe of God's house, and made a vow to God.
 - *“Then God said to Jacob, ‘Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there; and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau your brother’” (Gen. 35: 1)*
- (1) Jacob commanded his household and all who were with him, to put away the foreign gods
 - sanctifying the soul

The Worshiper (Gen 35)

- (2) Jacob commanded his household to change their garments.
 - purifying of the body.
- (3) They gave to Jacob, all the earrings which were in their ears, together with the foreign idols, to bury them under the terebinth tree which was by Shechem.
 - burying all the works and thoughts of the devil under the cross

The Worshiper (Gen 35)

- (4) As Jacob journeyed to Bethel, the neighboring peoples did not dare to pursue him, as *“The terror of God was upon the cities that were all around them”* (Gen 35: 5)
 - Evil can not pursue into the house of God
- (5) Jacob enjoys a divine appearance, and a confirmation of the renewal of his name, and the divine promises
 - *“And God appeared to Jacob again, ... and said to him, ‘Your name shall not be called Jacob anymore, but Israel shall be your name’ ... The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac I give to you; and to your descendants after you I give this land’ “* (Gen. 35: 9 - 12)

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