

Friday, January 14, 2022

From Darren:

Gen 30:1-31:16 - Marriage and family dynamics in this time was...something

Ps 12:1-8 - God protects the oppressed

Pro 3:13-15 - Wisdom = Joy

Matt 10:1-23 - A friend of mine and I have decided we are going to say "Yes" to others' generosity...it may sound simple, but how often do we turn it down because we are being "humble" or, in actuality, we don't want to seem weak...Jesus reminded the disciples to say "yes" when others wanted to bless them

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Genesis 30:1-31:16

30 **1** When Rachel saw that she wasn't having any children for Jacob, she became jealous of her sister. She pleaded with Jacob, "Give me children, or I'll die!" **2** Then Jacob became furious with Rachel. "Am I God?" he asked. "He's the one who has kept you from having children!" **3** Then Rachel told him, "Take my maid, Bilhah, and sleep with her. She will bear children for me, and through her I can have a family, too." **4** So Rachel gave her servant, Bilhah, to Jacob as a wife, and he slept with her. **5** Bilhah became pregnant and presented him with a son. **6** Rachel named him Dan, for she said, "God has vindicated me! He has heard my request and given me a son." **7** Then Bilhah became pregnant again and gave Jacob a second son. **8** Rachel named him Naphtali, for she said, "I have struggled hard with my sister, and I'm winning!" **9** Meanwhile, Leah realized that she wasn't getting pregnant anymore, so she took her servant, Zilpah, and gave her to Jacob as a wife. **10** Soon Zilpah presented him with a son. **11** Leah named him Gad, for she said, "How fortunate I am!" **12** Then Zilpah gave Jacob a second son. **13** And Leah named him Asher, for she said, "What joy is mine! Now the other women will celebrate with me." **14** One day during the wheat harvest, Reuben found some mandrakes growing in a field and brought them to his mother, Leah. Rachel begged Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes." **15** But Leah angrily replied, "Wasn't it enough that you stole my husband? Now will you steal my son's mandrakes, too?" Rachel answered, "I will let Jacob sleep with you tonight if you give me some of the mandrakes." **16** So that evening, as Jacob was coming home from the fields, Leah went out to meet him. "You must come and sleep with me tonight!" she said. "I have paid for you with some mandrakes that my son found." So that night he slept with Leah. **17** And God answered Leah's prayers. She became pregnant again and gave birth to a fifth son for Jacob. **18** She named him Issachar, for she said, "God has rewarded me for giving my servant to my husband as a wife." **19** Then Leah became pregnant

again and gave birth to a sixth son for Jacob. **20** She named him Zebulun, for she said, "God has given me a good reward. Now my husband will treat me with respect, for I have given him six sons." **21** Later she gave birth to a daughter and named her Dinah. **22** Then God remembered Rachel's plight and answered her prayers by enabling her to have children. **23** She became pregnant and gave birth to a son. "God has removed my disgrace," she said. **24** And she named him Joseph, for she said, "May the LORD add yet another son to my family." **25** Soon after Rachel had given birth to Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, "Please release me so I can go home to my own country. **26** Let me take my wives and children, for I have earned them by serving you, and let me be on my way. You certainly know how hard I have worked for you." **27** "Please listen to me," Laban replied. "I have become wealthy, for the LORD has blessed me because of you. **28** Tell me how much I owe you. Whatever it is, I'll pay it." **29** Jacob replied, "You know how hard I've worked for you, and how your flocks and herds have grown under my care. **30** You had little indeed before I came, but your wealth has increased enormously. The LORD has blessed you through everything I've done. But now, what about me? When can I start providing for my own family?" **31** "What wages do you want?" Laban asked again. Jacob replied, "Don't give me anything. Just do this one thing, and I'll continue to tend and watch over your flocks. **32** Let me inspect your flocks today and remove all the sheep and goats that are speckled or spotted, along with all the black sheep. Give these to me as my wages. **33** In the future, when you check on the animals you have given me as my wages, you'll see that I have been honest. If you find in my flock any goats without speckles or spots, or any sheep that are not black, you will know that I have stolen them from you." **34** "All right," Laban replied. "It will be as you say." **35** But that very day Laban went out and removed the male goats that were streaked and spotted, all the female goats that were speckled and spotted or had white patches, and all the black sheep. He placed them in the care of his own sons, **36** who took them a three-days' journey from where Jacob was. Meanwhile, Jacob stayed and cared for the rest of Laban's flock. **37** Then Jacob took some fresh branches from poplar, almond, and plane trees and peeled off strips of bark, making white streaks on them. **38** Then he placed these peeled branches in the watering troughs where the flocks came to drink, for that was where they mated. **39** And when they mated in front of the white-streaked branches, they gave birth to young that were streaked, speckled, and spotted. **40** Jacob separated those lambs from Laban's flock. And at mating time he turned the flock to face Laban's animals that were streaked or black. This is how he built his own flock instead of increasing Laban's. **41** Whenever the stronger females were ready to mate, Jacob would place the peeled branches in the watering troughs in front of them. Then they would mate in front of the branches. **42** But he didn't do this with the weaker ones, so the weaker lambs belonged to

Laban, and the stronger ones were Jacob's. **43** As a result, Jacob became very wealthy, with large flocks of sheep and goats, female and male servants, and many camels and donkeys.

31 **1** But Jacob soon learned that Laban's sons were grumbling about him. "Jacob has robbed our father of everything!" they said. "He has gained all his wealth at our father's expense." **2** And Jacob began to notice a change in Laban's attitude toward him. **3** Then the LORD said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your father and grandfather and to your relatives there, and I will be with you." **4** So Jacob called Rachel and Leah out to the field where he was watching his flock. **5** He said to them, "I have noticed that your father's attitude toward me has changed. But the God of my father has been with me. **6** You know how hard I have worked for your father, **7** but he has cheated me, changing my wages ten times. But God has not allowed him to do me any harm. **8** For if he said, 'The speckled animals will be your wages,' the whole flock began to produce speckled young. And when he changed his mind and said, 'The striped animals will be your wages,' then the whole flock produced striped young. **9** In this way, God has taken your father's animals and given them to me. **10** "One time during the mating season, I had a dream and saw that the male goats mating with the females were streaked, speckled, and spotted. **11** Then in my dream, the angel of God said to me, 'Jacob!' And I replied, 'Yes, here I am.' **12** "The angel said, 'Look up, and you will see that only the streaked, speckled, and spotted males are mating with the females of your flock. For I have seen how Laban has treated you. **13** I am the God who appeared to you at Bethel, the place where you anointed the pillar of stone and made your vow to me. Now get ready and leave this country and return to the land of your birth.'" **14** Rachel and Leah responded, "That's fine with us! We won't inherit any of our father's wealth anyway. **15** He has reduced our rights to those of foreign women. And after he sold us, he wasted the money you paid him for us. **16** All the wealth God has given you from our father legally belongs to us and our children. So go ahead and do whatever God has told you."

Psalm 12:1-8

12 **1** Help, O LORD, for the godly are fast disappearing! The faithful have vanished from the earth! **2** Neighbors lie to each other, speaking with flattering lips and deceitful hearts. **3** May the LORD cut off their flattering lips and silence their boastful tongues. **4** They say, "We will lie to our hearts' content. Our lips are our own—who can stop us?" **5** The LORD replies, "I have seen violence done to the helpless, and I have heard the groans of the poor. Now I will rise up to rescue them, as they have longed for me to do." **6** The LORD's promises are pure, like silver refined in a furnace, purified seven times over. **7** Therefore, LORD, we know you will protect the

oppressed, preserving them forever from this lying generation, **8** even though the wicked strut about, and evil is praised throughout the land.

Proverbs 3:13-15

3 13 Joyful is the person who finds wisdom, the one who gains understanding. **14** For wisdom is more profitable than silver, and her wages are better than gold. **15** Wisdom is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her.

Matthew 10:1-23

10 1 Jesus called his twelve disciples together and gave them authority to cast out evil spirits and to heal every kind of disease and illness. **2** Here are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (also called Peter), then Andrew (Peter's brother), James (son of Zebedee), John (James's brother), **3** Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew (the tax collector), James (son of Alphaeus), Thaddaeus, **4** Simon (the zealot), Judas Iscariot (who later betrayed him). **5** Jesus sent out the twelve apostles with these instructions: "Don't go to the Gentiles or the Samaritans, **6** but only to the people of Israel—God's lost sheep. **7** Go and announce to them that the Kingdom of Heaven is near. **8** Heal the sick, raise the dead, cure those with leprosy, and cast out demons. Give as freely as you have received! **9** "Don't take any money in your money belts—no gold, silver, or even copper coins. **10** Don't carry a traveler's bag with a change of clothes and sandals or even a walking stick. Don't hesitate to accept hospitality, because those who work deserve to be fed. **11** "Whenever you enter a city or village, search for a worthy person and stay in his home until you leave town. **12** When you enter the home, give it your blessing. **13** If it turns out to be a worthy home, let your blessing stand; if it is not, take back the blessing. **14** If any household or town refuses to welcome you or listen to your message, shake its dust from your feet as you leave. **15** I tell you the truth, the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah will be better off than such a town on the judgment day. **16** "Look, I am sending you out as sheep among wolves. So be as shrewd as snakes and harmless as doves. **17** But beware! For you will be handed over to the courts and will be flogged with whips in the synagogues. **18** You will stand trial before governors and kings because you are my followers. But this will be your opportunity to tell the rulers and other unbelievers about me. **19** When you are arrested, don't worry about how to respond or what to say. God will give you the right words at the right time. **20** For it is not you who will be speaking—it will be the Spirit of your Father

speaking through you. **21** “A brother will betray his brother to death, a father will betray his own child, and children will rebel against their parents and cause them to be killed. **22** And all nations will hate you because you are my followers. But everyone who endures to the end will be saved. **23** When you are persecuted in one town, flee to the next. I tell you the truth, the Son of Man will return before you have reached all the towns of Israel.