

Bible Text New International Version	Who are the people involved and what is the situation?	What traits of God are displayed in this story? What are the traits of the people?	In what ways do you see yourself in this story? How is God inviting you to respond?
<p><b>Gen 29:31-30:24</b> <b>Jacob's Children</b></p> <p><sup>31</sup> When the LORD saw that Leah was not loved, he enabled her to conceive, but Rachel remained childless. <sup>32</sup> Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Reuben,<sup>[a]</sup> for she said, "It is because the LORD has seen my misery. Surely my husband will love me now."</p> <p><sup>33</sup> She conceived again, and when she gave birth to a son she said, "Because the LORD heard that I am not loved, he gave me this one too." So she named him Simeon.<sup>[b]</sup></p> <p><sup>34</sup> Again she conceived, and when she gave birth to a son she said, "Now at last my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." So he was named Levi.<sup>[c]</sup></p> <p><sup>35</sup> She conceived again, and when she gave birth to a son she said, "This time I will praise the LORD." So she named him Judah.<sup>[d]</sup> Then she stopped having children. <i>(continued)</i></p> <p>a. Gen 29:32 - <i>Reuben</i> sounds like the Hebrew for <i>he has seen my misery</i>; the name means <i>see, a son</i>.</p> <p>b. Gen 29:33 - <i>Simeon</i> probably means <i>one who hears</i>.</p> <p>c. Gen 29:34 - <i>Levi</i> sounds like and may be derived from the Hebrew for <i>attached</i>.</p> <p>d. Gen 29:35 - <i>Judah</i> sounds like and may be derived from the Hebrew for <i>praise</i>.</p>			

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<p><b>Gen 29:31-30:24 - continued</b></p> <p><b>30</b> When Rachel saw that she was not bearing Jacob any children, she became jealous of her sister. So she said to Jacob, "Give me children, or I'll die!"</p> <p><sup>2</sup> Jacob became angry with her and said, "Am I in the place of God, who has kept you from having children?"</p> <p><sup>3</sup> Then she said, "Here is Bilhah, my servant. Sleep with her so that she can bear children for me and I too can build a family through her."</p> <p><sup>4</sup> So she gave him her servant Bilhah as a wife. Jacob slept with her, <sup>5</sup>and she became pregnant and bore him a son. <sup>6</sup>Then Rachel said, "God has vindicated me; he has listened to my plea and given me a son." Because of this she named him Dan.<sup>[e]</sup></p> <p><sup>7</sup> Rachel's servant Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son. <sup>8</sup> Then Rachel said, "I have had a great struggle with my sister, and I have won." So she named him Naphtali.<sup>[f]</sup></p> <p><sup>9</sup> When Leah saw that she had stopped having children, she took her servant Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife. <sup>10</sup> Leah's servant Zilpah bore Jacob a son. <sup>11</sup> Then Leah said, "What good fortune!"<sup>[g]</sup> So she named him Gad.<sup>[h]</sup> <i>(continued)</i></p> <p>e. Gen 30:6 - <i>Dan</i> here means <i>he has vindicated</i>.</p> <p>f. Gen 30:8 - <i>Naphtali</i> means <i>my struggle</i>.</p> <p>g. Gen 30:11 - Or "<i>A troop is coming!</i>"</p> <p>h. Gen 30:11 - <i>Gad</i> can mean <i>good fortune</i> or <i>a troop</i>.</p>			

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<p><b>Gen 29:31-30:24 - continued</b></p> <p><sup>12</sup> Leah's servant Zilpah bore Jacob a second son. <sup>13</sup> Then Leah said, "How happy I am! The women will call me happy." So she named him Asher.<sup>[i]</sup></p> <p><sup>14</sup> During wheat harvest, Reuben went out into the fields and found some mandrake plants, which he brought to his mother Leah. Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes."</p> <p><sup>15</sup> But she said to her, "Wasn't it enough that you took away my husband? Will you take my son's mandrakes too?"</p> <p>"Very well," Rachel said, "he can sleep with you tonight in return for your son's mandrakes."</p> <p><sup>16</sup> So when Jacob came in from the fields that evening, Leah went out to meet him. "You must sleep with me," she said. "I have hired you with my son's mandrakes." So he slept with her that night.</p> <p><sup>17</sup> God listened to Leah, and she became pregnant and bore Jacob a fifth son. <sup>18</sup> Then Leah said, "God has rewarded me for giving my servant to my husband." So she named him Issachar.<sup>[j]</sup></p> <p><sup>19</sup> Leah conceived again and bore Jacob a sixth son. <sup>20</sup> Then Leah said, "God has presented me with a precious gift. This time my husband will treat me with honor, because I have borne him six sons." So she named him Zebulun.<sup>[k]</sup></p> <p><sup>21</sup> Some time later she gave birth to a daughter and named her Dinah. <i>(continued)</i></p> <p>i. Gen 30:13 - <i>Asher</i> means <i>happy</i>.  j. Gen 30:18 - <i>Issachar</i> sounds like the Hebrew for <i>reward</i>.  k. Gen 30:20 - <i>Zebulun</i> probably means <i>honor</i>.</p>			

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<p><b>Gen 29:31-30:24 – <i>continued</i></b></p> <p><sup>22</sup> Then God remembered Rachel; he listened to her and enabled her to conceive. <sup>23</sup> She became pregnant and gave birth to a son and said, “God has taken away my disgrace.” <sup>24</sup> She named him Joseph,<sup>1</sup> and said, “May the LORD add to me another son.”</p> <p><b>Gen 31:1-55</b>  <b>Jacob Flees From Laban</b></p> <p><b>31</b> Jacob heard that Laban’s sons were saying, “Jacob has taken everything our father owned and has gained all this wealth from what belonged to our father.” <sup>2</sup> And Jacob noticed that Laban’s attitude toward him was not what it had been.</p> <p><sup>3</sup> Then the LORD said to Jacob, “Go back to the land of your fathers and to your relatives, and I will be with you.”</p> <p><sup>4</sup> So Jacob sent word to Rachel and Leah to come out to the fields where his flocks were. <sup>5</sup> He said to them, “I see that your father’s attitude toward me is not what it was before, but the God of my father has been with me. <sup>6</sup> You know that I’ve worked for your father with all my strength, <sup>7</sup> yet your father has cheated me by changing my wages ten times. However, God has not allowed him to harm me. <sup>8</sup> If he said, ‘The speckled ones will be your wages,’ then all the flocks gave birth to speckled young; and if he said, ‘The streaked ones will be your wages,’ then all the flocks bore streaked young. <sup>9</sup> So God has taken away your father’s livestock and has given them to me. (<i>continued</i>)</p> <p>1. Gen 30:24 - <i>Joseph</i> means <i>may he add</i>.</p>			

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<p><b>Gen 31:1-55 - <i>continued</i></b></p> <p><sup>10</sup> “In breeding season I once had a dream in which I looked up and saw that the male goats mating with the flock were streaked, speckled or spotted. <sup>11</sup> The angel of God said to me in the dream, ‘Jacob.’ I answered, ‘Here I am.’ <sup>12</sup> And he said, ‘Look up and see that all the male goats mating with the flock are streaked, speckled or spotted, for I have seen all that Laban has been doing to you. <sup>13</sup> I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and where you made a vow to me. Now leave this land at once and go back to your native land.”</p> <p><sup>14</sup> Then Rachel and Leah replied, “Do we still have any share in the inheritance of our father’s estate? <sup>15</sup> Does he not regard us as foreigners? Not only has he sold us, but he has used up what was paid for us. <sup>16</sup> Surely all the wealth that God took away from our father belongs to us and our children. So do whatever God has told you.”</p> <p><sup>17</sup> Then Jacob put his children and his wives on camels, <sup>18</sup> and he drove all his livestock ahead of him, along with all the goods he had accumulated in Paddan Aram,<sup>a</sup> to go to his father Isaac in the land of Canaan.</p> <p><sup>19</sup> When Laban had gone to shear his sheep, Rachel stole her father’s household gods. <sup>20</sup> Moreover, Jacob deceived Laban the Aramean by not telling him he was running away. <sup>21</sup> So he fled with all he had, crossed the Euphrates River, and headed for the hill country of Gilead. (<i>continued</i>)</p> <p>a. Gen 31:18 - That is, Northwest Mesopotamia</p>			

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<p><b>Gen 31:1-55 - <i>continued</i></b> <b>Laban Pursues Jacob</b>  <sup>22</sup> On the third day Laban was told that Jacob had fled. <sup>23</sup> Taking his relatives with him, he pursued Jacob for seven days and caught up with him in the hill country of Gilead. <sup>24</sup> Then God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream at night and said to him, "Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad."  <sup>25</sup> Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country of Gilead when Laban overtook him, and Laban and his relatives camped there too. <sup>26</sup> Then Laban said to Jacob, "What have you done? You've deceived me, and you've carried off my daughters like captives in war. <sup>27</sup> Why did you run off secretly and deceive me? Why didn't you tell me, so I could send you away with joy and singing to the music of timbrels and harps? <sup>28</sup> You didn't even let me kiss my grandchildren and my daughters goodbye. You have done a foolish thing. <sup>29</sup> I have the power to harm you; but last night the God of your father said to me, 'Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad.' <sup>30</sup> Now you have gone off because you longed to return to your father's household. But why did you steal my gods?"  <sup>31</sup> Jacob answered Laban, "I was afraid, because I thought you would take your daughters away from me by force. <sup>32</sup> But if you find anyone who has your gods, that person shall not live. In the presence of our relatives, see for yourself whether there is anything of yours here with me; and if so, take it." Now Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen the gods. (<i>continued</i>)</p>			

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<p><b>Gen 31:1-55 - continued</b></p> <p><sup>33</sup> So Laban went into Jacob's tent and into Leah's tent and into the tent of the two female servants, but he found nothing. After he came out of Leah's tent, he entered Rachel's tent. <sup>34</sup> Now Rachel had taken the household gods and put them inside her camel's saddle and was sitting on them. Laban searched through everything in the tent but found nothing.</p> <p><sup>35</sup> Rachel said to her father, "Don't be angry, my lord, that I cannot stand up in your presence; I'm having my period." So he searched but could not find the household gods.</p> <p><sup>36</sup> Jacob was angry and took Laban to task. "What is my crime?" he asked Laban. "How have I wronged you that you hunt me down? <sup>37</sup> Now that you have searched through all my goods, what have you found that belongs to your household? Put it here in front of your relatives and mine, and let them judge between the two of us.</p> <p><sup>38</sup> "I have been with you for twenty years now. Your sheep and goats have not miscarried, nor have I eaten rams from your flocks. <sup>39</sup> I did not bring you animals torn by wild beasts; I bore the loss myself. And you demanded payment from me for whatever was stolen by day or night. <sup>40</sup> This was my situation: The heat consumed me in the daytime and the cold at night, and sleep fled from my eyes. <sup>41</sup> It was like this for the twenty years I was in your household. I worked for you fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your flocks, and you changed my wages ten times. <sup>42</sup> If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had not been with me, you would surely have sent me away empty-handed. But God has seen my hardship and the toil of my hands, and last night he rebuked you." (<i>cont'd</i>)</p>			

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<p><b>Gen 31:1-55 - continued</b></p> <p><sup>43</sup> Laban answered Jacob, “The women are my daughters, the children are my children, and the flocks are my flocks. All you see is mine. Yet what can I do today about these daughters of mine, or about the children they have borne? <sup>44</sup> Come now, let’s make a covenant, you and I, and let it serve as a witness between us.”</p> <p><sup>45</sup> So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar. <sup>46</sup> He said to his relatives, “Gather some stones.” So they took stones and piled them in a heap, and they ate there by the heap. <sup>47</sup> Laban called it Jegar Sahadutha, and Jacob called it Galeed.<sup>b</sup></p> <p><sup>48</sup> Laban said, “This heap is a witness between you and me today.” That is why it was called Galeed. <sup>49</sup> It was also called Mizpah,<sup>c</sup> because he said, “May the LORD keep watch between you and me when we are away from each other. <sup>50</sup> If you mistreat my daughters or if you take any wives besides my daughters, even though no one is with us, remember that God is a witness between you and me.”</p> <p><sup>51</sup> Laban also said to Jacob, “Here is this heap, and here is this pillar I have set up between you and me. <sup>52</sup> This heap is a witness, and this pillar is a witness, that I will not go past this heap to your side to harm you and that you will not go past this heap and pillar to my side to harm me. <sup>53</sup> May the God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us.” <i>(continued)</i></p> <p>b. Gen 31:47 - The Aramaic <i>Jegar Sahadutha</i> and the Hebrew <i>Galeed</i> both mean <i>witness heap</i>. c. Gen 31:49 - <i>Mizpah</i> means <i>watchtower</i>.</p>			



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<p><b>Gen 31:1-55 - continued</b></p> <p>So Jacob took an oath in the name of the Fear of his father Isaac. <sup>54</sup> He offered a sacrifice there in the hill country and invited his relatives to a meal. After they had eaten, they spent the night there.</p> <p><sup>55</sup> Early the next morning Laban kissed his grandchildren and his daughters and blessed them. Then he left and returned home. <sup>d</sup></p> <p><b>Gen 35:16-26</b></p> <p><b>The Deaths of Rachel and Isaac</b></p> <p><sup>16</sup> Then they moved on from Bethel. While they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel began to give birth and had great difficulty. <sup>17</sup> And as she was having great difficulty in childbirth, the midwife said to her, “Don’t despair, for you have another son.” <sup>18</sup> As she breathed her last—for she was dying—she named her son Ben-Oni. <sup>e</sup> But his father named him Benjamin. <sup>f</sup></p> <p><sup>19</sup> So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem). <sup>20</sup> Over her tomb Jacob set up a pillar, and to this day that pillar marks Rachel’s tomb.</p> <p><sup>21</sup> Israel moved on again and pitched his tent beyond Migdal Eder. <sup>22</sup> While Israel was living in that region, Reuben went in and slept with his father’s concubine Bilhah, and Israel heard of it. <i>(continued)</i></p> <p>d. Gen 31:55 - The Aramaic <i>Jegar Sahadutha</i> and the Hebrew <i>Galeed</i> both mean <i>witness heap</i>.</p> <p>e. Gen 35:18 - <i>Ben-Oni</i> means <i>son of my trouble</i>.</p> <p>f. Gen 35:18 - <i>Benjamin</i> means <i>son of my right hand</i>.</p>			

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<p><b>Gen 35:16-26 - <i>continued</i></b></p> <p>Jacob had twelve sons:</p> <p><sup>23</sup> The sons of Leah:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Reuben the firstborn of Jacob, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar and Zebulun.</p> <p><sup>24</sup> The sons of Rachel:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Joseph and Benjamin.</p> <p><sup>25</sup> The sons of Rachel's servant Bilhah:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Dan and Naphtali.</p> <p><sup>26</sup> The sons of Leah's servant Zilpah:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Gad and Asher.</p> <p>These were the sons of Jacob, who were born to him in Paddan Aram.</p>			

**Reflections**

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In the story of Rachel and Leah, the deceiver, Jacob, was himself deceived. Do you see any generational sin in your family? If so, what is it, and how can you break the chain?

We all have strengths and weaknesses, and we all compare ourselves to others. How do you praise God for the weaknesses in your life?



# The God Who Sees: a Study of Women in the Bible

## Prayer Requests

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