

Bible Essentials

Scripture Passage: Genesis 29:14-30

As a group, share something about your past week. For example, share prayer requests and answers to prayer. Share the best and worst moments of your week (highs and lows). Write prayer requests here. Open with prayer for these requests and for God to open your hearts to this week's study.

What is the one thing in your life you have had to work hardest for?

Read today's passage. Discuss your initial impressions of the passage. Write any major points here.

Here is some context for Genesis 29:14-30.

The last time we saw Jacob and Esau, Jacob had just stolen Esau's blessing by disguising himself as Esau. This caused Esau to hate Jacob, and Esau consoled himself by promising to kill Jacob. Rebekah overheard this and told Jacob, sending him away to her brother Laban for safety. While he was on his way, Jacob had a dream, and in the dream, God confirmed to Jacob that he was now under the covenant that God had made with Abraham. God's promise to Abraham would now extend to Jacob as well, including the promise of land, descendants, and blessing. Even more important, God's presence would be with Jacob wherever he goes.

After the dream, Jacob promised to make God his God if God would grant him safety and success on his trip to live with Laban. Eventually, Jacob came to a place where some shepherds and their flocks were gathered, and he asked if they knew Laban. They pointed out Laban's daughter, Rachel, who had just arrived with her flock of sheep. Jacob watered Rachel's sheep and revealed who he was. Rachel ran back to her father and told him, and Laban embraced Jacob and brought him home.

What are your thoughts about the context? Discuss the context as a group. Write some key points here.

Read the passage again. Use a different Bible version if you have one available. Have someone summarize the passage in their own words, and use this space to record that summary.

Look closely at the passage and answer the following questions as a group. Write notes in the space provided.

What does the passage say about God?

What does the passage say about people?

What does the passage say about God's plan?

What else strikes you about this passage?

Understanding how a passage fits into the overarching story of the Bible is important.

This story is where we see the foundation of God’s promise to make Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob into a great nation being set up. God’s promise to Abraham only extended through one son—Isaac. God’s promise to Isaac only extended to one son—Jacob. Both Abraham and Isaac had other descendants through whom God’s blessing did not pass. But all that changes with Jacob. God’s blessing didn’t flow to only one of Jacob’s descendants. It flowed to all of them. Through Leah, Rachel, Zilpah, and Bilhah, we see the 12 tribes of Israel be born. These tribes are the focus of the rest of the Old Testament and into the New Testament.

What are your thoughts on how this passage fits into the overarching story of the Bible? Discuss as a group. What questions do you have individually or as a group? Discuss potential answers.

As a group, use the following questions to apply today's Scripture passage to your life.
How does this passage affect how you view God?

How does this passage affect how you view yourself?

How does this passage affect how you will live your life?

Close in prayer, asking God to help you apply what you learned today.