

33-35 She became pregnant again and had another son. “GOD heard,” she said, “that I was unloved and so he gave me this son also.” She named this one Simeon (GOD-Heard). She became pregnant yet again — another son. She said, “Now maybe my husband will connect with me — I’ve given him three sons!” That’s why she named him Levi (Connect). She became pregnant a final time and had a fourth son. She said, “This time I’ll praise GOD.” So she named him Judah (Praise-GOD). Then she stopped having children.



1 **30** When Rachel realized that she wasn’t having any children for Jacob, she became jealous of her sister. She told Jacob, “Give me sons or I’ll die!”

2 Jacob got angry with Rachel and said, “Am I God? Am I the one who refused you babies?”

3-5 Rachel said, “Here’s my maid Bilhah. Sleep with her. Let her substitute for me so I can have a child through her and build a family.” So she gave him her maid Bilhah for a wife and Jacob slept with her. Bilhah became pregnant and gave Jacob a son.

6-8 Rachel said, “God took my side and vindicated me. He listened to me and gave me a son.” She named him Dan (Vindication). Rachel’s maid Bilhah became pregnant again and gave Jacob a second son. Rachel said, “I’ve been in an all-out fight with my sister — and I’ve won.” So she named him Naphtali (Fight).

9-13 When Leah saw that she wasn’t having any more children, she gave her maid Zilpah to Jacob for a wife. Zilpah had a son for Jacob. Leah said, “How fortunate!” and she named him Gad (Lucky). When Leah’s maid Zilpah had a second son for Jacob, Leah said, “A happy day! The women will congratulate me in my happiness.” So she named him Asher (Happy).

14 One day during the wheat harvest Reuben found some mandrakes in the field and brought them home to his mother Leah. Rachel asked Leah, “Could I please have some of your son’s mandrakes?”

15 Leah said, “Wasn’t it enough that you got my husband away from me? And now you also want my son’s mandrakes?”

Rachel said, “All right. I’ll let him sleep with you tonight in exchange for your son’s love-apples.”

16-21 When Jacob came home that evening from the fields, Leah was there to meet him: “Sleep with me tonight; I’ve bartered my son’s mandrakes for a night with you.” So he slept with her that night. God listened to Leah; she became pregnant and gave Jacob a fifth son. She said, “God rewarded me for giving my maid to my husband.” She named him Issachar (Bartered). Leah became pregnant yet again and gave Jacob a sixth son, saying, “God has given me a great gift. This time my husband will honor me with gifts — I’ve given him six sons!” She named him Zebulun (Honor). Last of all she had a daughter and named her Dinah.

22-24 And then God remembered Rachel. God listened to her and opened her

womb. She became pregnant and had a son. She said, “God has taken away my humiliation.” She named him Joseph (Add), praying, “May GOD add yet another son to me.”



25-26 After Rachel had had Joseph, Jacob spoke to Laban, “Let me go back home. Give me my wives and children for whom I’ve served you. You know how hard I’ve worked for you.”

27-28 Laban said, “If you please, I have learned through divine inquiry that GOD has blessed me because of you.” He went on, “So name your wages. I’ll pay you.”

29-30 Jacob replied, “You know well what my work has meant to you and how your livestock has flourished under my care. The little you had when I arrived has increased greatly; everything I did resulted in blessings for you. Isn’t it about time that I do something for my own family?”

31-33 “So, what should I pay you?”

Jacob said, “You don’t have to pay me a thing. But how about this? I will go back to pasture and care for your flocks. Go through your entire flock today and take out every speckled or spotted sheep, every dark-colored lamb, every spotted or speckled goat. They will be my wages. That way you can check on my honesty when you assess my wages. If you find any goat that’s not speckled or spotted or a sheep that’s not black, you will know that I stole it.”

34 “Fair enough,” said Laban. “It’s a deal.”

35-36 But that very day Laban removed all the mottled and spotted billy goats and all the speckled and spotted nanny goats, every animal that had even a touch of white on it plus all the black sheep and placed them under the care of his sons. Then he put a three-day journey between himself and Jacob. Meanwhile Jacob went on tending what was left of Laban’s flock.

37-42 But Jacob got fresh branches from poplar, almond, and plane trees and peeled the bark, leaving white stripes on them. He stuck the peeled branches in front of the watering troughs where the flocks came to drink. When the flocks were in heat, they came to drink and mated in front of the streaked branches. Then they gave birth to young that were streaked or spotted or speckled. Jacob placed the ewes before the dark-colored animals of Laban. That way he got distinctive flocks for himself which he didn’t mix with Laban’s flocks. And when the sturdier animals were mating, Jacob placed branches at the troughs in view of the animals so that they mated in front of the branches. But he wouldn’t set up the branches before the feebler animals. That way the feeble animals went to Laban and the sturdy ones to Jacob.

43 The man got richer and richer, acquiring huge flocks, lots and lots of servants, not to mention camels and donkeys.

1-2 **31** Jacob learned that Laban’s sons were talking behind his back: “Jacob has used our father’s wealth to make himself rich at our father’s expense.” At the same time, Jacob noticed that Laban had changed