



Portion:

Title:

SCRIPTURES

- Genesis 28:10-32:2
- Judges 16:19-20
- Ecclesiastes 10:15
- Hebrews 2:2
- Job 4:8
- Hebrew 12:14-15
- Romans 12:17-19

BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS

- Eyes Pointed in the Wrong Direction
- Ultimatums to Yahweh
- Character Development
- Boomerang!
- Confrontation Avoidance
- The Ultimate Goal

What's your problem? You know, everyone has at least one. We've all witnessed or endured something significant. I would not have to press too hard for you to remember at least one serious event or circumstance that was so impactful that it is now lodged in your brain. It's stuck in your mind as if it is actually engraved in your memory.

As you search your memories, and consider both sides of those meaningful events, whether you were the perpetrator or the victim, I am confident you will find several. And what you will notice, as much as you'd like to ignore it, and as painful as it might

be to contemplate, the cycle of those traumas have repeated over and over again. I am sure this has made you wonder; “How can this keep happening?”

*Well, the answer is rather simple...it boils down to our **Behavioral Patterns**. Whether you like it or not, we have all inherited corrupted DNA, just like Jacob. Let me be clear, this is not an excuse, especially for the Believer! Let’s just call it a reason, not an excuse. The Bible encourages us; “I can do **all things** through Christ who strengthens me.” Wouldn’t getting rid of those **Behavioral Patterns** be included in “all things”? The answer is a resounding YES!!*

*The Biblical account of Jacob’s journey, after he was asked to depart in search of a wife, points us to several **Behavioral Patterns**. We must, must recognize them; and even more critical, we must forbid ourselves from repeating them!*

THEME: MAIN SCRIPTURE(S) THAT HAS INSPIRED MESSAGE

*Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land. For **I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.**” Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely the LORD is in this place, and **I did not know it.**” And he was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place!*

This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.” Genesis 28:15-17 ESV

Then Jacob made a vow, saying, ***“If God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, so that I come again to my father’s house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God,*** and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God’s house. And of all that you give me I will give a full tenth to you.” Genesis 28:20-22 ESV

And in the morning, behold, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, “What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? ***Why then have you deceived me?***” Genesis 29:25 ESV

OUTCOME: MAIN TAKEAWAY(S) I AM HOPING FOR PEOPLE

“I can do **all things** through him who strengthens me.”

Philippians 4:13 ESV

Let’s Set the Scene: Portion in a blurb

1. Now it is Jacob’s turn to get moving. This portion is named for the words in Genesis 28:10, *“And Jacob went out from Beersheba.”* The area we will study this week records the story of Jacob’s flight from his brother Esau, his stairway vision at Bethel, how he lands in the employment of his uncle Laban (his

mother Rebekah's brother), and his eventual marriage to two sisters (Laban's daughters), Leah (the firstborn) and Rachel. Jacob's double marriage results in the sisters' race to bear Jacob sons, initially giving him eleven, including those that are born from their maidservants. Rachel later bears Benjamin, Jacob's twelfth son. At the end of the portion, Jacob leaves Laban and returns to the land of Canaan, but not before Laban tries to stop him.

Genesis 28

2. **Jacob's Ladder:** This portion contains Jacob's famous vision at Luz which he then renames Bethel.
3. He dreams of a ladder from heaven reaching the earth, with Angels (messengers) going back and forth between heaven and earth.
 - a) I find it interesting to note that when you see any reference to angels in the Old Testament, as we see in Genesis 28:12, the word in Hebrew (malakê) means messenger or representative.
 - b) You may also find it interesting, as well, that the book of Malachi is often thought to be written by the prophet Malachi, as if it is his name. And although that could be true, it is really just saying, "*The burden of the word of the LORD to Israel by **Malachi**.*" (Malachi 1:1) In Hebrew it says, *The*

burden of the word of Yahweh to Israel by malākî [my messenger]."

4. Jacob sees Yahweh standing above the ladder and hears the confirmation of the promises made to his grandfather Abraham. "The land you are on right now will be yours and your descendants, and they will be too numerous to count, and through them the earth will be blessed." Plus, "I will always be with you and protect you until all I have promised comes to pass."
5. Jacob awakes and knows that Yahweh is in this awesome place; he declares, "This can be none other than the 'house of God [Bethel]!"
6. Jacob pledges a tenth of all his prosperity if Yahweh will protect and provide for him on his journey to where he going and then on his return to the land of promise.

Genesis 29

7. Jacob meets Rachel and kisses her. A bold move!
 - a) Jacob comes upon the well in the land to which he is traveling and he sees three flocks of sheep waiting to be watered. The shepherds explain to him how the well operates, and how they must roll a great stone out of the way before they water the sheep.

- b) It is the hottest part of the day and the cattle will not gather until later to be watered, so it is time to get the sheep in one place to water them.
 - c) Jacob inquires of these shepherds if they know Laban and if he is well. They affirm both, and behold, in that moment, they point out Laban's daughter Rachel as she approaches. A woman who approaches a well will eventually be Jacob's wife? Wow! As you may remember, a similar thing happened when Abraham's servant was approaching a well on his quest to find Isaac's wife, when he first met Rebekah.
 - d) Jacob rolls the stone away for Rachel and waters her dad's sheep, a prophetic foreshadowing of what he is about to do!
 - e) At this point he boldly kisses Rachel, as he reveals that he is her first cousin, the son of Rebekah, her father's sister.
8. Rachel runs to tell her father Laban that Jacob is his sister Rebekah's son and Laban rejoices, and he kisses Jacob when they meet. Rebekah did a similar thing when she ran back to report to her family what happened when she met Abraham's servant. Laban has seen a miracle like this before! Back then it was his sister who finds her husband; now it is his daughter who finds her husband. It just so happens that his daughter's husband-to-be is the fruit of the union of his sister's marriage, the one he instantly approved of back then. Wow!

9. Laban makes a prophetic statement to Jacob, after Rachel's testimony, that is of biblical proportions, affirming Rachel as his wife; *"And Laban said to him, **Surely you are my bone and my flesh.**" And he stayed with him for a month.*" Genesis 29:14 NKJV

a) **Remember Adam said that when he married Eve:** *"And Adam said: **This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh;** She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and **be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.**"* Genesis 2:23-24 NKJV

10. **Flashback:** Look what happened when Rebekah ran back to report to her brother Laban what occurred with Abraham's servant at the well, and then what Laban says when the servant tells him what happened!

a) **Rebekah to Laban:** *"Now Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban, and Laban ran out to the man by the well. So it came to pass, when he saw the nose ring, and the bracelets on his sister's wrists, and **when he heard the words of his sister Rebekah,** saying, "Thus the man spoke to me," that he went to the man. And there he stood by the camels at the well. And he said, **"Come in, O blessed of the LORD!***

Why do you stand outside? For I have prepared the house, and a place for the camels.”” Genesis 24:29-31 NKJV

b) **The Servant to Laban:** *“Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, “**The thing comes from the LORD**; we cannot speak to you either bad or good. Here is Rebekah before you; **take her and go, and let her be your master’s son’s wife, as the LORD has spoken.**””* Genesis 24:50-51 NKJV

11. Laban is so overjoyed at Rachel’s testimony that he offers Jacob employment. He asks Jacob what he would like in return, as he sees that his nephew should not work for free.

12. Jacob looks at Laban’s daughters and sees delicate Leah and beautiful Rachel and he knows he is already in love with Rachel. Jacobs offers to work seven years for Rachel to become his wife.

13. Laban agrees, as he sees marrying Rachel to a man in the family is better than giving her to another man.

14. But...when seven years are fulfilled Laban tricks Jacob and sends Leah into his marriage chambers (one might ask: “How could Jacob not know?”)

a) *“So it came to pass in the morning, that behold, it was Leah. And he said to Laban, “What is this you have done to me? Was it not for Rachel that I served you? **Why then have you deceived me?**””* Genesis 29:25 NKJV

b) One might see this as the fruit of Jacob's past actions, as he was complicit with his mother Rebekah (Laban's sister) in the **deceptive plot** to steal his brother Esau's blessing. (See [The Impetuous Seed](#))

15. Laban explains to Jacob that in his land it is simply not done that the younger daughter would be given in marriage before her older sister. Jacob marries Leah and then works another seven years for Rachel! That is commitment!

16. After seven more years he also marries Rachel. Both daughters come with maidservants, Leah has Zilpah and Rachel has Bilhah. These maidservants play prominent roles as they too will bear sons to Jacob, sons who will eventually become the tribes of Israel!

a) See the birth chart on the last page of last year's notes on this Torah Portion: [Still Chasing Idols](#)

17. Jacob agrees to an additional seven years of service for Laban (total 21 years), during which time he prospers and Leah bears his first four sons: Reuben, Simeon, **Levi**, and **Judah**.

Genesis 30

18. Rachel is barren up to this point and she is distraught. Jacob is not happy with her as he claims, "It's not my fault." Rachel's solution is to offer her maidservant Bilhah to bear children for her. Bilhah gives Jacob Dan and Naphtali (sons five and six).

19. Since Leah had stopped bearing sons after Judah (#4), she then offers her maidservant Zilpah who gives Jacob sons seven and eight, Gad and Asher.
20. Rueben (Leah's firstborn) then comes in from the field with mandrakes—an ancient plant known for its potential to promote fertility. Rachel wants some, but Leah is like, "You already took my husband, now you want my mandrakes too?" Rachel promises Leah that she would encourage Jacob to lie with her that evening if she shared her mandrakes. That is exactly what happens and Jacobs ninth son, Issachar comes from it, and then later Yahweh gives Leah her sixth son, Jacob's tenth, Zebulun. Leah does have a daughter Dinah following Zebulun, but as a female she does not figure in the birth order.
21. Then God open's Rachel's womb, as she bears Joseph, Jacob's eleventh son, whom Jacob will ultimately consider like his firstborn, as Joseph IS THE FIRSTBORN of his true love Rachel. Number twelve, Benjamin, will not show up until much later.
22. At the end of the portion, Jacob agrees to leave Laban.
 - a) *"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 for you."* Genesis 30:26 NKJV
23. Laban wants him to stay admitting that he has been abundantly blessed because of Jacob. Name your price and stay he offers:

a) *“And Laban 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.” Then he said, “Name me your wages, and I will give it. ””* Genesis 30:27-28 NKJV

24. Jacob says, “We all acknowledge that in my service to you Laban, you have prospered greatly, but you don’t have to ‘give’ me anything.” Instead, he asks if he may separate the flock and take only the spotted and speckled sheep with him, to which Laban is happy to agree. However, Laban then cheats Jacob a second time; the first was the Leah and Rachel swap.

(Remember, we are dealing with a pagan here!) Laban quickly extracts all the marked sheep and gives them to his own sons who take the flocks three-days’ journey away from Jacob, so there are none left for him.

25. Jacob sees what Laban has done and is blessed anyway, as Yahweh shows him a way to cause all the strongest sheep to give birth to spotted and speckled offspring.

a) *“Thus the man became exceedingly prosperous, and had large flocks, female and male servants, and camels and donkeys.”* Genesis 30:43 NKJV

Genesis 31

26. Laban reports to his wives the testimony of what has just taken place and how Yahweh’s hand is over his great prosperity.

Laban's daughters are happy to leave their father with Jacob's abundance, as they see it as their rightful inheritance.

27. Jacob sets out to return to the land of Canaan so prosperous that Laban tries to stop him. (How similar this is to Israel leaving Egypt later on in history?)

28. Before they leave, Rachel snatches Laban's household idols to take with her. **This is a Key Prophetic Moment!** I again refer to the teaching which elaborates on this topic: [Still Chasing Idols](#)

a) *"Now Laban had gone to shear his sheep, and Rachel had stolen the household idols that were her father's."* Genesis 31:19 NKJV

29. The missing idols infuriate Laban as he pursues Jacob. **Whoever took them will surly die!**

30. Of course, Jacob does not know Rachel stole them and he agrees to that consequence. Laban cannot find anything from his own household among Jacob's belongings, because Rachel is sitting on them in her tent when her father comes in to search. She apologizes for not being able to "rise to greet her father," as she tells him she is in her monthly flow. Laban moves on, never suspecting her.

31. Jacob then recounts with Laban his twenty years of faithful service and all the prosperity Laban has enjoyed because of

him, and in the end Jacob makes a covenant of peace with Laban.

32. Laban sets up a pillar of stone as a witness to delineate their lands, and the next morning blesses them and departs. Jacob then continues his journey!

EXHORTATION # 1

1. **Those focused on the natural never know whether God is there or not!**

A. Eyes Pointed in the Wrong Direction

- (1) Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land. For ***I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.*** 16 Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and ***I did not know it.***" 17 And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

Genesis 28:15-17 ESV

- (2) Jacob had just left Beersheba at the request of Isaac.
- a) Isaac had obeyed the exhortation of his wife Rebekah. She had reminded Isaac that they would be miserable if Jacob were to marry a Canaanite woman and that Jacob should go to Laban's house.

- b) On his journey to Padan-Aram, Jacob falls asleep and has a dream. In this dream he realizes he is surrounded by Spiritual beings ascending and descending on a ladder. (This is anthropomorphism.)
1. Anthropomorphism: the attribution of human characteristics or behavior to a god, animal, or object.
- (3) Having woken up from the dream, **Jacob realizes Yahweh** has had something to do with this dream and that this area has spiritual meaning.
- a) Moreover, Jacob **had failed to realize** God's presence around him the entire time.
- (4) Unbeknownst to him, the hounds of heaven have been on his tail the entire time, even before his birth.
- a) Much like in the story of Samson and Delilah (see Judges 16)—She made him sleep on her knees. And she called a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him. And she said, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" And he awoke from his sleep and said, "I will go out as at other times and shake myself free." **But he did not know that the LORD had left him.**

Judges 16:19-20 ESV

EXHORTATION # 2

2. Placing conditions upon the Sovereign God of the Universe is never a good idea!

A. Ultimatums to Yahweh

(1) Then Jacob made a vow, saying, ***“If God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God*** Genesis 28:

- a) ***The toil of a fool wearies him***, for he does not know the way to the city. Ecclesiastes 10:15 ESV
- (2) This sort of quasi-prayer of Jacob displays the shallowness of his view of who Yahweh is in the life of the believer.
 - a) From our side, there is no ***“If” and “then”*** as it relates to Yahweh. It is not a bargaining agreement. (Of course Yahweh makes all sorts of “if then” declarations.)
 - b) We can sound off pretty much the same way when we pray to God, can't we? Lord, if you.... (Fill in the blank) then I.... (Fill in the blank).

EXHORTATION # 3

3. God uses human desires as an initiative for character development.

A. Character Development

(1) Jacob said to them, "My brothers, where do you come from?" They said, "We are from Haran." He said to them, "Do you know Laban the son of Nahor?" They said, "We know him." He said to them, "Is it well with him?" They said, "It is well; **and see, Rachel his daughter is coming with the sheep!**" He said, "Behold, it is still high day; it is not time for the livestock to be gathered together. Water the sheep and go, pasture them." But they said, "We cannot until all the flocks are gathered together and the stone is rolled from the mouth of the well; then we water the sheep." While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherdess. **Now as soon as Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother,** Jacob came near and rolled the stone from the well's mouth and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. **Then Jacob kissed Rachel and wept aloud.**

Genesis 29:4-11

(2) We can only assume that Rachel was stunningly beautiful.

- a) In those days and culture, women were not able to expose their physical appearance as their attire would not show off much.
 - b) It is possible that Rachel's facial features, eyes, nose, hair etc were of such beauty that Jacob was instantly infatuated by her appearance.
- (3) He, taking after his mothers Rebekah's qualities, tries to get the men who introduced him to the fact Rachel was walking up with the sheep, to walk away from them, for what purpose? We are not told.
- a) The men refused as it was not yet time to do so and all of the flock was not there.
 - b) "We cannot until all the flocks are gathered together and the stone is rolled from the mouth of the well"
 - c) Jacob was concocting a way to be left alone with Rachel by trying to distract the men with the task of pasturing the flock.
- (4) Jacob's natural attraction for a beautiful woman is what God used to bring him into the situation by which his character would undergo a lengthy developmental course.**
- a) Very often we tend to overlook the very common everyday occurrences of life as indifferent, minor or of

no relevance to our walk with God. This ought not be so!

- b) God uses all things for His completion of a predetermined outcome. He had made a covenant with Abraham, which would eventually involve Isaac, and subsequently involve Jacob. None of what we read in Scriptures is futile; all of it has a specific spot for its appointed time.
- (5) Do you doubt this to be the case in your life?
- a) Why? Because you don't see yourself as an Abraham, or a Jacob, etc.?
 - b) Did it ever occur to you that the supporting roles of those surrounding them were equally important for the overall fulfillment of such promises?

EXHORTATION # 4

4. It all comes full circle. In other words, "You get what you give!" And, "What goes around comes around!"

A. Boomerang!

- (1) Jacob loved Rachel. And he said, "*I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel.*" Laban said, "*It is better that I give her to you* than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me." So *Jacob served seven years*

for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her. Genesis 29:18-20 ESV

(2) But in the evening **he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and he went in to her.** (Laban gave his

female servant Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her servant.) *And in the morning, behold, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, “What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? **Why then have you deceived me?**” Genesis 29:23-25 ESV*

- a) With the same premeditation with which Rebekah and Jacob carried out their deception toward Isaac, Laban carried out his toward Jacob!
 - b) Notice in verse 19 Laban said to Jacob **“It is better that I give her to you”**. All the while, he had no intentions of doing so unless Jacob were to marry Leah first.
 - c) However, Laban does not tell Jacob of this very important fact until after Jacob has spent the night with Leah?
 - d) How fitting is it that his mother’s own brother pulls off the same stunt on him (Jacob) that they both pulled on Isaac?
- (3) **Boomerang!** In Biblical terms, “sowing and reaping” also known as “God’s principle of retribution”

- a) For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a ***just retribution*** Hebrews 2:2 ESV
- b) As I have seen, those who ***plow iniquity and sow trouble reap the same.*** Job 4:8 ESV
- c) Is it possible that some of the problems we have encountered in our lives have been a direct result of our very own actions?
- d) According to Biblical principles, it seems very likely!

EXHORTATION # 5

5. Running away from *proper* confrontation makes one appear guilty.

A. Confrontation Avoidance

- (1) So Jacob arose and set his sons and his wives on camels. He drove away all his livestock, all his property that he had gained, the livestock in his possession that he had acquired in Paddan-aram, to go to the land of Canaan to his father Isaac. Laban had gone to shear his sheep, and Rachel stole her father's household gods. And Jacob tricked Laban the Aramean, ***by not telling him that he intended to flee. He fled with all that he had and arose and crossed the Euphrates, and set his face toward the hill***

country of Gilead. When it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob had fled, he took his kinsmen with him and pursued him for seven days and followed close after him into the hill country of Gilead. But God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream by night and said to him, "Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad." And Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country, and Laban with his kinsmen pitched tents in the hill country of Gilead. And Laban said to Jacob, "What have you done, that you have tricked me and driven away my daughters like captives of the sword? Why did you flee secretly and trick me, and did not tell me, so that I might have sent you away with mirth and songs, with tambourine and lyre? And why did you not permit me to kiss my sons and my daughters farewell? Now you have done foolishly. It is in my power to do you harm. But the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, 'Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad.'" Genesis 31:17-29 ESV

- a) Bringing less than desirable news to someone is never an easy task. However, it is definitely a character builder and makes it easier to get straight to the heart of

the matter, rather than first having to defend your innocence.

- (2) ***Strive for peace with everyone***, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. ***See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble***, and by it many become defiled Hebrews 12:14-15 ESV
- a) Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all.
- b) If possible, ***so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all***. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” Romans 12:17-19
ESV

CLOSING

6. The Ultimate Goal

A. In His Image

- (1) The ultimate goal of Yahweh in the life of the believer is to transform each and everyone of them into the image of His Son Y’shua (Jesus). It was so from the very beginning of creation.

- a) Just as a reminder, the Bible in the Book of Genesis 1:26 says “And God said, ***let us make man in our image***”.
 - b) Before all of creation was infected with sin through Adam and Eve’s disobedience, Yahweh had already devised an eternal plan to bring His creation **BACK** into fellowship with Him and to restore the image He originally infused into human beings.
- (2) See these teachings on our website:
- a) [The Image of God](#)
 - b) [The Image of God \(Short Version\)](#)
 - c) [The Image of God \(Conference Version\)](#)
- (3) In doing restoring His image, His simple and yet complex plan is laid out for us in the Book of Romans.
- a) “And we know that for those who love God *all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those **whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image** of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.” Romans 8:28-30 ESV*

- (4) Do you see His plan? His plan includes ***“all things working together.”***
- a) That means even the things we consider to be bad things, will ultimately gel with other things to, turning them good, overriding what, at one point, seemed to be bad.
 - b) Secondly, the end goal of that process is ***“to be conformed to the image of His Son.”***
 - c) How are we ever to accomplish such a tall order unless we surrender our will in exchange for His?
- (5) There is plenty of material in God’s Word to use as a mirror, and Yahweh expects us to do so.
- a) As matter of fact He tells us in James ***“ For if anyone is a hearer of the Word and not a doer, he is like a man studying his natural face in a mirror. For he studied himself and went his way, and immediately he forgot what he was like. But whoever looks into the perfect Law of liberty and continues in it, he is not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work. This one shall be blessed in his doing.***

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

- 1. Why is it so devastating for your faith to have your eyes focused on the natural?**
 - A. What is the meaning of Jacob's dream of the ladder?
 - B. What is an anthropomorphism?
- 2. Why is it a bad idea to give Yahweh an ultimatum?**
 - A. If...then...only works under what conditions?
- 3. How can God use human desires to develop his character?**
 - A. How is this on full display when Jacob meets Rachel?
- 4. How is the "boomerang effect" on full display in Jacob's life?**
 - A. Describe how this plays out in his pursuit of Rachel?
- 5. Why is it dangerous to always avoid confrontation?**
 - A. How can confrontation build character?
 - B. How can healthy confrontation help with pursuing peace?
- 6. What is the ultimate goal of your faith-walk?**