Torah Series - Book of Genesis

B. Chapters 30:1-32:31 – The 12 Tribes are born

Genesis 30:1-24 – Jerry Springer enters the Chat!

- Rachel is barren. **Envies Leah**, probably for the first time ever. Complains to Jacob.
- Recall: infertility was always viewed as the woman's fault (land vs seed). Jacob basically blames God for her lack of children.
- Rachel gives her servant **Bilhah** to Jacob for bearing vicarious children! (Flashback to Sarah & Hagar!) Get around God's planning. Didn't work well then, won't work well this time.
- Bilhah → **Dan** ("*judged*") Spoiler: Nothing good comes out of Dan (left out from the listing of the 12 tribes in Revelation!)
- Bilhah → **Naphtali** ("*wrestling*") Rachel: Haha! I beat my sister this time!
- Leah joins the fight with Zilpah!
- Zilpah → **Gad** ("*good fortune*"); **Asher** ("*happy/blessed*")
- Reuben finds **Mandrakes**. Nightshade family, sweet berries seen as aphrodesiac/**fertility** booster. Rachel wants them so she trades Leah a night with Jacob for them. (Flashback: Jacob & Esau's pot of stew). Hiring Jacob out as a male prostitute of sorts!
- Leah resumes birthing → **Issachar** ("*wages*"). → **Zebulun** ("*honour*") → Daughter **Dinah**.
- God remembers Rachel → **Joseph** ("*may he add*")

Genesis 30:25-43 – Jacob Prospers

- Jacob has been with Laban ~25 years or so. Time to go.
- Laban & Jacob make a deal. God has prospered Laban on Jacob's account.
- Jacob keeps the speckled sheep & goats. Laban keeps the pure white ones (more desirable)
- Jacob deceives Laban with the "birthing poplar trick" so that the flocks only produce speckled babies that Jacob gets to keep from the strongest of the flocks. Payback to Laban for the Leah swindle!
- Jacob becomes mega rich and prosperous, large flocks, slaves, camels & donkeys

Genesis 31:1-55 – Jacob & Laban part company

- God tells Jacob to get outta Dodge
- Leah & Rachel basically say that Jacob should take all their dad's flocks on account of Laban's shenanigans.
- Jacob: "God has taken away the livestock of your father and given them to me" (vs 9).
- Jacob saddles up everyone and takes off for Canaan.
- Rachel steals Labans household gods (protection deities)
- Laban finds out that they took everything and took off, pursues them.
- **Confrontation**: both men have alternate views of reality. Laban thinks Jacob stole from him. Jacob thinks Laban is a tyrant.
- Jacob offers to return anything of Laban's to Laban, not knowing Rachel stole the gods.
- Laban searches, can't find the gods, Rachel has them in her camel's saddle. Won't get up, blaming her time of the month.

- Jacob gets chapped and throws it back in Laban's face (vs 36-42).
- Laban: all these people and all this stuff is mine! But let's make a deal.
- They make a **stone cairn**. Laban calls it: *Jegar Sahadutha* ("witness pile" in Aramaic); Jacob calls it *Galeed* ("the pile is a witness" in Canaanite/Western/Hebrewish).
- Cairn is a marker of territory. You go that way, I'll go this way. Swear oaths on honour.
- The two groups part ways. Jacob is no longer welcome with his mom's side of the family and must return to his Father's side and deal again with Esau.

Genesis 32:1-21 – A gift for Esau

- Jacob sees the army of God encamped! Serves as a reminder of **God's promises** after he has been gone for quite some time.
- Jacob needs to **re-integrate** back into the family line of Isaac and Abraham's seed (plural) in a prominent way
- Jacob sends a delegation. Esau responds with sending 400 men!
- Jacob splits his people & possessions in two as a protective hedge against Esau
- Jacob prays hard to God.
- He prepares a massive gift for Esau vs. 14-16. Idea is Esau will be "appeased" (atonement) by the gift before meeting Jacob.

Genesis 32:22-32 – Tragically Hip

- Jacob sends his family across the Jabbok river so Esau might run into them first & maybe be merciful
- Jacob is alone and wrestles this mysterious man who shows up out of nowhere.
- Jacob is grasping/struggling with God (*hypostasis/2nd Person*) just has he did for his whole life with Esau/Laban/etc.
- Tragically Hip: Jacob is put out of socket
- Vs 28: "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but **Israel**, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed." Israel: "*He strives with God*".
- What is God's name? *Peniel* - the face of God.
- Jacob need not trust on his own ability/schemes but rather he needs to **trust God**. The hip limp reminds him of this.

