

My Time with God / Session 10

Day 1

Read Genesis 29:13-30.

- How did Laban deceive Jacob?

Deception comes in many ways, shapes, and forms. We can deceive others by lying to them, exaggerating things, understating the truth, or omitting important details or facts. Regardless of how we do it, our intent is to trick them for our own gain or to hurt them in some way. Deception often leads to feelings of betrayal and distrust. Most people expect friends and family to be truthful most of the time. Therefore, it is hurtful when we find we have been deceived, whatever the reason. Sometimes we don't realize how our deceitfulness hurts and angers others until someone deceives us. Some people might say, "We got a taste of our own medicine." This won't happen if we follow the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Day 2

Read Genesis 30:25-34.

- What kind of deal did Jacob make with Laban as wages for his service?

How do you feel about making a deal with someone who has cheated you in the past? It's difficult to trust someone who you know has tricked you before. You want to be fair to them, but your guard is up. When it is difficult to trust others, know that you can always trust God. He is always with us, and God never deceives.

Day 3

Read Genesis 31:1-16.

- Why did Jacob leave Laban?

Have you ever felt so uncomfortable around a group of people that you couldn't enjoy yourself and you had to leave the party or event? People can make us feel uncomfortable by what they say or do or even by the way they look at us. Envy and jealousy can cause others to mistreat us. That's what happened to Jacob. Laban's sons envied Jacob's success and harbored feelings of resentment and anger. Nonetheless, we can't just leave or move each time we sense that someone does not like us. Jacob didn't leave at the first sign of discord. He waited until God told him to leave. We can trust God to be with us in the midst of difficulty and to guide us away from painful situations.

Day 4

Read Genesis 32:1-12.

- Why did Jacob divide his people into two camps?

Our usual plan of action is to call upon God in times of trouble, and it is a good plan. Times of fear should be times of prayer. Whatever frightens us should drive us to our knees. Jacob was no different. He called out to God, because he feared for the lives of his family. He devised a plan to try to protect his family, yet he remained in prayer and trusted God as he marched on toward danger. Remember, God is an ever-present help in times of trouble. He wants us to call out to Him, do what we can, and trust Him completely.

Day 5

Read Genesis 32:13-23.

- Why did Jacob send Esau cattle, sheep, and goats?

As teenagers, my brother and I often disagreed about various things. Our disagreements were known to escalate, at times, into full-blown arguments. At times when I had lost my temper and said hurtful things, I would begin to feel guilt, remorse, and regret. So, I would bake chocolate chip cookies. My brother loved chocolate chip cookies! I would take the cookies, still warm from the oven, and go into his room to ask for forgiveness. The cookies were a sign of my sincerity. He knew that I wouldn't have baked them if I were not truly sorry. My gentle answer turned away his wrath.

Day 6

Read Genesis 32:24-32.

- Why did Jacob wrestle with an angel?

Prayers can be gentle praise to God. They can be simple "Thank You's" or intercession for others. Prayers can last seconds, minutes, or hours. Jacob's prayer was more like a wrestling match. It was a spiritual battle, fought with prayers and tears. Jacob was relentless and earnest in his prayer, never losing hope or faith, though his situation seemed bleak. We can pray at all times of the day or night, and God will hear our prayers. Persistent and fervent prayer is effectual.

Day 7

Read Genesis 33:1-11.

- What unexpectedly happened when Esau and Jacob met?

Prayer changes things. Nothing is impossible with God. He can change the minds and hearts of people and give us favor with our enemies. He can take away feelings of hurt, anger, and revenge, and replace them with peace, love, and forgiveness. Prayer is the key that unlocks God's grace and mercy. Never underestimate the power of prayer.