



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



Jacob and Laban

September 10, 2017

10:30 Service of the Word

Jacob left home and set out on a 500 mile journey to his uncle Laban. In today's reading from Genesis Jacob reaches his uncle's home and settles in – sort of. Jacob, who has been swindling and manipulating people his whole life, gets a taste of his own medicine. Uncle Laban is a manipulator too. This is not the story of a happy family, but God is with Jacob always just as God promised.

Welcome to worship today!

If you are visiting with us we invite you to sign the Guest Book in the back of the sanctuary.

Nursery care is available during the service. Please see one of the ushers if you need more information.

† GATHERING †

Prelude and Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, the one who fashions us, the one who heals us, the one who reforms us again and again.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin, calling for God's transforming power.

Silence for reflection and self-examination

P: Source of all life,

C: we confess that we have not allowed your grace to set us free. We still fear that we are not good enough. We hear your word of love freely given to us, yet we expect others to earn it. We turn the church inward, rather than moving it outward. Forgive us. Stir us. Reform us to be a church powered by your will, willing to speak for what is right and work for what is just. Amen.

P: God hears our cry and sends the Spirit to change us and to empower our lives in the world. Our sins are forgiven and God continues to work in us. God's love is unconditional, and we are raised up as God's people who will always be made new, in the name of Jesus our Lord.

C: Amen.

Gathering Hymn Lord, Be Glorified

(For music turn to Hymn 744 in the Red Hymnal)

1. **In my Life, Lord,
be glorified, be glorified;
in my life, Lord,
be glorified today.**
2. **In our song, Lord,
be glorified, be glorified;
in our song, Lord,
be glorified today.**
3. **In your church, Lord,
be glorified, be glorified;
in your church, Lord.
be glorified today.**
4. **In your world, Lord,**

**be glorified, be glorified;
in your world, Lord,
be glorified today.**

Text: Bob Kilpatrick, Music: Bob Kilpatrick

Greeting (2 Corinthians 13:13)

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

Gathering Dialog (Deuteronomy 26, 11, 8)

A: You are the treasured people of the Lord,

C: a people holy to the Lord our God.

A: Keep the words of the Lord in your heart; teach them to your children.

**C: Talk about them when you are at home and when you are away,
when you lie down and when you rise.**

A: One does not live by bread alone,

C: but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray...

O Lord God, enliven and preserve your church with your perpetual mercy. Without your help, we mortals will fail; remove far from us everything that is harmful, and lead us toward all that gives life and salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

† WORD †

Bible Reading Genesis 29-31

A Jacob Arrives in Haran

Then Jacob went on his journey, and came to the land of the people of the east. ²As he looked, he saw a well in the field and three flocks of sheep lying there beside it; for out of that well the flocks were watered. The stone on the well's mouth was large, ³and when all the flocks were gathered there, the shepherds would roll the stone from the mouth of the well, and water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place on the mouth of the well. ⁴Jacob said to them, "My brothers, where do you come from?" They said, "We are from Haran." He said to them, "Do you know Laban son of Nahor?" They said, "We do." ⁶He said to them,

“Is it well with him?” “Yes,” they replied, “and here is his daughter Rachel, coming with the sheep.”⁷ He said, “Look, it is still broad daylight; it is not time for the animals to be gathered together. Water the sheep, and go, pasture them.”⁸ 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.”

⁹While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father’s sheep; for she kept them. ¹⁰Now when Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of his mother’s brother Laban, and the sheep of his mother’s brother Laban, Jacob went up and rolled the stone from the well’s mouth, and watered the flock of his mother’s brother Laban. ¹¹Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and wept aloud. ¹²And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father’s kinsman, and that he was Rebekah’s son; and she ran and told her father. ¹³When Laban heard the news about his sister’s son Jacob, he ran to meet him; he embraced him and kissed him, and brought him to his house. Jacob told Laban all these things, ¹⁴and Laban said to him, “Surely you are my bone and my flesh!” And he stayed with him a month.

B Laban Likes Jacob

Then Laban said to Jacob, “Because you are my kinsman, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?”

¹⁶Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷Leah’s eyes were lovely, and Rachel was graceful and beautiful. ¹⁸Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, “I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel.” ¹⁹Laban said, “It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me.” ²⁰So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her.

C Laban’s Deception of Jacob

Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed.” ²²So Laban gathered together all the people of the place, and made a feast. ²³But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her. ²⁴(Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her maid.) ²⁵When morning came, 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?” ²⁶Laban said, “This is not done in our country—giving the younger before the firstborn. ²⁷Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years.” ²⁸Jacob did so, and completed her week; then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel as a wife. ²⁹(Laban gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel

to be her maid.)³⁰ So Jacob went in to Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than Leah. He served Laban for another seven years.

D Birth of Jacob's Children

Leah's Children

When the LORD saw that Leah was unloved, he opened her womb; but Rachel was barren.³² Leah conceived and bore a son, and she named him Reuben; for she said, "Because the LORD has looked on my affliction; surely now my husband will love me."³³ She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the LORD has heard that I am hated, he has given me this son also"; and she named him Simeon.³⁴ Again she conceived and bore a son, and said, "Now this time my husband will be joined to me, because I have borne him three sons"; therefore he was named Levi.³⁵ She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "This time I will praise the LORD"; therefore she named him Judah; then she ceased bearing.

Rachel's Lack of Children

When Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, she envied her sister; and she said to Jacob, "Give me children, or I shall die!"

²Jacob became very angry with Rachel and said, "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?"

Rachel's Maid Bilhah

³Then she said, "Here is my maid Bilhah; go in to her, that she may bear upon my knees and that I too may have children through her."⁴ So she gave him her maid Bilhah as a wife; and Jacob went in to her.⁵ And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son.⁶ Then Rachel said, "God has judged me, and has also heard my voice and given me a son"; therefore she named him Dan.

⁷Rachel's maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son.⁸ Then Rachel said, "With mighty wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, and have prevailed"; so she named him Naphtali.

Leah's Maid Zilpah

⁹When Leah saw that she had ceased bearing children, she took her maid Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife.¹⁰ Then Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son.¹¹ And Leah said, "Good fortune!" so she named him Gad.

¹²Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a second son.¹³ And Leah said, "Happy am I! For the women will call me happy"; so she named him Asher.

Rachel's Lack of Children

In the days of wheat harvest Reuben went and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes."

¹⁵But she said to her, "Is it a small matter that you have taken away my husband? Would you take away my son's mandrakes also?" Rachel said, "Then he may lie with you tonight for your son's mandrakes."

Leah's Children

¹⁶When Jacob came from the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him, and said, "You must come in to me; for I have hired you with my son's mandrakes." So he lay with her that night. ¹⁷And God heeded Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son. ¹⁸Leah said, "God has given me my hire because I gave my maid to my husband"; so she named him Issachar. ¹⁹And Leah conceived again, and she bore Jacob a sixth son. ²⁰Then Leah said, "God has endowed me with a good dowry; now my husband will honor me, because I have borne him six sons"; so she named him Zebulun. ²¹Afterwards she bore a daughter, and named her Dinah.

Rachel has a Child

Then God remembered Rachel, and God heeded her and opened her womb. ²³She conceived and bore a son, and said, "God has taken away my reproach"; ²⁴and she named him Joseph, saying, "May the LORD add to me another son!"

C Deception and Counter Deception

When Rachel had borne Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, "Send me away, that I may go to my own home and country. ²⁶Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served you, and let me go; for you know very well the service I have given you." ²⁷But Laban said to him, "If you will allow me to say so, I have learned by divination that the LORD has blessed me because of you; ²⁸name your wages, and I will give it." ²⁹Jacob said to him, "You yourself know how I have served you, and how your cattle have fared with me. ³⁰For you had little before I came, and it has increased abundantly; and the LORD has blessed you wherever I turned. But now when shall I provide for my own household also?" He said, "What shall I give you?" Jacob said, "You shall not give me anything; if you will do this for me, I will again feed your flock and keep it: ³²let me pass through all your flock today, removing from it every speckled and spotted sheep and every black lamb, and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and such shall be my wages. ³³So my honesty will answer for me later, when you come to look into my wages with

you. Every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats and black among the lambs, if found with me, shall be counted stolen.”

³⁴Laban said, “Good! Let it be as you have said.” ³⁵But that day Laban removed the male goats that were striped and spotted, and all the female goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had white on it, and every lamb that was black, and put them in charge of his sons; ³⁶and he set a distance of three days’ journey between himself and Jacob, while Jacob was pasturing the rest of Laban’s flock.

³⁷Then Jacob took fresh rods of poplar and almond and plane, and peeled white streaks in them, exposing the white of the rods. ³⁸He set the rods that he had peeled in front of the flocks in the troughs, that is, the watering places, where the flocks came to drink. And since they bred when they came to drink, ³⁹the flocks bred in front of the rods, and so the flocks produced young that were striped, speckled, and spotted. ⁴⁰Jacob separated the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the striped and the completely black animals in the flock of Laban; and he put his own droves apart, and did not put them with Laban’s flock. ⁴¹Whenever the stronger of the flock were breeding, Jacob laid the rods in the troughs before the eyes of the flock, that they might breed among the rods, ⁴²but for the feebler of the flock he did not lay them there; so the feebler were Laban’s, and the stronger Jacob’s. ⁴³Thus the man grew exceedingly rich, and had large flocks, and male and female slaves, and camels and donkeys.

B Laban Dislikes Jacob

Now Jacob heard that the sons of Laban were saying, “Jacob has taken all that was our father’s; he has gained all this wealth from what belonged to our father.” ²And Jacob saw that Laban did not regard him as favorably as he did before. ³Then the LORD said to Jacob, “Return to the land of your ancestors and to your kindred, and I will be with you.” ⁴So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah into the field where his flock was, ⁵and said to them, “I see that your father does not regard me as favorably as he did before. But the God of my father has been with me. ⁶You know that I have served your father with all my strength; ⁷yet your father has cheated me and changed my wages ten times, but God did not permit him to harm me. ⁸If he said, ‘The speckled shall be your wages,’ then all the flock bore speckled; and if he said, ‘The striped shall be your wages,’ then all the flock bore striped. ⁹Thus God has taken away the livestock of your father, and given them to me. ¹⁰During the mating of the flock I once had a dream in which I looked up and saw that the male goats that leaped upon the flock were striped, speckled, and mottled. ¹¹Then the angel of God said to me in the dream, ‘Jacob,’ and I said, ‘Here I am!’

¹²And he said, ‘Look up and see that all the goats that leap on the flock are striped, speckled, and mottled; for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you. ¹³I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and made a vow to me. Now leave this land at once and return to the land of your birth.’¹⁴

A Jacob Leaves Haran

¹⁴Then Rachel and Leah answered him, “Is there any portion or inheritance left to us in our father’s house? ¹⁵Are we not regarded by him as foreigners? For he has sold us, and he has been using up the money given for us. ¹⁶All the property that God has taken away from our father belongs to us and to our children; now then, do whatever God has said to you.”

¹⁷So Jacob arose, and set his children and his wives on camels; ¹⁸and he drove away all his livestock, all the property that he had gained, the livestock in his possession that he had acquired in Paddan-aram, to go to his father Isaac in the land of Canaan.

After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Children’s Sermon

Sermon

Hymn of the Day Great God, Your Love Has Called Us
(for music, please turn to Hymn 358 in the Red Hymnal)

- 1. Great God, your love has called us here,
as we, by love, for love were made.
Your living likeness still we bear,
though marred, dishonored, disobeyed.
We come, with all our heart and mind
your call to hear, your love to find.**
- 2. We come with self inflicted pains
of broken trust and chosen wrong,
half free, half bound by inner chains,
by social forces swept along,
by pow’rs and systems close confined,
yet seeking hope for humankind.**
- 3. Great God, in Christ you call our name**

**and then receive us as your own,
not through some merit, right, or claim,
but by your gracious love alone.
We strain to glimpse your mercy seat
and find you kneeling at our feet.**

**4. Then take the towel, and break the bread,
and humble us, and call us friends.
Suffer and serve till all are fed,
and show how grandly love intends
to work till all creation sings,
to fill all worlds, to crown all things.**

**5. Great God, in Christ you set us free
your life to live, your joy to share.
Give us your Spirit's liberty
to turn from guilt and dull despair,
and offer all that faith can do
while love is making all things new.**

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Apostles' Creed

A: We confirm our faith with the Apostles' Creed

C: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

P: With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

The pastor will begin the prayer with a petition and then invites the congregation to add additional petitions and thanksgivings. Please conclude your petition with: Lord in your mercy,

*The congregation will respond: **Hear our prayer.***

The pastor concludes the prayer:

P: Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: Amen.

Peace

A: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

A: Let us share that peace with one another.

The congregation may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

‡ THANKSGIVING ‡

Offering & Special Music

Hymn of Thanksgiving *As the offering is brought forward the congregation sings:*

Lord Let My Heart Be Good Soil

For music turn to Hymn 713 in the Blue Hymnal

**Lord, let my heart be good soil,
open to the seed of your Word.
Lord, let my heart be good soil,
where love can grow and peace is understood.
When my heart is hard,
break the stone away.
When my heart is cold,
warm it with the day.
When my heart is lost,
lead me on your way.
Lord, let my heart,
Lord, let my heart,
Lord, let my heart be good soil.**

Offering Prayer

A: Let us pray: God of life,

C: you give us these gifts of the earth, these resources of our life and our labor. Take them, offered in great thanksgiving, and use them to set a table that will heal the whole creation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

A: Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

† SENDING †

Blessing

P: God, creator of all things, speaking reformation into being; Jesus Christ, savior of the world, raising the dead; Holy Spirit, living voice, calling and enlightening the church: Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn How Great is Our God
(for music, please turn to Hymn 67 Songbook Binder)

**1. The splendor of the King
Clothed in majesty
Let all the earth rejoice
All the earth rejoice
He wraps Himself in light
And darkness tries to hide
And trembles at His voice
And trembles at His voice**

Chorus **How great is our God
Sing with me
How great is our God
And all will see how great**

How great is our God

2. **And age to age He stands**
And time is in His hands
Beginning and the End
Beginning and the End
The Godhead three in one
Father Spirit Son
The Lion and the Lamb
The Lion and the Lamb *Chorus*

Bridge (2x) **Name above all names**
Worthy of all praise
My heart will sing
How great is our God *Chorus*

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Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: God's Work. Our Hands.

Worship assistants TODAY:

Greeters and Ushers	Tim and Liz Brown
Acolyte	Ben Deibler
Nursery Care	Kristi Bullwinkle
Counters	Ethan and Alyssa Minkel
Coffee Hour	Linda Morley and Ruth Edmunds

Worship assistants for next Sunday, September 17

Greeters and Ushers	Gay and John Card
Acolyte	Ally Buch
Altar Care	Liz Brown
Communion Assistants	Tim and Liz Brown
Nursery Care	Katy Stimmel
Counters	Nancy and Ivan Shuler
Coffee Hour	Sue Kaufmann

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