Genesis

**When Greed Reigns (30:25-43)**

*From a study of Luther’s Works: Lectures on Genesis, Paul Kretzmann’s Popular Commentary of the Bible, and the Lutheran Study Bible*

## **When Ag Science Comes into Play (30:25-43)**

* Jacob’s time is up… again.
  + Requests a peaceful release from Laban after his time of fourteen years is served
* Laban responds
  + He knows what he’s received from Jacob
    - Jacob has increased his wealth
    - Not only that, Laban has learned that wealth has come from the Lord
      * But how?
        + Divination

Therefore Moses uses a remarkable word, נִחַשְׁתִּי, from the word for serpent, and it seems that at the same time he had regard for this meaning. The word also means auguries and divinations. Num. 24:1: “He did not go … to meet with omens.” But it was customary to take auguries by means of serpents. Therefore Moses wanted to point out that Laban was an augur.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Second Commandment issue.

*What does this mean?* We should fear and love God, so that we do not curse, swear, use satanic arts, lie, or deceive by His name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.

Deuteronomy 18:10

Acts 16:16

* + “Name your wages”
    - Red lights and sirens should be going off for Jacob
    - This is what he said earlier!
      * Genesis 29:15
    - Laban was a filthy and greedy man. He was a dog, etc., a monster of that happy age. For because of his outstanding wickedness he should more properly be living in this last age, which is completely ruined by avarice and all vices.[[2]](#footnote-2)
* Jacob’s request for additional payment
  + Jacob knows all that he has done for Laban
    - Colossians 3:22-25
  + Under Jacob, Laban’s wealth has multiplied
  + Neglect of Jacob’s family?
    - Was Laban so greedy that he ignored the needs of his own daughters and grandchildren?
      * 2 Corinthians 2:14
      * 1 Timothy 5:8
    - This is a very sharp rebuke.[[3]](#footnote-3)
      * “What do you want?”
  + Jacob wants nothing from Laban
    - Jacob’s trust is not in what Laban will give for him to live and survive, but in what the Lord will provide.
      * Psalm 118:8
    - Jacob is even going to work Laban’s flocks for him!?!
      * This speech was very pleasing to greedy Laban, since he heard that for the present no money had to be paid out by him and that he could have longer use of such a faithful servant.[[4]](#footnote-4)
  + “I’ll take the weird sheep off your hands.”
    - There is a less, than desirable sheep.
      * Exodus 12:5
      * Leviticus 1:3
      * Ephesians 5:25-27
      * 2 Peter 3:14
    - You can know whose are whose
    - A case for genetics?
      * For it is natural for white young to be born from white and for black to be born from black. But it happens very rarely that spotted young are born from those of one color, unless nature is imitated by human skill and diligence, as will be stated later. Therefore Laban congratulated himself not only that his property was not diminished, but that it was even increased. For nature is on his side.[[5]](#footnote-5)
    - Too good to be true for a greedy Laban
      * for instead of accepting such an unfair condition (Laban) should have admonished his son-in-law not to defraud himself… “What are you doing, my son-in-law?”.[[6]](#footnote-6)
      * But just in case…
        + Laban STILL takes the male of some and the female of other, and hides them from Jacob.

For whatever reason, there is a belief that you need two of the same colored animal to produce an animal of the same color.

* Jacob gets to work
  + Peels strips of bark from a branch
  + Puts the branch by the well (Ladies night at the bar?)
    - Sheep do their thing… looking at this stripped branch.
      * Striped branch = Striped lambs
      * It is an established fact and in agreement with the teaching of physicians, who state that in the conception of all living beings, not only of dumb animals but also of human beings, special forms or marks are imprinted on the young, both as a result of a mental image and as a result of various objects that appear to the heart or the eyes, not only in the very heat of conception but also after impregnation has taken place.[[7]](#footnote-7)
      * Jerome and the naturalists relate the example of a queen who gave birth to a child with the form and face of an Ethiopian as a result of a strong mental image of an Ethiopian painted on a tablet near her bed. They also tell that another woman who was accused of adultery because, although she herself was ugly, she had given birth to a beautiful infant unlike both parents and the whole relationship. She would have been condemned, they say, had Hippocrates not obtained her liberation by giving the advice to ask her whether in her bedchamber she had had a painted tablet which had given her pleasure when she looked at it. When this had been found, she was absolved by the judges.58 Thus we sometimes see bloody spots or spots of another color scattered on the face, on the eyes, on the cheeks, and on the neck of infants, namely, when pregnant women have been suddenly excited by the sight and the fear of something unusual and have moved their hands to those members. Here at Wittenberg we have seen a citizen with a face like a corpse who stated that while his mother was pregnant, she was suddenly confronted by the sight of a corpse and was so terrified that the face of the fetus in her womb took on the form of a corpse.[[8]](#footnote-8)
      * Same thing goes with the view of the strong sheep.
    - Despite the “science” behind it all, Luther still recognizes this as a miracle and a work of the Lord.
      * But… did Jacob purposefully deceive Laban?
        + Luther excuses Jacob for three reasons:

Excused by human right

Owed wages

Done by divine authority

The Lord saw Jacob’s affliction and blessed him with success

Genesis 31:42

* + - * Genesis 24:35
      * Genesis 26:13-14

1. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 5: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 26-30*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw05?ref=Bible.Ge30.27&off=627&ctx=+name%2c+but+in+vain.+~Therefore+Moses+uses), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 5 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 366. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 5: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 26-30*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw05?ref=Bible.Ge30.25-26&off=906&ctx=he+do+this%3f+Because+~Laban+was+a+filthy+a), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 5 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 364. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 5: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 26-30*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw05?ref=Bible.Ge30.29-30&off=7982&ctx=own+household+also%3f%0a~This+is+a+very+sharp), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 5 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 371. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 5: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 26-30*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw05?ref=Bible.Ge30.31&off=2273&ctx=whatever+He+gives.%E2%80%9D+~This+speech+was+very), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 5 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 373. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 5: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 26-30*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw05?ref=Bible.Ge30.32-33&off=2423&ctx=er+number+of+these.+~For+it+is+natural+fo), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 5 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 375. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 5: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 26-30*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw05?ref=Bible.Ge30.32-33&off=2882&ctx=+execrable+avarice%2c+~for+instead+of+accep), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 5 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 375. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 5: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 26-30*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw05?ref=Bible.Ge30.37-39&off=2186&ctx=gh+the+Holy+Spirit.+~It+is+an+established), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 5 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 380. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 5: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 26-30*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw05?ref=Bible.Ge30.37-39&off=2255), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 5 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 380–381. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)