The Family September 25

First Peyton Place

 Jacob received both Leah and Rachel for wives, Jacob loved Rachel more and God saw this and allowed Leah to have the children.

 Rachel became jealous of Leah – and said to Jacob, "Give me children, or I will die."

 Jacob became angry with Rachel and said," I can't take the place of God. He is the one who keeps you from having children." Genesis 30:1b, 2.

 In our lives we encounter jealousy like Rachel, over children, or the lack of children, God determines if we are to have children or not, we have been able to alter ourselves not to have children but God still determines if we can have children in the first place. Pray to God, but remember God's will will be done so if you pray you must accept God's choice. Jealousy is such a waste of energy!

 Bilhah, Rachael's handmaid saved face for Rachel by giving Jacob two sons. Leah realized she had quit having children so she gave Zilpah to Jacob and she gave him two sons.

What an interesting family!

VERSE FOR TODAY: She said, "Here is my slave girl Bilhah; sleep with her, so that she can have a child for me. In this way I became a mother through her." Genesis 30:3.

PRAYER THOUGHT: A prayer of thanks for my children and a special prayer for those who do not have children and want them, that you will answer their prayer in favor of children.

A Special Son September 26

The Mandrakes

 Ruben, Leah’s son found mandrakes in the wheat field; mandrakes are plants believed to produce fertility and were used as loved charms.

 Rachel wanted the mandrakes because of her inability to have children, she allowed Leah to sleep with Jacob for the mandrakes. Leah’s prayers were answered and she became pregnant again giving Jacob his fifth son by her. Twice more should become pregnant and had another son and daughter.

 – Then God remembered Rachel; he answered her prayer and made it possible for her to have children. Genesis 30:22. What a blessing for Rachel when she became pregnant and had a son, which she named Joseph because Rachel wanted more children, Joseph sounds like the Hebrew for

"May he give me another".

 God answers prayers for us today too we must first pray and then have enough faith that God will answer them!

A LINGERING THOUGHT: God does answer prayer!

VERSE FOR TODAY: She became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She said,

“God has taken away my disgrace by giving me a son…" Genesis 30:23.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Praise be to you, O Lord, for all the prayers you have answered for me. Help me to always know you are there too good and bad times.

Jacob’s Bargain September 27

Jacob Prospers

 Jacob decided it was time to return to his family in Canaan, but when he approached Laban – Laban said to him, "Let me say this: I have learnt by divination that the Lord has blessed me because of you. Name your wages, and I will pay them." Genesis 30:27, 28.

 This was Jacob’s wages –"…Let me go through all your flocks today and take every black lamb and every spotted or speckled young goat. That is all the wages I want." Genesis 30:32.

 Jacob took these "misfits" and increased his flocks by putting green branches of poplar, almond and plane trees, after stripping away some of the bark, in front of the feeding troughs his flock used and for some reason the animals would breed among these branches. Jacob’s flocks grew and Jacob became very wealthy.

 In this world of sin and corruption, Christians are the "misfits", our numbers can increase too, if we witness to others the love of God we feel in our hearts and that our daily lives reflect what God has done in our lives. Our wealth may not be in material things but the wealth in our heart is eternal.

VERSE FOR TODAY: In this way, Jacob became very wealthy. He had many flocks, slaves, camels, and donkeys. Genesis 30:43.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O Lord, to witness to someone today; maybe not the "Good News" story but let just how I talk and act to reflect your love.

A Journey September 28

Jacob Flees

 Laban and his sons became unfriendly towards Jacob – The Lord said to him, "Go back to the land of your fathers and your relatives. I will be with you." Genesis 31:3.

 Jacob met with his wives in the fields where they were minding the flocks and followed God's instructions and left with his family and possessions.

 Laban and his sons pursued Jacob and after seven days caught up with Jacob – In a dream that night God came to Laban and said to him, "Be careful not to threaten Jacob in any way." Genesis 31:24. Laban was looking for his household gods but did not find them.

 Jacob was fortunate to have God on his side and he knew it –"…If the God of my fathers, the God of Abraham and Isaac, had not been with me, you would have already sent me away empty-handed. But God has seen my trouble and the work I have done, and last night he gave his judgment." Genesis 31:42.

 Jacob and Laban came to another agreement; one part was that Jacob would not mistreat Laban's daughters and that they would leave each other alone.

 We are fortunate that God is on our side as well, God is always with us, if someone has moved away it is not God!

VERSE FOR TODAY: Let us have confidence, then, and approach God's throne, where there is grace. There we will receive mercy and find grace to help us just when we need it. Hebrews 4:16.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Thank you O Lord, for the blessed peace you give me by just knowing that you are always with me.

A Struggle September 29

Jacob Wrestles

 Then Laban and Jacob split and Jacob prepares to meet Esau.

 Jacob sent all the family and possessions across the river Jabbok but Jacob stayed behind alone.

 A man arrived and started wrestling with Jacob until dawn – When the man saw that he was not winning the struggle, he struck Jacob on the hip, and it was thrown out of joint. Genesis 32:25.

 The man wanted Jacob to let him go but Jacob wouldn't without a blessing – The man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob. You have struggled with God and with men, and you have won; so your name will be Israel." Then he blessed Jacob. Genesis 32:28, 29b.

 Jacob named the place – Jacob said,

"I have seen God face to face, and I am still alive;" so he name the place Peniel. Genesis 32:30.

 Jacob had seen God through this man and lived! We have not seen God but have faith that we will someday and live eternally with him!

VERSE FOR TODAY: Even today the descendents of Israel do not eat the muscle which is on the hip joint, because it was this muscle that Jacob was struck. Genesis 32:32.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Thank you, O Lord, for your Son that died that we can have eternal life. Help my faith to endure to the time of my death or your second coming so that I can live eternally with you.

The Reunion September 30

Meeting Esau

 Jacob was worried and afraid of meeting Esau, because when they parted Esau was very angry with Jacob over losing his father's blessing.

 Jacob sent servants on with all kinds of gifts on ahead to win Esau's favor, when they finally caught sight of one another, Jacob bow down – But Esau ran to meet him, threw his arms around him, and kissed him. They were both crying. Genesis 33:4.

 When we move away from God and return, God welcomes us like Esau met Jacob with open arms and love. God does not want anyone to be lost.

 There had been separation due to fear and anger between the brothers, in spite of all the gifts Jacob sent the love between the brothers was restored.

 Esau met all of Jacob's family and was confused by the first group with the gifts – Jacob answered, "It was to gain your favour." Genesis 33:8b.

 Our tithes, offerings and the time we spend in actual witnessing and church related activities are gifts unto the Lord but should not be thought of in terms of gaining God's favor, instead should be done as our love duty and witness to the world of our Savior.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Jacob said, "No, please, if I have gained your favour, accept my gift. To see your face is for me like seeing the face of God, now that you have been so friendly to me…" Genesis 33:10.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O Lord, to have the right attitude in giving my tithes and gifts of time and money to you.