

Genesis
St. Jerome Adult Bible Study
Lesson 7 – Answers

1. The story of Jacob is full of deceit and more deceit. First of all, Jacob tricks Isaac into giving him Esau's birthright, then Laban tricks Jacob with Leah in place of Rachel and again by removing flocks promised to Jacob. Jacob fools Laban by special breeding of spotted sheep and goats.
2. After Laban agreed to give all the dark and spotted sheep to Jacob, he had them removed from Jacob's influence. Jacob, however, devised a method to breed similar sheep and goats which soon came to outnumber Laban's flocks.
- 3a. Jacob decides to return to Canaan because he has been ill used by Laban and Laban's sons and because God urged him to return to his family.
- 3b. Laban also mistreated or disrespected his daughters Leah and Rachel so that, when they heard that God wanted Jacob to leave Laban, they were happy to leave also.
4. Laban was a greedy taskmaster. He made Jacob work for him for seven years as a bride price for Leah and another seven for Rachel. After that, Jacob was forced to work another six years for his share of the flock.
5. As they were packing to leave Laban, Rachel stole a god belonging to Laban and hid it in her saddlebag which she then sat on, claiming to be menstruating, to prevent Laban from finding it.
6. During Jacob's journey home, Laban caught up to him and they made a covenant with each other. Jacob agreed not to mistreat his wives, Laban's daughters, or to have other wives. Both also agreed not to cross into the other's territory with "harmful intent."
- 7.

- 8a. Jacob, who perpetrated many deceptions, was still favored by God because God had promised to make him a father of nations and God still talks to him. Also, God forbade Laban from harming Jacob.
- 8b.
9. When he comes near home, Jacob begins to fear meeting Esau because Esau threatened to kill Jacob for stealing his birthright and blessing.
10. Fearing violence from Esau, Jacob sought to protect his people and his flocks by separating them into two groups. He also sent emissaries with gifts of animals to Esau. Jacob also prayed for God's protection.
- 11.
12. Along the way, Jacob is accosted by and wrestles with a strange man. The man tells Jacob that he has wrestled "the divine" and Jacob claims to have seen the face of God.
13. The stranger and, later, God, give Jacob the new name "Israel" which becomes the eponymous name of the country where all Jacob's descendants will live.
14. Near the end of his journey home, Jacob finally meets up with Esau. Although the birthright and blessing are his and God has foretold that Jacob will rule over his brother, Jacob approaches Esau humbly bowing seven times.
15. Esau rushed to Jacob, hugged and kissed him, and seemed to forgive him. Still, Jacob was cautious (had he been deceived too many times?) and allowed much space between himself and Esau.
16. Dinah was Jacob's daughter by Leah (the mother also of Simeon and Levi). She had gone ahead of Jacob's party to "visit with the women of the land."
17. The Shechemites who occupied the land west of the Jordan in Canaan, wanted to intermarry with Jacob's family. Jacob's sons told them that such a thing was impossible unless they became circumcised. When the Shechemites were temporarily disabled from the procedure, they were vulnerable to the attacks of Jacob's sons.

- 18a. After Jacob's sons kill the Schechmites in retaliation for the rape of Dinah, Jacob warns them that their action will make Jacob and his people "repugnant" to the indigenous inhabitants of Canaan and that, if they attacked, Jacob would not have enough men to defend himself.