

INTRODUCTION

Some of the Ten Commandments, and many of the other commands in the Bible, deal with those things God gave us at creation for our happiness. That is, those two pairs of things:

- work and sabbath keeping
- marriage and child bearing

We can be greatly helped in understanding the Ten Commandments, and how we apply them in our lives as the disciples of Jesus Christ, by knowing what the Bible records about those things before God spoke the Ten Commandments and Moses wrote them into the Bible.

Last time we observed some things about sabbath keeping and about marriage. We return to this history today to observe some things about work and about child bearing.

I continue reading to you from the history of Jacob and his family, taking up where I left off last time.

TEXT

Genesis 29:30-30:43

BODY

What do we observe in this history, about work and about child bearing?
More importantly, what do we observe about salvation for sinners in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ?

I. God Blessed a Family By a Man Devoting Himself to Work

A. Notice the man's willingness to work, as a prominent part of the history

1. Genesis 29:10 And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother.
2. Genesis 29:14-15 And Laban said to him, "Surely you are my bone and my flesh." And he stayed with him for a month. (15) Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what should your wages be?"
3. Genesis 29:20 So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed only a few days to him because of the love he had for her.
4. Genesis 29:30 Then Jacob also went in to Rachel, and he also loved Rachel more than Leah. And he served with Laban still another seven years.
5. Genesis 30:16 When Jacob came out of the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him...
6. Genesis 30:29 So Jacob said to him, "You know how I have served you and how your livestock has been with me."
7. Genesis 30:31 So he said, "What shall I give you?" And Jacob said, "You shall not give me anything. If you will do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep your flocks:"
8. Genesis 31:6 And you know that with all my might I have served your father.
9. Genesis 31:38-41 These twenty years I have been with you; your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried their young, and I have not eaten the rams of your flock. (39) That which was torn by beasts I did not bring to you; I bore the loss of it. You required it from my hand, whether stolen by day or stolen by night. (40) There I was! In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night, and my sleep departed from my eyes. (41) Thus I have been in your house twenty years; I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times.

- B. The man was heir to his father's fortune, but he was willing to work and sacrifice to build and provide for his own family
 - 1. his father sent him away to get a wife, but without the wealth to which he was the heir; willingly he went in obedience to his father
 - 2. as Jesus Christ!
 - a) Philippians 2:5-8 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, (6) who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, (7) but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. (8) And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.
 - b) 2 Corinthians 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.
 - 3. all the man wanted was the woman for his wife
 - 4. "love hurts the wallet"
 - 5. business owner: it's not hard to find people who want to get paid; but it's hard to find people who want to work
- C. The man's boss used his power over his employee to cheat him
 - 1. Genesis 31:7-8 Yet your father has deceived me and changed my wages ten times, but God did not allow him to hurt me. (8) If he said thus: 'The speckled shall be your wages,' then all the flocks bore speckled. And if he said thus: 'The streaked shall be your wages,' then all the flocks bore streaked.
- D. The worker showed integrity, faithfulness
- E. God provided for and vindicated the hard-working employee

God blessed a family by a man devoting himself to work

II. God Blessed a Family By Women Devoting Themselves to Childbearing

- A. It may seem strange to take the four women in this history as any kind of good example
 - 1. their behavior was scandalous in some ways, which I do not mean to excuse, and which I do not mean to recommend
 - 2. but I am trying to practice the kind of application from this history that our Lord's apostle Peter demonstrated when he pointed to Sarah as a good example
 - a) 1 Peter 3:5-6 For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, (6) as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.
 - 3. we are reading this history today to look for what lessons it holds regarding child rearing and work

- B. See the severe trouble that came when a man did not keep himself to just one woman, but had children with more than one woman
 - 1. conflict
 - a) among the women
 - (1) who were sisters, which can be a very sweet relationship
 - (2) but when made rivals in love, can turn very bitter
 - b) among the children
 - (1) the father favored the children of the woman he loved the most
 - (2) the other sons then hated that favored son
 - 2. note that the women also did not keep to God's order when they became desperate for children
 - 3. see the ideal insisted upon in the congregation's officers
 - a) 1 Timothy 3:2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach;
 - b) 1 Timothy 3:12 Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.
- C. See the blessing that came by these women's childbearing
 - 1. Rachel bore Joseph, who would save the whole family in the seven-year famine
 - 2. Rachel also bore Benjamin
 - a) from whom would come King Saul, whom God used several times to defeat Israel's enemies, the Philistines
 - b) from whom would come the apostle Paul, whom the Lord used so powerfully to preach the gospel to us gentiles, and to write so much of the New Testament scriptures
 - 3. Leah bore Levi
 - a) from whom would come Moses, whom God used to lead the children of Israel out of slavery in Egypt, and by whom God gave us so much of the Bible, including the book of Genesis, which we are studying today
 - b) from whom would come John the Baptist, who preached repentance to prepare the way for Christ to come
 - 4. Leah bore Judah
 - a) from whom would come King David, the man after God's own heart, whom God used to defeat Israel's enemies all around, and who penned many of the psalms
 - b) from whom would come our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Lion of Judah and Son of David

CONCLUSION

God ordained these things for our good; so He blesses those who devote themselves to the use of them.

Men and boys, devote your life to the Lord by your work.

- there are games; but if you play any games
 - play them less and less as you go from boyhood to manhood
 - do not devote yourselves to them
- understand that it is perverse not to work, then to expect God to bless you
- pray that the Lord will bless you; expect that blessing to come largely through your hard work

Girls and women, devote your life to the Lord, whether or not you can bear children.

- understand that if you are not married, and so do not have opportunity to bear children,
 - you are not in a bad or useless position;
 - you are in a blessed position, in that you can care about the things of the Lord without the distraction of having to do what a husband needs you to do (1 Cor 7:34-35);
 - take that opportunity for as long as it lasts;
 - do not waste your time pining away; do not waste your time doing things that are only for carnal pleasure;
 - instead, serve the Lord, being holy in body and in spirit, like Anna, who served God with fastings and prayers night and day
- if you are married, but for whatever reason cannot bear children
 - be comforted in your grief by the hope of the Lord's return, when all tears will be wiped away, and our bodies will be made perfect for all eternity
 - rejoice in how the fruit of the Spirit that the Lord will cause you to bear are of great blessing to the congregation and to the world
 - by your service to the saints, you may be like a mother to many
- but if you are married, and have opportunity to bear children, devote yourself to that blessed task
 - do not fall for any feminist lies that would say working at home bearing children is somehow demeaning drudgery; the truth is that to be able to work in the home bearing children is a glorious gift
 - bring forth those who will have brothers and sisters to love and share life with
 - bring forth those who will bless and care for you and be a joy to you in your old age
 - bring forth the next generation of farmers and plumbers and engineers who will take dominion over this planet and subdue it for the good of mankind
 - bring forth the next generation who will hear the gospel and believe, and give glory to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
 - bring forth the next generation of pastors and deacons for the congregations
 - bring forth the next Paul Gerhardt and Isaac Watts and John Newton to write new songs by which to sing the Lord's praises
 - bring forth the next generation of missionaries to take the gospel to the ends of the earth

In all these things, keep to the created order. Observe work and sabbath keeping, marriage and child bearing as our Creator ordained for us when He gave them to us at creation.

The world has twisted those things; has neglected those things; has sometimes all but forgotten those things; all to its own hurt.

In the congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ, among his disciples, let it be that those creation ordinances are remembered, appreciated, and observed as God made it to be in the beginning.

Roel - Call to Worship - Psalm 48:1

Thad - Scripture Reading - Psalm 48:2-13

Stephen - Congregational Prayer

Benediction - Psalm 48:14

Ava - Prelude - "My Jesus, I Love Thee"

Rita - Trinity 720 "The Child of a King" - Alex lead

Rita - Trinity 269 "Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken" - Andrew lead

Rita - Trinity 712 "I Know Whom I Have Believed"

“When I Can Read My Title Clear”
(Andrew singing at home 2024-01-08)