

Genesis 29 ff

WE have three weeks left including this one; our subjects shall be today – more Middle Eastern Skulduggery, and the final two weeks we have consider the long story of Joseph in Egypt

First tale: the daughters of Laban ch 29

The meeting of Rachael:

Note that Jacob by himself is strong enough to move the stone – out of respect for Laban and Rachael and an engagement

greetings and joy followed by outright deceit in the marriage to Leah

the sad story of Leah childlessness was seen as a curse and the fault of women

Leah's plan=: out breeding Rachael

Swapping sex for mandrake roots: Mandrakes (*Mandragora officinarum*)

Used in traditional medicine: a sedative, a tranquilizer and it can kill

Thought to aid fertility and an aphrodisiac (shape like human legs)

Here used to pimp out Jacob

(meanwhile) Jacob is cheating Laban by breeding the sheep and goats

The belief that breeding is changed by externals

This arouses the jealousy of Laban's sons

God intervenes to threaten (31:24) Laban

Peace is made by a covenant

Meanwhile: Laban's idols are rendered ritually unclean

Next crisis: running into Esau

Divides his possessions for safety, ie damage control

Easily solving Esau's anger by bribery, and a few slaves (when Jacob tries to ditch him) 33:122

The struggle with the Angel

Renaming Jacob: Israel (he who contends with God)

The identity of the people of Israel (story of the Beth Din)

Angels do not normally reveal their names

Crisis 3: the rape of Dinah and the murder of The men of Shechem

Sex constitutes the marriage....but this is forced

Note how justice is served

Jacob scoots to Bethel – now a sacred place because God acted there

Another version of the naming story: the E text

Ff by more naming of people and places

Note that just living near Jacob brings blessings