

Laban and his daughters: an allegory of the monarchy and exile

GENESIS	MONARCHY
Laban, the foreign father of Rachel and Leah	Monarchy itself as “foreign”
Leah the elder, mother of Judah	Judah, the “elder”
Rachel the younger, mother of Benjamin and Joseph, grandmother of Ephraim/Manasseh	Israel, the “younger,” called “Ephraim,” 1 Kg 12.25
Laban calls Jacob “my bone and my flesh” (29.14)	All the tribes of Israel to David: “we are your bone and flesh” (2 Sam 5.1; also, 19.12-13)
Jacob’s father-in-law [Laban] is deceptive	David’s father-in-law [Saul] is deceptive
Jacob served seven years for Leah before Rachel, Gen 29.20	David reigned seven years over Judah before Israel, 2 Sam 2.11; 5.5; 1 Kg 2.11
Jacob [Israel] “slaves” (Heb, <i>`avod</i>) for Laban, Gen 29.20, 30; 30.26, 29; 31.6, 41	Israel “slaved” (Heb, <i>`avodah</i>) for the Solomonic monarchy, 1 Kg 12.4
Jacob to Laban: ‘Why then have you deceived (Heb, <i>rmh</i> , piel, only here in torah) me?’ Gen 29.25	Saul said to Michal, “Why have you deceived (Heb, <i>rmh</i> , piel) me like this...” 1 Sam 19.17
Rachel, the barren wife, demands “sons,” envying her rival sister-wife, Gen 30.1	Hannah, the barren wife, prays for a “son”, envying her rival wife, 1 Sam 1 (as itself an allegory of the monarchy)
Jacob [Israel] is inspired to “return” to land of his ancestry, Gen 31.3	Israel returns to land of its ancestry, 1 Kg 12.16
Then Rachel and Leah answered him, “Is there any portion or inheritance left to us in our father's house?” Gen 31.14	When all Israel saw that the king would not listen to them, the people answered the king, “What share do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse.” 1 Kg 12.16
Jacob “takes away” Laban’s livestock and daughters, Gen 31.9	David “takes away” Bathsheba and Saul’s daughters, 2 Sam 12
<i>Teraphim</i> as expression of idolatry, Gen 31.19 (only mention of <i>teraphim</i> in torah)	<i>Teraphim</i> as expression of idolatry, 1 Sam 19.13; 2 Kg 23.24 (only mention of <i>teraphim</i> in monarchy)