

## Genesis Ch. 29

- Jacob has a personal encounter with the true and the living God, in that place that he calls “the house of God”.
- Jacob is emboldened and encouraged by the promises of God made directly to him, personally.
  1. God will give him the land.
  2. God will multiply his descendants.
  3. Through his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.
  4. God will be with him, and keep him wherever he goes.
  5. God will bring him back again into the land of his fathers.

But at the same time:

**Galatians 6:7-8** “<sup>7</sup>Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. <sup>8</sup>For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”



V: 1-3 Jacob continues his journey to the east, God is leading him to a well. God always leads us to living water – He always leads us to Himself.

- Eliezer ended up at the same kind of a place.
- When Jacob arrives he sees:
  1. 3 flocks of sheep gathered around the well but not drinking.
  2. The well is blocked by a large stone, which seemingly takes all the shepherds to move.
  3. When all done, they would return the stone, preventing others from using the water.

- Wells belonged to people, property rights – waiting for Laban’s daughter, may have been Laban’s well.
- We often think of shepherds as being older rugged men of the out doors, but more often than not in that culture the shepherding was done by young boys and women. This would explain why one of them couldn’t just move the stone away and water their respective flock – which Jacob a grown man would later do.

V: 4-7        Jacob and these other shepherds understood each other, they spoke the same language, probably either Hebrew or Aramaic.

- Jacob is getting his bearings, when he finds out where they are from, he knows where he is.
- Sometimes we get our bearings the same way; back when I was a cop and watching all the things going on around me, I thought I was in Sodom & Gomorrah, or when I was with a group of believers and we were worshipping the Lord together, I thought I was in heaven!
- Jacob checks on Laban – he’s counting on Laban being alive.

V: 5        They know Laban, but they don’t say much else about him. Knowing what we already know about Laban and what Jacob is headed into to me this almost reads like; “oh, yeah, we know him...”

V: 6        Rachel, Laban’s daughter is on her way with the sheep.

V: 7        Jacob is an experienced shepherd, and he begins to question them about what they are doing, when he does that he is exercising leadership, assuming a position of authority – possibly because of his age.

- Kind of like “what are you doing? Why aren’t you out feeding the sheep?”

V: 8        Their response is that they can’t water the sheep until they are all present.

V: 9        Rachel shows up with her father’s sheep – and boom, it’s love at first sight.

- Jacob has never seen such a beautiful flock of sheep like that....
- Jacob see’s Rachel, and it’s a done deal.

V: 10       Jacob knew who she was from the other shepherds.

- Jacob goes, and by himself rolls away the stone, and waters her flock.

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There are some interesting parallels here:

- Jacob is the Good Shepherd, he is the one who waters the flock.
- The Good Shepherd is the One who removes the barrier, providing a way, access to the water of life, to the living water.
- The Good Shepherd is the One who actually waters the sheep, and he is the one who actually does all the work,
- This Good Shepherd, the anointed Son – came from a far away place to a people who didn't know Him. They were strangers to Him, yet at the same time they were His people.
- While there were 4 flocks gathered, and they all had access to the water, we only read about one of the four receiving the water.

Jesus said:

**John 10:11** “I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.” John 14:6

**John 14:6** “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.”

**John 4:14** “But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”

Turn to:

**Matthew 13:3-9** Parable of the 4 soils.

**Matthew 13:18-23** Explanation of the parable, only 1 out of 4 bear fruit.

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V: 10 An interesting contrast is that Jacob water's Rachel's sheep, as opposed to Rachel watering Jacob's camels – possibly a foretaste of things to come.

V: 11 Jacob kisses Rachel, lifted up his voice – to God.

- Wept for joy.

V: 12-13 Laban had a couple of reasons to be excited.

1. Money, Jacob's family was well off.
2. Jacob was 77 when he left home on this trek. 20 years before Jacob was born, Rebekah had left her home, following the servant Eliezer headed to the land of Canaan to marry Isaac. It had been almost 100 years since Laban had heard how his sister had been doing, what had happened, and how she had prospered in the house of the wealthy son.

- The eastern culture is much more demonstrative in dealing with their family and guests.
- It is not un-common in that culture to see two men walking along holding hands – to them a sign of fellowship, a symbol of relationship. To us often the sign of a perverted relationship.
- In the eastern culture men will often greet each other with a kiss on the cheek, which is how I greet my sons. To some a hand shake is enough.

**2 Corinthians 13:12**      “Greet one another with an holy kiss.”

V: 14 “We’re family!”

- Jacob had stayed with Laban for a month.
- When Eliezer sought a bride for Isaac. He saw the girl and essentially brought her back right away without delay. And her family let her go.
- Jacob might have benefitted from the same approach, instead he ends up staying for 20 years.

V: 15 Jacob is likely working for Laban already, but not yet for wages.

- Now the determination, what shall the wages be, name your wages.
- Jacob literally names his wages; Rachel.

V: 16-17      Two daughters, two different women.

Rebekah:

1. The first thing we saw about her was that she was a servant – watering the camels.
  2. The second thing was that she was willing by faith to go the distance, travelling 500 miles to be joined to her husband.
  3. Next she had a relationship with God, asking God what was going on with her warring babies.
  4. Lastly, even though she went about it the wrong way, she was trying to accomplish God’s will with respect to the blessing of Jacob.
- Leah: “Weary”, “wild cow”, “Gazelle”
  - Rachel: “Ewe”
  - Much is said about Leah being “tender eyed” – often because of the contrast implying that she was ugly. She may simply have had light colored eyes, delicate eyes, given her name “Gazelle” she was probably not hard to look at.

- The contrast implies that Rachel her sister was somehow above average – beautiful and well favored.

V: 18 Jacob “loved” Rachel.

Loved (H 157). 'ahab, aw-hab'; or 'aheb, aw-habe'; to have affection for, sexually or otherwise, like, friend.

- Jacob makes an agreement with Laban to work for 7 years for Rachel.
- Jacob is specific: “thy younger daughter”

V: 19 Laban knew from the git-go what he was going to do.

- Notice that his response describes what later happens.

V: 20 7 years pass like 7 days because of his love for Rachel.

- This is all a good thing because Jacob isn’t getting any younger, now he’s 84 and ready for his bride.

V: 21 His time is fulfilled and it’s time for the marriage.

V: 22-25 Laban deceives the “deceiver”.

- Jacob is asking Laban why he deceived him, kind of funny coming from a guy who is fleeing from Esau for the same reason.
- Supposition on my part: “feast” may have also implied alcohol which may have increased Jacob’s lack of discernment.
- Either way he wasn’t looking too closely.
- Where was Rachel? Tied up in another tent? Did she play along?
- I wonder if he thought about when he disguised himself and deceived his father?

**Galatians 6:7-8** “<sup>7</sup>Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. <sup>8</sup>For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”

- What goes around, comes around. (Biblical principal)

**Judges 1:6-7** “<sup>6</sup>But Adonibezek fled; and they pursued after him, and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes. <sup>7</sup>And Adonibezek said, threescore and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table: as I have done, so God hath required me. And they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died.”

V: 26 Laban offers his excuses – his mention of “firstborn” may have rung a bell or two.

- While it is obvious that Laban deceived Jacob, he may not have actually “violated” their agreement.
- In V: 18 Jacob says “I’ll work 7 years for the younger daughter Rachel.
- In V: 19 Laban says it’s better that I give her to you than to someone else.
- Laban implied that he agreed with Jacob, but never said so directly.
- Laban does give Rachel to Jacob a week later, after he had also given Leah away.
- Laban does alter the deal and gets another 7 years of labor out of Jacob.
- Jacob is at a point of decision. He can accept the fact that now he has a wife, not the one that he necessarily wanted, but the one that God ordained for him.
- Leah is the wife who eventually produces Judah, through whom the Messiah will come.

**Hebrews 13:5** “Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

**1 Timothy 6:6** “But Godliness with contentment is great gain.”

V: 27-28 Jacob goes the other direction; he still wants Rachel.

- As Jacob agrees to this arrangement, he takes a step backward towards Esau’s position. While his wives are not Canaanite, now he has one more than what he was instructed to have.

**Psalms 119:165** “Great peace have those that love thy law, and nothing causes them to stumble.”

- Later as each of the respective handmaids – supplied by Laban – come into the situation that is doubled and he ends up with four wives.
- Scripture describes these events, Jacob having 4 wives, that does not mean that it condones or approves, it is merely recorded as a pertinent fact in the overall scene.
- God’s intention was for a monogamous relationship between husband and wife.

**Genesis 28:2** “take thee a wife...” Singular.

- This seems to be in line with God’s will, because that is what God gave to Adam, one wife:

**Genesis 2:22-23** “bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh – one flesh”

V: 29-31 He went in unto Rachel, their marriage is consummated.

- Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah. While this was true from the beginning, it would have seemed prudent to make some adjustment in his attitude given that now he is married to Leah as well.
- Jacob may have given into a root of bitterness.

V: 30 "... he loved also Rachel more than Leah..."

"also" is a key word – it means that he loved them both, just that he loved Rachel more.

- This is consistent with the next few verses because apparently Jacob is lying with both of his wives. Leah begins to conceive and has 4 sons up front, and a couple more later on – while Rachel doesn't have any because she's barren.
- I assume Jacob wouldn't keep going in unto Leah if he "hated" her in the sense that we normally think of that word.

V: 31 The key to understanding this is found in the word "hated".

"**Hated**" (H8130). sane', saw-nay'; to hate (personally), enemy, foe, be hateful, odious.

- This may be a comparative use of the word, as it is in the New Testament at times.

Jesus told His disciples:

**Luke 14:26** "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple."

- There are many other scriptures that call us to love one another, husbands are to love their wives, all of us are to honor and love our parents, we're to love our children.

"**hate**" (G3404) misero, hatred; to detest, to persecute; by extens. to love less.

- By comparison, we are to love Jesus more than our father, or mother, wife, or children, and so on.
- Based on Jacob's behavior, still having a physical relationship with Leah he must have loved her as well to some degree, just not as much as Leah.
- This may sound better, but it is still sin.

**Ephesians 5:25** “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;”

**Acts 10:34** “Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons.” (Deut. 10:17, Romans 2:11, Galatians 2:6, Ephesians 6:9)

- Jacob has placed himself in an impossible situation.

**Matthew 6:24** “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”

- We could joke about serving to wives as masters, but what it really speaks about is our inability to supremely love two people, or God and anything else. There will always be one that is loved less.

**James 1:8** “A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.”

V: 32-35 No one was having children until God decided they were having children.

**Reuben:** “Behold a son”.

- Leah’s desire is for the love of her husband.

**Simeon:** “Hearing”.

- The Lord has “seen” and “heard” that she was not loved, and blessed her – affirmed His love for her.

**Levi:** “Joining”, “jointed to”.

**Judah:** “Praise”

- Leah has at this moment stopped looking at her husband, and is looking to the Lord, and giving Him praise.