

GENESIS 29

Jacob's Marriages & Children

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KEYWORD

God (Plural)
God (Singular)
LORD
GOD
Lord
lord
El Olam
Bara
Asah
Beth
Numbers

REVERANCE

Elohim (The Trinity)
El
Jehovah & or Yahweh (YHWH)
Jehovah & or Yahweh
GOD the Master (Kurios), Adonai
Man the Master
Everlasting God
God creating from nothing
God making or assembling from existent materials
House

- 1 - Unity between God the Father & His Son Jesus (John 10:30)
- 2 - Represents union, division, and verification
- 3 - Harmony, New Life & completeness (467 times)
- 4 - Creation & The creative ability of God.
- 5 - God's grace, goodness and favor toward humans (318)
- 6 - Imperfection of man and the sin and weakness he has
- 7 - Perfection
- 8 - New beginnings
- 9 - Divine completeness or conveys the meaning of finality (49)
- 10 - God's authority, completeness, order, and divine perfection
- 11 - Disorder, chaos and judgment (11 - 24 & "11th" - 19)
- 12 - God's power and authority (187)
- 13 - Rebellion
- 40 - Represent completeness or wholeness.
- 70 - Perfect spiritual order carried out with all power.

Keywords

"create" (bara), "make" (asah), and "form" (yatsar). In Isaiah 43:7 - All the three are used.

Jehova means the becoming one as God relates to man and man's needs and becomes to man whatever man may need

PRAYER

Father we thank you for the privilege of studying your word together.

Thank you for the records Jesus, that lead us to you and eternal life in you.

Jesus let your Holy spirit now implant upon our hearts your truths.

Thank you Jesus that revelation knowledge will flow freely, uninterrupted & un-hindered by satanic or demonic forces.

In Jesus's name and everybody say Amen!



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REVIEW

After his journey east, Jacob arrived at the home of Laban, his mother's brother.

Laban lived in Haran in Mesopotamia, outside of the land God had promised to Abraham, Isaac and, in the previous chapter, to Jacob.

Jacob had left his homeland in Canaan, both to find a wife among his father's people and to escape the murderous rage of his older twin brother, Esau in Genesis 27:41.

Jacob's plan is to seek out the former household of his mother, Rebekah, and her brother, Laban.

First, though, Jacob comes across a well in a field.

He asked some shepherds gathered near the well with their flocks if they knew Laban and if he is thriving.

They do know him and point to Laban's daughter Rachel arriving with a flock of her own.

Jacob immediately rolled the heavy stone away from the well and waters the sheep that belong to Rachel's father in verse 1–10.

This might have been an effort to impress her, as later verses will show that Jacob came to love Rachel very much.

Jacob becomes emotional about finding these relatives he has never met before.

He kissed Rachel and wept loudly.

Finally, he told her who he was, and she ran to tell Laban.

Laban quickly arrived.

He hugged and kissed Jacob and welcomed him into his home.

Jacob told Laban some version of his story and how he came to be there, and Laban acknowledged that Jacob is truly his relative in verses 11–14.

After Jacob had been with the family for a month and working for Laban, the uncle asked the nephew what wages he would ask to continue working for him.

The implication is that Jacob is a good worker and very helpful to Laban.

Jacob, who has come in part to find a wife, offers to work for seven years in exchange for marrying Laban's younger daughter Rachel, whom Jacob loves in verses 15–18.

This intense love for Rachel will be an important contrast to Jacob's feelings for her older sister, Leah, later in this chapter.

Laban quickly agreed to this generous offer and the years fly by for Jacob.

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When the time had passed, Laban threw a wedding feast.

On the wedding night, however, Laban managed to switch out Rachel with her older, less attractive sister Leah.

Jacob slept with Leah without realizing she is not Rachel; apparently in that time and place, this was enough to constitute a legal marriage in verses 19–25.

When Jacob realized the next morning what had happened, he demanded to know why Laban had committed this outrageous deception.

Laban calmly told Jacob that their custom does not allow the younger daughter to marry first in verse 26.

Obviously, even if this were true, it is information Laban had seven years to pass along to Jacob.

The entire arrangement was an obvious ploy on Laban's part.

Here, then, is Jacob "getting a taste of his own medicine:" the lying manipulator in Genesis 27:34–36 feeling the sting of deception and fraud.

As if in generosity, Laban offers to allow Jacob to marry Rachel the next week in exchange for another seven years of work.

In spite of Laban's manipulation, Jacob agrees in verses 27–30.

Looking back on this passage after reading about Jacob's remaining life, it turns out he has gained four wives (two of whom are really servants or concubines) in the span of a week!

Both of the servants given to Laban's daughters, at their weddings, will wind up bearing children to Jacob, as well in Genesis 30:2–3; & 30:9–10.

Now married twice over, and with seven more years of unpaid work ahead of him, Jacob settled in.

Leah, though, is deeply wounded by the fact that Jacob loved Rachel more than her.

In fact, Jacob is said to hate Leah, at least by comparison.

Given the circumstances of their marriage, this is hardly a surprise.

The Lord, who is always with Jacob, takes notice of Leah's heartbreak and allows her to begin having children while her younger, better-loved sister remains barren in verse 31.

Jacob's first three sons from his unloved wife are named as a result of her faith.

Leah trusted in the God who noticed her pain and for her hope, or lack of it, that Jacob will now turn his heart toward her.

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In spite of Leah bearing Reuben, Simeon, and Levi, however, Jacob apparently remains unloving toward Leah in verses 32–34.

Leah seems to give up hoping that bearing sons will increase Jacob's love for her.

She named her fourth boy Judah, which means "praise" or "may God be praised."

Leah's faith in God's goodness remained intact, even while her hope that her husband will love her appears to slip away in verse 35.

The last verse of this chapter specifically indicates that Leah stopped conceiving children after Judah.

This might be due to a temporary time of infertility.

However, the next chapter speaks of Rachel's anger that Leah has had children while Rachel has not.

This jealousy from his favored wife might have inspired Jacob to withhold himself from Leah in an effort to give Rachel a child to call her own.

That's it, The Summary of Genesis 29



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GEN 29: 1-7

Then Jacob went on his journey, and came into the land of the people of the east.

(This was northern Mesopotamia where Haran was located.)

²And he looked, and behold a well in the field, and, lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks; and a great stone was upon the well's mouth.

(It is interesting that God led Jacob to the well, even as Abraham's servant earlier had been led by the LORD and had come to the place where Rebekah came out to get water.

It was a different type of well and not the usual type where you are dipping a bucket in for the water.

It was closed by a rock and when the rock was rolled back the water would flow out and water the sheep.

The stone was probably too heavy for these small boys to roll so they would wait until a group would arrive and then the stronger ones would roll the stone back.

They were gathering early, probably to get in line for the water.)

³And thither were all the flocks gathered; and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in his place.

(Wells were places of great significance in this region where water was life.

Wells were also often associated with God's blessing.

Jacob's ancestor Abraham had gone through considerable trouble over wells during his time in Canaan in Genesis 21:25.

Jacob's father, Isaac, as well, had experienced disputes over wells and access to water in Genesis 26:18-22.)

⁴And Jacob said unto them, My brethren, whence be ye? And they said, of Haran are we.

⁵And he said unto them, Know ye Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, We know him.

(Nahor was the father of Bethuel, the father of Laban, as repeatedly mentioned earlier.

- Therefore, "son" as used here actually means grandson.
- A similar use of "son" was observed in our comments on Genesis 9:24.

It should be noted that the conversation reported here is quite different from the way a similar conversation would run today.

This was due to the fact that the Hebrews did not have a word that simply meant "yes."

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Note that,

"The words from the middle of Genesis 29:2 and including Genesis 29:3 are parenthetical, the watering of the flocks not taking place until the arrival of Rachel, and after Jacob had removed the stone."

That this conversation took place so easily indicates that these diverse branches of Terah's family spoke Aramaic, the language of Ur of the Chaldees, from which place Terah and Abraham had migrated.

Anyways God led Jacob to the right well at the right time just as He led the servant of Abraham directly to a well, in order to find a wife for Isaac in Genesis 24:12-16)

⁶And he said unto them, Is he well? And they said, He is well; and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep.

(Rachel was a shepherdess which wasn't unusual for girls in that culture. Even today in Israel you will see small girls tending the sheep.)

⁷And he said, Lo, it is yet high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together; water ye the sheep, and go and feed them.

(Evidently, Jacob wanted to get rid of these little guys, with their sheep, so that when Rachel arrived he would be alone with her)

GEN 29: 8-10

And they said, We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and till they roll the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep.

(Jacob told the shepherds, in essence, to stop hanging out, to water the sheep, and to get back to the pasture.

However the shepherds responded that Jacob's plan is not how they do things.

They wait until all of the sheep have arrived, all of the flocks, then they roll away the heavy stone covering of the well and water all of the flocks at once.)

⁹And while he yet spake with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep; for she kept them.

¹⁰And 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.

(Jacob was probably showing off a bit for Rachel as it usually took several men to roll the stone from the mouth of the well.)

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GEN 29: 11-12

And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept.

(These were tears of joy, for the realization that at last Jacob had reached his destination and that God had blessed him all the way.

To kiss a relative would not necessarily have been seen as a romantic gesture in this era.

It may, however, have seemed strange to do without first identifying oneself as a relative, especially when bursting into tears immediately afterwards.

So we can assume Rachel was confused at this point.)

¹²And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother,

(Here again we have an example of the Hebrew usage of the word "brother" in the extended sense of relative.)

and that he was Rebekah's son; and she ran and told her father.

It may not have happened in that order, but Rachel was taken aback by the whole scene.

No doubt, she had heard the story of her Aunt Rebekah, who was taken, by the servant of Abraham, to be the wife of Abraham's son.

How the story had involved the well and how Rebekah had been prosperous as the wife of Isaac.

There were already some romantic connotations in regards to the family of Nahor and the family of Abraham.

Now here is Jacob kissing his cousin, overcome with emotion and thanksgiving to God.

GEN 29: 13

And it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him

(This was the customary greeting among Hebrew families in those days and even down until the present time.)

and brought him to his house. And he told Laban all these things.

Many years earlier, Laban had heard about the arrival of the servant of a relative and ran out of the city to greet him in Genesis 24:28-29.

That time it was Abraham's servant who came to offer great wealth as part of his request to take Rebekah away and marry her to Isaac.

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Perhaps when Laban heard from Rachel that Rebekah's son had arrived, he expected to find a similar opportunity for wealth.

Whatever Laban's initial motives, he quickly saw that Jacob arrived without any wealth.

GEN 29: 14-15

And Laban said to him, Surely thou art my bone and my flesh, And he abode with him the space of a month.

(The phrase "*surely you are my bone and my flesh*" is a statement of celebrating his close family connection to Jacob.

Jacob was welcomed to stay into Laban's home for a month.

During this month Jacob was not idle. Wherever we are, it is good to employ ourselves in some useful business.

Anyways a month may have been long enough for Esau to cool off, for Jacob to find a wife, and to return home.

Instead, Laban made Jacob an offer he couldn't refuse, one that will keep him working for Laban in the land of Mesopotamia for a very long time.)

¹⁵And Laban said unto Jacob, Because thou art my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? tell me, what shall thy wages be?

(This might sound like a nice offer, but really Laban let Jacob know if he wanted to remain among them, he must stay as a hired servant.

Jacob's father Isaac was a very wealthy man. Back home servants did the hard work; now Jacob was the servant.

Jacob's reaction in this situation revealed much of his character.

This demonstrates the principle that you never know what kind of servant you are until others *treat* you like a servant.)

GEN 29: 16-17

And Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷Leah was tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured.

(Tender eyed or delicate means weak-eyed.

Some say it meant that they were blue and that blue eyes were a sign of weakness in that culture.

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According to that era's standards of beauty, it was ideal to have sharp, dark, expressive eyes.

Leah had a plainer face than what Jacob would have preferred.

Rachel, on the other hand, was described as being "*beautiful in both form and appearance*" which is a reference to both the shape of her body and the look of her face.)

GEN 29: 18-19

And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter.

(Not only was Rachel **beautiful of form and appearance**, but she was also the first friendly face Jacob met in the area.

It is therefore understandable why he had a love at first sight attachment to Rachel.

The offer to work for **seven years** was essentially a dowry.

Though Jacob came from a family with great wealth, he left home with no money.

Before he could take a woman in marriage he had to provide a dowry to demonstrate he was fit to support a family and to compensate for the taking of the daughter.

And since Jacob loved Rachel, he didn't want to risk a refusal and as such he gave a very generous offer, one that was far above a normal dowry of serving Laban for 7 years.

But again this was too much an offer for a dowry and Jacob being the master of deception perhaps imagined that during that time he, as a nephew, would inherit Laban's wealth since Laban didn't have a son.)

¹⁹And Laban said, It is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man; abide with me.

(Jacob's offer was extraordinarily generous. It's no surprise that Laban quickly agreed.)

GEN 29: 20

And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her.

This is among the most romantic verse in the Bible.

But not to take away from the romance of this passage, but Jacob, at this time, was over 70 years old. He lived to be 165; so he is really still a kid. 😊

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Jacob had such a great love for Rachel that seven years seemed but a few days to him.

The years flew by. Love can do that to a man.

In this ancient culture, Jacob was not allowed to spend as much time as he wanted with Rachel.

- There were strict social guidelines to separate unmarried men and women.
- This clearly demonstrated an important principle: *true love waits*.
- Jacob was willing to wait **7 years** for Rachel.

In the 1990s, there was a successful campaign among teens titled "**True Love Waits.**"

It persuaded them to take the following pledge:

Believing that true love waits, I make a commitment to God, myself, my family, those I date, my future mate and my future children to be sexually pure until the day I enter a covenant marriage relationship.

One may debate the success of the campaign, but the principle remains.

Jacob was willing to wait for Rachel **because of the love he had for her.**

NOW LET'S REVIEW ABIT ABOUT THESE 2 SISTERS LEAH AND RACHEL WHO BECAME THE MOTHERS OF THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL

Without doubt, Leah was the stronger and more suitable wife for Jacob, and that must be allowed as the reason God permitted the deception and greed of Laban to succeed, thus making Leah the principal wife of the patriarchal family.

Her pre-eminence consisted of the following:

- I. She was the actual mother of six sons (Genesis 30:19), half of the twelve patriarchs, and one daughter (Dinah).
- II. Her son Judah succeeded to the headship of the Chosen Nation, through whom the Messiah was born.
- III. Her posterity became the principal element in the true Israel, following the defection and loss of the Northern Israel.
- IV. David the king who gave his name and title to Christ himself ("the son of David") was her descendant.
- V. She was the first, and therefore the lawful, wife of Jacob.
- VI. Her son Judah gave his name and title to Christ, "The Lion of the Tribe of Judah."

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VII. She is here mentioned first and was at last buried by Jacob's side in the cave of Machpelah at Hebron, "presumably before Jacob's descent to Egypt."

Rachel, being more beautiful than Leah, was the special object of Jacob's love, that being the principal element in her place in Scripture, and in the history of the Chosen People.

It is possible that she consented to the fraud and deception committed against Jacob in the matter of Leah.

Her honor in the history of Israel was inferior to that of Leah in the following:

- I. She was the second, not the first, wife of Jacob.
 - II. She was impatient and demanding (in the matter of her barrenness).
 - III. Through her posterity, homosexuality found its beginnings in Israel (See Hosea 9:9; Judges 19:10).
 - IV. Her descendant, Ephraim, led the rebellion that divided Israel, usurped the very name of the Chosen Nation as his own, and led the majority of Jacob's descendants into apostasy and destruction.
 - V. Her body was not placed beside that of Jacob's in Machpelah.
 - VI. Apparently, she sponsored and kept alive pagan idolatry among the Israelites (Genesis 31:32-35).
 - VII. Although having full knowledge of Abraham's introduction of concubinage into his family and of the terrible consequences of it, Rachel, nevertheless, fell into the same error, re-introducing concubinage into the families of the covenant people.
-

The names of Leah and Rachel were said to have the following meanings:

- I. Leah was defined by Beeching as meaning "wild cow." However, we prefer the meaning of "gazelle,".
 - II. Rachel means "ewe."
-

GEN 29: 21-23

And Jacob said unto Laban, Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her.

(Jacob's words read like a demand. It's possible there had already been tension between Jacob and Laban and that Jacob felt the need to be strong with Laban to bring their deal to a close.)

²²And Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast.

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(Nobody from Jacob's family is said to have been invited.)

We're not told that Jacob had any contact with Isaac, Rebekah, Esau, or others from their household during the seven years that have passed.

That may not be surprising given the circumstances under which Jacob left home. Still, we wonder if any word of Jacob's wedding would have reached them.

A wedding feast during this era may have lasted as long as a week with much eating and drinking, as well as several specific rituals and ceremonies.

One of significant event would involve the groom taking the bride to his chamber to consummate the marriage.)

²³And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him; and he went in unto her.

(According to the wedding customs of the day, the wife was veiled until she was finally alone with her husband in the honeymoon suite.

So if it was dark by the time Jacob and his new bride were alone together, it helps explain how Jacob was easily fooled.

We can also assume that Leah was in agreement with this arrangement.

Yet even if she was not in agreement, she was under the absolute authority of her father which also explains why Rachel allowed this to happen.)

GEN 29: 24-25

And Laban gave unto his daughter Leah Zilpah his maid for an handmaid.

(Laban gave to Leah one of his servant girls, Zilpah, as a wedding present. He did the same for Rachel.

It was not uncommon for a father to give his daughter a generous gift for her wedding, and the lifetime gift of a servant girl would have been very generous, indeed.

The family precedent for this had been set many years earlier when Rebekah set off to be married to Isaac.

Then Laban's father had given to Laban's sister Rebekah her childhood nurse and several servant girls in Genesis 24:59-61.

Due to problems conceiving children in the family, Zilpah became Jacob's wife and a mother to his children.)

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²⁵And it came to pass, that in the morning, behold, it was Leah; and he said to Laban, What is this thou hast done unto me? did not I serve with thee for Rachel? wherefore then hast thou beguiled me?

It is interesting that Jacob asked Laban why he had deceived him; when **“he” was there running from his brother Esau, because he had deceived Isaac**, his father.

Now Jacob the deceiver is being deceived by his father-in-law.

It says in **Galatians 6:7**

Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Adoni-bezek, when he was captured and they cut off his thumbs and his great toes, said in **Judges 1:7**

Three score 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 requited me....

This is a law that God has established within nature.

- Whatever a man sows, that he also reaps.
- It is a necessary law in order to keep order in nature.
- Life would be almost impossible, chaotic at the least, if this were not a law of nature.
- If you did not reap what you sowed, the whole agriculture industry would be chaotic.

The law of sowing and reaping is not just valid in the physical universe, but the bible declares it is also valid in the spiritual realm.

Watch what you sow into your mind, because you become what you have planted in your mind!

Jacob exchanged the younger for the older; Laban exchanged the older for the younger.

When Jacob deceived his father and cheated his brother, God did not change His plan to choose Jacob to receive the birthright.

Instead, God took Jacob to the school of difficult experience to discipline him.

This shows that our disobedience may not derail God’s plan for our life, but it will greatly affect how we end up experiencing it.

One might spend 20 years working for someone like Laban while God teaches a few things.

Though we can see this was God’s correction upon Jacob, it in no way justified Laban’s deception.

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The fact that God *does* work all things together for good never excuses the evil things man does.

GEN 29: 26-27

And Laban said, It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn.

(There was indeed such a custom among the Indians, the Egyptians, and other Oriental countries and it could have been possible that Laban had heard of such customs, but there is no evidence whatsoever that any such customs prevailed in the vicinity of Haran.

As suggested earlier, one may wonder what part Rachel played in this, if any.

The trick of Laban when he substituted Leah for Rachel could not have been possible without Rachel's consent.

Evidently she did not fear any competition from her less-favored sister, and welcomed the thought of her company back to Canaan.

What happened to Jacob here was as mean and despicable a fraud as was ever perpetrated by one human being against another.

One may only wonder if Jacob remembered the fraud that he and his mother had committed against Isaac.

Did the remembrance of it lead to his rather meek acceptance of what Laban did to him?

This time, "the heel-catcher" was himself taken by the heel, the deceiver was deceived.

Laban also, in turn, would learn the solemn truth that "as men sow, so shall they reap.")

²⁷Fulfil her week,

(It was the custom of the time when you got married to spend the first week with your wife.)

and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years.

Laban comes across to us as a manipulative, almost cartoonish villain. ☺

He solves the problem of getting Leah married and the problem of not losing Jacob's free labor all in one tidy scheme.

He gets everything he wants at Jacob's expense.

Jacob did have options, of course.

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- He could have refused to marry Rachel and left Laban's household.
- He could have refused the marriage to Leah, though if it was legally binding, that might have ruined his chances to marry Rachel.
- Or, more reasonably, he could have simply demanded Rachel and told Laban that he wasn't going to be cheated into extra work.

But, Laban seems to have known from the beginning that Jacob loved Rachel and was likely to continue to serve him in order to marry her.

Later on, in the story, Jacob accuses Laban of changing his wages ten different times in the years he worked for him.

You could say that the second seven years made up Jacob's post-graduate work in the school of difficult experience wherein he mastered in

"You Reap What You Sow."

GEN 29: 28

And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week; and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also.

(Polygamy is not widely practiced today, but we do practice *serial marriage*.

When it comes to terminology, we can think of polygamy as *mass marriage* in the sense we speak about *mass murder*: someone who marries more than one at the same time.

There is also *serial murder*: where a murderer kills many, but one at a time.

In our modern culture, we also multiply wives to ourselves; we just do it one at a time.

We can't do anything about our marriages that have broken up in the past, but each of us can do all that we can before God to make sure that from now on, it is one partner for all time.)

GEN 29: 29-30

And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah his handmaid to be her maid.

(As he had done with Leah, Laban gave a generous wedding present to Rachel: a servant girl called Bilhah.

She, too, was destined to become a wife of Jacob and give birth to his sons.

This means, in the space of a week, Jacob had gone from single, to living with four women who will all, eventually, bear him children.)

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³⁰And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years.

Laban was a perfect picture of a deceptive manipulator.

He ended up getting exactly what he wanted (both his daughters married).

Yet this would turn out badly for both himself and his daughters.

Oftentimes, God will judge manipulators by giving them what they in their sinful desires and methods want, yet allowing it to be loss for them.

The problems in this family can be seen immediately.

Not only had Jacob married two sisters, but he also allowed everyone to know that one was favored and loved more than the other.

Ultimately, all these problems came from Laban's manipulative deception, and the prior sin of Jacob that brought it upon himself.

What should Jacob have done?

Some say Jacob should have gone to Laban and told him to correct the whole mess, and simply be married to Rachel and let Leah be Laban's problem.

Others believe that according to the standards of the culture, he could not have put Leah aside, because she was unable to marry another after having been given to Jacob.

Perhaps he should have done the best he could have in the situation, which would have been to love his two wives equally.

What a mess!

GEN 29: 31-32

And when the LORD saw that Leah was hated,

(The word "hate" in here means "to love less.")

Similarly, Jesus commanded those who would follow him to "hate" their father and mother in Luke 14:26.

It simply means that Jacob continued to love Rachel **MORE THAN** he loved Leah.

Now, one is left to wonder about the reason for Leah's distress.

Did she not consent to the deception that placed her in the bed that should have been for Rachel?

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Could she have been unaware that the wrong done to her sister was the reason she might have been hated by Jacob?

God set a principle and so it shall always be: What a man sows, that also shall he reap!

he opened her womb; but Rachel was barren.

(Rachel became the third wife of the first patriarchs of Israel who unable to conceive a child until the Lord allowed it.

The same was true for Sarah and Rebekah.

Even Leah's firstborn son by Jacob is only born with the Lord's intervention.

Clearly, it was important to God for Israel to know that children were a gift from Him and that pregnancy was not something that could be controlled by human will alone.

Amen!!

God's compassion on Leah was touching. She was truly the innocent party in all of this mess.

God can bring comfort and blessing to a wife and meet her needs even when the husband acts in an ungodly manner.

God was good to Leah, even when her husband and her sister weren't.

Isaiah 54:5 says,

For your Maker is your husband, the LORD of hosts is His name.

Husbands are responsible to care for their wives. Yet when they do not, God can meet the needs of a hurting wife, needs that may be neglected by the husband.

Here's a nice poem by Luther that he cited in Boice:

"Wretched Leah sits sadly in her tent with her maid and spends her time spinning and weeping.

For the rest of the household, and especially Rachel, despises her because she has been scorned by her husband, who prefers Rachel and is desperately in love with Rachel alone.

She is not beautiful, not pleasing.

No, she is odious and hated...

There the poor girl sits; no one pays any attention to her.

Rachel gives herself airs before; she does not deign to look at her.

'I am the lady of the house,' she thinks, 'Leah is a slave.'

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These are truly carnal things in the saintly fathers and mothers, like the things that usually happen in our houses.”)

³²And Leah conceived, and bare a son, and she called his name Reuben;

(The first of Jacob's twelve sons is born to his unloved wife Leah.

Leah named her firstborn Reuben which means, “*Look a son*”. She hoped that this birth would bring to her Jacob’s love.

Unfortunately it didn’t ☹)

for she said, Surely the LORD hath looked upon my affliction; now therefore my husband will love me.

(Jacob, even though he did not love Leah, still was willing to have sex with her.

This demonstrates a principle that is still true, that a man will often be willing to have sex completely apart from love, and only a foolish woman regards the willingness to have sex as proof of love.

Leah was not the first, nor the last, to live under this problem of male nature.)

GEN 29: 33

And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Because the LORD hath heard that I was hated,

(Apparently, the birth of Reuben did not turn the heart of Jacob towards Leah.

She was still aware he did not love her, though he still was willing to have sex with her.

Of course, Jacob and Leah were married, so there was nothing *sinful* in sexual relationship.

But this plainly shows that Jacob, like most any man in the flesh, was able and willing to have sex with someone he did not love.

A 1995 survey asked men the following question:

“Have you ever had sex with a woman you have actively disliked?”

Guess what; 58% of men answered “yes.” ☺)

he hath therefore given me this son also; and she called his name Simeon.

The LORD had seen and had heard Leah’s grief in that she was not loved.

GEN 29: 34

GENESIS 29

And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Now this time will my husband be joined unto me, because I have born him three sons; therefore was his name called Levi (*joined*).

Leah said, Surely, this time my husband will come live with me and she called her third born son Levi which means “*joined*.”

She was expressing again that yearning for the love of her husband.

GEN 29: 35

And she conceived again, and bare a son; and she said, Now will I praise the LORD; therefore she called his name Judah (*praise*); and left bearing.

Leah had four sons in rapid succession while Rachel remained barren.

She also stopped naming her children to reflect the pain and longing in her heart as we see her naming her fourth son, “*Praise*.”.

Perhaps Leah had given up on winning Jacob's affection and so she decided to focus and praise on God.

Leah, though she was neglected by Jacob and despised by Rachel, had a great purpose in God's plan.

The two greatest tribes came from Leah, not Rachel:

- Levi the priestly tribe and Judah the royal tribe.

And most importantly, the Messiah came from Leah, the less-attractive sister who was neglected and despised but learned to look to the LORD and praise Him.

THE LESSONS WE LEARN FROM THIS STUDY ARE:

1. The marriage customs in Genesis 29 probably seem strange to most western readers. They may seem unfair, uncivilized, or contrary to modern ideals.
 2. This chapter is a good reminder that cultures and customs have varied widely throughout history.
 3. Be careful not to read and interpret the Bible solely through your modern cultural perspective. Trying to interpret an ancient culture through your culture's lens is a sure way to so start misinterpreting things.
 4. To understand ancient people and their practices we need to remain open minded to the fact that not everyone in history shared our view of the way the world should work.
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GENESIS 29

We will start from Chapter 30 next week ...

IF YOU HAVEN'T RECEIVED JESUS CHRIST AS YOUR PERSONAL SAVIOUR, I WANT YOU TO PRAY THIS PRAYER WITH ME RIGHT NOW

- Heavenly Father, I realize that I'm a sinner
 - But right now I repent of my sins
 - I make you my Lord
 - I receive the free gift of forgiveness of sin
 - I need you, Jesus
 - Be my savior
 - So right now I declare by faith that I am saved in Jesus' name. Amen & Praise God
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If you just prayed that prayer with me online, please let us know through our website and we shall send you a free eBook as a gift to you today.

Otherwise, welcome to the family of God. Amen!

LET'S STANDUP FOR THE FINAL BLESSING

Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us:

- Be with you, bless you and keep you
 - May the Lord cause his face to shine upon you and give you peace
 - May your heart be filled with his love
 - May you walk in the spirit
 - May you be strengthened by the work of his Holy spirit in your inner man
 - May you be increased in knowledge and understanding of His word, His will and His purposes for your life that you might walk before the Lord in a way that's pleasing unto him
 - And may God increase your faith and your trust
 - May he work in your life in a beautiful way as he natures you and as he leads you into that path of fellowship with him self
-

GENESIS 29

- May your life be enriched in all things in Christ Jesus
 - And May the Lord and his blessings be upon you while we are absent from each other until we are brought back together again to continue our fellowship and our growing together in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ
 - Amen
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