



Lesson 21

JACOB MARRIES RACHEL (& LEAH)

Story Elements

- **TEXT:** Gen. 29:1-30
- **Setting:** circa 1900 B.C.
- **Main Characters:** God, Jacob, Rachel, Leah, and Laban
- **Plot:** Jacob arrives at his uncle's house and falls in love with his cousin.
- **Key word(s):** "___" (vv 18, 20, 30, 32)
- **Climax:** *Genesis 29:21 And Jacob said unto Laban, Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her.*

Excursion Ended

- 1) (v 1) After an unspecified amount of time, Jacob's near-500-mile journey to Haran came to an end. In the Hebrew "went on his journey" implied haste (literally "lifted up his _____") – Jacob's spirits, and consequently his feet, were lifted by the heavenly vision at Bethel.
- 2) (vv 2-3) Outside of Laban's city Jacob saw a well of water surrounded by three flocks of sheep. The well was covered over with a large stone. What would be the purpose of covering the well's mouth in such a manner? _____
- 3) (vv 4-8) Jacob conversed with the local shepherds and learned that they were from Haran and were acquainted with Laban. In fact, they were waiting at the well for Laban's flock to join them so they could remove the stone lid and water all the sheep at once. In the distance, Laban's flock approached with _____ his daughter leading them.
- 4) (vv 9-12) When Jacob saw Rachel...
 - a) ...he removed the stone and watered her sheep for her – in similar fashion as when his mother _____ had shown kindness to Abraham's servant many years before.
 - b) ...he kissed her and wept. Perhaps a strange reaction to us, but Jacob must've been overwhelmed with gratitude that God had providentially arranged the meeting this way, just as was promised at Bethel (*cf.* 28:15). His thoughts would have been the same as Eliezar's: "The LORD hath _____ my way." (*cf.* 24:56)
 - c) ...her introduced himself to her – he was her father's _____ (a word used for any near relation), the son of Rebekah.

Bride Bartered

- 5) (vv 13-20) Laban received Jacob with open arms. After he abode with them a month, staying and working as part of the family, Jacob was asked to name his wages. He responded, "I will serve thee seven years for _____ thy younger daughter."
- a) The Bible mentions Rachel's older sister, Leah. She is described as "tender eyed," which probably meant _____ eyes – something that might not have been as aesthetically pleasing in that culture as dark-colored eyes. (*cf.* Song. 1:15; 5:12)
- b) Laban heartily agreed to Jacob's offer, so Jacob stayed and worked for 7 years – "and they seemed unto him but a few _____ for the love he had to her."

Deceiver Deceived

- 6) (vv 21-22) After the seven years was finished, Jacob told Laban, "Give me my ____." Preparations were made and the week-long ceremony and reception commenced.
- 7) (vv 23-25) The morning after the ceremony, Jacob saw his unveiled bride in the morning light and "behold, it was _____."
- a) (v 26) Jacob demanded an explanation of his new father-in-law. Laban defended the switcheroo by saying that it was _____ to marry off the younger daughter before the elder.
- b) (v 27) Laban then told Jacob, regarding Leah, that he should "perform her week," that is, treat her as his bride during the bridal feast and then afterward he could marry Rachel – as long as he stayed and worked an additional _____ years.
- 8) (v 30) Jacob agreed to Laban's terms. The Bible notes that Jacob loved Rachel more than _____ – the stage was set for more family disharmony and jealous infighting.

Application

- 9) Jacob the deceiver was deceived and "paid in his own coin." Though Laban's beguiling was wrong and hurtful, we can't help but remember that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also _____." (Gal. 6:7)
- 10) Jacob's love for Rachel is a stirring reminder of Christ's love for the Church, and we can't help but see an allegory in the sisters: "Dr. Lightfoot makes Leah and Rachel to be figures of the two churches, the Jews under the law and the _____ under the gospel: the younger the more beautiful, and more in the thoughts of Christ when he came in the form of a servant; but he other, like Leah, first embraced."¹

Answer Key

"Key word(s): "love" | 1. feet | 2. Probably to protect it from enemies who might try to stop the wells. | 3. Rachel | 4. a) Rebekah; b) prospered; c) brother | 5. Rachel; a) pale-colored; b) days | 6. wife | 7. Leah; a) uncustomary; b) seven | 8. Leah | 9. reap | 10. Gentiles

¹ Henry, Matthew. *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994. Print.