

## GENESIS 29 JACOB AND HIS WIVES

### Verses 1-6

Three flocks of sheep—a sign from God that it was the right place/  
A huge stone covered the well to protect it from impurities, evaporation as well as unwelcome visitors helping themselves to their water. It took several men, normally, to remove.

When asked about Laban, the men said “He is shalom.” He is safe, happy, in good health and at peace.

Jacob found he had reached his destination and here came his cousin, Rachel. Now at 77 years of age, he was meeting his bride-to-be who was probably 14 or 15 years old. Since lives were longer then, he would be considered middle-aged.. Different time, different culture.

### Verses 7-11

Jacob wanted the men to get to watering their flocks and leave so he could have alone time with Rachel, but they said, “Not the way we do things here. Everyone comes together for water.”

when Rachel came to the well, Jacob rolled off the stone all by himself and watered her sheep. Then he kissed in greeting and his emotions took over after the long hot journey, probably thinking of his mom and relief that God led him to her family. And, perhaps love at first sight?

Though not the case for Hebrews, it was, in other cultures the job of young girls to care for the young Hebrew boys had that chore.

### Verses 12-14

Laban ran to meet him and embraced him. I wonder if Jacob should have checked his pockets afterwards?

He was welcomed into the home and stayed, working for Laban one month.

“Surely you are my bone and my flesh.” This indicates a type of adoption on Laban's part, At this point he seems to only have daughters.

Verses 15-20 Laban knew Jacob wanted a bride and pretty sure he knew which one had caught his eye. However, Jacob had brought no dowry so he promised to work for Rachel for 7 years.

Leah means “strong woman,” or “cow.”

Rachel means “young ewe.” We see whom was more precious to her parents in this family.

Leah was tender-eyed. Beauty in the middle east is judged by the eyes. If a woman has dark fiery eyes she's a looker. Paler eyes are seen as weak, so Leah probably had blue or hazel eyes. She just wasn't born with the right genes for that part of the world.

Rachel, on the other hand, was a vision of beauty. The patriarchs seemed to be blessed with gorgeous wives.

The fact is, light colored eyes don't fare well in the heat of the desert. That seems to be why people in hot climates have darker eyes, while blue eyes are prevalent in northern countries.

Verses 21-22

Big wedding party-for the men. Pour the wine .. keep jacob's glass full.

Verses 23-27

Leah, all dressed in wedding gear and veil was taken to Jacob. The wine, the darkness, the deceit, not only of Laban but of Leah!

And what about Rachel? How was she feeling about all this?

So, the trickster was tricked by a bigger trickster! "What have you done to me?!" Laban had caused Jacob to be in "bondage" to Leah in this relationship. "You have betrayed me!"

There is evidence that Laban's excuse was true about oldest must be married first.

Laban again managed to manipulate Jacob into another 7 years of work.

There is still a legal term used in Israel called "Laban's youngest daughter, Rachel." It is used in a transaction to specify NO switching or shenanigans!

Verses 28-30

So, jacob agreed, and after giving Leah a week in hopes of producing a child, he married Rachel, hen continued to work another 7 years for Laban.

The brides were each given a servant maid, so Jacob was now responsible for 2 wives and two other women.

Zilpah, Leah's maid, means "fragrant droppings." as myrrh droppings.

Bilhah, Rachel's maid, means "timid."

Verses 31-35

The Hebrew word "sane," means 'to hate personally, to detest or to find utterly odious.' It appears that Jacob resented Leah for her part in the deception. Poor Leah.

But, God took pity on her and blessed her with children, though that only added to the bitter rivalry between the two sisters.

Reu ven or Reu ben! "See, it;s a son!" The first son named Reuben, "for Surely God has looked on my misery and depression. Now my husband will have a bonding affection for me." She hoped they would bond over that first son.

Number 2 son - Shimon (Simon) from Shama' "to hear" When used God to man it means t"o hear and obey." Used from man addressing God, it means "hearken; hear with sympathy."

Leah was thankful to God for hearkening to her cries. Another son inhopes of changing Jacob's heart.

Number 3 son – Levi from the verb, "liva" 'to accompany.' This is a prophesy for the future as the Levites would receive no parcel of land in the promised land because the Lord is their inheritance. They served with religious duties and "accompanied " the other tribes into the promised land.

Number 4 son – Judah Ye hu duh' “Now I will praise the Lord.” Comes from the verb, “Hoda;” and the word “toda” 'to thank.' The word for “Jewish is Yehudim.’ Now you know that “Jewish” means 'thankful!'

follow up Judah with /Genesis 49:8

Now, Leah has four boyus to care for and to love.

## GENESIS 30 GOD INCREASES JACOB

### Verses 1-6

John MacArthur: “A childless woman in the ancient near eastern culture was no better than a dead wife and became a severe embarrassment of her husband.”

Rachel was envious and frustrated, taking it out on Jacob, just as Sarah did to Abraham. Jacob truthfully points out to her that God is in control of it all.

So, she switches to plan “B”: A surrogate, using Bilhah who would sit on Rachel's knees as she gave birth. This symbolized the wife providing a child for her husband.

The phrase, “on my knees,” is 'berek,' very similar to 'barak' which means to kneel; to bless.' Rachel would be blessed by this in giving her husband a child.

Rachel named the boys born to Bilhah; whether she took them and raised them I couldn't find. However, at Rachel's death, Bilhah is credited for taking Benjamin and Joseph (a teen) to raise from that time.

Bilhah gave birth to Dan, considered to be Rachel's “first” son. His name means “judge.” Indeed, a famous judge from that tribe was Samson.

### Verses 7-8

The sixth son born to Bilhah was Naphtali. His name is translated “wrestlings,” but a better translation would be “twistedness, entangling, crookedness.”

We can see how relationships are entangled and messed up.

### Verses 9-13

Two can play that game. If Rachel can do this, so can I. Later in Moses' day, the law prohibited a man from marrying sisters, unless one was deceased.

Leah claims 2 more boys for herself.

Number seven is Gad, birthed by Zilpah. His name is another pun, having 2 meanings. One means “troop.” but the ophther means “a fortune has come.” as in good luck or success.

The eighth son born to Jacob was Zilpah's second, named Asher by Leah. The name is nearly the same as “osher' which means 'happy, blessed.'

### Verses 14-21

Competition was running high between these two wives. Rue the firstborn was only a small boy when he found the mandrakes and took them to his mom.

Also called the mayapple or love apple, it belongs to the potato family and can be poisonous as is

deadly nightshade, another in the potato family. The mandrake was seen in the ancient world as an aphrodisiac or fertility inducing drug.

Rachel was willing to try anything.

You can hear the animosity in Leah's words, but Rachel's offer was accepted and after informing Jacob he was "hired" for the night, Leah conceived her 5<sup>th</sup> son, making Jacob father of 9 sons.

He was named Issachar 'Yee se har' Here is another pun in Hebrew. Sachar has two meanings: "to hire" and the other, "wages, reward." The hire was the fee for the mandrakes, but the reward was for Leah, who was rewarded by God with another child.

Enough time passed that Leah had a sixth son, Zebulun, Ze vu loon means "dwelling." Leah lived in hope that that sixth son would finally make Jacob dwell with her.

Then, a daughter is mentioned because she will show up in chapter 34. Normally, daughters aren't mentioned in a lineage unless important in some way for us to know.

Dinah is the feminine form of Dan and means "judgment." In chapter 34 we'll understand how that applies in life.

So, the seven years, Rachel was childless while Leah popped out six sons, God comforted her because she was unloved by her husband.

Verses 22-24

finally, it was God's timing for Rachel to have a son. Joseph means "will be added." Rachel was confident that God would add to her another son after Joseph. She was still in competition with her sister.

Joseph never became one of the 12 tribes of Israel, though his sons were adopted by Jacob and they inherited land.

If we look ahead we'll see that Jacob was 130 years old when he was reunited with Joseph in Egypt. Joseph, at that time was 39. That would make Jacob 91 when Joseph was born..

Rachel says, "God has removed my disgrace."

Verses 25-34

It had now been at least 14 years that Laban had worked Jacob. Now, Jacob was itching to get away from cheating Laban. Laban knew on which side his bread was buttered and wasn't so willing for Jacob to leave.

So far, Jacob has two wives, two concubines, 11 sons and at least one daughter (Probably more) for whom he is responsible. Yet, he owns nothing. Everything he has accomplished was for Laban. No wonder Laban wanted him to stick around. He enjoyed the residual blessings that fell from being around Jacob.

Originally, Laban looked upon Jacob as an adopted son, but later, he must have had his own sons who were now worried Jacob would take their inheritance.

No trust anymore. No love lost between the two men.

An offer was made and Laban liked it. Sounded like all the more for him. Jacob was counting on his wisdom gained in years of animal husbandry and the knowledge that God would bless him.

Verses 35-43

Not a speck - You know Laban made sure to get every animal with any markings at all. He removed all that had a stripe or spot and took them three days journey from Jacob and the others.

As for the methods used by Jacob in breeding, the peeled sticks were put in the water trough and it's thought that the sap from them entered the water and caused the ewes to come into heat. The word in Hebrew for 'conceive' means "to be in heat." God also gave him wisdom in gene selectivity in producing more speckled or striped in the flocks. Recessive gene and all that.

Anyway, he was blessed by God and after awhile Jacob had huge flocks as well as other animals, even adding many servants.