

Jacob, Rachel, Laban, and Leah

Gen 29 ¹ So Jacob went on his journey and came to the land of the people of the East. ² And he looked, and saw a well in the field; and behold, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks. A large stone was on the well's mouth.

³ Now all the flocks would be gathered there; and they would roll the stone from the well's mouth, water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place on the well's mouth. ⁴ And Jacob said to them, "My brethren, where are you from?" And they said, "We are from Haran." ⁵ Then he said to them, "Do you know Laban the son of Nahor?" And they said, "We know him." ⁶ So he said to them, "Is he well?" And they said, "He is well. And look, his daughter Rachel is coming with the sheep." ⁷ Then he said, "Look, it is still high day; it is not time for the cattle to be gathered together. Water the sheep, and go and feed them." ⁸ But they said, "We cannot until all the flocks are gathered together, and they have rolled the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep."

⁹ Now while he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherdess. ¹⁰ And 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. ¹¹ Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept. ¹² And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's relative and that he was Rebekah's son. So she ran and told her father. ¹³ Then it came to pass, when Laban heard the report about Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him and kissed him, and brought him to his house. So he told Laban all these things. ¹⁴ And Laban said to him, "Surely you are my bone and my flesh." And he stayed with him for a month. ¹⁵ Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what should your wages be?" ¹⁶ Now Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷ Leah's eyes were delicate, but Rachel was beautiful of form and appearance. ¹⁸ Now Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, "I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter." ¹⁹ And Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to another man. Stay with me."

²⁰ So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed only a few days to him because of the love he had for her. ²¹ Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in to her." ²² And Laban gathered together all the men of the place and made a feast. ²³ Now it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her. ²⁴ And Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah as a maid. ²⁵ So it came to pass in the morning, that behold, it was Leah. And he said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Was it not for Rachel that I served you? Why then have you deceived me?" ²⁶ And Laban said, "It must not be done so in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. ²⁷ Fulfill her week, and we will give you this one also for the service which you will serve with me still another seven years." ²⁸ Then Jacob did so and fulfilled her week. So he gave him his daughter Rachel as wife also. ²⁹ And Laban gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as a maid. ³⁰ Then Jacob also went in to Rachel, and he also loved Rachel more than Leah. And he served with Laban still another seven years.

► The Heb. in vs1 literally says, "So Jacob picked up his feet." Jacob has a new _____ in his step, because God appeared to him and promised that He is with him (Gn 28.10-17).

► In the Bible, when a man and woman first meet at a well, you pretty much know that God is bringing them

_____, for God has woven a pattern in Scripture where water, especially from a spring or well, is associated with new _____.

— Adam & Eve in the Garden of Eden (Gn 2.8-25)

Gn 2 ¹⁰ Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden

— The Bridegroom & Bride in the Song of Solomon

Song 4 ¹² A garden enclosed Is my sister, my spouse, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.

— Eliezer finding Rebekah for Isaac (Gn 24.11-15)

— Moses meeting Zipporah (Exo 2.16-21)

— Jesus meeting the Samaritan woman (Jn 4.5-30, 39)

► In vs 2-10, we see Jacob's _____, energy, wisdom, and strength in contrast to the shepherds.

— Cf. Moses in Exo 2.16-17

— Cf. Rebekah in Gn 24

► Laban initially treats Jacob as _____, but later as a _____ hand when it turns out Jacob does not have lavish gifts as Abraham's servant Eliezer did in Gn 24.

► Jacob is at a disadvantage for several reasons:

— He is not from Haran and has no _____. He is dependent on the good graces of Laban.

— He is in _____ with Rachel, but he has nothing to give as a bride-price other than his labor. So Jacob offers to work for Laban for ____ years in exchange for Rachel's hand.

— Cf. Deut 22.29, 50 shekels of silver as a bride-price

► During that seven years, Jacob is receiving no wages; he is basically living like a _____.

► When the 7 years is up, Jacob has to force the issue (21). At the wedding feast, Jacob thinks he is getting Rachel, but in the morning light, he sees that it is _____. The facts suggest that Laban was _____ this from the beginning.

► Laban has Jacob between a rock and a hard place:
— Jacob has already slept with Leah, so there is no going back, not without _____ Leah.

— Jacob loves Rachel, so Laban dangles her in front of Jacob for another ____ years of service, with the sweetener that Laban will allow Jacob to marry her right away.

— Jacob agrees. A week later, he takes Rachel as his second wife, and serves Laban for another seven years (30).

► What Laban has done is _____ from Jacob, Rachel, and Leah their marriages and their spouses. How so?

► Laban acts this way because he is covetous; he worships _____ instead of the true and living God.

Col 3⁵ [P]ut to death ... covetousness, which is idolatry.

Eph 5⁵ [T]his you know, that no ... covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

1Tim 6¹⁰ [T]he love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

James 1¹⁶ Do not be deceived ...¹⁷ Every good gift ... is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights

Act20³⁵ Jesus ... said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Heb 13⁵ Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." (cf. Gn28.15; Mt28.20b)

Prov 21²⁵ [T]he lazy man ... refuse[s] to labor.²⁶ He covets greedily all day long

Rom 13⁹ [T]he commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," ... are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Jer 6¹³ "Everyone is given to covetousness; and ... everyone deals falsely"

Exo 20¹⁷ "You shall not covet ... anything that is your neighbor's."

Exo 18²¹ "You shall select ... able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness ... to be rulers"

1Tim 3² A bishop then must be blameless, ...³ not ... greedy for money ...⁸ Likewise deacons must be reverent, ... not greedy for money

Prov 1¹⁹ Greed ... takes away the life of its owners ... 15²⁷ He who is greedy for gain troubles his own house