

A copy of this lesson is posted in Adobe pdf format at <http://cranfordville.com> under Bible Studies in the [Bible Study](#) section

A note about the [blue, underlined](#) material: These are hyperlinks that allow you to click them on and bring up the specified scripture passage automatically while working inside the pdf file connected to the internet. Just use your web browser's back arrow or the taskbar to return to the lesson material.

\*\*\*\*\*

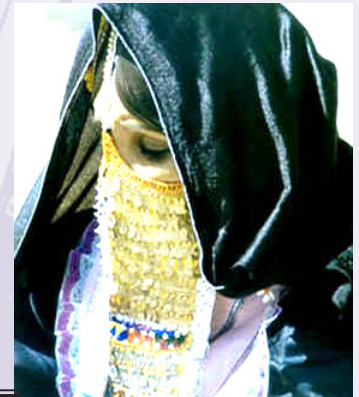
### Quick Links to the Study

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| I. <a href="#">Context</a>    | II. <a href="#">Message</a>                      |
| a. <a href="#">Historical</a> | a. <a href="#">Arrival at Haran, vv. 1-14</a>    |
| b. <a href="#">Literary</a>   | b. <a href="#">Working for a wife, vv. 15-35</a> |

\*\*\*\*\*

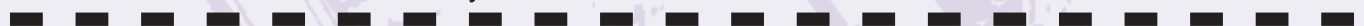
The story of how Jacob found his wife Rachel is one of the more fascinating stories in the Bible. It is filled with intrigue, deception, love and patience. Most amazing is Jacob's first wedding night when he got the surprise of his life as he lifted the veil from his bride's face. Eventually he ended up with two wives who were sisters and his first-cousins to boot.

Although the customs of that day about marriage, weddings etc. are dramatically different than those of our day, some deep, lasting principles of human relationships surface in the episodes of chapter 29. We can profit from these abiding truths of the text as we study with curiosity the strange customs of that ancient day.



## I. Context

As is true with previous studies, we will depend upon earlier studies in Genesis to provide the basic study on the historical and literary background to chapter 29 in our study. New material will supplement that material as it illumines the study of Gen. 29.



### a. Historical

**External History.** With the exile of the Jewish people in Babylon in the sixth century BCE came a determination to preserve their religious heritage and traditions in cohesive written expression. Bits and pieces of that tradition had existed for centuries in both written and oral forms, but, with the uncertainty of the future now that the homeland lay in ruin, the need to preserve that heritage gained new levels of urgency. The centrality of the legal codes provided the core of the first five books of the Old Testament. The stories of Genesis establish the roots for the beginnings of the Jewish people by tracing their origins back into humanity in general and ultimately to the creation of the first man and woman.

With the numerous creation stories linked to vari-

ous semitic cultures of the middle east, Genesis set up origins in a positive light as the creation of the God who embraced His creation, especially its people, with compassion and love. This stood in stark contrast to the Babylonian traditions that placed humanity as an afterthought of capricious unholy egocentric gods who spent more time fighting one another than anything else. No special people existed. No interest in relationships of the divine with the human. Nothing but vicious cruel evil typified the behavior patterns of the deities. In these cultures their gods mirrored the unholy, vicious cruelty of their powerful rulers.

Also, in contrast to the legendary traditions of the Babylonians who ignored or considered holiness as irrelevant to human behavior, the Jewish heritage in



Genesis presents us with a holy but compassionate God who expects His creation to measure up to His standards of righteous living. Thus their traditions reflect honest appraisals of human behavior in both its bright moments, but also in its sometimes deeply dark sides as well. Before a holy God, one does not and cannot distort the reality of his behavior, nor that of his ancestors.

**Internal History.** The time and place markers inside chapter 29 center around a spring located near Haran, which was Laban's home. The narrative introduces us to this trip with the simple words "Jacob went on his journey." That journey has been outlined in the previous chapter with some reference points providing spatial indication of the trip.



**28:5.** Thus Isaac sent Jacob away; and he went to Paddan-aram, to Laban son of Bethuel the Aramean,

## b. Literary

**Genre.** As with the previous studies in Genesis 12-50, we are dealing the patriarchal narratives that trace the specific origins of the Israelite people from Abraham to Joseph. For most OT scholars, [the issue of sources](#) takes on special importance in seeking to analyze the literary nature of the text.

Most are convinced that vv. 1-14 have a J origin (Jahwist), while vv. 15-30 are less clear. Older scholarship tended toward an E source (Elohism) with Page 2 of Genesis 29 Bible Study

the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

**28:10-11.** Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set.

**29:1-2.** Then Jacob went on his journey, and came to the land of the people of the east. As he looked, he saw a well in the field and three flocks of sheep lying there beside it; for out of that well the flocks were watered.

As is reflected on the above map, this was a lengthy trip taking many weeks to complete. Once he arrived at Haran, he would spend the next twenty years living with Laban in order to gain his wives. Not until chapter 32 will he be able to leave Haran to return south to Beersheba where he father Isaac was living.

Nothing in chapter 28 indicates how long the trip from Beersheba to Haran took. It was over 400 miles in length so one can conclude a lengthy period with the means of travel available to Jacob. In chapter 29, time markers become more important to the story.

One Jacob arrived at Laban's home, he stayed with him a month (29:14) before entering into the agreement to work for Laban seven years in order to gain Rachel as his wife. (29:18). Verse 20 is important as a time indicator: "So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her."

But on the wedding night, Jacob discovered that Laban had switched sisters and gave him Leah, the older one, instead of Rachel. Laban negotiated with Jacob another agreement for seven years to gain Rachel, once he had spent a week with Leah as his wife: "Jacob did so, and completed her week; then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel as a wife." (29:28).

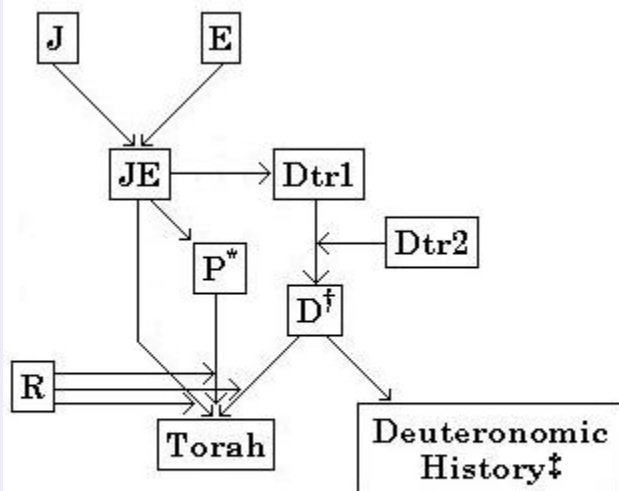
No specific time markers are stated after Rachel became his wife, although vv. 31-35 do record the birth of three sons to Leah. The next seven years seem to be covered by the explosion of Jacob's family which is described in 29:31-30:43. This would complete the promised 14 years of service to Laban. According to 31:38, 41 Jacob spent a total of twenty years living with Laban and establishing his family.

some P source (Priestly) insertions. VV. 31-35 are typically viewed as a composite mixture of J and E sources in very small units. But some more recent OT scholars like Claus Westermann sees these last four verses of chapter 29 as J text material. The J source editor(s) stands as the primary shaper(s) of the final form of the text of the entire book of Genesis, in the view of a large number of OT scholars.

The impact of this can be seen somewhat help-



fully in a schematic diagram of the view of multiple sources that were used in the formation of the text of Genesis:



\* Includes most of Leviticus

† Includes most of Deuteronomy

‡ Joshua, Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings

**Literary Setting.** Chapter 29 is a part of the Jacob cycle of narratives covering Genesis 25-35. G.J.

Wenham (Word Biblical Commentary, Logos Systems) summarizes the internal structure of the Jacob cycle:

Chaps. 29–31, the account of Jacob's relationship with Laban, constitute the centerpiece of the Jacob cycle (viz. Gen 25–35). It is a cycle within a cycle and, like the whole Jacob cycle, is constructed palistrophically. The opening episode (29:1–14), telling of Jacob's arrival in Haran and his entry in Laban's household, is balanced by the closing story of Jacob's departure with his wives from Laban (31:1–32:1 [31:55]). The second episode, telling how Laban outwitted Jacob in making him work for his two wives for fourteen years (29:15–30), is matched by the account of Jacob outwitting Laban to obtain the flocks and herds that were his due (30:25–43). At the center is the account of the birth of Jacob's sons, the forefathers of the tribes of Israel (29:31–35).

Thus chapter 29 provides three crucial elements of that center piece:

**29:1-14** <...arrival - departure...> 31:1-32:1

**29:15-30** <.....deception.....> 30:25-43

**29:31-35** // 30:1-24

birth of sons

## II. Message

**Literary Structure.** As the above outline from Wenham suggests, the narrative in chapter 29 divides into two main sections (vv. 1-14 & vv. 15-30), followed by a smaller third unit, vv. 31-35, which is somewhat paralleled by 30:1-24. We will place primary emphasis on the two main sections, and give some attention to the smaller unit in 29:31-35 at the end of the second unit.

### a. Arrival at Haran, vv. 1-14

LXX

ἵκαλ ἐξάρας Ἰακωβ τοῦ  
ς πόδας ἐπορεύθη εἰς γῆν  
ἀνατολῶν πρὸς Λαβαν τὸν  
υἱὸν Βαθουηλ τοῦ Σύρου  
ἀδελφὸν δὲ Ρεβεκκας  
μητρὸς Ἰακωβ καὶ Ησαυ <sup>2</sup>  
καὶ ὄρᾳ καὶ ἰδοὺ φρέαρ  
ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ ἦσαν δὲ ἐκεῖ  
τρία ποίμνια προβάτων  
ἀναπαυόμενα ἐπ' αὐτοῦ ἐκ  
γὰρ τοῦ φρέατος ἐκείνου  
ἐπότιζον τὰ ποίμνια  
λίθος δὲ ἦν μέγας ἐπὶ τῷ  
στόματι τοῦ φρέατος <sup>3</sup>καὶ  
συνήγοντο ἐκεῖ πάντα τὰ  
ποίμνια καὶ ἀπεκύλιον  
τὸν λίθον ἀπὸ τοῦ  
στόματος τοῦ φρέατος καὶ  
ἐπότιζον τὰ πρόβατα καὶ

NASB

Then Jacob went on  
his journey, and came to  
the land of the sons of  
the east. 2 He looked,  
and saw a well in the  
field, and behold, three  
flocks of sheep were ly-  
ing there beside it, for  
from that well they wa-  
tered the flocks. Now  
the stone on the mouth  
of the well was large.  
3 When all the flocks  
were gathered there,  
they would then roll the  
stone from the mouth of  
the well and water the  
sheep, and put the stone  
back in its place on the

NRSV

1 Then Jacob went  
on his journey, and came  
to the land of the people  
of the east. 2 As he  
looked, he saw a well in  
the field and three flocks  
of sheep lying there be-  
side it; for out of that well  
the flocks were watered.  
The stone on the well's  
mouth was large, 3 and  
when all the flocks were  
gathered there, the  
shepherds would roll the  
stone from the mouth of  
the well, and water the  
sheep, and put the stone  
back in its place on the  
mouth of the well. 4 Ja-

NLT

1 Jacob hurried on,  
finally arriving in the land  
of the east. 2 He saw in  
the distance three flocks  
of sheep lying in an open  
field beside a well, wait-  
ing to be watered. But a  
heavy stone covered the  
mouth of the well. 3 It  
was the custom there to  
wait for all the flocks to  
arrive before removing  
the stone. After watering  
them, the stone would  
be rolled back over the  
mouth of the well. 4  
Jacob went over to the  
shepherds and asked  
them, "Where do you

ἀπεκαθίστων τὸν λίθον ἐπὶ τὸ στόμα τοῦ φρέατος εἰς τὸν τόπον αὐτοῦ <sup>4</sup>εἶπεν δὲ αὐτοῖς Ἰακωβ ἀδελφοί πόθεν ἐστὲ ὑμεῖς οἱ δὲ εἶπαν ἐκ Χαρραν ἐσμέν <sup>5</sup>εἶπεν δὲ αὐτοῖς γινώσκετε Λαβαν τὸν υἱὸν Ναχωρ οἱ δὲ εἶπαν γινώσκομεν <sup>6</sup>εἶπεν δὲ αὐτοῖς ὑγιαίνει οἱ δὲ εἶπαν ὑγιαίνει καὶ ἰδοὺ Ραχηλ ἡ θυγάτηρ αὐτοῦ ἦρχετο μετὰ τῶν προβάτων <sup>7</sup>καὶ εἶπεν Ἰακωβ ἔτι ἐστὶν ἡμέρα πολλή οὐπω ὥρα συναχθῆναι τὰ κτήνη ποτίσαντες τὰ πρόβατα ἀπελθόντες βόσκετε <sup>8</sup>οἱ δὲ εἶπαν οὐ δυνησόμεθα ἕως τοῦ συναῆθῆναι πάντας τοὺς ποιμένας καὶ ἀποκυλίσωσιν τὸν λίθον ἀπὸ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ φρέατος καὶ ποτιοῦμεν τὰ πρόβατα

<sup>9</sup>ἔτι αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος αὐτοῖς καὶ Ραχηλ ἡ θυγάτηρ Λαβαν ἦρχετο μετὰ τῶν προβάτων τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῆς αὐτὴ γὰρ ἔβοσκεν τὰ πρόβατα τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῆς <sup>10</sup>ἐγένετο δὲ ὡς εἶδεν Ἰακωβ τὴν Ραχηλ θυγατέρα Λαβαν ἀδελφοῦ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ πρόβατα Λαβαν ἀδελφοῦ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ προσελθὼν Ἰακωβ ἀπεκύλισεν τὸν λίθον ἀπὸ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ φρέατος καὶ ἐπότισεν τὰ πρόβατα Λαβαν τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ <sup>11</sup>αὶ ἐφίλησεν Ἰακωβ τὴν Ραχηλ καὶ βοήσας τῇ φωνῇ αὐτοῦ ἔκλαυσεν <sup>12</sup>καὶ ἀνήγγειλεν τῇ Ραχηλ ὅτι ἀδελφὸς τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῆς ἐστὶν καὶ ὅτι υἱὸς Ρεβеккаς ἐστὶν καὶ δραμοῦσα ἀπήγγειλεν τῷ πατρὶ αὐτῆς κατὰ τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα <sup>13</sup>ἐγένετο δὲ ὡς ἤκουσεν Λαβαν τὸ ὄνομα Ἰακωβ τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἀδελφῆς αὐτοῦ

mouth of the well. 4 Jacob said to them, "My brothers, where are you from?" And they said, "We are from Haran." 5 He said to them, "Do you know Laban the son of Nahor?" And they said, "We know *him*." 6 And he said to them, "Is it well with him?" And they said, "It is well, and here is Rachel his daughter coming with the sheep." 7 He said, "Behold, it is still high day; it is not time for the livestock to be gathered. Water the sheep, and go, pasture them." 8 But they said, "We cannot, until all the flocks are gathered, and they roll the stone from the mouth of the well; then we water the sheep."

9 While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherdess. 10 When Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, Jacob went up and rolled the stone from the mouth of the well and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. 11 Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted his voice and wept. 12 Jacob told Rachel that he was a relative of her father and that he was Rebekah's son, and she ran and told her father. 13 So when Laban heard the news of Jacob his sister's son, he ran to meet him, and em-

cob said to them, "My brothers, where do you come from?" They said, "We are from Haran." 5 He said to them, "Do you know Laban son of Nahor?" They said, "We do." 6 He said to them, "Is it well with him?" "Yes," they replied, "and here is his daughter Rachel, coming with the sheep." 7 He said, "Look, it is still broad daylight; it is not time for the animals to be gathered together. Water the sheep, and go, pasture them." 8 But they said, "We cannot until all the flocks are gathered together, and the stone is rolled from the mouth of the well; then we water the sheep."

9 While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep; for she kept them. 10 Now when Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of his mother's brother Laban, and the sheep of his mother's brother Laban, Jacob went up and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of his mother's brother Laban. 11 Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and wept aloud. 12 And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's kinsman, and that he was Rebekah's son; and she ran and told her father. 13 When Laban heard the news about his sister's son Jacob, he ran to meet him; he embraced him and kissed him, and brought him

live?" "At Haran," they said. 5 "Do you know a man there named Laban, the grandson of Nahor?" "Yes, we do," they replied. 6 "How is he?" Jacob asked. "He's well and prosperous. Look, here comes his daughter Rachel with the sheep." 7 "Why don't you water the flocks so they can get back to grazing?" Jacob asked. "They'll be hungry if you stop so early in the day." 8 "We don't roll away the stone and begin the watering until all the flocks and shepherds are here," they replied.

9 As this conversation was going on, Rachel arrived with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherd. 10 And because she was his cousin, the daughter of his mother's brother, and because the sheep were his uncle's, Jacob went over to the well and rolled away the stone and watered his uncle's flock. 11 Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and tears came to his eyes. 12 He explained that he was her cousin on her father's side, her aunt Rebekah's son. So Rachel quickly ran and told her father, Laban. 13 As soon as Laban heard about Jacob's arrival, he rushed out to meet him and greeted him warmly. Laban then brought him home, and Jacob told him his story. 14 "Just think, my very own flesh and blood!"



ἔδραμεν εἰς συνάντησιν αὐτῷ καὶ περιλαβὼν αὐτὸν ἐφίλησεν καὶ εἰσήγαγεν αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ καὶ διηγήσατο τῷ Λαβαν πάντας τοὺς λόγους τούτους <sup>14</sup>καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ Λαβαν ἐκ τῶν ὁστών μου καὶ ἐκ τῆς σαρκός μου εἰ σύ καὶ ἦν μετ' αὐτοῦ μῆνα ἡμερῶν

braced him and kissed him and brought him to his house. Then he related to Laban all these things. 14 Laban said to him, "Surely you are my bone and my flesh." And he stayed with him a month.

to his house. Jacob told Laban all these things, 14 and Laban said to him, "Surely you are my bone and my flesh!" And he stayed with him a month.

Laban exclaimed. After Jacob had been there about a month,



### Notes:

Internally this narrative divides itself into three scenes: 1. Jacob meets the shepherds, vv. 1-9; 2. Jacob meets Rachel, vv. 10-12; 3. Jacob stays with Laban, vv. 13-14.

Verse one stands as a generalized topic sentence introduction to the entire Laban cycle in chaps. 29-31: "Then Jacob went on his journey, and came to the land of the people of the east." As was highlighted in the [Internal History](#) section above, this statement completes a three fold place marker reference to Jacob's trip from Beersheba in the far south of Palestine to Haran in the far north of what is now modern Syria. I'm quite confident that at the end of this long journey Jacob was feeling apprehension along with excitement. Yet, he was traveling into strange country to people he only knew from the description of his parents back in Beersheba.

**1. Jacob meets the shepherds, vv. 1-9.** His first encounter was with shepherds at a watering well in the countryside near Haran. This narrative centers on inquiries about Laban and setting Jacob up in a heroic manner for the subsequent scene when Rachel arrives at the well.

When Jacob first arrived, he saw the well covered by a large stone. It was located in the countryside outside of a settlement of people. The covering of the mouth of the well most likely was for protection of the well for watering of flocks of sheep and goats. The large rock covering it would have prevented individuals from opening the well by themselves for indiscriminate personal use. The *IVP Bible Background Commentary* (Logos Systems) provides some helpful background to this:

The stone served a double function, as a guard against contamination or poisoning of the well and as a social control mechanism, preventing any of the herdsmen in the area from drawing more water than was their right. Apparently water was scarce in this "open country" and thus the right to use the well was a jealously guarded one. Bedouin herders seldom wish to even divulge the

location of wells within their territory, so this degree of security is not out of place. The stone may even have served to disguise the location of the well from the casual passerby. Wells of this time were not surrounded by protective walls, so the stone would also have prevented animals (or people) from inadvertently stumbling into it.

Near the well he spotted three flocks of sheep already at the well but not yet having been watered. Typical greetings are exchanged with the shepherds herding the flock, before Jacob inquires about whether they are acquainted with Laban. They tell him that Laban is known to them and that he is doing well. About that time, they spot his daughter, Rachel, bringing her father's sheep to the well to be watered. Being a shepherd himself, he is puzzled by the fact that it is early afternoon and these shepherds have already brought the sheep in from grazing to be watered for the night. To him this seemed wasteful. Somewhat annoyed by his rather blunt question with tones of accusation in it, they tell him that all the flocks must be gathered before the rock is removed for watering the animals. No reason is given for this, so it is unclear why such was done, and why everyone had to wait for the entire group of shepherds. Such was not the usual pattern in the ancient world, nor would it be so in that part of the world today.

**2. Jacob meets Rachel, vv. 10-12.** While talking with the shepherds, Rachel arrives with her father's sheep. Certainly she would have to wait until the men decided to remove the rock cover before she could water her sheep. But once Jacob realizes who she is, he disregards the custom of waiting for the rest of the shepherds. Instead, he removes the large rock cover himself so that Rachel can water her sheep.

The meeting between Jacob and Rachel is described in tender tones: "Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and wept aloud. And Jacob told Rachel that he was her



father's kinsman, and that he was Rebekah's son; and she ran and told her father." (vv. 11-12). Wenham (*WBC*, Logos Systems) provides some insight here:

The warmth of his greeting of Rachel contrasts sharply with the coolness with which the shepherds had received him. His enthusiasm empowers him to roll away the huge stone that normally required several shepherds to move. And then he waters his uncle's sheep, kisses Rachel, weeps, and finally explains that he is "her father's relative, Rebekah's son." This unusual sequence of actions (surely it would have been expected for Jacob to introduce himself before kissing his cousin and weeping?) portrays a man swept along by the joy of meeting his cousin. But what makes him so joyful? Is it relief at finding a relation in a foreign country, or the pleasure of doing something for his uncle, or has he already fallen in love with Rachel? Though his embrace of Rachel no doubt anticipates their later relationship, and Isaac has already directed him to find a wife from Laban's family (28:2), the narrative seems to play down this interpretation by repeatedly insisting that Jacob watered the sheep, not because they were Rachel's, but because they belonged to Laban, "his mother's brother." There is also no comment yet about Rachel's beauty (contrast 24:16). This suggests that Jacob's prime motive at this stage is to ingratiate himself with his uncle.

### 3. Jacob stays with

**Laban, vv. 13-14.** Once Rachel has run back to her father's house to announce the arrival of Jacob, her father and Jacob's uncle, Laban, rushes out to meet Jacob. Again, a tender embrace of this uncle and nephew takes place, being the first time they have ever seen one another. Laban graciously invites Jacob to stay with them in Haran, and he does so for the next month.

What can we learn from these verses? To be sure, we realize that in this part of the text we are moving toward a story of relationships with much inspiration and warning. Although not prominently emphasized directly in vv. 1-14, it nevertheless becomes clear that God's hand is in the background guiding these events so that Jacob meets Rachel and out of that encounter will eventually come most of the twelve tribes of Israel.

What **isn't present** in these verses are some

of the outlandish interpretations found in the church fathers of the second through eighth centuries of the Christian era. For example, Ephrem the Syrian -- a church father writing in AD 363-373 -- interpreted Jacob's kissing of Rachel as follows:

Jacob continued on and turned aside to a well where he saw Rachel the shepherd girl, who, with her bare feet, her shabby clothing and her face burned from the sun, could not be distinguished from the charred brands that come out of the fire. Jacob knew at once that he who had provided the beautiful Rebekah at the spring now provided Rachel in her shabby clothing at the well. Then he performed a heroic deed in her presence, for, through the Son who was hidden in it, he rolled away the stone that even many could raise only with great difficulty. When he betrothed her to God through this marvelous deed, Jacob then returned and married himself to her with a kiss.

(cf. M. Sheridan, *Genesis 12-50. Ancient Christian Commentary on OT 2*, page 194.)

I include this quote to illustrate how wrong interpretation of biblical texts can go when screwy methods of interpretation are employed. Ephrem either in ignorance of or by deliberately ignoring ancient customs of greeting -- which were still practiced in his life time as well -- took a simple greeting of a hug and a kiss on either cheek and turned it into something it wasn't in the scripture text. His so-called "Christian

spiritualizing" of the biblical text is not only false, but harmful to the discovery of legitimate meaning and relevance of the sacred text to our lives. Yet, amazingly such nonsense continues to be done in many circles of Christianity to this very day.

Jacob kissed both Rachel when he met her and subsequently Laban when he met him. Such was entirely normative in the middle East both then and now as well. To read marriage vows into Jacob's kiss of

Rachel is about as dumb as to read homosexual tones into his kissing of Laban.

What we can see legitimately from these verses is the joy of family reunion. And the graciousness of hospitality to strangers. Laban's entire family became involved in welcoming this nephew and cousin into the household. In that world, family stood central and larger family units reached out to one another. By example this text underscores that biblical principle to us as a reminder that family matters. How many of us have cousins etc. in our larger extended fami-







lies that we actually don't know or have never seen? Here is where the text challenges all of us. In our busy, hectic American lifestyle all too often family slips down the list of priorities and we don't develop relationships with our cousins, aunts, uncles etc. I must confess the existence of numerous cousins on both my mother's and my father's sides of the family whom I would not know if I saw them on a street corner in downtown Shelby. I vaguely know of their existence, but little beyond that. For me there's a tragedy in that. My life would be richer if I knew them personally. Our sense of belonging to "family" would be stronger. As we share common Christian values and commitments, our lives would be immeasurably blessed. Family matters!

We can see this clearly in Gen. 29:1-14.

## b. Working for a wife, vv. 15-35

### LXX

<sup>15</sup>εἶπεν δὲ Λαβαν τῷ Ιακωβ ὅτι γὰρ ἀδελφός μου εἰ οὐ δουλεύσεις μοι δωρεάν ἀπάγγελόν μοι τίς ὁ μισθός σου ἐστίν <sup>16</sup>τῷ δὲ Λαβαν δύο θυγατέρες ὄνομα τῇ μείζονι Λεια καὶ ὄνομα τῇ νεωτέρᾳ Ραχηλ <sup>17</sup>οἱ δὲ ὀφθαλμοὶ Λειας ἀσθενεῖς Ραχηλ δὲ καλὴ τῷ εἶδει καὶ ὡραία τῇ ὄψει <sup>18</sup>ἠγάπησεν δὲ Ιακωβ τὴν Ραχηλ καὶ εἶπεν δουλεύσω σοι ἑπτὰ ἔτη περὶ Ραχηλ τῆς θυγατρὸς σου τῆς νεωτέρας <sup>19</sup>εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῷ Λαβαν βέλτιον δοῦναί με αὐτὴν σοὶ ἢ δοῦναί με αὐτῷ ἄνδρὶ ἑτέρῳ οἴκησον μετ' ἐμοῦ <sup>20</sup>καὶ ἐδούλευσεν Ιακωβ περὶ Ραχηλ ἔτη ἑπτὰ καὶ ἦσαν ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ ὥς ἡμέραι ὀλίγαι παρὰ τὸ ἀγαπᾶν αὐτὸν αὐτὴν <sup>21</sup>εἶπεν δὲ Ιακωβ πρὸς Λαβαν ἀπόδος τὴν γυναῖκά μου πεπλήρωνται γὰρ αἱ ἡμέραι μου ὅπως εἰσέλθω πρὸς αὐτήν <sup>22</sup>συνήγαγεν δὲ Λαβαν πάντας τοὺς ἄνδρας τοῦ τόπου καὶ ἐποίησεν γάμον <sup>23</sup>καὶ ἐγένετο ἑσπέρα καὶ λαβὼν Λαβαν Λειαν τὴν θυγατέρα αὐτοῦ εἰσήγαγεν αὐτήν πρὸς Ιακωβ καὶ εἰσηλθὼν πρὸς αὐτὴν

### NASB

15 Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?" 16 Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. 17 And Leah's eyes were weak, but Rachel was beautiful of form and face. 18 Now Jacob loved Rachel, so he said, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel." 19 Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than to give her to another man; stay with me." 20 So Jacob served seven years for Rachel and they seemed to him but a few days because of his love for her. 21 Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife, for my time is completed, that I may go in to her." 22 Laban gathered all the men of the place and made a feast. 23 Now in the evening he took his daugh-

### NRSV

15 Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my kinsman, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall 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 lovely, and Rachel was graceful and beautiful. 18 Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel." 19 Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than to give her to any other man; stay with me." 20 So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her. 21 Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife, for my time is completed, that I may go in to her, for my time is completed." 22 So Laban gathered together all the people of the place, and made a feast. 23 But in the eve-

### NLT

15 Laban said to him, "You shouldn't work for me without pay just because we are relatives. How much do you want?" 16 Now Laban had two daughters: Leah, who was the oldest, and her younger sister, Rachel. 17 Leah had pretty eyes, but Rachel was beautiful in every way, with a lovely face and shapely figure. 18 Since Jacob was in love with Rachel, he told her father, "I'll work for you seven years if you'll give me Rachel, your younger daughter, as my wife." 19 "Agreed!" Laban replied. "I'd rather give her to you than to someone outside the family." 20 So Jacob spent the next seven years working to pay for Rachel. But his love for her was so strong that it seemed to him but a few days. 21 Finally, the time came for him to marry her. "I have fulfilled my contract," Jacob said to Laban. "Now give me my wife so we can be married." 22 So

ν Ιακωβ <sup>24</sup>ἔδωκεν δὲ Λαβαν Λεια τῇ θυγατρὶ αὐτοῦ Ζεῦ φαν τὴν παιδίσκην αὐτοῦ αὐτῇ παιδίσκην <sup>25</sup>ἔγένετο δὲ πρωὶ καὶ ἰδοὺ ἦν Λεια εἶπεν δὲ Ιακωβ τῷ Λαβαν τί τοῦτο ἐποίησάς μοι οὐ περὶ Ραχηλ ἐδούλευσα παρὰ σοὶ καὶ ἵνα τί παρελογίσω με <sup>26</sup>εἶπεν δὲ Λαβαν οὐκ ἔστιν οὕτως ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ἡμῶν δοῦναι τὴν νεωτέραν πρὶν ἢ τὴν πρεσβυτέραν <sup>27</sup>συντέλεσον οὖν τὰ ἔβδομα ταύτης καὶ δώσω σοι καὶ ταύτην ἀντὶ τῆς ἐργασίας ἧς ἐργᾷ παρ' ἐμοὶ ἔτι ἑπτὰ ἔτη ἕτερα <sup>28</sup>ἐποίησεν δὲ Ιακωβ οὕτως καὶ ἀνεπλήρωσεν τὰ ἔβδομα ταύτης καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ Λαβαν Ραχηλ τὴν θυγατέρα αὐτοῦ αὐτῷ γυναῖκα <sup>29</sup>ἔδωκεν δὲ Λαβαν Ραχηλ τῇ θυγατρὶ αὐτοῦ Βαλλαν τὴν παιδίσκην αὐτοῦ αὐτῇ παιδίσκην <sup>30</sup>καὶ εἰσῆλθεν πρὸς Ραχηλ ἡγάπησεν δὲ Ραχηλ μᾶλλον ἢ Λεϊαν καὶ ἐδούλευσεν αὐτῷ ἑπτὰ ἔτη ἕτερα <sup>31</sup>ἰδὼν δὲ κύριος ὅτι μισεῖται Λεια ἤνοιξεν τὴν μήτραν αὐτῆς Ραχηλ δὲ ἦν στείρα <sup>32</sup>καὶ συνέλαβεν Λεια καὶ ἔτεκεν υἱὸν τῷ Ιακωβ ἐκάλεσεν δὲ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ρουβην λέγουσα διότι εἶδέν μου κύριος τὴν ταπείνωσιν νῦν με ἀγαπήσει ὁ ἀνὴρ μου <sup>33</sup>καὶ συνέλαβεν πάλιν Λεια καὶ ἔτεκεν υἱὸν δευτέρου τῷ Ιακωβ καὶ εἶπεν ὅτι ἤκουσεν κύριος ὅτι μισοῦμαι καὶ προσέδωκέν μοι καὶ τοῦτον ἐκάλεσεν δὲ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Συμεων <sup>34</sup>καὶ συνέλαβεν ἔτι καὶ ἔτεκεν υἱὸν καὶ εἶπεν ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ πρὸς ἐμοῦ ἔσται ὁ ἀνὴρ μου ἔτεκον γὰρ αὐτῷ τρεῖς υἱοὺς διὰ τοῦτο ἐκάλεσεν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ

ter Leah, and brought her to him; and Jacob went in to her. 24 Laban also gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah as a maid. 25 So it came about 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 with you? Why then have you deceived me?" 26 But Laban said, "It is not the practice in our place to marry off the younger before the firstborn. 27 Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also for the service which you shall serve with me for another seven years." 28 Jacob did so and completed her week, and he gave him his daughter Rachel as his wife. 29 Laban also gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as her maid. 30 So Jacob went in to Rachel also, and indeed he loved Rachel more than Leah, and he served with Laban for another seven years.

31 Now the LORD saw that Leah was unloved, and He opened her womb, but Rachel was barren. 32 Leah conceived and bore a son and named him Reuben, for she said, "Because the LORD has seen my affliction; surely now my husband will love me." 33 Then she conceived again and bore a son and said,

ning he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her. 24 (Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her maid.) 25 When morning came, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?" 26 Laban said, "This is not done in our country, giving the younger before the firstborn. 27 Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years." 28 Jacob did so, and completed her week; then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel as a wife. 29 (Laban gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel to be her maid.) 30 So Jacob went in to Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than Leah. He served Laban for another seven years.

31 When the Lord saw that Leah was unloved, he opened her womb; but Rachel was barren. 32 Leah conceived and bore a son, and she named him Reuben; for she said, "Because the Lord has looked on my affliction; surely now my husband will love me." 33 She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the Lord has heard that I am hated, he has given me this son also"; and

Laban invited everyone in the neighborhood to celebrate with Jacob at a wedding feast. 23 That night, when it was dark, Laban took Leah to Jacob, and he slept with her. 24 And Laban gave Leah a servant, Zilpah, to be her maid. 25 But when Jacob woke up in the morning, it was Leah! "What sort of trick is this?" Jacob raged at Laban. "I worked seven years for Rachel. What do you mean by this trickery?" 26 "It's not our custom to marry off a younger daughter ahead of the firstborn," Laban replied. 27 "Wait until the bridal week is over, and you can have Rachel, too, that is, if you promise to work another seven years for me." 28 So Jacob agreed to work seven more years. A week after Jacob had married Leah, Laban gave him Rachel, too. 29 And Laban gave Rachel a servant, Bilhah, to be her maid. 30 So Jacob slept with Rachel, too, and he loved her more than Leah. He then stayed and worked the additional seven years.

31 But because Leah was unloved, the LORD let her have a child, while Rachel was childless. 32 So Leah became pregnant and had a son. She named him Reuben, for she said, "The LORD has noticed my misery, and now my husband will love me." 33 She soon became pregnant



**LXX**

Λευι <sup>35</sup>καὶ συλλαβοῦσα ἔτι  
ἔτεκεν υἱὸν καὶ εἶπεν νῦν  
ἔτι τοῦτο ἐξομολογήσομαι  
κυρίῳ διὰ τοῦτο ἐκάλεσεν  
τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ιουδα καὶ  
ἔστη τοῦ τέκτειν

**NASB**

"Because the LORD has heard that I am unloved, He has therefore given me this *son* also." So she named him Simeon. 34 She conceived again and bore a son and said, "Now this time my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." Therefore he was named Levi. 35 And she conceived again and bore a son and said, "This time I will praise the LORD." Therefore she named him Judah. Then she stopped bearing.

**NRSV**

she named him Simeon. 34 Again she conceived and bore a son, and said, "Now this time my husband will be joined to me, because I have borne him three sons"; therefore he was named Levi. 35 She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "This time I will praise the Lord"; therefore she named him Judah; then she ceased bearing.

**NLT**

again and had another son. She named him Simeon, for she said, "The LORD heard that I was unloved and has given me another son." 34 Again she became pregnant and had a son. She named him Levi, for she said, "Surely now my husband will feel affection for me, since I have given him three sons!" 35 Once again she became pregnant and had a son. She named him Judah, for she said, "Now I will praise the LORD!" And then she stopped having children.

**Notes:**

Verses 15 - 30 describe the deception of Jacob by Laban over gaining Rachel as his wife. This is matched, as was discussed in the [Internal History](#) section above, by Jacob's subsequent deception of Laban later on in 30:25-43:

**29:1-14** ◀...arrival...departure▶ 31:1-32:1

**29:15-30** ◀...deception...▶ 30:25-43

**29:31-35** // 30:1-24

birth of sons

Then, verses 31-35 is the first segment of the depiction of the sons of Jacob that extends through 30:24.

Wenham (WBC, Logos Systems) sees two basic scenes in vv. 15-30:

29:15-30 falls into two scenes, each followed by a comment on Jacob's labor for his wife.

vv 15-19 The betrothal of Jacob to Rachel

v 20 Seven years of service for Rachel

vv 21-30a The wedding

v 30b Another seven years of service

**Scene 1: The betrothal of Jacob to Rachel**

(vv. 15-19 with comment in v. 20. After working for Laban a month, Jacob is offered wages for his work by Laban. In response to Laban's offer Jacob requests Rachel as his wife after seven years of work for Laban. Laban agrees to this proposal.

The text introduces the two daughters of Laban, Leah and Rachel, with these descriptions: "Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. Leah's eyes were lovely, and Rachel was graceful and beautiful." (vv.



16-17). Some details of the Hebrew text are brought out by Wenham (WBC, Logos Systems):

The name "Leah" may mean "cow," as in Akkadian littu, Arabic la-ātu "wild cow" (so KB, 487), whereas Rachel is Hebrew for "ewe" (cf. 31:38; 32:15). What makes eyes "soft" (רַךְ) is unclear; most commentators think it means they had no fire or sparkle, a quality much prized in the East. Whether her eyes were the only features that let her down is not said, but the glowing description of Rachel as having "a beautiful figure and a lovely face" suggests Leah was outshone by her sister in various ways.

Laban agrees to Jacob's exceedingly generous offer of working seven years for Rachel. The extent of this offer is well described by Wenham (WBC, Logos Systems):

So it is little surprise to be told that “Jacob loved Rachel.” What is surprising is the price he was prepared to pay for her hand, seven years labor, undoubtedly indicating the intensity of his affection for her. In the ancient Near East, betrothal was effected by paying a *תּוֹרָה*, *tirhatum* (Akk.), “marriage present,” “bride price” (Exod 22:15 [16]). This was essentially a capital transfer by the groom’s family to the bride’s family pledging the man to marry. The OT fixes the maximum marriage gift at fifty shekels (Deut 22:29), but typically the gifts were much lower. However, since Jacob could not ask his family to pay, he offered seven years of service instead. Since casual laborers received between one-half and one shekel a month in old Babylonian times (G. R. Driver and J. C. Miles, *The Babylonian Laws* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952] 1:470-71), Jacob was offering Laban a very handsome marriage gift in exchange for Rachel’s hand.

Laban’s acceptance of the offer is carefully worded: “It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me.” (v. 19). Direct mention of Rachel’s name is avoided, thus leaving the door slightly open for the deception to follow at the end of the seven years. Perhaps, Laban was hoping someone would come along during that seven years to request Leah in marriage, but if not he could remedy his situation by exchanging brides.

Scene one ends with the narrative comment: “So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her.” (v. 20). Indentured servants according to the later Jewish laws (Ex. 21:1-6; Deut. 15:12-18) had to be released from their obligation after six years. So Jacob’s willingness to go beyond six years is a reflection of the depth of his love for Rachel. The “few days” that characterized these seven years here stands in contrast to Rebekah’s instructions to her son Jacob to “stay awhile” with her brother Laban, until the anger of Esau quieted down, after Jacob tricked him out of his birthright (cf. Gen 27:44).

**Scene 2: the wedding (vv. 21-30a), with comment (v. 30b).** At the end of the seven years, Jacob asked Laban to deliver Rachel to him as promised. When so pressured, Laban scheduled the customary wedding feast to celebrate the marriage of his daughter. As typical in the biblical narratives, this celebration would last an entire week. That this celebration continued for a week is implicit in the request to Jacob by Laban in v. 27 to “complete the week of this one...” The absence of Jacob’s family for these festivities most likely led to abbreviation of some of the customs. The heart of the festival was the reaffirmation of the wedding contract, and the

exchange of gifts. Jacob’s seven years of free labor was his gift to Laban. Laban in turn gave one of his slave girls, Zilpah, to the bride as a token of his affection for his daughter. With the women veiled at the festival, and by the end of an evening of free drinking amidst celebration, Laban was able to successfully switch daughters and brought Leah to Jacob rather than the promised Rachel. By morning Jacob had sobered up enough to recognize that this wasn’t Rachel who was in the tent with him. He vigorously challenges his new father-in-law about this deception. But is met with the reply that custom demands that the oldest daughter must be married off before the younger daughter can be married.

Rather than nullify the wedding contract, Jacob opts to complete the week of wedding festivities with Leah, and to work another seven years for Rachel. At the end of the week of celebration for Leah, Rachel was given to Jacob as his wife. Also, Laban gave another of his slave girls, Bilhah, to Rachel as a wedding gift. So Jacob now had two wives and two slave

girls as the nucleus of his family. Jacob then served another seven years. Thus within a little over a week’s time Jacob had



acquired two wives. But he loved the second one, Rachel, more than Leah, the first one.

Scene 2 ends with the comment (v. 30b): “He served Laban for another seven years.” This time he paid for his bride afterwards, rather than in advance. Smart move!

**The next segment**, vv. 31-35, depicts Jacob settling in with his new wives, while working out the seven year agreement for Rachel. He will spend another six years working for ownership of flocks of sheep and goats.

God first favored Leah with four sons from Jacob because He saw that she was “unloved.” These were Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah. During that time, Rachel was unable to produce children.



The positive tone of 29:31-35 quickly disappears in the parallel section of 30:1-24. In a manner similar to Sarah when she was unable to conceive, Rachel sends in her slave-girl Bilhah for Jacob to impregnate. The first son of this union was named Dan, and a second son was Naphtali.

Once Leah ceased having children, she copy-cats Rachel and sends in her slave girl, Zilpah, to Jacob. The first son of this union is Gad, and the second son is Asher.

As a young boy Reuben found some [mandrakes](#) in the field and brought them to his mother Leah. In the ancient world they were thought to have all kinds of curative and fertility powers. Leah used them to get pregnant again with Jacob and this son was named Issachar. She gave him another son, Zebulun, and a daughter, Dinah.

Afterwards Rachel finally gave birth to a son who was named Joseph.

Before Jacob left Haran, he had accumulated ten sons and a daughter from the two wives, Rachel and Leah, and their two slave girls, Bilhah and Zilpah. All this took place over a twenty year period while he was living in Haran and working for his father-in-law Laban. Never could he have anticipated what lay ahead of him twenty plus years earlier when he left his father Isaac's home in Beersheba seeking a wife.

What can we learn from this? Is there anything that has relevancy to our world? In the second half of chapter 29 along with the material in chapter 30, what we see is mostly disgusting to Christian



sensitivities regarding husband / wife relationships. It bears the marks of the reprehensible pattern of polygamy that has been making the news recently out of the trial of [Warren Jeffs](#), the leader of the fundamentalist Mormon sect in Utah. Largely driven by Christian principles of marriage taught in the Bible, our secular American culture long ago moved beyond the destructiveness of multiple wives and tons of children. And yet, unbelievably in our own culture such perversion of marriage and family life can still be found. Even more astonishingly it is justified on the basis of "biblical principles." Such twisting of scripture as Jeffs has attempted has opened the

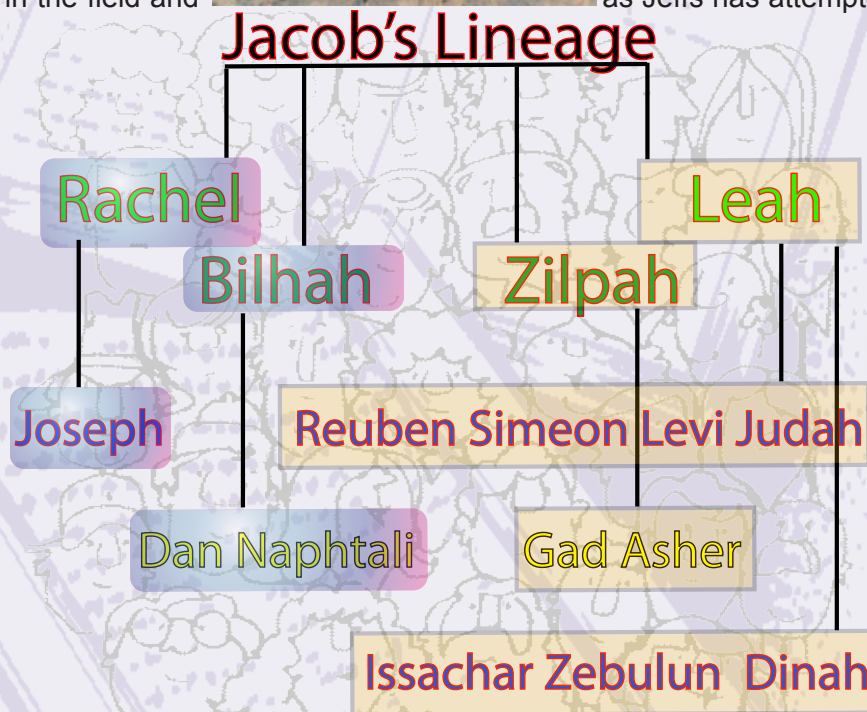
door for destroying the lives of countless young people, as [news stories](#) surface of how these people were forced to live in that world.

And outside our country, we see often times vicious efforts to impose such reprehensible patterns on the world by fundamentalist Islam. If these movements inside Islam could have their way, the entire world would be

pulled back into the darkness of this ancient semitic pattern of marriage.

Is there anything positive in this story? Two aspects appear to me from these verses. First, God was at work using the brokenness of marriage customs of that world in order to accomplish His purpose of turning Abraham's seed into a nation of people. Out of bad God was able to work good.

Second, we see for the first time in the Bible how deep the love of a man for a wife can and should go. Jacob's sacrificial love for Rachel propelled him to give of himself way beyond the usual in order to obtain the wife of his dreams. We can learn something valuable from that.



## LXX

ἰκαὶ ἐξάρας Ἰακωβ τοῦ  
ς πόδας ἐπορεύθη εἰς γῆν  
ἀνατολῶν πρὸς Λαβαν τὸν  
υἱὸν Βαθουηλ τοῦ Σύρου  
ἀδελφὸν δὲ Ρεβεκκας  
μητρὸς Ἰακωβ καὶ Ησαυ  
<sup>2</sup>καὶ ὄρᾱ καὶ ἰδοὺ φρέαρ  
ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ ἦσαν δὲ ἐκεῖ  
τρία ποίμνια προβάτων  
ἀναπαυόμενα ἐπ' αὐτοῦ ἐκ  
γὰρ τοῦ φρέατος ἐκείνου  
ἐπότιζον τὰ ποίμνια λίθος  
δὲ ἦν μέγας ἐπὶ τῷ στόματι  
τοῦ φρέατος καὶ συνήγοντο  
ἐκεῖ πάντα τὰ ποίμνια καὶ  
ἀπεκύλιον τὸν λίθον ἀπὸ  
τοῦ στόματος τοῦ φρέατος  
καὶ ἐπότιζον τὰ πρόβατα  
καὶ ἀπεκαθίστων τὸν λίθον  
ἐπὶ τὸ στόμα τοῦ φρέατος  
εἰς τὸν τόπον αὐτοῦ <sup>4</sup>εἶπεν  
δὲ αὐτοῖς Ἰακωβ ἀδελφοί  
πόθεν ἐστὲ ὑμεῖς οἱ δὲ  
εἶπαν ἐκ Χαρραν ἐσμέν  
<sup>5</sup>εἶπεν δὲ αὐτοῖς γινώσκετε  
Λαβαν τὸν υἱὸν Ναχωρ οἱ  
δὲ εἶπαν γινώσκομεν <sup>6</sup>εἶπεν  
δὲ αὐτοῖς ὑγιαίνει οἱ δὲ  
εἶπαν ὑγιαίνει καὶ ἰδοὺ  
Ραχηλ ἡ θυγάτηρ αὐτοῦ  
ἦρχετο μετὰ τῶν προβάτων  
<sup>7</sup>καὶ εἶπεν Ἰακωβ ἔτι ἐστὶ  
ν ἡμέρα πολλή οὕπω ὥρα  
συναχθῆναι τὰ κτήνη  
ποτίσαντες τὰ πρόβατα  
ἀπελθόντες βόσκετε <sup>8</sup>οἱ  
δὲ εἶπαν οὐ δυνησόμεθα  
ἕως τοῦ συναχθῆναι  
πάντας τοὺς ποιμένας καὶ  
ἀποκυλίσωσιν τὸν λίθον  
ἀπὸ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ  
φρέατος καὶ ποτιοῦμεν τὰ  
πρόβατα

<sup>9</sup>ἔτι αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος αὐ  
τοῖς καὶ Ραχηλ ἡ θυγάτηρ  
Λαβαν ἦρχετο μετὰ τῶν  
προβάτων τοῦ πατρὸς αὐ  
τῆς αὐτῇ γὰρ ἔβοσκεν τὰ  
πρόβατα τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῆς  
<sup>10</sup>ἐγένετο δὲ ὥς εἶδεν Ἰακ

## NASB

Then Jacob went on  
his journey, and came to  
the land of the sons of  
the east. 2 He looked,  
and saw a well in the  
field, and behold, three  
flocks of sheep were ly-  
ing there beside it, for  
from that well they wa-  
tered the flocks. Now  
the stone on the mouth  
of the well was large. 3  
When all the flocks  
were gathered there,  
they would then roll the  
stone from the mouth of  
the well and water the  
sheep, and put the stone  
back in its place on the  
mouth of the well. 4 Ja-  
cob said to them, "My  
brothers, where are you  
from?" And they said,  
"We are from Haran." 5  
He said to them, "Do you  
know Laban the son of  
Nahor?" And they said,  
"We know *him*." 6 And  
he said to them, "Is it  
well with him?" And they  
said, "It is well, and here  
is Rachel his daughter  
coming with the sheep." 7  
He said, "Behold, it  
is still high day; it is not  
time for the livestock to  
be gathered. Water the  
sheep, and go, pasture  
them." 8 But they said,  
"We cannot, until all  
the flocks are gathered,  
and they roll the stone  
from the mouth of the  
well; then we water the  
sheep."

9 While he was still  
speaking with them,  
Rachel came with her  
father's sheep, for she  
was a shepherdess. 10

## NRSV

1 Then Jacob went  
on his journey, and came  
to the land of the peo-  
ple of the east. 2 As he  
looked, he saw a well in  
the field and three flocks  
of sheep lying there be-  
side it; for out of that  
well the flocks were wa-  
tered. The stone on the  
well's mouth was large,  
3 and when all the flocks  
were gathered there, the  
shepherds would roll the  
stone from the mouth of  
the well, and water the  
sheep, and put the stone  
back in its place on the  
mouth of the well. 4 Ja-  
cob said to them, "My  
brothers, where do you  
come from?" They said,  
"We are from Haran." 5  
He said to them, "Do  
you know Laban son of  
Nahor?" They said, "We  
do." 6 He said to them, "Is  
it well with him?" "Yes,"  
they replied, "and here  
is his daughter Rachel,  
coming with the sheep." 7  
He said, "Look, it is still  
broad daylight; it is not  
time for the animals to be  
gathered together. Water  
the sheep, and go, pas-  
ture them." 8 But they  
said, "We cannot until all  
the flocks are gathered  
together, and the stone  
is rolled from the mouth  
of the well; then we wa-  
ter the sheep."

9 While he was still  
speaking with them,  
Rachel came with her  
father's sheep; for she  
kept them. 10 Now when  
Jacob saw Rachel, the  
daughter of his mother's  
brother Laban, and the

## NLT

1 Jacob hurried on,  
finally arriving in the land  
of the east. 2 He saw in  
the distance three flocks  
of sheep lying in an open  
field beside a well, wait-  
ing to be watered. But a  
heavy stone covered the  
mouth of the well. 3 It  
was the custom there to  
wait for all the flocks to  
arrive before removing  
the stone. After watering  
them, the stone would  
be rolled back over the  
mouth of the well. 4 Ja-  
cob went over to the  
shepherds and asked  
them, "Where do you  
live?" "At Haran," they  
said. 5 "Do you know a  
man there named La-  
ban, the grandson of  
Nahor?" "Yes, we do,"  
they replied. 6 "How is  
he?" Jacob asked. "He's  
well and prosperous. Look,  
here comes his daughter  
Rachel with the sheep." 7  
"Why don't you water the  
flocks so they can get back  
to grazing?" Jacob asked.  
"They'll be hungry if you  
stop so early in the day." 8  
"We don't roll away the  
stone and begin the wa-  
tering until all the flocks  
and shepherds are  
here," they replied.

9 As this conversa-  
tion was going on, Ra-  
chel arrived with her  
father's sheep, for she  
was a shepherd. 10 And  
because she was his  
cousin, the daughter of  
his mother's brother,  
and because the sheep  
were his uncle's, Jacob  
went over to the well



ὡς τὴν Ραχὴλ θυγατέρα Λαβαν ἀδελφοῦ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ πρόβατα Λαβαν ἀδελφοῦ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ προσελθὼν Ἰακώβ ἀπεκύλισεν τὸν λίθον ἀπὸ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ φρέατος καὶ ἐπότισεν τὰ πρόβατα Λαβαν τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ <sup>11</sup>καὶ ἐφίλησεν Ἰακώβ τὴν Ραχὴλ καὶ βοήσας τῇ φωνῇ αὐτοῦ ἔκλαυσεν <sup>12</sup>καὶ ἀνήγγειλεν τῇ Ραχὴλ ὅτι ἀδελφὸς τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῆς ἐστίν καὶ ὅτι υἱὸς Ρεβέκκας ἐστίν καὶ δραμοῦσα ἀπήγγειλεν τῷ πατρὶ αὐτῆς κατὰ τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα <sup>13</sup>ἐγένετο δὲ ὡς ἤκουσεν Λαβαν τὸ ὄνομα Ἰακώβ τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἀδελφῆς αὐτοῦ ἔδραμεν εἰς συνάντησιν αὐτῷ καὶ περιλαβὼν αὐτὸν ἐφίλησεν καὶ εἰσηγάγεν αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ καὶ διηγήσατο τῷ Λαβαν πάντας τοὺς λόγους τούτους <sup>14</sup>καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ Λαβαν ἐκ τῶν ὁστών μου καὶ ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς μου εἰ σύ καὶ ἦν μετ' αὐτοῦ μῆνα ἡμερῶν

<sup>15</sup>εἶπεν δὲ Λαβαν τῷ Ἰακώβ ὅτι γὰρ ἀδελφός μου εἰ οὐ δουλεύσεις μοι δωρεάν ἀπάγγελόν μοι τίς ὁ μισθός σου ἐστίν <sup>16</sup>τῷ δὲ Λαβαν δύο θυγατέρες ὄνομα τῇ μείζονι Λεία καὶ ὄνομα τῇ νεωτέρᾳ Ραχὴλ <sup>17</sup>οἱ δὲ ὀφθαλμοὶ Λείας ἀσθενεῖς Ραχὴλ δὲ καλὴ τῷ εἶδει καὶ ὡραία τῇ ὄψει <sup>18</sup>ἠγάπησεν δὲ Ἰακώβ τὴν Ραχὴλ καὶ εἶπεν δουλεύσω σοι ἑπτὰ ἔτη περὶ Ραχὴλ τῆς θυγατρὸς σου τῆς νεωτέρας <sup>19</sup>εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῷ Λαβαν βέλτιον δοῦναί με αὐτὴν σοὶ ἢ δοῦναί με αὐτὴν ἀνδρὶ ἐτέρῳ οἴκησον μετ' ἐμοῦ <sup>20</sup>καὶ ἐδόυλευσεν Ἰακώβ περὶ Ραχὴλ ἑτὶ ἑπτὰ

When Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, Jacob went up and rolled the stone from the mouth of the well and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. 11 Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted his voice and wept. 12 Jacob told Rachel that he was a relative of her father and that he was Rebekah's son, and she ran and told her father. 13 So when Laban heard the news of Jacob his sister's son, he ran to meet him, and embraced him and kissed him and brought him to his house. Then he related to Laban all these things. 14 Laban said to him, "Surely you are my bone and my flesh." And he stayed with him a month.

15 Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?" 16 Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. 17 And Leah's eyes were weak, but Rachel was beautiful of form and face. 18 Now Jacob loved Rachel, so he said, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel." 19 Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than to give her to another man;

sheep of his mother's brother Laban, Jacob went up and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of his mother's brother Laban. 11 Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and wept aloud. 12 And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's kinsman, and that he was Rebekah's son; and she ran and told her father. 13 When Laban heard the news about his sister's son Jacob, he ran to meet him; he embraced him and kissed him, and brought him to his house. Jacob told Laban all these things, 14 and Laban said to him, "Surely you are my bone and my flesh!" And he stayed with him a month.

15 Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my kinsman, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall 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 lovely, and Rachel was graceful and beautiful. 18 Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel." 19 Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me." 20 So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and

and rolled away the stone and watered his uncle's flock. 11 Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and tears came to his eyes. 12 He explained that he was her cousin on her father's side, her aunt Rebekah's son. So Rachel quickly ran and told her father, Laban. 13 As soon as Laban heard about Jacob's arrival, he rushed out to meet him and greeted him warmly. Laban then brought him home, and Jacob told him his story. 14 "Just think, my very own flesh and blood!" Laban exclaimed. After Jacob had been there about a month,

15 Laban said to him, "You shouldn't work for me without pay just because we are relatives. How much do you want?" 16 Now Laban had two daughters: Leah, who was the oldest, and her younger sister, Rachel. 17 Leah had pretty eyes, but Rachel was beautiful in every way, with a lovely face and shapely figure. 18 Since Jacob was in love with Rachel, he told her father, "I'll work for you seven years if you'll give me Rachel, your younger daughter, as my wife." 19 "Agreed!" Laban replied. "I'd rather give her to you than to someone outside the family." 20 So Jacob spent the next seven years working to pay for Rachel. But his love for her was so strong that it seemed to

καὶ ἦσαν ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ ὥς ἡμέραι ὀλίγαι παρὰ τὸ ἀγαπᾶν αὐτὸν αὐτὴν <sup>21</sup>εἶπεν δὲ Ἰακωβ πρὸς Λαβαν ἀπόδος τὴν γυναῖκά μου πεπλήρωται γὰρ αἱ ἡμέραι μου ὅπως εἰσέλθω πρὸς αὐτήν <sup>22</sup>συνήγαγεν δὲ Λαβαν πάντας τοὺς ἄνδρας τοῦ τόπου καὶ ἐποίησεν γάμον <sup>23</sup>καὶ ἐγένετο ἑσπέρα καὶ λαβὼν Λαβαν Λειαν τὴν θυγατέρα αὐτοῦ εἰσήγαγεν αὐτήν πρὸς Ἰακωβ καὶ εἰσηλθεν πρὸς αὐτὴν Ἰακωβ <sup>24</sup>ἔδωκεν δὲ Λαβαν Λεια τῇ θυγατρὶ αὐτοῦ Ζελφαν τὴν παιδίσκην αὐτοῦ αὐτῇ παιδίσκη <sup>25</sup>ἐγένετο δὲ πρωὶ καὶ ἰδοὺ ἦν Λεια εἶπεν δὲ Ἰακωβ τῷ Λαβαν τί τοῦτο ἐποίησάς μοι οὐ περὶ Ραχὴλ ἐδούλευσα παρὰ σοὶ καὶ ἵνα τί παρελογίσω με <sup>26</sup>εἶπεν δὲ Λαβαν οὐκ ἔστιν οὕτως ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ἡμῶν δοῦναι τὴν νεωτέραν πρὶν ἢ τὴν πρεσβυτέραν <sup>27</sup>συντέλεσον οὖν τὰ ἑβδομα ταύτης καὶ δώσω σοι καὶ ταύτην ἀντὶ τῆς ἐργασίας ἧς ἐργᾶ παρ' ἐμοὶ ἔτι ἑπτὰ ἔτη ἕτερα <sup>28</sup>ἐποίησεν δὲ Ἰακωβ οὕτως καὶ ἀνεπλήρωσεν τὰ ἑβδομα ταύτης καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ Λαβαν Ραχὴλ τὴν θυγατέρα αὐτοῦ αὐτῷ γυναῖκα <sup>29</sup>ἔδωκεν δὲ Λαβαν Ραχὴλ τῇ θυγατρὶ αὐτοῦ Βαλλαν τὴν παιδίσκην αὐτοῦ αὐτῇ παιδίσκη <sup>30</sup>καὶ εἰσηλθεν πρὸς Ραχὴλ ἠγάπησεν δὲ Ραχὴλ μᾶλλον ἢ Λειαν καὶ ἐδούλευσεν αὐτῷ ἑπτὰ ἔτη ἕτερα <sup>31</sup>ἰδὼν δὲ κύριος ὅτι μισεῖται Λεια ἤνοιξεν τὴν μήτραν αὐτῆς Ραχὴλ δὲ ἦν στειρά <sup>32</sup>καὶ συνέλαβεν Λεια καὶ ἔτεκεν υἱὸν τῷ Ἰακωβ ἐκάλεσεν δὲ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ρουβὴν λέγουσα διότι εἶδέν μου

stay with me.” 20 So Jacob served seven years for Rachel and they seemed to him but a few days because of his love for her. 21 Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give *me* my wife, for my time is completed, that I may go in to her.” 22 Laban gathered all the men of the place and made a feast. 23 Now in the evening he took his daughter Leah, and brought her to him; and *Jacob* went in to her. 24 Laban also gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah as a maid. 25 So it came about 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 with you? Why then have you deceived me?” 26 But Laban said, “It is not the practice in our place to marry off the younger before the firstborn. 27 Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also for the service which you shall serve with me for another seven years.” 28 Jacob did so and completed her week, and he gave him his daughter Rachel as his wife. 29 Laban also gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as her maid. 30 So *Jacob* went in to Rachel also, and indeed he loved Rachel more than Leah, and he served with Laban for another seven years.

they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her. 21 Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed.” 22 So Laban gathered together all the people of the place, and made a feast. 23 But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her. 24 (Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her maid.) 25 When morning came, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, “What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?” 26 Laban said, “This is not done in our country, giving the younger before the firstborn. 27 Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years.” 28 Jacob did so, and completed her week; then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel as a wife. 29 (Laban gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel to be her maid.) 30 So Jacob went in to Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than Leah. He served Laban for another seven years.

31 When the Lord saw that Leah was unloved, he opened her womb; but Rachel was barren. 32 Leah conceived and bore a son,

him but a few days. 21 Finally, the time came for him to marry her. “I have fulfilled my contract,” Jacob said to Laban. “Now give me my wife so we can be married.” 22 So Laban invited everyone in the neighborhood to celebrate with Jacob at a wedding feast. 23 That night, when it was dark, Laban took Leah to Jacob, and he slept with her. 24 And Laban gave Leah a servant, Zilpah, to be her maid. 25 But when Jacob woke up in the morning, it was Leah! “What sort of trick is this?” Jacob raged at Laban. “I worked seven years for Rachel. What do you mean by this trickery?” 26 “It’s not our custom to marry off a younger daughter ahead of the firstborn,” Laban replied. 27 “Wait until the bridal week is over, and you can have Rachel, too, that is, if you promise to work another seven years for me.” 28 So Jacob agreed to work seven more years. A week after Jacob had married Leah, Laban gave him Rachel, too. 29 And Laban gave Rachel a servant, Bilhah, to be her maid. 30 So Jacob slept with Rachel, too, and he loved her more than Leah. He then stayed and worked the additional seven years.

31 But because Leah was unloved, the LORD let her have a child, while Rachel was childless. 32 So Leah became preg-



κύριος τὴν ταπείνωσιν νῦν με ἀγαπήσει ὁ ἀνὴρ μου<sup>33</sup> καὶ συνέλαβεν πάλιν Λεια καὶ ἔτεκεν υἱὸν δεύτερον τῷ Ιακωβ καὶ εἶπεν ὅτι ἤκουσεν κύριος ὅτι μισοῦμαι καὶ προσέδωκέν μοι καὶ τοῦτον ἐκάλεσεν δὲ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Συμεων<sup>34</sup> καὶ συνέλαβεν ἔτι καὶ ἔτεκεν υἱὸν καὶ εἶπεν ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ πρὸς ἐμοῦ ἔσται ὁ ἀνὴρ μου ἔτεκον γὰρ αὐτῷ τρεῖς υἱοὺς διὰ τοῦτο ἐκάλεσεν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Λευι<sup>35</sup> καὶ συλλαβοῦσα ἔτι ἔτεκεν υἱὸν καὶ εἶπεν νῦν ἔστι τοῦτο ἐξομολογήσομαι κυρίῳ διὰ τοῦτο ἐκάλεσεν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ιουδα καὶ ἔσθη τοῦ τίκτειν

31 Now the LORD saw that Leah was unloved, and He opened her womb, but Rachel was barren. 32 Leah conceived and bore a son and named him Reuben, for she said, "Because the LORD has seen my affliction; surely now my husband will love me." 33 Then she conceived again and bore a son and said, "Because the LORD has heard that I am unloved, He has therefore given me this son also." So she named him Simeon. 34 She conceived again and bore a son and said, "Now this time my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." Therefore he was named Levi. 35 And she conceived again and bore a son and said, "This time I will praise the LORD." Therefore she named him Judah. Then she stopped bearing.

and she named him Reuben; for she said, "Because the Lord has looked on my affliction; surely now my husband will love me." 33 She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the Lord has heard that I am hated, he has given me this son also"; and she named him Simeon. 34 Again she conceived and bore a son, and said, "Now this time my husband will be joined to me, because I have borne him three sons"; therefore he was named Levi. 35 She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "This time I will praise the Lord"; therefore she named him Judah; then she ceased bearing.

nant and had a son. She named him Reuben, for she said, "The LORD has noticed my misery, and now my husband will love me." 33 She soon became pregnant again and had another son. She named him Simeon, for she said, "The LORD heard that I was unloved and has given me another son." 34 Again she became pregnant and had a son. She named him Levi, for she said, "Surely now my husband will feel affection for me, since I have given him three sons!" 35 Once again she became pregnant and had a son. She named him Judah, for she said, "Now I will praise the LORD!" And then she stopped having children.

Genesis 29:1 - 35 <sup>LXT</sup> <sup>1</sup>καὶ ἐξάρας Ἰακωβ τοὺς πόδας ἐπορεύθη εἰς γῆν ἀνατολῶν πρὸς Λαβαν τὸν υἱὸν ν Βαθουηλ τοῦ Σύρου ἀδελφὸν δὲ Ρεβεκκας μητρὸς Ἰακωβ καὶ Ησαυ <sup>2</sup>καὶ ὄρᾳ καὶ ἰδοὺ φρέαρ ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ ἦσαν δὲ ἐκεῖ τρία ποίμνια προβάτων ἀναπαυόμενα ἐπ' αὐτοῦ ἐκ γὰρ τοῦ φρέατος ἐκείνου ἐπότιζον τὰ ποίμνια λίθος δὲ ἦν μέγας ἐπὶ τῷ στόματι τοῦ φρέατος <sup>3</sup>καὶ συνήγοντο ἐκεῖ πάντα τὰ ποίμνια καὶ ἀπεκύλιον τὸν λίθον ἀπὸ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ φρέατος καὶ ἐπότιζον τὰ πρόβατα καὶ ἀπεκαθίστων τὸν λίθον ἐπὶ τὸ στόμα τοῦ φρέατος εἰς τὸν τόπον αὐτοῦ <sup>4</sup>εἶπεν δὲ αὐτοῖς Ἰακωβ ἀδελφοί πόθεν ἐστὲ ὑμεῖς οἱ δὲ εἶπαν ἐκ Χαρραν ἐσμέν <sup>5</sup>εἶπεν δὲ αὐτοῖς γινώσκετε Λαβαν τὸν υἱὸν Ναχωρ οἱ δὲ εἶπαν γινώσκομεν <sup>6</sup>εἶπεν δὲ αὐτοῖς ὑγιαίνει οἱ δὲ εἶπαν ὑγιαίνει καὶ ἰδοὺ Ραχὴλ ἡ θυγάτηρ αὐτοῦ ἤρχετο μετὰ τῶν προβάτων <sup>7</sup>καὶ εἶπεν Ἰακωβ ἔτι ἐστὶν ἡμέρα πολλή οὐπω ὥρα συναχθῆναι τὰ κτήνη ποτίσαντες τὰ πρόβατα ἀπελθόντες βόσκετε <sup>8</sup>οἱ δὲ εἶπαν οὐ δυνησόμεθα ἕως τοῦ συναχθῆναι πάντας τοὺς ποιμένας καὶ ἀποκυλίσωσιν τὸν λίθον ἀπὸ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ φρέατος καὶ ποτιοῦμεν τὰ πρόβατα <sup>9</sup>ἔτι αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος αὐτοῖς καὶ Ραχὴλ ἡ θυγάτηρ Λαβαν ἤρχετο μετὰ τῶν προβάτων τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῆς αὐτὴ γὰρ ἔβοσκειν τὰ πρόβατα τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῆς <sup>10</sup>ἐγένετο δὲ ὡς εἶδεν Ἰακωβ τὴν Ραχὴλ θυγατέρα Λαβαν ἀδελφοῦ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ πρόβατα Λαβαν ἀδελφοῦ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ προσελθὼν Ἰακωβ ἀπεκύλισεν τὸν λίθον ἀπὸ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ φρέατος καὶ ἐπότισεν τὰ πρόβατα Λαβαν τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ <sup>11</sup>αὶ ἐφίλησεν Ἰακωβ τὴν Ραχὴλ καὶ βοήσας τῇ φωνῇ αὐτοῦ ἔκλαυσεν <sup>12</sup>καὶ ἀνήγγειλεν τῇ Ραχὴλ ὅτι ἀδελφὸς τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῆς ἐστὶν καὶ ὅτι υἱὸς Ρεβεκκας ἐστίν καὶ δραμοῦσα ἀπήγγειλεν τῷ πατρὶ αὐτῆς κατὰ τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα <sup>13</sup>ἐγένετο δὲ ὡς ἤκουσεν Λαβαν τὸ ὄνομα Ἰακωβ τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἀδελφῆς αὐτοῦ ἔδραμεν εἰς συνάντησιν αὐτῷ καὶ περιλαβὼν αὐτὸν ἐφίλησεν καὶ εἰσήγαγεν αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ καὶ διηγήσατο τῷ Λαβαν πάντας τοὺς λόγους τούτους <sup>14</sup>καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ Λαβαν ἐκ τῶν ὁστών μου καὶ ἐκ τῆς σαρκός μου εἰ σύ καὶ ἦν μετ' αὐτοῦ μῆνα ἡμερῶν <sup>15</sup>εἶπεν δὲ Λαβαν τῷ Ἰακωβ ὅτι γὰρ ἀδελφός μου εἰ οὐ δουλεύσεις μοι δωρεάν ἀπάγγειλόν μοι τίς ὁ μισθός σου ἐστίν <sup>16</sup>τῷ δὲ Λαβαν δύο θυγατέρες ὄνομα τῇ μείζονι Λεια καὶ ὄνομα τῇ νεωτέρᾳ Ραχὴλ <sup>17</sup>οἱ δὲ ὀφθαλμοὶ Λειας ἀσθενεῖς Ραχὴλ δὲ καλὴ τῷ εἶδει καὶ ὡραία τῇ ὄψει <sup>18</sup>ἠγάπησεν δὲ Ἰακωβ τὴν Ραχὴλ καὶ εἶπεν δουλεύσω σοι ἑπτὰ ἔτη περὶ Ραχὴλ τῆς θυγατρὸς σου τῆς νεωτέρας <sup>19</sup>εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῷ Λαβαν βέλτιον δοῦναί με αὐτὴν σοὶ ἢ δοῦναί με αὐτὴν ἀνδρὶ ἑτέρῳ οἴκησον μετ' ἐμοῦ <sup>20</sup>καὶ ἐδούλευσεν Ἰακωβ περὶ Ραχὴλ ἔτη ἑπτὰ καὶ ἦσαν ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ ὡς ἡμέραι ὀλίγαι παρὰ τὸ ἀγαπᾶν αὐτὸν αὐτὴν <sup>21</sup>εἶπεν δὲ Ἰακωβ πρὸς Λαβαν ἀπόδος τὴν γυναῖκά μου πεπλήρωνται γὰρ αἱ ἡμέραι μου ὅπως εἰσέλθω πρὸς αὐτήν <sup>22</sup>συνήγαγεν δὲ Λαβαν πάντας τοὺς ἄνδρας τοῦ τόπου καὶ ἐποίησεν γάμον <sup>23</sup>καὶ ἐγένετο ἐσπέρα καὶ λαβὼν Λαβαν Λειαν τὴν θυγατέρα αὐτοῦ εἰσήγαγεν αὐτήν πρὸς Ἰακωβ καὶ εἰσῆλθεν πρὸς αὐτήν Ἰακωβ <sup>24</sup>ἔδωκεν δὲ Λαβαν Λεια τῇ θυγατρὶ αὐτοῦ Ζελφαν τὴν παιδίσκην αὐτοῦ αὐτῇ παιδίσκη <sup>25</sup>ἐγένετο δὲ πρῶτὴ καὶ ἰδοὺ ἦν Λεια εἶπεν δὲ Ἰακωβ τῷ Λαβαν τί τοῦτο ἐποίησάς μοι οὐ περὶ Ραχὴλ ἐδούλευσα παρὰ σοὶ καὶ ἵνα τί παρελογίσω με <sup>26</sup>εἶπεν δὲ Λαβαν οὐκ ἔστιν οὕτως ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ἡμῶν δοῦναι τὴν νεωτέραν πρὶν ἢ τὴν πρεσβυτέραν <sup>27</sup>συντέλεσον οὖν τὰ ἑβδομα ταύτης καὶ δώσω σοι καὶ ταύτην ἀντὶ τῆς ἐργασίας ἧς ἐργᾷ παρ' ἐμοῦ ἔτι ἑπτὰ ἔτη ἕτερα <sup>28</sup>ἐποίησεν δὲ Ἰακωβ οὕτως καὶ ἀνεπλήρωσεν τὰ ἑβδομα ταύτης καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ Λαβαν Ραχὴλ τὴν θυγατέρα αὐτοῦ αὐτῷ γυναῖκα <sup>29</sup>ἔδωκεν δὲ Λαβαν Ραχὴλ τῇ θυγατρὶ αὐτοῦ Βαλλαν τὴν παιδίσκην αὐτοῦ αὐτῇ παιδίσκη <sup>30</sup>καὶ εἰσῆλθεν πρὸς Ραχὴλ ἠγάπησεν δὲ Ραχὴλ μᾶλλον ἢ Λειαν καὶ ἐδούλευσεν αὐτῷ ἑπτὰ ἔτη ἕτερα <sup>31</sup>ἰδὼν δὲ κύριος ὅτι μισεῖται Λεια ἤνοιξεν τὴν μήτραν αὐτῆς Ραχὴλ δὲ ἦν στείρα <sup>32</sup>καὶ συνέλαβεν Λεια καὶ ἔτεκεν υἱὸν τῷ Ἰακωβ ἐκάλεσεν δὲ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ρουβην λέγουσα διότι εἶδέν μου κύριος τὴν ταπείνωσιν νῦν με ἀγαπήσει ὁ ἀνὴρ μου <sup>33</sup>καὶ συνέλαβεν πάλιν Λεια καὶ ἔτεκεν υἱὸν δευτέρου τῷ Ἰακωβ καὶ εἶπεν ὅτι ἤκουσεν κύριος ὅτι μισοῦμαι καὶ προσέδωκέν μοι καὶ τοῦτον ἐκάλεσεν δὲ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Συμεων <sup>34</sup>καὶ συνέλαβεν ἔτι καὶ ἔτεκεν υἱὸν καὶ εἶπεν ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ πρὸς ἐμοῦ ἔσται ὁ ἀνὴρ μου ἔτεκον γὰρ αὐτῷ τρεῖς υἱούς διὰ τοῦτο ἐκάλεσεν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Λευι <sup>35</sup>καὶ συλλαβοῦσα ἔτι ἔτεκεν υἱὸν καὶ εἶπεν νῦν ἔτι τοῦτο ἐξομολογήσομαι κυρίῳ διὰ τοῦτο ἐκάλεσεν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ιουδα καὶ ἔσθη τοῦ τίκτειν

Genesis 29:1 - 35



WTT Genesis 29:1 וַיֵּשָׂא יַעֲקֹב רִגְלָיו וַיַּלֶּךְ אֶרְצָה בְּנֵי-קָדָם:

וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה בָאָר בַּשָּׂדֶה וְהִנֵּה-שָׁם שְׁלֹשָׁה עֹדְרֵי-צֹאן רֹבְצִים  
עָלֶיהָ כִּי מִן-הַבָּאָר הָהוּא יִשְׁקוּ הָעֹדְרִים וְהָאֶבֶן גְּדֹלָה  
עַל-פִּי הַבָּאָר:

<sup>3</sup> וַנֹּאסְפוּ-שְׁמָה כָּל-הָעֹדְרִים וַגִּלְּלוּ אֶת-הָאֶבֶן מֵעַל פִּי  
הַבָּאָר וְהִשְׁקוּ אֶת-הַצֹּאן וַהֲשִׁיבוּ אֶת-הָאֶבֶן עַל-פִּי הַבָּאָר  
למקומה:

<sup>4</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם יַעֲקֹב אַחֵי מַאֲיִן אַתֶּם וַיֹּאמְרוּ מִחֶרֶן אַנְחֲנוּ:  
<sup>5</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם הַיּוֹדְעֵתֶם אֶת-לִבִּי בֶן-נָחוּר וַיֹּאמְרוּ יָדָעְנוּ:  
<sup>6</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם הַשְׁלוֹם לוֹ וַיֹּאמְרוּ שְׁלוֹם וְהִנֵּה רָחֵל בָּתּוֹ  
בָּאָה עִם-הַצֹּאן:

<sup>7</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר הֵן עוֹד הַיּוֹם גְּדוֹל לֹא-עֵת הָאֶסֶף הַמְקַנָּה הַשִּׁקּוֹ  
הַצֹּאן וּלְכוּ רְעוּ:

<sup>8</sup> וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא נוּכַל עַד אֲשֶׁר יֹאסְפוּ כָּל-הָעֹדְרִים וַגִּלְּלוּ  
אֶת-הָאֶבֶן מֵעַל פִּי הַבָּאָר וְהִשְׁקִינוּ הַצֹּאן:  
<sup>9</sup> עוֹדְנוּ מְדַבֵּר עִמָּם וְרָחֵל בָּאָה עִם-הַצֹּאן אֲשֶׁר לְאִבֶּיהָ כִּי  
רָעָה הוּא:

<sup>10</sup> וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר רָאָה יַעֲקֹב אֶת-רָחֵל בִּתְ-לָבָן אַחֵי אִמּוֹ  
וְאֶת-צֹאן לָבָן אַחֵי אִמּוֹ וַיִּנָּשׁ יַעֲקֹב וַיִּגַּל אֶת-הָאֶבֶן מֵעַל  
פִּי הַבָּאָר וַיִּשֶׁק אֶת-צֹאן לָבָן אַחֵי אִמּוֹ:  
<sup>11</sup> וַיִּשֶׁק יַעֲקֹב לְרָחֵל וַיֵּשָׂא אֶת-קָלוֹ וַיִּבְדֵּךְ:  
<sup>12</sup> וַיִּגַּד יַעֲקֹב לְרָחֵל כִּי אַחֵי אִבֶּיהָ הוּא וְכִי בֶן-רִבְקָה הוּא  
וְתָרְץ וַתִּגַּד לְאִבֶּיהָ:

<sup>13</sup> וַיְהִי כַשְׁמוֹעַ לָבָן אֶת-שְׁמוֹעַ יַעֲקֹב בֶּן-אָחִיתוֹ וַיִּרְץ לְקִרְאָתוֹ  
וַיַּחֲבֹק-לוֹ וַיִּנָּשֶׁק-לוֹ וַיְבִיאוּהוּ אֶל-בֵּיתוֹ וַיְסַפֵּר לְלָבָן אֵת  
כָּל-הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה:

<sup>14</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לָבָן אֵךְ עֲצָמִי וּבִשְׂרִי אֵתָה וַיֵּשֶׁב עִמּוֹ חֹדֶשׁ  
יָמִים:

<sup>15</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן לִיעֲקֹב הֲכִי-אֲחִי אֵתָה וַעֲבַדְתָּנִי חֲנֹם הַגִּידָה  
לִי מִה-מִשְׁכְּרִיתָךְ:

<sup>16</sup> וּלְלָבָן שְׁתֵּי בָנוֹת שֵׁם הַגְּדֹלָה לֵאמֹר וְשֵׁם הַקְּטָנָה רָחֵל:  
<sup>17</sup> וַעֲיִנִּי לֵאמֹר רַכּוֹת וְרָחֵל הָיְתָה יִפְתָּתָאָר וַיִּפֹּת מִרְאָה:

18 וַיֵּאָהֵב יַעֲקֹב אֶת־רַחֵל וַיֹּאמֶר אֶעֱבֹדְךָ שְׁבַע שָׁנִים בְּרַחֵל  
בְּתוֹךְ הַקְּטָנָה:

19 וַיֹּאמֶר לְבִן טוֹב תִּתֵּנִי אַתָּה לְךָ מִתַּתִּי אַתָּה לְאִישׁ אֲחֵר  
שְׁבַע עֲמֻדִי:

20 וַיַּעֲבֹד יַעֲקֹב בְּרַחֵל שְׁבַע שָׁנִים וַיְהִי בְּעֵינָיו כִּיָּמִים  
אֲחֵדִים בְּאַהֲבָתוֹ אַתָּה:

21 וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל־לְבִן הִבֵּה אֶת־אִשְׁתִּי כִּי מָלְאוּ יָמִי  
וְאָבוֹאָה אֵלֶיהָ:

22 וַיֵּאסֹף לְבִן אֶת־כָּל־אֲנָשֵׁי הַמָּקוֹם וַיַּעַשׂ מִשְׁתָּה:  
23 וַיְהִי בָּעֶרֶב וַיִּקַּח אֶת־לֵאָה בָּתּוֹ וַיָּבֹא אֵלָיו וַיָּבֹא  
אֵלֶיהָ:

24 וַיִּתֵּן לְבִן לָהּ אֶת־זִלְפָּה שִׁפְחָתוֹ לְלֵאָה בָּתּוֹ שִׁפְחָה:

25 וַיְהִי בִבְקָר וַהֲנֶה־הוּא לֵאָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־לְבִן מַה־זֹּאת  
עָשִׂיתָ לִּי הֲלֹא בְרַחֵל עֲבַדְתִּי עֲמֻדָּה וְלָמָּה רָמִיתָנִי:

26 וַיֹּאמֶר לְבִן לֹא־יַעֲשֶׂה כֵּן בַּמָּקוֹמִי לַתַּת הַצְּעִירָה לִפְנֵי  
הַבְּכִירָה:

27 מָלֵא שְׁבַע זֹאת וַנִּתְּנָה לְךָ גַּם־אֶת־זֹאת בַּעֲבֹדָה אֲשֶׁר  
תַּעֲבֹד עֲמֻדִי עוֹד שְׁבַע־שָׁנִים אַחֲרוֹת:

28 וַיַּעַשׂ יַעֲקֹב כֵּן וַיִּמָּלֵא שְׁבַע זֹאת וַיִּתֵּן־לוֹ אֶת־רַחֵל בָּתּוֹ  
לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה:

29 וַיִּתֵּן לְבִן לְרַחֵל בָּתּוֹ אֶת־בִּלְהָה שִׁפְחָתוֹ לָהּ לְשִׁפְחָה:  
30 וַיָּבֹא גַם אֶל־רַחֵל וַיֵּאָהֵב גַּם־אֶת־רַחֵל מִלֵּאָה וַיַּעֲבֹד עֲמֻדָּה

עוֹד שְׁבַע־שָׁנִים אַחֲרוֹת:

31 וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה כִּי־שָׁנוּאָה לֵאָה וַיִּפְתַּח אֶת־רִחְמָהּ וַרַחֵל  
עָקְרָה:

32 וַתֵּהָרֵי לֵאָה וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ רְאוּבֵן כִּי אָמַרָה  
כִּי־רָאָה יְהוָה בְּעֵנָיִי כִּי עָתָה יֵאָהֲבֵנִי אִישִׁי:

33 וַתֵּהָרֵי עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן וַתֹּאמֶר כִּי־שָׁמַעַ יְהוָה כִּי־שָׁנוּאָה  
אֲנִי וַיִּתֵּן־לִי גַם־אֶת־זֶה וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ שִׁמְעוֹן:

34 וַתֵּהָרֵי עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן וַתֹּאמֶר עָתָה הִפְעֵם יִלְוֶה אִישִׁי  
אֵלַי כִּי־יִלְדֵתִי לוֹ שְׁלֹשָׁה בָנִים עַל־כֵּן קָרָא־שְׁמוֹ לֵוִי:

35 וַתֵּהָרֵי עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן וַתֹּאמֶר הִפְעֵם אוֹדָה אֶת־יְהוָה



עַל־כֵּן קִרְאָה שְׁמוֹ יְהוּדָה וַתַּעֲמֹד מִלְּדָתָּ:

