### Genesis

## Chapter 29

1So thereafter, Jacob [resumed his journey] eastward towards the land of Laban… To the son of BathuEl the Syrian and the brother of RebecKa (the mother of Jacob and Esau).  
  
2{Look!} [Jacob] then spied a well in the plains where there were three flocks of sheep resting. It was a well that they used to water the flocks, and there was a large stone covering it.  
  
3You see, after all the flocks had gathered there, they used to roll the stone away from the mouth of the well to provide water for the [animals], then they’d push it back over the mouth of the well to cover it again.  
  
4So Jacob asked [those nearby]:  
  
 ‘Brothers, where are you from?’  
  
And they replied:  
  
 ‘We’re from Haran.’  
  
5Then he asked:  
  
 ‘Do you know Laban, son of NaHor?’  
  
And they answered:  
  
 ‘We do!’  
  
6And he asked:  
  
 ‘Is he doing well?’  
  
Then they replied:  
  
 ‘He’s well. Look, here comes his daughter RachEl with his sheep!’  
  
7And Jacob said:  
  
 ‘It’s still mid-day… It isn’t time for the flocks to be gathered yet. So, why don’t you just water the flocks, then take them back out to graze?’  
  
8But they said:  
  
 ‘We can’t do that until all the shepherds arrive. They’ll roll away the stone from the mouth of the well and then we’ll all water our flocks.’  
  
9Well, while he was still speaking to them, {Look!} Laban’s daughter RachEl arrived with her father’s sheep, because she was in charge of grazing them. 10And when Jacob saw RachEl (the daughter of Laban, his mother’s brother) and the sheep of his mother’s brother Laban, Jacob went over and rolled the stone away from the mouth of the well and watered Laban’s sheep.  
  
11Thereafter, Jacob kissed RachEl and shouted loudly, as he [started to] cry… 12For he explained to RachEl that he was a close relative of her father, and that he was RebecKa’s son.  
  
So she ran and told her father what he said. 13And when Laban heard the name of Jacob (his sister’s son), he ran to meet him… He hugged and kissed him, then he led him into his house.  
  
Then after [Jacob] explained to Laban [all that had happened to him], 14Laban said to him:  
  
 ‘You are my own flesh and bones!’  
  
Well, after [Jacob] had stayed with [Laban] for a full month, 15Laban said to Jacob:  
  
 ‘Surely you aren’t going to serve me for nothing, for you’re my brother! Tell me how I can reward you!’  
  
16Well, Laban had two daughters. The name of the eldest was called LeAh, and the younger was called RachEl. 17Although LeAh had weak eyes, RachEl was beautiful and had a very pretty face.  
  
18And because Jacob loved RachEl, he replied:  
  
 ‘I will serve you 7 years for your younger daughter, RachEl.’  
  
19So Laban said to him:  
  
 ‘It’s better for me to give her to you than to some other man. Come and live with me!’  
  
20Well, Jacob served [Laban] 7 years for RachEl, but to him it seemed like just a few days, because he loved her so much.  
  
21Then Jacob told Laban:  
  
 ‘Now, give me my wife, because I’ve served my time.’  
  
22So Laban assembled all the people and prepared a wedding banquet. 23Then that evening, he took his daughter LeAh and brought her to Jacob, and Jacob [had sex] with her. 24Laban also gave his servant ZelPha to his daughter LeAh, to be her handmaid.  
  
25Well, it was [the next] morning before [Jacob realized] that it was LeAh. So Jacob [went to] Laban and asked:  
  
 ‘What have you done to me?  
  
 ‘Didn’t I serve you for RachEl? Why have you deceived me?’  
  
26And Laban answered:  
  
 ‘In our country, it isn’t proper to give the younger before the eldest. 27Serve me for 7 [more years] and I’ll give her to you also, in return for your labor of 7 more years.’  
  
28So, that’s what Jacob did… He served for 7 [more years].  
  
Then Laban also gave his daughter RachEl to be his wife. 29And Laban gave his servant BalLa to be his daughter’s handmaid.  
  
30Thereafter, [Jacob had sex with] RachEl, and he loved RachEl more than LeAh… And this is why [he had been willing] to serve him for 7 more years.  
  
  
31Well, when Jehovah God saw that [Jacob] wasn’t attracted to LeAh, He opened her womb, while RachEl remained barren. 32So LeAh got pregnant and bore a son to Jacob, whom she named ReuBen [meaning, ‘See, a Son!’].  
  
For she said:  
  
 ‘Jehovah has seen my humiliation and given me a son, so that now my husband will love me.’  
  
33Then she got pregnant again and bore a second son to Jacob.  
  
[This time] she said:  
  
 ‘Because Jehovah has heard that I’m hated, He’s also given me this one.’  
  
So she named him SimeOn [meaning, ‘He Has Heard’].  
  
34Then she got pregnant a third time and bore a son, and said:  
  
 ‘Now my husband will stay with me, because I’ve born three sons to him.’  
  
So she named him Levi [meaning, ‘He Is Mine’].  
  
35Thereafter, she got pregnant again and bore a [fourth] son. And she said:  
  
 ‘I give thanks to Jehovah once more.’  
  
So she named him Judah [meaning, ‘Praised’]. And after that, she stopped having children.