

Correction / Disclaimer on Genesis 28:18-22 from last week where I said, "It sounds like an "If God will, then I will" statement but it is not. (73)

I should have said it is my opinion that the statement was to indicate Jacobs recognition and appreciation verses the implied bargaining that I interpreted.

Genesis 29 (Jacob gets married twice). In chapter 29 we will encounter Jacob getting swindled, by Laban, in to marrying two brides so the great swindler gets swindled.

Side note: After Bible study last week it dawned on me (or did it?) the three patriarchs all married women from the area of Haran, specifically, from the area that Abraham was to get away from ("Leave your fathers house and go to a place where I shall show you").

About 500 years later Moses brings the Israelites right up to the fringe of the promised land but the Israelites being a stiff-necked people were not allowed to enter it. Their faithlessness caused them to get a 40 year time out (until the faithless ones had passed away) and then Joshua leads them in. In the promised land the Israelites are told to segregate so that they may become a special people; a nation of priests (Exodus 19:6).

These Israelites, originating from Jacob, had "Gentile" mothers. "Gentile" in the sense that God had led Abraham away from "his fathers house, and family".

Undoubtedly God, through the Holy Spirit, however impressed upon Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that their wives should come from there. Why? In my opinion this might be Gods way of telling us that the relationship between Israel and (Christ following) Gentiles is a holy one. Two blessed peoples who are Holy Spirit led to be nations of priests; - The Israelites told so in Exodus 19:36 and the Gentile Bride Christians in Matthew 28:19-20 (see Printout).

I believe that Isaac having the bride brought to him

by Eliczer ("God's Helper") and then catching her up (74) by coming out of his tent describes Jesus coming for His bride (the Church), in the clouds, as the Holy Spirit has drawn her to Him. ("When the fullness of the gentiles has come in" - or when the fullness of the church is complete). And as such depicts the Gentile plan of salvation through Jesus Christ.

And Jacob with his Gentile bride(s) form the nation of Israel ^{who} were saved by faith in God's promised Messiah and adherence to the Law in the Old Testament and by faith in Jesus Christ, the promised One in the New Testament.

Genesis 29: 1-3 Please pardon my "rabbit trail" following my rabbit trail of Gentile brides: The significance of "wells" in the Bible? (see printout).

Genesis 29: 4-11 Jacob inquires about his mother's brother Laban in order to head towards his household so that he can find the perfect bride. Enter stage left Rachel heading right towards him with her sheep. It is not time yet to feed sheep, at least not until all three herds are present. However, Jacob has been bitten by the Love at first sight bug and graciously rolls the stone away from the mouth of the well to let Rachel water the flock. Jacobs conviction that "she" is the one is so powerful that he can't help himself and so he kisses her. Verse 11 says, "He lifted up his voice" (praise sounds) and wept (tears of joy for God providing "her" so quickly!

Genesis 29: 12: Jacob tells Rachel who he is and this must immediately ring a bell in Rachel's mind (and heart) because undoubtedly the blessing that the family got because of Rebekah's marriage to Isaac many years prior.

Genesis 29: 13-14 Laban had no intention of letting this one grab the bride and go like Eliczer did! No, he was going to "milk" this for all it was worth!

Genesis 29: 15-17 Jacob got put to work as soon as he got there. Obviously, he had arrived without a dowry,

Which was customary when one sought a wife. It was designed as security for the bride in the marriage. This way if the husband gave a wife a decree of divorce then when she moved back home that she would not be destitute of finances. (In the Old Testament a husband could divorce a wife just because he wanted to. No questions asked.)

So here Laban is saying, "tell me what a fair wage is for your work." Jacob replies "I will serve you seven years for Rachel". This agreement could not be any clearer!

Genesis 29:19-20 Laban has no intention of "giving" his daughter away free of charge. He is just saying that. Jacob agrees to serving Laban for seven years for Rachel. This might be where the origin of, "Time flies when your having fun" came from. It is a picture of how eternity for us will be! We will have such Agape love for the Triune God that we will be reigning, ruling, and serving with bliss. Forever. Not a care in the world, not a down day, not a glimpse of anything but pure joy. And here on earth it is doing everything to the glory of the Lord. In our work (beruf) and in our of time.

Genesis 29:21: Time went by so quickly that seven years elapse in the time between verse 20 and 21. Jacob asks for his wife-to-be Rachel so that he can be married and start a family.

Genesis 29:22 Laban has a wedding feast. Its sole purpose is to get Jacob drunk.

Genesis 29:23-24 Laban slips Leah (Rachel's older sister) in to the tent of Jacob, and also gives Leah his maid Zilpah. Both Jacob and Rachel are obviously upset with Laban and Leah's deceit.

Genesis 29:25 Jacob realizes, too late, that he has been deceived and that he has married Leah and not Rachel. He confronts Laban.

Genesis 29:26-27 Whether it truly was customary to marry-off the older sister before the younger or not, Laban had seven years to let it be known but declined to do so. The fact that Rachel was oblivious to this "custom" leads

to believe it was just a lie. On another note, if Jacob would have gone before the elders of the region he could have easily argued to the court that the agreement was 7

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years service resulting in Rachel being his wife (verse 18) and that that would mean $3\frac{1}{2}$ years for Leah and $3\frac{1}{2}$ years for Rachel yielding the agreed up 7 years of service for Rachel.

Genesis 29:28 Jacob has a wife but not the one he wanted, so he works another 7 years, and Rachel finally becomes his wife.

Genesis 29:29-30 Laban gives his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as a maid. Scripture tells us that Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah and this seems harsh but it is honest. Jacob would have married Rachel and both would have been content. I truly believe this. But God ultimately had other plans. Maybe it was "what goes around comes around" or that He had a plan for 12 tribes of Israel that included Leah in the geneology. Verse 30 tells us that Jacob still served Laban another 7 years. This is probably the most confusing for me. Why did he not just take his wives and run as fast as he could?

Genesis 29:31-35 "God has mercy on who He has mercy". God said that to Moses as His Shekinah Glory passed by Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 33:19) and Paul writes God gives mercy upon whom He gives mercy in Romans 9:15. So God opens Leah's womb. Her first son to Jacob is Reuben ("the Lord has looked at my affliction") thinking that now Jacob would love her. She conceived again and bore Simeon ("because the Lord had heard I am unloved"). Then she bore again, a son, and called him Levi ("now this time my husband will become attached to me because I bore him three sons"). Then she bore again and called the son Judah ("Now I will praise the Lord"). - Jesus would come from the tribe of Judah, so this means that Leah had a part in God's plan. (At 3AM this morning I noticed that God opens and closes wombs. He closed

Abimelechs wives and concubines wombs when he had Sarah in his harem. He opened Sarahs womb when the time had come. Here He opened Leahs womb and kept Rachel barren. God is the author of life in every womb. Psalm 139:13-14 (see first printout sheet).