

## Jacob's Wives



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When Jacob arrived at Laban's well, he met a beautiful shepherdess named Rachel. From that moment, he loved her. He was penniless; a man without a dowry and in love with a beautiful woman. When Laban offered him wages, he negotiated Rachel's hand in marriage for seven years of his labor. For him, the seven years of labor was like only a few days; the wonderful day came before he knew it.

Preparations were made, but behind the scenes Laban planned a devious scheme to trap Jacob into working for him another seven years. He secretly switched Rachel for Leah and Jacob married a woman he did not love, an uncomely woman with poor eye-sight. Jacob was shocked when he discovered the trickery the next day.

Laban reassured him that he could have Rachel, but his custom prevented him from allowing his younger daughter from marrying before the older daughter. Jacob agreed to another seven years of labor and was given Rachel's hand in marriage; he loved Rachel more than Leah.

God saw that Leah was unloved, so He opened her womb and she conceived and gave birth to a son, named Reuben. Rachel remained barren. God participated in the lives of these women, for He has a plan and they are key characters in His story.

Leah continued to fall pregnant and give birth to sons. This was a great honor in ancient times, as they remembered God's instructions from old to multiply and fill the earth (Genesis 1:28). Rachel became jealous and pleaded with Jacob for a child, but God had not yet opened her womb. Each of Laban's daughters were given a servant girl upon marriage. So, Rachel decided to give Jacob her servant girl as a wife to conceive on her behalf; and a son was born. Leah did

the same when she stopped conceiving and her servant girl gave Jacob a son. The competition continued until ten sons and one daughter were born. Rachel still had not conceived until some time later, she conceived giving birth to Joseph. She was beyond happy, for now she feels the disgrace she endured all those years lifted; she had become, finally, worthy of God's blessing. She called him Joseph; the name implied that she pressured God into blessing her again with another child. The birthing of children was critical to self-value in ancient times.

So, what important parallel story was God writing in the lives of Jacob's four wives?

God's coded language is rich in this story. It is all about His church and the four different congregations within it.

The Apostle Paul understood God's coded language. He revealed the mystery of the **relationship between Christ** who is pictured as Jacob in this portion of the story and the **church**. The female gender pictures mankind who was given the role of the church, but with to the fall of man, the female gender took on the image of both the true and false church.

Ephesians 5 provides the key to understanding the type of relationship Christ in eternity will have with the faithful church.

**The True Church:** "For we are members of His [Christ's] body. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the **two will become one flesh. This mystery is profound, but I am speaking about Christ and the church**" (Ephesians 5:30-32).

**The False Church:** "The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls. She held a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries. This title was written on her forehead: 'Mystery Babylon the Great the Mother of Harlots and of the abominations of the earth'" (Revelation 17:4-5).

The **relationship between Christ and his church** is revealed through the lives of Jacob's four wives. God Almighty and Jesus Christ work as one, in total unity with God Almighty as the head and Christ as His body. This **united relationship** has been expanded to include mankind, that is, repentant, righteous mankind who was created: male and female. The male role images the leadership given to mankind within government, while the female role images the leadership given within religion. While earthly men often fill these roles, the imagery of what these roles picture, remains in God's eyes: male and female.

There is an order of authority within these roles. God Almighty remains supreme.

"But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God" (I Corinthians 11:3).

This scripture shows that the head of national governments is Christ and the head of the church is the government then Christ and the head of Christ is God Almighty.

This is an important concept because God is transparent. He wants mankind to understand that before mankind was created, His government existed long before time came into being. The creation of Adam first—Adam whose gender pictures the leadership within government, existed first before the leadership within religion. The woman who pictures the church came into existence through the rib of Adam, just as the church is given eternal life through Christ, the second Adam. The female role is a new spiritual role in heaven. It does not exist right now, but it will when Christ's Bride is resurrected into a radiant body, for Christ has promised that he will share his rulership with her.

“He did this to present her to himself as a **RADIANT CHURCH without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish**. Instead, she will **be holy and without fault**” (Ephesians 5:27).

Understanding these parallels removes the veil that covers this wonder of God, as He has established for mankind a position of honor within His order in His kingdom. This great honor will be given to both Israelites and Gentiles, so the story shows in the lives of Jacob's four wives.

#### **LEAH, THE OLDEST DAUGHTER OF LABAN**

Leah had poor eye-sight, which imaged a spiritual walk where the ministry has difficulty seeing and understanding the pure word of God. Their doctrine is often faulty. As a result, in God's eyes, this congregation is uncomely.

She is the older of the two daughters. It is like God split His people into two time periods: the older and the younger, Leah images the ancient Israelites who were so wayward in their walk with Him. Despite the miracles, the battles God fought for them, the witness they saw with their own eyes, still they transgressed walking like drunkards. Her children, though part of God's church, throughout time, remain spiritually weak.

God opened her womb, so we know God is with her. She gave birth to six sons and one daughter. She attracts many members into her congregation, but her doctrines are not sound.

Jacob was tricked into marrying her. Jacob here images Christ who sacrificed his life for both the church he loves and the one who is difficult to love because they desperately need to overcome and return to the pure word of God. In addition, Christ's sacrifice also covers the repentant Gentiles who are imaged through the servants of Leah and Rachel.

All the churches in Revelation are urged to overcome, the difference between the loved and the unloved is that, the loved are overcoming, while the unloved don't yet realize that they need to overcome. It will take a time of trouble before they truly take overcoming seriously.

“**To the one who overcomes**, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne” (Revelation 3:21).

## **RACHEL, THE ONE JACOB LOVED**

Rachel is a shepherdess and the youngest who images the church who blossoms into a loving and nurturing mother during the last 2,000 years of this evil age after God's Holy Spirit is given, making true spiritual maturity possible.

She is the church that goes back in time who couldn't have children, that is, could not birth spiritual sons of God in her early years because God had not opened her womb yet—the Holy Spirit had not been available to everyone. She felt the pain of feeling unworthy all those years. The prophets of the ancient times preached the word of God, but so few listened. They were often alone, mocked by their wayward priests and many killed by their government leaders. They lived during spiritually barren times unable to bring in members into their congregation.

God has a plan for His church; this story reveals His plan for the loved church. Rachel, the one Jacob loved becomes infiltrated with paganism. She was the one who had Laban's idols, but she is also the one who overcomes and remains steadfastly faithful. God opened Rachel's womb in her later years picturing the time when Jesus died and paid the price for our sins. A new chapter begins, the church is born. It is she that Jeremiah sees weeping and refusing to be consoled for her children—the repentant righteous children are not in the Holy Land. God assures her that they will return home and that **her work of rearing humble, repentant Believers will be rewarded.**

"A voice is heard in Ramah, mourning and great weeping, **Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted**, because they are no more. Thus says the LORD, 'Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears; For **your work will be rewarded**,' declares the LORD, 'And they will return from the land of the enemy'" (Jeremiah 31:15-16).

She is the loved church filled with God's Holy Spirit. Now, a son is born, Joseph. His story is rich in God's coded language. Rachel gives birth to only two sons, an image that her congregation would remain small in number at least until Christ returns. She died giving birth to Benjamin, it signified a new chapter in the structure of the ministry of the true church when the veil was rent and Believers given direct access to God. Rachel's son went under the direct care of his father, Jacob.

## **THE SERVANT GIRLS OF LEAH AND RACHEL**

Rachel's jealousy spurred the competition between the two sisters. Rachel gave her servant girl to Jacob to wed and a son was born. Leah did the same. Like congregations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, increasing their membership is often seen as an indicator of success.

The servant girls were slaves; they were not free like Leah and Rachel. These servant girls image religious leaders who produce congregations from the Gentile nations and are brought into the family of Israel.

When 21<sup>st</sup> century Israel returns home in the future, they will come with people from different nations and these foreigners will live with the 21<sup>st</sup> century Israelites and become part of their family in the Promised land.

“But the LORD will have mercy on the descendants of Jacob. He will choose Israel as his special people once again. He will bring them back to settle once again in their own land. And **people from many different nations will come and join them there and unite with the people of Israel**” (Isaiah 14:1).

“Distribute the land as an allotment for yourselves and for **the foreigners who have joined you and are raising their families among you. They will be like native-born Israelites to you** and will receive an allotment among the tribes. These foreigners are to be given land within the territory of the tribe with whom they now live. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken!” (Ezekiel 47:22-23).

### **A RESURRECTION PRIOR TO THE RE-UNIFICATION OF ISRAEL**

A resurrection is certain at the return of Christ because the high priest who accused Jesus of blasphemy will be resurrected and witness Christ’s return.

Jesus replied, "You have said it. And **in the future** you will see the Son of Man seated in the place of power at God's right hand and **coming on the clouds of heaven**" (Matthew 26:64).

But what about the physical resurrection of ancient Israel in Ezekiel 37. A valley of very dry bones lay, then a rattle is heard, bone against bone, tendons and flesh appear then skin and they stand up—a vast army. God says, “Come from the four winds, O breath and breathe into these slain, that they may live” (Ezekiel 37:9). These slain are the whole house of Israel. They become aware that they have been resurrected, but they are not excited—rather troubled they say, “Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off” (Ezekiel 37:11).

Christ will stand before them with the Saints and tell them about his payment of their sins and now, God’s generous gift of grace and the receiving of God’s Holy Spirit so that they can keep the law of God willingly—with a heart of flesh. The nation of Israel is God’s first-born nation.

Then, the ancient and the 21<sup>st</sup> century Israelites of the house of Judah and Israel will come together as one kingdom of humble, God-fearing and God-serving people who will enter into an everlasting covenant, one they will not break.

### **THEY ARE IDENTIFIABLE CONGREGATIONS**

A key point is that God did not scatter His people among the Gentiles to the point that they could not be distinguished. Amos, the prophet wrote in the word of God saying, “Surely the eyes of the Sovereign LORD are on the sinful kingdom [the beast power]. I will destroy it from the face of the earth—yet **I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob...** For I will give the command, and **I will shake the house of Israel [all 12 tribes] among all the nations as grain is**

**shaken in a sieve, but not a kernel will fall to the ground. All the sinners among my people will die by the sword,** all those who say, 'Disaster will not overtake or meet us' (Amos 9:8-10).

God says he will destroy the wicked among His people, but not the righteous. He has carefully watched over His people, especially the scattered ten tribes. Though some inter-married with the Gentiles, God's formula that He uses to distinguish His people will be known in the Millennium when He gathers them to bring them home. Had the divorced 10-tribed house of Israel inter-married or mingled among the Gentiles to the point where they are no longer an identifiable people, God would not be able to bring them home as He as prophesied.

“In those coming days,’ says the LORD, ‘the **people of Israel** will return home **TOGETHER** with the **people of Judah**. They will come weeping and **seeking the LORD their God**’” (Jeremiah 50:4).

“**I will plant Israel in their own land, never again to be uprooted from the land I have given them,**’ says the LORD your God” (Amos 9:15).

There remains to this day, three identifiable congregations within God's church: Leah, Rachel and the servant girls.

#### **FUTURE PROVES PAST**

The story of Jacob's four wives reveals two parallel stories: one recorded hundreds of years ago and the other the spiritual walk of God's church. 21<sup>st</sup> century Christians have the story. **Learn the code,** our wonderful future is just moments away resting on the horizon. We are a people of hope, for Christ is our Savior and we follow him wherever he goes.

Such is the drama-filled story of Jacob's marriage to four different women: two from the ancestry of Abraham and two from the Gentile nations. They are a parallel of the four congregations within God's church and the journey along the rough and rugged road, they took to come to God.

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