

Pentwater Bible Church

Jacob's Marriages *Genesis Message Sixty-One* *Genesis 29: 1-30*



Meeting of Jacob and Laban with Rachel, Leah and Servants Jan Van Neck (1635-1714)

Daniel E. Woodhead – Pastor Teacher

Pentwater Bible Church

Bulletin April 1, 2011

Pentwater Bible Church

Pentwater Bible Church is a non-denominational Christian Church dedicated to teaching the Bible as fact. We strive to learn God's Will for this world and us as individuals through a clear line-by-line verse-by-verse exposition of the entire Bible.

It is our desire to draw ever closer to the Lamb of God, Jesus Our Creator and Messiah. It is only through Him that redemption can be found.

Verse-by-Verse we draw closer to God and experience true freedom in the truth of His Word.



Daniel E. Woodhead, Pastor



Jacob & Rachel by William Dyce (1806-1864)

Learning God's Word One Verse at a Time

Pentwater Bible Church



Announcements

See us on Facebook

Sunday Radio Teaching of Galatians on WEEH 100.5 FM at 06:00 AM; Z95 FM at 9:30 AM; WMOM 102.7 FM at 11:00 AM & 9:00 PM & Internet
<http://www.wmom.fm/> 11:00AM

Mid Week Study and discussion Wednesdays from 7:00 PM to 8:30 Topic: "Israel; The Arabs & Islam." Next Session: Jews under the Caliphates WEDNESDAY APRIL 11, 2012

Maundy Thursday Service At the Comfort Inn Thursday 7:00 PM

Wednesday Women's ministry meets at Joan's house 4:00 PM teaching through "Living by the Book."

Skype our Service at PentwaterBibleChurch

Share Your Church With Others

Sunday Service April 1, 2012

11:00 AM

Introduction Music: Lord I Lift Your Name on High
Rick Founds

Opening Prayer:

Hymn #1: What Will Your Answer Be
T. S. Teddlie

Communion: Remembering our Lord

Message: Jacob' Marriages
Genesis Chapter 29: 1-30
Hymn # 2: Walking Alone at Eve
Thomas Sweaton

&

Offering:

Benediction:

Closing Music: Goodness of the Lord
Brooklyn Tabernacle

WHAT WILL YOUR ANSWER BE

1. Some-day you'll stand at the bar on high, Some-day your re-cord you'll see;
2. Sad-ly you'll stand, if you're un-pre-pared, Trem-bling, you'll fall on your knee;
3. Now is the time to pre-pare, my friend, Make your soul spot-less and free;

Some-day you'll an-swer the ques-tion of life. What will you an-swer be?
Fac-ing the sen-tence of life or of death, What will that sen-tence be?
Washed in the blood of the Cru-ci-fied One, He will you're an-swer be.

Chorus

What will it be? What will it be? Where will you spend your e-ter-ni-ty?

What will it be? O, what will it be? What will you're an-swer be?
what will it be?

rit...

Dentwater Bible Church

Genesis Message Sixty-One

Jacob's Marriages

April 1, 2012

Daniel E. Woodhead

Review:

JACOB IS SENT AWAY

Genesis 27: 46 - 28: 5

Rebecca approached Isaac to tell him of her weariness of Esau taking wives from the Canaanites against his parent's wishes. She knew that Jacob must go to Haran and get a family member to marry. She came from there and knew that her family in Haran could produce a satisfactory wife for him. She had experienced too much grief from Esau. All of us who have been chosen to receive God's Holy Spirit receive correction and suffering (Deuteronomy 8: 5; Job 5: 17-18, 36: 8-12; Isaiah 48: 10; Daniel 12: 10). This is what produces the purity and direction of His Will. He needs to place us in positions to be willing to receive His directions and then serve Him. Jacob would receive the correction and shaping in his life from God in Haran during his stay there.

As a result of her visit to Isaac he called Jacob and both blessed him again and said, "Do not marry a Canaanite woman." Isaac now realized that Jacob was God's chosen and the blessing was an affirmation of his realization. He knew he must comply with God's Will. The Canaanites were a nasty lot of humans. They were a mixed race with despicable sexually immoral habits. Their fertility cults were worse than other places in the world. The Hebrews would be continually in peril of contamination from the lewd worship they engaged in and therefore Abraham and Isaac knew they did not want their sons to marry into these pagans. Just as his father Abraham did not want a Canaanite woman for Isaac he also did not want them for any of his family. It was important to the purity of the Hebrew nation to avoid intermarriage with any group outside the close family. The Abrahamic Covenant was now reaffirmed to Jacob and its requirement to bring the Messiah required a pure line of succession. Later that line would come through Jacob's son Judah. Jacob had the extra impetus to leave by the threat on his life by Esau. God in His Divine Counsels had ordained this and it was going to happen. So Jacob received the Covenant with all its blessings and responsibility and went alone to Paddan-aram to Bethuel's home in order to seek a wife. Somewhat different in this instance than what Abraham did in terms of sending Eliezer, Isaac sent Jacob by himself.

ESAU RESPONDS IN RESENTMENT

Genesis 28: 6-9

When Esau heard of this blessing and knew the degree of displeasure that his parents had regarding the taking of a Canaanite woman for a wife he decided in his resentment to anger them. He went to the family of Ishmael and took a third wife Mahalath a daughter of Ishmael who is also called Basemath in Genesis 36:3. Ishmael had

been dead for about fourteen years so it was his tribe that he went to in order to secure an additional wife. Esau despised his birthright and disobeyed his parents. He brought much grief upon them. Many who have gone through this world despised God and what He has prepared for us. They will never experience the Marriage Supper of the Lamb nor enter Heaven to receive God's blessings. It is only to those who believe that God loves and gives us His Spirit so we can realize what He has for us (I Corinthians 2: 9).

GOD REAFFIRMS HIS COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM TO JACOB

Genesis 28: 10-22

So Jacob departed from his family home in Beer-sheba and began his travel to Haran in Mesopotamia. He stopped for the night at a place, which would be named Bethel. This same event is referred to in Hosea 12: 4-5. Abraham had also built an altar there to make a public worship of God in the Land (Genesis 12: 8). We remember he did this after entering the Land right near the Canaanite worship center. When he placed the stone it was near his head or as the Hebrew reads "at his head" not under his head. If it were under his head he would have a miserably uncomfortable sleep. After he fell asleep he began to dream.

This dream produced the image of a ladder. In Hebrew this is *soolam* סֹלָם. This is a unique word. The Jewish encyclopedia refers to it as a hapax legomena. These are words or forms of words that occur once only. There are about 1,500 of these in the Old Testament; but only 400 are, strictly, "hapax legomena"; that is, are either absolutely new coinages of roots, or cannot be derived in their formation or in their specific meaning from other occurring stems. This occurrence of the word ladder is one of the 400 strict hapax legomena. The reason it is classified in this category is it is a very unique ladder, not the type we would normally consider when we see that word. It's meaning is actually a *stairway*, which is giving Jacob *access* to Heaven. What Jacob sees on this stairway when it appears are the angels of God.

There are only two times in Genesis when they appear through the use of this phrase "the angels of God." They also appear in Genesis 32: 1. Interestingly, the appearance of these angels is when he leaves the Land and when he returns to the Land. Here the angels are seen ascending and descending on the stairway to Heaven. They are making the path for Jacob to see the physical manifestation of Jehovah God, The Shechinah Glory. He then speaks to Jacob from the top of the stairway. He says that, *I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac*. The Hebrew word for father is *av* אָב and it also means *ancestor* so God is not referring to Abraham in the strict sense of Jacob's father. Isaac of course is his immediate father but Jehovah identifies Jacob with both of them to affirm the Covenant. He states the four provisions of the Covenant.

1. The Land is promised to him personally and individually (seed affirms Jacob's success in finding a wife and producing offspring).
2. Jehovah says that his offspring will be innumerable.
3. He promised a Gentile blessing, which was also affirmed specifically to both Abraham and Isaac as well.
4. Finally four specific personal promises are made to Jacob.

- a. God promised to be with him
- b. He promised to protect Jacob (keep you wherever you go)
- c. God promised to bring him again into the Land
- d. He would not leave Jacob until He had fulfilled the promises of the Covenant

After God had spoken with him Jacob recognized it and affirmed it as the “place of God” and immediately became afraid. He said that the place was dreadful indicating the “fear of God.” This comes upon all who truly know God and place their trust in Him. We have a deep reverential fear of Him. The more we study and the closer to Him we draw the more this fear of Him deepens. The place that Jacob had this experience was called Luz and appears as such in Genesis 35: 6, 48: 3; and Joshua 16: 2. In commemoration of his significant experience he names the place the house of God. In the Hebrew it is called *bieet elohim* בֵּית אֱלֹהִים which is translated as the house of God. The second place where God’s angels appear to him as he is reentering the Land is named by him to be *Mahanaim* or the *two camps* (Genesis 32: 1).

Jacob rose from his sleep early in the morning and took *the stone that he had put under his head, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.* Jacob was consecrating the stone and set up as a pillar for all to see the commemorative dedication of the event he experienced. He said this is Beth-El. That is an Anglicized way of saying “The House of God.” Jacob then affirmed God’s provisions for him. The text says, *If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,*²¹ *so that I come again to my father’s house in peace, and Jehovah will be my God,*²² *then this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God’s house.* The Hebrew word for if is *eem* אִם and actually also means since. The better translation is *since God will be with me...* He had this strong experience with God and has the affirmation of what God is going to do. It is not iffy. He knows God’s promise and plan. He finally responds with gratitude toward God by pledging a tenth of all he has to God. So the Covenant passes down to a third generation and the spiritual blessings are assured as well as the Gentile blessings, which will come through the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Today’s Message:

JACOB MEETS RACHEL

Genesis 29: 1-14

¹*Then Jacob went on his journey, and came to the land of the children of the east.* ²*And he looked, and behold, a well in the field, and, lo, three flocks of sheep lying there by it. For out of that well they watered the flocks. And the stone upon the well’s mouth was great.* ³*And thither were all the flocks gathered. And they rolled the stone from the well’s mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well’s mouth in its place.* ⁴*And Jacob said unto them, My brethren, whence are ye? And they said, Of Haran are we.* ⁵*And he said unto them, Know ye Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, We know him.* ⁶*And he said unto them, Is it well with him? And they said, It is*

well. And, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep. ⁷And he said, Lo, it is yet high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together. Water ye the sheep, and go and feed them. ⁸And they said, We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and they roll the stone from the well's mouth. Then we water the sheep. ⁹While he was yet speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep. For she kept them. ¹⁰And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. ¹¹And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept. ¹²And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother, and that he was Rebekah's son. And she ran and told her father. ¹³And it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house. And he told Laban all these things. ¹⁴And Laban said to him, Surely thou art my bone and my flesh. And he abode with him the space of a month (ASV 1901).

Jacob was sent away for two reasons. First he had to flee from Esau's wrath and second he had to find a wife from his mother's family. He was clear of Esau and now his focus was finding a wife. The text starts out by stating *Then Jacob went on his journey*. The Hebrew text actually states, "*Jacob lifted up his feet*." This phrase is found *only* here in the Bible. This literal rendering in the Hebrew let's us know something about his attitude. God had just spoken with him and assured him of his wonderful future and he was excited about the wife he would receive. He knew God's plan to bless him and was assured that God was with him leading and guiding. The Jews say that, *Jacob's heart lifted up his feet* (Bereshit Rabbah 70: 8).

Psalm 119: 105

¹⁰⁵*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, And light unto my path (ASV 1901).*

We remember how important the well is in arid country and this place of meeting is reminiscent of Eliezer meeting Rebecca at the well in Haran ninety-seven years earlier. One stark difference is that Eliezer came with a caravan, wealth and servants. Jacob came by himself, lonely and poor. But Jacob had God's direct divine assurance that He was with him. Jacob stopped at a well, which was closed up with a large stone for sanitary, and safety purposes. The stone usually meant in addition that the water was for the town's people and outsiders had to get permission as well as pay a fee to partake of the water. The stone was to be removed when all the flocks were gathered together to be watered, then closed up again.

Jacob spoke to the men at the well addressing them in a familiar term of "brethren." He wondered who they were. As soon as they said of Haran Jacob knew he had reached his destination. So he asked them if they knew Laban. In affirming the fact they knew Laban Jacob's uncle, they stated that he was well and they pointed out his daughter Rachel who was approaching the well with sheep. Jacob said to the men, "*Lo, it is yet high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together. Water ye the*

sheep, and go and feed them.” He was referring to the larger herds that would be coming in for water soon to join the small three groups waiting there now. He spoke as a man well versed in managing flocks. He wanted them to water the three small flocks immediately and get them out to pasture for feeding. This would give him time alone with Rachel. They responded *“We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and they roll the stone from the well’s mouth. Then we water the sheep.”* In other words that would not be in keeping with their custom in Haran. While they engaged in this conversation Rachel approached the well. Now the text tells us that she was a shepherdess (*with her father’s sheep. For she kept them*). This was an unusual role for a woman in Israel but not for the women in the neighboring countries. We see Jethro’s daughters having that role in Exodus 2: 16. Rachel רְחֵל in Hebrew means “ewe lamb.” Her name indicative of her beauty also lets us know that her family knew she was precious. The Bible states that she was *the daughter of Laban his mother’s brother*. The word brother is used in the sense of nephew here since he was Laban’s nephew and Rebecca was Rachel’s aunt.

As soon as Jacob saw her he independently rolled the stone away from the well making it available for her to water her father’s sheep. These stones were very heavy and he did this with a special amount of strength. He rolled away the stone, watered the sheep, kissed Rachel and immediately burst into tears. This again affirms the true nature of Jacob. He was not a cold calculating deceiver or scoundrel. He had warm memories of his mother and her family, which caused him to regard her as family and then he kissed Rachel upon meeting her. After kissing her, introduced himself with tears of joyous emotion as her cousin (אָחִי אֲבִיהָ, *achee aveeha*) brother, i.e., relation of her father) and Rebekah’s son. Rachel then went and told her father. Customarily she would have told her mother if alive but she being dead brought the news to her father. He came out to Jacob, embraced him and kissed him. Jacob being warmly welcomed into Laban’s home told him the story of his family for the last ninety-seven years. Then Laban said, *“Surely thou art my bone and my flesh,”* meaning a family member which caused him to let Jacob stay in his house for a month. While the text does not say it again in this particular text Jacob is here to acquire a wife. In doing so he will spend time working for Laban. We will soon see that Laban’s warm embrace was self-serving. His true colors, if you will, will be soon revealed.

JACOB’S MARRIAGES

Genesis 29: 15-30

¹⁵And Laban said unto Jacob, Because thou art my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? Tell me, what shall thy wages be? ¹⁶And Laban had two daughters. The name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷And Leah’s eyes were tender. But Rachel was beautiful and well favored. ¹⁸And Jacob loved Rachel. And he said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter. ¹⁹And Laban said, It is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man. Abide with me. ²⁰And Jacob served seven years for Rachel. And they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her. ²¹And Jacob said unto

Laban, Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her. ²²And Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast. ²³And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him. And he went in unto her. ²⁴And Laban gave Zilpah his handmaid unto his daughter Leah for a handmaid. ²⁵And it came to pass in the morning that, behold, it was Leah. And he said to Laban, What is this thou hast done unto me? Did not I serve with thee for Rachel? Wherefore then hast thou beguiled me? ²⁶And Laban said, It is not so done in our place, to give the younger before the first-born. ²⁷Fulfil the week of this one, and we will give thee the other also for the service, which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years. ²⁸And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week. And he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife. ²⁹And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah his handmaid to be her handmaid. ³⁰And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years. (ASV 1901).

Laban begins the conversation with a contract. He says that just because you are a close relative you should still receive payment for your efforts here. He point blank asks Jacob, “*Tell me, what shall thy wages be?*” God was with Jacob. God corrects His children when we break His moral law. Yes He was guiding Jacob and gave him the covenant. There still had to be divine retribution for Jacob’s deception. Jacob’s happy prospect of marrying Rachel turned, by Laban’s counter deception, into a difficult situation for Jacob. The Lord was going to use Laban as His means of discipline for Jacob. The deception he had practiced upon Isaac and Esau did not go unnoticed with the Lord. The Lord took Jacob, fine-tuned, and developed him into the patriarch of the Nation Israel that he would become. What now follows is a parenthetical description of Laban’s two daughters. This is preparing us to receive the rest of the story.

Laban had two daughters, Leah the eldest and Rachel whom Jacob has just met. Leah’s name means “cow or strong woman” in Hebrew and we have seen that Rachel’s name means “ewe lamb.” This again shows us the disposition of Laban and his wife toward each daughter by the characterization of the names they gave them. Leah was tender-eyed or as the Hebrew states, “weak-eyed.” Much diversity surrounds this term in the various scriptural contexts where it appears. Some say that she had poor vision and others say that she had cried her eyes out with the prospect of possibly having to marry Esau or some other equally undesirable man (Bereshit Rabbah 70: 16). The Hebrew word is *rakkot* רַכּוֹת . It can refer to a tender nature or genuine poor eyesight. Since the eyes are the gateway to the soul it would seem that Leah’s poor eyesight gave insight into her tender delicate nature. She was not attractive as Rachel but had a tender delicate nature. Interestingly, she was not so good-looking since bright eyes, with fire in them, are regarded as the height of beauty in Mesopotamian women.¹ Because of her appearance though she was not sought after for marriage. Her father knew she was the more difficult woman to place in an arranged marriage. Rachel was beautiful and well favored, meaning in face and figure with no physical deformities. We must remember that God looks on the

¹ Keil, C. F., & Delitzsch, F. (2002). *Commentary on the Old Testament*. (Genesis 29:15–30). Peabody, MA: Hendrickson.

inside and not on the outside (I Samuel 16: 7). One's physical appearance is not the basis for a lasting satisfying godly marriage.

Jacob then makes the statement to Laban regarding his desire for payment. He said, "*I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter.*" Then Jacob did work for Laban for the next seven years in exchange for having Rachel the younger of Laban's daughters for a wife. He did not demand her immediately citing his father's marriage to Rebecca. Which was immediate. But he had nothing to offer in return except labor. He had arrived empty handed. Laban's embrace confirmed that. The seven years did not seem too arduous of a time to wait for the woman he loved. So he approached Laban when the seven years were done and asked for his payment. He said, "*Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her.*" What follows here is profound in that we can see God's hand in this retribution for Jacob's deception.

Laban schedules a customary seven-day Mid-Eastern feast to celebrate the marriage. At night when the couple's first sexual union was to take place consummating the marriage the deceiver Jacob, gets deceived by Laban. Jacob was under some pressure due to the fact he was eighty-four years old and sensing the need to produce heirs for the Covenant to pass to the next generation. That may have been a factor so that in his haste he was unaware that Laban brought Leah to Jacob's tent instead of Rachel. Perhaps the feast had him tired and the festivities no doubt included wine, which affected his judgment. Finally it was also customary for the women to be veiled on their wedding night. In any event he did not realize that he slept with Leah and not Rachel. Leah must have gone along with the deception by pretending to be her younger sister. The text tells us also that Leah was given a handmaid called Zilpah whose name means "nearness or intimacy."

Waking in the morning Jacob realized he had intercourse with Leah and not Rachel. It was too late to reverse the situation. She was now officially his wife. Jacob confronted Laban. Laban when asked by Jacob why he had done this simply said, *It is not so done in our place, to give the younger before the first-born.* Jacob lived with them for seven years already and would have known the practices related to giving a daughter in marriage. Laban was probably making this up. Laban was going to get another seven years of service out of Jacob and told him that if he would *Fulfil the week of this one, and we will give thee the other also for the service, which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years.*" Jacob complied and agreed to work another seven years for Rachel. So Laban gave him Rachel. Rachel also was given a handmaid. Her name was Bilhah, which means "terror." Later under the Mosaic Law (Cir. 1440 B.C.) there would be a prohibition against marrying sisters (Leviticus 18: 18). Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah. He had intercourse, consummated the marriage and began another seven years of service to Laban at no pay. Jacob now had four women to support.

NEXT WEEK: JACOB'S SONS AND THE MULTIPLICATION OF LABAN'S CATTLE

Please Call or e-mail with any questions or comments.

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WALKING ALONE AT EVE

1. Walk - ing a - lone at eve and view - ing the skies a - far, Bid - ding the
 2. Sit - ting a - lone at eve and dream - ing the hours a - way, Watch - ing the
 3. Clos - ing my eyes at eve and think - ing of heav - en's grace, Long - ing to

dark - ness come to wel - come each sil - ver star; I have a great de - light
 shad - ows fall - ing now at the close of day; God in His mer - cy comes
 see my Lord, yes, meet - ing Him face to face; Trust - ing Him as my all

D.S. - Rest for a wea - ry soul

in the won - der - ful scenes a - bove, God in His pow'r and might is
 with His word He is draw - ing near, Spread - ing His love and truth a -
 where - so - ev - er my foot - steps roam, Plead - ing with Him to guide me

once re - deemed by the Sav - ior's love, Where I'll be pure and whole and

Fine Chorus

show - ing His truth and love. O! for a home with God, a place in His
 round me and ev - 'ry - where.
 on to the spir - it's home.

live with my God a - bove!

D.S. al Fine

courts to rest, Sure in a safe a - bode with Je - sus and the blest;