

SALT Church

Genesis 29

“The Sins of a Father”

July 15, 2026

“In the Beginning”

Recap:

- Cleaning up last week
 - I said (at least twice) that this would be the last time that Jacob would see his parents alive.
 - I was wrong.
 - It would be the last time Jacob would see his mother alive but in Genesis 35 we find Jacob reunited with his father Isaac before his death.
 - Thank you Ray

Upon further research Rebekah's death is not recorded in the Bible but oddly enough her nurses death.

- Some scholars believe that she died upon Jacobs return some 20 years later but for whatever reason it is not mentioned in the Bible.
 - But we do have Isaac's death.

Genesis 35:27-29

²⁷ Jacob came home to his father Isaac in Mamre, near Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had stayed. ²⁸ Isaac lived a hundred and eighty years. ²⁹ Then he breathed his last and died and was gathered to his people, old and full of years. And his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

- Isaac lives 180 years “wow”
 - But this presents another question
 - **How old was Jacob when he left home?**

We know that Isaac was 40 when he married Rebekah

- We also know that he was 60 when the boys were born (Genesis 25:26)
- We know that Jacob is going to live to age 147 (Genesis 47:9)
- Genesis 37 tells us that Joseph was 17 when his brother sold him into slavery.
- Genesis 41:46 tells us that Joseph was 30 years old when he began to serve Pharaoh.
 - It also tells us that there were 7 years of plenty and 7 years of drought. (14 total years making Joseph 44 years old at the end of the drought)
 - Jacob comes to Egypt the 2nd year of the drought, making Joseph 39 years old.
 - Genesis 47 tells us that Jacob is 130 when he enters Egypt.
 - Therefore we know Jacob is 130 and Joseph is 39 which means that Jacob was 91 when Joseph is born.
 - We also know that Joseph is born at the end of the 14 years of service to Laban. (Genesis 30)
 - This gives us Jacob's age of his departure from home, 77.
 - Because he lives to be 147, we can deduce that he would have been like a mid-thirties man of today.

- We can also deduce that Jacob really was a homebody.

Now to tonight's text

Genesis 29

29 Then Jacob continued on his journey and came to the land of the eastern peoples.² There he saw a well in the open country, with three flocks of sheep lying near it because the flocks were watered from that well. The stone over the mouth of the well was large.

- Jacob would have been energized by his vision of the Lord's angels moving back and forth from the earth to heaven.
- He would have remembered the promises of blessing from the Lord and his father Isaac.
- He would have recalled the stories told by both his mother and father as to how she was found at a well by Abraham's servant.
 - This arrival was one with great expectations.

³ When all the flocks were gathered there, the shepherds would roll the stone away from the well's mouth and water the sheep. Then they would return the stone to its place over the mouth of the well.

- The stone would be put into place for the sake of keeping animals and people out of the well.
- The water meant life and the wells had to be protected.

4 Jacob asked the shepherds, “My brothers, where are you from?”

- “My brothers”, Jacob is filled with anticipation.
 - I suppose that if you lived in a tent for 77 years, wandering around the dessert you would be excited to visit the place of your families origin.
 - Pay attention to the dialogue.
 - The shepherds do not seem like they are much for conversation.

“We’re from Haran,” they replied.

5 He said to them, “Do you know Laban, Nahor’s grandson?”

“Yes, we know him,” they answered.

6 Then Jacob asked them, “Is he well?”

“Yes, he is,” they said, “and here comes his daughter Rachel with the sheep.”

- It sounds like they are happy to pass him off to her.

7 “Look,” he said, “the sun is still high; it is not time for the flocks to be gathered. Water the sheep and take them back to pasture.”

- I am sure they are thinking, “who is the yahoo think he is, telling us how to tend sheep.”

8 “We can’t,” they replied, “until all the flocks are gathered and the stone has been rolled away from the mouth of the well. Then we will water the sheep.”

- They sound lazy to me and I am guessing that is Jacobs point.

⁹ While he was still talking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherd.

- You don't hear about very many shepherdess.

¹⁰ When Jacob saw Rachel daughter of his uncle Laban, and Laban's sheep, he went over and rolled the stone away from the mouth of the well and watered his uncle's sheep.

- This guy is a 77 year old stud, he rolls away the stone that normally takes the help of everyone.
 - Perhaps he is the twin brother of Esau.

¹¹ Then Jacob kissed Rachel and began to weep aloud.

- I wonder what Rachael is thinking.
 - Who is this guy and why is he crying?
- I don't think this is a romantic kiss but rather it was the kiss of relative.
- His weeping would have been from the joy and the favor of the Lord.
 - Of course she is thinking, "what is going on with this guy."

¹² He had told Rachel that he was a relative of her father and a son of Rebekah. So she ran and told her father.

- This sounds just like Rebekah's story.

¹³ As soon as Laban heard the news about Jacob, his sister's son, he hurried to meet him.

- No doubt Laban remembers the last time some rich guy showed up looking for a bride.

He embraced him and kissed him and brought him to his home, and there Jacob told him all these things. ¹⁴ Then Laban said to him, “You are my own flesh and blood.”

- What a great day
 - After months of traveling Jacob has reached his destination
 - He is welcomed by his mothers brother.
 - He has met his future bride
 - He has been invited to stay
 - Life is good!

After Jacob had stayed with him for a whole month, ¹⁵ Laban said to him, “Just because you are a relative of mine, should you work for me for nothing? Tell me what your wages should be.”

- Based upon that statement Jacob had been helping out on the farm
- It also tells us that Laban has noticed something in Jacob
 - He knows why he is there (to find a wife)
 - He has seen how Jacob looks a Rachael.

¹⁶ Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷ Leah had weak eyes, but Rachel had a lovely figure and was beautiful.

- There is some debate as to what Moses means when he writes “Leah had weak eyes”
 - It is translated from a Hebrew word that means “tender”
 - We might say “kind” eyes
 - It could mean poor eyesight as well.

- So, Leah has kind eyes and Rachael has a lovely figure.
 - We move on...

¹⁸ Jacob was in love with Rachel and said, “I’ll work for you seven years in return for your younger daughter Rachel.”

- This is interesting to me
 - Why didn’t Isaac send money and gifts like Abraham did?
 - Did he do it this way so that Jacob would stay away long enough that Esau’s anger would subside?
 - Did Isaac know that traditionally a young man would work 3-4 years for his future bride?
 - If so, could that be enough time for Esau to calm down.
- But Jacob is so in love with Rachael that he basically says “I’ll pay double for her!”
 - Laban is stoked!!!!
 - Free labor for 7 years! (Sold)

¹⁹ Laban said, “It’s better that I give her to you than to some other man. Stay here with me.” ²⁰ So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her.

- Every woman in this room just went “Awwwwwww”
 - Every man in the room just thought, the real work begins when you say “I do” and...
 - there is no end until death do we part. (LOL)

²¹ Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give me my wife. My time is completed, and I want to make love to her.”

- The way this is worded it sounds like Laban had been putting Jacob off, trying to squeeze as much out of him as possible.
 - Why?
 - Because as soon as he has his wife he is going to head back home.
 - Keep in mind it has been 7 years, Jacob is now 84 years old.

²² So Laban brought together all the people of the place and gave a feast. ²³ But when evening came, he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and Jacob made love to her.

- This wedding sounds a little different than the one I had.
 - Just a feast and most likely wine and then your new father-in-law brings you your bride.

“Jesus said, you shall reap what you sow.”

- The deceiver had been deceived.
 - But Laban is not the only one in on the deception.
 - Leah had to be in on it as well.
 - She had to pretend to be Rachael all night.
 - How sad...
 - **Where was Rachael** when all of this was going on?
- Think about this:
 - From this deception God is going to give birth to the 6 of the 12 tribes of Israel.

- From Leah will come the Levites and Judah
 - Meaning from Leah will come the priest and the kings.
 - Think about who will come from this moment;
 - Moses, King David, King Solomon, and Jesus.
- (WOW)
 - Proof positive God can use messed up people to accomplish His will.

24 And Laban gave his servant Zilpah to his daughter as her attendant.

- Why is it important that Moses share this information with us?
 - Because Zilpah will also give Jacob two sons that will result in two of the 12 tribes of Israel.
 - What a mess!

25 When morning came, there was Leah! So Jacob said to Laban, “What is this you have done to me? I served you for Rachel, didn’t I? Why have you deceived me?”

- I wonder of the irony of those words stung at all.
 - In Leah’s case the older had deceived the younger.
 - What a mess!
 - How drunk do you have to be to mistaken your bride for someone else?

26 Laban replied, “It is not our custom here to give the younger daughter in marriage before the older one.

- That would have been some good information to have on the front end.

- Laban knew what he was doing, listen to his next words.

²⁷ Finish this daughter's bridal week; then we will give you the younger one also, in return for another seven years of work."

- Clearly Laban had a plan.
 - Clearly God had a plan.
 - Jacob had to feel the sting of his deception.
 - How difficult was this week and where was Rachael?

²⁸ And Jacob did so. He finished the week with Leah, and then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife.

- Love is a powerful thing
 - It will take you places that you would never go with a gun in your hand.
 - Jacob will have a very busy 2 weeks.

²⁹ Laban gave his servant Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as her attendant.

- Now, why would Moses include Bilhah in this story?
 - Yup, Jacob is going to sleep with her as well
 - and she will produce two son's that will become 2 of the 12 tribes of Israel.
 - This is so messed up!

³⁰ Jacob made love to Rachel also, and his love for Rachel was greater than his love for Leah. And he worked for Laban another seven years. (Now that's love)

31 When the Lord saw that Leah was not loved, he enabled her to conceive, but Rachel remained childless.

- Isn't that an interesting statement.
 - God enabled her to conceive.
 - But God did not allow Rachael to conceive.
- The Lords saw that Leah was unloved.
 - Was Rachael rubbing it in her face?
 - It wouldn't surprise me if she was because she must have been locked up during Leah's wedding week.

32 Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Reuben, for she said, "It is because the Lord has seen my misery. Surely my husband will love me now."

- Can you hear the sadness and pain of her existence?
 - She had been a part of the decision to deceive Jacob and now she was having to lie in the bed that she had made. (Alone, most of the time)
 - Reuben name means "Look a son"
 - Keep in mind that the only reason that she and Jacob are still in Haran is due to the fact that he is working off his debt for Rachael. (another 7 years)

33 She conceived again, and when she gave birth to a son she said, "Because the Lord heard that I am not loved, he gave me this one too." So she named him Simeon.

- Simeon means "God hears"
 - Clearly there is some loving going on.

- Perhaps she is not loved as much as Rachael.

(Side note) can you imagine the logistics of all of this?

- Two women that are sisters!
 - Life is hard enough without adding the stress of two wives that are sisters.

34 Again she conceived, and when she gave birth to a son she said, “Now at last my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons.” So he was named Levi.

- Levi means “attachment”
 - (Just a thought)
 - These boys would never forget the pain of their mother because every time their names were called, they would be reminded.
 - This is going to be part of the motivations of the boys as they get older.

35 She conceived again, and when she gave birth to a son she said, “This time I will praise the Lord.” So she named him Judah. Then she stopped having children.

- Judah mean praise.
 - The phrase, “then she stopped having children” should be followed up with “for now.”
 - She will have two more before she is done.

This whole thing is a mess!

- What do we see clearly in all of this?
 - That the chosen people of God still live with the consequences of sin.
 - That God's grace in this moment should not be confused with His endorsement of sinful behavior.
 - From the very beginning God had said 1 woman for 1 man and the 2 shall become 1.
 - Abraham made this same mistake with 2 women and later with 3
 - **Isaac did not**
 - Esau did with 3 women
 - Jacob topped them all with 4 women and yet he is known as Israel.
 - He was the recipient of God's grace, mercy, and blessing.

We close with more deception to come.

- This is what happens when God's people refuse to listen to Him
- When they refuse to believe in the promises that He has made to them.
 - Jacob has more to learn and the fallout from this mess will be passed down to the next generation.
 - Lots of people will die but in the end God will get the glory and Jacob will become Israel.