

Genesis 29

Verses 1-6

Then Jacob set out on his journey, and went to the land of the people of the east.
² He looked, and saw a well in the field, and behold, three flocks of sheep were lying there beside it, because they watered the flocks from that well. Now the stone on the mouth of the well was large. ³ When all the flocks were gathered there, they would roll the stone from the mouth of the well and water the sheep. Then they would put the stone back in its place on the mouth of the well.

⁴ Jacob said to them, “My brothers, where are you from?” And they said, “We are from Haran.” ⁵ So he said to them, “Do you know Laban the son of Nahor?” And they said, “We know *him*.” ⁶ And he said to them, “Is it well with him?” And they said, “It is well, and here is his daughter Rachel coming with the sheep.” ⁷

Then Jacob set out on his journey, and went to the land of the people of the east.

This is in northern Mesopotamia

See Map 2905



² He looked, and saw a well in the field

This could be the same well where the servant of Abraham met Rebekah years earlier

It was in the same vicinity

However there was a long period of time between the servant of Isaac and Jacob coming to Haran

See chart 2910

Ch	Person	Event	Age	Year
20	Abraham	She is my sister (2nd time)	99	1897
21	Abraham	Isaac born	100	1896
22	Abraham	Abraham Tested	120	1876
23	Sarah	Sarah dies	127	1859
24	Isaac	Marries Rebekah	40	1856
25	Isaac	Esau and Jacob born	60	1836
25	Abraham	Abraham dies	175	1821
26	Esau	Marries two Hittites	40	1796
25	Ishmael	Ishmael dies	137	1773
27 - 28	Isaac	blessing	137	1759
27 - 28	Jacob	Trip to Haran	77	1759
29	Jacob	7 years for Rachel	77-84	1752
29 - 30	Jacob	7 years and 11 kids	84-91	1752 - 1745
30	Jacob	Joseph born	91	1745

So he said to them, “Do you know Laban the son of Nahor

Son as used here actually means grandson

Laban was the grandson of Nahor Nahor – Bethuel – Laban

We saw this same usage in Genesis 9:24 with Noah and Canaan

Verses 7-12

⁷ Then he said, “Look, it is still high day; it is not time for the livestock to be gathered. Water the sheep, and go, pasture them.” ⁸ But they said, “We cannot, until all the flocks are gathered, and they roll the stone from the mouth of the well; then we water the sheep.”

⁹ While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father’s sheep, for she was a shepherdess. ¹⁰ When Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of his mother’s brother Laban, and the sheep of his mother’s brother Laban, Jacob went up and rolled the stone from the mouth of the well, and watered the flock of his mother’s brother Laban. ¹¹ Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and raised his voice and wept.

¹² Jacob told Rachel that he was a relative of her father and that he was Rebekah’s son, and she ran and told her father.

⁸ But they said, “We cannot, until all the flocks are gathered, and they roll the stone from the mouth of the well; then we water the sheep.”

The shepherds must have been young boys since they were unable to remove the stone

Also Jacob would never have spoken to grown men this way

⁹ While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father’s sheep, for she was a shepherdess.

This was probable common for families of that time

Jacob went up and rolled the stone from the mouth of the well, and watered the flock of Laban.

Rebekah watered all the camels for the servant of Abraham

But just the opposite is done here; Jacob waters the sheep for Rachel

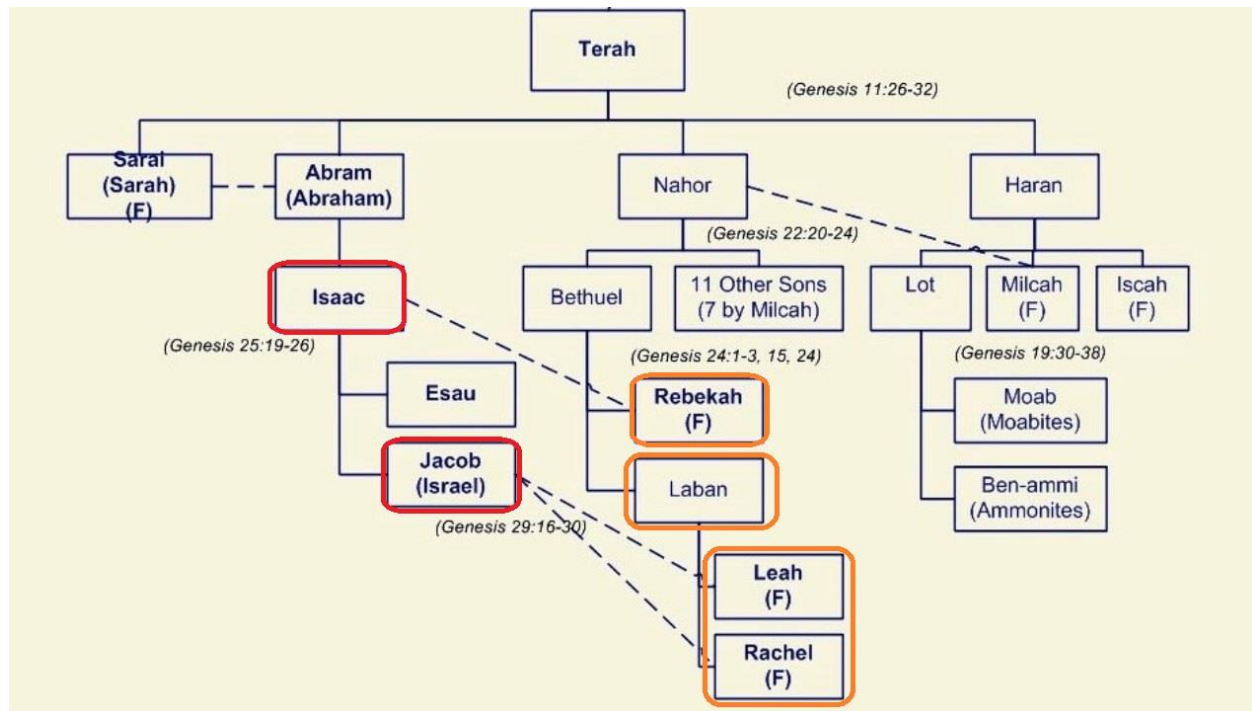
However, there is a good reason for the difference seen here

The servant of Abraham came with a caravan bearing expensive gifts

Whereas, Jacob probably came alone hoping to find a place to stay

¹² Jacob told Rachel that he was a relative of her father and that he was Rebekah's son, and she ran and told her father.

See chart 2915



Verses 13-20

¹³ So when Laban heard the news about Jacob, his sister's son, he ran to meet him, and embraced him and kissed him, and brought him to his house. Then he told Laban all these things. ¹⁴ And Laban said to him, "You certainly are my bone and my flesh." And he stayed with him a month.

¹⁵ Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?" ¹⁶ Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷ And Leah's eyes were weak, but Rachel was beautiful in figure and appearance. ¹⁸ Now Jacob loved Rachel, so he said, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel." ¹⁹ Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than to give her to another man; stay with me." ²⁰ So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him like *only* a few days because of his love for her.

¹³ So when Laban heard the news about Jacob, his sister's son, he ran to meet him, and embraced him and kissed him, and brought him to his house.

This was the customary greeting among Hebrew families at that time

¹⁵ Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing?"

For a month, Jacob had worked for room and board

Laban knew Jacob was a good worker and wanted him to stay

But he also had two daughters that were not married yet

Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel.

Laban knew that Jacob had an eye for Rachel and that he would stay

Jacob knew he couldn't go back home and he wanted to be with Rachel

So this agreement was sealed before it was even discussed

I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel

Why would Jacob suggest 7 years?

This may have been the maximum number of years he could be indebted

The cancellation of debt in the Law was every seven years

See Deuteronomy 15:1-6

Now this was long before the Law was given, but as we have seen, many things in the law were practiced by the people before God made it binding in 1446 BC

So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him like *only* a few days because of his love for her.

Yes, she was beautiful in figure and appearance, but he truly loved her.

Verses 21-30

²¹ Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give *me* my wife, for my time is completed, that I may have relations with her.” ²² So Laban gathered all the people of the place and held a feast. ²³ Now in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to him; and *Jacob* had relations with her. ²⁴ Laban also gave his female slave Zilpah to his daughter Leah as a slave. ²⁵ So it came about in the morning that, behold, it was Leah! And he said to Laban, “What is this *that* you have done to me? Was it not for Rachel that I served with you? Why then have you deceived me?” ²⁶ But Laban said, “It is not the practice in our place to marry off the younger before the firstborn. ²⁷ Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also for the service which you shall serve with me, for another seven years.” ²⁸ Jacob did so and completed her week, and he gave him his daughter Rachel as his wife. ²⁹ Laban also gave his female slave Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as her slave. ³⁰ So *Jacob* had relations with Rachel also, and indeed he loved Rachel more than Leah, and he served with Laban for another seven years.

²¹ Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give me my wife, for my time is completed, that I may have relations with her.

Jacob is now 84 years old; better late than never

Abraham was unable to have children at 99 years of age

That gives Jacob a window of about 15 years at best

But with 2 wives and 2 slave women he was able to become the father of 12 sons

We can only guess, but Leah and Rachel are probably much younger

And Laban made a feast. And in the evening, he took Leah, and brought her to him; and he made love to her

Their marriage ceremony, if we can call it that, consisted of a feast

It is possible that vows were exchanged but there is no indication that this occurred

Nevertheless, it was their way of confirming the marriage relationship

Then the father of the bride brought her to the tent of the groom

And it came to pass in the morning that, behold, it was Leah

What circumstances could explain Jacobs lack of awareness?

It is possible that Jacob had way too much to drink during the feast?

Noah got so drunk that his grandson took advantage of him without his knowledge

Jacob had to be nearly unconscious not to notice it was someone other than Rachel

And he said to Laban, “What is this that you have done to me?”

We have heard this expression several times now in the Book of Genesis

1. Genesis 12:18

2. Genesis 20:9

3. Genesis 26:10

²⁶ **But Laban said, “It is not the practice in our place to marry off the younger before the firstborn.”**

Even if this statement was true, what Laban did was deceptive because Jacob was “a foreigner” and Laban had a responsibility to inform him of this practice

Did Laban command Rachel and Leah to remain silent about this practice?

Even if he did, was it right for Rachel to say nothing to her future husband?

We know Laban was a deceiver but so was Jacob in regard to Esau

There is a lesson to be learned here **As men sow, so shall they reap**

Jacob deceived his father and brother

Now he is suffering the consequences of his actions?

Having said that, we should not assume that **all** suffering is the result of sin

Sometimes we suffer for the sake of righteousness (For doing what is right)

Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also for the service which you shall serve with me, for another seven years.

Laban has no shame, nada, zero, nil, none.

He deceived Jacob and now he wants another 7 years from him

But Jacob really loved Rachel and was willing to agree

Jacob is now 84 years old

During the next 7 years Jacob will have 11 sons

Not a problem when you have 4 wives

They can call the slave women whatever they want, but they were wives.

And he will have his last child, Benjamin, at the age of 97

See chart 2920

Ch	Person	Event	Age	Year
25	Isaac	Esau and Jacob born	60	1836
25	Abraham	Abraham dies	175	1821
26	Esau	Marries two Hittites	40	1796
25	Ishmael	Ismael dies	137	1773
27 - 28	Isaac	blessing	137	1759
27 - 28	Jacob	Trip to Haran	77	1759
29	Jacob	7 years for Rachel	77-84	1752
29 - 30	Jacob	7 years and 11 sons	84-91	1752 - 1745
30	Jacob	Joseph born	91	1745
31	Jacob	6 years for the flocks	97	1739
32-33		Jacon & Esau reunite	97	1739
35	Jacob	Benjamin born	97	1739
35	Rachel	Dies giving birth	35	1739

Verses 31-35

³¹ Now the Lord saw that Leah was unloved, and He opened her womb, but Rachel was unable to have children. ³² Leah conceived and gave birth to a son, and named him Reuben, for she said, “Because the Lord has seen my affliction; surely now my husband will love me.” ³³ Then she conceived again and gave birth to a son, and said, “Because the Lord has heard that I am unloved, He has therefore given me this *son* also.” So she named him Simeon. ³⁴ And she conceived again and gave birth to a son, and said, “Now this time my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons.” Therefore he was named Levi. ³⁵ And she conceived again and gave birth to a son, and said, “This time I will praise the Lord.” Therefore she named him Judah. Then she stopped having children.

³¹ Now the Lord saw that Leah was unloved, and He opened her womb, but Rachel was unable to have children.

Leah had 4 sons with the following names and meanings:

REUBEN means..... Behold, a son

SIMEON means.....To hear or to be heard

LEVI means.....United or joined

JUDAH means.....Praise