

Chapter 29

29:15-17

Then Laban said to Jacob, “Because you are my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what should your wages be?” 16 Now Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. 17 Leah’s eyes were delicate, but Rachel was beautiful of form and appearance. They must have been similar in size or Jacob would have known something was amiss. What we can say here is that **Rachel** was shapely, and **Leah** had **delicate eyes**. Quite the strange contrast. The veil was probably over most of every face in these situations thus requiring descriptions of Leah’s eyes. In regards to wine, Genesis 9, 19, 24 (if Rebekah’s dad is hung over in the last morning of that episode), and in this chapter may have been an impairer of judgment.

29:18-19

20 So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed only a few days to him because of the love he had for her. There is no hint that **Rachel** knew her dad was going to pull this “cultural norm.” 31:26 shows us that Laban was consistently conniving.

29:21-28

24 And Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah as a maid. After Hagar, **Zilpah** is the second **maid** in the book of Genesis. **25 So it came to pass in the morning, that behold, it was Leah.** I try not to quote other authors en mass, but this was too good to pass up:

Jacob stays in love seven years (vs. 20), and the 2,520 days seem like “a few days” (vs. 20) because of the dreamlike trance that he is in. One can see him mooning around the ranch like a sick cow, writing sonnets, and soliloquizing to the moon and stars at night, and occasionally serenading Rachel under her balcony. The mood is captured well in the conversation of the newlyweds who were strolling on the beach at Miami (on their honeymoon). The reception constitutes the ceremony, and the father takes his daughter to the prospective groom. It is 8 p.m. (or near there) the last night of the feast, and Jacob goes back to his tent, alone as usual. An hour later there is the sound of slippered feet in the sand outside, and with his heart nearly jumping up into his mouth, Jacob goes to the front flap to receive his beloved. He has waited 2,520 nights for this night, and now it has arrived! In the moonlight stands the veiled figure of his heart’s affections, and beside her “giving the bride away” is Laban (who never gave anything away). Very few words are exchanged, and if “Rachel” said anything, it must have been with some effort. Jacob attributes her incoherence to “stage fright” or “honeymoon heebie-jeebies.” For Laban, in this instance, “silence is truly golden.” Jacob bids his father-in-law “good night,” and almost knocks “Rachel” down hustling her into the tent. Laban goes home whistling “There’s a Gold Mine in the Sky, Bye and Bye,” and everyone is happy. That is, until morning (vs. 25) ...Leah keeps her mouth shut (except for kisses) and passes off as the bride elect. But “in the morning, behold, it was Leah!” (vs. 25). Jacob sleeps late, opens his eyes at 9 a.m., yawns, smiles to himself, snuggles into the pillow with happy memories, and reaches over to put his arm around his beloved. He yawns and smiles again to himself, thinking of the wonderful night and the wonderful days and nights to

follow. "Rachel" yawns and stretches, rolls over, and...! Oh, good night, nurse! It's the wrong woman!!¹

And he said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Was it not for Rachel that I served you? Why then have you deceived me?" Did Jacob forget chapters 26-27 and what it was like to **deceive** somebody? Hosea 8:7 speaks of "sowing in the wind and reaping in the whirlwind."

26 And Laban said, "It must not be done so in our country, "I'm just going according to custom." Laban could have told him this before. to give the younger before the firstborn.

27 Fulfill her week, and we will give you this one also for the service which you will serve with me still another seven years."

28 Then Jacob did so and fulfilled her week. In the Hebrew this really only means "fulfill her seven." Sometimes a **week** in Scripture is seven years (Daniel 9). It need not be that here.

If **her** is Rachel, then it could be another **week** of years. However, if **her** is Leah, then it could mean a **week** of days. Judges 14 gives us light here. Verses 10 and 11 show us that there were marriage feasts that lasted 7 days. Or, to say it this way, a **week** of days was the length of a marriage feast. This is, no doubt, the meaning here in Genesis. So Jacob marries twice in two weeks' time. He paid, therefore, for one before he got her, and he paid for the other after he got her (Rachel). 30:1, then, takes place after Rachel watches her sister give Jacob four sons right away.

29:31-33

When the LORD saw that Leah was ⁴unloved, translated "hated" in other versions. This helps us understand some N.T. verses like Romans 9:13...Esau was "unloved" or "loved less" and in the Gospels, Jesus requires us to "love wives, etc.... less" (versus "hate"). **He opened her womb; but Rachel was barren.** It is the LORD Who gives children. Psalm 127 makes it appear that children are actually a blessing from God. **32 So Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name** We have no clue that Leah consulted her husband on what to name these boys. His influence was plenty clear. ⁵**Reuben; for she said, "The LORD has surely looked on my affliction. Now therefore, my husband will love me."** **33 Then she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the LORD has heard that I am ⁶unloved,** She has a measure of faith, to be sure. She thinks God cares about her! In the last of this chapter, we find four sons...all of them named after how Leah feels about her relationship with her husband. All of them, addressed in like order by Jacob some 50 years later and having blessing pronounced or denounced in Genesis 49.

¹ Ruckman, Dr. Peter S.. Genesis Commentary (The Bible Believer's Commentary Series) (Kindle Locations 11625-11650). BB Bookstore. Kindle Edition.

⁴ Lit. *hated*

⁵ Lit. *See, a Son*

⁶ Lit. *hated*