

GENESIS 29: A DECEIVED DECEIVER

I. OVERVIEW

- A. Jacob arrived in the land to the east and saw a well
- B. He asked some shepherds if they know Laban
 - i. They do, and tell him his daughter Rachel is coming to the well
 - ii. So Jacob told Rachel he is her father's nephew
- C. Jacob started working for Laban in the field
 - i. He worked seven years for the right to marry Rachel
- D. After the seven years were up, Jacob asked for his wife
 - i. But Laban gave him his oldest daughter Leah instead
 - ii. It wasn't his custom to give the younger daughter before the older
- E. So Jacob worked another seven years for Rachel
 - i. He loved her more than Leah
- F. But God saw Leah was neglected
 - i. So He gave her four sons
 - a. Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah

II. THE SHEPHERDS WOULD ROLL THE STONE – V. 3

- A. The stone was so large it required all the shepherds to roll it away

III. HARAN – V. 4

- A. Abraham's brother, uncle of Laban
- B. Where Abram briefly stopped after he left Ur
 - i. Where his father Terah died

IV. RACHEL – V. 6

- A. Means ewe
 - i. Female sheep leading the sheep¹

V. IT IS NOT TIME – V. 7

- A. Flocks were watered in the morning or evening²
 - i. But it was the middle of the day

¹ Armstrong, S. (2012, July 15). *Genesis 2011 - Lesson 29A*. Verse By Verse Ministry International.
https://versebyverseministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_29a

² Armstrong, S. (2012, July 15). *Genesis 2011 - Lesson 29A*. Verse By Verse Ministry International.
https://versebyverseministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_29a

VI. WE CANNOT – V. 8

- A. Not all the shepherds had arrived yet
 - i. They couldn't roll the stone away from the well without all of them there

VII. RACHEL CAME – V. 9

- A. Jacob met Rachel at a well just like Abraham's servant met Rebekah at a well
- B. She was the shepherd they were waiting for
 - i. She probably couldn't roll the stone away herself
 - a. So they waited for her to make sure her flocks were watered
 - b. But she was extremely late
 - ii. Reveals a very inefficient system

VIII. JACOB SAW RACHEL – V. 10

- A. He did not pray like Abraham's servant did for wisdom and discernment
- B. He saw her and wanted to take her as his wife
 - i. Was she the one God had in mind for him?
 - ii. Leah would be the one to give birth to the chosen line

IX. JACOB CAME NEAR AND ROLLED THE STONE – V. 10

- A. A task which required multiple shepherds, he did himself

X. WATERED THE FLOCK – V. 10

- A. Jacob watered Rachel's flock of sheep
 - i. Like Rebekah watered the servant's camels
- B. Jacob is a good shepherd and has a strong work ethic
 - i. Someone Laban might want to keep around³
 - ii. Shows God is taking care of him

XI. JACOB KISSED RACHEL – V. 11

- A. Not a romantic kiss
 - i. Greeting a relative
- B. Only kiss between a man and woman mentioned outside Song of Solomon⁴

XII. WEPT ALOUD – V. 11

- A. Other translations say "lifted up his voice"

³ Armstrong, S. (2012, July 15). *Genesis 2011 - Lesson 29A*. Verse By Verse Ministry International.
https://versebyverseministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_29a

⁴ Armstrong, S. (2012, July 15). *Genesis 2011 - Lesson 29A*. Verse By Verse Ministry International.
https://versebyverseministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_29a

- i. Compared to Abraham's servant who bowed low in worship
 - a. Genesis 24:26 ***The man bowed his head and worshiped the LORD...***

XIII. MY BONE AND MY FLESH – V. 14

- A. Similar to what Adam said to Eve
 - i. Genesis 2:23 ***Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.”***
 - ii. Eve was created to be a helper for Adam
 - a. Jacob ended up serving Laban

XIV. WHAT SHALL YOUR WAGES BE – V. 15

- A. Two interpretations
 - i. Laban was telling Jacob that if he wanted to stay he needed to work
 - a. Jacob wasn't used to hard work
 - i. Servants did that for him at home⁵
 - ii. Laban recognized how essential Jacob was and made an offer to keep him⁶
 - a. Sons were paid through their inheritance
 - i. Work incentivized by a greater inheritance
 - b. Servants were paid wages
 - i. Luke 15:18-19 ***‘I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.”’***
 - ii. Galatians 4:1-2 ***I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything, but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father.***
 - c. Jacob had no inheritance from Laban so there was no incentive for him to stay
 - i. Offering to pay Jacob meant he could pay dowry to marry his daughter⁷

XV. LEAH'S EYES WERE WEAK – V. 17

- A. Or soft
- B. Could also mean delicate, dainty

⁵ Guzik, D. (2018). Genesis 29 - Jacob's Marriages and Children. Enduring Word. <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/genesis-29/>

⁶ Armstrong, S. (2012, July 22). Genesis 2011 - Lesson 29B. Verse By Verse Ministry International. https://versebyverseministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_29b

⁷ Armstrong, S. (2012, July 22). Genesis 2011 - Lesson 29B. Verse By Verse Ministry International. https://versebyverseministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_29b

- i. Still beautiful, but not compared to Rachel⁸

XVI. I WILL SERVE YOU SEVEN YEARS – V. 18

- A. Basically as a dowry
 - i. Since Jacob had no money⁹

XVII. IT IS BETTER THAT I GIVE HER TO YOU – V. 19

- A. This is a verbal slight of hand
 - i. Laban didn't specifically promise to give Rachel to Jacob at the end of the seven years
 - a. Only that he would give her to him as his wife¹⁰

XVIII. A FEW DAYS – V. 20

- A. Seven years seemed like no time at all
- B. Rebekah had told Jacob to go stay with Laban for a while
 - i. Literally, a few days¹¹

XIX. IT WAS LEAH – V. 25

- A. Very little detail about how this could have happened
- B. Jacob pretended to be Esau by making food and wearing skins
 - i. Leah may have disguised herself in a similar way

XX. WHY THEN HAVE YOU DECEIVED ME? – V. 25

- A. The deceiver was now deceived
- B. Jacob asked this as if he had never deceived anyone before

XXI. IT IS NOT SO DONE IN OUR COUNTRY – V. 26

- A. No way for us to know if he is lying

XXII. GIVE THE YOUNGER BEFORE THE FIRSTBORN – V. 26

- A. Esau's birthright was meant for the firstborn
 - i. But the younger son Jacob took it
- B. Jacob intended to marry the younger daughter Rachel
 - i. But Laban deceived him and gave him the firstborn Leah
- C. Parallels show this was the consequence for Jacob's deception
 - i. God did not approve of what he did¹²

⁸ Speiser, E. A. (1964). *The Anchor Bible Genesis: Introduction, Translation and Notes*. Doubleday.

⁹ Guzik

¹⁰ Wiersbe, W. W. (2010). *Be Authentic: Exhibiting Real Faith in the Real World: OT Commentary, Genesis 25-50*. David C. Cook.

¹¹ Sailhamer, J. H. (2008). *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (T. Longman & D. E. Garland, Eds.; Revised Edition). Zondervan.

¹² Sailhamer

- ii. Disobedience didn't change God's plan for Jacob's life
 - a. But may have changed how he experienced life¹³

XXIII. COMPLETE THE WEEK OF THIS ONE – V. 27

- A. Marriage ceremonies lasted one week
 - i. Laban wanted Jacob to finish the marriage ceremony for Leah
 - ii. Then he would also give him Rachel immediately
 - a. With the understanding Jacob would work for another seven years

XXIV. JACOB DID SO – V. 28

- A. He had no argument against Laban's reasoning
- B. He simply complied

XXV. LEAH WAS HATED – V. 31

- A. Jacob didn't despise Leah
 - i. He loved her less than Rachel
 - ii. Just like he was loved less than Esau by Isaac

XXVI. RACHEL WAS BARREN – V. 31

- A. Like Sarah and Rebekah before her
 - i. Indication that the chosen Seed would come through Rachel
 - ii. Storyline of Genesis seems to confirm this
 - iii. But it turns out to be Leah who is the mother of Judah
- B. God is working against Jacob's plans
 - i. Jacob wanted to marry Rachel but Laban tricked him
 - ii. Now Rachel is barren but Leah is able to have children
 - iii. God is trying to get Jacob to rely on Him, not on his own plans¹⁴

XXVII. SHE CALLED HIS NAME REUBEN – V. 32

- A. Means *See, a son*
- B. Jacob was not involved in naming the son
 - i. Usually fathers named the children
 - ii. He doesn't seem to have any interest in Leah's children¹⁵

XXVIII. THE LORD HAS LOOKED – V. 32

¹³ Guzik

¹⁴ Salhamer

¹⁵ Armstrong, S. (2012, July 30). *Genesis 2011 - Lesson 29C*. Verse By Verse Ministry International.
https://versebyverseministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_29c

- A. Like the Lord saw Hagar
- B. God sees those who are not favored by men

XXIX. THE LORD HAS HEARD – V. 33

- A. First He saw, now He heard
- B. Leah is giving credit to God for these children
 - i. Even though she is from a family of pagans
 - ii. Puts Jacob to shame since he inherited God's promise

XXX. SIMEON – V. 33

- A. Similar to *heard*
- B. Implies Leah had been crying out to God¹⁶

XXXI. LEVI – V. 34

- A. Similar to *attached*
- B. Tribe of Levi would eventually become priests
 - i. They would attach or join Israel to God through priestly ministry¹⁷

XXXII. JUDAH – V. 35

- A. Similar to *praise*
- B. Leah had stopped complaining about Jacob
 - i. She was now giving thanks to God¹⁸
- C. Three is the number of testing
 - i. She was testing Jacob to see if he would love her during the first three sons
 - ii. With the fourth child, she recognizes God is her true husband

XXXIII. SHE CEASED BEARING – V. 35

- A. For some reason, the chapter ends here
- B. Story picks up in chapter 30

XXXIV. POINTS TO JESUS

- A. A stone that must be rolled away would provide access to water for the sheep
 - i. Later, a stone would be rolled away to provide access to Living Water for His sheep
- B. Levi would become the priestly line
- C. Judah would become the kingly line

¹⁶ Wiersbe

¹⁷ Armstrong, S. (2012, July 30). *Genesis 2011 - Lesson 29C*. Verse By Verse Ministry International.
https://versebyverseministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_29c

¹⁸ Wiersbe

i. Jesus was descended from Judah

D. Jesus is our priest-king

XXXV. QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

A. Why do you think God allowed Jacob to experience the consequences of his deception through the deception of Laban?

B. Why does God allow us to experience the consequences of our actions? What would happen if He were to always shield us from those consequences?

C. What can you see starting to happen as a result of Jacob not seeking the Lord's will when making decisions?

D. What could happen if we do not prayerfully seek guidance from the Lord when making decisions?

E. What do you think Jacob should have done after he was given Leah in marriage? Should he have continued to work for the right to marry Rachel?

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- F. What does God do even though Jacob largely ignores Him? How have you seen God guide you even when you weren't seeking Him for direction?

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- G. How does your view of God change when you see Him use people's deception and dishonesty to bring about His purposes?

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- H. How did Leah respond to rejection?

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- I. Have you ever been rejected the way Leah was? How did you respond? Did your response glorify God?

XXXVI. FURTHER STUDY

- A. List the similarities and differences between Genesis 24 and 29. What point do you think the author is trying to tell us?

B. What does Leviticus 18:18 say about marrying two sisters? Why is this such a problem?

C. What does Deuteronomy 21:15-17 reveal about God's heart regarding an unloved wife and her children?

D. What does the name Levi reveal about his descendants' role in the nation of Israel? See Numbers 18:1-4.

E. What does Judah's name reveal about the destiny of his descendants? See Genesis 49:8. How does this point to the Messiah?
