

*Morning Sermon February 14, 2021*

*“Love, and learning to Love” – Genesis 29:15-32*

**<sup>20</sup> So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed *only* a few days to him because of the love he had for her. Genesis 29:20 (NKJV)**

*Again, I am jumping ahead in the Book of Genesis, we’ve passed –*

- *Sarah’s death – Genesis 23*
- *Isaac marrying Rebekah – Genesis 24*
- *Abraham and Keturah, Abraham’s Death, the Birth of Esau and Jacob, and Esau selling his birthright – Genesis 25*
- *Jacob and Rebekah’s deception of Jacob’s Father Isaac, in order to steal the blessing Isaac intended to give to Esau – Genesis 27*
- *Jacob’s leaving of home due to the fact Esau intended to kill him, his dream in Bethel of the Ladder –*

**<sup>12</sup> Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. <sup>13</sup> And behold, the LORD stood above it and said: “I *am* the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; ... <sup>16</sup> Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know *it*.” <sup>17</sup> And he was afraid and said, “How awesome *is* this place! This *is* none other than the house of God, and this *is* the gate of heaven!” Genesis 28:12-13A & 16–17 (NKJV)**

*I. Two great events in Jacob’s life: meeting God in the Ladder dream in Bethel, and meeting Rachel the next day –*

- 1. Meeting of God in a dream, described already – Genesis 28:10-17*

**<sup>19</sup> And he called the name of that place Bethel; but the name of that city had been Luz previously. Genesis 28:19 (NKJV)**

- A. **Bethel, means House of God! I believe this incident shows us Jacob was born again!**
- B. *He saw the angels of God ascending and descending on a ladder, which Jesus will one day claim is a reference of picture of Himself –*

**<sup>51</sup> And He said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.” John 1:51 (NKJV)**

- C. *The new birth is a work of God’s Spirit, it is mysterious to us, but it enables us to see God’s Kingdom, which without it we cannot see –*

**<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John 3:3 (NKJV)**

- D. *Sometime in Jacob’s life, I believe he was born again. He would have to be, to be saved, to be God’s man, which he was. I believe that his new birth happened in Genesis 28, with his dream. This would be the beginning of his true walk with God. The start of his sanctification.*

- 2. *Meeting his dream girl, Rachel the very next day –*

**<sup>9</sup> Now while he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father’s sheep, for she was a shepherdess. <sup>10</sup> And 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. <sup>11</sup> Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept. <sup>12</sup> And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father’s relative and that he was Rebekah’s son. So she ran and told her father. Genesis 29:9–12 (NKJV)**

- A. *Love at first sight, Jacob kisses Rachel, there is weeping emotion from the start – Genesis 29:11*

- B. *Rachel seems to return this love, her running to her father, shows energy – Genesis 29:12*

- C. *Note two the similarities with Abraham’s servant’s meeting of Rebekah, Jacob’s mother, particularly the watering of animals upon meeting:*

- *That Rebekah did this was the servant’s asked for sign.*
- *That Jacob does this now for Rachel, is a labor of love - :10!*

II. *Two kinds of Love, both working in Jacob and making him work –*

<sup>15</sup> Then Laban said to Jacob, “Because you *are* my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what *should* your wages be?” <sup>16</sup> Now Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. <sup>17</sup> Leah’s eyes were delicate, but Rachel was beautiful of form and appearance. <sup>18</sup> Now Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, “I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter.” <sup>19</sup> And Laban said, “*It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to another man. Stay with me.*” <sup>20</sup> So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed *only* a few days to him because of the love he had for her. Genesis 29:15–20 (NKJV)

1. *Laban mentions wages, it appears Jacob was already working for him, probably out of love for Rachel, who he would have been working with – Genesis 29:15*
2. *Before Jacob answers, the narrator, Moses, comments giving the daughters’ names and a short description – Genesis 29:16-17*

*The World Bible Commentary comments on this -*

16–17 This interruption by the narrator supplies some necessary background information about Leah and Rachel that has been withheld hitherto but is necessary for understanding the story. This interruption also serves to heighten suspense. We are forced to wait a little before we hear whether Jacob will bid for Rachel and whether it will be accepted. The name “Leah” may mean “cow,” as in Akkadian *littu*, Arabic *laḥātu* “wild cow” (so KB, 487), whereas Rachel is Hebrew for “ewe” (cf. 31:38; 32:15). What makes eyes “soft” (רַך) is unclear; most commentators think it means they had no fire or sparkle, a quality much prized in the East. Whether her eyes were the only features that let her down is not said, but the glowing description of Rachel as having “a beautiful figure and a lovely face” suggests Leah was outshone by her sister in various ways.

## Genesis 29:16–17

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3. *I believe Rachel’s natural beauty, got Jacob’s pheromones started –*

<sup>18</sup> Now Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, “I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter.”

- A. *Jacob’s offer to work seven years for Rachel was beyond the normal bride price of those days which was three or at most four years!*
- B. *I believe Laban saw Jacob’s starry-eyed labor and as a master manipulator, wanted to lock Jacob into a contract / covenant while Jacob was *feeling* more than thinking!*

4. *Let, Jacob’s new birth, and his love, which was a fruit of God’s Spirit kept his labor GOING –*

<sup>20</sup> So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed *only* a few days to him because of the love he had for her. Genesis 29:20 (NKJV)

- A. *God is love, so we find love everywhere –*
- ... God is love. 1 John 4:8 (NKJV)
- B. *This is why even animals and tax-collectors are capable of a level of love – Matthew 23:37 & Matthew 5:46*
- *Jesus compares His own love to Jerusalem to the love of a hen for her chicks -*

<sup>37</sup> “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing! Matthew 23:37 (NKJV)

- *He tells us we need to exceed the love of tax-collectors, by loving even our enemies -*

<sup>46</sup> For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? Matthew 5:46

*My point is even an ungodly world does have a level of Love, a gift of God to the point that it is real -*

**The Things we do for love ... like walking in the rain and the snow when there’s no where to go – Ten CC**

**ain’t no mountain high enough, ain’t no valley low enough, ain’t no river wide enough to keep me from you. - Nickolas Ashford & Valerie Simpson**

**Love is a many splendid thing – Paul Francis Webster**

C. *Both kinds of start with the qualities mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13*

<sup>4</sup> Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; <sup>5</sup> does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; <sup>6</sup> does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; <sup>7</sup> bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. <sup>8</sup> Love never fails... 1 Corinthians 13:4–8 A (NKJV)

D. *But the love of the ungodly has a limited self-life, like wedding in Cana wine, it runs out, or lacks its original flavor –*

**2** On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. **2** Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. **3** And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, “They have no wine.” John 2:1–3 (NKJV)

E. *But love that continues strong without sin distorting it is God’s Love, a fruit of the Spirit –*

**22** But the fruit of the Spirit is **love**, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, Galatians 5:22 (NKJV)

*This love is like the water Jesus makes into wine, it is supernatural!*

F. *Jacob’s love continued and grew despite Laban’s manipulative unfairness –*

• *21 Years –*

**26** And Laban said, “It must not be done so in our country, 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. So he gave him his daughter Rachel as wife also. ... **30** Then Jacob also went in to Rachel, and he also loved Rachel more than Leah. And he served with **Laban still another seven years**. Genesis 29:26–30 (NKJV)

G. *His love eventually included Leah, which was with God’s help –*

**31** When the LORD saw that Leah was unloved, He opened her womb; but Rachel was barren. **32** So Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben; for she said, “The LORD has surely looked on my affliction. Now therefore, my husband will love me.” Genesis 29:31–32 (NKJV)

III. *True love, God’s love, combined with God’s providence, has the power to change us –*

1. *Laban, Jacob’s father-in-law was a MASTER manipulator, Jacob first realized this the day after his first wedding –*

**21** Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in to her.” **22** And Laban gathered together all the men of the place and made a feast. **23** Now it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her. **24** And Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah as a maid. **25** So it came to pass in the morning, that behold, it was Leah. 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?” Genesis 29:21–25 (NKJV)

*Note the deception:*

A. *The feast lasted all day – Genesis 29:21-23 A “Evening”*

B. *Likely there is drinking Jacob might be drunk!*

C. *Almost certainly Leah is wearing a veil, she is in on the deception!*

D. *Jacob confronts Laban about this –*

**25** So it came to pass in the morning, that behold, it was Leah. 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?” Genesis 29:21–25 (NKJV)

2. *However, could he ask God a similar WHY question and not know the answer? God was disciplining Jacob! Laban was God’s paddle for this purpose, Rachel God’s kiss!*

A. *Just as his father-in-law, in league with Leah, the less lovely daughter, had deceived Jacob! So, Jacob, in league with his mother Rebekah, deceived Isaac, to steal the blessing, so Jacob had been a MASTER manipulator too! His crying fowl might have taken him out of this arrangement but His love for Rachel kept him in ---*

B. The “elder first” idea, which Jacob had disrespected in his own relation with his elder brother Esau, he is forced (by his love for Rachel) to respect by manipulative Laban –

<sup>26</sup> And Laban said, “It must not be done so in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. <sup>27</sup> Fulfill her week, and we will give you this one also for the service which you will serve with me still another seven years.”

<sup>28</sup> Then Jacob did so and fulfilled her week. So he gave him his daughter Rachel as wife also. <sup>29</sup> And Laban gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as a maid. <sup>30</sup> Then *Jacob* also went in to Rachel, and he also loved Rachel more than Leah. And he served with Laban still another seven years. Genesis 29:26–30 (NKJV)

*As much as this circumstance was pure cruel manipulation on Laban’s part, God’s providence was meant to discipline Jacob for past sin and move him irresistibly to a labor of love, Jacobs labor for Laban was darn near perfect –*

<sup>36</sup> Then Jacob was angry and rebuked Laban, and Jacob answered and said to Laban: “What *is* my trespass? What *is* my sin, that you have so hotly pursued me? <sup>37</sup> Although you have searched all my things, what part of your household things have you found? Set *it* here before my brethren and your brethren, that they may judge between us both!

<sup>38</sup> These twenty years I *have been* with you; your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried their young, and I have not eaten the rams of your flock. <sup>39</sup> That which was torn *by beasts* I did not bring to you; I bore the loss of it. You required it from my hand, *whether* stolen by day or stolen by night. <sup>40</sup> There I was! In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night, and my sleep departed from my eyes. <sup>41</sup> Thus I have been in your house twenty years; I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times. <sup>42</sup> Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God has seen my affliction and the labor of my hands, and rebuked *you* last night.” Genesis 31:36–42 (NKJV)

*Jacob’s very name meant “manipulator” yet later his name would be changed by God to Israel, meaning “POWER with GOD!”*

*He gets this name after wrestling with God in prayer – Genesis 32*

3. Love (true godly love) in general has this power to change and improve us –

<sup>8</sup> Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. <sup>9</sup> For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not bear false witness,” “You shall not covet,” and if there *is* any other commandment, are *all* summed up in this saying, namely, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” <sup>10</sup> Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love *is* the fulfillment of the law.

Romans 13:8–10 (NKJV)

A. Love means obedience, not disobedience to God’s law –  
<sup>15</sup> “If you love Me, keep My commandments. John 14:15 (NKJV)

B. Love means holding people to the highest standards and holding them to the Highest (God) in prayer –

*“Love them dearly, hold them to the highest!” “Love them dearly, hold them to the Highest!”*

C. We should desire such love: (C1) From God (C2) from those closest to us, Love rejoices in the truth – 1 Corinthians 13:6 B

“He’s still working on me To make me what I need to be

It took him just a week to make the moon and stars

The sun and the earth and Jupiter and Mars

How loving and patient He must be ‘Cause He’s still working on me”

Gloria Gaither *God brings people into our lives to do this -*

*Too often I have read of people not wanting to be “changed” by a potential partner, but if I have a partner again, I want one who will leave her mark on me in changes and improvements! We have to read between the lines a little to find Rachel’s love for Jacob, but I think we see it in her ‘running to her father’ and probably in her continued ‘shepherding’ with her husband, but even Laban was a C.A.*

<sup>9</sup> Now while he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father’s sheep, for she was a shepherdess. Genesis 29:9 (NKJV)

*Arnold Brevick*