

Jacob Marries Rachel and Leah

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What We Will Learn

- Family as a structure for regulation of human interactions
- Laban's authority over daughter's marriage
- Set conditions
- Invited "Council of Relatives"
- Based on Genesis 29:14–30

Laban Offers A Job to Jacob


- Jacob stayed with Laban free for one month
- Laban offered him a job and requested a wage agreement
- Genesis 29:14–15

14 Then Laban said to him, "You are my own flesh and blood." 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."

Jacob Secures an Agreement to Marry Rachel

- Jacob proposed to serve Laban for seven years and take Rachel as his wife in return
- Laban accepted Jacob's proposal
- Jacob served Laban as agreed
- He loved Rachel
- He requested the marriage be formalized
- Genesis 29:16–21



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 was lovely in form, and beautiful.

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

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.

21 Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife. My time is completed, and I want to lie with her."

The Switch

Jacob Got Leah

- Laban hosted his relatives and Jacob for the marriage ceremony
- In the night, Laban gave Leah to Jacob
- Jacob did not know that he got Leah instead of Rachel
- Laban gave Zilpah to Leah as maidservant
- Genesis 29:22–24




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 gave her to Jacob, and Jacob lay with her.

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

Laban Proposes A Compromise

- Jacob protested the switch in the morning
- Laban convinced Jacob to marry both Leah and Rachel
- Jacob completed customary marriage process with Leah
- Genesis 29:25–27



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?"

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

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

Jacob Marries Rachel Also

- Jacob married Rachel also
- Laban gave Bilhah to Rachel as maidservant
- Jacob served Laban additional seven years
- Genesis 29:28–30



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

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

30 Jacob lay with Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than Leah. And he worked for Laban another seven years.

Concluding Remarks

- Jacob had nothing when he arrived in Paddan Aram
- After about seven years, he became the husband of two wives: Rachel and Leah
- He wanted Rachel but he got both
- Leah got Zilpah as maidservant
- Rachel got Bilhah as maidservant

Concluding Remarks cont'd

- Passage illustrates family as structure for regulation of human interactions
- Laban's authority in his daughter's marriage
 - Agree or disagree to a marriage
 - Set the conditions
 - Identify the process
- Exercised authority witnessed by his Council of Relatives