

**JACOB: HIS LIFE IN HARAN**  
Genesis 29

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**Part I (Genesis 29:1 – 30)**

**INTRODUCTION**

Best Bible chronology suggests that Jacob was 77 yrs old when he arrived in Paddan Aram (the region around Haran). We know that Isaac was 60 when Jacob and Esau were born (Ch.25:26), that Isaac was sufficiently old that he had lost his sight (Ch.27) and that Isaac lived 180 years (Gen.35:28). We also know that Jacob was in Paddan Aram for about 20 years and that Isaac died after Jacob returned to Caanan (Gen.35).

**HIS ARRIVAL** (29:1-14)

When Jacob arrives in the region of Haran “*the land of the Eastern peoples*”, he sees a well in a field and three flocks of sheep. This seems unusual for flocks were normally gathered at night for mutual protection, not during the middle of the day (v.7). It so happens the shepherds were from Haran and knew Laban, Nahor’s grandson. Even as he is talking to them, Rachel, his cousin arrives with her flock of sheep. We notice two things:

The providential timing of Rachel’s arrival. All of life is an intricate weave of providential events. We know:

That the hairs on our head are numbered (Matt.10:30).

That the Lord knows our innermost thoughts, our going out and our coming in (Ps.139:1-4).

For those who love the Lord and who are called according to His purpose, all things work together for their good (Rom.8:28).

Do we believe that all the events of life fall within the realm of God’s providential circumstances?

Jacob’s unusual reaction to this meeting – he, “*began to weep aloud*”.

The sense here is of an outpouring of relief and gratitude. Was this not a fulfilment of the promise made by God in 28:15? Jacob, the deceiver, deserving of nothing, has providentially been directed by the Lord to the one whom he will ultimately love and marry. Despite his own failings he sees the goodness of God and His faithfulness to His promises.

**HIS MARRAGE** (29:15-30)

After a month with Laban, Jacob and Laban talk business. “*Just because you are a relative ---- what should your wages be*” (v.15). It is helpful to remember that Jacob was: (a) the son of a wealthy man, (b) was a man of the tents (25:27) and, (c) that he arrived with nothing. Here is a man used to being served, reduced from a position of privilege to the position of a servant.

Laban has two daughters, one with “*weak*” eyes (Leah) and the other (Rachel) who is particularly beautiful. The Hebrew word used for “*weak*” is “*rak*”. In every other context (e.g., Gen.18:7; 33:13) in which it is used it carries the meaning of “*tender*” or “*frail*”. Nowhere is it used in a demeaning way. Leah was a person with gentle eyes!

“*I’ll work for you seven years in return for your youngest daughter Rachel*” (v.18).

If you are new or visiting; *a special warm welcome to you.* We trust you enjoy your time with us.

Today we will be having communion. If it is your practice to participate in this we welcome you to join with us in celebrating the Lord’s Supper. If this is not your custom or if you are unsure of what to do please just pass the emblems (bread and wine) to the person next to you.

