

## THE LOVE OF GOD

**SCRIPTURE:** Genesis 29:13-35

### Jacob, Laban, Leah and Rachel : A Story of Love and Betrayal

- Jacob is the second son of Isaac and Rebekah. He was born holding on to his older brother Esau's heel and was then named Jacob, which meant Supplanter. (Genesis 25)
- Later in his life, Jacob deceives Esau to give up his birth right and later steals their father Isaac's blessing which was meant for Esau which led to his leaving home and going to his uncle Laban's home.
- When Jacob meets Rachel, he promises Laban to work for him for seven years for her hand in marriage. (Genesis 29)
- We can see here that Laban took notice of Jacob's overzealous attitude and took advantage of this. He did not exactly promise Jacob that he would give Rachel to him after 7 years. Jacob on the other hand, we see that he seemed to find his validation in Rachel. Was he really in love with Rachel or perhaps he wanted to have Rachel for what she represented and what having her as a wife could mean to him?
- All his life Jacob had always been the deceiver, the schemer but at this time the tables were turned on him. After 7 years of working for Laban, he thought he finally would get Rachel but woke up in the morning with Leah in his bed. He then confronted Laban and then had to work 7 more years for Rachel's hand in marriage.
- Rachel can symbolize the things we idolize in life, the things we hope to achieve. Whereas Leah symbolizes our frustrations and disappointments.
- More often than not we become fixated on our goals, on our dreams . . . or on others, then when we encounter disappointments and frustration we lose heart.

### Leah. Looking for love in all the wrong places

- Leah's life is one of depravity. Early on in the story she had been described as having weak eyes while Rachel was beautiful of form and face.
- In Leah's life, her sister has always been a constant reminder of her shortcomings.
- A lot of our own grief and disappointments come because we have become fixated on other people.
- She thought that she would find identity with Joseph. She had thought that this was her redemption.
- Leah was looking for validation and approval, but she was looking for it in the wrong places.
- Today, we often find singles looking for their worth in some boy or in some girl rather than in the Man who was crucified for them.
- Towards the end of Leah's story, we see that the Lord blessed Leah. She had 4 kids and finally when she gave birth to the 4<sup>th</sup> child, she named him Judah which means *I will praise the Lord* and she stopped bearing children. It was then that Leah realized that no matter what she did she cannot find love in Jacob, but she had found perfect love in God. [Gen. 29:35]

### The Love of God [1 John 4:7-12,18-19]

- His love perseveres and sees us to completion—love us too much to leave us. His love motivates us, sustains us, and produces in us the capacity to *be* loving.

- Relationships are difficult due to the simple fact that we live in a sinful world and the only people we can build meaningful relationships with are sinners—imperfect and flawed
- By looking at our relationships through the context of the Gospel, we realize that even the fact that they’re difficult is God’s grace and mercy towards us.
- Even though we think we work hard for the people we love, God works infinitely harder for both the lovable and the unlovable. It paints a very vivid picture of God’s unconditional love for the unlovely.
- This is God’s love. It is different from anything the world has to offer. And no single man or woman or thing can ever fill your deeper longings. . . because there will always be a hunger in us for the love of God.
- Romans 5:6-10 reminds us that even before we became worthy, or we had earned it Christ already died for us. And when we truly understand this then it would be difficult for us not to manifest it in our lives.
- The love of God is Christ[1 John 4:9-10] *propitiation* – reconciliation, appeasement, payment
- God constantly uses and chooses unworthy people. He chooses weak people because it is in our weakness that His Grace and Salvation would come through Christ. This is God’s perfect love and perfect justice. It would be hard for us not to share this with others.





**OBSERVATION:**

Study the passage. Who are the characters in the passage? What details stand out to you the most? You can also re-write the passage in your own words to make it more personal.

1. Read Genesis 29:13-35. What was the events leading to Jacob’s going to Laban’s house. What do you think Jacob was thinking when he offered to work for Laban for 7 years in exchange for Rachel’s hand in marriage? How do you think he felt when he found out he was deceived? What do you think Leah was going through in the story and how she finally felt when she encountered God’s love?
2. What is God telling you in 1 John 4?
3. What reassurance can you get in Romans 5:6-10

**APPLICATION:**

Patently listen as God reveals where you can apply the passage’s lesson in your life. Write down specific action points to what He has revealed to you.

	<p>Personal: Have you truly experienced God’s love?          What is God’s love prompting you to do?          What are the “Rachels” and “Leahs” in your life?</p>
	<p>Family: Can your family members see God’s love in you?          Are you able to reflect Jesus Christ in your relationships?</p>
	<p>Discipleship: Have you shared God’s love with anyone lately?          Is God’s love prompting you to open yourself to a discipleship relationship?</p>
	<p>Church/ Ministry: Is God prompting you to work in His ministry?          How can you best reflect God’s grace and love in your community?</p>

**PRAYERS:**

Lift all the things that you learned back to God. Share your thoughts to Him. If He is impressing a sin in your life, confess it to Him. He is always ready to forgive.

