

Genesis 29:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years.

Analysis

And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet se... This passage belongs to the Jacob narratives which demonstrate God's sovereign election overriding human merit and the transformation of a deceiver into Israel, the father of the twelve tribes. The Jacob cycle shows how divine purposes advance through flawed individuals whom God graciously transforms.

Key themes include God's sovereign choice ("the older shall serve the younger"), the consequences of deception and family dysfunction, exile and return patterns, wrestling with God leading to blessing, and covenant renewal across generations. Jacob's character development from manipulative deceiver to mature patriarch demonstrates sanctification's lifelong process.

Theologically significant aspects include:

1. divine election based on grace not merit (Romans 9:10-13)
2. God's faithfulness to covenant promises despite human unfaithfulness
3. discipline as evidence of divine love and means of transformation
4. generational patterns of sin requiring divine intervention to break
5. prayer and wrestling with God as legitimate expressions of faith.

Jacob's limp after wrestling God symbolizes how divine encounters leave permanent marks, transforming our approach to life and dependence on God rather than our own cunning.

Historical Context

The patriarchal narratives (Genesis 12-50) reflect the cultural, social, and legal customs of the ancient Near East during the Middle Bronze Age (2000-1500 BCE). Archaeological discoveries including the Mari tablets, Nuzi tablets, and Egyptian records confirm many details: nomadic pastoralism, covenant-making ceremonies, marriage customs, property laws, and international travel patterns described in Genesis.

The cultural practices reflected include: treaty/covenant forms (Genesis 15), bride-price customs (Genesis 24, 29), inheritance laws favoring firstborn sons (Genesis 25, 27), adoption practices (Genesis 15, 30), levirate-type arrangements (Genesis 38), and Egyptian administrative systems (Genesis 41, 47). These parallels confirm Genesis's historical reliability while showing how God worked within ancient cultural frameworks to accomplish His purposes.

For later Israelites, these narratives established their identity as Abraham's descendants, explained their claim to Canaan, justified their possession of Joseph's bones (Exodus 13:19), and provided models of faith despite imperfection. The patriarchs' failures and God's faithfulness encouraged Israel that covenant relationship depended on God's grace rather than human merit. The movement from Mesopotamia to Canaan to Egypt set the stage for the Exodus and conquest narratives.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What does this passage reveal about God's sovereignty and human responsibility?
2. What obstacles prevent us from living out the truths presented in this verse?

3. How does this verse fit into the broader biblical story culminating in Christ?

Interlinear Text

בְּחַד לְ	אֶת	צָמָמָה	יָאָבֶב	בְּחַד לְ	אֶת	צָמָמָה	יָאָבֶב
And he went in	H1571	H413	also Rachel	and he loved	H1571	H853	also Rachel
	H935		H7354	H157			H7354
מִלְאָה הָ	צָבֵב דָּ	עַד עַמְּוִי	שְׁבַע	שְׁנָה יָמִ			
more than Leah	and served	H5973	H5750	with him yet seven	years	H7651	H8141
	H3812	H5647					
אֶחָרוֹת:							
other							
	H312						

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 31:41 (Parallel theme): Thus have I been twenty years in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages ten times.

Matthew 10:37 (Love): He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

Genesis 44:27 (Parallel theme): And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons:

Genesis 29:18 (Love): And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter.

Genesis 29:20 (Love): And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her.

John 12:25 (Love): He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

Genesis 29:31 (Parallel theme): And when the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb: but Rachel was barren.

Genesis 31:15 (Parallel theme): Are we not counted of him strangers? for he hath sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money.

Genesis 44:20 (Love): And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him.

Deuteronomy 21:15 (Love): If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they have born him children, both the beloved and the hated; and if the firstborn son be hers that was hated:

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