Genesis

**He Works Hard for His Honey (29:1-30)**

*From a study of Luther’s Works: Lectures on Genesis, Paul Kretzmann’s Popular Commentary of the Bible, and the Lutheran Study Bible*

## **When Contracts Go Bad (29:1-30)**

* “Go East, no-so-young man!”
  + Genesis 28:5
    - Safety from Esau
    - It is about time to find a wife
    - The Lord’s command
      * Genesis 28:14
  + Quite the lock
    - A well with a large stone
      * Multiple shepherds would be needed to move the stone to access the water.
        + Luther assumes that the shepherds would have been young boys, girls, or women.
      * Anyone know of some other Scripture passage where a large stone came into play?
  + Six Degrees of Abraham
    - Finding that common denominator
    - They will learn that he is not an enemy or intruder
  + Here comes Rachel!
    - Get your motor running.
    - Something is not sitting right with Joseph…
      * Not the typical time of the day for sheep to be watered/fed
      * But the stone is too large!
        + Mark 16:3
    - A special place in Moses’ heart?
      * Exodus 2:16-17
    - Time to impress, or the silliness of the way life was being conducted?
      * No waiting for Rachel
      * What took many to do a single job, Jacob does himself.
    - A tearful kiss
      * A family greeting?
      * A fulfillment of the Lord’s promise to Jacob?
      * A dirty old man?
    - An explanation given and a need to run.
      * We’ve seen this before
        + Genesis 24:28-29
      * We’ll see it again!
* Time to tell Laban
  + He too runs to meet his kinsman
    - Kissed him too…
    - Bone and flesh!
      * Genesis 2:23
      * And think ahead…
  + Jacob has a safe place to live
    - He is not going to sit around the house
    - Foreshadowing of Moses again?
  + Laban begins to have something up his sleeve.
    - What has Jacob been known to do?
    - And the name Laban agrees beautifully, for it means “white.” Hypocrites, you see, have a great show of godliness, discipline, and morals, so that nothing seems saintlier, nothing more honorable, and nothing more religious than they are. But it would have been more appropriate if the word had been turned around and he had been called Nabal.[[1]](#footnote-1)
      * 1 Samuel 25:3
    - And so does Jacob.
      * He wants Rachel
        + Leah’s weak eyes?

A sign of life?

man’s greatest adornment

* + - * + At his age, should Jacob be picky?

Therefore it is not proper for such a saintly man to be so foolish and lustful that he looks at a maiden’s beauty and loves a beautiful one more than he loves one who is ugly. For one cannot say that he did so out of love for offspring, since for the most part ugly women are most fertile, as is clear in the case of Leah. But by no childbearing could she bring it about that she was loved as much by Jacob as Rachel was loved. Therefore he cannot be excused on the pretext of seeking offspring, but it is simply droll and ridiculous to love a maiden because of her beauty, not for the sake of offspring.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Here our Jacob is concerned about none of these, not about a house, not about an ox, not about other necessities; but first of all he chooses a wife.[[3]](#footnote-3)

* + - * Jacob offers seven years of his life and labor for Rachel
        + Has nothing to pay the price for a bride.
        + Offers his labor for seven years

Far more than a normal price paid to a father

Shows how badly Jacob wants Rachel

That’s a lot of years for a man with a lot of mileage

He has his goal in mind

1 Corinthians 13:7

* When payday rolls around
  + Jacob can’t wait!
  + Laban gathers for the wedding
    - For celebration of the couple?
      * Matthew 22:2-3
    - Or for mockery of Jacob?
  + Laban makes the switch…
    - Is the consummation the ceremony?
      * Wouldn’t Jacob know?
        + Dark?
        + HIS eyes were weak?
        + Too excited?
  + A really bad case of bed-head
    - Not Rachel
      * We now see why Laban gathered his friends
        + I think, however, that those whom Laban gathered together as his guests were fickle and worthless fellows, good-for-nothing rascals, who were compelled to approve and excuse this crime to please Laban.[[4]](#footnote-4)
      * But terrible cupidity impelled greedy Laban to commit such a great crime, not so much in order to foist his older daughter on Jacob as to detain him for seven more years. For he was aware of wonderful success and of the increase of his property. Therefore it was shameful and horrible for the very pious man to be detained by such a monstrous crime in order to satisfy the greedy desires of this old fox.[[5]](#footnote-5)
      * How Rachel herself felt is not told, but it is reasonable to suppose that her indignation was not less. For she undoubtedly knew that she was the bride, and it was known to the whole neighborhood that Jacob was serving for Rachel during those seven years. Therefore she was disturbed by this wrong just as much as the bridegroom himself. Indeed, she could endure and overcome much less; for the nature of her sex is weaker.[[6]](#footnote-6)
      * The father does not try to find out what his daughter wants; he does not hear her answer. If these were the customs of those people, they certainly were very bad.[[7]](#footnote-7)
    - Was it a true marriage?
      * I reply that there was not. Then was it adultery? By no means! What then? A monstrosity! For if you look at the deed itself, Jacob is not Leah’s husband; but he taints and defiles a woman who was not betrothed to him.[[8]](#footnote-8)
      * But after his complaint there will be a true marriage when God grants a dispensation for this union and confirms it by giving offspring: Simeon, Levi, Reuben, etc. Then it must be called well done, in order that everything the saints do may work together for their good (cf. Rom. 8:28).[[9]](#footnote-9)
* Sixteen tons, what do ya get?
  + But what should the saintly man do? He lets it pass. He bears this wrong with equanimity in order that he may obtain Rachel, who was his one true bride; and he sees that he cannot obtain her except on the completely unfair condition that he keep Leah, whom he did not love. [[10]](#footnote-10)

1. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 5: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 26-30*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw05?ref=Bible.Ge29.14&off=253&ctx=y+and+grasping+man.+~And+the+name+Laban+a), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 5 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 285. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 5: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 26-30*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw05?ref=Bible.Ge29.16-20&off=1524&ctx=ed+Jacob%E2%80%99s+old+age.+~Therefore+it+is+not+), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 5 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 288. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 5: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 26-30*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw05?ref=Bible.Ge29.16-20&off=7600&ctx=+ox+for+plowing.%E2%80%9D%EF%BB%BF22~%EF%BB%BFHere+our+Jacob+is+c), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 5 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 291. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 5: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 26-30*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw05?ref=Bible.Ge29.23-25&off=2336), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 5 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 296–297. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 5: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 26-30*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw05?ref=Bible.Ge29.23-25&off=3499), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 5 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 297. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 5: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 26-30*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw05?ref=Bible.Ge29.23-25&off=5099&ctx=ltogether+too+hard.+~How+Rachel+herself+f), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 5 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 297–298. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 5: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 26-30*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw05?ref=Bible.Ge29.23-25&off=13956&ctx=ptial+bed+of+Jacob.+~The+father+does+not+), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 5 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 301. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 5: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 26-30*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw05?ref=Bible.Ge29.23-25&off=14912&ctx=Leah+and+Jacob.%EF%BB%BF32%EF%BB%BF+~I+reply+that+there+w), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 5 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 302. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 5: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 26-30*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw05?ref=Bible.Ge29.23-25&off=19686&ctx=n+betrothed+to+him.%0a~But+after+his+compla), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 5 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 304. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Martin Luther, [*Luther’s Works, Vol. 5: Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 26-30*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lw05?ref=Bible.Ge29.28&off=952&ctx=+her+and+no+other.%E2%80%9D%0a~But+what+should+the+), ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 5 (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1999), 307. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)