

RACHEL – HEAVENLY IDEALS

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Lesson: Genesis 29:1-20

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

Children, have you ever loved or wanted something so much that all the work and effort you took to get it seemed almost as nothing? Why? Because your heart was in your work!

If you have ever experienced this, then you can understand what is meant in the Word, in the story of Jacob, that his seven years of service for Rachel seemed unto him but a few days, so great was the love he had for her.

Jacob had fled to the land of Haran from the anger of Esau, his twin brother. For, as you remember, Jacob had stolen his brother’s birthright—his inheritance—and his father’s blessing.

When Jacob arrived, in Haran, the land from which his mother, Rebekah, had come many years before, he saw a well of water with a great stone covering it and three flocks of sheep waiting to be watered. And while he was in the very act of asking where he was and whether his uncle, Laban, was well, behold Rachel—the most beautiful woman Jacob had ever seen—came with her sheep. Jacob was so overjoyed at seeing Rachel that the first thing he did was to take the huge rock off the well for her, then kissed her and wept for joy.

Rachel led Jacob to her father’s house where he was warmly welcomed by Laban who invited Jacob to stay with him and work for him. Laban asked him what he wanted for wages. He wanted to know what Jacob would like to be paid for taking care of his “small cattle”, his sheep and goats. The Word tells us “And Jacob loved Rachel, and said, I will serve you seven years for Rachel your daughter. And Laban said, ‘It is better that I should give her to you, than that I should give her to another man: abide with me.’ And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her.”

Do you know what? This story, which actually took place thousands of years ago, is told in the Lord’s Word because it is part of your life. Jacob is you! You have a journey in life seeking to find yourself. You have to find out what you want to be, what you want to do with your life, what you want to do that is worthwhile, what *use* you are to perform for others. In this journey in life, if you want to be successful, then like Jacob, you must travel towards the East,

that is, towards the spiritual East where the Lord is, and there is where you will find the Lord's Word, "a well of living water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14).

At this well, when you approach the Lord's Word, you will be led to discover "Rachel", the most beautiful affection your mind can ever experience.

Rachel means the affection of truth. She stands for our ideals, the ideals of perfection which we form in our minds and which we love and work for. Our minds have been touched with the magic of *forethought*. We can form pictures ahead of time of what we want to do and what we want to be. These pictures are beautiful dreams of perfection, noble goals, and high ideal—ideas that can fill our minds with delight. Just as Rachel "filled Jacob with delight," so our noble dreams are such that we want to marry them and have them be part of our lives.

And where do you think the highest ideas that we can think of come from? They come from the "living waters" of the Lord's Word. When we see this—when we make this acknowledgment—we remove the great stone over the well. Once we see that the Lord is Perfection Itself and that He is the Perfect Man who can show us the ways of perfection, then we go to Him for spiritual life. The flock of innocent affections in our minds will be watered and refreshed, and Rachel, our ideals, can become a living reality with us.

Innocence—our willingness to follow the Lord—these obedient affections are the flocks of our minds which want to follow the truth, even as Rachel's flocks followed her to the well. If these innocent affections are to live and grow, they must be refreshed by learning truth from the Word—by regular worship and instruction. This truth from the Word will teach us that we are all forms of heavenly use - that it is our use to develop our abilities. We must go to school and do our best to learn to read and write and be skilled in arithmetic. We must study science and history, to learn how to use our bodies for health and happiness. And best of all we must learn how to get along with, cooperate, and work with others for the sake of what is useful and right. When we know the Lord wants us to be useful and we love this goal, it becomes a beautiful idea. It becomes a "Rachel" in our minds, which can inspire us to work hard, to forget ourselves, to commit ourselves fully and wholeheartedly. When we do this, time will almost disappear and work will seem easy for our hearts will be in it; we will then love the goals of life the Lord has revealed for us In His Word. We will come to see them clearly before us. Then the work of perfecting our lives will seem as nothing and, like Jacob, seven whole years will seem as but a few days so great will be our love for the beautiful Rachel.