



HIGH SCHOOL MINISTRY

April 26, 2020

Main Point: Love is a gift from God and is meant to be shared with those around us.

1. Listen to this Spotify playlist

https://open.spotify.com/playlist/2PFq9EG6qySS7pasjKKAxB?_php=1

2. Read this passage two times - Genesis 29:21-35

3. Process

Let's fill you in on what has happened with Jacob since we were together last week: We know that Jacob's deception to wrestle the blessing away from his brother created a schism in the family. Upon learning of Jacob's trickery, Esau flew into a murderous rage and Rebekah warned her younger son to flee. At this point in Jacob's story, the worst seemed to be behind him. He was on a new path—one that would advance the fulfillment of God's promise to bless the world through him.

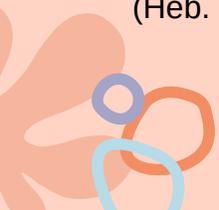
Jacob entered the land, found a well, and as he was talking with the shepherds waiting to water their flocks, a shepherdess named Rachel approached in order to water her flock. Jacob discovered that Rachel was the daughter of his uncle, Laban. He wept with joy over having found his family and Rachel ran home to tell Laban the good news.

Genesis 29:13-20 tells of Jacob's initial encounter with his uncle, Laban. In this encounter, Jacob willingly offered to work seven years for his uncle to secure the hand of Laban's youngest daughter, Rachel, whom he loved. Laban agreed to the arrangement and the seven years "seemed like only a few days" to Jacob because of his love for Rachel.

29:13 The world might view Jacob's encounter with Rachel as luck but we know that is not the case. God was at work to providentially bring Jacob and Rachel together. Jacob did not find love; it was provided to him by His loving Father.

29:25 In this moment, Jacob knew exactly how Esau felt when the blessing was ripped out from under him through lies and deception. The parallels in the story are clear: the matter of the firstborn, the exploitation of desires, and tragic deception. And that is the point. This is what God wanted Jacob to experience—the pain and fury of deception, especially deception at the hands of a relative that was at the very core of human intimacy—a place where we are supposed to feel safe and loved.

God used Laban's trickery to teach Jacob a lesson he needed to learn, to discipline him. Not because He was fed up with Jacob—but because He loved him. God disciplines the ones He loves (Heb. 12:6). No discipline is enjoyable — it is painful—but it produces the fruit of peace and righteousness (Heb. 12:11). Jacob was a manipulator, exploiter, and deceiver. Although none of that disqualified him from receiving God's promised blessing, God loved him too much to leave him there. God wants to purify His own and that purification sometimes comes through pain.



29:31 To say that Leah was merely unloved doesn't quite carry the strength of the Hebrew word used here. It also suggests hatred. Jacob wasn't just apathetic toward Leah—he despised her, perhaps because she reminded him of how he had been beaten at his own game of deception. But the Lord saw this, had compassion for her, and opened her womb giving her the gift of children—four sons recorded in this text.

29:32-34 She named the first son Reuben, which literally means “See, a son!” Leah recognized her son as a gift from the Lord because He saw her affliction. She then voiced the jarring statement that this son would surely lead her husband to love her. It was the desperate hope of the unloved—a desperate hope that went unfulfilled.

4. Think About It

- How do you think this might have caused Jacob to think deeply about his own lies and deception toward Esau?
- What do we learn from this account about God's love toward those who often go unloved by others?
- How have you seen God develop your love for others through an understanding of His love for you?
- What ways might God show His love for us? What is by far the greatest way God has shown His love for humanity?
- What can you do to show someone who may feel unloved how much he or she is loved by God?

Join Lauren & Nathan in a Zoom Call!

Sunday, April 26 at 7:00 pm

<https://zoom.us/j/4144653655?pwd=SkYyNVVVKaS9OdGQxSTJaeUFpSU5yUT09>

Meeting ID: 414 465 3655

Password: 853104



We are here for you!

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