

# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

*Genesis*

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## JACOB WORKS FOR RACHEL

Genesis 29

Elementary Lesson

Year One, Quarter Two, Lesson One

[0140]

AIM: to use the story of Jacob working for Rachel to teach my class that if they will trust and obey God, He will make things turn out like they ought to.

OBJECTS TO HAVE: Something to show where you or a family member works (like a company logo, etc.)

A paycheck stub

A picture of a bride and groom

Your Bible

POINT OF CONTACT: (Teacher, I will use a fictitious job as an example for you). Kids, I want to show you something that I have brought with me this morning. This is a uniform with my name on it. Do you know what that uniform says? It says, "Wilson's Repair Shop." Do you know why I have a uniform that says, "Wilson's Repair Shop" on it? Because that is where I work. Every day, Monday through Friday, I get up in the morning and I drive to work. I walk into a garage wearing this uniform, and all day long I fix cars for people.

Do any of you want to tell me where your mom or dad works?

Can anyone tell me why people like your parents and me go to work every day? It's so that, at the end of the week, we will get **paid** for our work. The money that we get **paid** is the money that we use to pay for the house, to buy the groceries, to make the car payment, buy the clothes, and anything else that we need money for. There is only one right way to get money, and that is to work for it. That's called *making a living*. God does not want people to make a living by winning money, stealing money, or having other people give them money. We are to work for our money. Do you know what this is? This is a **paycheck** stub. At the end of every week when I get paid, my **paycheck** is connected to a **paycheck** stub. I tear off the **paycheck** and deposit it in the bank, and then I put this stub in a folder for my records. When I work, I expect to receive a **paycheck**. If I worked all week, and my boss decided not to give me a **paycheck**, he could get in big trouble with the law, because he owes me money for the time that I worked for him. The reason you work a job is so that you will get a **paycheck**.

Today I am going to tell you a story about a man who worked for another man; but when the work was finished, the man did not pay him what he had promised to pay him. Let me tell you about it.

STORY: For the last two weeks I have been telling you the story of Jacob and Esau. Remember how I told you that Jacob and Esau were twins? I told you how their father, Isaac, had given a birthright to Esau, but that Jacob tricked Esau into giving the birthright to him. Then later, it was time for Esau to receive a blessing from his father, Isaac. Once again, Jacob tricked his father into giving the blessing to him instead of Esau.

After all of that, Jacob decided that it would be better if he would leave home and go away for a while. He told his thoughts to his mom and dad. His mom and dad told him that if he was going to leave, he should go back to the land where his mother Rebekah was from and where his grandfather Abraham was from. Jacob packed his things and left, to do exactly what his mom and dad had told him to do. He was going to travel far away to the land of *Padan-aram*. When Jacob arrived in *Padan-aram*, he met a man named *Laban*. Laban was Jacob's uncle. Laban was so happy to meet his sister's son. Laban gave Jacob a place to stay and gave him some work to do.

After about a month, Laban told Jacob, "You shouldn't be working for nothing. Tell me what I should pay you for working for me."

Now, Laban had two daughters, the older daughter named *Leah*, and the younger daughter named *Rachel*. Jacob fell in love with Rachel the minute he saw her. So Jacob told Laban, "I will work for you for seven years, and the only pay I will ask of you is to allow me to marry your daughter Rachel."

Laban thought for a minute, then he agreed. “Okay, Jacob, it’s a deal.” (Remember, in those days, it was normal for the parents to decide whom their children would marry.)

Jacob worked hard every day. He did everything that was required of him. Seven years seems like a long time, but to Jacob those seven years went by very quickly, because he loved Rachel so much. Whenever Jacob would get tired, and feel like giving up, he would think of Rachel, and the work seemed much easier.

Finally, those seven years were ended. It was time for Jacob to be married to his boss’s daughter, Rachel. The wedding was all planned. The people came, the cake was prepared, the decorations were all in place. The music played and the bride and groom came down the aisle together. The bride was wearing a beautiful wedding dress, with a veil that covered her face. The preacher performed the ceremony, and ended it with, “I now pronounce you man and wife.” Then the bride and groom went off on their honeymoon. And all the time, the bride’s face was covered with her veil.

The next day when the sun came up, Jacob saw his new bride’s face for the first time. Immediately Jacob knew that something was wrong. Jacob realized that his boss had tricked him. Instead of giving Jacob his younger daughter Rachel to be his wife, Laban had given his older daughter Leah to be his wife. They were married now. It was done. It could not be changed. Jacob went back to his boss Laban and said, “Why did you give me Leah instead of Rachel? You tricked me!”

Laban said, “In our country the custom is for the older daughter to be married before the younger daughter is married. I had to get Leah married before Rachel could be married. You may marry Rachel also, but first you must work another seven years.” (Don’t forget, in those days, it was common for a man to have more than one wife.)

Now Jacob could have been very mad, couldn’t he? He could have lost his temper, and tried to get revenge on his boss. He could have gotten bitter at God and said, “How could you let this happen to me?” But Jacob did not do any of these things.

Kids, there are going to be many times in your life when things will happen to you that do not seem fair. Sometimes it will seem like some other person has been unfair to you. Somebody else may get some new toy that you don’t get. Somebody else may get an opportunity that you did not get. What should you do when life seems unfair to you? Should you complain and get mad at God? Should you give up on God? No. God knows what He is doing, and He can make everything work out just right for you. **It is your job to trust God and obey Him.**

Say that sentence with me, ready...*trust God and obey Him.* Say it again.

So if you think someone has broken a promise to you, what should you do? **Trust God, and obey Him.**

If you get in trouble for something that you did not do, what should you do? **Trust God, and obey Him.**

If someone else gets the credit for something good that you did, what should you do? **Trust God, and obey Him.**

If you get blamed for something that someone else did, what should you do? **Trust God, and obey Him.**

If someone else gets a new bike, and you don’t ever get one, what should you do? **Trust God, and obey Him.**

If things are tough at home, and it seems like it’s easy for everyone else, what should you do? **Trust God, and obey Him.**

If it seems like people who are living in sin are having all the fun, what should you do? **Trust God, and obey Him.** There will be many times in your life when life seems unfair. But no matter what, you should **trust God and obey Him.**

Jacob did not get bitter. He did what his boss asked him to do. He worked seven more years, and at the end of those seven years, he was married to Rachel, the girl of his dreams.

You see, when you **trust God and obey Him**, God makes things work out for you the way they are supposed to. God never leaves you to suffer on your own. That doesn’t mean that things will always be easy for you. But it does mean that if you will **trust God and obey Him**, God will make sure that your life works out exactly the way it is supposed to.

Let’s learn our memory verse: **Psalm 37:5 – Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in Him; and he shall bring it to pass.**

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Teen and Adult Lesson

Year One, Quarter Two, Lesson One

[0140]

*Teacher, choose one of the following truths to expand upon in teaching this portion of Scripture to your teen/adult class. Teach and apply the truth that you choose using statements and illustrations that are most helpful and applicable to your students.*

I. YOU WILL REAP WHAT YOU SOW. Jacob had pulled two very shady moves on his brother Esau. Now he is many miles away, and it seems like that mess is all behind him. He had gotten away with it! But what he didn't know is that someone was about to pull some shady moves on him. His boss and father-in-law-to-be gives Jacob a taste of his own medicine. Don't expect that you can sow dishonest seeds, walk away from them, and never face the consequences of your actions. The miles do not nullify God's law of sowing and reaping.

II. EXPECT PEOPLE TO TREAT YOU THE WAY THAT YOU TREAT OTHER PEOPLE. Jacob's life up to this point has been characterized by poor treatment of people. It is safe to assume that if he was so careless in his treatment of his twin brother, he probably did not do any better with other people. Now, in order to get what he really wants (Rachel), he is forced to deal with someone who is going to treat him the same way he has treated others. If you are critical of others, expect others to be critical of you. If you are unfair to others, expect others to be unfair to you. This is not only a matter of human nature; it is a matter of justice that God carries out.

III. SOMETIMES YOU MUST BE FACED WITH PEOPLE LIKE YOURSELF IN ORDER TO BE CURED OF WHO YOU ARE. Genesis 29:25. Jacob is absolutely alarmed to be cheated, tricked and mistreated in this way...exactly how Esau must have felt after being cheated, tricked and mistreated by Jacob. Jacob had left Esau with plenty of bitterness to overcome; now Jacob had plenty of that same bitterness to overcome himself. God has many methods of curing us of our sinful ways; we must be honest enough to see who we really are, and allow Him to cure us.

IV. EVERY ONE OF US MUST FACE TIMES OF PROVING BEFORE WE ACHIEVE SUCCESS. Jacob eventually became a very successful, influential man. But he did not walk away from Esau, and immediately step into success. Jacob had to endure 20 years of difficulties and challenges. It was a time of introspection, of seeking God, and of proving what he was made of. It was what some might call, "Paying his dues."

V. STAYING ON COURSE IS A SURE PROOF OF TRUE LOVE. Imagine working 14 years of your life to earn the right to marry someone! Rachel could never question the validity of Jacob's love. Over the course of 14 years, surely Jacob had plenty of opportunities to marry other women; but he did not waver. It is wrong thinking for someone to say, "Prove your love by RUSHING;" it proves nothing when you throw away your principles, your future, and your reputation and give in to the lusts of your flesh. If you really hope to prove true love, you will do so by staying on course, following your principles, and providing a stable future for the one you claim to love.

# Jacob Works for Rachel

## Genesis 29:1-30

[0140]

### *Jacob Feels the Sting of Deceit*

- I. GENESIS 29:1-8 Jacob Travels to Haran
  - 1-3 Jacob meets a group of shepherds by a well
  - 4-6 The shepherds point out Rachel to Jacob
  - 7-8 The shepherds wait for the well to be uncovered
- II. GENESIS 29:9-14 Jacob Meets Rachel and Her Family
  - 9-10 Jacob uncovers the well for Rachel
  - 11-12 Jacob introduces himself to Rachel
  - 13-14 Jacob stays with Rachel's family
- III. GENESIS 29:15-19 Jacob Agrees to Work for Rachel
  - 15 Laban tells Jacob to name his wages
  - 16-18 Jacob offers to work for seven years for the right to marry Rachel
  - 19 Laban agrees to the deal
- IV. GENESIS 29:20-27 Laban Tricks Jacob
  - 20-21 Jacob completes the seven years
  - 22-24 Laban secretly puts Leah in Rachel's place
  - 25-27 Laban justifies his deceit
- V. GENESIS 29:28-30 Jacob Finally Marries Rachel
  - 28-29 Jacob works an additional seven years for Rachel
  - 30 Jacob loves Rachel more than he loves Leah

### **Psalm 37:5**

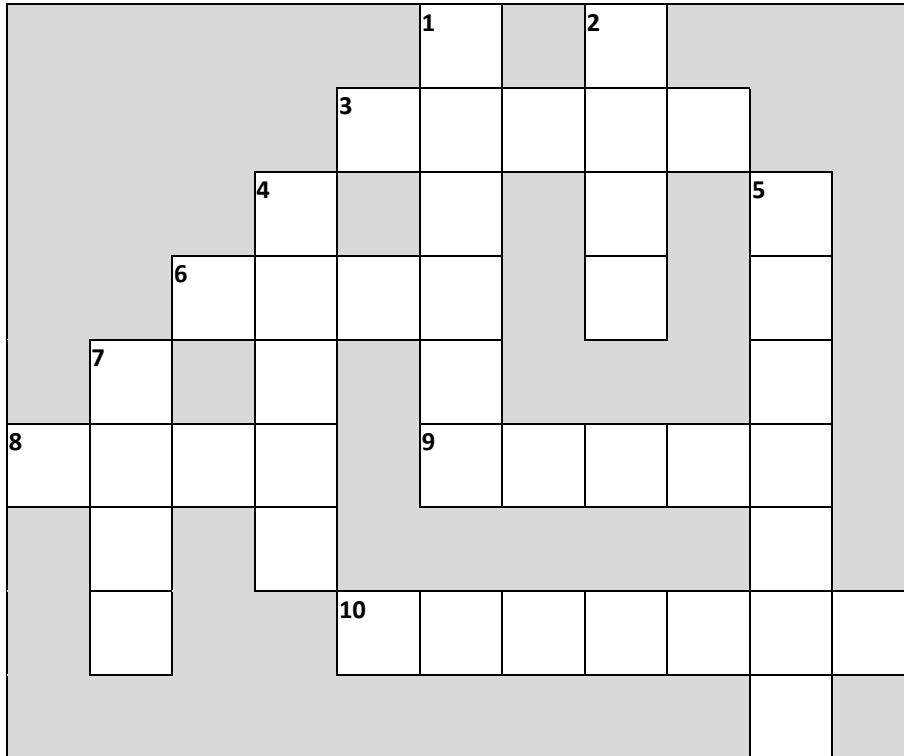
*Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in Him; and he shall bring it to pass.*

# JACOB WORKS FOR RACHEL

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[0140]

Complete the crossword puzzle below using words from the Scripture passage and information from today's lesson.



### ACROSS

### DOWN

- 3 \_\_\_\_\_ left home after he stole Esau's blessing
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_ was Laban's older daughter
- 8 Jacob was in \_\_\_\_\_ with Rachel
- 9 Leah and Rachel's father was named \_\_\_\_\_
- 10 Laban \_\_\_\_\_ Jacob into marrying Leah

- 1 Jacob was in love with \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Jacob worked a total of \_\_\_\_\_-teen years for Rachel
- 4 Laban said if Jacob worked for him for \_\_\_\_\_ years he could marry Rachel
- 5 Rachel was \_\_\_\_\_ than Leah
- 7 Jacob had to \_\_\_\_\_ to marry Rachel

***Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in Him;  
and he shall bring it to pass.***

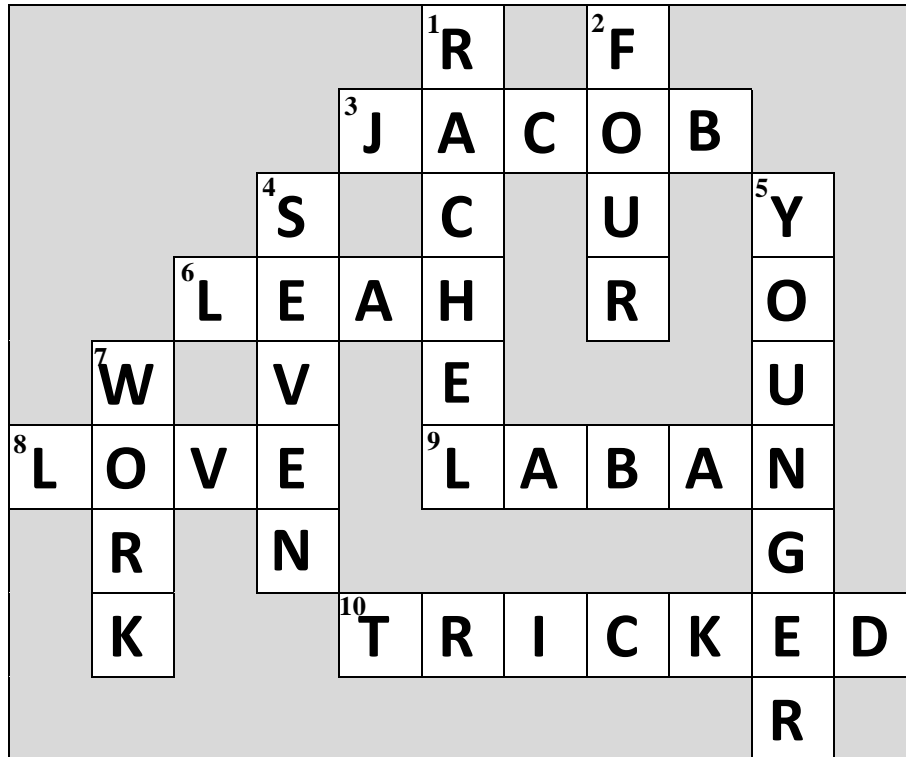
PSALM 37:5

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[0140]

*The answers to today's puzzle*



### ACROSS

- JACOB left home after he stole Esau's blessing
- LEAH was Laban's older daughter
- Jacob was in LOVE with Rachel
- Leah and Rachel's father was named LABAN
- Laban TRICKED Jacob into marrying Leah

### DOWN

- Jacob was in love with RACHEL
- Jacob worked a total of FOUR -teen years for Rachel
- Laban said if Jacob worked for him for SEVEN years he could marry Rachel
- Rachel was YOUNGER than Leah
- Jacob had to WORK to marry Rachel