Beyt El & 14 Years For Daughters, 11 Sons & 1 Daughter Born

Genesis 27:37-30:38

Reading Questions

1. Is Genesis 28:20-22 proof tithing commands predate the Lewites?
2. When are the all the sheep watered?
3. Is it permitted to marry two sisters?
4. How and at what point in time did Le'ah become Ya'aqov's wife?
5. How and at what point in time did Rachel become Ya'aqov's wife?
6. How long did Le'ah cease to bear in Genesis 30:9 before giving her servant?
7. What does Le'ah say in Genesis 30:11?
8. What can we learn from Ya'aqov's selection of specifically colored sheep and goats for his wages?

Reading Answers

1. You can click here to read a little about tithing if you want to hear our perspective on this.

2. When all the flocks are gathered together (Genesis 29:8)

3. No. Although Ya'aqov married both Le'ah and Rachel he did not set his heart out to do this but rather was deceived into it. Leviticus 18:18 prohibits taking a woman as a rival to her sister. It is clear that Le'ah was very sad and had inner-turmoil from the rivalry between her and her sister Rachel. I do not believe יהוה wants any woman to go through that with her own flesh and blood sister. A woman could become a rival even if not a sister, but it is probably inevitable and even worse in a situation with two sisters and therefore probably the reason it is prohibited.

4. Although Ya'aqov did not agree to marry Le'ah, because Ya'aqov was a man of integrity, she became his wife by default when he went into her. We learn from Exodus 22:16-17 and Deuteronomy 22:28-29 that the ruling is if a man goes into a woman he is supposed to take her to be his wife and he cannot put her away because he humbled her. This shows that as soon as a man goes into a woman, he has a responsibility and a debt to the woman's father to pay the bride price and take her as wife. The father, however, has a right to refuse. We can see that because the father has this right to refuse in Exodus 22, the marriage is not final by the physical action alone, but only when the father has found out about the situation and has an opportunity to express his disapproval of the marriage.

In the case of Ya'aqov, it is clear the father (Lavan) of the woman (Le'ah) did approve as he was the one who gave her to Ya'aqov. Therefore, the father (Lavan) is aware of the situation and approves, so she (Le'ah) becomes his wife by default when Ya'aqov goes into her, even though he never agreed to this orally.
The part of my answer above where I said, "because Ya'aqov was a man of integrity" is stated because after he found out it was Le'ah he did the right thing and did not refuse to keep Le'ah as his wife. I also consider it possible that the point in which he became married to Le'ah was when he found out it was her in the morning and did not try to give her back to Lavan. In a way, he kind of "agreed" to have her as a wife by not trying to give her back to Lavan in the morning when he found out. It is assumed in my answer above that because Ya'aqov was a man of integrity, as far as he was concerned, once he took a woman's virginity he knew he was to be her husband and would not try to avoid the responsibility of taking her as his wife.

5. This is somewhat debatable, but I consider it possible that Rachel and Ya'aqov became officially husband and wife from the point in time that Lavan and Ya'aqov made an agreement that Ya'aqov would serve Lavan 7 years for Rachel. This time appears to be the beginning of their betrothal. It appears according to Deuteronomy 22:23-24 that those who are betrothed are considered husband and wife. They were not yet one flesh, but it does appear there was an agreement that appears similar to a betrothal.

6. We see in the 7 year time period she bore six children, which shows she had only ceased bearing for 1 of the 7 years. I would guess it did not take long, but probably less than half a year before she saw she was not pregnant and gave her servant.

7. Some translations say "A troop cometh", while others say "With Gad", or "What luck!" or something related to fortune. I think the correct translation is, "With slicing!". The second definition from the Ancient Hebrew Lexicon of the Bible is "Slice" and this makes more sense due to the nature of the sister rivalry here. Slicing is referring to the rivalry and battle between the sisters for the love and attention of their husband. I do not believe that Le'ah believed in luck or fortune, but that she was a woman of יהוה who believed in the true Elohiym.

8. Ya'aqov was a man of integrity as we see by what he said in Genesis 30:33. What we can learn from his selection is we want to be in a position where no wrongdoing can be accused or ascribed to us from anyone. We want to be blameless in all that we do. We do not want to put ourselves in a bad position where someone could make up some story about us if we have an opportunity to put ourselves in a better position where it is obvious and clear, and protects us from accusations. Of course, we can't control what others do and sometimes false accusations may come, but when we are in a position to make decisions, we want to make the wisest decisions possible – and of course this means we need יהוה's blessing and guidance.

Reading Notes

- Ya'aqov says that the place he laid down was the house of Elohiym (Genesis 28:17). This is why he called it "Beyt El". Beyt means Tent or House and El is referring to יהוה Elohiym. The word "El" means "power" and "Elohiym" means "Mighty Powers".

- When discussing marriage and how a marriage is determined, some people believe it is solely based upon the consent of a man and a woman. I do not hold this view that consent is required by the man or woman in all situations to establish a marriage. My view is that marriage under normal circumstances is established by consent between two men – a man and the father of a woman who a man wants to marry. However, I'm not saying the daughter's desires shouldn't be considered. See reading notes for Week 5 of the Annual Reading Schedule for more information on asking the daughter what she wants.

  There appears (at least to me) to be exceptions where oral consent of either person is not required for a marriage to exist. All the laws of יהוה must be considered when determining if a marriage exists. We've seen with Ya'aqov and Le'ah that was not the case as he did not orally consent as noted above. The only person who we have evidence that they orally consented to the marriage was Lavan, the Father of Le'ah.

  Also, it is interesting to take note of Rut's (Ruth's) situation. In her case, she was a woman who had no child and she was "acquired" or "purchased" by the one who was the kinsmen redeemer. In situations like hers, the "kinsmen redeemer" may or may not be someone she actually chooses or consents to being married with. Although, back then I think women were more likely to be content just with having someone to provide for them and permit them to have children, it doesn't appear that Rut (Ruth), for example, necessarily knew who she would be married to until it was determined at the gate of the city who the kinsmen redeemer was.

  We can see in the book of Ruth that Boaz says in Ruth 4:10 he purchases/acquires Rut (Ruth) by acquiring/purchasing the land of the deceased. It is because of this arrangement, not necessarily because she orally agrees to be with him, that she becomes his wife. This is one of the laws of marriage related to the "duty of a husband's brother" found in Deuteronomy 25:5-7. This is why in Ruth 4:11 the men of the city did not say, "Does Ruth agree to this? Hold on! She must first agree! Let us bring her out here to the gate of the city and hear if she truly consents!" If her oral consent was required to establish the marriage, the men of the city would have required that they hear her for herself consent to this arrangement. However, they did not require this and therefore that infers her oral consent was not required.

  I also want to state, so there is no confusion, that if a father hears his daughter is going to get married to a man and he does not object to it, and his daughter therefore goes and gets married as she told her father she would, then the marriage stands. If her father later, after they are married, decides he doesn't want his

daughter married to him and doesn't like the man she married after all, it is too late – the marriage is already established.

Related Verses

All Nations Blessed In Avram & In His Seed: Genesis 18:18, 22:18, 26:4, 28:14, Acts 3:25-26, Galatians 3:8
Lie With Woman & Right of Refusal: Exodus 22:16-17, Deuteronomy 22:28-29
Sons of Yisra'el: 1 Chronicles 2:1-2
Genealogy Ya'aqov To Yehudah: Luke 3:33-34
Found Him In Beyt El: Hosea 12:4-5
Served For A Wife: Hosea 12:12