

Chapter 29

Iacob intertained by Laban, 15. serueth him feuen yeares for Rachel, 23. but firft receiuing Lia, 27. feuen dayes after receiueth alfo Rachel, and serueth for her feuen yeares more. 31. She remaining barren, Lia beareth foure fonnes.

Iacob therefore going on his iourney, came into the East cuntry. ² And he fawe a wel in the field, and three flockes of sheepe lying beside it: for of it the beafts were watered, and the mouth therof was clofed with a great ftone. ³ And the maner was when al the sheepe were geathered together they did rowle of the ftone, and after the sheepe were refreshed they put it on the mouth of the wel againe. ⁴ And he faid to the sheperds: Brethren, Whence are you? Who answered: Of Haran. ⁵ And he asked them, faying: Know you Laban the fonne of Nachor? They faid: We do knowe him. ⁶ Is he in health? quoth he: He is in health, fay they: And behold Rachel his daughter cometh with his flocke. ⁷ And Iacob faid: There is yet much day remaining, neither is it time to bring the flockes into the foulds againe: firft geue the sheep drinke, and fo bring them backe to feede. ⁸ Who answered: We can not, til al the cattel be gethered together: and we remoue the ftone from the wels mouth, that we may water the flocks. ⁹ They were yet fpeaking, and behold Rachel came with her fathers fheepe: for fhe fed the flocke. ¹⁰ Whom when Iacob had feene, and knew her to be his cofen germaine, and that they were the fheepe of Laban his vncl: he remoued the ftone, wherwith the wel was clofed. ¹¹ And hauing watered the flocke, he ^akiffed her: and lifting vp his voice wept, ¹² and he told her that he was her fathers brother, and the fonne of Rebecca: but fhe in haft went and told her father. ¹³ Who when he heard

^a S. Auguftin (*q. 87. in Gen.*) cōmendeth familiar kiffing of kinsfolke and frendes as a laudable cuftome in fome countries. It is no where more ciuil & modeft then in England.

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that Iacob his fifters fonne was come, he ranne forth to mete him: and embracing him, and hartely kiffing him, brought him into his houfe. And when he had heard the caufes of his iourney, ¹⁴ he answered: Thou art my bone and my flefh. And after the dayes of one moneth were expired, ¹⁵ he faid to him: becaufe thou art my brother, fhalt thou ferue me gratis? Tel me what wages wilt thou take. ¹⁶ He had in dede two daughters, the name of the elder was Lia: and the younger was called Rachel. ¹⁷ But Lia was bleare eyed: Rachel wel fauored, and of a bewtiful countenance. ¹⁸ Whom Iacob louing, faid: I wil ferue thee for Rachel thy younger daughter, feauen yeares. ¹⁹ Laban answered: It is better that I geue her to thee then to an other man, tary with me. ²⁰ Iacob therfore ferued for Rachel feuen yeares: and they femed a few dayes becaufe of the greatnes of his loue. ²¹ And he faid to Laban: geue me my wife: becaufe now the time is complete, that I may companie with her. ²² Who hauing bid a great number of his freinds to the feaft, made the mariage. ²³ And at night ^ahe brought in Lia his daughter to him, ²⁴ geuing his daughter a handmaid, named Zelpha. With whom when Iacob had companied after the maner, when morning was come he faw Lia: ²⁵ and he faid to his father in lawe: What is it that thou dideft meane to doe? did not I ferue thee for Rachel? why haft thou deceiued me? ²⁶ Laban answered: It is not the cuftome in this place, that we beftowe the younger in mariage firft. ²⁷ Make vp the ^bweeke of dayes of this match: and I wil geue thee this fame alfo, for the worke that thou shalt ferue me other feauen yeares. ²⁸ He yelded to his pleafure: and after the weeke was pafte, he married Rachel to wife: ²⁹ to whom her father had deliuered Bala for to be her feruant. ³⁰ And hauing at length obtained the mariage that he wished, he preferred the loue of the later before the former, feruing

^a Laban greuoufly offended, neither could Lia be excufed, but Iacob was innocent, in this fact.

^b After feuen daies he had Rachel who was his firft fpoufe. *S. Hierom Tradit. Heb. S. Aug. q. 89. in Gen.*

with him other feauen yeares. ³¹ And our Lord feing that he despifed Lia, opned her wombe, her fifter remaining barren. ³² Who conceaued and bare a fonne, and called his name Ruben, faying: Our Lord faw mine affliction: now my husband wil loue me. ³³ And againe she conceaued and bare a fonne, and faid: For becaufe our Lord heard that I was contemned, he hath geuen this alfo to me: and she called his name Simeon. ³⁴ And she conceaued the third time, and bare an other fonne: and faid: Now alfo my husband wil be ioyned to me, for becaufe I haue borne him three fonnes: and therefore she called his name, Leui. ³⁵ The fourth time she conceaued and bare a fonne, and faid: Now wil I confeffe to our Lord. And for this she called him Iuda: and she left bearing.