

# FINDING YOURSELF AND YOUR HEAVENLY IDEALS

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*Read Genesis 29:1-20*

Have you ever wanted something so much that all the work and effort it took to get it seemed like almost nothing? Why did this happen? Because your heart was in your work! If you have ever experienced this, you understand what is meant in the story of Jacob when we are told that his seven years of service for Rachel seemed like only a few days, so great was his love for her.

## The Journey

*Jacob went on his journey and came to the land of the people of the east. And he looked, and saw a well in the field; and behold, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks. A large stone was on the well's mouth (verses 1, 2).*

This story, which actually took place thousands of years ago, is told in the Lord's Word because it is part of your life. You are Jacob! You have a journey in life—a journey to find yourself. You have to discover what you want to do with your life that is worthwhile, what use you want to perform for others. And if you want to be successful on this journey, then, like Jacob, you must travel toward the east. Spiritually, "the east" means where the Lord is and where you will find the Lord's Word. So on this life journey, you look toward the Lord and His Word for guidance.

## Seeing Rachel

*Then [Jacob] said to them, "Do you know Laban the son of Nahor?" And they said, "We know him.... And look, his daughter Rachel is coming with the sheep" (verses 5-6).*

When you approach the Lord's Word (the well), you will be led to discover Rachel—the most beautiful love your mind can ever experience. Rachel means the affection or love of truth. She stands for the ideals we hold in our minds and which we love and work for. Human beings have been given the gift of forethought. We can form pictures in our minds, ahead of time, of what we want to do and be. These pictures are beautiful dreams of perfection—noble goals and high ideals—that can fill our minds with delight. Just as Rachel delighted Jacob, so our noble dreams are so beautiful that we want to "marry" them. We want to be joined with them, to have them be part of our lives forever.

## Uncovering the Well and Watering the Flock

*Now while [Jacob] was speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherdess. And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel...that Jacob went and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock.... Then Jacob kissed Rachel and lifted up his voice and wept (verses 9, 10, 11).*

The highest ideas and dreams that we are capable of come from the “living waters” of the Lord’s Word. When we recognize that the Word is the source of our ideals, we remove the great stone from over the well. Once we see that it is the Lord who can show us the ways of perfection, then we go to Him for spiritual life and guidance.

And from the Word, the innocent affections in our minds, represented by the flock of sheep, will be watered and refreshed. Innocence, or our willingness to follow the Lord, are the obedient flock of our minds which wants to follow the truth, even as Rachel’s flock followed her to the well. For these innocent affections to live and grow, they must be refreshed by learning truths from the Word through regular worship and instruction. These truths teach us that the purpose of all our lives is to be useful to other people. It is our mission to develop and use our abilities so that we can be truly helpful and loving. Then our heavenly ideals, our Rachel, can become a living reality with us.

### **Jacob’s Love**

*Now Jacob loved Rachel; and he said, “I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter....” So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed but a few days to him because of the love he had for her (v. 18 & 20).*

When we see the Lord wants us to be useful and when we love this goal, it becomes a beautiful “Rachel” in our minds. This ideal inspires us to work hard, to forget ourselves, to commit ourselves fully and wholeheartedly to serving others. When we do this, time will almost disappear. The work of perfecting our lives will seem easy because our hearts will be in it. We will love the goals of life that the Lord has revealed to us in His Word and will see them clearly before us. Then, as with Jacob, years will come to seem like only a few days, so great will be our love.