

# GRACE GAZETTE

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*Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.* *Hebrews 12:12-13*

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## THE MARRIAGE OF LEAH

*And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him; and he went in unto her.* *Genesis 29:23*

One of the many reasons that we are convinced that the Holy Bible is the word of GOD is because of its brutal honesty. There is nothing in it that is contrived or concocted in such a way as to make those who are its heroes appear in some sort of an "airbrushed state" or aggrandized so as to abandon the bare facts relating to their flawed humanity..

David, whom the scripture describes as a man after "GOD's own heart", is shown in its pages to be a mere man. None of his faults are hidden and his great sins of adultery and murder are set forth for all to see. In like fashion we see Noah's drunkenness, Lot's incest, Judah's deceit and fornication with a harlot (as he supposed), and those Israelites who were sent out to reconnoiter Jericho, stopping off at a harlots house.

The LORD JESUS CHRIST said that HE came "*not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*" (Mat.9:13) HE would demonstrate, in the pages of the Book which HE dictated word by word to those HE chose to be its penmen, the exact corrupt nature of all men. It is in light of that corruption, from which HE has rescued HIS people, that the magnitude and glory of HIS redemptive work is seen. Therefore HE would give no man an excuse for thinking that he has some sort of righteousness with which he might commend himself to GOD or that HIS favor is shown to those who have some worthiness to receive it.

It is quite common for natural men to compare themselves among themselves and conclude that there are some among them who live more uprightly than do others. In this comparison it is easy for them to conclude that the good works and kindnesses of some men far exceed that of the majority. We would not dispute this comparison in the least. There are indeed many who are comparatively innocent. If one should compare the deeds of any infant with those of a Ted Bundy or a Jeffrey Dahmer he could not help but conclude that these infants are indeed pure.

Yet the scripture is plain when it declares "*there is none that doeth good, no not one.*" (Ps.14:3) The LORD JESUS clearly nixed the thinking that true and pure "goodness" could be found in men when HE said, "*Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.*" (Mar 10:18) This came from the lips of HIM who "*did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.*" (1 Pet.2:22) It is sheer folly for mortal men to consider that any who are born of the seed of a man and woman could be considered "good". "*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*" (Rom 3:23) Men have no moral capital with which to gain favor with HIM who is "*of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity.*" (Hab 1:13)

While it is impossible for any creature to accuse GOD of evil and it is clear that HE tempteth no man (see James 1:13), it is also clear that HE has ordained the sin of men to accomplish HIS exact purpose in the earth, (see Isa.45:7; Ps.76:10) even using it to bring about those occurrences which work together for the good of HIS people in the earth.

We see such a thing occurring here in the deceit of Laban and the complicity of Leah in this deception, as she was substituted for her sister, perhaps even Rachel herself was knowledgeable of this ruse. Yet this marriage of Leah to Jacob was absolutely necessary for the redemption of GOD's people to occur according to the predestined purpose of GOD because it was from this very union that the "LION of the tribe of Judah" sprang since Judah was Leah's son which she bore to Jacob. In this union were all the nations of the earth blessed.

Yet in a "perfect world" as men would have it, this marriage would never have occurred because we see this union as the result of deception and trickery and view Jacob as one who was taken advantage of by his uncle and erstwhile "father in law". It all seems wrong to our sense of propriety. There are many observations which we can draw from this situation.

The LORD will often lead HIS people by a path which they would never choose if those "choices" were left up to them. *"And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."* (Isa 42:16) The majority of Jacob's sons were born to him by Leah, most especially Judah from which JESUS CHRIST after the flesh was born, even though he could not have known that ahead of time. GOD blesses HIS people in spite of their own carnal wanderings and "choices".

The immediacy of our desires often cause us to complain at the lot which has fallen to us; even as Jacob was unhappy when he discovered that his bride was not Rachel. Yet all that the LORD gives to HIS people is for their benefit. *"Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert."* (Isa 43:19) Paul was given a "thorn in the flesh" to teach him that the grace of the LORD is sufficient in all things which may befall the children of GOD.

The LORD will often humble HIS children by causing them to experience the fruits of the sins they are most secretly fond of or disposed to. Jacob was a conniver of the first order, in fact his name literally means "supplanter". Is it not appropriate that he got a taste of his own medicine and perhaps each time he thought of how wronged he had been by Laban, the SPIRIT of GOD pricked his conscience to remind him of his own deceivings. *"Be sure your sin will find you out."* (Num 32:23) The greatest sadness of the children of GOD is a contemplation of their own corruption, yet it is this contemplation that the LORD uses to drive them to CHRIST that they might, in humility before HIM, cry out, *"I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."* (Job 42:6) *"Lord, save us: we perish."* (Mat 8:25)

The redemption of the LORD's people is the grand purpose that is seen in the whole design of the world and every activity that has taken place in the world is meant to bring that to fruition. It was necessary in that design that CHRIST should be born of the tribe of Judah, whose name literally means "the praise of the LORD".

The world and all of its glory belongs to HIM who directs all events: from the flight of a sparrow to the number of hairs upon a man's head. CHRIST came into the world to do the will of HIS FATHER, who sent HIM as the deliverer of HIS own elect bride. Even as all glory belongs to HIM in the accomplishment of that salvation, so we preach the gospel for this sole reason as well. HE shall indeed call HIS own from the four corners of the earth and cause them to hear the sweet story of the REDEEMER and HIS bride. *"Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife."* (Rev 21:9) *"Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."* (Eph 5:25-27)

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