



*What Two Sisters Teach Us  
about Combating Comparison*

NICKI KOZIARZ



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about Combating Comparison*

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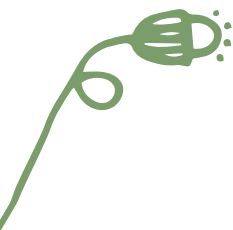


## *About the Author*



**NICKI KOZIARZ** is a wife, mom, author, and speaker with Proverbs 31 Ministries. She and her husband own a fixer-upper farm just outside of Charlotte, NC, where they are raising their girls and barnyard of misfit animals. Nicki speaks nationally at conferences and retreats and is part of the First 5 writer team at Proverbs 31. Visit her website: [nickikoziarz.com](http://nickikoziarz.com) to connect!





*What will it take for you to say at the end of your life, "It is well with my soul"?<sup>1</sup>*

This question began this journey for me. Because things were not well. I was letting something consume my life. It greeted me every morning. And teased me at night. It was there in the mirror. It was there on the scale. It was in the work meeting. It was everywhere.

### *Comparison.*

Feeling less than. Never quite measuring up. Always seeming to be a step behind. And who was I chasing? *Her*.

There is so much to be said about opening the Bible and reading it just as it is. But I've found that when I take my struggles through the Scriptures I uncover a way to become someone I could never be on my own. There is power, authority, and wisdom tucked into the pages of this ancient book we hold in our hands.

Studying the Bible should be an incredible journey that anyone can jump in on. It is a journey filled with answers to questions, some we couldn't even think to ask.

And maybe as we look at this comparison struggle, there's a question you're not sure you've ever really been honest enough to ask. It's this quiet question tucked away in the soul of every girl as she sees beauty, looks at success, and wonders where her happily ever after is.

This question—Why her?

Why not me?

What's wrong with me?

Who even am I?



As we take a close look at the lives of two women who I consider the two most famous sisters in the Bible, we'll see how all their obsessing over these questions only led to more struggles. We'll note how much each sister lost herself trying to be someone she wasn't. And we'll see what can happen to a woman when she decides to combat comparison God's way.

Each week you'll do five days of personal Bible study. You'll read passages, answer questions, and learn to stop playing the comparison game. Day five will be light and fun as you do some personal insight. All of this will put you on the hunt for who God says you are and who you're going to become with His help.

Each week, you'll study a part of Rachel and Leah's story in a fresh and powerful way and focus on a verse to help you combat comparison. You'll also learn a truth, grounded in the Word of God, that will help you keep comparison from compromising who God created you to be.

Because truth, like always, will set us free. And free girls don't have to measure up to anyone. Not even *her*.

On a scale of 1-10, (with 1 being unfamiliar and 10 being very knowledgeable), how would you rate your understanding of the story of Rachel and Leah?

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

What facts do you know about this story? List them below, even if it's just the names of people in the story.

The majority of our study of Rachel and Leah will take place in Genesis 29–31. You're going to be blown away by how much just these three chapters will teach us. Each day you'll begin the study with prayer. I know a lot of times we end our studies in prayer, and we'll do that a few times throughout this journey, but there is something powerful about beginning with prayer. It's that moment when we clear our minds and ask God to step in and teach us only the things He can teach us.

OK, let's go discover how to combat comparison!







TRUTH ONE:

*You need to be honest.*

COMBATING COMPARISON VERSE ONE:

*Lord, you have searched me and known me.*

**PSALM 139:1**



### *Warm Things Up*

Ask your group to answer the following questions. This will help you begin to build much needed community for this study!

What made you decide to be a part of this study?

What are some hopes/expectations you have for this study?

Where do you like to do your Bible study?

What tends to distract and detour you away from doing Bible study?

### *Watch*

To hear more from Nicki, download the optional video bundle to view the Week One teaching at [www.lifeway.com/RachelandLeah](http://www.lifeway.com/RachelandLeah).

### *Create Conversation*

If there is one thing you could change about yourself, what would it be? Does this desired change come from healthy motivation or is it driven by comparison? Explain.

What is the quiet question we ask when we compare ourselves to others? Share about a time you've found yourself asking this.

How have you personally experienced the negative consequences of comparison? In what areas of your life are you prone to compare?

What three things did Nicki challenge you to do this week? Which of these three will be most difficult for you? Explain.

How will you combat comparison with the truth of Psalm 139:1 this week?

End your time together by praying for the girls in your group to have the freedom and trust to be honest before the Lord, with themselves, and with the group.





DAY ONE

## *And So It Begins*

Jacob resumed his journey and went to the eastern country.  
He looked and saw a well in a field.

**GENESIS 29:1-2a**

*Beginning Prayer:*

*Before you begin each study,  
jot down a personal prayer here.*

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Every journey begins with the first step. And today, we take our first step into an ancient text to begin discovering one of the most fascinating stories in the Bible. This story is filled with drama, mouth-dropping statements, and details that will literally make your eyes bulge. But it's also a love story, a redemption story, and ultimately a God-story.

**GRAB YOUR BIBLE AND READ GENESIS 29:1-3.**

One of the best things we can do after reading a verse or verses is to start asking questions.

**What questions can you think of to ask about these three verses?**

Here are few questions I'm asking:

Who is Jacob?

What is this journey he's on?

Where is this well in a field?

We may or may not be able to answer all our questions throughout this journey. There are some questions the Bible just flat out leaves mysterious. Questions that leave us with more questions. And answers that don't seem to really answer. But for today, let's start with what I think is the most important question from these three verses:

### *Who is Jacob?*

A few months ago, I was meeting with some new people for an informational meeting at a little coffee shop in my small town. After I got my coffee, I walked over toward two women sitting in the corner and asked if they were there for the same meeting. They replied with a quick *yes*, but continued their conversation completely ignoring me.

Unsure if I was interrupting them, I pulled one of the other chairs at the table away from them and sat down, as if the space made some type of emotional barrier between us. It didn't work, but at least I tried.

Getting more insecure by the moment, I tried to grasp what they were talking about so I could jump into the conversation. They mentioned a name that was familiar to me, so I jumped in, "Oh, I know her!"

They both looked at me with the strangest look, until one of them replied in a rather snobbish tone, "Her, is a him."

Ahem. Blush.

Obviously, I stopped trying to figure out who they were talking about and just sat quietly, feeling like a complete fool.



As awkward as that situation was, I was reminded how important it is to know the context of a situation. We can't always just jump into conversations and know what's going on.

Similarly we shouldn't jump into the middle of a book of the Bible and assume we know what's going on. Taking the time to understand what's happening where we pick up in the story, understanding who is who, and studying a story inside and out is so valuable. If we want to understand what's *really* happening in a passage, we need to examine its context.

God is not concerned with how much we know or don't know. He doesn't care where we jump into the story. But usually we gain a deeper understanding of the story by learning more of the background. God is the best teacher—always welcoming our questions, our curiosity, and even our doubt. There's never a snobby response back from Him if we get something wrong or don't understand things.

What we gain from understanding the whole picture of what we are studying is amazing. When I first read Jacob's name, I thought I knew a lot about him. But what I discovered was fascinating.

Let's figure out who Jacob was. Turn to Genesis 25:19-28. Read those verses and then answer these questions:


1. Jacob's mother and father were named \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Circle the correct answer:
  - A. Jacob was three years older than his brother.
  - B. Jacob was five years younger than his brother.
  - C. Esau and Jacob were twins.
3. How old was Isaac when they were born?
4. What does it say the boys grew up to do?

Esau:

Jacob:



5. According to verse 28, why did Isaac love Esau?
  
6. Does the text say why Rebekah loved Jacob?
  
7. What are your thoughts about what seems to be a confession of who was who's favorite child?



**FAST FACT:** You may have heard of Isaac before. He was Abraham's son. The son Abraham was willing to sacrifice until God sent the ram. See Genesis 22 to read this story.

Comparison is already rearing its ugly head in this journey. These two boys is where it begins, but it will be a thread throughout the entire process.

Tomorrow we're going to dig into Jacob's journey. But for now, I want to talk about your journey and share a little bit more about mine.

For way too long comparison stole so much from me. It made me miss out on the special, unique, and incredible plans God had for my life. It made me look to the left and to the right, missing what was right in front of me. And I just felt miserable. My license plate could have read, *Unhappiest Woman in America*.

I have a feeling you've had a moment or two like this in your life too. Because no matter how confident you are, you've been compared and you've done the comparing. None of us are exempt from this struggle. But what I've discovered about most girls is that we love to shout our success, but seldom speak of our sorrows.

And battling comparison, unlike wanting to quit, being disorganized, or not having it all together, is something we rarely admit.

Maybe you haven't allowed yourself to admit to the struggle of comparison in your life. Or maybe you're so fed up with this struggle you are ready to suffocate it. But we're here. Together. Ready to do the best we can do to combat this comparison compromise.

Circle all the areas where comparison has tried to take you captive:

*School*    *Activities*    *Body Image*    *Social Media*    *Sports*  
*Grades*    *Clothing*    *Success*    *Friends*    *Relationships*

Are there other areas? Let's get honest about them, right here, right now. This is just between you and God. List any other specific areas where you are struggling with comparison:

TURN TO 2 CORINTHIANS 10:12.

What does this verse say happens when we compare ourselves with others?

What are some of the effects comparison has had on you? On your attitude? Your behavior? Your confidence?

As we wrap up this first day of study, I want us to take a minute to process a few things. By the end of this study, I hope you have a deeper understanding of how God thinks of you. When we shift our minds to knowing what God says and thinks about us, we'll shift not only our thinking, but the words we use to describe ourselves.

I want to help you build holy confidence. That's why I'm giving you six truths and six Combating Comparison Verses throughout this study.

Go back to the first page of this week's study.



Write out Truth One:

Write out our Combating Comparison Verse One:

Throughout the week we'll spend some time processing Truth One, but today I want you to process this verse.

1. Read Psalm 139:1-7 to get the full context of this verse.  
\*Bonus study, read all of Psalm 139.
2. Do an Internet search to find out who the author of this psalm was. The author was \_\_\_\_\_.
3. What do you think would have made this verse significant for the author's life?
  
4. What does it mean to you to know that God knows everything about you?

OK friend, that's a wrap for Day One. See you tomorrow as we learn more about Jacob's role in this tale of two sisters.



## DAY TWO

### *He Just Had to Go*

Jacob asked the men at the well, "My brothers! Where are you from?"  
"We're from Haran," they answered. "Do you know Laban grandson  
of Nahor?" Jacob asked them. They answered, "We know him."

**GENESIS 29:4-5**

*Beginning Prayer:*

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Can you think of the most defining moment of your life so far? A moment when everything shifted in an instant and nothing was ever the same?

Of course, the moment we invite Jesus into our lives should always be the most defining, but I'm talking about moments where decisions defined us, maybe in a not-so-great way.

It's these moments where life is never the same again. We've all had them. Some more dramatic than others, but they are there. I remember one of the most significant defining moments in my life very clearly.

Nineteen. Alone. Standing in a bathroom holding a pregnancy test that read "positive." My life shifted instantly. That moment was defining because while I had struggled with comparison for what seemed like a lifetime, becoming a mom at such a young age wasn't exactly ideal material for learning to become comfortable in your own skin.

I spent a lot of my early twenties looking at all these women who seemed to have life way more figured out than I did. Comparison convinces us we're failures. And our failures leave us in a place of constant comparison. It's this cycle that never seems to go away.

But failure in life is really one of life's greatest teachers. And it's time for you and me to get honest about our failures. There's so much God wants to teach us about our past. It contains clues to help us understand what's happening today.

Describe the first time comparison showed up in your life:

How has comparison played a role in a significant failure in your life?

What are some examples of ways students in your school or community engage in comparison?

Yesterday we saw Jacob and Esau's own parents showing favoritism. For sure, a defining moment in both of their journeys. How do the comparisons we face as children affect defining moments in the future?

Yesterday we learned a little bit about Jacob. He's a significant part of this story we're studying, so as we jump back into our story, we need to uncover a few more defining moments for Jacob.

Arriving at the well was a defining moment in his journey. But you might be wondering, *what he's doing at this well anyway?*

Let's do some digging.

READ GENESIS 25:27-34.

What does Esau call the meal Jacob was making?

What did Jacob ask Esau to sell him (v. 31)?





**FAST FACT  
BIRTHRIGHT:**

The firstborn son was given special privileges and duties in the family. He also received a double portion of the inheritance.<sup>1</sup> For Esau to sell his birthright for a pot of beans would have been equivalent to selling your grandmother's two-carat diamond ring for a bowl of Cheerios. Not worth it.

**FAST FACT:** Isaac went on to live over forty years after this incident.<sup>4</sup>

What role would comparison have played during this defining moment for Jacob and Esau?

This was a big defining moment for both Jacob and Esau. Nothing would ever be the same between them again. But this intense struggle to be the best didn't end there. In fact, we'll see it get worse a few verses later. It's a constant theme throughout their story.

Isaac became old and unable to see well (Gen. 27:1). He became weak and sick and thought his days might be up very soon. So he asked Esau to go out and catch something yummy to eat. Isaac wanted this to be a special moment between him and Esau in which he could give Esau his blessing (Gen. 27:2-4).

The blessing was different than the birthright. The birthright was what they were required to get by law, such as the double portion of the inheritance.<sup>2</sup> The blessing is what the father decided to give, such as who would become head of the extended family after the father's death.<sup>3</sup> So what Jacob did next was extra shady. He went to Isaac and pretended to be Esau, and Isaac fell for it (Gen. 27:27-29).

And whoa, did this stir up some anger in Esau. Once Isaac and Rebecca saw how in danger both of their lives were, they made a drastic decision.

**READ GENESIS 27:41–28:2.**

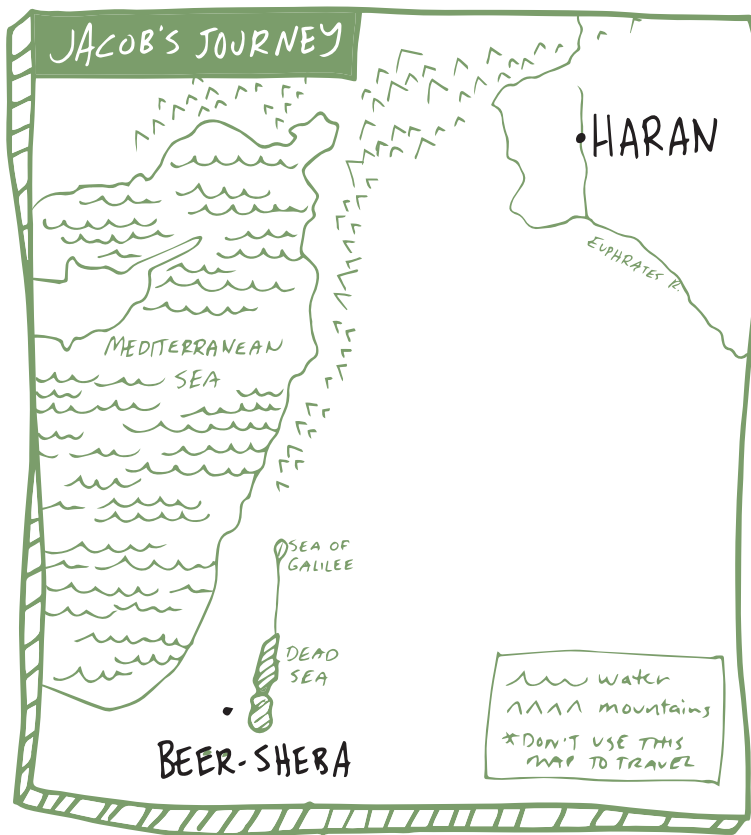
Where did Rebecca tell Jacob to go?

What did Isaac tell Jacob to do there?

Circle the reason why Rebecca and Isaac told Jacob to do this:

- A. To calm down
- B. To find a wife
- C. To hide from Esau
- D. All of the above

Turn to Genesis 28:10. On the map below, draw an arrow from Jacob's starting point to his ending point.



Does Genesis 29:1-4 tell us how long it took Jacob to arrive at the well? Yes or No





**FAST FACT  
BIRTHRIGHT:**

Jacob's journey was about 500 miles. It would have taken him weeks to make this trip.<sup>5</sup>

That's about like walking from Charlotte, NC, to Orlando, FL, or from San Diego to San Francisco.

As we wrap up today's study, I want us to think about our starting point and where we want to end up. Bible studies are great, but just knowing a lot about the Bible isn't going to change our lives. It's when we apply God's Word to our attitude and actions that we see the most impact.

For many of us, comparison has a hold on our lives in a way that has caused us to pause. We've become numb to believing God has special, unique things just for us.

In Romans 12:4-8, we see the genius of God's design in putting all of us together in the church, each with a part to play and a gift to contribute, but none able to go it alone. He could have appointed just a few superwomen and supermen to do it all, but He didn't. If we are willing to just do our part and not compare how our part measures up to someone else's, we just might find the thrill of being a functioning part of a something much larger than ourselves. Plus, we'll likely come away with some great relationships added in for good measure.

Tomorrow, we'll discover a key turning point in Jacob's story. But today, I believe is a turning point for you and me. The more unsettled we allow ourselves to become with this comparison struggle, the more likely we are to overcome it. And the more honest we get about where we are, the more we'll see where we need to go. It's the struggles we hide or simply deny that never see the light of victory.

I want you to fill in this timeline of your comparison struggles. The starting point is where this whole issue first popped up in your life. But where will it end?

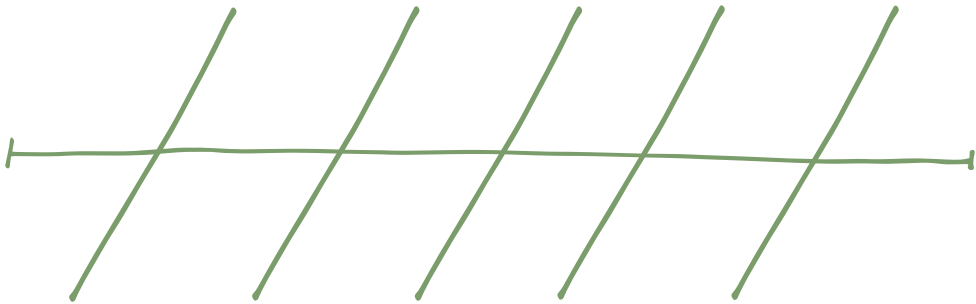
Jacob knew his destination was Haran. He didn't know what was in store for him there, but it was better than where he was.

And where God wants you and me to end up is much better than where we are now. He wants your destination to be freedom.

Take a few minutes to plot out your comparison journey. Here are some questions you might want to consider:

- What is your first memory of comparison?
- What were some of your “defining moments”?
- Who has been your biggest internal rival?
- What are the lessons you’ve learned along the way?
- What has God revealed to you about this struggle?

## *Your Comparison Journey*



As you think about the end: What do you want your life free of comparison to look like? How will your life be different?

What are some practical steps you can take to move closer to freedom? I've filled in a few for you. Add in some specific steps of your own to your journey below:

- Daily time with God
- Surrounding yourself with Christian friends who will help you grow
- Replacing my comparison thoughts with a Combating Comparison Verse
- Staying focused on where I want to end up in life, not where others are headed
- Learning to express gratitude for what I have
- 
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I'm proud of you for taking the time to really work through this! I'll see you tomorrow as we continue our journey.



## MID-WEEK TRUTH CHECK-IN

### TRUTH ONE:

*You need to be honest.*

Each week I'm giving you a truth your soul needs to hear to help combat comparison. These truths, lined up with God's Word, will give us the strength to fight this internal enemy a little more each day.

Our first truth: **You need to be honest.**

I know this sounds incredibly basic, and maybe you're rolling your eyes at this not-so-profound truth. It's simple. Yes. But until we are honest with ourselves and others about our struggle with comparison, we'll continue to live in denial. Knowing truth and living truth are two different things.

It's time to dismiss denial and dishonesty and invite honesty to transform us.

Today, we're going to start applying Scripture to this week's Truth.

Fill in the blanks for our verse this week:

Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ have \_\_\_\_\_ me and \_\_\_\_\_ me.  
(Psalm 139:1).

Read and write down Psalm 139:23 as a prayer for this time of reflection.

If we have thoughts and emotions that we know are not pleasing to God, the best way to get rid of them is to ask Him to search us. We can't hide from God, but this is a good thing. The kindness of His presence often brings us to a place of repentance.

When you think about the idea of God searching your heart right now, what is something you might be fearful of Him seeing in you when it comes to this struggle of comparison?

What are the good things God would see in your heart?

What are the longings or desires God sees in your heart?



## DAY THREE



# *There She Comes*

“Do you know Laban grandson of Nahor?” Jacob asked them.  
They answered, “We know him.” “Is he well?” Jacob asked.  
“Yes,” they said, “and here is his daughter Rachel,  
coming with his sheep.”

**GENESIS 29:5-6**

### *Beginning Prayer:*

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If there was a playlist for this study, I'd have you start the lesson by listening to Manfred Mann's "Doo Wha Diddy Diddy."<sup>6</sup> I know it's an old song, but it's really fun. I totally give you permission to pause today's study and have a little dance party. It was the first song that popped in my head when I read the verses we are going to be unpacking today.

If Jacob had known that song, I bet it would have popped into his head on this hot day at a well in Haran.

I once read that people make their judgments of you within seven seconds of meeting you.<sup>7</sup> That's not a lot of time! Maybe that's why people spend so much time on their clothes, makeup, hair, and such. Or maybe it's because we want to come off a little more impressive than we really are.

We're about to meet someone named Rachel, the daughter of a man named, Laban. As she got up that morning, brushed her hair, and picked out her clothes, she had no idea what was coming. If she had known, she might have spent a few extra moments getting ready. This day was going to be a defining moment for her.

#### **LABAN FAST FACTS:**

Brother to Jacob's mom, Rebekah.  
First mentioned in Genesis 24:29-60. His occupation: Farmer.



READ GENESIS 29:5-9.

Have you ever heard of Laban before? Yes or No

Who does verse 5 say Laban's grandfather was?

TURN TO GENESIS 11:26.

Who was one of the grandfather's brothers? Circle the right answer.

- A. Isaac
- B. Joseph
- C. Abram

In verse 7, why was Jacob so surprised Rachel was bringing her sheep to the well?

**FUN FACT:**

Rachel is the first shepherdess mentioned in the Bible.<sup>9</sup>

I'm not sure we can make much of a point about the time of day they were coming to the well. They might have done things a lot differently 500 miles away where Jacob was from. One commentary suggests that perhaps Jacob was trying to get the herdsmen to go away so he could talk with Rachel.<sup>8</sup>

**What was Rachel's job?**

I love this moment when Rachel walked up to the well. It's a beautiful, sovereign moment. It reminds us that life is full of unexpected moments. Normally we think of these unexpected things in a bad way—spilling food on your shirt during lunch, being tardy for first period, or running laps at practice.

God has the best surprises in life for us. But comparison keeps our eyes on ourselves and causes us to miss what's happening right in front of us. The more honest we become, the better we'll get to a place where we reject comparison and receive confidence.

Jacob also needed to get honest with himself and with God. We have seen a few of his dishonest struggles unfold. But Jacob had a big defining moment before he arrived at this well—an encounter with God.

Sometimes encounters with God leave us warm and fuzzy, and sometimes they leave us with a desire to do some deep soul-searching.

While Jacob was traveling from Beer-sheba to Haran, he had to take a break to sleep. Something incredible happened while he was asleep.

## READ GENESIS 28:10-22.

What did Jacob use to lay his head on?

Describe his dream:

What did Jacob name this place?

What vow did Jacob make?

- A. That he would apologize to Esau
- B. That he would give God a tenth of everything
- C. That he would find a wife
- D. That he would never lie again

### FAST FACT:

There are twenty-one dreams recorded in the Bible.<sup>10</sup>



In this fast-paced world, we find ourselves running through each day. It's hard to create space for encounters with God. There's so much information buzzing in our brains all day.

Sometimes God gifts us with the grace of honesty by being in His presence. We are able to see ourselves in the light of truth. This honest assessment helps keep our mistakes from turning into a failure-filled future.



Describe a time you had an undeniable encounter with God:

Turn to John 10:14 and fill in the blanks:

"I am the \_\_\_\_\_ ."

Wait. Are you seeing what I'm seeing? Jacob had this undeniable encounter with God which led to this amazing providential moment at the well—where there are literally sheep showing up! God, the Good Shepherd, has guided Jacob to this exact moment.

But it only came after one of the most gut-level honest moments Jacob had with God. There were things God needed to show Jacob that were keeping him from experiencing all that He had for him.

And I'm so sorry to tell you this, but until the day we arrive in heaven, we are also in this process where God needs to reveal the sin in our hearts. Comparison has compromised a lot of things in our lives. It may not be our only struggle, but it's the root of a lot of them.

Yesterday I wanted you to get a taste of what it would be like to be a little more free from this comparison struggle. Today, as we wrap up this idea of being honest with yourself and with God, take time to realize where you are in the process. Remember how Jacob's defining moment led to the next step in his journey.

*Here's a prayer I'm praying for both of us:*

Father, as we lean into this story of Jacob's redefining moment, we know that you have redefining moments for each of us. We ask you to show us our Bethel, the place where we have an undeniable encounter with You, which leads to the beginning of our struggles ending. Holy Spirit, reveal what needs to be revealed and give us the gift of grace wrapped in honesty.



## DAY FOUR

# *Awkward Entries*

Then Jacob kissed Rachel and wept loudly.

GENESIS 29:11

*Beginning Prayer:*

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I seem to be the queen of awkward entries. I've had a slew of them in my lifetime. But the worst example was probably the time I walked into a room full of people and fell flat on my face.

That morning, I was running late for an event where I was teaching and grabbed the first pair of shoes I could find, white sandals. It had rained that morning and the parking lot was full of puddles. Rushing into the building, my feet splashed in puddle after puddle. When I came dashing into the room, my wet shoes met with the recently waxed floors. My first introduction was my face to the floor. No one in the room knew what to do, and it became one of the most awkward moments of my entire life.

I'm sure you've had a moment or two like this. Please, tell me you have?

As we pick back up with our story, Jacob is about to have his own little awkward entry.

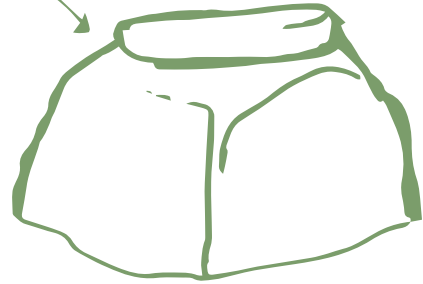
READ GENESIS 29:9-11.

According to verse 10, what does Jacob do as soon as he sees Rachel?



I smile when I picture this moment. Because men will always be men. Maybe Jacob was being a perfect gentlemen, or maybe he was being a little bit of a show-off. As you can see from the picture, removing this stone wasn't like popping the lid off a spaghetti sauce jar. It took a lot of strength.

LARGE  
STONE  
LID



Most of the commentaries I studied said there were probably several reasons why the well was covered up in the first place. It could have been because they didn't want any sheep falling in.<sup>11</sup> Or it might have been designed to protect the well,<sup>12</sup> to keep it from drying up or becoming contaminated.<sup>13</sup>

Whatever the reason, the stone was heavy. It would take a strong man to move it. Perhaps Jacob was ready to show Rachel that he had the strength to move it.

Go back and read Genesis 29:2. How many flocks of sheep does it say were already at the well?

- A. 5
- B. 10
- C. 3

Why do you think the other shepherds hadn't already moved the stone to water their sheep? Circle the best answer:

- A. They were being lazy.
- B. The stone was too heavy.
- C. It was too hot.
- D. They were waiting for all the flocks to arrive so the water wouldn't get contaminated.

Honestly, it could have been a number of reasons. We don't know one hundred percent. But what we do know is Jacob took the initiative and moved the stone.

A little showing off isn't too out of character for a man, even in today's society. But what happens next puzzles me a bit.

## READ GENESIS 29:11.

Write what it says Jacob did:

This is one of the places in Scripture we need to look a little closer to really understand what's happening. Yes, Jacob just straight-up kissed Rachel. But this wasn't a big, romantic, smoochy-type kiss. It was a common way to greet someone in Jacob's culture.

When I first met my husband's family, I felt really uncomfortable. Every time we would say goodbye to them, they would kiss me on the cheek. And I was like, "Um, ya, I don't even know you, this is weird." I'm not a real touchy person. I like my personal space, and it just felt really awkward to say goodbye to someone like this ... *for years*.

But my husband's family is made up of people who transplanted to the South. They are originally from New York. And this is a very common thing for people to do up there. But for us Southerners, it feels strange. We're huggers, mostly side huggers. But after understanding their background and their upbringing, it made me feel less uncomfortable. What is called "kissing" in much of the world does not involve a lot of physical contact. It's the "air kiss" just to the side of the face. In some places (like Ethiopia) there are three kisses—one on one side, one on the other side, and then another kiss back on the first side.

What are some other cultural differences you can think of across the United States or the world?

So maybe we can wrap our minds around the kissing, but Jacob's crying?

Why do you think Jacob wept when he saw Rachel?



I'm guessing it was a combination of things. "Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents" (Gen 25:27, ESV). He stayed at home, so he probably was not a traveler. So after he had just completed a 500 mile journey, he would have been exhausted and lonely. He was probably also wondering if he would find his mother's family so far away from home, and if there would be anyone there he could marry. So perhaps the combination of fatigue, loneliness, and anxiety made him especially emotional. Then when he saw a relative, his mother's niece, he was overjoyed.

## READ GENESIS 29:12.

### What was Rachel's response?

Something made her eager to get home quickly to her father. I don't know, maybe this was an answer to Rachel's hopes and dreams. Maybe she was in shock. Whatever it was, nothing would ever be the same for Rachel and her family from this moment on. Another defining moment on the story radar.

We've built the foundation for our story this week. And today is where we end our study of Rachel and Leah for the week. Tomorrow, we begin our study of *you*. That's right, friend. I'm so excited to help you uncover all the unique and incredible things about who God has created you to be.

As we wrap up this week's study of Rachel and Leah, I want you to remember the key points.

List all the characters we were introduced to this week.  
(Hint, there are five people and one group of people):

List at least three defining moments we've uncovered in this story:

1.

2.

3.

How did our Combating Comparison Verse of the week (Psalm 139:1) help you uncover your comparison battle?



OK! High-fives. You did it. One week of study complete.



## DAY FIVE (OPTIONAL)

### *You Be You*

*What kind of Bible study girl are you?*

1. Your favorite type of Bible studies are:
  - A. Verse-by-verse studies through a book of the Bible
  - B. Studies on faith, courage, and victory
  - C. Anything in the Psalms
  - D. Anything in Proverbs
2. You participate in class by:
  - A. Listening carefully
  - B. Offering new ideas or new perspectives
  - C. Affirming/agreeing with others in their responses
  - D. Having an answer prepared in case you're called on
3. You'll do your homework:
  - A. Carefully, slowly, and thoughtfully
  - B. While also checking in with the other girls in class
  - C. At the same time each day
  - D. Honestly, you might not, but if you do, it'll be deep
4. When you look at your Bible study book or page:
  - A. It contains others' prayer requests that you jotted down
  - B. You've got action steps or things you want to do
  - C. It's neat and tidy
  - D. You have other verses on the same subject in the sidebar
5. If you have a question during the week, you will:
  - A. Text a friend from class
  - B. Dig into the Greek or Hebrew definitions
  - C. Creatively come up with a few different answers
  - D. Look it up on the Internet

## RESULTS:

| Question 1 | Question 2 | Question 3 | Question 4 | Question 5 |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| A) 1       | A) 4       | A) 4       | A) 3       | A) 3       |
| B) 2       | B) 2       | B) 3       | B) 2       | B) 4       |
| C) 3       | C) 3       | C) 1       | C) 1       | C) 2       |
| D) 4       | D) 1       | D) 2       | D) 4       | D) 1       |

### *Mostly 1s*

You are the Delightfully Devoted Bible Study Girl!

On time and ready to go, you are consistent. You find joy in having every page complete and every blank filled in. Other girls can count on you.

### *Mostly 2s*

You are the True Trailblazer Bible Study Girl!

You've got ideas! You've got guts! You are ready to inspire! It's hard to hold you back during Bible Study. Your input and enthusiasm are epic!

### *Mostly 3s*

You are the Cheerful Encourager Bible Study Girl!

You want to be positive and build others up. You enjoy fellowship, hugs, and conversation. You will be the first to pass the tissues if someone starts crying.

### *Mostly 4s*

You are the Wise Observer Bible Study Girl!

You are a serious scholar and deep thinker. You like to mull things over and hear other people's responses before chiming in. You keep the group anchored.

