

Leah's Legacy

I. Slide1 Intro:

- A. **Jacob's** experience in Haran was **just like Abraham's servant's** experience in ch.24.
1. **Abraham's servant** met Rebekah (Jacob's mother) at a well.
Jacob meets Rachel (his future wife) at a well.
 2. **Both** Abraham's servant and Jacob deal with **Laban** (Rebekah's brother and Rachel's father and thus **Jacob's uncle**)
 3. Whereas **Abraham's servant** returns **quickly** with Rebekah, **Jacob** spends **20 years** in Haran (31:41), despite having planned a much shorter stay.
 4. **Rachel and Leah** are Jacob's **cousins** - it seems that marriage among cousins (called **endogamy**/endo=w/in gamy=marriage) was a normal occurrence in the ancient Near East. [**kissin cousin's**]
- B. **The building of Jacobs family** was vitally important to God's plan of salvation. **For** God would use *the nation of Israel* to give the world **the Bible** & **the Redeemer**.
1. We'll watch this figure emerge form the shadows that caught me by surprise.

II. Slide2a **JACOB'S LOVE FOR RACHEL (1-17)**

- A. (6) **Rachel** (רַחֵל) = ewe lamb. Wordplay - ***Rachel his daughter is coming with the sheep.***
1. 1st **daughter**, then **shepherdess** (only female shepherdess in bible)
- B. (15) Jacob's dad Isaac was **wealthy**, **but** Jacob had to **work** for his uncle. [labor for Laban]
1. **God's plans are different for all of us.** We must accept His will.
- C. (17) **Leah** - etymology unknown. ***But talk about image issues.***
1. We have the unloved & the lovely. The ugly duckling & the swan. The one w/a designer life & the nobody.
 2. Leah became Jacob's wife not by his choice, but by her father's scheming.
 3. **Slide2b Now the eyes of Leah were dull** - This idiom expresses that Leah's **eyes** - and by extension, **her appearance** - ***did not match the conventional standard of beauty in the ancient world.***

- a) But, it's actually unclear whether this description is **positive** or **negative**.
- b) If the Hebrew word used here, רַךְ (rakh) *tender, soft, delicate*, is translated *weak or dull*, it may indicate a **lack of brightness in her eyes**; lustrous or sparkling eyes were considered a striking sign of beauty. **On the other hand**, if rakh is translated *delicate, tender, or lovely*, it may indicate that *she had one striking feature, while Rachel had many*.

III. Slide3a **JACOB'S LABOR FOR RACHEL (18-30)**

A. (18-20) **Love** can take the burden out of work.

1. Slide3b **Smitten**, 7 yrs for Rachel. 30-40 shekels was the **typical price/dowry** of the day.
 - a) A month's wage was 1 to 1 1/2 shekels, was **typical wage** for a month.
 - b) He's not negotiating he's offering more than double. *He's out of his head w/love*.
2. Slide3c Matter of fact the Hebrew is so **indiscreet** in vs.21, *I just want to go sleep with her*. It's when feelings run past **love** straight to **infatuation**.
3. Slide4/5 eg. **Guy in Nepal**.
 - a) *Jacobs thinking...finally Rachael will fix my life. Then my life will matter. If I get her, she will fill my void.*
 - b) Slide6a **Identity**: not what we do. **Not who** we're with. **Not** the trophy wife *nor* the wealthy man. It's our true worth. **It's not what we do but who we are**.
 - (1) It's finding our identity in Christ, which is grounded in an awareness of the nature of God. [*i.e.* imago dei. the story of the fathers love w/the prodigal. **Can you say I am loved rather than, I have to perform?**] **Identity says we all matter**.
 - c) Hopework assignment:¹ **My identity. Male. 57. Jesus lover. Follower of him for 38 years. I've been made in His image from the beginning. Ran away for 19 years. He bought me, sought me, caught me, and brought me to Himself. I was saved by His grace and learning to live in His grace day by day. Jesus is my shepherd and I am His sheep. He knows my name and I know his. He will never leave me or let me go. He bought my salvation, is**

¹ From Dan's Counseling Class.

*helping with my sanctification, and one day I will cash in my glorification.
I am His and He is mine.*

(1) Who are you in Christ now as a husband? (showing anger or grace?)

- B. Slide6b (25) Tasting your own medicine - As Jacob had **disguised** himself to **deceive** his father (Gen 27), Laban presented the **veiled** Leah at the wedding instead of Rachel.
- C. (26) Laban insinuates that **he**, not **Jacob**, is the one who *has the right to be angry*.
- D. Slide6c (25,26) Same words from dad's mouth, *what is this that you have done to me?* Then, the aha moment of vs.26 *in our parts we don't prefer the younger b4 the older*.
1. Slide6d Wait, he's done to me what I did to my dad. I reached out into the dark just like my dad did in his blindness. [the deceiver gets deceived]
 2. You know that if you want something in the world **so bad**...you will always go to bed with Rachael & wake up w/Leah.
- E. (27) Complete the week - this refers to the 7-day marriage celebration.
1. Jacob the schemer met his match in Laban and soon begin to **reap what he had sown**. **Jacob had deceived his father, and his father-in-law deceived him**.
- F. (28) So, worked 7 years, married Leah. After 7 day wedding celebration, married Rachael, then worked for 7 more years.
1. Which, Laban was **taking a risk** that he wouldn't flee, **but** Jacob seemed to be a changed man since his *experience at Bethel*.
 2. **Did you need, do you need a Laban in your life to help you with your character adjustments or temperament tweaks or behavior modifications?**
- G. Contemplation: What or who might you be **infatuated** with? Is there someone or something you are using to try to **fix** your life? Is there something that you feel if you get it you will be **satisfied**? Do you have something that started as a **healthy goal** that has turned into an **infatuation**? Can you say **I am loved** rather than **I have to perform**? What is your **identity** in? Do you see yourself as a **deceiver** in any area of your life? Do you need a **Laban** in your life for some **character adjustments**?

IV. Slide7a **LEAH'S LEGACY (31-35)**

- A. (31,32) Reuben - *looked* or actually, *See, a son*.

- B. (33) **Simeon** - The Hebrew name שִׁמְעוֹן *Shim'own* from the Hebrew for **heard**, *shama'*.
- C. (34) **Levi** - The **origin** of this name is **uncertain**. From the word *lawah*, *to attach/joined*.
1. First 3 boys/tribes were to go through history **labelled** with reminders of their **stormy origins**.
- D. (35) **Judah** - from the Hebrew word *yadah*, meaning *to praise*.
- E. **Leah's Legacy** -
- F. **Slide7b** Laban *deceived* Jacob. Jacob *didn't love* Leah. **Yet God** exalted Leah to become mother of **the priestly & kingly tribes** of **Levi & Judah**.
1. Leah's **Lord saw** - and stepped in, because she bore His image & His concern for her, her children, her future. God, seeing his daughter so despised, looked upon her affliction of a loveless husband **and** opened her womb **instead of** her sister's. [God is the hero of the story...again!]
 2. She birthed child after child, hoping with each new son, *for now my husband will love me* (32)...*Now this time my husband will be attached to me* (34).
 - a) But at the core **shame** makes us look *inward*, we must look **to Him**.
 - b) You can't cover shame with things (having children)
 3. **Slide8a** **Finally**, with the birth of her 4th, **Judah**, she gives up her hopes of husbandly love & turns to *praise the Lord*. ***This time I will praise the Lord*** (35)
 - a) **A man can compliment me, but not validate me** (my validation comes from my Lord). People can celebrate things about you **but never** see it all...**never** see what God sees.
 - b) **My praise is not contingent upon my circumstances**. You choose to worship him.
 - (1) **Slide8b/c** In Ps.34 David, *Leah's descendant* says, ***I will bless the Lord*** most of the time (**no**), 80% of the time (**no**), ***at all times***; ***his praise shall continually be in my mouth***.
 - (2) Ps.146:2 ***I will praise the Lord as long as I live***; ***I will sing praises to my God while I have my being***.
 - (a) **You choose to worship** - **When** your **husband** doesn't love you. **When** your **sister** got all the goods. **When** you feel **life** didn't deal you the right cards.
- G. **What if we could show Leah Matthew 1?**

1. **Jesus** is from **Judah**. Judah is from **Leah**. The one that Jacob never wanted. *The Savior of the world was born out of the **rejection** of the woman who was unloved by Jacob.*
2. Do you feel rejected? Unloved? A failure? Flawed? Here we watch her move from **rejection** to **blessing**. She gave him the child who would **save the world**.
3. Leah's story illustrates that **God** often chooses to fulfill His purposes by using those who are **overlooked** by others.

H. Contemplation: Where might God be looking to step into your life where **you** might need some help? Are you looking to your spouse for **validation**? Can you identify any **shame** you've been covering, that you need to look to Jesus for help? Can you say tonight, *at this time I will praise the Lord!* Will you choose to **praise** the Lord **right now**? Do you feel rejected, unloved, a failure, flawed, overlooked? Move from rejection to blessing.