

## 2009 HERO #4 LEAH- A DESPERATE HOUSEWIFE

Genesis 29::1-30

This summer we have studied  
 The sad story of Sarah and Hagar,  
 The adultery of David and Bathsheba  
 The fighting of Esau and Jacob,  
 The murder of Uriah,  
 The deceit and treachery of Jacob and Laban,  
 Today we look at the pain of Rachael and Leah.

The Bible is full of messy families.  
 Yet for some reason we love to hear about their  
 deceit, intrigue, sex, favoritism,  
 Broken promises, and even death.  
 Perhaps it gives us some hope as we  
 Look at our own family messes.  
 What captivated millions of people these last 3 weeks?  
 They were watching the Michael Jackson family and life in review.  
 What a complicated review of a human family in Ciaos.  
 Indeed, if the truth be told,  
 Some of us are in some real messes right now.

But the Bible shows us that God loves messy people,  
 He can turn messes in to miracles.  
 Don't give up, because he's not through with us yet.

Leah was the first born of Laban family,  
 She was a baby only a mother could love.  
 a homely child.  
 That would have been acceptable if you're an only child.  
 But a second girl was born: Rachael  
 And everyone ooh and aahed over her.  
 Saying to Leah, "Isn't Rachel Beautiful, you must be so proud  
 To have such a beautiful sister."  
 When the girls were older it would sound like:  
 "Why Rachael you are so beautiful- just like your mother,  
 And Leah, what a pretty dress you have on."

Even the Bible records that  
**Leah had weak eyes, but Rachel as lovely in form and beautiful. Genesis 29:16-17**  
 Our heart goes out to Leah  
 It wasn't her fault she had weak eyes. Sleepy eyes,  
 Her name means "Wearied,"  
 Some commentaries translate her name meaning "Cow"  
 While Rachel means "ewe"  
 Rachel was a cute little lame.  
 Leah was Elsie the Cow.

## A FATHER'S FAVORITE

This is one story that didn't make the nursery rhymes.

And some of you understand the feelings Leah felt.  
 Because you too were outshined by a brother or sister,  
 out loved by a sibling.  
 out-performed in athletics, music, academics, or life.

Our world today favors beauty over the beast,  
 slim over those who are more rounded.  
 Clear skinned over those of blemish,  
 Tall and slender over those who are short and blighted.  
 What young girl has not stood in front of a mirror and  
 been discouraged by the reflection she sees?  
 I am dismayed by 'the pressure little girls have today.  
 I was awakened by my granddaughter last week at 3:00 in the morning,  
 She needed to go to the bathroom.  
 I got her up.  
 When she came out she had wet down her hair,  
 Because she doesn't like her curly red hair,  
 She wants it to be straight like all the other little girls.  
 I love her curly red hair.

What doesn't help Leah, she feels unloved,  
 In the favoritism of the parents,  
 Now I know most parents really try to love their children alike.  
 We all try to help our children claim the beauty and gifts  
 God has given them.  
 And to love themselves as God created them.

I used to walk by my kids bathroom when they were getting  
 Dressed as they were standing looking in the mirror,  
 I would stop and say: Do you like what you see?  
 Aw Dad!  
 God does,  
 And daddy does.

Leah and Rachel's parents were insensitive  
 to the struggles of their daughters,  
 Laban was outright crude about it,  
 He wanted to get Leah off his hands and married,  
 By hook or by crook.  
 So he could get a larger dowry from Rachel.  
 And he ignored Leah's desperate need for affirmation

### **JACOB'S ARRIVAL**

Jacob was on the lam,  
 He had bamboozled his brother Esau out of his birthright as the firstborn,  
 And deceived his old blind father with a piece of hairy goat skin,  
 And stole the blessing.  
 Esau was going to kill him,  
 So he fled.

After a long journey,

He pulled into the rest stop near the well of Uncle Laban,  
 The well was a place to check out young available girls,  
 Just like the mall is today or the parking lots of 6<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
 “Let’s go down and cruise the well.”

That is what Jacob did.

**There he saw a well in the field, with three flocks of sheep lying near it because the flocks were watered from that well. The stone over the mouth of the well was large. Genesis 29:2**

He spotted the beautiful Rachel.  
 With sheep to be watered at the well.  
 And whether he was trying to impress her or not.  
 he moved the stone from the mouth of the well.  
 And waters her sheep.

The well had an owner.  
 When all the flocks were gathered,  
 The stone was rolled away.  
 The owner supervising the well to keep the water from being polluted.

**When all the flocks were gathered there, the shepherds would roll the stone away from the well’s mouth and water the sheep. Then they would return the stone to its place over the mouth of the well. Genesis 29:3**

Jacob takes matters into his own hands.  
 Breaks the deal, and steals the water!  
 Remember he just came from an encounter with God  
 He had promise to be done with dishonest and deceptive living.  
 But he allowed his lustful passion to compete with his godliness.  
 It’s like,  
 “If God will be with me, then the LORD will be my...hellooo beautiful”

You remember Isaac’s method of finding a wife was  
 To pray and seek God’s leading.  
 Jacob’s choice for a wife is picked by what his eyes tell him.  
 What Looks Good May Not Be Good

### **TWO TRICKSTERS MEET:**

Uncle Laban is thrilled to meet his sister’s boy.

**As soon as Laban heard the news about Jacob, his sister’s son, he hurried to meet him. He embraced him and kissed him and brought him to his home and there Jacob told him all these things. Genesis 29:13**

**All these things.** I believe means,  
 That Jacob came clean with Laban.  
 He told him the whole story of his deceit, theft, and trickery.  
 And his fleeing from his brother.  
 And his experience of God in the wilderness.

**Jacob was in love with Rachel and said: “I’ll work for you seven years in return for your younger daughter Rachel. Genesis 29:18**

Laban could hardly conceal his glee.

He had just won the lottery.  
seven years of free labor and a nephew as his son-in-law.

But Laban had a problem.  
The custom was that the older sister was to be married first.  
Let's just say: that Jacob liked sheep more than cows.

Our heart goes out to Leah.  
No man wanted her.  
Seven years later still unmarried,  
And her father at wit's end trying to get rid of her.  
**So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her. Genesis 29:20**

Then Jacob said to Laban.  
**Give me my wife. My time is completed, and I want to lie with her. Genesis 29:21**  
Here is the twist of words that shammed Jacob.  
Had he told Laban Give me Rachael, my wife,  
Then Laban would have had no excuse for giving him Leah.  
**Give me my wife. My time is completed, and I want to lie with her. Genesis 29:21**  
We have the

### **WEDDING NIGHT SWITCH**

How Laban pulled this off is unknown,  
Was Leah so convinced that no one would ever want her that the only way  
for marriage was for someone to be tricked into taking her?  
She did what her father told her to.  
Where was Rachel? Was she locked in her room.

But Jacob is also to blame.  
He had lived with these girls for seven years.  
Surely by this time he would know the difference.  
Even in the dark.  
Leah wore Rachel's bridal veil.  
Which was taken off in the darkness of the bridal chamber,

The other thing we would do well to take warning from is  
The Hebrew word for "Wedding feast" means: Drinking party.  
Laban got Jacob drunk on his wedding night.  
And friends we haven't learned much after 3000 years.

The trickster was tricked.  
The Bible simply says:  
**When morning came, it was Leah Genesis 29:25**  
That would put a lump in your bowl of cereal wouldn't it?

Poor Leah's had gone to her wedding night hoping that  
If she just gave Jacob everything  
She could change his heart.  
How many young girls have sold their purity for these very same thing?

The next morning she saw it all in his eyes,  
Her broken dreams and bitter disappointment,  
“Oh no its you.”

We have all heard those words, or felt them  
Jacob cried foul.

**What is this you have done to me? I served you for Rachel, didn't I? Why have you deceived me? Genesis 29:25**

Laban replied: **It is not our custom here to give the younger daughter in marriage before the older one. Finish this daughter's bridal week; then we will give you the younger one also, in return for another seven years of work. Genesis 29:26-27**

Leah is crushed hearing the news,  
Neither her father or her husband wanted her.  
Heartsick and heartbroken,

**He finished the week with Leah, and then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife. Genesis 29:28**

One week and Leah is at another wedding,  
This time her sisters, a rival wife of her husband.

**Jacob lay with Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than Leah. And he worked for Laban another seven years. Genesis 29:30**

What a Gonzilla honeymoon it must have been for Leah,  
Knowing her husband couldn't wait for it to be over.  
Then in the second week of her marriage,  
Kicked out of her wedding bed,  
She had to watch the new lovebirds coo and cuddle in the blush of romance fulfilled.

We can all remember times where we were not chosen.  
The emotional scars that cut us deep.  
With the hurt as our beloved moved out and on to someone else  
who seemed more glittery and alluring.

Leah faced her life and faithfully preformed her marital duties  
To an ungrateful husband whose affections were elsewhere.

But God rewarded her perfunctional obedience with blessing.  
And Leah begins to have children,  
And it is through her children we see her healing.  
First child was called.

**Reuben:** which means **:See a son. Because the Lord has looked on my affliction; surely now my husband will love me. Genessi 29:32**

A second son: **Simeon**” because **the lord had heard that I am hated. Genesis 29:33**  
Hated meaning to love less.

Third son. **Levi:** Joined. **Now this time my husband will be joined to me, because I have born him three sons. Genesis 29:34**

Finally Leah came to see that  
She would never be Jacob's first love,  
But she accepted the fact that she still had a home and a family with Jacob.

And she began to turn her attention for love to God.

The fourth son was named: **Judah**.

Which means praise.

**This time I will praise the Lord; Genesis 29:35**

Forget Rachel and Jacob.

Forget trying to earn Jacob's love.

Forget even trying to get the scraps of Jacob's affection.

'I will praise the Lord.'

Leah finds her true love in God.

The joy of the Lord is her strength.

In the end: Leah finds the love she so has cherished.

From the 49 children and grandchildren.

who love and cherish her.

Where is God in all this rivalry and deceit?

Where is God in our family messes?

And what good that can come out of this family warfare.

First of all the law is changed.

**In Leviticus 18:18 that you could not take your sister as a rival wife.**

The law came to late for Leah

2<sup>nd</sup>. We are reminded that we are to love the Lord our God first.

Not our husbands, not our wives,

**Trust in Him at all times, O people, pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge. Psalms 62:8**

3<sup>rd</sup>. Take charge of your life and actions.

Don't let other push or move you into sin.

Leah's behavior enhanced Laban deceit

She could have taken off Rachael's veil.

She could have fled from Jacob's tent rather than climb into bed.

There are worse things than being single.

She would have spared them both a lifetime of heartache.

**For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. I Peter 2:15**

4<sup>th</sup> REMEMBER that even in the darkest moment God is still in control.

And he will work it out to his will and way.

We walk by faith and not by sight.

**Proverbs 14:12 says, "There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death."**

5<sup>th</sup> Let God determine your destiny and purpose in life. Think about this:

Christ was born from the lineage of Leah and not Rachel. Genesis 29:35

Even the priestly Levites came from Leah (Gen. 29:34)!

If you will trust God today with your life and your family,

He came and will make a miracle out of your messes.