

WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE CLASS
MARCH 8, 2023
GENESIS 30:1-23

INTRODUCTION:

1. From Genesis 29.31 down to Genesis 30.23, we find an account of the children who were born to Jacob. Of those children, Leah had nine and Rachel had four.
2. The desire to have children created a rivalry between Rachel and Leah.

I. THE VALUE OF CHILDREN

A. Children were important to Leah.

1. Leah was a wife who was unloved.
 - a) **GENESIS 29.30:** *“Jacob...loved Rachel more than Leah.”*
 - b) Giving Leah to Jacob was not fair to Leah or Jacob. (Gen. 29.25)
 - c) “Unloved” Literally, “to hate, scorn, decrease in status, enemy” (Gen. 29.31,33)
2. After seeing how Leah was treated, God opened Leah’s womb. (Gen. 29.31)
3. Leah saw the children as a path to her husband’s heart.
 - a) **GENESIS 29.32:** *“Now therefore, my husband will love me”*
 - b) **GENESIS 29.33:** *“Because the LORD has heard that I am unloved.”*
 - c) **GENESIS 29.34:** *“Now this time my husband will become attached to me.”*
 - d) **GENESIS 29.35:** *“Now I will praise the LORD.”*

B. Children were important to Rachel.

1. Rachel was jealous of Leah.
 - a) **GENESIS 30.1:** *“Rachel envied her sister”*
 - b) Why? Rachel did not want to lose the affection of her husband. (Gen. 30.14-16)
2. **GENESIS 30.1:** *“Give me children, or else I die!”*
 - a) Such was a common reaction to a distressing situation. (Gen. 27.46; Num. 11.15; 1 Kings 19.4; Job 3.20-22; Jer. 20.14-18; Jonah 4.3,8)
 - b) **GENESIS 30.2:** Instead of appealing to God, Jacob and Rachel turned their anger toward each other. (cf. Gen. 25.21)
3. **GENESIS 30.3-8:** God granted Jacob and Rachel children by Rachel’s maid, Bilhah.
4. **GENESIS 30.9-12:** Leah gave children to Jacob through her maid, Zilpah.
 - a) **GENESIS 30.13-15:** Out of envy, Rachel kept Jacob away from her.
 - b) **GENESIS 30.16:** *“I have surely hired you with my son’s mandrakes”*

II. TWO LESSONS OF APPLICATION

A. Children are a blessing from God.

1. The thirteen children given to Leah, Rachel, and Jacob were from God. (Gen. 29.31)
2. Not having children, women turned to God. (Gen. 25.21; 1 Sam. 1.8-11,19,20)
3. How are children viewed today?
 - a) Do we see our children as a blessing? (Ps. 127.3-5; Prov. 17.6; Gen. 41.51)
 - b) Are children burdens and inconveniences? (Jer. 19.4-6; Ps. 106.37,38)

B. Envy can destroy the lives of those who harbor it.

1. **PROVERBS 14.30:** *“Envy is rottenness to the bones”* (cf. 1 Cor. 3.3)
2. **ECCLESIASTES 4.4:** *“Again, I saw that for all toil and every skillful work a man is envied by his neighbor. This also is vanity and grasping for the wind.”*
3. Heaven has no place for the envious. (Gal. 5.21)