

Leah-Jacob's 1st Wife

Leah is first mentioned in Genesis chapter 29 and verse 16. Her name is mentioned 34 times. 33 times in Genesis and once in Ruth 4:11. Leah seems to be remembered least among Laban's daughter's and Jacob's wives. One reason is the Bible's following of Rachel's son, Joseph. Though seemingly obscure from history, Leah was chosen of God to be a blessing to all men.

Leah as described by the scriptures: Genesis 29:16-17 "And Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷Leah was tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured."

- She was the eldest daughter of Laban.
- Leah was Tender eyed.

This description of her is difficult to truly understand. The Hebrew language does not give a lot of help here. The Hebrew word for tender used is (רַכּוֹת)-(rak-kot). It is defined by Brown-Driver-Briggs as delicate, weak of eyes. Gesenius defines it the same. Ancient Hebrew Dictionary defines it also as weak. All of the definitions seem to have a connotation of being defective. This could mean one or more of the following.

1. She had very poor eyesight.
2. She was crossed-eyed or had a lazy eye
3. Her eyes showed a form of weakness in her body. As if she was sick.
4. Glazed over as with cataracts.

I do believe from the context of Verse 17, that it was a form that obstructed her beauty. The writer declares this with the following about Leah's sister; "but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured"

It does not seem that this description is meaning she was sick in body. Her health seems to be good, allowing her to endure her life as a woman, spouse and mother without difficulty.

As stated above, Leah can be easily overlooked because of Rachel's story and the following of her son as a provider for all men. Nevertheless, let's try to look at Leah and pray the Holy Spirit may reveal her to us.

Before we go any further, I feel it necessary to state, that it does not matter how the world may see us, we all have a place in the work of the Lord. How we react to those statements that may be made about us, will greatly influence the way we serve the Lord. Care not what the world may say about you, Serve God in Spirit and Truth and you will be blessed and made a witness for others.

A type of sociology is called "Social Stratification", unfortunately this is the way people judge others on who they are, what they can do and the value they are in society. Social stratification refers to the categorization of people based on wealth, income, race education, ethnicity, gender, occupation, social status, religion etc....

This classification is the result of sin. Man, no longer seen themselves as equals created in the image of God. Because of sin people see themselves better than others and forget that all are created after the similitude of Adam.

We are of Adam:

Acts 17:26 "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;"

Malachi 2:10 "Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?"

Proverbs 22:2 "The rich and poor meet together: the LORD is the maker of them all."

We are all sinners:

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"

Romans 5:12 "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"

Romans 5:18 "**Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation;** even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life."

When we are saved, each of us has a job that God has preordained:

Ephesians 2:10 "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Galatians 3:28 "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

Be all that we can be toward God and not be bothered by the actions of others. God has promised to bless the works of the faithful:

Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected (Future and an Hope) end."

Isaiah 46:9-10 "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, ¹⁰ Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:"

Romans 8:28 "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

What we know of Leah:

1. Leah was rejected:

- Her Father gave her away using deceit. I may be looking too far into this, but it may have seemed to her that she was not wanted by anyone and that the only way she would be married was in this manner.
- May have been rejected by her sister: Rachel envied Leah. Chapter 30:1 This form of the Hebrew (qānā) used is translated into “envied” often denotes jealous anger. This seems to be the case here with the comment that Rachel would make to Jacob. *Genesis 30:1 “And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die.”*
- She was rejected by Jacob: Jacob spent one night with her and when he found out it was Leah, he ran to Laban. Leah was not even giving time to be with Jacob until he married Rachel. Jacob married her sister a week after. Not for any other reason than she was not loved by Jacob. The feeling of a hope with someone and to be loved, to then be rejected must have broken Leah’s heart.
- Those that should have been her most important people, her father, sister and husband rejected her.
- This caused her great Affliction. *Genesis 29:32 “And Leah conceived, and bare a son, and she called his name Reuben: for she said, Surely the LORD hath looked upon my affliction; now therefore my husband will love me.”* Affliction can also be translated humiliation or poverty.
- As with all of us, we desire to feel loved: *Genesis 29:32 “now therefore my husband will love me”; Genesis 29:33 “Because the Lord hath heard that I was Hated”; Genesis 29:34 “Now this time will my husband be joined unto me”; Genesis 30:20 “now will my husband dwell with me, because I have born him six sons”. (After six sons, she still desired that Jacob would show love to her and yet was left wanting)(As long as we desire the love from the world, we will always be disappointed, yet there is one that Loves us unconditionally, Jesus our Lord and Savior.*

2. Even rejected she remained Loyal.

- Her beauty was within: Despite her continued rejection, she was faithful to Jacob.
- When Jacob was meeting Esau, even though she had given him Six sons, she was placed just behind the handmaidens: *Genesis 33:1-2 “And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids. And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost.”*----- She remained loyal in the face of danger.

3. She was a woman of Faith:

- She gave credit to God – Rachel blamed Jacob; *Genesis 30:1 “Said unto Jacob, Give me children or else I die”*
- 1st Son-Reuben: *Genesis 29:32 “Surely the Lord hath looked upon my affliction;”*
- 2nd Son-Simeon: *Genesis 29:33 “Because the Lord hath heard that I was hated, he hath therefore given me this son also”*
- 3rd Son-Levi: *Genesis 29:34; there is here no record of her praise to God.*
- 4th Son-Judah: *Genesis 29:35 “Now will I praise the Lord”*

- 5th Son-Issachar: Genesis 30:18 “God hath given me Hire”
 - 6th Son-Zebulun: Genesis 30:20 “God hath endued me with a good dowry (gift)”
4. God blesses the forsaken:
- Psalms 27:1-14 - **Psalms 27:10** “When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.”
 - Although Rachel’s first-born son is mentioned in the record of faith (Hebrews 11:22) Leah’s has two son’s that will bring forth son’s that will be seen throughout the whole bible.
 - 3rd Son-Levi: From this son came those that would be ministers to the spiritual things of Israel. Levi had three sons: Genesis 46:11 “And the sons of Levi; Gershon, Kohath and Merari”
 - **Gershon:** His descendants were in charge of the tent coverings of the Tabernacle and hanging of them. Numbers 4:22-26
 - **Merari:** His descendants were in charge boards, bars and pillars of the Tabernacle. Numbers 4:29-33
 - **Kohath:** His descendants were in charge of the furniture of the Tabernacle. Also, from him came the High priesthood. Numbers 3:29-32; Numbers 4:2-21

Though they never received their own portion of Land when the Children of Israel conquered the land of Canaan, they received much more. The blessing of being separated for the work of God and a foreshadow of the Messiah.

- 4th Son-Judah: Came the Kings of Judah and above all else, was the line that brought us our redeemer.
 - See Joseph’s genealogy: Matthew 1:1-16
 - Mary’s genealogy: Luke 3:23-38

Genesis 49:8-12 “Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. ⁹Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? ¹⁰The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. ¹¹Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: ¹²His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk.”

Hebrews 7:14 “For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.”

Revelation 5:5 “And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.”

God doth not see as men: 1 Samuel 16:7 "But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart."

^ We may not be seen as beautiful to the eyes of the World, but to Christ. ^ Isaiah 62:1-4 "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. (2) And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name. (3) Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. (4) Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.