

## *Genesis*

### Chapter 30:1-24

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Last week we read of how Leah had 4 boys, which were the first 4 of 12 for Jacob. We also read that Rachel was unable to have children because the Lord had closed her womb because Leah was unloved by Jacob.

Let's start out this week reading Rachel's response to all of this.

✧ **Gen 30:1-2** <sup>1</sup> *Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and said to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die!"* <sup>2</sup> *And Jacob's anger was aroused against Rachel, and he said, "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?"*

Rachel's response of dieing doesn't mean that she would kill herself. It means that she felt that she was unable to perform her duties as a wife and would die with grief. But her statement was incorrect, as we will see in studies to come. I say this because we will read of Rachel dieing in childbirth.

But aren't we all just like this sometimes? We think we need something and if we don't have it we think that our life no longer has meaning. Yet we seem to forget that we have lived all our lives up to this point without it.

So why is it so important now? Has not God given you all that you need to sustain life? Has God not given you more then you need and blessed you with so many extra things?

I thank God everyday for all that I have. I know God always supplies my needs and beyond. I know God spoils me because He loves me. I may not be rich in the world's eyes, but I know I have much more then others in the world. People in third world countries live on the streets or cardboard houses. Children beg in the streets for food and they even die there. In some countries parents sell their children into slavery just to buy food. We are very spoiled and blessed her in the USA. Don't be like Rachel who had it all but wasn't happy because she thought she didn't have enough.

So Rachel gets mad at her husband because she has been unable to bear children. Now if you think about it, it wasn't Jacob's fault, because we just read last week that he had four boys through Leah. But still, out of anger Rachel blames her husband, and what's his response?

***"Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?"***

or

*I'm not God; I didn't do this to you. If you have a problem with God, ask Him.*

And with this response, Rachel sees that the fault is not her husbands, so she comes up with an idea of how she to can have children.

✧ **Gen 30:3** *So she said, "Here is my maid Bilhah; go in to her, and she will bear a child on my knees, that I also may have children by her."*

Now where have you heard this before (Think Abraham and Sara)? Once again, the teaching of the parents and grandparents continue down the line. This was not an uncommon custom for a woman who could not bear children. But still it doesn't mean it was the right thing to do.

✧ **Gen 30:4-8** *<sup>4</sup> Then she gave him Bilhah her maid as wife, and Jacob went in to her. <sup>5</sup> And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. <sup>6</sup> Then Rachel said, "God has judged my case; and He has also heard my voice and given me a son." Therefore she called his name Dan. <sup>7</sup> And Rachel's maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son. <sup>8</sup> Then Rachel said, "With great wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, and indeed I have prevailed." So she called his name Naphtali.*

Rachel is so caught up in the traditions that she is saying that God had given her a child. It's true a child was born, but not from Rachel, regardless of what she says. God gave Bilhah, her handmaid, the child. If God had heard her voice as she said God did, then He would have allowed her to have children on her own, not through her handmaid.

Just because all of this is going on between Leah and Rachel and their handmaids, doesn't mean that it's OK with God. We've learned at the beginning that God created one woman for one man, not many women for one man.

So before you say that God has blessed you with something, you better be sure it's within what God says is OK. It would be like a man cheating on his wife and the other woman getting pregnant. You could say God has blessed her with a child, but it doesn't mean God blessed how this child was conceived or even the wife of the husband. Throughout the bible, you will read of how people blew it big time, but God still blessed them. In fact we are reading an example of this even now. Satan will try to destroy us and separate us from God by tempting us with sin. But God can take your sin and work it out for His glory.

A perfect example is the rejection of Jesus by the religious leaders. They had Jesus crucified, but even though Satan meant this for destruction and evil, God took it, and through the sins of the religious leaders, and even Judas Iscariot who betrayed Jesus, God was glorified through it all and we have eternal life because of it. Now this doesn't give us justification to sin, so don't use it as an excuse.

So through Bilhah Dan was conceived.

**Dan** means: "*A judge*"

Someone who we all know about and read about from the tribe of Dan was Samson.

† **Judges 13:2** *Now there was a certain man from Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren and had no children.*

Manoah was Samson's father.

### **Jacob's blessing for Dan**

† **Gen 49:16-18** <sup>16</sup> *"Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel. <sup>17</sup> Dan shall be a serpent by the way, a viper by the path, that bites the horse's heels So that its rider shall fall backward. <sup>18</sup> I have waited for your salvation, O LORD!*

### **Moses' blessing for the tribe of Dan**

† **Deut 33:22** *And of Dan he said: "Dan is a lion's whelp; He shall leap from Bashan."*

Dan is not mentioned as one of the 12 Tribes in the book of Revelation

The next son born to Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid was Naphtali

**Naphtali** means: "wrestling"

The land of Naphtali was the beginning of Jesus preaching.

† **Matt 4:13-17** <sup>13</sup> *And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, <sup>14</sup> that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:<sup>15</sup> "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles:<sup>16</sup> The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned."<sup>17</sup> From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**"*

### **Jacobs blessing for Naphtali**

† **Gen 49:21** *"Naphtali is a deer let loose; He uses beautiful words.*

### **Moses' blessing for the tribe of Naphtali**

† **Deut 33:23** *And of Naphtali he said: "O Naphtali, satisfied with favor, And full of the blessing of the LORD, Possess the west and the south."*

**144,000** mentioned in the book of Revelation

† **Rev 7: 6b** *of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed;*

✧ **Gen 30:9-13** <sup>9</sup> *When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took Zilpah her maid and gave her to Jacob as wife. <sup>10</sup> And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son. <sup>11</sup> Then Leah said, "A troop comes!" So she called his name Gad. <sup>12</sup> And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a second son. <sup>13</sup> Then Leah said, "I am happy, for the daughters will call me blessed." So she called his name Asher.*

The battle continues for Jacob's love as a husband. So what does Leah do? The same thing her sister did, she gave her maid to Jacob to bear children for her. And from this maid came two more sons, Gad and Asher.

**Gad** means: "troop"

The prophet Elijah was from the tribe of Gad.

† **1 Kings 17:1** *And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word."*

Some of the men who followed king David were from Gad and were mighty warriors.

† **1 Chron 12:8 & 14 8** *Some Gadites joined David at the stronghold in the wilderness, mighty men of valor, men trained for battle, who could handle shield and spear, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as gazelles on the mountains:  
<sup>14</sup> These were from the sons of Gad, captains of the army; the least was over a hundred, and the greatest was over a thousand.*

**Jacobs blessing for Gad**

† **Gen 49:19** *"Gad, a troop shall tramp upon him, But he shall triumph at last.*

**Moses' blessing for the tribe of Gad**

† **Deut 33:20-21** <sup>20</sup> *And of Gad he said: "Blessed is he who enlarges Gad; He dwells as a lion, and tears the arm and the crown of his head. <sup>21</sup> He provided the first part for himself, because a lawgiver's portion was reserved there. He came with the heads of the people; He administered the justice of the LORD, And His judgments with Israel."*

**144,000 mentioned in the book of Revelation**

† **Rev 7: 5c** *of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed;*

After Gad, was born **Asher** which means: “*happy*”

A woman prophet came from the tribe of Asher.

† **Luke 2:36** *Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity;*

The tribe seems to have taken no important part in the subsequent history. It raised no hero, and gave no deliverer to the nation.

Jacobs blessing for Asher

† **Gen 49:20** *"Bread from Asher shall be rich, and he shall yield royal dainties.*

**Moses' blessing for the tribe of Asher**

† **Deut 33:24-25** *<sup>24</sup> And of Asher he said: "Asher is most blessed of sons; Let him be favored by his brothers, and let him dip his foot in oil. <sup>25</sup> Your sandals shall be iron and bronze; As your days, so shall your strength be*

**144,000 mentioned in the book of Revelation**

† **Rev 7:6a** *of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand were sealed;*

✧ **Gen 30:14-16** *<sup>14</sup> Now Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes." <sup>15</sup> But she said to her, "Is it a small matter that you have taken away my husband? Would you take away my son's mandrakes also?" And Rachel said, "Therefore he will lie with you tonight for your son's mandrakes." <sup>16</sup> When Jacob came out of the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, "You must come in to me, for I have surely hired you with my son's mandrakes." And he lay with her that night.*

If you'll remember from last week's study, Reuben was the first born of Jacob to Leah. So what was so important about some old flowers here that Rachel was willing to allow Leah to sleep with Jacob that night?

Mandrakes are more than just a flower. In fact they are called “Love Apples” for a very good reason. Mandrakes were rare to find and if you did, it was a great find. Mandrakes grew close to the ground like a strawberry. They had a white flower that produced a small round red fruit like a little apple. It's believed that this fruit is an aphrodisiac or a love potion in a sense. Basically if you eat it, it would put you in the mood for love.

From the mandrake plants grew roots like carrots and it was believed that if you ate the root that it would make a woman fertile (able to have children). So you see why this little flower was so important to Rachel since she was unable to bear children at this time.

It's obvious that Leah did give some of these mandrakes to Rachel, because when Jacob came in from the field, she basically said to him, "*it's my turn Jacob.*" She even told him that it was because the mandrakes were given to Rachel.

Now since Jacob loved Rachel so much, you would think that he would be excited because possibly Rachel would be able to have children now. But he was stuck with Leah that night instead and would have to save his passion for another night.

So, did this mandrake work for Rachel? Let's read on and see.

✂ **Gen 30:17-21** <sup>17</sup> *And God listened to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son.* <sup>18</sup> *Leah said, "God has given me my wages, because I have given my maid to my husband." So she called his name Issachar.* <sup>19</sup> *Then Leah conceived again and bore Jacob a sixth son.* <sup>20</sup> *And Leah said, "God has endowed me with a good endowment; now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons." So she called his name Zebulun.* <sup>21</sup> *Afterward she bore a daughter, and called her name Dinah.*

"Wait, wait, wait a minute here. How come Leah had children and not Rachel?" you may be thinking.

Remember no matter what you do, everything is in God's hands. And if God says no children right now, then that is what will happen. If God says not to marry that man or woman, it would be wise to listen to Him. If God says to stay at your job, or even leave it, then trust in Him. With all-important decision like this, you should be seeking the Lord and if you seek His will, do what He says.

A child will ask for a cookie and the parent will say, "No", but they take one anyway and end up getting into trouble for it. The same should be with us. If we ask God for something and He says no, then we shouldn't go out and get it anyway or there will be trouble in store. Isn't that why God says no in the first place? Not to spoil our fun, but to protect us, as a parent does with its child.

Issachar was the 5th son born to Leah.

**Issachar** means: "*there is recompense*" or "*God hath given me*"

Leah said this about God when Issachar was born "***God has given me my wages,***" which is an interesting statement since she may have conceived the night she hired Jacob with her mandrakes.

**Jacobs blessing for Issachar**

† **Gen 49:14-15** <sup>14</sup> *"Issachar is a strong donkey, Lying down between two burdens; <sup>15</sup> He saw that rest was good, And that the land was pleasant; He bowed his shoulder to bear a burden, And became a band of slaves.*

#### **Moses' blessing for the tribe of Issachar (and Zebulun)**

† **Deut 33:18-19** <sup>18</sup> *And of Zebulun he said: "Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going out, And Issachar in your tents!" <sup>19</sup> They shall call the peoples to the mountain; There they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness; For they shall partake of the abundance of the seas And of treasures hidden in the sand."*

#### **144,000 mentioned in the book of Revelation**

† **Rev 7:7c** *of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed;*

Zebulun was born afterwards.

**Zebulun** means: "exalted"

Not much is mentioned about Zebulun.

#### **Jacobs blessing for Zebulun**

† **Gen 49:13** *"Zebulun shall dwell by the haven of the sea; He shall become a haven for ships, And his border shall adjoin Sidon.*

#### **Moses' blessing for the tribe of Zebulun**

† **Deut 33:** <sup>18</sup> *And of Zebulun he said: "Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going out, And Issachar in your tents!" <sup>19</sup> They shall call the peoples to the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness; for they shall partake of the abundance of the seas And of treasures hidden in the sand."*

#### **144,000 mentioned in the book of Revelation**

† **Rev 7:8a** *of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand were sealed;*

Leah then has one final child, but this is not a boy, but a girl named Dinah. It is possible that other girls were born during this time. But it's rare that a woman is named amongst the genealogies. But there is a purpose why she is named here, which we will see in the studies to come. We did read a little about it last week and if you can't wait to find out, I would encourage you to read ahead in chapter 34.

✧ **Gen 30:22-24** <sup>22</sup> *Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb. <sup>23</sup> And she conceived and bore a son, and said, "God has*

*taken away my reproach." 24 So she called his name Joseph, and said, "The LORD shall add to me another son."*

After all of this, don't you just want to breath a sigh of relief for Rachel?

So, did God forget about Rachel? No, "to remember" means to think about. God was thinking about Rachel and her inability to have children. By reading this we see that God was in control of this whole situation, and only when God allowed Rachel to have children did it happen.

In the NLT it reads like this.

✎ **Gen 30:22 (NLT)** *Then God remembered Rachel's plight and answered her prayers by giving her a child.*

Finally son number 11 for Jacob is Joseph.

**Joseph** means: "*Jehovah has added*"

We will not get into Joseph right now because we will learn a lot about him in the coming studies in Genesis.

### **Jacobs blessing for Joseph**

† **Gen 49:22-26** <sup>22</sup> *"Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well; His branches run over the wall. 23 The archers have bitterly grieved him, Shot at him and hated him. 24 But his bow remained in strength, And the arms of his hands were made strong By the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob (From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), 25 By the God of your father who will help you, And by the Almighty who will bless you With blessings of heaven above, Blessings of the deep that lies beneath, Blessings of the breasts and of the womb. 26 The blessings of your father have excelled the blessings of my ancestors, Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. They shall be on the head of Joseph, And on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers.*

### **Moses' blessing for the tribe of Joseph**

† **Deut 33:13-17** <sup>13</sup> *And of Joseph he said: "Blessed of the LORD is his land, With the precious things of heaven, with the dew, And the deep lying beneath, 14 With the precious fruits of the sun, With the precious produce of the months, 15 With the best things of the ancient mountains, With the precious things of the everlasting hills, 16 With the precious things of the earth and its fullness, And the favor of Him who dwelt in the bush. Let the blessing come 'on the head of Joseph, And on the crown of the head of him who was separate from his brothers.' 17 His glory is like a firstborn bull, and his horns like the horns of the wild ox; Together with them He shall push the peoples To the ends of the earth;*

*They are the ten thousands of Ephraim, And they are the thousands of Manasseh."*

**144,000 mentioned in the book of Revelation**

† *Rev 7:8b of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed;*

So that's it for the sons.

*"Wait a minute, I thought there were 12 sons? Where is number 12?"*

You are right, there is a 12<sup>th</sup> son named Benjamin, but he won't be born until the 35<sup>th</sup> chapter.

To close this week's study. One thing that stands out is Rachel's closing statement when God blesses her with a son.

*"The LORD shall add to me another son."*

God just blessed her with her first son, but it wasn't enough for her. She basically is saying that God will give her another son, which He will. But she will have no other children and will not be able to enjoy her last son.