

Battle for Babies

Genesis 29.31-30.24

Text may SURPRISE You that we're reading Story of God's HOLY Family ONE Family on Whole Earth 4000 yrs ago in COVENANT w/ CREATOR God CHOSEN to SHOW God to World by their WORDS and ACTIONS!

NOWHERE Else People can GO to SEE and KNOW God who can SAVE Them MIGHT be TRUE for You in your Classroom, Office, or Apartment Complex! ON-LOOKER Chosen Family of Jacob 4000 yrs ago MIGHT be CONFUSED!?"
"If this is what GOD looks like in Person's life, not so sure I WANT HIM!"

1. Sad Sisters

JACOB Covenant Princeling – Son of Isaac, Grandson of Abraham

Went BACK Home to MARRY & Start Family > DECEIT – got 2 WIVES!

in the evening he (*Laban*) took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and he went in to her. (Laban gave his female servant Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her servant.)... Then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife. (Laban gave his female servant Bilhah to his daughter Rachel to be her servant.) So Jacob went in to Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than Leah...

Genesis 29.23,24,28-30

Female Servants: Ancient Near Eastern CUSTOM – Historical Accuracy Text

JACOB > Single Man in 80's to LEADER of 4 Women in Home >> BED!

a. Victims and Victimiziers – Sisters SINNERS who were SINNED Against

VICTIMS:

Little Girls DREAMED: Marriage, Family > Probably NOT Same Man!

DECEITFUL DADDY had OWN, Selfish Plan for his LITTLE GIRLS

Rachel and Leah said, "Is there any portion or inheritance left to us in our father's house? Are we not regarded by him as foreigners? For he has sold us, and he has indeed devoured our money. Genesis 31.14,15

v. 32 Leah said, "...for now my husband will love me."

v. 34 "Now this time my husband will be attached to me.."

v. 1 Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, she envied her sister. She said to Jacob, "Give me children, or I shall die!"

TEXT Who is Queen of MAMA HILL? – FIGHT of 2 Sisters, 2 Wives of Jacob

NEITHER wants to be NUMBER 2 Wife > Life of PAIN and REGRET

WAY to Man's Heart? 1) FOOD – Jacob is Mama's Boy, COOKING Expert

2) SONS – Carry his NAME and EXTEND his RESPECT in Community

VICTIMIZERS:

CRUEL trick on JACOB > Some level of COOPERATION – Silent Compliance

REASON Leah Cooperated with WEDDING Night Prank, Wanted Husband

TEXT – Battle for BABIES – 7 years of DIAPERS and SLEEPLESS NIGHTS

11 SONS, 1 DAUGHTER (that we know of), 4 WIVES > Watermelon Season!



Young REUBEN – 4 or 5 – Playing in FIELD

Finds MANDRAKE Fruits > **NOW order on TAobao**

Ancient times APHRODISIAC to INDUCE FERTILITY

Both RACHEL & LEAH Convinced of their LIFE-CREATING Power

vs. 14,15 Then Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes." 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?"

Leah was TIRED & BITTER of BITTER BATTLE over BABIES

v. 8 Rachel said, "With mighty wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister and have prevailed." --- spoken *BEFORE* she had ONE Child (Servant: 2, Leah: 4)

b. Half Empty – both Sisters see GLASS as HALF EMPTY

LEAH is looking for LOVE / RACHEL is looking for CHILDREN

LEAH has CHILDREN / RACHEL has LOVE

The story demonstrates the craving of human beings for love and recognition,
and the price of thwarting it. Derek Kidner

Realize – speaking as One BLESSED w/ Love & Kids – areas of PAIN, HURT

Sometimes We EXPECT the COMPLETE Package – STORY BOOK Fantasy!

PERFECT SPOUSE – KIDS – HOME – JOB – CHURCH – FRIENDS....

DANGER: We can be LOOKING for LOVE in all the WRONG PLACES!

BABY Battle RAGES – Score CHANGES from 4 to 0 TO 4 to 2

TEAM LEAH needs to Step Up SERVANT ZILPAH Ordered to PRODUCE

vs. 9-13 When Leah saw that she had ceased bearing children, she took her servant Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife. Then Leah's servant Zilpah bore Jacob a son. And Leah said, “Good fortune has come!” so she called his name Gad. Leah's servant Zilpah bore Jacob a second son. And Leah said, “Happy am I! For women have called me happy.” So she called his name Asher.

GAD – ((Not ref to GOD)) = GOOD LUCK! FORTUNE! “Lucky ME!”

NOT PRAYER or PRAISE but Exclamation of PRIDE! WINNING Battle!

ASHER – “How HAPPY am I!” – Trying to CONVINCe Herself

LEAH – NOT a HEATHEN or PAGAN > Great, Great GRANNY of JESUS!

Needs to KNOW the HOPE and JOY her GREAT Descendent came to BRING

Jesus: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you.”
John 14.27

Success over her BARREN Sister > NEVER does WIN LOVE of Husband!

Best she HOPEs for in LIFE is ACCLAIM of OTHER WOMEN: SUPER MOM

ASHER = “Women will CALL Me HAPPY, I will be ENVIED!!”

FOLLOWER of God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob who ENDURED Much Difficulty

I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me. Philippians 4.11-13

GLAD Paul includes 3 Words “I have learned” – NOT Natural INSTINCT

CONTENTMENT is a PROCESS – JOURNEY to Grow in God’s PEACE

PUT our LIVES in Hands of HIM who gives us STRENGTH

GLASS may be Half-Empty but HE promises FULLNESS, Abundant LIFE

c. Religious Idolaters – God may not be in their Lives, but on their LIPS

They are TALKING the TALK / Slowly learn to WALK the WALK

v. 32 Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben, for she said, “Because the LORD has looked upon my affliction; for now my husband will love me.” --- **lit. SEE A SON!!**

LEAH is DESPERATE that JACOB who SCORNS her will NOW SEE HER!

v. 33 She conceived again and bore a son, and said, “Because the LORD has heard that I am hated, he has given me this son also.” And she called his name Simeon. >> **The Lord has HEARD that I AM HATED!!**

WORD of HOPELESSNESS: First Son REUBEN was NEVER made her SEEN

v. 34 Again she conceived and bore a son, and said, “Now this time my husband will be attached to me, because I have borne him three sons.” Therefore his name was called Levi. --- **MY Husband WILL BE Attached TO ME!**

With EACH SON BORN she hopes for LOVE!! Hopes DASHED

But LOOK CLOSELY – God’s Name used, but she does NOT WANT GOD!!

In our sympathy for her difficult position, we should not miss the fact that...while she took the Lord's name on her lips...it was her husband's approval that she regarded as truly essential to a meaningful life...This is the essence of idolatry: someone or something other than the living God is occupying the God-shaped space at the core of our being. Iain Duguid

WE LEARN what our IDOLS are thru LOSS

As long as HAVE THINGS – Feed our IDOLS, they SMILE on Us > Happy!

We are OBLIVIOUS to their CONTROLLING POWER over US

We are Happy, HEALTHY, WEALTHY --- Life is BEAUTIFUL

Then LOSS – Health, Job, Death, Sickness, Trouble > See Ourselves & IDOLS

SISTERS cannot LIVE without SONS, AFFIRMATION, RESPECT, STATUS

BABY BATTLES FUELED by INSECURITY and IDOLATRY

BRIGHT MOMENT in Leah's Life – Sees for Season LOVE from God is Best

v. 35 And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "This time I will praise the LORD." Therefore she called his name Judah. Then she ceased bearing.

In COUPLE Years she will GET BACK into BABY BATTLE > Ends with 7!

Will TRUST in the WAY of MAN, WORLD in RIVALRY with SISTER

But HERE SHE gets it RIGHT! "I will Praise Him!"

UNLOVED Leah able to TRANSCEND her DISTRESS > Call on God in HOPE

2. Silent Stud

In Genesis 25 Esau came in from the fields having had no success, saw food that he needed badly, and sold his birthright to Jacob in the bargain. In Genesis 30 Reuben goes out to the field and has success in finding something. Rachel wants the food he has found and trades an opportunity for conception...Esau had become nothing but a pawn, and now Jacob finds himself in the same situation

John Walton

a. Not Leading

COVENANT demands COMMITMENT > BLESSED to BE a BLESSING

Isaac called Jacob and blessed him and directed him, "...God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may become a company of peoples. May he give the blessing of Abraham to you and to your offspring with you..."
Genesis 28.1-4

Text SUMMARY of SEVEN Years of HISTORY of God's HOLY FAMILY

FORMATIVE INFANT Years of PILLARS of NATION of Israel – 12 Tribes

Where is JACOB? SPEAKS just ONCE in TEXT – AWOL, ABSENTEE DAD

BELOVED RACHEL duty of FILLING OUT Everyone's Nightly Dance Cards

vs. 15,16 Rachel said, "Then he may lie with you tonight in exchange for your son's mandrakes." When Jacob came from the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, "You must come in to me, for I have hired you with my son's mandrakes." So he lay with her that night.

JACOB the ROOSTER Compliantly goes to VISIT the RIGHT HEN

Family ETHICS seem more like DOG KENNEL than Godly Home

Family COMFORTABLE Trading things that SHOULD be ABOVE Trade

One Time JACOB speaks: It is NOT MY Fault! YOU need to FIX it!

v. 2 "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?"

Learned well from 1st Father ADAM – Not MY FAULT – God!! WOMAN!!

b. Not Loving

Right Theology! RIGHT DOCTRINE LIFE is from CREATOR GOD

THEOLOGY was DEFENSE Mechanism – Defend SELF

vs. 1,2 When Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, she envied her sister. She said to Jacob, “Give me children, or I shall die!” Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel, and he said, “Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?”

Jacob SPOKE TRUTH but did NOT SPEAK the TRUTH in LOVE

Love without Truth TOO SOFT / Truth without Love TOO HARD

Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ
Ephesians 4.15

BOTH Abraham & Sarah AND Isaac & Rebekah FACED BARRENESS

Unfortunately JACOB allowed RACHEL to Follow Example of Grandma Sarah
Like SARAH got HAGAR so NOW Jacob silently allows SURROGATE Wives

Jacob's PARENTS WAITED on God in PRAYER for 20 years for Children...

And Isaac prayed to the LORD for his wife, because she was barren. And the LORD granted his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived. Genesis 25.21

Jacob's PROBLEM NOT UNANSWERED PRAYERS – UNPRAYED Prayers!

Instead of GENTLY ENCOURAGING her – LOVING Sacrificially like Christ

JACOB blames RACHEL that the PROBLEM is HER PROBLEM

Jacob NOT LEADING and NOT LOVING > BATTLE for BABIES Rages

HANNAH waited on GOD in FERVENT PRAYER for her son SAMUEL

RACHEL was Beautiful on OUTSIDE > BITTER on the INSIDE...

v. 1 “Give me children, or I shall die!”

DESPERATE Cry answered LITERALLY > Will DIE having 2nd SON!

3. Sovereign Savior

a. Purpose – What is THIS doing in the BIBLE?? – T.M.I.!!

TEXT is FRAMED by GOD OPENING the Sister's Wombs

v. 31 When the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb

LEAH is Truly WRONGED Woman – God of JUSTICE comes to her RESCUE

She has MORE CHILDREN than other 3 WOMEN Combined! 7 Children

v. 22 Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb.

Rachel STOPS trying to BE GOD and receives GIFT of SON from GOD

Saw LOVE APPLES / Mandrakes NOT WORK > Just gave LEAH another Son!

For at LEAST this NANO-Second RACHEL sees ONLY God can give LIFE

See BIG Picture > READ this Kardashian DRAMA 4000 yrs after Happened

Dysfunctional FAMILY is God's Family > will become GOD'S NATION

Jesus to Samaritan woman: "...salvation is from the Jews" – HE was a JEW

NOW – because PLAN was Accomplished – Salvation for ALL NATIONS

Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. 1 Corinthians 10.11

b. Pardon – v. 22 "Then God remembered Rachel..." NOT MEMORY LAPSE

REMEMBER is Biblical WORD of REDEMPTION

But God remembered Noah and all the beasts...And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided
Genesis 8.1

Tiny Speck on Vast Ocean engulfing Planet Earth / Floating above Condemned

NOAH COULD SHOUTED "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

"God remembered Noah" – Moses writes from Noah's Perspective

GOD IS OMNISCIENT – GOD CANNOT FORGET – KNOWS ALL THINGS
 NOAH, Rachel, YOU? FELT FORGOTTEN, SILENCE FROM HEAVEN

“God’s remembering always implies movement toward the objects of His
 memory”
 Brevard Childs

TIMES OF GREAT DIFFICULTY – GOD’S CHILDREN FEEL FORGOTTEN

LONGEST DISTANCE – btwn HEAD where you Know something
 to HEART where you FEEL it

God is SYMPATHETIC with our STRUGGLE

WHEN CHILDREN OF ISRAEL WERE SLAVES IN EGYPT –

God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham,
 with Isaac, and with Jacob. God saw the people of Israel—and God knew.
 Exodus 2.24,25

PLEASANT to THINK God Remembers NICE AND NEEDY People

We can be TOUCHED to GIVE to Helpless CHILD – Hungry, Alone, Needy

Will we give MONEY to DRUNK who will just GUZZLE More Booze?

DRUNK not WORTHY of our MONEY or TIME > Suffer for their SINS!

Translate that GOSPEL is for Worthy People: God helps those Help Themselves

See BRIGHT Moment of Redemption in Rachel’s Life > Passes BRIEFLY

vs. 22-24 Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her
 womb. She conceived and bore a son and said, “God has taken away my
 reproach.” And she called his name Joseph, saying, “May the LORD add to me
 another son!”

When she understands that Children come from God - NOTHING Else Works!

Blame Husband / Concubines / Mandrakes / Schemes & DEALS – All Failed

Feeble Prayer “MAY God give me ANOTHER”

Rachel shows MORE GREED than GRATITUDE: “Give me ANOTHER!!”

ABRAHAM shows Salvation by FAITH / JACOB & Wives show is by GRACE

Jacob NO HERO! God is REMEMBERING & RESCUING these LOSERS

FAMILY is CASE STUDY in DYSFUNCTION > Family LOVED by GOD

Family going to be APPLE of God’s Eye for 2000 yrs: FULLNESS of Time

Angel appears to man NAMED Joseph ENGAGED to VIRGIN named MARY

“Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for *he will save his people from their sins.*” Matthew 1.20,21

He did NOT come for RIGHTEOUS, Came for SICK, SINNERS, Unrighteous

Came to CALL SINNERS to REPENTANCE

RACHEL – Give me children or I will DIE!

JESUS – Father, I will DIE to WIN your SONS and DAUGHTERS!

HALLELUJAH! What a SAVIOR!

c. Promise v. 24 And she called his name Joseph

FINALLY the Faithful Jewish Reader says “A man who fears & follows God”

SON born in this SAD Home > Greatest EXAMPLE of Jesus in OLD Covenant

NOT One Bad word Spoken JOSEPH – Firstborn of Rachel, beloved of Jacob

Clearly POINTS to SINLESS SON > FIRSTBORN of all God’s NEW Creation

UTTERLY Lost without God: Hope, Family, Job, Church, Future God-Centered
Life is NOT About Winning, Getting Ahead, Having More > About GOD

WHERE is Your IDOL? What BABY Battle are you FIGHTING?

God works out His Sovereign Purpose thru WRONG Wife!

LEAH becomes MOTHER > KINGLY & PRIESTLY Line > JUDAH & LEVI

In FULLNESS of Time: Great King, High Priest JESUS CHRIST thru LEAH

God SOVEREIGNLY Acts for His People > He ALONE can DELIVER

As we stand before God in as his children, he looks upon us in love because we come in Jesus name. As he looks at us, he no longer sees us marred by the kinds of jealousies and insecurities that this chapter of Scripture records, even though we continue to struggle against the cherished idolatries of our hearts. In Christ, however, those sinful thoughts and actions have been covered by his perfect goodness, which enables us to stand before God, accepted by grace. Christ's spotless record has been given to us.

Iain Duguid

One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple.

Psalm 27.4

Genesis 29³¹When the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb, but Rachel was barren. ³²And Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben, for she said, “Because the LORD has looked upon my affliction; for now my husband will love me.” ³³She conceived again and bore a son, and said, “Because the LORD has heard that I am hated, he has given me this son also.” And she called his name Simeon. ³⁴Again she conceived and bore a son, and said, “Now this time my husband will be attached to me, because I have borne him three sons.” Therefore his name was called Levi. ³⁵And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, “This time I will praise the LORD.” Therefore she called his name Judah. Then she ceased bearing. 30:¹ When Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, she envied her sister. She said to Jacob, “Give me children, or I shall die!” ²Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel, and he said, “Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?” ³Then she said, “Here is my servant Bilhah; go in to her, so that she may give birth on my behalf, that even I may have children through her.” ⁴So she gave him her servant Bilhah as a wife, and Jacob went in to her. ⁵And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. ⁶Then Rachel said, “God has judged me, and has also heard my voice and given me a son.” Therefore she called his name Dan. ⁷Rachel's servant Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son. ⁸Then Rachel said, “With mighty wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister and have prevailed.” So she called his name Naphtali. ⁹When Leah saw that she had ceased bearing children, she took her servant Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife. ¹⁰Then Leah's servant Zilpah bore Jacob a son. ¹¹And Leah said, “Good fortune has come!” so she called his name Gad. ¹²Leah's servant Zilpah bore Jacob a second son. ¹³And Leah said, “Happy am I! For women have called me happy.” So she called his name Asher. ¹⁴In the days of wheat harvest Reuben went 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.” ¹⁵But 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?” Rachel said, “Then he may lie with you tonight in exchange for your son's mandrakes.” ¹⁶When Jacob came from the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, “You must come in to me, for I have hired you with my son's mandrakes.” So he lay with her that night. ¹⁷And God listened to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son. ¹⁸Leah said, “God has given me my wages because I gave my servant to my husband.” So she

called his name Issachar. ¹⁹And Leah conceived again, and she bore Jacob a sixth son. ²⁰Then Leah said, “God has endowed me with a good endowment; now my husband will honor me, because I have borne him six sons.” So she called his name Zebulun. ²¹Afterward she bore a daughter and called her name Dinah. ²²Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb. ²³She conceived and bore a son and said, “God has taken away my reproach.” ²⁴And she called his name Joseph, saying, “May the LORD add to me another son!”