



The Book of Genesis

Lesson Number 50



A MINISTRY INITIATED IN MAY 1993, AND DEDICATED TO STRENGTHENING THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST, BY BUILDING THEIR FAITH, ENHANCING THEIR JOY, AND STABILIZING THEIR HOPE, ENABLING THEM TO WORK OUT THEIR SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.

TRANSLATION LEGEND: ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot m(1992); ALT=Analytical-Literal Translation (2005), AMPLIFIED=Amplified Bible (1965), ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot with Greek Interlinear (2003); ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), BRENT=Brenton's English Septuagint; CEB=Common English Bible (2011); CEV=Contemporary English Version (1995); DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), ERV=English Revised Version (1885), ESV=English Stand Version (2001), GENEVA=Geneva Bible (1599), GNB=Good News (1966), GSNT=Goodspeed (1923), GWN=God's Word (1995), IE=International English (1973), ISV=International Standard Version (1967), JPS=Jewish Publication Society (1917), KJV=King James Version (1611), LITV=Literat Translation of the Bible (1976), LIVING=Living Bible (1971), MESSAGE=The Message (1993), MKJV=Modern KJV (1962), MONTGOMERY=Montgomery's New Testament (2001), MRD=Peshitta-James Murdock Translation (1852), NAB=New American Bible (2002), NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible (1985), NKJV=New King James Version (1979), NLT=New Living Translation (1996), NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), PHILLIPS=J B Phillips New Testament (1962), PNT=Bishop's New Testament (1595), RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakj (1985), WEB=Webster Bible (1833), WEYMOUTH=Weymouth's New Testament (1903), WILLIAMS=William's New Testament (1937), TYNDALE=Tyndale's Bible (1526), WYCLIFFE=Wycliffe New Testament (1382), YLT=Young's Literal Translation (1862)

----- GREEK LEXICON LEGEND -----

LEXICON LEGEND: FRIEBERG = Friberg Lexicon, UBS = Barclay-Newman, LOUW-NIDA = Louw-Nida Lexicon, LIDDELL SCOTT

THE INSPIRED RECORD OF THE BEGINNING OF ALL THINGS: THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, MANKIND, SIN, THE FIRST CHOSEN AND BLESSED NATION, THE FIRST CURSE, THE FIRST PROMISE, AND THE FIRST FAITH.

DISCLAIMER: The quoting of other translations is not to be taken as a condoning of them. My purpose is rather to show the remarkable diversity, and sometimes outright contradictions that exist among these various versions of Scripture. Our understanding of the Word of God ultimately depends upon our comprehension of the Lord Himself and His eternal purpose. Where this understanding is not present, we are shut up to scholasticism and conjecture, both of which are of the world, not of God.

LEAH BEARS CHILDREN BY JACOB

Gen 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. ² And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said, Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb? ³ And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her; and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her. ⁴ And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid to wife: and Jacob went in unto her. ⁵ And Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a son. ⁶ And Rachel said, God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son: therefore called she his name Dan. ⁷ And Bilhah Rachel's maid conceived again, and bare Jacob a second son. ⁸ And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed: and she called his name Naphtali. ⁹ When Leah saw that she had left bearing, she took Zilpah her maid, and gave her Jacob to wife. ¹⁰ And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a son. ¹¹ And Leah said, A troop cometh: and she called his name Gad. ¹² And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a second son. ¹³ And Leah said, Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed: and she called his name Asher. ¹⁴ And Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes. ¹⁵ And she said unto her, Is it a small matter that thou hast taken my husband? and wouldest thou take away my son's mandrakes also? And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with thee to night for thy son's mandrakes. ¹⁶ And Jacob came out of the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said, Thou must come in unto me; for surely I have hired thee with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night. ¹⁷ And God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth son. ¹⁸ And Leah said, God hath given me my hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband: and she called his name Issachar. ¹⁹ And Leah conceived again, and bare Jacob the sixth son. ²⁰ And Leah said, God hath endued me with a good dowry; now will my husband dwell with me, because I have born him six sons: and she called his name Zebulun. ²¹ And afterwards she bare a daughter, and called her name Dinah." (Genesis 30:1-21)

INTRODUCTION

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

In this chapter a kind of competition is seen between Rachel and Leah. Each one is seeking the betterment of Jacob, and each is most

zealous in their undertaking. Knowing what we do about the Lord and his purpose, the activities of these two women may appear rather crude. Yet, we must remember the nature of the

times in which they lived, as well as the fact that reconciliation to God and the new creation had not yet been put in place. Also, the comparative amount of revelation was so small it can scarcely

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be imagined. **Even by default, professing Christians reason with a background of more understanding than they may recognize.** The amount of revelation that has been realized is of such significance that it is possible for even sinners to have some views of God that were not available to those of Jacob's time. This circumstance is something like that which was realized by Laban – certainly not an authority on the God of heaven. Yet, there were certain things that he knew. Later, for example, he will say, *"I have learned by experience that the LORD hath blessed me for thy sake"* (Gen 30:27). Years earlier, when Abraham's servant was there to secure a wife for Isaac, when asked if they were amenable to Rebekah going with him, Laban and his father said, *"The thing proceedeth from the LORD: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good"* (Gen 24:50).

It is to be admitted that such men did not always live up to the knowledge they had. Yet, there was a level of knowledge existent that confirmed God had not left Himself without a witness. As Paul affirmed of those ancient times to some idol-worshippers in Lystra, *"Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn*

from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." (Acts 14:15-17).

GOD ALLOWED MEN TO WALK IN THEIR OWN WAYS

God is thus depicted as allowing men to walk in their own ways – ways which would be altogether unacceptable in the day of salvation. Yet, even then, He left a witness of Himself. He did not approve of their ways, but *"allowed"* them to walk in them, owing to the lack of revelation available to them. This certainly does not answer all of the questions that may have been posed about conditions such as those of our text. However, we do not want to overlook the fact that God also *"left not Himself without witness."* This allowed men to form valid thoughts about God.

- ➡ Sinful Lamech reasoned, *"If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold"* (Gen 4:24).
- ➡ Both Leah and Rachel reasoned on what God had done, even though specific revelation had been given to neither of them (Gen 30:6,18, 20,23).
- ➡ The mariners on the ship Jonah had

taken reasoned during a fierce storm that God might think upon them that they not perish (Jonah 1:5).

- ➡ The citizens of Nineveh reasoned that God could very well turn away from his fierce anger (Jonah 3:9).
- ➡ When they stole the ark of the covenant, the Philistines were able to associate their trouble with a judgment from God (1 Sam 5:8-6:14).

The point is that every generation has enough evidence to seek the Lord and draw some valid conclusions about Him. They should be able to recognize both judgments and blessings as coming from Him.

THE EVENTS OF OUR TEXT

Seeing she had bare no children to Jacob, Rachel; becomes envious of Leah. She gives her handmaid to Jacob, that she might have children through proxy. After Bilhah bore her first son, Rachel said that God had judged her, and heard her voice. After bearing another son, Rachel said she had out-wrestled her sister, Leah. Leah, seeing she was not able to bare children at the time, gives her handmaid to Jacob, and she delivers two children to the patriarch. Still, Leah desires that she herself bare children unto Jacob. After taking certain unique measures, Leah hires Jacob through an agreement with Rachel, to lie with her. She then informs Jacob of the arrangement, and he consents to it. The Lord hearkens unto Leah, and she bears Jacob two more sons – six in all. She also bears a daughter –

After bearing another son, Rachel said she had out-wrestled her sister, Leah. Leah, seeing she was not able to bare children at the time, gives her handmaid to Jacob, and she delivers two children to the patriarch. Still, Leah desires that she herself bare children unto Jacob.

the first of reference in the children of Jacob. Now, after baring six sons, Leah feels that God had given her what she had

intended by hiring Jacob for a night. She reasoned that God had done this because she had given her handmaid to her

husband so he might have more children. Thus the foundation of the nation of Israel is being built.

RACHEL ENVIES LEAH

Gen 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."***

RACHEL SAW THAT SHE BARE NO CHILDREN TO JACOB

"And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children . . ."

Other versions read, *"was not bearing."* ^{NIV} *"realized,"* ^{CEB} *"seeing herself,"* ^{DOUAY} *"saw she could not have children,"* ^{GWN} *"perceived that she bore no children,"* ^{SEPTUAGINT} *"saw she wasn't having any children,"* ^{NLT} *"realizing she was barren,"* ^{LIVING} and *"having perceived."* ^{BRENTON}

The Scripture affirms that Rachel was barren – **now she knows by experience that this is the case.** Her condition not changed. She saw now a state that had existed all along.

For some women, this may not have been a serious matter, and

therefore they would simply have adapted to the circumstance. **However, when the woman had been called into the purpose of God, and His revealed purpose of bringing forth nations, a specific nation, and an ultimate Seed through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, we have a different situation on our hands.** In that context, barrenness is counterproductive, , particularly when involves the wife of Jacob,

At this point, the extent of Rachel's knowledge of Jacob's calling and blessing of the Lord is not fully known. **However, whether she knew it or not, within the circumference of the will of the Lord a certain sensitivity is developed that is not driven by perception.** It is, you might say, intuitive,

Barrenness Confirmed by Experience

Rachel's barrenness was now confirmed by her experience. Actually, she was barren all along, but did not know it until there was an effort for her to bring forth children. Other barren women learned this the same way – included, Sarah and Rebekah.

A Type to be Seen

There is a type to be seen here. There is more than one kind of barrenness. This condition is discovered when the individual makes an effort to do God's will. It is then that they find they are lacking the necessary power. This is a spiritual barrenness and impotence in which the individual cannot produce the *"the fruit of the Spirit."* Such an one cannot produce *"good works,"* even though they may know this is the purpose for which God creates men in Christ Jesus (Eph 2:10). Such people lack Divine power, and the Spirit is not working in them as God intended.

This is easy enough to understand if we are considering those who are not born again, and therefore have not received *"the gift of the Holy Spirit"* (Acts 2:38). **But if the person who has heard and believed the Gospel, been baptized into Christ, and, after some time, is still not able to produce what God expects of them. What of that person?**

Like Rachel, they do not learn of their inability until they set out to do what God requires of them. Those who never engage in a hearty effort to *"do the will of God"* (Mk 3:35) will never know whether, in fact, they can do it or not. In such a case, all speaking about the will of God is really nothing more than philosophical.

What has led to this spiritual impotence There is no simple answer to that question? Some possibilities follow.

➡ **BEGINNER.** Perhaps they are young in the faith, and have not yet obtained a suitable understanding of life in Christ Jesus. This category is referred to as being *"children, tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine"* (Eph 4:14).

➡ **QUENCHER.** It may also be that they are continually quenching and grieving the Holy Spirit with their fleshly manners. If a person does not heed to the solemn warning, *"Quench not the Spirit"* (1 Thess 5:19), they are at once thrust into spiritual barrenness, for the fruit that is required of them is produced by the Holy Spirit.

➡ **UNTAUGHT.** It is also possible that they are not being subjected to *"sound doctrine"* (1 Tim 1:10; Tit 2:1). This condition is similar to that of being *"children tossed to and*



MICHELANGELO'S DEPICTION OF RACHEL AND LEAH

fro." In this case, however, adequate time for them to have learned their state has passed, and because of flawed or skewed teaching, they are still, in the dark.

➔ **NOT BORN AGAIN.** Unless a person is "born again," he can neither see nor enter the Kingdom of God (John 3:3,5).

There is much more that could be said on this matter, but it is not profitable at this time to dwell on it any longer. Suffice it to say, the condition of barrenness exists in the spirit as well as in the flesh. Looking at it more closely, it is also a condition that must be traced back to Divine judgment. **Spiritual growth, or the lack thereof, must not be perceived as being in any way automatic processes that exist independently of the Lord Himself.** There is no facet of spiritual life, from its conception through glorification, in which God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit are not active. Should a person take it upon himself to prove such an erroneous postulate, he would be thrown down to the ground by the Word of the Lord.

RACHEL ENVIED HER SISTER

" . . . Rachel envied her sister. . . "

Other versions read, "became jealous," NASB and "was full of envy." BBE

Rachel's envy was not driven by ordinary pride, as though there was a contest going on between her and Leah. **She rather was grieved because she had not given children to Jacob.** It is true that later, in the history of Jewish women, it was a reproach to be barren – not able to bear children (Gen 20:23; 1 sam 1:6; Isa 54:1; Lk 1:25).

This envy was not driven by personal pride, but by a love for Jacob, and the desire to bear him children. For her, the inability to bear children was a primary deficiency.

GIVE ME CHILDREN

" . . . and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die." Other versions read, "I may as well be dead," CEB and "Give me sons, and if there is none -- I

die" YLT

Here, the strength of Rachel's desire surfaces. This was not a mere emotional outburst. **She saw her life as futile if she did not bare children to Jacob, her husband.** Thus she added, "or else I die." She could not go on living comfortably without bearing children. Life would be such a burden to her that it would not be considered true living. Her words reveal her frustration with life as it was to her at that time.

A Word About Discontentment

Discontentment can be the prelude to proper or improper quests. While it is true that discontentment can be good, it can also be a temptation to lure people into unlawful areas. This calls for a proper and godly response to discontentedness.

It is good to develop real and valid contentment – wherever you are. For

contentment is great gain" (1 Tim 6:6). He continued, "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content" (1 Tim 6:7-8). We are also reminded, "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb 13:5).

In Christ Jesus the state of contentment is available. While this cannot be spelled out to the satisfaction of the flesh, the people of God must believe this is the case, and seek that contentment from the Lord. There is no secret formula to obtaining this contentment – but it can be obtained.

It is good to remember that boredom is the mother of all kinds of transgression, and leads one into a path that is fraught with danger.

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example, David was able to say, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage" (Psa 16:6). The Psalmist admonished, "Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass" (Psa 37:7). He also observed, "A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked" (Psa 37:16).

This side of the cross, Paul observed, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" (Phil 4:11). He reminded Timothy, "But godliness **with**

RESPONSES TO BARRENNESS

It has been interesting to see the responses of the patriarchs and their wives to barrenness.

➔ **SARAH.** Her personal response to barrenness is not recorded, although she did associate the prospect of giving birth to a child to be a "pleasure" (Gen 18:12). Through God's intervention, Sarah conceived. She was barren for the first ninety years of her life.

➔ **REBEKAH.** Her personal response to barrenness is not recorded. However, Isaac did entreat the Lord for her, and was heard (Gen 25:21).

Through Divine intervention Rebekah conceived. She was barren for the first twenty years of her marriage to Isaac.

Lord, that she might bear a child, vowing she would give the son to the Lord all the days of his life (1 Sam 1:6-20). God intervened, and she did conceive.

training is provided for those who desire to be included in something beyond simply occupying a seat and a place on the church roster.

As a result, the thought of bearing fruit to God (Rom 7:4) is virtually unknown at the experiential level. **However, barrenness toward God is infinitely more serious than the barrenness of the womb.** On this subject the Lord has spoken. *"For if these things [virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity] be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."* (2 Pet 1:8). And again, *"For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned."* (Heb 6:7-8).

Bearing thorns and briers is equivalent to being spiritually barren. In the new covenant, it parallels the condition of Israel, who, though cultured to bring forth good grapes, yielded *"wild grapes"* instead (Isa 5:1-2). Of their condition the Lord said, *"Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto Me?"* (Jer 2:21).

In my judgment, the modern church in general, and nominal Christians in particular, should be very discontent with their lack of spiritual productivity – discontent enough to engage in a fervent effort to be fruitful.

It is enough to say the Lord notes our response to being discontent. It has been logged in *"the books"* (Rev 20:12).

➔ RACHEL. Our text reveals the reproach

If it can be established that spiritual productivity is normal, and that provisions have been made for this to take place, there should be a great discontentment wherever spiritual barrenness exists.

she felt because of her barrenness. In some way she must have communicated her desire to the Lord, for it is written later, *"And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb"* (Gen 30:22). Whether He hearkened as a result of what is reported in this portion of the text or not, we do not know. However, through Divine intervention, Rachel eventually conceived. Traditionally, Rachel is considered to have been barren for about the first twenty years of her marriage to Jacob. Her first son was Joseph. Before him Leah had six sons (Gen 30:12), Zilpah had two sons (Gen 30:10,12), and Bilhah had two sons (Gen 30:5,7).

➔ ELIZABETH. Elizabeth considered bearing barren an reproach. Her husband Zecharias sought the Lord concerning her barrenness. His prayers apparently extended over a lengthy period, and were finally heard when they were both very old. The Lord intervened, and Elizabeth gave birth to John the Baptist (Lk 1:11-24).

A Principle to be Seen

If it can be established that spiritual productivity is normal, and that provisions have been made for this to take place, there should be a great discontentment wherever spiritual barrenness exists.

One of the devastating effects of Babylon the Great is that it has made people content to be spiritually barren. After all, arrangements have been made for the organization to handle all of the fruit-bearing. A professional clergy system, supported by all manner of para-ministers take care of the fruit-bearing role of the church. Special

➔ MANOAH'S WIFE. Again, the response of Manoah's wife to her barrenness is not recorded (Judges 13:1-20). Through Divine intervention Manoah's wife conceived.

➔ HANNAH. After enduring reproach from her peers, Hannah sought the

JACOB'S ANGER IS KINDLED

"² And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said, Am I in

God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?"

JACOB'S ANGER WAS KINDLED

"And Jacob's anger was kindled

against Rachel . . .” Other versions read, “*anger was aroused*,” ^{NKJV} “*anger burned*,” ^{NASB} “*became very angry*,” ^{NRSV} “*became furious*,” ^{NET} “*was incensed*,” ^{TNK} “*flew into a rage*,” ^{LIVING} “*being enraged*,” ^{ABP} “*became upset*,” ^{CEV} and “*anger glowed*.” ^{LITV}

Rachel’s request was an unreasonable one, and although it was an experience of frustration, Jacob could not endure it. As spiritually primitive as the times were, Jacob knew that barrenness and fertility both came from God – a facet of true knowledge that is not at all common in our time.

The Living Bible goes a bit far in interpreting this event by saying Jacob “*flew into a rage*.” This was not a beastly and uncontrollable anger, but was related to being grieved or vexed – both of which are intelligent and related to thought, as compared with violence. This means that it was the unreasonableness of Rachel’s statement that caused his anger to be kindled.

The Impact of Unreasonableness

Among other things, this confirms that unreasonableness causes grief to men and women of faith, even if it comes from those who are loved. There is a relationship we have with each other than transcends any fleshly associations. Any person who is unacquainted with this will sometimes interpret anger toward them as evidence they are no longer loved. Such inclinations must be subdued.

Some Thoughts on Anger

➔ There is such a thing as “*the anger of the Lord*” – often said to have been focused upon Israel (Ex 4:14; Num 1:10; 12:9; 25:3,4; 32:14; Deut 6:14). There are thirty-two references to “*the anger of the Lord*” in Scripture. (Ex 4:14; Num 1:10; 12:9; 25:3,4; 32:14; Deut 6:14; 7:4; 29:20,27; Josh 7:1; 23:16; Judges 2:14,20; 3:8; 10:7; 2 Sam 6:7; 2 Kgs 13:3; 24:20; ; 1 Chron 13:10; 2 Chron 25A:15; Isa 5:25; Jer 4:8; 12:13; 23:20; 25:37; 30:24; 51:45; 52:3; Lam 4:16; Z Ex 4:14; Num 1:10; 12:9; 25:3,4;

32:14; Deut 6:15; 7:4; 29:20,27; Josh 7:1; 23:16; Judges 2:14,20; 3:8; 10:7; 2 Sam 6:7; 24:1; 2 Kgs 13:3; 24:20; 1 Chron 13:10; 2 Chron 25:15; Isa 5:25; Jer 4:8; 12:13; 23:20; 25:37; 30:24; 51:45; 52:3; Lam 4:16; Zeph 2:2).

- ➔ God is “*angry with the wicked every day*” (Psa 7:11).
- ➔ Jesus once looked upon an unbelieving synagogue crowd “*with anger*” (Mk 3:5).

not likely.

Jacob no doubt saw things in Rachel’s hasty statement that chaffed against his soul.

- ➔ Rachel had not responded to her barrenness in a commendable manner.
- ➔ She was jealous of her own sister, whose womb the Lord had opened.
- ➔ She blurted out an expectation that

There is no way to dignify the outbursts of the flesh, even though they are result of grief and a lack of understanding.

- ➔ Believers are admonished, “*Be ye angry and sin not*” (Eph 4:26).
- ➔ There is an “*anger*” to be “*put off*” (Col 3:8).
- ➔ An elder, or bishop, is to be “*not soon angry*” (Tit 1:7).

AM I IN GOD’S STEAD

“ . . . and he said, *Am I in God’s stead* . . .” Other versions read, “*in the place of God*,” ^{NKJV} “*Do you think I am God?*” ^{CEB} “*in God’s place*,” ^{CJB} “*Am I as God?*” ^{DOUAY} “*in the position of God*,” ^{NJB} “*take the place of God*,” ^{TNK} “*Don’t blame me! I’m not God*,” ^{CEV} and “*I can’t take the place of God*.” ^{GNB}

This is one of those occasions when something was expected of men that can only be done by God. Of course, Rachel, becoming overcome by her condition, did not think appropriately. She, at least momentarily, expected a resolution from Jacob, who was unable to do what she desired. There is a possibility that she expected Jacob to go to the Lord about the matter, as in the case of Rebekah’s barrenness (Gen 25:21). However, judging from Jacob’s response, this is

was obviously impossible in the flesh.

No Way to Dignify the Flesh

There is no way to dignify the outbursts of the flesh, even though they are result of grief and a lack of understanding. Even a fervent love for someone, as Jacob had for Rachel, cannot overlook unreasonableness – even though men sometimes expect this of one another.

WHO HATH WITHHELD FROM THEE

“ . . . who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?”

It was common knowledge among the saints of past time, that sterility, or barrenness, was not just a malfunction of nature.

- ➔ Sarah said of her barrenness: “*Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing*” (Gen 16:2).
- ➔ Jacob said of Rachel’s barrenness, “*Am I in God’s stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?*” (Gen 30:2).
- ➔ It is written of Hannah and her barrenness: “*And her adversary also*

provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb" (1 Sam 1:6).

wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife" (Gen 20:18).

the womb. This fact was known early in His dealings with men. There is no acceptable reason for it not being known in our time. That is why *"the fruit of the womb"* is traced to Him (Psa 127:3).

➔ As a judgment from heaven *"the LORD had fast closed up all the*

In His Sovereignty, and according to His will, God both opens and closes

BEHOLD MY MAID BILHAH

"³ And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her; and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her. ⁴ And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid to wife: and Jacob went in unto her. ⁵ And Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a son. ⁶ And Rachel said, God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son: therefore called she his name Dan."

God had not revealed a single thing about this promise.

➔ Through Abraham's Seed all families of the earth would be blessed (Gen 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14). Once again, nothing had been revealed about the nature of this blessing – not a single syllable.

Add to this that nothing about eternity had been revealed, or about what would take place after death, or that the present heavens and earth

being forever with the Lord, or the gift of the Holy Spirit. You will find yourself unable to come up with a satisfactory answer. **Yet, that is the condition in which the patriarchs and their spouses found themselves.**

How would you react to experiences similar to that of those ancients? **Probably just like they did.** In fact, it is quite possible that you would not even reach their level of response - for they always adapted the course of their lives to further revelation.

Once again, I must keep before you the fact that these events took

Within the professed church there are multitudes of people who, in their reasoning, are beneath the level of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel. There is no way to adequately state the seriousness of such a condition.

You should be able to see the degenerative effects that the *"falling away"* has had upon the reasoning of men. Within the professed church there are multitudes of people who, in their reasoning, are beneath the level of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel. **There is no way to adequately state the seriousness of such a condition.** Its presence contradicts all that God has revealed about regeneration, transformation, and life in Christ Jesus.

place during a time when very little had been revealed by God – particularly regarding the purpose that was to be revealed and implemented in Christ Jesus. Actually, only two things had been made known regarding that purpose, and they were very abbreviated, and neither was in any way developed.

would, in fact, pass away. Whatever was known about such matters – if anything at all was known – was very elementary, and probably intuitive. **That means that men were incapable of reasoning upon such matters, or thinking of experience within the context of A Divine intent that was eternal.**

Ponder how you might think and reason if you did not know anything about the purpose of God, what was involved in the bruising of the serpent's head, or the global blessing promised to Abraham. What if you knew nothing about regeneration, the promise of

BEHOLD MY MAID BILHAH

"And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her; and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her. . ." Other versions read, *"let her give birth to a child that will be laid on my knees, so that through her I too can build a family"* ^{CJB} *"She will bear children for me, and through her I can have a family, too"* ^{NLT} *"she doth bear on my knees, and I am built up, even I, from her"* ^{YLT} and *"[when the baby comes] she shall deliver it upon my knees, that I by her may also have children."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

The expression *"bear upon my*

➔ The Seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent (Gen 3:15). The means through which this would take place were not made known, nor were its implications or outcome. At the time of our text,

knees,” can be explained in two different ways.

- ➡ That she would deliver the child while resting upon Rachel’s knees, thereby giving the appearance that the child came from Rachel.
- ➡ That she would deliver the child, which would be nursed and raised on Rachel’s knees, as expressed in Isaiah 66:12. This is the more probable meaning, accenting that Bilhah bore the child for Rachel, not for herself.

Thus Rachel pursues the same course as Sarah (Gen 16:2). **Rebekah distinguished herself by not following this path, because Isaac entreated the Lord for her, and she conceived** (Gen 25:21).

The Concept of Vicarious Children

During those relatively dark times, we are introduced to vicarious children – a concept that is fully developed in the salvation that is in Christ Jesus.

There is a sense in which God begets children through Christ, like Rachel beget children through Bilhah. In the day of presentation, Jesus will say, *“Behold I and the children which God hath given Me”* (Heb 2:13). Paul alludes to this when he says of the saints, *“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will”* (Eph 1:5). Yet, even though we are children through Jesus Christ, we are called *“the children of God”* (Rom 8:16,21; Gal 3:26; 1 John 3:10).

The parallel breaks down, for a figure can only, by its very nature, be partial. **Yet, these Divinely tailored and reported historical events introduce facets of thought that assist us in comprehending the salvation of God.**

SHE GAVE HIM BILHAH HER HANDMAID

“ . . . And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid to wife: and Jacob went in unto her. . . ”

In order that we might think of

this matter within the proper context, Bilhah is said to be given to Jacob in the capacity of a *“wife.”* This same thing was said of Hagar, when Sarah gave her to Abraham: *“And Sarai Abram’s wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife”* (Gen 16:3). **This separates the whole event from mere fleshly lust.**

The purpose was to bear seed for Jacob – seed that could be reckoned as belonging to Rachel. Again, this cannot be rationalized from the standpoint of the New Covenant or life in Christ Jesus. **It was the kind of convention that was necessary because of the**

Again, this cannot be rationalized from the standpoint of the New Covenant or life in Christ Jesus. It was the kind of convention that was necessary because of the times.

times. When further and more specific revelation was given, this was no longer allowed.

BILHAH CONCEIVED

“ . . . And Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a son. . . ”

Today, Bilhah would be called a “surrogate mother” – bearing a child for someone else. **I understand this to be an unacceptable practice at this time – a practice that has been driven by an ignorance of both God’s manner and purpose.** It is one thing for this to be done during the twilight of revelation. It is quite another for it to be done during the brightness of the day of salvation.

Notice the precision with which this birth is reported. Bilhah did not bear a son for herself, but *“bare Jacob a son.”*

RACHEL RESPONDED

“ . . . And Rachel said . . . ”

Responses are important, especially when they are related to the purpose of God.

Remember, from our perspective, we are witnessing the commencement of the building of the nation of Israel. This was the body of people identified as:

- ➡ The *“Israelites”* – named after Jacob, following the change of his name to *“Israel”* (Gen 32:28; Rom 9:4a).
- ➡ Those to whom *“pertaineth the adoption,”* or a people exclusively identified with God (Rom 9:4b). This also taught men that there is such a thing as a unique people, and that God works through the people He has chosen.

➡ Those to whom pertained *“the glory,”* or the manifestations of God (Rom 9:4c). Prior to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the Israelites, there was no one to whom God revealed Himself as extensively as He did to Abraham and His offspring. He did this through angels, dreams, visions, and increasing revelations of Himself and His purpose.

➡ Those to whom pertained *“the covenants,”* or the commitments of God to men (Rom 4:d). God made no commitment to any other body of people. He refers to *“covenants”* (plural) because He made covenant with Abraham as well as with Israel (Gen 15:18; 17:2-21; Ex 2:24).

➡ Those to whom pertained *“the giving of the Law”* (Rom 4:e). This was the appointed vehicle through which the knowledge of sin was obtained (Rom 3:20). This knowledge was not intended for Israel alone. Rather, they were the custodians of that knowledge.

- ➡ Those to whom pertained *“the service of God,”* or the revealed worship of, and service to, God. This was done in the Tabernacle service (Rom 9:4f). In this *“service”* the approach to God, the significance of sacrifice, the necessity of blood, and the role of priests and the High Priest were revealed.
- ➡ Those *“whose are the fathers”* – the ones to whom God made promises concerning His purpose: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Rom 9:5a).
- ➡ Those *“of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen”* (Rom 9:5b). Jesus was particularly identified with the Jews – a *“child”* and a *“son”* given to them (Isa 9:6). He was not intended to be limited to the Israelites, but was raised among them, taking advantage of all of the

students of Scripture.

- ➡ That God had chastened Rachel (Ainsworth, Wordsworth).
- ➡ Secured justice for Rachel, considering her infertility to be an injustice when compared with Leah’s productivity (Keil, Lange).
- ➡ Vindicated Rachel from the approach of barrenness (Munster, Rosenmuller).
- ➡ Hath dealt with me according to His sovereign justice, withholding from me the fruit of the womb while I was forgetful of my dependence on Him, and granting me posterity when I approached him in humble supplication.” (Murphy).
- ➡ Rachel was speaking in hypocrisy, applauding herself rather than giving glory to God (Calvin).

God Hath Heard My Voice

“ . . . and hath also heard my voice . . . ” Other versions read, *“listened to my plea,”* ^{NIV} *“heard my prayer,”* ^{GWN} *“given ear to my voice,”* ^{BBE} *“hearkened to my voice,”* ^{SEPTUAGINT} *“responded to my prayer,”* ^{NET} *“listened to my plea,”* ^{NIB} *“heard my request,”* ^{NLT} *“heeded my plea.”* ^{TNK}

Unless Rachel is lying in this statement, she had presented a plea to God for children. It does appear as though the request was associated with giving her handmaid Bilhah to Jacob. We do not know whether or not she had prayed to God about this matter before Bilhah entered into the picture. It does appear from the text that she had resigned herself to the fact that she was personally barren.

God Hath Given Me A Son

“ . . . and hath given me a son...”

The Lord had given her a son through a handmaid, just as he had given Sarah a son through Hagar, and Leah sons through Zilpah. Sarah’s case, however, differed, in that a specific son was promised, that was determined by God to be born of Sarah. Therefore, Ishmael was rejected as Abraham’s legitimate heir (Gen 21:10-12).

In this case, however, the child born to Bilhah would be reckoned among the progenitors of the tribes of Israel.

She Called His Name Dan

“ . . . therefore called she his name Dan.”

The name *“Dan”* means *“JUDGMENT, HE JUDGES,”* ^{HITCHCOCK} *“A JUDGE.”* ^{EASTON}

Just prior to his death, when Jacob blessed his sons, he associated judgment with Dan: *“Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel”* (Gen 49:16). When Israel commenced its journey to Canaan, the tribe of Dan was *“the rear guard of all the camps, set out according to their armies”* ^{NKJV} (Num 10:25).

While the circumstances were something less than ideal, the absence of a condemning word by the Holy Spirit suggests that Rachel’s assessment was correct – that God had worked through, what appeared to be, her decision.

revelation that had been given to them as He grew *“in wisdom”* (Lk 2:52).

This nation – Israel – would be formed by the offspring of Jacob, begotten through four women: Leah, Zilpah, Bilhah, and Rachel.

God Hath Judged Me

“ . . . “God hath judged me . . . ”

Other version s read, *“God has judged my case,”* ^{NKJV} *“God has vindicated me,”* ^{NASB} *“God has been my judge,”* ^{BBE} *“God has judged in my favor,”* ^{CEB} *“God hath given sentence on my side”* ^{GNV} *“God has done me justice,”* ^{NJB} and *“God hath decided for me.”* ^{YLT}

This expression has been interpreted in a variety of ways by

I see this expression as meaning God vindicated the choice of Rachel to give her handmaid, Bilhah, to Jacob as a wife. The fact that Bilhah gave birth to a son, Rachel reasoned, was an act of God, confirming that she had done the right thing.

While the circumstances were something less than ideal, the absence of a condemning word by the Holy Spirit suggests that Rachel’s assessment was correct – that God had worked through, what appeared to be, her decision. He did this in order to build the nation of Israel. Truly, His ways are *“past finding out”* (Rom 11:33).

BILHAH CONCEIVED AGAIN

“⁷ And Bilhah Rachel's maid conceived again, and bare Jacob a second son.⁸ And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed: and she called his name Naphtali.”

BILHAH Bears A SECOND SON

“And Bilhah Rachel's maid conceived again, and bare Jacob a second son. . . .”

The nation-building continues with a second son being born to Jacob through Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid – the sixth son in all.

I HAVE WRESTLED WITH MY SISTER

“ . . . And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed” Other versions read, *“mighty wrestlings,”* ^{NASB} *“I have had a great struggle with my sister, and I have won,”* ^{NIV} *“I have had a great fight with my sister, and I have overcome her,”* ^{BBE} *“I've competed fiercely with my sister, and now I've won,”* ^{CEB} *“In my wrestlings with God, I have wrestled with my sister and won,”* ^{CSB} *“Wrestlings of God have I wrestled with my sister, and have prevailed”* ^{DARBY} *“God hath compared me with my sister, and I have prevailed”* ^{DOUAY} *“with excellent wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and have gotten the upper hand,”* ^{GENEVA} *“God has helped me, and I contended with my sister and prevailed,”* ^{SEPTUAGINT} *“I have fought a desperate struggle with my sister, but I have won,”* ^{NET} *“A fateful contest I waged with my sister; yes, and I have prevailed,”* ^{TNK} *“I am in a fierce contest with my sister and I am winning!,”* ^{LIVING} and *“With mighty wrestlings [in prayer to God] I have struggled with my sister and have prevailed.”* ^{AMPLIFIED}

At this time, Leah also was unable to bear children, having *“left bearing,”* or *“stopped having children”* ^{NIV} (Gen 29:35). This was no the result of her choice. As the narrative confirms, she still wanted children. Thus Rachel says she has been wrestling with Leah – not

directly, but indirectly, taking up the matter with the Lord. It is assumed that Leah had been doing the same – both women seeking to deal with their present inability to bear children.

Now, having bare a child through her handmaid Bilhah, Rachel considers that she has won the contest – at least at that particular time.

NAME	MEANING
Reuben	“Behold, the son”
Israel would behold God's working, and would be beheld by the world.	
Simeon	“Hearing”
Israel would be noted for hearing from the Lord through Moses and the Prophets	
Levi	“Joined to”
In a unique way, Israel would be identified with the God of heaven	
Judah	“Praise”
Through Israel, God would introduce the concept of praise.	
Dan	“Judge”
God would be uniquely revealed as Judge through Israel	
Naphtali	“My wrestling”
Through Israel God would introduce the concept of interceding and pleading	

SHE CALLED HIS NAME NAPHTALI

“ . . . and she called his name Naphtali.”

The name *“Naphtali”* means *“THAT STRUGGLES OR FIGHTS,”* ^{HITCHCOCK} *“MY WRESTLING,”* ^{EASTON} AND *“WRESTLED,”* ^{SMITH'S}

The practice of using names that uniquely marked the birth of the children continues. Each child became a visible sign of an epoch, and certain characteristics in that would be found in

the nation of Israel. Thus far, the names have been as shown on the left.

WRESTLING WITH GOD

The concept of wrestling with God will be developed more fully in an experience Jacob will have after he leaves Laban's house. He will be depicted as wrestling with an angel (Gen 32:24-31; Hos 12:4-5).

Earlier in Genesis, Abraham had an experience that can be seen as wrestling with the Lord. He pled with God concerning the coming destruction of Sodom, asking, *“Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?”* (Gen 18:23). He asked if God would destroy the city if fifty righteous people could be found there. He continued by asking if He would destroy the city of forty-five could be found; then forty, then thirty, then twenty, then ten (Gen 18:28-32). Abraham was, so to speak, wrestling with God. O, there was no real competition there. Owing to His gracious nature, God allowed Abraham to contend for the righteous. It saved Lot's life, for before destroying Sodom, *“God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt.”* (Gen 19:29).

Who knows what mighty works could be revealed if the saints learned how to wrestle with God, or be importunate in their prayers, not giving up until an answer was given – praying *“without ceasing”* (1 Thess 1:17)? We can strive together with other saints *“in prayers”* (Rom 15:30). On one occasion Jesus gave a parable of a man who went to his friend at midnight saying *“Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.”* The friend declined the request, saying he was already in bed. Nevertheless, Jesus said of that man, *“I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he*

needeth" (Luke 11:8. That saying was followed by these words, *"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that*

knocketh it shall be opened." (Luke 11:9-10).

Did not our Lord say, *"men ought always to pray, and not to faint"* (Luke 18:1). This is worth thinking about. Some of this was no doubt involved in

Paul's prayers for the churches (Rom 1:9; Eph 1:15-20; 3: ; Phil 1:9-11; Col 1:9-11; 1 Thess 1:2; ; 5:232 Thess 1:11-12; 2 Tim 1:3; Phile 1:4-6).

May the saints of God learn to wrestle in prayer.

LEAH GIVES ZILPAH TO JACOB TO WIFE

⁹ *When Leah saw that she had left bearing, she took Zilpah her maid, and gave her Jacob to wife.* ¹⁰ *And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a son.* ¹¹ *And Leah said, A troop cometh: and she called his name Gad."*

LEAH SAW THAT SHE HAD LEFT BEARING

"When Leah saw that she had left bearing . . ." Other versions read, *"stopped bearing,"* ^{NKJV} *"ceased bearing,"* ^{NRSV} *"would have no more children for a time,"* ^{BBE} *"had stopped having children,"* ^{GWN} *"wasn't getting pregnant anymore,"* ^{NLT} *and "could have no more children."* ^{ERV}

It appears to have dawned upon Leah that she could no longer bear children. Her womb had been shut again. Therefore, not content with the situation, she sought other means through which she could give additional children to Jacob.

SHE TOOK ZILPAH HER MAID

" . . . she took Zilpah her maid, and gave her Jacob to wife..." Following the action of Rachel, seeing that she could not bear children, Leah gave her handmaid to Jacob *"to wife."* This is a consistent way of expressing this kind of action: to be a *"wife."*

- ➡ Sarah gave Hagar to Abraham *"to be his wife"* (Gen 16:3).
- ➡ Rachel gave Bilhah her handmaid to Jacob as his *"wife"* (Gen 30:4).
- ➡ Leah gave Zilpah her handmaid to Jacob as his *"wife"* (Gen 30:9).

Once again, I draw attention to the fact that this was not to provide for

the lust of the flesh. The objective was a birth – the increase of Jacob's *"seed."*

ZILPAH BARE JACOB A SON

" . . . And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a son . . ."

The Formation of Israel

If God is the One who opens and shuts the womb (Gen 29:31; 30:22; 1 Sam 1:5; Isa 66:9), then these births are being orchestrated by Him. **This is particularly true since we are dealing with the formation of the nation of Israel – and God DID form Israel.** He is the One who put this nation together, doing so through the twelve sons of Jacob. These births, therefore, must be considered the Lord's doing. We cannot afford to get lost in the process He employed to accomplish this purpose.

As it is written, *"But now thus saith the LORD that **CREATED** thee, O Jacob, and he that **FORMED** thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine"* (Isa 43:1). And again, *"Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art My servant: **I have FORMED thee; thou art My servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of Me"*** (Isa 44:21).

AND LEAH SAID

"And Leah said, A troop cometh: and she called his name Gad." Other versions read, *"How fortunate!"* ^{NASB} *"What good fortune!"* ^{NIV} *"It has gone well for me,"* ^{BBE} *"What good luck!"* ^{CEB} *"Fortunately,"* ^{DARBY} *"Happily,"* ^{DOUAY} *"Good fortune has come,"* ^{ESV} *"A company cometh,"* ^{GENEVA} *"I've been lucky,"* ^{GWN} *"My luck has turned,"* ^{LIVING}

and "Victory and good fortune have come." ^{AMPLIFIED}

"THE AUTHORIZED RENDERING, SUPPORTED BY THE SAMARITAN, AND SUPPOSED TO ACCORD BETTER WITH GENESIS 49:19, IS APPROVED BY CALVIN, AINSWORTH, BUSH, AND OTHERS." ^{PULPIT COMMENTARY}

Again, there is quite a difference seen in the various translations.

- ➡ An experience of good fortune,
- ➡ An experience of luck.
- ➡ A troop is coming.

In his prophecy of Dan, Jacob made reference to a *"troop."* *"Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last"* (Gen 49:19). Other versions read, *"Gad will be attacked by a band of raiders, but he will attack them at their heels"* ^{NIV}; *"Gad, an army will come against him, but he will come down on them in their flight,"* ^{BBE} *"a troop will troop on him, but he will troop on their heel,"* ^{CJB} *"a troop assaulteth him, But he assaulteth last."* ^{YLT} The name *"Dan"* means *"troop."* ^{STRONG'S}

In fulfillment of the prophecy that would be uttered later, Leah saw *"Dan"* as the beginning of a large body of people, who, according to prophecy, would be attacked by another body of large people, yet would overcome them at last. **From a practical point of view, she sees herself as fruitful, with more fruit to come. She did not, of course, know the prophecy pronounced relative to Dan many years later.** Yet, it seems to me, the Lord moved her to speak in harmony with His determinations, even as He did Caiaphas (John 11:49-51),

and Balaam (Num 24:2-5).

Something to Ponder

A proper understanding of Scripture can only be realized **within the**

context of Scripture itself. The revelation of God cannot, under any circumstances, be deciphered by the wisdom of man. Both the facts and meaning of Scripture extend beyond the

boundary of human wisdom. **The less familiar a person is with Scripture, the least able they are to understand it.** No text stands apart from the whole of Scripture.

ZILPAH BEARS JACOB ANOTHER SON

“¹² And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a second son. ¹³ And Leah said, Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed: and she called his name Asher.”

ZILPAH BEARS JACOB A SECOND SON

“And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a second son. . . .”

As Rachel's Handmaid Bilhah delivered two sons for Jacob (Dan and Naphtali, so Leah's handmaid Zilpah also delivers two: Gad and Asher. Therefore, Jacob now has eight sons: Reuben, Levi, Simeon, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. Each one will become the progenitor of a unique tribe of Israel. **Once again, I want to draw attention to the fact that God was building the nation of Israel through this means.** Through this means he was actually taking away the opportunity for any single person to glory in the formation of the nation of Israel. One progenitor was born to Abraham – and that by Sovereign intervention in a hopeless situation. A single progenitor was born to Isaac, and that was also by God's miraculous working in an impossible situation. Now, however, Jacob will be the progenitor of the twelve sons who will be the progenitors of the twelve tribes that will make up the *“great nation”* that God promised Abraham he would become:–i.e. *“And I will make of thee a great nation”* (Gen 12:2).

Do not miss how the God heaven is accomplishing this. **It is in such a manner that no single person will be able to boast that they alone can account for the rising of the nation.** Jacob cannot. Leah cannot. Zilpah cannot. Rachel cannot. Bilhah cannot. Only God Almighty could bring

something like a single nation from this!

- ➔ Out of Adam's sons, only one had a holy lineage –Seth (Lk 3:38).
- ➔ Noah's sons became the fathers of diverse peoples, with the holy lineage coming from Shem, and unholy people coming from Ham, and Japheth (Gen10:1-32).
- ➔ Ishmael, a single son, was the progenitor of a twelve unholy nations (Gen 25:16).
- ➔ Abraham's six sons through Keturah became the heads of six Arabic tribes, often warring against each other (Gen 25:2-6).
- ➔ Isaac produced two sons through Rebekah, but they were set at odds with one another (Gen 25:23). Though twins, God chose one of them.

“what good fortune,”^{NAB} “what blessedness,”^{NJB} “what joy is mine,”^{NLT} “what fortune,”^{TNK} “I'm happy now,”^{CEV} “I am very happy,”^{ERV} “I have been blessed,”^{GW} and “A happy day.”^{MESSAGE}

This is the first time the word *“happy”* is used in Scripture.

As used here, the word *“happy”* means *“blessed”* or *“especially favored.”* An example of this use is the first Psalm: *“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful”* (Psa 1:1). Another sterling example is the beatitudes given by Jesus in the fifth chapter of Matthew: *“blessed are . . .”* (Matt 5:3-11).

In the English language *“happy”* means, *“FAVORED BY LUCK OR FORTUNE; NOTABLY FITTING, EFFECTIVE, OR WELL ADAPTED; ENJOYING OR CHARACTERIZED BY WELL-BEING AND CONTENTMENT;*

Here Leah expresses the perception of a state well being and advantage. It is a rational expression, as opposed to a purely emotional one.

Now, however, for the first time, we have a man with twelve accepted sons, each of which were used to build parts of a single nation. We do not want to lose sight of what a great work this is.

HAPPY AM I

“And Leah said, Happy am I . . .”

Other versions read, *“This is for my happiness,”^{DOUAY} “blessed am I,”^{GENEVA}*

EXPRESSING, REFLECTING, OR SUGGESTIVE OF HAPPINESS; GLAD, PLEASED; HAVING OR MARKED BY AN ATMOSPHERE OF GOOD FELLOWSHIP; SYNONYMS SEE LUCKY, FIT.^{MERRIAM-WEBSTER} — “1 FEELING OR SHOWING PLEASURE OR CONTENTMENT. 2 WILLING TO DO SOMETHING. 3 FORTUNATE AND CONVENIENT: A HAPPY COINCIDENCE.”^{OXFORD} I have highlighted the English definition that parallels the word as used in Scripture.

As used in this text, *“happy”* is

not the feeling of exhilaration, or some other expression of emotion – all though true happiness may be accompanied by such feelings. **Here Leah expresses the perception of a state well being and advantage.** It is a rational expression, as opposed to a purely emotional one. Thus we read New Covenant expressions like:

- ➡ *"Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth."* (Rom 14:22).
- ➡ *"Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."* (James 5:11).
- ➡ *"But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror,*

neither be troubled." (1 Pet 3:14).

- ➡ *"If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified."* (1 Pet 4:14)

Therefore, Leah considers herself to have been advantaged, and given an obvious and profitable benefit.

THE DAUGHTERS WILL CALL BE BLESSED

" . . . for the daughters will call me blessed . . ." Other versions read, *"women will call me happy,"* ^{NASB} *"all women will give witness to my joy,"* ^{BBE} *"the other women will celebrate with me,"* ^{NLT} *"Women will deem me fortunate,"* ^{TNK} and *"The other women will think me blessed indeed!"* ^{LIVING}

"The women" were apparently the women located around them then, and the wome who would hear of the births later. They would recognize how Leah had been blessed by God.

AND SHE CALLED HIS NAME ASHER

" . . . and she called his name Asher." The name *"Asher"* means *"HAPPINESS,"* *HITCHCOCK* OR *"HAPPY."* ^{EASTON} Thus, again, the child is named in accordance with the circumstance, this becoming a living reminder of a significant occasion in the life of Rachel. This is a consistent practice in Scripture (Gen 4:25; 5:29; 17:5,15-16,19; 25:25; 29:32,33,35; 30:8,11,13,18,20,24; 35:10; 35:18; Ex 2:10,22; 1 Sam 1:20; 1 Chron 4:9). Of course, the preeminent example of this is the Lord Jesus Himself. As it is written, *"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins"* (Matt 1:21).

REUBEN AND THE MANDRAKES

Once we have accepted the postulate that what God promises He alone does (Num 23:19; Isa 14:24; 46:11), we really have no alternative but to believe that in this text it is really God working out His will,

" 14 And Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes. 15 And she said unto her, Is it a small matter that thou hast taken my husband? and wouldest thou take away my son's mandrakes also? And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with thee to night for thy son's mandrakes."

There are accounts written in Scripture that appear to have been

given to teach that God's ways cannot be detected apart from revelation. Further, even when they are revealed, they do not conform to man's natural way of reasoning. **This text appears to fall into that category.**

God has revealed that His ways are transcendent to those of men. **For that reason, they must be revealed.** Further, we are taught to cease from any efforts to comprehend them with natural understanding (James 3:15-17; 11; 1 Cor 1:20-21; 2:1-6,13).

- ➡ GOD – *"Which doeth great things and unsearchable; marvelous things without number."* (Job 5:9)

- ➡ GOD – *"Which doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number."* (Job 9:10)

- ➡ *"Touching the Almighty, we cannot find Him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict."* (Job 37:23)

- ➡ *"Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; Thy judgments are a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast."* (Psa 36:6)

- ➡ *"He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end."* (Eccl 3:11)

- ➡ *"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!"*

how **unsearchable** are his judgments, and His ways **past finding out!**" (Rom 11:33)

➔ **"For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counselor?"** (Rom 11:34)

➔ **"For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."** (1 Cor 2:16)

Once we have accepted the postulate that what God promises He alone does (Num 23:19; Isa 14:24; 46:11), we really have no alternative but to believe that in this text it is really God working out His will, fulfilling His promise to multiply the seed of Jacob (Gen 18:14; 32:12), and make of him **"a nation"** (Gen 35:11).

The notion of God fulfilling His will by piecing together what originated solely with men is too absurd to entertain for a moment of time. This simply is not the way God works, and He has revealed this is the case. Men and women may think their ideas are their own, but when it comes to the fulfillment of what God has promised, **He puts into the hearts of people what He intends for them to do.** An example of how extreme this can be is found in the Revelation. There, the success of an opposing **"beast"** is traced to the working of God Himself: **"For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil His will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled"** (Rev 17:17).

Other more pleasant examples are as follows.

➔ **"And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan: and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee."** (Ex 31:6)

➔ **"Blessed be the LORD God of our fathers, which hath put such a thing as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem."** (Ezra 7:27)

MANDRAKES Hebrew dudaim; i.e., "love-plants", occurs only in Genesis 30:14-16 and Cant. 7:13. Many interpretations have been given of this word dudaim. It has been rendered "violets," "Lilies," "jasmynes," "truffles or mushrooms," "flowers," the "citron," etc. The weight of authority is in favor of its being regarded as the *Mandragora officinalis* of botanists, "a near relative of the night-shades, the 'apple of Sodom' and the potato plant." It possesses stimulating and narcotic properties (Genesis 30:14-16). The fruit of this plant resembles the potato-apple in size, and is of a pale orange colour. It has been called the "love-apple." The Arabs call it "Satan's apple." It still grows near Jerusalem, and in other parts of Palestine. ^{EASTON}

"... a stupefying narcotic with broad dark green leaves, flowers purple, and green apples which become pale yellow when ripe, with a tuberous bifid (forked) root. Still found ripe in wheat harvest (May) on the lower parts of Lebanon and Hermon (Genesis 30:14). The apples produce dizziness and exhilaration. The ancients believed them calculated to produce fecundity [fruitful in offspring]. Their Hebrew name, dudaim, "love apples," agrees with their being used as aphrodisiacs [an agent (as a food or drug) that arouses or is held to arouse sexual desire] to conciliate love." ^{FAUSSET'S}

"The odor or flavor of the plant is a matter of opinion. They have a delightful smell, and the taste is agreeable, though not to everybody. The Orientals especially value strongly smelling things, that to more delicate senses are unpleasing. The fruit was ripe as the time of wheat harvest. From a rude resemblance of old roots of the mandrake to the human form, some strange superstitious notions have arisen concerning it (Josephus Wars, vii. 6, section 3)." ^{SMITH'S}

"Mandrakes are the fruit of the *Mandragora officinarum*, a member of the Solanaceae or potato order, closely allied to the *Atropa belladonna*. It is a common plant all over Palestine, flourishing particularly in the spring and ripening about the time of the wheat harvest (Genesis 30:14). The plant has a rosette of handsome dark leaves, dark purple flowers and orange, tomato-like fruit... They are still used in folklore medicine in Palestine. The plant was well known as an aphrodisiac by the ancients (Song of Solomon 7:13)." ^{INTERNATIONAL STD BIBLE ENCYCLOPEDIA}

➔ **"And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: neither was there any beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon."** (Neh 2:12)

➔ **"He turned their heart to hate his people, to deal subtly with his servants."** (Psa 105:25)

➔ **"And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their**

hearts, that they shall not depart from me." (Jer 32:40)

I am laboring this point because of the erroneous views of God Himself and His will that have been perpetrated in the nominal church. **A kind of God – a false God – has been declared that has caused people to entertain erroneous concepts about how He goes about fulfilling His will.** However, if men do not have some intelligent and truthful grasp about how God works, they will have a flawed view of His great salvation, and will attribute more to men than is appropriate.

If eternal life is to **"know"** the **"only true God"** (John 17:3), and if **"the true God"** is the One concerning which Jesus gives us a proper understanding Jesus Christ (1 John 5:20), then it can be neither right nor safe to entertain erroneous concepts of Him!

With this in mind, we will proceed with the text. **REUBEN FINDS MANDRAKES**

"And Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto his mother Leah. . ."

Mandrakes were an uncultured flower that grew in the fields. **Easton's Bible Dictionary** says, "It possesses stimulating and narcotic properties."

Fausset's Bible Dictionary says, "A STUPEFYING NARCOTIC WITH BROAD DARK . . . THE APPLES PRODUCE DIZZINESS AND EXHILARATION. THE ANCIENTS BELIEVED THEM CALCULATED TO PRODUCE FECUNDITY" [FRUITFUL IN OFFSPRING].



Solomon made reference to them when speaking of the love he had for his wives: **"The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved"** (Song 7:13).

It is with this in mind that the text continues – namely that mandrakes had a pleasant effect upon people that would lead to being especial vulnerable

to affection.

RACHEL SAID TO LEAH

" . . . Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes. And she said unto her, Is it a small matter that thou hast taken my husband? and wouldest thou take away my son's mandrakes also? . . . "

Leah knew the implications of Rachel's request. **The objective of Rachel is to have the mandrakes for herself, thinking that they will bring the advantage to her in bringing forth children.**

HE SHALL LIE WITH THEE FOR A

NIGHT

" . . . And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with thee to night for thy son's mandrakes. "

Keep in mind that Leah had ceased bearing children, and it is apparent that Rachel knows this. **She is therefore willing to sell Leah the privilege of spending the night with Jacob, imagining that nothing will come from it.** Then, with the advantage of the mandrakes, she will gain the advantage in giving Jacob children.

How can a plot like this yield anything good? Much less be used by God for the fulfillment of His purpose –

a purpose that has to do with being the Savior into the world? Admittedly, it does not appear to the wisdom of men to be a wise or pleasing course at all.

And, indeed, if we were addressing a matter taking place in this day of salvation, this would not be acceptable. However, that is not the circumstance of our text. **Instead, this is taking place when during the darkest spiritual period the world has ever known – "from Adam to Moses"** (Rom 5:14). Little had been made known about God Himself. Nothing about an eternal purpose had been revealed, and sin had not yet been defined. I cannot imagine more difficult circumstances.

GOD HEARKENS TO LEAH AND SHE HAS A FIFTH SON

" ¹⁶ And Jacob came out of the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said, Thou must come in unto me; for surely I have hired thee with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night. ¹⁷ And God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth son. ¹⁸ And Leah said, God hath given me my hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband: and she called his name Issachar. "

It is necessary to consider the circumstances under which Rachel and Leah were living. **They were both married to a man who was immediately involved in the focused blessing of the Lord.** Their husband, Jacob, was the third in this blessed intention. Rachel was the wife Jacob chose, and Leah was not. Through an act of deceit, Leah was the first to be Jacob's wife. She lived knowing that she was not the wife of preference. Rachel lived knowing she was the wife of preference, but unable to do what she knew a wife was intended to do – bear children to her husband. The situation is compounded by the Divinely imposed fertility of Leah, and the equally Divinely imposed barrenness of Rachel. Leah continues to live with Jacob as the lesser wife.

I would suppose there are few women who could live under such circumstances. Yet, these women not only survived such experiences, they thought them out, and, under Divine guidance, were creative in the handling of those circumstances.

Rachel continues to live with Jacob seeing all of his children come from someone other than her.

I would suppose there are few women who could live under such circumstances. Yet, these women not only survived such experiences, they thought them out, and, under Divine guidance, were creative in the handling of those circumstances.

JACOB CAME OUT OF THE FIELD

"And Jacob came out of the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said, Thou must come in unto me; for surely I have hired thee with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night. . . "

Leah greets Jacob, who is returning from the field of labor. She informs him that he must spend the night with her because she has hired him with her sons mandrakes. **Mind you, she is not going to use the mandrakes, but has given them to Rachel, who was going to depend upon those mandrakes to address her situation.**

As we will find, Leah was depending on something else. Finding that she had ceased bearing, and resorting to the use of her handmaid Bilhah, she had brought the Lord into the matter.

It is interesting that at this spiritually rudimentary time, there was an acute awareness among the sensitive that with God all things are possible. How must heaven view the obtuseness of our time, when men are living with a staggering amount of Divine revelation?

GOD HEARKENED UNTO LEAH

"And God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth son. . ."

After ceasing to bear children, and seeing the birth of two children by Bilhah, and two by Zilpah, Leah now conceives. **The credit could certainly not be given to the mandrakes, for she had not depended upon them.**

The reason for the conception is given: *"God hearkened unto Leah!"* The fact that her son, Reuben, had brought his mandrakes to his mother suggested that she may have been depending upon their use to give her the advantage in bearing children. Now, however, it is clear that no such dependency is present. If God *"hearkened unto Leah,"* in some way she had made some kind of an appeal to Him. The result – she conceived and bear Jacob a fifth son.

It is interesting that at this spiritually rudimentary time, there was an acute awareness among the sensitive that with God all things are possible. How must heaven view the obtuseness of our time, when men are living with a staggering amount of Divine revelation? **Yet, even within the professing church there is a sad lack of persuasion concerning the ability of God Almighty.** This is the reason those who hawk religious programs are so popular. Their concocted methodologies range from personal discipline and conquering "habits," to the winning of souls and the "planting" of churches. Because there is a staggering amount of financial

gain associated with these programs, dependency upon the Lord is in a rapid downward spiral.

GOD HATH GIVEN ME MY HIRE

" . . . And Leah said, God hath given me my hire . . . " Other versions read, *"my wages,"* ^{NKJV} *"rewarded me,"* ^{NIV} *"made payment to me,"* ^{BBE} *"gave me what I paid for,"* ^{CEB} and *"repaid me."* ^{LIVING}

Leah refers to the agreement she made with Rachel – an agreement that was instigated by Rachel herself: *"And she said unto her, Is it a small matter that thou hast taken my husband? and wouldest thou take away my son's mandrakes also? And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with thee to night for thy son's mandrakes"* (Gen 30:15). **Of course, Rachel had no idea that Leah's night with Jacob would yield a son, for Leah had not been able to bear children during that time.** Apparently, however, Leah asked the Lord to give her a child at that time – and He did.

Conservative commentators fault Leah for this saying, boldly declaring that Leah had violated the laws for marriage, yet had the brashness to credit God with what is here reported. **I cannot agree with them in their criticism of Leah.**

➔ First, and foremost, this is an inspired record given to Moses at least three hundred years later. Yet, Moses is not given a single word of criticism from the Holy Spirit concerning Leah. He does not editorialize her remark, but simply gives it as truth.

➔ Second, I do not believe God has anywhere indicated that He has given the liberty to men to question the integrity of historical people He has **not** criticized.

➔ Third, God had not yet given any laws concerning marriage. The only word that might be considered a guideline is the statement of Adam when God delivered Eve to him: *"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh"* (Gen 2:24). The will of God was inferred in Abraham's directions concerning Isaac obtaining a wife from his own people (Gen 24:3-8). The same kind of instruction was given to Jacob by both Rebekah and Isaac (Gen 27:43-46; 28:1-3).

TOTALITY OF REVELATION ON MARRIAGE
FROM GENESIS 1:1-GENESIS 50:26

A MAN IS TO LEAVE HIS FATHER AND OTHER, AND CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE

ISAAC AND JACOB DIRECTED TO MARRY A WIFE FROM ABRAHAM'S KINDRED

It is a principle with God that He deals with men *"according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not"* (2 Cor 8:12). **It is wrong to judge men who were without the Law as though they had it.**

This by no means suggests that the actions of question were morally right. **It does, however, accent the fact that those who have not been given the mind of the Lord cannot appropriate that mind on their own.**

In order to properly instruct men concerning His Person and purpose, God first isolated those He chose from the rest of the world, separating them from the heathen (the rest of the world). He would give them their own land, their own law, and their own religion. Until this all took place, following the exodus from Egypt, we should not expect the conduct of these

people to on par with those who have been given a new nature and extensive revelation.

I GAVE MY MAIDEN TO MY HUSBAND

" . . . because I have given my maiden to my husband . . ."

Leah's reasoning was apparently that she had so desired Jacob to have more children that she gave her handmaid to him to wife – as Rachel had given her handmaid. As to the moral virtue of such a procedure, it is certainly not an intended pattern. It is, however, the consequence of limited revelation. Care must be taken not to

criticize Leah unduly, for if God did, in fact, enable her to bear a child, who before was unable to do so, who are we to question His judgment?

As I have already indicated, this does not mean we have license to approach marriage in such a manner, like certain of the Mormon cult. The Lord has, in the Law of Moses, the words of Jesus, and the apostolic writings said much on the subject of marriage. Those words are what we now live by – not the manners of those to whom little was given.

SHE CALLED HIS NAME ISSACHAR

" . . . and she called his name Issachar."

The name Issachar means "REWARD OR RECOMPENSE," ^{HITCHCOCK} "HIRED," ^{EASTON} "HE IS HIRE," ^{FAUSSET'S} AND "A HIRED WORKMAN." ^{ISBE}

Thus we have another birth and name that marks an epoch. Every time Leah sees Issachar or hears his name, she will recall this most unusual circumstance.

This is Jacob's ninth son, and the fifth son personally born to him by Leah.

LEAH BEARS JACOB A SIXTH SON

" 19 And Leah conceived again, and bare Jacob the sixth son. 20 And Leah said, God hath endued me with a good dowry; now will my husband dwell with me, because I have born him six sons: and she called his name Zebulun."

LEAH CONCEIVED AGAIN

"And Leah conceived again, and bare Jacob the sixth son. . ."

God had apparently opened Leah's womb, for she *"conceived again,"* apparently without any unusual circumstances.

I want to keep before you the fact that God is forming a nation, beginning with the birth of those who will head up the twelve tribes that will constitute the nation of Israel.

"The sixth son" is the sixth son of Leah, and the tenth son in total.

GOD HATH ENDUED ME

" . . . And Leah said, God hath endued me with a good dowry . . ." Other versions read, *"a good endowment,"* ^{NASB} *"a precious gift,"* ^{NIV} *"a good bride-price,"* ^{BBE} *"wonderful gift,"* ^{CEB} *"a beautiful present,"* ^{GWN} *"a good reward,"* ^{NLT} *"a choice gift,"* ^{TNK} *"good gifts for my husband,"* ^{LIVING} and *"a good marriage gift [for my*

husband]." ^{AMPLIFIED}

The word translated *"dowry"* means "ENDOWMENT, OR GIFT." ^{STRONG'S} This is the only place the Hebrew word (zebed),

with me, because I have born him six sons . . ." Other versions read, *"will treat me with honor,"* ^{NIV} *"will honor me,"* ^{NRSV} *"have my husband living with me,"* ^{BBE} *"will live with me,"* ^{CJB} *"choose me,"*

I want to keep before you the fact that God is forming a nation, beginning with the birth of those who will head up the twelve tribes that will constitute the nation of Israel.

here translated *"dowry,"* is found in Scripture. The English word *"dowry"* also occurs in Genesis 34:12, Exodus 22:17, and First Samuel 18:25). In those texts it is translated from a different Hebrew word – mohair. That word means, "PRICE FOR A WIFE." ^{STRONG'S}

In this text, the word *"dowry"* is more related to an **endowment**, or gift. The idea is that she has given the gift of six sons to Jacob – a good endowment, or gift. So far as the building of the nation of Israel is concerned, this is a considerable heritage.

NOW WILL MY HUSBAND DWELL WITH ME

" . . . now will my husband dwell

^{SEPTUAGINT} *"will bring me presents,"* ^{NJB} *"will treat me with respect,"* ^{NLT} *"will exalt me,"* ^{TNK} *"will praise me,"* ^{CEV} *"accept me,"* ^{ERV} and *"dwell with me [and regard me as his wife in reality]."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

While the word translated *"dwell"* does have a secondary meaning of being exalted, the idea is that Jacob will exalt, choose, honor, and accept her by living with her, rather than with Rachel. It appears that Jacob lived with Rachel and visited Leah. Because she had been so fruitful, bearing him six sons, she felt he would move in with her.

In accounting for the building of the house of Israel, when Boaz married Ruth, the elders of Israel said, "And all

the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, *"We are witnesses. The LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like **Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel:** and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem"* (Ruth 4:11).

SHE CALLED HIS NAME ZEBULUN

" . . . and she called his name Zebulun."

The name Zebulun means, "DWELLING, HABITATION," ^{HITCHCOCK} "DWELLING," ^{EASTON} and "HABITATION." ^{McCLINTOK & STRONG'S}

At this point, Jacob has ten sons, and six of them have been personally born to Leah.

WORDS SAID AT BIRTHS

- ➡ When the first birth occurred, Eve said, *"I have gotten a man from the Lord"* (Gen 4:1).
- ➡ When Noah Was born, his father Lamech said, *"This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the*

ground which the LORD hath cursed." (Gen 5:29).

- ➡ When Ishmael was born, even though he was born to Abraham through Hagar, there is no record, of anything being said (Gen 16:15-16).
- ➡ When Isaac was born, Sarah said, *"And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me . . . Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born him a son in his old age"* (Gen 21:6-7).
- ➡ When Reuben was born Leah said, *"Surely the LORD hath looked upon my affliction; now therefore my husband will love me."* (Gen 29:32).
- ➡ When Simeon was born, *"Because the LORD hath heard that I was hated, he hath therefore given me this son also."* (Gen 29:33).
- ➡ When Levi was born Leah said, *"Now this time will my husband be*

joined unto me, because I have born him three sons: therefore was his name called Levi." (Gen 29:34).

- ➡ When Judah was born, Leah said, *"Now will I praise the LORD: therefore she called his name Judah; and left bearing."* (Gen 29:35)
- ➡ When Bilhah gave birth to Dan, Rachel said *"God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son"* (Gen 30:6)
- ➡ When Bilhah has gave birth to Naphtali, Rachel says, *"With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed."* (Gen 30:8)
- ➡ When Zilpah gave birth to Dan, Rachel said, *"And Leah said, A troop cometh."* (Gen 30:11)
- ➡ Now that Zilpah has again delivered a son for Jacob in behalf of Leah, Leah said, *"Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed."* (Gen 30:13)

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 1/25/13. We will continue our series of lessons in the book of Genesis. The fifty-first lesson will cover verses 22 through 43 of chapter thirty: "JACOB'S ENCOUNTER WITH LABAN." Rachel bears Joseph, and Jacob asks Laban to send him away with his wives and children. Laban says he has learned by experience that he has been blessed because of Jacob. Jacob agrees to stay for the increase of his flocks. He then sets a plan in motion through which his own flocks are increased significantly. The meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.

LEAH BEARS A DAUGHTER

" ²¹ And afterwards she bare a daughter, and called her name Dinah."

The name Dinah means "judgment, who judges" ^{HITCHCOCK} "judged, vindicated," ^{EASTON} "acquitted," ^{SMITH'S} "justice." ^{ISBE}

This is the only recorded daughter of Jacob. We do not know if he had any

other daughters or not.

Later, Moses records an incident in which Dinah was ravished Shechem, prince of the country (Gen 34:2). This occasioned a series of events that involved revenge and justice – something Dinah's name suggested (Gen 34). As he was dying, in the

closing words of Jacob, he made reference to this event, and the revenge that was wrought because of it (Gen 49:5-7).

Thus we have been exposed to some of the unsearchable involvements associated with forming the nation of Israel.

MOTHER	NAME	MEANING	SAYING	REFERENCE
Leah	Reuben	"Behold, the son"	Surely the Lord hath looked on my affliction.	Gen 29:32
Leah	Simeon	"Hearing"	"The Lord hath heard that I was hated."	Gen 29:33
Leah	Levi	"Joined to"	"The Lord hath looked upon mine affliction."	Gen 29:34
Leah	Judah	"Praise"	"Now I will praise the Lord."	Gen 29:35
Bilhah	Dan	"Judge"	"The Lord hath judged me and heard my voice."	Gen 30:6
Bilhah	Naphtali	"My wrestling"	"With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed."	Gen 30:8
Zilpah	Gad	"Fortune"	"A Troop cometh."	Gen 30:11
Zilpah	Asher	"Happy"	"Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed."	Gen 30:13
Leah	Issachar	"Hired"	"God has given me my hire."	Gen 30:18
Leah	Zebulun	"Dwelling"	"God hath endued me with a good dowry."	Gen 30:20
Rachel	Joseph	"Increaser"	"The Lord shall add to me another son."	Gen 30:24
Rachel	Benjamin	"Son of my right hand"	Rachel died	Gen 35:18