

FALLING IN LOVE WITH THE LORD

Gen 29:35 And she [Leah] conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Now I will praise the Lord." Therefore she called his name Judah. Then she stopped bearing.

After Jacob had deceived his father by pretending to be his brother Esau, he fled for his life to Haran. There he encountered a beautiful woman named Rachel. He offered to work for Laban for seven years for her to be his wife. The number seven in the Bible stands for perfection. Jacob working for seven years for Rachel is a type of Jesus' complete and perfect work at the cross to purchase the church as His bride. The seven years passed very quickly because of the love he had for Rachel. On his wedding night he expected Rachel to become his. However, Jacob was deceived and Laban sent Leah his eldest daughter into his tent instead of Rachel. Jacob woke up with the wrong woman! He woke up with Leah. He loved and wanted Rachel! Laban explained that he could not give the younger sister in marriage before the older one. Laban gave Rachel also to Jacob for the promise of working seven more years.

Although Leah was Jacob's first wife, he preferred and loved Rachel more than Leah. Leah longed for the love of a husband but Jacob's heart belonged to Rachel. Leah felt her only hope of gaining the love of Jacob would be by giving him a son. Giving your husband his firstborn son in bible days was a token of great honor. God saw that Leah was unloved and was gracious to her. He allowed her to conceive a son.

Gen 29:31 When the Lord saw that Leah was unloved, He opened her womb; but Rachel was barren.

Gen 29:32 So Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben; for she said, "The Lord has

surely looked on my affliction. Now therefore, my husband will love me.

Leah gave birth to a son and called her son Reuben, which means "see a son!" She told herself, "Now therefore, my husband will love me!" However, she soon saw her hopes unrealized. He still loved and favored Rachel instead of her. However, God graciously allowed her to give birth to another son.

Gen 29:33 Then she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the Lord has heard that I am unloved, He has therefore given me this son also." And she called his name Simeon.

Leah gave birth to another son and called him Simeon- which means "God has heard." She hoped desperately that this son would change Jacob's heart towards her and that he would begin to love her now. However, once again her hopes were dashed. Jacob still loved Rachel and favored her. God once again blesses her with another son.

Gen 29:34 She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Now this time my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." Therefore his name was called Levi.

Leah thought three times was a charm! She thought surely after giving Jacob three sons and Rachel not giving him any that Jacob would finally be attached to her. However, for a third time she was let down. Her deep longing to be loved by Jacob just did not materialize. What she thought would ensure his love had left her feeling empty. However, God once again showed grace to Leah and she conceived once again.

Gen 29:35 *And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Now I will praise the Lord." Therefore she called his name Judah. Then she stopped bearing.*

When Leah gave birth to her fourth son it finally dawned on her that although Jacob did not love her or care for her, there was One who showed her unfailing love and concern. It dawned on her that the Lord loved her by blessing her again, and again, and again, and again! For the first time Leah looked away from Jacob to meet her needs for love and she lifted up her eyes and was captivated by the love of God towards her. This love overwhelmed her so much that she said, "**NOW**, I will praise the Lord!" Instead of trying to be loved she fell in love with God. She fell in love with the Lord because He first loved her. It is no wonder that from this son, Judah, would come our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

As a singles pastor I see many singles right where Leah was. They so much want the love of a husband. They want the love of a wife. However, it seems so elusive. However, if they would but stop and look at their lives and behold how much God has done for them... If they spent time looking at how faithful He has been time and time again when they did not deserve it... If they would behold that the Lord has graciously given to them even when they tried to use what God gave to meet their own personal desires... If they would notice how the Lord has given, and given, and given again and again... they would realize just how much they are loved by Him and fall in love with Him.

God wants to fill your heart with his infinite love and to reveal to you how special you really are to Him. He longs for you to turn your attention away from what a mere human can give you to a love so immense that it can only come from God. He wants you to come to the place where Leah came to, "**NOW**, I will praise the Lord!" Once you find your heart filled with His love, He will make sure all your heart's desires are fulfilled. Lift up your eyes and open up your heart to the eternal Love of your Lord. He is waiting for your praise and love.