

Face to Face

with

Rachel and Leah

First Day

Her Story

“But all of us who are Christians have no veils on our faces, but reflect like mirrors the glory of the Lord. We are transformed in ever-increasing splendor into His own image, and this is the work of the Lord who is the Spirit.” (II Corinthians 3:18 PHILLIPS)

Rachel's and Leah's lives are so intertwined that it is difficult to study one without the other. Although they were sisters, raised in the same home, with the same parental training, they were quite unique and individual. Leah, the elder sister, is described as having *delicate eyes*, while Rachel is said to be *beautiful of form and appearance*. I Samuel 16:7 NASB tells us that, *“God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”* In our study this week, we will look at the lives and hearts of Rachel and Leah in order to get a glimpse of who they were. We will begin today by looking at what Scripture tells us about them. *This is their story.*

Read the following verses and, in a few sentences, summarize the events described there:

Genesis 29:1-14

Genesis 29:15-30

Genesis 29:31 – 30:13

Genesis 30:14-26

Genesis 31 (Scan the entire chapter, concentrating on Rachel and Leah.)

Genesis 35:16-20

What was **Rachel's sorrow?**

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What did she know?

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What was Leah's sorrow? _____

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What did she learn?

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Second Day

Her Manner

Who is She?

“...Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.” (II Peter 1:5-7)

Rachel's name means "ewe."

Leah's name means "weazied," or "faint for sickness."

Today we will be looking at the *character* of Rachel and of Leah. Consider the Scripture you have read on *Rachel's* life and use the following words to describe her:

○ *Her strength*

- *Her weakness*
- *Her faith*

Use the following words to describe *Leah*:

- *Her strength*
- *Her weakness*
- *Her loyalty*

How did Rachel's *character* make a difference in the way she handled her sorrows? _____

How did Leah's *character* make a difference in the way she handled her sorrows? _____

There is often a moment or an event in a person's life which reveals to us *who* that person is...

- What do you consider the defining moment of *Rachel's* life?
- What do you consider the defining moment of *Leah's* life?

There have been moments or events *in your own life* which have defined who you are today. Share what you consider to be the defining moment of your life so far. _____

Third Day

Her Hope

“And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord.” (Luke 1:45 NASB)

Today we will focus in on Leah's *hope*. From what you have studied about her this week:

What was her *need*? _____

What was her *hope*? _____

What was God's *promise*? _____

Leah's story is a sad one. Scripture tells us plainly that Leah was *unloved*. But it also tells us that God *saw* that she was unloved and opened her womb (Genesis 29:31)! God gave Leah sons – 6 of them to be exact. The first 4 came in succession and the names Leah gave them are evidence of a change that was taking place in her heart. Look at **Genesis 29:31-35** and answer the following questions:

- **Reuben** means “*look a son.*” What did Leah say when she had Reuben? v.32
- **Simeon** means “*hearing.*” What did Leah say when she had Simeon? v.33
- **Levi** means “*attachment.*” What did Leah say when she had Levi? v.34
- **Judah** means “*praise.*” What did Leah say when she had Judah? v.35

What was Leah hoping for with the birth of each child, and how does Judah's name give evidence that Leah's focal point had changed? _____

Where is your focal point today? Is it on the one thing you lack, or is it on the great provider of all your needs, Jesus Christ? Share the difference it would make if your focal point was on Christ. _____

Although Leah wasn't Jacob's first choice, she was God's! God honored *her* by bringing both the priestly tribe of Levi and the Messianic tribe of Judah through her!

Memory Verse:

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us” (Ephesians 3:20). This is our memory verse this week – begin memorizing it today!

Fourth Day

Her Gifts

It has been said that the talents and abilities we receive from God are His gift to us; what we do with those talents and abilities is our gift to God. This week we have the opportunity to view two sisters, so closely linked that it is difficult to study them separately, and yet, they couldn't be more different in their physical characteristics and emotional makeup. Examining their lives will hopefully help us to cherish what we have been given and encourage us to use our gifts to the maximum to glorify Him!

Rachel and Leah both possessed beauty, but each exhibited hers in a different way. Rachel's was an outward beauty that brought the admiring glances of all who saw her, while Leah's took a little longer to recognize. Hers was an inward beauty that caught the admiring glance of the Giver!

“Do not let your beauty be that outward adorning of arranging the hair, of wearing gold, or of putting on fine apparel; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible ornament of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.”

I Peter 3:3

Which words from the above verse would you use to describe Rachel? _____

Which words from the above verse would you use to describe Leah? _____

Would you say that Rachel and Leah used their gifts well? Please share your thoughts.

Physical and spiritual beauty come with their own rewards, though one is temporal and one eternal. Contrast some of the rewards you can think of for each one.

○ *Physical beauty*

○ *Spiritual beauty*

The world would have us emphasize our physical attributes in order for us to be appreciated and loved, but the Bible teaches us that we are to be concerned with *inner beauty*, which is precious in the sight of God.

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Would you say that the amount of time you spend in front of the mirror each day is *equal to – more than – or less than* the amount of time you spend before God each day? _____

Depending upon which “mirror” you are spending time with, your life will reflect the results. What do you think this says about you? _____

Psalm 27:4 reveals one of the “beauty secrets” so necessary for the woman who desires to please God. What secret does this verse reveal? _____

- Name some practical ways in which you can cultivate, or nurture, your inner beauty?

In Proverbs 11:22 we find an interesting analogy to the woman who lacks this inner beauty. To what is she compared? _____

Are you in the habit of spending time with the Lord each and every day? As you spend time beholding the beauty of the Lord a glorious thing happens in the process. What transpires according to II Corinthians 3:18? _____

Aren’t you glad the Lord doesn’t see as man sees? Man looks at the outward appearance, *but the Lord looks at the heart!* When our hearts are set on pleasing Him, our lives will reflect that result because He is at work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

- What does God promise to the humble spirit? Psalm 149:4

- What kind of person does God consider *beautiful*? Romans 10:15

Do you want to catch the Lord’s admiring glance? Then will you ask Him today to help you become beautiful in His eyes?

Fifth Day

Her Legacy

“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” (Romans 15:4)

How will you be remembered? How would you like to be remembered? What will you leave behind of benefit for others? What you do and say today will leave imprints for others to view tomorrow.

Taking a closer look...

- What impression did Rachel leave with you this week?

- What impression did Leah leave with you this week?

Taking a personal look....

- What did the Lord show you about dealing with disappointments and difficult relationships?

- What did you learn this week about the importance of inner beauty?

Passing it on....

- What lesson from Rachel or Leah’s life do you consider worthy of passing on to someone else?

Sixth Day

Your Prayer

Each day this week you have examined up close – face to face – a woman of the Bible: her *story and manner; her promise and hope; her gifts and legacy*. Throughout the process, as you learned about her, you also learned about yourself.

Now the focus shifts to *Your Prayer*. Each week during your group time you will have the opportunity to pray in agreement with the other ladies for the things you write down on this personalized page. Keep an updated account in the *Praise* list each week as God answers your petitions. This year let's come boldly to His throne and learn to pray the **BIG PRAYER** with expectancy! The only prerequisite for such boldness is being *humble and real* in His presence.

Prayer: Write out your prayer for each of the following...

I praise God for (an aspect of His marvelous character) _____

I confess to God _____

I thank God for _____

I ask God for _____

Promise: Write out this week's *promise* in the space provided...and learn to pray this promise from Scripture.

Praise: If God has answered a prayer request for you this week or fulfilled a desire of your heart, please write it out and date it as a stone of remembrance.

Notes

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