

**The Refinement of Jacob Continues:
God's Purpose Prevails Despite Sin
Gen. 29:31-30:24
March 23, 2022**

What characteristics of God have been displayed in our study of the life of Jacob up to Gen. 29:31?

Despite these characteristics of God shown in Jacob's life, it was striking how absent the recognition, the acknowledgement, the reliance upon, or the worship of God was in the last passage we studied where we saw Jacob's arrival to Mesopotamia.

I. God's Purpose Prevails Despite the Seeking of Fulfillment in Another (29:31-35)

In verse 31 we see God having regard for Leah because she was hated. God shows His compassion for her and He opens her womb; once again displaying that God is the author of life, that God is the One who brings forth life, and that children are a gift from Him.

Three sons, prized children in the ancient world who would carry on the family name, are born to Jacob and Leah in quick succession.

Jacob's love was what Leah wanted but couldn't obtain and Jacob's love was something that Leah seemed to believe will fulfill her. Jer. 3:8-9.

Notice that in naming Judah, we see a shift in the name's focus from Jacob to the One from whom she's being given the ability to conceive, the LORD!

II. God's Purpose Prevails Despite Reliance Upon Old Ways to Achieve One's Own Ends (30:1-13)

Rachel does not rejoice with the birth of Leah's three sons, instead she envies her sister. Rachel goes to Jacob and says to him, "Give me children, or I shall die!"

In the only words that he will speak in this passage he speaks words that are truth, but words that have no grace.

Rachel turns to Bilhah, the servant who was a wedding gift given to her by her father, and tells (doesn't ask) Jacob to go in to her for the sole purpose of being a surrogate for her.

III. God's Purpose Prevails Despite Superstition and Ungodly Scheming (14-21)

Mandrakes are a Mediterranean plant with white or purple flowers and large yellow berries. It has a forked fleshy root that supposedly resembles the human form and was formerly widely used in medicine and magic. Song of Songs 7:13.

As Jacob returns from the field Leah's words - "I have hired you" - reduce Jacob to the level of a prostitute.

IV. God's Purpose Prevails Because God Shows Grace to the Undeserving (22-24)

God remembered Rachel - the same word used in Gen. 8:1 where we're told that God remembered Noah after the great flood. Ex. 2:23-25.

What might this history communicate to the first hearers of this passage?

What does this history communicate to us?