

## GENESIS –Lesson 52

Learn: Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, and my ways are not your ways, saith the LORD. Isaiah 55:6-8

Read: Genesis 30:1-24

1. Why was Rachel envious of her sister? v 1
2. How did Rachel's barrenness affect the marriage relationship of Jacob and Rachel?  
vv 1, 2a
3. According to Jacob, what was the reason that Rachel was not able to bare children?  
v 2b
4. Does the reason that Jacob gave for Rachel's barrenness apply to all cases where a woman is unable to bare a child? Use Psalm 127:3; 113:9 to explain.
5. How did Rachel show worldly wisdom to solve her problem, rather than seeking God's help? vv 3, 4
6. Rachel's maid conceived immediately and bore a son. What was Rachel's response?  
v 6
7. Rachel gave the name Dan to the son which Bilhah bore. The name means "justice." What was the justice that Rachel had not had before she claimed this son? vv1, 6
8. Was there "justice" for Bilhah in this situation? Explain.
9. Because of the success in gaining a son in this way, what did Rachel do? v 7

By having the relationship of Jacob to Bilhah continue, Bilhah was now regarded as an actual wife of Jacob, though only a second class wife (more like a concubine).

10. What did Rachel name the second son born of Bilhah? v 8 Why?

11. What a mess all this rivalry caused in the family. What happened next? vv 9-13

Because of our own culture, it is difficult for us to understand why these two sisters would willingly allow another woman to have their husband for the sole reason of having sons. Jacob seems to be compliant to their wishes, one reason being that it seemed to keep the women content. Leah, on her part, was overjoyed at the birth of the sixth son Asher, which means “happy.” In her society she would be acknowledged as unusually blessed. In any case, this rivalry resulted in producing a large family quite rapidly, and this would be important in the future accomplishment of God’s promises regarding the nation that would come from Jacob.

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Reuben, who was by this time old enough to play alone in the fields, found some mandrakes. Knowing that they would please his mother, he brought them home to Leah.

The mandrake is a small orange-colored berry-like fruit, much esteemed in ancient times as an aphrodisiac and inducer of fertility. It has been called the “love-apple” and, in Western countries, the “May-apple.” It has also been used as a narcotic and emetic (induces vomiting), especially its large roots. It was no doubt because of its supposed value in promoting fertility that both Leah and Rachel desired it.

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12. What bargain did Rachel make with Leah in order to gain the mandrakes? vv 14, 15

13. From this bargain that Leah made, and what she did in verse 16, what can we learn about Leah and Jacob’s time spent together at this point in their marriage?

14. Leah wanted more children, where did she go for help? v 17

15. It is interesting to note that although Leah claimed the sons of Zilpah as her own, thus giving her a total of six, how many sons does the scripture say she had at this time?

What does this tell us about how God views things even though we think that we have gained advantage by our manipulation of events?

16. What did the birth of another son to Leah bring her as a reward as regards her time with Jacob? vv 18-21

17. What was Leah's great desire? v 20a

At this point, Jacob's first daughter was born to Leah. Later Jacob had other daughters (Genesis 37:35; 46:7, 15), but the only one whose name and whose mother's name is given is Dinah, meaning "Judgment." We will learn later that this little girl was much loved by the brothers. THE GENESIS RECORD p 469 Dr. Henry Morris

18. Finally, after many years, the Lord answered Rachel's prayers. This conception was not due to the mandrakes, of course, which in any case had been eaten several years previously. What brought about the birth of Rachel's first son? v 22

19. What did Rachel give God credit for doing for her? v 23

20. Here we see that although Rachel had claimed the sons of her handmaid Bilhah, it had not given her any peace as to the situation of not being able to have children. What should we learn from this account regarding trying to meet our needs outside of God's plan?

21. We are reminded again of Isaiah 55:8. What does it say?

22. What does I Corinthians 1:20-29 say? Especially note verses 20, 25, 27.

23. Why does God work through difficult times in our lives, to show us the foolishness of doing things the world's way rather than His way? I Corinthians 1:29-31

24. What is the solution for us when we have gone our own way instead of trusting God and doing things and living His way? Isaiah 55:6, 7

25. According to God's plan of marriage Rachel and Leah had done wrong, but in spite of themselves, God used the situation to bring about His plan. What does this tell us about God? Isaiah 46:9, 10