

LEAH



God saw that Leah was hated, and He enabled her to have children. Leah named her first son Reuben, "Because the Lord has looked upon my affliction; for now my husband will love me" (Gen 29:32). Leah seemed to know that God had provided this child to her, but her greatest desire remained her husband's love. Leah had a second son, named Simeon, "Because the Lord has heard that I am hated, he has given me this son also" (Gen. 29:33). Leah no longer requested the love of her husband, only that his hatred would fade. Leah then had a third son named Levi, "now this time my husband will be attached to me, because I have borne him three sons" (Gen 29:34). Leah no longer requested the love of her husband or an absence of his hatred, she only wanted to remain connected to him.

After stealing the family blessing and birthright from Esau, Jacob fled from his home (Gen. 27:18-29). Jacob relocated to modern-day Turkey to live with his uncle, Laban. Laban had two daughters, Leah and Rachel. Leah was the older of the two daughters, but Rachel's beauty caught Jacob's eye. Jacob entered into an agreement with Laban to work seven years for Rachel's hand in marriage. After seven years passed, the time had come for Jacob and Rachel to be joined as one.

Laban switched daughters the night of the wedding ceremony, and Jacob was married to Leah. The deceiver was finally deceived. Jacob woke to a surprise the next day, and Laban explained that the eldest daughter must be married before the younger. Laban offered Rachel to Jacob for another seven years of labor. However, Laban did not require the work up front on this occasion. Jacob simply had to finish the week long marriage ceremony and then he could also take Rachel's hand in marriage. It is difficult to imagine the feelings and emotions of Leah in this moment. Laban saw a week of marriage to Leah as sufficient to redeem the true prize, Rachel. Jacob's feeling on the matter were not hidden either: "He loved Rachel more than Leah" (Gen. 29:30).

Through three children Leah desired the love and affection of Jacob, but the subsequent naming reveals that the children had done nothing to endear Leah to Jacob. Leah then conceived a fourth son. She called him Judah saying, "This time I will praise the Lord" (Gen. 29:35). It was not until her fourth son, Judah, that Leah was able to direct her heart, affection, and praise to the Lord. **God loves the overlooked**, and He was all Leah needed.



GOD LOVES THE OVERLOOKED