

Church Chat @ Home



June 21, 2020

"Deadly Envy"

Abraham's son Isaac had two sons named Jacob and Esau. Abraham's family was growing just as God had promised. In our story today, Jacob is going to get married. Have you ever been to a wedding?

The story of Jacob, Rachel, & Leah, from Genesis 29 – 30

The Jesus Storybook Bible Version



There were once two sisters. The youngest sister was very beautiful and her name was Rachel. But the oldest sister wasn't beautiful at all (some thought her quite ugly), and her name was Leah.

Rachel was the kind of girl who always gets invited to parties and chosen for the team. Everyone loved her. And poor Leah? No one hardly noticed her.

One day, their cousin Jacob came to stay. He was one of Isaac's sons and he was on the run. (Jacob had stolen and cheated and made some enemies – including his own brother – and now he was hiding.)

The funny thing is, Jacob – of all people – was the one God gave the special promise to, the same promise he had given to his grandfather Abraham: “I will rescue the world through your family.” (But then God chooses people we least expect, as we’ll see.)

Jacob stayed a long time working for his Uncle Laban. One day, Laban said, “Jacob, I’ve decided to pay for your work. What do you want?” A sudden thought struck him. “How about one of my daughters?”



Jacob looked at Rachel and he looked at Leah. Who would he choose? Of course, he chose Rachel. “I’ll work seven years for free!” Jacob said. “If I can marry Rachel.” So Jacob worked seven years and, at last his wedding day arrived. But that night, Laban played a nasty trick on Jacob.

Instead of sending Rachel to marry Jacob, he sent Leah. (Now, in those days, they didn’t have electricity, so it was dark in their tent and, besides, women wore veils and you couldn’t see their faces properly. So Jacob suspected nothing.)

The next morning, Jacob woke up – and screamed. His new wife was lying beside him but it wasn’t Rachel – it was Leah. Jacob jumped out of bed. “Laban!” he cried. “You scoundrel!”

But Laban said, “Work for me another seven years and then you can marry Rachel.”



So Jacob worked for Laban another seven years and, at last, Rachel became his wife. Now Jacob had two wives, but of his two wives, Jacob loved Rachel the best.

“No one loves me,” Leah said. “I’m too ugly.” But God didn’t think she was ugly. And when he saw that Leah was not loved and that no one wanted her, God chose her – to love her specially, to give her a very important job. One day, God was going to rescue the whole world – through Leah’s family.

Now when Leah knew that God loved her, in her heart, suddenly it didn’t matter anymore whether her husband loved her the best, or if she was the prettiest. Someone had chosen her, someone did love her – with a Never Stopping, Never Giving Up, Unbreaking, Always and Forever Love.



So when Leah had a baby boy she called him Judah, which means, "This time I will praise the Lord!" And that's just what she did.

And you'll never guess what job God gave Leah. You see, when God looked at Leah, He saw a princess. And sure enough, that's exactly what she became. One of Leah's children's children's children would be a prince – the Prince of Heaven – God's Son.

This Prince would love God's people. They wouldn't need to be beautiful for Him to love them. He would love them with all of his heart. And they would be beautiful because He loved them. Like Leah.

POP-QUIZ:

In this story we have two sisters. Circle the name of the sister you think the description is about.

DESCRIPTION	ANSWER	
1. The younger sister.	RACHEL	LEAH
2. The beautiful sister.	RACHEL	LEAH
3. The older sister who no one noticed.	RACHEL	LEAH
4. The sister Jacob wanted to marry.	RACHEL	LEAH
5. After seven years the sister Jacob first married.	RACHEL	LEAH
6. The second sister Jacob married.	RACHEL	LEAH
7. The sister Jacob loved.	RACHEL	LEAH
8. The sister God chose to set his love on.	RACHEL	LEAH
9. The sister with a son named Judah.	RACHEL	LEAH
10. The sister through whose family God would rescue his people.	RACHEL	LEAH

Sermon Notes:

Main Truths:

1. THE _____ OF ENVY
2. THE _____ OF ENVY
3. THE _____ ENVY
4. THE _____ FROM ENVY

Main Idea: We battle our whole lives with **deadly envy** as we find ourselves comparing our lives and circumstances with others. What often drives this is a desire to find acceptance and love as we fear rejection more than anything else. It is only when we are set free in the one who was rejected by all, the man of sorrows – Jesus, that our **deadly envy** can be put to death in Him. It is then that we can begin to thrive even in the most desperate of times.

1. The Struggle of Envy...

Our envy is tied to our deep desire to be accepted and love, and a fear and insecurity of rejection. We envy because we don't have what others do, and if we did, we would be more loved, accepted, and happier. Because we don't, we feel incomplete. So we envy.

Notes: _____

How does envy manifest itself in your life? How does the fear, insecurity, and search for love drive you?

2. The Pain of Envy...

The struggle is real, and it is a painful devastating struggle.

Notes: _____

"She is the girl nobody wants." – Keller

"Wretched Leah sits sadly in her tent with her maid weeping. For the rest of the household and especially Rachel, despises her because she has been scorned by her husband, who prefers Rachel and is desperately in love with Rachel alone. She is not beautiful, not pleasing. No, she is odious and hated...no one pays attention to her." – Luther

How have you dealt with the pain of your rejection? How has that pain impacted your present-day life and how has it distorted the way you look at life? People? God? How has it dimmed your prospects for your future?

3. The War Against Envy...

The struggle of rejection is real, and that struggle is so painful that we wage war on rejection so that we don't have to experience the pain of it in our lives.

Notes: _____

“Though Leah became Jacob’s first wife she was not the beloved wife. This she was only too aware of, and even the birth of four sons did little to comfort her. She longed for the affection of her husband and proclaimed the fact in her comments on the names of her children, whom she saw as gifts from the Lord.”
– Joyce Baldwin

“Leah gave birth to her first child, a boy and she named him Reuben. Reuben means, “to see” and she thought, “Now maybe my husband will see me; maybe I won’t be invisible anymore.” But she had a second son, and she named him Simeon, which has to do with hearing: “Now maybe my husband will finally listen to me.” But he didn’t. She had a third son and named him Levi, which means “to be attached,” and she said, “Maybe finally my husband’s heart will be attached to me. “ – Tim Keller

How do you battle and fight rejection in your life?

4. *The Freedom From Envy...*

The pain of Leah’s rejection becomes an opportunity for not just self-growth, but to discover a person that she has been looking for all her life.

Notes: _____

"She was pouring her heart to God, and God, who always hears the cry of the broken and contrite heart, was good to her." – Boice

"Finally, it says that she conceived for the fourth time, and when she gave birth to Judah, she said, 'This time!' Isn't that defiant? It is totally different; no mention of husband, no mention of child. There is some kind of breakthrough. She says, 'This time I will praise the LORD. Something happened to Leah; God did something in her. There was a breakthrough. She began to understand what you are supposed to do with your desire for one true love. She turned her heart toward the only real beauty, the only real lover who can satisfy those cosmic needs.'" – Keller

Psalm 34:18 – The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit. (ESV)

"The fourth son was called Judah, which means 'praise'. By this time, Leah had stopped seeing the birth of sons as a means by which her husband's love could be gained and instead merely praised God for the birth of her children. Leah's was a bad situation, which God did not completely change. But God changed Leah. He gave her grace to live in a less-than-perfect situation. He multiplied her joy in childbirth. He gave her sons who became the fathers of the greatest of the Jewish tribes. Levi was the father of the priests. Judah was the father of the tribe through whom the Messiah came." – Boice

"This is the Messianic line! God has come to the girl that nobody wanted, the unloved, and made her the mother of Jesus—not beautiful Rachel, but the homely one, the unwanted one, the unloved one." – Keller

"He became the man nobody wanted. He was born in a manger. He had no beauty that we should desire him. He came to his own and his own received him not. And at the end, nobody wanted him. Everybody abandoned him."
– Keller

John 1:12-13 – But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. (ESV)

Matthew 11:28-30 – Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (ESV)

Draw

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Application Questions:

1. What do we learn about the danger of envy from Leah? _____

2. How does Leah find freedom from envy? _____

3. How can Jesus set our hearts free from envy? _____

POP-QUIZ ANSWERS:

DESCRIPTION	ANSWER	COMMENTS/QUESTIONS
The younger sister.	RACHEL	Yes, it is Rachel.
The beautiful sister.	RACHEL	Rachel is the beautiful younger sister.
The older sister who no one noticed.	LEAH	Yes, it is Leah.
The sister Jacob wanted to marry.	RACHEL	What did Jacob have to do in order to marry Rachel? Yes, he had to work for his uncle Laban for seven years.
After seven years the sister Jacob first married.	LEAH	Correct, Jacob thought he was marrying Rachel, but actually it was Leah. Laban played a nasty trick on Jacob.
The second sister Jacob married.	RACHEL	Jacob had married both sisters.
The sister Jacob loved.	RACHEL	How did Leah feel knowing that Jacob loved Rachel best? Yes, not loved, not attractive, and not wanted.
The sister God chose set his love on.	LEAH	Even though Leah was not wanted, not to attractive, and not loved by others, God chose to set his love on her.
The sister with a son named Judah.	LEAH	The name Judah means "this time I will praise the Lord." Which is exactly what Leah did!
The sister through whose family God would rescue his people.	LEAH	Yes, one of Judah's children's children's children would be Jesus. Isn't that amazing! It is through Leah's family that Jesus would one day come.