

# BIBLE STUDY: Rachel and Leah

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A case study based on Rachel and Leah's relationship.

## Introduction

How many times have you been disappointed by someone you trusted, betrayed by a friend, abandoned by a loved one? Leah and Rachel were cheated by their father, who introduced sibling rivalry between them over their husband Jacob. As sisters and wives for the same husband, they wanted to win over each other throughout their life. Through their bittersweet relationship, we can learn how not to compete or struggle.

## Objectives

1. Participants will learn that competition in life is a good thing, while fighting to win over anybody at any cost may not glorify God.
2. Participants will learn that God is with us when we go through life's struggles and answers our prayers for help in His time.
3. Participants will learn that all things, including suffering/struggling, is for our good when we love God and surrender to His will. (Romans 8:28)

## Activity (5 min.)

Ask a couple participants to describe a happy occasion and also a challenging occasion with a sibling or a family member.

## Scripture (20 min.)

Read together Genesis 29, 30:1-26, 31:1-7;14-17; 35:16-20

## Application (25 min.)

1. What was Leah's response to the following feelings that she endured in her life, sharing the role of Jacob's wife with her competitive sister Rachel? Have you ever felt any of these natural feelings or any similar to these in your family or school? How did you respond to those emotions? How does God expect us to respond?
  - Unattractiveness - She probably felt helpless (proverbs 31:30)
  - Unloved by her husband - (Genesis 29:33, Romans 5:6-8)
  - Life of misery (Genesis 29:33)
  - Living with anger over her sister for stealing her husband (James 1:19-20, Ephesians 4:29-32)
  - Struggle to gain husband's respect (Genesis 30:20, Genesis 1:27) (Understanding that we are created in His image would help us to keep our identity in God not based on the way others respect us.)
2. Did God see Leah in her struggle? (Genesis 29:31) Did God help her to overcome her failed or misplaced expectations? Can God actively involve and guide us through our various struggles? Can God understand our emotions of rejection, loneliness, etc.? (1 Corinthians 10:13, Psalms 50:15, Isaiah 53 :3-8)
3. After many thousands of years, do you think that God really blessed Leah through her suffering? Can suffering/struggles become a road for blessing in our lives? (James 1:2-4, 12-15)
  - Yes. Our Lord Jesus, also called the Lion of Judah (Revelation 5:5, Genesis 49:8-10), was born in the lineage of Judah, Leah's fourth son. (Matthew 1:2,3)
4. Did Rachel and Leah live together peacefully as Jacob's wives? What was the reason for their continuous conflict? Did they ever stand in unison peacefully as Jacob's wives over any family decision? (Genesis 31:4-7,14-16) Have you ever experienced sibling rivalry? Do you find any common issues? What does God say to us about those issues?
  - Jealousy (Genesis 30:1, James 3:13-16), comparing blessings of the other person, Love for another human being (Isaiah 2:22, John 14:1)
5. As Jacob's favorite wife, did Rachel experience unpleasant emotions in her relationships? (Genesis 30:1) Did Rachel end her race happily since she was loved very much by her husband? (Genesis 35:18) Can any human being fulfill the longings of our heart? (Ecclesiastes 3: 9-14) When family disappoints us, where can we find comfort? Read Matthew 12:46-50. What was Jesus' response to those who asked about His family?

6. What should we do when feelings of anger, jealousy, bitterness, etc. get in the way of our relationships with family and others? (Psalm 32:3, 5 - Confession) What promise do we have from God concerning our sins? (Isaiah 1:18) Where do we receive this forgiveness? (Titus 3:5-8 - Baptism, Matthew 26:28 - Communion)
7. After the birth of each of her children, what was Leah's response? (Genesis 29:32-35, 30:18-20) Read Deuteronomy 4:29-31. What does God promise concerning prayer?

**Take action (10 mins)**

- Thank God for creating you in His image with a unique purpose. Examine your heart in silence on how your relationship is with your siblings and friends.
- Confess any sins that the Holy Spirit might show you and ask God's help and favor in your life to have healthy friendships and relationships. Take comfort in the forgiveness that He gives.
- Pray to God that He would help you in your individual struggles and pray in faith for divine guidance.
- In faith, offer your emotions, relationships and life to God so that He can be glorified in you.
- Memorize any Scripture that can help you in your struggle or write them in your journal and meditate on it.
- Talk to your spiritual mentor about your new commitment so that they can encourage you and pray for you.