

Genesis 30:1-13 The Sons of Jacob

Gen 30:1 Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied (**became jealous of**) her sister (**Leah**), and said to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die!"

Don't let comparison turn a blessing into a competition, we are on the same team
Rachel looks at Leah and becomes jealous: Rachel had Jacob's love, but Leah was having children. Leah had children, but desperately wanted Jacob's love. Rachel sees Leah's children and feels depressed. Leah sees Rachel's relationship with Jacob and feels left alone. Neither woman was satisfied with what she had.

Comparison makes us focus on what someone else has, rather than recognizing what God has already given us and gifts he wants us to use.

And this can happen in a church or ministry:

Why is God using them and not me?

Why did they get the opportunity?

Why did God answer their prayer but not mine?

Why does their ministry seem to be growing?

Application: Don't allow someone else's blessing to become the measurement of your own worth, you be you, and follow Jesus.

Gal 6:4 But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

Gal 6:5 For each one shall bear his own load.

Peter was worried about what everyone else was doing? How is your walk?

Jhn 21:20 Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?"

Jhn 21:21 Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, "But Lord, what about this man?"

Jhn 21:22 Jesus said to him(**Peter**), "If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me."

Luk 9:23 Then He(Jesus) said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

God was speaking to Joseph in dreams, others got jealous

Gen 37:8 And his brothers said to him, "Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

Gen 37:11 And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

Gen 30:2 And Jacob's anger was aroused (**became furious**) against Rachel, and he said, "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld (**or kept**) from you the fruit of the womb (**having children**)?"(**God is ultimately sovereign over conception and childbirth**)

Psa 127:3 Behold, children are a heritage (**gift**) from the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a reward.

Jacob made it clear, He is not God. God is the one we look to. God makes one barren or one fruitful, do not blame me?

The Bible does not teach: If you have children, God has blessed you; if you don't, God has withheld or denied you His blessing."

Children are described in Scripture as a blessing and gift from God, while the ability to conceive is ultimately under God's sovereignty. However, Scripture does not teach that childlessness means a person is unloved, unblessed, or being punished by God.

Several faithful people experience infertility or delayed childbirth—Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Hannah, and Elizabeth, for example. Their stories actually demonstrate that childlessness can coexist with God's love and purpose. Scripture also demonstrates that a person's worth, God's love, and God's purpose for their life cannot be measured by whether they have biological children.

So called friends and love ones will often cause trouble

1Sa 1:4 And whenever the time came for Elkanah to make an offering, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and daughters.

1Sa 1:5 But to Hannah he would give a double portion, for he loved Hannah, although the LORD had closed her womb.

1Sa 1:6 And her rival also provoked her severely, to make her miserable, because the LORD had closed her womb.

Gen 30:3 So she(**Rachel**) said, "Here is my maid Bilhah; go in to (**or have marital relations with**) her, and she will bear a child (**while sitting, on my lap or**) on my knees, that I also may have children (**be built up or have family**) by her (**to count as my own**)."

This ritual sitting on her knees symbolized that the wife was providing the child for her husband through a surrogate mother.

Sarai said to Abram please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her

Gen 16:1 Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. And she had an Egyptian maidservant whose name was Hagar.

Gen 16:2 So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the LORD has restrained me from bearing children. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her." And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai.

Gen 30:4 Then she(**Rachel**) gave him (**her husband**), Bilhah her maid as (**secondary**) wife, and Jacob went in to (**had marital relations with**) her.

Gen 30:5 And Bilhah conceived (**became pregnant**) and bore (**gave birth to**) Jacob a son.

Gen 30:6 Then Rachel said, "God has "judged" my case (**or rendered justice to me**); and He(**God**) has also heard my voice (**my prayer, my plea**) and given me a son (**through my maid**)." Therefore she(**Rachel**) called his name Dan (**meaning God judged**).

Lam 3:59 O LORD, You have seen how I am wronged; Judge my case.

Gen 30:7 And Rachel's maid Bilhah conceived (**became pregnant**) again and bore Jacob a second son.

Gen 30:8 Then Rachel said, "With great wrestlings (**desperate struggle in prayer to God**) I have wrestled with my sister (**Leah**), and indeed I have prevailed (**won**)." So she(**Rachel**) called his name (**second son**) Naphtali (**it is related to wrestling, struggling**).

It is only God work, why do you condemn your sister or another. Pride is an enemy of God. Don't try to accomplish through manipulation what only God can provide.

Psa 127:1 A Song of Ascents. Of Solomon. Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman stays awake in vain.

Gen 16:3 Then Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan.

Gen 16:4 So he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress became despised in her eyes.

Gen 30:9 When Leah saw (**realized**) that she had stopped bearing (**children**), she(**Leah**) took Zilpah her maid and gave her to Jacob as (**a secondary**) wife.

A secondary wife is usually much lower in rank than the official wife who manages the household and gives birth to the legitimate children. Secondary wives usually had marginal rights to financial support and recognition. Their children were usually acknowledged as offspring of the man, but may vary in status according to circumstances (customs and legal arrangements), may be equal or lower in status than the children born to the official wife.

Gen 30:10 And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son.

Gen 30:11 Then Leah said, "A troop comes (**or how fortunate I am**)!" So she called his name Gad (**meaning fortune has come**).

Gen 30:12 And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a second son.

Gen 30:13 Then Leah said, "I am "happy", for the daughters (**the other women**) will call me blessed." So she(**Leah**) called his name Asher (**meaning happy**).

Luk 1:46 And Mary said: "My soul magnifies the Lord,

Luk 1:47 And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.

Luk 1:48 For He(God) has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.

Genesis 30:14-24 Leah's son Reuben found mandrakes, let's make a deal

Gen 30:14 Now Reuben (**oldest son**) went in the days of wheat harvest and found mandrakes (**the root, plant growing**) in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah (**her older sister**), "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes (**A plant, root thought to be an aphrodisiac or cure for infertility**)."

Gen 30:15 But she said (**Leah angrily replied**) to her(**Rachel her younger sister**), "Is it a small matter that you have taken away my husband? Would you take away my son's mandrakes also?" And Rachel said (**ok, all right**), "Therefore he(**Jacob**) will lie with you tonight (**in exchange**) for your son's mandrakes."

She wanted to be pregnant again so I will trade for your son's mandrakes.

There is a lot of bitterness between these sisters, how sad it is? Only the Lord can reconcile people's issues. One day one of them will die and the other one will regret the evils they did, repentance is available to everyone?

Gods plan one man and one women

Gen 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

God's thoughts are not your thoughts

Isa 55:8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD.

Isa 55:9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

Gen 30:16 When Jacob came (**in**), out of the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him(**Jacob**) and said, "You must come in to me (**sleep with me tonight**), for I have surely hired you with my son's mandrakes (**which he found**)." And he(**Jacob**) lay with her that night.

Gen 30:17 And God listened to Leah (**her prayer**), and she conceived (**became pregnant**) and bore Jacob a fifth son.

This makes it clear that Leah had brought her desire or situation before God, and God responded by answering her prayer and allowing her to conceive.

Phl 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

Phl 4:5 Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.

Phl 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

Phl 4:7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Jer 33:3 'Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.'

Mat 7:7 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

Mat 7:8 "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

James 4:2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask.

Gen 30:18 Leah said, "God has given me my wages (**rewarded me**), because I have given my maid to my husband (**as a wife**)." So she(**Leah**) called his name (**fifth son**) Issachar (**sounds like a Hebrew term that means reward**).

Gen 30:19 Then Leah conceived (**became pregnant**) again and bore Jacob a sixth son.

Gen 30:20 And Leah said, "God has endowed me with a good endowment (**marriage gift, another son**); now my husband will dwell with me (**more**), because I have borne him (**honored him with**) six sons." So she(**Leah**) called his name Zebulun (**Hebrew probably related to honor, home or elevated place?**).

Gen 30:21 Afterward she(**Leah**) bore (**gave birth to**) a daughter, and called her name Dinah.

Gen 30:22 Then God remembered (**answered the prayers of**) Rachel, and God listened to her, and opened her womb (**enabled her to become pregnant**).

Application: Don't assume silence means God isn't listening. It can be timing

Psalm 34:17 "When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears..."

1John 5:14 "If we ask anything according to his will he hears us."

Psalm 18:6 "In my distress I called upon the LORD... and my cry to him reached his ears.

Heb 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Gen 30:23 And she(**Rachel**) conceived (**became pregnant**) and bore a son, and said, "God has taken away my reproach (**removed my disgrace and humiliation**)."

Gen 30:24 So she(**Rachel**) called his name Joseph (**means may He add**), and said, "The **LORD** (**Yahweh**) shall add to me, another son."

We see here there pregnancies are attributed to God:

Leah: "God listened to Leah" → she conceived (30:17)

Rachel: "God remembered Rachel" → He opened her womb (30:22)

The chapter repeatedly emphasizes that God is ultimately the giver of children, even though Jacob's household is using human arrangements: wives, maidservants, worldly wisdom, prayer and competition to try to produce children.

Prophetic: Rachel dies giving birth to her second son

Gen 35:16 Then they journeyed from Bethel. And when there was but a little distance to go to Ephrath, Rachel labored in childbirth, and she had hard labor.

Gen 35:17 Now it came to pass, when she was in hard labor, that the midwife said to her, "Do not fear; you will have this son also."

Gen 35:18 And so it was, as her soul was departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-Oni; but his father called him Benjamin.

Genesis 30:25-36 Jacob's Agreement with Laban (Jacob Names His Wages) Jacob Prospers

Gen 30:25 And it came to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said to Laban, "Send me away, that I may go to my own place and to my (**own**) country.

Different seasons in our lives?

Don't confuse God's blessing with an easy life? A difficult season may mean growth?

Jacob is blessed, but he's also being mistreated.

Rachel is loved, but she's barren.

Leah is fertile, but feels unloved.

Laban is prospering, but is acting dishonestly.

Jhn 16:33 "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

Count trials as Joy

James 1:2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,

James 1:3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

James 1:4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

1Pet 1:6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,

1Pet 1:7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

1Pet 1:8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

Gen 30:26 "Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served you (whom I have acquired by working for you the last 14 years**), and let me go; for you know my service (**and hard work for**) which I have done for you."**

Gen 30:27 And Laban said to him(Jacob**), "Please stay, if I have found favor in your eyes, for I have learned by experience (**and by the omens in divination**) that the LORD has blessed me (**physically by making me wealthy**), for your sake (**on account of you**)."**

Laban is acknowledging that Jacob's presence has brought God's blessing upon his household and possessions.

This connects back to God's promise to Jacob in Genesis 28:14, where God told Jacob summarized: "In you and your offspring (descendants**) shall all the families of the earth be blessed." So even though Laban himself, does not appear to be a faithful worshiper of the LORD, he recognizes the observable results of God's blessing through Jacob.**

God can bless someone even in an unfair environment, and another person can benefit from God's blessing because of your relationship with that person.

Gen 30:28 Then he(Laban**) said, "Name me your wages (**please tell me how much I owe you**), and I will give it (**I will pay whatever you want**)."**

Gen 30:29 So Jacob said (replied**) to him(**Laban**), "You know how I have served you and how your livestock (**and possessions**) has been with me (**and has grown under my care**)."**

Be faithful even when you're being treated unfairly

Col 3:23–24 "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord..."

Luke 16:10 "One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much."

1Pet 2:18–20 endure unjust treatment while doing good.

Gal 6:9 "Let us not grow weary of doing good."

Gen 30:30 "For what you had, before I came was little, and it has increased to a great amount (your wealth has increased enormously**); the LORD has blessed you, since my coming. And now, when shall I also provide for my own house (**how long, before I start providing for my own family**)?"**

1Tim 5:8 But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Gen 30:31 So he(Laban) said (replied), "What (wages) shall I give you?" And Jacob said, "You shall not give me anything. (But), If you will do this (one) thing for me (and agree to this proposal), I will again feed and keep (watch over) your flocks:

Gen 30:32 "Let me pass (inspect and walk) through all your flock today, removing from there, all the speckled and spotted sheep, and all the brown (dark-colored) ones among the lambs, and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and these shall be my wages.

Gen 30:33 "So my righteousness will answer (testify) for me in time to come (future), when the subject of my wages comes before you (an accounting): every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the lambs, will be considered stolen, if it is with me."

Our righteousness will be answered in Gods timing

Psa 37:6 He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday.

Psa 37:7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.

Gen 30:34 And Laban said, "Oh, that it were according to your word (All right! Let it be done as you say)!"

Gen 30:35 So he(Laban, not Jacob as was agreed) removed that day, the male goats that were speckled (striped) and spotted, all the female goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had some white in it, and all the brown (dark-colored) ones among the lambs, and gave them into the hand of his sons.

Why would Laban do this? It appears Laban was protecting his own interests and making Jacob's agreement more difficult to fulfill. Laban the deceiver.

So Jacob clearly understood Laban's repeated changes to the wage arrangement as cheating. Laban's behavior fits a pattern we've already seen:

Genesis 29: Laban deceives Jacob concerning Rachel and Leah.

Genesis 30: Laban agrees to Jacob's wages but removes the animals associated with Jacob's proposed wages, when Jacob said he would do it.

Genesis 31:7: Jacob says Laban changed his wages ten times.

But the story is not over, God knows what is going on? Gen 31:12 God said, I have seen all that Laban is doing to you.

Gen 30:36 Then he(**Laban**) put three days' journey (**or distance**) between himself and Jacob, and (**meanwhile**) Jacob fed (**and cared for**) the rest of Laban's flocks.

Genesis 30:37-43 Jacob's uses Rods

Gen 30:37 Now Jacob took for himself rods (**fresh-cut branches**) of green poplar and of the almond and chestnut trees, peeled white strips in them (**of the bark**), and exposed the white (**inner wood**) which was in the rods (**sticks or branches**).

Gen 30:38 And the rods (**branches**) which he had peeled, he set before the flocks in the gutters (**watering channels**), in the watering troughs where the flocks came to drink, so that they should conceive (**mate**) when they came to drink.

Gen 30:39 So the flocks conceived (**mated**) before the rods (**branches**), and the flocks brought forth (**gave birth to**) streaked, speckled, and spotted.

The success of Jacob's action was undoubtedly the answer to an unrecorded prayer. Later in 31:7-1, Jacob gives God the credit for what happened, citing a special dream that he had from God.

Gen 30:40 Then Jacob separated the lambs, and made the flocks face (**at mating time**), toward the streaked, and all the brown in the flock of Laban; but he put his own flocks by themselves (**this is how he built his own flock**), and did not put them (**where they could breed with**) with Laban's flock (**keep them separated**).

Gen 30:41 And it came to pass (**when the females were in heat**), whenever the stronger livestock conceived (**mated**), that Jacob placed the rods before the eyes of the livestock in the gutters, that they might conceive (**mate, breed**) among the rods (**or in front of the branches**).

Gen 30:42 But when the flocks were feeble (**weaker**), he did not put them in (**where the branches were**); so the feeble were (**or weaker animals ended up belonging to**) Laban's and the stronger Jacob's.

Gen 30:43 Thus the man(**Jacob, as a result**) became exceedingly prosperous (**quickly became wealthy**), and had large flocks (**sheep and goats**), female and male servants, and camels and donkeys.

Quote from David Guzik on Blue Letter Bible

The ancient Hebrew says, "The man (Jacob) burst out exceedingly." God blessed Jacob, but it was not because Jacob was especially good. It was because of the promises God made to Jacob (Genesis 28:13-15) and the covenant made to Abraham.

Jacob also used selective breeding to increase the strength and vitality of his flock. We don't know exactly how this method worked. It is possible Jacob knew more about animal husbandry than we do today; but it is more likely Jacob did the best he knew, and God blessed it.

i. [Genesis 31:10-13](#) tells us that Jacob saw in a dream the blessed reproduction of speckled and spotted sheep and goats. That dream was also connected with a promise of God's care for Jacob and a command to return to Canaan, the land of his family.

i. In the same way, blessing comes from the LORD to us not because we are great or good, but because of the covenant God has made with us through Jesus, and promises He has given us in His word.

ii. We may note Jacob's principles for prosperity:

- Don't make wealth your goal ([Genesis 30:25-26](#)).
- Don't be afraid to work for others and try to increase their wealth before or as you work to increase your own wealth ([Genesis 30:27](#)).
- Work hard, dedicating yourself to your employer's success ([Genesis 30:26](#), [31:38-42](#)).
- Trust God ([Genesis 30:31-33](#)).

End, Prayer

Extra Scriptures: