

ENVY THAT TURNED INTO GRATITUDE

Gen. 29:31-35

1st Son of Leah - Reuben ("Behold, a son!") Leah recognized that God had seen how miserable she was, had opened her womb, and had given her this son. She interpreted that fact as God's way of enabling her to gain her husband's love. But did it work out that way? Apparently not. Then, less than a year later, Simeon was born.

2nd Son of Leah - Simeon ("hearing") Leah was still unloved. Reuben's birth had not helped Jacob to love her. He still had eyes for Rachel only. God had heard Leah's crying, He had seen her tears, and He understood her deep desire to have Jacob's love. So, he gave her this second son. Surely this time Jacob would love her. But did he?

3rd Son of Leah - Levi ("attached, joined") This expressed her consuming desire, ***"Now at last my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons."***

4th Son of Leah - Judah ("praising") She explained that name by saying, ***"This time I will praise the Lord."*** For the first time, in naming her sons, Leah turned from expressing her yearning for *Jacob's* love to recognizing and basking in *God's* love.

WHAT HAPPENED?

- a. Her focus had shifted from what she lacked to what she already had. Nothing changed in her relationship with Jacob. He was still starry-eyed over Rachel. Leah had four sons in a time when bearing sons meant everything. She woke up to the richness of her situation and said, ***"This time I will praise the LORD."***
- b. She recognized that she could not change her husband, but she could change herself.
- c. She finally came to the conclusion that she really didn't need the one and only thing she had thought would bring her happiness. She

learned that her plan for happiness would not work, but God's plan for her happiness would.

- d. We will miss out on God's perfect plan for happiness for us if we don't let go of our preconceived ideas of what happiness is. He knows what He is doing. We need to trust Him enough to get out of the driver's seat and to just enjoy the ride.

**Psa. 37:4-5 Delight yourself also in the LORD, and he will give you
the
desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in
him,
and he will bring it to pass.**