

Power Text – Hebrews 12:14-15

“Try to be at peace with everyone, and try to live a holy life, because no one will see the Lord without it. Guard against turning back from the grace of God. Let no one become like a bitter plant that grows up and causes many troubles with its poison.” Good news Bible

Notes:

Women Of The Bible

STUDY 5

Rachel

Background - Read - Genesis 27:41-46 & Genesis 28:1-2

*After Jacob had stolen the birthright from Esau, Esau threatened to kill Jacob. To avoid this from happening Isaac and Rebekah sent Jacob away to her family in the east hoping that at the same time he would find himself a wife. Esau had chosen Canaanite wives which had caused a lot of stress in the family, especially for Rebekah.

Discuss

Read – Genesis 29:1-12

* You wonder what thoughts were going on in Jacobs mind when he arrived at the well. Jacob would have been aware of how his own mother was found at the well by his father’s servant.

Discuss

Read - Genesis 29:13-20

“In early times custom required the bridegroom, before the ratification of a marriage engagement, to pay a sum of money or its equivalent in other property, according to his circumstances, to the father of his wife. This was regarded as a safeguard to the marriage relation. Fathers did not think it safe to trust the happiness of their daughters to men who had not made provision for the support of a family. If they had not sufficient thrift and energy to manage business and

acquire cattle or lands, it was feared that their life would prove worthless. But provision was made to test those who had nothing to pay for a wife. They were permitted to labor for the father whose daughter they loved, the length of time being regulated by the value of the dowry required. When the suitor was faithful in his services, and proved in other respects worthy, he obtained the daughter as his wife; and generally the dowry which the father had received was given her at her marriage." **Patriarchs and Prophets, E.G. White, P188-189**

Discuss

Read – Genesis 29:21-22

*We know it is from this point on that Laban's deception practised on Jacob caused Jacob lifelong family difficulties. We will be exploring the story of Leah in our next study.

Discuss

Read – Genesis 29:28-30

*So, Jacob did get Rachel as his wife soon after being tricked into marrying Leah, but he had to stay with Laban for another 7 years to pay for Rachel. Jacob only intended to have one wife but ended up with two!

Discuss

Read – Genesis 30:1-8

*Culturally at the time, a women's status came from the children she bore. You could imagine what must have been going on in Rachel's mind seeing her sister conceive and bare children so easily and Rachel being the most favoured had none. It must have been an extremely difficult time for her. But you wonder if her using her maid to have children to get back at her sister was such a wise thing to do. Could she have dealt with the situation in a different way?

Discuss

Read – Genesis 30:22-24

*Finally, Rachel conceived and bore a son whom they called Joseph.

Discuss

Read – Genesis 31:4-16

*Here our reading tells us that Laban had done the wrong thing by Jacob regarding his wages. Laban had also withheld his daughters' dowries from them.

Discuss

Read – Genesis 31:17-19, Genesis 31:32-35 & Genesis 35:1-4

*We don't know why Rachel took her father's god's? Whether it was to teach him a lesson for how he had treated them or whether it was to show her father the folly of these gods?

Discuss

Read – Genesis 35:16-20 and Genesis 48:7

*Rachel died unexpectedly while giving birth to her second son Benjamin. Jacob's love for Rachel was expressed by placing a pillar by her grave and when Jacob lay dying many years later, he made a point of mentioning her to Joseph, which is recorded for us today.

Discuss

Our study of Rachel is an interesting one. She had a husband who loved her dearly but had a sister who she was in constant conflict with. But through it all one of her son's and 2 of her grandsons made up the 12 tribes of Israel. Even in her difficult circumstances of a women of her time God brought something good out of something that was a complicated situation for her. Can we learn anything from Rachel's life and apply to our own Christian walk?