

Study Guide for June 20th, 2010: What a Father! Genesis 29:31-30:24 & 35:23-26

Introduction: As you think of your earthly father – what were some of his strengths and what were some of his weaknesses? How has God used your father to shape your life?

I. The Lord SAW . . . (Leah gives birth to four boys) Gen. 29:31-35.

- A. How does God compensate Leah? What do we learn about God? (Ps. 34:18, 147:3)
- B. What does Leah name each of the boys? What is the significance of each name?
- C. How does Leah change / grow in her understanding of God through this process?
- D. Human rejection sometimes leads to a divine connection. Illustrate. (See Ps. 27:10)

II. God has KEPT you . . . (Bilhah and Zilpah give birth to four boys) Gen. 30:1-13.

- A. Why is Rachel upset? How does she express her frustration?
- B. Describe Jacob's response to Rachel (vs. 2). (Compare I Sam. 1: 1-20)
- C. What does Jacob **not** do? (Compare Gen. 25:21)
- D. What is Rachel's response to her barrenness? What do the boy's names signify?
- E. What is Leah's response to Rachel's actions? What do the boy's names signify?
- F. Describe the relationship between Leah and Rachel. How is God at work?

III. God LISTENED . . . (Leah - two sons and a daughter, Rachel - a son) Gen. 30:14-24.

- A. Mandrake plants were considered an aphrodisiac and reputed to enhance fertility.
- B. Who owns the mandrake plants? Who wants them? What deal is struck?
- C. What does Rachel's request reveal? Did it work?
- D. What does Leah's response (vs. 15) reveal? How does God respond to her?
- D. How is Jacob portrayed in this episode? How is Jacob reduced to a hired hand?
- E. When does God **remember** (Gen. 8:1 & Ex. 2:24) Rachel? (See Gen. 35:23-26)
- F. How do you see God's grace and mercy in this story of competition and selfishness?