



## Women of the Bible

### Leah vs Rachel – Inner Beauty or Outer Beauty?

#### Lesson 16

Genesis contains an interesting tale of two sisters; Leah and Rachel. Leah is the older sister and Rachel the younger. These women are the daughters of Laban and the wives of Jacob. Yes, that's right; they were both married to Jacob – thanks to the trickery of their father. Although they shared the same husband they were very different and the Bible gives us insight into each of them. Leah is the less pretty of the two. We can only imagine how hard it must have been to live in the shadow of Rachel knowing that her husband loved her sister more. There are many lessons to derive from these sisters, but most importantly we will see that outer beauty isn't the most important quality of a woman. Beauty can lie to us and is no promise of a better life... just ask Rachel. Leah and Rachel's story reminds us that true fulfillment in this life can only come when we embrace God's perfect love for us and His plan for our lives.

Open your Bible and begin with a word of prayer

**This Week's Scripture: Genesis 29:9-30**

<sup>9</sup>Jacob was still talking with them when Rachel arrived with her father's flock, for she was a shepherd.

<sup>10</sup>And because Rachel was his cousin—the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother—and because the sheep and goats belonged to his uncle Laban, Jacob went over to the well and moved the stone from its mouth and watered his uncle's flock. <sup>11</sup>Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and he wept aloud. <sup>12</sup>He explained to Rachel that he was her cousin on her father's side—the son of her aunt Rebekah. So Rachel quickly ran and told her father, Laban. <sup>13</sup>As soon as Laban heard that his nephew Jacob had arrived, he ran out to meet him. He embraced and kissed him and brought him home. When Jacob had told him his story, <sup>14</sup>Laban exclaimed, "You really are my own flesh and blood!" <sup>15</sup>Laban said to him, "You shouldn't work for me

without pay just because we are relatives. Tell me how much your wages should be.”<sup>16</sup>Now Laban had two daughters. The older daughter was named Leah, and the younger one was Rachel.<sup>17</sup>There was no sparkle in Leah’s eyes, but Rachel had a beautiful figure and a lovely face.<sup>18</sup>Since Jacob was in love with Rachel, he told her father, “I’ll work for you for seven years if you’ll give me Rachel, your younger daughter, as my wife.”<sup>19</sup>“Agreed!” Laban replied. “I’d rather give her to you than to anyone else. Stay and work with me.”<sup>20</sup>So Jacob worked seven years to pay for Rachel. But his love for her was so strong that it seemed to him but a few days.<sup>21</sup>Finally, the time came for him to marry her. “I have fulfilled my agreement,” Jacob said to Laban. “Now give me my wife so I can marry her.”<sup>22</sup>So Laban invited everyone in the neighborhood and prepared a wedding feast.<sup>23</sup>But that night, when it was dark, Laban took Leah to Jacob, and he slept with her.<sup>24</sup>(Laban had given Leah a servant, Zilpah, to be her maid.)<sup>25</sup>But when Jacob woke up in the morning—it was Leah! “What have you done to me?” Jacob raged at Laban. “I worked seven years for Rachel! Why have you tricked me?”<sup>26</sup>“It’s not our custom here to marry off a younger daughter ahead of the firstborn,” Laban replied.<sup>27</sup>“But wait until the bridal week is over, then we’ll give you Rachel, too—provided you promise to work another seven years for me.”<sup>28</sup>So Jacob agreed to work seven more years. A week after Jacob had married Leah, Laban gave him Rachel, too.<sup>29</sup>(Laban gave Rachel a servant, Bilhah, to be her maid.)<sup>30</sup>So Jacob slept with Rachel, too, and he loved her much more than Leah. He then stayed and worked for Laban the additional seven years. Should you want to read more about Rachel and Leah see Genesis chapters 29-32

**This Week’s Memory Verse:**

**For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus,  
so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago.**

**Ephesians 2:10(NLT)**

1. Looking at Leah’s life, many of us can relate to how she must have felt. Whether we feel “pretty” according to worldly standards or have felt rejection, most of us have experienced her heartache. How should our memory verse encourage us when we feel unworthy? \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. What does 1 Peter 3:3-4 tell us about inner and outer beauty? How would it have encouraged Leah and how does it encourage you today? \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. Still not convinced? What does 2 Corinthians 4:16 tell us about our outer self? \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Reflect and Respond** – Psalm 139:14-15 tells us; “I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.” David understood who and what he was to God when he penned this Psalm. Meditate on this psalm and ask the Lord to speak to your heart in regard to how you see yourself and how God sees you. Journal you thoughts. \_\_\_\_\_

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**Result** – Consider today’s bible study lecture. What one lesson will you take away from this study and apply to your walk with the Lord? \_\_\_\_\_

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