



Day 4

Scriptural Background: Gen 29:31 – 30:24

"35 And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "This time I will praise the LORD." Therefore she called his name Judah. Then she ceased bearing." Gen 29:35

Ancient, eastern societies often put far more stock into the naming of children than modern, western ones do. Also, in more communal societies a woman's worth is often determined by her ability to produce sons for her husband (the way we might use things like beauty, personality, intellect, or ability as indicators of value). So, this passage of Leah's naming of her children offers a fascinating glimpse into the inner psychology of our human longing to be loved. Leah is unloved compared to her more beautiful yet barren rival sister (Gen 29:31). Therefore, with the birth of each of her first three sons she thinks, "maybe *this time* Jacob will finally love *me* (Gen 29:32, 33, 34). Maybe *now* I will be loved." The names of Reuben, Simeon, and Levi all reflect this desire. It is not until the birth of her fourth son that the eyes of her heart shift from Jacob to God, and she says, "this time I will praise *the LORD*," and names him Judah. Not coincidentally, *that* is the tribe from which Jesus comes (Gen 49:10, Matt 1:2). He puts an end to all human striving, fixes our eyes on God alone, and lets us know we are loved.

Prayer:

Ah Lord Jesus, this Lenten season may we graciously be brought to the end of self-effort. Help us come to rely not on ourselves, but on You our Messiah, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, and in Your name to praise the Lord. Amen.