

Chapter 1 : Leah - Wikipedia

The story of Jacob, Leah, and Rachel is filled with much difficulty, yet God used these people greatly to impact history. Their twelve sons were the leaders of the twelve tribes that became the nation of Israel.

Wickstrom all Scriptures quoted from the NASB In Genesis chapter 27, Jacob had already swindled his brother Esau out of the birthright, and now he had deceitfully taken away the blessing of their father Isaac. Esau, having been double-crossed twice, was so angry that he was preparing to kill Jacob. Laban had two daughters; the older daughter was named Leah, and the younger daughter was named Rachel. Rachel had the body of a goddess and the face of a super-model. It does not denote a defect, but instead, describes the quality of gentleness. Jacob immediately fell head over heels in love with Rachel. He told Laban that he would work seven years for Laban and as payment, he would get to marry Rachel. Both men shook hands on the deal. At the end of the seven years, Laban swindled Jacob by switching Leah for Rachel towards the end of the marriage ceremony. Jacob thought he was spending the night with Rachel, but Laban had cunningly substituted Leah in her place. It is important to realize that women during this time frame were treated as property. Since marriages were arranged, the wishes of a daughter were not taken into consideration. The swindler had been swindled. He did not want Leah, he wanted Rachel. Jacob and Laban worked out another deal for another seven years of service. When the seven-day marriage ritual with Leah was complete, Jacob immediately married Rachel. The Bible says in Genesis The interpreters of the Old Testament added those words to the text much later. What the Bible indicates here is that Jacob did not love Leah at all. Jacob had eyes only for Rachel and he did not care about Leah. Two women; one was loved and the other was unloved. The interesting thing to look at is the personalities of the two women. They were like night and day, complete opposites. Let me show you. Leah worshiped God, and kept asking Him for more sons in the hope that maybe Jacob would love her. Rachel was always jealous of Leah because Leah could bear children. Leah was jealous of Rachel because Jacob was in love with her. Rachel was unhappy due to God closing her womb. Leah was happy and rejoiced over her children. When Rachel died after giving birth to Benjamin Jacob buried her near Bethlehem. The Bible points out in Genesis I point this out to show that both sisters had faults and shortcomings. When Jacob was old and dying, he gave his sons instructions to bury with him with his forefathers, and next to Leah Gen. What happened in the end that caused Leah to be shown so much honor and not Rachel? It was Leah that Jacob wanted to be buried next to, not Rachel. In the end, Leah was given the love she had always longed for. Perhaps Jacob saw that Leah was focused on God which became something that drew him to her. It was Leah who gave birth to Judah. It was Leah who gave birth to Levi, who would become the father of the line of Priests. Leah was not blessed with physical beauty, but she was indeed blessed by God. Unloved by men, she was deeply loved by God. Perhaps you are a Christian woman who is married to man that does not love you. You and Leah have much in common. Where is your focus? Leah learned to put her focus on God. During all those years that she was unloved, God continued to bless Leah. During all those years that Leah was unloved by her husband, God never stopped loving her. Are you willing to give God time to answer your prayers? Leah waited, and God answered her prayer. Leah could have become bitter because she was unloved, but she did not, and God rewarded her patience. God could have looked at all of her faults and shortcomings, but he focused on her desire for him. God will reward your patience if you keep your heart and your life focused on Him. Keep God as your number one priority and he will see you through to the end. The desire of most women is to be a super-model like Rachel. What woman does not want men to desire her? But God wants women who desire Him. He wants women with weak eyes like Leah, who will focus on Him, and not on the world. You know how painful and tough life really is as you live from day to day. Will you face life and focus your eyes on God like Leah? Or will you focus inward and focus on your problems, like Rachel. It is a tale of two sisters, which one will you choose to be? Would you like information on how to become a Christian? Touch the button below for Steps to Salvation.

Chapter 2 : The Trick's On Jacob - A Bible Story by Linda Sue Pochodzay Edwards

"So Jacob went in to Rachel also, and indeed he loved Rachel more than Leah, and he served with Laban for another seven years" (Gen.). So we have the first of the God-fearing patriarchs entering into a bigamous relationship.

Appearance[edit] The Torah introduces Leah by describing her with the phrase, "Leah had tender eyes" Hebrew: In the Rabbinic mind, the two brothers are polar opposites; Jacob being a God-fearing scholar and Esau being a hunter who also indulges in idolatry and adultery. But people were saying, "Laban has two daughters and his sister, Rebekah , has two sons. The older daughter Leah will marry the older son Esau , and the younger daughter Rachel will marry the younger son Jacob. Thus the Torah describes her eyes as "soft" from weeping. In the Biblical account, Jacob is dispatched to the hometown of Labanâ€”the brother of his mother Rebekahâ€”to avoid being killed by his brother Esau, and to find a wife. On the wedding night, however, Laban switches Leah for Rachel. Later Laban claims that it is uncustomary to give the younger daughter away in marriage before the older one Genesis Laban offers to give Rachel to Jacob in marriage in return for another seven years of work Genesis Jacob accepts the offer and marries Rachel after the week-long celebration of his marriage to Leah. According to the scriptures, God saw that Leah was "unloved" and opened her womb as consolation. Seeing that she is unable to conceive, Rachel offers her handmaid Bilhah to Jacob, and names and raises the two sons Dan and Naphtali that Bilhah bears. Leah responds by offering her handmaid Zilpah to Jacob, and names and raises the two sons Gad and Asher that Zilpah bears. According to some commentaries, Bilhah and Zilpah are actually half-sisters of Leah and Rachel. Leah has not conceived for a while, and this plant, whose roots resemble the human body, is thought to be an aid to fertility. Leah agrees, and that night she sleeps with Jacob and conceives Issachar. Afterwards she gives birth to Zebulun and to a daughter, Dinah. After that, God remembers Rachel and gives her two sons, Joseph and Benjamin. She is thought to be buried in the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron alongside Jacob. This cave also houses the graves of Abraham and Sarah , and Isaac and Rebekah.

Chapter 3 : Rachel - Wikipedia

The love story of Jacob, Leah and Rachel is one of the most amazing love stories in the Old calendrierdelascience.com biblical matriarch Leah was the wife of Jacob and the mother of six of the twelve tribes: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar and Zebulun.

And Laban had two daughters: Leah was tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favored. And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter. And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed to him but a few days, for the love he had to her. And Jacob said to Laban, Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in to her. And Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast. And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him; and he went in to her. And Laban gave to his daughter Leah Zilpah his maid for an handmaid. And it came to pass, that in the morning, behold, it was Leah: And Laban said, It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. Fulfill her week, and we will give you this also for the service which you shall serve with me yet seven other years. And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week: And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah his handmaid to be her maid. And he went in also to Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years. And Leah conceived, and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben: And she conceived again, and bore a son; and said, Because the LORD has heard I was hated, he has therefore given me this son also: And she conceived again, and bore a son; and said, Now this time will my husband be joined to me, because I have born him three sons: And she conceived again, and bore a son: And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in to her; and she shall bear on my knees, that I may also have children by her. And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid to wife: And Bilhah conceived, and bore Jacob a son. And Rachel said, God has judged me, and has also heard my voice, and has given me a son: And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed: When Leah saw that she had left bearing, she took Zilpah her maid, and gave her Jacob to wife. And Leah said, A troop comes: And Leah said, Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed: And she said to her, Is it a small matter that you have taken my husband? And he lay with her that night. And God listened to Leah, and she conceived, and bore Jacob the fifth son. And Leah said, God has given me my hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband: And Leah conceived again, and bore Jacob the sixth son. And Leah said, God has endued me with a good dowry; now will my husband dwell with me, because I have born him six sons: And afterwards she bore a daughter, and called her name Dinah. And she conceived, and bore a son; and said, God has taken away my reproach: The online chat window at the bottom right corner of the screen.

When preparing to meet Esau and his men, Jacob put the maids and their children first in line, then Leah and her children second, and Rachel and Joseph as far back as possible to protect them. Leah never knew the affection from Jacob that she yearned for.

The greatest love letter ever written was the one from God to humans. It is called the Bible. Sadly, it is one of the greatest love letters that people do not read. The Bible contains some of the most wonderful love stories ever told. One that is an inspiring story of love between a husband and wife is that of Jacob and Rachel. In fact, it is one of the greatest love stories of all time. Jacob is the father of the twelve tribes of Israel and is a significant figure in biblical history. God later changes his name to Israel from which the nation finds its name. Esau was the first born of Isaac but he lost his birthright to Jacob. Esau is the father of the Arabic speaking peoples today. There was a natural, bitter rivalry between Jacob and Esau and today there is a natural animosity between Israel and the Arab nations surrounding her. He met Rachel at the well and for him, it was love at first sight. He went to the well and when he single-handedly moved the great stone cover off of the well, perhaps trying to impress Rachel. Then Jacob kissed Rachel and began to weep aloud. He seemed to know with certainty that Rachel would be his bride. Rachel ran to her father and told him about the young traveler. Love sometimes makes things in life more bearable as it did for Jacob. In Jewish wedding ceremonies, the bride usually has their entire face covered with only a small opening for the eyes. After Jacob married the woman and spent the night with his new bride he woke up in horror to discover that he had been tricked. Jacob thought that he had married Rachel but he had instead married Leah. Laban said that Jacob could also marry Rachel if he agreed to work another seven years for him. Jacob, smitten by Rachel, quickly agreed and worked another seven years for Laban. Jacob had once deceived his brother Esau and had tricked him out of his rightful birthright. Now it was Jacob's turn to be tricked. Jacob loved Rachel at first sight and at last sight. A pillar that may have been a memorial for him to remember her and a place for him to return to visit much like a gravestone today in a cemetery. Today, they are together again in Paradise; together forever and to never die again. Did you enjoy this love story? If so you might also like this article: All rights reserved worldwide. Just click the button below to get started.

Chapter 5 : Bible Stories for Kids - A Love Story - Jacob and Rachel

Leah is described in the Hebrew Bible as the daughter of Laban and her younger sister Rachel became the two concurrent wives of Hebrew patriarch Jacob. Laban had six sons, whose descendants became some of the Twelve Tribes of Israel.

Jacob made an agreement to serve Laban seven years for the opportunity to marry Rachel. At the end of the seven years, there was a marriage feast, with its usual eating and drinking. Laban deceptively gave Leah, instead of Rachel, to Jacob. Was it not for Rachel that I served you? Why then have you deceived me? Laban responded that it was not the custom to give the younger daughter away in marriage before the older daughter. However, in order to have Rachel for his wife, Jacob had to give Laban seven more years of service. She was now the wife of Jacob, a man who had not desired her nor expected her to be his wife. Jacob had been in love with her younger sister Rachel all along! Imagine how that must have felt to Leah to have her husband for one week and then have him snatched away by her younger sister! Leah knew that she was the unloved wife. Sometimes women suffer from feeling unloved. Sometimes they are victims of unhappy marriages through no fault of their own. But God was aware of this unfortunate situation, and He had compassion on Leah. Leah was not overlooked or unloved by God. God rewarded her with children, which was a highly important honor for a wife in those days. The names that Leah subsequently chose for her sons demonstrated that she had faith, trust and hope in God. God does look upon the affliction and suffering of women who have faith in Him. Leah hoped that her husband would now love her, for she had borne him his firstborn son. She believed that Jacob would no longer ignore her. God blessed Leah again: Leah had faith that God heard her plight of being unloved and had given her this son as well. Leah was hoping that by now, having three sons, Jacob would be even more attached to her. Leah also knew that God was helping her. Leah gave God the credit for her happiness and joy by praising the Lord. This tells us a lot about the mental state of Leah at this time. Things had changed for the better for Leah! From his line came our Lord and King, Jesus Christ, whom all on the earth will worship with praise! Leah stopped bearing children for a time, and Rachel had not yet borne any children; so the two sisters presented their maids, Bilhah and Zilpah, to Jacob, and from the maids more sons were born to Jacob. Leah also bore a daughter named Dinah. The timing was significant. And Rachel was right; she would yet have one more son, whom Jacob would call Benjamin. Did the rift between the sisters ever become healed? Are we not considered strangers by him? For he has sold us, and also completely consumed our money. For one, a well-known blessing, which all Israel knew, was later pronounced upon Ruth: Leah and Rachel and their maids did indeed build the house of Israel—12 sons and a daughter! God can work His will in spite of human imperfections, motives and emotions. Rachel and Leah had imperfections, as all men and women do. But in spite of those, God used them to build the house of Israel. When she felt alone and unloved, she prayed and trusted in God, and God was there to help. She held on to hope and saw that God was blessing her. God was faithful in giving her an endowment of children—an inheritance. The Bible does not say when she died, but Leah is buried in the cave of Machpelah, along with her husband Jacob. Leah will awaken in a resurrection to life in the future and will find out how many children she truly has! God will hear our prayers and will intervene for us. Leah, the wife of Jacob, understood that, and we need to have faith similar to that of Leah.

Chapter 6 : A tale of two sisters

Rachel and Leah were two sisters who married the same man - Jacob. Their father, Laban, was Jacob's uncle. Laban was a farmer. Unsurprisingly Rachel's name means 'ewe' - a female sheep.

Women in the Old Testament Peacemaking is an admirable quality, and the story of Rachel and Leah underlines its necessity. It is a romantic tale of two sisters and the one man they love. The story points out how subterfuge eventually catches up with the evil-doer. Jacob learns this lesson while he lives at the home of his uncle, Laban. Laban has two daughters, Leah and Rachel. When Jacob first sees Rachel at the well, it is love at first sight. Since Jacob has not brought the necessary riches to marry, he agrees to work for Laban for seven years, but " Still the wedding takes place, but Laban tricks Jacob by presenting Leah as the bride! What a moment it must have been when Laban says that they can all live together but that Jacob must work another seven years to marry Rachel. Just picture this household, and these two young women. Although there were times of envy, there was no continuing jealousy since both were devoted to Jacob, but in different ways. Rachel and Jacob have a deep love affair. Leah and Jacob have a quiet arrangement, an arrangement that results in four little boys, and later two more sons and a daughter. Leah did not at first feel loved or wanted. The names that Leah gives her sons show her ascending thought. First is Reuben whose name means "son provided in my affliction. Although this arrangement was common, it must have hurt Rachel. Imagine ten boys running around the house. Finally, patient Rachel has a baby. It is Joseph, and she says, "God hath taken away my reproach. Thus the future leaders of the twelve tribes of Israel have come from these two sisters and their maids. But there are complications. Jacob longs to return to his native home, but realizes that according to law, Laban could claim his wives and children as well as the great flocks he now has. The love the sisters have for Jacob unites them and they agree on how wronged Jacob has been. So they decide that whatever God tells Jacob to do, he should do. The departure is another story that you can read, but suffice it to say that after 20 years, Jacob returns home with his large family, faces Esau, and all is forgiven. The story of the sisters ends as Rachel dies in childbirth when Benjamin is born. As a symbol of his great love, Jacob sets a pillar on her grave, a grave site still identified today. This is the oldest memorial to a woman in the Bible. And what about Leah? The love affair of Jacob and Rachel, as well as the love of the sisters for each other, lasted despite desperate circumstances. These sisters shared a home, a husband, and a history. They must have developed great inner peace to live together for decades. That, in itself, is a tribute to the women who raised the twelve sons who became the leaders of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Chapter 7 : LEAH, WIFE OF JACOB, SISTER OF BELOVED RACHEL

30 So Jacob went in to Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than Leah, and served Laban for another seven years.

31 When the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb; but Rachel was barren.

Rachel and Jacob by James Tissot. Rebekah had sent him there to be safe from his furious twin brother, Esau. Whereas "Rachel was lovely in form and beautiful", "Leah had tender eyes". He assured Jacob that after his wedding week was finished, he could take Rachel as a wife as well, and work another seven years as payment for her. When God "saw that Leah was unloved, he opened her womb" Gen Rachel, like Sarah and Rebecca, remained unable to conceive. According to Tikva Frymer-Kensky, "The infertility of the matriarchs has two effects: Bilhah gave birth to two sons that Rachel named and raised Dan and Naphtali. Leah responds by offering her handmaid Zilpah to Jacob, and names and raises the two sons Gad and Asher that Zilpah bears. According to some commentaries, Bilhah and Zilpah are actually half-sisters of Leah and Rachel. Laban pursued him and accused him of stealing his idols. Laban had neglected to give his daughters their inheritance Gen Laban left her alone, but the curse Jacob had pronounced came true shortly thereafter. The midwife told her in the middle of the birth that her child was a boy. Rashi explains that Ben Yamin either means "son of the right" i. Rachel was buried on the road to Efrat , just outside Bethlehem , [10] and not in the ancestral tomb at Machpelah. Mordecai , the hero of the Book of Esther , and Queen Esther herself, were descendants of Rachel through her son Benjamin. The designation of ish yemini refers to his membership in the Tribe of Benjamin ben yamin, son of the right. After the tribes of Ephraim and Benjamin were exiled by the Assyrians , Rachel was remembered as the classic mother who mourns and intercedes for her children. According to the Midrash , Rachel spoke before God: Will You cause my children to be exiled on this account? The Jeremaic prophecy is the inspiration behind the medieval dramatic cycle Ordo Rachelis , concerned with the infancy of Jesus.

Chapter 8 : RACHEL, JACOB in the BIBLE. Famous love story with passion, tragedy.

After Rachel's death, Leah carried on as the wife of Jacob, and the mother of his many children, living in Canaan. The Bible does not say when she died, but Leah is buried in the cave of Machpelah, along with her husband Jacob (Genesis).

Laban was a farmer. Sheep can be docile animals. Leah means a wild cow or ox. The story Jacob was a cheat. He immediately fell in love with the beautiful Rachel, but little did he know that Laban, a relative of his mother, was as dubious as he was. He required Jacob to work seven years for him in exchange for marrying Rachel Genesis Just as he had deceived his own father many years ago Genesis 27 , so now Laban was to deceive him. After seven years of hard work Laban tricked Jacob into marrying the older sister Leah - a lot of wine and a veil over the head of Leah during the wedding did the job. Jacob had to work another seven years before he could marry his beloved Rachel Genesis Both Rachel, Leah and Jacob were bitterly hurt by this deception Genesis Not to be out done Rachel asked Jacob to sleep with her maid Bilhah. This was in line with the custom of the day. Bilhah gave birth to two boys. Rachel named them Dan and Naphtali. This only intensified the rivalry between the two sisters. Leah asked Jacob to sleep with her maid Zilpah and she too gave birth to two sons - Gad and Asher. But this did not satisfy Leah. Here was a home where children were used as tools of revenge. It would not have been a pleasant place. Finally Rachel gave birth to a son herself. He was called Joseph Genesis Just when it looked like things were looking up for Rachel another twist comes. Laban and his sons were getting irritated at how well Jacob was doing. With hostility growing towards him Jacob decided it was time to do a run again. Both Leah and Rachel happily agreed to go back to his home with him Genesis On the way back Rachel gave birth to another son called Benjamin. She died during child birth. The name Rachel gave to her son reflects the sorrow and hurt she lived through. We all need to be careful of the hurts and emotional wounds that may follow us from our background and circumstances in life. These need to be dealt with. Only Jesus can heal these kinds of ailments. The remarks of Rachel and Leah in Genesis Does he not regard us as foreigners? Couple this with the rivalry and bitterness between them in their married home and you get the picture of the situation they had to deal with. Rachel had every cause to be annoyed with her father. He had done her wrong. She and Jacob were very much in love and could have made a wonderful couple. However, things did not have to go the way they did. God can turn these kind of situations around for us today if we serve Him and love Him with all our heart Romans 8: If you love God you will forgive those that have hurt you and refuse to harbour bitterness in your heart against them. Bitterness destroys Hebrews It is in your own interest that you forgive. After getting your heart right with God, you can then pray and break the curses that might have been let loose in your life because of the actions of other people. It might be helpful to ask other believers to pray with you. Ask God for healing and a restoration of all the things that evil has caused. Mention some of the troubles that Rachel and Leah faced in their home? Can past actions of our parents still affect us today? How can we prevent this? What were the weaknesses of Rachel? How many children did Rachel eventually have? Can God bless us despite our background? Why is it so important to forgive?

Chapter 9 : - Bible Study - BibleWise

The story of Jacob and Leah may also be connected to the story of Noah and his youngest son (Gen). Although the Bible is unclear on the exact sin there, [9] many commentators believe that the story suggests that Noah was raped by his youngest son while he was drunk.

May 9, This post contains affiliate links. Please see my full disclosure here. The love triangle of Jacob, Rachel, and Leah rolls off the pages of the Bible like some kind of big screen movie up for the latest Academy Award. Two sisters in love with the same man. The story of Jacob, Leah and Rachel is a true story, and an especially painful one for Leah, overshadowed by her sister, cast as the supporting role rather than the star. On the surface, she appears to have gotten the broken side of the wishbone. Jacob, the son of Isaac, the grandson of the patriarch Abraham, is no stranger to getting himself into trouble. In his latest shenanigans, he cheats his brother Esau out of his patriarchal blessing. Well, Rachel must have been stunning to behold because Jacob is smitten and commits to this agreement. Jacob finally gets a taste of his own deceptive medicine. Infuriated, Jacob confronts Laban, who tells him that the older daughter needs to be married first. Enter the happy home of Jacob and his two sister wives. If I can take the liberty to read between the lines, Leah was the timid, less-pretty older sister, and Rachel was the one who got all the attention. Try to imagine the scenario. Leah is the silent witness to the love of Jacob and Rachel right under her nose: By contrast, nobody is working 7 years to marry Leah. In fact, we can probably assume no one comes to ask for her hand in marriage during that time because she is still available when those 7 years are over. Can it get any more humiliating for poor Leah? He had His own business He was working out in her, and as it always is with God, timing is everything. The Bible describes it this way in Genesis Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. Surely my husband will love me now. However, by Son 4, something changes in Leah. This son is about praise. With this son, I will praise the Lord. Working our magic to get what our hearts desperately want? I have been there. I can remember going all through my 20s and into my early 30s with this shadow of singleness hanging over me. That feeling of being unloved. That something must be wrong with me. For me, it was a few more than 3 tanked relationships before I got there. But that was the lesson God was teaching me, too “to worship and trust Him. To be at peace with His plan for my life, whatever that looked like” single, married, children. And not just to worship, but to let His love fill every crack in my heart, which felt like just one big, gaping need. You can read the full story of how He won my heart here. After I learned that lesson, I met the man who was to be my husband about a year later. But you know what? A few years into marriage, I was able to relate more to Rachel than to Leah in that I struggled with infertility. It pushes our faith to the very edge of itself, and we look over the cliff and have to trust that He is there when we see nothing on the other side. Eventually God does grant Leah 2 more sons. With the 6th and final son, Leah says that surely this time my husband will treat me with honor Genesis But God and His grace are there at every turn. Not a perfect journey of worship and surrender, but I believe that Leah learned to worship God and surrender her unfulfilled desire even while she still felt the sting. I can remember many worship services in my years of being single, in my years of miscarriages, in my years of infertility, where I had tears streaming down my face, but my hands were up in worship. But I knew He was still to be worshiped. And, like Leah, worship during those times of unfulfilled desires is the truest and most beautiful worship and, likely, the sweetest sacrifice of praise to God. However, right as she gives birth, she asks God for another son. Rachel does become pregnant again and gives birth to Benjamin while they were traveling. Rachel ends up dying in childbirth, and she is buried along the way. For a period of time, Leah is the sole wife of Jacob. Rachel never gets that honor, but it is given to Leah alone. With Judah, Leah learns to praise God in spite of not being loved, in spite of not having her desire met. While beautiful in itself, this son is especially significant. Judah is the ancestor to King David, who is in the lineage of Jesus, the Messiah who would save Israel “and the entire human race. While Jacob may not have given Leah the place of honor through their marriage, God gives Leah the incredibly profound honor of being a part of the ancestry of Jesus. Leah, not Rachel, had that honor. Did Leah ever have that love she craved? God saw the Leah was unloved, and He blessed her with sons to take away some of the sting. But beyond the surface, in

ways we might never see, realize or be witness to, He is making something beautiful with our lives. Do we believe that what becomes of our lives will be so remarkably beautiful in the end, even if we never witness it ourselves? The pilgrims came to North America because they truly believed they were called here by God for the furtherance of the Gospel. The first winter here, the losses were brutal. Of the pilgrims who set out, 51 died. When spring finally came, they had the opportunity to return to Europe. None of them left. Every single one of them chose to stay. Because they knew they were part of something greater than themselves. William Bradford in his memoir *Of Plymouth Plantation*, describes the deeply-held beliefs of the pilgrims. They desired to advance: When seen in that light, was her temporary suffering worth it? He is overwhelmingly compassionate. He is abundantly gracious. Like any father, His heart is to give His children good gifts. But should He choose to withhold what our hearts so desperately want, can we trust Him in that? Can we be willing to be a stepping stone to something greater than ourselves? You may feel like Leah in a world of Rachels: