

Introduction

Names are significant. A couple of months ago we looked at some of the names of God that we have encountered in the first twenty-four chapters of Genesis. The names reveal who God is. The names of people are also significant. In my daily reading plan, I have been in the book of Hosea last week. It is good to have a daily reading plan. We need to be in God's word every day. I recommend spending daily time in Psalms, Proverbs, Gospels, and in the rest of the Old Testament and New Testament. There are lots of reading plans available, and I have some of them on our church website under Connection Tools. In Hosea, God told him to name his first son, Jezreel, because He was going to punish the house of Jehu for the bloodshed of Jezreel. Hosea had another child, a little girl, and the Lord told him to name her Lo-ruhamah, because He was not going to have compassion on Israel any longer. These were prophetic names, and they were significant.

(Hosea 1:4-7) "And the LORD said to him, 'Name him Jezreel; for yet a little while, and I will punish the house of Jehu for the bloodshed of Jezreel, and I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel. {5} On that day I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel.' {6} Then she conceived again and gave birth to a daughter. And the LORD said to him, 'Name her Lo-ruhamah, for I will no longer have compassion on the house of Israel, that I would ever forgive them. {7} But I will have compassion on the house of Judah and deliver them by the LORD their God, and will not deliver them by bow, sword, battle, horses or horsemen.'"

When Karen and I had our second child, I had learned that many 2nd born children felt unloved. We wanted our 2nd born to feel loved, and we named her Amy, which means beloved. When Joanna was born, Karen and I were forty years old, and I was getting ready to end my professional career. She was our ninth child, and I was getting ready to plant my first church. We named her Joanna Beth, because that means the place of more grace. We needed more grace. I probably should have thrown a fourth name in there, Sophia, because I needed more grace and wisdom for what I was about to do.

When Chad was born, Kathleen was in the hospital with leukemia, and she was undergoing chemo and getting ready for a bone marrow transplant. We named him Stephen Chad because of it was the prayer of our heart. Stephen means the crowned wreath that is given to a champion, and Chad was short for the Hebrew word chadash (Strong's H2318), which means to renew or to restore to life. In Psalms 51:10 and 51:12, we see it translated both renew and restore. We were praying that God would restore Kathleen to life and she would be victorious in her fight with leukemia. God answered that prayer.

In our text today, Jacob has twelve children, eleven sons and a daughter. Their names were all very significant. Sometimes they had to do with what God was doing, had done, or was going to do. Often the name was significant because of what was going on in their life, or they were a prayer for what they wanted. Last week we saw that the names were significant because they revealed some desires and needs in their lives.

I divided up our passage into four scoring drives. I used the terms scoring drives because this is a serious rivalry. Rachel even said that she was wrestling with her sister and had prevailed. The Hebrew word for wrestlings is naphthulim (Strong's H5319), and Naphtali is a derivative of it. In the midst of this rivalry between two sisters, we have these names that have lots of meaning

behind them. Last week, we looked at Leah's first scoring drive and then Rachel's first scoring drive. All of these scoring drives took place in a seven-year span. We looked at the time period last week. That is a lot of children to have in seven years. The text does not give the children in a chronological or consecutive order. Instead, they are given in four groups of children, which I have called scoring drives. Last week we covered the first two scoring drives, and this week we will cover the final two scoring drives.

Timeline of Jacob's Children		
Year	Leah	Rachel
1	Reuben	Dan (Bilhah) Naphtali (Bilhah)
2	Simeon	
3	Levi	
4	Judah	
5	Gad (Zilpah), Issachar (Leah)	
6	Asher (Zilpah), Zebulun (Leah)	
7	Dinah	Joseph
14+		Benjamin

Last week we covered Leah's First scoring drive and Rachel's First Scoring Drive. As you recall, God saw that Leah was unloved or hated and He opened her womb and gave her Reuben, which was a combination of Raah and Ben. Then, she conceived again and said that God had heard her, so she named him Simeon. She conceived again and gave birth to Levi, and said that now my husband will be lavah or attached to me. Then, she gave birth to Judah because she was going to praise the Lord.

We saw in Rachel's First Scoring Drive that she was unable to bear children. She was motivated to have children out of jealousy. We looked at the importance of having right motives. Children are a gift, reward, and a blessing, not something to compete with. She gave her maid, Bilhah, to Jacob and she gave birth to Dan, and said that God had vindicated her. Then, Bilhah conceived again and gave birth to Naphtali, and she said that she had wrestled with her sister and prevailed. We will pick up our text in Genesis 30:9 and go through verse 24.

3. Leah's Second Scoring Drives (Gen 30:9-13)

(Gen 30:9-13) "When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took her maid Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife. {10} Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son. {11} Then Leah said, "How fortunate!" So she named him Gad. {12} Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a second son. {13} Then Leah said, "Happy am I! For women will call me happy." So she named him Asher. {14} Now in the days of wheat harvest Reuben went and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes." {15} But she said to her, "Is it a small matter for you to take my husband? And would you take my son's mandrakes also?" So Rachel said, "Therefore he may lie with you tonight in return for your son's mandrakes." {16} When Jacob came in from the field in the evening, then Leah went out to meet him and said, "You must come in to me, for I have surely hired you with my son's mandrakes." So he lay with her that night. {17} God gave heed to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son. {18} Then Leah said, "God has given me my wages because I gave my maid to my husband." So she named him Issachar. {19} Leah conceived again and bore a sixth son to Jacob. {20} Then Leah said,

"God has endowed me with a good gift; now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons." So she named him Zebulun. {21} Afterward she bore a daughter and named her Dinah.

Per the timeline that I just gave, Leah's second scoring drive is taking place at the same time as Rachel's First Scoring Drive. Leah saw that she had stopped bearing so she gave her maid, Zilpah, to Jacob as a wife. Leah was used to getting pregnant immediately and when she did not get pregnant right away, she put in a substitute of her own. We know that it was not a long time because she gave birth to six sons and one daughter in a seven-year period, so she did not stop bearing for very long. Her maid, Zilpah, conceived right away and gave birth to Gad. Leah said, "how fortunate!" The Hebrew word for fortunate is gad, which means good fortune. There was a Babylonian god by the name of Gad; it was the god of fortune.

Leah's maid bore Jacob another son, and Leah named him Asher. She said, "Happy am I! For women will call me happy." The Hebrew word for happy is Asher, and that is what she named her son.

The significance of these two children is that we have a need for good breaks. Nobody wants to be known as always having bad luck. We all need some breaks along the way. A contractor needs a foot in the door with a key client. In our training business, we need some breaks with key clients. I pray for favor with clients for our company and for the business owners in our congregation. I am not a big believer in luck, but I do believe in God's favor and blessing. I pray for his favor and blessing. The other need that we have is for joy and happiness. Joy is not dependent upon circumstances. We can be joyful in the midst of trials. Happiness is more circumstantial. I believe that there are cycles in life. We go through good and bad times. We need the good times in our lives. We need to be joyful at all times, and appreciate the good times when we are happy about the way things are going.

Our text takes a left turn and goes down what looks like a bunny trail talking about mandrakes. At harvest time, little Reuben, who is probably about five or six, finds a mandrake and brings it home. A mandrake is a flowering plant with a root. The plant is toxic and hallucinogenic, and has been used by the occult and in witchcraft. The plant root has a nice aroma and was an aphrodisiac or love potion. We see in Song of Solomon 7:13 that it had an appealing fragrance, and the context of its use is in a romantic setting between two lovers.

(SS 7:13) "The mandrakes have given forth fragrance; And over our doors are all choice fruits, Both new and old, Which I have saved up for you, my beloved."

At that time, the mandrake was also thought to be a fertility potion. I believe that this is the primary reason that Rachel has such great interest in the mandrake that little Reuben has brought home. She has not been able to conceive herself, and this mandrake might just do the trick for her. Therefore, she bargains with Leah, and offers Jacob for a night for her son's mandrake.

When Jacob came in from the field that evening, Leah met him and told him of her agreement with Rachel. So, Jacob spent the night with Leah and she conceived. She gave birth to a fifth son and named him Issachar. The word for wages is sakar (Strong's H7939), and Issachar is a derivative of this. She thought that God had given her wages because she gave Jacob her maid. While I do not hold the same view as Leah, I do believe there is significance in what she said. I believe that all of us want to see fruit from our labors. I frequently pray Psalm 90:17, "*Let the*

favor of the Lord our God be upon us; and confirm for us the work of our hands; yes, confirm the work of our hands.”

Then, Leah conceived again and bore a sixth son to Jacob. Jacob was still living with Rachel, and Leah thought that with the birth of a sixth son, he would start living or dwelling with her. The Hebrew word for dwell is zabal (Strong's H2082), and Zebulun is a derivative of this. The significance of this is that we have a need for companionship. We were not meant to live alone; we were meant to live in community. There is a family community and there is a larger community. God told Adam it was not good to be alone. That principle applies to Leah and to all of us.

We are not just to have community in our relationships with people, but God has created us to have relationship with Him. We are the bride of Christ, and we are to have the Spirit of Christ dwell with us. In 1 Corinthians 3:16 and 6:19-20, we are called temples of the Holy Spirit, and our temples need the Holy Spirit to dwell inside. There are two things that stand out to me. First, in those passages the Corinthians were not living righteous lives. God wanted them to live holy and upright lives because they were temples of the Holy Spirit. If we want more of the presence of the Holy Spirit, we need to live holy and upright lives. We need to repent of all sin.

Second, in Ephesians 5:18-20, we are told not to be drunk with wine but to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Paul tells us that to be filled with the Holy Spirit we need to speak to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. In other words, worship fills us with the Holy Spirit. Notice that there is also a giving of thanks for all things. A thankful and grateful heart also ushers in the presence of the Holy Spirit. We are to always give thanks for all things. We need to cultivate the habit of giving thanks. Parents, teach your children to give thanks. Take time to give thanks to other people and to God. Prayer and worship usher in the presence of the Holy Spirit in our temples.

(Eph 5:18-20) “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, {19} speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; {20} always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;”

Afterwards, Leah gave birth to Dinah. Dinah is the feminine form of Dan, which means to judge. Rachel has used the name Dan, but Leah also feels vindicated by God, and names her daughter, Dinah.

4. Rachel's Second Scoring Drive (Gen 30:22-24)

(Gen 30:22-24) “Then God remembered Rachel, and God gave heed to her and opened her womb. {23} So she conceived and bore a son and said, "God has taken away my reproach." {24} She named him Joseph, saying, "May the LORD give me another son.”

In the final scoring drive by Rachel, God gave heed to her and opened her womb. She has obviously been crying out to God for six years for Him to open her womb. She has had two children through her maid, but that is not the same as having one herself. She has felt reproached for her inability to have children. So, she said, “God has taken away my reproach.”

That feeling was very common in that culture. A woman was not performing her duty if she did not give her husband children. Even at the time of Jesus' birth, that was still prevalent. In Luke 1:25, God tells them that Zacharias and Elizabeth that they are going to have a child. She remarked that this was how God was going to "take away my disgrace among men." Not having children is not a disgrace. Children are a blessing, but it is not a disgrace to not have children. I did not marry my wife to have children. I married my wife because I love her and I wanted to spend my life with her. We enjoy one another. Karen has always been a lot of fun to be around. She is full of life and enthusiasm. God blessed us with ten children, but I would have loved her all the same if she had born no children.

Rachel named her son, Joseph, which means to increase or add. Just as we named Chad as a prayer to God, Rachel named her son Joseph as a prayer to God for another son. She would wait another six plus years for that son. God would answer that prayer in Genesis 35:16-20, when she gives birth to Benjamin, Jacob's twelfth son. They were on their way from Bethel to Ephrath when she gave birth to Benjamin. She died giving birth and named him Benoni, which means son of my sorrow. Jacob did not accept that and called him Benjamin, which is how he is referred to throughout the rest of the Bible. Benjamin means son of the right hand. The right hand stood for power, strength, and authority. When God promises to uphold you with His righteous right hand, He is saying that He will strongly support you with all His strength and power.

(Gen 35:16-18) "Then they journeyed from Bethel; and when there was still some distance to go to Ephrath, Rachel began to give birth and she suffered severe labor. {17} When she was in severe labor the midwife said to her, "Do not fear, for now you have another son." {18} It came about as her soul was departing (for she died), that she named him Ben-oni; but his father called him Benjamin."

(Is 41:10) "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."

The significance of this is we all want to have increase and to be fruitful. Growth is important. We need to see spiritual growth in our lives. We need to see numerical growth. Churches need to be growing. I pray for the grace of God in our church, because in the church of Antioch, people were being added because of the grace of God. (Acts 11:23-24)

Conclusion and Applications (2 Chron 16:9, 1 Cor 10:13, 2 Peter 1:3, Rom 8:31, 10:9-10)

The past two Sundays we have looked at the twelve children that Jacob had in his first seven years of marriage. He had seven children by Leah, one by Rachel, two by Bilhah, and two by Zilpah. We also saw that the names of these children had significance to the mother, and also to people in general.

I believe one of the key verses is Genesis 30:2. Jacob gets angry with Rachel because she had blamed him for the lack of children. He said to her, "Am I in the place of God?" God is the One that opens and closes wombs. All of the children's names were significant. I believe that these twelve names reveal needs in our lives that only God can fulfill. He is the One that sees you. He is the One that hears you. He is the one that helps you overcome. He is the One that vindicates us. He is the One that blesses us. He is the One that attaches Himself to us and dwells with us.

We all have a need to be heard and seen. This encouragement this morning to you is that God sees and hears the cry of your heart. He saw and heard Leah. He heard Daniel. He sees and hears us. Be encouraged this morning that the eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth to strongly support those whose heart is completely His. (2 Chron 16:9) No matter what you are going through, God sees and hears you. Keep pouring your heart out to Him, and be patient.

This morning, perhaps you are struggling in an area. God wants you to prevail and overcome. I want you to know this morning that there is no temptation that has overtaken you that you cannot handle. God is faithful and will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able to handle; He will show you a way of escape. God has given you everything that you need pertaining to life and Godliness. (1 Cor 10:13, 2 Peter 1:3)

Perhaps you have been feeling condemned about something. God wants to vindicate you. He tells us that "there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death." God wants to vindicate you this morning. He wants to set you free from any guilt or condemnation. He did that for Rachel, and He will do that for you. (Rom 8:31)

We saw that we have a need to be attached or connected. Leah had a need for her husband to be attached to her. Paul had a need to be joined or connected to the church in Jerusalem. If you are not connected to a local body, I encourage you to pray about connecting with us; we are the Connection Church of Albuquerque. You simply need to let me know that you want to be a member of this body and to make this your church home.

Perhaps this morning, you have never connected with the Lord. He desires to fellowship with us. He desires to be your Zebulun this morning, to come and make His dwelling place with you. He has a desire to be with you. He desires you to worship Him with all your heart. It begins by receiving Him as Your Lord this morning. If you believe that Jesus is Lord, that He came in the flesh, died on the cross for our sins, and was raised from the dead, then you just need to confess Him as Lord. It could be as simple as saying to Him, "Lord, I do believe, and I ask You to come into my life and to be my Lord. Forgive me of my sins and fill me with Your Holy Spirit." If you pray this, He will do that. He will come into your life and your life will be forever changed. (Rom 10:9-10)

Let's pray.

Introduction (Hosea 1:4-7)

1. **Leah's First Scoring Drives** (Gen 29:31-35, Dan 10:12, 1 John 5:14-15, John 6:40, 1 Cor 15:58, Eccl 2:11, 2:17, Acts 9:26, Eph 5:18-20)
 - Reuben:
 - Simeon:
 - Levi:
 - Judah:

2. **Rachel's First Scoring Drives** (Gen 30:1-8, Ps 128:1-4, Ps 127:3-5, James 4:3, 1 Tim 1:5, Phil 1:15-18)
 - Dan:
 - Naphtali:

3. **Leah's Second Scoring Drives** (Gen 30:9-13, SS 7:13, Ps 90:17, 1 Cor 3:16, 6:19-20, Eph 5:18-20)
 - Gad:
 - Asher:
 - Issachar:
 - Zebulun:
 - Dinah:

4. **Rachel's Second Scoring Drive** (Gen 30:22-24, 35:16-20, Is 41:10, Acts 11:23-24)
 - Joseph

Conclusion and Applications (2 Chron 16:9, 1 Cor 10:13, 2 Peter 1:3, Rom 8:31, 10:9-10)