

Parish of Ferndown
Study sheet for week commencing 17th November 2008
The Life of Jacob (3) “Marriage & Family” Gen 29: 14-35

The study this week takes on the next step of Jacob’s journey, but looks more deeply into the issues raised by his two marriages.

Reaping and Sowing

- Read Galatians 6:7. From everyday life, can you think of people who have lied and cheated, and eventually were found out....or had the same done to them?
- Read Gen 29:16-30. Earlier Jacob had deceived his father who had weak eyes, in a dark tent, to steal a blessing. Now he is deceived in a dark tent, does not get the blessing, but gets the girl with the weak eyes. There is amazing irony and “reaping what you sow” in this story. **Let us now look at some of the characters and issues raised by Gen 29 and 30**

Laban

- Laban was a clever man and knew how to get the most out of Jacob’s difficult situation. Jacob had met his match! Maybe he had met his mirror image. From the deception over which bride he gets, to which sheep he keeps, there is a power play going on between these two men.
- What power plays do you observe between people? (at home, work, church, leisure)

Leah

- She got children but not the man, or the love she wanted – at least to start with. But look at the progression of names Leah gives her children, and their meanings. What do the names indicate in terms of Leah’s outlook on life as she has more and more children, and is married longer?

Jacob and Leah

- Their marriage shows that they were both victims of circumstances. But their marriage seems to blossom, and they work things through over many years. Why is their marriage a prophetic challenge to the way the western world views relationships with seemingly little emotion?

Jacob and Rachel

- Their marriage seems perfect. However, Rachel got the man but not the children (for a long while anyway). Even in marriages that look perfect from the outside there will always be issues that need addressing.
- How have issues of childlessness, resentment or anger affected the marriages of those you know? (I realise this is a painful area to share, and issues of confidentiality maybe at stake, so please be wise about what you share. But it can be healthy to admit that no marriage is perfect or without stresses and strains)

PRAY

For those who are married and those who are not.
Pray for childless couples who want children.
Pray for parents who need help to be good parents.
Pray for Social Services and the Police.
Pray for Christmas get togethers with the in-laws!
Pray for our government to honour marriage.