God Remembered Rachel and Opened Her Womb and She Gave Birth to a Son
30: 22-24

DIG: In what sense had God remembered Rachel? What significance did Joseph's name have for Rachel? What was the irony of childbirth for Rachel? How was Joseph's birth a turning point in the life of Jacob?

REFLECT: What has God added to your life lately? Are you grateful or resentful?

God remembered Noah **(8:1)** and **then He** also **remembered Rachel (30:22a).** Not that **He** had forgotten **her,** but **He remembered her** in the sense of *moving toward her in grace.* **He listened to her** prayers **and opened her womb (30:22b).** This will be the eleventh **son** of **Jacob**; four with **Leah** (Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah), two with **Leah's** maidservant **Zilpah** (Gad and Asher), two more with **Leah** (Issachar and Zebulun), two with **Rachel's** maidservant **Bilhah** (Dan and Naphtali), and now Joseph. Simply prodigious.

She became pregnant and gave birth to a son. There is no mention of mandrakes on **her** lips; **she** knew that ADONAI was at work in **her** life. **She** said: **God has taken away** the **disgrace** of **my** barrenness **(30:23).** The Hebrew word for **has taken away** is *asaf,* and means *a removal of disgrace, in the past tense.* Once proud of **her** beauty and figure, **she** has been sufficiently humbled. Probably at **his** circumcision, **she named him** Joseph, which means *addition or he shall add, in the future tense. The name combines two thoughts, first the idea of asaph, to take away, and secondly, yosef, which means to add.* By naming **him** this, **she** was saying that *in the past* God had **taken away her disgrace.** And by faith, **she** was praying that ADONAI would *add* to **her** another **son** *in the future* because **Joseph** means *he shall add* **(30:24).** Indeed, **her** hope was fulfilled, probably about fifteen years later, when **she gave birth to** Benjamin. At one time **she** felt that if **she** couldn't have **children, she** would die **(30:1),** but the reality was that in having **children, she** would die in **childbirth (35:16-18).** This was **Jacob's** twelfth, and last, **child.**

Ya'akov was ninety-three when **Joseph** was born, and **his birth** seems to be a turning point in **his** life. It prompted a desire for **Jacob** to return to **his** own country.