

Taking Advantage of Opportunities

Sunday November 10, 2024

Dr. Pete Norris

Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And behold, the Lord stood above it and said: "I am the Lord God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you." **(Genesis 28:12-15 NKJV)**

Opportunity is a combination of circumstances favorable for a purpose. His adversity was an opportunity for a promotion.

Now Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. Leah's eyes were delicate, but Rachel was beautiful of form and appearance. Now Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, "I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter." And Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to another man. Stay with me." So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed only a few days to him because of the love he had for her. Then 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. Now it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her. And Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah as a maid. So it came to pass in the morning, that behold, it was Leah. And he said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Was it not for Rachel that I served you? Why then have you deceived me?" And Laban said, "It must not be done so in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. Fulfill her week, and we will give you this one also for the service which you will serve with me still another seven years." **(Genesis 29:16-27 NKJV)**

Laban, who was in control represented God the Father. Rachel stood for the promise (your destiny, your purpose, your calling) beautiful to behold. Leah

stood for the obstacles in your Life (hard to look at, weakly and seemingly of little value. Jacob stands for you, your future full of promise and expectation.

Jacob went to sleep full of joy and expectation, and awoke to disappointment and despair. Leah was hard to face in the bright light of day, especially after a night of celebrating the beautiful promise we'd been given. Before Jacob could receive Rachel, God had to change his character to make him worthy to receive the promise. God uses the hard times in our life, to mold us into His image. He allows the obstacles to give us His character.

The fear of failure can keep you from success. We have to guard our minds and keep our minds disciplined.

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. **(II Timothy 1:7 NKJV)**

Your purpose is greater than your pressure.

Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. **(II Corinthians 4:16-18 NKJV)**

Looking at the seen will not produce a weight of glory. Shortcuts are filled with pitfalls that only give you more pain. Birthing character out of Chaos.

Now when the Lord saw that Leah was unloved, He made her able to bear children, but Rachel was barren. **(Genesis 29:31 AMP)**

Leah conceived and gave birth to a son and named him Reuben (See, a son!), for she said, "Because the Lord has seen my humiliation and suffering; now my husband will love me [since I have given him a son]." **(Genesis 29:32 AMP)**

Reuben means " to see" which means to perceive with the eyes to comprehend, to believe possible, to know through firsthand experiences.

Then she conceived again and gave birth to a son and said, "Because the Lord heard that I am unloved, He has given me this son also." So she named him Simeon (God hears). **(Genesis 29:33 AMP)**

Simeon means "to hear". To hear means "to gain understanding and knowledge from". Don't you imagine Jacob had trouble in his house. Rachel is the beauty (the promise) of his life, but Leah (the obstacle, the hard time) is the one giving birth to all the revelation. Rachel isn't giving birth to anything. Revelation, Vision is coming through Leah. Very few people make it to their Rachel (promise) because they want take care of their Leah. God is preparing His bride to have character befitting Royalty.

She conceived again and gave birth to a son and said, "Now this time my husband will become attached to me [as a companion], for I have given him three sons." Therefore he was named Levi. **(Genesis 29:34 AMP)**

Levi means "companion or to be joined". Jacob began to see and hear, and to form a relationship with God through the process of Leah. Although the Rachel was there, no revelation was coming from her. Joined means "to bring or to put together so as to make continuous". If we are determined to live out our destiny, the confusion of the hard times will cause discouragement and doubt. If we embrace the obstacle, walking by faith, Faith will rise on the inside of us. This revelation came through Leah. It's hard to live everyday with Leah, knowing Rachel is there in sight, but out of reach.

Don't despise small beginnings, they are of great value. Don't grieve obstacles, embrace them.

Again she conceived and gave birth to a [fourth] son, and she said, "Now I will praise the Lord." So she named him Judah; then [for a time] she stopped bearing [children]. **(Genesis 29:35 AMP)**

Judah means "praise". God taught Jacob to praise through Leah. The lesson of praise came from an unexpected thing in his life, the unlovely, the weak thing that he despised. Little did he know we have to serve, before we lead. If you can't deal with Leah, you will never dance with Rachel. Are you willing to birth something through Leah?

Henry Ford said, " Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off the Goal".

Reuben-to see. Simeon-to hear. Levi-to join. Judah-to praise.

And He said, "Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men and have prevailed." **(Genesis 32:28 AMP)**

Jacob had to come to the end of himself to find God and choose to become Israel.