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Leah (People Of The Promise)



Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Leah was a good book. Let that part sink in first. I'd hope for some time now that an author would take up the cross to bring Leah's life to us in fictional form. Shott did. The book begins with Jacob being a worker for Laban, as is true in Scripture. Then it wastes no time getting to the nitty gritty of trickery, the part we've learned so well from reading about Jacob, Rachel and Leah. What I liked is that Shott portrays Leah as intelligent wife, the wife with all the smarts even if she lacks sexiness. He gave Leah worth albeit sexual characteristics that Rachel had. At many points in the story, I was sympathetic to Leah's plight of being unloved because she put up no resistance to anything. She accepted Jacob's cruelty without complaint while still supporting him as a wife. There was a little inconsistency illustrating Leah's eyes. First, her eyes were weak but several times throughout the book Shott gives illuminance to Leah's eyes as "big, beautiful and expressive." It should have been one or the other. It was like Shott lost focus in how he wanted to present Leah's weakness. Also missing are scenes that make Jacob and Leah closer after Rachel's death. I mean really, how many walks and conversations can a man and wife have and not have more than just walking and talking? Overall, I liked this book.

This is a lovely little retelling of the Jacob story from his first wife Leah's point of view. In love with Jacob but realizing that he's barely noticed her, Leah takes desperate measures and pulls the

world's most famous bed trick. With Jacob believing himself finally in bed with Leah's younger sister, the beautiful Rachel, they consummate their marriage and when the morning light comes Jacob finds that he is saddled with a woman he doesn't love - although in time he gets his Rachel as well. Leah consoles herself with the knowledge that she is the mother of Jacob's sons, with Rachel apparently barren. But then the long-awaited Joseph is born, and Leah must bear the disinheritance of her eldest son, goodhearted Reuben, who has done nothing wrong except to not be Rachel's (the Bilhah scandal is never mentioned, which is a shame as it would have been interesting to see Leah's reaction to Reuben's one major moral lapse). Leah must draw on inner strength and God to deal with the difficult times that follow, including the Shechem massacre and its aftermath, a sickening suspicion that her sons had something to do with Joseph's death (and this version ends grimly, as Leah did not live long enough, as Jacob did, to find out that Reuben saved Joseph by suggesting he be thrown into a well instead of killed outright) - and, always, the knowledge that Jacob will always love Rachel more than her. It is not until the end of her life that Jacob shows Leah that he has noticed how she has been the glue that binds the family together and how much her intelligent advice has meant to him, even if it was Rachel's bed he went to most nights. And, of course, it is Leah - not Rachel - who is honored with a place in Jesus' ancestry. Shott keeps the novel in historical perspective, not trying to modernize the morality of biblical times. He also intriguingly picks up on the Bible's mention of Leah's bad eyesight and vividly describes what it must be like to live in a world where you have to ask someone to tell you what's going on if it's more than a few feet from you.

"Leah" by James R. Shott was a wonderful way to get inside the person of Leah and see this story from her perspective. I found it factual for the most part, allowing for being fictionalized. One error I feel led to point out is the statement that Jacob's father, Isaac, died before Jacob returned to his homeland with his family. In fact, Gen. 35:27-29 tells us Isaac was still alive when Jacob returned home, and died after that time, "and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him." This also discounts the statement that Jacob and Esau did not see each other after the initial encounter when Jacob bestowed Esau with many gifts from his flocks and herds. I can appreciate the struggles of writing a novel based on a Biblical character, but feel obvious errors like this one could have been avoided with a little more research. Thank you, James Shott, for giving us a wholesome and enjoyable look at characters in the Bible.

Thanks James R Shott, for putting this story into reality. It's great fiction and makes me think of

Leah as to who she may have really been. I enjoyed it enough that I am on the computer looking for other characters you might have written into real life and I see you have a few. Hope you keep it up. That's quite a gift.

I really wanted to like this book, as I love biblical tales, especially from the Old Testament. But I found this book to be dull, dragging. And the error of Isaac dying before Jacob returned to his homeland was a little too blatant, and I couldn't get passed it. Another thing, is even though I think the author did do a good job of giving us a perspective of what it was like to live back then, there were parts that I felt were a little to PC for me. For example when Jacob slaps Leah, and then thinks to himself how much he HATES the custom of hitting women. It just strikes as unnecessary to establish the idea that even though Jacob slaps his wife, he really doesn't like the custom. Another thing about the novel was that I just didn't find it all that gripping. It flowed along fine, but unfortunately it didn't make me want to stay up passed by bed time and continue reading it.

Shott masterfully tells the story of Jacob (and somewhat of Joseph) through the eyes of Leah, his first wife who was not the beauty Rachel was, but who was extraordinarily bright and a leader - a true matriarch. As with other "People of the Promise" series books I've loved, I had to read this book in one sitting. A great romantic story.

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