

We often find comfort and inspiration in the hymns we sing, don't we? Their words resonate deep within our souls, echoing our joys, sorrows, and deepest longings. But have you ever paused to consider the stories of suffering and loss written into the very notes of those hymns? Horatio Spafford poured his grief and faith into the timeless words of "It Is Well with My Soul" after the tragic drowning of his four daughters. Similarly, "Precious Lord, Take My Hand" is Thomas A. Dorsey's cry to God after the sudden death of both his wife and newborn son. Today, we'll explore another hymn composed with notes of heartbreak: "This Time I Will Praise the Lord" by Matt Bassford. But this isn't Matt's story; it's the story of a woman named Leah, a woman who, like Spafford, Dorsey, and Matt, found herself standing amid the rubble of earthly hopes. Let's step into her world, found in the pages of Genesis 29-30, and witness her journey of finding strength and solace in deep disappointment.

1. The Disregarding of Leah (Gen 29:16-30):
 - a. Jacob – Passed over her because of her undesirable looks. | vv. 16-20
 - b. Laban – Used her as a pawn to defraud Jacob of seven more years of labor | vv. 21-27
 - c. Rachel – As the loved wife, she tormented her sister | vv. 28-30; cf. 30:1, 8
2. The Brokenhearted Bride (Gen 29:31):
 - a. The glory of marital bliss was replaced with the misery of an unloving home.
 - b. But the LORD saw her sorrowful state and blessed her with children. | Psa 34:18
3. Motherhood as a Battlefield (Gen 29:32-35):
 - a. Leah thought children were the answer to winning her husband's affections.
 - i. Reuben – "See a son... now my husband will love me." | v. 32
 - ii. Simeon – "The LORD has heard I am hated." | v. 33
 - iii. Levi – "Now this time my husband will be attached to me." | v. 34
 - b. Blindly, she laid her children at the feet of the idol named Jacob. | Psa 115:4-8
 - c. But children aren't pawns in the games adults play! | Psa 127:3; Mat 18:10; Eph 6:4
 - d. Finally, she recognized that true fulfillment came from God alone.
 - i. Judah – "This time I will praise the LORD." | v. 35; Pro 3:5-8; Psa 34:1ff
4. The Honoring of Leah:
 - a. Rachel's fall from grace: consumed by envy and idolatry. | Gen 30:22-24; 31:19b, 35:16-21
 - b. In the end, Leah rested with the covenant people of God. | Gen 49:28-33; cf. Mat 8:10-12

Like Leah, "Standing... amid the rubble, where [her] earthly hopes had soared," we too may find ourselves surrounded by the debris of unrequited love, broken hopes, and unfulfilled expectations. So let us stand with her amid the rubble of our disappointments and declare with unwavering faith: "I will turn to Him in trouble; this time, I will praise the Lord." Let us come confessing our "former blindness" and that our "plans were vain." Let us choose to praise God "For the gifts that He has given, For the gifts He will not give." This time, let us choose to find our hopes and expectations under His "anointing grace." This time, let us choose to surrender our pain and our disappointments into His loving hands because "He will never disappoint" And let us, with Leah, join the chorus of God's covenant people and this time, "Praise the Lord."