

Could You Be Suffering From a Spirit of Infertility?

God's first command to mankind was to go forth and multiply (Genesis 1:28). However, I believe this command isn't just for physical children. Yes, God was telling Adam and Eve to go have children and fill up the earth, but I believe beyond just having more children. God wants us as believers to go forth and have spiritual fruit. We, as God's people, need to go forth making disciples of all nations (Matt 28:19). God wants us to spiritually "parent" those who need love and guidance. When we start stepping in the footsteps of God's destiny for our lives, we realize that getting to a destiny isn't all about us. It's about bearing fruit, helping others reach their destinies, and spreading the gospel of Christ. God sent us all to the earth to impact humanity. Our lives should be about multiplying what God has done in us and helping others. I am in no way trying to marginalize the difficulties some couples have faced with infertility. This article is about a spiritual concept.

Many years ago, I found myself in a very frustrated place. I knew God called me into ministry, and nothing seemed to be happening. I was in a time of training. I wanted so badly to be bearing fruit for the kingdom that I was tired of feeling like I was banging my head against a brick wall. I began to notice in the Old Testament there were times, seasons and reasons why God opened up the womb of women. I saw one story in particular that God used to stop me from feeling so sorry for myself.

The story of Rachel and her struggle with infertility can be found in Genesis 30. Here are some great points that God showed me that fateful day. Rachel was in a very similar place to where I was at that time in my spiritual walk. I was so desperate to produce in the kingdom, and so frustrated that

it wasn't happening that I was having fleshly moments. I wasn't going to be doing what I felt I was called to be doing until my attitude changed, and neither did Rachel.

Rachel saw that her sister was having children and she was jealous (v. 1). Being jealous and envious of other people's ministry and their fruitfulness will dry up your spiritual womb. It will spur you to fleshly desperation. It will cause you to hate those who are prospering around you, and it will make you bitter.

You can't compare your journey to those around you. You have to run your own race with God. You have to keep your eyes in your lane and if someone near you is seeing a great move of God in their lives then rejoice with them (1 Cor. 12:26). We've all done this before; we look around at people succeeding in places we feel we are failing and start the 'What about me blues.' That kind of attitude will get you nowhere quick. Rejoice with your brothers and sisters in the Lord. We are all on the same team. Are you in this for yourself, or are you in this to further the gospel?

Rachel threw a temper tantrum to her husband (v. 1). As a result of Rachel not bearing any children she ran to her husband and cried, "Give me children, or I will die" (Gen. 30:1b). I find this such a comical moment, as if her husband could somehow solve her childless problems. I am sure they were doing everything they knew to do. I want to point out here that I don't believe Rachel's fit was really aimed at Jacob but at God. She is acting like a spoiled 2-year-old who isn't getting what they want, so they are going to kick and scream, thinking it will suddenly manifest. Jacob's response in verse 2 was to get annoyed with Rachel and tell her he wasn't God.

When I found myself in a similar place, I found myself very aggravated with my husband too. It wasn't my husband's fault that God didn't seem to be moving forward the destiny I so

much hungered after, but I found myself irritable at him and blamed him for it. I wasn't really angry at my husband; truthfully, I was frustrated at God. I couldn't figure out why He had told me that I was going to do all these things and just felt like he left me. I remember one day when I was feeling particularly snarky, Dan and I were talking in our bedroom, and suddenly he stood up and said, "You can sit in here and feel sorry for yourself, but I'm done. I'm going in the living room, and you can act like this by yourself." I was throwing a temper tantrum, and just as you wouldn't respond right away to a temper tantrum, God doesn't quickly respond to Rachel either. When my kids were throwing fits, I learned early on as long as they weren't going to hurt themselves, ignoring the fit was usually the best way to handle it. When they were done flipping out, I would respond. Spiritual maturity knows that God has a plan even if you can't see it at the moment. Maturity accepts God's will, timing and learns to endure the process. Immaturity throws fits.

Rachel tries to manipulate God and make it happen on her own (v. 3-16). Rachel started giving her maid to her husband to produce offspring, which was something practiced in those days. She is really wrestling with God. What she is really saying is, 'Since you're not going to do what I want you to do, I'll make it happen myself.' Where I want to point out here is in v. 14, where this is a conversation over mandrakes. Rachel's sister Leah (Yes, they are both married to Jacob, which adds to the drama of this family) has a son who finds mandrakes during the wheat harvest. A mandrake is a root that some people believe to be in the shape of a woman. Often they would hang these up in their tents. They were supposed to promote fertility. They were essentially an idol. They were witchcraft. Rachel wants that witchcraft so badly because she believes it will help her get pregnant. Rachel and Leah get into an argument about it, and in order to pay her sister back for the witchcraft/mandrakes, Rachel bargains that their husband can sleep with Leah for payment. Rachel is the

favored wife. Rachel is the one whom Jacob worked for in order to marry. However, Rachel is so desperate to force God's will to happen and she have children she would rather prostitute out the favor of God on her life to get what she thinks she needs. She is trusting in the witchcraft more than God.

How many times have I seen this play out in the church today? People are hungry, desperate and frantic, trying to fulfill what God has for them. But they are not willing to do things the way God wants them done. They would rather prostitute out their favor, giftings, abilities that God gave them to do it themselves rather to do what they need to do when God tells them and wait patiently on Him. I have met many awesome leaders who started and have worlds of potential in the kingdom but have lost their way in this arena. When you try to manipulate or force God to do something in your timing, it never works. It will be like dust. Unless the Lord builds the destiny, house or fulfillment, you labor in vain (Psalm 127:1) Waiting on God's timing is always worth it! Really it becomes a vicious cycle that will tear apart ministries and God's people. They want to do God's will, they keep trying to force God's will, they get more frustrated at God, they live life defeated. Instead they need to just listen for God's will and stick with what He said. They need to trust that He has their best interest in His heart. They need to wait. I personally love a great quote that Spurgeon is credited with saying, "By perseverance the snail reached the ark." You can reach that ark to, one divine movement at a time. Success doesn't happen in giant leaps, but consistent choices.

Then God remembered Rachel (v. 22) We do not know how long it is between Rachel's attempts at manipulation and finally throwing it is until she does finally get pregnant, but her sister has three more children after the mandrake incident. So at least three years later, in v. 22, the Bible says, "God remembered Rachel." That "remembered," if looked up in a concordance actually means, "made ready." God made Rachel

ready, and Rachel had to allow herself to mature and be made ready. It was then and only then that Rachel had two children. I want to point out here again that it's not a competition with you and your brothers and sisters in the Lord. Rachel's son Joseph was the reason the family didn't starve during the famine in the land. It was because his brothers sold him into slavery and he was raised up in Egypt, and the family moved to Egypt so that they didn't starve about 20 years later. Yes, Leah had more children, but it was Rachel's son who became more exalted later in life and whom all the brothers eventually honored.

God has so many awesome plans for your life, and He wants to see them fulfilled. You have to remember He created you in your mother's womb for purpose, and He wants you to step into those places more than you do. He wants you to be spiritually fruitful and multiply what He has on the inside of you to others. He wants people to see His awesomeness in your life, so that you can point others to Him. However, in order for you to see that fulfilled in your life, you must submit to Him. You must submit to the process. Patience and persistence are things that people don't want to hear about in the kingdom but are so needed. Many people are finding themselves stuck in a rut of spiritual infertility, and they don't understand why. It's because they are trying to get to their destinations in their own abilities, and as a result, their struggle is amounting to dust. I believe that it can go further and create strongholds in your life and spiritual bondage. If you find yourself caught in this cycle, repent. Ask God to restore you and do what He says. You must do your part to run your race. If you need to go to college, to get where God has said, do it! If you need to start a business, in His time, do it! Write those books, run those races and do everything that you can do to get where God is calling you. However, know that it is a process and you can't force the doors down. You can get right smack in front of one, so that when He makes you ready, you can run through that door. You have to stop

wrestling against God, and start agreeing with heaven. It is only then that you will see yourself moving forward. {eoa}

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