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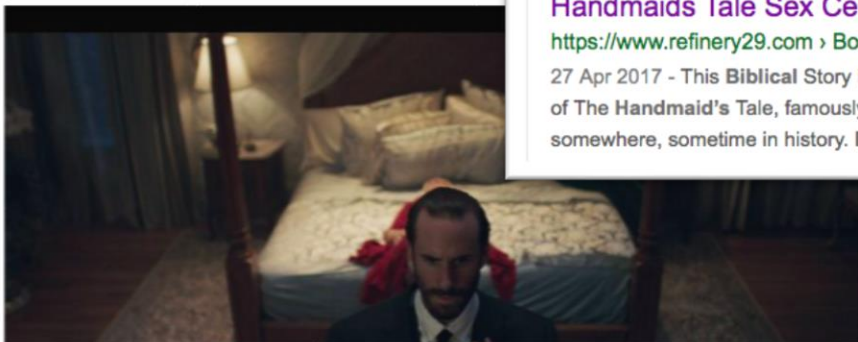
This Biblical Story Is At The Heart Of *The Handmaid's Tale*

ELENA NICOLAOU

27 APRIL 2017, 18:00



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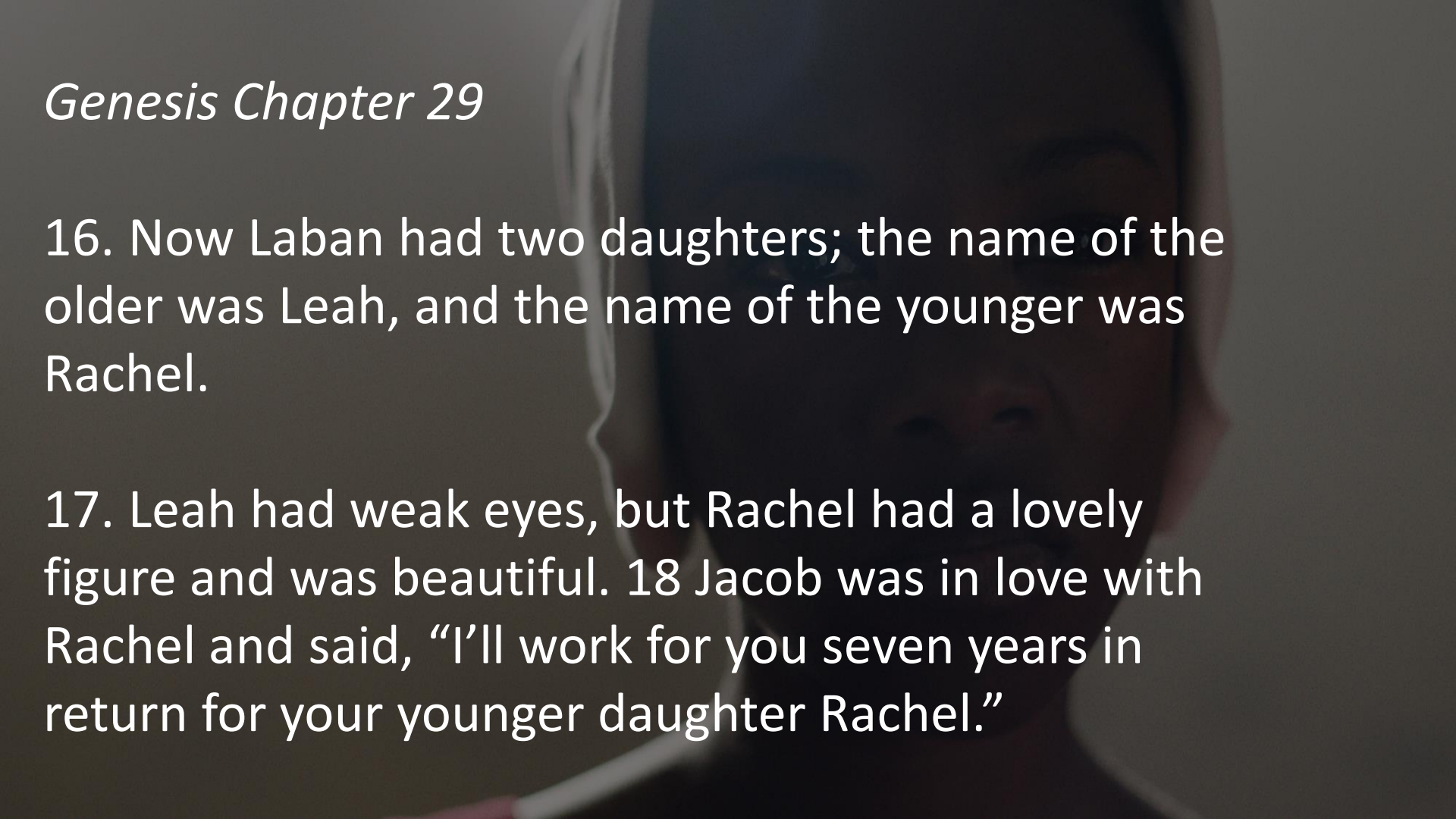


Handmaids Tale Sex Ceremony Bible Story Bilhah Maid - Refinery29

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27 Apr 2017 - This Biblical Story Is At The Heart Of The Handmaid's Tale. ... Margaret Atwood, author of The Handmaid's Tale, famously claimed that there's nothing in the book that didn't happen somewhere, sometime in history. In fact, the primary childbearing custom in The Handmaid's Tale

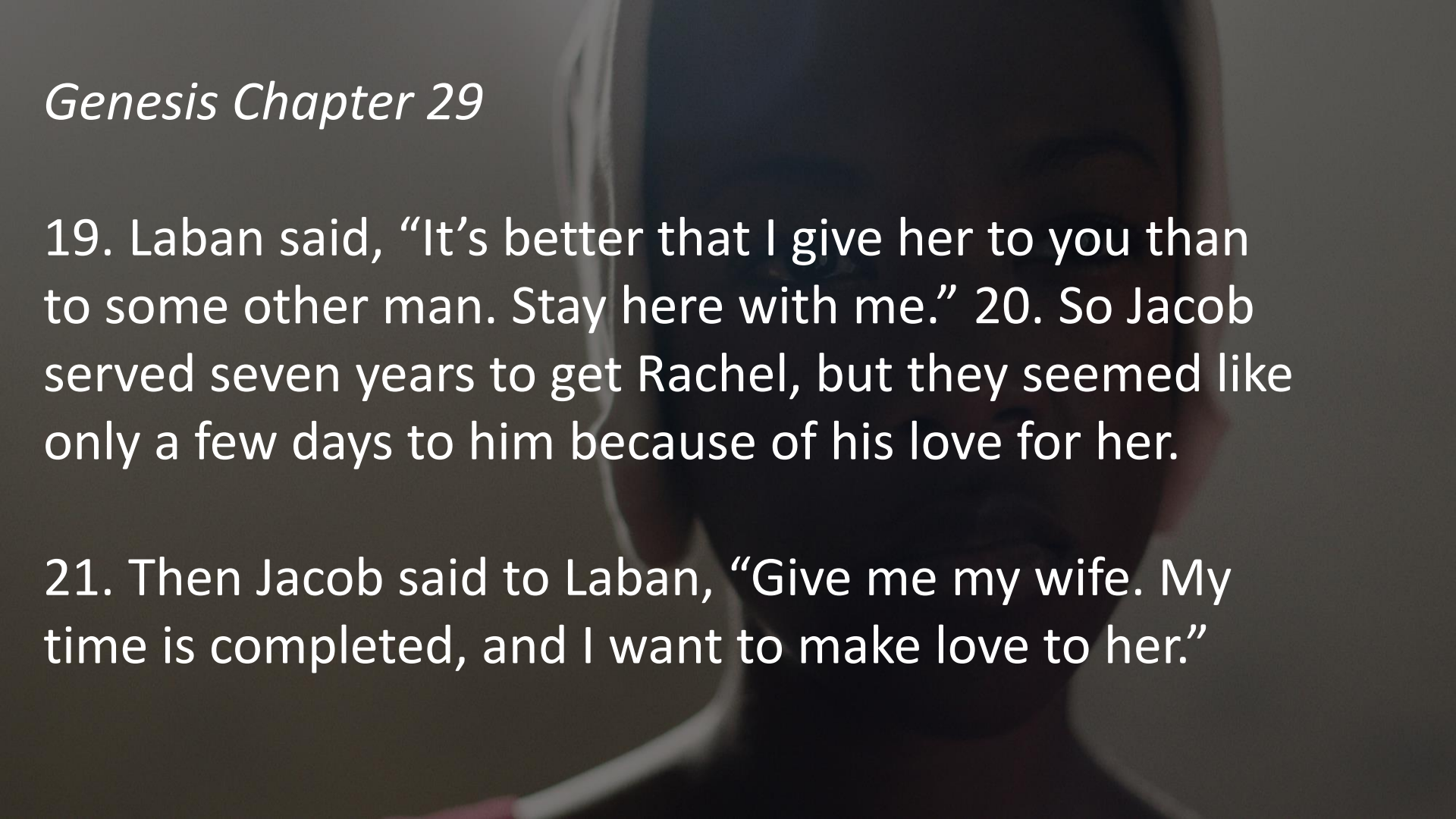
Genesis 29, Bilhah
The Bible's Handmaid's Tale



Genesis Chapter 29

16. Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel.

17. Leah had weak eyes, but Rachel had a lovely figure and was beautiful. 18 Jacob was in love with Rachel and said, "I'll work for you seven years in return for your younger daughter Rachel."



Genesis Chapter 29

19. Laban said, “It’s better that I give her to you than to some other man. Stay here with me.” 20. So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her.

21. Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give me my wife. My time is completed, and I want to make love to her.”

Genesis Chapter 29

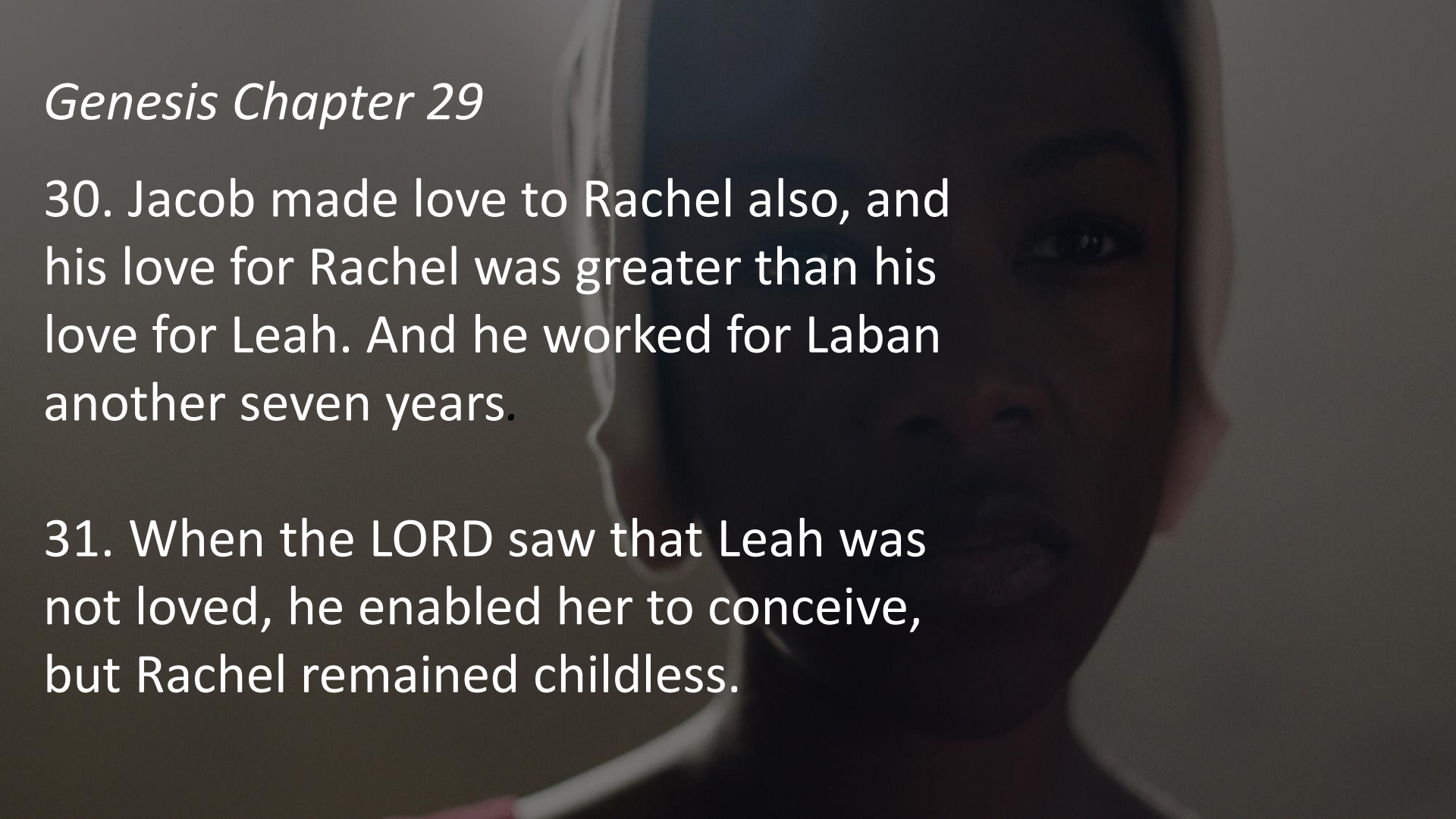
22. So Laban brought together all the people of the place and gave a feast. 23. But when evening came, he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and Jacob made love to her. 24. And Laban gave his servant Zilpah to his daughter as her attendant.

25. When morning came, there was Leah! So Jacob said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? I served you for Rachel, didn't I? Why have you deceived me?"

Genesis Chapter 29

26. Laban replied, “It is not our custom here to give the younger daughter in marriage before the older one. 27. Finish this daughter’s bridal week; then we will give you the younger one also, in return for another seven years of work.”

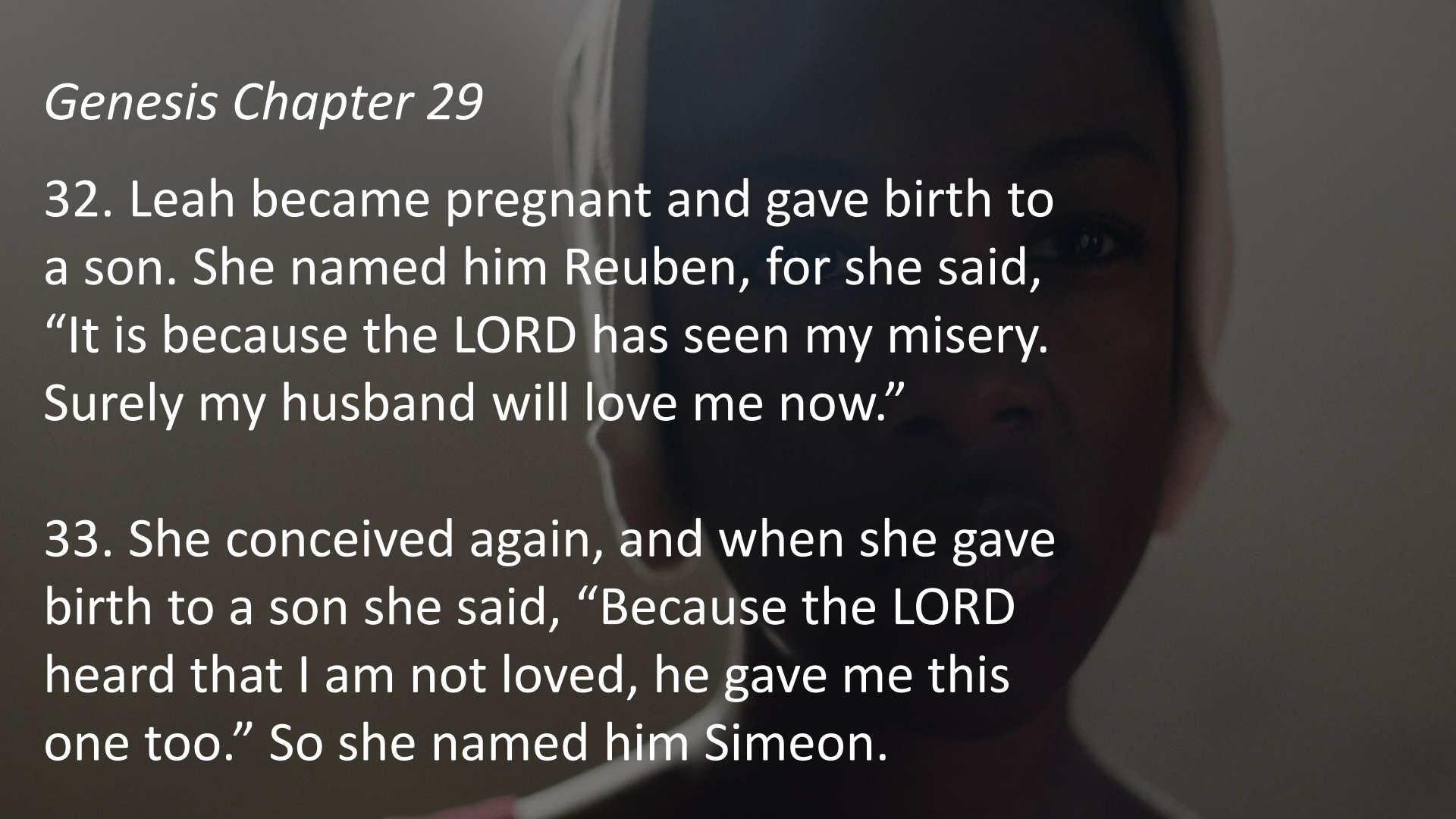
28. And Jacob did so. He finished the week with Leah, and then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife. 29. Laban gave his servant Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as her attendant.



Genesis Chapter 29

30. Jacob made love to Rachel also, and his love for Rachel was greater than his love for Leah. And he worked for Laban another seven years.

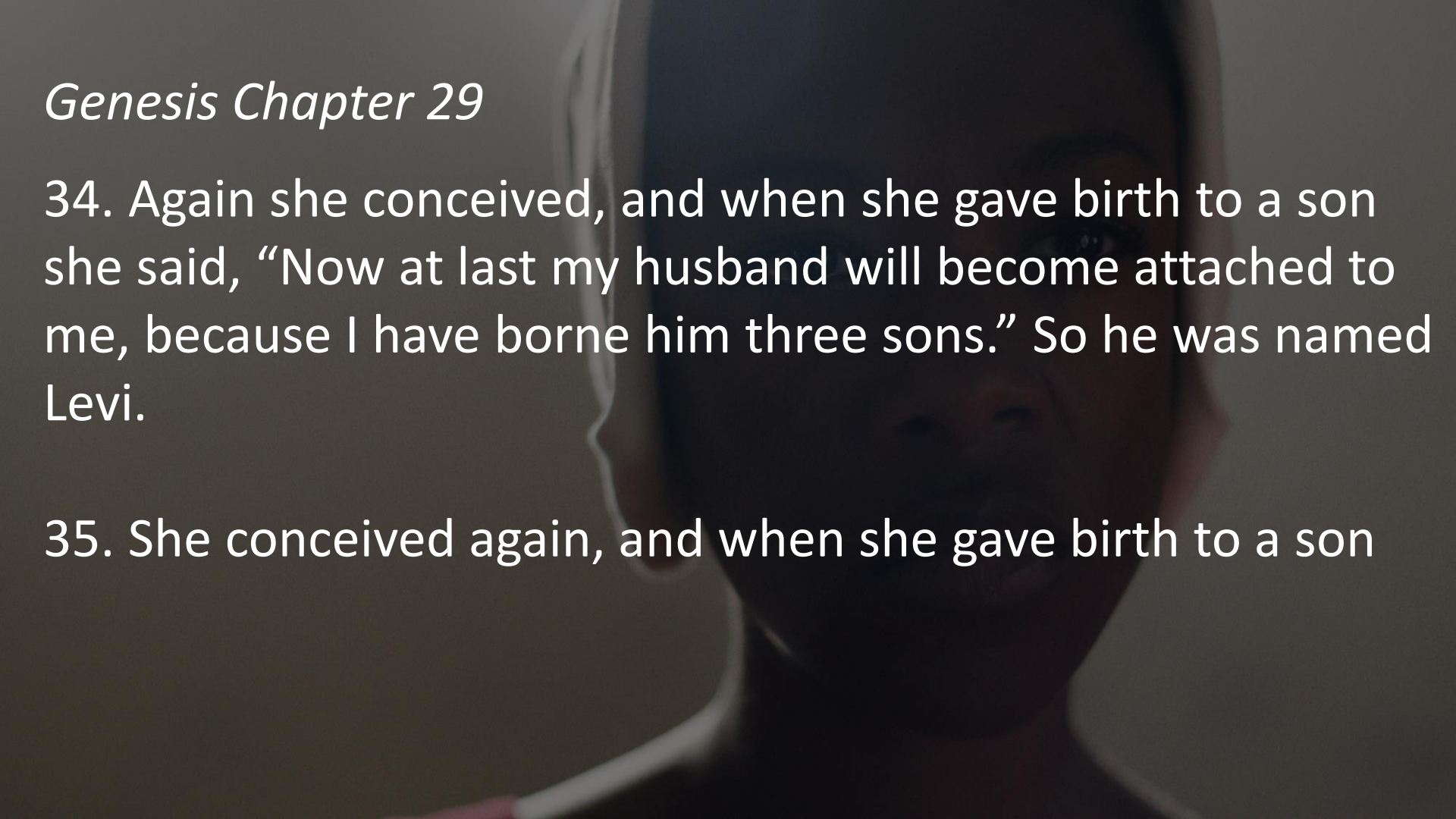
31. When the LORD saw that Leah was not loved, he enabled her to conceive, but Rachel remained childless.



Genesis Chapter 29

32. Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Reuben, for she said, “It is because the LORD has seen my misery. Surely my husband will love me now.”

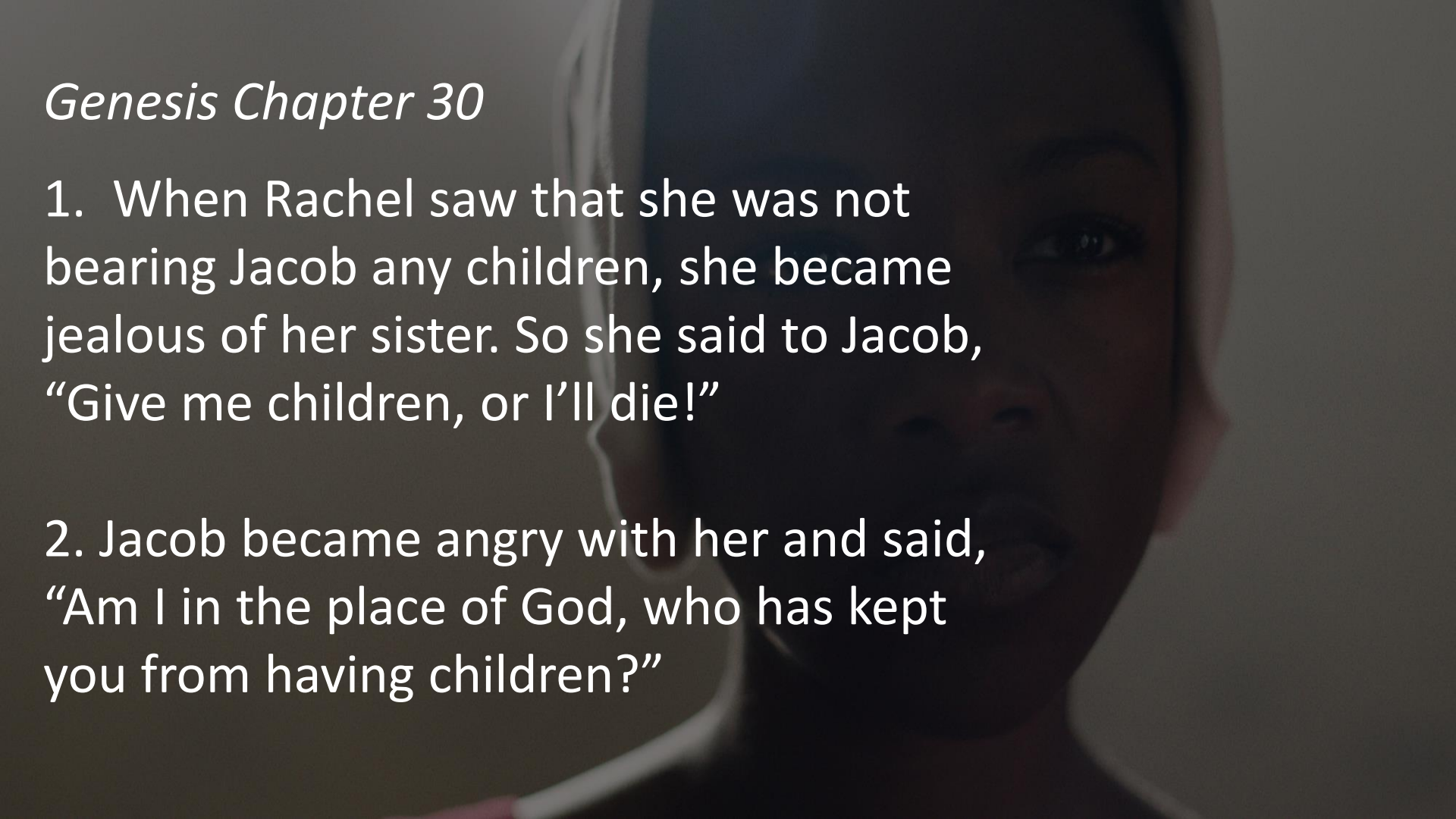
33. She conceived again, and when she gave birth to a son she said, “Because the LORD heard that I am not loved, he gave me this one too.” So she named him Simeon.



Genesis Chapter 29

34. Again she conceived, and when she gave birth to a son she said, “Now at last my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons.” So he was named Levi.

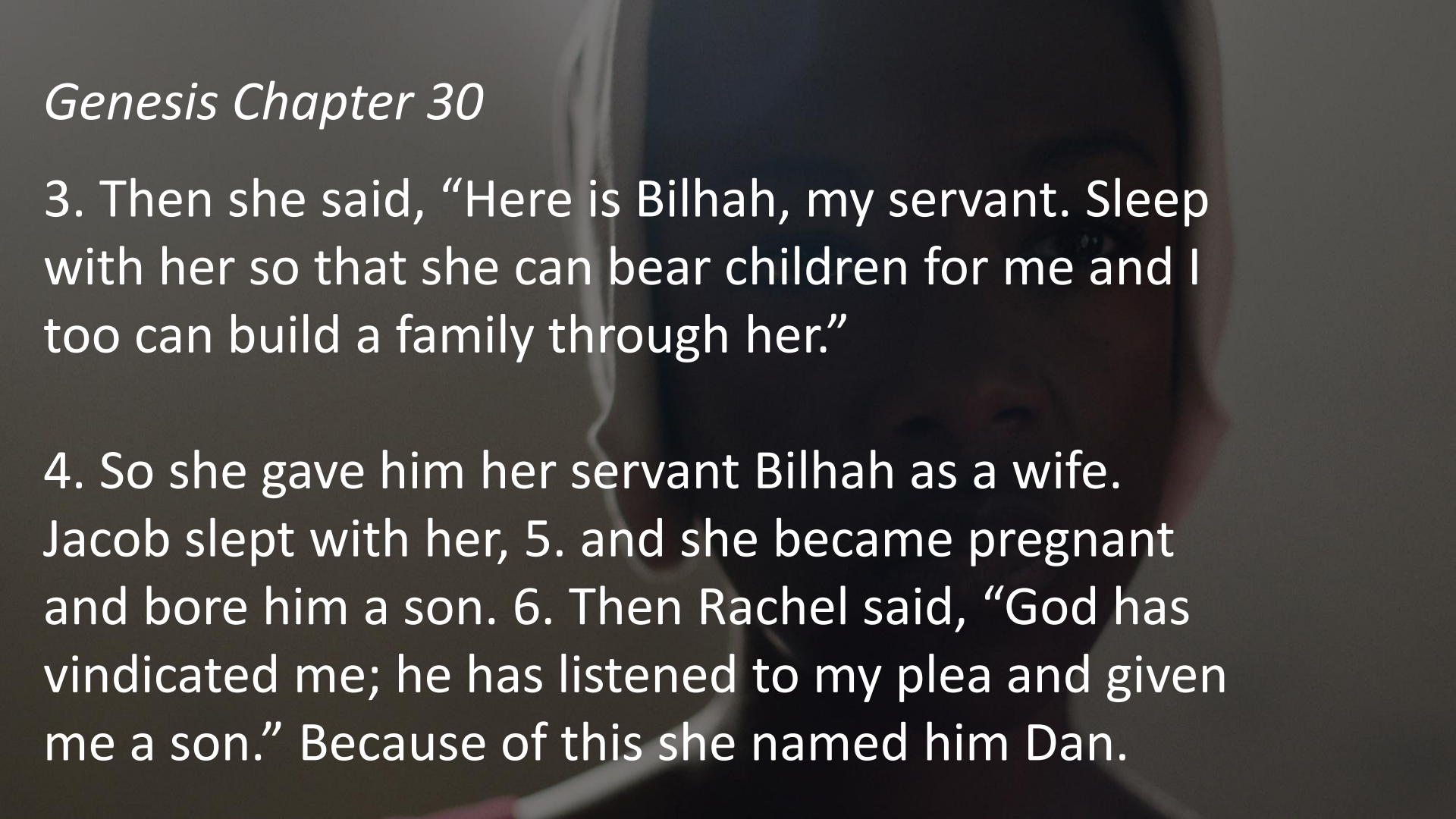
35. She conceived again, and when she gave birth to a son



Genesis Chapter 30

1. When Rachel saw that she was not bearing Jacob any children, she became jealous of her sister. So she said to Jacob, "Give me children, or I'll die!"

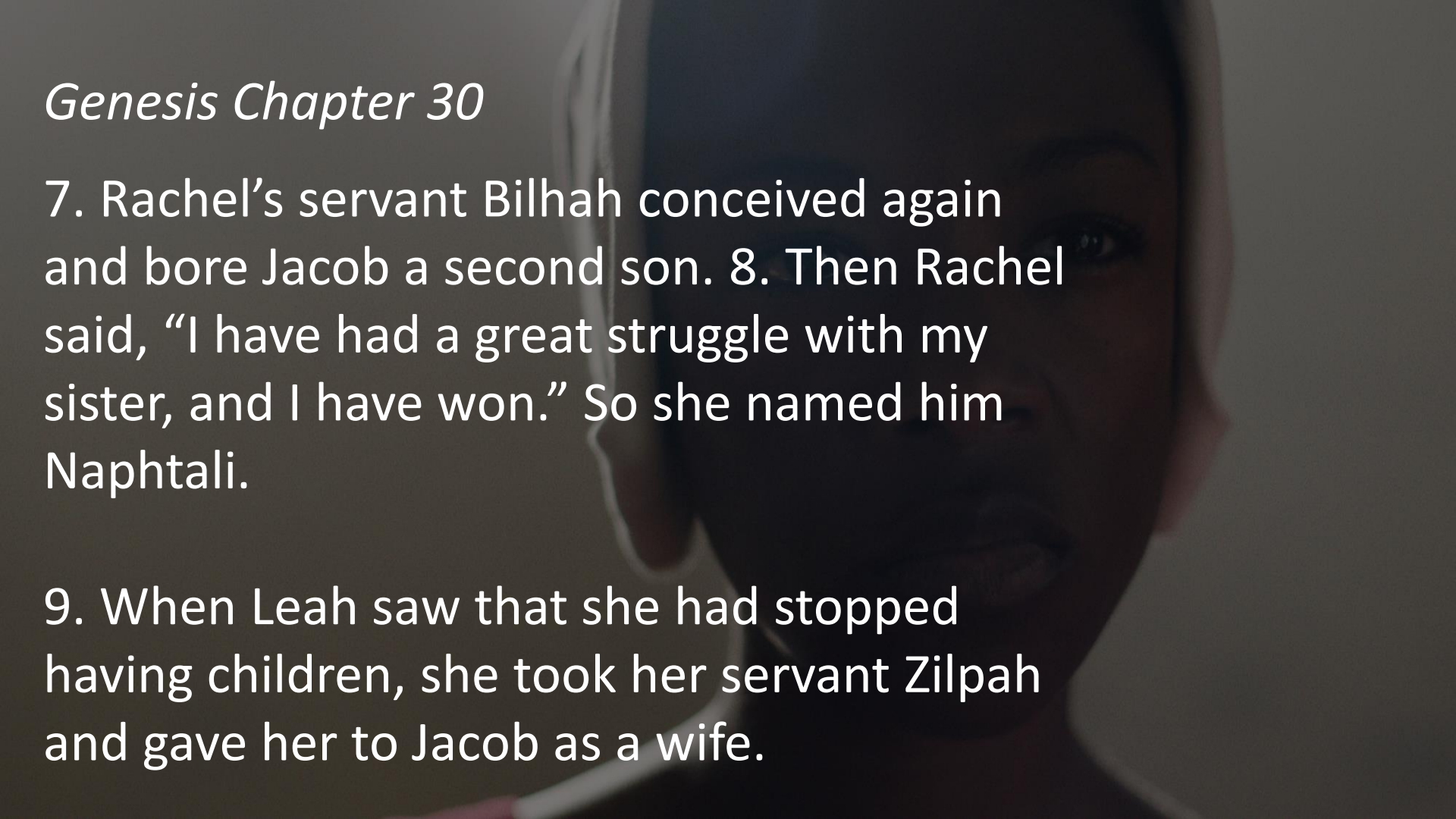
2. Jacob became angry with her and said, "Am I in the place of God, who has kept you from having children?"

A woman wearing a white headscarf is shown from the chest up, looking down with a somber expression. The background is dark and out of focus.

Genesis Chapter 30

3. Then she said, “Here is Bilhah, my servant. Sleep with her so that she can bear children for me and I too can build a family through her.”

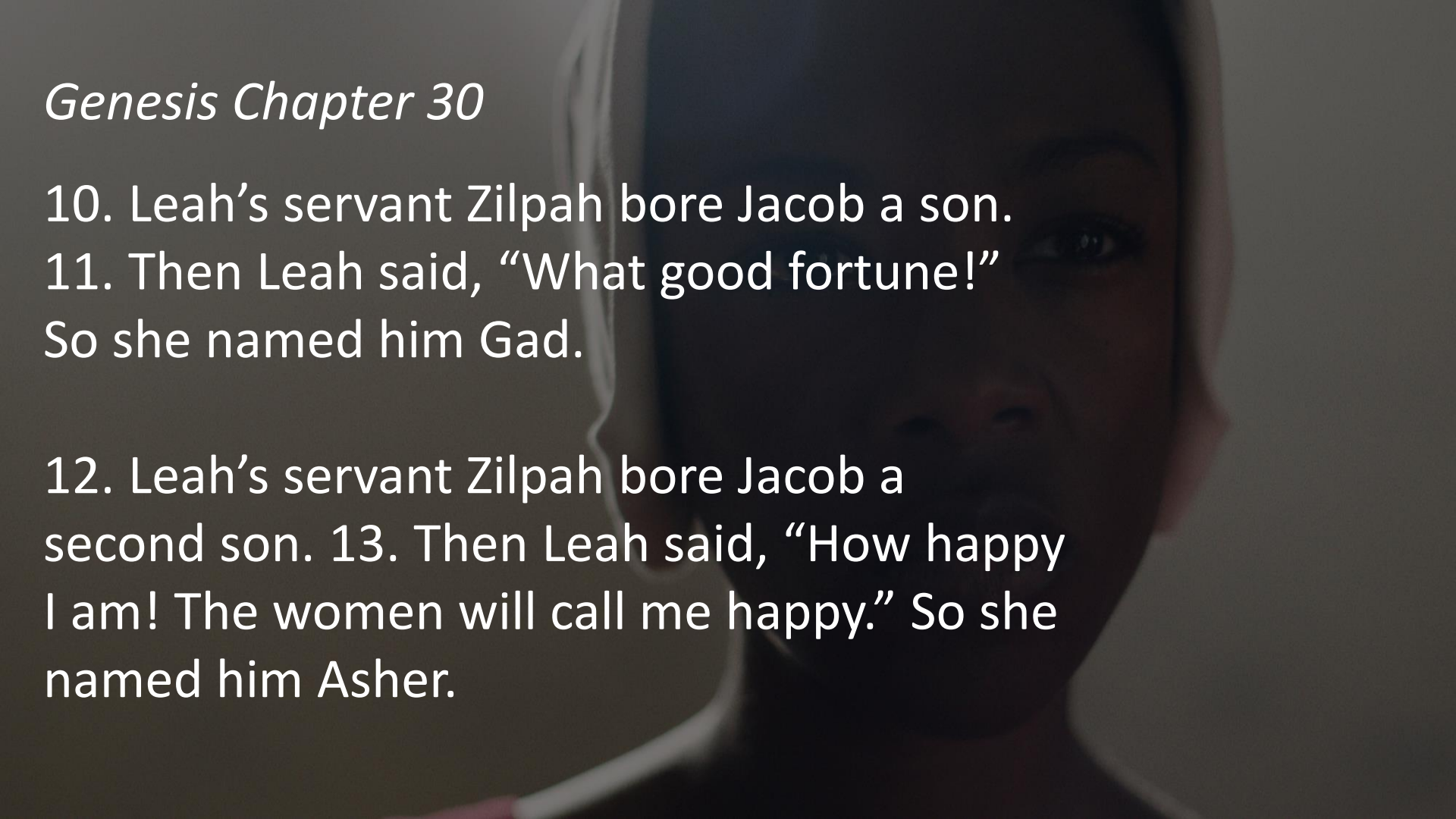
4. So she gave him her servant Bilhah as a wife. Jacob slept with her, 5. and she became pregnant and bore him a son. 6. Then Rachel said, “God has vindicated me; he has listened to my plea and given me a son.” Because of this she named him Dan.



Genesis Chapter 30

7. Rachel's servant Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son. 8. Then Rachel said, "I have had a great struggle with my sister, and I have won." So she named him Naphtali.

9. When Leah saw that she had stopped having children, she took her servant Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife.



Genesis Chapter 30

10. Leah's servant Zilpah bore Jacob a son.

11. Then Leah said, "What good fortune!"
So she named him Gad.

12. Leah's servant Zilpah bore Jacob a
second son. 13. Then Leah said, "How happy
I am! The women will call me happy." So she
named him Asher.

Genesis Chapter 35:21-22

21. Israel moved on again and pitched his tent beyond Migdal Eder.

22. While Israel was living in that region, Reuben went in and slept with his father's concubine Bilhah, and Israel heard of it.



Discuss:

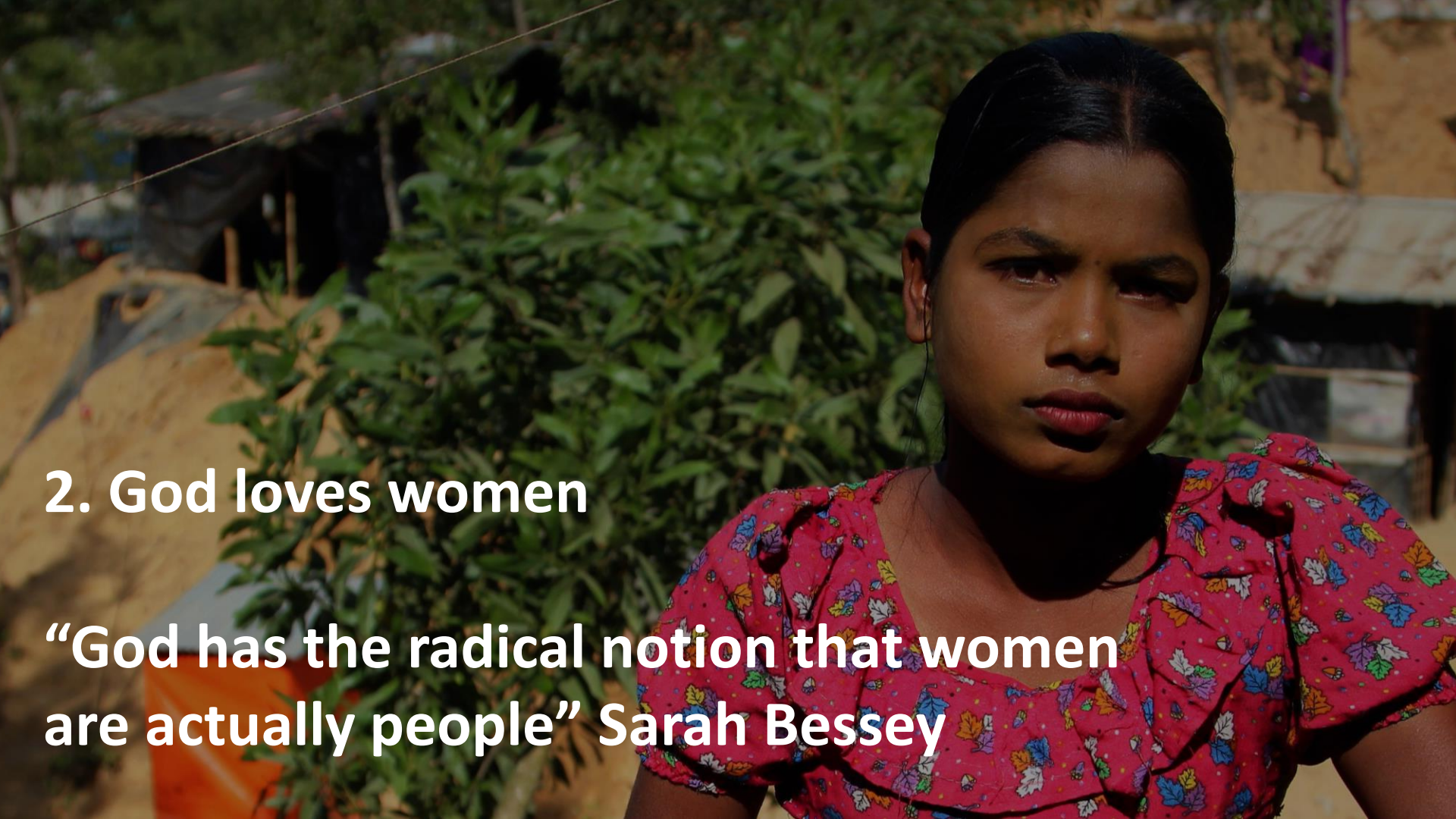
**Why is Bilhah's Handmaid's
Tale included in the bible?**

- 
- 1. God condemns abuse**
 - 2. God loves women**
 - 3. God redeems messy relationships**

1. God condemns abuse

“The best way to right a wrong is to shine a light on the truth” Ida B Wells





2. God loves women

“God has the radical notion that women are actually people” Sarah Bessey

A person with long reddish-brown hair, wearing a light blue denim jacket over a grey shirt, is shown from the chest down. Their hands are clasped together in their lap. The background is dark and out of focus. In the bottom right corner, a hand is partially visible, reaching towards the person.

3. God understands messy relationships



The finale: justice, freedom and redemption

A close-up portrait of a woman with dark skin, wearing a white headscarf. She is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The lighting is soft, highlighting her features. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

The Bible's Handmaid's Tale