

Ultimate Parsha continued...

With all of this going against her, the Midrash tells us that Leah's prayers were answered in her being allowed to marry Yaakov (first) and have his children. This is in no small part due to Rachel's willingness to share the signal with Leah (Rashi), and Yaakov's recognition that this was Hashem's plan (R' Aharon Kotler). Upon giving birth to her fourth child, Yehudah--which was recognized as more than the average (Rashi)--Leah expresses her gratitude through the name, which means "thankfulness" and "praise" according to Sforno.

At this time of year, when many of us are gathering with family at Thanksgiving time, we have an opportunity to reflect on the many blessings in our own lives and to thank Hashem for what he has granted us. May all of our prayers be answered in the same way that our matriach Leah's were.

Shabbat Shalom,

Paul S. Oberman

