

Genesis - Lesson 31

Genesis 31

Distributed by: KJV Bible Studies

Email: mailKjvBibleStudies@gmail.com

Website: www.KjvBibleStudies.net

Memory verses for this week: *Jas 4:5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? Jas 4:6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.*

Introduction: We continue our study on the book of Genesis this week as God calls Jacob back to Bethel. He was to have gone to Haran for a few days, but now had stayed 20 years and found it time to leave to head to his home land.

I. The Reasons for Jacob's Flight

Gen 31:1 *And he heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's; and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory.*

Gen 31:2 *And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it was not toward him as before.*

Gen 31:3 *And the LORD said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee.*

Gen 31:4 *And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock,*

In verse 1, we find Laban's sons claiming that Jacob was taking away all that was rightfully their fathers. Laban and all his sons had turned against Jacob. Things were good for a while, but now Laban's countenance changed. It says it was not toward Jacob the way it had been before. Earlier Laban was glad to have Jacob with him and claimed that he had been blessed because of Jacob's presence.

Gen 30:27 *And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thine eyes, tarry: for I have learned by experience that the LORD hath blessed me for thy sake.*

We as Christians are blessed because of Christ and what He has done for us.

1Jn 2:12 *I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.*

God knows all about our situations, and intervenes and commands Jacob to return to the land of his fathers. He promises to be with him as he had earlier promised as he began his trip to Haran. Jacob calls for Rachel and Leah to inform them that they are

about to leave.

Gen 31:5 And said unto them, I see your father's countenance, that it is not toward me as before; but the God of my father hath been with me.

Gen 31:6 And ye know that with all my power I have served your father.

Gen 31:7 And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me.

Gen 31:8 If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bare speckled: and if he said thus, The ringstraked shall be thy hire; then bare all the cattle ringstraked.

Gen 31:9 Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given them to me.

Gen 31:10 And it came to pass at the time that the cattle conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream, and, behold, the rams which leaped upon the cattle were ringstraked, speckled, and grised.

Jacob clearly states his case against the girls' father, Laban. He explains that Laban had attempted to deceive him and continued to change his wages ten times. He knows why he was so blessed, and attributes his success to God. When we see ourselves with pure and undefiled clarity, we know of ourselves we are nothing without God. We are the branches, but he is the true vine. Without him we can do nothing.

In Barne's Notes on the Bible, he said this about Jacob and what he said to his wives.

Circumstances at length induce Jacob to propose flight to his wives. His prosperity provokes the envy and slander of Laban's sons, and Laban himself becomes estranged. The Lord now commands Jacob to return, and promises him his presence to protect him. Jacob now opens his mind fully to Rachel and Leah. Rachel, we observe, is put first. Several new facts come out in his discourse to them. Ye know - Jacob appeals to his wives on this point - "that with all my might I served your father." He means, of course, to the extent of his engagement. During the last six years he was to provide for his own house, as the Lord permitted him, with the full knowledge and concurrence of Laban. Beyond this, which is a fair and acknowledged exception, he has been faithful in keeping the cattle of Laban. "Your father deceived me, and changed my wages ten times;" that is, as often as he could.

Gen 31:11 And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob: And I said, Here am I.

Gen 31:12 And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle are ringstraked, speckled, and grised: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee.

Gen 31:13 I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred.

God commands Jacob to return to Bethel. As is always the case, God kept His promise. Remember the first night away from home when he had that dream about the angels ascending and descending on the ladder. God promised to be with him that night.

Gen 28:13 And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

Gen 28:14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall

all the families of the earth be blessed.

Gen 28:15 And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

In verse 11, we have record that God spoke to Jacob. One of the greatest blessings of life, is to hear God's Word.

Heb 1:1 *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,*

Heb 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

It was God and not Jacob's silly devices that we read about in last week's lesson which caused Jacob's prosperity. It was the God of Bethel. Remember from our earlier studies that Bethel means the "house of God." Bethel stands for fellowship and communion with God. The backslider is always called to return to Bethel.

Gen 31:14 And Rachel and Leah answered and said unto him, Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house?

Gen 31:15 Are we not counted of him strangers? for he hath sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money.

Gen 31:16 For all the riches which God hath taken from our father, that is ours, and our children's: now then, whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do.

Not only had Laban wronged Jacob, but he had wronged his daughters. They were in agreement that their father had withheld their inheritance and had taken their money and treated them like strangers. They know what Jacob has said is the truth and they accepted what God had done and promised to their husband.

II. Jacob Leaves the Land of Haran

Gen 31:17 Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon camels;

Gen 31:18 And he carried away all his cattle, and all his goods which he had gotten, the cattle of his getting, which he had gotten in Padanaram, for to go to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan.

Gen 31:19 And Laban went to shear his sheep: and Rachel had stolen the images that were her father's.

Gen 31:20 And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled.

Gen 31:21 So he fled with all that he had; and he rose up, and passed over the river, and set his face toward the mount Gilead.

Hearing God's command, Jacob does not tarry but sets his family on the camels and they flee away secretly. His possessions are packed and ready to go so they might return to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan. Verse 19 points out that this was done while Laban was far away.

Rachel stole her father's images. These images were seraphim or idols. No matter how wronged we may be, it never warrants us doing wrong things. The old saying that two wrongs never make a right is so true. According to Judges 18:13-20 and other passages, the seraphim were used as oracles in order to enquire from them. With this in mind, there may have been a number of reasons as to why Rachel stole them.

Jdg 18:13 And they passed thence unto mount Ephraim, and came unto the house of Micah.

Jdg 18:14 Then answered the five men that went to spy out the country of Laish, and said unto their brethren, Do ye know that there is in these houses an ephod, and teraphim, and a graven image, and a molten image? now therefore consider what ye have to do.

Jdg 18:15 And they turned thitherward, and came to the house of the young man the Levite, even unto the house of Micah, and saluted him.

Jdg 18:16 And the six hundred men appointed with their weapons of war, which were of the children of Dan, stood by the entering of the gate.

Jdg 18:17 And the five men that went to spy out the land went up, and came in thither, and took the graven image, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image: and the priest stood in the entering of the gate with the six hundred men that were appointed with weapons of war.

Jdg 18:18 And these went into Micah's house, and fetched the carved image, the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image. Then said the priest unto them, What do ye?

Jdg 18:19 And they said unto him, Hold thy peace, lay thine hand upon thy mouth, and go with us, and be to us a father and a priest: is it better for thee to be a priest unto the house of one man, or that thou be a priest unto a tribe and a family in Israel?

Jdg 18:20 And the priest's heart was glad, and he took the ephod, and the teraphim, and the graven image, and went in the midst of the people.

Jacob steals away secretly. While moving quickly and following God's command was good, he seemed fearful of Laban. There is seemingly little or no faith in the way that Jacob departs.

Isa 52:12 For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rereward.

As Christians, we need to go at God's speed. Most of our problems come when we hurry up to make decisions and get ahead of God. God has a steady pace, and it isn't the pace we find ourselves when we worry and haste. Slow and steady will get us to where God intends for us to be.

Gen 31:22 And it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob was fled.

Gen 31:23 And he took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days' journey; and they overtook him in the mount Gilead.

Gen 31:24 And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.

It was three days before Laban found out that Jacob had fled. He now pursues Jacob.

It took him 7 days, but finally Laban overtakes them. Before he ever spoke a word, God warns Laban not to harm Jacob. How many times has God interceded on our behalf and we are unaware.

Psa 37:23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.

Gen 31:25 Then Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mount: and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mount of Gilead.

Gen 31:26 And Laban said to Jacob, What hast thou done, that thou hast stolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters, as captives taken with the sword?

Gen 31:27 Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me; and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth, and with songs, with tabret, and with harp?

Gen 31:28 And hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters? thou hast now done foolishly in so doing.

Gen 31:29 It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt: but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.

Gen 31:30 And now, though thou wouldest needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house, yet wherefore hast thou stolen my gods?

Gen 31:31 And Jacob answered and said to Laban, Because I was afraid: for I said, Peradventure thou wouldest take by force thy daughters from me.

Gen 31:32 With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live: before our brethren discern thou what is thine with me, and take it to thee. For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them.

Gen 31:33 And Laban went into Jacob's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the two maidservants' tents; but he found them not. Then went he out of Leah's tent, and entered into Rachel's tent.

Gen 31:34 Now Rachel had taken the images, and put them in the camel's furniture, and sat upon them. And Laban searched all the tent, but found them not.

Gen 31:35 And she said to her father, Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise up before thee; for the custom of women is upon me. And he searched, but found not the images.

Laban is angry and accuses Jacob of behaving as an enemy. He says they have stolen away unawares and taken his daughters and not even let him kiss his grandchildren good bye. He says that he would have sent them away with honor, but considering what was said at the first of the chapter, this seems doubtful. He acknowledges that he would have harmed Jacob, if it had not been for God's warning. Laban accuses Jacob of stealing his gods. He shows his lack of faith in verse 31 when he acknowledges that he was afraid. Not believing that any of his group had stolen the gods, Jacob pronounces death on the thief. He did not dream that Rachel was the guilty party. Laban searches the tents but his gods were not found. Rachel had hid them in the camel's furniture, and she sat upon them to prevent Laban from examining that place.

Matthew Henry spoke of Jacob's anger in his notes on Genesis 31.

The power of provocation. Jacob's natural temper was mild and calm, and grace had improved it; he was a smooth man, and a plain man; and yet Laban's unreasonable carriage towards him put him into a heat that transported him into a heat that transported him into some vehemence, [Gen 31:36](#), [Gen 31:37](#). His chiding with Laban, though it may admit of some excuse, was not justifiable, nor is it written for our imitation. Grievous words stir up anger, and commonly do but make bad worse. It is a very great affront to one that bears an honest mind to be charged with dishonesty, and yet even this we must learn to bear with patience, committing our cause to God.

Gen 31:36 And Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban: and Jacob answered and said to Laban, What is my trespass? what is my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me?
Gen 31:37 Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both.
Gen 31:38 This twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten.
Gen 31:39 That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night.
Gen 31:40 Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes.
Gen 31:41 Thus have I been twenty years in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages ten times.
Gen 31:42 Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight.

Jacob has an angry reply. He was angered by Laban's threats and for being called a thief. Twenty years of suppressed complaints are uttered. Remember sometimes when people blow up it isn't about just what happened, but it may be suppressed anger over things we had nothing to do with. That happens at work a lot when a small thing turns into a major battle. But we need to keep a calm head about us and do our best to get along with everyone we encounter. Jacob is wise and credits God for his prosperity and protection.

Rom 12:14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.
Rom 12:15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.
Rom 12:16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.
Rom 12:17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.
Rom 12:18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Gen 31:43 And Laban answered and said unto Jacob, These daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and these cattle are my cattle, and all that thou seest is mine: and what can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children which they have born?
Gen 31:44 Now therefore come thou, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee.
Gen 31:45 And Jacob took a stone, and set it up for a pillar.
Gen 31:46 And Jacob said unto his brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones, and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap.
Gen 31:47 And Laban called it Jegarsahadutha: but Jacob called it Galeed.
Gen 31:48 And Laban said, This heap is a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed;
Gen 31:49 And Mizpah; for he said, The LORD watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another.

The men make a covenant between Jacob And Laban. Laban is the one that proposes a covenant. He skillfully avoids answering the charges of Jacob for a very obvious

reason, because the words were true and he had no answer to them. Jacob took a stone and set it up for a pillar and they gathered stones and made a heap. A stone memorial was erected as a witness or testimony.

Laban words the covenant. His manner was somewhat suspicious. His aim seems to have been making Jacob the goat as he says let the heap be a witness between me and thee this day.

Gen 31:50 If thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take other wives beside my daughters, no man is with us; see, God is witness betwixt me and thee.

Gen 31:51 And Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold this pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee;

Gen 31:52 This heap be witness, and this pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm.

Gen 31:53 The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us. And Jacob sware by the fear of his father Isaac.

Gen 31:54 Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount.

Gen 31:55 And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them: and Laban departed, and returned unto his place.

Laban shows love in verse 50 as he is protective of his daughters. Then the truth comes out in verse 52 when he really uncovers his real concern, and that was for his own safety. Jacob offered a sacrifice upon the mount and tarried all night at the mount. Laban rises early and blesses his daughters, granddaughters, and grandsons.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. The sons of Laban accused Jacob of doing what?

Verse one says they said: *Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's; and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory.*

2. What was God's promise to Jacob as he returned to the land?

I will be with thee.

3. How did Jacob's wives feel their father had treated them?

Badly and not given them the inheritance they had due.

4. Explain Jacob's preparation to leave Laban to return to Bethel.

They quickly assemble everything and steal away secretly.

5. What did Rachel take that belonged to her father?

Rachel stole her father's images. These images were seraphim or idols.

6 How many days passed before Laban knew of Jacob's departure?

3 days

7. What warning did God give Laban concerning Jacob and how did it come to Laban?

Gen 31:24 And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.

8. Was Jacob aware of Rachel having her father's images?

No. He threatened to put the person responsible to death if the images were found.

9. Where did Rachel hide the images?

In camel's furniture which she conveniently sat on.

10. How many years did Jacob say he had served Laban?

20 years

11. Explain the covenant that was made between Laban and Jacob.

Gen 31:49 The LORD watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another.

Gen 31:50 If thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take other wives beside my daughters, no man is with us; see, God is witness betwixt me and thee.

Gen 31:51 And Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold this pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee;

Gen 31:52 This heap be witness, and this pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm.

12. Describe Laban's departure from Jacob and his family.

He rose early in the morning and kissed his daughters and sons and bid them farewell.

KJV Bible Studies are prepared and distributed free of charge. The lessons may not be sold without consent. If you have questions or wish to discuss the lessons, or possibly need help in finding Jesus Christ as your Personal Lord and Savior, contact us at the email below.

Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Website: www.KjvBibleStudies.net

Email: mailKjvBibleStudies@gmail.com

Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.