

Jacob—Genesis 31

Jacob Leaves Haran for Canaan

I. Additional Scriptures/Notes...

31:8... RINGSTRAKED or RINGSTREAKED—“עֶקֶם *âqôd aw-kode* ' From H6123; *striped* (with *bands*): - ring straked” [Strong’s].

31:19... RACHEL HAD STOLEN THE IMAGES—“...afterwards called gods, which he made use of in an idolatrous and superstitious manner, one way or other: they seem to be a kind of 'penates,' or household gods; in the Hebrew they are called 'teraphim;' and which De Dieu thinks were the same with 'seraphim;' and were images of angels, consulted on occasion, and placed in the house for the protection of it, and to increase the substance thereof: some take them to be plates of brass describing the hours of the day, a sort of sundials; or were such forms, that at certain times were made to speak, and show things to come: but they rather seem to be images of an human form, as say the Jewish writers, and as seems from [1Sa 19:13](#); and which it is supposed were made under certain constellations, and were a sort of talismans, and were consulted as oracles, and in high esteem with the Chaldeans and Syrians, a people given to astrology, and by which they made their divinations; ... and therefore Rachel took them away, that her father might not consult them, and know which way Jacob fled, as Aben Ezra; but this looks as if she had an opinion of them, and that they had such a power of discovering persons and things that were attributed to them: and indeed some think she took them away from an affection and veneration for them, supposing she should not be able to meet with such in Canaan in Isaac's family; and what is observed in [Gen 35:2](#) seems to countenance this; but one would think she had been better instructed by Jacob during his twenty years' conversation with her; and besides, had she been tinctured with such sort of superstition and idolatry, she would never have used them so indecently, as to have sat upon them in the circumstances in which she was, [Gen 31:34](#); it is more to her credit and character to say with Jarchi, that she did this to take off her father from the idolatrous worship of them, and to convince him that they were no gods; since they could not inform him of the designs of Jacob, and of his flight, nor secure themselves from being carried away by her; unless it can be thought that she took them because of the metal of which they were made, gold or silver, being willing to have something of her father's goods as her portion, which she thought she had a right unto, or in recompense of her husband's service” [*John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*].

31:21... GILEAD—“A mountainous region bounded on the west by the Jordan, on the north by Bashan, on the east by the Arabian plateau, and on the south by Moab and Ammon. [Gen 31:21](#); [Deu 3:12-17](#). It is sometimes called 'Mount Gilead,' [Gen 31:25](#), sometimes 'the land of Gilead,' [Num 32:1](#), and sometimes simply 'Gilead.' [Psa 60:7](#); [Gen 37:25](#).” [*Smith's Bible Dictionary*].

31:49... MIZPAH—“(a watch-tower). The name of several places in Palestine. The earliest of all, in order of the narrative, is the heap of stones, piled up by Jacob and Laban, [Gen 31:48](#), on Mount Gilead, [Gen 31:25](#), to serve both as a witness to the covenant then entered into, and as a landmark of the boundary between them. [Gen 31:52](#)” [*Smith's Bible Dictionary*].

II. Chronology.BIBLE PERIOD: **Patriarchy.****III. Summary.**

We read in this chapter of a change in the attitude that Laban had toward Jacob which was observed by Jacob. He made the observation in the facial expression of Laban. Jacob begins to tell Rachel about the unjust way that Laban had dealt with him and he tells Rachel of how God has blessed him and been with him. Jacob reports to Rachel a dream that he had in which he is told to return to his home. Both Rachel and Leah are agreeable to leaving their home to return with Jacob to his. Quickly the decision is made to leave and Jacob does not inform Laban. Laban finds that someone has stolen his idols. Laban pursues Jacob seven days and they meet at mount Gilead. Laban is warned in a dream by night not to speak evil of Jacob (see point # under "Lessons and Applications," below). When the confrontation takes place, one of the things Laban seems most interested in is recovering the idols which Rachel has stolen. Jacob is unaware that Rachel had taken them and he allows Laban to conduct a search. Jacob became upset at Laban's charge that he had stolen the idols and he has a few words for Laban to consider about the dishonorable way he had been treated by Laban. A covenant is made and boundaries are set, Jacob offers a sacrifice, and Laban departs.

IV. Outline.

1. Jacob stole away unawares from Laban (Gen 31:1-21).
2. When Laban finds his idols missing, he chases after Jacob (31:22-35).
3. Jacob and Laban make a covenant together (31:36-53).
4. Jacob offers a sacrifice unto the Lord (31:54).
5. Laban returns home (31:55).

V. Questions.**True or False**

01. _____ Jacob's God is the God of Bethel.
02. _____ Laban accused Jacob of changing his wages ten times.
03. _____ Laban told Jacob he had the power to do him hurt.
04. _____ Rachel and Leah tried to talk Jacob into staying in Haran.
05. _____ Laban found his missing images in Rachel's tent.

Multiple Choice (Select the BEST Answer)

06. _____ When Jacob left Haran, he was headed toward: (a) Ur; (b) the Black Sea; (c) Mount Gilead.
07. _____ The amount of time Jacob spent serving Laban was: (a) twenty years; (b) fourteen years; (c) it is not revealed.
08. _____ Jacob observed that this had changed: (a) the weather; (b) the beauty of Rachel; (c) the countenance of Laban.
09. _____ When Jacob decided to leave, he had this much of a head start on Laban: (a) three days; (b) seven days; (c) a fortnight.
10. _____ Was Jacob angry with that Laban pursued him: (a) YES; (b) NO.

Fill in the Blanks

11. "With whomsoever thou _____ thy gods, let him not _____."
12. "Then Jacob offered _____ upon the mount, and called his _____ to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and _____ all night in the mount."

13. “Thus God hath _____ the cattle of your father, and _____ them to me.”
14. “And God came to _____ the _____ in a dream by _____...”
15. Had it not been for God appearing to Laban, according to Jacob, Laban would have sent him away _____.

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be found on next week's handout

ANSWERS to Genesis 30 Questions... [01—True, Gen 30:43; 02—False, Gen 30:4-6; 03—False, Gen 30:30; 04—True, Gen 30:20-21; 05—True, Gen 30:22; 06—b, Gen 30:10; 07—a, Gen 30:33; 08--b, Gen 30:24; 09—b, Gen 30:27; 10—c, Gen 30:19; 11—Naphtali, Gen 30:7-8; 12—would, according, Gen 30:34; 13—served, go, knowest, Gen 30:26; 14—appoint, wages, Gen 30:28; 15—anger, kindled, Gen 30:2.]

VI. Lessons & Applications.

1. **And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah...** (Gen 31:3, + 16). This move on the part of Jacob was wise. Jacob has received his instructions from the Lord. He now seeks to explain to his wives the reason why it is now time to leave for Canaan's land. His course of action is already determined since it was the Lord's will, but he would like for Rachel and Leah to know about the move and the reason for it. It is such a wonderful response that these two women give to the facts presented by Jacob. They tell Jacob, “Whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do” (v. 16). Today, God speaks to us through the written word. No one can ever go wrong by following this advice from Rachel and Leah!!!
2. **And ye know that with all my power I have served your father** (Gen 31:6). This is a mark of character in Jacob. Not only was he aware that he had worked honorably for Laban, he also knew that it was easily observable by others that he had done so. In the discussion in Ephesians 6:5-9 regarding servants and masters and how they are to regard one another we see that which Jacob did in serving Laban with all his power is that which is recommended in that situation. If we are to apply these instructions from Ephesians to our own lives, it would be applied in the employee/employer relationship. We ought to put forth our very best efforts.
3. **...take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good nor bad** (31:24). This literal statement would mean no speaking at all. Clarke comments: “God's caution to Laban was of high importance to Jacob - Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad; or rather, as is the literal meaning of the Hebrew, משוב עד רע mittob ad ra, from good to evil; for had he neither spoken good nor evil to Jacob, they could have had no intercourse at all. The original is, therefore, peculiarly appropriate; for when people meet, the language at first is the language of friendship; the command therefore implies, 'Do not begin with Peace be unto thee, and then proceed to injurious language and acts of violence.'” If this is indeed the meaning of the Hebrew expression it is very similar to the warning of James 3:9-12. We must be consistent in the way we use our tongues. It is inconsistent to begin with words of praise and then continue in such a way that is tearing down the person we must praised. We need to give heed to the warning the Lord gave Laban and the warning James presents to us.

VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle.

Q A Z W X S W E D C J V F R T G B N H Y
 T U R F H V B G D T Y A H N M J U I H O
 X W S W E A D C V R B G C T Y H N T M F
 B G E W Q A T X F R O S T O C D O E T O
 R F V N B G T I Y U I U F V B R C D E U
 V R F I T U Y T S R E Q G A W Z X D C R
 J V B G T Y Y H N M M J U H Y T E W V T
 V U C D E R Y F V B Y G T Y T G N A C E
 V F D R T G B E V F R S S Q N A F G Z E
 X S S G E C F T A B G R I A T F E E X N
 Z A D E E Q W S X R E C H N U V F S R T
 X T E B A E W Q A T S C X T C V B T N M
 I L U K J R H G H F D S S Z A Q E W E D
 S C S V F R C G T G B Y N H Y N R F W N
 E C R C D E U H R F M B G T T U Q X A V
 L C U F R A T G E L B N H I F Y U B N B
 T V P F D C D E L D V F M R F H A Y H R
 T X S O E D C A V T Y E E D U L C V F T
 A C W V F R T G B N S M J U T R F W Q A
 C T X C F H O U S E H O L D S N Q D R L

[The highlighted words can be found above. They may be backwards, diagonal, upside down, etc. See if you can find them all. The more you use the words of the Bible, the greater blessed you will be! You might be surprised at how much this little exercise will help you retain important truths. THANK YOU for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. DRL]

Genesis 31:36-41... ³⁶And **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? ³⁷Whereas 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. ³⁸This **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. ³⁹That 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. ⁴⁰Thus I was; in the day the **drought** consumed me, and the **frost** by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes. ⁴¹Thus 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**.