



Genesis – 31:1-55
Time to Go Home
(Lesson #40)

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Outline for this week:

- The circumstances change (31:1-3)
- Jacob summons Rachel and Leah (31:4)
- Jacob confers with Rachel and Leah (31:5-13)
- Rachel and Leah respond to Jacob’s plan (31:14-16)
- Jacob Flees Haran back to the Promised Land (31:17-21)
- Laban confronts and accuses Jacob (31:25-35)
- Jacob chides and confronts Laban (31:36-42)
- Laban requests a covenant with Jacob (31:43-45)
- Laban and Jacob enter in a non-aggression covenant (31:45-54)
- Laban blesses his daughters and grandchildren and Jacob begins the trip home (31:55)

Jacob’s Timeline:

Event	Jacob’s Age	Genesis
Jacob’s grandfather Abraham dies	15	25:7
Jacob sent to Laban in Haran	77	28:5
Jacob marries Leah and Rachel	84	29:21-30
Jacob fathers Joseph with Rachel	91	30:22-24
Jacob flees from Laban to Canaan	97	Ch. 31
Jacob’s son Joseph is sold into slavery	108	37:12-36
Jacob’s father Isaac dies	120	35:28-29
Jacob reunites with Joseph and moves his family to Egypt	130	47:28
Jacob dies	147	47:28

31:1 Now Jacob heard that the sons of Laban were saying, "Jacob has taken all that was our father’s, and from what was our father’s he has gained all this wealth." **2** And Jacob saw that Laban did not regard him with favor as before. **3** Then the LORD said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your kindred, and I will be with you."

Vs 1 - When Laban entered into this contract with Jacob it looked extremely lucrative for Laban and no doubt his sons were super-excited, but as it has played out Jacob’s flocks were growing and flourishing.

God is blessing Jacob and everything the goats and the sheep bring forth belongs to Jacob, meanwhile Laban’s flock is getting smaller and smaller, and weaker and weaker. Laban’s sons began to say that: "**Jacob has taken all that was our father’s, and from what was our father’s he has gained all this wealth.**"

Now this is **absolutely untrue**. Jacob has done nothing against Laban and in fact Jacob has been faithful to their original agreement. Remember what Laban did after he made the agreement with Jacob:

“35 But that day Laban removed the male goats that were striped and spotted, and all the female goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had white on it, and every lamb that was black, and put them in the charge of his sons. 36 And he set a distance of three days’ journey between himself and Jacob, and Jacob pastured the rest of Laban’s flock.” (Ge 30:35-36 ESV)

What had actually happened was God **had blessed Laban because of Jacob**, and now **God is blessing Jacob!** Laban’s sons are claiming **deceit** on Jacob’s part, **which is UNTRUE**.

Vs 2 - Laban too, is beginning to look at **Jacob differently**. We might suspect it that Laban is now looking at Jacob with **envy and jealousy**. So Laban's feelings towards Jacob have changed.

APPLICATION: People's attitudes towards us can change. But we should respond with grace:

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. 16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. 17 Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. (Rom 12:14-18, ESV).

But because of sin. People's attitude can change towards us. That can be discouraging. But never forget: 6 "For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed (Mal 3:6, ESV).

People's **opinion of you may change**. Good news, God's opinion of you never changes. If you are his Son through faith in Jesus, his opinion of you will never change.

Laban had always had the upper hand over Jacob, but now God has shifted the table and **Jacob is being blessed directly** and Laban was no longer being blessed by God. It appears that God is now paying Jacob, from Laban's pocket, for the **20 years of labor that Jacob had provided**.

Vs 3 - I suspect, as Jacob watches the hostility growing, he is beginning to wonder what he should do next. Before he can come to any decision. **The Lord says to Jacob!**

Twenty years ago, Yahweh appeared to Jacob. Here once again, Yahweh speaks to Jacob. This is actually the third appearance, we had no knowledge about the second appearance, we will learn about it in a moment.

Here, Yahweh speaks to Jacob, Yahweh inserts Himself into Jacob's life a third time. This time after 20 years in Haran. We do not know exactly how God spoke during this particular event, but God spoke and Jacob clearly understood.

APPLICATION: I know sometimes we wish God would speak to us like this. I would just remind us that we have the completed revelation from God. We have everything he desires to say to man. We have everything we need to know as it pertains to life and godliness.

We do not know exactly how the Lord spoke to Jacob, but the message was crystal clear to Jacob: **Return to land of your fathers**.

This is interesting because when this started with Abraham and Isaac, the land of your fathers was Haran, now the land of your fathers is Canaan, the land of Jacob's fathers is no longer Haran, but Canan.

Then we read the promise: **I will be with you**. Leave and go to Canaan and you can be sure that I will be with you.

This was precisely one of the things that Yahweh had said to Jacob in Luz (Bethel):

13 And behold, the LORD stood above it and said, "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring. 14 Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 15 Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." (Gen 28:13-15, ESV).

APPLICATION: That is an amazing promise. But that same God has made that same promise to you and I!

5 Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." (Heb 13:3, ESV).

4 So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah into the field where his flock was 5 and said to them, "I see that your father does not regard me with favor as he did before. But the God of my father has been with me. 6 You know that I have served your father with all my strength, 7 yet your father has cheated me and changed my wages ten times. But God did not permit him to harm me. 8 If he said, 'The spotted shall be your wages,' then all the flock bore spotted; and if he said, 'The striped shall be your wages,' then all the flock bore striped.

Vs 4-5 - God having spoken clearly to Jacob, God having clearly commanded Jacob to go, Jacob heads home and as he gets close he sends and calls for **Rachel and Leah**.

Likely seeking privacy, Jacob calls Rachel and Leah into the field where his flock was. It seems his desire is for them to be able to **talk alone**.

He says to them, **things are changing here**. Your father does not **regard me as he previously did**. I sense, something has changed in how he feels about me. He has become hostile towards me. I suspect he likely told them what **Laban's sons were saying**. **But the God of my fathers has been with me!**

Vs 6-7- He reminds Rachel and Leah of his faithfulness in serving their father. Notice he says I have served your dad Laban **with all my strength**.

APPLICATION: Do we labor for our secular boss with all our heart? If not, why not. I would remind us:
23 Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, (Col 3:23, ESV).

Again, it has not yet been fully explained, but Jacob has served Laban for **20 years**, we will see that clearly in a moment.

We do not know the details of this, they are not part of the running narrative, but it seems over this **20 year period**, and likely the bulk of it being these **last 6 years**, Laban has been **constantly cheating** Jacob and kept **changing the agreement**, changing Jacob's wages.

Now, we do not fully understand what Laban was doing, but it was to the disadvantage of Jacob. The key point: **But God did not permit him to harm me**. Jacob's point seems to be, he likely would have hurt me already, but God did not allow him to do that.

APPLICATION: God is our protector, God is the one who watches over us, and God has ensured Jacob's protection, in particular in the last six years as Jacob has grown massively wealthy!

Did you know that whatever comes to you, comes filtered through the hand of a God who loves you with all his heart?

Vs 8 - Jacob provides more insight into what Laban had been doing. If the agreement was for those born spotted, then the flock started bearing spotted. If the agreement was for striped, then the flock bore striped. So Laban has been scheming and cheating Jacob, and this sets us up for what we read next!

9 Thus God has taken away the livestock of your father and given them to me. 10 In the breeding season of the flock I lifted up my eyes and saw in a dream that the goats that mated with the flock were striped, spotted, and mottled. 11 Then the angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob,' and I said, 'Here I am!'

12 And he said, 'Lift up your eyes and see, all the goats that mate with the flock are striped, spotted, and mottled, for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you.

Vs 9 - God had over the last six years, taken away the livestock from your father and given them to me. It is important for us to understand that whatever we make of the peeling of the wood last week, Jacob saw what was happening, in what the animals were bearing, was not based on his cleverness, but instead based on God!

God had (as we have seen him do over and over) stepped in and leaned into the injustice that was occurring. Laban may have thought that he could **defraud Jacob**, but God was going to ensure that **Jacob was paid for his labor!**

Vs 10 - Jacob shares a story with his wives, they had likely not heard about that explains why Jacob believes that all that has happened was the work of Yahweh.

It was during the breeding season, it appears that Jacob was asleep, and he lifted up his eyes and saw in a dream that the goats that were mating with the flock were stripped, spotted, and speckled.

But this was not what was happening. The goats that were mating were all solid colored for Laban had stolen away from the flock all those that were striped, spotted, and speckled.

In this dream it seems God is saying, the goats may be solid colored on the outside, but I will ensure they are really spotted and speckled, ringed and streaked. **I (Yahweh) will override the natural outcome!**

Vs 11-12 - In this dream, the Angel of God spoke to Jacob. Now we have seen this before, this is no ordinary angel, this is a **Christophany** or a **Theophany**. This is a **preincarnate appearance of Jesus Christ**.

We are not told exactly when this happened, but we imagine it happened around the start of this **six year period**. If true it had been 14 years since the encounter at Bethel. Here 14 years later **God** once again **appears to Jacob** in a dream. This would have been the **second recorded** encounter **between Yahweh and Jacob**.

This is no ordinary angel, this as we will see is God Himself. Here the Angel of God, calls and Jacob responds here I am.

Do you want to get God's attention? Be on either side of injustice and you are definitely coming into the crosshairs of our sovereign Father.

Now notice, Jacob does not claim that it is through his ingenuity or his cleverness that he has become rich, rather it is because of God. **He gives God all the glory for the complete change in his circumstances!**

13 I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and made a vow to me. Now arise, go out from this land and return to the land of your kindred.'" 14 Then Rachel and Leah answered and said to him, "Is there any portion or inheritance left to us in our father's house? 15 Are we not regarded by him as foreigners? For he has sold us, and he has indeed devoured our money. 16 All the wealth that God has taken away from our father belongs to us and to our children. Now then, whatever God has said to you, do."

Vs 13 - Next this **angel of the Lord** further identifies himself. This **angel** is the **God of Bethel**. You remember the God who stood above the staircase that went to heaven (Gen 28:13-15).

God goes on to remind Jacob that it was there in Bethel, the Jacob "anointed a pillar" and "made a vow" to Yahweh (Gen 28:18-22).

Here is the command, from the God of Bethel: *Now arise, go out from this land and return to the land of your kindred.*

Notice the land of Jacob's kindred is the Promised Land, it is the land of Canaan.

Vs 14-16 - Rachel and Leah are in **complete agreement** with Jacob and notice their charges against their dad (Laban). Two rhetorical questions with the obvious answer built right into each question, followed by three points of truth, and lastly a recommendation.

- 1) Is there any portion or inheritance left for us in our father's house?
- 2) Are we not regarded as foreigners in our own home?
 - He sold us like property
 - He devoured the money he received for us.
 - a. Laban has received 14 years wages from Jacob, a massive sum, Rachel and Leah had received none of that!
 - The wealth that God took from our father rightly belongs to us and our children.
 - b. This may be the only time these ladies have agreed on anything in the last 13 years.
- Do what God is telling you to do!

Laban has been cheating Jacob, but following the customs of the day he has also been cheating his daughters.

Laban appears to be a man driven by a deep desire to possess the things of the world. As I told you some weeks back when we first ran into Laban, he will prove to be a lot like Lot.

One other point, it seems that Jacob has been faithful to Laban, has worked tirelessly for Laban, and these two ladies know it.

17 So Jacob arose and set his sons and his wives on camels. 18 He drove away all his livestock, all his property that he had gained, the livestock in his possession that he had acquired in Paddan-aram, to go to the land of Canaan to his father Isaac. 19 Laban had gone to shear his sheep, and Rachel stole her father's household gods. 20 And Jacob tricked Laban the Aramean, by not telling him that he intended to flee. 21 He fled with all that he had and arose and crossed the Euphrates, and set his face toward the hill country of Gilead.

Vs 17-18 - So Jacob loads up his camels and donkeys, he brings together his massive flocks of various animals. He places his wives, handmaids, and children on donkeys. He is leaving Haran as a massive caravan. By way of reminder, it has been **20 years since he has been home.**

Now **before we leave these verses**, I want you to consider two pictures:

- 1) How Jacob arrived in Haran.
- 2) How Jacob is leaving Haran.

There could not be **two drastically different pictures than these two!**

Vs 19 - Jacob picked this time to leave because Laban was away from home and was out shearing his sheep.

Then we have an additional piece of information. Namely that Rachel, stole her father's household gods. So last week we saw that Laban practiced divination, this week we see that he has household gods.

The Hebrew word translated "household gods" is **תְּרַפִּיִּים (t'raphiym)**. It is generally used to describe a small image or small idol that was kept in a person's home.

Vs 20-21 - Jacob **tricked** Laban. Two Hebrew words are used here: first גָּנַב (**ganab**), it means to steal away or to carry away. The second is לֵב (**leb**), which is used over 500 times and means the **heart**.

In the Hebrew what it says here is that **Jacob stole away the heart of Laban**. He took Laban's **daughters and grandchildren** without telling Laban that **he intended to leave**.

While Laban was out sheering his sheep, Jacob stole Laban's heart he grabbed his family and he arose and **crossed the Euphrates** and headed for the **hill country of Gilead**.

22 When it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob had fled, 23 he took his kinsmen with him and pursued him for seven days and followed close after him into the hill country of Gilead. 24 But God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream by night and said to him, "Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad."

Vs 22-23 - A few days pass before Laban finally learns that Jacob has loaded up his whole household and is headed back to Canaan. Although Jacob has a three-day head start, Jacob has young children and a massive flock of goats and lambs, so it is only a matter of time before Laban catches him.

Now why did it take three days for Laban to learn about Jacob, we cannot be sure, but I would remind us what Laban did, we read about it last week (Gen 30:35-36).

Laban takes out after Jacob and his extended family, and he pursued them for seven days.

Vs 24 - But God... God showed up to Laban in a dream and told him in a way that was clear and could not be confused: *"Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad."*

25 And Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country, and Laban with his kinsmen pitched tents in the hill country of Gilead. 26 And Laban said to Jacob, "What have you done, that you have tricked me and driven away my daughters like captives of the sword? 27 Why did you flee secretly and trick me, and did not tell me, so that I might have sent you away with mirth and songs, with tambourine and lyre? 28 And why did you not permit me to kiss my sons and my daughters farewell? Now you have done foolishly."

Vs 25 - So Laban caught up with Jacob in the **hill country of Gilead**. There Jacob had pitched his tent and there Laban pitched his tents.

You can imagine Laban had an entourage. Jacob pitched his tent while Laban pitched his tents. Imagine being Jacob. Laban has caught up with you and he is now approaching your tent on foot.

Vs 26 - You see the question, what have you done in that you גָּנַב (**ganab**) לֵב (**lebab**). Again ESV translates these two Hebrew words which literally mean "stole away" and "heart" as "tricked."

Vs 27-28 - *Why did you flee secretly, why did you (ganab) (gaw-nab')* steel away from me?

I would have sent you away with mirth and songs, with tambourine and lyre. Laban is saying I would have made a grand party of sending you away. Why did you slither off?

Why did you not permit me to kiss my grandsons and daughters farewell. You have **acted foolishly!**

29 It is in my power to do you harm. But the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, 'Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad.' 30 And now you have gone away because you longed greatly for your father's house, but why did you steal my gods?" 31 Jacob answered and said to Laban, "Because I was afraid, for I thought that you would take your daughters from me by force. 32 Anyone with whom you find your gods shall not live. In the presence of our kinsmen point out what I have that is yours, and take it." Now Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them.

Vs 29 - That was forthright. Laban is totally up-front with Jacob. I kinda sense, this idea that I would clean you plow, but God appeared to me and told me to proceed with great caution!

It seems that Laban fully intended to hurt Jacob and take everything back to Haran. Were it not for Yahweh!

But the God of your Father. This is very interesting for it seems Laban understood that Yahweh was Isaac's God. Notice God was very clear with Laban: **"Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad."**

This is the second pagan king where God is stepped into a dream and provided a clear warning. You remember the last was Abimelech in (Gen 20:3).

Vs 30 - So you left because you longed to go back home. But why did you steal my household gods.

Again, the Hebrew word here is **תרפים (t'raphiym)**. These were like household gods little statues that many believed blessed the home. These were common in middle-eastern culture during Abraham's time.

NEWS FLASH: If your God can be stolen, then He is no god at all. This is true for you and me as well and moves a number of things into the broad category of "not a god at all."

Vs 31 - First Jacob answers why he slipped off, he explains why he left without announcing his plans. Jacob is honest. I was "afraid." We have talked about this a number of times, **fear** is the **antithesis of faith**.

Fear will cause us to shrink back, fear will cause us to run, fear will hinder us from advancing in our faith. I was afraid you would take my daughters and we can imagine their children by force.

Vs 32 - The Jacob boldly declares that the person with whom you find your gods shall not live.

Clearly Jacob had no idea that Rachel had took Laban's **תרפים (t'raphiym)** or he would have never announced her death sentence.

Further, he seems to be saying go through our goods and if anything is yours you can take it. Then Moses tells us plainly: **Now Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them.**

33 So Laban went into Jacob's tent and into Leah's tent and into the tent of the two female servants, but he did not find them. And he went out of Leah's tent and entered Rachel's. 34 Now Rachel had taken the household gods and put them in the camel's saddle and sat on them. Laban felt all about the tent, but did not find them. 35 And she said to her father, "Let not my lord be angry that I cannot rise before you, for the way of women is upon me." So he searched but did not find the household gods.

Vs 33 - Laban begins going through Jacob's tent. Then he goes the tents of the women. This is comical were it not so tragic. Laban searching for his gods.

Vs 34-35 - Rachel is the one who had taken Laban's gods, she had put them in her camel's saddle and sat on them. She recognized that Jacob's declaration has put her in dire jeopardy.

So here, as Laban searches Rachel's tent, she is sitting on the saddle that contains his Gods. Laban is feeling all around the tent, but he did not find them.

As Laban is searching Rachel tent, she said to her father: *"Let not my lord be angry that I cannot rise before you, for the way of women is upon me."* The obvious point is I cannot stand up and properly acknowledge your presence, please forgive me.

36 Then Jacob became angry and berated Laban. Jacob said to Laban, "What is my offense? What is my sin, that you have hotly pursued me? 37 For you have felt through all my goods; what have you found of all your household goods? Set it here before my kinsmen and your kinsmen, that they may decide between us two. 38 These twenty years I have been with you. Your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried, and I have not eaten the rams of your flocks. 39 What was torn by wild beasts I did not bring to you. I bore the loss of it myself. From my hand you required it, whether stolen by day or stolen by night."

Vs 36-37 - Jacob, again with no idea what Rachel has done begins to berate his father-in-law. What is my sin? For what reasons have you hotly pursued me?

You have felt through everything we own, set now, in front of all to see what you have found among my goods that belongs to you. **Ohhhh the mercy of God.** Imagine how this conversation would be going if Laban would have found his gods in Rachel's tent!

Now we are about to learn some additional details about Jacob's time with Laban...

Vs 38-39 - Here we get the total time that Jacob was with Laban. These **20 years** I have been with you...

- Seven for, as it played out, for Leah.
- Then another seven, for Rachel.
- Then these six others that were not numbered until just now. This period started when Jacob first went to Laban, following the birth of Joseph and said send me home.

During this 20 years Jacob says:

- 1) Your female lambs and goats have not miscarried.
- 2) I did not eat the rams of your flock.
- 3) What wild beasts killed, I did not bring to you, but I bore the loss of it. We do not know exactly what Jacob did when a sheep or a goat was killed by a wild animal, but it is clear, he covered the cost of it.
- 4) He goes on: From my hand you required it, whether stolen by day or stolen by night.

You know how I cared for **YOUR flocks!**

40 There I was: by day the heat consumed me, and the cold by night, and my sleep fled from my eyes. 41 These twenty years I have been in your house. I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times. 42 If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had not been on my side, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God saw my affliction and the labor of my hands and rebuked you last night."

Vs 40 -I labored hard for you and in difficult situations and you know it!

Vs 41 - Here is Jacob's summation and it matches what we have already determined:

- I have been here in Haran, in your home for a total of 20 years.
- I served 14 years to pay the bride's price for your two daughters
- I served six years for your flock.
- During this time you have changed my wages 10 times.

Now Jacob had told Rachel and Leah that, but now he is saying it to the face of the man that did it.

Vs 42 - Jacob goes on. If God had not been on my side you would have sent me away with nothing.

In spite of all the good I have done you, you would have sent me away empty-handed, you would have sent me home with NOTHING! That is how you would have repaid all the hard labor I offered you!

Then Jacob says this: *God saw my affliction and the labor of my hands and rebuked you last night.*

The God who sees everything, saw my affliction, he saw the labor of my hands. Last night he rebuked you.

APPLICATION: Our God sees our affliction, our God sees when we are mistreated, mishandled, and even misunderstood. If we leave it with God, He will step in at the appropriate time, on His timetable and He will defend us. The problem many times, we are unwilling to wait on God.

43 ¶ Then Laban answered and said to Jacob, "The daughters are my daughters, the children are my children, the flocks are my flocks, and all that you see is mine. But what can I do this day for these my daughters or for their children whom they have borne? 44 Come now, let us make a covenant, you and I. And let it be a witness between you and me." 45 So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar. 46 And Jacob said to his kinsmen, "Gather stones." And they took stones and made a heap, and they ate there by the heap.

Vs 43 - Laban says this is all mine, everything we see here. This is all bloviating, actually none of it is his!

But what can I do for them. He could have done anything he wanted in the positive. God is preventing him from doing anything in the negative!

Vs 44-45 - Laban asks Jacob to enter into a covenant with him. **Jacob took a stone and set up a pillar.**

This should **seem familiar** to us for this is very similar if not identical to what Jacob did in Beersheba (Gen 28:18-20a):

Here, Jacob appears to do about the same thing, but then we read. He brings his “**kinsmen**” into the equation and they too are to bring stones and together they create a great heap of stones.

It seems that these are his sons. He commands his sons to gather stones and create a heap. This means that his sons are now entering into the covenant and whatever the content.

The Hebrew word for heap is גַּל (**gal**). They made a (**gal**) and they ate there at the **gal**, the heap. OK, tuck that away for one second.

47 Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed. 48 Laban said, "This heap is a witness between you and me today." Therefore he named it Galeed, 49 and Mizpah, for he said, "The LORD watch between you and me, when we are out of one another's sight. 50 If you oppress my daughters, or if

you take wives besides my daughters, although no one is with us, see, God is witness between you and me."

Vs 47 - Laban called the heap Jegar-sahadutha. This is **Aramaic** and it means **"the heap of witness."** Jacob on the other hand called it **Galeed**, which interestingly enough, in Hebrew means **"the heap of witness."**

So the Hebrew word for heap is **גל (gal)**. The Hebrew word for witness is **עד ('ed)**. Thus **Galeed**.

Vs 48-49 - Here we are told that Laban speaks and he says: This heap will stand as a witness between you and me, and he calls it now **"Galeed"** and **"Mizpah"** which means **watchtower**.

Laban says this is a witness heap and a watchtower between you and me, that **"The LORD watch between you and me, when we are out of one another's sight..."**

Vs 50 - If you oppress my daughters or take any additional wives besides my daughters, God is witness and God will judge between you and me.

This seems funny coming from the lips of a guy who chased them down and then spent the day searching through their goods to find his gods. But that is what Laban says.

51 Then Laban said to Jacob, "See this heap and the pillar, which I have set between you and me. 52 This heap is a witness, and the pillar is a witness, that I will not pass over this heap to you, and you will not pass over this heap and this pillar to me, to do harm. 53 The God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us." So Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac, 54 and Jacob offered a sacrifice in the hill country and called his kinsmen to eat bread. They ate bread and spent the night in the hill country. 55 Early in the morning Laban arose and kissed his grandchildren and his daughters and blessed them. Then Laban departed and returned home."

Vs 51-52 - Laban continues to speak, this heap, this pillar, this pile of stones is a witness that I will not pass this heap to come south to do you harm, and you abiding in the south will not pass north of the heap with the plan to **come and do me harm**. This is a covenant of non-aggression towards one another.

Vs 53 - Here Laban seems to be generally invoking the name of Abraham's God and as well Nahor's God. Interesting...

Now this is the second time we have heard this phrase, many believe this is yet another name of God, **the fear of Isaac!**

So Jacob swears and enters into a covenant with Laban, a non-aggression pact, a peace treaty if you will.

Vs 54-55 - **Jacob here offers a sacrifice**. This is the first use of this Hebrew word **זָבַח (zebach)** in the Bible. We have seen other patriarchs make offerings, but this is the first use of the word for sacrifice. They broke bread together, there in the hill country, and they spent the night together.

Early the next morning Laban kissed his daughters and grandchildren goodbye and then blessed them, and departed for Haran.

It is worth noting that the extended family in Paddan-Aram disappear from the Biblical record.

That brings us to the end of chapter 31, the problems with Laban have been resolved and they break company in a positive way. **But what about Esau? That is coming!**