

Genesis: God and the Originals

FLEEING LABAN

Jacob Flees (31:1-21)

Vv. 1-3

1. What are the three reasons we are given for why Jacob finally decides to leave Laban and Paddan Aram?
2. What does God promise Jacob at the end of v. 3
3. Why does Laban agree to the deal according to verse 19? And how does Jacob feel about the deal according to verse 20?

Vv. 4-13

4. Who does Jacob have to convince first before he decides to flee?
5. We learn another way in which Laban has “cheated” Jacob in v. 7. What is it?
6. To whom does Jacob attribute his success over Laban in v. 7, 9, 11, 13?
7. In v. 13, how does God identify who God is? How is this a critical reminder to Jacob, especially so far away from home?

BONUS: Does anyone remember Jacob's vow to God at Bethel (v. 13)?

Vv. 14-21

8. Holy cow! What is so odd (considering the last chapter) about how Rachel and Leah respond? But why does it make sense, according to them?
9. Rachel joins in Jacob's deceit in v. 19. What does she do? Why do you think she would do such a thing; what are household gods anyway?

Laban and Jacob Confront Each Other (31:22-42)

Vv. 22-25

10. How does God intervene miraculously on Jacob's behalf in v. 24? Has this happened before?

Vv. 26-32

11. Do you think Laban is being serious in vv. 26-30, or is he just being deceitful? Defend both positions.
12. The gods take center stage in vv. 30-32. How is Jacob's excuse in v. 31 kind of a "copout," and how does he unwittingly condemn Rachel?

Vv. 33-37

13. Nothing really comes of the "gods" issue, so why are these passages in the Bible? Consider how they reflect on Rachel, Laban, and Jacob.

Vv. 38-42

14. Jacob gets the last say in his confrontation with Laban. Same question as in #11 - is Jacob being serious, or do you think he is manipulating the facts?
15. How is God described in v. 42 with regard to Isaac? Ultimately, what is the reasoning Isaac gives for God sparing him from Laban's wrath?

The Pact Between Jacob and Laban (31:43-55)

16. Laban comes to his senses and offers a covenant agreement with Jacob in these verses. What are Laban's primary concerns?

BONUS: After reading through this entire chapter, what's the point of it? Why do you think this story of "flight" is recorded when nothing really happens?