

## Genesis 31:1-21 **Departure from Laban in Syria**

<sup>1</sup> Now Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, "Jacob has taken away all that was our father's, and from what was our father's he has acquired all this wealth." <sup>2</sup> And Jacob saw the countenance of Laban, and indeed it was not favorable toward him as before.

<sup>3</sup> Then the LORD said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your family, and I will be with you."

<sup>4</sup> So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field, to his flock, <sup>5</sup> and said to them, "I see your father's countenance, that it is not favorable toward me as before; but the God of my father has been with me. <sup>6</sup> And you know that with all my might I have served your father. <sup>7</sup> Yet your father has deceived me and changed my wages ten times, but God did not allow him to hurt me. <sup>8</sup> If he said thus: 'The speckled shall be your wages,' then all the flocks bore speckled. And if he said thus: 'The streaked shall be your wages,' then all the flocks bore streaked. <sup>9</sup> So God has taken away the livestock of your father and given them to me. <sup>10</sup> And it happened, at the time when the flocks conceived, that I lifted my eyes and saw in a dream, and behold, the rams which leaped upon the flocks were streaked, speckled, and gray-spotted.

<sup>11</sup> Then the Angel of God spoke to me in a dream, saying, 'Jacob.' And I said, 'Here I am.' <sup>12</sup> "And He said, 'Lift your eyes now and see, all the rams which leap on the flocks are streaked, speckled, and gray-spotted; for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you. <sup>13</sup> I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed the pillar and where you made a vow to Me. Now arise, get out of this land, and return to the land of your family.' "

<sup>14</sup> Then Rachel and Leah answered and said to him, "Is there still any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house? <sup>15</sup> Are we not considered strangers by him? For he has sold us, and also completely consumed our money. <sup>16</sup> For all these riches which God has taken from our father are really ours and our children's; now then, whatever God has said to you, do it."

<sup>17</sup> Then Jacob rose and set his sons and his wives on camels. <sup>18</sup> And he carried away all his livestock and all his possessions which he had gained, his acquired livestock which he had gained in Padan Aram, to go to his father Isaac in the land of Canaan.

<sup>19</sup> Now Laban had gone to shear his sheep, and Rachel had stolen the household idols that were her father's. <sup>20</sup> And Jacob stole away, unknown to Laban the Syrian, in that he did not tell him that he intended to flee. <sup>21</sup> So he fled with all that he had. He arose and crossed the river, and headed toward the mountains of Gilead. NKJV

Facts revealed:

- ✧ Jacob heard that Laban's sons accused him of taking away all the wealth of their father Laban though he had done nothing dishonest.
- ✧ Jacob saw that Laban no longer favored him as he had when he made the agreement for Jacob to continue in his service, since the wealth had been transferred to Jacob by God Himself in changing the coloring of the animals in Jacob's keeping.
- ✧ Yehowah spoke to Jacob and instructed him to return to his father's land with the promise that He would be with Jacob.
- ✧ Jacob called his wives Rachel and Leah to the field where he was and told them that Laban no longer favored him but that "Elohey aabiy (the God of my father) has been with me."  
Here Jacob is acknowledging that it was not by his hand the color of the animals was changed but rather it was done by the hand of God Himself.
- ✧ Here we learn that Jacob had done all he could to serve Laban faithfully and that Laban had changed the terms of the agreement ten times as he saw the wealth being transferred to Jacob.

- ✧ We also learn that Elohiym changed the result as Laban changed the terms of the agreement and did not allow Laban's greed to hurt Jacob whom God had promised to be with and that He would keep Jacob wherever he should go and would bring him back to the promised land. [\[Genesis 28:15\]](#)
- ✧ Jacob told them that Malak Elohiym (the Angel of God) had spoken to Jacob in a dream and identified Himself as ha-El Beit-El (God of Bethel or God of the house of God), and had instructed him to return to Bethel "where you made a vow to me," "to the land of your kindred."
- ✧ Leah and Rachel agreed because they saw that their father had sold them for Jacob's service and that they now felt like strangers to their father as his attitude had turned cold toward Jacob.
  - They also acknowledged that they would have no inheritance from Laban because Laban had consumed their money.
  - They also acknowledged that it was the hand of Elohiym that had transferred the wealth to Jacob and that the wealth really belonged to them and their children.
  - In her desire to have some inheritance from her father Rachel had stolen her father's household idols.
  - So here we learn that God had a good reason to bless Jacob instead of Laban, because Laban was an idolater, while Jacob walked with God and acknowledged God's help.
- ✧ Jacob gathered together all his family and his possessions he had acquired in Padan Aram and departed to go to his father Isaac in the Land of Canaan with his wives and children riding on camels.
- ✧ Jacob departed secretly while Laban was busy shearing his sheep, and headed toward the mountains of Gilead.
- ✧ Gilead is the area east of the Jordan that Moses gave to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and to half of the tribe of Manasseh which they had taken from Og the king of Bashan and Sihon the king of the Amorites. [\[Numbers 32:33\]](#)
- ✧ God had promised Abraham to give his descendants the land after they had been in Egypt 400 years "because the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete." [\[Genesis 15:16\]](#)