

LABAN'S TRICKERY

Genesis 30:25- 31:16

At last Rachel had a child of her own. She named him Joseph. By this time Jacob had ten other sons, whose mothers were Leah, Zilpah, and Bilhah.

Jacob went to his father-in law Laban and said, "Send me away to my own country now. Give me my wives and my children, for whom I have served you. For you know that I have earned the right to have them by serving you fourteen years."

But Laban said, "I am asking you to stay here and work for me, for I have learned by experience that the Lord has blessed me because of you. Tell me what you want for wages, and I will pay you."

Jacob answered, "You know how I have served you, and how I have taken care of your livestock. For you had very little before I came, and now your herds have increased to a multitude. The Lord has blessed you since my coming. So when shall I begin to provide for my own family?"

For all the fourteen years that Jacob had worked for Laban, he had gained no flocks or herds for himself. Everything belonged to Laban. So Jacob had nothing to give to his sons.

Again, Laban asked, "What do you want for wages?"

Jacob answered, "You shall not give me anything, but do this for me; and I will feed and keep your flock. I will walk through your herds today, and take out all the animals that are speckled and spotted and brown among the sheep, and speckled and spotted among the goats. They shall be my wages. Then when the time comes, no one can accuse me of taking what does not belong to me."

Laban agreed to these wages for he thought to get the best of Jacob again.

That very day Laban took out all the spotted and speckled, streaked and brown sheep and goats, and sent them away with his sons, to pastures three days distant from their home. Laban left only all white animals with Jacob, so thinking to reduce any chances Jacob had for gaining a flock. But Laban knew very little about the breeding of animals.

Jacob took the flocks that Laban left with him to care for. He partially stripped branches from certain trees in the watering troughs to encourage the animals to breed. Jacob was an experienced herder, and he knew how to practice selective breeding. When the animals conceived, they produced mostly animals that were spotted, speckled and stripped. After this Jacob would separate the flocks, putting all those that belonged to Laban in one flock, and those that belonged to himself in another. Then whenever the strongest animals conceived, Jacob used the stripped trees before them so that they would produce the speckled, spotted and stripped animals. But the weaker animals Jacob did not put in front of the trees when they were producing offspring. So, as time passed on, Jacob's flocks grew very great, and he was able to also get maidservants, manservants, camels, and asses.

As time went on the sons of Laban began to resent Jacob, and Jacob heard what they were saying about him. They said, "Jacob has taken away all that was ours, and he is getting the honor that should belong to our father."

Though Jacob had not done anything wrong, and had in fact been the one who made Laban rich, Jacob realized that Laban no longer favored him.

The Lord told Jacob that it was time for him to return home to the land of Canaan. So he called Leah and Rachel to him and told them the situation. Jacob said, "I see that your father is not pleased with me as before. But God has been with me. You know that I have served your father with all my ability, and how your father has deceived me and changed my wages ten times. But God has not let him hurt me. Whatever he changed my wages to, the Lord blessed. So it is God who has taken away from your father and given to me. God told me how to manage the flocks so that they would increase for me. Now God has told me to return to the land that he has given me."

Both Rachel and Leah answered their husband Jacob saying, "Is there anything, or any inheritance for us with our father? We are considered nothing to him. He has sold us, and used up all our inheritance for himself. All the riches which God has taken from our father, is ours, and our children's. Now then, do whatever God has told you to do."

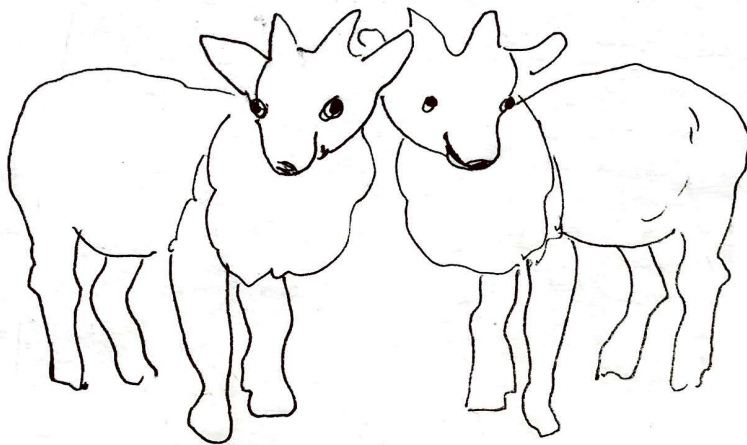
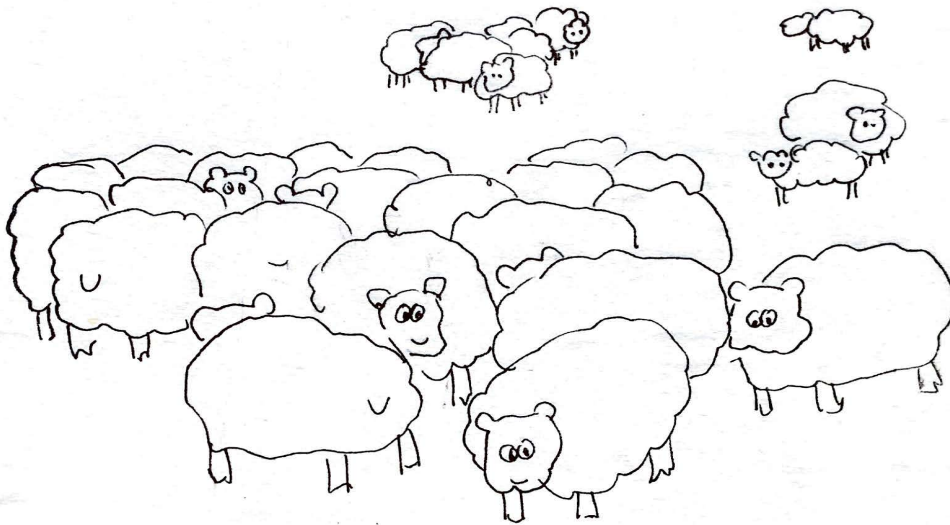
In many ways Jacob had changed from the man who had left his parents home in Canaan. He had left home because of his deceit and lies. Now he had been the object of Laban's lies and deceit for twenty years. But Jacob had learned to trust God in the situation, and instead of trying to trick Laban and get the better of him, Jacob had learned to trust God and depend on him. So, because Jacob did things God's way, Laban could not steal from Jacob that which God wanted him to have.

PRINCIPLE: Trust God to defeat those who wish to harm you.

LEARN: A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion.
Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.
He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.
Psalm 112: 5,6,7

A good man sheweth favour and leniency: he will
guide his affairs with discretion.
Surely he shall not be moved forever: the righteous
shall be in everlasting remembrance: his heart is
like sheep not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is
fixed, trusting in the Lord. Psalm 112: 5, 6, 7





1. Color scene .
2. Color Jacob -
3. Color sheep - speckled
spotted
striped or brown .
4. Cut out +
paste on scene .

