

GENESIS –Lesson 55

Learn: Now therefore, fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. And if it seem evil to you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD. Joshua 24:14-15

Read: Genesis 31:19-55

As Jacob was leaving Padan-aram with his family, Rachel slipped into Laban's tent and stole his "images" (literally, teraphim, or small idol figurines used in divination and as household deities supposed to bring good luck to the owner). Their use frequently cropped up in Israelite history, but was definitely idolatrous and contrary to the true faith of Jehovah. Laban had become an idolater, and though Rachel trusted Jacob's God, she was also reluctant to completely give up her previous superstitions. Rachel did this secretly, and no one in the family knew what she had done.

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1. What did Rachel, as well as any who say they follow Christ, need to learn?
See Isaiah 46:5-10, especially note verses 9, 10.

What does God tell us about saying that we are serving Him, while still trusting in our old way of doing things? Joshua 24:14, 15

What is the practical understanding and application of this in our lives? Or, what are things that should not be a part of the life of a believer in Jesus?

The river mentioned in verse 21 is the Euphrates which at this point is sufficiently shallow for Jacob's whole entourage to ford. Jacob was heading for Mount Gilead, a mountainous region east of the Jordan River. Its northern edges are nearly three hundred miles from Haran. The journey would be long as they could probably only travel fifteen to twenty miles a day with the flocks.

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2. How much of a head start did Jacob have before Laban discovered that he was gone?
v 22
 3. How long did it take Laban to catch up to Jacob? v 23
 4. What warning did God give to Laban before he had a chance to confront Jacob? v 24
 5. What did Laban say to Jacob to try to make him feel guilty? vv 26-28
 6. Judging from Laban's past actions, would any one believe him concerning his great love for his family or good intentions toward them? Explain.
 7. After Laban's explanation of why he had come, he made a threat against Jacob. What reason did he give for not carrying it out? v 29
 8. What was Laban's final thrust at Jacob? v 30
- Laban , of course, knew Jacob well enough to know that he would never have stolen from him, neither would Jacob want anything to do with an idol. It certainly would have been cheaper for Laban to just have new idols made. But he used the excuse of the idols as reason for so vigorously chasing Jacob, trying to cover his true motives.
9. Jacob understood Laban very well. What did Jacob give as the reason for leaving Laban secretly? v 31
 10. As far as Laban's gods were concerned, what did Jacob tell him? v 32
 11. What happened when Laban searched for his gods? vv 33-35

Rachel may have thought that in taking the idols she had only committed “a little sin.” She may have thought that her father deserved some punishment for his treatment of them. But whatever her reasoning, she put the whole family in a very difficult situation. God allowed her strategy of protecting herself to succeed, knowing that Jacob was innocent, and it was on Jacob that the discovery of the idols would have fallen the hardest. Laban would have charged Jacob with theft and lying, even though Laban knew well enough of Jacob’s character.

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12. From what happened with Rachel and the idols, what lesson can be learned personally about allowing what we consider “a little sin” in our lives?

13. Finally, after all these years Jacob speaks up to Laban. What did Jacob say concerning the treatment he had received from his father-in-law? vv 36-41

14. What had Jacob trusted for his protection through all these trials at the hand of his father-in-law? v 42

15. Finally, Laban tells the truth of his true intentions and motives. What do we learn about him? v 43

Laban was claiming for himself, what Jacob had honestly earned, yet Laban would never have allowed Jacob to have it. Laban continued to justify himself, and finally changed the subject in order to divert attention away from the embarrassing facts.

16. What did Laban propose? v 44

17. What did Jacob want done in order to commemorate the covenant that they made? vv 45-46

18. Each man gave the place a different name, but both words mean the same thing. According to verse 48, what is the meaning?

19. The heap of stones was also called Mizpeh which means watchtower. What were the

conditions that Laban made in the covenant? vv 50-53

20. As Laban made all these conditions, what was he implying about Jacob (that from past experiences he knew was not true)?

21. We often see this strategy of those who are in the wrong that Laban used. How can the not guilty person respond to this evil device? Proverbs 25:4, 5

22. In verse 51, who took credit for building the marker?

Who actually built the marker? v 45

Again we see deceptive behavior on the part of Laban, what does that tell us about the unjust and their behavior in spite of reality and truth?

How can understanding the way evil works give us help in our stand for righteousness?

Ephesians 5:14-17

Proverbs 3:5, 6

James 1:5-8

23. What is strange about the way Laban invoked the name of God, in verse 53?

24. What does what Laban said show us about his worship?

Will God accept that type of worship which Laban shows? Find verses to explain your answer.

23. What did Jacob lead those in his camp to do once the covenant had been concluded?
v 54

24. Laban went home and we don't hear about him again. Though he knew about the true God and had seen what God can do, Laban continued in idolatry and covetousness. What lesson should we learn from the life of Laban?