

***IN THE BEGINNING GOD*****Jacob Heads for Home.      Genesis 30:25—31: 55**

*“I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and where you made a vow to me. Now leave this land at once and go back to your native land.”* Genesis 31:13

**Day 1: Read Genesis 30:25–43.**

1. Jacob has worked for Laban for 14 years without wages. He has 2 wives, 11 sons, and 1 daughter. What does he want to do now, and why? (vv. 25, 26, 30)
2. Why does Laban want Jacob to stay? (vv. 27, 29, 30) Why is this not surprising? (28:13–15)
3. How would you describe Laban’s business practices? (vv. 28, 32–36; Gen. 31:6, 7; 14, 15)
4. What does Laban do to sabotage Jacob’s plans for financial security? (vv. 34–36) How does Jacob get the better of him? (vv. 37–43)
5. How has Jacob gotten a “good dose of his own medicine” while living with his Uncle Laban? (Review chapter 27.)

**Day 2: Read Genesis 31:1–16.**

6. Why does Jacob suddenly feel uneasy and ready to head for home in a hurry? (vv. 1, 2; 9)
7. Jacob used “innovative” breeding methods, but just how much credit can he take for his success? (vv. 5–9) Why is this not surprising? (Gen. 12:2–3; 27:27–29; 28:14, 15)
8. Jacob takes his wives into his confidence. What are the arguments he uses to convince them to leave their father’s house and go all the way to Canaan with him? (vv. 5–13)
9. List the number of times Jacob refers to God or to “angel of God” in this speech. (vv. 4–13) How do you think Jacob has grown in his relationship with God over the last 14 years?

**Day 3: Read Genesis 31:1–21.**

10. God comes to Jacob in a dream and reminds him that he is the “God of Bethel.” (31:13) What should this name remind Jacob of? (Gen. 28:13–15, 19)

11. God's promise to be with us should bring us great comfort. What does that comfort look like? (Ps. 23; Ps. 46; Ps. 91:11–15)
12. God's presence is a source of courage. What does God's presence give us the courage to do? (28:14, 15; Jos. 1:9; Mt. 28:18–20; Rom. 1:16)
13. In what ways have you experienced his comfort or his courage this week?

**Day 4: Read Genesis 31:17–42.**

14. What do you think Laban's intention is when he chases Jacob and the family all the way down to Gilead? Who intervenes and how? (vv. 24, 29, 42)
15. Rachel steals the "household gods." These were small idols and were thought to bring the family protection and blessing. They were symbols of the gods' presence, handed down as an heirloom from one generation to the next. Why would this theft, coming at the same time as Jacob's departure, make Laban feel very afraid and vulnerable?
16. What does Rachel's behavior reveal about her attitude towards her father? (vv. 14–16, 19, 33b–35)
17. Jacob finally gets his day in court (vv. 25, 37). After twenty years of being treated as an indentured servant and being exploited and manipulated, Jacob gets to tell his side of the story (vv. 36–42). How has God been Jacob's only friend and ally?
18. When you are going through hard times, how does knowing that God is on your side change your perspective? (Gen. 50:20; Is. 38:17; Jer. 29:11; Rom. 8:28)

**Day 5: Read Genesis 31:43–55.**

19. Laban and Jacob agree to disagree and draw up a covenant that simply sets a boundary between them. What is missing here? (Mt. 18:35; Lk. 17:3–4; Jas. 5:16)
20. At each stage of Jacob's personal journey he sets up a pillar of stones to commemorate significant events (28:10–22; 31:45–46). Think back over the last twenty years of your life and write a journal entry. What have you learned about God and yourself through the significant events in your life?