

Genesis 31

1 He got fairly outfoxed at this eastern way of dealing and now they don't like the deal. Even though both parties enter into the agreement, they are both trying to get the best deal at the other's expense. When the other guy wins, you cry "unfair".

2,3 Gen 28:15 21 years to the fulfillment of the earlier promise, "I will bring you back to this land" When God promises me something I start wondering if it will ever happen after a year or two.

4,5 He is starting to recognize it is God that has blessed him, or is he still just using the name of God as he connives his way to get ahead?

6,7 We only have the record of this once. Is he exaggerating or were there a number of other times in which God was letting Jacob reap what he had sown?

8 Sounds like the deal got changed here and there along the way. Jacob doesn't confess to his involvement in breeding so that he would come out ahead.

9 Well, you could say God allowed you to breed them in a way that won you the majority. Sometimes a deceitful man's greatest advocate is his wife. He constantly skews events with his words, making himself to look like someone extra special. He is special. He just doesn't see it is God's hand that makes him special. His lack of self-esteem is showing.

10-12 God is trying to show him that it is God who evens the score, not our sneaky tricks.

13 His second revelation is a directional one in which he returns to the land promised to Abraham. He returns to face his fears, and to see if his father and mother lives.

14 They now have brothers who will inherit all that is Laban's. Basically they are saying - "we are out of the will". Was there no love between them and their father?

15 They have the perspective their husband has sown into their ears.

16 There is some truth and some distortion in most of our perspectives.

17-19 Laban has some idols that could have been of valuable metal. They hadn't done him much good for Jacob had most of the flocks. Why would Rachel take them when she says to do what Jacob's God tells him?

20 To ignore what is right is to do wrong. He was afraid of confrontation, but this made a more difficult encounter later. That is usually the way it works out when we take what looks like the easy way that avoids our duty.

21-24 God is protecting the Seed. Jacob is not right, but he is going the right direction. God is saying not to get into a fight or be deceitful.

25 –27 Yeh right! Here again is that eastern way of making yourself look great and the other guy look bad.

28 He is humbling Jacob but is also showing himself how great a hypocrite he is and why Jacob needed to get away.

29,30 He saves face for him a little and basically says he is grudgingly doing that because of his dream. When all else fails, blame God.

31,32 He could say that with a clear conscience, but almost lost his most loved wife in the bargain.

33-35 We get a little insight into their relationship. She is as sneaky as her dad and husband.

36 Now it is Jacob's turn to shame Laban. He had time to think of a good comeback to put him in his place.

37-39 All the pent up anger he had came pouring out. Jacob was careful to be honest outwardly, but it is his heart that was deceitful.

40-42 Woe. I think he believes his own slant and doesn't realize the greatness of his own faults.

43 Now this is a reality check for Jacob's one sided perspective. A deceptive greedy man meets a deceptive greedy man. God often has us encounter others that show us what we are like to God. They have battered each other with words, now they have to meet in the middle somewhere. They have defeated each other - so they draw a truce.

44 –46 Eating together made is symbolic of peace between the two parties. The stones are a reminder of the truce that is made.

47-53 Had JHWH been their great grand father's God? If so what was he doing with idols? Jacob does not take an oath in the name of their God but in that of his own father's God. There is such a tit for tat going on it is a wonder they didn't end up killing each other.

54,55 Jacob offers sacrifice to JHWH and shows some generosity in feeding all that were there and invited relatives.