

The Book of Genesis

Chapter Thirty One

Breaking Free

Lesson Verse:

I. Lesson Introduction

- A. The sons of Laban were very envious of Jacob. Over the six year period that Jacob tended the flocks they realized that Jacob was becoming the stronger. It appears that even though Laban tried his best to swindle Jacob, the Lord would always reversed Laban's plot and use it against him.
- B. Furthermore Jacob's brothers-in-law made it a point to tell Laban that Jacob came to them with nothing. Now everything he has he obtained from Laban. To their way of thinking what Jacob had, was really theirs, and they wanted it all back!
- C. Jacob needs to break free, or he is a dead man!

II. Lesson

A. **Jacob's Secret** _____ (31:1-21)

1. He was not safe there
2. Laban has changed, and all his sons are envious of Jacob
3. Jacob has had to deal enough with Laban's envy for 10 lifetimes
4. God tells Jacob it is time to leave
5. Jacob explains to his wives why they must leave their home and Laban
 - a. He exaggerates about how things have been
 - b. And lies to cover up his real activities
 - c. And then claims that God was behind it all – not quite!
6. Rachel and Leah agree to leave (31:14-16)
7. They all pack up, and leave early in the day, getting three days advance on Laban
8. Rachel steals her daddy's idols. She is not a great mother figure:
 - a. Yes she was a _____
 - b. A _____
 - c. An _____
 - d. A _____

B. **Laban's Severe** _____ (31:22-30)

1. Finds out Jacob has escaped – he is a type of the _____
2. It took 7 days to catch up with Jacob and his family – Jacob is travelling fast
3. God intervenes (as He does in Job 1 and 2; Pr 16:7)
4. Laban confronts Jacob
 - a. Why leave? Didn't you like it there?
 - b. Why leave secretly? Why didn't you ask? We could have had a party! Laban kind of exaggerates how they left!
 - c. I should hurt you, but God won't let me
 - d. Why steal my gods (31:30; 31:19). Question, what kind of a god is it that can be stolen? Or burnt? Or carried?
5. Laban, as the antichrist, hates to lose to Jacob!

C. **Jacob's Sober** _____ (31:31-32)

1. "I was afraid" – good motivating force
 - a. Fear of you
 - b. Fear of you taking what I have
2. "But also, I am not afraid"
 - a. Of how right I am in all my dealings with you – self-righteous
 - b. There are no false gods here

- c. I am so sure, you can look and see, and if there are any gods of you're here, then that person who has them shall be executed!

D. Laban's Diligent Search (31:33-35)

1. Tent after tent
2. In Rachel's tent – Laban gets tricked
3. Notice that Rachel brings gods with her into the life that God has called her, her husband, and kids into
4. HIDES them as only a woman can!
5. Principle: Leave the gods of the old life behind you (Josh 24:15)!

E. Jacob's Soap-Box (31:36-42) – finally gets to take a dig at his arch-enemy, Laban

1. "What is my sin?"
2. After 20 long years, I am quitting
3. I took responsibility for all you flocks, and all the problems in the flock
4. All that has happened has been because God is on MY side

F. Laban's Surrender (31:43-55)

1. He gives up
2. The people looking at him, were all his people – his children and grandchildren
3. Make a covenant – a vow never to meet again!
 - a. Jegar-sahadutha – chaldean word for "heap of testimony"
 - b. Galeed – Hebrew for "heap of witness"

III. Concluding Questions