



Way Point Chronicles

Traveling through the Old Testament by Chronological Stories

© 2007 Dr. Edgar Pierce

Way Point 22

Who Ran Off With My Idols

Story of Jacob's Departure from Laban

Travel Log

Personal Notes

Jacob after fleeing Canaan in fear of Esau has settled down with his mother's brother. He worked a total of 14 years for the hand of Rachel after being deceived that resulted in having two wives. The last seven years he had worked he had been blessed with 11 children born to the four women we looked at last Way Point.

We see he was a man of character because he fulfilled his agreements and worked the full seventeen years.

I- Let Me Return Home:

As we enter this story we find Jacob, who is now about 85-90 years old, having fulfilled his commitment telling Laban he wants to go home.

Genesis 30:25-26 *And it came to pass, when Rachel had born Joseph, that Jacob said unto Laban, Send me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country. 26 Give me my wives and my children, for whom I have served thee, and let me go: for thou knowest my service which I have done thee.*

After Joseph was born the fourteen years are up and he asks Laban to let him leave. He has worked for the wives and the children we would certainly think would be his but notice he even asks Laban to give him the children as if they belonged to Laban.

We must remember one important thing here. Jacob had been working for 14 years for Laban and all the increase of herds was Laban's not Jacob's. Jacob was dead broke with 4 wives and 12 children. (Remember Benjamin was not yet born but there was one daughter.) I feel that Jacob was resting on the providential promises of God to take care of him. Jacob is growing and learning to trust God. Has he arrived at the destination of full faith. No, not yet. He is like all of us still on the journey.

II- Laban Desires a New Contract:

We cannot help but wonder how on earth that Jacob could ever trust anything that Laban said. We will find later in our text that Jacob was aware that he was being cheated and mistreated all the years he was there. Laban obviously did not want Jacob to leave. I suspect as we see the evidence unfold it was not because he wanted to have the grandchildren close but the blessing of God upon Jacob was making him rich.

Genesis 30:27 *And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thine eyes, tarry: for I have learned by experience that the LORD hath blessed me for thy sake. 28 And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it.*

Remember that Jacob was the one who had set the terms of seven years

Series of horizontal lines for personal notes.



Way Point Chronicles

Traveling through the Old Testament by Chronological Stories

© 2007 Dr. Edgar Pierce

both times before. Now what is it going to be. Laban again lets him set the terms. The kindheartedness of Jacob seems to bleed through in these situation. He gave more than he should have and agreed to do more than Laban would have asked if he was setting the terms.

III- The Terms:

Jacob asks for only the cattle of Laban that were not purebred. He asks for the striped and spotted and speckled. *Genesis 30:29 And he said unto him, Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle was with me. 30 For it was little which thou hadst before I came, and it is now increased unto a multitude; and the LORD hath blessed thee since my coming: and now when shall I provide for mine own house also?*

31 And he said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me any thing: if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep thy flock: 32 I will pass through all thy flock to day, removing from thence all the speckled and spotted cattle, and all the brown cattle among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats: and of such shall be my hire. 33 So shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come, when it shall come for my hire before thy face: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the sheep, that shall be counted stolen with me. 34 And Laban said, Behold, I would it might be according to thy word.

Jacob removed all these from the others a three day journey. He has agreed to work and keep the flock of Laban for these.

IV- The Blessing:

The section of Scripture from *Genesis 30:25ff* records what many call superstition or an old wives tale. Regardless we see that God blesses Laban exceedingly during the next years. *Genesis 30:43 And the man [Jacob] increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses.*

God was blessing Jacob now and it was costing Laban it seems from *Genesis 31:1 And he heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's; and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory.*

Rachel and Leah's brothers, probably content to not work the flocks that Jacob was caring for, began to complain that Jacob was taking their fathers herds. This is evidence of just how substantial that Jacob was being blessed. A lesson we can learn spiritually from this is to guard our heart to prevent jealousy from entering when God chooses to bless others by our perception more than us.



Coordinates:
Gen 30:25-31:55

Sights to See:

- 1- God taught Jacob lessons of life in a tough situation.
- 2- Laban took advantage of Jacob many times by allowing Jacob to set the terms. Good hearted Christians can be take advantage of if we are not careful.
- 3- God bless Laban because of the blessing of God on the life of Jacob. I am reminded that God has blessed our nation because of His people that seek Him. *Psalms 33:12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.*
- 4- Jacob quickly followed the will of God to return to Canaan.
- 5- God is the protector of those who follow Him. He protected Jacob from Laban and warned Laban to do Jacob no harm. Jacob certainly would have been killed without this protection. The Psalmist cried in *Psalms 17:8 Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings,*



✦ **Way Point Chronicles** ✦

✦✦✦ *Traveling through the Old Testament by Chronological Stories* ✦✦✦

© 2007 Dr. Edgar Pierce

Laban pursues Jacob but is warned in a dream to do no harm to him by God. **Genesis 31:24** *And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.*

Now Jacob is face to face with what is certainly a very angry Laban. **Genesis 31:25** *Then Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mount: and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mount of Gilead.*

Laban rakes Jacob over the coals for making such a decision without telling him and letting him say goodbye. **Genesis 31:26** *And Laban said to Jacob, What hast thou done, that thou hast stolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters, as captives taken with the sword? 27 Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me; and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth, and with songs, with tabret, and with harp? 28 And hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters? thou hast now done foolishly in so doing.*

Laban tells Jacob that he could hurt him for this but God told him not to do so. Notice it was not Laban's God. **Genesis 31:29** *It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt: but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.*

He has accused him of almost everything including kidnapping. But we are fixing to get to the root of the matter. **Genesis 31:30** *And now, though thou wouldest needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house, yet wherefore hast thou stolen my gods?*

Jacob answered and told him that he was afraid that he would force him to leave without his wives or children if he had told him. **Genesis 31:31** *And Jacob answered and said to Laban, Because I was afraid: for I said, Peradventure thou wouldest take by force thy daughters from me.*

Jacob tells him that he did not have the gods of Laban and whoever had them should be killed. **Genesis 31:32** *With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live: before our brethren discern thou what is thine with me, and take it to thee. For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them.*

Laban searched Jacob's tent, Leah's tent the tents of the handmaids and did not find the idols. He goes into Rachel's tent and Rachel, a chip off the old block, deceived her dad so that he did not find them under where she sat. **Genesis 31: 34** *Now Rachel had taken the images, and put them in the camel's furniture, and sat upon them. And Laban searched all the tent, but found them not. 35 And she said to her father, Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise up before thee; for the custom of women is upon me. And he searched, but found not the images.*

VIII- Jacob Vents His Frustration:

Jacob has been biting his tongue for 20 years. Now he is mad enough to tell Laban where to get off. **Genesis 31:36** *And Jacob was wrath, and chode with Laban: and Jacob answered and said to Laban, What is my trespass? what is my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me? 37 Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both. 38 This twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten. 39 That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night. 40 Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from*



Way Point Chronicles

Traveling through the Old Testament by Chronological Stories

© 2007 Dr. Edgar Pierce

mine eyes. 41 Thus have I been twenty years in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages ten times. 42 Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight.

Jacob recognized that God had kept His promise to bless him and to take care of him. God had kept his covenant.

IX- Mizpah Covenant:

Notice the ownership that Laban still claims upon all that Jacob's. *Genesis 31:43 And Laban answered and said unto Jacob, These daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and these cattle are my cattle, and all that thou seest is mine: and what can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children which they have born?*

The two now make a covenant. Not a covenant of peace but one of separation. They seal the covenant with a pile of stones.

44 Now therefore come thou, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee. 45 And Jacob took a stone, and set it up for a pillar. 46 And Jacob said unto his brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones, and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap. 47 And Laban called it Jegarsahadutha: but Jacob called it Galeed. 48 And Laban said, This heap is a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed; 49 And Mizpah; for he said, The LORD watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another.

They wanted God to want the other one so that they would not do each other harm. *Genesis 31:50 If thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take other wives beside my daughters, no man is with us; see, God is witness betwixt me and thee.*

Notice that this was a line in the sand so to speak that each was not to cross over. *Genesis 31:51 And Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold this pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee; 52 This heap be witness, and this pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm. 53 The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us. And Jacob sware by the fear of his father Isaac. 54 Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount. 55 And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them: and Laban departed, and returned unto his place.*

Jacob is now free from what is seems evident was a tyrant of a taskmaster. He was a man who certainly did not show any love toward his son in law. Still through all these years Jacob could see the hand of God providing, protecting and fighting his battles for him.