

GENESIS

JACOB SNEAKS AWAY FROM LABAN VSS.1 – 21

THE REASON

EXEGESIS VERSES 1 – 3:

וַיִּשְׁמַע אֶת־דְּבָרֵי בְנֵי־לָבָן לֵאמֹר לָקַח יַעֲקֹב אֶת־^{WTT} Genesis 31:1
כָּל־אֲשֶׁר לְאָבִינוּ וּמֵאֲשֶׁר לְאָבִינוּ עָשָׂה אֶת כָּל־הַכְּבוֹד הַזֶּה:

^{NAS} Genesis 31:1 Now Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, "Jacob has taken away all that was our father's, and from what belonged to our father he has made all this wealth." (וַיִּשְׁמַע אֶת דְּבָרֵי בְנֵי לָבָן לֵאמֹר לָקַח יַעֲקֹב אֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר לְאָבִינוּ וּמֵאֲשֶׁר לְאָבִינוּ עָשָׂה אֶת כָּל הַכְּבוֹד הַזֶּה [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: shama-; "Now he heard"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/pl/constr: dabar; "the words of"; + n/com/m/pl/constr: ben; "the sons of"; + proper n: "Laban"; + prep: lamed w/ v/qal/inf/constr: 'amar; "saying"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: laqach; "He took"; + proper n: "Jacob"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr: kol + rel.pro: 'asher + prep: lamed + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cpl suff: 'ab; "all of which was for our father"; + waw conj. + prep: min + rel.pro: 'asher + prep: lamed + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cpl suff: 'ab; "and from that being for our father"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: -asah; "he made"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr: kol; "all of"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/constr: kabod {lit. glory}; "the wealth"; + d.a. + adj/m/s: zeh; "this"])

וַיִּרְא יַעֲקֹב אֶת־פְּנֵי לָבָן וְהָנָה אֵינָנוּ עִמּוֹ כְּתָמוּל^{WTT} Genesis 31:2
שְׁלֹשִׁים:

^{NAS} Genesis 31:2 And Jacob saw the attitude of Laban, and behold, it was not friendly toward him as formerly. (וַיִּרְא יַעֲקֹב רֵאדָה וַיִּרְא יַעֲקֹב אֶת פְּנֵי לָבָן וְהָנָה אֵינָנוּ עִמּוֹ כְּתָמוּל שְׁלֹשִׁים [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: ra'ah; "and he saw"; + proper n: "Jacob"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/b/pl/constr: paneh {lit. faces}; "the countenance of/attitude"; + proper n: "Laban"; + waw conj: interj.part.: hinneh; "and behold"; + adv: 'ayin; "not"; + prep: w/3ms suff: -im; "with him"; + prep: kaph; "as/like"; + adv: temol; "formerly/before"; + adv" shileshom; {lit. 3 days ago} "day before yesterday"])

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־יַעֲקֹב שׁוּב אֶל־אֶרֶץ אֲבוֹתֶיךָ וְלִמְוֹלָדֶיךָ וְאִתִּי אֶמְדָּ:^{WTT} Genesis 31:3

^{NAS} Genesis 31:3 Then the LORD said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your relatives, and I will be with you. (וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל יַעֲקֹב שׁוּב אֶל אֶרֶץ אֲבוֹתֶיךָ וְאִתִּי אֶמְדָּ:

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וַיָּבֹא יַעֲקֹב מִלְּבָן וְיָחִיד וְיָחִיד וְיָחִיד [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "Then He said"; + proper n: yahweh: "the Lord" + prep: 'el + proper n: "to Jacob"; + v/qal/imp/m/s: shub; "return"; + prep: 'el + n/com/f/s/constr: 'erets + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/2ms suff: 'ab; "to the land of your fathers"; + waw conj. + prep: lamed + n/com/f/s/constr. w/2ms suff: moledeth; "and to your kin/relatives"; + waw conj. + v/qal/IPF/1cs; hayah + prep. w/2fs suff: -im; "and I will exist with you {fem. suff. = nephesh: soul/+V}]

ANALYSIS VERSES 1 – 3:

1. Some 6+ years have passed since **Jacob** began his business endeavor.
2. He has accumulated much wealth (30:43) as a result of success in the breeding of the sheep and goats, a fact previously assumed.
3. It is now validated by the remarks of Laban's **sons** who were given charge to look after the flocks initially separated from the solid colored herd (30:35-36).
4. In the eyes of men, his success appears to be the result of exceptional skills on Jacob's part to bring about the desired genetics for his profit (30:37-42).
5. The spiritual reality was that it was God that blessed the breeding, human efforts aside (cf.vss.7ff).
6. We can safely assume that **Jacob** practiced his "striped rods" technique throughout this time as his father-in-law changed the rules of Jacob's commission some 10x over the 6 years (allowing for mating seasons approx. twice a year).
7. No matter the attempts to undermine Jacob's success, it always failed.
8. It could easily appear to those that omit God from the equation only "playing the odds" in life that somehow **Jacob** was cheating the family.
9. Like father like "**sons**", Jacob's cousins also carry an air of distrust in others.
10. Further it's obvious they have not enjoyed any success to speak of with the original flocks put under their care.
11. These observations give insight to the intent of their words in vs.1, "**Jacob has taken away all that was our father's, and from what belonged to our father he has made all this wealth**".
12. Jealousy ignites their accusation and distrust underwrites their intent.
13. The first part of their statement "**has taken away all that was our father's**/laqach kol 'asher lamed 'ab" is exaggeration.
14. False accusation will often blow things out of proportion for cause.
15. Obviously **Jacob** hasn't acquired Laban's entire estate.
16. This betrays the preconceived notion that somehow the family has been robbed (the verb "**has taken**").
17. The only things **Jacob** has received is what was agreed upon and allowed by **Laban** as revealed in his changing of terms.
18. The second part of their statement "**from what belonged to our father he has made all this wealth**/min 'asher 'ab –asah kol ha kabod ha zeh" reflects the son's rationale behind their accusation.
19. While the idea of Jacob's profit stemming **from what** their **father** owned is true, its intent is distorted being discolored by the first statement.

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20. In other words, rather than accurately portraying the true idea it truncates it as if to say that Laban was simply a target being taken advantage of by Jacob through unfair play.
21. The inclusion of truth with the error of falsehood gives their notion validity (rationalizing).
22. The truth is that **Jacob** hasn't robbed anybody even if his profit came from their **father's** assets initially.
23. The NAS translation "**wealth**" is literally in the Hebrew "*glory/honor*" that is intended to depict Jacob as "crowing/gloating" over his successes.
24. Their **words** attempt to paint **Jacob** as a thieving shyster having taken advantage of their poor father and going around reveling in his success.
25. Why Jacob's cousins intercede at this point is unknown.
26. Maybe they felt like their **father** was the type that would keep on until he really lost everything and felt it necessary to intervene.
27. Fear of losing their potential inheritance could have been a driving force.
28. No matter, jealousy/envy again rears its ugly head in this family (cf.30:1).
29. They demonstrate their father's preoccupation with money and the details of life.
30. The cousins weren't shy about voicing their grievances as **Jacob** either overheard or was told by others of their slander.
31. The **words of Laban's sons** then gives depth to the meaning of vs.32, "**And Jacob saw the attitude of Laban, and behold, it was not friendly toward him as formerly/waw** Jacob ra'ah paneh laban waw hinneh 'aying -im kaph temol shileshom.
32. The interjectory particle "**behold!**" implies that Laban's change of **attitude** was sudden and unexpected.
33. Further, the NAS omits the Hebrew adverb *shileshom* that literally means "*three days ago*" or "*the day before yesterday*".
34. A literal Hebrew translation of the final phrase attending Laban's change of **attitude** could be rendered "...**and behold, it was not with him like formerly three days before**".
35. The Hebrew is fairly clear that Laban's disparaging attitude was not something that built up over time, but occurred shortly after his cousins started mouthing off in accusation.
36. Jacob's cousins are the instigators in this case of Laban's sudden change in demeanor towards **Jacob** by bending his ear with the poison of their allegations.
37. While **Jacob** has become very wealthy, he does not have the kind of family support (defense) to truly protect him if violence was to break out over the affair.
38. Against this background Yahweh speaks to him telling him "**Return to the land of your fathers and to your relatives, and I will be with you/shub** 'el 'erets 'ab waw lamed moledeth waw hayah -im".
39. In 28:15 God told **Jacob** in a dream that during his time away from his homeland He would be with him and ensure a safe return home.
40. God proved to be good to His promise of the first part blessing **Jacob** with wives, children and much **wealth**.
41. He now shows His hand to secure the promise of the 2nd part by interceding on this occasion telling **Jacob** to leave before any harm could befall him.
42. That God's directive-will was for him to leave takes precedence over the manner of his departure.
43. **Jacob** was under no legal bind and being innocent of the trumped up charges free to leave at his whim.

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JACOB'S APPEAL TO HIS WIVES

EXEGESIS VERSES 4 – 13:

וַיִּשְׁלַח יַעֲקֹב וַיִּקְרָא לְרַחֵל וּלְלֵאָה הַשָּׂדֶה
אֶל-צֹאֲנוֹ: ^{WTT} Genesis 31:4

^{NAS} Genesis 31:4 So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to his flock in the field, (7
צֹאֵן אֶל שָׂדֶה הַ לְאָה ל ו רַחֵל ל קָרָא ו יַעֲקֹב שִׁלַּח [waw consec. +
v/qal/IPF/3ms: shalach; "and he sent"; proper n: "Jacob"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms:
qara'; "and called"; + prep: lamed + proper n: "for Rachel"; + waw conj. + prep: lamed +
proper n: "and for Leah"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: sadeh; "in the field"; + prep: 'el +
n/com/f/s/constr. w/3ms suff: tso'n; "to his flock"])

וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶן רָאָה אָנֹכִי אֶת־פְּנֵי אָבִיכֶן כִּי־אֵינְנִי
אֵלַי כְּתִמּוֹל שְׁלֹשׁ וָאֵלֹהֵי אָבִי הֵיָה עִמָּדִי: ^{WTT} Genesis 31:5

^{NAS} Genesis 31:5 and said to them, "I see your father's attitude, that it is not friendly
toward me as formerly, but the God of my father has been with me. (7
רָאָה ל אָמַר ו רָאָה אֶת־פְּנֵי אָבִיכֶן כִּי־אֵינְנִי אֵלַי כְּתִמּוֹל שְׁלֹשׁ וָאֵלֹהֵי אָבִי הֵיָה עִמָּדִי [waw
consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar + prep. w/3fpl suff: lamed; "and he said to them"; +
v/qal/ptc/m/s/abs: ra'ah; "Seeing"; + pro/1cs: 'anokiy; "I myself"; + sign of d.o. +
n/com/b/pl/constr: paneh {lit. faces}; "the countenance/attitude of"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/2fpl
suff: 'ab; "your father"; + conj: kiy; "that"; + adv w/3ms suff: 'ayin; "it is not"; + prep. w/1cs
suff: 'el + prep: kaph; "towards me like"; + adv: temol; "formerly"; + adv: shileshom; "the day
before yesterday"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/pl/constr: 'elohiym; "but the God of"; +
n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: 'ab; "my father"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: hayah; "strives/existed/has
been"; + prep. w/1cs suff: -imad; "with me"])

וְאַתֶּנָּה יָדַעְתָּן כִּי בְכָל־כֹּחִי עָבַדְתִּי אֶת־אָבִיכֶן: ^{WTT} Genesis 31:6

^{NAS} Genesis 31:6 "And you know that I have served your father with all my strength. (7
וְאַתֶּנָּה יָדַעְתֶּם כִּי בְכָל־כֹּחִי עָבַדְתִּי אֶת־אָבִיכֶן [waw conj. + pro/2fpl: 'attenah; "you
yourselves"; + v/qal/PF/2fpl: yada-; "know"; + conj: kiy; "that"; + prep: bet +
n/com/m/s/constr: kol; "with all of"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: kocha; "my
strength/ability"; + v/qal/PF/1cs: -abad; "I served"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr. /w2fpl
suff: 'ab; "your father"])

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וְאָבִיכֵן הִתַּל בִּי וְהִחֲלַף אֶת־מִשְׁכָּרְתִּי עֲשָׂרַת מִנִּים
וְלֹא־נָתַנּוּ אֱלֹהִים לְהָרַע עִמָּדִי: WTT Genesis 31:7

NAS Genesis 31:7 "Yet your father has cheated me and changed my wages ten times; however, God did not allow him to hurt me. (וְ אָבִיכֵן הִתַּל בִּי וְהִחֲלַף אֶת חֲלָפִי וְנָתַן לִי מִנִּים עֲשָׂרָה עִמָּדִי) [waw conj. + n/com/m/s/constr. w/2fpl suff: 'ab; "yet your father"; + v/Hiphil/PF/3ms: thalal; "deceived/cheated"; + prep. w/1cs suff: bet; "on me"; + waw conj. + v/Hiphil/PF/3ms: chalaph; "and changed"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/f/s/constr. w/1cs suff: masekkoreth; "my wages"; + adj/f/s/constr: -asarah; "ten"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: moneh; "times"; + waw conj. + part: lo' + v/qal/PF/3ms w/3ms suff: nathan; "yet he did not allow {give} him"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiym; "God"; + prep: lamed w/ v/Hiphil/inf/constr: ra-a-; "to hurt/to do evil"; + prep. w/1cs suff: -imad; "against me"])

אִם־כֹּה יֹאמֵר נִקְדִּים יִהְיֶה שְׂכָרְךָ וְיִלְדוּ
כָּל־הַצֹּאן נִקְדִּים וְאִם־כֹּה יֹאמֵר עֲקָדִים יִהְיֶה שְׂכָרְךָ וְיִלְדוּ
כָּל־הַצֹּאן עֲקָדִים: WTT Genesis 31:8

NAS Genesis 31:8 "If he spoke thus, 'The speckled shall be your wages,' then all the flock brought forth speckled; (אִם כֹּה יֹאמֵר נִקְדִּים יִהְיֶה שְׂכָרְךָ וְיִלְדוּ כָּל־הַצֹּאן נִקְדִּים) [part: -im + adv: koh; "if thus/when"; + v/qal/IPF/3ms; 'amar; "he would speak"; + adj/m/pl/abs: naqod; "the speckled ones"; + v/qal/IPF/3ms: hayah; "will become"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/2ms suff: sakar; "your wages"; + waw consec. + v/qal/PF/3cpl: yalad; "then they gave birth to"; + n/com/m/s/constr: kol; "each of"; + d.a. + n/com/b/s/abs: tso'n; "the flock"; + adj/m/pl/abs: naqod; "speckled ones"])

and if he spoke thus, 'The striped shall be your wages,' then all the flock brought forth striped. (וְ אִם כֹּה יֹאמֵר עֲקָדִים יִהְיֶה שְׂכָרְךָ וְיִלְדוּ כָּל־הַצֹּאן עֲקָדִים) [waw conj. + part: 'im + adv: koh; "and if thus"; + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "he would speak"; + adj/m/pl/abs: -aqod; "striped ones"; + v/qal/IPF/3ms: hayah; "will become"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/2ms suff: sakar; "your wages"; + waw consec. + v/qal/PF/3cpl: yalad; "then they gave birth to"; + n/com/m/s/constr. kol + d.a. + n/com/b/s/abs: tso'n; "each of the flock"; + adj/m/pl/abs: -aqod; "striped ones"])

וַיִּצַל אֱלֹהִים אֶת־מִקְנֵה אָבִיכֵם וַיִּתֵּן־לִי: WTT Genesis 31:9

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^{NAS} Genesis 31:9 "Thus God has taken away your father's livestock and given them to me. (וּ לְנָתַן וְאֶב מִקְנֵה אֵת אֱלֹהִים נִצַּל ו) [waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3ms: natsal {lit. deliver/rescue}; "and He snatched/has taken away"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiym; "God"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr: meqeneh; "the livestock of"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/2mpl suff: 'ab; "your father"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: nathan + prep. w/1cs suff: lamed; "and gave them to me"])

^{WTT} Genesis 31:10 וַיְהִי בַעַת יַחַם הַצֹּאן וְאִשָּׁא עֵינַי וְאָרָא בַחֲלוֹם
וְהִנֵּה הָעֵתָדִים הָעֹלִים עַל־הַצֹּאן עֲקָדִים וְקָדִים וּבְרָדִים:

^{NAS} Genesis 31:10 "And it came about at the time when the flock were mating that I lifted up my eyes and saw in a dream, (וּ בְרֵאָה וְעַיִן נִשָּׂא ו צֹאן הַ יַחַם עֵת ב הִיָּה ו) הַ חֲלוֹם הַ בְּרֵאָה וְעַיִן נִשָּׂא ו צֹאן הַ יַחַם עֵת ב הִיָּה ו) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: hayah; "and it came to pass"; + prep: bet + n/com/b/s/abs: -eth; "at the time"; + v/Piel/inf/constr: yacham {lit. be in heat/conceive}; "for mating"; + d.a. + n/com/b/s/abs: tso'n; "the flock"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/1cs: nasa'; "that I lifted up"; + n/com/b/dual/constr. w/1cs suff: -ayin; "my eyes"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/1cs: ra'ah; "and I saw"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: chalom; "in the dream"] and behold, the male goats which were mating were striped, speckled, and mottled. (וּ נִקְדָּ בָרָד וְנִקְדָּ עֲקָד צֹאן הַ עַל עֲלֵה הַ עֵתָד הַ הִנֵּה [waw conj. + interj.part: hinneh; "and behold!"; + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: -attud; "the male goats"; + d.a. + v/qal/ptc/m/pl/abs: -alah {lit. go up, climb}; "the ones mounting"; + prep: -al + d.a. + n/com/b/s/abs: tso'n; "upon the flock"; + adj/m/pl/abs: -aqod; "were striped"; + adj/m/pl/abs: naqod; "speckled"; + waw conj. + adj/m/pl/abs: barod; "and spotted/mottled"])

^{WTT} Genesis 31:11 וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי מַלְאָךְ הָאֱלֹהִים בַּחֲלוֹם יַעֲקֹב וְאָמַר
הִנְנִי:

^{NAS} Genesis 31:11 "Then the angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob,' and I said, 'Here I am.' (וּ הִנֵּה אָמַר ו יַעֲקֹב חֲלוֹם הַ ב אֱלֹהִים הַ מַּלְאָךְ אֵל אָמַר ו) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar + + prep. w/1cs suff: 'el + n/com/m/s/constr: male'ake + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiym + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: chalom; "The he said to me, the angel of God, in the dream"; + proper n: "Jacob"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/1cs: 'amar + interj.part. w/1cs suff: hinneh; "and I said, 'Behold me/Here I am'"])

^{WTT} Genesis 31:12 וַיֹּאמֶר שְׂאֵנָא עֵינִיד וְרֵאָה כָּל־הָעֵתָדִים הָעֹלִים
עַל־הַצֹּאן עֲקָדִים וְקָדִים וּבְרָדִים כִּי רֵאִיתִי אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר

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3. While we would not rule out fear as part of Jacob's driving force, the main reason for such a departure is that his family is vulnerable to any hostile aggression from Laban's flanks.
4. With the command from **God** to leave under His protective umbrella in vs.3, haste is of the essence and a willingness of his companions to follow marching orders a necessity.
5. His approach to his wives is one of honesty on his part supported by the truth of doctrine.
6. To avoid any prying eyes or ears, **Jacob** summons **Rachel and Leah** to a location providing maximum defense against eavesdropping "**to his flock in the field/ha sadeh 'el tso'n**".
7. He begins by presenting the immediate cause for concern, "**I see your father's attitude, that it is not friendly toward me as formerly/ra'ah 'anokiy paneh 'ab kiy 'ayin 'el kaph temol shileshom**".
8. He simply repeats his initial observation recounted in vs.2 to include the sudden change of disposition imbedded in the Hebrew adverb *shileshom* meaning "**three days before**" omitted in the NAS (*see analysis*).
9. He omits any participation of the sister's brothers as accomplices and instead relates the real issue at hand doctrinally, "**but the God of my father has been with me/waw 'elohiym 'ab hayah -immad**".
10. **Jacob** here illustrates "cool-headedness" by avoiding unnecessary words that might only serve to enflame emotions and give an air of excessive accusation.
11. Rather he presents a presence of stability in faith that **God** has had his back in protection in spite of hostilities sticking with the real issue at hand.
12. His wives with any discernment can fill in the blanks regarding the remainder of their family.
13. In vss.6-7 he then presents his case as to why he is in the right and their **father** in the wrong.
14. In other words there is no cause for this new temperament from their **father** and his present demeanor should be considered abnormal, unstable and legitimate reason for his plan.
15. He then draws upon facts of which his wives would be well informed and that first to his work ethics, "**And you know that I have served your father with all my strength/waw 'attenah yada- kiy bet kol kocha -abad 'ab**".
16. **Rachel and Leah** knew first hand all of the efforts **Jacob** had put in over the past ~23 years including the past 6.
17. His reputation of work ethics spoke for itself (cf.30:27-30).
18. The height of his integrity is then exemplified in vs.7 in the fact that he maintained it in the face of unethical conduct from **Laban**.
19. Here the reader learns that over the past 6 years **Laban** "**has cheated me and changed my wages ten times/thalal bet waw chalaph masekkoreth -asarah moneh**".
20. While the news may be new to the reader, it was something the wives further knew.
21. The primary meaning of the English translation "**cheated**" is "**deceived**" as seen in its other 8 uses. Exo.8:29; Jdg.16:10,13,15; Job 13:9 (2x); Isa.44:20; Jer.9:4
22. It is from the root *hathal*/חָתַל having the nuance of "mocking". Cf.1Kgs.18:27; Job 17:2
23. It implies that **Laban** was ridiculing **Jacob** for his "rod technique" in breeding.
24. Laban's dishonesty for breaking the terms of their agreement was in part to try and show how absurd he considered Jacob's actions.
25. **Jacob** again then simply counters his grievance with doctrine, "**God did not allow him to hurt me/nathan 'elohiym lamed ra-a -immad**".
26. The English translation "**allow**" is literally in the Hebrew "**give**" teaching that **God** overruled Laban's evil not catering to his demeaning tactics towards **Jacob**.

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27. In vs.8, **Jacob** then expounds upon how exactly **God** jammed **Laban**.
28. Each time he tried to change his wage, **God** would intervene with a miracle to insure that “**all/kol**” **speckled** or **striped** per Laban’s most recent change would emerge as such.
29. Jacob’s doctrinal argument is simple; it is **God** that was in control of the matters surrounding the births and “**Thus God has taken away your father’s livestock and given them to me/waw natsal ‘elohiyim meqeneh ‘ab waw nathan lamed**” (vs.9).
30. While men may blame men for events in life, the adjusted believer always recognizes nothing is done apart from God’s control.
31. That **God** is in control of life is a doctrinal principle that both **Rachel and Leah** have come to grips with in their own experiences of birth (cf.29:35; 30:24).
32. The English translation “**has taken away**” is literally in the Hebrew “*rescued/delivered*” as in *rescued* from danger (cf.32:11; 37:21,22).
33. This suggests sanctified sarcasm on the part of **Jacob** of **God** protecting the **livestock** from the likes of one such as his uncle (doesn’t really care about things apart from money).
34. The phrase “**given them to me**” highlights the grace that **Jacob** has grown to appreciate in all that he has acquired.
35. Again, it is the contention of many interpreters that **Jacob** is only now coming to realize God’s hand in these things versus gradual growth and insight over the past 6 years.
36. Their position is based on the following **dream** relating to **God** explicitly revealing His hand in the matter, occurring in correlation with God’s revelation earlier in vs.3 (at the end of the 6 years).
37. However, it can be equally argued that the **dream** was for the purpose to validate Jacob’s growing faith as encouragement to now pack up and move on as so instructed.
38. The **dream** in the latter vein is then design to encourage and validate Jacob’s position to his wives of the need for their cooperation as to his plan to leave covertly.
39. As it might apply to Jacob’s “rod technique” for breeding, it would serve to keep him oriented and not get the “big head” as “the man who became exceedingly prosperous” (cf.30:43).
40. His spiritual growth is to maintain a level of doctrinal thinking recognizing that all blessings are the grace of **God** on behalf of the believer and not based on our own merits alone.
41. **God** would have blessed him with or without the rods simply because he was +V and **God** promised to be with him.
42. The vision he refers to here is generally accepted among interpreters as a fuller version that resulted in the command of vs.3 (cf.vs.13b).
43. The **dream** itself centers on the **goats** among Laban’s herds.
44. It was during their particular **mating** season that the vision came to pass.
45. In the **dream** vision, all of “**the male goats which were mating were striped, speckled, and mottled/ha –attud ha –alah –al ha tso’n –aqod naqod waw barod**”.
46. Obviously, in reality, the **goats mating** were of solid color.
47. As he pondered the **mating goats, the angel of God** addressed him to which he responded, “**Here I am/hinneh**”.
48. The “**angel of God/male’ake ‘elohiyim**” is none other than **God** Himself per vs.13.
49. It is the same title used of God’s revelation to Hagar in Gen.21:17.
50. Common to both passages is God’s emphasis on paying attention to believers in crisis.
51. It emphasizes His omniscience in action to deliver the believer in time.

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52. Having Jacob's attention, **God** instructs him to "**Lift up, now, your eyes and see all the male goats which are mating are striped, speckled, and mottled/nasa' na' –ayin waw ra'ah kol –attud ha –alah –al ha tso'n –aqod naqod waw barod**".
53. The unique feature of the command is that **Jacob** was already lifting **up** his **eyes** seeing the **goats** copulating as noted in vs.10.
54. What are we to make of the apparent redundancy?
55. One logical solution is that **God** is exhorting **Jacob** to critique the dream spiritually, with his "soulful **eyes**" i.e., to view it from God's perspective.
56. What he is to ultimately GAP is the doctrine of omniscience as it pertains to God's protection under the Covenant terms.
57. **God** will not allow evil to prevail over +V thwarting any promised blessings in that vein.
58. He will always overrule evil in judgment to ensure and vindicate +V in their faithfulness to Him.
59. This doctrine is essential for Jacob's continued path in life truly trusting that **God** will always have his back so to speak.
60. The doctrine then gives substance to God's words, "**for I have seen all that Laban has been doing to you/kiy ra'ah kol 'asher Laban –asah lamed**".
61. The verb "**I have seen**" specifically emphasizes omniscience.
62. What **God** has always been aware of was the evil and deceitful practice that **Laban** has employed against God's chosen.
63. Yet, none of this hampered **God** in His Sovereign plan to bless **Jacob** otherwise.
64. The multi-colored **mating male goats** in the **dream** represent the fact that **God** determined their genetic color at the moment of copulation ensuring offspring accordingly.
65. **God** was able on the spur of the moment decree what they would look like.
66. That only **male goats** are in view further suggests that it is the males of the species that dominate the genetic outcome.
67. Men and their evil devices are no match for an omnipotent and omniscient **God**.
68. **Jacob** is to carry this doctrine forward in his continued spiritual advance Ph₂.
69. He is to continue to grow in faith-rest putting his trust in **God** for all things.
70. The **dream** represents the doctrine underwriting continued spiritual growth that has become evident in Jacob's life over the past 20 years.
71. Hence, God's reflective remarks to him in vs.13, "**I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar, where you made a vow to me/ 'anokiy ha 'el bethel 'asher mashach sham matsebah 'asher nadir lamed sham neder –attah**".
72. It is a reflection back to the days beginning Jacob's journey and his spiritual immaturity at the time recorded in 28:10-22.
73. Remembering back, **Jacob** dealt with that **dream** with human viewpoint religiosity equating worship with physical realities (cf.28:16,17,22).
74. He was a mystic believer full of doubt and dependent upon physical realities to have faith.
75. However, what is most important in observation is Jacob's **vow to God** that with safe passage and return home he will serve **God** as #1 priority (cf.28:20-21).
76. It was a **vow** that exposed a desire to serve **God** anticipating +V on the part of **Jacob** in response to **life** extended to him by **God**.
77. **God** has and continues to provide the evidence of fulfilling His role accommodating his +V.

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78. Lost in the English translation is the use of the cognate noun *neder* (**vow**) following the verb *nadir* (**you made a vow**).
79. **God** literally tells **Jacob** that the **vow made** back at **Bethel** remains a **vow** “*still*/-attah”.
80. In other words God’s omniscience further continues to read Jacob’s soulish “tape” seeing the persistent +V of his soul.
81. **God** did not make a mistake by appointing **Jacob** as heir to the Covenant among the Patriarchs in spite of a questionable past spiritually.
82. God’s omniscience foresees all things from eternity past perfectly in time and is always postured to intervene on behalf of where He knows +V exists.
83. **Jacob** then closes the conversation with his wives with a rendition of God’s words in vs.2, “**arise, leave this land, and return to the land of your birth**/qum yatsa min ha ‘erets ha zo’th waw shub ‘el ‘erets moledeth.
84. He omits the words “*and I will be with you*” from vs.2 as he has already made that point clear specifically (cf.vs.5) and with details.
85. He adds the commands to “**arise**” and “**leave**” to impress upon the wives that time is of the essence.
86. The ball is now in the court of **Rachel and Leah** as to their compliance or rebellion.

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RACHEL AND LEAH RESPOND

EXEGESIS VERSES 14 – 16:

וַתַּעַן רָחֵל וְלֵאָה וַתֹּאמְרָנָה לּוֹ הֲעוֹד לָנוּ חֵלֶק וְנַחֲלָה בְּבַיִת אֲבִינֹנוּ: ^{WTT} Genesis 31:14

^{NAS} Genesis 31:14 And Rachel and Leah answered and said to him, "Do we still have any portion or inheritance in our father's house? (וַתַּעַן רָחֵל וְלֵאָה וַתֹּאמְרָנָה לּוֹ הֲעוֹד לָנוּ חֵלֶק וְנַחֲלָה בְּבַיִת אֲבִינֹנוּ) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: -anah; "and they responded/answered"; + proper n: "Rachel" + waw consec. + proper n: "Leah": + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fpl: 'amar + prep. w/3ms suff: lamed; "and said to him"; + interr.part: ha + prep: -od; "Do we still?"; + prep. w/1cpl suff: lamed; "for us"; + n/com/m/s/abs: cheleq; "a share/portion"; + waw consec. + n/com/ff/s/abs: nachalah; "or inheritance/property"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr: bayith + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cpl suff: 'ab; "in the house of our father"])

גַּם־אָכַל אֶת־כֶּסֶפֶנוּ: הֲלוֹא נִכְרִיּוֹת נִחְשְׁבָנוּ לּוֹ כִּי מִכְרָנוּ וַיֹּאכֵל ^{WTT} Genesis 31:15

^{NAS} Genesis 31:15 "Are we not reckoned by him as foreigners? For he has sold us, and has also entirely consumed our purchase price. (הֲלוֹא נִכְרִיּוֹת נִחְשְׁבָנוּ לּוֹ כִּי מִכְרָנוּ וַיֹּאכֵל אֶת־כֶּסֶפֶנוּ) [interr.part: ha + neg.part: lo' + adj/ff/pl/abs: nakeriy; "Are we not foreigners/strangers"; + prep.w/3ms suff: lamed; "to him"; + conj: kiy; "for/because"; + v/qal/PF/3ms w/1cpl suff: makar; "he sold us"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'acal; "and consumed"; + conj: gam; "indeed"; + v/qal/inf/abs: 'akal; "consuming" {entirely}; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cpl suff: keseph; "our silver/purchase price"])

הוּא וְלִבְנֵינוּ וְעַתָּה כֹּל־הָעֶשֶׂר אֲשֶׁר הִצִּיל אֱלֹהִים מֵאֲבִינֹנוּ לָנוּ ^{WTT} Genesis 31:16
אֵשֶׁר אֲשֶׁר אָמַר אֱלֹהִים אֵלֶיךָ עֲשֵׂה:

^{NAS} Genesis 31:16 "Surely all the wealth which God has taken away from our father belongs to us and our children; now then, do whatever God has said to you." (הוּא וְלִבְנֵינוּ וְעַתָּה כֹּל־הָעֶשֶׂר אֲשֶׁר אֲשֶׁר אָמַר אֱלֹהִים אֵלֶיךָ עֲשֵׂה) [conj: kiy; "surely/thus"; + n/com/m/s/constr: kol + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: -aser; "all of the riches/wealth"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "which"; + v/Hiphil/PF/3ms: natsal {lit. rescue fr. danger, same as vs.9}; "He has caused to take"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiyim; "God";

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+ prep: *min* + *n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cpl suff: 'ab*; "from our father"; + prep. *w/1cpl suff: lamed*; "for us"; + *pro/3ms: hu'*; "it itself" {ref. riches}; + *waw conj. + prep: lamed* + *n/com/m/pl/constr. w/1cpl suff: ben*; "and for our sons"; + *waw conj. + adv: -attah*; "and now"; + *n/com/m/s/abs: kol* + *rel.pro: 'asher* + *v/qal/PF/3ms: 'amar* + *n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiym* + *prep. w/2ms suff: 'el* + *v/qal/imp/m/s: -asah*; "all which He said, God, to you, do"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 14 – 16:

1. For the first time in the Genesis narrative, we find Jacob's two wives not in some sort of conflict with one another (i.e., switch at marriage; baby wars).
2. With a common purpose and like-mindedness in evaluation and doctrine they are finally presented to be on the same page.
3. This suggest spiritual matriculation and +V at least at some level for both.
4. Their synchronized thinking is represented in the opening phrase "**And Rachel and Leah answered and said to him**/*waw –anah Rachel and Leah waw 'amar lamed*" representing them acting as one.
5. The verb "**answered**" means they first took time to consider between themselves Jacob's words and the verb "**said**" means they then spoke as one in agreement.
6. Jacob's cool-headed approach has its desired effect as the sisters calmly and rationally react.
7. Their response is headed by two rhetorical questions:
 - A. "**Do we still have any portion of inheritance in our father's house?**/*ha –od lamed cheleq waw nachalah bet bayith 'ab*".
 - B. "**Are we not reckoned by him as foreigners?**/*ha lo' nakeriy lamed*".
8. The first question expects a negative answer with the second in the affirmative.
9. The questions in essence declare a sense of betrayal by Laban towards his daughters.
10. Both of the sisters have come to recognize that neither have claim to any property that Laban yet possesses, now or in the future.
11. Further, both have found themselves being treated as strangers in any family matters otherwise in Laban's household.
12. They regard themselves as having been disowned by their **father** and that without cause.
13. Their thoughts are reflection upon Jacob's experience of being abused by Laban without cause contrasted to their own experience validating his claim.
14. They then give a two-fold reason as to why they have drawn this conclusion:
 - A. "**For he has sold us**/*kiy makar*"
 - B. "**And has also entirely consumed our purchase price**/*waw 'acal gam 'akal keseph*".
15. They recognize that their **father's** abuse towards them began at the marriage fiasco.
16. He treated them like nothing more than slaves from which he might find profit at the auction block.
17. Their **father's** profit came in the form of increased assets stemming from Jacob's labor and blessing by association (30:27,29-30).
18. Even though Jacob is Laban's key to continued prosperity, Laban once again turned on him with evil violating the terms of contract changing his wages (31:7).
19. Laban's evil towards Jacob sparked retribution by **God** in the form of deflating his herds to minimum giving maximum wealth to Jacob (30:9).
20. Laban blew opportunity to garnish future prosperity as it might benefit his household.

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21. This is the emphasis on the sister's 2nd statement of reasoning that Laban has "squandered" **our purchase price**.
22. Laban's greed and stupidity resulted in his blessing by association being **taken away** from him.
23. In the process he has shown his total lack of appreciation for the real value of his daughters as a **father** and in turn has distanced himself from them with disdain due to their relationship with **Jacob**.
24. In other words, any +V association with Jacob's household is considered alien to Laban and grounds for his -V to treat them with contempt.
25. Vs.16 then exposes the sister's spiritual orientation to Jacob's speech, "**Surely all the wealth which God has taken away from our father belongs to us and our children**/kiy kol -aser 'asher natsal 'elohiym min 'ab lamed hu' waw lamed ben".
26. They too see the hand of **God** in transferring their father's short-lived fortune into Jacob's and their hands.
27. The English verb "**has taken away**" is the same Hebrew verb *natsal* used in vs.9 by Jacob indicating a "rescue from danger".
28. The deliverance is from a greed driven negative believer that would use money in continuing to manipulate and hold sway over their lives.
29. Laban's forfeited **wealth** in all its forms are better off with their positive husband and family.
30. Laban has no more to offer that could otherwise have negative influence for all concerned.
31. The use of the verb *natsal* is the sister's way of saying they are in total agreement with Jacob's assessment in vs.9 and that **God** is for Jacob and against Laban.
32. **God** has provided all of the overt evidence coupled with doctrine for the sister's to rationally come to recognize their own deliverance from the grip of -V providing a path for +V to enjoy maximum blessing.
33. How they avail themselves to the opportunity of deliverance will be unique with each sister.
34. However, it is sufficient for the time being that both sisters agree that being on the side of the POG that delivers is the right decision.
35. They thus conclude, "**now then, do whatever God has said to you**/waw -attah kol 'asher 'amar 'elohiym 'el -asah".
36. In other words, "We are with **God and you**".

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JACOB'S DEPARTURE FROM PADDAN-ARAM

EXEGESIS VERSES 17 – 21:

וַיָּקָם יַעֲקֹב וַיִּשָּׂא אֶת־בָּנָיו וְאֶת־נָשָׁיו עַל־הַגַּמְלִים: ^{WTT} Genesis 31:17

^{NAS} Genesis 31:17 Then Jacob arose and put his children and his wives upon camels; (7

וַיָּקָם יַעֲקֹב וַיִּשָּׂא אֶת־בָּנָיו וְאֶת־נָשָׁיו עַל־הַגַּמְלִים [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: qum; "and he arose"; + proper n: "Jacob"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: nasa'; "and lifted up/put"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: ben; "his sons"; + waw conj. + sign of d.o. + n/com/f/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ishshah; "and his wives"; + prep: -al + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: gamal; "upon the camels"])

וַיִּנְהַג אֶת־כָּל־מִקְנֵהוּ וְאֶת־כָּל־רֶכֶשׁוֹ אֲשֶׁר רָכַשׁ
מִקְנֵה קְנִיָּנוֹ אֲשֶׁר רָכַשׁ בְּפָדֵן אֲרָם לְבֹא אֶל־יִצְחָק אָבִיו
אֶרְצָה כְּנַעַן: ^{WTT} Genesis 31:18

^{NAS} Genesis 31:18 and he drove away all his livestock and all his property which he had

gathered, רָכַשׁ אֲשֶׁר רָכַשׁ כָּל־מִקְנֵהוּ וְאֶת־כָּל־רֶכֶשׁוֹ אֲשֶׁר רָכַשׁ [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: nahag; "and he drove away/led away"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr: kol + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: miqeneh; "all of his livestock"; + waw conj. + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr: kol + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: rekush; "and all of his property/goods"; + rel.pro: 'asher + v/qal/PF/3ms: rakash; "which he had acquired/collected"])

his acquired livestock which he had gathered in Paddan-aram, to go to the land of Canaan

to his father Isaac. אָב יִצְחָק אֶל בֹּא ל פָּדֵן אֲרָם ב רָכַשׁ אֲשֶׁר קְנִיָּן מִקְנֵהוּ (מִקְנֵהוּ) אָב יִצְחָק אֶל בֹּא ל פָּדֵן אֲרָם [n/com/m/s/constr: miqeneh; "the livestock of"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: qineyan; "his wealth"; + rel.pro: 'asher + v/qal/PF/3ms: rakash; "which he had acquired"; + prep: bet + proper n: "in Paddan-aram"; + prep: lamed w/ v/qal/inf/constr: bo'; "to go"; + prep: 'el + proper n: "to Isaac"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ab; "his father"; + n/com/f/s/constr: 'erets + proper n: "to the land of Canaan"])

וְלָבָן הָלַךְ לְגֹזֵז אֶת־צֹאֲנוֹ וַתִּגְנֹב רָחֵל
אֶת־הַתְּרָפִים אֲשֶׁר לְאָבִיהָ: ^{WTT} Genesis 31:19

^{NAS} Genesis 31:19 When Laban had gone to shear his flock, then Rachel stole the

household idols that were her father's. רָחֵל גָּנְבָה וַיֵּצֵא אֶת־גִּזְזוֹ לְהַלֵּךְ לָבָן (וְלָבָן) אֶת־הַתְּרָפִים אֲשֶׁר לְאָבִיהָ [waw conj. + proper n: "when Laban"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: halak

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{lit. to walk}; "had gone"; + prep: lamed w/ v/qal/inf/constr: gazaz; "to shear"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/f/s/constr. w/3ms suff: tso'n; "his flock"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: ganab; "then she stole"; + proper n: "Rachel"; + sign of d.o. + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: teraphiym; "the idols"; + rel.pro: 'asher + prep: lamed + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3fs suff: 'ab; "which were for her father"])

וַיִּגְנַב יַעֲקֹב אֶת־לֵב לְבִן הָאֲרָמִי עַל־בְּלִי הַגִּיד
לוֹ כִּי בָרַח הוּא׃^{WTT} Genesis 31:20

^{NAS} Genesis 31:20 (Revised) **And Jacob stole the heart of Laban the Aramean, by not telling him that he was fleeing.** (וַיִּגְנַב יַעֲקֹב אֶת־לֵב לְבִן הָאֲרָמִי עַל־בְּלִי הַגִּיד לוֹ כִּי בָרַח הוּא) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: ganab; "and he stole" + proper n: "Jacob"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr: leb; "the heart of"; + proper n: "Laban"; + d.a. + proper n: 'arammiy; "the Aramean"; + prep: -al + adv: beliy {adv. of negation} "upon without"; + v/Hiphil/PF/3ms: nagad; "causing to make known"; + prep. w/3ms suff: lamed; "to him"; + conj: kiy; "that"; + v/qal/ptc/m/s/abs: barach; "fleeing"; + pro/3ms: hu'; "was he"])

וַיִּבְרַח הוּא וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ וַיֵּקָם וַיַּעֲבֹר אֶת־הַנָּהָר
וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת־פָּנָיו הָרַ הַגִּלְעָד׃^{WTT} Genesis 31:21

^{NAS} Genesis 31:21 **So he fled with all that he had; and he arose and crossed the Euphrates River, and set his face toward the hill country of Gilead.** (וַיִּבְרַח הוּא וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ וַיֵּקָם וַיַּעֲבֹר אֶת־הַנָּהָר וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת־פָּנָיו הָרַ הַגִּלְעָד) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: barach; "so he fled"; + pro/3ms: hu'; "he himself"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/constr: kol; "and all of"; + rel.pro: 'asher + prep. w/3ms suff: lamed; "which was for him"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: qum; "and he arose"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: -abar; "and passed over/crossed"; + sign of d.o. + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: nahar; "the River/Euphrates"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: siym; "and set"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/b/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: paneh; "his face"; + n/com/m/s/constr: har; "toward the hill country of"; + d.a. + proper n: gile-ad; "Gilead"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 17 – 21:

1. In this section we learn specifically that Jacob's clandestine meeting with **Rachel** and Leah was in part to ensure their support for his plan to leave **Laban** and company secretly (vs.20).
2. The details of the departure itself are brief.
3. The most notable feature of the departure is the charge of theft by both **Rachel** and **Jacob** (vss.19-20).
4. As we will see, one act was sin, the other pointing to sin.

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5. Having the assurance of his wives in support, **Jacob** rolls into action preparing for the long journey illustrated in the opening phrase “**Then Jacob arose/waw qum Jacob**”.
6. Considering his immense wealth, the task would be daunting requiring delegation of duties and responsibilities.
7. With all in the ready, he loads up with his most precious cargo of wealth being stated first for emphasis, “**Then Jacob arose and put his children and his wives upon camels/waw qum Jacob waw nasa’ ben waw ‘ishshah –al gamal**”.
8. Immediately the author introduces family as priority in context which later becomes a bone of contention between **Jacob** and **Laban** (cf.vss.26,28).
9. Of the animals **Jacob** possessed, **camels** would be of the most value for the journey at hand in transporting people and goods.
10. Acting as “drover”, **Jacob** leads the way for the exodus from **Paddan-aram, to go to the land of Canaan to his father Isaac** (vs.18).
11. This being the first mention of **Isaac** by name since Jacob’s dream in 28:13 catches the reader’s eye.
12. Jacob’s heart lies not only in the land of promise, but to return to his **father**.
13. It appears **Jacob** has a new and healthy appreciation for his own dad after spending 20 years under the authoritative thumb of his uncle **Laban**.
14. The twice mentioned “**livestock/miqeneh**” in vs.18 draws attention to the vast herds of sheep and goats of which God blessed **Jacob** (cf. use of noun vs.9).
15. Further emphasis is placed on his legitimate acquisition of all that he possessed as the noun *rekush* and cognate verb *rakash* that mean “**collected** (or purchased) **property**” are used 3x.
16. This as a reminder that **Jacob** has become a victim of false accusation as a thief (vs.1).
17. The author parenthetically informs the reader in vs.19 that “**When Laban had gone to shear his flock, then Rachel stole the household idols that were her father’s/waw laban halak lamed gazaz tso’n waw ganab Rachel ha teraphiym ‘asher lamed ‘ab**”.
18. This obviously occurred sometime between the secret meeting of husband and wives (vss.4-16) and departure while everyone in Jacob’s **household** would be preoccupied with preparations.
19. It shows opportunity for **Jacob** leaving undetected as his uncle would be away from the homestead.
20. **Rachel** also takes opportunity of her **father’s** absence to steal his **idols**.
21. This was done without Jacob’s knowledge.
22. Her actions would later put the caravan’s progress in jeopardy (cf.vss.30ff).
23. The Hebrew term *teraphiym* used to describe these **idols** point towards **idols** set up as a “shrine” in one’s home.
24. These were usually small **idols** (though could be life size, cp.1Sam19:13,16) that could be used to represent family ancestors and often of significant value.
25. They are associated with divination. Eze.21:21; Zec.10:2
26. They were often taken on journeys to bring good luck.
27. The question is why did **Rachel** steal them?
28. The answer lies in the fact that while she was in agreement to leave, she was not willing to let go of her past.
29. She was not willing to completely separate from a form of religious reversionism clinging to the mysticism it promoted.

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30. For **Rachel**, they were to be her St. Christopher, the patron of strength, travel and travelers.
31. She examples a believer that even though may adhere to the truth in part, they are not completely committed with sufficient focus to complete a successful Ph₂. Cp.Luk.9:61-62
32. More importantly to the immediate text, the **idols** suggest the kind of religious reversionism in which **Laban** was steeped.
33. He worshiped family combined with mysticism of praying to the dead (cf. divination; 30:27).
34. Laban's family was his god deemed most important in life.
35. As such, **Laban** becomes a perfect example of the hypocrisy of religious reversionism.
36. He touts sanctity of family and yet has treated them like *skubala*.
37. Recognizing this then helps interpret vs.20, “**And Jacob stole the heart of Laban the Aramean, by not telling him that he was fleeing/waw ganab Jacob leb laban ha ‘arammiy – al beliy nagad lamed kiy barach hu**”.
38. The NAS translation “*deceived*” is unfortunate, though understandable i.e., deception alone indicates sin on the part of **Jacob**.
39. Of the 57x the Hebrew *ganab* (**stole**) is used, only in Gen.31 is it translated *deceive* and that pertaining to the context of our verse (cf.vss.26,27; used 3x).
40. Interpreters pounce on the implication suggested in the NAS to say that **Jacob** has definitely sinned against his uncle (*deceived*).
41. The Hebrew verb means to steal, be a thief, carry away, kidnap.
42. Kidnapping is what **Laban** will accuse his nephew of later (cf.vs.26).
43. The Hebrew phrase “**stole the heart**” is here euphemistic portraying **Laban** as having felt betrayed by **Jacob**.
44. That because **Jacob** did **not** inform him one bit as intending to leave.
45. That **Laban** worships family, such an act by a family member would be unthinkable.
46. Remember, **Laban** examples the hypocrisy of religious reversionism.
47. Only in Laban's eyes is *deceit* assumed.
48. However, **Jacob** was under no obligation to tell **Laban** anything; Laban's false accusation later of kidnapping his family shows that the idea of *deceit* is simply a trumped up charge.
49. To steal “**the heart of Laban**” is to “rob him of religious privilege of serving his **idols**” i.e., to cheat him from worshipping the desire of **heart** (his gods) by taking his family from him.
50. Worship of family is where his **heart** lies; **Jacob stole his heart**.
51. In Laban's eyes, **Jacob** should have exhausted every avenue to otherwise avoid leaving in such a way (covertly).
52. This is further insinuated by the Hebrew adverb *beliy* (adv. of negation: **not**) that has the root meaning “to wear out/exhaust” as to failing to inform **Laban** of their departure.
53. In other words, **Jacob** didn't cater to Laban's religiosity in any verbal sparring.
54. Laban's religiosity holds no sway with Jacob's decision and he leaves post-haste, “**with all that he had/ha' waw kol 'asher lamed**” (vs.21).
55. After putting some distance between he and **Laban**, **Jacob** regroups (tightens the ranks) per the phrase “**and he arose/waw qum**”.
56. A major hurdle was to cross the *Euphrates River* only referred to as “**the River/ha nahar**” in the Hebrew.
57. This assumes that Haran of **Paddan-Aram** was located on the north side of the *Euphrates*.
58. He then made a bee-line for **the hill of Gilead** located on the east side of the Jordan River between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea.

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LABAN PURSUES JACOB

EXEGESIS VERSES 22 – 25:

וַיִּגַד לְלָבָן בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי כִּי בָרַח יַעֲקֹב: ^{WTT} Genesis 31:22

^{NAS} Genesis 31:22 When it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob had fled, (נגד 7)

לָבָן בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי כִּי בָרַח יַעֲקֹב [waw consec. + v/Hophal/IPF/3ms: nagad; "when it was caused to be made known"; + prep: lamed + proper n: "to Laban"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: yom; "on the day"; + d.a. + adj/m/s/abs: sheliyshi; "the third one"; + conj: kiy; "that"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: barach; "he had fled"; + proper n: "Jacob"]

וַיִּקַּח אֶת-אָחָיו עִמּוֹ וַיִּרְדֹּף אַחֲרָיו הָרֶדֶף שִׁבְעַת יָמִים וַיִּדְבֹּק אֹתוֹ בְּהַר הַגִּלְעָד: ^{WTT} Genesis 31:23

^{NAS} Genesis 31:23 then he took his kinsmen with him, and pursued him a distance of seven days' journey; and he overtook him in the hill country of Gilead. (עם אח את לקח ו)

וַיִּקַּח אֶת-אָחָיו עִמּוֹ וַיִּרְדֹּף אַחֲרָיו הָרֶדֶף שִׁבְעַת יָמִים וַיִּדְבֹּק אֹתוֹ בְּהַר הַגִּלְעָד [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: laqach; "then he took"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/pl/constr. /w/3ms suff: 'ach; "his kinsmen/brothers"; + prep. w/3ms suff: -im; "with him"; + waw consec. + v/qaal/IPF/3ms: radaph; "and he pursued/followed after"; + prep. w/3fs suff: 'acherey; "him afterwards"; + n/com/b/s/constr: derek; "a road of/journey of"; + adj/m/s/constr: sheba-; "seven"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: yom; "days"; + waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3ms: dabaq {caused to cling}; "he caused to catch/got close to"; + sign of d.o. w/3ms suff: 'eth; "him"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr: har; "in the hill country of"; + d.a. + proper n: "Gilead"]

וַיָּבֹא אֱלֹהִים אֶל-לָבָן הָאַרְמִי בַחֲלֹם הַלַּיְלָה וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הַשְׁמַר לְךָ פֶּן-תִּדְבֹּר עִם-יַעֲקֹב מִטוֹב עַד-רָע: ^{WTT} Genesis 31:24

^{NAS} Genesis 31:24 And God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream of the night, and said to him, (ל אמר ו לילה ה חלום ה ב ארמי ה לבן אל אלהים בוא ו)

[waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: bo'; "and He came"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiym; "God"; + prep: 'el + proper n: "to Laban"; + d.a. + proper n: "the Aramean"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/s/constr: chalom; "in a dream of"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: layelah; "the night"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar + prep. w/3ms suff: lamed; "and He said to him"]

"Be careful that you do not speak to Jacob either good or bad." (עם דבר פן ל שמר)

וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הַשְׁמַר לְךָ פֶּן-תִּדְבֹּר עִם-יַעֲקֹב מִטוֹב עַד-רָע [v/Niphal/imp/m/s: shamar; "be on guard/be careful"; + prep.

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w/2ms suff: lamed; "for you"; + conj: pen; "lest/that not"; + v/Piel/IPF/2ms: dabar; "you speak"; + prep: -im + proper n: "with Jacob"; + prep: min; "from"; + n/com/m/s/abs: tob; "good"; + prep: -ad; "until/as far as"; + adj/m/s/abs: ra-; "evil/bad"])

וַיִּשָׁג לָבָן אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וַיַּעֲקֹב אֶת־אֶהְלוֹ בְּהָרָה
וּלְבָן תִּקַּע אֶת־אָהְלוֹ בְּהָרָה הַגִּלְעָדִי׃

WTT Genesis 31:25

^{NAS} Genesis 31:25 **And Laban caught up with Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country,** (וַיִּשָׁג לָבָן אֶת יַעֲקֹב וַיַּעֲקֹב אֶת אֶהְלוֹ בְּהָרָה [waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3ms: nasag; "and he reached/overtook"; + proper n: "Laban"; + sign of d.o. + proper n: "Jacob"; + waw conj. + proper n: "and Jacob"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: taqa- {to strike/blow}; "he pitched"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ohel; "his tent"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: har; "in the hill country"])

and Laban with his kinsmen camped in the hill country of Gilead. (וַיִּשָׁג לָבָן אֶת אֶת תִּקַּע לָבָן וְאָחֵי אֶת־אָהְלוֹ בְּהָרָה הַגִּלְעָדִי [waw conj. + proper n: "and Laban"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: taqa- {lit. strike}; "he pitched camp"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ach; "with his kinsmen"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr: har; "in the hill country of"; + d.a. + proper n: "Gilead"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 22 – 25:

1. **Jacob** was on his **third day** (*yom sheliyshiy*) when news of his exit from Padadan-aram reached Laban's ears.
2. The Hophal form of the verb “**it was told/nagad**” is causative passive meaning that **Laban** only found out through others.
3. This suggests that **Laban** was still out and about engaged in sheep-shearing when others located him and told him of the news.
4. **Laban** springs into action calling in the help of his “**kinsman/brothers**’ach” to form a search party to go and hunt **Jacob** down.
5. That **Laban** had access to other relatives in the immediate vicinity to come to his aid explains Jacob's concern of defending his family i.e., he would be greatly outnumbered.
6. This gives a strategic sense to why **Jacob** “*set his face toward the hill country of Gilead*” in vs.21.
7. He was booking it for terrain that would provide added advantage for natural defense in the event of attack.
8. It was in the very vicinity of **Gilead** that **Laban** and company gained a visual on Jacob's band after they “**pursued him seven days**’ journey/radaph ‘acherey derek sheba- yom”.
9. This means 10 days of travel by **Jacob** had by then transpired.
10. The distance from the Euphrates to the edge of the **hill country of Gilead** is estimated some 350 miles as the crow flies.
11. This means that in 10 days of travel for **Jacob** they kept a 35-40 mile a **day** pace for the entire entourage which is exceptional, but not impossible.

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12. For **Laban** and company they covered the same distance averaging around 50 miles per day over 7 days.
13. With **Jacob** in his sights, vs.24 then reveals the intentions of **Laban** once he directly encountered **Jacob**.
14. In a **dream** on the night before confronting **Jacob** (cf.vs.29), **God** appeared to **Laban** warning him, “**Be careful that you do not speak to Jacob either good or bad/shamar lamed pen dabar –im Jacob min tob –ad ra-**“.
15. The admonition “**do not speak either good or bad**” means **Laban** is not to seek to influence **Jacob** in any way by means of a favorable enticement or threat that would deter **Jacob** returning home.
16. It was thus **Laban’s** intent to get **Jacob** to return to Haran, by force if necessary.
17. Though left unspoken, the intent of the warning on **Laban’s** part was for him to consider that in the event of disobedience to **God**, he put his own life at stake.
18. A sense of humor by **God** seems to exist as this real life “inspiration” is set in contrast to **Laban’s** supposed divine disclosure received earlier in 30:27.
19. **Laban** wanted to tout his ability of communicating with **God** and now that it really happens it obviously is disconcerting.
20. **Laban** realizes he is treading on thin ice here.
21. Apart from avoiding any attempts to “sway” **Jacob** back to Haran, **Laban** was free to say and do whatever he wished as the subsequent narrative makes apparent.
22. Vs.25 advances the scene placing **Laban** on **Jacob’s** “doorstep”, “**And Laban caught up with Jacob/waw nasag Laban Jacob**.”
23. Both companies of men are seen to have dug in set for confrontation.
24. The choice of verb translated “**pitched**” and “**camped**” respectively (*taqa-*) has a sense of preparing to attack if necessary.
25. The verb means to strike a blow and is used of setting up tents by pounding stakes into the ground.
26. Its most frequent use is in connection with the blowing of trumpets which could mean signaling attack (e.g., Jdg.3:27).
27. The other term for pitching a tent is the verb *nathah* used in Gen.12:8; 26:25; 33:19; 35:21.
28. Vs.25 recognizes that both parties were prepared for violence if necessary.
29. However, Divine intervention diffused the one party that would have ignited a fight.

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LABAN AIRS HIS GRIEVANCE

EXEGESIS VERSES 26 – 30:

וַיֹּאמֶר לְבָן לְיַעֲקֹב מָה יַעֲקֹב מְהָ עָשִׂיתָ וַתִּגְנֹב אֶת־לִבִּי
וַתִּנְהַג אֶת־בָּנֹתַי כְּשָׂבִיּוֹת חָרֵב׃

WTT Genesis 31:26

^{NAS} Genesis 31:26 Then Laban said to Jacob, "What have you done by deceiving me and carrying away my daughters like captives of the sword? (מָה יַעֲקֹב לְ לָבָן אָמַר ו) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + proper n: "Laban"; + prep: lamed + proper n: "to Jacob"; + interr.pro: mah; "What?"; + v/qal/PF/2ms: -asah; "have you done"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/2ms: ganab {lit. steal; same as vs.20}; "and you stole"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: lebab; "my heart"; + waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/2ms: nahag {lit. to lead, drive; same as vs.18}; "and carried away"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/f/pl/constr. w/1cs suff: bath; "my daughters"; + prep: kaph; "like"; + v/qal/pass/ptc/sf/pl/constr: shabah; "being captives of"; + n/com/f/s/abs: chereb; "the sword"])

לָמָּה נִחַבְתָּ לְבָרְחָ וַתִּגְנֹב אֹתִי וְלֹא־הִגַּדְתָּ לִּי
וְאֲשַׁלְחֶךָ בְּשִׂמְחָה וּבְשָׂרִים בְּתֶף וּבְכִנּוֹר׃

WTT Genesis 31:27

^{NAS} Genesis 31:27 "Why did you flee secretly and deceive me, and did not tell me, (לָמָּה) [interr.part: lamah; "Why?"; + v/Niphal/PF/2ms: chaba' {lit. hide}; "did you in secret"; + prep: lamed w/ v/qal/inf/constr: barach; "for fleeing"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/2ms: ganab; "and steal {deceive; same as vs.26}; + sign of d.o. w/1cs suff: 'eth; "from me"; + waw conj. + neg.part: lo'; "and not"; + v/Hiphil/PF/2ms: nagad; "make known"; + prep. w/1cs suff: lamed; "to me"])

so that I might have sent you away with joy and with songs, with timbrel and with lyre; (ו) [waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/1cs: shalach; "so I might send off/send away"; + prep: bet + n/com/f/s/abs: simechah; "with joy/merriment"; + waw conj. + prep: bet + n/com/m/pl/abs: shiyar; "and with songs"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/abs: toph; "with tambourine/timbrel"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/abs: kinnor; "with harp/lyre"])

וְלֹא נִטְשִׁיתָנִי לְנִשְׁק לְבָנִי וּלְבָנֹתַי עִתָּה הַסְּבִלָּה
עָשׂוּ׃

WTT Genesis 31:28

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^{NAS} Genesis 31:28 **and did not allow me to kiss my sons and my daughters? Now you have done foolishly.** (וַיֵּשְׁבֶה לִּי וְלִבְנֵי לְנִשְׁקָ לְנִשְׁשָׁ לֹא וְ) [waw conj. + neg.part: lo' + v/qal//PF/2ms w/1cs suff: nashash; "and did not permit me"; + prep: lamed w/ v/Piel/inf/constr: nashaq; "for to kiss"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/1cs suff: ben; "to my sons"; + waw conj. + prep: lamed + n/com/f/pl/constr. w/1cs suff: bath; "and for my daughters"; + adv: -attah; "now"; + v/Hiphil/PF/2ms: sakal; "you acted foolishly"; + v/qal/inf/constr: -asah; "doing so"])

וְיֵשׁ-לְאֵל יְדֵי לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּכֶם רַע וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבִיכֶם
אָמַשׁ אָמַר אֵלַי לֵאמֹר הַשְׁמַר לְךָ מִדְּבַר עִם-יַעֲקֹב מִטּוֹב
עַד-רָע: ^{WTT} Genesis 31:29

^{NAS} Genesis 31:29 **"It is in my power to do you harm, but the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, 'Be careful not to speak either good or bad to Jacob.'** (אֵל לַיֵּשׁ דְּבַר מִן לַשְׁמַר אָמַר לַאֵל אָמַר אָב אֱלֹהִים וְרַע עִם עֲשֵׂה לַיֵּד רַע עַד טוֹב מִן יַעֲקֹב עִם) [adv: yesh; "there exists"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/s/constr: 'el; "for power"; + n/com/f/s/constr. w/1cs suff: yad; "by my hand"; + prep: lamed w/ v/qal/inf/constr: -asah; "to do"; + prep. w/2mpl suff: -im; "with you all"; + adj/m/s/abs: ra-; "harm/evil"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/pl/constr: 'elohiym; "but God of"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/2mpl suff: 'ab; "your father"; + adv: 'emesh; "yesterday/last night"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: 'amar + prep. w/1cs suff: 'el + prep: lamed w/ v/qal/inf/constr: 'amar; "He said to me saying"; + v/Niphal/imp/m/s: shamar; "Guard/be careful"; + prep. w/2ms suff: lamed; "for you"; + prep: min w/ v/Piel/inf/constr: dabar; "from saying"; + prep: -im + proper n: "with Jacob"; + prep: min + n/com/m/s/abs: tob + prep: -ad + adj/m/s/abs: ra-; "from good until evil/bad"])

וְעַתָּה הֲלֹךְ הַלְכָתָּ כִּי-נִכְסַף נִכְסַפְתָּה לְבַיִת
אֲבִיךָ לָמָּה גָּנַבְתָּ אֶת-אֱלֹהֵי: ^{WTT} Genesis 31:30

^{NAS} Genesis 31:30 **"And now you have indeed gone away because you longed greatly for your father's house; but why did you steal my gods?"** (כִּסָּף כִּי הֹלֵךְ הֹלַךְ עַתָּה וְ) [waw conj. + adv: -attah; "and now"; + v/qal/inf/abs: halak {lit. walk}; "walking"; + v/qal/PF/2ms: halak; "you have walked"; + conj: ki; "because"; + v/Niphal/inf/abs: kasaph; "longing for"; + v/Niphal/PF/2ms: kasaph; "you have longed for"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/s/constr: bayith + n/com/m/s/constr. w/2ms suff: 'ab; "for the house of your father"; + interr.part: lamah; "Why?"; + v/qal/PF/2ms: ganab; "have you stolen"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/1cs suff: 'elohiym; "my gods"])

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ANALYSIS VERSES 26 – 30:

1. The reader might think that the normal believer having been warned by God shutting the doors on one's intent and purpose would "cut their losses, pack up and move on" (cf.vs.24).
2. But the norm is not what we find with the religious reversionist **Laban**.
3. He again examples how the STA driven believer often will by-pass even the more obvious common sense application of doctrine to satisfy its arrogance.
4. He shows that religious reversionism will work itself around obvious doctrine in order to facilitate the STA/human viewpoint agenda.
5. Instead of doing the practical thing, **Laban** thinks he carries an "ace in the hole"!
6. He will set out to prove he is really a victim in the scheme of things and that God's warning did not take in account the whole situation.
7. **Laban** being the scheming, conniving individual he is, will try to trump doctrine and find a way around it to secure his original plan.
8. If he can convince others (and **God**) that **Jacob** has ripped him off, then the law will take up his cause giving him recourse in judgment otherwise.
9. His approach is to present himself as the innocent one making **Jacob** out as the evil doer.
10. **Laban** serves as both prosecutor of **Jacob** and defendant of himself to facilitate his agenda.
11. Further his approach is typical as it employees an air of affability/warmth and care but is rife with hypocrisy and innuendo.
12. He begins by attacking Jacob's character, "**What have you done by deceiving me**" that is literally in the Hebrew "**What have you done even having stole my heart/mah –asah waw ganab lebab**".
13. **Laban** now openly admits what the author previously informed the reader in vs.21, that **Jacob** transgressed by disrespecting Laban's religious belief of worshipping family (*see analysis vs.21*).
14. Laban's practice of idolatry blinds him fueling his STA to censure doctrine pursuing his own religious agenda being self-deceived in his life quests.
15. The statement is designed to color **Jacob** as one that has no respect for another's belief.
16. It would appeal to the camaraderie of others present bound in idolatry.
17. The evidence of Jacob's inconsiderate attitude is seen in the 2nd part of the accusation, "**and carrying away my daughters like captives of the sword/waw nahag bath kaph shabah chereb**".
18. The statement is nothing less than accusing **Jacob** forcing his **daughters** to go with him such as with **captives of war** tantamount in Laban's eyes as kidnapping.
19. It paints **Jacob** as the aggressive one.
20. Laban's **daughters** are the very things his idols represent (ancestors).
21. The verb "**carrying away**" in context illustrates that any "**deceiving**" implied by the verb *ganab* is only in the mind of **Laban** and not a sin on Jacob's part.
22. The accusation of kidnapping is slanderous at the least.
23. What Rachel and Leah think of their father has been made abundantly clear (cf.vss.14-16).
24. If anyone was trying to force someone with pressure to do something, it was their father.
25. **Jacob** has disrespected Laban's ideological belief of family over **God** and violated its very sanctity by stealing away Laban's **daughters**.

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26. **Laban** further attacks Jacob's character insinuating one that was a conspirator and dishonest in vs.27, "**Why did you flee secretly and deceive me, and did not tell me**/lamah chaba' lamed barach waw ganab 'eth waw lo' nagad lamed".
27. **Laban** paints the covert departure (**flee secretly**) of **Jacob** as someone that had something to hide.
28. He then insinuates that it was because he had taken what did not belong to him (NAS "**deceive**" is again the Hebrew *ganab* meaning to steal).
29. This is a preliminary hint to Laban's "ace in the hole".
30. The phrase "**and did not tell me**" implies hurt feelings on the part of **Laban** who would have otherwise treated **Jacob** in grace for the proposed infractions.
31. **Laban** then pours it on to stir up the emotions of all by what he claims he would have done if only **Jacob** had first come to him.
32. **Jacob** supposedly robbed **Laban** opportunity to show his love for him by sending him **away** in a festive spirit, "**with joy and with songs, with timbrel and with lyre**/bet simechah waw bet shiyr bet toph bet kinnor".
33. In other words, **Jacob** didn't allow **Laban** to apply celebration of family according to his idolatrous tradition (as if he would have...not!).
34. **Laban** then doubles up on the syrupy emotions in vs.28, "**and did not allow me to kiss my sons and my daughters?**/waw lo' nathash nashaq lamed ben waw lamed bath".
35. All this to put upon **Jacob** a guilt trip for dissing his father-in-law and his religion while making himself appear as a loving family man trying to live his life according to his beliefs.
36. That's the front that Laban's religious reversionism must maintain to preserve its ideology of family worship.
37. Obviously his hypocrisy is as sticky as his maudlin words suggest.
38. In vs.29, **Laban** changes gears in his role of prosecution, "**It is in my power to do you harm**/yesh lamed 'el yad lamed -asah -im ra-".
39. This is as close as he will come to making a threat towards **Jacob** as a measure of Laban's willingness to test **God**.
40. It serves to hint at **Laban** having the upper hand in the situation.
41. He then quickly cuts short any real threat and reveals his **dream** of the **night** before when **God** told him, "**Be careful not to speak either good or bad**/shamar lamed min dabar min tob -ad ra-".
42. As a fair prosecutor, **Laban** wants to ensure he establishes the appearance that he respects Jacob's belief and would not violate the terms of his **God**.
43. This is the emphasis of the phrase "**the God of your father**/'elohiym 'ab" contrasting Jacob's background to Laban's.
44. Obviously, the real reason **Laban** won't cross the line of Divine mandate is fear for his own life.
45. Further, Laban's purpose for iterating God's command is to set the doctrine up as superficial.
46. In other words, that's how the religious reversionist often looks at their ideology as that which is really insignificant unless it can be used to their advantage.
47. The advantage for Laban's ideological spiel and reference to God's words is that he believes he can force the issue to his advantage.
48. In vs.30, **Laban** winds down with the typical condescending method used by lawyers stating a supposed matter of fact in reflection, "**And now you have indeed gone away because you**

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longed greatly for your father's house/waw –attah halak halak kiy kasaph kasaph lamed bayith 'ab".

49. The dramatic effect is seen in the grammar for emphasis that in the Hebrew literally states, **“going away you have gone”** and **“longing for you have longed”**.
50. The intent of the language is as if to say, *“So you will claim that the real reason you have left in such fashion is that you miss daddy so much...and what, in such a hurry you couldn't even say goodbye?”*
51. It is the final part of vs.30 that **Laban** then plays his trump card, **“Why did you steal my gods?/lamah ganab 'elohiym”**.
52. The whole concept of “stealing Laban's **heart**” is wrapped up in these words.
53. There is no innuendo and the accusation is one of direct blame.
54. Obviously **Laban** doesn't really care **why Jacob** might have stolen the idols as his whole argument apart from Divine disclosure was a fabrication anyways.
55. All he cares about is getting his way in lieu of what doctrine otherwise has communicated to him.
56. The accused theft would be a case of breaking the law and rendering Jacob's family to the mercy of the court.
57. **Laban** would avoid violating God's command and would still get his way.
58. The question any righteous court should now ask is, “How do you **steal** someone's **gods?**”
59. If they can be stolen, what good are they?
60. This irony is not lost on those that adjure idolatry.
61. Paul makes clear that idols are nothing; it is the fallacy of the ideology behind idolatry that makes it demonic. 1Cor.8:4-5; 10:19,20
62. That which takes precedence over BD as led by the STA amounts to idolatry. Col.3:5
63. The command is to *“flee from idolatry”* (cp.1Cor.10:14) ironically exactly what **Jacob** is doing by leaving Laban's household.
64. That Laban's confrontation finds foundation in idolatry, it is of no surprise that it can be easily refuted and dismantled with the truth.

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JACOB CONFESSES SIN AND PASSES JUDGMENT

EXEGESIS VERSES 31 – 32:

וַיַּעַן יַעֲקֹב וַיֹּאמֶר לְלָבָן כִּי יִרְאַתִּי כִּי אֶמְרָתִי
פֶּן-תִּגְזַל אֶת-בְּנוֹתַי מֵעַמִּי:

^{NAS} Genesis 31:31 Then Jacob answered and said to Laban, "Because I was afraid, for I said, 'Lest you would take your daughters from me by force.' (לֹא אָמַר ו יַעֲקֹב עַנְהוּ ו)
[waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: -anah; "and he answered/responded"; + proper n: "Jacob"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + prep: lamed + proper n: "to Laban"; + conj: kiy; "Because"; + v/qal/PF/1cs: yara'; "I feared"; + conj: kiy; "for"; + v/qal/PF/1cs: 'amar; "I said"; + conj: pen; "Lest/in case"; + v/qal/IPF/2ms: gatzal; "you might take by force/seize"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/f/pl/constr. w/2ms suff: bath; "your daughters"; + prep: min + prep. w/1cs suff: -im; "from {with} me")]

עִם אֲשֶׁר תִּמְצָא אֶת-אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא יִחִיָּה נֶגְדְּ אַחֵינוּ
הַכֹּרֶלֶךְ מָה עֲמָדִי וְקַח-לִּי וְלֹא-יָדַע יַעֲקֹב כִּי רָחֵל גָּנְבָתָם:

^{NAS} Genesis 31:32 "The one with whom you find your gods shall not live; (אֲשֶׁר עֲמָד)
[prep: -imma; "beside with/the one with"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "whom"; + v/qal/IPF/2ms: matsa'; "you might find"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/2ms suff: 'elohiym; "your gods"; + neg: lo' + v/qal/IPF/3ms: chayah; "will not live"]]
in the presence of our kinsmen point out what is yours among my belongings and take it for yourself." (לֹא לָקַח ו עִם מָה ל נָכַר אָח נֶגְדְּ)
[prep: neged; {lit. made conspicuous} "before/in the presence of"; + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/1cpl suff: 'ach; "our brothers/kinsmen"; + v/Hiphil/imp/m/s: nakar; "cause to acknowledge/point out"; + prep. w/2ms suff: lamed; "for you"; + interr.pro: mah; "what is?"; + prep. w/1cs suff: -im; "among mine"; + waw conj. + v/qal/imp/m/s: laqach + prep. w/2fs suff: lamed; "and take for yourself"]]

For Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them. (גִּבְרָה רָחֵל כִּי יַעֲקֹב יָדַע לֹא ו)
[waw conj. + neg: lo' + v/qal/PF/3ms: yada-; "Now he did not know"; + proper n: "Jacob"; + conj: kiy; "that"; + proper n: "Rachel"; + v/qal/PF/3fs w/3mpl suff: ganab; "had stolen them"]]

ANALYSIS VERSES 31 – 32:

1. Jacob's reply to Laban's onslaught of accusation is terse and effective.
2. It both defends against the character attack and usurps Laban's attempt at self-empowerment.

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3. That is it turns the table exposing **Laban** in the true light of his character and relegates any power of prosecution into the hands of **Jacob**.
4. **Jacob** first considers all that **Laban** has presented seen in the phrase, “**Then Jacob answered**/waw –anah Jacob”.
5. He reflects the believer that does not go off with retort apart from deliberating the facts of argument.
6. Having his thoughts together, he then addresses **Laban** per the phrase “**and said to Laban**/waw ‘amar lamed Laban”.
7. He first directs the attention to the core of Laban’s accusations of **Jacob** being guilty of sin, “**Because I was afraid**/kiy yara”.
8. He employs intellectual honesty to dethrone the intellectual dishonesty personified by **Laban**.
9. He states that any sin accounted to him was not against **Laban**, but against God under sin fear.
10. Jacob’s sin was failing to faith-rest once again in life of not trusting **God** in spite of how the circumstances appeared to him otherwise.
11. That this is Jacob’s only sin in the departure affair is supported in vs.36 when under righteous indignation he challenges **Laban** otherwise.
12. **Jacob** then states the cause for his fear, “**for I said, ‘Lest you would take your daughters from me by force’**/kiy ‘amar pen gatzal bath min –im”.
13. As our analysis of this chapter has previously pointed out, it was the threat of losing his family that prompted Jacob’s covert exodus, any sinful acts of deceit, etc. aside.
14. The past tense of the phrase, “**for I said**” harks back to his last conversation recorded with Rachel and Leah in vss.5-13.
15. This at least implies that he passed on his concerns to his wives at that time with our verse now filling in the blank.
16. Otherwise he was just talking to himself.
17. His defense for leaving in his stealthy manner changes the picture of Laban’s innuendos that **Jacob** was aggressive in nature (cf.vs.26).
18. The fact that **Laban** has rounded up all of his relatives to support him in returning his **daughters** places the weight of truth as to the aggressor right on Laban’s shoulders.
19. Jacob’s confession starts peeling away the layers of hypocrisy and intellectual dishonesty of **Laban** (application: R_B cancels/rejects both).
20. It shows the power of intellectual honesty residing with the believer willing to acknowledge true sin as they may be up against the façade of some religious reversionist running under self-righteousness.
21. The religious reversionist dismisses the presence of personal sin in the life to the degree they pursue their doctrine of demons.
22. So Jacob’s initial response directs the blame of sin to its appropriate categories and guilty parties.
23. That **Jacob** iterates that his wives would be removed “**by force**” further clears the air as whose authority they were under i.e., their husband, not their father.
24. While Rachel and Leah may still be Laban’s **daughters**, **Laban** gave up any parental authority when he sold them to **Jacob**. Cf.Eph.5:23

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25. Before God any kidnapping on their part would have to come from the father's actions, not Jacob's.
26. All of this pictures the religious reversionism of worshiping family quite well as it places Jacob's God in authority and power over what **Laban** rationalizes as his **gods** i.e., doctrine establishes true authority human viewpoint aside.
27. In vs.32, **Jacob** puts on the robe as judge over the whole matter.
28. He will first pass sentence and then call upon the witnesses of the jurors to carry out any reparations **Laban** has claimed due him.
29. The judgment: "**The one with whom you find your gods shall not live**/-immaḏ 'asher matsa' 'elohiym lo' chayah".
30. Some interpreters question the legitimacy of the punishment of death by **Jacob** just for stealing.
31. However, that is only the surface infraction/sin.
32. The more crucial sin is that the thief was stealing something they obviously coveted for themselves providing circumstantial evidence to their own practice in idolatry.
33. These particular household idols, the teraphiym, were also associated with divination as practiced by **Laban** (cf.30:27 cp.31:19).
34. This practice was a contender for capital punishment under the Law. Cp.Exo.22:18
35. Idolatry in general was grounds for national destruction and dispersion from the land. Cp.Deu.4:25,26
36. Judgment against idolatry was practiced in Job's time. Job.31:26-28
37. So a sentence of death associated with this crime centers on the spiritual realities deserving of death.
38. Two outstanding features are reflected in Jacob's sentencing of death:
 - A. He has just handed down a death sentence on his wife Rachel.
 - B. He has rendered true judgment against **Laban** for claiming these idols as his own.
39. Even though "**Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them**/lo' yada- Jacob kiy Rachel ganab", the irony is she will die prematurely even though she will be graced out presently.
40. That **Jacob** calls for the execution of the perpetrator also signifies his authority and power over his own family and people.
41. He then calls for the witness of the gathered "**kinsman**/'ach" to have first-hand observation of Laban scouring Jacob's belongings to look for the stolen idols (vs.32b).
42. This is in contrast to **Laban** offering no witnesses for his side in the trial which shows further the unrighteous deviance in his actions. Cp.Deu.19:15
43. Further the relatives could help identify Laban's property if found.
44. Jacob's move calling for sentencing and witnesses to corroborate any findings clears the judicial air that it will be **Jacob** calling the shots in the matter of his own family, not **Laban**.
45. It sets the standards of righteous judgment so that any fair minded individual present would have a hard time in objection.
46. In retrospect, if the idols had been found with **Rachel**, the stolen heart of **Laban** would have been crushed, albeit a fitting judgment for his idolatry (and hers).
47. However, so would have Jacob's heart been crushed.
48. It appears that God protects all parties concerned because of the innocence of the covenant heir delivering him from the burden and sorrow of having to carry out judgment.
49. It points out that while men carry out human judgment, God executes spiritual +J.

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RACHEL DECEIVES LABAN

EXEGESIS VERSES 33 – 35:

וַיֵּבֵא לְבֶן בְּאֵהָל יַעֲקֹב וּבְאֵהָל לְאֵה וּבְאֵהָל
שְׁתֵּי הָאֲמָהוֹת וְלֹא מָצָא וַיֵּצֵא מֵאֵהָל לְאֵה וַיֵּבֵא בְּאֵהָל רַחֵל:
WTT Genesis 31:33

^{NAS} Genesis 31:33 So Laban went into Jacob's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the tent of the two maids, but he did not find them. Then he went out of Leah's tent and entered Rachel's tent. (וַיֵּבֵא לְבֶן בְּאֵהָל יַעֲקֹב בּוֹא וְ לְאֵה אֵהָל בּוֹא וְ לְשְׁנַיִם אֵהָל בּוֹא וְ לְאֵה אֵהָל מִן יֵצֵא וְ מֵאֵה לְאֵה רַחֵל אֵהָל בּוֹא [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: bo'; "and he went"; + proper n: "Laban"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr: 'ohel; "into the tent of"; + proper n: "Jacob"; + waw conj. + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr: 'ohel; "and into the tent of"; + proper n: "Leah"; + waw conj. + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr: 'ohel; "and into the tent of"; + adj/f/dual/constr: shenayim; "the two"; + d.a. + n/com/f/pl/abs: 'amah; "maids"; + waw conj. + neg.part: lo'; + v/qal/PF/3ms: matsa'; "and did not find"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: yatsa'; "and he went out"; + prep: min + n/com/m/s/constr: 'ohel; "from the tent of"; + proper n: "Leah"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: bo' + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr: 'ohel; "and went into the tent of"; + proper n: "Rachel"])

וַיֵּשֶׁב עֲלֵיהֶם וַיִּמְשֹׁשׁ לְבֶן אֶת־כָּל־הָאֵהָל וְלֹא מָצָא:
WTT Genesis 31:34

^{NAS} Genesis 31:34 Now Rachel had taken the household idols and put them in the camel's saddle, and she sat on them. And Laban felt through all the tent, but did not find them. (מִשָּׁשׁ וְ עַל יֵשֶׁב וְ גָמֵל הָ פָר בַּ שִׁים וְ תִרְפִּים הָ אֵת לָקַח רַחֵל וְ מִשָּׁשׁ לְבֶן אֶת־כָּל־הָאֵהָל לְאֵה מִצָּא [waw conj. + proper n: "Now Rachel"; + v/qal/PF/3fs: laqach; "had taken"; + sign of d.o. + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: teraphiym; "the household idols"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs w/3mpl suff: siym; "and put them"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr: kar {lit. lamb}; "in the saddlebag of"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: gamal; "the camel"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: yashab; "and she sat"; + prep. w/3mpl suff: -al; "upon them"; + waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/3ms: mashash; "and he felt" {same as 27:12,21,22}; + proper n: "Laban"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr: kol + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: 'ohel; "in all of the tent"; + waw conj. + neg: lo' + v/qal/PF/3ms: matsa'; "and did not find"])

וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל־אֲבִיהָ אֶל־יִחָר בְּעֵינַי אֲדָנִי כִי לֹא
אוֹכַל לָקוּם מִפְּנֵיךָ כִּי־דָרַךְ נָשִׁים לִי וַיִּחַפֵּשׂ וְלֹא מָצָא
אֶת־הַתְּרָפִים:
WTT Genesis 31:35

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^{NAS} Genesis 31:35 **And she said to her father, "Let not my lord be angry that I cannot rise before you, for the manner of women is upon me." So he searched, but did not find the household idols.** (מִן קוֹם לֹ יִכַּל לֹא פִי אֲדוֹן עֵינַי בְּחֵרָה אֶל אֲבִי אִמְרִי) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: 'amar + prep: 'el + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3fs suff: 'ab; "and she said to her father"; + neg.adv: 'al; "not"; + v/qal/IPF/3ms/jussive: charah {lit. burn}; "let be angry"; + prep: bet + n/com/b/dual/constr: -ayin; "in the eyes of"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: 'adon; "my lord"; + conj: kiy; "that"; + neg: lo' + v/qal/IPF/1cs: yacal; "I am not able"; + prep: lamed w/ v/qal/inf/constr: qum; "to rise/stand"; + prep: min + n/com/b/pl/constr. w/2ms suff: paneh; "from before you"; + conj: kiy; "for/because"; + n/com/b/s/constr: derek; "the way of"; + n/com/f/pl/abs: ishshah; "women"; + prep. w/1cs suff: lamed; "is for me"; + waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/3ms: chaphash; "and he thoroughly searched"; + waw conj. + neg: lo' + v/qal/PF/3ms: matsa'; "and did not find"; + sign of the d.o. + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: teraphiyim; "the household idols"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 33 – 35:

1. The author does well relating the tense atmosphere of this situation with Jacob's response in vss.31-32 especially as it would impact **Rachel** the thief (cf.32c).
2. Her life is on the line!!
3. Strained emotions now transcend heightening to anticipation of the ultimate outcome awaiting the process of Laban's investigation.
4. In spite of Jacob's adamant defense of innocence for himself, **Laban** nevertheless pushes forward in a search for his missing gods.
5. He is compelled to distrust others and withhold grace due to his own deceitful, untrustworthy nature.
6. He begins the search in **Jacob's tent** (*'ohel*) advancing to **Leah's**, Bilhah's and Zilpah's tents, **the two maids** (*shenayim ha 'amah*).
7. It immediately becomes apparent that the living quarters for all parties of interest to **Laban** primary to his goal of forcing legal action to return Jacob and company home is his focus.
8. To simply find the missing **idols** (*teraphiyim*) in the possession of one of the servants would not be compelling enough to demand return of the whole group.
9. After an initial investigation of the parties in view, **Laban** comes up empty handed as "**he did not find them/lo' matsa**".
10. Following the natural order of tents investigated in grammatical sequence (Jacob, Leah, **the two maids**) draws attention to the repetitiveness of **Leah's tent** in the sentence, "**Then he went out of Leah's tent and entered Rachel's tent**" ending vs.33.
11. This suggests that after the initial search **Laban** returned to **Leah's** quarters for a more thorough hunt.
12. Not until then does he enter **Rachel's tent**.

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13. This supports our contention in point 7 now zeroing in on the two main potential targets in the hunt.
14. Further the narrator is subtly exposing the thinking of **Laban** as he pursues his quest.
15. Thinking in his own devious mind he would ask himself, “Where would Jacob hide the **idols** in order not to be caught with them red-handed?”
16. That **Jacob** has proclaimed a death sentence for any caught with the goods suggests he has probably hidden them on someone else...this is what Laban would probably do!!
17. Who is **Jacob’s** favorite wife??
18. Everyone knows it’s **Rachel** and therefore Leah would be a good “mule” as Jacob would probably not lose any real sleep over her loss!
19. Hence, **Rachel** would be the less suspect of all concerned.
20. Surely Jacob would never put her life in danger!
21. Yet his own STA fakes him out as she is the very thief he is looking for.
22. **Rachel** now takes on the very persona of her father in the art of deceit.
23. In vs.34, the author informs us that she “**had taken the household idols and put them in the camel’s saddle, and she sat on them**/laqach ha teraphiym waw siym bet kar ha gamal waw yashab –al”.
24. When she had determined or managed to put the **idols in the camel’s saddle** is unknown.
25. Had she taken advantage of Laban’s concentration on the other tents or had planned far in advance?
26. It makes sense that this is where she initially placed them when she stole them.
27. This so to keep them close to her and give her advantage to intercede in the case of inquisitive types or others handling her property.
28. In either case, it provided the setting necessary for her ploy in keeping them from being found.
29. The phrase that “**Laban felt through all the tent**/waw mashash laban kol ‘ohel” uses the same Hebrew word for “touching/feeling” (*mashash*) as Isaac did touching Jacob trying to identify his son in Gen.27:21,22.
30. This would indicate surface touching without any real force or aggression.
31. In other words, when **Laban** first **felt** (*mashash*) **through Rachel’s tent** it was more or less superficial and without much digging around and again nothing was found.
32. Handling her property and checking for any abnormal lumps or cavities, he eventually comes around to where **Rachel** was seated vs.35.
33. She had strategically placed herself over the skins holding the gods so that she would have to move for them to be checked.
34. She then springs her plan of deceit, “**Let not my lord be angry that I cannot rise before you, for the manner of women is upon me**/’al charah bet –ayin ‘adon kiy lo’ yacal lamed qum min paneh kiy derek ‘ishshah lamed”.
35. She politely excuses herself from moving implying that it would be embarrassing for her because she was menstruating.
36. Laban has already tricked himself into thinking that **Rachel** is most likely not the one and her excuse seems both plausible and excusable.
37. It is here that the story takes on a most repugnant and humorous twist.
38. It pokes fun at the *teraphiym* that are saved by a menstrual cycle!!
39. It illustrates religious reversionism as that rendered unclean. Cp.Lev.15:19

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40. In addition, it teaches that those associated with idolatry and/or seeking it in the form of religious reversionism are fools in life.
41. This is illustrated by **Laban** who in all his searching cannot find his gods.
42. This is in total contrast to seeking the real and living God. Cf.Deu.4:29; 1Chr.28:9; 2Chr.15:2; Pro.8:17; Heb.11:6
43. **Laban** is deceived by one that represents his family idolatry.
44. Obvious frustration sets in for **Laban** after acknowledging **Rachel's** request and he does one final thorough search of her **tent** per the Piel verb in the phrase "**So he searched/waw chaphash**".
45. His whole plan and quest of outdoing God crashes and burns as he could **not find** his little gods as they tricked him once in again in their leading role of deceiving mankind.
46. His only substantial charge is rendered null and void.
47. He is left hanging out to dry as his only serious accusation appears unfounded.
48. The trickster is tricked...what goes around comes around!!
49. Now he will have to face the righteous indignation of **Jacob** on top of it all.

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JACOB EXPRESSES RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION VSS.36-42

HIS INDIGNANT CHALLENGE RESTORING HIS PUBLIC REPUTATION

EXEGESIS VERSES 36 – 37:

WTT Genesis 31:36
 וַיֵּצֵר לַיַּעֲקֹב וַיִּרְבּוּ בְלָבוֹ וַיַּעַן יַעֲקֹב וַיֹּאמֶר לְלָבָן
 מַה־פָּשְׁעִי מָה חַטָּאתִי כִּי דָלַקְתָּ אַחֲרָי:

NAS Genesis 31:36 Then Jacob became angry and contended with Laban; and Jacob answered and said to Laban, (וַיֵּצֵר לַיַּעֲקֹב לְחַרָּה לְלָבָן וַיֵּצֵר לַיַּעֲקֹב לְחַרָּה לְלָבָן [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: charah {lit. burn}; "and it burned/angered"; + prep: lamed + proper n: "for Jacob"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: riyb; "and he contended/disputed"; + prep: bet + proper n: "with Laban"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: - anah; "and he answered"; + proper n: "Jacob"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and said"; + prep: lamed + proper n: "to Laban"])

"What is my transgression? What is my sin, that you have hotly pursued me? (פָּשַׁע מָה אַחֲרָי דַּלְקָה כִּי חַטָּאת מָה [interr.pro: mah; "what?"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: pesha-; "is my transgression/breach of trust or law"; + interr.pro: mah; "what?"; + n/com/f/s/constr. w/1cs suff: chatta'th; "is my sin" {same as 4:7; 18:20}; + conj: ki; "that"; + v/qal/PF/2ms: dalaq; "you have hotly pursued"; + adv. w/1cs suff: 'acharey; "after me"])

WTT Genesis 31:37
 כִּי־מִשְׁשַׁתָּ אֶת־כָּל־כְּלֵי מַה־מִּצְאָתָּ מִכֹּל
 כְּלֵי־בֵיתְךָ שִׁים פֶּה נִגַּד אַחֲרַי וְאֶחָיִךְ וַיִּוְכַחוּ בֵּין שְׁנֵינוּ:

NAS Genesis 31:37 "Though you have felt through all my goods, what have you found of all your household goods? (כִּי מִן מִצְאָתָּ מָה כְּלֵי כָל מִן מִשְׁשַׁתָּ כִּי [conj: ki; "though/since"; + v/Piel/PF/2ms: mashash; "you have felt/groped through"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/m/s/constr: kol; "all of"; + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/1cs suff: keliy; "my goods/articles"; + interr.pro: mah; "what?"; + v/qal/PF/2ms: matsa'; "have you found"; + prep: min + n/com/m/s/constr: kol + n/com/m/pl/constr: keliy + n/com/m/s/constr. w/2ms suff: bayith; "from all off the goods of your household"])

Set it here before my kinsmen and your kinsmen, that they may decide between us two. (כִּי מִן מִצְאָתָּ מָה כְּלֵי כָל מִן מִשְׁשַׁתָּ כִּי [v/qal/imp/m/s: siym; "put/place"; + adv: koh; "here"; + adv: neged; "before"; + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/1cs suff: 'ach; "my kinsmen"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/2ms suff: 'ach; "and your kinsmen"; + waw conj. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3mpl/jussive: yakach; "so they might decide/judge"; + prep: bayin; "between"; + adj/m/dual/constr. w/1cpl suff: shenayim; "the two of us"])

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ANALYSIS VERSES 36 – 37:

1. After **Laban** rifles **through** Jacob’s property, **Jacob** has had enough.
2. His patience turns to righteous indignation and he determines it is time to unload on his uncle.
3. This in defense of his reputation (vss.36-37) and to assert his uncle’s real reputation as a cheat and charlatan (vss.38-42).
4. By no means could one legitimately suggest that **Jacob** fits in the category of being quick-tempered or quick to anger. Cf.Pro.14:29; 15:18; 16:32; 19:11; 22:24; Jam.1:19,20
5. He has showed himself to be emotionally stable not only enduring under Laban’s corrupt dealings over a decade but now the indignity of this public spectacle.
6. **Laban** challenged **Jacob** in front of all their relatives and now it is “his turn in the barrel”.
7. Principle: If you embarrass someone in public, don’t be surprised when you are faced with rebuke and embarrassment of your own.
8. **Laban** examples that some STA’s like to “air their dirty laundry in public” and it is just retribution for their target to recoil with righteous indignation.
9. Righteous anger is an expression of judgment by God.
10. It is so fitting here for the +V believer (**Jacob**) seeking to perform God’s directive will to rebuke this –V religious reversionist (**Laban**) that has just attempted to circumvent the intent of God’s will in the dream the night before (cf.vss.24,29).
11. The opening phrase “**Then Jacob became angry**” could be rendered in the Hebrew “**Then it became anger for Jacob/waw charah lamed Jacob**”.
12. The Hebrew accurately recognizes that the situation as a whole (**it became anger**) simmered until it exploded into Jacob’s **angry** mood.
13. The more he thought about what was happening, the more he became righteously indignant.
14. The anger then spurred **Jacob** into action not customary of his character, “**and he contended with Laban/waw riyb bet Laban**”.
15. The word “**contended**” has the idea of “disputed” (cf.26:20,21,22) recognizing the legitimacy to challenge unsubstantiated accusations of others especially in a legal forum.
16. **Jacob** shows another side in contrast to his passive nature.
17. Though Jacob’s anger peaked moving him to now confront his uncle, he again refrains from letting his emotions dictate his speech exemplified in the phrase “**and Jacob answered and said to Laban/waw –anah Jacob waw ‘amar lamed Laban**” (see use of verbs for consideration then talk in vs.31).
18. His first question “**What is my transgression?/mah pasha-**” addresses the criminal or legal accusations of stealing the idols.
19. The Hebrew noun *pasha-* (**transgression**) emphasizes criminal action or legal breach. Cf.Gen.50:17 (Joseph’s brothers selling him); Exo.22:9 (*breach of trust*)
20. Obviously for all of Laban’s efforts in searching he has come up empty handed.
21. Even though Rachel has stolen the *teraphiym*, **Jacob** himself is innocent of crime.
22. He legally should not be held accountable for his wife’s action as he played no part in it.
23. So God protects the innocent avoiding any intentions to railroad him otherwise.
24. This at least implies that if the *teraphiym* had been found otherwise, blame would have landed on Jacob’s head in some form of fashion sufficient to drag him back to Haran.
25. This illustrates that God will employ His overruling will as necessary in the event of others trying to trip up the +V believer’s execution of His Divine will (directive and geographical).

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26. While the first question addresses the legal matter, the second addresses the spiritual underpinnings having motivated **Laban**, “**What is my sin, that you have hotly pursued me?**”/mah chata’th kiy dalaq ‘acharey”.
27. The Hebrew noun *chata’th* (**sin**) means “miss the mark”; and was used previously anticipating Cain’s STA **sin** of murder (Gen.4:7) and the **sin** of homosexuality in Gen.18:20.
28. In the preceding cases it looked to perpetuated **sin** or the STA running “unbridled/unchecked”.
29. While stealing is of course a **sin**, the idea here is **sin** as it relates to a life of perpetuated **sin** or reversionism.
30. In other words the challenge insinuates “Where is proof of **my** religious reversionism you have so implied?”
31. It sets up for comparison before witnesses the moral/ethical character of the two men.
32. This as they represent their form of religion.
33. The phrase “**that you have hotly pursued me**”/kiy dalaq ‘acharey” encapsulates both ideas of legal and spiritual accusations that have motivated **Laban** to chase **Jacob** down.
34. For **Laban** the motivation was first for the supposed offense of **Jacob** disrespecting his idolatry (stole his “heart”, “daughters” and “idols”) and second for literally stealing his idols/gods.
35. The last category of theft “idols”, was the physical evidence designed to substantiate the spiritual accusations.
36. Of the legal and spiritual accusations, there is only one way to prove innocence for both and that is the fact there was found no evidence of the literal crime of theft and thus no sin.
37. This is the hammer behind Jacob’s final question, “**Though you have felt through all my goods, what have you found of all your household goods?**”/kiy mashash kol keliy mah matsa’ min kol keliy bayith” (vs.37).
38. Jacob’s question is a sanctified mimic of Laban’s condescending approach of the real reason why he left in such a hurry before he levied his accusation of theft in vs.30.
39. The question points out that not only did **Laban** not find his *teraphiym*, but after rummaging around his property could not come up with even one item that had previously belonged to **Laban**.
40. Again, the verb translated “**felt**”/mashash” is the same used for Isaac feeling **Jacob** (27:21,22; used in 31:34) and carries the idea of “violating” Jacob’s property.
41. Jacob’s sanctified sarcasm was designed to increase the effect of Laban’s malicious character attack of not able to provide any true evidence, “**Set it here before my kinsmen and your kinsmen, that they may decide between us two**”/siym koh neged ‘ach waw ‘ach waw yakach bayin shenayim”.
42. What goes around comes around. Cp.Isa.3:11; Gal.6:7
43. Let the jurors render judgment based on facts and not empty allegations as to which of the **two** men are in the right.
44. The lack of evidence is sufficient proof of the innocence of **Jacob** to restore a valued reputation in society.
45. This clears the air of the legalities of the situation leaving only moral considerations to clear the air of any spiritual malfeasance between the **two**.

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JACOB'S REBUKE OF LABAN

EXEGESIS VERSES 38 – 42:

שָׁנָה עֶשְׂרִים שְׁנָה אֲנֹכִי עִמָּךְ רַחֲלִיךָ וְעִזֶיךָ לֹא שָׁכְלוּ וְאֵילֵי צֹאנְךָ לֹא אֲכַלְתִּי: WTT Genesis 31:38

^{NAS} Genesis 31:38 "These twenty years I have been with you; your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried, nor have I eaten the rams of your flocks. (שָׁנָה עֶשְׂרִים זֶה) [adj/m/s: zeh; "these"; + adj/b/pl/abs: -eseriyim; "twenty"; + n/com/f/s/abs: shanah; "years"; + pro/1cs: 'anokiy + prep. w/2fs suff: -im; "I myself, with you"; + n/com/f/pl/constr. w/2ms suff: rachel; "your ewes"; + waw conj. + n/com/f/pl/constr. w/2ms suff: -ets; "and your female goats"; + neg.part: lo' + v/Piel/PF/3cpl: shakal {lit. make childless}; "they have not miscarried"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/pl/constr: 'ayil; "or the rams of"; + n/com/f/s/constr. w/2ms suff: tso'n; "your flock"; + neg.part: lo' + v/qal/PF/1cs: 'akal; "I have not eaten"])

טֶרֶפָה לֹא־הֵבֵאתִי אֵלַיךָ אֲנֹכִי אֲחַטָּנָה מִיָּדְךָ תִּבְקַשְׁנָה גְּנֹבְתִי יוֹם וְגִנְבֹתִי לַיְלָה: WTT Genesis 31:39

^{NAS} Genesis 31:39 "That which was torn of beasts I did not bring to you; I bore the loss of it myself. (טֶרֶפָה לֹא בֹא אֵלַיךָ אֲנֹכִי אֶל בֹּא לֹא טֶרֶפָה) [n/com/f/s/abs: therephah; "The animal torn by beasts" {used 9x}; " neg.part: lo' + v/Hiphil/PF/1cs: bo' + prep. w/2ms suff: 'el; "I did not cause to come/bring to you"; + pro/1cs: 'anokiy; "I myself"; + v/Piel/IPF/1cs w/3fs suff: chatha' {lit. miss the way/sin}; "absorbed the offense/bore the loss of it"])

You required it of my hand whether stolen by day or stolen by night. (גָּנַב בִּקְשָׁה יָד מִן) [prep: min + n/com/f/s/constr. w/1cs suff: yad; "from my hand"; + v/Piel/IPF/2ms w/3fs suff: baqash; "you utterly required it"; + v/qal/pass/ptc/f/s/constr: ganab; "that being stolen"; + n/com/m/s/abs: yom; "by day"; + waw conj. + v/qal/pass/ptc/f/s/constr: ganab; "and that being stolen"; + n/com/m/s/abs: layelah; "by night"])

הַיְיָתִי בַיּוֹם אֲכַלְנִי חָרֵב וְקָרָח בַּלַּיְלָה וְתַדְדָּ נִשְׁנָתִי מֵעֵינָי: WTT Genesis 31:40

^{NAS} Genesis 31:40 "Thus I was: by day the heat consumed me, and the frost by night, and my sleep fled from my eyes. (נִדְדָּ וְלַיְלָה הָ בַ קָרָח וְחָרֵב אֲכַל יוֹם הָ בַ הִיָּה) [v/qal/PF/1cs: hayah; "it came to pass/thus I was:"; + prep; bet + d.a. +

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n/com/m/s/abs: yom; "in the day"; + v/qal/PF/3ms w/1cs suff: 'akal; "it consumed me"; + n/com/m/s/abs: choreb {lit. dry}; "the heat"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/abs: qerach; "and the frost"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: layelah; "in the night"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3fs: nadad; "and it fled"; + n/com/f/s/constr. w/1cs suff: shenah; "my sleep"; + prep: min + n/com/b/dual/constr. w/1cs suff: -ayin; "from my eyes"])

וְזֶה־לִי עֲשָׂרִים שָׁנָה בְּבֵיתְךָ עֲבַדְתִּיךָ אַרְבַּע־עֶשְׂרֵה
שָׁנָה בְּשְׁתֵּי בָנֹתֶיךָ וְשֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים בְּצֹאֲנֶךָ וַתַּחֲלֵף אֶת־מִשְׁכָּרְתִּי
עֶשְׂרֵת מֹנִים:

^{NAS} Genesis 31:41 "These twenty years I have been in your house; I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you changed my wages ten times. (וְזֶה לִי עֲשָׂרִים שָׁנָה עֲשָׂרֵה אַרְבַּע עֲבַד בֵּית בְּ שָׁנָה עֲשָׂרִים לִי זֶה) שֵׁשׁ וּ בְּת שְׁנַיִם ב שָׁנָה עֲשָׂרָה אַרְבַּע עֲבַד בֵּית ב שָׁנָה עֲשָׂרִים לִי זֶה) שֵׁשׁ וּ בְּת שְׁנַיִם ב שָׁנָה עֲשָׂרָה אַרְבַּע עֲבַד בֵּית בְּ שָׁנָה עֲשָׂרִים לִי זֶה) [adj/m/s: zeh; "these"; + prep. w/1cs suff: lamed; "for me"; + adj/b/pl/abs: -eseriyim; "twenty"; + n/com/f/s/abs: shanah; "years"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr. w/2ms suff: bayith; "in your house"; + v/qal/PF/1cs: -abad; "I have served"; + adj/f/s/abs: 'rebba-; "four"; + adj/f/s/abs: -esereh; "ten"; + n/com/f/s/abs: shanah; "years"; prep: bet + adj/f/dual/constr: shenayim; "for the two of"; + n/com/f/pl/constr. w/2ms suff: bath; "your daughters"; + waw conj. + adj/f/s/constr: shesh; "and six"; + n/com/f/pl/abs: shanah; "years"; + prep: bet + n/com/f/s/constr. w/2ms suff: tso'n; "for your flock"; + waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/2ms: chalaph; "and you have caused to change"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/f/s/constr. w/1cs suff: masekkoreth; "my wages"; + adj/f/s/constr: -asarah; "ten"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: moneh; "counts/times"])

לֹא־לִי אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם וַפָּחַד יִצְחָק הָיָה
לִי כִי עָתָה רִיקָם שְׁלַחְתָּנִי אֶת־עֲנִי וְאֶת־יָגִיעַ כְּפִי רָאָה
אֱלֹהִים וַיִּזְכַּח אֲמֹשׁ:

^{NAS} Genesis 31:42 "If the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had not been for me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. (לֹא־לִי לִי) שְׁלַח רִיקָם עָתָה כִּי לֹא הָיָה יִצְחָק פָּחַד ו אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהִים אֲבִי אֱלֹהִים [conj: lule'; "if not/unless"; + n/com/m/pl/constr: 'elohiyim + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: 'ab; "the God of my father"; + n/com/m/pl/constr: 'elohiyim + proper n: "the God of Abraham"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/constr: pachad; "and the fear of"; + proper n: "Isaac"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: hayah; "came to be/became"; + prep. w/1cs suff: lamed; "for me"; + conj: kiy; "that"; + adv: -attah; "now"; + prep: reyqam; "emptily/empty-handed"; + v/Piel/PF/2ms w/1cs: shalach; "you would have sent me away"])

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God has seen my affliction and the toil of my hands, so He rendered judgment last night."

אֱמֶשׁ יָכַח וְ אֱלֹהִים רָאָה כִּפֵּי יָגִיעַ אֵת וְ עָנִי אֵת [prep: 'eth + n/com/m/s/constr. w/1cs suff: -aniy; "with my affliction/oppression"; + waw conj. + prep: 'eth + n/com/m/s/constr: yegiy-a; "and with the toil of"; n/com/ff/dual/constr. w/1cs suff: kaph {lit. palm of hand}; "my hands"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: ra'ah; "He saw"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiym; "God"; + waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3ms: yakach; "and He rendered judgment/decided"; + adv: 'emesh {lit. yesterday}; "last night"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 38 – 42:

1. Along with the criminal accusation of theft, Laban characterized Jacob as a believer not to be trusted (vs.27), antagonistic to others (vs.26, 28) pursuing a self-centered agenda at the expense of others (vs.30a).
2. In other words, Jacob was a reversionist lacking sound moral and ethical character.
3. Laban was a self-righteous religious reversionist that sought to build his own righteousness on the perceived unrighteousness of others...in other words to appear spiritually superior.
4. This is the distinct contrast between the two men and their beliefs as one (Laban) seeks to transfer his own unrighteous to another for the sake of gain or saving face.
5. That which characterizes the believers reputation cannot always be based on a singular incident or unsubstantiated claim(s) otherwise.
6. A believer reflects their true spiritual character over a length of time evidencing their true moral and ethical assets of belief.
7. It is this insight that Jacob appeals to as he begins to directly rebuke Laban in vss.38-42.
8. The opening phrase “**These twenty years I have been with you**/zeh –eseriyim shanah ‘anokiy –im” provides ample time for anyone to ascertain any distinctions of character flaws between Jacob and Laban.
9. The listeners (and readers) are to determine for themselves the moral integrity of these two believers.
10. Jacob will first defend himself in vss.38-40 and then expose Laban’s transgression in evidence of his reversionism in vss.41-42.
11. Jacob appeals to his work ethics as proof of his moral integrity as he was not a laborer working just for appearance sake, but gave 110%.
12. This explains in part why God blessed Jacob to such a high degree and why Laban originally reaped the reward in blessing by association (cf.30:27).
13. First on the list was with the advent of Jacob managing Laban’s livestock there was a very low incident (or none) of animals miscarrying, “**your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried**/rachel waw –ets lo’ shakal”.
14. This is to be attributed to Jacob’s care of the females during pregnancy and birthing and God blessing his efforts.
15. It suggests compassion and mercy that Jacob has for living creatures. Cf.Col.3:12
16. It reflected the virtue of servitude in application to ensure maximum production of livestock belonging to his uncle.
17. Laban would have been the first to notice this dramatic change during the Jacob years.

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18. And before any might say that it was for appearance sake, add to the fact that Jacob never slaughtered any of “**the rams/’ayil**” even when his own family might had been struggling.
19. A missing ram here and there might not be noticed, but Jacob did not succumb to temptation showing he didn’t even stoop to pilfering from Laban.
20. Jacob’s intentions were pure.
21. On Laban’s part there is no mention of him having otherwise offered any assistance to benefit his daughters and grandchildren even in the 7 years of Jacob’s family growing in leaps and bounds.
22. He was a stingy miserly believer. Cf.1Tim.6:17-19
23. In Jacob’s day shepherds were held responsible for missing livestock unless it was “**torn of beasts/therephah**” (cp.Exo.22:13).
24. Jacob states that in those cases he bore the brunt of “**the loss/chatha**” himself.
25. The Hebrew *chatha’* (**loss**) is a cognate of *chatta’th* (*sin*) in vs.36 illustrating that the owner under said circumstance was to grace the shepherd out and forgive any perceived debt.
26. Of course grace was not Laban’s style and he “**required it of my hand whether stolen by day or stolen by night/yad baqash ganab yom waw ganab layelah**”.
27. In some places animals lost during daylight were charged to the herdsman but not those lost at **night**.
28. This assertion shows that with Laban none of the exemptions of loss on behalf of the shepherd applied as he demanded any and all restitution as a result of loss.
29. Avarice ruled Laban to such a degree that he had no compassion on even his own family if it meant a shekel left his pocket.
30. Again, he does this to his own “*bone and flesh*” (cf.29:14).
31. In vs.40, Jacob relates to the rigors of his job, “**by day the heat consumed me, and the frost by night, and my sleep fled from my eyes/bet yom ‘akal choreb waw qerach bet layelah waw nadad shenah min –ayin**”.
32. It is understood that laboring in this area of the world the days could be brutally hot and the nights extremely cold as the geography was not affected by the moderating sea.
33. While this verse may seem that Jacob is complaining or patting himself on the back, they are to be understood as working conditions under an uncompassionate and stingy employer.
34. Jacob arrived on the scene with nothing other than the clothes on his back.
35. His tightfisted uncle provided nothing to help him endure the elements and exposure over the years i.e., absolutely no benefits attached to this job.
36. Yet this did not deter Jacob from doing his job “as unto the Lord”. Cp.Eph.6:5-6
37. The reference to loss of sleep suggests that Laban did not even offer the help of any of his sons for Jacob to oversee the **flocks** (cp.30:35).
38. Jacob was on call essentially 24/7 and left to his own means for protecting and caring for the livestock as well as to his own needs.
39. The reader can surmise here that this smooth-skinned rich kid who was momma’s boy growing up has toughened up considerably during his tenure with Laban.
40. He is now a match for his hairy outdoorsman brother Esau.
41. In vs.41, Jacob again makes reference to “**These twenty years**” here as reference to his close association with Laban applying under his authority hence the phrase, “**I have been in your house/bet bayith**”.

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42. This does not demand that Jacob shared living quarters with Laban, only that he resided on Laban's property and would be as accessible as if living in his home.
43. Jacob then breaks down the period of 20 **years** into the "**fourteen**/'rebba- -esereh" of contract terms for his wives and the "**six**/shesh" just completed for the means to have his own business.
44. This emphasizes his integrity and honesty in fulfilling obligations (contracts) to others legally and morally.
45. It shows acclimation to authority in terms of true respect and orientation, something lacking with Laban in His attitude towards BD and **God**.
46. In contrast to Jacob's integrity, he continues, "**you changed my wages ten times**/chalaph ha masekkoreth –asarah moneh".
47. Jacob throws the "rebuke hammer" in Laban's face that he expounded upon with his wives in vs.7.
48. The rebuke in turn exemplifies Jacob's spiritual growth over the **years** as he expressed to his wives that in spite of Laban's action, "*God did not allow him to hurt me*".
49. The 2nd reference to the 20 **years** of service by Jacob is designed to evidence the real spiritual character between himself and his uncle.
50. One abuses authority, the other subservient.
51. Jacob has grown spiritually...his uncle ends the 20 year tenure still a thief and a cheat!!
52. Now... who is the reversionist??
53. **God** saw Jacob's plight and overbearing unethical nature of his uncle and made sure in the end that Jacob was vindicated for his diligence and faith.
54. For the spiritually astute they can critique which believer is adjusted or not as the evidence is there.
55. This is the force of vs.42, "**If the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had not been for me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed**/lule 'elohiyim 'ab 'elohiyim Abraham waw pachad Isaac hayah lamed kiy –attah reyqam shalach".
56. Jacob critiques Laban recognizing that not for the intercession of God, even **now** Laban would reclaim Jacob's property/family and send him on with only the clothes on his back.
57. From no compassion to no compassion characterizes Laban.
58. Even a slave that had served his master 6 **years** under the Law was not to be sent away **empty-handed** (cf.Deu.15:12-14), how much more so a member of the family in Jacob's position...family is Laban's gods...right?
59. **God** overruled Laban's cruelty in the final 6 **years** of Jacob's tenure when he tweaked the genetics of the mating flock so the newborn would be according to the most recent agreement.
60. So Jacob bears witness to the One that overturned Laban's greed and made Jacob a rich man.
61. Jacob bears witness in reality, not some supposed religious insight (cf.30:27).
62. The phraseology here is noteworthy.
63. Compare the words back in Jacob's dream in 28:13, "*I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac...*".
64. These words were spoken to a fleeing and STA driven Jacob.
65. They are words of generational and providential protection.
66. Of most notable interest is the reference to **God** as "**the fear of Isaac**".

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67. This is reference to Isaac's spiritual adjustment of recognizing that **Jacob** was the appointed heir to the Covenant by **God** (cf.27:33) as prophesied to Rebekah (cf.25:23) during Jacob's deception in 27:1-29.
68. Just as Isaac's spiritual eyes were opened, so has Jacob's +V awaken over the past 20 **years!**
69. But how about Laban?
70. Only by the **fear** of **God** via the dream the **night** before was he willing to forego his agenda.
71. Other than that he reflects a believer that is just as driven by an unbridled STA as he was 20 **years** ago i.e., no spiritual growth.
72. This is the consequence of religious reversionism.
73. It's all about appearance with no substantial spiritual advancement.
74. In spite of how men may evaluate men, **God** sees these things.
75. Just as he saw Jacobs **affliction/oppression** (-*aniy*) under the unrighteous regime of his negative uncle and the continued perseverance of action with honor by Jacob evidenced in "**the toil of my hands/yegiy-a kaph**"
76. The final phrase "**so He rendered judgment last night/yakach 'emesh**" confirms God's stance in affirmation of blessing Jacob's +V and condemning Laban's -V.
77. **God** himself condemned Laban's idolatrous reversionism because it produced nothing more than a self-serving STA powered agenda.
78. In turn He overruled Laban turning the tables on him to evidence His Divine pleasure with +V and displeasure with -V.
79. This then explains the whole meaning of Jacob's time out of the land in terms of his preservation and wealth i.e., he was +V Ph₂ adhering to the precepts of BD in light of cosmic oppression.
80. Jacob's rebuke serves as a profound opportunity for Laban to reconsider his wayward life.
81. For one ultimately +V it would have spiritual benefit...but for the -V, it just further sears their conscience.
82. Evidence for Laban's volition will be seen in his reaction in the following verses.
83. The rebuke in truth leaves Laban feeling defenseless and offended as boxed in a corner with only a response of verbal bravado to try and save face.

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THE COVENANT BETWEEN LABAN AND JACOB VSS.43-53

LABAN PROPOSES THE COVENANT

EXEGESIS VERSES 43 – 47

WTT Genesis 31:43
 וַיֹּעַן לָבָן וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־יַעֲקֹב הַבָּנוֹת בְּנֹתַי וְהַבָּנִים
 בְּנֵי וְהַצֹּאן צֹאנִי וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה רֹאֶה לִי־הוּא וְלִבְנֹתַי
 מִה־אֲעֹשֶׂה לְאֵלֶּה הַיּוֹם אוֹ לְבָנֵיהֶן אֲשֶׁר יִלְדוּ:

NAS Genesis 31:43 Then Laban answered and said to Jacob, "The daughters are my daughters, and the children are my children, and the flocks are my flocks, and all that you see is mine. (וַיֹּעַן לָבָן עֲנָה ו) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: -anah; "And he answered" + proper n: "Laban"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + prep: 'el + proper n: "to Jacob"; + d.a. + n/com/ff/pl/abs: bath + n/com/ff/pl/constr. w/1cs suff: bath; "the daughters are my daughters"; + waw conj. + d.a. + n/com/m/pl/abs: ben + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/1cs suff: ben; "and the children are my children"; + waw conj. + d.a. + n/com/b/s/abs: tso'n + n/com/ff/s/constr. w/1cs suff: tso'n "and the flocks are my flocks"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/s/abs: kol + rel.pro: 'asher + pro/2ms: 'attah + v/qal/ptc/m/s/abs: ra'ah + prep. w/1cs suff: lamed + pro/3ms: hu'; "and all which you yourself are seeing for me it is mine"])

But what can I do this day to these my daughters or to their children whom they have borne? (וַיֹּעַן לָבָן לְאֵלֶּה הַיּוֹם אוֹ לְבָנֵיהֶן אֲשֶׁר יִלְדוּ [waw conj. + prep: lamed + n/com/ff/pl/constr. w/1cs suff: bath; "but as for my daughters"; + interr.pro: mah; "what?"; + n/qal/IPF/1cs: -asah; "can I do"; + prep: lamed + adj/b/pl: 'elleh; "for these"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: yom; "this day"; + conj: 'or; "or"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3fpl suff: ben; "or for their children"; + rel.pro: 'asher + v/qal/PF/3cpl: yalad; "whom they have borne"])

WTT Genesis 31:44
 בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ:
 וְעַתָּה לְכֶה נַכְרְתָה בְרִית אֲנִי וְאַתָּה וְהָיָה לְעֵד

NAS Genesis 31:44 "So now come, let us make a covenant, you and I, and let it be a witness between you and me." (וַיֹּעַן לָבָן עֲנָה ו) [waw conj. + adv: -attah + v/qal/imp/m/s: halak {lit. walk}; "so now come"; + v/qal/IPF/1cs/cohortative: karath; "let us cut"; + n/com/ff/s/abs: berith; "a covenant"; + pro/1cs: 'aniy + waw conj. + pro/2ms: 'attah; "I and you"; + waw consec. + v/qal/PF/3ms: hayah; "and

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it will become"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/s/abs: -ed; "for a witness"; + prep. w/1cs suff: bayin + waw conj. + prep. w/2ms suff: bayin; "between me and between you])

וַיִּקַּח יַעֲקֹב אֶבֶן וַיְרִימָהּ מִצְבָּה׃^{WTT} Genesis 31:45

^{NAS} Genesis 31:45 **Then Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar.** (וַיִּקַּח יַעֲקֹב אֶבֶן וַיְרִימָהּ מִצְבָּה רֹם וַיִּשְׂמוּ גַל עַל-הַגַּל׃ [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: laqach; "and he took"; + proper n: "Jacob"; + n/com/f/s/abs: 'eben; "a stone"; + waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3ms w/3fs suff: rum; "and he caused to raise it up"; + n/com/f/s/abs: matstsebah; "as a pillar"])

וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב לְאָחָיו לְקַטְוּ אֲבָנִים וַיִּקְחוּ אֲבָנִים וַיַּעֲשׂוּ-גַל עַל-הַגַּל׃^{WTT} Genesis 31:46

^{NAS} Genesis 31:46 **And Jacob said to his kinsmen, "Gather stones." So they took stones and made a heap, and they ate there by the heap.** (וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל אָחָיו לְקַטְוּ אֲבָנִים וַיִּקְחוּ אֲבָנִים וַיַּעֲשׂוּ-גַל עַל-הַגַּל וַיִּשְׂמוּ גַל עַל-הַגַּל׃ [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + proper n: "Jacob"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ach; "to his kinsmen"; + v/qal/imp/m/pl: laqath; "you all gather up/pick up"; + n/com/f/pl/abs: 'eben; "stones"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mp: laqach; "so they took"; + n/com/f/pl/abs: 'eben; "stones"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: -asah; "and they made"; + n/com/m/s/abs: gal; "a heap"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: 'akal; "and they ate"; + adv: sham; "there"; + prep: -al + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: gal; "upon the heap"])

וַיִּקְרָא-לוֹ לְבֵן יֶגֶר שְׂהַדוּתָא וַיַּעֲקֹב קָרָא לוֹ גַלְעָד׃^{WTT} Genesis 31:47

^{NAS} Genesis 31:47 **Now Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed.** (וַיִּקְרָא לְבֵן יֶגֶר שְׂהַדוּתָא וַיַּעֲקֹב קָרָא לוֹ גַלְעָד׃ [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: qara; "and he called"; + prep. w/3ms suff: lamed; "for it"; + proper n: "Laban"; + proper n. {Aramaic}: "yegar sahadutha"; + waw conj. + proper n: "and Jacob"; + v/qal/IPF/3ms: qara' + prep. w/3ms suff: lamed; "called for it"; + proper n: "gale-ed"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 43 – 47:

1. Jacob's rebuke sets **Laban** back on his heels.
2. The smack down of truth takes the wind from his sail and now he must regroup.
3. He concludes that his initial plan is of no avail and he is only left with the alternative to salvage what self-esteem (pride) he can before his clan.

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4. He determines that his best approach is to continue to wave the banner of his idolatrous beliefs (ancestor worship) and try to build upon Jacob's rebuke as additional fodder that he is a threat in spite of his words.
5. These two line items are the considerations leading to his speech per the phrase, "**Then Laban answered and said to Jacob**/waw –anah Laban waw 'amar 'el Jacob".
6. His opening assertion is that he considers all that **Jacob** possesses his property by rights.
7. That includes his "**daughters/bath**", "**children/ben**" and "**flocks/tso'n**" and **all** other personal possession that the eye could, as he states, "**see is mine/ra'ah lamed**" vs.43.
8. Obviously **Laban** is not referring to legal rights or otherwise the grandstanding accusing **Jacob** of stealing his idols was superfluous i.e., **Jacob** and company would have been legally bound to return by law anyways.
9. An alternative to legal rights as justification for his words would be rights as considered by the ideology of Laban's practiced idolatry of ancestor worship.
10. The author here is giving the reader some insight into his religious belief.
11. That is that the head of the family retains all rights of possession of that belonging to the family in terms of relationships and property only relinquished by the will of the heir.
12. In other words, relationships and family heritage are not based on Bible doctrine, but the doctrine of men.
13. This in turn reveals the primary fallacy attached to idolatry/religious reversionism: It promotes man to play god!
14. Under ancestor worship the heir (next in line in familial authority through physical lineage) determines the welfare of family and preservation of property for life.
15. This ideology is contrasted to the Abrahamic Covenant where God Himself determines the heir through spiritual lineage and controls their preservation and prosperity of both heir and kin for all eternity.
16. The physical ancestral line of worship will be alluded to in vs.53 when **Laban** appeals to "*the God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father (Terah)*" mixing the Ph₂ +V of Abraham and the –V of Terah and Nahor who were themselves religious reversionists.
17. It points to the fact that ancestral worship and idolatry in general are nothing less or more than a counterfeit of the truth.
18. Religious reversionism is an admixture of truth and error.
19. To claim that Laban's assertion here is only being pompous/self-important (i.e., not motivated by religious belief) leaves the context soggy as to purpose.
20. Laban's opening remark is designed to reestablish his foundation of accusation of **Jacob** being aggressively antagonistic to Laban's religion following his own beliefs (stolen heart, daughters, idols).
21. In other words, **Jacob** is frustrating Laban's supposed spiritual right over his family.
22. Laban's frustration is then bent into resignation that he is choosing to cater to Jacob's religion in the clause, "**But what can I do this day to these my daughters or to their children whom they borne?**/waw lamed bath mah –asah lamed 'elleh ha yom 'or lamed ben 'asher yalad".
23. The Hebrew preposition *lamed* translated "**to**" would be better translated "**for**" emphasizing what **Laban** could **do** on their behalf in light of the situation.
24. It is a pathetic attempt by **Laban** to now recolor himself as one that has real grace and compassion for his family (cf.29:14; 31:26-28).

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25. The idea he is trying to project is that the only thing that is stopping him is his own willingness to cater to Jacob's religious agenda.
26. **Laban** is here on his part drawing the line making distinct his religious belief from Jacob's.
27. Yet the reader knows that the real reason **Laban** is backing off is he is terrified as to what God might do otherwise.
28. We note that **Laban** never refers to his **daughters** as Jacob's wives...this would weaken his position of supposed spiritual authority and is a low shot at BD to which **Jacob** adheres.
29. Having reestablished **Jacob** following BD in his life as antagonistic to others, **Laban** then springs his main plan in vs.44, "**So now come, let us make a covenant, you and I, and let it be a witness between you and me**/waw –attah halak karath berith 'aniy waw 'attah waw hayah lamed –ed bayin waw bayin".
30. Additional motivation for **Laban** to make this agreement is obvious as he has lost all concerned anyways and sees no risk in further "burning the bridge".
31. The **covenant** itself is designed to make **Jacob** look like a threat and the possibility he may come back later at his advantage to harm **Laban**.
32. As the following text will make clear, **Jacob** willingly agrees to the pact.
33. The inquisitive reader might ask why when his uncle has been and still is being such a jerk?
34. The answer is most simply recognized in the fact that the pact will ultimately advance God's plan for **Jacob** in this situation...apply separation!!
35. **Jacob** recognizes this and is willing to make peace with all men to the degree possible. Cf.Rom.12:18
36. **Jacob** is willing to ignore the continued slanderous innuendoes recognizing #1, **Laban** is recalcitrant to the truth and #2, it allows their relationship an amenable departure apart from compromising the truth.
37. Ironically Laban's own STA agenda creates and makes the application of separation easy.
38. Nothing **Laban** proposes in the peace treaty violates Jacob's norms or standards (causes sin) and he further recognizes at this point that **Laban** is not going to repent and come around otherwise.
39. If this pact gets **Laban** off Jacob's back without any further effort than staying in fellowship throughout the ordeal...then do it!!
40. We can further note that Jacob's only words to **Laban** in this section is his oath of promise in vs.53 illustrating his control of the tongue in the face of Laban's ongoing hypocrisy.
41. Jacob's acceptance of proposal is then illustrated by his actions in vss.45,46.
42. He first takes "**a stone and set it up as a pillar**/'eben waw rum matstsebah".
43. Landmark moments of Jacob's life in worship of Yahweh center around the erection of a pillar (cf.Gen.28:18,22; 31:13 cp.35:14).
44. He then instructs Laban's "**kinsmen, gather stones**/'ach laqath" of which they made into a pile or "**heap/gal**".
45. Only by recognizing the issue of religious reversionism do these actions take on depth of meaning.
46. **Jacob** in response to Laban's "drawing a line" between their religions is now attesting to the reality symbolically.
47. It suggests sardonic humor on the part of **Jacob** (grimly cynical).
48. The singular **stone pillar** represents Jacob's allegiance to Yahweh; the piles of stone represent Laban's polytheism of religious idolatry.

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49. For the connection of a **stone heap** with idolatry see Hos.12:11 where the prophet declares priestly sacrifice as vanity.
50. This illustrates the price of +V doing business with the religious reversionist.
51. That is it necessitates not allowing the truth to be compromised with the error of their gods.
52. That “**they ate there by the heap**/'akal sham –al ha gal” points to the necessary fellowship to close the deal being strictly for business and not spiritual fellowship that he will later have with his own **kinsmen** in vs.54.
53. Each of the parties then name their memorials where **Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed.**
54. The name **Jegar-sahadutha** is Aramaic given by this Syrian meaning “pile of the testimony”.
55. **Galeed** is the Hebrew synonym though not exactly alike meaning “pile of the witness” providing the proper name recognized by future ancestors per vs.47.
56. A testimony refers to a declaration made by a person under oath in support of a particular fact whereas witness looks to the observer(s).
57. While the differences in meaning are subtle, they speak volumes as to construction of the contract and its attestation.
58. The text of oath finds its substance in Laban’s words that follow (testifies) whereas **Jacob** defers to the witnesses as the catalyst binding the pact no matter mal-intent underlying Laban’s words.
59. The idea of testimony highlights the legality of the statements whereas witness highlights its attestation of fact or event.

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LABAN'S TESTAMENT OF COVENANT

EXEGESIS VERSES 48 – 53:

וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן הַגֵּל הַזֶּה עֵד בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ הַיּוֹם
עַל־כֵּן קָרָא שְׁמוֹ גַּלְעָד: ^{WTT} Genesis 31:48

^{NAS} Genesis 31:48 And Laban said, "This heap is a witness between you and me this day." Therefore it was named Galeed; (וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן אֵמַר ו) *[waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + proper n: "Laban"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: gal; "the heap"; + d.a. + adj/m/s: zeh; "this one"; + n/com/m/s/abs: -ed; "a witness"; + prep. w/1cs suff: bayin; "between me"; + waw conj. + prep. w/2ms suff: bayin; "and between you"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: yom; "today/this day"; + prep: -al + adv: ken; "upon thus/therefore"; + v/qal/PF/3ms: qara'; "he called"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: shem; "the name of it"; + proper n: "gale-el"]*

וְהַמִּצְפָּה אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵף יְהוָה בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ כִּי
נִסְתָּר אִישׁ מֵרֵעֵהוּ: ^{WTT} Genesis 31:49

^{NAS} Genesis 31:49 and Mizpah, for he said, "May the LORD watch between you and me when we are absent one from the other. (וַיֹּאמֶר אֲשֶׁר מִצְפָּה הֵן ו) *[waw conj. + d.a. + proper n: "mitsepah"; + rel.pro: 'asher + v/qal/PF/3ms: 'amar; "for which he said"; + v/qal/IPF/3ms/jussive: tsaphah; "May He watch/look out"; + proper n: yahweh; "the Lord"; + prep. w/1cs suff: bayin; "between me"; + waw conj. + prep. w/2ms suff: bayin; "and between you"; + conj: kiy; "when"; + v/Niphal/IPF/1cpl: {lit. hidden}; sathar: "we are absent"; + n/com/m/s/abs: ish; "a man"; + prep: min + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: ye-; "from his friend/from the other"]*

אִישׁ עֲמָנוּ רָאָה אֱלֹהִים עֵד בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ:
אִם־תַּעֲנֶנָּה אֶת־בְּנֹתַי וְאִם־תִּקַּח נָשִׁים עַל־בְּנֹתַי אֵין ^{WTT} Genesis 31:50

^{NAS} Genesis 31:50 "If you mistreat my daughters, or if you take wives besides my daughters, although no man is with us, see, God is witness between you and me." (אִם) *[conj: -im; "if"; + v/Piel/IPF/2ms: -anah; "you afflict/oppress/mistreat"; + sign of d.o. + n/com/f/pl/constr. w/1cs suff: bath; "my daughters"; + waw conj. + conj: 'im + v/qal/IPF/2ms: laqach; "and if you take"; + n/com/f/pl/abs: ishshah; "wives"; + prep: -al; "besides"; +*

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n/com/f/pl/constr. w/1cs suff: bath; "my daughters"; + adv: 'ayin; "without/although no"; + n/com/m/s/abs: 'ish; "man"; + prep. w/1cpl: -im; "with us"; + v/qal/imp/m/s: ra'ah; "see"; + n/com/m/pl/abs: 'elohiym; "God"; + n/com/m/s/abs: -ed; "a witness"; + prep. w/1cs suff: bayin + waw conj. + prep. w/2ms suff: bayin; "between me and between you"])

וַיֹּאמֶר לְבֶן לַיַּעֲקֹב הִנֵּה הַגִּל הַזֶּה וְהִנֵּה
הַמִּצְבָּה אֲשֶׁר יָרִיתִי בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ׃^{WTT} Genesis 31:51

^{NAS} Genesis 31:51 **And Laban said to Jacob, "Behold this heap and behold the pillar which I have set between you and me.** (וַיֹּאמֶר לְבֶן לַיַּעֲקֹב לְהִנֵּה הַגִּל הַזֶּה וְהִנֵּה הַמִּצְבָּה אֲשֶׁר יָרִיתִי בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: 'amar; "and he said"; + proper n: "Laban"; + prep: lamed + proper n: "to Jacob"; + interj.part: hinneh; "behold!"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: gal; "the heap"; + d.a. + adj/m/s: zeh; "this one"; + waw conj. + interj.part: hinneh; "and behold!"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: matstsebah; "the pillar"; + rel.pro: 'asher; "which"; + v/qal/PF/1cs: yarah; {lit. throw/cast}; "I have set"; + prep. w/1cs suff: bayin + waw conj. + prep. w/2ms suff: bayin; "between me and between you])

עַד הַגִּל הַזֶּה וְעַד הַמִּצְבָּה אֲסִי לֹא־אֶעֱבֹר
אֵלֶיךָ אֶת־הַגִּל הַזֶּה וְאֶת־הַמִּצְבָּה אֲלֵי אֶת־הַגִּל הַזֶּה
וְאֶת־הַמִּצְבָּה הַזֹּאת לְרָעָה׃^{WTT} Genesis 31:52

^{NAS} Genesis 31:52 **"This heap is a witness, and the pillar is a witness,** (זֶה הַגִּל הַזֶּה עַד הַגִּל הַזֶּה וְעַד הַמִּצְבָּה הִנֵּה הַמִּצְבָּה הִנֵּה הַמִּצְבָּה [n/com/m/s/abs: -ed; "a witness"; + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: gal; "is the heap"; + d.a. + adj/m/s: zeh; "this one"; + waw conj. + n/com/f/s/abs: -edah; "and a witness"; + d.a. + n/com/f/s/abs: matstsebah; "is the pillar"])

that I will not pass by this heap to you for harm, (הַגִּל הַזֶּה אֶת־אֵל עֲבַר לֹא־אֲנִי אִם [conj: 'im + pro/1cs: 'ani; "whether/that I myself"; + neg.part: lo' + v/qal/IPF/1cs: -abar; "will not pass over/by"; + prep. w/2ms suff: 'el; "to you"; + sign of d.o. + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: gal; "the heap"; + d.a. + adj/m/s: zeh; "this one"])

and you will not pass by this heap and this pillar to me, for harm. (וְעֲבַר לֹא־אֶתָּה אִם [waw conj. + conj: 'im; "and whether/that"; + pro/2ms suff: 'attah; "you yourself"; + neg: lo' + v/qal/IPF/2ms: -abar; "will not pass over/by"; + sign of d.o. + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: gal; "the heap"; + d.a. + adj/m/s: zeh; "this one"; + waw conj. + sign of d.o. + d.a. + matstsebah; "and the pillar"; + d.a. + adj/f/s: zo'th; "this/such one"; + prep: lamed + adj/f/s/abs: ra-ah; "for evil/injury/harm"])

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וְאֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם וְאֱלֹהֵי נָחוֹר יִשְׁפְּטוּ בֵּינֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵי
 אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וַיִּשָּׁבַע יַעֲקֹב בְּפֶחָד אָבִיו יִצְחָק; WTT Genesis 31:53

^{NAS} Genesis 31:53 "The God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us." So Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac. (וְאֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם וְאֱלֹהֵי נָחוֹר יִשְׁפְּטוּ בֵּינֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וַיִּשָּׁבַע יַעֲקֹב בְּפֶחָד אָבִיו יִצְחָק; [n/com/m/pl/constr: 'elohiym + proper n: "the God of Abraham"; + waw conj. + n/com/m/pl/constr: 'elohiym + proper n: "and the God of Nahor"; + v/qal/IPF/3mpl/jussive: shaphath; "let judge"; + prep. w/1cpl suff: bayin; "between us"; + n/com/m/pl/constr: 'elohiym + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3mpl suff: 'ab; "the God of their father"; + waw consec. + v/Niphal/IPF/3ms: sheba-; "and he swore"; + proper n: "Jacob"; + prep: bet + n/com/m/s/constr: pachad {same as vs.42}; "by the fear of"; + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ab; "his father"; + proper n: "Isaac"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 48 – 53:

1. The testament of the pact sets the terms and conditions between the two parties of agreement.
2. Only **Laban** has input implying **Jacob** was agreeing more out of expediency than necessity waiting to see what terms he would invoke to bind the two men.
3. Even though **Jacob** has tentatively given indication of willingness to consider a pact he obviously listens to the complete terms before making a formal pledge.
4. The significance of the author's reiteration of names describing the covenant in vss.48 and 49 begs explanation.
5. It appears that the naming in vs.47 (*Jegar-sahadutha* and *Galeed*) would constitute formal titles of the covenant in the Aramaic and Hebrew.
6. The purpose of names in vss.48,49 gives the reason for the Hebrew name **Galeed** given by **Jacob** in vs.47 and adding another Hebrew name (**Mizpah**) in vs.48 both as a result of Laban's opening speech.
7. Further the two names are designed to find significance as they relate to the pile of stones and **pillar** respectively.
8. Laban's words of vss.48,49 serve as an opening sanction of authority that he draws upon to attest the agreement.
9. He first makes reference to the pile of stones **Jacob** had Laban's relative's amass, "This heap is a witness between you and me this day/ha gal ha zeh –ed bayin waw bayin ha yom".
10. We should note here that the English phrase in the NAS "between you and me" used 4x in vss.48-51 reverses the Hebrew order of persons that emphasizes **Laban** then **Jacob** i.e., "between me and you".
11. The Hebrew order of reference emphasizes that the pact is designed to be one-sided in favor of **Laban**.
12. Further it illustrates Laban's continued self-centeredness/egotism placing his person in importance over **Jacob**.

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13. The Hebrew *ha gal ha zeh* (**this heap**) makes it clear that the pile of stones are specific to Laban's opening words.
14. As we pointed out in the analysis of vs.45-46, the stones were symbolic of Laban's paganist reversionism and the **pillar** of the Hebrew faith solely adhered to by **Jacob**.
15. These dual beliefs now become stitched together by **Laban** via the covenant.
16. In other words, **Laban** appeals to both the Hebrew faith and paganism which he has mixed together in his religious reversionism as the **God/god** given authority binding the contract.
17. It at least implicitly hints at Laban's attempt to propose an ecumenical solution to the disagreements of faiths between him and **Jacob**.
18. That **Laban** first appeals to "**this heap**" as "**a witness**" is why the covenant derived its Jewish name **Galeed**.
19. At this point **Laban** defers mention of the **pillar** as "**a witness**" for emphasis (not until vs.51,52 does he mention the **pillar**).
20. Rather, the author just mentions as an aside a secondary name given the pact, "**and Mizpah/waw mitsepah**" in vs.49.
21. This name is a play on words meaning "watchtower" and is silently symbolized by the **pillar**.
22. It is derived from the verb "**watch**" in Laban's second benedictive statement, "**May the Lord watch between you and me when we are absent one from the other/tsaphah** Yahweh bayin waw bayin kiy sathar 'ish min ye-".
23. The religiosity of **Laban** now oozes from his self-righteousness.
24. His invocation of Yahweh gives **Jacob** pause for himself to witness Yahweh's protection afforded him overall under the Abrahamic Covenant and hence memorializing the pact with a name he personally appeals to.
25. On Laban's part it is language recognizing **Laban** as a believer, even though a religious reversionist.
26. Other than that it is nothing more than lip service to the truth that he recognizes **God** in a role as a protector over the two men.
27. Even demons recognize the Person of **God** so for a paganist twist on the Hebrew faith to appeal to Yahweh should be of no surprise to the reader. Cp.Jam.2:19
28. Laban's statement of vs.49 is designed to appeal to those that hold to the Covenant faith while not violating his own erroneous religious beliefs.
29. That his words are secondary to the **heap** of stones mentioned in vs.48 illustrates Laban's religiosity putting his idolatry over what Covenant doctrine he may hold to.
30. Most specifically to intent, that he appeals to the protective nature of Yahweh keeping an omniscient eye out **between** the men suggests one of the party can't be trusted.
31. This lays the groundwork for Laban's agenda for proposing this covenant.
32. That is to rebut Jacob's earlier refutation that **Laban** can't be trusted (vss.36-42) by making it appear that he fears for those whom he loves and his own life with **Jacob** free to physically and/or militarily retaliate at a later date.
33. Vs.50 then ties the duplicity of Laban's religion with a supposed initial warning of wrongdoing to Laban's **daughters**.
34. It distorts the doctrine of family into that more important than BD.
35. His threat, "**If you mistreat my daughters, or if you take wives besides my daughters, although no man is with us, see, God is witness between you and me/-im** –anah bath waw –im laqach 'ishshah –al bath 'ayin 'ish –im ra'ah 'elohiym –ed bayin waw bayin".

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36. His words are designed to invoke the kind of superstitious fear he lives by for less than proper treatment of his **daughters**.
37. That his **daughters** are the now the focus harks back to **Laban** appealing to the pile of stones as a **witness** in vs.48.
38. It makes clear the specific nature of the appeal as that which relates to Laban's ancestor worship symbolized by the **heap**.
39. His warning resumes the air of Laban's supposed love for his family and that **God** supports his ideology of putting family first.
40. However, the words reflect the true light of their human viewpoint error by their very hypocrisy.
41. To begin with there is no record of **Jacob** ever abusing Rachel or Leah; only the abuse of their father selling them and treating them like slaves (cf.31:15).
42. The following admonition of taking more **wives** other than Laban's **daughters** is just as hypocritical.
43. Who was it that slipped the extra wife into Jacob's life to begin with in spite of **Jacob** desiring only one.
44. It was **Laban** that forced **Jacob** into bigamy initially and now he is concerned with this practice in the future?
45. Really...after all that **Jacob** has been through do you think he wants another wife?
46. Both parts of Laban's warnings are nothing less than him trying to again play god according to his fallacious religious beliefs.
47. Can you say "Long distance meddling"?
48. **Laban** then tries to put emotional pressure on **Jacob** by again invoking **God** as if **God** was backing Laban's religious philosophy.
49. In vs.51, **Laban** then gets to the crux of the pact by calling upon both his and Jacob's belief's as binding, "**Behold this heap and behold the pillar which I have set between me and you**/hinneh ha gal ha zeh waw hinneh ha matstsebah 'asher yarah bayin waw bayin".
50. At some point **Laban** took the **pillar** that **Jacob** had stood up earlier (vs.45) and literally "**threw/cast**" (*yarah*) it **between** the two men.
51. This signifies **Laban** beating his chest religiously holding **Jacob** in contempt for adhering to the singular faith of sound BD.
52. In vs.52, **Laban** then declares an ecumenical **witness** of both the symbolic imageries, "**This heap is a witness, and the pillar is a witness**/-ed ha gal ha zeh waw -edah ha matstsebah".
53. In all three mentions by **Laban** of "**this heap**" (vss.48,51,52 [2x]) the Hebrew employs the demonstrative adjective *ha zeh* while omitting it in all references to the **pillar**.
54. The adjective "**this**" exalts the **heap** over the **pillar**.
55. The grammar is designed to reflect the tone of Laban's condescending approach that his religious belief is the correct one over Jacob's strict uniformed Hebrew faith.
56. **Laban** then appeals to the **heap** as his standard of vow that he will never transgress its rules and guidelines in an inappropriate way to **Jacob**.
57. There is not actual Hebrew words "**for harm**" in vs.52b, though the idea is implied.
58. On Jacob's part, he is to swear by both **heap and pillar** that he will not return to Haran to do **Laban** "**harm/ra-ah**".
59. Here **Laban** is theatrically trying to suggest that his life is in danger.

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60. He further uses his SOP in making an agreement whereas he is not straightforward as to his side of the bargain (leaves open legitimate avenues of repercussions allowed in his idolatry).
61. His warning to **Jacob** again throws in mysticism as it suggests that he is subject to not only **God** in his vow, but the demon boogiemen too!
62. In vs.52, **Laban** closes with another benedictive type of speech, “**The God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us/’elohiym Abraham waw ‘elohiym Nahor shaphath bayin ‘elohiym ‘ab**”.
63. **Laban** again slathers with lip service his supposed dedication to obedience to **God**.
64. Only here does the Hebrew combine an action “**between**” the two unilaterally.
65. This as they are to be judged by the **God** mentioned.
66. This again suggests an ecumenical approach being utilized by **Laban** to consolidate an agreement between him and **Jacob**.
67. The only problem is that **Laban** not only invokes the Elohiym of +V (**Abraham**), but integrates –V (**Nahor** and **Terah**) as equals in the roles of judging.
68. It is true that Elohiym is **God** of all 3 men but only one could legitimately **judge** under the standard of **God** for actions in time and that is the Ph₂ positive believer and true heir of the Covenant thru **Abraham**.
69. In contrast to **Abraham** swearing to **God** in his oath taking with Abimelech (Gen.21:23,24) and his faithful servant to **Abraham** in Gen.24:3,9,37, **Jacob** does not swear by **Laban**’s invocation.
70. Rather he simply swears by his own +V (keeping his word) knowing that Yahweh/Elohiym’ is **witness** to all as encapsulated in the final phrase “**by the fear of his father Isaac/bet pachad ‘ab Isaac**”.
71. **Jacob**’s spiritual growth has produced new wisdom in **Jacob** enabling him to enter into a cosmic contract with –V without violating or compromising BD and his own +V.
72. He will walk away from his uncle with the confidence that **God** really will **judge between** them and that based on +V and –V in orientation or not to the directive will of **God**.

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JACOB WORSHIPS AND LABAN'S DEPARTURE

EXEGESIS VERSES 54 – 55:

וַיִּזְבַּח יַעֲקֹב זֶבַח בְּהָר וַיִּקְרָא לְאָחָיו לְאֹכַל-לֶחֶם וַיֵּאָכְלוּ לֶחֶם וַיִּלִּינוּ בְּהָר׃^{WTT} Genesis 31:54

^{NAS} Genesis 31:54 **Then Jacob offered a sacrifice on the mountain, and called his kinsmen to the meal; and they ate the meal and spent the night on the mountain.** (וַיִּזְבַּח זֶבַח הָרָה בַּלַּיְלָה וַיִּקְרָא לְאָחָיו לְאֹכַל לֶחֶם וַיֵּאָכְלוּ לֶחֶם וַיִּלִּינוּ בְּהָרָה) [waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: zabach {lit. slaughter}: "and he offered"; + proper n: "Jacob"; + n/com/m/s/abs: zebach; "a sacrifice"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: har; "on the mountain"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: qara'; "and he called"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: 'ach; "his brothers/kinsmen"; + prep: lamed w/ v/qal/inf: 'acal; "to eat"; + n/com/m/s/abs: lechem; "bread/a meal"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: 'acal; "and they ate"; + n/com/m/s/abs: lechem; "the meal"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3mpl: lun; "and they lodged/spent the night"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: har; "on the mountain"])

וַיִּשְׁכַּם לָבָן בַּבֹּקֶר וַיִּנָּשֶׂק לְבָנָיו וּלְבָנוֹתָיו וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָהֶם וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיָּשָׁב לָבָן לְמִקְוֹמוֹ׃^{WTT} Genesis 32:1

^{NAS} Genesis 31:55 **And early in the morning Laban arose, and kissed his sons and his daughters and blessed them. Then Laban departed and returned to his place.** (וַיִּשְׁכַּם לָבָן שָׁכַם בַּבֹּקֶר וַיִּנָּשֶׂק לְבָנָיו וּלְבָנוֹתָיו וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָהֶם וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיָּשָׁב לָבָן לְמִקְוֹמוֹ) [waw consec. + v/Hiphil/IPF/3ms: shakam; "and he arose early"; + proper n: "Laban"; + prep: bet + d.a. + n/com/m/s/abs: boker; "in the morning"; + waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/3ms: nashak; "and he kissed"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/pl/constr. w/3ms suff: ben; "in regards to his sons"; + waw conj. + prep: lamed + n/com/f/pl/constr. w/3ms: bath; "and in regards to his daughters"; + waw consec. + v/Piel/IPF/3ms: barak; "and he blessed {them}"; + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: halak; {lit. walk}; "and he departed" + waw consec. + v/qal/IPF/3ms: shub; "and he returned"; + proper n: "Laban"; + prep: lamed + n/com/m/s/constr. w/3ms suff: maqom; "to his place"])

ANALYSIS VERSES 54 – 55:

1. Having had to endure the drama of a religious reversionist in antagonism to the truth and +V via **Laban** confronting **Jacob**, the scenario ends in a refreshing fashion.
2. This both grounded in doctrine and application.

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3. With the oaths completed between **Jacob** and his uncle, **Jacob** retreats up “**the mountain/ha har**”.
4. It is **on the mountain** that **Jacob** engages in true worship by literally “*slaughtering a sacrifice/zabach zebach*”.
5. This is the first time these Hebrew terms have been used for **sacrifice** in Genesis.
6. Previous reference to this ritual centered on the Hebrew *-olah* (עֹלָה) that denotes a whole burnt offering emphasizing the doctrine of propitiation. Cf.Gen.8:20[2x]; 22:2[2x],3,6,7,8,13 [2x]
7. The present Hebrew *zabach/zebach* is used in conjunction with the doctrine of sin bearing in judgment (Ex.Exo.5:3; 12:27; 23:18) and is associated with burnt and peace offerings (Ex.Exo.20:24; 24:5).
8. In connection with sin bearing it highlights victory over the STA in life, Ph₁ and 2.
9. It is used of sacrificing to idols emphasizing condemnation of association with such. Cp.Exo.32:8-10; 34:14-16
10. Our author chooses this term to capture the essence of what the ritual of **sacrifice** encapsulated in general means.
11. That is Ph₁ and 2 deliverance from sin making possible the doctrines of propitiation and peace with God finding victory over the STA in time and eternity escaping Divine wrath and judgment from God.
12. These are the essential doctrines that will make reality Laban’s earlier proclamation for God to “*judge between us*” in vs.53.
13. **Jacob** finds solace and refuge in being an heir to the true doctrine of the Covenant.
14. He celebrates all that it means on his behalf and the deliverance it has provided for him for his failures in life because he adheres to the sound faith of **sacrifice**.
15. This in contrast to an uncle who practiced idolatry totally contradicting the admonitions of BD otherwise refusing to deal with his STA.
16. **Jacob** recognizes that Laban’s final words of God judging between them will come about based on BD, not the traditions and ideologies of men running under an unbridled STA intellectually pursuing human viewpoint.
17. He illustrates the comfort +V believers often find from the ills of the cosmos coming to Bible class, isolating their STA’s and zeroing on doctrine that brings a perpetual peace.
18. After a day like **Jacob** just spent recorded for us in vss.25-54, the spiritual refreshment of true worship helps restabilize +V having undergone an otherwise very emotional event.
19. It appears he first went to make the **sacrifice** alone (or with minimal company) as after making the **sacrifice**, he then “**called his kinsmen to the meal; and they ate the meal and spent the night on the mountain/qara**’ lamed ‘ach lamed ‘acal lechem waw ‘acal lechem waw lun bet ha har”.
20. The question here is “Are the **kinsman** Jacob’s only, Laban’s only or both?”
21. The text omits any reference that Laban attended.
22. That **Jacob** gave invitation suggests that the invite was open to any that would acknowledge the significance of the sacrificial **meal** according to BD.
23. In other words, it was a call to true fellowship of any that was likeminded to the Covenant faith.
24. “**They**” are the ones that **ate the meal and spent the night on the mountain** in true fellowship.

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25. It is clear from the underlying emphasis of the text targeting religious reversionism symbolized by the pile of stones that the two meals of vs.46 and 54 are to be contrasted.
26. The latter **meal** points to the reality of true fellowship being inclusive of any that will align themselves with the truth of BD, even for a time.
27. It is noteworthy to point out that none that partook of the sacrificial **meal** returned to the main body of camps that evening.
28. It makes one wonder if Jacob's party grew larger for his return home.
29. In any case, **Laban** has burnt that bridge and **early in the morning** he **arose** (*shakam bet boker*).
30. Vs.55 actually begins a new paragraph in the Hebrew text and should begin our chapter 32.
31. Typical **Laban** carries through with his religious façade "**and kissed his sons and his daughters**/nashak lamed ben waw lamed bath" goodbye (cf.vs.27-28).
32. He then pronounces a meaningless blessing over **them**.
33. The non-recorded words of Laban's blessing indicates they are not to be regarded in the same vein as the blessings that Abraham and Isaac pronounced on their offspring.
34. As a religious reversionist he was just going through the ritual necessary to exemplify his standard of beliefs.
35. We see the mirrored counterfeit of his actions to those of the +V adjusted believers.
36. He was minus +V in his life and only mimicked sound application in its reality.
37. Going to Bible class, praying or application prescribed by the WOG is meaningless apart from +V.
38. **Laban departed and returned to his place** living a lie, pretending to pursue the POG while truly pursuing the STA in a religious way.
39. He previously burnt any bridges of future association with Jacob via their pact.
40. This revealed his obstinance of refusing to go on +V.
41. He set the demarcation line for the doctrine of separation to be implemented.
42. In this case, God set up the circumstances that would bring about separation exposing the true nature of **Laban** for all to openly critique.
43. God jammed his efforts in pursuit of **Jacob** and out came his arsenal of religiosity to try and circumvent the POG otherwise.
44. He drew the "line in the sand" so to speak and Jacob's retreat for sacrificial worship judges his negative contempt for the truth.
45. **Laban** wants no part of "pure truth" and goes his own way.
46. **Jacob** had some problem separating from **Laban** some 6 years ago, so God intervened with **Jacob** Gaping His intervention and provided a circumstance that separation could ultimately come to fruition.
47. **Jacob** was finally willing to leave Haran but his uncle was a "clinger oner"!!
48. God again intervened and **Laban** damns himself from further association.
49. It shows that God supports the adjusted believer applying separation and will intervene otherwise as possible to ensure its benefit.
50. How refreshing for **Jacob** having physically removed himself from the burden of religious paganism and an STA driven believer otherwise.
51. *Review the Doctrine of Vindication.*