

**The Story of Jacob**  
*Heroes of Faith Series*  
Week 10: Jacob's Escape

**Scripture**

Genesis 31

**Motivation**

***Where are we in the story? (Genesis 29-30)***

- Jacob tricked his brother, Esau, out of the blessing and had to run for his life
- God met him at Bethel and promised to be with him
- Laban deceived Jacob into marrying Leah, instead of Rachel
- Jacob spent 20 years working, waiting, and trying to get ahead
- Family drama, rivalry, and manipulation were constant
- Jacob now wants to leave, but Laban wants him to stay.
- Jacob and Laban strike a deal, and God blesses Jacob's flocks through some strange breeding practices.

**Genesis 30:43 (NLT)** As a result, Jacob became very wealthy, with large flocks of sheep and goats, female and male servants, and many camels and donkeys.

Have you ever stayed in a situation longer than you should have?

You knew something needed to change—you could feel it—but you weren't sure how to move or even if it was God telling you to move.

...a job, toxic relationship, season of spiritual apathy, or the weight of the same old routine.

You told yourself, "This is just how life is now."

But somewhere deep inside, something was stirring.

Jacob gets that. He's been in that tension for 20 years—working, waiting, wondering. But in Genesis 31, God finally speaks. "Go back."

Genesis 31 isn't just a *travel* story—it's a *trust* story. Why? Because obeying God's voice will always pull us *out of comfort* and *into faith*.

## Information

### ***Realizations of Jacob Concerning God...***

#### ■ **Jacob realizes that God is moving him on**

**Genesis 31:1 (NLT)** But Jacob soon learned that Laban's sons were grumbling about him. "Jacob has robbed our father of everything!" they said. "He has gained all his wealth at our father's expense." **2** And Jacob began to notice a change in Laban's attitude toward him. **3** Then the Lord said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your father and grandfather and to your relatives there, and I will be with you."

- ✓ Jacob's situation hadn't gotten better—it had gotten more bitter
- ✓ God uses the tension Jacob is feeling to push him into transition
- ✓ Just because Jacob was used to dysfunction didn't mean he should stay in it

#### ■ **Jacob realizes God has always been with him, and will continue to do so**

**Genesis 31:4 (NLT)** So Jacob called Rachel and Leah out to the field where he was watching his flock. **5** He said to them, "I have noticed that your father's attitude toward me has changed. But the God of my father has been with me. **6** You know how hard I have worked for your father, **7** but he has cheated me, changing my wages ten times. But God has not allowed him to do me any harm."

- ✓ Rachel and Leah feel the tension also and agree to follow God's voice

**Genesis 31:14 (NLT)** Rachel and Leah responded, "That's fine with us! We won't inherit any of our father's wealth anyway. **15** He has reduced our rights to those of foreign women. And after he sold us, he wasted the money you paid him for us. **16** All the wealth God has given you from our father legally belongs to us and our children. So go ahead and do whatever God has told you."

- ✓ Jacob, and all that he has, leaves quietly

**Genesis 31:17 (NLT)** So Jacob put his wives and children on camels, **18** and he drove all his livestock in front of him. He packed all the belongings he had acquired in Paddan-aram and set out for the land of Canaan, where his father, Isaac, lived. **19** At the time they left, Laban was some distance away, shearing his sheep....

- ✓ Rachel steals her father's idols in their departure

**Genesis 31:19 (NLT)** ...Rachel stole her father's household idols and took them with her. **20** Jacob outwitted Laban the Aramean, for they set out secretly and never told Laban they were leaving. **21** So Jacob took all his possessions with him and crossed the Euphrates River, heading for the hill country of Gilead.

- **Jacob realizes that God has been fighting for him**

**Genesis 31:22 (NLT)** Three days later, Laban was told that Jacob had fled. **23** So he gathered a group of his relatives and set out in hot pursuit. He caught up with Jacob seven days later in the hill country of Gilead. **24** But the previous night God had appeared to Laban the Aramean in a dream and told him, “I’m warning you—leave Jacob alone!”

- ✓ Laban plays victim

**Genesis 31:25 (NLT)** Laban caught up with Jacob as he was camped in the hill country of Gilead, and he set up his camp not far from Jacob’s. **26** “What do you mean by deceiving me like this?” Laban demanded. “How dare you drag my daughters away like prisoners of war? **27** Why did you slip away secretly?”

- ✓ Laban gets upset that his idols were stolen

**Genesis 31:29 (NLT)** “I could destroy you, but the God of your father appeared to me last night and warned me, ‘Leave Jacob alone!’ **30** I can understand your feeling that you must go, and your intense longing for your father’s home. But why have you stolen my gods?” **31** “I rushed away because I was afraid,” Jacob answered. “I thought you would take your daughters from me by force. **32** But as for your gods, see if you can find them, and let the person who has taken them die!”

- ✓ Laban’s search for the idols yields nothing

**Genesis 31:32 (NLT)** ...But Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen the household idols. **33** Laban went first into Jacob’s tent to search there, then into Leah’s, and then the tents of the two servant wives—but he found nothing. Finally, he went into Rachel’s tent. **34** But Rachel had taken the household idols and hidden them in her camel saddle, and now she was sitting on them. When Laban had thoroughly searched her tent without finding them, **35** she said to her father, “Please, sir, forgive me if I don’t get up for you. I’m having my monthly period.” So Laban continued his search, but he could not find the household idols.

- ✓ Jacob unloads on Laban, and realizes that God has been fighting for him

**Genesis 31:36 (NLT)** Then Jacob became very angry, and he challenged Laban. “What’s my crime?” he demanded. **38** “For twenty years I have been with you, caring for your flocks.” **41** “...for twenty years I slaved in your house! I worked for fourteen years earning your two daughters, and then six more years for your flock... **42** In fact, if the God of my father had not been on my side—the God of Abraham and the fearsome God of Isaac—you would have sent me away empty-handed. But God has seen your abuse and my hard work. That is why he appeared to you last night and rebuked you!”

- ✓ Jacob and Laban make a covenant of peace by setting boundaries

**Genesis 31:50 (NLT)** “If you mistreat my daughters or if you marry other wives, God will see it even if no one else does. He is a witness to this covenant between us.” **51** “See this pile of stones,” Laban continued, “and see this monument I have set between us. **52** They stand between us as witnesses of our vows. I will never pass this pile of stones to harm you, and you must never pass these stones or this monument to harm me. **53** I call on the God of our ancestors—the God of your grandfather Abraham and the God of my grandfather Nahor—to serve as a judge between us.” So Jacob took an oath before the fearsome God of his father, Isaac, to respect the boundary line.

- Boundaries are a gift of God’s grace—especially with unhealthy people
- This moment marks a break from generational control
- Sometimes peace isn’t about reconciliation—it’s about release

## Application

Maybe you’re in a season where God is saying, “It’s time to go.”

Time to leave the fear.

Time to walk away from someone else’s control.

Time to stop being stuck in someone else’s expectations.

But you’re scared. And that’s okay.

The same God who spoke to Jacob will walk with you.

He’ll protect you, fight for you, and lead you into freedom.