

RESCUE AND RESURRECTION

Genesis 30:25—31:55

“I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and where you made a vow to me. Now leave this land at once and go back to your native land.” Genesis 31:13

1. Read Genesis 30:25–43. Jacob has worked for Laban for 14 years without wages. He has two wives, eleven sons, and a daughter. What does Jacob want to do now? What does Laban want Jacob to do? (verses 25–30)
2. What does Laban do to sabotage Jacob’s plan for financial security? How does Jacob get the better of him? (verses 34–43)
3. Why is Jacob's success not surprising? (Genesis 28:13–15)
4. Read Genesis 31:1–18. What prompts Jacob to finally decide to head for home?
5. Jacob takes his wives into his confidence. In his speech to persuade them to come with him to Canaan, who does Jacob repeatedly refer to? How has Jacob grown in his relationship with God over the last 20 years?
6. God’s promise to be with us brings comfort. What does that comfort look like? (Psalm 23; 46; 91:11–15) Share a specific time when you have been comforted by the promise that God is with you.
7. Read Genesis 31:19–42. Why do you think Laban chases Jacob and the family all the way to Gilead? Who intervenes and how? (vss. 24, 29, 42)

8. Rachel steals the “household gods.” These were small idols and were thought to bring the family protection and blessing. They were symbols of the gods’ presence, handed down as an heirloom from one generation to the next. How would this theft, coming at the same time as Jacob’s departure, make Laban feel? What does Rachel’s behavior reveal about her? (verses 14–16, 19, 33b–35)

9. After twenty years of being mistreated, Jacob finally gets to tell his side of the story (verses 36–42). How has God been Jacob’s only friend and ally?

10. When you are going through hard times, what has God revealed about himself that affects your perspective on your suffering? (Genesis 50:20; Psalm 139:13–16; Jeremiah 29:11; Romans 8:28)

11. Read Genesis 31:43–55. Laban and Jacob agree to disagree and draw up a covenant that simply sets a boundary between them. What is missing here? (Matthew 18:35; Luke 17:3–4; James 5:16)

12. At each stage of Jacob’s personal journey he sets up a pillar of stones to commemorate significant events (28:10–22; 31:45–46). Think back over the last five to ten years of your life and write a journal entry. What have you learned about God and yourself through the significant events in your life?