

Genesis: God and Man

The Fear of Isaac

Genesis 31:22-55

God & Man

Adam and Even

Cain and Abel

Noah

Abraham

Isaac

Jacob

Sincerity means that the appearance and the reality are exactly the same. Studies in the Sermon on the Mount, 1449 L Oswald chambers

Previously

- Jacob's birth, twin, birthright, stew
- Deceiving, leaving, cleaving
- Land of Laban, back where Abraham started
- Rachel being overdramatic, very burdened by the fact that she couldn't have kids
- Gives maid Bilhah - Dan, Naphtali
- Rivalry with her sister, still values giving children to her husband as a way to get his affection
- Leah had four previously, thinks she's done, gives Zilpah
- Zilpah - Gad and Asher
- God listens to her
- More sons, one daughter Dinah, all the way to Joseph
- Jacob wants his freedom
- God continues to favor Jacob and his hard work, becomes quite wealthy, servants, camels

Do you feel like God is with you?

Or do you feel alone?

Do you know God is with you?

[Deu 31:6 NKJV] 6 "Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, He [is] the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you."

Do the circumstances and people in your life make you feel alone, obligated, trapped or guilt-tripped into anything?

Seek the LORD for the truth on these things.

There may be a duty there for you to fulfill, or there may not be any obligation at all on your end.

How far have you come in life?

Through what circumstances have you gone through? To whom do you credit with doing it? Be honest with yourself. Do you credit yourself, God, someone else, something or some program, education or philosophy?

Perhaps you blame God.

But is he really the one to blame for it? Have you put an obligation on him that was truly someone else's responsibility, even your own?

It might be time for you to go back. It might be time for you to go forward. But there is only one voice that can truly guide you.

[Isa 30:18-26 NKJV] 18 Therefore the LORD will wait, that He may be gracious to you; And therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you. For the LORD [is] a God of justice; Blessed [are] all those who wait for Him. 19 For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem; You shall weep no more. He will be very gracious to you at the sound of your cry; When He hears it, He will answer you. 20 And [though] the Lord gives you The bread of adversity and the water of affliction, Yet your teachers will not be moved into a corner anymore, But your eyes shall see your teachers. 21 Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This [is] the way, walk in it," Whenever you turn to the right hand Or whenever you turn to the left. 22 You will also defile the covering of your images of silver, And the ornament of your molded images of gold. You will throw them away as an unclean thing; You will say to them, "Get away!" 23 Then He will give the rain for your seed With which you sow the ground, And bread of the increase of the earth; It will be fat and plentiful. In that day your cattle will feed In large pastures. 24 Likewise the oxen and the young donkeys that work the ground Will eat cured fodder, Which has been winnowed with the shovel and fan. 25 There will be on every high mountain And on every high hill Rivers [and] streams of waters, In the day of the great slaughter, When the towers fall. 26 Moreover the light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, And the light of the sun will be sevenfold, As the light of seven days, In the day that the LORD binds up the bruise of His people And heals the stroke of their wound.

31:17-21 (just to recap)

31:22-35

Laban told on the third day (they were a few days journey away, so it took time for the message to get there. That distance between them was crucial to their departure)

The cross, the grave...three days

“Be careful that you speak neither good nor bad”

Speak to him Laban, but don't come against him, don't curse him, but also, don't bless him, don't flatter him, don't try to be the one who blesses him.

The way you can bless him, the way you can care for him, is to let him go

God speaks to this idolatrous man!

This deceiving, trick-filled man. Who uses his own family for his own gain.

How gracious is God. God did it for Jacob, but also for Laban. I guarantee God would have blessed Laban too if Laban was so bent on Laban and his idols.

In fact, God had been blessing Laban in the past...because of Jacob, for Jacob's sake...but Laban remained hard and idolatrous. And when that blessing was removed and solely landed on Jacob...Laban wants to get it back from Jacob.

These things truly reveal hearts and the heart of a matter

The people you love and trust and are related to, and maybe even you and me, might be concealing our true motives, our true desires, and using our flesh to maintain devotion to these idols of our own making. And when our idols go missing. Our blessing not found. We quickly turn on those we say we love, we feign interest in, and will sacrifice our relationship with them to get back what we want.

No Laban, you wouldn't have sent him away

Thinly veiled threats...so much for not speaking a word good or bad

Like all idolaters who hear the word of God, or are even face to face with Him in a dream, it is quickly forgotten or not applied

Afraid, take his daughters back by force

A man of violence

Lives by the sword, dies by the sword

[Mat 26:52 NKJV] 52 But Jesus said to him, "Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.

A hasty vow...

Judges 11, Jephthah's daughter

Why would he vow such a thing? Had he forgotten his daughter might come out to see him when he returns?

[Ecc 5:1-7 NKJV] 1 Walk prudently when you go to the house of God; and draw near to hear rather than to give the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they do evil. 2 Do not be rash with your mouth, And let not your heart utter anything hastily before God. For God [is] in heaven, and you on earth; Therefore let your words be few. 3 For a dream comes through much activity, And a fool's voice [is known] by [his] many words. 4 When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it; For [He has] no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed-- 5 Better not to vow than to vow and not pay. 6 Do not let your mouth cause your flesh to sin, nor say before the messenger [of God] that it [was] an error. Why should God be angry at your excuse and destroy the work of your hands? 7 For in the multitude of dreams and many words [there is] also vanity. But fear God.

See him searching, can't find his gods

The dependence on an idol, you'll be reliant on violence (physical, emotional, etc)

You'll go through your family's things like they're the criminal

When no laban, you're the criminal

Rachel is cunning

[Mat 10:16 NKJV] 16 "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

Leah as well, the mandrakes

Like Jacob, Rebekah his mom

Like Abraham

Like their father

Like their family

But her tactics are no better, no more righteous than her father's. She's stealing. She's lying. Out of spite against her dad. She's relying on the same idol as her dad, albeit in a different way, to get the outcome she desires

[Jas 1:19-20 NKJV] 19 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; 20 for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

Don't let your family's tendency, sins, genetics, weaknesses determine your walk, your life.

"Blood is thicker than water"

Jesus blood and the water of the word is thicker than your family blood

Your personal past

Your fleshly weaknesses

Don't stay under their abusive authority in your life

:36-42

Jacob angry and rebukes Laban

[1Ti 5:1-2 NKJV] 1 Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort [him] as a father, younger men as brothers, 2 older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity.

There may come a time when those who avoid conflict, like Jacob, must face the music. We might even have to run away in the middle of the night, but our problems will always catch up with us.

Jacob had to run away, it was a last resort...like his future descendents would have to flee from Pharaoh.

Must tell it like it is both to those who accuse and hurt them, and those they themselves as hurt.

Jacob had been cut off from his twin...Esau. And joined to a distant Uncle. Now it was time to be cut away from his Uncle and reconciled with his brother.

See him standing by, watch this unrighteous search and seizure (although it's true, they did steal the idol...it wasn't Jacob who stole it, but Rachel, Laban's favored daughter) Favoritism and oversight...laban never trusted Jacob totally, truly

[Pro 22:24-25 NKJV] 24 Make no friendship with an angry man, And with a furious man do not go, 25 Lest you learn his ways And set a snare for your soul.

This encounter in the mountains

This family argument

This heated, raw exchange

:36 What is my trespass? What is my sin, that you have so hotly pursued me?

Laban, seriously, what have you found? Put all the evidence out here for everyone to see Why have you hotly pursued me? If you really loved us Laban, you wouldn't be angry, looking for your idols and wanting what you think is yours back...you'd be hurt and broken and asking why we left you.

But Laban knew.

Matthew 18 method

Jacob the deceiver, the trickster, become

the hard working, the honest, starting to truly fear God

Finds himself under attack, under judgment, for being the same old person he used to be

When he's clearly not (it was Rachel, secretly, after all)

Isn't that the case for all of us believers

We begin to follow God. Our old ways go by the wayside.

Our closest friends and family begin to show their true colors. We try to remain honorable.

But at some point separation happens. And it's not usually because we want it.

It's because they force it. It's because their sin gets projected onto us.

Their idolatry vs. our inherited righteousness comes to a head

Only one will prevail

Elijah and the prophets of baal

These 20 years I have been with you!

7 for Rachel, then got Leah

7 more for Rachel, then got her finally

6+more serving Laban

Jacob is no spring chicken anymore

He is older, he is wiser, and he has finally come to a point where he can defend his actions

I have done you NO wrong Laban

He can't say the same about his brother Esau, to whom he's heading home towards - at God's command. But he's not that same rash, conniving, deceiving, and crafty, self-willed and selfish and desirous young man anymore

He came to Laban's land empty, broken, alone, but with a promise, and a covenant. Not from his deceit, but directly from God in the dream.

20 years later he's rich, he's got a huge family which will become a nation, and he's starting to get that God is the one who blessed him all this time. He doesn't need a fake idol. He doesn't need an abusive uncle. He just needs to listen to the God who promises and delivers nothing but good, in the truth. And who's only demands is personal righteousness and obedience in light of what God has done for him and promised him.

Can you see this passionate legal argument with his uncle, pleading his case?

Jacob's pleading his own case, but is that not the heart we're to have for God's case in other's lives?

[2Co 5:20-21 NKJV] 20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore [you] on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. 21 For He made Him who knew no sin [to be] sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Telling Laban the same thing he told his family. He's leaving because of Laban. His season under and around the influence and reach of Laban has come to an end. Not because he's fed up with it, although he is, but because God has given him the OK to depart. And more than that, the call back to the promised land.

Jacob now has all he needs to return to the promised land. God is with him. God is blessing him. He has family. Possessions and more than enough of a changed heart to continue on the right path that God had intended all along.

It just took a season of 20 years of hard work for an unthankful and untrustworthy uncle, for him to be at the point God can truly get a hold of him and it's all been set up to bless him.

[Rom 8:28 NKJV] 28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to [His] purpose.

But Jacob's ultimate defense, he knew was God. He knew that it was God convicting Laban. God standing up for him.

[Rom 12:19 NKJV] 19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but [rather] give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance [is] Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.

[Psa 61:3 NKJV] 3 For You have been a shelter for me, A strong tower from the enemy.

You don't need to rebuke the devil. Even songs about it now.

Yes, fight him with scripture, recite scripture like the Lord perhaps in response

But you don't need to let the devil know "not today"

That's his tactic. You have no authority over him just as he has no authority over you.

[Jde 1:8-11 NKJV] 8 Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries. 9 Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" 10 But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves. 11 Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

:43-55

Claiming it was all his. He never truly gave his daughters to Jacob. They were still there. Close by. But these animals, he never gave a thing to Jacob. They made fair deals and Laban always changed it. God had blessed Jacob. And Laban thinks God's blessing on Jacob's life and absence in his own is Jacob stealing from him.

It sounds a lot like the modern, idolatrous mindset and political leanings sweeping the west.

A covenant...their simple word was not good enough or trustworthy anymore

They needed a legal proceeding

Eating on the heap (reading the law and seeing how many times eating goes on, how many times the Lord eats with his people)

You don't eat with enemies

You eat with friends, family

Olive garden, when you're here, you're family

May the Lord watch

Whether he really believed it or not

The dream happened. The dream is recorded in scripture so it was evident. Laban wasn't quiet about it. He knew it. Jacob knew it. And God would need to be the one to keep a watch on them. They couldn't watch each other.

But it was good. They would let God be the one to sort it out.

No more deals. No more trades. No more payment.

Finally leaving and cleaving, 20 years later

Laban called it Jegar Sahadutha,[fn] but Jacob called it Galeed.

Aramaic vs. hebrew

Witness heap

Hopefully this deal wouldn't be a pile of garbage between them, like every other word and deal Laban had made

These men spoke two languages natively. And by the way Laban dealt with their past arrangements there was clearly something lost in translation...on purpose

Mizpah, watch tower

But this time God was explicitly brought into their dealings, their relationship

[2Co 6:14-18 NKJV] 14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? 15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? 16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among [them]. I will be their God, And they shall be My people." 17 Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you." 18 "I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty."

When they couldn't keep an eye on each other God would be watching them Watching their backs

But did Laban really have any need of this covenant? No. Jacob hadn't wronged him. Jacob was the one who really needed God to watch out for him...and he already had that. He didn't need Laban to go along with it. God was handling it.

Non-militarized zone

Split the bedroom down the middle
You don't come here, I won't go there.

This distance between us, this split in our relationship, is amicable from this point forward.

Don't come back and I won't pursue.

God of Abraham and Nahor?

I don't know that Nahor followed God like Abraham, but perhaps Laban trying to equate their spirituality. That Jacob was no better in believing in God alone than he was in letting God in on his pantheism

Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac

Not by what Laban said, by what God had said. Jacob no longer feared Laban, but instead, Feared God

[Pro 9:10 NKJV] 10 "The fear of the LORD [is] the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One [is] understanding."

Jacob was getting it. He was near the place he rested his head on a stone where he heard God's promise made personal to him. He was seeing God's faithfulness to him, despite his past. Despite who he was in his family. He was learning and counting on God's provision and blessing and promise. And not that of his father. Not that of his birthright. Not that of his uncle.

Jacob offered a sacrifice. Not Laban.

Abraham. Isaac. Noah. Abel. All knew about sacrifice. All knew of the sweet aroma of God handling things in their lives

how God watching out for them was worth far more than whatever they could offer.

God finally put Laban in his place.

Back to where he came from.

As we find our place in God, and he leads us to where we should be, there will be Laban's who come to take what they think is theirs of our blessing.

Like Jacob knew, we can trust God to do the fighting for us. Because the fight is not truly with our family, our friends, our loved ones or even people who seem to be our enemies...

If we put our trust in the Fear of Isaac and of Jacob...we do not have to fear them.

God will put our enemy in his place. We don't have to show him.

[Eph 6:10-13 NKJV] 10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual [hosts] of wickedness in the heavenly [places]. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.