

LESSON 20

Jacob Flees from Laban

GENESIS 30:25 – 31:55



— BIBLE TRUTH —

GOD CARES FOR THOSE WHO ARE CALLED TO BE A PART OF HIS PLAN

LESSON SNAPSHOT

- 1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN**
Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.
- 2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN**
Read Genesis 31:1–24 from the Scriptures or read story 20, “Jacob Flees from Laban,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.
- 3. OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN**
Changing the Rules
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ white sheet
 - ✓ black paint or marker
- 4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN**
- 5. OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN**
Hide the Household Gods
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ photocopy a dozen pictures of an idol (any photo of Buddha or other idol will do)
- 6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN**
- 7. ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN**
Goat Drawings
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ several photos of goats
 - ✓ crayons, colored pencils, and paper
- 8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN**
- 9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN**
Separate the Goats
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ game pieces prepared as instructed

TOTAL 75 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

God miraculously multiplied Jacob's flocks—Jacob asks Laban if he can take his wives and children and go back home. But Laban does not want Jacob to leave. Laban inquires of Jacob what he would like to be paid for continuing to work. Jacob suggests that his wages be paid from every sheep or goat that has unusual markings or is an unusual color. Laban agrees.

God miraculously increases Jacob's flocks, so Laban changes the rules as to which animals Jacob can take, but still Jacob's flocks increase in number. No matter how Laban changes the rules, God keeps blessing Jacob.

God called Jacob to return to the land of his father—In the middle of the problems with Laban, God tells Jacob to return to Canaan. Jacob trusts the Lord but still fears and distrusts Laban. So while Laban is away shearing his sheep, Jacob gathers up everything he owns and leaves Laban without even saying goodbye. That makes Laban so angry he goes after Jacob.

God protected Jacob from Laban's anger—God protects Jacob from Laban's anger. In the end, Laban even makes a peace agreement with Jacob. We also learn that Laban worshiped idols because his daughter Rachel stole the "household gods" and took them with her, probably thinking they would bring her good luck on her journey.

WHERE IS JESUS? _____

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Read Matthew 2:13–16.

In a dream, God told Jacob to leave Laban so that Jacob could return to the land of promise. Only in this way could the generations promised to Abraham be born. Jesus was protected in a similar way when in a dream God told Joseph to take Jesus away from Herod. Neither Laban's opposition to Jacob nor Herod's opposition to Jesus could stop God's plan.

God prospered Jacob, and many years later the Savior was one of Jacob's descendants just as God promised. All of history moves in the direction of fulfilling God's redemptive plan.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Genesis 31:1–24 from the Scriptures or read story 20, "Jacob Flees from Laban," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Changing the Rules

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ white sheet
- ✓ black paint or marker

Before class, create a rope: cut up an old white sheet into ten eighteen-inch squares. Using a thick-tipped black marker or black paint, color half the squares with spots and half with streaks and stripes. Tie the corners of the squares together (alternate spots and stripes) to form a rope.

Play the role of Jacob retelling the story of how Laban changed his wages ten times but how each time God made sure the newly born livestock matched Laban's changes. Wear a loose fitting shirt and a sweater or jacket over the shirt. Place the rope of sheet squares under your shirt in the small of your back. Thread the rope through your sleeve right up to the cuff. As you speak of the changes one by one, pull on the rope to reveal another square. With a little practice you should be able to mimic the act of a magician who produces a line of scarves. With each of the squares, unfold them and show the spotted or streaked pattern that matches the demands of Laban.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- From this story, what do we learn about God being in control of all things?
(Only God can ensure that an animal would be born streaked or spotted. This story shows us how God is in control of every detail of our lives.)

- Through this experience, what did Jacob learn about God?
(Jacob began to learn that God is real and that he wants our trust. God takes the first step to come to man. Though Jacob would have wanted to leave Laban earlier, he was afraid to stand up to him. With the grace and courage given by God, Jacob is able to lead his family home.)

TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

Hide the Household Gods

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ photocopy a dozen pictures of an idol (any photo of Buddha or other idol will do)

Prior to class, hide the pictures of the idol all around the classroom.

Read Genesis 31:25–33 to the class. Explain to the children that Rachel, who stole her father's household gods, came into the classroom earlier and asked if she could hide them here. Tell the class that now that you have had some time to think about it, you don't think it is such a good idea that you allowed her to do this and you want their help in finding the household gods.

Release the children to try to find all twelve pictures. After they have located all the pictures, ask the following questions:

- **What is the difference between these household gods and the true God of the Bible?**
(The household gods are fake. They are simply made of wood or stone and are dead not alive. The true God depicted in the Bible relates to us. He speaks to us and directs our lives.)

- **Why did Rachel take her father's gods?**
(Most commentators believe she was just learning about the true and living God when Jacob told her they would be leaving. She was not ready to give up what she thought these gods had to offer.)

- **Why did the true God want Jacob and his family to leave Laban?**
(First, Jacob had a destiny to return to the land that God had promised to Abraham and his descendants. Second, God is a jealous God and did not want Jacob and his family to be mixed in with idol worshipers.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Goat Drawings

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ several photos of goats
- ✓ crayons, colored pencils, and paper

Show the class the pictures of goats. Pass out the paper and coloring implements and have the children draw three goats. Ask them to color one with streaks, one with spots, and one with blotches of different colors.

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Separate the Goats

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ game pieces prepared as instructed

To prepare game pieces, divide a standard sheet of paper into four squares. Draw spots on one; streaks on a second; larger spots, some lighter and some darker (to represent mottled goats), on a third; and finally color one solid. Then photocopy one sheet for each student in your class, and cut the photocopies into quarters. Finally shuffle the squares to mix up the different patterns.

In class, after explaining the story of how Laban kept changing the rules on Jacob, tell the class you are going to show them what happened. Show them the different game pieces and tell them the names of the patterns: spotted, streaked, mottled, and solid. Have the children sit in the center of the room forming a herd of goats. Pass out one square per child (face down so they cannot see the pattern). Then call out one of the four patterns. Have the children turn over their squares and each one with the pattern that matches the one you called out should separate themselves from the others. In this way, you can explain how Laban gave Jacob his wages. Only God made it so that all the goats born matched whatever Laban called out. Reshuffle the squares and try the exercise again.

