

(I) TROUBLE

1. Laban's sons

- a) Noted the growing wealth of Jacob
- b) Noted also Laban's diminished wealth (in comparison)
- c) Complained to their father (Genesis 31:1)

2. Laban's response

- a) His countenance changed for the worse
- b) He was upset with what he had heard (Genesis 31:2)

3. Jacob's awareness

- a) He became acutely conscious
- b) He knew he had to make a firm decision soon

(II) GOD'S LEADING

1. God's word to Jacob (Genesis 31:3)

- a) Jacob was to return to the land of his fathers
- b) And to his family

2. God's promise

- a) He would be with Jacob
- b) His Presence would offer sufficient protection

(III) JACOB'S WORD TO RACHEL AND LEAH

Genesis 31:4-13

1. Presenting the plans to go to Canaan

- a) Rachel and Leah

b) Out in the field

2. Reviewing the situation

a) Unfavourable change of Laban's countenance (Genesis 31:5)

b) Faithful service of Jacob reviewed (Genesis 31:6)

c) Laban had changed Jacob's wages 10 times (Genesis 31:7)

3. Tracing God's hand

a) God had been with Jacob (Genesis 31:5)

b) He had kept Jacob from being harmed by Laban (Genesis 31:7)

c) He had had taken the livestock of Laban and given that to Jacob (Genesis 31:9)

4. God's word to Jacob

a) It was not his attempts to make Laban's sheep and goats speckled, spotted and brown that accounted for the success (Genesis 30:37-42)

b) It was God's hand of mercy and grace (Genesis 31:8-12)

c) The God of Bethel (Genesis 31:13) (Cf. Genesis 28)

i) Recall the first encounter with God

ii) Command to leave Haran

iii) Return to Canaan - "the land of your family"

(IV) RESPONSE OF RACHEL AND LEAH

Genesis 31:14-16

1. No reason to stay on in Haran (Genesis 31:14)

2. Laban had treated his own daughters as if they were strangers (Genesis 31:15)

3. All their wealth had been taken by Laban (Genesis 31:16a)

4. The wealth that Jacob had acquired was rightfully theirs (Genesis 31:16b)
5. Readiness to obey whatever God had commanded Jacob (Genesis 31:16c)