

Concubine Information

- Concubines were a lower class wife, and were almost always women.
- Most often they were considered no more than slaves or personal property.
- In rare occasions they could be elevated to the status of wife.
- They were used to produce children, make political alliances, or as a status symbol.
- Having sex with a ruler's concubine was an act of treason.
- There is variety in the ancient world how concubines were used.
- The Bible does not condone this behavior as morally acceptable.

Jacob Flees (v. 17-22)

- Jacob arises and is going to return to the promised land like God commanded.
- Jacob takes only his sons, his wives, his livestock, and his rightful property.
- Rachel steals Laban's idols.
- The household gods are his personal idols and gods.
- It is unclear what her motivation was, but she shouldn't have done it.
- Jacob does not tell Laban when he is leaving, and he has no need to.
- Laban has continually opposed Jacob's leaving, so this is wise.

Laban Pursues (v. 23-35)

- Laban does not realize Jacob has left for three days.
- He runs after him to bring him back and it takes 7 days to catch up.
- God warns Laban in a dream to leave Jacob alone.
- Laban accuses Jacob of kidnapping his daughters, which we know he did not.
- Laban lies by saying he would have loved to celebrate Jacob's leaving.
- Laban wants to threaten Jacob, but God holds him back.
- Jacob's God can speak and hold power over Laban.
- Laban's gods can be stolen away and have no voice or power.

Laban's gods

- Laban complains that his gods have been stolen away from him.
- Jacob swears that whoever stole them will be executed.
- Laban is free to take back any property that is rightfully his, which is none.
- Laban searches all the tents and cannot find them.
- Rachel is sitting on them on her camel.
- She cannot stand up because she is on her period.
- Rachel is sitting on an unclean animal, while she is unclean, on top of idols.
- Her behavior is wrong and sinful.
- Laban's gods are shown to be powerless and used best as sanitation pads.
- God protects Jacob even though there is sin in the camp.

Jacob's Complaint (v. 36-42)

- Jacob's anger finally comes to the surface over how Laban has treated him.
- Jacob pleads his innocence and asks for judgment.
- Jacob has faithfully served Laban for 20 years.
- Jacob has never stolen a single sheep or killed one.
- Any sheep that died or were lost were paid for out of Jacob's pockets.
- He has suffered for 20 years and been mistreated the entire time.
- Jacob knows that only the God of Abraham and Isaac has protected him.
- If not for God, Jacob would have been sent away with nothing.
- But God sees those who suffer.
- God sees those who work faithfully despite opposition.
- God acts on their behalf.

Pillars and Covenant (v. 43-55)

- Laban maintains that everything Jacob has is his, including his own children.
- Jacob has been mistreated and Laban refuses to acknowledge any wrong doing.
- Laban offers to make a peace treaty and covenant.
- They set stones as a border they will no longer cross.
- They ask for God to watch over and punish whoever tries to violate the covenant.
- Even though Jacob boasts, he is worried Jacob will come for vengeance.
- Laban swears by Elohim, Jacob swears by YWH.
- Laban is serving and swearing by different gods than Jacob.
- Jacob uses a unique name of God, "the fear of Isaac." This is the fear God brings into his enemies, like he has brought to Laban.
- Jacob makes a sacrifice and they break bread to symbolize their peace.
- Laban kisses, blesses, and leaves.

Application

- God can protect those who walk in his will.
- God sees those who are mistreated and will bring justice.
- Our faithful labor is not unseen and will not go unrewarded.