

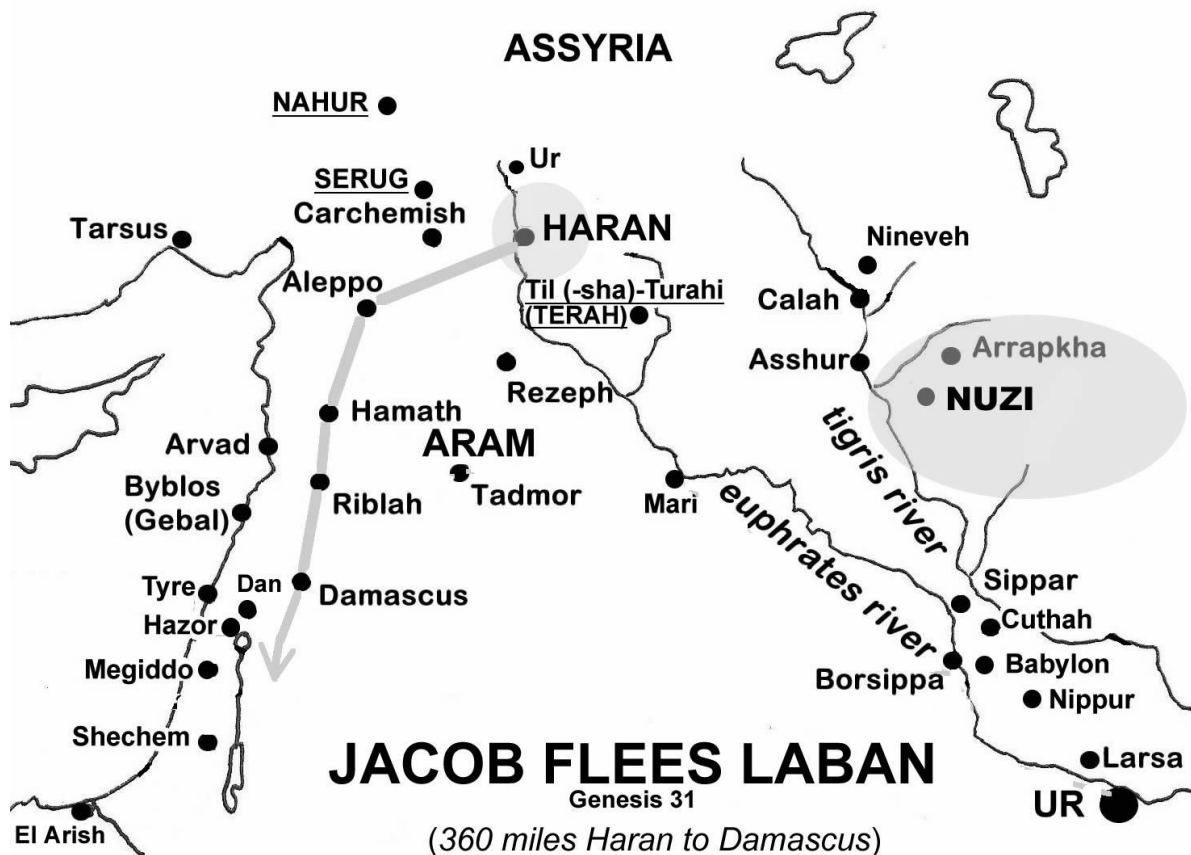
Genesis 31:14-55

Genesis 31:14-16 – Rachel and Leah agree to follow Jacob as he follows God:

Then Rachel and Leah answered and said to him, “Is there any portion or inheritance left to us in our father’s house? 15 Are we not regarded by him as foreigners? For he has sold us, and he has indeed devoured our money. 16 All the wealth that God has taken away from our father belongs to us and to our children. Now then, whatever God has said to you, do.”

Genesis 31:17-21 – Jacob Flees with his family, flocks and possessions across the Euphrates:

17 So Jacob arose and set his sons and his wives on camels. 18 He drove away all his livestock, all his property that he had gained, the livestock in his possession that he had acquired in Paddan-aram, to go to the land of Canaan to his father Isaac. 19 Laban had gone to shear his sheep, and Rachel stole her father’s household gods. 20 And Jacob tricked Laban the Aramean, by not telling him that he intended to flee. 21 He fled with all that he had and arose and crossed the Euphrates, and set his face toward the hill country of Gilead.



Genesis 31:22-24 – Laban pursues Jacob into Gilead:

22 When it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob had fled, 23 he took his kinsmen with him and pursued him for seven days and followed close after him into the hill country of Gilead. 24 But God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream by night and said to him, “Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad.”

1. Travel rate for Jacob’s 3 days with flocks and Laban’s 7 days of pursuit
 - a. Jacob travels 3 days to get head start + Laban travels 7 days to catch up = 10 days

- b. Haran to the north end of the hill country of Gilead is 350 miles. This appears to mean:
 - i. Jacob is traveling 35 miles/day...which is very crazy fast.
 - 1. Caravans at the best can travel 23 miles/day
 - 2. Flocks of sheep and goats travel at about 10 miles/day, so they are likely not traveling more than 3x the average speed of a flock
 - ii. If Jacob is traveling 10 miles/day then Laban traveling 20 miles/day would catch Jacob after three days.
 - 1. This distance would be about 65 miles from Haran
 - 2. Jacob would have just crossed the Euphrates and be at Til-Barsib
 - iii. If Jacob were traveling 13 miles/day and Laban 17 miles/day then Laban would catch Jacob in seven days.
 - 1. This would be the distance of about 110 miles from Haran near Ebla
 - iv. Maybe Laban took several days (7-10) to get ready to pursue Jacob.
 - v. Laban is traveling at 150+ years old.
- 2. "Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad."
 - a. Point is the definition of "good or bad" is going to come from Laban before he speaks.
 - b. Laban is so twisted, selfish and manipulative that even if he wanted to "say something good" to Jacob, or bless Jacob, or give Jacob some good advice, etc, it most likely would not qualify as "good" according to God's standards or plans.
 - c. Anything Laban says will be evil even if Laban thought it would be "good".
 - d. God is telling Laban to leave Jacob alone, stop interacting with Jacob, get out of Jacob's life so God can continue the truly "good" work he is doing for Jacob.
 - e. Abimelech also had a dream where he was told NOT to harm Abraham.
- 3. Jacob's God was NOT Laban's God. It was common to have different gods and to be tolerant of other people having their own god.

Genesis 31:25-32 – Laban Confronts Jacob:

25 And Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country, and Laban with his kinsmen pitched tents in the hill country of Gilead. 26 And Laban said to Jacob, "What have you done, that you have tricked me and driven away my daughters like captives of the sword? 27 Why did you flee secretly and trick me, and did not tell me, so that I might have sent you away with mirth and songs, with tambourine and lyre? 28 And why did you not permit me to kiss my sons and my daughters farewell? Now you have done foolishly. 29 It is in my power to do you harm. But the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, 'Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad.' 30 And now you have gone away because you longed greatly for your father's house, but why did you steal my gods?" 31 Jacob answered and said to Laban, "Because I was afraid, for I thought that you would take your daughters from me by force. 32 Anyone with whom you find your gods shall not live. In the presence of our kinsmen point out what I have that is yours, and take it." Now Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them.

- 1. Laban is a liar and has practiced lying so long he no longer knows the truth.
 - a. Laban claimed he would have sent Jacob off with music and celebration. But, he would not have, and later reveals he would not have.

- b. Yet, Laban probably believes his statement even though it is not true, it is not Laban intent and in a few verses Laban says exactly the opposite.
 - c. In a sense, Laban is NOT lying, because he is so self-deceived that he cannot speak the truth nor identify the truth.
 - d. The human brain can adjust to being dishonest so that it can no longer deal in truth.
 - e. The Bible calls this the hardness of the heart, replacing the truth with a lie and no longer being able to perceive or understand Truth.
 - f. Laban is a lost soul with a hardened heart.
2. Laban's viewpoint of this situation presents Laban as 31:27-28):
- a. The victim
 - b. His heart is hurt for his daughters and grandchildren
 - c. Yet, as the big man that he is, Laban is the understanding father
3. Jacob answers Laban first question, "Why did you flee secretly," with, "I was afraid and thought you'd take my family."
- a. Later Laban reveals that he did consider Jacob's family his own and not Jacob's.
 - b. The daughters/wives did not consider themselves taken captive by Jacob, but supported his decision to leave and left willingly with Jacob.

Genesis 31:33-35 – Laban Searches for his Teraphim and Rachel Lies to her father:

33 So Laban went into Jacob's tent and into Leah's tent and into the tent of the two female servants, but he did not find them. And he went out of Leah's tent and entered Rachel's. 34 Now Rachel had taken the household gods and put them in the camel's saddle and sat on them. Laban felt all about the tent, but did not find them. 35 And she said to her father, "Let not my lord be angry that I cannot rise before you, for the way of women is upon me." So he searched but did not find the household gods.

- 1. Laban had to assume Jacob was lying because Laban would have been lying.
- 2. Jacob's harsh vow was not necessary especially since he does know everything.
- 3. Menstruation
 - a. Made women unclean or impure; this uncleanness/impurity was considered contagious
 - b. Made women vulnerable to demonic attacks so she was under taboo
 - c. Prohibit women from social contact
 - d. Made women radiate danger even if seen (They were to stay in the tent, etc.)

Genesis 31:36-42 – Jacob defends himself before Laban:

36 Then Jacob became angry and berated Laban. Jacob said to Laban, "What is my offense? What is my sin, that you have hotly pursued me? 37 For you have felt through all my goods; what have you found of all your household goods? Set it here before my kinsmen and your kinsmen, that they may decide between us two. 38 These twenty years I have been with you. Your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried, and I have not eaten the rams of your flocks. 39 What was torn by wild beasts I did not bring to you. I bore the loss of it myself. From my hand you required it, whether stolen by day or stolen by night. 40 There I was: by day the heat consumed me, and the cold by night, and my sleep fled from my eyes. 41 These twenty years I have been in your house. I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six

years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times. 42 If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had not been on my side, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God saw my affliction and the labor of my hands and rebuked you last night.”

1. Contract with Shepherds

- a. Terms of a contract were drawn up in the spring shearing when the wool was weighed and lambing season was over.
- b. A new contract would be established in the spring for the following year.
- c. Shepherd contracts:
 - i. Assumed these two things:
 1. There would be a 15% natural loss in the flock
 2. There would be an 80% birthrate
 - ii. Shepherds kept:
 1. Milk products
 2. A fixed amount of wool
 3. Any animals in excess of the agreed amount
 4. Daily personal food rations

Genesis 31:43 –

43 Then Laban answered and said to Jacob, “The daughters are my daughters, the children are my children, the flocks are my flocks, and all that you see is mine. But what can I do this day for these my daughters or for their children whom they have borne?”

1. Laban considered his daughters and grandchildren as his own. Jacob was a hired servant.
2. Jacob could leave and be free, but Jacob did not have the right to take his family.

Genesis 31:44-54 - Stones are set up as a boundary and witness to Jacob and Laban's covenant:

44 Come now, let us make a covenant, you and I. And let it be a witness between you and me.”

996 [e] u·bē-ne·kā.	996 [e] bē-nī	5707 [e] lā·'ēd	"ed" /āyd/ = "witness, evidence, testimony"	1961 [e] wə-hā-yah	859 [e] wā·'at-tah;	589 [e] 'ā-nī	1285 [e] bə-rīt	3772 [e] nīk·rə·tah	1980 [e] lə·kah	6258 [e] wə·'at-tah,	44
וּבְנֵיךָ	בֵּינִי	לֵעֵד	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְאַתָּה	אֲנִי	בְרִית	נִקְרָתָה	לָכֵה	וְעַתָּה	
and you	between me	a witness	and let it be	and you	and you	I	a covenant	let us make	come	therefore now	
Conj-w Prep 2ms	Prep 1cs	Prep-l N-ms	Conj-w V-Qal-ConjPerf-3ms	Conj-w Pro-2ms	Pro-1cs		N-fs	V-Qal-Imperf.Cohort-1cp	V-Qal-imp-ms 3fs	Conj-w Adv	

45 So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar.

4676 [e] maš·šē·bāh.	matstsebah /maht-tseh-bah'/	7311 [e] way·rī-me·hā	68 [e] 'ā-ben;	3290 [e] ya·'ā-qōb	3947 [e] way-yiq·qah	45
מַצֵּבָה	= "pillar, pillars, stump, obelisks, memorial stone"	וַיָּרִיםָהּ	אֶבֶן	יַעֲקֹב	וַיִּקַּח	
[as] a pillar		and set it up	a stone	Jacob	So took	
N-fs	Conj-w V-Hifil-ConseclImperf-3ms 3fs		N-fs	N-proper-ms	Conj-w V-Qal-ConseclImperf-3ms	

46 And Jacob said to his kinsmen, “Gather stones.” And they took stones and made a heap, and they ate there by the heap.

47 Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed.

1567 [e] gal·éd. גַּלְעָד: Galeed N-proper-fs	7121 [e] lōw לוֹ - Prep	3290 [e] qā·rā קָרָא it Prep 3ms	3026 [e] šā·hā·dū·tā; שְׂהָדוּתָא but Jacob V-Qal-Perf-3ms	ye·gar יֶגֶר Jegar Sahadutha N-proper-fs	3837 [e] lā·bān, לָבָן Laban N-proper-ms	lōw לוֹ it Prep 3ms	7121 [e] way·yiq·rā- וַיִּקְרָא And called Conj-w V-Qal-ConsecImperf-3ms
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Gal`ed
/gah-LAYD/ or /gal-ade/
"heap of testimony" from
GAL means "heap, spring, wave"
ED means "witness, evidence"

A Syriac word as
an Aramaic term meaning
"heap of witness"

48 Laban said, “This heap is a witness between you and me today.” Therefore he named it Galeed,

7121 [e] qā·rā- קָרָא was called V-Qal-Perf-3ms	3651 [e] kēn כֵּן thus Adv	5921 [e] 'al- עַל- Upon Prep	3117 [e] hay·yō·wm; הַיּוֹם today Art N-ms	996 [e] ū·bē·nə·kā וּבֵינָה and you Conj-w Prep 2ms	996 [e] bē·nī בֵּינִי between me Prep 1cs	5707 [e] 'éd עֵד a witness N-ms	2088 [e] haz·zeh הַזֶּה this [is] Art Pro-ms	1530 [e] hag·gal הַגֵּל mound Art N-ms	3837 [e] lā·bān, לָבָן Laban N-proper-ms	559 [e] way·yō·mer וַיֹּאמֶר And said Conj-w V-Qal-ConsecImperf-3ms
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ED =
"witness"

GAL =
"mound"

GAL-ED

1567 [e] gal·éd. גַּלְעָד: Galeed N-proper-fs	8034 [e] šə·mōw שְׁמוֹ its name N-msc 3ms
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49 and Mizpah, for he said, “The Lord watch between you and me, when we are out of one another's sight.

582 [e] 'iš אִישׁ one N-ms	5641 [e] nis·sā·tēr נִסְתָּר we are absent V-Nifal-Imperf-1cp	3588 [e] kī כִּי when Conj	996 [e] ū·bē·nə·kā; וּבֵינָה and you Conj-w Prep 2ms	996 [e] bē·nī בֵּינִי between me Prep 1cs	3068 [e] Yah·weh יְהוָה Yahweh N-proper-ms	6822 [e] yi·šəp יִשָּׁפ May watch V-Qal-Imperf.Jus-3ms	559 [e] 'ā·mar, אָמַר he said V-Qal-Perf-3ms	834 [e] 'ā·šer אֲשֶׁר because Pro-r	4709 [e] wə·ham·miš·pāh וְהַמִּצְפָּה and also Mizpah Conj-w, Art N-proper-fs
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וְהַמִּצְפָּה
"lookout",
"watch tower"
"the"
"and",
"also"

wə·ham·miš·pāh
"and",
"also"
"the"
"lookout",
"watch tower"

הַמִּצְפָּה
mitspeh
"lookout, watchtower"

from הַפָּצַח - tsaphah meaning
"watchman, keep watch, lookout"

7453 [e]
mē·rē·ē·hū.
מֵרֵעֵהוּ
from another
Prep-m | N-msc | 3ms

50 If you oppress my daughters, or if you take wives besides my daughters, although no one is with us, see, God is witness between you and me.”

51 Then Laban said to Jacob, “See this heap and the pillar, which I have set between you and me.

2009 [e] wə·hin·néh וְהִנֵּה and here is Conj-w Interjection	2088 [e] haz·zeh, הִזֵּה this Art Pro-ms	1530 [e] hag·gal הֵגַל mound Art N-ms	2009 [e] hin·néh הִנֵּה Here is Interjection	3290 [e] lə·ya·'ā·qōḇ; לְיַעֲקֹב to Jacob Prep-l N-proper-ms	3837 [e] lā·bān לָבָן Laban N-proper-ms	559 [e] way·yō·mer וַיֹּאמֶר And said Conj-w V-Qal-ConsecImperf-3ms
<p><i>matstsebah</i> /maht-tseh-bah/ = "pillar, pillars, stump, obelisks, memorial stone"</p>						
996 [e] ū·ḇē·ne·kā. וּבְנֵיךָ and you Conj-w Prep 2ms	996 [e] bē·nī בֵּינִי between me Prep 1cs	3384 [e] yā·rī·tī יָרִיתִי I have placed V-Qal-Perf-1cs	834 [e] 'ā·šer אֲשֶׁר which Pro-r	<div> <div>4676 [e] ha·maṣ·šē·bāh, הַמַּצְבָּה [this] pillar Art N-fs</div> </div>		

GAL = "mound"

52 This heap is a witness, and the pillar is a witness, that I will not pass over this heap to you, and you will not pass over this heap and this pillar to me, to do harm.

853 [e] 'eṭ- אֶת-	413 [e] 'ē·le·kā אֵלֶיךָ to you Prep 2ms	5674 [e] 'e·'ē·ḇōr אֶעְבֹּר will pass beyond V-Qal-Imperf-1cs	3808 [e] lō- לֹא- not Adv-NegPrt	589 [e] 'ā·nī, אֲנִי I Pro-1cs	518 [e] 'im- אִם that Conj	<div> <div>4676 [e] ham·maṣ·šē·bāh, הַמַּצְבָּה [this] pillar [is] Art N-fs</div> </div>	5713 [e] wə·'ē·dāh וְעֵדָה and a witness Conj-w N-fs	2088 [e] haz·zeh, הִזֵּה this [is] Art Pro-ms	1530 [e] hag·gal הֵגַל mound Art N-ms	5707 [e] 'ēḏ עֵד A witness N-ms
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853 [e] wə·'eṭ- וְאֶת-	2088 [e] haz·zeh הִזֵּה this Art Pro-ms	1530 [e] hag·gal הֵגַל mound Art N-ms	853 [e] 'eṭ- אֶת-	413 [e] 'ē·lay אֵלַי to me Prep 1cs	5674 [e] ṭa·'ā·ḇōr תֵּעְבֹּר will pass beyond V-Qal-Imperf-2ms	3808 [e] lō- לֹא- not Adv-NegPrt	859 [e] 'at·tāh אֵתָּה you Pro-2ms	518 [e] wə·'im- וְאִם and Conj-w Conj	2088 [e] haz·zeh, הִזֵּה this Art Pro-ms	1530 [e] hag·gal הֵגַל mound Art N-ms
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7451 [e] lə·rā·'āh. לְרָעָה: for harm Prep-l Adj-fs	2063 [e] haz·zōṭ הַזֹּאת this Art Pro-fs	<div> <div>4676 [e] ham·maṣ·šē·bāh הַמַּצְבָּה pillar Art N-fs</div> </div>
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53 The God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us.” So Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac, 54 and Jacob offered a sacrifice in the hill country and called his kinsmen to eat bread. They ate bread and spent the night in the hill country.

1. Jacob establishes a new agreement (contract, covenant, treaty) with Laban:
 - a. The ceremony with - A ceremonial community meal. - Formal proclamation of the covenant stipulations.
 - The swearing of an oath
 - b. The sign of the covenant/treaty/agreement is a stone pillar with additional rock heap as:
 - 1-A witness to the covenant ceremony. 2-A territorial boundary for the two parties
 - c. Jacob's obligations:
 - i. Treatment of Laban's daughters
 1. Jacob – no other wives, it would infringe on Rachel and Leah's status and value
 - a. Nuzi tablets have this same clause in marriage contracts)

55 Early in the morning Laban arose and kissed his grandchildren and his daughters and blessed them. Then Laban departed and returned home.

1. Laban does not kiss or bless Jacob.