



*In the beginning...*

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים

# The Life of Jacob

## Chapter 31

# Genesis 31

- <sup>1</sup> And he heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's; and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory.
- <sup>2</sup> And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it was not toward him as before.

**Genesis 31:1-2**

- What do you do when the world's against you?
  - Panic?
  - Bury your head?
  - 'Flee to your mountain'?

# Psalm 11

<sup>1</sup> In the LORD put I my trust: How say ye to my soul,  
Flee as a bird to your mountain?

Psalm 11:1

- How say *Ye*?
- His enemies? Unbelieving friends?
- Our greatest enemy
- The flesh
- cf. Matt 18:25 'it will cost you all you have'

# Psalm 11

<sup>1</sup> In the LORD put I my trust: How say ye to my soul,  
Flee as a bird to your mountain?

Psalm 11:1

- ‘Run from the problem’
- ‘Resort to that which you know’
- ‘Go to your ‘happy place’
- ‘Go to your kingdom – where you rule’
- *What is it the you resort to in difficult times?*

# What we *must* do!

*“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Matthew 6:33)*

Immediately we look at these words of Jesus, we find them the most revolutionary statement human ears ever listened to. “Seek ye first the kingdom of God.” We argue in exactly the opposite way, even the most spiritually-minded of us – “But I *must* live; I *must* make so much money; I *must* be clothed; I *must* be fed.”

# What we *must* do!

The great concern of our lives is not the kingdom of God, but how we are to fit ourselves to live. Jesus reverses the order: Get rightly related to God first, maintain that as the great care of your life, and never put the concern of your care on the other things..”

- Oswald Chambers



# Genesis 31

<sup>3</sup> And the LORD said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee.

<sup>4</sup> And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock,

<sup>5</sup> And said unto them, I see your father's countenance, that it is not toward me as before; but the God of my father hath been with me.

# Genesis 31

<sup>6</sup> And ye know that with all my power I have served your father.

<sup>7</sup> And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me.

<sup>8</sup> If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bare speckled: and if he said thus, The ringstraked shall be thy hire; then bare all the cattle ringstraked.

**Genesis 31:6-8**



# Genesis 31

<sup>9</sup> Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given them to me.

<sup>10</sup> And it came to pass at the time that the cattle conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream, and, behold, the rams which leaped upon the cattle were ringstraked, speckled, and grisled.

<sup>11</sup> And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob: And I said, Here am I.

# Genesis 31

<sup>12</sup> And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle are ringstraked, speckled, and grisled: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee.

<sup>13</sup> I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred.

**Genesis 31:12-13**

# Typical Dwelling in Haran





# Typical Dwelling in Haran



# Genesis 31

<sup>14</sup> And Rachel and Leah answered and said unto him, Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house?

<sup>15</sup> Are we not counted of him strangers? for he hath sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money.

<sup>16</sup> For all the riches which God hath taken from our father, that is ours, and our children's: now then, whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do.

**Genesis 31:14-16**

- (That went better than Jacob probably expected!)

# Genesis 31

<sup>17</sup> Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon camels;

<sup>18</sup> And he carried away all his cattle, and all his goods which he had gotten, the cattle of his getting, which he had gotten in Padan-aram, for to go to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan.

<sup>19</sup> And Laban went to shear his sheep: and Rachel had stolen the images that were her father's.

**Genesis 31:17-19**

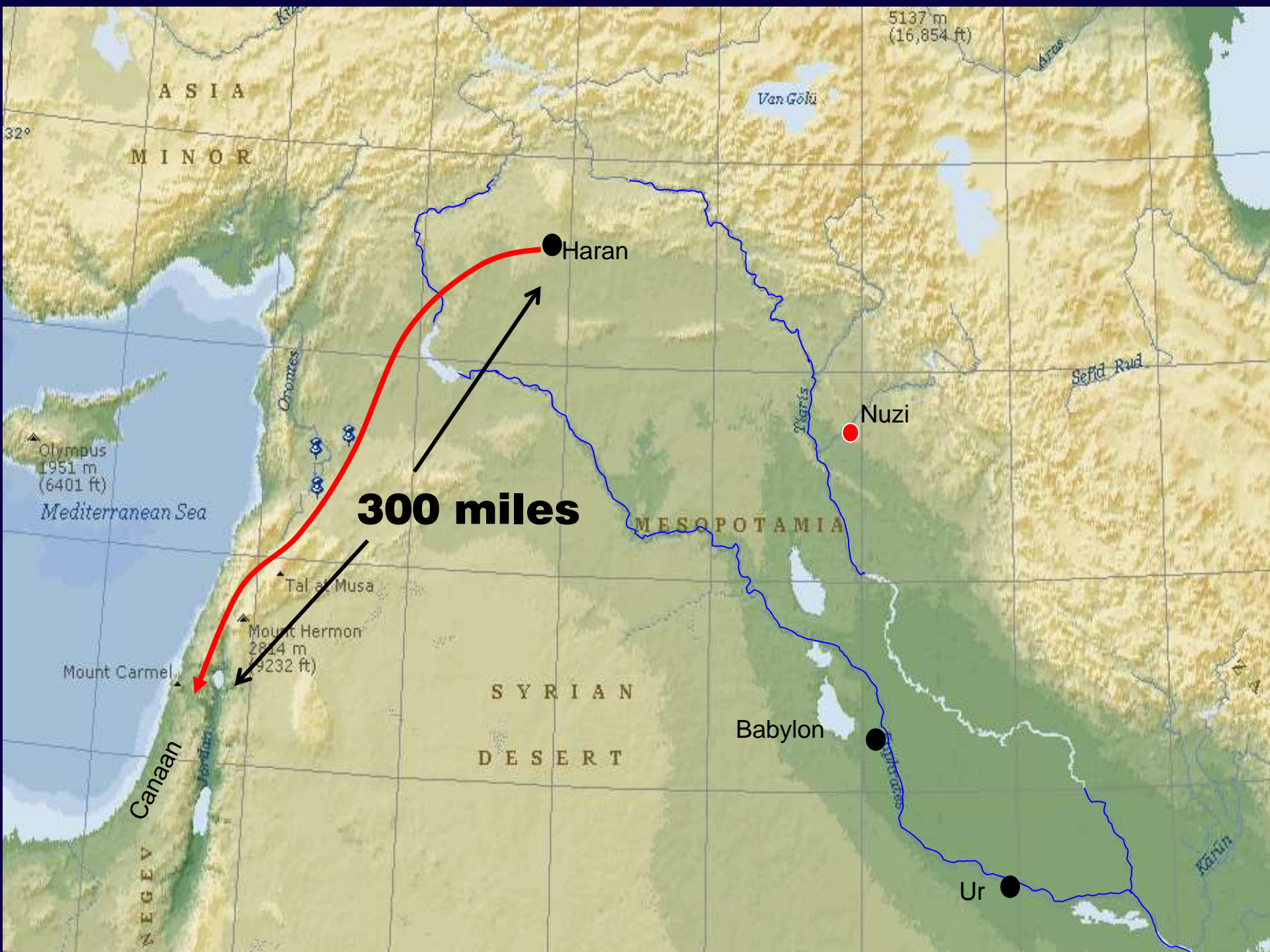


# The Nuzi Tablets

- 1925: 4000 clay tablets discovered  
East of Haran: 1500 BC
- Teraphim evidence of property ownership
  - Boundary marker as protection
- Sisterhood status misunderstood
- Surrogate motherhood by maidservants

# Inheritance

- So, Rachel and Leah were wrong to look to their father Laban for their *portion or inheritance* once they were married to Jacob. He now was their portion and inheritance. “Since you are saved and joined to Christ, appraise the world and ask, ‘Is there yet any portion for me?’ If you think there is, you are mistaken.” (Barnhouse)



ASIA

MINOR

5137 m  
(16,854 ft)

Van Gölü

Haran

Nuzi

**300 miles**

MESOPOTAMIA

SYRIAN

DESERT

Babylon

Ur

Olympus  
1951 m  
(6401 ft)

Mediterranean Sea

Tal at Musa  
Mount Hermon  
2814 m  
(9232 ft)

Mount Carmel

Canaan

NEGEV

Sefid Rud

Karun

# Genesis 31

<sup>20</sup> And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled.

<sup>21</sup> So he fled with all that he had; and he rose up, and passed over the river, and set his face toward the mount Gilead.

**Genesis 31:20-21**

- \*River Euphrates

# River Euphrates nr Syria





# Genesis 31

22 And it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob was fled.

23 And he took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days' journey; and they overtook him in the mount Gilead.

24 And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.



# Being On The Lord's Side!

<sup>7</sup> When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

**Proverbs 16:7**

# Genesis 31

<sup>25</sup> Then Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mount: and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mount of Gilead.

<sup>26</sup> And Laban said to Jacob, What hast thou done, that thou hast stolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters, as captives taken with the sword?

**Genesis 31:25-26**

- Rachel & Leah had happily gone with Jacob
- They were more like captives with Laban!
- The world thinks we are entering bondage when we leave it to follow after God

# Genesis 31

27 Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me; and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth, and with songs, with tabret, and with harp?

28 And hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters? thou hast now done foolishly in so doing.

**Genesis 31:27-28**

- Laban says they should have had a leaving party!
- Not likely!
- The world hates to lose face!
  - Much easier to blame those following God!

# Genesis 31

29 It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt: but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.

Genesis 31:29

- It was no more in ‘the power of Laban’s hand’ to hurt Jacob than to turn the day to night!
- Laban just want’s to pretend he’s in control!
  - **The is the nature of persecution!**
    - Can you remember the persecutors?
    - Did they manage to extinguish the light?

# Genesis 31

<sup>30</sup> And now, though thou wouldst needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house, yet wherefore hast thou stolen my gods?

<sup>31</sup> And Jacob answered and said to Laban, Because I was afraid: for I said, Peradventure thou wouldst take by force thy daughters from me.

**Genesis 31:30-31**

- Notice something interesting here?
- Jacob genuinely cared for both daughters

# Genesis 31

<sup>32</sup> With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live: before our brethren discern thou what is thine with me, and take it to thee. For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them.

<sup>33</sup> And Laban went into Jacob's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the two maidservants' tents; but he found them not. Then went he out of Leah's tent, and entered into Rachel's tent.

**Genesis 31:32-33**



# Genesis 31

<sup>34</sup> Now Rachel had taken the images, and put them in the camel's furniture, and sat upon them. And Laban searched all the tent, but found them not.

<sup>35</sup> And she said to her father, Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise up before thee; for the custom of women is upon me. And he searched, but found not the images.

**Genesis 31:34-35**

# Genesis 31

**36** And Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban: and Jacob answered and said to Laban, What is my trespass? what is my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me?

**37** Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both.

**Genesis 31:36-37**

# Genesis 31

38 This twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten.

39 That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night.

40 Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes.

# Genesis 31

<sup>41</sup> Thus have I been twenty years in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages ten times.

<sup>42</sup> Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight.

# Genesis 31

<sup>43</sup> And Laban answered and said unto Jacob, These daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and these cattle are my cattle, and all that thou seest is mine: and what can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children which they have born?

**Genesis 31:43**

- This is as close as Laban gets to an apology!  
– and it's not a very good one!



# Genesis 31

- 44 Now therefore come thou, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee.
- 45 And Jacob took a stone, and set it up for a pillar.
- 46 And Jacob said unto his brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones, and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap.
- 47 And Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha: but Jacob called it Galeed.



# Genesis 31

48 And Laban said, This heap is a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed;

49 And Mizpah; for he said, The LORD watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another.

50 If thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take other wives beside my daughters, no man is with us; see, God is witness betwixt me and thee.

**Genesis 31:48-50**

# Genesis 31

**51** And Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold this pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee;

**52** This heap be witness, and this pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm.

**53** The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us. And Jacob sware by the fear of his father Isaac.

# Genesis 31

<sup>54</sup> Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount.

<sup>55</sup> And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them: and Laban departed, and returned unto his place.

**Genesis 31:54-55**

- This is an act of worship by Jacob.
- From here he could survey the promised land
- He was now free from danger and home!



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