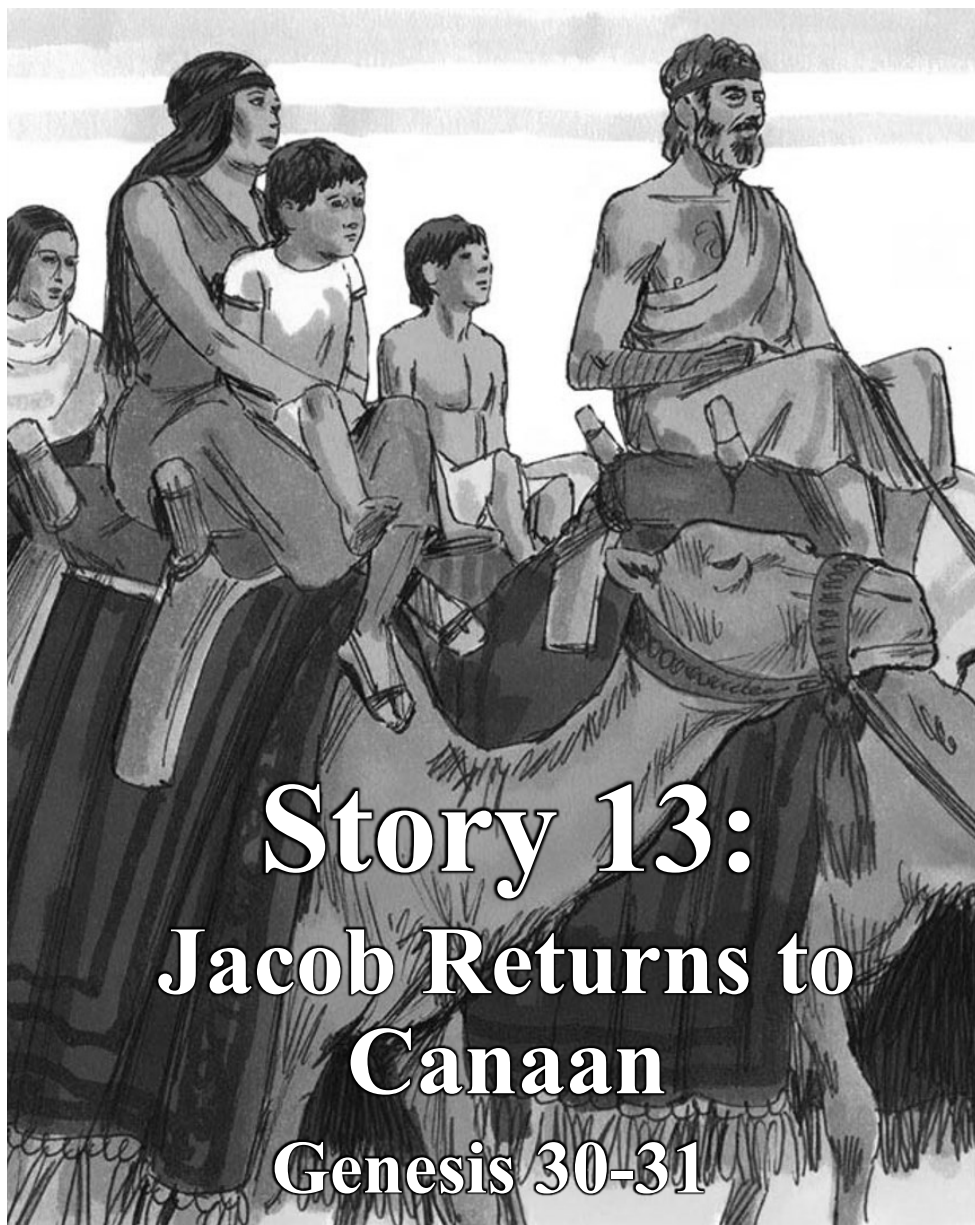


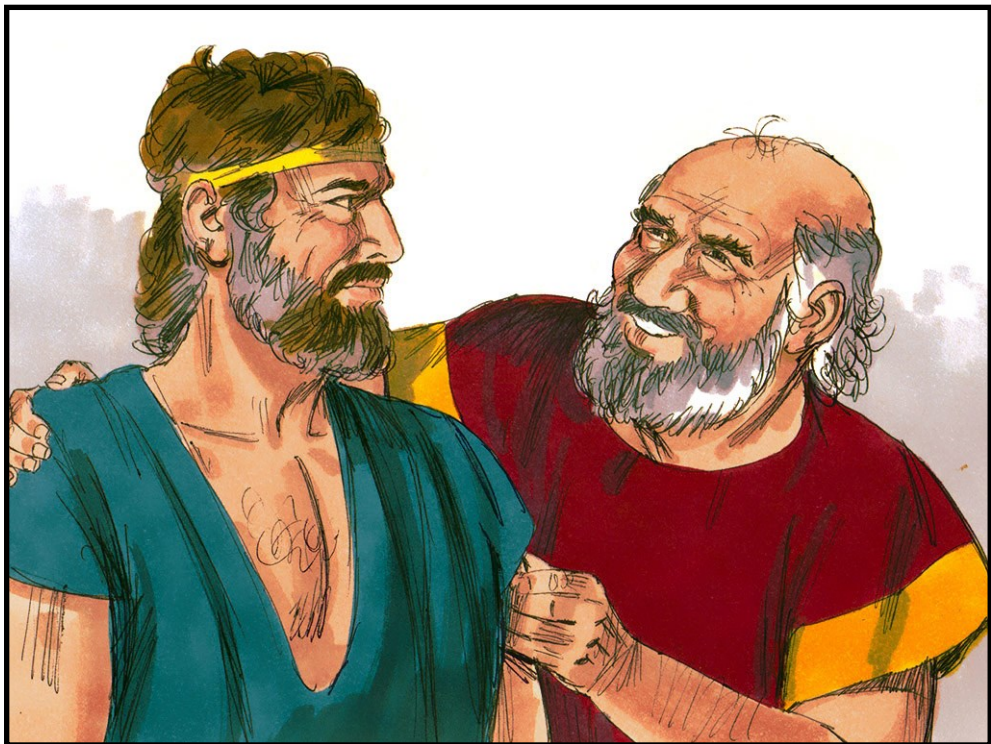
Story 13:
Jacob Returns to
Canaan
Genesis 30-31



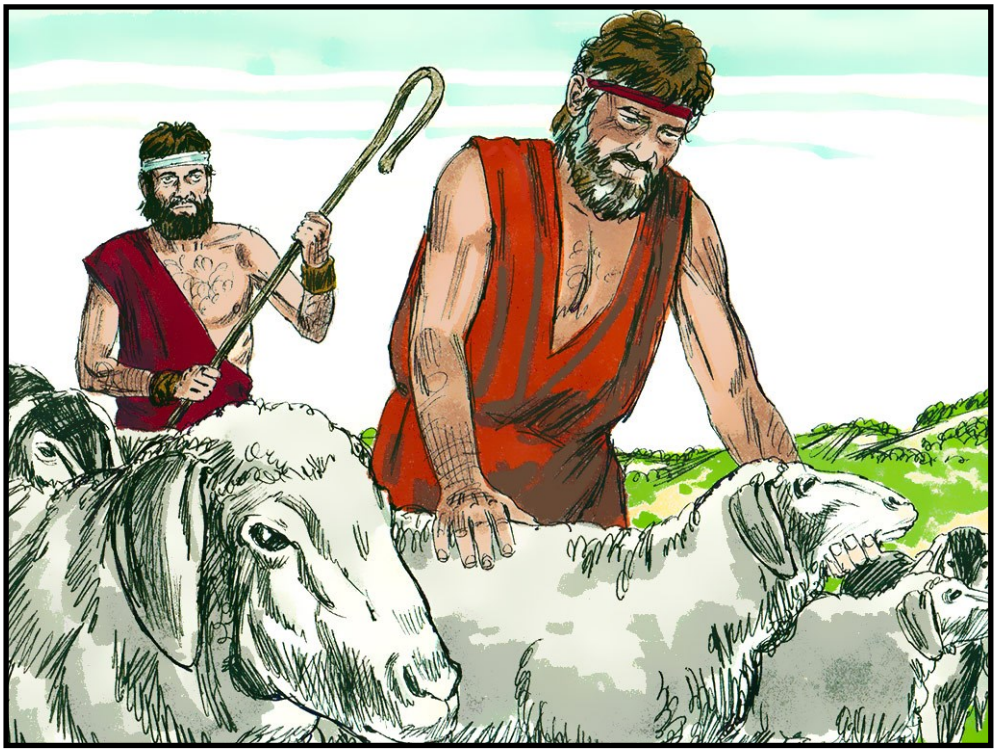
Story 13:
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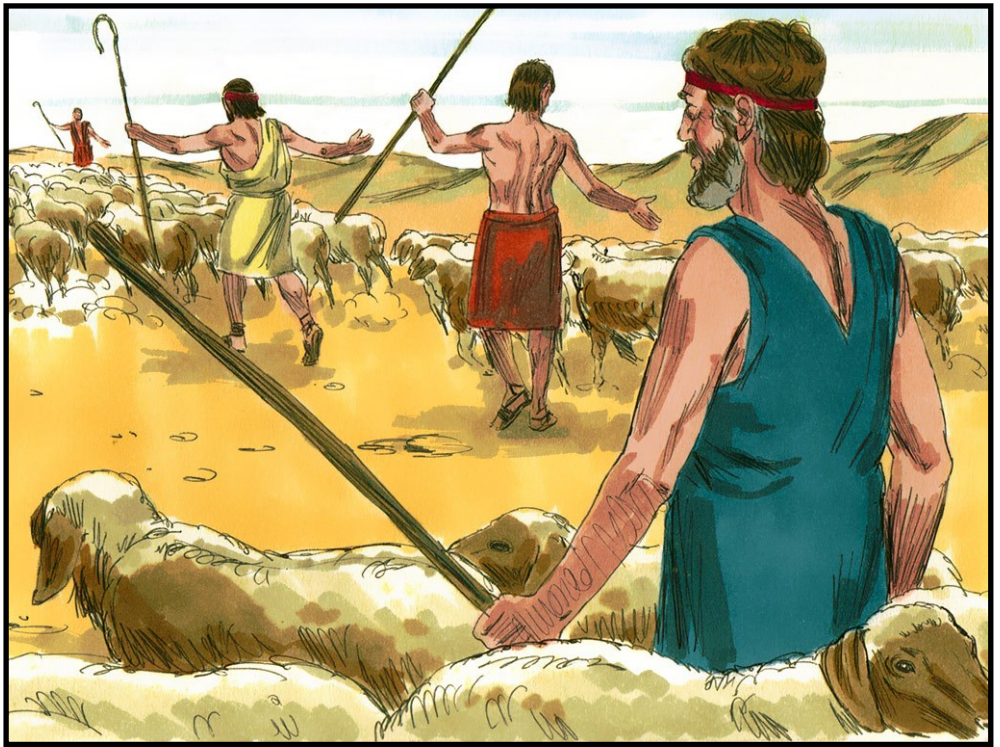
Jacob lived in Harran with his two wives, Leah and Rachel. During that time, he worked for their father, Laban. As the years went by, Jacob had many other sons and even a daughter, but Rachel was still not able to have children. Then, God worked a miracle and allowed her to have a child. She named the baby Joseph which means, “He adds” because God finally added a child to her life.



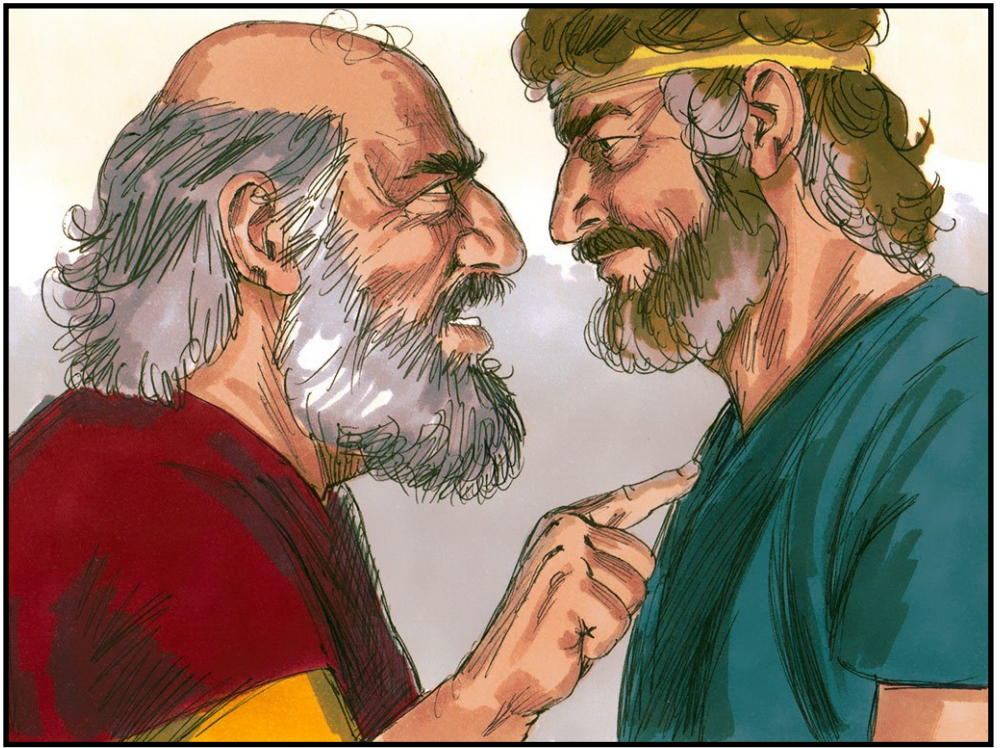
After the birth of Joseph, Jacob went to Laban and told him that he wanted to return to his home in Canaan. But Laban said, “Please stay here! The LORD is blessing me because you are working for me. I will pay you whatever you want. Just name your price.”



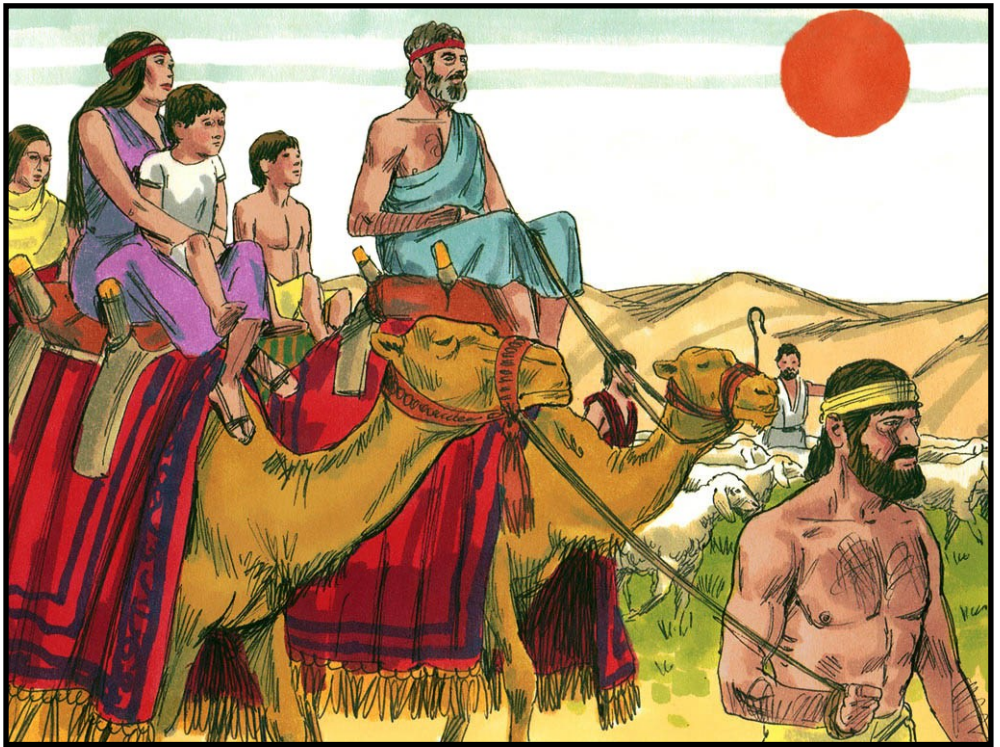
Jacob replied, “You have become very rich because of my work with your goats and sheep. You had very little when I came, but now you have a lot. Here’s what we should do: Let me have all the sheep and goats with spots, and every dark colored lamb. In the future you will be able to look at my flocks and know that I have not stolen any animals from you. All my animals will be either spotted or dark.”



As time passed, Jacob found a way to peel back the bark on branches of certain trees to make the wood look spotted. He would place the branches in the animal's drinking water. When he did this, the sheep and goats would have spotted babies. He only did this when the strongest animals were near so that they would become his. Jacob's animals became larger and stronger and Laban's animals became smaller and weaker.

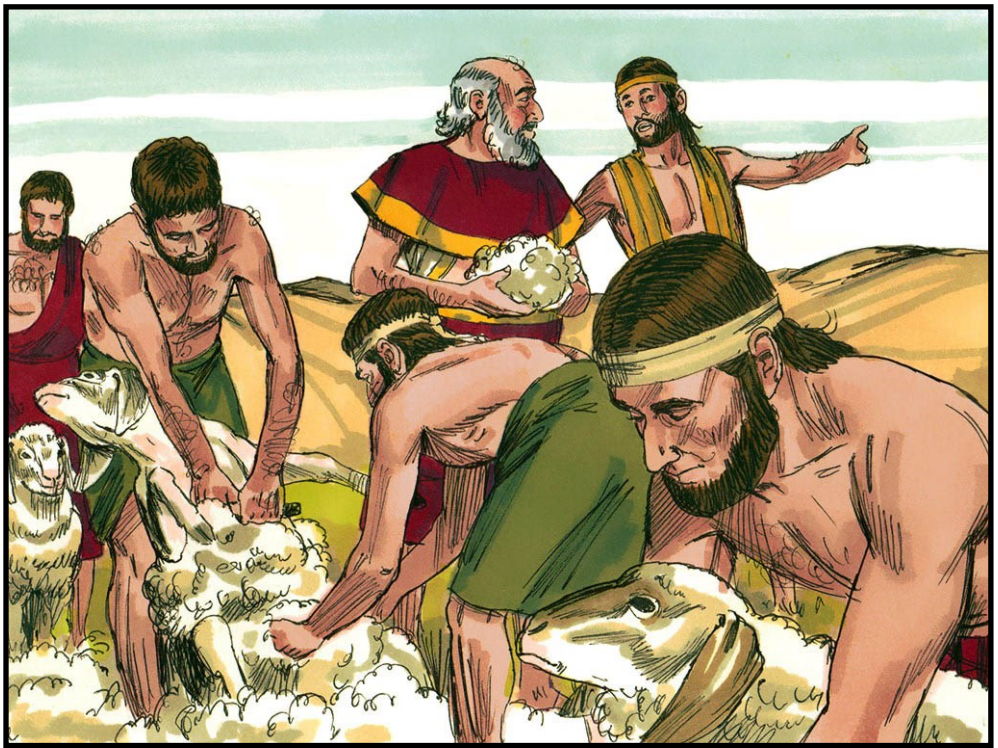


Now, Laban's sons began to complain that their father's animals were not doing as well as Jacob's animals. In time, even Jacob began to notice the change in Laban's mood toward him. He was not as nice as he used to be.



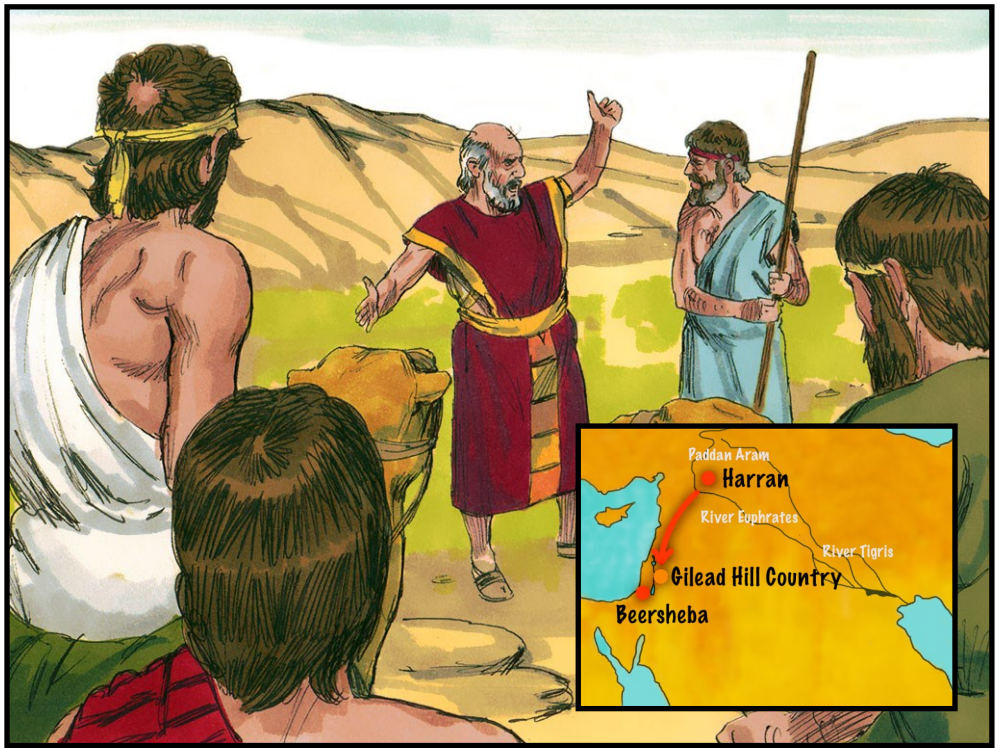
The LORD spoke to Jacob and said, “Go back to the land of your fathers and to your family, and I will be with you.”

So, Jacob said to Rachel and Leah, “I can see that your father’s mood towards me has changed. He has cheated me many times, and now the LORD wants us to return to Canaan. So, they got on their camels, and taking their herds with them, set out towards Canaan.



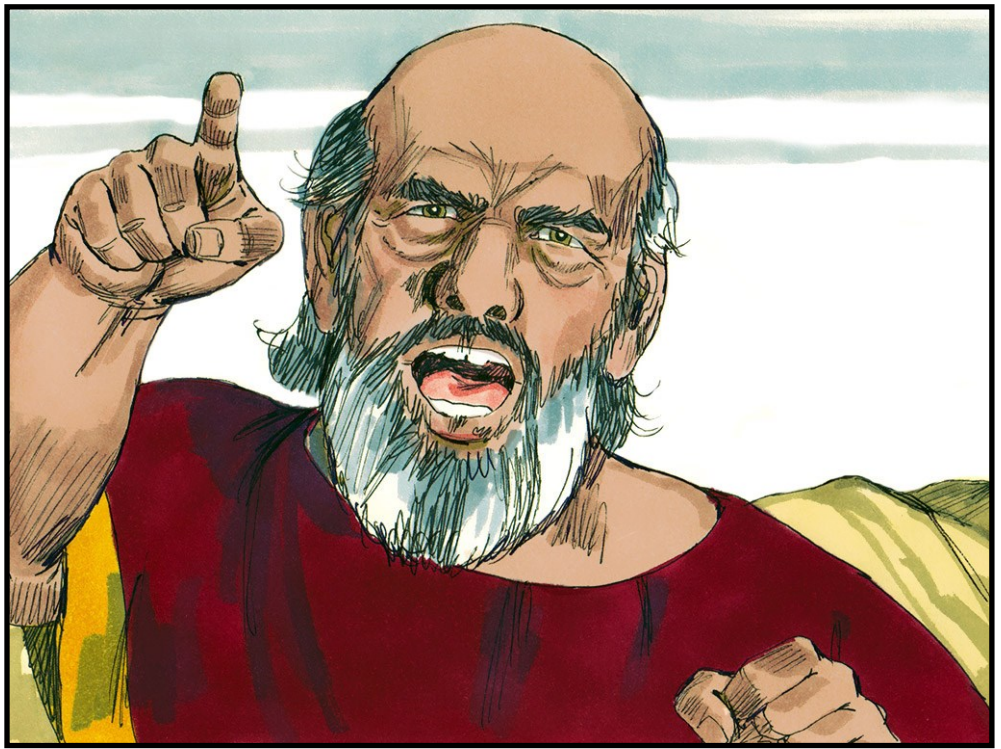
Right before they left, Rachael had gone into her father's tent and stole some of his "household" idols.

Furthermore, Jacob did not tell Laban that he was leaving because he thought he might try to stop him. After three days Laban received word that Jacob had left with Rachael, Leah, the grandchildren, and all their flocks and herds.



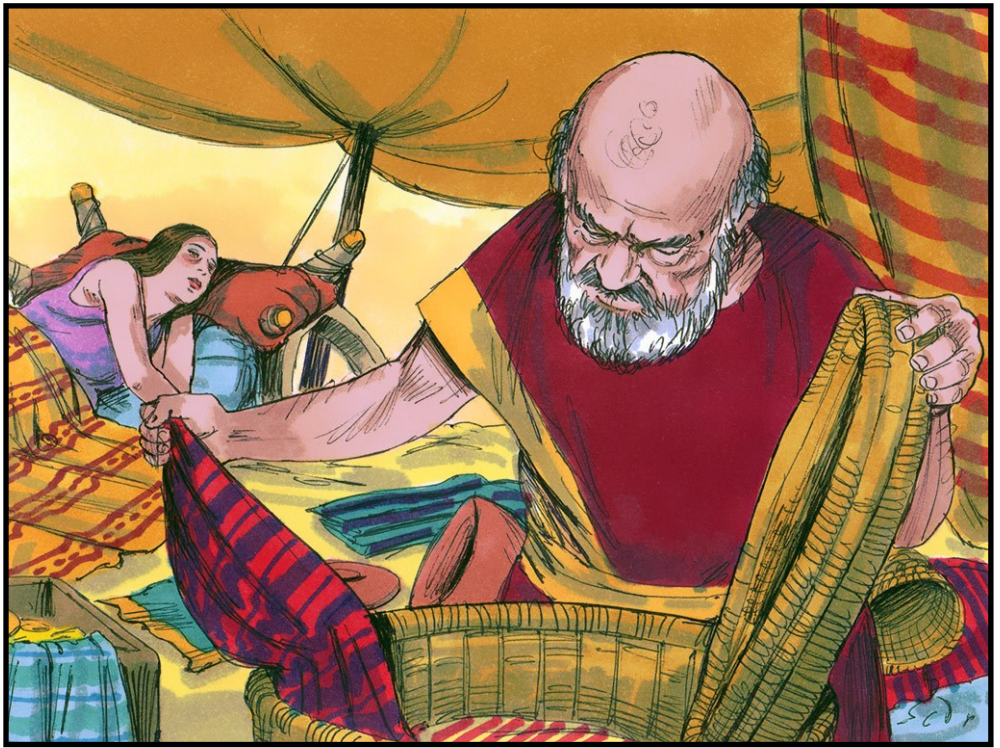
After leaving, Jacob stopped in the Gilead Hill Country. A week later Laban caught up to him and his family.

Laban said to Jacob, “Why did you run away and not tell me? We could have celebrated before you left. You didn’t even let me kiss my daughters and grandchildren goodbye. Regardless of your actions, God warned me in a dream to watch out and not say anything good or bad against you.”



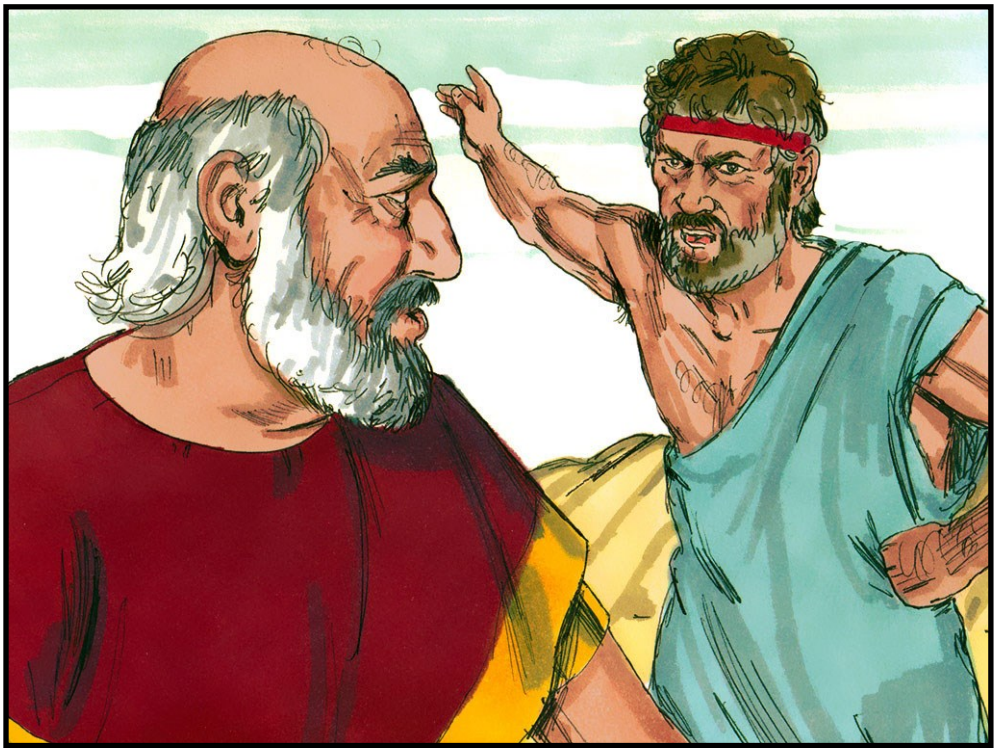
“And why did you steal my household idols?” Laban continued. “I understand that you have left because you want to be with your father’s family, but why take my things?”

Now, Jacob did not know that Rachael had stolen the idols. So he said, “I did not take them. And if you find anyone among my group who has them, they will be put to death.”

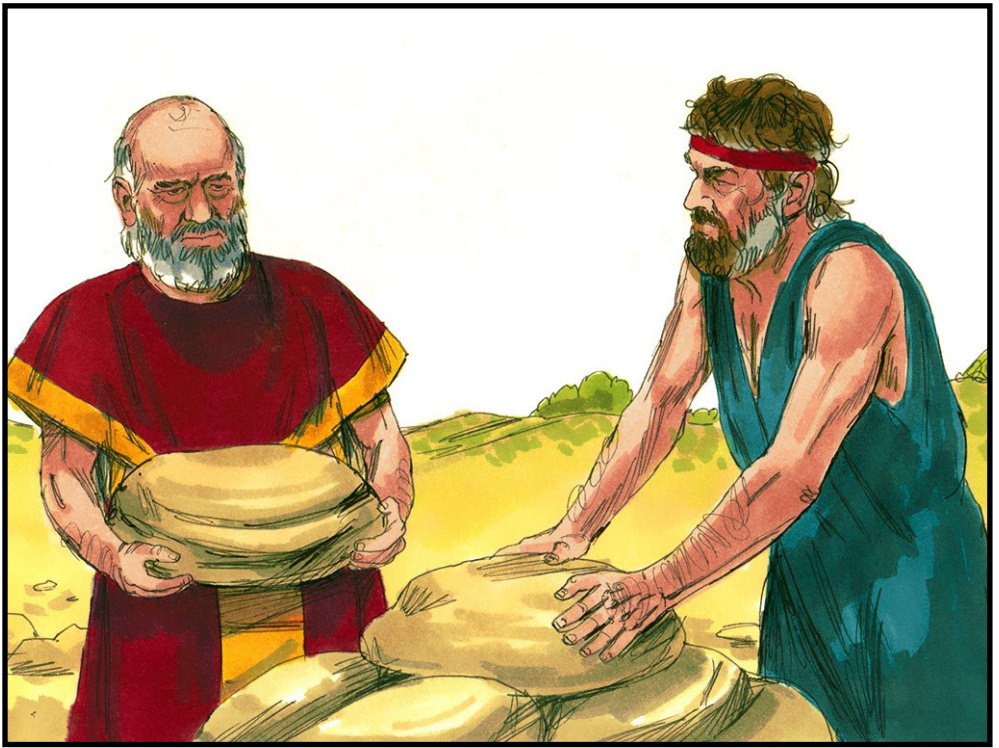


Laban began searching through all of their things looking for the idols. When he left Leah's tent, he went into Rachel's tent. Now, Rachel had taken Laban's household idols, put them in a bag, and sat on them.

As Laban was searching her tent, she said, "Don't be angry with me father, I cannot stand up in your presence. I'm not decent. So, Laban searched, but could not find his idols.

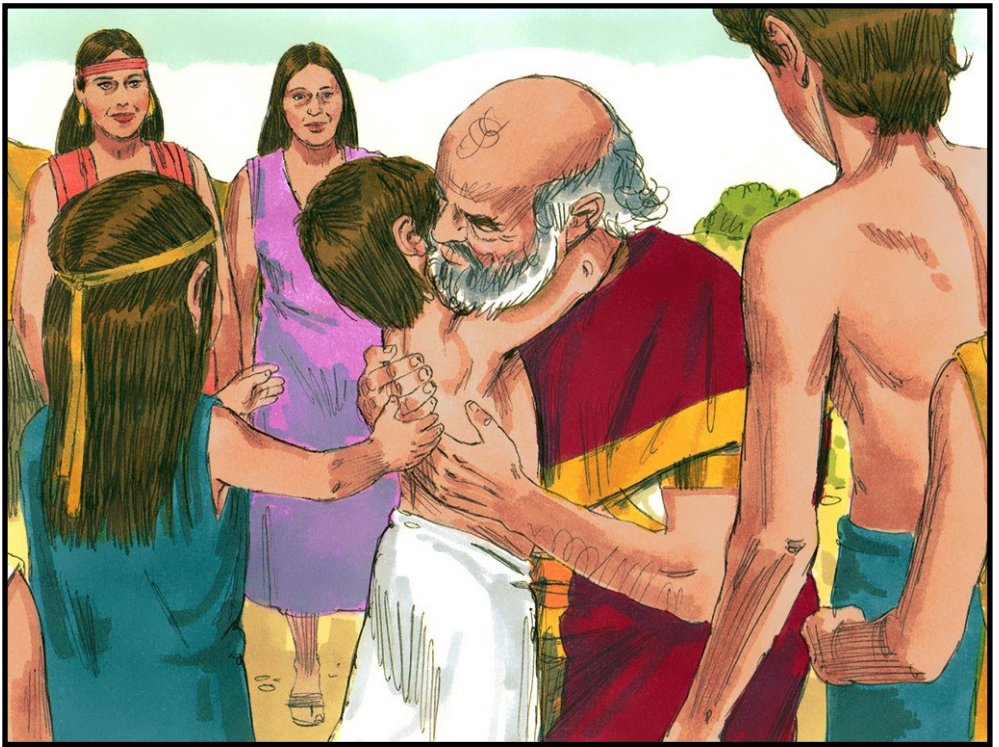


Jacob began to get angry with Laban. “What have I done to deserve this? You’ve chased me down like a criminal. I worked for you these twenty years and treated you fairly. If one of your animals got hurt or stolen, I paid for it. I worked in the heat. I worked in the cold. There were even nights that I went without sleep. God has seen my hard work and suffering. That is why he visited you in a dream last night.”



Laban replied, “These daughters and flocks are mine. But what can I do? Come now, let’s make a promised between you and me.”

So, they gathered stones and made a mound with them. Laban promised not to go past the stones to hurt Jacob and Jacob promised not to go past the stones to hurt Laban.



Laban and Jacob ate a meal together. Then, they made promises to each other before the LORD. They even took time to offer a sacrifice to God. The next morning Laban kissed his daughters and grandchildren goodbye. Then he returned home.

M

kids

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