

The Birth of a Nation

A Study in Genesis 25-36

Jacob's Exodus and a
Covenant of Hostility
Genesis 31:1-55
March 28, 2021

MAIN POINT: Our God is faithful to bring about his purposes to redeem a people for his glory.

I. JACOB'S EXODUS (VV. 1-21)

- Hostility is brewing and the LORD speaks (vv. 1-3)
- Laban's disfavor and Jacob's speech (vv. 4-16)
- Jacob's exodus (vv. 17-21).

II. A COVENANT OF HOSTILITY (VV. 22-55)

- Hostility is brewing and the LORD speaks (vv. 22-24)
- Laban's disfavor and Jacob's speech (vv. 25-42)
- A covenant of hostility (vv. 43-55)

III. SHADOWS OF THE EXODUS IN GENESIS 31

- The LORD prepares both Jacob and Moses for their exodus-work by reminding them that he is with them (Gen. 31:3; Exod. 3:12).
- God works to plunder both Laban and the Egyptians in preparation for the exodus (Gen. 31:9, 16; Exod. 3:21-22; 12:36).
- God calls to Jacob and Moses, reminding them that he sees the affliction of his people (Gen. 31:11-12; Exod. 3:4, 7).
- Jacob crosses the Euphrates after his exodus from Laban (Gen. 31:21), and Israel crosses the Red Sea after her exodus from Egypt (Exod. 14).
- Jacob is pursued by Laban after his exodus but is protected by God (Gen. 31:23-24), and Israel is pursued by Pharaoh after her exodus but is protected by God (Exod. 14:5-9, 10-20).
- Laban's household gods are defeated and shamed (Gen. 31:34-35), and Egypt's gods are defeated and brought to nothing by the LORD (Exod. 12:12).
- God sees the affliction of Jacob and Israel, and acts to rescue his afflicted people (Gen. 31:42; Exod. 2:24; 3:7).
- The post-exodus covenant established between Jacob and Laban, like that of the Mosaic covenant, constrained hostility rather than overcoming it (Gen. 31:49-52; Gal. 3:23-24).

IV. A GREATER EXODUS AND A BETTER COVENANT

- Shadows of Israel's exodus from Egypt are all throughout Genesis 31, and both point to the greater exodus and covenant-confirming work of Jesus.
- There are echoes of the exodus throughout the Gospels, but Jesus's cross-work is described as an actual exodus. (cf. Luke 9:30-31).
- Through Jesus's exodus and his covenant-of-peace-confirming work, the greatest of all hostility has been overcome (cf. Rom. 5:8-10).

Suggested Reading:

Echoes of Exodus: Tracing Themes of Redemption through Scripture by
Alistair J. Roberts and Andrew Wilson

Questions/Discovery Points for Life Groups/Families

Please Read Genesis 31:1-55

1. Jacob was comforted in the midst of his circumstances by his ever-present God. How does God's presence with us sustain us during different circumstances of our life?
2. God's grace shown to Jacob is evident throughout Genesis 31. Take some time to discuss several of the ways God has shown his grace to Jacob, and take some time to discuss how God has shown his grace to you in Christ.
3. Why do you think there are so many shadows of the exodus throughout the book of Genesis? In what ways are you encouraged by both the shadows of the exodus in Genesis and the echoes of the exodus in the life and ministry of Jesus?
4. Laban's pursuit of Jacob is one with militaristic intent. How do the LORD's words to Laban derail such intent? How are you encouraged by the fact that our God is a Warrior-King who fights on behalf of his people? How is this Warrior-King theme lived out in the life of Jesus?
5. Laban's household gods are shamed in Genesis 31:25-42. Even so, in what ways are you prone to idolatrous thinking and living? Think deeply about areas where you may be prone to idolatry, and ask the LORD to overcome those idolatrous thoughts and desires with a greater affection for him as your all-satisfying Savior.