

Tuesday, January 15

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Genesis 31:17 - 32:12

31 **17** So Jacob put his wives and children on camels, **18** and he drove all his livestock in front of him. He packed all the belongings he had acquired in Paddan-aram and set out for the land of Canaan, where his father, Isaac, lived. **19** At the time they left, Laban was some distance away, shearing his sheep. Rachel stole her father's household idols and took them with her. **20** Jacob outwitted Laban the Aramean, for they set out secretly and never told Laban they were leaving. **21** So Jacob took all his possessions with him and crossed the Euphrates River, heading for the hill country of Gilead. **22** Three days later, Laban was told that Jacob had fled. **23** So he gathered a group of his relatives and set out in hot pursuit. He caught up with Jacob seven days later in the hill country of Gilead. **24** But the previous night God had appeared to Laban the Aramean in a dream and told him, "I'm warning you—leave Jacob alone!" **25** Laban caught up with Jacob as he was camped in the hill country of Gilead, and he set up his camp not far from Jacob's. **26** "What do you mean by deceiving me like this?" Laban demanded. "How dare you drag my daughters away like prisoners of war? **27** Why did you slip away secretly? Why did you deceive me? And why didn't you say you wanted to leave? I would have given you a farewell feast, with singing and music, accompanied by tambourines and harps. **28** Why didn't you let me kiss my daughters and grandchildren and tell them good-bye? You have acted very foolishly! **29** I could destroy you, but the God of your father appeared to me last night and warned me, 'Leave Jacob alone!' **30** I can understand your feeling that you must go, and your intense longing for your father's home. But why have you stolen my gods?" **31** "I rushed away because I was afraid," Jacob answered. "I thought you would take your daughters from me by force. **32** But as for your gods, see if you can find them, and let the person who has taken them die! And if you find anything else that belongs to you, identify it before all these relatives of ours, and I will give it back!" But Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen the household idols. **33** Laban went first into Jacob's tent to search there, then into Leah's, and then the tents of the two servant wives—but he found nothing. Finally, he went into Rachel's tent. **34** But Rachel had taken the household idols and hidden them in her camel saddle, and now she was sitting on them. When Laban had thoroughly searched her tent without finding them, **35** she said to her father, "Please, sir, forgive me if I don't get up for you. I'm having my monthly period." So Laban continued his search, but he could not find the household idols. **36** Then Jacob became very angry, and he challenged Laban. "What's my crime?" he demanded. "What have I done

wrong to make you chase after me as though I were a criminal? **37** You have rummaged through everything I own. Now show me what you found that belongs to you! Set it out here in front of us, before our relatives, for all to see. Let them judge between us! **38** “For twenty years I have been with you, caring for your flocks. In all that time your sheep and goats never miscarried. In all those years I never used a single ram of yours for food. **39** If any were attacked and killed by wild animals, I never showed you the carcass and asked you to reduce the count of your flock. No, I took the loss myself! You made me pay for every stolen animal, whether it was taken in broad daylight or in the dark of night. **40** “I worked for you through the scorching heat of the day and through cold and sleepless nights. **41** Yes, for twenty years I slaved in your house! I worked for fourteen years earning your two daughters, and then six more years for your flock. And you changed my wages ten times! **42** In fact, if the God of my father had not been on my side—the God of Abraham and the fearsome God of Isaac —you would have sent me away empty-handed. But God has seen your abuse and my hard work. That is why he appeared to you last night and rebuked you!” **43** Then Laban replied to Jacob, “These women are my daughters, these children are my grandchildren, and these flocks are my flocks—in fact, everything you see is mine. But what can I do now about my daughters and their children? **44** So come, let’s make a covenant, you and I, and it will be a witness to our commitment.” **45** So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a monument. **46** Then he told his family members, “Gather some stones.” So they gathered stones and piled them in a heap. Then Jacob and Laban sat down beside the pile of stones to eat a covenant meal. **47** To commemorate the event, Laban called the place Jegar-sahadutha (which means “witness pile” in Aramaic), and Jacob called it Galeed (which means “witness pile” in Hebrew). **48** Then Laban declared, “This pile of stones will stand as a witness to remind us of the covenant we have made today.” This explains why it was called Galeed—“Witness Pile.” **49** But it was also called Mizpah (which means “watchtower”), for Laban said, “May the LORD keep watch between us to make sure that we keep this covenant when we are out of each other’s sight. **50** If you mistreat my daughters or if you marry other wives, God will see it even if no one else does. He is a witness to this covenant between us. **51** “See this pile of stones,” Laban continued, “and see this monument I have set between us. **52** They stand between us as witnesses of our vows. I will never pass this pile of stones to harm you, and you must never pass these stones or this monument to harm me. **53** I call on the God of our ancestors—the God of your grandfather Abraham and the God of my grandfather Nahor—to serve as a judge between us.” So Jacob took an oath before the fearsome God of his father, Isaac, to respect the boundary line. **54** Then Jacob offered a sacrifice to God there on the mountain and invited everyone to a covenant feast. After they had eaten, they spent the night on the mountain. **55** Laban got up early the next

morning, and he kissed his grandchildren and his daughters and blessed them. Then he left and returned home.

32 **1** As Jacob started on his way again, angels of God came to meet him. **2** When Jacob saw them, he exclaimed, “This is God’s camp!” So he named the place Mahanaim. **3** Then Jacob sent messengers ahead to his brother, Esau, who was living in the region of Seir in the land of Edom. **4** He told them, “Give this message to my master Esau: ‘Humble greetings from your servant Jacob. Until now I have been living with Uncle Laban, **5**and now I own cattle, donkeys, flocks of sheep and goats, and many servants, both men and women. I have sent these messengers to inform my lord of my coming, hoping that you will be friendly to me.’” **6** After delivering the message, the messengers returned to Jacob and reported, “We met your brother, Esau, and he is already on his way to meet you—with an army of 400 men!” **7** Jacob was terrified at the news. He divided his household, along with the flocks and herds and camels, into two groups. **8** He thought, “If Esau meets one group and attacks it, perhaps the other group can escape.” **9**Then Jacob prayed, “O God of my grandfather Abraham, and God of my father, Isaac—O LORD, you told me, ‘Return to your own land and to your relatives.’ And you promised me, ‘I will treat you kindly.’” **10** I am not worthy of all the unfailing love and faithfulness you have shown to me, your servant. When I left home and crossed the Jordan River, I owned nothing except a walking stick. Now my household fills two large camps! **11** O LORD, please rescue me from the hand of my brother, Esau. I am afraid that he is coming to attack me, along with my wives and children. **12** But you promised me, ‘I will surely treat you kindly, and I will multiply your descendants until they become as numerous as the sands along the seashore—too many to count.’”

Matthew 10:24 - 11:6

10 **24** “Students are not greater than their teacher, and slaves are not greater than their master. **25** Students are to be like their teacher, and slaves are to be like their master. And since I, the master of the household, have been called the prince of demons, the members of my household will be called by even worse names! **26** “But don’t be afraid of those who threaten you. For the time is coming when everything that is covered will be revealed, and all that is secret will be made known to all. **27** What I tell you now in the darkness, shout abroad when daybreak comes. What I whisper in your ear, shout from the housetops for all to hear! **28** “Don’t be afraid of those who want to kill your body; they cannot touch your soul. Fear only God, who can destroy both soul and body in hell. **29** What is the price of two sparrows—one copper coin ? But not a single sparrow can fall to the ground without your Father knowing it. **30** And the very

hairs on your head are all numbered. **31** So don't be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows. **32** "Everyone who acknowledges me publicly here on earth, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. **33** But everyone who denies me here on earth, I will also deny before my Father in heaven. **34** "Don't imagine that I came to bring peace to the earth! I came not to bring peace, but a sword. **35** 'I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. **36** Your enemies will be right in your own household!' **37** "If you love your father or mother more than you love me, you are not worthy of being mine; or if you love your son or daughter more than me, you are not worthy of being mine. **38** If you refuse to take up your cross and follow me, you are not worthy of being mine. **39** If you cling to your life, you will lose it; but if you give up your life for me, you will find it. **40** "Anyone who receives you receives me, and anyone who receives me receives the Father who sent me. **41** If you receive a prophet as one who speaks for God, you will be given the same reward as a prophet. And if you receive righteous people because of their righteousness, you will be given a reward like theirs. **42** And if you give even a cup of cold water to one of the least of my followers, you will surely be rewarded."

11 1 When Jesus had finished giving these instructions to his twelve disciples, he went out to teach and preach in towns throughout the region. **2** John the Baptist, who was in prison, heard about all the things the Messiah was doing. So he sent his disciples to ask Jesus, **3** "Are you the Messiah we've been expecting, or should we keep looking for someone else?" **4** Jesus told them, "Go back to John and tell him what you have heard and seen— **5** the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is being preached to the poor. **6** And tell him, 'God blesses those who do not turn away because of me.'"

Psalm 13:1 - 6

13 1 O LORD, how long will you forget me? Forever? How long will you look the other way? **2** How long must I struggle with anguish in my soul, with sorrow in my heart every day? How long will my enemy have the upper hand? **3** Turn and answer me, O LORD my God! Restore the sparkle to my eyes, or I will die. **4** Don't let my enemies gloat, saying, "We have defeated him!" Don't let them rejoice at my downfall. **5** But I trust in your unfailing love. I will rejoice because you have rescued me. **6** I will sing to the LORD because he is good to me.

Proverbs 3:16 - 18

3 16 She offers you long life in her right hand, and riches and honor in her left. **17** She will guide you down delightful paths; all her ways are satisfying. **18** Wisdom is a tree of life to those who embrace her; happy are those who hold her tightly.