

Study Guide for July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010. Breaking Free: Genesis 31:25-55.

Introduction: Describe a time you had to break ties with the past in order to chart a clear course for the future. What patterns or people were particularly difficult to get free from?

I. Overtaken and accused: (Gen. 31:25-30)

- A. What does Laban accuse Jacob of doing or failing to do? Is Laban justified?
- B. How would Laban's charges sound to . . . Laban's relatives? . . . Jacob's family?
- C. What or who kept Laban from doing Jacob and his family harm?
- D. What long term benefit does God accomplish by orchestrating this encounter?

II. Show Me the gods: (Gen. 31:31-37)

- A. What response to Jacob make to Laban's accusation about stealing his 'gods'?
- B. Where does Laban look? What does he find? What would the relatives think?
- C. Who hid the 'gods'? Where are they? What do we learn from this?
- D. Summarize Jacob's tone and argument (vs. 36-37)? How is Jacob presented here?

III. Judge me by my record: (Gen. 31:38-42)

- A. How does Jacob describe his work for Laban? What did Jacob do and not do?
- B. What conditions did Jacob encounter during these 20 years?
- C. How did Jacob perceive God at work during this season of his life?
- D. How has God shaped your soul / character through your work over the past years?

IV. Peace treaty: (Gen. 31:43-55)

- A. What claim does Laban make (vs. 43)? Is it true? What offer does he present?
- B. How do Laban and Jacob commemorate their treaty (covenant)? How do they part?
- C. How is God referenced . . . by Laban? . . . by Jacob? What does this indicate?
- D. Are there relationships or attachments that you feel you need to break free from? What might good closure look like in those situations? (Ruth 1:8-10 & Ecc. 3:5)