

Direction from a Dream
6-12-2016

Gen 31:10-13

10 In the breeding season of the flock I lifted up my eyes and saw in a dream that the goats that mated with the flock were striped, spotted, and mottled. 11 Then the angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob,' and I said, 'Here I am!' 12 And he said, 'Lift up your eyes and see, all the goats that mate with the flock are striped, spotted, and mottled, for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you. 13 I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and made a vow to me. Now arise, go out from this land and return to the land of your kindred.'

Lord uses trying circumstances & exasperating people in our lives to refine & grow us & to teach us to trust/obey Him.

- When we take easy way out by too quickly leaving a difficult situation we never fully develop patience, endurance & trust in God.
- Jacob persevered for 20 long yrs & worked faithfully & hard as unto Lord for an unjust employer until God directed him to move on. Gen 31:13, 30:25-34

Both understood: Laban's prosperity was ultimately due to God's favor on Jacob.

- Sometimes God blesses evil men because of Christians. Potiphar. 1 Cor 7:12-14
- All prosperity is from Lord, not our ingenuity, hard work, or "breaks". 1 Cor. 4:7
 - Some intelligent folks work hard all their lives & never get rich.
- People realize this & use Christians or Christianity to achieve their greedy desires.
 - They think they can use God to get what want, but then discard Him if doesn't come through.
 - Pagan Laban foolishly tried to manipulate God through Jacob to serve his own greed. Had other gods/idols to ensure prosperity.
 - Laban's greed created bitterness & conflict in a family.
 - Laban & sons were hostile toward wealthy Jacob, daughters were angry at their father for using them to better his own financial position.
 - Inheritance splits families today!

Jacob's plan seems advantageous to Laban. Gen 30:32-36, 31:10, 1 Cor 1:20-21

- Back then in the Middle East most sheep were white & most goats were black or dark Brown.
- Jacob tended Laban's flocks & receive spotted/speckled (significantly v #).
 - Jacob was acting in faith by doing what God told him in dream no matter how absurd it seemed: bronze serpent; Jericho, forgiven by faith in Jesus Christ.
 - We are not commanded to be victorious, only obedient.

Laban cheated immediately with a plan more plausible than Jacob's. Gen 30:32-36

- He removed all unusually colored animals & had his sons tender them.
 - Jacob started without any spotted/speckled...a perfect opportunity to highlight Lord's supernatural, unmerited favor on him. Gen 30:37-43

He believed "visual aids" before mating animals would affect offspring appearance.

- Jacob idea was entirely based on a false premise, but God's instruction in the dream was consistent with natural genetic laws. Gen 31:10-13,
 - In the vision there were no peeled poles, segregated flocks, but only striped, speckled & mottled males were mating, none of the rest.
- God used Jacob's foolish beliefs to bring about His sovereign purposes.
 - When things go right (even when based on accurate assumptions), it is not because of our planning/brilliance, but God's grace and goodness.

God was giving Jacob an opportunity to trust in Him during the trying circumstances with difficult, unjust people.....How is God giving you that same opportunity? 1 Pet 1:6-7, Col 3:23, 1 Pet 2:18, 1 Cor 10:31, Prov 3:5-6

- Trust in Lord & His grace rather than in your schemes.
 - Persevere & work diligently, faithfully, & hard as unto Lord.
 - Do all for glory of God, not personal gain & when you succeed give Him sincere honor & all the glory.

