

# GENESIS: BACK TO THE BEGINNING

## Jacob

Peace on Earth

Genesis 31:22-55



bethel *community*  
CHURCH

Rev. Bradley S. Belcher, Senior Pastor

# Peace on Earth

BACK TO THE BEGINNING

A close-up photograph of several sheep with thick, light-colored wool, looking towards the camera. The sheep are packed closely together, and their faces are visible through the wool. The background is dark and out of focus.

# Peace on Earth

**Genesis 31:22-55** When it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob had fled, 23 he took his kinsmen with him and pursued him for seven days and followed close after him into the hill country of Gilead. 24 But God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream by night and said to him, “Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad.” 25 And Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country, and Laban with his kinsmen pitched tents in the hill country of Gilead. -

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# Peace on Earth

**26 And Laban said to Jacob, “What have you done, that you have tricked me and driven away my daughters like captives of the sword? 27 Why did you flee secretly and trick me, and did not tell me, so that I might have sent you away with mirth and songs, with tambourine and lyre? 28 And why did you not permit me to kiss my sons and my daughters farewell? Now you have done foolishly. 29 It is in my power to do you harm. But the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, ‘Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad.’ -**

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# Peace on Earth

**30 And now you have gone away because you longed greatly for your father's house, but why did you steal my gods?" 31 Jacob answered and said to Laban, "Because I was afraid, for I thought that you would take your daughters from me by force. 32 Anyone with whom you find your gods shall not live. In the presence of our kinsmen point out what I have that is yours, and take it." Now Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them. -**

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# Peace on Earth

**33 So Laban went into Jacob's tent and into Leah's tent and into the tent of the two female servants, but he did not find them. And he went out of Leah's tent and entered Rachel's. 34 Now Rachel had taken the household gods and put them in the camel's saddle and sat on them. Laban felt all about the tent, but did not find them. 35 And she said to her father, "Let not my lord be angry that I cannot rise before you, for the way of women is upon me." So he searched but did not find the household gods. -**

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# Peace on Earth

**36 Then Jacob became angry and berated Laban. Jacob said to Laban, “What is my offense? What is my sin, that you have hotly pursued me? 37 For you have felt through all my goods; what have you found of all your household goods? Set it here before my kinsmen and your kinsmen, that they may decide between us two. 38 These twenty years I have been with you. Your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried, and I have not eaten the rams of your flocks. -**

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# Peace on Earth

**39 What was torn by wild beasts I did not bring to you. I bore the loss of it myself. From my hand you required it, whether stolen by day or stolen by night. 40 There I was: by day the heat consumed me, and the cold by night, and my sleep fled from my eyes. 41 These twenty years I have been in your house. I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times. -**

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## Peace on Earth

42 If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had not been on my side, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God saw my affliction and the labor of my hands and rebuked you last night.” 43 Then Laban answered and said to Jacob, “The daughters are my daughters, the children are my children, the flocks are my flocks, and all that you see is mine. But what can I do this day for these my daughters or for their children whom they have borne? -

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# Peace on Earth

44 Come now, let us make a covenant, you and I. And let it be a witness between you and me.” 45 So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar. 46 And Jacob said to his kinsmen, “Gather stones.” And they took stones and made a heap, and they ate there by the heap. 47 Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed. 48 Laban said, “This heap is a witness between you and me today.” Therefore he named it Galeed, 49 and Mizpah, for he said, “The Lord watch between you and me, when we are out of one another's sight. -

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# Peace on Earth

50 If you oppress my daughters, or if you take wives besides my daughters, although no one is with us, see, God is witness between you and me.” 51 Then Laban said to Jacob, “See this heap and the pillar, which I have set between you and me. 52 This heap is a witness, and the pillar is a witness, that I will not pass over this heap to you, and you will not pass over this heap and this pillar to me, to do harm. 53 The God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us.” So Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac, -

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# Peace on Earth

54 and Jacob offered a sacrifice in the hill country and called his kinsmen to eat bread. They ate bread and spent the night in the hill country. 55 Early in the morning Laban arose and kissed his grandchildren and his daughters and blessed them. Then Laban departed and returned home. (ESV)

BACK TO THE BEGINNING



# Peace on Earth

BACK TO THE BEGINNING

A close-up photograph of several sheep with thick, light-colored wool, looking towards the camera. The sheep are packed closely together, and their faces are visible through the wool. The background is dark and out of focus.



**God told Jacob to leave Haran and return to his homeland. Jacob took his family, crossed the Euphrates River, and headed first for the hill country of Gilead. Laban caught up with him there.**

**BACK TO THE BEGINNING**



# Peace on Earth

BACK TO THE BEGINNING



# Peace on Earth

I. Unresolved Anger will consume you.

A. We don't need to include others in our rage.

*22 When it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob had fled, 23 he took his kinsmen with him...*

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# Peace on Earth

I. Unresolved Anger will consume you.

B. We don't need to relentlessly chase people down in our fury.

*and pursued him for seven days...*

BACK TO THE BEGINNING



# Peace on Earth

I. Unresolved Anger will consume you.

C. We don't need to become obsessed in our frustration.  
*and followed close after him into the hill country of Gilead.*

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# Peace on Earth

II. We need to hear God's call for peace in our lives.

A. Being careful with our communication.

*24 But God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream by night and said to him, "Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad."*

- *Proverbs 12:18 There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.*

# Peace on Earth

II. We need to hear God's call for peace in our lives.

A. Being careful with our communication.

- *Ephesians 4:29 Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.*
- *Ephesians 4:15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,*

# Peace on Earth

II. We need to hear God's call for peace in our lives.

B. Not badgering people with our inquisition and threats.

1. No exaggeration.

*25 And Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country, and Laban with his kinsmen pitched tents in the hill country of Gilead. 26 And Laban said to Jacob, "What have you done, that you have tricked me and driven away my daughters like captives of the sword?"*

# Peace on Earth

II. We need to hear God's call for peace in our lives.

B. Not badgering people with our inquisition and threats.

2. No embellishing.

*27 Why did you flee secretly and trick me, and did not tell me, so that I might have sent you away with mirth and songs, with tambourine and lyre? 28 And why did you not permit me to kiss my sons and my daughters farewell?*

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# Peace on Earth

II. We need to hear God's call for peace in our lives.

B. Not badgering people with our inquisition and threats.

3. No name calling.

*Now you have done foolishly.*

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# Peace on Earth

II. We need to hear God's call for peace in our lives.

B. Not badgering people with our inquisition and threats.

4. No making threats.

*29 It is in my power to do you harm. But the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, 'Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad. '*

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# Peace on Earth

II. We need to hear God's call for peace in our lives.

B. Not badgering people with our inquisition and threats.

5. No guilt trips.

*30 And now you have gone away because you longed greatly for your father's house,*

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# Peace on Earth

II. We need to hear God's call for peace in our lives.

B. Not badgering people with our inquisition and threats.

6. No idolatry.

*but why did you steal my gods?"*

- *James 4:1-3 What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? 2 You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. -*

# Peace on Earth

II. We need to hear God's call for peace in our lives.

B. Not badgering people with our inquisition and threats.

6. No idolatry.

- *3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.*

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# Peace on Earth

II. We need to hear God's call for peace in our lives.

C. Fearing God and not man.

*31 Jacob answered and said to Laban, "Because I was afraid, for I thought that you would take your daughters from me by force.*

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# Peace on Earth

II. We need to hear God's call for peace in our lives.

D. Being careful not to overstate our position.

*32 Anyone with whom you find your gods shall not live. In the presence of our kinsmen point out what I have that is yours, and take it." Now Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them.*

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# Peace on Earth

II. We need to hear God's call for peace in our lives.

E. Giving back what doesn't belong to us.

*33 So Laban went into Jacob's tent and into Leah's tent and into the tent of the two female servants, but he did not find them. And he went out of Leah's tent and entered Rachel's.*

*34 Now Rachel had taken the household gods and put them in the camel's saddle and sat on them. Laban felt all about the tent, but did not find them. -*

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# Peace on Earth

II. We need to hear God's call for peace in our lives.

E. Giving back what doesn't belong to us.

*35 And she said to her father, "Let not my lord be angry that I cannot rise before you, for the way of women is upon me."  
So he searched but did not find the household gods.*

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# Peace on Earth

II. We need to hear God's call for peace in our lives.

F. Simply stating what is true.

*36 Then Jacob became angry and berated Laban. Jacob said to Laban, "What is my offense? What is my sin, that you have hotly pursued me? 37 For you have felt through all my goods; what have you found of all your household goods? Set it here before my kinsmen and your kinsmen, that they may decide between us two. -*

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# Peace on Earth

II. We need to hear God's call for peace in our lives.

F. Simply stating what is true.

*38 These twenty years I have been with you. Your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried, and I have not eaten the rams of your flocks. 39 What was torn by wild beasts I did not bring to you. I bore the loss of it myself. From my hand you required it, whether stolen by day or stolen by night. -*

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# Peace on Earth

II. We need to hear God's call for peace in our lives.

F. Simply stating what is true.

*40 There I was: by day the heat consumed me, and the cold by night, and my sleep fled from my eyes. 41 These twenty years I have been in your house. I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times.*

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# Peace on Earth

II. We need to hear God's call for peace in our lives.

G. Acknowledging God's work in the situation.

*42 If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had not been on my side, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God saw my affliction and the labor of my hands and rebuked you last night.*

BACK TO THE BEGINNING



# Peace on Earth

III. We need to pursue peace with those who oppose us.

A. We need God's help in resolving our conflicts.

*43 Then Laban answered and said to Jacob, "The daughters are my daughters, the children are my children, the flocks are my flocks, and all that you see is mine. But what can I do this day for these my daughters or for their children whom they have borne?"*

# Peace on Earth

III. We need to pursue peace with those who oppose us.

B. We need to seek terms of agreement with our opponent.  
*44 Come now, let us make a covenant, you and I. And let it be a witness between you and me."*

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# Peace on Earth

III. We need to pursue peace with those who oppose us.

C. We should set up monuments of peace in our lives.

*45 So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar. 46 And Jacob said to his kinsmen, "Gather stones." And they took stones and made a heap, and they ate there by the heap. 47 Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed. 48 Laban said, "This heap is a witness between you and me today." Therefore he named it Galeed, -*

# Peace on Earth

III. We need to pursue peace with those who oppose us.

C. We should set up monuments of peace in our lives.

*49 and Mizpah, for he said, "The Lord watch between you and me, when we are out of one another's sight."*

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# Peace on Earth

III. We need to pursue peace with those who oppose us.

D. We need to seek mutually beneficial terms with our opponent.

*50 "If you oppress my daughters, or if you take wives besides my daughters, although no one is with us, see, God is witness between you and me." 51 Then Laban said to Jacob, "See this heap and the pillar, which I have set between you and me. -*

# Peace on Earth

III. We need to pursue peace with those who oppose us.

D. We need to seek mutually beneficial terms with our opponent.

*52 This heap is a witness, and the pillar is a witness, that I will not pass over this heap to you, and you will not pass over this heap and this pillar to me, to do harm. 53 The God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us." So Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac,*

# Peace on Earth

III. We need to pursue peace with those who oppose us.

E. If possible, we need to find ways to worship and fellowship with our opponent.

*54 and Jacob offered a sacrifice in the hill country and called his kinsmen to eat bread. They ate bread and spent the night in the hill country. 55 Early in the morning Laban arose and kissed his grandchildren and his daughters and blessed them. Then Laban departed and returned home.*

# Peace on Earth

III. We need to pursue peace with those who oppose us.

E. If possible, we need to find ways to worship and fellowship with our opponent.

- *Romans 12:18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.*

BACK TO THE BEGINNING



# Peace on Earth

BACK TO THE BEGINNING

A photograph of a flock of sheep in a field, with several sheep looking towards the camera. The sheep are white with some brown patches. The background is a soft-focus field of green grass and trees.

# Peace on Earth

**It's very easy to become angry with people who oppose us. If we are not careful, our unresolved anger will consume us. We need to hear God's call for peace in our lives doing everything we can to pursue peace with those who oppose us.**

**BACK TO THE BEGINNING**

A photograph of a flock of sheep in a field, with the text 'BACK TO THE BEGINNING' overlaid in the bottom left corner.