



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

Pass The Promise Series, Lesson 19

Lesson Title: Laban Tricks Jacob

Take Home Point: God can make good even out of family messes.

Warm-Up:

One of Aesop's fables goes this way: There was a shepherd boy who got bored tending his sheep, so he thought of a way to add excitement to his day. He ran toward his village calling out, "Wolf! Wolf!" The villagers rushed out to drive away the wolf. How the boy laughed at his good trick. The villagers were not amused and warned him not to do it again. However, a few days later he did it again, with the same results, and he enjoyed another laugh. Then one day a wolf really did come, and the boy raced toward the village crying, "Wolf! Wolf!" but no one came to his aid and his flock was destroyed. The moral of the story? "A liar will not be believed, even when he is telling the truth."

Read: Genesis 29:13–31:55

Observation (What happened?):

How did Laban trick Jacob and lie to him? Why did he do it?

How did Laban get tricked later in the story?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Do you think Jacob had learned his lesson about deceiving others? If so, do you think he learned it before he reached his Uncle Laban or when he left?

Did God desert any of the characters in this account because they were dishonest? What does that tell you about his character?

Insight:

Trust is a basic human need. We need to know that we can trust others, and others need to know they can trust us. Why is this so? Because God made us relational beings. When we trust another, there is a sense of security in the relationship that God intended to mirror the security we can have with him when we trust him. We can exchange our ideas, emotions, concerns, thoughts, issues, and opinions without undue fear of rejection. Without trust, we are cautious in relating, if we relate at all, because we are uncertain and fearful of being rejected or hurt. It hurts to be deceived; it hurts our heart and damages relationships. God wants us to live with integrity so when we testify to his love and forgiveness, our message is received as trustworthy – worthy of consideration. Our integrity reflects his character.

Application (What does it mean to me?):

How do you deal with someone who has been dishonest with you? What steps do you take to handle the situation? How do you respond when you can't do anything about it?

Pray that God would use you as a witness of his forgiveness and power to make good from even bad situations.