

**~LABAN 1 (620)**  
**(La'ban) [White]**

- The grandson of Abraham's brother Nahor. He was the son of Bethuel and the brother of Rebekah
- Well, it came about that before he had finished speaking, why, here coming out was Rebekah, who had been born to Bethuel the son of Milcah the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, and her water jar was upon her shoulder. ([Genesis 24:15](#))
- Now Rebekah had a brother and his name was **Laban**. So Laban went running to the man who was outside at the fountain. ([Genesis 24:29](#))
- So Isaac sent Jacob away, and he struck out for Paddanaram, for **Laban** the son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, mother of Jacob and Esau. ([Genesis 28:5](#))
- And he was the father of Leah and Rachel.
- As it was, **Laban** had two daughters. The name of the older was Leah and the name of the younger Rachel. ([Genesis 29:16](#))
- **Laban** resided at the city of Haran in Paddan-aram, an area of Mesopotamia.
- So the servant took ten camels from the camels of his master and proceeded to go with every sort of good thing of his masters in his hand. Then he rose and got on his way to Mesopotamia to the city of Nahor. ([Genesis 24:10](#))
- Now, then, my son, listen to my voice and get up, run away to **Laban** my brother at Haran. ([Genesis 27:43](#))
- When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and had sent him away to Paddanaram to take from there a wife for himself, and that when he blessed him he laid the command upon him, saying; Do not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan. ([Genesis 28:6](#))
- So Jacob said to them; My brothers, from what place are you? to which they said; We are from Haran. ([Genesis 29:4](#))

- Then he said to them; Do you know **Laban** the grandson of Nahor? To which they said; We know him. (**Genesis 29:5**)
- **Laban** is called, the son of Bethuel the Syrian literally, the Aramaean. He is also referred to as **Laban** the Syrian.
- So Isaac sent Jacob away, and he struck out for Paddanaram, for **Laban** the son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, mother of Jacob and Esau. (**Genesis 28:5**)
- And Isaac happened to be forty years old at his taking Rebekah the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Paddanaram, the sister of **Laban** the Syrian, as his wife. (**Genesis 25:20**)
- So Jacob outwitted **Laban** the Syrian, because he had not told him that he was running away. (**Genesis 31:20**)
- Then God came to **Laban** the Syrian in a dream by night and said to him; Watch yourself that you do not go speaking either good or bad with Jacob. (**Genesis 31:24**)
- This designation is fitting in view of the fact that he was a resident of Paddan-aram, which means, **Plain, Flatland of Aram**, or Syria. **Laban** was a Semite dwelling in a region occupied by persons speaking Aramaic, a Semitic language.
- To the vicinity just mentioned, aged Abraham sent his servant to find a wife for Isaac.
- Now Abraham was old, advanced in years, and Yehowah had blessed Abraham in everything. (**Genesis 24:1**)
- Hence Abraham said to his servant, the oldest one of his household, who was managing all he had; Put your hand, please, under my thigh. (**Genesis 24:2**)
- As I must have you swear by Yehowah, the God of the heavens and the God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites in among whom I am dwelling. (**Genesis 24:3**)
- But you will go to my country and to my relatives, and you will certainly take a wife for my son, for Isaac. (**Genesis 24:4**)

- So the servant took ten camels from the camels of his master and proceeded to go with every sort of good thing of his masters in his hand. Then he rose and got on his way to Mesopotamia to the city of Nahor. (**Genesis 24:10**)
- When **Laban** heard Rebekah's account of her encounter with Abraham's servant and saw the gifts she had been given, he went running to the servant, addressed him as one blessed by Yehowah, and extended hospitality to him.
- And the young woman went running and telling the household of her mother about these things. (**Genesis 24:28**)
- Now Rebekah had a brother and his name was **Laban**. So Laban went running to the man who was outside at the fountain. (**Genesis 24:29**)
- And it came about that on seeing the nose ring and the bracelets on the hands of his sister and on hearing the words of Rebekah his sister, saying; This is the way the man spoke to me, then he came to the man and there he was, standing by the camels at the fountain. (**Genesis 24:30**)
- At once he said; Come, you blessed one of Yehowah. Why do you keep standing out here, when I myself have made the house ready and room for the camels? (**Genesis 24:31**)
- With that the man came on into the house, and he went unharnessing the camels and giving straw and fodder to the camels and water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him. (**Genesis 24:32**)
- **Laban** subsequently took a leading part in the negotiations concerning the marriage of Rebekah, the approval for the marriage coming from both him and his father, Bethuel.
- Then **Laban** and Bethuel answered and said; From Yehowah this thing has issued. We are unable to speak bad or good to you. (**Genesis 24:50**)
- Here is Rebekah before you. Take her and go, and let her become a wife to the son of your master, just as Yehowah has spoken. (**Genesis 24:51**)

- And it came about that when Abraham's servant had heard their words, he at once prostrated himself on the earth before Yehowah. ([Genesis 24:52](#))
- And the servant began to bring out articles of silver and articles of gold and garments and to give them to Rebekah, and he gave choice things to her brother and to her mother. ([Genesis 24:53](#))
- After that they ate and drank, he and the men who were with him, and they spent the night there and got up in the morning. Then he said; Send me off to my master. ([Genesis 24:54](#))
- To this her brother and her mother said; Let the young woman stay with us at least ten days. Afterward she can go. ([Genesis 24:55](#))
- But he said to them; Do not detain me, seeing that Yehowah has given success to my way. Send me off, that I may go to my master. ([Genesis 24:56](#))
- So they said; Let us call the young woman and inquire at her mouth. ([Genesis 24:57](#))
- Then they called Rebekah and said to her; Will you go with this man? In turn she said; I am willing to go. ([Genesis 24:58](#))
- At that they sent off Rebekah their sister and her nurse and Abraham's servant and his men. ([Genesis 24:59](#))
- And they began to bless Rebekah and say to her; O you, our sister, may you become thousands times ten thousand, and let your seed take possession of the gate of those who hate it. ([Genesis 24:60](#))
- After that Rebekah and her lady attendants rose and they went riding on the camels and following the man, and the servant took Rebekah and got on his way. ([Genesis 24:61](#))
- Years later, to escape Esau's vengeance and to obtain a wife, Jacob traveled to the home of his uncle **Laban** at Haran.
- However, Esau harbored animosity for Jacob on account of the blessing with which his father had blessed him, and Esau kept

- saying in his heart; The days of the period of mourning for my father are getting closer. After that I am going to kill Jacob my brother. ([Genesis 27:41](#))
- So Isaac sent Jacob away, and he struck out for Paddanaram, for **Laban** the son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, mother of Jacob and Esau. ([Genesis 28:5](#))
  - By this time **Laban** had two daughters, Leah and Rachel.
  - As it was, **Laban** had two daughters. The name of the older was Leah and the name of the younger Rachel. ([Genesis 29:16](#))
  - Possibly also sons.
  - In time he got to hear the words of the sons of **Laban**, saying; Jacob has taken everything that belonged to our father, and from what belonged to our father he has amassed all this wealth. ([Genesis 31:1](#))
  - **Laban** made an agreement with Jacob that for seven years of service he would receive **Laban's** younger daughter Rachel as wife. However, **Laban** tricked Jacob on his wedding night by substituting the older daughter Leah for Rachel, brushing Jacob's protests aside by appealing to local custom and then offering Rachel to Jacob as a second wife, if Jacob would serve him for an additional seven years.
  - Now it came about that as soon as **Laban** heard the report about Jacob the son of his sister, he went running to meet him. Then he embraced him and kissed him and brought him on into his house. And he began to relate to Laban all these things. ([Genesis 29:13](#))
  - After that **Laban** said to him; You are indeed my bone and my flesh. So he dwelt with him a full month. ([Genesis 29:14](#))
  - After that **Laban** said to Jacob; Are you my brother, and must you serve me for nothing? Tell me, What are your wages to be? ([Genesis 29:15](#))
  - As it was, **Laban** had two daughters. The name of the older was Leah and the name of the younger Rachel. ([Genesis 29:16](#))
  - But the eyes of Leah had no luster, whereas Rachel had become

beautiful in form and beautiful of countenance. (**Genesis 29:17**)

- And Jacob was in love with Rachel. So he said; I am willing to serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter. (**Genesis 29:18**)
- To this **Laban** said; It is better for me to give her to you than for me to give her to another man. Keep dwelling with me. (**Genesis 29:19**)
- And Jacob proceeded to serve seven years for Rachel, but in his eyes they proved to be like some few days because of his love for her. (**Genesis 29:20**)
- Then Jacob said to **Laban**; Give over my wife, because my days are up, and let me have relations with her. (**Genesis 29:21**)
- With that **Laban** gathered all the men of the place and made a feast. (**Genesis 29:22**)
- But it turned out that during the evening he resorted to taking Leah his daughter and bringing her to him that he might have relations with her. (**Genesis 29:23**)
- Moreover, **Laban** gave to her Zilpah his maidservant, even to Leah his daughter, as a maidservant. (**Genesis 29:24**)
- So it followed in the morning that here it was Leah! Consequently he said to **Laban**; What is this you have done to me? Was it not for Rachel that I served with you? So why have you tricked me? (**Genesis 29:25**)
- To this **Laban** said; It is not customary to do this way in our place, to give the younger woman before the firstborn. (**Genesis 29:26**)
- Celebrate to the full the week of this woman. After that there shall be given to you also this other woman for the service that you can serve with me for seven years more. (**Genesis 29:27**)
- Accordingly Jacob did so and celebrated fully the week of this woman, after which he gave him Rachel his daughter as his wife. (**Genesis 29:28**)

- When Jacob finally wished to depart, **Laban** urged him to remain and continue serving him for wages.
- And it followed that when Rachel had given birth to Joseph, Jacob immediately said to **Laban**; Send me away that I may go to my place and to my country. (**Genesis 30:25**)
- Give over my wives and my children, for whom I have served with you, that I may go, for you yourself must know my service which I have rendered you. (**Genesis 30:26**)
- Then **Laban** said to him; If, now, I have found favor in your eyes, I have taken the omens to the effect that Yehowah is blessing me due to you. (**Genesis 30:27**)
- And he added; Stipulate your wages to me and I shall give them. (**Genesis 30:28**)
- The agreement was that Jacob could keep for himself all the speckled and color-patched sheep, the dark-brown sheep among the young rams, and any color-patched and speckled she-goats.
- Then he said; What shall I give you? And Jacob went on to say; You will give me nothing whatsoever! If you will do this thing for me, I shall resume shepherding your flock. I shall continue guarding it. (**Genesis 30:31**)
- I will pass among your whole flock today. You set aside from there every sheep speckled and with color patches, and every dark-brown sheep among the young rams and any color-patched and speckled one among the she-goats. Hereafter such must be my wages. (**Genesis 30:32**)
- And my right-doing must answer for me on whatever future day you may come to look over my wages, every one that is not speckled and color-patched among the she-goats and dark brown among the young rams is something stolen if it is with me. (**Genesis 30:33**)
- To this **Laban** said; Why, that is fine! Let it be according to your word. (**Genesis 30:34**)
- But Jacob's later words to Leah and Rachel and also to **Laban**,

- Then Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah out to the field to his flock. (**Genesis 31:4**)
- And he said to them; I am seeing the face of your father, that he is not the same toward me as formerly, but the God of my father has proved to be with me. (**Genesis 31:5**)
- And you yourselves certainly know that with all my power I have served your father. (**Genesis 31:6**)
- And your father has trifled with me and he has changed my wages ten times, but God has not allowed him to do me harm. (**Genesis 31:7**)
- If on the one hand he would say; The speckled ones will become your wages, then the whole flock produced speckled ones, but if on the other hand he would say; The striped ones will become your wages, then the whole flock produced striped ones. (**Genesis 31:8**)
- So God kept taking the herd of your father away and giving it to me. (**Genesis 31:9**)
- This makes twenty years for me in your house. I have served you fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your flock, and you kept changing my wages ten times. (**Genesis 31:41**)
- Indicate that during succeeding years **Laban** frequently altered this original agreement when it turned out that Jacob's flocks were increasing greatly. **Laban's** attitude toward Jacob was not the same as formerly, and at Yehowah's direction Jacob decided to return to his homeland with his family and flocks.
- In time he got to hear the words of the sons of **Laban**, saying; Jacob has taken everything that belonged to our father, and from what belonged to our father he has amassed all this wealth. (**Genesis 31:1**)
- When Jacob would look at the face of **Laban**, here it was not with him as formerly. (**Genesis 31:2**)
- Finally Yehowah said to Jacob; Return to the land of your fathers and to your relatives, and I shall continue with you. (**Genesis**



### **31:3)**

- Then Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah out to the field to his flock. (**Genesis 31:4**)
- And he said to them; I am seeing the face of your father, that he is not the same toward me as formerly, but the God of my father has proved to be with me. (**Genesis 31:5**)
- I am the true God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and where you vowed a vow to me. Now get up, go out of this land and return to the land of your birth. (**Genesis 31:13**)
- Then Jacob got up and lifted his children and his wives onto the camels. (**Genesis 31:17**)
- And he began driving all his herd and all the goods that he had accumulated, the herd of his acquisition that he had accumulated in Paddanaram, in order to go to Isaac his father to the land of Canaan. (**Genesis 31:18**)
- On the third day after Jacob's secret departure, **Laban** learned of it and pursued Jacob, catching up with him in the mountainous region of Gilead. However, a warning from God prevented Laban from harming Jacob.
- Now **Laban** had gone to shear his sheep. Meantime Rachel stole the teraphim that belonged to her father. (**Genesis 31:19**)
- So Jacob outwitted **Laban** the Syrian, because he had not told him that he was running away. (**Genesis 31:20**)
- And he proceeded to run away and to get up and cross the River, he and all he had. After that he directed his face to the mountainous region of Gilead. (**Genesis 31:21**)
- Later, on the third day, it was told to **Laban** that Jacob had run away. (**Genesis 31:22**)
- With that he took his brothers with him and went chasing after him for a distance of seven days journey and caught up with him in the mountainous region of Gilead. (**Genesis 31:23**)
- Then God came to **Laban** the Syrian in a dream by night and said

to him; Watch yourself that you do not go speaking either good or bad with Jacob. ([Genesis 31:24](#))

- When they met, **Laban** and Jacob quarreled. Jacob pointed to his 20 years of faithful service and hard work and showed how Laban had dealt with him unfairly, changing his wages ten times.
- And Jacob became angry and began to quarrel with **Laban**, and in answer Jacob went on to say to Laban; What is the revolt on my part, what the sin of mine, as a reason why you have hotly pursued after me? ([Genesis 31:36](#))
- Now that you have felt through all my goods, what of all the goods of your house have you found? Put it here in front of my brothers and your brothers, and let them decide between us two. ([Genesis 31:37](#))
- These twenty years I have been with you. Your female sheep and your she-goats did not suffer abortions, and the rams of your flock I never ate. ([Genesis 31:38](#))
- Any animal torn to pieces I did not bring to you. I myself would stand the loss of it. Whether one was stolen by day or was stolen by night, you would put in a claim for it from my hand. ([Genesis 31:39](#))
- It has been my experience that by day the heat consumed me and the cold by night, and my sleep would flee from my eyes. ([Genesis 31:40](#))
- This makes twenty years for me in your house. I have served you fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your flock, and you kept changing my wages ten times. ([Genesis 31:41](#))
- If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Dread of Isaac, had not proved on my side, you would now have sent me away empty-handed. My wretchedness and the toil of my hands God has seen, and so he reproved you last night. ([Genesis 31:42](#))
- **Laban** was very concerned about retrieving the teraphim, or household idols, which Rachel, unknown to Jacob, had stolen. These he was unable to find, for Rachel kept them concealed.

- **Laban** may have become influenced in his religious ideas by the moon-worshipping people among whom he dwelt, and this may be indicated by his use of omens and his possession of teraphim. However, it should be noted that it was likely more than merely religious reasons that made **Laban** so anxious to locate and retrieve the teraphim.
- Tablets unearthed at Nuzi near Kirkuk, Iraq, reveal that, according to the laws of patriarchal times in that particular area, possession of such household idols by a woman's husband could give him the right to appear in court and claim the estate of his deceased father-in-law.
- Hence, **Laban** may have thought that Jacob himself stole the teraphim in order to dispossess **Laban's** own sons later. This may explain why, on failing to locate the household gods, **Laban** was anxious to conclude an agreement with Jacob that would ensure that Jacob would not go back with the household gods after **Laban's** death to deprive his sons of their inheritance.
- If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Dread of Isaac, had not proved on my side, you would now have sent me away empty-handed. My wretchedness and the toil of my hands God has seen, and so he reproved you last night. ([Genesis 31:42](#))
- Then **Laban** in answer said to Jacob; The daughters are my daughters and the children my children and the flock my flock, and everything you are looking at is mine and my daughters. What can I do against these today or against their children whom they have borne? ([Genesis 31:43](#))
- And now, come, let us conclude a covenant, I and you, and it must serve as a witness between me and you. ([Genesis 31:44](#))
- Accordingly Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar. ([Genesis 31:45](#))
- Then Jacob said to his brothers; Pick up stones! And they went taking stones and making a heap. After that they ate there on the heap. ([Genesis 31:46](#))
- And **Laban** began calling it Jegarsahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed. ([Genesis 31:47](#))

- This makes twenty years for me in your house. I have served you fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your flock, and you kept changing my wages ten times. (**Genesis 31:41**)
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- And **Laban** proceeded to say; This heap is a witness between me and you today. That is why he called its name Galeed. (**Genesis 31:48**)
- And The Watchtower, because he said; Let Yehowah keep watch between me and you when we are situated unseen the one from the other. (**Genesis 31:49**)
- If you go to afflicting my daughters and if you go to taking wives in addition to my daughters, there is no man with us. See! God is a witness between me and you. (**Genesis 31:50**)
- And **Laban** went on to say to Jacob; Here is this heap and here is the pillar that I have erected between me and you. (**Genesis 31:51**)

- This heap is a witness, and the pillar is something that bears witness, that I will not pass this heap against you and that you will not pass this heap and this pillar against me for harm. (**Genesis 31:52**)
- **Laban** made a covenant of family peace with Jacob, and to memorialize it, a stone pillar and a heap of stones were set up. Using Hebrew, Jacob called the heap Galeed, meaning, **Witness Heap**. **Laban** called it *Jegar-sahadutha*, using an **Aramaic**, or **Syrian**, expression having the same meaning. It was also called, **The Watchtower**.
- Then **Laban** in answer said to Jacob; The daughters are my daughters and the children my children and the flock my flock, and everything you are looking at is mine and my daughters. What can I do against these today or against their children whom they have borne? (**Genesis 31:43**)
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the pillar that I have erected between me and you. (**Genesis 31:51**)

- This heap is a witness, and the pillar is something that bears witness, that I will not pass this heap against you and that you will not pass this heap and this pillar against me for harm. (**Genesis 31:52**)
- Let the god of Abraham and the god of Nahor judge between us, the god of their father. But Jacob swore by the Dread of his father Isaac. (**Genesis 31:53**)
- After bidding his grandchildren and daughters farewell, **Laban** returned home, and the Bible record makes no further mention of him.
- After that Jacob sacrificed a sacrifice in the mountain and invited his brothers to eat bread. Accordingly they ate bread and passed the night in the mountain. (**Genesis 31:54**)
- However, **Laban** got up early in the morning and kissed his children and his daughters and blessed them. Then Laban got on his way that he might return to his own place. (**Genesis 31:55**)