

Palestine while Laban lived way up in northern Syria -- Laban accused Jacob of having taken the "teraphim." Jacob indignantly denied the charge. We find him becoming quite heated over Laban's mean and wrong attitude toward him, ~~but~~ ^{that} after all of Laban's meanness, ~~how~~ he should now accuse him of sinking so low as to steal the household gods. Jacob said, "Let the one upon whom these household gods are found be killed if you can find them anywhere. You can search everything I have." Laban came into Jacob's possessions and searched very thoroughly, but he did not find the "teraphim" because Rachel sat on them. She asked her father to excuse her from getting up as she was not feeling well, and concealed them under her. He searched all through the tent and was convinced they were not there. This is proof, then, that the teraphim ^{have been} cannot/~~be~~ very large. Certain medieval commentators have thought ~~that~~ the reason for Laban's great interest in securing these teraphim back was that they were made of gold. But the amount of gold which could ~~be~~ thus be concealed so that Rachel could sit over them and Laban would not suspect that they were there, would not be sufficient to pay for the cost of the expedition ~~that he had to make~~ which he had to make in order to overtake Jacob and strike such terror into his heart. It is clear enough that the reason why he wanted them so badly was not that they were made of gold. ~~Why~~ ^{Why}, then, was Rachel, the wife of the believer, Jacob, so anxious to steal these household gods, and why was Laban so tremendously concerned about getting them back?

It is a problem for which we find no answer in the pages of the Scripture. This is pretty good evidence that the account of it was written at a time when the answer was perfectly clear to everybody. According to the critical view of the matter, the account was not written until many centuries after the event; yet at the period at which it was said to have been written, we can find nothing which can give us any explanation of the reason why Laban would be so anxious to get back these teraphim. Had the account been