



"And now I am no more in the world,
but these are in the world..." (John 17:11).

Use this recent news story to help your students see the relevance
of this week's lesson from the Standard Lesson Commentary®
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A PROMISE KEPT . . . OR NOT?

In July 2015, the US, Iran, and five other nations agreed on terms for lifting sanctions on Iran in return for Iran's promise to scale back its nuclear weapons development program. Our government has announced that lifting of the sanctions will begin this month. Whether Iran is keeping its promise is open to debate. In October and again in November, Iran tested a nuclear-capable missile in violation of two United Nations Security Council prohibitions, including the current nuclear agreement.

A PROMISE KEPT . . . EVENTUALLY

Jacob kept his promise to Laban to work for seven years so that he might marry Laban's younger daughter, Rachel. However, Laban didn't keep his promise! He substituted his older daughter, Leah, at the wedding. Then he extracted another seven-year work commitment from Jacob in order to marry Rachel. So Laban kept his original promise . . . sort of . . . eventually.

1. Should we trust international agreements made with so-called rogue nations such as Iran?
What is the alternative to such agreements?
2. What does Laban's trickery suggest to you about his character? If Jacob was aware of Laban's character, why do you think he chose to make agreements with him?
3. Note how Laban cited the values of his culture to justify his actions. How do differing cultural values play a part in current world conflicts? How do you think those should be addressed?
4. Some argue that personal integrity is relative, depending upon the values of one's culture. That is, right and wrong may differ in differing cultural circumstances. How would you respond to that idea?

—Charles R. Boatman

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