

**PARSHAT VAYEITZEI:**

**SABBATH TABLE OUTLINE**

This guide corresponds to the video: [What's The Meaning Of Jacob's Ladder?](https://www.alephbeta.org/playlist/jacobs-ladder-meaning)

###### What, If Anything, Did the Ladder Mean?

1. So the beginning of this week’s parsha tells of a dream – a famous vision, beheld by Yaakov.
   1. He sees a ladder, with its feet planted on the ground, and its top, reaching into the heavens.
   2. Angels are going up and down the ladder.
2. In his dream, God declared to Jacob that He will give this land, the land Jacob is resting upon, right now, He’s going to give this land to him and his children – and that those children will be numerous; they going to be like the dust of the earth.
3. So the question I have for you is: What’s the deal with the ladder? Was that ladder just a nice visual effect – a little heavenly CGI, to make the whole scene seem more dramatic? Or did the image of the ladder somehow contribute to the message of the dream? Did it actually refine or enrich what the dream meant to *say*?

Guide by Dr. Sarah Levy

1. I think the latter possibility – pardon the pun – just might be the case. Here is why:
   1. It turns out that there are two other stories, elsewhere in the Torah, that seem to correspond, in an eerie way, with the words, the images of Jacob’s dream sequence here. I want to look at those other stories with you.
   2. I have a feeling that they each shed important light on the meaning of Jacob’s dream, and the meaning of the ladder that he envisions in that dream.
2. So what are those two other stories?

###### A First Parallel Story

1. Here is Jacob; his father, Isaac, has just blessed him and said goodbye to him.
   1. Jacob, of course, is trying to run away from his brother, Esav, who he has just deceived. And so, Jacob goes and leaves Be’er Sheva, and he goes. heads off toward the land of Charanin, leaving the Land of Canaan.
   2. All of a sudden, he ‘meets up with a place.’ I know its a strange choice of words, I grant you, but who am I to argue; that’s what the text says.
   3. And there, Jacob falls asleep and in that place has this dream of angels going up and down a ladder. Jacob names the place after the vision, calling it *‘beit el,’* the House of God.
2. So here’s my question for you: *where else do we meet a scene that reminds you of this?* When *else* is Jacob on the road, journeying between Charan and the Land of Canaan? When *else* in the torah does Jacob meet angels? When else does that same, peculiar word – *vayifga* – get used to describe the encounter with angels?
3. Turns out, that other story… happens in just a few chapters from now… it happens at the very

*end* of Parshat Vayeitzei, this week’s parsha.

1. You see there, at the end of Vayeitzei, Jacob is again on the road – except this time in reverse direction.



* 1. He is going *from* Charan back to the Land of Canaan.
  2. You see, at the beginning of Vayeitzei, Yaakov was leaving his father’s house.
  3. And now, at the end of Vayeitzei, he is leaving Lavan -- his *father in law’s* house. Back at the beginning of Vayeitzei, with that dream with the ladder, father had blessed his child and said goodbye.
  4. And now, at the end of Vayeitzei- same kind of thing happening…Lavan woke up in the morning and kissed his children goodbye and blessed them…

1. As you can tell, it is starting to sound – as Yogi Berra might say, like deja vu all over again.
   1. So once again, after leaving father, this time father in law, Jacob encountered angels.

Same unusual word, וּעגְּ ְפ יּו – used to describe the encounter with them.

* 1. And, just like the first time, Yaakov names the place.

1. It is hard to escape the feeling that these two stories - they’re somehow connected. But for all their similarities, there are some contrasts between these two stories also. For example:
   1. The first time around, in his dream with the ladder, Yaakov encounters a *place*, and in the place… there were angels. But he doesn’t encounter the angels directly. He actually sleeps while the Angels go up and down the ladder. The angels pretty much ignored him. He is an observer, we might say, not a participant, in the drama.
   2. But not so, the second time around, at the end of *Vayeitzei*, he and the angels are moving towards one another, on the same plane. And Jacob doesn’t just encounter the place; he encounters the angels themselves, directly. This time, he is not just an observer of a drama; he is a participant in it.
2. And it kind of makes you wonder. What changed? Why are things different now?

###### A Second Parallel Story

1. Ok, so let’s move on to that second story I was telling you about. What *other* story in the Torah – besides Yaakov’s encountering the angels of *machanayim* – seems to line up, somehow, with Yaakov’s vision of the Ladder?
2. So, I personally first got clued into the connection I’m about to tell you about, when I was traveling on a trip to the Grand Canyon last summer, and along the way, I was studying with my daughter, Ariella, in the car, and she asked me about the Torah’s description of Jacob’s Ladder.
   1. The Torah says about the ladder that it starts on the earth, and ‘*rosho bashamayim*,’ its head is in heaven.
   2. So she says to me: Abba, that sure sounds a lot like another structure in the Torah that starts on the ground and *rosho bashamayim –* its head is in the heavens.
   3. What, folks, is that other structure?
3. Well, what Ariella was thinking about, was the Tower of Babel, of course. It’s the only other structure the Torah described this exact way.
4. So could these two structures have anything to do with each other?

###### Further Indications of a Connection

1. The Tower and the Ladder; they do seem to be eerily related.
   1. It’s not *just* the words *‘rosho bashamayim’* that seems to connect them; there are actually a whole host of other parallels between the stories.
   2. So I want to suggest that, in a way, the Ladder is a kind of mirror of the Tower: The tower is a great building project embarked upon by *man*; and the ladder its built by God.
   3. The tower gets condemned by God; but the ladder, seemingly, the ladder is wonderful. Which brings us, of course, to the heart of the matter: For the Tower and the Ladder… What is the *purpose* of each structure?



1. Well, here, too, maybe the tower and the ladder are actually mirrors of one another. You see, the Tower seems designed to help humans make the leap to the stars, so to speak, to God’s realm. Which makes you wonder: *If the tower is a way humans imagined they could get to the heavens, is the ladder a vehicle through which heavenly beings – maybe even God Himself -- could reach the earth?*
2. You see, through the Tower, people actually sought to build a name for themselves. “ ,וּנלָּ-השׂﬠֲ ַנ ְו

םשֵׁ” in the words of the text. Which means, even if they scatter and their civilization disappears

– still, the tower that they built, inasmuch as it pierces the heavens, it will be their legacy.

* 1. Could, the Ladder have had an inverse purpose to that?
  2. God’s domain is in the heavens – but this ladder; it is a bridge between worlds... Could its intent be to somehow help God ‘make a name for Himself’, as it were – to establish some sort of legacy for Himself, in *our* World?

###### But How?

1. So, such thoughts are rather intriguing, but the question that immediately comes to mind is: How, exactly, would a ladder do any of those things? How would this ladder help a heavenly God make His mark, as it were, upon the earth? How would it help Him establish ‘a name’ here?
   1. The answer to that, might lie in the message that Jacob receives from God in the dream.
   2. While he’s looking at the Ladder, God had told Yaakov that his children would become like the dust of the earth, and collectively, they would come to possess the Land of Canaan.
   3. We asked, before, why that message was accompanied by this mysterious vision of a Divine Ladder. And answer is that the two parts of the dream we’ve been talking about

– the vision and the message – are actually... *one and the same.* There *gonna* be a nation. But the nation isn’t just a blind fact. It has a purpose, a reason for being. *The reason the nation exists is to become the ladder.*

1. The nation, somehow, it’s going to connect heaven and earth. It will be a vehicle for bringing God’s Name into the world; our world! For leaving a Divine mark upon this very physical world.
   1. *How* would it do that? And *when* would it begin to do that?
   2. It happens, maybe, at the end of Vayeitzei – with that first parallel story we’d been talking about, the one with the angels of *machanayim*.
2. You see, Vayeitzei *begins* with a lonely Jacob, running away from his brother, leaving the Land of Canaan; if those are the circumstances under which Jacob has his dream of the Ladder – Vayeitzei ends with an inverse of those circumstances: Jacob is on his way home, back to the Land of Canaan. He is not a lone individual anymore. He has a family, comprised of children. The children who are the incipient Tribes of Israel. The dream is happening now. The nation... is actually being born.
   1. And when it’s happening, Jacob begins to become the ladder.
   2. How? Not just because he’s becoming a nation, but because he is actualizing, in his life and the life of his family, something the nation needs to actually *stand for.*
   3. He is beginning to bring Godly values from heaven, as it were, down into this world, he’s beginning to make them a reality in this terrestrial sphere of ours.
3. A brave and noble thing is happening at the end of Vayeitzei; a Godly thing.
   1. Jacob, who once fled his brother’s wrath, is coming now, proactively, to meet his brother in person. He does not evade him, as before; he seeks him out. He comes to meet him. He sends him gifts. He embraces him and he kisses him. He does his best to reconcile with him.



* 1. Isn’t it interesting that it is at this very moment that Jacob, once again… just happens to meet up with angels? Angels that are not oblivious to him, but are coming to actually meet him. Angels that are not just in a dream, but angels that are there in real life. Angels that are not perpendicular to him, but are actually aligned with him.

1. What changed?
   1. Maybe the answer is: The angels haven’t really changed. They, perhaps, are the same angels that were on the ladder. The angels haven’t changed; Jacob has. His perspective has shifted. No longer is he asleep on the floor as angels ascend to heaven in a mere dream.
   2. No, the dream has started to become real: The ladder isn’t imagined anymore. Jacob is *becoming* the ladder, in ‘real-life’, and so of course – the angels, whose whole goal is to *get* to the ladder, to go down to it, those angels are meeting him now, head on, eye to eye.
2. What does it *mean* to say he has become a ladder, in real life?
   1. Well, the ladder is a conduit – a way the Divine could connect to the earth. And how

*does* the Divine connect to the earth? The answer is: through human action.

* 1. When human beings act nobly, courageously, when they bring Divine values into the world through their actions – they become a kind of ladder. You see, a Divine value, is just a thought; it is intangible. It is all very nice for God to have all these values, but if they don’t affect life here, we all merrily go on our way without them.
  2. By embodying God’s values in our actions, we build a *shem-* a name- for God in the world; we help make a lasting mark for the Divine here, in our very tangible, physical reality.

1. At the end of *Vayeitzei*, Jacob takes a fateful step.
   1. Laden with the children that will become scions of his nation, he approaches his brother and seeks to make things right with him.
   2. That overture may seem small, but it is the beginning of a journey for this incipient nation – a journey of bringing heavenly values into the real world. Jacob has begun to make his dream real.
   3. And in doing so, with his feet planted firmly on the ground, he has begun to pierce the heavens.





**PARSHAT VAYEITZEI: UNDERSTANDING RACHEL**’**S WORLD**

##### This guide corresponds to the video: [Rachel's Shame & The Secret Meaning Behind Joseph's Name](https://www.alephbeta.org/playlist/josephs-name-chiasm-meaning)

**SABBATH TABLE OUTLINE**



1. Reintroducing chiastic structure
   1. Tool to understand and analyze Biblical text
   2. Text in which the structure mirrors itself (first and last element, second and second to last, etc.)
   3. In Hebrew, called אתבש because the Hebrew letters mirror each other
   4. This structure can:
      1. Find the center around which the narrative revolves
      2. Give meaning by showing how pairs in structure match up
         * One of the parts may give meaning to the other

Guide by Dr. Sarah Levy

* + - * Acts as a kind of commentary
      * In order to understand what's happening on one

side of the structure, you have to understand what's happening on the other side

1. Example of chiastic structure in Vayeitzei

Look at five elements that happen at the start of the parsha:



a)

1. Jacob leaves Beer Sheva and goes to Haran (Genesis 28:10)
2. He encounters a place where he sleeps (28:11)
3. He has a dream with angels going up and down a ladder (28:12)
4. He wakes up and realizes the awe of the place (28:17)
5. He names the place Beit El (28:19)
6. Where else do we see a mirror image of those exact same five elements?
7. Look at the end of the parsha:
   1. Jacob leaves (Genesis 32:2)
   2. He has an encounter (32:2) - uses the same wording at before
   3. Angels meet him (32:2)
   4. He recognizes God in the place (32:3)
   5. He names the place after its significance (32:3)
8. These two sets of five elements illuminate each other because there are subtle differences, for example:
   1. The first time Jacob goes, he is running away against his will, but the second time, he is going on his way (connotes that he is going proactively)



* 1. The first time he encounters a place and lies horizontally while the angels go up and down and don't take notice of him, but the second time, the angels travel horizontally and do take notice of him

1. Additional chiastic elements in the parsha?
   1. In Genesis 28:18, he takes a stone and makes it a monument to memorialize encounter with heavenly father

- In Genesis 31:45, he takes a stone and makes it a monument to memorialize encounter with earthly father- in-law

* 1. In Genesis 28:22, Jacob makes a promise to give God a tenth of anything given to him

- In Genesis 31:41, Jacob argues with Laban about his changing his wages 10 times

* 1. Jacob heads out and encounters three flocks of sheep towards the start of the parsha

- Right before complaining to Laban about his wages, Jacob takes flocks of sheep (30:36, 40) for three days' travel

* 1. In Genesis 29:15, Jacob and Laban have a conversation about wages
* In Genesis 30:28, there is another conversation about wages
  + The first time, the wages weren't monetary, Jacob asked for Laban's daughter's hand in marriage
  + The second time, the word נקבה used sounds just like the word for female
  1. In Genesis 29:21, Jacob asks for his wife – when else does Jacob ask for Laban's daughters?

- In Genesis 30:26, Jacob asks for his wives and children



1. Most interesting part of chiasm is the middle
   1. When Rachel finally gives birth (Genesis 30:23), she names him Joseph (coming from אסף/gather) - Why would Rachel feel this great sense of shame and talk about God gathering her shame?
      1. Jacob has two wives - Leah has lots of children;

Rachael is barren, and it feels terrible

* + 1. Chiasm teaches that her sense of shame comes from somewhere else entirely
  1. Laban then gathers everyone for the wedding (29:22) - first time אסף is used

1. Rachel names her son because of her sense of shame
2. Everyone danced and was merry, not knowing that is was actually Leah who was getting married
3. It was supposed to be Rachel's wedding, but she was all alone with her shame because of her father
4. She was then infertile until God, her heavenly father, presents her with a child
5. God gathered in her shame, hence the redemptive name of Joseph



V.

Invite you to continue to explore this chiasm and the course

on what does it mean to be children of Israel



##### Hi everybody, this is Rabbi David Fohrman, and welcome to Parshat Vayeitzei. You are watching [Aleph](https://www.alephbeta.org/) [Beta](https://www.alephbeta.org/). I want to reintroduce to you a fascinating tool that you can use to analyze biblical texts: Chiastic structure, or what you might call in Hebrew, an atbash structure.

An atbash structure works like this. There is a text which is structured in such a way that the first element mirrors the last element, and the second to first element, mirrors the second to last element, etc., all converging towards the center. The reason why it is called an atbash is because Aleph is the first letter of the alphabet, Tav is the last, Bet is the second letter of the alphabet, Shin is the second to last.

##### An atbash structure can do a lot of things; it can find a center of the gravity around which a whole series of ideas seems to revolves around. But Chiastic structure can do something else, too. There is a whole world of meaning to be gleaned from how the pairs in the atbash structure match up. It may well be that one of these elements sheds light on the other, that the match between them is a kind of commentary as it were, that's inlaid in the Torah. To really understand what's happening on one side of the Chiastic structure, you have to understand what's happening on the other side.

And I'd like to demonstrate that to you with a fantastically elegant chiasm that occurs right here in Parshat Vayeitzei.

## A Chaistic D'var

Torah on

## Parshat Vayeitzei

##### Let's look at five elements that happen right at the beginning of the Parsha:

Element #1: חרנה וילך שבע מבאר יעקב ויצא– "Jacob leaves Be'er Sheva, and he goes to Charan." Element #2: " במקום ויפגעand he encounters this place” where he sleeps.

##### Element #3: In this dream that he has, " בו ויורדים עולים אלוקים מלאכי והנהThere are these angels going up and down this ladder."

Element #4: Yaakov wakes up in the middle of the night and realizes the significance of the place. He says, " הזה המקום נורא מהThis is just an astounding place" " אלקים בית אם כי זה איןThis place is a house of God", and then,

##### [Element #5:] קל בית ההוא המקום שם את ויקרא– "He names the place the House of God" because he understands that that's its significance.

So those are the five elements that begin this story. Now, let me ask you a question. Where else do we see a mirror image of those exact same five elements? Well, these five happen at the very beginning of Vayeitzei. Look at the very end of Vayeitzei. Yaakov is leaving Lavan's house, his father- in- law's house. לדרכו הלך ויעקב– "Yaakov on the way" again. אלוקים מלאכי בו ויפגעו– "he encountered angels."

##### The first time we have vayifga in the [Book of Genesis](https://www.alephbeta.org/torah/genesis), is right there at the beginning of Vayeitzei. The

second and last time you have that in the Book of Genesis is right here, .אלוקים מלאכי בו ויפגעו

And then, as if on cue, Yaakov said, as he saw these angels, זה אלוקים מחנה – "It's a camp of God here." And he names the place after its significance. He calls it Machanayim, which means "camps." So it all matches up. It's also almost as if these two sets of five elements are sort of illuminating each other because there are subtle differences, too.

## Connecting the Chiastic Text in Parshat Vayeitzei

##### For example, the first time Yaakov goes, he is running away, almost against his will, from his brother. The second time Yaakov is going, he is going ledarko, going on his way. What an interesting phrase. I can't say for sure what it means. But it might connote that he is not going reactively, forced to run away from his brother, he is going on his way, proactively, to meet his brother and to see if he can reconcile with him.

The first time around, he encountered a place and there were angels. But he was traveling horizontally, the angels were traveling vertically, up and down the ladder; they didn't even take notice of him. But the second time around, the angels are traveling horizontally; they do take notice of him. The angels are coming to greet him. Let's go on. If this were a true Chiasim, then the next element that you'd see at the beginning of Vayeitzei, should parallel an event at the end of Vayeitzei, but just a little bit earlier.

##### So back to the beginning of Vayeitzei. After Jacob has this dream with the angels going up and down the ladder, he takes this rock he's been sleeping on, " מצבה אתה וישם מראשתיו שם אשר האבן את ויקחand he makes it a monument." Well, that's the first matzevah, monument, ever made in the [Book of Genesis](https://www.alephbeta.org/torah/genesis). What's the second monument made?

Oh, look at that. In the end of Vayeitzei, right before Yaakov leaves Lavan's household to go meet up

##### with his brother and encounter those angels, " אבן יעקב ויקחYaakov takes a stone one more time"

" מצבה וירמהand he makes another monument" this time, to memorialize his final meeting with his father-in-law, Lavan. One matzevah memorializes an encounter with his heavenly father, another matzevah memorializes an encounter with an earthly father-in-law.

##### The next thing that happens at the beginning of Vayeitzei is that Jacob makes a promise,

" לך אעשרנו עשר לי תתן אשר וכלGod, anything that you give me, I will give you a tenth of." What happens the last time Jacob leaves his earthly father? There is another negotiation involving tens. Right before Jacob encounters those angels who come to greet him, and right before Jacob sets up that matzevah to mark his encounter with his father-in-law Lavan, Jacob negotiates in anger with his father- in-law. He complains to him, " מנים עשרת משכרתי את ותחלףyou promised me wages, but you changed those wages ten times." What's the next thing that happens at the beginning of Vayeitzei?

##### Yaakov heads off again and he gets to Charan and he encounters three flocks of sheep. Well, that's the first time we ever meet an eder, a flock of tzon, sheep. When is the only other time we meet an eder of sheep? Right where you expect it to be. Right before he complained about changing wages ten times.

Yaakov had taken flocks of sheep from Lavan's flock and put them aside: .לבדו עדרים לו וישתThere is the other occurrence of eder.

##### Three is associated with that, too. The first time around there were three flocks; here there were three days' travel between Yaakov's flocks and Lavan's flocks. .יעקב ובין בינו ימים שלשת דרך וישם

Next thing that happens, Yaakov encounters Lavan and Lavan wants to know how much is Yaakov willing to work for, "משכרתך מה לי הגידהTell me, what are going to be your wages?"

##### It turns out that there is another time that Lavan asks Yaakov what are to be your wages, and that's right where it should be. "ואתנה עלי שכרך נקבה ויאמרName your wages", Lavan says, "and I will give them."

Isn't it interesting that, the first time around, the wage that Yaakov named wasn't actually monetary at all. He asked him for the hand of his daughter in marriage. Listen to Lavan's language the second time around. The word for "name your price", nakvah, sure sounds a lot like the word nekevah, "female." The first part of the chiasim is present in the second of the chiasim.

##### And now, back to the beginning of the Vayeitzei. he next thing that happens: " לבן אל יעקב ויאמרAn d Jacob said to Lavan," " אשתי את הבהplease, give me my wife." ימי מלאו כי "I have finished working for you. I would like the hand of your daughter in marriage." When else does Yaakov ask for Lavan's daughters? Look at the next earlier event.

נשי את תנהHe says as he is ready to go, "Please give me my wives," your daughters. ילדי ואתBut now there are children, too. “Give me their children.” " בהן אתך עבדתי אשרI worked for you for these."

Let me show you what I think is, perhaps, one of the most astounding pieces of this, the very next chiastic pair.

## The Biblical Meaning of the Name Joseph

##### When Rachel finally gives birth, she names him Yosef, coming from the word asaf. " את־

חרפתי אלקים אסףGod has gathered in my shame." Why would Rachel feel this great sense of shame that God, "you've finally gathered in my shame"?

##### I think most of us would say, if we're just reading her story, Yaakov has two wives; Leah and Rachel. Leah had all these children, one after another. And Rachel was barren. It feels terrible. So her sense of shame is that she has been barren all this time. inally God has given her this child. But the chiasim teaches you, her sense of shame has come from somewhere else entirely. Keep on reading the beginning of Vayeitzei. What's the very next thing that happens?

המקום אנשי כל את לבן ויאסף משתה ויעשYaakov asked for the hand of Rachel in marriage. Lavan prepares the wedding. He gathers, asaf, all the towns folk for a great celebration. That's the first time the

##### word asaf is used in the Yaakov and Lavan story. Rachel names her child "for God having gathered in her sense of shame." What shame? Well, when is the first time she felt this sense of shame?

It was that night that her father gathered all the invitees, all the towns folks, made a huge bash to celebrate the wedding of his daughter that was supposed to be Rachel – but where was she? She was off in a side room while everyone danced, not knowing that it was Leah, that Rachel wasn't there at all. It was supposed to be her wedding and she was all alone with her shame.

##### Her father had treated her as no woman has a right to be treated by her father. Along came her heavenly father and gave her a gift that no woman in her situation could ever even rightfully hoped for. To be infertile for so long, and then God, your heavenly Father, presents you with a child.

shame." my in gathered has Godאסף אלקים את חרפתי "

##### My own father may have betrayed me, but that betrayal is redeemed now by the grace of my heavenly Father who loves me more than I can imagine, and hence the redemptive name – Yosef.

There is far more to this chiasm than I have been able to show you in these short minutes, but I invite you to continue exploring how far, in each direction, does it go. What is its center? I invite you to look at our course, '[What does it means to be the Children of Israel.](https://www.alephbeta.org/playlist/yaakov-man-of-truth)' Have a wonderful Shabbat.



**VAYEITZEI: RACHEL’S SHAME & THE SECRET MEANING BEHIND JOSEPH’S NAME**

Welcome to the Aleph Beta Study Guide to Parshat Vayeitzei!

**Our Favorite Things**

If you’ve been around the block with us here at Aleph Beta — regularly bringing our parsha guides to your Shabbos table or study group, or watching the animated videos on our site — then you know that we get pretty excited about something that most people find kinda boring: the *methodology* of Torah study. That is, *how* do we go about studying the Torah and reaping its insights? How does the Torah encode its meaning and what tools can we apply to the text to

unlock it? In that spirit: we’re all about chiasms. A chiasm — which we sometimes refer to as אתבש (*atbash*) — is a way of laying out text in a particular pattern that looks something like this:

**ELEMENT A**

**ELEMENT B ELEMENT C**

**CENTER ELEMENT C2**

**ELEMENT B2**

**ELEMENT A2**

The first idea (Element A) mirrors the last idea (Element A2), the second idea (Element B) mirrors the second-to-last idea (Element B2), and so on, with all of the parallels converging around the center. Why does the Torah make use of these kinds of patterns? Well, a chiasm can do a lot of things. It can point you to the center of an entire verse or passage, and in doing so, indicate the “center of gravity” around which a whole series of ideas seem to revolve. But a chism can do something else, too. There is a whole world of meaning to be gleaned from how the pairs in the chiasm match up. It may well be that one element (e.g., Element A) sheds light on its matching element (e.g., Element A2), that these pairs serve as a kind of commentary, as it were, on the Torah, *within* the Torah. This all sounds pretty abstract, so we’d like to demonstrate it to you with a fantastically elegant chiasm that occurs right here in Parshat *Vayeitzei*.

### Jumping In

Let’s look at the five elements that we find right at the beginning of the parsha:

#### INSTRUCTIONS

There are a lot of divrei Torah on the parsha. How is this different?

At Aleph Beta, we believe that the Torah is a guidebook that answers life’s biggest questions, offering profound insights about how we should live our lives. Moreover, we believe that Jewish tradition has always recognized the right of all readers, in every generation, to look at the text themselves and try to decide what they think it means. That means you. That’s why you are the most important author of this quest through the sources. We think that this guide offers a fun, stimulating and relevant path through the sources, but if you get wrapped up in a stimulating discussion and never make it past page 2, we’ll consider that a success!

Is this guide for self-study or should I study it with others?

Either works! You can gather a small group of friends to explore it together, share it with a chevruta (learning partner), or go through it by yourself.

Do I need to prepare anything or can I just jump in?

Just jump in! Even if you’re planning to use this for a group discussion, just open up to page 1 and get going. (If you read it in advance, it will spoil the fun!) The only thing you should do in advance is print out copies of the “Source Sheet” for the other participants, so everyone can follow along and engage with the sources.

About the Author

Most of the material within – although not the particular language contained in this guide - was first developed and taught by Rabbi David Fohrman, founder and CEO of Aleph Beta, and is presented in his video, “Parshat Vayeitzei: Rachel’s Shame & The Secret Meaning Behind Joseph’s Name” (available for viewing at [www.alephbeta.org](http://www.alephbeta.org/)). This guide was written by Beth Lesch, edited by Rivky Stern, and arranged by Laura Schembre.

**1**

Jacob goes somewhere

Gen. 28:10

**2** Jacob experiences an

encounter

)פגע(

Gen. 28:11

ו ֵ ּי ֵצא ַי ֲעקֹב, ִמ ְּב ֵאר ׁ ָש ַבע;

ו ֵ ּי ֶל ְך, ָחרָ ָנה

ו ִ ּי ְפ ַּגע ַּב ָּמקום ַ

ַ Jacob encounters this

Jacob went out from

place

Beer-sheba, and went

toward Haran

**3**

Angels of God are

present

Gen. 28:12

ו ַ ּי ֲחלֹם… ְו ִה ֵּנה ַמ ְל ֲא ֵכי עֹ ִלים ְויֹ ְר ִדים ּב ֹו אלֹקים,

And he dreamed… and behold, there were angels of God going up

and down

**4**

Jacob notices that

the place is godly

Gen. 28:17

ו ּיֹא ַמר, ַמה-נ ֹו ָרא, ַה ָּמקום ַה ֶ ּזה: ֵאין זה, ִּכי ִאם- ֵבית ֱאלֹקים, ְו ֶזה, ׁ ַש ַער

ה ָּׁשמָ ִים

And he said: “How awesome is this place! It is none other than a house of God, and this is the gate of Heaven!”

**5**

Jacob names the place after its significance

Gen. 28:19

ו ִ ּי ְק ָרא ֶאת- ׁשם-ה ָּמקום ההוא, ֵּבית-אל

And he called the name of that place “House of God” (lit:

Beit El)

Where else do we find those exact same five elements?

We find them at the very *end* of Parshat *Vayeitzei*:

**Gen. 32:2-3**

4. Jacob notices that the place is godly

2. Jacob experiences an encounter (פגע)

1. Jacob goes somewhere

ַמ ֲח ָנ ִים. ההוא,



ּכ ֲא ׁ ֶשר ָר ָאם, ַמ ֲח ֵנה ֱאלֹקים ֶזה; ַו ִ ּי ְק ָרא ׁ ֵשם-ה ָּמקום

ל ַד ְר ּכ ֹו; ַו ִ ּי ְפ ְּגע ּו-ב ֹו, ַמ ְלאֲ ֵכי אֱלֹקים. ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ַי ֲעקֹב

ַל ְך ה

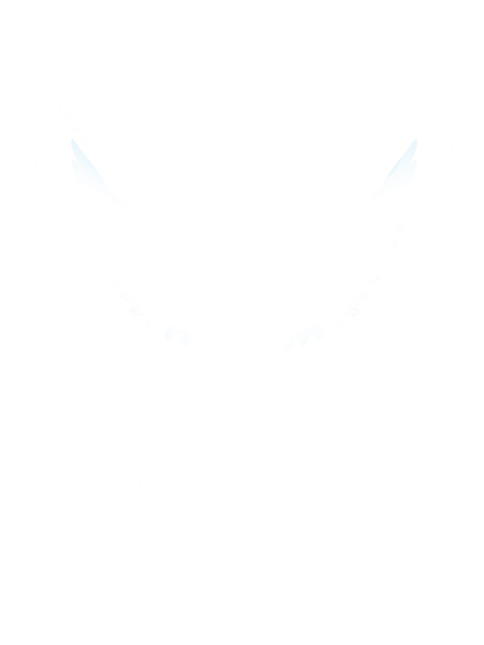
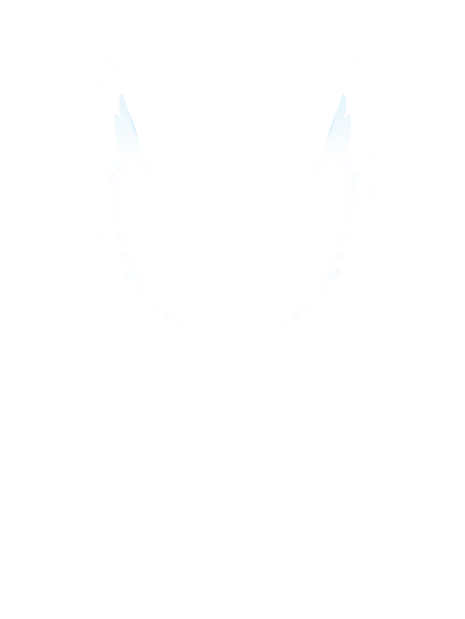
ו ַי ֲעקֹב,

5. Jacob names the place after its significance

1. Angels of God are present

And Jacob went on his way, and they met him, the angels of God. And Jacob said when he saw them: ‘This is God’s camp.’ And he called the name of that place Mahanaim.

The opening and the close of the parsha — all five elements match up. But, of course, they’re not *exactly* the same. There are subtle differences between them, differences which may prove quite illuminating.



For example, the first time that Jacob is going somewhere, where is he going? And what sort of state is he in? The answer is: he’s fleeing his brother, running away against his will. But the second time, we find that Jacob goes *l’darko* — “on his way.” What an interesting phrase. We can’t say for sure what it means, but it does seem to connote that Jacob is much more secure, self-possessed than when he fled, all those years before. He’s no longer journeying reactively, forced to escape his brother’s anger. Now, he’s going proactively, on his own terms, so to speak — to meet his brother and see if he can reconcile with him.

And look at the third element: the angels of God. The first time, when he encountered those angels, the angels were traveling vertically, going up and down the ladder. But Jacob was traveling *horizontally*; the angels didn’t even take notice of him. There was no exchange between them. The second time around, the angels are traveling horizontally, and they do take notice of him: they come to greet him. These two elements and their contrasts seem to imply that Jacob — his circumstances, his internal experience — undergoes some key developments over the course of the parsha.

Now, this smattering of parallels is interesting enough, and does seem to have the potential to point us towards some noteworthy insights — but we haven’t yet proven that there is a chiasm here in Parshat *Vayeitzei*. If this were a true chiasm, then we should be able to find more parallels — and there’s a very specific place that we should find them:

**AND THIS ELEMENT**

**BEGINING OF PARSHA**

**GEN. 28:10-19 (THE FIVE ELEMENTS)**

**THIS ELEMENT**

**SHOULD PARALLEL THIS ELEMENT SHOULD PARALLEL THIS ELEMENT**

**GEN. 32:2-3 (THE FIVE ELEMENTS)**

**END OF PARSHA**

### Element 2

So let’s go back to the beginning of the parsha, just after we read about those five elements, and start hunting. What happens after Jacob’s dream with the angels going up and down the ladder?

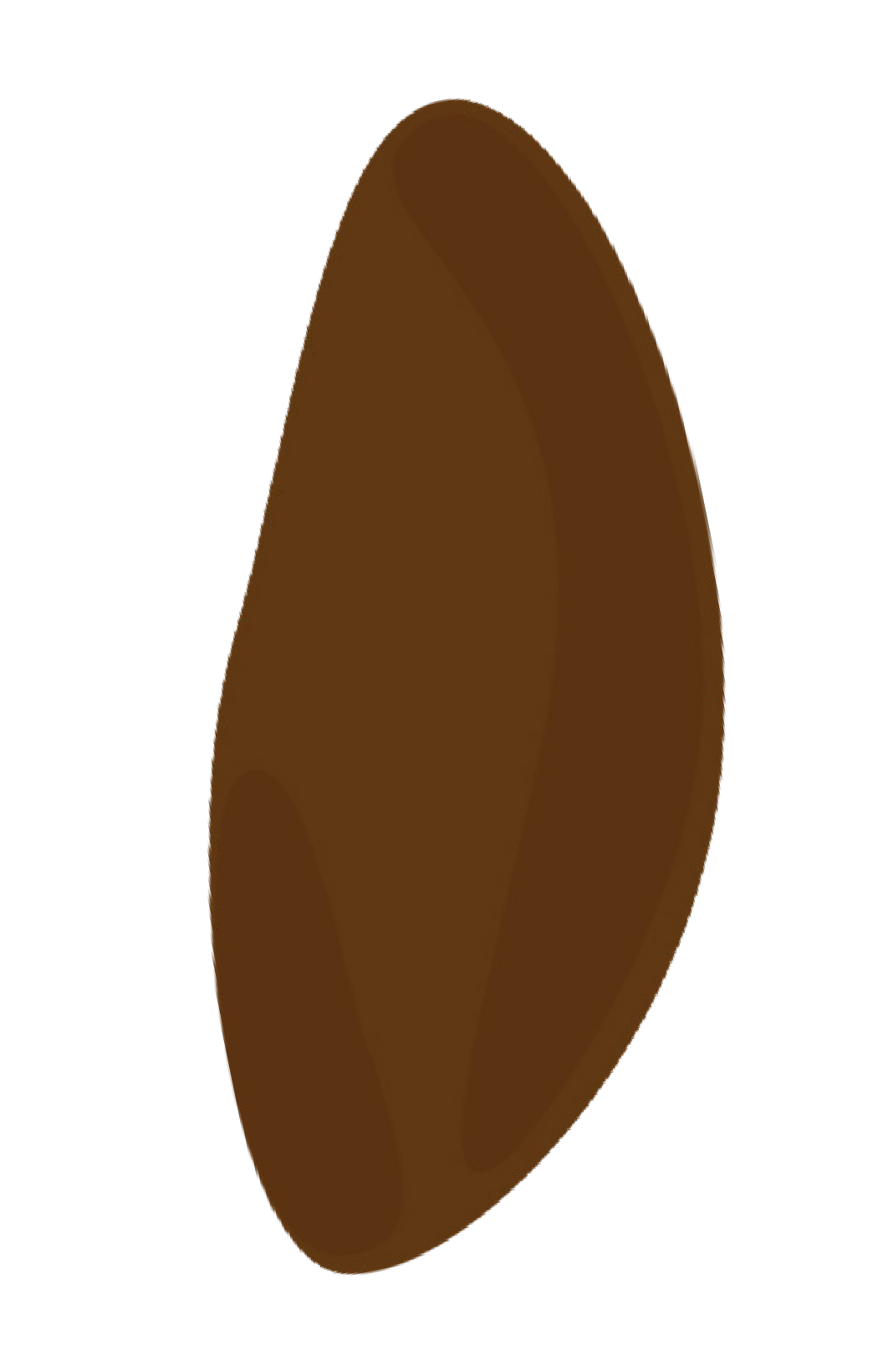
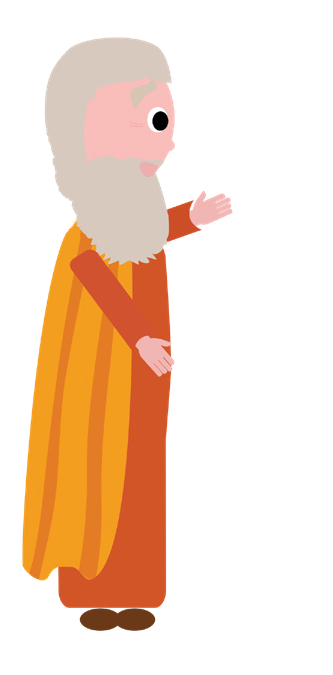
**Genesis 28:18**

ּב ּ ֹב ֶקר, ַו ִ ּי ַּקח ֶאת-ה ֶא ֶבן ֲא ׁ ֶשר- ָׂשם ְמ ַר ֲא ׁשֹ ָתיו, ַו ָ ּי ֶׂשם אֹ ָת ּה, ַמ ֵ ּצ ָבה; ַו ִ ּיצֹק ׁ ֶש ֶמן, ַעל-רֹא ׁ ָש ּה.

ו ַ ּי ׁ ְש ֵּכם ַי ֲעקֹב

And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head, and set it up as a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

He takes this rock that he’s been sleeping on and he builds it into a *matzevah*, a monument. That’s the first time, in the entire Book of Genesis, that someone erects a monument. When is the second time?



It’s at the end of the parsha, just before Jacob we read about those five elements again:

**Genesis 31:45**

ַו ִ ּי ַּקח ַי ֲעקֹב, ָא ֶבן; ַו ְי ִרי ֶמ ָה, ַמ ֵ ּצ ָבה.

And Jacob took the stone and he set it up as a pillar.

The first monument memorialized Jacob’s encounter with God, his Heavenly Father, so to speak. The second monument memorializes his encounter with Lavan: his *earthly* father-in-law.

### Element 3

And what is the next thing that happens at the beginning of *Vayeitzei*? Jacob makes a promise to God:

**Genesis 28:20-22**

כל ֲא ׁ ֶשר ִּת ֶּתן- ִלי, **עַ ֵּ ׂשר ֲאעַ ְּ ׂש ֶר ּנ ּו** לָ ְך.

ֱאלֹקים; ְו ּבית

ה ּזֹאת, ֲא ׁ ֶשר- ַׂש ְמ ִּתי ַמ ֵ ּצ ָבה-- ִי ְה ֶיה,

אם- ִי ְה ֶיה ֱאלֹקים ִע ָּמ ִדי… ְו ָה ֶא ֶבן

ו ִ ּי ַ ּדר ַי ֲעקֹב, ֶנ ֶדר ֵלאמֹר:

And Jacob vowed a vow, saying: ‘If God will be with me… then this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, will be God’s house; and whatever You give me, **I will surely give a tenth back to You.**’

What happens the last time that Jacob leaves his earthly father, Lavan? There is another negotiation involving *tens*. It’s right at the end of *Vayeitzei*, just before Jacob encounters those angels who come to greet him, and right before Jacob sets up that monument to mark his encounter. Jacob complains angrily to Lavan:

**Gen. 31:7**

ְו ֶה ֱח ִלף ֶאת-מ ְׂש ֻּכ ְר ִּתי **ֲע ֶ ׂשרֶת** מֹנִים

[You promised me wages but] you changed my wages **ten** times

It’s Element 3: the element of tens.

### Element 4

Let’s keep moving. What’s the next thing that happens at the beginning of *Vayeitzei*? Jacob heads off again and he arrives in Charan:

**Gen. 29:2**

ּבָּׂש ֶדה, ְו ִה ֵּנה- ׁשם ׁ ְשלֹ ׁ ָשה **ֶע ְדרֵי**-צֹאן רֹ ְב ִצים ָע ֶלי ָה

ֵאר ב

ו ַ ּי ְרא ְו ִה ֵּנה

And he looked, and behold a well in the field, and, lo, three **flocks** of sheep lying there by it

That’s the first time in the Torah that we ever meet an *eder*, a flock of sheep. When is the *only other* time that we meet an

*eder* of sheep? Right where you’d expect it to be: before Jacob complained about his wages changing ten times:

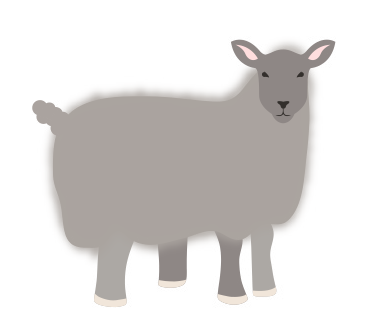
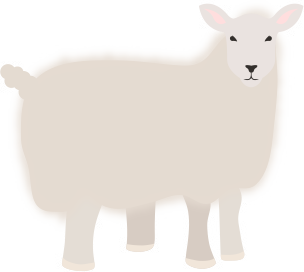
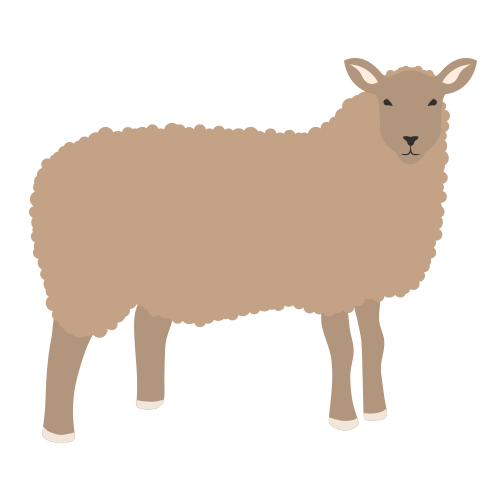
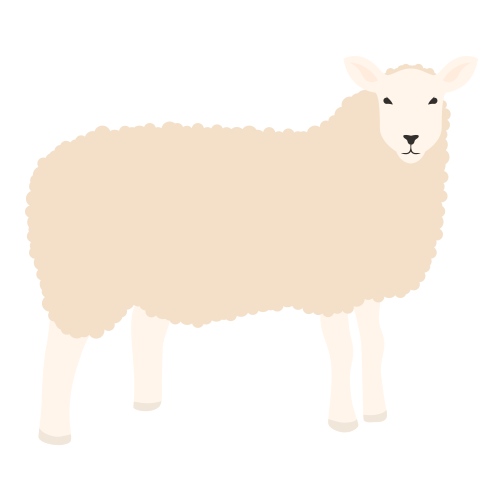
**Gen. 30:40**

ל ַב ּד ֹו, ְולֹא ׁ ָש ָתם ַעל-צֹאן ָל ָבן.

וַ ָ ּי ׁ ֶשת-ל ֹו **ֲע ָדרִים**

And [Jacob] put his own **flocks** apart, and put them not with Laban’s flock.

And that’s not the only parallel. The number three is associated with both of these stories. The first time around, there were *three* flocks, and the second time around, there are *three* days’ travel between Jacob’s flocks and Lavan’s flocks (Gen. 30:36).



### Element 5

The next thing to happen, at the start of *Vayeitzei,* is that Jacob encounters Lavan — and Lavan asks him a question:

**Gen. 29:15**

ִלי, ַמה- **ַּמ ְ ׂש ֻּכרְ ֶּת ָך**.

ִּגי ָדה ה

ל ַי ֲעקֹב…

ו ּיֹא ֶמר ָל ָבן,

And Laban said to Jacob… ‘Tell me, what shall your **wages** be?’

It turns out that there is *another* time that Lavan asks Jacob about his wages — and it’s right where it should be:

**Gen. 30:28**

**ׂש ָכרְ ָך** ָע ַלי, ְו ֶא ֵּת ָנה.

ְק ָבה נ

ו ּיֹאמַר:

And [Laban] said: “Name your **wages**, and I will give them.”

It’s interesting that the first time around, the wage that Jacob named wasn’t actually *monetary* at all. He asked Lavan for the hand of his daughter, Rachel, in marriage. Now listen to Lavan’s language the second time around. What is the Hebrew word that he uses when he says, “Name your wages”?

# נקְבה

That sure looks a lot like the Hebrew word for “female”:

# נקֵבה

What we’re seeing, it seems, is that the first part of the chiasm is actually *present* in the second part of the chiasm.

### Element 6

And now, back to the beginning of *Vayeitze*i. What’s the next thing that happens?

**Gen. 29:21**

ְלאו ָי ָמי; ְו ָאב ֹו ָאה, ֵא ֶלי ָה. ּכי ָמ

ה ָבה ֶאת-**אִ ׁ ְש ִּתי**,

ו ּיֹא ֶמר ַי ֲעקֹב ֶאל- ָל ָבן

And Jacob said unto Laban: ‘Give me my **wife**, for my days [of working for you] are filled, that I may go in to her.’

When else does Jacob ask for Lavan’s daughter? Look down to the end of *Vayeitzei*, just above Element 5:

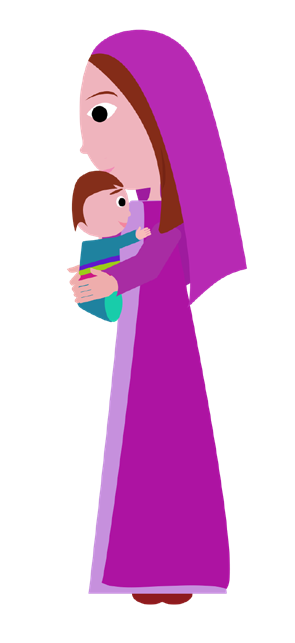
**Gen. 30:26**

ּב ֵהן

ְת ָנה ֶאת-**נָ ׁ ַשי** ְו ֶאת- ְי ָל ַדי, ֲא ׁ ֶשר ָע ַב ְד ִּתי אֹ ְת ָך

Give me my **wives** and my children for whom I have worked for you

This time, Jacob isn’t only asking for Rachel. He’s asking for all of his wives, and for his children. The storyline has progressed, but the essence of the request is still the same.



### Element 7

And now, we’d like to show you what is perhaps the most astounding piece of this: the very next chiastic pair. When Rachel finally gives birth, she names him Joseph, coming from the word *asaph*, “to gather”:

**Gen. 30:23-24**

ּבן ַא ֵחר.

לי,

ֶמר, **אָ ַסף** ֱאלֹקים ֶאת-ח ְר ָּפ ִתי. ַו ִּת ְק ָרא ֶאת- ׁשמ ֹו י ֹו ֵסף, ֵלאמֹר: יֹ ֵסף ְיקוה ּבן; וַ ּתֹא

וַ ַּת ַהר, וַ ֵּת ֶלד

And she conceived, and bore a son, and said: ‘God has **gathered in** my shame.’ And she called his name Joseph, saying: May the LORD add to me another son.’

Why would Rachel feel this great sense of shame?

Most of us would probably say: *Just look back at Rachel’s story. Jacob has two wives, Leah and Rachel. Leah has all of these children, one after the other. And Rachel is barren, all the while. She’s distraught. Her sense of shame is that she’s been childless, for all of this time — and finally, God has gifted her a son.*

But the chiasm seems to teach otherwise. Rachel’s sense of shame comes from *somewhere else*. Go back to the beginning of *Vayeitzei* and you’ll find the verse that “matches” this one, just after Element 6:

**Gen. 29:22**

ה ָּמקום, ַו ַ ּי ַעׂש ִמ ׁ ְש ֶּתה.

**ו ֶ ּיאֱסֹף** ָל ָבן ֶאת- ָכל-א ְנ ׁ ֵשי

And Laban **gathered** together all the men of the place, and made a feast.

Why did Lavan make a feast? Let’s remind ourselves of the story. Jacob had asked for Rachel’s hand in marriage, and Lavan prepared the wedding, and he gathered together all of the town folk for a great celebration. That’s the *first* time that this word, *asaph*, is used in the Jacob and Lavan story. And then Rachel names her child “Joseph” — because God *asaph*, “gathered,” in her sense of shame. What was the shame? What shame did Rachel feel that night, at the wedding celebration?

Her father had gathered together all the invitees, it was supposed to be Rachel’s wedding night — but where was Rachel? She was off in a side room while everyone danced. It was Leah who was under the wedding canopy. It was supposed to be Rachel’s wedding, but instead, she was all alone with her shame. Her father had treated her in a way that no woman should be treated. But fast forward in Rachel’s story, and you see that her Heavenly Father comes and gives her a gift that no woman in her situation could ever have rightfully hoped for. She was infertile for so many years — and then God gave her a baby. God gathered in her shame. Her own father may have betrayed her, but that betrayal is redeemed by the grace of her Heavenly Father. That redemption, and grace, is encapsulated in the name of her baby: Joseph.

There is far more to this chiasm than we have been able to show you in this guide, and so we invite you to continue to explore how far, in each direction, it goes, and to ask: *What is its center, and why?*

**Genesis 28:10-32:3**

**בראשית כח:י–לב:ג**

**10** And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went

ח ָר ָנה. יא ַו ִ ּי ְפ ַּגע ּב ָּמקום ַו ָ ּי ֶלן ׁ ָשם,

י ַו ֵ ּי ֵצא ַי ֲעקֹב, מ ְּב ֵאר ׁ ָש ַבע; ַו ֵ ּי ֶל ְך,

toward Haran. **11** And he lighted upon the place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he

ַע ה ֶּׁש ֶמ ׁש, ַו ִ ּי ַּקח מ ַא ְב ֵני ה ָּמקום, ַו ָ ּי ֶׂשם מ ַר ֲא ׁשֹ ָתיו; ַו ִ ּי ׁ ְש ַּכב, ההוא. יב ַו ַ ּי ֲחלֹם, ְו ִה ֵּנה ס ָּלם מ ָ ּצב א ְר ָצה, ְורֹא ׁש ֹו, מ ִּגי

ּכי-בא ָּמקום ּב

took one of the stones of the place, and put it under his

מ ְל ֲא ֵכי אלֹקים, עֹ ִלים ְויֹ ְר ִדים ב ֹו. יג ְו ִה ֵּנה ְיק ָוה ִנ ָ ּצב

ה ָּׁש ָמ ְי ָמה; ְו ִה ֵּנה

head, and lay down in that place to sleep. **12** And he

ָליו, ַו ּיֹא ַמר, א ִני ְיקוה אלֹ ֵהי א ְב ָר ָהם א ִבי ָך, ֵואלֹקי ִי ְצ ָחק; ה ָא ֶרץ, ע

dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and

the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels

ָה-- ְל ָך א ְּת ֶנ ָּנה, ו ְל ַז ְר ֶע ָך. יד ְו ָה ָיה ַז ְר ֲע ָך ּכ ֲע ַפר א ָּתה ׁשֹ ֵכב ע ֶלי

א ׁ ֶשר

of God ascending and descending on it. **13** And, behold, the LORD stood beside him, and said: ‘I am the LORD, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac. The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed.

**14** And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south. And in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. **15** And, behold, I

ה ָא ֶרץ, ו ָפ ַר ְצ ָּת ָי ָּמה ָו ֵק ְד ָמה ְו ָצפ ָנה ָו ֶנ ְג ָּבה; ְו ִנ ְב ְרכ ּו ב ָך ּכל-מ ׁ ְש ְּפחֹת

ה ֲא ָד ָמה, ו ְב ַז ְר ֶע ָך. טו ְו ִה ֵּנה א ֹנ ִכי ע ָּמ ְך, ו ׁ ְש ַמ ְר ִּתי ָך ּבכל א ׁ ֶשר- ּת ֵל ְך,

ו ֲה ׁ ִשב ִתי ָך, אל-ה ֲא ָד ָמה ה ּזֹאת: ּכי, לֹא א ֱע ָז ְב ָך, עד א ׁ ֶשר אם-ע ִׂשי ִתי, את א ׁ ֶשר- ִ ּד ַּב ְר ִּתי ל ְך. טז ַו ִ ּיי ַקץ ַי ֲעקֹב, מ ְּׁש ָנת ֹו, ַו ּיֹא ֶמר, א ֵכן ֵי ׁש ְיקוה

ּב ָּמקום ה ֶ ּזה; ְו ָא ֹנ ִכי, לֹא ָי ָד ְע ִּתי. יז ַו ִ ּיי ָרא, ַו ּיֹא ַמר, מה-נ ֹו ָרא, ה ָּמקום ה ֶ ּזה: אין ֶזה, ּכי אם- ֵבית אלֹקים, ְו ֶזה, ׁ ַש ַער ה ָּׁש ָמ ִים. יח ַו ַ ּי ׁ ְש ֵּכם

י ֲעקֹב ּב ּ ֹב ֶקר, ַו ִ ּי ַּקח את-ה ֶא ֶבן א ׁ ֶשר- ָׂשם מ ַר ֲא ׁשֹ ָתיו, ַו ָ ּי ֶׂשם אֹ ָת ּה,

am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest,

ההוא,

ׁשם-ה ָּמקום את-

על-רֹא ׁ ָש ּה. יט ַו ִ ּי ְק ָרא

מ ֵ ּצ ָבה; ַו ִ ּיצֹק ׁ ֶש ֶמן,

and will bring thee back into this land; for I will not leave

ל ִרא ׁשֹ ָנה. כ ַו ִ ּי ַ ּדר ַי ֲעקֹב, ֶנ ֶדר לאמֹר:

ּבית-קל; ְואו ָלם ל ּוז ׁ ֵשם-ה ִעיר,

thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee

א ׁ ֶשר א ֹנ ִכי הו ֵל ְך, ְו ָנ ַתן- ִלי

ּב ֶ ּד ֶר ְך ה ֶ ּזה

אם- ִי ְה ֶיה אלֹקים ע ָּמ ִדי, ו ׁ ְש ָמ ַר ִני

of.’ **16** And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said: ‘Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not.’ **17** And

ּבית

ל ֶחם ל ֱאכל, ו ֶב ֶגד ל ְל ּ ֹב ׁש. כא ְו ׁ ַש ְב ִּתי ב ׁ ָשל ֹום, אל- ֵבית א ִבי; ְו ָה ָיה

יקוה לי, לאלֹקים. כב ְו ָה ֶא ֶבן ה ּזֹאת, א ׁ ֶשר- ַׂש ְמ ִּתי מ ֵ ּצ ָבה-- ִי ְה ֶיה,

he was afraid, and said: ‘How full of awe is this place! this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.’ **18** And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and

ֵאר ב

ֵּנה עֵּׂשר א ַעְּׂש ֶר ּנ ּו ל ְך. א ְר ָצה ב ֵני-ק ֶדם. ב ַו ַ ּי ְרא ְו ִה

אלֹקים; ְוכל א ׁ ֶשר ִת ֶּתן- ִלי,

א ַו ִ ּיָּׂשא ַי ֲעקֹב, ַר ְג ָליו; ַו ֵ ּי ֶל ְך,

took the stone that he had put under his head, and set it

ְּב ֵאר מן-ה

ֶלי ָה-- ִכי ע

ְד ֵרי-צֹאן רֹ ְב ִצים ע

ּבָּׂש ֶדה, ְו ִה ֵּנה- ׁשם ׁ ְשלֹ ׁ ָשה

up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. **19** And

ה ְּב ֵאר. ג ְו ֶנ ֶא ְספו- ׁש ָּמה על- ּפי

ה ִהוא, ַי ׁ ְשקו ה ֲע ָד ִרים; ְו ָה ֶא ֶבן ְּגדֹ ָלה,

he called the name of that place Beth-el, but the name of

כל-ה ֲע ָד ִרים, ְו ָג ְלל ּו את-ה ֶא ֶבן מ ַעל ִפי ה ְּב ֵאר, ְו ִה ׁ ְשקו, את-ה ּצֹאן;

the city was Luz at the first. **20** And Jacob vowed a vow,

ַחי א

ל ְמקֹ ָמ ּה. ד ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ֶהם ַי ֲעקֹב,

ְּב ֵאר, ה

ּפי על-

ֶא ֶבן את-ה

ו ֵה ׁ ִשיב ּו

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saying: ‘If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way

ָל ָבן את-

ַד ְע ֶּתם ה ְי

ֶהם, ל

ְחנ ּו. ה ַו ּיֹא ֶמר א ָנ

ָח ָרן מ

ֶּתם; ַו ּיֹא ְמר ּו, א

מ ַא ִין

that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put

ה ׁ ָשל ֹום ל ֹו; ַו ּיֹא ְמר ּו ׁ ָשל ֹום-

ֶהם, ל

ּבן-נחור; ַו ּיֹא ְמר ּו, ָי ָד ְענ ּו. ו ַו ּיֹא ֶמר

on, **21** so that I come back to my father’s house in peace,

ּצֹאן. ז ַו ּיֹא ֶמר, הן ע ֹוד ה ּי ֹום ָּגד ֹול-- עם-ה

ָאה ּב

-ו ִה ֵּנה ָר ֵחל ּב ּת ֹו,

then shall the LORD be my God, **22** and this stone, which I

ה ִּמ ְק ֶנה; ה ׁ ְשקו ה ּצֹאן, ו ְלכ ּו ְרע ּו. ח ַו ּיֹא ְמר ּו, לֹא

ָא ֵסף ה

לֹא-עת,

have set up for a pillar, shall be God’s house; and of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee.’

**1** Then Jacob went on his journey, and came to the land of the children of the east. **2** And he looked, and behold a well in the field, and, lo, three flocks of sheep lying there

נ ּו ַכל, עד א ׁ ֶשר ֵי ָא ְספו ּכל-ה ֲע ָד ִרים, ְו ָג ְלל ּו את-ה ֶא ֶבן מ ַעל ִפי ה ְּב ֵאר; ו ִה ׁ ְש ִקינ ּו, ה ּצֹאן. ט ע ֹו ֶד ּנ ּו, מ ַד ֵּבר ע ָּמם; ְו ָר ֵחל ּב ָאה, עם-ה ּצֹאן א ׁ ֶשר ל ָא ִבי ָה-- ִכי רֹ ָעה, הוא. י ַו ְי ִהי ּכ ֲא ׁ ֶשר ָר ָאה ַי ֲעקֹב את-ר ֵחל, ּבת- ָל ָבן

א ִחי א ּמ ֹו, ְו ֶאת-צֹאן ל ָבן, א ִחי א ּמ ֹו; ַו ִ ּי ַּג ׁש ַי ֲעקֹב, ַו ָ ּי ֶגל את-ה ֶא ֶבן מ ַעל

by it.--For out of that well they watered the flocks. And the

ָר ֵחל; ל

א ּמ ֹו. יא ַו ִ ּי ַּׁשק ַי ֲעקֹב,

ִחי א

ָבן ל

את-צֹאן

ה ְּב ֵאר, ַו ַ ּי ׁ ְש ְק,

ִפי

stone upon the well’s mouth was great. **3** And thither were

ִבי ָה הוא, ְו ִכי בן- א

א ִחי ּכי

את-קֹל ֹו, ַו ֵ ּי ְב ְּך. יב ַו ַ ּי ֵּגד ַי ֲעקֹב ל ָר ֵחל,

ו ִ ּיָּׂשא

all the flocks gathered; and they rolled the stone from the

ר ְב ָקה, הוא; ַו ָּת ָרץ, ַו ַּת ֵּגד ל ָא ִבי ָה. יג ַו ְי ִהי כ ׁ ְשמֹ ַע ל ָבן את- ׁש ַמע ַי ֲעקֹב

well’s mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone back upon the well’s mouth in its place.-- **4** And Jacob

said unto them: ‘My brethren, whence are ye?’ And they

ֹו ַו ְי ַח ֶּבק-ל ֹו ַו ְי ַנ ֶּׁשק-ל ֹו, ַו ְי ִבי ֵאהו, אל- ֵבית ֹו; ָב ִרים ה ֵא ֶּלה. יד ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ֹו ל ָבן, א ְך ע ְצ ִמי ל ְק ָראת ּכל-ה ְ ּד

ּבן-אחֹת ֹו, ַו ָ ּי ָרץ ַס ֵּפר ל ָל ָבן, את ו ְי

said: ‘Of Haran are we.’ **5** And he said unto them: ‘Know ye

ַי ֲעקֹב, ה ִכי- ל

חֹ ֶד ׁש ָי ִמים. טו ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ָבן, ע ּמ ֹו,

ו ְב ָׂש ִרי א ָּתה; ַו ֵ ּי ׁ ֶשב

Laban the son of Nahor?’ And they said: ‘We know him.’ **6**

ו ְל ָל ָבן, ׁ ְש ֵּתי

מה-מ ְׂש ֻּכ ְר ֶּת ָך. טז

ִלי,

ִּגי ָדה ה

ח ָּנם;

ַו ֲע ַב ְד ַּת ִני א ָּתה,

א ִחי

And he said unto them: ‘Is it well with him?’ And they said:

ָאה, ַר ּכ ֹות; ל

ָּנה ָר ֵחל. יז ְו ֵעי ֵני ה ְּק ַט

ל ָאה, ְו ׁ ֵשם

ְּגדֹ ָלה ה

ֵשם

בנ ֹות:

‘It is well; and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with

מ ְר ֶאה. יח ַו ֶ ּי ֱא ַהב ַי ֲעקֹב, את-ר ֵחל;

ָתה, ְי ַפת-תֹ ַאר, ִוי ַפת ה ְי

ו ָר ֵחל,

the sheep.’ **7** And he said: ‘Lo, it is yet high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together; water

ו ּיֹא ֶמר, א ֱע ָב ְד ָך ׁ ֶש ַבע ׁ ָש ִנים, ּב ָר ֵחל ּב ְּת ָך, ה ְּק ַט ָּנה. יט ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ָבן, ט ֹוב ִת ִּתי אֹ ָת ּה ל ְך, מ ִּת ִּתי אֹ ָת ּה, ל ִאי ׁש א ֵחר; ׁ ְש ָבה, ע ָּמ ִדי. כ ַו ַ ּי ֲעבד ַי ֲעקֹב

ye the sheep, and go and feed them.’ **8** And they said: ‘We

cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and they

ּכ ָי ִמים א ָח ִדים, ּב ַא ֲה ָבת ֹו אֹ ָת ּה. כא ב ֵעי ָניו

ּב ָר ֵחל, ׁ ֶש ַבע ׁ ָש ִנים; ַו ִ ּי ְהי ּו

roll the stone from the well’s mouth; then we water the

ו ּיֹא ֶמר ַי ֲעקֹב אל- ָל ָבן ה ָבה את-א ׁ ְש ִּתי, ּכי מ ְלאו ָי ָמי; ְו ָאב ֹו ָאה, א ֶלי ָה.

sheep.’ **9** While he was yet speaking with them, Rachel

את- ָכל-א ְנ ׁ ֵשי ה ָּמקום, ַו ַ ּי ַעׂש מ ׁ ְש ֶּתה. כג ַו ְי ִהי ב ֶע ֶרב--

ָבן ל

כב ַו ֶ ּי ֱאסֹף

came with her father’s sheep; for she tended them. **10** And

ּה, ל

ָבן ל

א ֶלי ָה. כד ַו ִ ּי ֵּתן

בא,

א ָליו; ַו ָ ּי

ב ּת ֹו, ַו ָ ּי ֵבא אֹ ָת ּה

ֵל ָאה את-

ו ִ ּי ַּקח

it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter

ב ּת ֹו, ׁ ִש ְפ ָחה. כה ַו ְי ִהי ב ּ ֹב ֶקר, ְו ִה ֵּנה-

את-ז ְל ָּפה ׁ ִש ְפ ָחת ֹו-- ְל ֵל ָאה

of Laban his mother’s brother, and the sheep of Laban

מה-זֹאת ע ִׂשי ָת ִלי--הלֹא ב ָר ֵחל ע ַב ְד ִּתי

הוא ל ָאה; ַו ּיֹא ֶמר אל- ָל ָבן,

his mother’s brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the

ע ָּמ ְך, ְו ָל ָּמה ִר ִּמי ָת ִני. כו ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ָבן, לֹא- ֵי ָע ֶׂשה כן ּב ְמקו ֵמנ ּו-- ָל ֵתת

stone from the well’s mouth, and watered the flock of

Laban his mother’s brother. **11** And Jacob kissed Rachel,

ה ְּב ִכי ָרה. כז מ ֵּלא, ׁ ְש ֻב ַע זֹאת; ְו ִנ ְּת ָנה ל ָך ַּגם-את-

ְפ ֵני ל

ה ְ ּצ ִעי ָרה,

and lifted up his voice, and wept. **12** And Jacob told

זֹאת, ּב ֲעב ָדה א ׁ ֶשר ַת ֲעבד ע ָּמ ִדי, ע ֹוד, ׁ ֶש ַבע- ׁש ִנים א ֵחר ֹות. כח ַו ַ ּי ַעׂש

Rachel that he was her father’s brother, and that he was

ּכן, ַו ְי ַמ ֵּלא ׁ ְש ֻב ַע זֹאת; ַו ִ ּי ֶּתן-ל ֹו את-ר ֵחל ּב ּת ֹו, ל ֹו ל ִא ָּׁשה. כט

י ֲעקֹב

Rebekah’s son; and she ran and told her father. **13** And

בא ַּגם

ל ׁ ִש ְפ ָחה. ל ַו ָ ּי

את- ִב ְל ָהה ׁ ִש ְפ ָחת ֹו-- ָל ּה,

ּת ֹו, ּב

ָר ֵחל ל

ָבן ל

ו ִ ּי ֵּתן

it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob

מ ֵּל ָאה; ַו ַ ּי ֲעבד ע ּמ ֹו, ע ֹוד ׁ ֶש ַבע- ׁש ִנים

אל-ר ֵחל, ַו ֶ ּי ֱא ַהב ַּגם-את-ר ֵחל

his sister’s son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced

א ֵחר ֹות. לא ַו ַ ּי ְרא ְיקוה ּכי- ְׂשנ ּו ָאה ל ָאה, ַו ִ ּי ְפ ַּתח את-ר ְח ָמ ּה; ְו ָר ֵחל,

him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house. And

ל ָאה ַו ֵּת ֶלד ּבן, ַו ִּת ְק ָרא ׁ ְשמ ֹו ְראו ֵבן: ּכי א ְמ ָרה,

ע ָק ָרה. לב ַו ַּת ַהר

he told Laban all these things. **14** And Laban said to him:

‘Surely thou art my bone and my flesh.’ And he abode with

ּכי-ר ָאה ְיקוה ּב ָע ְנ ִיי-- ִכי ע ָּתה, ֶי ֱא ָה ַב ִני אי ׁ ִשי. לג ַו ַּת ַהר ע ֹוד, ַו ֵּת ֶלד

him the space of a month. **15** And Laban said unto Jacob:

ּכי- ׁש ַמע ְיקוה ּכי- ְׂשנ ּו ָאה א ֹנ ִכי, ַו ִ ּי ֶּתן- ִלי ַּגם-את-זה;

ּבן, ַו ּתֹא ֶמר

‘Because thou art my brother, shouldest thou therefore

ַּפ ַעם ה

ָּתה ע

ַו ּתֹא ֶמר ּבן,

ו ִּת ְק ָרא ׁ ְשמ ֹו, ׁ ִש ְמע ֹון. לד ַו ַּת ַהר ע ֹוד, ַו ֵּת ֶלד

serve me for nought? tell me, what shall thy wages be?’ **16**

ל ִוי. לה

ֵכן ָק ָרא- ׁשמ ֹו, על-

ב ִנים;

ּכי- ָי ַל ְד ִּתי ל ֹו ׁ ְשלֹ ׁ ָשה

א ַלי,

אי ׁ ִשי

י ָּל ֶוה

Now Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was

ְיקוה--על- ֵכן ָק ְר ָאה את-

ַּפ ַעם או ֶדה ה

ַו ּתֹא ֶמר ּבן,

ו ַּת ַהר ע ֹוד ַו ֵּת ֶלד

Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. **17** And

ְשמ ֹו, ְיהו ָדה; ַו ַּת ֲעמֹד, מ ֶּל ֶדת.

Leah’s eyes were weak; but Rachel was of beautiful form

ּכי לֹא ָי ְל ָדה ל ַי ֲעקֹב, ַו ְּת ַק ֵּנא ָר ֵחל, ּב ֲאחֹת ּה; ַו ּתֹא ֶמר

א ַו ֵּת ֶרא ָר ֵחל,

and fair to look upon. **18** And Jacob loved Rachel; and he

מ ָתה א ֹנ ִכי. ב ַו ִ ּי ַחר-אף ַי ֲעקֹב,

אל- ַי ֲעקֹב ה ָבה- ִּלי ב ִנים, ְו ִאם-א ִין

said: ‘I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger

daughter.’ **19** And Laban said: ‘It is better that I give her

ה ַת ַחת אלֹקים א ֹנ ִכי, א ׁ ֶשר-מ ַנע מ ֵּמ ְך, ְפ ִרי-ב ֶטן. ג

ּב ָר ֵחל; ַו ּיֹא ֶמר,

to thee, than that I should give her to another man; abide

ֹבא א ֶלי ָה; ְו ֵת ֵלד, על- ִב ְר ַּכי, ְו ִא ָּב ֶנה

ו ּתֹא ֶמר, ה ֵּנה א ָמ ִתי ב ְל ָהה

with me.’ **20** And Jacob served seven years for Rachel;

את- ִב ְל ָהה ׁ ִש ְפ ָח ָת ּה, ל ִא ָּׁשה; ַו ָ ּיבא

ד ַו ִּת ֶּתן-ל ֹו מ ֶּמ ָּנה.

גם-א ֹנ ִכי,

and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he

ו ַו ּתֹא ֶמר ָר ֵחל, ּבן.

ַי ֲעקֹב ל

ָהה, ַו ֵּת ֶלד ּב ְל

א ֶלי ָה, ַי ֲעקֹב. ה ַו ַּת ַהר

had to her. **21** And Jacob said unto Laban: ‘Give me my

ּבן; על- ֵכן ָק ְר ָאה ׁ ְשמ ֹו, ָ ּדן. ז

אלֹקים, ְו ַגם ׁ ָש ַמע ּבקֹ ִלי, ַו ִ ּי ֶּתן- ִלי

ּד ַנ ִּני

wife, for my days are filled, that I may go in unto her.’ **22**

ּב ְל ָהה ׁ ִש ְפ ַחת ָר ֵחל: ּבן ׁ ֵש ִני, ל ַי ֲעקֹב. ח ַו ּתֹא ֶמר

ו ַּת ַהר ע ֹוד--ו ֵּת ֶלד,

And Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and

ר ֵחל, ַנ ְפ ּת ּו ֵלי אלֹקים ִנ ְפ ַּת ְל ִּתי עם-אחֹתי-- ַגם- ָיכ ְל ִּתי; ַו ִּת ְק ָרא ׁ ְשמ ֹו,

made a feast. **23** And it came to pass in the evening, that

he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him; and he

ל ָאה, ּכי ע ְמ ָדה מ ֶּל ֶדת; ַו ִּת ַּקח את-ז ְל ָּפה ׁ ִש ְפ ָח ָת ּה,

נ ְפ ָּת ִלי. ט ַו ֵּת ֶרא

went in unto her. **24** And Laban gave Zilpah his handmaid

ל ִא ָּׁשה. י ַו ֵּת ֶלד, ִז ְל ָּפה ׁ ִש ְפ ַחת ל ָאה-- ְל ַי ֲעקֹב ּבן.

ו ִּת ֵּתן אֹ ָת ּה ל ַי ֲעקֹב

unto his daughter Leah for a handmaid. **25** And it came

ֹו, ָּגד. יב ַו ֵּת ֶלד, ִז ְל ָּפה את- ׁשמ

בגד ) ָּבא ָגד;( ַו ִּת ְק ָרא ל ָאה,

יא ַו ּתֹא ֶמר

to pass in the morning that, behold, it was Leah; and he

ל ָאה-- ְב ָא ׁ ְש ִרי, ּכי א ְּׁשר ּו ִני

ּבן ׁ ֵש ִני, ל ַי ֲעקֹב. יג ַו ּתֹא ֶמר

ִש ְפ ַחת ל ָאה,

said to Laban: ‘What is this thou hast done unto me? did not I serve with thee for Rachel? wherefore then hast thou

את- ׁשמ ֹו, א ׁ ֵשר. יד ַו ֵ ּי ֶל ְך ְראו ֵבן ּבי ֵמי ק ִציר-ח ִּטים,

ּבָּׂש ֶדה, ַו ָ ּי ֵבא אֹ ָתם, אל- ֵל ָאה א ּמ ֹו; ַו ּתֹא ֶמר ָר ֵחל,

ֹות; ַו ִּת ְק ָרא ָצא ד ּו ָד ִאים ּבנ ו ִ ּי ְמ

beguiled me?’ **26** And Laban said: ‘It is not so done in our

ּב ֵנ ְך. טו ַו ּתֹא ֶמר ל ּה, ה ְמ ַעט ַק ְח ֵּת ְך מ ּד ּו ָד ֵאי

אל- ֵל ָאה, ְת ִני-נא לי,

place, to give the younger before the first-born. **27** Fulfil the week of this one, and we will give thee the other also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years.’ **28** And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week;

את- ּד ּו ָד ֵאי ּב ִני; ַו ּתֹא ֶמר ָר ֵחל, ל ֵכן ִי ׁ ְש ַּכב ע ָּמ ְך ב ֵנ ְך. טז ַו ָ ּיבא ַי ֲעקֹב מן-הָּׂש ֶדה, ּב ֶע ֶרב, ַו ֵּת ֵצא

א ַלי ָתב ֹוא, ּכיׂשכרׂש ַכ ְר ִּתי ָך ּבד ּו ָד ֵאי ּב ִני;

את-אי ׁ ִשי, ְו ָל ַק ַחת, ַּגם ָלה, ַת ַחת, ד ּו ָד ֵאי ְק ָראת ֹו ַו ּתֹא ֶמר ה ַּל ְי ל ָאה ל

and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife. 29 And

ָאה; ַו ַּת ַהר ַו ֵּת ֶלד אל- ֵל

אלֹקים,

ּב ַּל ְי ָלה הוא. יז ַו ִ ּי ׁ ְש ַמע

ָּמ ּה, ע

ו ִ ּי ׁ ְש ַּכב

Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah his handmaid

ׂש ָכ ִרי, א ׁ ֶשר-נ ַת ִּתי

ּבן ח ִמי ׁ ִשי. יח ַו ּתֹא ֶמר ל ָאה, ָנ ַתן אלֹקים

ל ַי ֲעקֹב,

to be her handmaid. **30** And he went in also unto Rachel,

ל ִאי ׁ ִשי; ַו ִּת ְק ָרא ׁ ְשמ ֹו, ִיָּׂשש ָכר. יט ַו ַּת ַהר ע ֹוד ל ָאה, ַו ֵּת ֶלד ּבן-

ִש ְפ ָח ִתי,

and he loved Rachel more than Leah, and served with him

ְז ָב ַד ִני אלֹקים אֹ ִתי ֵז ֶבד ט ֹוב--ה ַּפ ַעם ל ָאה,

ִש ִּׁשי ל ַי ֲעקֹב. כ ַו ּתֹא ֶמר

yet seven other years. **31** And the LORD saw that Leah

was hated, and he opened her womb; but Rachel was

י ְז ְּב ֵל ִני אי ׁ ִשי, ּכי- ָי ַל ְד ִּתי ל ֹו ׁ ִש ָּׁשה ב ִנים; ַו ִּת ְק ָרא את- ׁשמ ֹו, ְז ֻבל ּון. כא

barren. **32** And Leah conceived, and bore a son, and she

ּבת; ַו ִּת ְק ָרא את- ׁש ָמ ּה, ִ ּדי ָנה. כב ַו ִ ּי ְז ּ ֹכר אלֹקים, את-

ו ַא ַחר, ָי ְל ָדה

called his name Reuben; for she said: ‘Because the LORD

אלֹקים, ַו ִ ּי ְפ ַּתח את-ר ְח ָמ ּה. כג ַו ַּת ַהר, ַו ֵּת ֶלד

ֶלי ָה א

ר ֵחל; ַו ִ ּי ׁ ְש ַמע

hath looked upon my affliction; for now my husband will

ׁשמ ֹו י ֹו ֵסף, את-

ְר ָּפ ִתי. כד ַו ִּת ְק ָרא את-ח

אלֹקים

ַסף א

ּבן; ַו ּתֹא ֶמר,

love me.’ **33** And she conceived again, and bore a son; and

ּכ ֲא ׁ ֶשר ָי ְל ָדה ָר ֵחל את-י ֹו ֵסף;

לאמֹר: יֹ ֵסף ְיקוה לי, ּבן א ֵחר. כה ַו ְי ִהי,

said: ‘Because the LORD hath heard that I am hated, He

אל- ָל ָבן, ׁ ַש ְּל ֵח ִני ְו ֵא ְל ָכה, אל-מקו ִמי ו ְל ַא ְר ִצי. כו ְת ָנה

ו ּיֹא ֶמר ַי ֲעקֹב,

hath therefore given me this son also.’ And she called his

ֵא ֵל ָכה: ּכי א ָּתה ָי ַד ְע ָּת, ּב ֵהן--ו

את-נ ׁ ַשי ְו ֶאת- ְי ָל ַדי, א ׁ ֶשר ע ַב ְד ִּתי אֹ ְת ָך

name Simeon. **34** And she conceived again, and bore a

ִּתי ָך. כז ַו ּיֹא ֶמר א ָליו ל ָבן, אם-נא מ ָצאתי חן ע ַב ְד

את-עב ָד ִתי א ׁ ֶשר

son; and said: ‘Now this time will my husband be joined

ּב ֵעי ֶני ָך; ִנ ַח ׁ ְש ִּתי, ַו ְי ָב ְר ֵכ ִני ְיקוה ּב ְג ָל ֶל ָך. כח ַו ּיֹא ַמר: נ ְק ָבהׂש ָכ ְר ָך

unto me, because I have borne him three sons.’ Therefore was his name called Levi. **35** And she conceived again,

א ָליו--א ָּתה ָי ַד ְע ָּת, את א ׁ ֶשר ע ַב ְד ִּתי ָך;

ע ַלי, ְו ֶא ֵּת ָנה. כט ַו ּיֹא ֶמר

and bore a son; and she said: ‘This time will I praise the

א ׁ ֶשר-ה ָיה ל ָך ל ָפ ַני, ַו ִ ּי ְפרֹץ

ִּתי. ל ּכי מ ַעט א

ו ֵאת א ׁ ֶשר-ה ָיה מ ְק ְנ ָך,

LORD.’ Therefore she called his name Judah; and she left

ל ֹרב, ַו ְי ָב ֶר ְך ְיקוה אֹ ְת ָך, ל ַר ְג ִלי; ְו ַע ָּתה, מ ַתי א ֱע ֶׂשה ַגם-א ֹנ ִכי-- ְל ֵבי ִתי.

off bearing.

**1** And when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and she said unto Jacob: ‘Give me children, or else I die.’ **2** And Jacob’s anger was kindled against Rachel; and he said: ‘Am I in God’s stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?’ **3** And

she said: ‘Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her; that she

לא ַו ּיֹא ֶמר, מה א ֶּתן- ָל ְך; ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ַי ֲעקֹב, לֹא-ת ֶּתן- ִלי מאו ָמה--אם-

ַת ֲע ֶׂשה- ִּלי ה ָ ּד ָבר ה ֶ ּזה, א ׁש ּו ָבה א ְר ֶעה צֹאנ ָך א ׁ ְשמֹר. לב א ֱעבר ּב ָכל-

צֹאנ ָך ה ּי ֹום, ה ֵסר מ ָּׁשם ּכל- ֶׂשה ָנקֹד ְו ָטל ּוא ְו ָכל- ֶׂשה-חום ּב ְּכ ָׂש ִבים,

ו ָטל ּוא ְו ָנקֹד, ּב ִע ִ ּזים; ְו ָה ָיה,ׂש ָכ ִרי. לג ְו ָע ְנ ָתה- ִבי צ ְד ָק ִתי ּבי ֹום מ ָחר, ּכי-תב ֹוא על- ְׂש ָכ ִרי ל ָפ ֶני ָך: ֹכל א ׁ ֶשר-אי ֶנ ּנ ּו ָנקֹד ְו ָטל ּוא ּב ִע ִ ּזים, ְוחום ּב ְּכ ָׂש ִבים-- ָגנ ּוב הוא, א ִּתי. לד ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ָבן, הן: ל ּו, ְי ִהי כ ְד ָב ֶר ָך. לה

may bear upon my knees, and I also may be builded up

ּכל-ה ִע ִ ּזים

ה ֲע ֻק ִ ּדים ְו ַה ְּט ֻל ִאים, ְו ֵאת

את-ה ְּת ָי ׁ ִשים

ההוא

ּי ֹום ּב

ו ָ ּי ַסר

through her.’ **4** And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid to

ב ֹו, ְו ָכל-חום ּב ְּכ ָׂש ִבים; ַו ִ ּי ֵּתן, ּב ַיד-

ה ְּנ ֻק ּד ֹות ְו ַה ְּט ֻלאֹת, ֹכל א ׁ ֶשר- ָל ָבן

wife; and Jacob went in unto her. **5** And Bilhah conceived,

ַי ֲעקֹב; ְו ַי ֲעקֹב, רֹ ֶעה את- ו ֵבין

ּב ָניו. לו ַו ָ ּי ֶׂשם, ֶ ּד ֶר ְך ׁ ְשלֹ ׁ ֶשת ָי ִמים, ּבינ ֹו,

and bore Jacob a son. **6** And Rachel said: ‘God hath judged

ל ָבן--ה ּנ ֹו ָ ֹתרת. לז ַו ִ ּי ַּקח-ל ֹו ַי ֲעקֹב, מ ַּקל ל ְב ֶנה לח--ול ּוז ְו ַע ְרמ ֹון;

צֹאן

me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a

son.’ Therefore called she his name Dan. **7** And Bilhah

ל ָבנ ֹות--מ ְחׂ ֹשף ה ָּל ָבן, א ׁ ֶשר על-ה ַּמ ְקל ֹות. לח

ְפ ָצל ֹות ּב ֵהן,

ו ְי ַפ ֵ ּצל

Rachel’s handmaid conceived again, and bore Jacob a

ִפ ֵ ּצל, ּב ְר ָה ִטים, ּב ׁ ִש ְקת ֹות ה ָּמ ִים--א ׁ ֶשר

את-ה ַּמ ְקל ֹות א ׁ ֶשר

ו ַ ּי ֵ ּצג,

second son. **8** And Rachel said: ‘With mighty wrestlings

ה ּצֹאן, ַו ֵ ּי ַח ְמ ָנה ּבב ָאן ל ׁ ְש ּת ֹות. לט

ל ׁ ְש ּת ֹות ל ֹנ ַכח

ּצֹאן ה

ָתבאןָ

have I wrestled with my sister, and have prevailed.’ And she

ְט ֻל ִאים. מ ו

ע ֻק ִ ּדים ְנ ֻק ִ ּדים

ּצֹאן, ה

ַּמ ְקל ֹות; ַו ֵּת ַל ְדןָ אל-ה

ּצֹאן, ה

ו ֶ ּי ֱחמ ּו

called his name Naphtali. **9** When Leah saw that she had

ְו ָכל-חום, ּבצֹאן אל-עקֹד

ה ְפ ִריד ַי ֲעקֹב, ַו ִ ּי ֵּתן ְפ ֵני ה ּצֹאן

ו ַה ְּכ ָׂש ִבים,

left off bearing, she took Zilpah her handmaid, and gave

ל ַב ּד ֹו, ְולֹא ׁ ָש ָתם על-צֹאן ל ָבן. מא ְו ָה ָיה,

ל ָבן; ַו ָ ּי ׁ ֶשת-ל ֹו ע ָד ִרים

her to Jacob to wife. **10** And Zilpah Leah’s handmaid bore

ה ּצֹאן ה ְמ ֻק ָּׁשר ֹות, ְו ָׂשם ַי ֲעקֹב את-ה ַּמ ְקל ֹות ל ֵעי ֵני ה ּצֹאן,

ּב ָכל- ַי ֵחם

Jacob a son. **11** And Leah said: ‘Fortune is come!’ And she

called his name Gad. **12** And Zilpah Leah’s handmaid bore

ּב ַּמ ְקל ֹות. מב ו ְב ַה ֲע ִטיף ה ּצֹאן, לֹא ָי ִׂשים; ְו ָה ָיה

ּב ְר ָה ִטים-- ְל ַי ְח ֵמ ָּנה,

Jacob a second son. **13** And Leah said: ‘Happy am I! for

ל ַי ֲעקֹב. מג ַו ִ ּי ְפרֹץ ה ִאי ׁש, מאֹד מאֹד;

ה ֲע ֻט ִפים ל ָל ָבן, ְו ַה ְּק ׁ ֻש ִרים

the daughters will call me happy.’ And she called his name

ִּלים ַו ֲחמֹ ִרים. ו ְג ַמ

ו ׁ ְש ָפחות ַו ֲע ָב ִדים,

ו ְי ִהי-ל ֹו, צֹאן ַר ּב ֹות,

Asher. **14** And Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest,

ּכל-א ׁ ֶשר

ַקח ַי ֲעקֹב, את ל

לאמֹר,

ֵני- ָל ָבן ב

את- ִ ּד ְב ֵרי

א ַו ִ ּי ׁ ְש ַמע,

and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto

ל ָא ִבינ ּו--ע ָׂשה, את ּכל-ה ָּכבד ה ֶ ּזה. ב ַו ַ ּי ְרא ַי ֲעקֹב,

ו ֵמ ֲא ׁ ֶשר

ל ָא ִבינ ּו;

his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah: ‘Give me, I pray

ע ּמ ֹו, ּכ ְתמ ֹול ׁ ִש ְל ׁש ֹום. ג ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ְיקוה

ְו ִה ֵּנה אי ֶנ ּנ ּו ל ָבן;

את- ּפ ֵני

thee, of thy son’s mandrakes.’ **15** And she said unto her: ‘Is

אל-א ֶרץ אב ֹו ֶתי ָך ו ְלמ ֹו ַל ְד ֶּת ָך; ְו ֶא ְה ֶיה, ע ָּמ ְך. ד ַו ִ ּי ׁ ְש ַלח

אל- ַי ֲעקֹב, ׁש ּוב

it a small matter that thou hast taken away my husband? and wouldest thou take away my son’s mandrakes also?’ And Rachel said: ‘Therefore he shall lie with thee to-

ו ְל ֵל ָאה, הָּׂש ֶדה, אל-צֹאנ ֹו. ה ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ֶהן, רֹ ֶאה

ּכי-אי ֶנ ּנ ּו א ַלי, ּכ ְתמֹל ׁ ִש ְל ׁ ֹשם; ֵואלֹקי א ִבי,

ָר ֵחל ל

ִבי ֶכן, א

י ֲעקֹב, ַו ִ ּי ְק ָרא ֹנ ִכי את- ּפ ֵני א

night for thy son’s mandrakes.’ **16** And Jacob came from

ִבי ֶכן. את-א

ַב ְד ִּתי, ע

ּכ ִחי, ּב ָכל-

ּכי,

ו ְו ַא ֵּת ָנה, ְי ַד ְע ֶּתן: ע ָּמ ִדי.

ה ָיה

the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said: ‘Thou must come in unto me; for I have surely

את-מ ְׂש ֻּכ ְר ִּתי ע ֶׂש ֶרת מֹ ִנים; ְולֹא-נ ָתנ ֹו

אם- ּכה יֹא ַמר, ְנ ֻק ִ ּדים ִי ְה ֶיהׂש ָכ ֶר ָך--ו ָי ְלד ּו

ְו ֶה ֱח ִלף ּבי,

ָּמ ִדי. ח ע

ה ֶתל

ָה ַרע ל

ז ַו ֲא ִבי ֶכן

אלֹקים,

hired thee with my son’s mandrakes.’ And he lay with her

ע ֻק ִ ּדים ִי ְה ֶיהׂש ָכ ֶר ָך--ו ָי ְלד ּו כל-

כל-ה ּצֹאן, ְנ ֻק ִ ּדים; ְו ִאם- ּכה יֹא ַמר,

that night. **17** And God hearkened unto Leah, and she

ה ּצֹאן, ע ֻק ִ ּדים. ט ַו ַ ּי ֵ ּצל אלֹקים את-מ ְק ֵנה א ִבי ֶכם, ַו ִ ּי ֶּתן- ִלי. י ַו ְי ִהי,

conceived, and bore Jacob a fifth son. **18** And Leah said:

ֶרא, ּב ֲחל ֹום; ְו ִה ֵּנה ה ַע ֻּת ִדים העֹ ִלים עי ַני ָו ֵא

ה ּצֹאן, ָו ֶאָּׂשא

ּב ֵעת ַי ֵחם

‘God hath given me my hire, because I gave my handmaid

ע ֻק ִ ּדים ְנ ֻק ִ ּדים ו ְב ֻר ִ ּדים. יאו ּיֹא ֶמר א ַלי מ ְל ַא ְך ה ֱאלֹקים,

על-ה ּצֹאן,

to my husband. And she called his name Issachar. **19**

And Leah conceived again, and bore a sixth son to Jacob.

ה ֵּנ ִני. יב ַו ּיֹא ֶמר,ׂשא-נא עי ֶני ָך ו ְר ֵאה ּכל-

ּב ֲחל ֹום-- ַי ֲעקֹב; ָואֹ ַמר,

1. And Leah said: ‘God hath endowed me with a good

ָר ִאי ִתי, את ּכי

ע ֻק ִ ּדים ְנ ֻק ִ ּדים, ו ְב ֻר ִ ּדים:

ִלים על-ה ּצֹאן, העֹ

ה ַע ֻּת ִדים

dowry; now will my husband dwell with me, because I have

מ ׁ ַש ְח ָּת ָּׁשם

ּבית-קל, א ׁ ֶשר

ה ֵאל,

ל ָבן עֹ ֶׂשה ּל ְך. יג א ֹנ ִכי

ּכל-א ׁ ֶשר

borne him six sons.’ And she called his name Zebulun.

1. And afterwards she bore a daughter, and called her

א ׁ ֶשר ָנ ַד ְר ָּת ִלי ׁ ָשם ֶנ ֶדר; ע ָּתה, קום צא מן-ה ָא ֶרץ ה ּזֹאת, ֹו ַל ְד ֶּת ָך. יד ַו ַּת ַען ָר ֵחל ְו ֵל ָאה, ַו ּתֹא ַמ ְר ָנה ל ֹו: הע ֹוד אל-א ֶרץ מ

מ ֵ ּצ ָבה,

ו ׁש ּוב,

name Dinah. **22** And God remembered Rachel, and God

ּכי

א ִבינ ּו. טו הל ֹוא ָנ ְכ ִר ּי ֹות ֶנ ְח ׁ ַש ְבנ ּו ל ֹו,

לנ ּו ח ֶלק ְו ַנ ֲח ָלה, ּב ֵבית

hearkened to her, and opened her womb. **23** And she

conceived, and bore a son, and said: ‘God hath taken

את- ַכ ְס ֵּפנ ּו. טז ּכי כל-העֹ ׁ ֶשר, א ׁ ֶשר ה ִ ּציל

מ ָכ ָרנ ּו; ַו ּיֹא ַכל ַּגם-אכ ֹול,

away my reproach.’ **24** And she called his name Joseph,

אלֹקים

ו ְל ָב ֵנינ ּו; ְו ַע ָּתה, ֹכל א ׁ ֶשר א ַמר

אלֹקים מ ָא ִבינ ּו-- ָלנ ּו הוא,

saying: ‘The LORD add to me another son.’ **25** And it came

ְּג ַמ ִּלים. על-ה

את- ָב ָניו ְו ֶאת-נ ׁ ָשיו,

א ֶלי ָך--ע ֵׂשה. יז ַו ָ ּי ָקם, ַי ֲעקֹב; ַו ִ ּיָּׂשא

to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said

ְנ ָינ ֹו, ק

א ׁ ֶשר ָר ָכ ׁש--מ ְק ֵנה

ָכל-מ ְק ֵנהו, ְו ֶאת- ָכל-ר ֻכ ׁש ֹו את-

יח ַו ִ ּי ְנ ַהג

unto Laban: ‘Send me away, that I may go unto mine own

יט ְו ָל ָבן ּכ ָנ ַען.

ִי ְצ ָחק א ִביו, א ְר ָצה אל-

ּב ַפ ַ ּדן א ָרם: לב ֹוא

א ׁ ֶשר ָר ַכ ׁש

place, and to my country. **26** Give me my wives and my

ָא ִבי ָה. כ ל

את-צֹאנ ֹו; ַו ִּת ְג ֹנב ָר ֵחל, את-ה ְּת ָר ִפים א ׁ ֶשר

ה ַל ְך, ל ְגזֹז

children for whom I have served thee, and let me go; for

ִּמי--על- ְב ִלי ה ִּגיד ל ֹו, ּכי ב ֵר ַח הוא. כא ה ֲא ַר

ו ִ ּי ְג ֹנב ַי ֲעקֹב, את- ֵלב ל ָבן

thou knowest my service wherewith I have served thee.’

**27** And Laban said unto him: ‘If now I have found favour

ו ִ ּי ְב ַרח הוא ְו ָכל-א ׁ ֶשר-ל ֹו, ַו ָ ּי ָקם ַו ַ ּי ֲעבר את-ה ָּנ ָהר; ַו ָ ּי ֶׂשם את- ּפ ָניו,

in thine eyes--I have observed the signs, and the LORD

ל ָל ָבן, ּב ּי ֹום ה ְּׁש ִלי ׁ ִשי: ּכי ב ַרח, ַי ֲעקֹב. כג ַו ִ ּי ַּקח

הר ה ִּג ְל ָעד. כב ַו ֻ ּי ַּגד

hath blessed me for thy sake.’ **28** And he said: ‘Appoint

א ֲח ָריו, ֶ ּד ֶר ְך ׁ ִש ְב ַעת ָי ִמים; ַו ַ ּי ְד ֵּבק אֹת ֹו, ּב ַהר

את-א ָחיו, ע ּמ ֹו, ַו ִ ּי ְר ּדֹף

me thy wages, and I will give it.’ **29** And he said unto him:

ה ָּל ְי ָלה; ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ּב ֲחלֹם

בא אלֹקים אל- ָל ָבן ה ֲא ַר ִּמי,

ה ִּג ְל ָעד. כד ַו ָ ּי

‘Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle

עם- ַי ֲעקֹב--מ ּט ֹוב עד-רע. כה ַו ַ ּיֵּׂשג ל ָבן,

ֹו, ה ָּׁש ֶמר ל ָך ֶפן- ּת ַד ֵּבר ל

have fared with me. **30** For it was little which thou hadst

ֳהל ֹו ּב ָהר, ְו ָל ָבן ָת ַקע את-א ָחיו, ּב ַהר את-א

את- ַי ֲעקֹב; ְו ַי ֲעקֹב, ָת ַקע

before I came, and it hath increased abundantly; and the

ל ַי ֲעקֹב, מה ע ִׂשי ָת, ַו ִּת ְג ֹנב את- ְל ָב ִבי; ַו ְּת ַנ ֵהג,

ה ִּג ְל ָעד. כו ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ָבן,

LORD hath blessed thee whithersoever I turned. And now when shall I provide for mine own house also?’ **31** And he said: ‘What shall I give thee?’ And Jacob said: ‘Thou shalt

ַנ ְח ֵּבאת ל ְברֹ ַח, ַו ִּת ְג ֹנב אֹ ִתי; ְולֹא- ל ָּמה

ְב ׁ ִש ִרים ּ ֹבתף ו ְב ִכ ּנ ֹור. כח ְולֹא ְנ ַט ׁ ְש ַּת ִני, ו

את- ְב ֹנ ַתי, ּכ ׁ ְש ֻבי ֹות, ח ֶרב. כז ה ַּג ְד ָּת ִלי, ָו ֲא ׁ ַש ֵּל ֲח ָך ּב ִׂש ְמ ָחה

not give me aught; if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will

ל ֲעׂש ֹות

ה ְס ַּכ ְל ָּת עׂש ֹו. כט ֶי ׁש- ְל ֵאל ָי ִדי,

ְו ִל ְב ֹנ ָתי; ע ָּתה, ל ָב ַני

ל ַנ ֵּׁשק

again feed thy flock and keep it. **32** I will pass through all

א ַמר א ַלי לאמֹר, ה ָּׁש ֶמר ל ָך מ ַ ּד ֵּבר

ִבי ֶכם א ֶמ ׁש א

ע ָּמ ֶכם ָרע; ֵואלֹקי

thy flock to-day, removing from thence every speckled and

ְו ַע ָּתה הלֹ ְך ה ַל ְכ ָּת, ּכי-נ ְכסֹף ִנ ְכ ַס ְפ ָּתה עד-רע. ל

עם- ַי ֲעקֹב--מ ּט ֹוב

spotted one, and every dark one among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and of such shall be my hire. **33** So shall my righteousness witness against me hereafter, when thou shalt come to look over my hire that is before thee: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and dark among the sheep, that

ל ֵבית א ִבי ָך; ל ָּמה ָג ַנ ְב ָּת, את-אלֹ ָהי. לא ַו ַ ּי ַען ַי ֲעקֹב, ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ָל ָבן: ּכי י ֵראתי-- ִכי א ַמ ְר ִּתי, ֶפן- ּת ְגזֹל את- ְבנ ֹו ֶתי ָך מ ִע ִּמי. לב עם א ׁ ֶשר ִת ְמ ָצא

ָך, לֹא ִי ְח ֶיה--נ ֶגד א ֵחינ ּו ה ֶּכר- ְל ָך מה ע ָּמ ִדי, ְו ַקח- ָל ְך; ַי ֲעקֹב, ּכי ָר ֵחל ְּג ָנ ָב ַתם. לג ַו ָ ּיבא ל ָבן ּבאֹ ֶהל ַי ֲעקֹב ו ְבאֹ ֶהל את-אלֹ ֶהי ולֹא- ָי ַדע

ל ָאה, ו ְבאֹ ֶהל ׁ ְש ֵּתי ה ֲא ָמהֹת--ולֹא מ ָצא; ַו ֵ ּי ֵצא מאֹ ֶהל ל ָאה, ַו ָ ּיבא

if found with me shall be counted stolen.’ **34** And Laban

ָּג ָמל-- ה

ַכר ּב

את-ה ְּת ָר ִפים, ַו ְּת ִׂש ֵמם

ְק ָחה ל

ּבאֹ ֶהל ָר ֵחל. לד ְו ָר ֵחל

said: ‘Behold, would it might be according to thy word.’ **35**

ָכל-האֹ ֶהל, ְולֹא מ ָצא. להו ּתֹא ֶמר את-

ֶהם; ַו ְי ַמ ֵּׁש ׁש ל ָבן ע ֵלי

ו ֵּת ׁ ֶשב

And he removed that day the he-goats that were streaked

ִני, ּכי ל ֹוא או ַכל לקום מ ָּפ ֶני ָך, ּכי- ֶד ֶר ְך ּב ֵעי ֵני אדֹ

אל-א ִבי ָה, אל- ִי ַחר

and spotted, and all the she-goats that were speckled and

מ ָצא את-ה ְּת ָר ִפים. לו ַו ִ ּי ַחר ל ַי ֲעקֹב, ַו ָ ּי ֶרב

נ ׁ ִשים לי; ַו ְי ַח ֵּפׂש, ְולֹא

spotted, every one that had white in it, and all the dark

ּב ָל ָבן; ַו ַ ּי ַען ַי ֲעקֹב, ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ָל ָבן, מה- ּפ ׁ ְש ִעי מה ח ָּטאתי, ּכי ָד ַל ְק ָּת

ones among the sheep, and gave them into the hand of his

א ֲח ָרי. לז ּכי-מ ַּׁש ׁ ְש ָּת את- ָכל- ֵכ ַלי, מה-מ ָצאת מ ּ ֹכל ּכ ֵלי-בי ֶת ָך-- ִׂשים

sons. **36** And he set three days’ journey betwixt himself and Jacob. And Jacob fed the rest of Laban’s flocks.

א ַחי ְו ַא ֶחי ָך; ְוי ֹו ִכיחו, ּבין ׁ ְש ֵנינ ּו. לח ֶזה ע ְׂש ִרים ׁ ָש ָנה א ֹנ ִכי

ֹכה, ֶנ ֶגד

1. And Jacob took him rods of fresh poplar, and of the

ע ָּמ ְך, ְר ֵח ֶלי ָך ְו ִע ֶ ּזי ָך לֹא ׁ ִש ֵּכל ּו; ְו ֵאי ֵלי צֹאנ ָך, לֹא א ָכ ְל ִּתי. לט ט ֵר ָפה,

almond and of the plane-tree; and peeled white streaks

ְת ַב ְק ׁ ֶש ָּנה; ְּג ֻנ ְב ִתי י ֹום, ו ְג ֻנ ְב ִתי

מ ָ ּי ִדי

ַח ֶּט ָּנה, א

ָך--א ֹנ ִכי א ֶלי

לֹא-ה ֵבאתי

in them, making the white appear which was in the rods.

1. And he set the rods which he had peeled over against

מ ֵעי ָני. ּב ׁ ְש ֵּתי

ּב ָּל ְי ָלה; ַו ִּת ַ ּדד ׁ ְש ָנ ִתי, א ְר ַּבע-ע ְׂש ֵרה ׁ ָש ָנה

ב ּי ֹום א ָכ ַל ִני חֹרב, ְו ֶק ַרח ׁ ָש ָנה, ּב ֵבי ֶת ָך, ע ַב ְד ִּתי ָך ה ִיי ִתי ע ְׂש ִרים

ל ְי ָלה. מ ֶזה- ִּלי מא

the flocks in the gutters in the watering-troughs where

את-מ ְׂש ֻּכ ְר ִּתי, ע ֶׂש ֶרת מֹ ִנים. מב

ב ֹנ ֶתי ָך, ְו ׁ ֵש ׁש ׁ ָש ִנים ּבצֹאנ ָך; ַו ַּת ֲח ֵלף

the flocks came to drink; and they conceived when they

came to drink. **39** And the flocks conceived at the sight of

ְב ָר ָהם ו ַפ ַחד ִי ְצ ָחק, ה ָיה לי-- ִכי ע ָּתה, ֵרי ָקם אלֹ ֵהי א

ִבי א

ל ּו ֵלי אלֹ ֵהי

the rods, and the flocks brought forth streaked, speckled,

ָר ָאה אלֹקים--ו ּי ֹו ַכח א ֶמ ׁש. מג ּכ ַּפי,

ַּל ְח ָּת ִני; את-ע ְנ ִיי ְו ֶאת- ְי ִגי ַע ִש

and spotted. **40** And Jacob separated the lambs--he also

ַה ָּב ִנים ּב ַני ְו ַה ּצֹאן צֹאני, ּב ֹנ ַתי ְו

ַו ּיֹא ֶמר אל- ַי ֲעקֹב, ה ָּבנ ֹות ל ָבן

ו ַ ּי ַען

set the faces of the flocks toward the streaked and all the

ּי ֹום, או ה

ֵא ֶּלה, ל

מה-א ֱע ֶׂשה

ְו ִל ְב ֹנ ַתי לי-הוא;

וכל א ׁ ֶשר-א ָּתה רֹ ֶאה,

dark in the flock of Laban--and put his own droves apart,

ִנ ְכ ְר ָתה ב ִרית--א ִני ָו ָא ָּתה; ְו ָה ָיה ל ָכה

ל ְב ֵני ֶהן, א ׁ ֶשר ָי ָלד ּו. מד ְו ַע ָּתה,

and put them not unto Laban’s flock. **41** And it came to pass, whensoever the stronger of the flock did conceive,

ּבי ִני ו ֵבי ֶנ ָך. מה ַו ִ ּי ַּקח ַי ֲעקֹב, א ֶבן; ַו ְי ִרי ֶמ ָה, מ ֵ ּצ ָבה. מו ַו ּיֹא ֶמר

ל ֶא ָחיו ל ְקט ּו א ָב ִנים, ַו ִ ּי ְקחו א ָב ִנים ַו ַ ּי ֲעׂש ּו-גל; ַו ּיֹא ְכל ּו ׁ ָשם,

ל ֵעד, ֲעקֹב י

that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the flock in

ל ָבן, ְי ַגרׂש ֲהד ּו ָתא; ְו ַי ֲעקֹב, ָק ָרא ל ֹו ַּג ְל ֵעד.

על-ה ָּגל. מז ַו ִ ּי ְק ָרא-ל ֹו

the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods; **42**

מח ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ָבן, ה ַּגל ה ֶ ּזה עד ּבי ִני ו ֵבי ְנ ָך ה ּי ֹום; על- ֵכן ָק ָרא- ׁשמ ֹו,

but when the flock were feeble, he put them not in; so the feebler were Laban’s, and the stronger Jacob’s. **43** And

ׁש אי

ֶצף ְיקוה ּבי ִני ו ֵבי ֶנ ָך: ּכי ִנ ָּס ֵתר, א ַמר, ִי

א ׁ ֶשר

ְל ֵעד. מט ְו ַה ִּמ ְצ ָּפה ּג

the man increased exceedingly, and had large flocks, and

ׁש, אי

את- ְב ֹנ ַתי, ְו ִאם- ּת ַּקח ָנ ׁ ִשים על- ְב ֹנ ַתי--אין

מ ֵר ֵעהו. נ אם- ּת ַע ֶּנה

maid-servants and men-servants, and camels and asses.

ָך. נא ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ָבן, ל ַי ֲעקֹב: ה ֵּנה ו ֵבי ֶנ

ע ָּמנ ּו; ְר ֵאה, אלֹקים עד ּבי ִני

**1** And he heard the words of Laban’s sons, saying: ‘Jacob

ו ֵבי ֶנ ָך. נב עד ה ַּגל ה ֶ ּזה,

ה ַּמ ֵ ּצ ָבה, א ׁ ֶשר ָי ִרי ִתי, ּבי ִני

ה ַּגל ה ֶ ּזה, ְו ִה ֵּנה

hath taken away all that was our father’s; and of that

אם-א ִני, לֹא-א ֱעבר א ֶלי ָך את-ה ַּגל ה ֶ ּזה, ְו ִאם-א ָּתה

ו ֵע ָדה ה ַּמ ֵ ּצ ָבה:

which was our father’s hath he gotten all this wealth.’ **2** And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it was not toward him as beforetime. **3** And the LORD said unto Jacob: ‘Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to

לֹא-ת ֲעבר א ַלי את-ה ַּגל ה ֶ ּזה ְו ֶאת-ה ַּמ ֵ ּצ ָבה ה ּזֹאת, ל ָר ָעה. נג אלֹ ֵהי

א ְב ָר ָהם ֵואלֹקי ָנחור, ִי ׁ ְש ְּפט ּו בי ֵנינ ּו--אלֹ ֵהי, א ִבי ֶהם; ַו ִ ּי ָּׁש ַבע ַי ֲעקֹב,

ּב ַפ ַחד א ִביו ִי ְצ ָחק. נד ַו ִ ּי ְז ַּבח ַי ֲעקֹב ֶז ַבח ּב ָהר, ַו ִ ּי ְק ָרא ל ֶא ָחיו ל ֱא ָכל-

thy kindred; and I will be with thee.’ **4** And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock, **5** and

ָהר. ל ָב ָניו ְו ִל ְבנ ֹו ָתיו--ו ְי ָב ֶר ְך א ְת ֶהם; ַו ֵ ּי ֶל ְך ּב

ל ֶחם; ַו ּיֹא ְכל ּו ל ֶחם, ַו ָ ּי ִלינ ּו

א ַו ַ ּי ׁ ְש ֵּכם ל ָבן ּב ּ ֹב ֶקר, ַו ְי ַנ ֵּׁשק

said unto them: ‘I see your father’s countenance, that it

ל ְמקֹמ ֹו. ב ְו ַי ֲעקֹב, ה ַל ְך ל ַד ְר ּכ ֹו; ַו ִ ּי ְפ ְּגע ּו-ב ֹו, מ ְל ֲא ֵכי

ו ָ ּי ׁ ָשב ל ָבן,

is not toward me as beforetime; but the God of my father hath been with me. **6** And ye know that with all my power I have served your father. **7** And your father hath mocked me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me. **8** If he said thus: The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the flock bore speckled; and if he said thus: The streaked shall be thy wages; then bore all the flock streaked. **9** Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given them to me. **10** And it came to pass at the time that the flock conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream, and, behold, the he-goats which leaped upon the flock were streaked, speckled,

and grizzled. **11** And the angel of God said unto me in the

ּכ ֲא ׁ ֶשר ָר ָאם, מ ֲח ֵנה אלֹקים ֶזה; ַו ִ ּי ְק ָרא ׁ ֵשם-

אלֹקים. ג ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ַי ֲעקֹב

ה ָּמקום ההוא, מ ֲח ָנ ִים.

dream: Jacob; and I said: Here am I. **12** And he said: Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the he-goats which leap upon the flock are streaked, speckled, and grizzled; for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee. **13** I am the God of Beth-el, where thou didst anoint a pillar, where thou didst vow a vow unto Me. Now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy nativity.’ **14** And Rachel and Leah answered and said unto him: ‘Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father’s house? **15** Are we not accounted by him strangers? for he hath sold us, and hath also quite devoured our price. **16** For all the riches which God hath taken away from our father, that is ours and our children’s. Now then, whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do.’ **17** Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon the camels; **18** and he carried away all his cattle,

and all his substance which he had gathered, the cattle

of his getting, which he had gathered in Paddan-aram, to go to Isaac his father unto the land of Canaan. **19** Now Laban was gone to shear his sheep. And Rachel stole the teraphim that were her father’s. **20** And Jacob outwitted Laban the Aramean, in that he told him not that he fled. **21** So he fled with all that he had; and he rose up, and passed over the River, and set his face toward the mountain of Gilead. **22** And it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob was fled. **23** And he took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days’ journey; and he overtook him in the mountain of Gilead. **24** And God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream of the night, and said unto him: ‘Take heed to thyself that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.’ **25** And Laban came up with Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mountain; and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mountain of Gilead. **26** And Laban said to Jacob: ‘What hast thou done, that thou hast outwitted me, and carried away my daughters as though captives of the sword? **27** Wherefore didst thou flee secretly, and outwit me; and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth and with songs, with tabret and with harp; **28** and didst not suffer me to kiss my sons and my daughters? now hast thou done foolishly. **29** It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt; but the God

of your father spoke unto me yesternight, saying: Take

heed to thyself that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad. **30** And now that thou art surely gone, because thou sore longest after thy father’s house, wherefore hast thou stolen my gods?’ **31** And Jacob answered and said to Laban: ‘Because I was afraid; for I said: Lest thou shouldest take thy daughters from me by force. **32** With

whomsoever thou findest thy gods, he shall not live; before our brethren discern thou what is thine with me, and take it to thee.’--For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them.-

- **33** And Laban went into Jacob’s tent, and into Leah’s tent, and into the tent of the two maid-servants; but he found them not. And he went out of Leah’s tent, and entered into Rachel’s tent. **34** Now Rachel had taken the teraphim, and put them in the saddle of the camel, and sat upon them. And Laban felt about all the tent, but found them not. **35** And she said to her father: ‘Let not my lord be angry that

I cannot rise up before thee; for the manner of women is upon me.’ And he searched, but found not the teraphim. **36** And Jacob was wroth, and strove with Laban. And Jacob answered and said to Laban: ‘What is my trespass? what is my sin, that thou hast hotly pursued after me?

**37** Whereas thou hast felt about all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? Set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us two. **38** These twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she-goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flocks have I not eaten. **39** That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bore the loss of

it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day or stolen by night. 40 Thus I was: in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep fled from mine eyes. **41** These twenty years have I been in thy house: I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy flock; and thou hast changed my wages ten times. **42** Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the Fear of Isaac, had been on my side, surely now hadst thou sent me away empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and gave judgment yesternight.’ **43** And Laban answered and said unto Jacob: ‘The daughters are my daughters, and the children are my children, and the flocks are my flocks, and

all that thou seest is mine; and what can I do this day for these my daughters, or for their children whom they have borne? **44** And now come, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee.’ **45** And Jacob took a stone, and set it up for a pillar. **46** And Jacob said unto his brethren: ‘Gather stones’; and they took stones, and made a heap. And they did eat there by the heap. **47** And Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha; but Jacob called it Galeed. **48** And Laban said: ‘This heap is witness between me and thee this day.’ Therefore was the name of it called Galeed; **49** and Mizpah, for he said: ‘The LORD watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another. **50** If thou shalt afflict my daughters, and if thou shalt take wives beside my daughters, no man being with us; see, God is witness betwixt me and thee.’ **51** And Laban said to Jacob: ‘Behold this heap, and behold the pillar, which I have set up betwixt me and thee. **52** This heap be witness, and the pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm. **53** The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us.’ And Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac. **54** And Jacob offered a sacrifice in the mountain, and called his brethren to eat bread; and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mountain.

**1** And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his

sons and his daughters, and blessed them. And Laban departed, and returned unto his place. **2** And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. **3** And Jacob said when he saw them: ‘This is God’s camp.’ And he called the name of that place Mahanaim.



**VAYEITZEI: RACHEL’S SHAME & THE SECRET MEANING BEHIND JOSEPH’S NAME**

Welcome to the Aleph Beta Study Guide to Parshat Vayeitzei!

### Our Favorite Things

If you’ve been around the block with us here at Aleph Beta — regularly bringing our parsha guides to your Shabbos table or study group, or watching the animated videos on our site — then you know that we get pretty excited about something that most people find kinda boring: the *methodology* of Torah study. That is, *how* do we go about studying the Torah and reaping its insights? How does the Torah encode its meaning and what tools can we apply to the text to

unlock it? In that spirit: we’re all about chiasms. A chiasm — which we sometimes refer to as אתבש (*atbash*) — is a way of laying out text in a particular pattern that looks something like this:

**ELEMENT A**

**ELEMENT B ELEMENT C**

**CENTER ELEMENT C2**

**ELEMENT B2**

**ELEMENT A2**

The first idea (Element A) mirrors the last idea (Element A2), the second idea (Element B) mirrors the second-to-last idea (Element B2), and so on, with all of the parallels converging around the center. Why does the Torah make use of these kinds of patterns? Well, a chiasm can do a lot of things. It can point you to the center of an entire verse or passage, and in doing so, indicate the “center of gravity” around which a whole series of ideas seem to revolve. But a chism can do something else, too. There is a whole world of meaning to be gleaned from how the pairs in the chiasm match up. It may well be that one element (e.g., Element A) sheds light on its matching element (e.g., Element A2), that these pairs serve as a kind of commentary, as it were, on the Torah, *within* the Torah. This all sounds pretty abstract, so we’d like to demonstrate it to you with a fantastically elegant chiasm that occurs right here in Parshat *Vayeitzei*.

### Jumping In

Let’s look at the five elements that we find right at the beginning of the parsha:

#### INSTRUCTIONS

There are a lot of divrei Torah on the parsha. How is this different?

At Aleph Beta, we believe that the Torah is a guidebook that answers life’s biggest questions, offering profound insights about how we should live our lives. Moreover, we believe that Jewish tradition has always recognized the right of all readers, in every generation, to look at the text themselves and try to decide what they think it means. That means you. That’s why you are the most important author of this quest through the sources. We think that this guide offers a fun, stimulating and relevant path through the sources, but if you get wrapped up in a stimulating discussion and never make it past page 2, we’ll consider that a success!

Is this guide for self-study or should I study it with others?

Either works! You can gather a small group of friends to explore it together, share it with a chevruta (learning partner), or go through it by yourself.

Do I need to prepare anything or can I just jump in?

Just jump in! Even if you’re planning to use this for a group discussion, just open up to page 1 and get going. (If you read it in advance, it will spoil the fun!) The only thing you should do in advance is print out copies of the “Source Sheet” for the other participants, so everyone can follow along and engage with the sources.

About the Author

Most of the material within – although not the particular language contained in this guide - was first developed and taught by Rabbi David Fohrman, founder and CEO of Aleph Beta, and is presented in his video, “Parshat Vayeitzei: Rachel’s Shame & The Secret Meaning Behind Joseph’s Name” (available for viewing at [www.alephbeta.org](http://www.alephbeta.org/)). This guide was written by Beth Lesch, edited by Rivky Stern, and arranged by Laura Schembre.

**1**

Jacob goes somewhere

Gen. 28:10

**2** Jacob experiences an

encounter

)פגע(

Gen. 28:11

ו ֵ ּי ֵצא ַי ֲעקֹב, ִמ ְּב ֵאר ׁ ָש ַבע;

ו ֵ ּי ֶל ְך, ָחרָ ָנה

ו ִ ּי ְפ ַּגע ַּב ָּמקום ַ

ַ Jacob encounters this

Jacob went out from

place

Beer-sheba, and went

toward Haran

**3**

Angels of God are

present

Gen. 28:12

ו ַ ּי ֲחלֹם… ְו ִה ֵּנה ַמ ְל ֲא ֵכי עֹ ִלים ְויֹ ְר ִדים ּב ֹו אלֹקים,

And he dreamed… and behold, there were angels of God going up

and down

**4**

Jacob notices that

the place is godly

Gen. 28:17

ו ּיֹא ַמר, ַמה-נ ֹו ָרא, ַה ָּמקום ַה ֶ ּזה: ֵאין זה, ִּכי ִאם- ֵבית ֱאלֹקים, ְו ֶזה, ׁ ַש ַער

ה ָּׁשמָ ִים

And he said: “How awesome is this place! It is none other than a house of God, and this is the gate of Heaven!”

**5**

Jacob names the place after its significance

Gen. 28:19

ו ִ ּי ְק ָרא ֶאת- ׁשם-ה ָּמקום ההוא, ֵּבית-אל

And he called the name of that place “House of God” (lit:

Beit El)

Where else do we find those exact same five elements?

We find them at the very *end* of Parshat *Vayeitzei*:

**Gen. 32:2-3**

1. Jacob notices that the place is godly
2. Jacob experiences an encounter (פגע)

1. Jacob goes somewhere

ַמ ֲח ָנ ִים. ההוא,



ּכ ֲא ׁ ֶשר ָר ָאם, ַמ ֲח ֵנה ֱאלֹקים ֶזה; ַו ִ ּי ְק ָרא ׁ ֵשם-ה ָּמקום

ל ַד ְר ּכ ֹו; ַו ִ ּי ְפ ְּגע ּו-ב ֹו, ַמ ְלאֲ ֵכי אֱלֹקים. ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ַי ֲעקֹב

ַל ְך ה

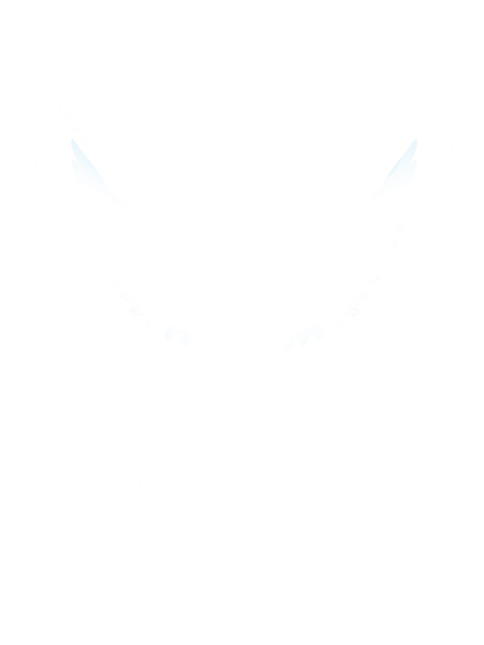
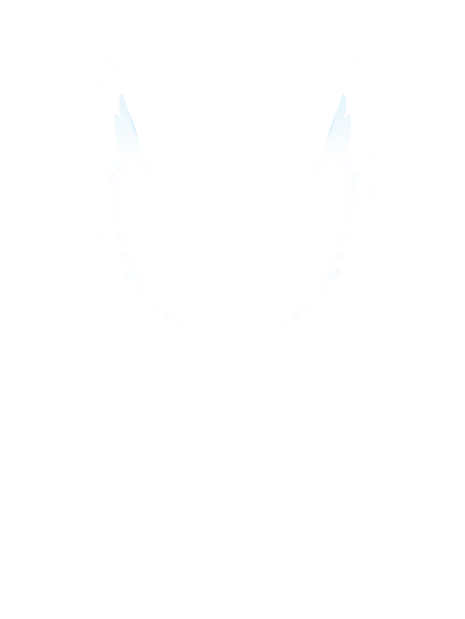
ו ַי ֲעקֹב,

5. Jacob names the place after its significance

3. Angels of God are present

And Jacob went on his way, and they met him, the angels of God. And Jacob said when he saw them: ‘This is God’s camp.’ And he called the name of that place Mahanaim.

The opening and the close of the parsha — all five elements match up. But, of course, they’re not *exactly* the same. There are subtle differences between them, differences which may prove quite illuminating.



For example, the first time that Jacob is going somewhere, where is he going? And what sort of state is he in? The answer is: he’s fleeing his brother, running away against his will. But the second time, we find that Jacob goes *l’darko* — “on his way.” What an interesting phrase. We can’t say for sure what it means, but it does seem to connote that Jacob is much more secure, self-possessed than when he fled, all those years before. He’s no longer journeying reactively, forced to escape his brother’s anger. Now, he’s going proactively, on his own terms, so to speak — to meet his brother and see if he can reconcile with him.

And look at the third element: the angels of God. The first time, when he encountered those angels, the angels were traveling vertically, going up and down the ladder. But Jacob was traveling *horizontally*; the angels didn’t even take notice of him. There was no exchange between them. The second time around, the angels are traveling horizontally, and they do take notice of him: they come to greet him. These two elements and their contrasts seem to imply that Jacob — his circumstances, his internal experience — undergoes some key developments over the course of the parsha.

Now, this smattering of parallels is interesting enough, and does seem to have the potential to point us towards some noteworthy insights — but we haven’t yet proven that there is a chiasm here in Parshat *Vayeitzei*. If this were a true chiasm, then we should be able to find more parallels — and there’s a very specific place that we should find them:

**AND THIS ELEMENT**

**BEGINING OF PARSHA**

**GEN. 28:10-19 (THE FIVE ELEMENTS)**

**THIS ELEMENT**

**SHOULD PARALLEL THIS ELEMENT SHOULD PARALLEL THIS ELEMENT**

**GEN. 32:2-3 (THE FIVE ELEMENTS)**

**END OF PARSHA**

### Element 2

So let’s go back to the beginning of the parsha, just after we read about those five elements, and start hunting. What happens after Jacob’s dream with the angels going up and down the ladder?

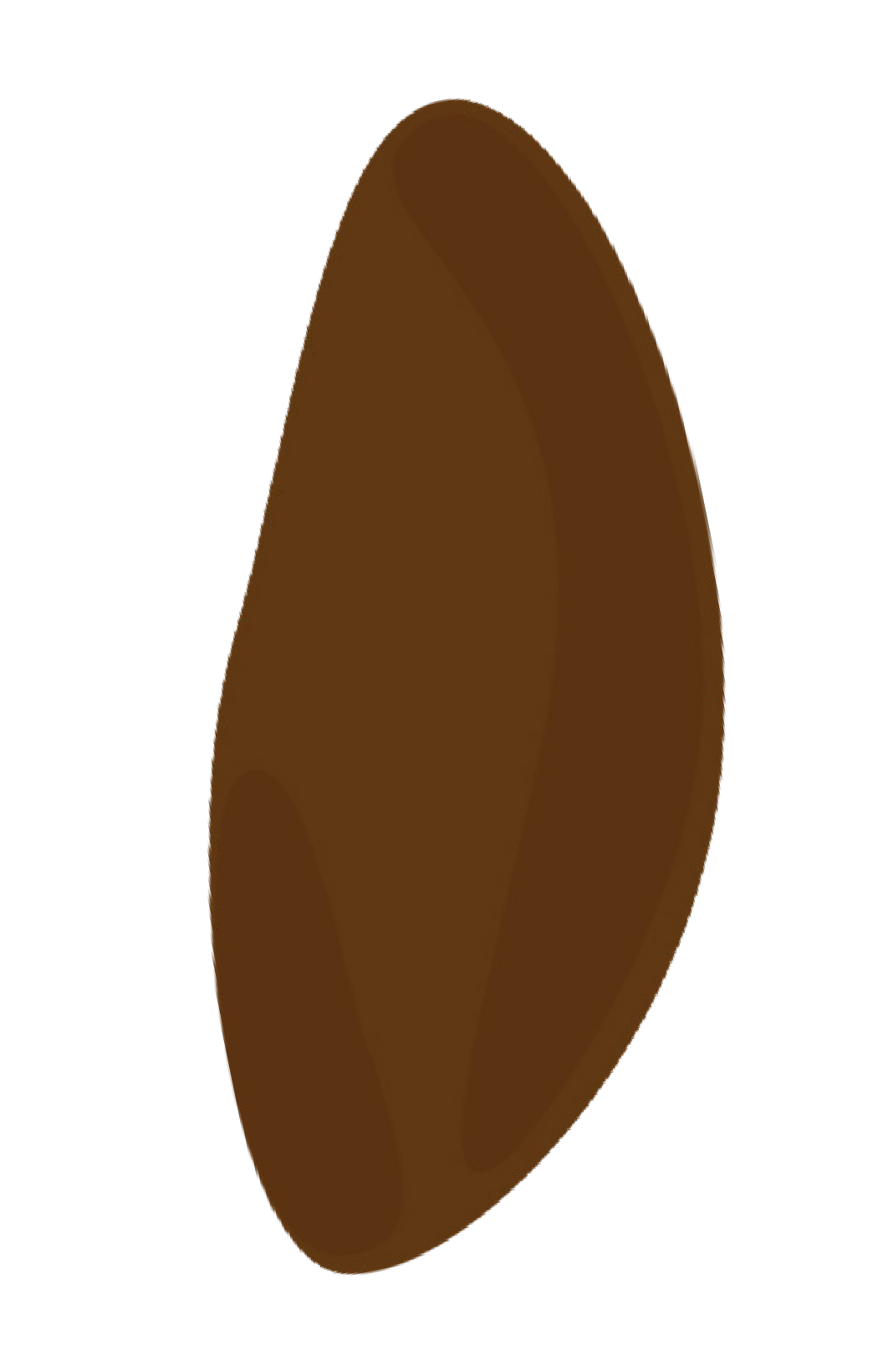
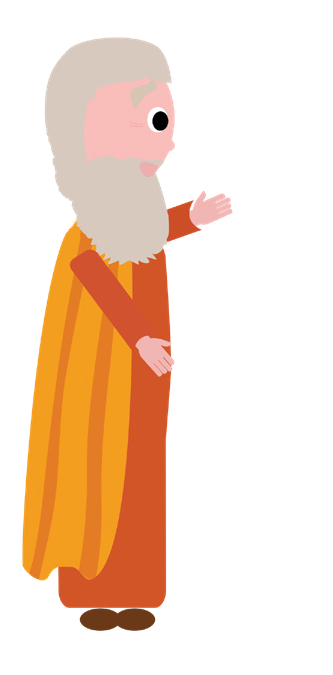
**Genesis 28:18**

ּב ּ ֹב ֶקר, ַו ִ ּי ַּקח ֶאת-ה ֶא ֶבן ֲא ׁ ֶשר- ָׂשם ְמ ַר ֲא ׁשֹ ָתיו, ַו ָ ּי ֶׂשם אֹ ָת ּה, ַמ ֵ ּצ ָבה; ַו ִ ּיצֹק ׁ ֶש ֶמן, ַעל-רֹא ׁ ָש ּה.

ו ַ ּי ׁ ְש ֵּכם ַי ֲעקֹב

And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head, and set it up as a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

He takes this rock that he’s been sleeping on and he builds it into a *matzevah*, a monument. That’s the first time, in the entire Book of Genesis, that someone erects a monument. When is the second time?



It’s at the end of the parsha, just before Jacob we read about those five elements again:

**Genesis 31:45**

ַו ִ ּי ַּקח ַי ֲעקֹב, ָא ֶבן; ַו ְי ִרי ֶמ ָה, ַמ ֵ ּצ ָבה.

And Jacob took the stone and he set it up as a pillar.

The first monument memorialized Jacob’s encounter with God, his Heavenly Father, so to speak. The second monument memorializes his encounter with Lavan: his *earthly* father-in-law.

### Element 3

And what is the next thing that happens at the beginning of *Vayeitzei*? Jacob makes a promise to God:

**Genesis 28:20-22**

כל ֲא ׁ ֶשר ִּת ֶּתן- ִלי, **עַ ֵּ ׂשר ֲאעַ ְּ ׂש ֶר ּנ ּו** לָ ְך.

ֱאלֹקים; ְו ּבית

ה ּזֹאת, ֲא ׁ ֶשר- ַׂש ְמ ִּתי ַמ ֵ ּצ ָבה-- ִי ְה ֶיה,

אם- ִי ְה ֶיה ֱאלֹקים ִע ָּמ ִדי… ְו ָה ֶא ֶבן

ו ִ ּי ַ ּדר ַי ֲעקֹב, ֶנ ֶדר ֵלאמֹר:

And Jacob vowed a vow, saying: ‘If God will be with me… then this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, will be God’s house; and whatever You give me, **I will surely give a tenth back to You.**’

What happens the last time that Jacob leaves his earthly father, Lavan? There is another negotiation involving *tens*. It’s right at the end of *Vayeitzei*, just before Jacob encounters those angels who come to greet him, and right before Jacob sets up that monument to mark his encounter. Jacob complains angrily to Lavan:

**Gen. 31:7**

ְו ֶה ֱח ִלף ֶאת-מ ְׂש ֻּכ ְר ִּתי **ֲע ֶ ׂשרֶת** מֹנִים

[You promised me wages but] you changed my wages **ten** times

It’s Element 3: the element of tens.

### Element 4

Let’s keep moving. What’s the next thing that happens at the beginning of *Vayeitzei*? Jacob heads off again and he arrives in Charan:

**Gen. 29:2**

ּבָּׂש ֶדה, ְו ִה ֵּנה- ׁשם ׁ ְשלֹ ׁ ָשה **ֶע ְדרֵי**-צֹאן רֹ ְב ִצים ָע ֶלי ָה

ֵאר ב

ו ַ ּי ְרא ְו ִה ֵּנה

And he looked, and behold a well in the field, and, lo, three **flocks** of sheep lying there by it

That’s the first time in the Torah that we ever meet an *eder*, a flock of sheep. When is the *only other* time that we meet an

*eder* of sheep? Right where you’d expect it to be: before Jacob complained about his wages changing ten times:

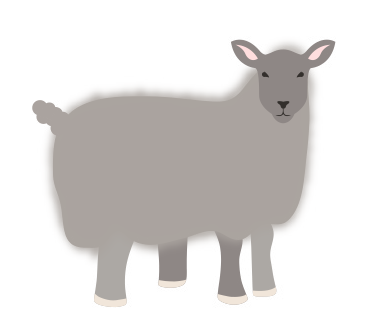
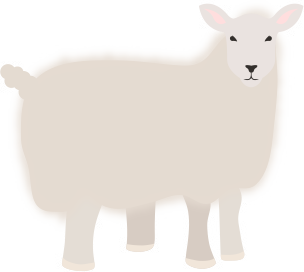
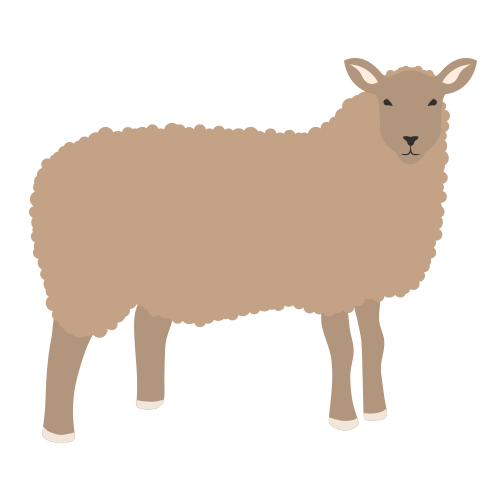
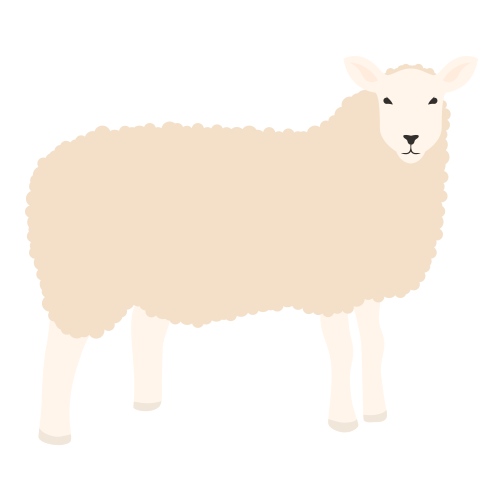
**Gen. 30:40**

ל ַב ּד ֹו, ְולֹא ׁ ָש ָתם ַעל-צֹאן ָל ָבן.

וַ ָ ּי ׁ ֶשת-ל ֹו **ֲע ָדרִים**

And [Jacob] put his own **flocks** apart, and put them not with Laban’s flock.

And that’s not the only parallel. The number three is associated with both of these stories. The first time around, there were *three* flocks, and the second time around, there are *three* days’ travel between Jacob’s flocks and Lavan’s flocks (Gen. 30:36).



### Element 5

The next thing to happen, at the start of *Vayeitzei,* is that Jacob encounters Lavan — and Lavan asks him a question:

**Gen. 29:15**

ִלי, ַמה- **ַּמ ְ ׂש ֻּכרְ ֶּת ָך**.

ִּגי ָדה ה

ל ַי ֲעקֹב…

ו ּיֹא ֶמר ָל ָבן,

And Laban said to Jacob… ‘Tell me, what shall your **wages** be?’

It turns out that there is *another* time that Lavan asks Jacob about his wages — and it’s right where it should be:

**Gen. 30:28**

**ׂש ָכרְ ָך** ָע ַלי, ְו ֶא ֵּת ָנה.

ְק ָבה נ

ו ּיֹאמַר:

And [Laban] said: “Name your **wages**, and I will give them.”

It’s interesting that the first time around, the wage that Jacob named wasn’t actually *monetary* at all. He asked Lavan for the hand of his daughter, Rachel, in marriage. Now listen to Lavan’s language the second time around. What is the Hebrew word that he uses when he says, “Name your wages”?

# נקְבה

That sure looks a lot like the Hebrew word for “female”:

# נקֵבה

What we’re seeing, it seems, is that the first part of the chiasm is actually *present* in the second part of the chiasm.

### Element 6

And now, back to the beginning of *Vayeitze*i. What’s the next thing that happens?

**Gen. 29:21**

ְלאו ָי ָמי; ְו ָאב ֹו ָאה, ֵא ֶלי ָה. ּכי ָמ

ה ָבה ֶאת-**אִ ׁ ְש ִּתי**,

ו ּיֹא ֶמר ַי ֲעקֹב ֶאל- ָל ָבן

And Jacob said unto Laban: ‘Give me my **wife**, for my days [of working for you] are filled, that I may go in to her.’

When else does Jacob ask for Lavan’s daughter? Look down to the end of *Vayeitzei*, just above Element 5:

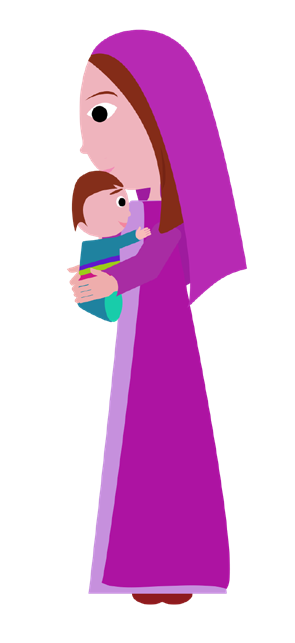
**Gen. 30:26**

ּב ֵהן

ְת ָנה ֶאת-**נָ ׁ ַשי** ְו ֶאת- ְי ָל ַדי, ֲא ׁ ֶשר ָע ַב ְד ִּתי אֹ ְת ָך

Give me my **wives** and my children for whom I have worked for you

This time, Jacob isn’t only asking for Rachel. He’s asking for all of his wives, and for his children. The storyline has progressed, but the essence of the request is still the same.



### Element 7

And now, we’d like to show you what is perhaps the most astounding piece of this: the very next chiastic pair. When Rachel finally gives birth, she names him Joseph, coming from the word *asaph*, “to gather”:

**Gen. 30:23-24**

ּבן ַא ֵחר.

לי,

ֶמר, **אָ ַסף** ֱאלֹקים ֶאת-ח ְר ָּפ ִתי. ַו ִּת ְק ָרא ֶאת- ׁשמ ֹו י ֹו ֵסף, ֵלאמֹר: יֹ ֵסף ְיקוה ּבן; וַ ּתֹא

וַ ַּת ַהר, וַ ֵּת ֶלד

And she conceived, and bore a son, and said: ‘God has **gathered in** my shame.’ And she called his name Joseph, saying: May the LORD add to me another son.’

Why would Rachel feel this great sense of shame?

Most of us would probably say: *Just look back at Rachel’s story. Jacob has two wives, Leah and Rachel. Leah has all of these children, one after the other. And Rachel is barren, all the while. She’s distraught. Her sense of shame is that she’s been childless, for all of this time — and finally, God has gifted her a son.*

But the chiasm seems to teach otherwise. Rachel’s sense of shame comes from *somewhere else*. Go back to the beginning of *Vayeitzei* and you’ll find the verse that “matches” this one, just after Element 6:

**Gen. 29:22**

ה ָּמקום, ַו ַ ּי ַעׂש ִמ ׁ ְש ֶּתה.

**ו ֶ ּיאֱסֹף** ָל ָבן ֶאת- ָכל-א ְנ ׁ ֵשי

And Laban **gathered** together all the men of the place, and made a feast.

Why did Lavan make a feast? Let’s remind ourselves of the story. Jacob had asked for Rachel’s hand in marriage, and Lavan prepared the wedding, and he gathered together all of the town folk for a great celebration. That’s the *first* time that this word, *asaph*, is used in the Jacob and Lavan story. And then Rachel names her child “Joseph” — because God *asaph*, “gathered,” in her sense of shame. What was the shame? What shame did Rachel feel that night, at the wedding celebration?

Her father had gathered together all the invitees, it was supposed to be Rachel’s wedding night — but where was Rachel? She was off in a side room while everyone danced. It was Leah who was under the wedding canopy. It was supposed to be Rachel’s wedding, but instead, she was all alone with her shame. Her father had treated her in a way that no woman should be treated. But fast forward in Rachel’s story, and you see that her Heavenly Father comes and gives her a gift that no woman in her situation could ever have rightfully hoped for. She was infertile for so many years — and then God gave her a baby. God gathered in her shame. Her own father may have betrayed her, but that betrayal is redeemed by the grace of her Heavenly Father. That redemption, and grace, is encapsulated in the name of her baby: Joseph.

There is far more to this chiasm than we have been able to show you in this guide, and so we invite you to continue to explore how far, in each direction, it goes, and to ask: *What is its center, and why?*

**Genesis 28:10-32:3**

**בראשית כח:י–לב:ג**

**10** And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went

ח ָר ָנה. יא ַו ִ ּי ְפ ַּגע ּב ָּמקום ַו ָ ּי ֶלן ׁ ָשם,

י ַו ֵ ּי ֵצא ַי ֲעקֹב, מ ְּב ֵאר ׁ ָש ַבע; ַו ֵ ּי ֶל ְך,

toward Haran. **11** And he lighted upon the place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he

ַע ה ֶּׁש ֶמ ׁש, ַו ִ ּי ַּקח מ ַא ְב ֵני ה ָּמקום, ַו ָ ּי ֶׂשם מ ַר ֲא ׁשֹ ָתיו; ַו ִ ּי ׁ ְש ַּכב, ההוא. יב ַו ַ ּי ֲחלֹם, ְו ִה ֵּנה ס ָּלם מ ָ ּצב א ְר ָצה, ְורֹא ׁש ֹו, מ ִּגי

ּכי-בא ָּמקום ּב

took one of the stones of the place, and put it under his

מ ְל ֲא ֵכי אלֹקים, עֹ ִלים ְויֹ ְר ִדים ב ֹו. יג ְו ִה ֵּנה ְיק ָוה ִנ ָ ּצב

ה ָּׁש ָמ ְי ָמה; ְו ִה ֵּנה

head, and lay down in that place to sleep. **12** And he

ָליו, ַו ּיֹא ַמר, א ִני ְיקוה אלֹ ֵהי א ְב ָר ָהם א ִבי ָך, ֵואלֹקי ִי ְצ ָחק; ה ָא ֶרץ, ע

dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and

the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels

ָה-- ְל ָך א ְּת ֶנ ָּנה, ו ְל ַז ְר ֶע ָך. יד ְו ָה ָיה ַז ְר ֲע ָך ּכ ֲע ַפר א ָּתה ׁשֹ ֵכב ע ֶלי

א ׁ ֶשר

of God ascending and descending on it. **13** And, behold, the LORD stood beside him, and said: ‘I am the LORD, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac. The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed.

**14** And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south. And in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. **15** And, behold, I

ה ָא ֶרץ, ו ָפ ַר ְצ ָּת ָי ָּמה ָו ֵק ְד ָמה ְו ָצפ ָנה ָו ֶנ ְג ָּבה; ְו ִנ ְב ְרכ ּו ב ָך ּכל-מ ׁ ְש ְּפחֹת

ה ֲא ָד ָמה, ו ְב ַז ְר ֶע ָך. טו ְו ִה ֵּנה א ֹנ ִכי ע ָּמ ְך, ו ׁ ְש ַמ ְר ִּתי ָך ּבכל א ׁ ֶשר- ּת ֵל ְך,

ו ֲה ׁ ִשב ִתי ָך, אל-ה ֲא ָד ָמה ה ּזֹאת: ּכי, לֹא א ֱע ָז ְב ָך, עד א ׁ ֶשר אם-ע ִׂשי ִתי, את א ׁ ֶשר- ִ ּד ַּב ְר ִּתי ל ְך. טז ַו ִ ּיי ַקץ ַי ֲעקֹב, מ ְּׁש ָנת ֹו, ַו ּיֹא ֶמר, א ֵכן ֵי ׁש ְיקוה

ּב ָּמקום ה ֶ ּזה; ְו ָא ֹנ ִכי, לֹא ָי ָד ְע ִּתי. יז ַו ִ ּיי ָרא, ַו ּיֹא ַמר, מה-נ ֹו ָרא, ה ָּמקום ה ֶ ּזה: אין ֶזה, ּכי אם- ֵבית אלֹקים, ְו ֶזה, ׁ ַש ַער ה ָּׁש ָמ ִים. יח ַו ַ ּי ׁ ְש ֵּכם

י ֲעקֹב ּב ּ ֹב ֶקר, ַו ִ ּי ַּקח את-ה ֶא ֶבן א ׁ ֶשר- ָׂשם מ ַר ֲא ׁשֹ ָתיו, ַו ָ ּי ֶׂשם אֹ ָת ּה,

am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest,

ההוא,

ׁשם-ה ָּמקום את-

על-רֹא ׁ ָש ּה. יט ַו ִ ּי ְק ָרא

מ ֵ ּצ ָבה; ַו ִ ּיצֹק ׁ ֶש ֶמן,

and will bring thee back into this land; for I will not leave

ל ִרא ׁשֹ ָנה. כ ַו ִ ּי ַ ּדר ַי ֲעקֹב, ֶנ ֶדר לאמֹר:

ּבית-קל; ְואו ָלם ל ּוז ׁ ֵשם-ה ִעיר,

thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee

א ׁ ֶשר א ֹנ ִכי הו ֵל ְך, ְו ָנ ַתן- ִלי

ּב ֶ ּד ֶר ְך ה ֶ ּזה

אם- ִי ְה ֶיה אלֹקים ע ָּמ ִדי, ו ׁ ְש ָמ ַר ִני

of.’ **16** And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said: ‘Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not.’ **17** And

ּבית

ל ֶחם ל ֱאכל, ו ֶב ֶגד ל ְל ּ ֹב ׁש. כא ְו ׁ ַש ְב ִּתי ב ׁ ָשל ֹום, אל- ֵבית א ִבי; ְו ָה ָיה

יקוה לי, לאלֹקים. כב ְו ָה ֶא ֶבן ה ּזֹאת, א ׁ ֶשר- ַׂש ְמ ִּתי מ ֵ ּצ ָבה-- ִי ְה ֶיה,

he was afraid, and said: ‘How full of awe is this place! this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.’ **18** And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and

ֵאר ב

ֵּנה עֵּׂשר א ַעְּׂש ֶר ּנ ּו ל ְך. א ְר ָצה ב ֵני-ק ֶדם. ב ַו ַ ּי ְרא ְו ִה

אלֹקים; ְוכל א ׁ ֶשר ִת ֶּתן- ִלי,

א ַו ִ ּיָּׂשא ַי ֲעקֹב, ַר ְג ָליו; ַו ֵ ּי ֶל ְך,

took the stone that he had put under his head, and set it

ְּב ֵאר מן-ה

ֶלי ָה-- ִכי ע

ְד ֵרי-צֹאן רֹ ְב ִצים ע

ּבָּׂש ֶדה, ְו ִה ֵּנה- ׁשם ׁ ְשלֹ ׁ ָשה

up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. **19** And

ה ְּב ֵאר. ג ְו ֶנ ֶא ְספו- ׁש ָּמה על- ּפי

ה ִהוא, ַי ׁ ְשקו ה ֲע ָד ִרים; ְו ָה ֶא ֶבן ְּגדֹ ָלה,

he called the name of that place Beth-el, but the name of

כל-ה ֲע ָד ִרים, ְו ָג ְלל ּו את-ה ֶא ֶבן מ ַעל ִפי ה ְּב ֵאר, ְו ִה ׁ ְשקו, את-ה ּצֹאן;

the city was Luz at the first. **20** And Jacob vowed a vow,

ַחי א

ל ְמקֹ ָמ ּה. ד ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ֶהם ַי ֲעקֹב,

ְּב ֵאר, ה

ּפי על-

ֶא ֶבן את-ה

ו ֵה ׁ ִשיב ּו

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saying: ‘If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way

ָל ָבן את-

ַד ְע ֶּתם ה ְי

ֶהם, ל

ְחנ ּו. ה ַו ּיֹא ֶמר א ָנ

ָח ָרן מ

ֶּתם; ַו ּיֹא ְמר ּו, א

מ ַא ִין

that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put

ה ׁ ָשל ֹום ל ֹו; ַו ּיֹא ְמר ּו ׁ ָשל ֹום-

ֶהם, ל

ּבן-נחור; ַו ּיֹא ְמר ּו, ָי ָד ְענ ּו. ו ַו ּיֹא ֶמר

on, **21** so that I come back to my father’s house in peace,

ּצֹאן. ז ַו ּיֹא ֶמר, הן ע ֹוד ה ּי ֹום ָּגד ֹול-- עם-ה

ָאה ּב

-ו ִה ֵּנה ָר ֵחל ּב ּת ֹו,

then shall the LORD be my God, **22** and this stone, which I

ה ִּמ ְק ֶנה; ה ׁ ְשקו ה ּצֹאן, ו ְלכ ּו ְרע ּו. ח ַו ּיֹא ְמר ּו, לֹא

ָא ֵסף ה

לֹא-עת,

have set up for a pillar, shall be God’s house; and of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee.’

**1** Then Jacob went on his journey, and came to the land of the children of the east. **2** And he looked, and behold a well in the field, and, lo, three flocks of sheep lying there

נ ּו ַכל, עד א ׁ ֶשר ֵי ָא ְספו ּכל-ה ֲע ָד ִרים, ְו ָג ְלל ּו את-ה ֶא ֶבן מ ַעל ִפי ה ְּב ֵאר; ו ִה ׁ ְש ִקינ ּו, ה ּצֹאן. ט ע ֹו ֶד ּנ ּו, מ ַד ֵּבר ע ָּמם; ְו ָר ֵחל ּב ָאה, עם-ה ּצֹאן א ׁ ֶשר ל ָא ִבי ָה-- ִכי רֹ ָעה, הוא. י ַו ְי ִהי ּכ ֲא ׁ ֶשר ָר ָאה ַי ֲעקֹב את-ר ֵחל, ּבת- ָל ָבן

א ִחי א ּמ ֹו, ְו ֶאת-צֹאן ל ָבן, א ִחי א ּמ ֹו; ַו ִ ּי ַּג ׁש ַי ֲעקֹב, ַו ָ ּי ֶגל את-ה ֶא ֶבן מ ַעל

by it.--For out of that well they watered the flocks. And the

ָר ֵחל; ל

א ּמ ֹו. יא ַו ִ ּי ַּׁשק ַי ֲעקֹב,

ִחי א

ָבן ל

את-צֹאן

ה ְּב ֵאר, ַו ַ ּי ׁ ְש ְק,

ִפי

stone upon the well’s mouth was great. **3** And thither were

ִבי ָה הוא, ְו ִכי בן- א

א ִחי ּכי

את-קֹל ֹו, ַו ֵ ּי ְב ְּך. יב ַו ַ ּי ֵּגד ַי ֲעקֹב ל ָר ֵחל,

ו ִ ּיָּׂשא

all the flocks gathered; and they rolled the stone from the

ר ְב ָקה, הוא; ַו ָּת ָרץ, ַו ַּת ֵּגד ל ָא ִבי ָה. יג ַו ְי ִהי כ ׁ ְשמֹ ַע ל ָבן את- ׁש ַמע ַי ֲעקֹב

well’s mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone back upon the well’s mouth in its place.-- **4** And Jacob

said unto them: ‘My brethren, whence are ye?’ And they

ֹו ַו ְי ַח ֶּבק-ל ֹו ַו ְי ַנ ֶּׁשק-ל ֹו, ַו ְי ִבי ֵאהו, אל- ֵבית ֹו; ָב ִרים ה ֵא ֶּלה. יד ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ֹו ל ָבן, א ְך ע ְצ ִמי ל ְק ָראת ּכל-ה ְ ּד

ּבן-אחֹת ֹו, ַו ָ ּי ָרץ ַס ֵּפר ל ָל ָבן, את ו ְי

said: ‘Of Haran are we.’ **5** And he said unto them: ‘Know ye

ַי ֲעקֹב, ה ִכי- ל

חֹ ֶד ׁש ָי ִמים. טו ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ָבן, ע ּמ ֹו,

ו ְב ָׂש ִרי א ָּתה; ַו ֵ ּי ׁ ֶשב

Laban the son of Nahor?’ And they said: ‘We know him.’ **6**

ו ְל ָל ָבן, ׁ ְש ֵּתי

מה-מ ְׂש ֻּכ ְר ֶּת ָך. טז

ִלי,

ִּגי ָדה ה

ח ָּנם;

ַו ֲע ַב ְד ַּת ִני א ָּתה,

א ִחי

And he said unto them: ‘Is it well with him?’ And they said:

ָאה, ַר ּכ ֹות; ל

ָּנה ָר ֵחל. יז ְו ֵעי ֵני ה ְּק ַט

ל ָאה, ְו ׁ ֵשם

ְּגדֹ ָלה ה

ֵשם

בנ ֹות:

‘It is well; and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with

מ ְר ֶאה. יח ַו ֶ ּי ֱא ַהב ַי ֲעקֹב, את-ר ֵחל;

ָתה, ְי ַפת-תֹ ַאר, ִוי ַפת ה ְי

ו ָר ֵחל,

the sheep.’ **7** And he said: ‘Lo, it is yet high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together; water

ו ּיֹא ֶמר, א ֱע ָב ְד ָך ׁ ֶש ַבע ׁ ָש ִנים, ּב ָר ֵחל ּב ְּת ָך, ה ְּק ַט ָּנה. יט ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ָבן, ט ֹוב ִת ִּתי אֹ ָת ּה ל ְך, מ ִּת ִּתי אֹ ָת ּה, ל ִאי ׁש א ֵחר; ׁ ְש ָבה, ע ָּמ ִדי. כ ַו ַ ּי ֲעבד ַי ֲעקֹב

ye the sheep, and go and feed them.’ **8** And they said: ‘We

cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and they

ּכ ָי ִמים א ָח ִדים, ּב ַא ֲה ָבת ֹו אֹ ָת ּה. כא ב ֵעי ָניו

ּב ָר ֵחל, ׁ ֶש ַבע ׁ ָש ִנים; ַו ִ ּי ְהי ּו

roll the stone from the well’s mouth; then we water the

ו ּיֹא ֶמר ַי ֲעקֹב אל- ָל ָבן ה ָבה את-א ׁ ְש ִּתי, ּכי מ ְלאו ָי ָמי; ְו ָאב ֹו ָאה, א ֶלי ָה.

sheep.’ **9** While he was yet speaking with them, Rachel

את- ָכל-א ְנ ׁ ֵשי ה ָּמקום, ַו ַ ּי ַעׂש מ ׁ ְש ֶּתה. כג ַו ְי ִהי ב ֶע ֶרב--

ָבן ל

כב ַו ֶ ּי ֱאסֹף

came with her father’s sheep; for she tended them. **10** And

ּה, ל

ָבן ל

א ֶלי ָה. כד ַו ִ ּי ֵּתן

בא,

א ָליו; ַו ָ ּי

ב ּת ֹו, ַו ָ ּי ֵבא אֹ ָת ּה

ֵל ָאה את-

ו ִ ּי ַּקח

it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter

ב ּת ֹו, ׁ ִש ְפ ָחה. כה ַו ְי ִהי ב ּ ֹב ֶקר, ְו ִה ֵּנה-

את-ז ְל ָּפה ׁ ִש ְפ ָחת ֹו-- ְל ֵל ָאה

of Laban his mother’s brother, and the sheep of Laban

מה-זֹאת ע ִׂשי ָת ִלי--הלֹא ב ָר ֵחל ע ַב ְד ִּתי

הוא ל ָאה; ַו ּיֹא ֶמר אל- ָל ָבן,

his mother’s brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the

ע ָּמ ְך, ְו ָל ָּמה ִר ִּמי ָת ִני. כו ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ָבן, לֹא- ֵי ָע ֶׂשה כן ּב ְמקו ֵמנ ּו-- ָל ֵתת

stone from the well’s mouth, and watered the flock of

Laban his mother’s brother. **11** And Jacob kissed Rachel,

ה ְּב ִכי ָרה. כז מ ֵּלא, ׁ ְש ֻב ַע זֹאת; ְו ִנ ְּת ָנה ל ָך ַּגם-את-

ְפ ֵני ל

ה ְ ּצ ִעי ָרה,

and lifted up his voice, and wept. **12** And Jacob told

זֹאת, ּב ֲעב ָדה א ׁ ֶשר ַת ֲעבד ע ָּמ ִדי, ע ֹוד, ׁ ֶש ַבע- ׁש ִנים א ֵחר ֹות. כח ַו ַ ּי ַעׂש

Rachel that he was her father’s brother, and that he was

ּכן, ַו ְי ַמ ֵּלא ׁ ְש ֻב ַע זֹאת; ַו ִ ּי ֶּתן-ל ֹו את-ר ֵחל ּב ּת ֹו, ל ֹו ל ִא ָּׁשה. כט

י ֲעקֹב

Rebekah’s son; and she ran and told her father. **13** And

בא ַּגם

ל ׁ ִש ְפ ָחה. ל ַו ָ ּי

את- ִב ְל ָהה ׁ ִש ְפ ָחת ֹו-- ָל ּה,

ּת ֹו, ּב

ָר ֵחל ל

ָבן ל

ו ִ ּי ֵּתן

it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob

מ ֵּל ָאה; ַו ַ ּי ֲעבד ע ּמ ֹו, ע ֹוד ׁ ֶש ַבע- ׁש ִנים

אל-ר ֵחל, ַו ֶ ּי ֱא ַהב ַּגם-את-ר ֵחל

his sister’s son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced

א ֵחר ֹות. לא ַו ַ ּי ְרא ְיקוה ּכי- ְׂשנ ּו ָאה ל ָאה, ַו ִ ּי ְפ ַּתח את-ר ְח ָמ ּה; ְו ָר ֵחל,

him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house. And

ל ָאה ַו ֵּת ֶלד ּבן, ַו ִּת ְק ָרא ׁ ְשמ ֹו ְראו ֵבן: ּכי א ְמ ָרה,

ע ָק ָרה. לב ַו ַּת ַהר

he told Laban all these things. **14** And Laban said to him:

‘Surely thou art my bone and my flesh.’ And he abode with

ּכי-ר ָאה ְיקוה ּב ָע ְנ ִיי-- ִכי ע ָּתה, ֶי ֱא ָה ַב ִני אי ׁ ִשי. לג ַו ַּת ַהר ע ֹוד, ַו ֵּת ֶלד

him the space of a month. **15** And Laban said unto Jacob:

ּכי- ׁש ַמע ְיקוה ּכי- ְׂשנ ּו ָאה א ֹנ ִכי, ַו ִ ּי ֶּתן- ִלי ַּגם-את-זה;

ּבן, ַו ּתֹא ֶמר

‘Because thou art my brother, shouldest thou therefore

ַּפ ַעם ה

ָּתה ע

ַו ּתֹא ֶמר ּבן,

ו ִּת ְק ָרא ׁ ְשמ ֹו, ׁ ִש ְמע ֹון. לד ַו ַּת ַהר ע ֹוד, ַו ֵּת ֶלד

serve me for nought? tell me, what shall thy wages be?’ **16**

ל ִוי. לה

ֵכן ָק ָרא- ׁשמ ֹו, על-

ב ִנים;

ּכי- ָי ַל ְד ִּתי ל ֹו ׁ ְשלֹ ׁ ָשה

א ַלי,

אי ׁ ִשי

י ָּל ֶוה

Now Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was

ְיקוה--על- ֵכן ָק ְר ָאה את-

ַּפ ַעם או ֶדה ה

ַו ּתֹא ֶמר ּבן,

ו ַּת ַהר ע ֹוד ַו ֵּת ֶלד

Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. **17** And

ְשמ ֹו, ְיהו ָדה; ַו ַּת ֲעמֹד, מ ֶּל ֶדת.

Leah’s eyes were weak; but Rachel was of beautiful form

ּכי לֹא ָי ְל ָדה ל ַי ֲעקֹב, ַו ְּת ַק ֵּנא ָר ֵחל, ּב ֲאחֹת ּה; ַו ּתֹא ֶמר

א ַו ֵּת ֶרא ָר ֵחל,

and fair to look upon. **18** And Jacob loved Rachel; and he

מ ָתה א ֹנ ִכי. ב ַו ִ ּי ַחר-אף ַי ֲעקֹב,

אל- ַי ֲעקֹב ה ָבה- ִּלי ב ִנים, ְו ִאם-א ִין

said: ‘I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger

daughter.’ **19** And Laban said: ‘It is better that I give her

ה ַת ַחת אלֹקים א ֹנ ִכי, א ׁ ֶשר-מ ַנע מ ֵּמ ְך, ְפ ִרי-ב ֶטן. ג

ּב ָר ֵחל; ַו ּיֹא ֶמר,

to thee, than that I should give her to another man; abide

ֹבא א ֶלי ָה; ְו ֵת ֵלד, על- ִב ְר ַּכי, ְו ִא ָּב ֶנה

ו ּתֹא ֶמר, ה ֵּנה א ָמ ִתי ב ְל ָהה

with me.’ **20** And Jacob served seven years for Rachel;

את- ִב ְל ָהה ׁ ִש ְפ ָח ָת ּה, ל ִא ָּׁשה; ַו ָ ּיבא

ד ַו ִּת ֶּתן-ל ֹו מ ֶּמ ָּנה.

גם-א ֹנ ִכי,

and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he

ו ַו ּתֹא ֶמר ָר ֵחל, ּבן.

ַי ֲעקֹב ל

ָהה, ַו ֵּת ֶלד ּב ְל

א ֶלי ָה, ַי ֲעקֹב. ה ַו ַּת ַהר

had to her. **21** And Jacob said unto Laban: ‘Give me my

ּבן; על- ֵכן ָק ְר ָאה ׁ ְשמ ֹו, ָ ּדן. ז

אלֹקים, ְו ַגם ׁ ָש ַמע ּבקֹ ִלי, ַו ִ ּי ֶּתן- ִלי

ּד ַנ ִּני

wife, for my days are filled, that I may go in unto her.’ **22**

ּב ְל ָהה ׁ ִש ְפ ַחת ָר ֵחל: ּבן ׁ ֵש ִני, ל ַי ֲעקֹב. ח ַו ּתֹא ֶמר

ו ַּת ַהר ע ֹוד--ו ֵּת ֶלד,

And Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and

ר ֵחל, ַנ ְפ ּת ּו ֵלי אלֹקים ִנ ְפ ַּת ְל ִּתי עם-אחֹתי-- ַגם- ָיכ ְל ִּתי; ַו ִּת ְק ָרא ׁ ְשמ ֹו,

made a feast. **23** And it came to pass in the evening, that

he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him; and he

ל ָאה, ּכי ע ְמ ָדה מ ֶּל ֶדת; ַו ִּת ַּקח את-ז ְל ָּפה ׁ ִש ְפ ָח ָת ּה,

נ ְפ ָּת ִלי. ט ַו ֵּת ֶרא

went in unto her. **24** And Laban gave Zilpah his handmaid

ל ִא ָּׁשה. י ַו ֵּת ֶלד, ִז ְל ָּפה ׁ ִש ְפ ַחת ל ָאה-- ְל ַי ֲעקֹב ּבן.

ו ִּת ֵּתן אֹ ָת ּה ל ַי ֲעקֹב

unto his daughter Leah for a handmaid. **25** And it came

ֹו, ָּגד. יב ַו ֵּת ֶלד, ִז ְל ָּפה את- ׁשמ

בגד ) ָּבא ָגד;( ַו ִּת ְק ָרא ל ָאה,

יא ַו ּתֹא ֶמר

to pass in the morning that, behold, it was Leah; and he

ל ָאה-- ְב ָא ׁ ְש ִרי, ּכי א ְּׁשר ּו ִני

ּבן ׁ ֵש ִני, ל ַי ֲעקֹב. יג ַו ּתֹא ֶמר

ִש ְפ ַחת ל ָאה,

said to Laban: ‘What is this thou hast done unto me? did not I serve with thee for Rachel? wherefore then hast thou

את- ׁשמ ֹו, א ׁ ֵשר. יד ַו ֵ ּי ֶל ְך ְראו ֵבן ּבי ֵמי ק ִציר-ח ִּטים,

ּבָּׂש ֶדה, ַו ָ ּי ֵבא אֹ ָתם, אל- ֵל ָאה א ּמ ֹו; ַו ּתֹא ֶמר ָר ֵחל,

ֹות; ַו ִּת ְק ָרא ָצא ד ּו ָד ִאים ּבנ ו ִ ּי ְמ

beguiled me?’ **26** And Laban said: ‘It is not so done in our

ּב ֵנ ְך. טו ַו ּתֹא ֶמר ל ּה, ה ְמ ַעט ַק ְח ֵּת ְך מ ּד ּו ָד ֵאי

אל- ֵל ָאה, ְת ִני-נא לי,

place, to give the younger before the first-born. **27** Fulfil the week of this one, and we will give thee the other also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years.’ **28** And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week;

את- ּד ּו ָד ֵאי ּב ִני; ַו ּתֹא ֶמר ָר ֵחל, ל ֵכן ִי ׁ ְש ַּכב ע ָּמ ְך ב ֵנ ְך. טז ַו ָ ּיבא ַי ֲעקֹב מן-הָּׂש ֶדה, ּב ֶע ֶרב, ַו ֵּת ֵצא

א ַלי ָתב ֹוא, ּכיׂשכרׂש ַכ ְר ִּתי ָך ּבד ּו ָד ֵאי ּב ִני;

את-אי ׁ ִשי, ְו ָל ַק ַחת, ַּגם ָלה, ַת ַחת, ד ּו ָד ֵאי ְק ָראת ֹו ַו ּתֹא ֶמר ה ַּל ְי ל ָאה ל

and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife. 29 And

ָאה; ַו ַּת ַהר ַו ֵּת ֶלד אל- ֵל

אלֹקים,

ּב ַּל ְי ָלה הוא. יז ַו ִ ּי ׁ ְש ַמע

ָּמ ּה, ע

ו ִ ּי ׁ ְש ַּכב

Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah his handmaid

ׂש ָכ ִרי, א ׁ ֶשר-נ ַת ִּתי

ּבן ח ִמי ׁ ִשי. יח ַו ּתֹא ֶמר ל ָאה, ָנ ַתן אלֹקים

ל ַי ֲעקֹב,

to be her handmaid. **30** And he went in also unto Rachel,

ל ִאי ׁ ִשי; ַו ִּת ְק ָרא ׁ ְשמ ֹו, ִיָּׂשש ָכר. יט ַו ַּת ַהר ע ֹוד ל ָאה, ַו ֵּת ֶלד ּבן-

ִש ְפ ָח ִתי,

and he loved Rachel more than Leah, and served with him

ְז ָב ַד ִני אלֹקים אֹ ִתי ֵז ֶבד ט ֹוב--ה ַּפ ַעם ל ָאה,

ִש ִּׁשי ל ַי ֲעקֹב. כ ַו ּתֹא ֶמר

yet seven other years. **31** And the LORD saw that Leah

was hated, and he opened her womb; but Rachel was

י ְז ְּב ֵל ִני אי ׁ ִשי, ּכי- ָי ַל ְד ִּתי ל ֹו ׁ ִש ָּׁשה ב ִנים; ַו ִּת ְק ָרא את- ׁשמ ֹו, ְז ֻבל ּון. כא

barren. **32** And Leah conceived, and bore a son, and she

ּבת; ַו ִּת ְק ָרא את- ׁש ָמ ּה, ִ ּדי ָנה. כב ַו ִ ּי ְז ּ ֹכר אלֹקים, את-

ו ַא ַחר, ָי ְל ָדה

called his name Reuben; for she said: ‘Because the LORD

אלֹקים, ַו ִ ּי ְפ ַּתח את-ר ְח ָמ ּה. כג ַו ַּת ַהר, ַו ֵּת ֶלד

ֶלי ָה א

ר ֵחל; ַו ִ ּי ׁ ְש ַמע

hath looked upon my affliction; for now my husband will

ׁשמ ֹו י ֹו ֵסף, את-

ְר ָּפ ִתי. כד ַו ִּת ְק ָרא את-ח

אלֹקים

ַסף א

ּבן; ַו ּתֹא ֶמר,

love me.’ **33** And she conceived again, and bore a son; and

ּכ ֲא ׁ ֶשר ָי ְל ָדה ָר ֵחל את-י ֹו ֵסף;

לאמֹר: יֹ ֵסף ְיקוה לי, ּבן א ֵחר. כה ַו ְי ִהי,

said: ‘Because the LORD hath heard that I am hated, He

אל- ָל ָבן, ׁ ַש ְּל ֵח ִני ְו ֵא ְל ָכה, אל-מקו ִמי ו ְל ַא ְר ִצי. כו ְת ָנה

ו ּיֹא ֶמר ַי ֲעקֹב,

hath therefore given me this son also.’ And she called his

ֵא ֵל ָכה: ּכי א ָּתה ָי ַד ְע ָּת, ּב ֵהן--ו

את-נ ׁ ַשי ְו ֶאת- ְי ָל ַדי, א ׁ ֶשר ע ַב ְד ִּתי אֹ ְת ָך

name Simeon. **34** And she conceived again, and bore a

ִּתי ָך. כז ַו ּיֹא ֶמר א ָליו ל ָבן, אם-נא מ ָצאתי חן ע ַב ְד

את-עב ָד ִתי א ׁ ֶשר

son; and said: ‘Now this time will my husband be joined

ּב ֵעי ֶני ָך; ִנ ַח ׁ ְש ִּתי, ַו ְי ָב ְר ֵכ ִני ְיקוה ּב ְג ָל ֶל ָך. כח ַו ּיֹא ַמר: נ ְק ָבהׂש ָכ ְר ָך

unto me, because I have borne him three sons.’ Therefore was his name called Levi. **35** And she conceived again,

א ָליו--א ָּתה ָי ַד ְע ָּת, את א ׁ ֶשר ע ַב ְד ִּתי ָך;

ע ַלי, ְו ֶא ֵּת ָנה. כט ַו ּיֹא ֶמר

and bore a son; and she said: ‘This time will I praise the

א ׁ ֶשר-ה ָיה ל ָך ל ָפ ַני, ַו ִ ּי ְפרֹץ

ִּתי. ל ּכי מ ַעט א

ו ֵאת א ׁ ֶשר-ה ָיה מ ְק ְנ ָך,

LORD.’ Therefore she called his name Judah; and she left

ל ֹרב, ַו ְי ָב ֶר ְך ְיקוה אֹ ְת ָך, ל ַר ְג ִלי; ְו ַע ָּתה, מ ַתי א ֱע ֶׂשה ַגם-א ֹנ ִכי-- ְל ֵבי ִתי.

off bearing.

**1** And when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and she said unto Jacob: ‘Give me children, or else I die.’ **2** And Jacob’s anger was kindled against Rachel; and he said: ‘Am I in God’s stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?’ **3** And

she said: ‘Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her; that she

לא ַו ּיֹא ֶמר, מה א ֶּתן- ָל ְך; ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ַי ֲעקֹב, לֹא-ת ֶּתן- ִלי מאו ָמה--אם-

ַת ֲע ֶׂשה- ִּלי ה ָ ּד ָבר ה ֶ ּזה, א ׁש ּו ָבה א ְר ֶעה צֹאנ ָך א ׁ ְשמֹר. לב א ֱעבר ּב ָכל-

צֹאנ ָך ה ּי ֹום, ה ֵסר מ ָּׁשם ּכל- ֶׂשה ָנקֹד ְו ָטל ּוא ְו ָכל- ֶׂשה-חום ּב ְּכ ָׂש ִבים,

ו ָטל ּוא ְו ָנקֹד, ּב ִע ִ ּזים; ְו ָה ָיה,ׂש ָכ ִרי. לג ְו ָע ְנ ָתה- ִבי צ ְד ָק ִתי ּבי ֹום מ ָחר, ּכי-תב ֹוא על- ְׂש ָכ ִרי ל ָפ ֶני ָך: ֹכל א ׁ ֶשר-אי ֶנ ּנ ּו ָנקֹד ְו ָטל ּוא ּב ִע ִ ּזים, ְוחום ּב ְּכ ָׂש ִבים-- ָגנ ּוב הוא, א ִּתי. לד ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ָבן, הן: ל ּו, ְי ִהי כ ְד ָב ֶר ָך. לה

may bear upon my knees, and I also may be builded up

ּכל-ה ִע ִ ּזים

ה ֲע ֻק ִ ּדים ְו ַה ְּט ֻל ִאים, ְו ֵאת

את-ה ְּת ָי ׁ ִשים

ההוא

ּי ֹום ּב

ו ָ ּי ַסר

through her.’ **4** And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid to

ב ֹו, ְו ָכל-חום ּב ְּכ ָׂש ִבים; ַו ִ ּי ֵּתן, ּב ַיד-

ה ְּנ ֻק ּד ֹות ְו ַה ְּט ֻלאֹת, ֹכל א ׁ ֶשר- ָל ָבן

wife; and Jacob went in unto her. **5** And Bilhah conceived,

ַי ֲעקֹב; ְו ַי ֲעקֹב, רֹ ֶעה את- ו ֵבין

ּב ָניו. לו ַו ָ ּי ֶׂשם, ֶ ּד ֶר ְך ׁ ְשלֹ ׁ ֶשת ָי ִמים, ּבינ ֹו,

and bore Jacob a son. **6** And Rachel said: ‘God hath judged

ל ָבן--ה ּנ ֹו ָ ֹתרת. לז ַו ִ ּי ַּקח-ל ֹו ַי ֲעקֹב, מ ַּקל ל ְב ֶנה לח--ול ּוז ְו ַע ְרמ ֹון;

צֹאן

me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a

son.’ Therefore called she his name Dan. **7** And Bilhah

ל ָבנ ֹות--מ ְחׂ ֹשף ה ָּל ָבן, א ׁ ֶשר על-ה ַּמ ְקל ֹות. לח

ְפ ָצל ֹות ּב ֵהן,

ו ְי ַפ ֵ ּצל

Rachel’s handmaid conceived again, and bore Jacob a

ִפ ֵ ּצל, ּב ְר ָה ִטים, ּב ׁ ִש ְקת ֹות ה ָּמ ִים--א ׁ ֶשר

את-ה ַּמ ְקל ֹות א ׁ ֶשר

ו ַ ּי ֵ ּצג,

second son. **8** And Rachel said: ‘With mighty wrestlings

ה ּצֹאן, ַו ֵ ּי ַח ְמ ָנה ּבב ָאן ל ׁ ְש ּת ֹות. לט

ל ׁ ְש ּת ֹות ל ֹנ ַכח

ּצֹאן ה

ָתבאןָ

have I wrestled with my sister, and have prevailed.’ And she

ְט ֻל ִאים. מ ו

ע ֻק ִ ּדים ְנ ֻק ִ ּדים

ּצֹאן, ה

ַּמ ְקל ֹות; ַו ֵּת ַל ְדןָ אל-ה

ּצֹאן, ה

ו ֶ ּי ֱחמ ּו

called his name Naphtali. **9** When Leah saw that she had

ְו ָכל-חום, ּבצֹאן אל-עקֹד

ה ְפ ִריד ַי ֲעקֹב, ַו ִ ּי ֵּתן ְפ ֵני ה ּצֹאן

ו ַה ְּכ ָׂש ִבים,

left off bearing, she took Zilpah her handmaid, and gave

ל ַב ּד ֹו, ְולֹא ׁ ָש ָתם על-צֹאן ל ָבן. מא ְו ָה ָיה,

ל ָבן; ַו ָ ּי ׁ ֶשת-ל ֹו ע ָד ִרים

her to Jacob to wife. **10** And Zilpah Leah’s handmaid bore

ה ּצֹאן ה ְמ ֻק ָּׁשר ֹות, ְו ָׂשם ַי ֲעקֹב את-ה ַּמ ְקל ֹות ל ֵעי ֵני ה ּצֹאן,

ּב ָכל- ַי ֵחם

Jacob a son. **11** And Leah said: ‘Fortune is come!’ And she

called his name Gad. **12** And Zilpah Leah’s handmaid bore

ּב ַּמ ְקל ֹות. מב ו ְב ַה ֲע ִטיף ה ּצֹאן, לֹא ָי ִׂשים; ְו ָה ָיה

ּב ְר ָה ִטים-- ְל ַי ְח ֵמ ָּנה,

Jacob a second son. **13** And Leah said: ‘Happy am I! for

ל ַי ֲעקֹב. מג ַו ִ ּי ְפרֹץ ה ִאי ׁש, מאֹד מאֹד;

ה ֲע ֻט ִפים ל ָל ָבן, ְו ַה ְּק ׁ ֻש ִרים

the daughters will call me happy.’ And she called his name

ִּלים ַו ֲחמֹ ִרים. ו ְג ַמ

ו ׁ ְש ָפחות ַו ֲע ָב ִדים,

ו ְי ִהי-ל ֹו, צֹאן ַר ּב ֹות,

Asher. **14** And Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest,

ּכל-א ׁ ֶשר

ַקח ַי ֲעקֹב, את ל

לאמֹר,

ֵני- ָל ָבן ב

את- ִ ּד ְב ֵרי

א ַו ִ ּי ׁ ְש ַמע,

and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto

ל ָא ִבינ ּו--ע ָׂשה, את ּכל-ה ָּכבד ה ֶ ּזה. ב ַו ַ ּי ְרא ַי ֲעקֹב,

ו ֵמ ֲא ׁ ֶשר

ל ָא ִבינ ּו;

his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah: ‘Give me, I pray

ע ּמ ֹו, ּכ ְתמ ֹול ׁ ִש ְל ׁש ֹום. ג ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ְיקוה

ְו ִה ֵּנה אי ֶנ ּנ ּו ל ָבן;

את- ּפ ֵני

thee, of thy son’s mandrakes.’ **15** And she said unto her: ‘Is

אל-א ֶרץ אב ֹו ֶתי ָך ו ְלמ ֹו ַל ְד ֶּת ָך; ְו ֶא ְה ֶיה, ע ָּמ ְך. ד ַו ִ ּי ׁ ְש ַלח

אל- ַי ֲעקֹב, ׁש ּוב

it a small matter that thou hast taken away my husband? and wouldest thou take away my son’s mandrakes also?’ And Rachel said: ‘Therefore he shall lie with thee to-

ו ְל ֵל ָאה, הָּׂש ֶדה, אל-צֹאנ ֹו. ה ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ֶהן, רֹ ֶאה

ּכי-אי ֶנ ּנ ּו א ַלי, ּכ ְתמֹל ׁ ִש ְל ׁ ֹשם; ֵואלֹקי א ִבי,

ָר ֵחל ל

ִבי ֶכן, א

י ֲעקֹב, ַו ִ ּי ְק ָרא ֹנ ִכי את- ּפ ֵני א

night for thy son’s mandrakes.’ **16** And Jacob came from

ִבי ֶכן. את-א

ַב ְד ִּתי, ע

ּכ ִחי, ּב ָכל-

ּכי,

ו ְו ַא ֵּת ָנה, ְי ַד ְע ֶּתן: ע ָּמ ִדי.

ה ָיה

the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said: ‘Thou must come in unto me; for I have surely

את-מ ְׂש ֻּכ ְר ִּתי ע ֶׂש ֶרת מֹ ִנים; ְולֹא-נ ָתנ ֹו

אם- ּכה יֹא ַמר, ְנ ֻק ִ ּדים ִי ְה ֶיהׂש ָכ ֶר ָך--ו ָי ְלד ּו

ְו ֶה ֱח ִלף ּבי,

ָּמ ִדי. ח ע

ה ֶתל

ָה ַרע ל

ז ַו ֲא ִבי ֶכן

אלֹקים,

hired thee with my son’s mandrakes.’ And he lay with her

ע ֻק ִ ּדים ִי ְה ֶיהׂש ָכ ֶר ָך--ו ָי ְלד ּו כל-

כל-ה ּצֹאן, ְנ ֻק ִ ּדים; ְו ִאם- ּכה יֹא ַמר,

that night. **17** And God hearkened unto Leah, and she

ה ּצֹאן, ע ֻק ִ ּדים. ט ַו ַ ּי ֵ ּצל אלֹקים את-מ ְק ֵנה א ִבי ֶכם, ַו ִ ּי ֶּתן- ִלי. י ַו ְי ִהי,

conceived, and bore Jacob a fifth son. **18** And Leah said:

ֶרא, ּב ֲחל ֹום; ְו ִה ֵּנה ה ַע ֻּת ִדים העֹ ִלים עי ַני ָו ֵא

ה ּצֹאן, ָו ֶאָּׂשא

ּב ֵעת ַי ֵחם

‘God hath given me my hire, because I gave my handmaid

ע ֻק ִ ּדים ְנ ֻק ִ ּדים ו ְב ֻר ִ ּדים. יאו ּיֹא ֶמר א ַלי מ ְל ַא ְך ה ֱאלֹקים,

על-ה ּצֹאן,

to my husband. And she called his name Issachar. **19**

And Leah conceived again, and bore a sixth son to Jacob.

ה ֵּנ ִני. יב ַו ּיֹא ֶמר,ׂשא-נא עי ֶני ָך ו ְר ֵאה ּכל-

ּב ֲחל ֹום-- ַי ֲעקֹב; ָואֹ ַמר,

1. And Leah said: ‘God hath endowed me with a good

ָר ִאי ִתי, את ּכי

ע ֻק ִ ּדים ְנ ֻק ִ ּדים, ו ְב ֻר ִ ּדים:

ִלים על-ה ּצֹאן, העֹ

ה ַע ֻּת ִדים

dowry; now will my husband dwell with me, because I have

מ ׁ ַש ְח ָּת ָּׁשם

ּבית-קל, א ׁ ֶשר

ה ֵאל,

ל ָבן עֹ ֶׂשה ּל ְך. יג א ֹנ ִכי

ּכל-א ׁ ֶשר

borne him six sons.’ And she called his name Zebulun.

1. And afterwards she bore a daughter, and called her

א ׁ ֶשר ָנ ַד ְר ָּת ִלי ׁ ָשם ֶנ ֶדר; ע ָּתה, קום צא מן-ה ָא ֶרץ ה ּזֹאת, ֹו ַל ְד ֶּת ָך. יד ַו ַּת ַען ָר ֵחל ְו ֵל ָאה, ַו ּתֹא ַמ ְר ָנה ל ֹו: הע ֹוד אל-א ֶרץ מ

מ ֵ ּצ ָבה,

ו ׁש ּוב,

name Dinah. **22** And God remembered Rachel, and God

ּכי

א ִבינ ּו. טו הל ֹוא ָנ ְכ ִר ּי ֹות ֶנ ְח ׁ ַש ְבנ ּו ל ֹו,

לנ ּו ח ֶלק ְו ַנ ֲח ָלה, ּב ֵבית

hearkened to her, and opened her womb. **23** And she

conceived, and bore a son, and said: ‘God hath taken

את- ַכ ְס ֵּפנ ּו. טז ּכי כל-העֹ ׁ ֶשר, א ׁ ֶשר ה ִ ּציל

מ ָכ ָרנ ּו; ַו ּיֹא ַכל ַּגם-אכ ֹול,

away my reproach.’ **24** And she called his name Joseph,

אלֹקים

ו ְל ָב ֵנינ ּו; ְו ַע ָּתה, ֹכל א ׁ ֶשר א ַמר

אלֹקים מ ָא ִבינ ּו-- ָלנ ּו הוא,

saying: ‘The LORD add to me another son.’ **25** And it came

ְּג ַמ ִּלים. על-ה

את- ָב ָניו ְו ֶאת-נ ׁ ָשיו,

א ֶלי ָך--ע ֵׂשה. יז ַו ָ ּי ָקם, ַי ֲעקֹב; ַו ִ ּיָּׂשא

to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said

ְנ ָינ ֹו, ק

א ׁ ֶשר ָר ָכ ׁש--מ ְק ֵנה

ָכל-מ ְק ֵנהו, ְו ֶאת- ָכל-ר ֻכ ׁש ֹו את-

יח ַו ִ ּי ְנ ַהג

unto Laban: ‘Send me away, that I may go unto mine own

יט ְו ָל ָבן ּכ ָנ ַען.

ִי ְצ ָחק א ִביו, א ְר ָצה אל-

ּב ַפ ַ ּדן א ָרם: לב ֹוא

א ׁ ֶשר ָר ַכ ׁש

place, and to my country. **26** Give me my wives and my

ָא ִבי ָה. כ ל

את-צֹאנ ֹו; ַו ִּת ְג ֹנב ָר ֵחל, את-ה ְּת ָר ִפים א ׁ ֶשר

ה ַל ְך, ל ְגזֹז

children for whom I have served thee, and let me go; for

ִּמי--על- ְב ִלי ה ִּגיד ל ֹו, ּכי ב ֵר ַח הוא. כא ה ֲא ַר

ו ִ ּי ְג ֹנב ַי ֲעקֹב, את- ֵלב ל ָבן

thou knowest my service wherewith I have served thee.’

**27** And Laban said unto him: ‘If now I have found favour

ו ִ ּי ְב ַרח הוא ְו ָכל-א ׁ ֶשר-ל ֹו, ַו ָ ּי ָקם ַו ַ ּי ֲעבר את-ה ָּנ ָהר; ַו ָ ּי ֶׂשם את- ּפ ָניו,

in thine eyes--I have observed the signs, and the LORD

ל ָל ָבן, ּב ּי ֹום ה ְּׁש ִלי ׁ ִשי: ּכי ב ַרח, ַי ֲעקֹב. כג ַו ִ ּי ַּקח

הר ה ִּג ְל ָעד. כב ַו ֻ ּי ַּגד

hath blessed me for thy sake.’ **28** And he said: ‘Appoint

א ֲח ָריו, ֶ ּד ֶר ְך ׁ ִש ְב ַעת ָי ִמים; ַו ַ ּי ְד ֵּבק אֹת ֹו, ּב ַהר

את-א ָחיו, ע ּמ ֹו, ַו ִ ּי ְר ּדֹף

me thy wages, and I will give it.’ **29** And he said unto him:

ה ָּל ְי ָלה; ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ּב ֲחלֹם

בא אלֹקים אל- ָל ָבן ה ֲא ַר ִּמי,

ה ִּג ְל ָעד. כד ַו ָ ּי

‘Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle

עם- ַי ֲעקֹב--מ ּט ֹוב עד-רע. כה ַו ַ ּיֵּׂשג ל ָבן,

ֹו, ה ָּׁש ֶמר ל ָך ֶפן- ּת ַד ֵּבר ל

have fared with me. **30** For it was little which thou hadst

ֳהל ֹו ּב ָהר, ְו ָל ָבן ָת ַקע את-א ָחיו, ּב ַהר את-א

את- ַי ֲעקֹב; ְו ַי ֲעקֹב, ָת ַקע

before I came, and it hath increased abundantly; and the

ל ַי ֲעקֹב, מה ע ִׂשי ָת, ַו ִּת ְג ֹנב את- ְל ָב ִבי; ַו ְּת ַנ ֵהג,

ה ִּג ְל ָעד. כו ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ָבן,

LORD hath blessed thee whithersoever I turned. And now when shall I provide for mine own house also?’ **31** And he said: ‘What shall I give thee?’ And Jacob said: ‘Thou shalt

ַנ ְח ֵּבאת ל ְברֹ ַח, ַו ִּת ְג ֹנב אֹ ִתי; ְולֹא- ל ָּמה

ְב ׁ ִש ִרים ּ ֹבתף ו ְב ִכ ּנ ֹור. כח ְולֹא ְנ ַט ׁ ְש ַּת ִני, ו

את- ְב ֹנ ַתי, ּכ ׁ ְש ֻבי ֹות, ח ֶרב. כז ה ַּג ְד ָּת ִלי, ָו ֲא ׁ ַש ֵּל ֲח ָך ּב ִׂש ְמ ָחה

not give me aught; if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will

ל ֲעׂש ֹות

ה ְס ַּכ ְל ָּת עׂש ֹו. כט ֶי ׁש- ְל ֵאל ָי ִדי,

ְו ִל ְב ֹנ ָתי; ע ָּתה, ל ָב ַני

ל ַנ ֵּׁשק

again feed thy flock and keep it. **32** I will pass through all

א ַמר א ַלי לאמֹר, ה ָּׁש ֶמר ל ָך מ ַ ּד ֵּבר

ִבי ֶכם א ֶמ ׁש א

ע ָּמ ֶכם ָרע; ֵואלֹקי

thy flock to-day, removing from thence every speckled and

ְו ַע ָּתה הלֹ ְך ה ַל ְכ ָּת, ּכי-נ ְכסֹף ִנ ְכ ַס ְפ ָּתה עד-רע. ל

עם- ַי ֲעקֹב--מ ּט ֹוב

spotted one, and every dark one among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and of such shall be my hire. **33** So shall my righteousness witness against me hereafter, when thou shalt come to look over my hire that is before thee: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and dark among the sheep, that

ל ֵבית א ִבי ָך; ל ָּמה ָג ַנ ְב ָּת, את-אלֹ ָהי. לא ַו ַ ּי ַען ַי ֲעקֹב, ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ָל ָבן: ּכי י ֵראתי-- ִכי א ַמ ְר ִּתי, ֶפן- ּת ְגזֹל את- ְבנ ֹו ֶתי ָך מ ִע ִּמי. לב עם א ׁ ֶשר ִת ְמ ָצא

ָך, לֹא ִי ְח ֶיה--נ ֶגד א ֵחינ ּו ה ֶּכר- ְל ָך מה ע ָּמ ִדי, ְו ַקח- ָל ְך; ַי ֲעקֹב, ּכי ָר ֵחל ְּג ָנ ָב ַתם. לג ַו ָ ּיבא ל ָבן ּבאֹ ֶהל ַי ֲעקֹב ו ְבאֹ ֶהל את-אלֹ ֶהי ולֹא- ָי ַדע

ל ָאה, ו ְבאֹ ֶהל ׁ ְש ֵּתי ה ֲא ָמהֹת--ולֹא מ ָצא; ַו ֵ ּי ֵצא מאֹ ֶהל ל ָאה, ַו ָ ּיבא

if found with me shall be counted stolen.’ **34** And Laban

ָּג ָמל-- ה

ַכר ּב

את-ה ְּת ָר ִפים, ַו ְּת ִׂש ֵמם

ְק ָחה ל

ּבאֹ ֶהל ָר ֵחל. לד ְו ָר ֵחל

said: ‘Behold, would it might be according to thy word.’ **35**

ָכל-האֹ ֶהל, ְולֹא מ ָצא. להו ּתֹא ֶמר את-

ֶהם; ַו ְי ַמ ֵּׁש ׁש ל ָבן ע ֵלי

ו ֵּת ׁ ֶשב

And he removed that day the he-goats that were streaked

ִני, ּכי ל ֹוא או ַכל לקום מ ָּפ ֶני ָך, ּכי- ֶד ֶר ְך ּב ֵעי ֵני אדֹ

אל-א ִבי ָה, אל- ִי ַחר

and spotted, and all the she-goats that were speckled and

מ ָצא את-ה ְּת ָר ִפים. לו ַו ִ ּי ַחר ל ַי ֲעקֹב, ַו ָ ּי ֶרב

נ ׁ ִשים לי; ַו ְי ַח ֵּפׂש, ְולֹא

spotted, every one that had white in it, and all the dark

ּב ָל ָבן; ַו ַ ּי ַען ַי ֲעקֹב, ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ָל ָבן, מה- ּפ ׁ ְש ִעי מה ח ָּטאתי, ּכי ָד ַל ְק ָּת

ones among the sheep, and gave them into the hand of his

א ֲח ָרי. לז ּכי-מ ַּׁש ׁ ְש ָּת את- ָכל- ֵכ ַלי, מה-מ ָצאת מ ּ ֹכל ּכ ֵלי-בי ֶת ָך-- ִׂשים

sons. **36** And he set three days’ journey betwixt himself and Jacob. And Jacob fed the rest of Laban’s flocks.

א ַחי ְו ַא ֶחי ָך; ְוי ֹו ִכיחו, ּבין ׁ ְש ֵנינ ּו. לח ֶזה ע ְׂש ִרים ׁ ָש ָנה א ֹנ ִכי

ֹכה, ֶנ ֶגד

1. And Jacob took him rods of fresh poplar, and of the

ע ָּמ ְך, ְר ֵח ֶלי ָך ְו ִע ֶ ּזי ָך לֹא ׁ ִש ֵּכל ּו; ְו ֵאי ֵלי צֹאנ ָך, לֹא א ָכ ְל ִּתי. לט ט ֵר ָפה,

almond and of the plane-tree; and peeled white streaks

ְת ַב ְק ׁ ֶש ָּנה; ְּג ֻנ ְב ִתי י ֹום, ו ְג ֻנ ְב ִתי

מ ָ ּי ִדי

ַח ֶּט ָּנה, א

ָך--א ֹנ ִכי א ֶלי

לֹא-ה ֵבאתי

in them, making the white appear which was in the rods.

1. And he set the rods which he had peeled over against

מ ֵעי ָני. ּב ׁ ְש ֵּתי

ּב ָּל ְי ָלה; ַו ִּת ַ ּדד ׁ ְש ָנ ִתי, א ְר ַּבע-ע ְׂש ֵרה ׁ ָש ָנה

ב ּי ֹום א ָכ ַל ִני חֹרב, ְו ֶק ַרח ׁ ָש ָנה, ּב ֵבי ֶת ָך, ע ַב ְד ִּתי ָך ה ִיי ִתי ע ְׂש ִרים

ל ְי ָלה. מ ֶזה- ִּלי מא

the flocks in the gutters in the watering-troughs where

את-מ ְׂש ֻּכ ְר ִּתי, ע ֶׂש ֶרת מֹ ִנים. מב

ב ֹנ ֶתי ָך, ְו ׁ ֵש ׁש ׁ ָש ִנים ּבצֹאנ ָך; ַו ַּת ֲח ֵלף

the flocks came to drink; and they conceived when they

came to drink. **39** And the flocks conceived at the sight of

ְב ָר ָהם ו ַפ ַחד ִי ְצ ָחק, ה ָיה לי-- ִכי ע ָּתה, ֵרי ָקם אלֹ ֵהי א

ִבי א

ל ּו ֵלי אלֹ ֵהי

the rods, and the flocks brought forth streaked, speckled,

ָר ָאה אלֹקים--ו ּי ֹו ַכח א ֶמ ׁש. מג ּכ ַּפי,

ַּל ְח ָּת ִני; את-ע ְנ ִיי ְו ֶאת- ְי ִגי ַע ִש

and spotted. **40** And Jacob separated the lambs--he also

ַה ָּב ִנים ּב ַני ְו ַה ּצֹאן צֹאני, ּב ֹנ ַתי ְו

ַו ּיֹא ֶמר אל- ַי ֲעקֹב, ה ָּבנ ֹות ל ָבן

ו ַ ּי ַען

set the faces of the flocks toward the streaked and all the

ּי ֹום, או ה

ֵא ֶּלה, ל

מה-א ֱע ֶׂשה

ְו ִל ְב ֹנ ַתי לי-הוא;

וכל א ׁ ֶשר-א ָּתה רֹ ֶאה,

dark in the flock of Laban--and put his own droves apart,

ִנ ְכ ְר ָתה ב ִרית--א ִני ָו ָא ָּתה; ְו ָה ָיה ל ָכה

ל ְב ֵני ֶהן, א ׁ ֶשר ָי ָלד ּו. מד ְו ַע ָּתה,

and put them not unto Laban’s flock. **41** And it came to pass, whensoever the stronger of the flock did conceive,

ּבי ִני ו ֵבי ֶנ ָך. מה ַו ִ ּי ַּקח ַי ֲעקֹב, א ֶבן; ַו ְי ִרי ֶמ ָה, מ ֵ ּצ ָבה. מו ַו ּיֹא ֶמר

ל ֶא ָחיו ל ְקט ּו א ָב ִנים, ַו ִ ּי ְקחו א ָב ִנים ַו ַ ּי ֲעׂש ּו-גל; ַו ּיֹא ְכל ּו ׁ ָשם,

ל ֵעד, ֲעקֹב י

that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the flock in

ל ָבן, ְי ַגרׂש ֲהד ּו ָתא; ְו ַי ֲעקֹב, ָק ָרא ל ֹו ַּג ְל ֵעד.

על-ה ָּגל. מז ַו ִ ּי ְק ָרא-ל ֹו

the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods; **42**

מח ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ָבן, ה ַּגל ה ֶ ּזה עד ּבי ִני ו ֵבי ְנ ָך ה ּי ֹום; על- ֵכן ָק ָרא- ׁשמ ֹו,

but when the flock were feeble, he put them not in; so the feebler were Laban’s, and the stronger Jacob’s. **43** And

ׁש אי

ֶצף ְיקוה ּבי ִני ו ֵבי ֶנ ָך: ּכי ִנ ָּס ֵתר, א ַמר, ִי

א ׁ ֶשר

ְל ֵעד. מט ְו ַה ִּמ ְצ ָּפה ּג

the man increased exceedingly, and had large flocks, and

ׁש, אי

את- ְב ֹנ ַתי, ְו ִאם- ּת ַּקח ָנ ׁ ִשים על- ְב ֹנ ַתי--אין

מ ֵר ֵעהו. נ אם- ּת ַע ֶּנה

maid-servants and men-servants, and camels and asses.

ָך. נא ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ל ָבן, ל ַי ֲעקֹב: ה ֵּנה ו ֵבי ֶנ

ע ָּמנ ּו; ְר ֵאה, אלֹקים עד ּבי ִני

**1** And he heard the words of Laban’s sons, saying: ‘Jacob

ו ֵבי ֶנ ָך. נב עד ה ַּגל ה ֶ ּזה,

ה ַּמ ֵ ּצ ָבה, א ׁ ֶשר ָי ִרי ִתי, ּבי ִני

ה ַּגל ה ֶ ּזה, ְו ִה ֵּנה

hath taken away all that was our father’s; and of that

אם-א ִני, לֹא-א ֱעבר א ֶלי ָך את-ה ַּגל ה ֶ ּזה, ְו ִאם-א ָּתה

ו ֵע ָדה ה ַּמ ֵ ּצ ָבה:

which was our father’s hath he gotten all this wealth.’ **2** And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it was not toward him as beforetime. **3** And the LORD said unto Jacob: ‘Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to

לֹא-ת ֲעבר א ַלי את-ה ַּגל ה ֶ ּזה ְו ֶאת-ה ַּמ ֵ ּצ ָבה ה ּזֹאת, ל ָר ָעה. נג אלֹ ֵהי

א ְב ָר ָהם ֵואלֹקי ָנחור, ִי ׁ ְש ְּפט ּו בי ֵנינ ּו--אלֹ ֵהי, א ִבי ֶהם; ַו ִ ּי ָּׁש ַבע ַי ֲעקֹב,

ּב ַפ ַחד א ִביו ִי ְצ ָחק. נד ַו ִ ּי ְז ַּבח ַי ֲעקֹב ֶז ַבח ּב ָהר, ַו ִ ּי ְק ָרא ל ֶא ָחיו ל ֱא ָכל-

thy kindred; and I will be with thee.’ **4** And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock, **5** and

ָהר. ל ָב ָניו ְו ִל ְבנ ֹו ָתיו--ו ְי ָב ֶר ְך א ְת ֶהם; ַו ֵ ּי ֶל ְך ּב

ל ֶחם; ַו ּיֹא ְכל ּו ל ֶחם, ַו ָ ּי ִלינ ּו

א ַו ַ ּי ׁ ְש ֵּכם ל ָבן ּב ּ ֹב ֶקר, ַו ְי ַנ ֵּׁשק

said unto them: ‘I see your father’s countenance, that it

ל ְמקֹמ ֹו. ב ְו ַי ֲעקֹב, ה ַל ְך ל ַד ְר ּכ ֹו; ַו ִ ּי ְפ ְּגע ּו-ב ֹו, מ ְל ֲא ֵכי

ו ָ ּי ׁ ָשב ל ָבן,

is not toward me as beforetime; but the God of my father hath been with me. **6** And ye know that with all my power I have served your father. **7** And your father hath mocked me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me. **8** If he said thus: The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the flock bore speckled; and if he said thus: The streaked shall be thy wages; then bore all the flock streaked. **9** Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given them to me. **10** And it came to pass at the time that the flock conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream, and, behold, the he-goats which leaped upon the flock were streaked, speckled,

and grizzled. **11** And the angel of God said unto me in the

ּכ ֲא ׁ ֶשר ָר ָאם, מ ֲח ֵנה אלֹקים ֶזה; ַו ִ ּי ְק ָרא ׁ ֵשם-

אלֹקים. ג ַו ּיֹא ֶמר ַי ֲעקֹב

ה ָּמקום ההוא, מ ֲח ָנ ִים.

dream: Jacob; and I said: Here am I. **12** And he said: Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the he-goats which leap upon the flock are streaked, speckled, and grizzled; for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee. **13** I am the God of Beth-el, where thou didst anoint a pillar, where thou didst vow a vow unto Me. Now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy nativity.’ **14** And Rachel and Leah answered and said unto him: ‘Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father’s house? **15** Are we not accounted by him strangers? for he hath sold us, and hath also quite devoured our price. **16** For all the riches which God hath taken away from our father, that is ours and our children’s. Now then, whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do.’ **17** Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon the camels; **18** and he carried away all his cattle,

and all his substance which he had gathered, the cattle

of his getting, which he had gathered in Paddan-aram, to go to Isaac his father unto the land of Canaan. **19** Now Laban was gone to shear his sheep. And Rachel stole the teraphim that were her father’s. **20** And Jacob outwitted Laban the Aramean, in that he told him not that he fled. **21** So he fled with all that he had; and he rose up, and passed over the River, and set his face toward the mountain of Gilead. **22** And it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob was fled. **23** And he took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days’ journey; and he overtook him in the mountain of Gilead. **24** And God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream of the night, and said unto him: ‘Take heed to thyself that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.’ **25** And Laban came up with Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mountain; and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mountain of Gilead. **26** And Laban said to Jacob: ‘What hast thou done, that thou hast outwitted me, and carried away my daughters as though captives of the sword? **27** Wherefore didst thou flee secretly, and outwit me; and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth and with songs, with tabret and with harp; **28** and didst not suffer me to kiss my sons and my daughters? now hast thou done foolishly. **29** It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt; but the God

of your father spoke unto me yesternight, saying: Take

heed to thyself that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad. **30** And now that thou art surely gone, because thou sore longest after thy father’s house, wherefore hast thou stolen my gods?’ **31** And Jacob answered and said to Laban: ‘Because I was afraid; for I said: Lest thou shouldest take thy daughters from me by force. **32** With

whomsoever thou findest thy gods, he shall not live; before our brethren discern thou what is thine with me, and take it to thee.’--For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them.-

- **33** And Laban went into Jacob’s tent, and into Leah’s tent, and into the tent of the two maid-servants; but he found them not. And he went out of Leah’s tent, and entered into Rachel’s tent. **34** Now Rachel had taken the teraphim, and put them in the saddle of the camel, and sat upon them. And Laban felt about all the tent, but found them not. **35** And she said to her father: ‘Let not my lord be angry that

I cannot rise up before thee; for the manner of women is upon me.’ And he searched, but found not the teraphim. **36** And Jacob was wroth, and strove with Laban. And Jacob answered and said to Laban: ‘What is my trespass? what is my sin, that thou hast hotly pursued after me?

**37** Whereas thou hast felt about all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? Set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us two. **38** These twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she-goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flocks have I not eaten. **39** That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bore the loss of

it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day or stolen by night. 40 Thus I was: in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep fled from mine eyes. **41** These twenty years have I been in thy house: I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy flock; and thou hast changed my wages ten times. **42** Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the Fear of Isaac, had been on my side, surely now hadst thou sent me away empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and gave judgment yesternight.’ **43** And Laban answered and said unto Jacob: ‘The daughters are my daughters, and the children are my children, and the flocks are my flocks, and

all that thou seest is mine; and what can I do this day for these my daughters, or for their children whom they have borne? **44** And now come, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee.’ **45** And Jacob took a stone, and set it up for a pillar. **46** And Jacob said unto his brethren: ‘Gather stones’; and they took stones, and made a heap. And they did eat there by the heap. **47** And Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha; but Jacob called it Galeed. **48** And Laban said: ‘This heap is witness between me and thee this day.’ Therefore was the name of it called Galeed; **49** and Mizpah, for he said: ‘The LORD watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another. **50** If thou shalt afflict my daughters, and if thou shalt take wives beside my daughters, no man being with us; see, God is witness betwixt me and thee.’ **51** And Laban said to Jacob: ‘Behold this heap, and behold the pillar, which I have set up betwixt me and thee. **52** This heap be witness, and the pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm. **53** The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us.’ And Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac. **54** And Jacob offered a sacrifice in the mountain, and called his brethren to eat bread; and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mountain.

**1** And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his

sons and his daughters, and blessed them. And Laban departed, and returned unto his place. **2** And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. **3** And Jacob said when he saw them: ‘This is God’s camp.’ And he called the name of that place Mahanaim.



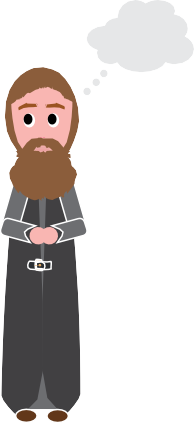
**VAYEITZEI: CONSEQUENCES OF JACOB’S DECEIT**

elcome to the Aleph Beta Study Guide to Parshat Vayeitzei!

W

### Black, White and Gray

One of the great challenges that faces us when reading the Book of Genesis is how we come to grips with the story told in last week’s parsha involving Jacob’s deception of his father Isaac and his brother Esau. How are we meant to look at that story?



?

There are statements of our Sages that seem to suggest that Jacob was in the right: that either he had no choice but to deceive and was therefore in some way justified, or that his deception - at some level - was not *really* a deception. There are, however, other strains of interpretation which suggest a picture that is more gray. They leave open the possibility that we are meant to struggle with whether Jacob’s resolution of the situation is something we should applaud - or something we should view with some level of concern.

We want to share with you a Midrash that seems to lead us in that latter direction and explore with you some of its implications. That Midrash is inspired by an episode in this week’s parsha, Parshat Vayetzei: Jacob’s first encounter with Rachel, the woman destined to become his beloved wife.

Let’s dive into the verses and the Midrash and see it for ourselves.

### Not Like In The Movies

The first encounter between Jacob and Rachel is one of the Bible’s great moments of romance:

**Genesis 29:10-11**

במדבר ג:א–ד

**10** And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel

ָל ָבן ֲא ִחי ּבת-

ּכ ֲא ׁ ֶשר ָר ָאה ַי ֲעקֹב ֶאת-ר ֵחל,

**י** ו ְי ִהי

the daughter of Laban his mother’s brother, and the

א ּמ ֹו, ְו ֶאת-צֹאן ָל ָבן, ֲא ִחי ִא ּמ ֹו; ַו ִ ּי ַּג ׁש ַי ֲעקֹב, ַו ָ ּי ֶגל

sheep of Laban his mother’s brother, that Jacob went

ה ְּב ֵאר, ַו ַ ּי ׁ ְש ְק, ֶאת-צֹאן ָל ָבן ֲא ִחי

את-ה ֶא ֶבן ֵמ ַעל ִּפי

near, and rolled the stone from the well’s mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother’s brother. **11** And Jacob kissed Rachel...

ל ָר ֵחל....

ו ִ ּי ׁ ַּשק ַי ֲעקֹב,

אמּ ֹו. **יא**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

There are a lot of divrei Torah on the parsha. How is this different?

At Aleph Beta, we believe that the Torah is a guidebook that answers life’s biggest questions, offering profound insights about how we should live our lives. Moreover, we believe that Jewish tradition has always recognized the right of all readers, in every generation, to look at the text themselves and try to decide what they think it means. That means you. That’s why you are the most important author of this quest through the sources. We think that this guide offers a fun, stimulating and relevant path through the sources, but if you get wrapped up in a stimulating discussion and never make it past page 2, we’ll consider that a success!

Is this guide for self-study or should I study it with others?

Either works! You can gather a small group of friends to explore it together, share it with a chevruta (learning partner), or go through it by yourself.

Do I need to prepare anything or can I just jump in?

Just jump in! Even if you’re planning to use this for a group discussion, just open up to page 1 and get going. (If you read it in advance, it will spoil the fun!) The only thing you should do in advance is print out copies of the “Source Sheet” for the other participants, so everyone can follow along and engage with the sources.

About the Author

Most of the material within – although not the particular language contained in this guide - was first developed and taught by Rabbi David Fohrman, founder and CEO of Aleph Beta, and is presented in his video, “Parshat

Vayeitzei: Consequences of Jacob’s Deceit” (available for viewing at [www.alephbeta.org](http://www.alephbeta.org/)). This guide was written by Beth Lesch, edited by Rivky Stern, and arranged by Laura Schembre.

Jacob sees Rachel and it’s love at first sight. He finds himself filled with strength he didn’t know he had; he flexes his muscles and single-handedly removes the heavy stone that is blocking the mouth of the well, the stone that no man could budge. After giving water to Rachel’s flocks, our hero turns to her and kisses her.



But then the verse chronicles something strange:

**Genesis 29:11**

ל ָר ֵחל; ַו ִ ּי ָּ ׂשא ֶאת-קֹל ֹו, ַו ֵ ּי ְב ְּך

ו ִ ּי ׁ ַּשק ַי ֲעקֹב,

And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept

The obvious question here is: why is Jacob crying?

#### PONDER THIS



Why do you think Jacob is crying? See if you can come up with more than one reason.

The most straightforward interpretation here is probably that Jacob is crying *tears of joy*. But it’s not the only reason. Our Sages discuss why Jacob cried, and their answer has nothing to do tears of joy. Their explanation seems bewildering at first -- but let’s take a look.

### The Benefit Of The Doubt

#### LOOK INSIDE: Studying the Midrash



Read through the midrash below.1 What are the **two** reasons that the midrash gives for Jacob’s cry? Does this explanation resonate with you? Why or why not?

**Rashi on Genesis 29:11**

**and wept:** Since he foresaw with the holy spirit that she (Rachel) would not enter the grave with him.

Another explanation: Since he came empty-handed, he said, “Eliezer, my grandfather’s servant, had nose rings, and bracelets and sweet fruits in his possession,

and I am coming with nothing in my hands.” [He had nothing] because Eliphaz the son of Esau had pursued him to kill him at his father’s orders; he (Eliphaz) overtook him, but since he had grown up in Isaac’s lap, he held back his hand. He said to him (Jacob), ”What shall I do about my father’s orders?“ Jacob replied,”Take what I have, for a poor man is counted as dead.”

רש”י על בראשית כט:יא

**ויבך:** לפי שצפה ברוח הקודש שאינה נכנסת

עמו לקבורה. דבר אחר לפי שבא בידים ריקניות, אמר אליעזר עבד אבי אבא היו בידיו נזמים וצמידים ומגדנות, ואני אין בידי כלום. לפי שרדף

אליפז בן עשו במצות אביו אחריו להורגו והשיגו, ולפי שגדל אליפז בחיקו של יצחק משך ידו. אמר לו מה אעשה לציווי של אבא, אמר לו יעקב טול

מה שבידי, והעני חשוב כמת.

Let’s just take a moment to recap the Midrash, so we’re all on the same page. According to the midrash, there are two possible reasons for why Jacob cries when he kisses Rachel:

1. According to the **first reason**, Jacob saw, through some kind of divine inspiration, that he and Rachel would not be buried together.
2. According to the **second reason**, Jacob cried because he didn’t have any money or gifts to give to Rachel. To explain why, the Midrash launches into this strange story about Eliphaz, a story which takes us back to the end of last week’s parsha, to Jacob’s deception of his brother Esau. According to the Midrash, after Jacob steals Esau’s blessing, Esau dispatches his son, Eliphaz, to hunt him down. Eliphaz catches up with his uncle Jacob and he overtakes him. He holds the dagger up to Jacob’s neck and is about to kill him… but in the last moment, Eliphaz can’t bring himself to do it. After all, he was raised in the household of Isaac, so murder doesn’t come easily to him. So he drops the dagger. But he wonders aloud to Jacob: “What am I going to do? My father commanded me to kill you.” So Jacob offers: “Take my money. Being poor is as good as being dead.” That seems to satisfy Eliphaz; he takes Jacob’s wealth, but leaves him alive.

1 This midrash is originally from *Genesis Rabbah*, but we’ve quoted it as Rashi brings it in his comment on the verse, Genesis 29:11.

What a strange set of stories this Midrash tells. They really leaves you scratching your head. First of all, the explanations are just plain odd. And second of all, they really seem to come out of nowhere. Why do the Sages feel the need to complicate things? Divine prophecy, this whole convoluted story with Eliphaz - none of that is in the text, and the Sages don’t offer any evidence to bolster their claims. And what message are we supposed to take away from it all?

Let’s not give up on this midrash so quickly. We want to invite you to delve deeply into it and to try to understand where it’s coming from. By the end, you may even find yourself defending its surprising interpretation.

#### PONDER THIS



Indeed, if you’re up for a challenge, take some time now to see if you can “defend” the midrash’s claims. Can you think of any evidence in the text to support them?

### A Cry For The Ages

To figure out where this Midrash is coming from, let’s go back to the verse itself. What are the words that the Bible uses to characterize Jacob’s tears at the well?

**Genesis 29:11**

ַו ִ ּי ָּ ׂשא ֶאת-קֹל ֹו, ַו ֵ ּי ְב ְּך

and he lifted up his voice and he cried

“Lifting up a voice and crying” is a very particular expression, one which doesn’t appear that often in the Bible. Let’s explore other times this phrase is used, and see if it sheds any light on this strange midrash.

#### PONDER THIS



Who was the first person in the Bible to “lift up their voice and cry”?

**Hint 1:** It was a woman.

**Hint 2:** She was a member of Abraham’s household.

The first time the Bible uses this expression2 is to describe Hagar, Abraham’s maidservant:

**Genesis 21:14-16**

בראשית כא:יד–טז

**14** And Abraham arose up early in the morning, and

ּב ּ ֹב ֶקר ַו ִ ּי ַּקח- ֶל ֶחם ְו ֵח ַמת ַמ ִים

**יד** ו ַ ּי ׁ ְש ֵּכם ַא ְב ָר ָהם

took bread and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and

ׂשם ַעל- ׁש ְכ ָמ ּה, ְו ֶאת-ה ֶ ּי ֶלד--ו ְי ׁ ַש ְּל ֶח ָה;

ּב ִמ ְד ַּבר ּב ֵאר ׁ ָש ַבע. **טו** ו ִ ּי ְכל ּו ה ַּמ ִים,

ו ִ ּי ֵּתן ֶאל-ה ָגר

ו ֵּת ֶל ְך ַו ֵּת ַתע,

sent her away; and she departed, and strayed in the

מן-ה ֵח ֶמת; ַו ַּת ׁ ְש ֵל ְך ֶאת-ה ֶ ּי ֶלד, ַּת ַחת ַא ַחד ה ִּ ׂשי ִחם.

wilderness of Beer-sheba. **15** And the water in the

ּכ ְמ ַט ֲח ֵוי ֶק ׁ ֶשת, ּכי

ְר ֵחק ה

**טז** ו ֵּת ֶל ְך ַו ֵּת ׁ ֶשב ָל ּה ִמ ֶּנ ֶגד,

bottle was spent, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs. **16** And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bow-shot; for she said: ‘Let me not look upon the death of the child.’ And she sat over against him, and lifted up her voice, and wept.

ה ָ ּי ֶלד; ַו ֵּת ׁ ֶשב ִמ ֶּנ ֶגד, ַו ּת ָּ ׂשא

ֹות ּבמ

א ְמ ָרה, ַאל-א ְר ֶאה

את-קֹ ָל ּה ַו ֵּת ְב ְּך.

After being expelled from Abraham’s house, Hagar finds herself in dire straits: she’s stranded in the desert with her son Ishmael and there’s no more water left in the canteen. She knows that death is coming, but she can’t bring herself to watch her son die. She casts down the child and, sitting from afar, lifts up her voice and cries. She is filled with a

sense of anguish, an utter loss of hope. Something is lost and it’s not coming back again.3 *That’s* what is implied by this expression of lifting up one’s voice and crying.



Bethlehem

So when Jacob lifts up his voice and cries, is he, too, sensing something precious slipping through his fingers? Yes - Rachel. He sees prophetically that he won’t be buried with her, that somehow that ultimate union symbolized by being buried next

to your soul-mate -- he’s never going to have that. He sees that he will lose her and be powerless to stop it. It’s just like Hagar and Ishmael at the well.

### Looking Backwards And Forwards

And there’s yet more meaning contained in this expression of lifting up one’s voice and crying. It turns out that we find it once more in Sefer Bereishit. What was the context there and how does it shed light on Jacob’s cry?

#### PONDER THIS



Can you think of someone else in the Book of Genesis who lifted up his voice and cried? Someone else who experienced a profound sense of loss and was powerless to stop it?

**Hint:** It’s in last week’s parsha…

2 This is the same exact expression that we find by Jacob in our parsha, except that here, it is conjugated in the feminine form since Hagar is the subject.

3 Ironically, in Hagar’s case, it turned out not to be true. Ishmael *wasn’t* lost, he *did* come back. Hagar didn’t see the well, the well that would allow Ishmael to live.

It turns out that the other person who lifts up his voice and cries is none other than Esau. And would you believe it? It happens just after Esau finds out that Jacob has stolen his blessing:

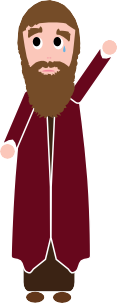
**Genesis 27:38**

**38** And Esau said unto his father: ‘Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father.’ And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.

בראשית כז:לח

**לח** ו ּיֹא ֶמר ֵע ָ ׂשו ֶאל-א ִביו, ה ְב ָר ָכה ַא ַחת הוא- ְל ָך

א ִבי-- ָב ְר ֵכ ִני ַגם-א ִני, ָא ִבי; וַ ִ ּי ָּ ׂשא עֵ ָ ׂשו קֹל ֹו, ַו ֵ ּי ְב ְּך.

Our Sages knew full well that the last time these words were used in the Bible, it was Esau crying because Jacob had deceived him, Esau resolving to kill Jacob. Is it a fluke that the last time this expression was used, Esau was crying because of something that Jacob had done to him… and a mere chapter and a half later, Jacob himself lifts up his voice and cries? No, the Midrash is saying, it’s no coincidence. If you want to understand Jacob’s cry, you need to understand Esau’s cry. This tale that the Sages tell about Esau dispatching his son Eliphaz to kill Jacob, leading to Jacob’s cry -- it serves to connect the stories. It’s the Sages way of saying: **One led to the other.**

### The Eliphaz Connection

Because what happens as a result of the dispatch of Eliphaz? Sure, Jacob manages to escape death, but he still has to face consequences. The consequence is that he shows up at Laban’s home empty-handed.

#### PONDER THIS



What is the significance of Jacob showing up at Laban’s home without any money or gifts? Why does that make him cry?

When Jacob arrives at Laban’s house without any gifts, he’s in a position of weakness when negotiating with the greedy Laban. Laban takes advantage of Jacob, pressing him into service for years on end. Because Jacob showed up empty- handed, he will spend twenty years playing the victim to Laban’s deceits, to his petty ploys to extract as much wealth from Jacob as he could.

Imagine how things might have been different if Jacob had come from a position of strength, if he had shown up with wealth in hand? Perhaps he could have appeased his greedy father-in-law with generous gifts right from the start.

Perhaps he could have been with Rachel from the start. Instead, not only does Rachel elude Jacob in death, but in life, too. The two reasons given by the Midrash: they’re both really talking about the same thing, about the loss of Rachel. That loss, the Sages seem to be saying, stems from what Jacob did to Esau.

### The Evidence Builds

#### PONDER THIS



Can you think of any other textual evidence in this parsha to connect Jacob’s act of deception to his later loss of Rachel? (If you’re up for a challenge, consider Genesis 29:23-26, see the Source Sheet.)

Consider what Laban says to Jacob when he deceives him at the chuppah, switching Leah for Rachel:

**Genesis 29:26**

ה ְּב ִכי ָרה

ְפ ֵני ל

ה ְ ּצ ִעי ָרה,

ּב ְמקו ֵמנ ּו-- ָל ֵתת כן

לֹא- ֵי ָע ֶ ׂשה

It is not done in our place, to give the younger before the firstborn

What’s the implication here? Laban seems to be taunting: “Maybe where you come from, Jacob, *you* give the younger before the older.” **Laban’s words harken back to Jacob’s deception of Esau.** And when you think about it, their crimes were awfully similar. They both involve family deception, the disguising of one sibling for another, and the tension between the older and the younger. In fact, one crime seems to be the exact inverse of the other:

With Jacob, the **younger** sibling was disguised as the **older.**

With Laban, the **older** sibling was disguised as the **younger.**

With Jacob, the siblings were **brothers.**

With Laban, the siblings were **sisters.**

With Jacob, the **mother** advises her **son** to deceive.

With Laban, the **father** advises his **daughter** to deceive.

The resonance is hard to ignore. This must have been what the Sages were seeing, what inspired their bewildering comment. What Jacob did to his father and his brother: now the inverse is happening to him.4

### Cause And Effect

So what do we make of all of this? Well, it’s all a commentary on Jacob’s deception of Esau. Whether we find a way to justify it, or even to say that it was somehow not even a deception at all, our Sages seem to be saying that “whatever goes around, comes around.” Jacob can’t escape the effects of that action. The tears that he caused his brother to shed would be repaid with his own tears. Rachel would always just barely elude Jacob’s grasp, both in life and in death.

Of course, this all leaves us with a difficult question. When we look at this kind of Midrash, one which seems - at least implicitly - to be critical of Jacob’s actions, it’s hard to know exactly how to process that. After all, Jacob is one of our forefathers; we look to him as a spiritual role model. There are many sources in our tradition which associate Jacob with the trait of “truth.”5 How do we reconcile one with the other?

We hope that our guide to next week’s parsha, Parshat Vayishlach, will shed some light.

4 And here’s another piece of evidence. Consider this: how did Laban manage to pull off his deception at the wedding canopy? The answer is: because it was dark. That’s the only way he was able to make Jacob think that Leah was Rachel. The Bible pointedly emphasizes that Laban’s subterfuge happened in the evening. (See Genesis 29 and contrast verse 23 with verse 25.) Does that remind you at all of Jacob’s deception of Isaac? It certainly does. That account opens by informing us that “Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see” (Genesis 27:1). Jacob tricked his father by taking advantage of his inability to see, just as Laban would later take advantage of his son-in-law’s ability to see.

5 This understanding probably originates with Genesis 25:27 and Micah 7:20, but is stated more explicitly in Genesis Rabbah 70:7 (also see Midrash Tehillim 15:2 or Tanna Devei Eliyahu Zuta 2).

Genesis 29:10-11

**10** And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother’s brother, and the sheep

ֵחל, ּבת- ָל ָבן א ִחי ַו ִ ּי ַּג ׁש ַי ֲעקֹב, ַו ָ ּי ֶגל את-ר א ּמ ֹו;

**בראשית כט:י–יא**

**י** ו ְי ִהי ּכ ֲא ׁ ֶשר ָר ָאה ַי ֲעקֹב

א ּמ ֹו, ְו ֶאת-צֹאן ל ָבן, א ִחי

of Laban his mother’s brother, that Jacob went near, and

ל ָבן א ִחי את-צֹאן

את-ה ֶא ֶבן מ ַעל ִפי ה ְּב ֵאר, ַו ַ ּי ׁ ְש ְק,

rolled the stone from the well’s mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother’s brother. **11** And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept.

את-קֹל ֹו, ַו ֵ ּי ְב ְּך.

ו ִ ּי ׁ ַּשק ַי ֲעקֹב, ל ָר ֵחל; ַו ִ ּי ָּ ׂשא

אמּ ֹו. **יא**

Rashi on Genesis 29:11

**and wept:** Since he foresaw with the holy spirit that she (Rachel) would not enter the grave with him. Another explanation: Since he came empty-handed, he said, “Eliezer, my grandfather’s servant, had nose rings, and bracelets and sweet fruits in his possession, and I am coming with nothing in my hands.” [He had nothing] because Eliphaz the son of Esau had pursued him to kill him at his father’s orders; he (Eliphaz) overtook him, but since he had grown up in Isaac’s lap, he held back his hand. He said to him (Jacob), ”What shall I do about my father’s orders?“ Jacob replied,”Take what I have, for a poor man is counted as dead.”

###### רש”י על בראשית כט:יא

**ויבך:** לפי שצפה ברוח הקודש שאינה נכנסת עמולקבורה. דבר אחר לפי שבא בידים ריקניות, אמר אליעזר עבד אבי אבא היו בידיו נזמים וצמידים ומגדנות, ואני אין בידי כלום. לפי שרדף אליפז בן

עשו במצות אביו אחריו להורגו והשיגו, ולפי שגדל אליפז בחיקו של יצחק משך ידו. אמר לו מה אעשה לציווי של אבא, אמר לו יעקב טול מה

שבידי, והעני חשוב כמת.

[www.alephbeta.org](http://www.alephbeta.org/) ALEPH BETA STUDY GUIDE ON PARSHAT VAYEITZEI - PAGE 8

Think of friends and family who will love it as much as you did - and share it with them!

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**Genesis 29:22-27**

###### בראשית כט:כב–כז

**22** And Laban gathered together all the men of the place,

ה ָּמקום, ַו ַ ּי ַעש מ ׁ ְש ֶּתה.

**כב** ו ֶ ּי ֱ ֹאסף ל ָבן את- ָכל-א ְנ ׁ ֵשי

and made a feast. **23** And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him;

ב ֶע ֶרב--ו ִ ּי ַּקח את- ֵל ָאה ב ּת ֹו, ַו ָ ּי ֵבא אֹ ָת ּה בא, אֵ ֶלי ָה. **כד** ו ִ ּי ֵּתן ל ָבן ל ּה, את-ז ְל ָּפה

**כג** ו ְי ִהי

אֵ ָליו; ַו ָ ּי

and he went in unto her. **24** And Laban gave Zilpah his

handmaid unto his daughter Leah for a handmaid. **25** And

ִש ְפ ָחת ֹו-- ְל ֵל ָאה ב ּת ֹו, ׁ ִש ְפ ָחה. **כה** ו ְי ִהי ב ּ ֹב ֶקר,

it came to pass in the morning that, behold, it was Leah;

ו ִה ֵּנה-הוא ל ָאה; ַו ּיֹא ֶמר אל- ָל ָבן, מה-זֹאת ע ִ ׂשי ָת

and he said to Laban: ‘What is this thou hast done unto

ַב ְד ִּתי ע ָּמ ְך, ְו ָל ָּמה ִר ִּמי ָת ִני. **כו** ב ָר ֵחל ע

ִלי--הלֹא

me? did not I serve with thee for Rachel? wherefore then

ה ְ ּצ ִעי ָרה,

ל ָבן, לֹא- ֵי ָע ֶ ׂשה כן ּב ְמקו ֵמנ ּו-- ָל ֵתת

ו ּיֹא ֶמר

hast thou beguiled me?’ **26** And Laban said: ‘It is not so

מ ֵּלא, ׁ ְש ֻב ַע זֹאת; ְו ִנ ְּת ָנה ל ָך

ל ְפ ֵני ה ְּב ִכי ָרה. **כז**

done in our place, to give the younger before the first-born.

בד ע ָּמ ִדי, ע ֹוד,

ֲע ַת

א ׁ ֶשר

ּגם-את-זֹאת, ּב ֲעב ָדה

**27** Fulfil the week of this one, and we will give thee the other also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years.’

ֵחר ֹות. א

ֶש ַבע- ׁש ִנים

**Genesis 21:14-16**

###### בראשית כא:יד–טז

1. And Abraham arose up early in the morning, and took

א ְב ָר ָהם ּב ּ ֹב ֶקר ַו ִ ּי ַּקח- ֶל ֶחם ְו ֵח ַמת מ ִים

**יד** ו ַ ּי ׁ ְש ֵּכם

bread and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away; and

ׂשם על- ׁש ְכ ָמ ּה, ְו ֶאת-ה ֶ ּי ֶלד--ו ְי ׁ ַש ְּל ֶח ָה;

ּב ִמ ְד ַּבר ּב ֵאר ׁ ָש ַבע. **טו** ו ִ ּי ְכל ּו ה ַּמ ִים,

ו ִ ּי ֵּתן אל-ה ָגר

ו ֵּת ֶל ְך ַו ֵּת ַתע,

she departed, and strayed in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

ַת ַחת א ַחד ה ִּ ׂשי ִחם.

את-ה ֶ ּי ֶלד,

מן-ה ֵח ֶמת; ַו ַּת ׁ ְש ֵל ְך

1. And the water in the bottle was spent, and she cast

the child under one of the shrubs. **16** And she went, and

מ ֶּנ ֶגד, ה ְר ֵחק ּכ ְמ ַט ֲח ֵוי ֶק ׁ ֶשת, ּכי

**טז** ו ֵּת ֶל ְך ַו ֵּת ׁ ֶשב ל ּה

sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bow-shot; for she said: ‘Let me not look upon the death of the child.’ And she sat over against him, and lifted up her voice, and wept.

**Genesis 27:38**

ה ָ ּי ֶלד; ַו ֵּת ׁ ֶשב מ ֶּנ ֶגד, ַו ִּת ָּ ׂשא

א ְמ ָרה, אל-א ְר ֶאה ּבמ ֹות

את-קֹ ָל ּה ַו ֵּת ְב ְּך.

###### בראשית כז:לח

**38** And Esau said unto his father: ‘Hast thou but one

ָכה א ַחת הוא- ְל ָך ה ְב ָר

**לח** ו ּיֹא ֶמר ע ָ ׂשו אל-א ִביו,

blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father.’ And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.

ע ָ ׂשו קֹל ֹו, ַו ֵ ּי ְב ְּך.

א ִבי-- ָב ְר ֵכ ִני ַגם-א ִני, א ִבי; ַו ִ ּי ָּ ׂשא

[www.alephbeta.org](http://www.alephbeta.org/) ALEPH BETA STUDY GUIDE ON PARSHAT VAYEITZEI - PAGE 9

David: Welcome to Parshat Vayeitzei.

So far, we've learned about Abraham and we've learned about Isaac.

##### David: Now we're up to Jacob – the next generation. Imagine you didn't know Jacob's story. What would expect to hear next?

You might expect to learn all about how Jacob continues the legacy. That he shows everyone what it means to have a relationship with God and that he models kindness, righteousness, and justice to the rest of the world! And then he passes those great virtues to his family, to children, so that they can continue the legacy after him.

##### After all Jacob must be a great role model, there are 25 chapters about him, he gets more air time than anyone else in Genesis. Our nation is even named after him, we become the children of Israel – he must be a really great guy!

Immanuel: But that's not what we find at all. At least not in the parshiot that focus on the first part of Jacob's life. There's actually one theme that seems to wend its way through many of the Jacob stories… and it's not a theme that any of us would be particularly proud of: It seems to be all about deception.

Understanding the

Story of

## Jacob

and Laban

##### David: In the last parsha, Isaac was ready to give his blessing to Esau, but Jacob – under the guidance of his mother – seemed to deceive his father in order to get the blessing for himself.

In this parsha, Jacob himself is deceived by Laban when Laban gives him Leah as a wife instead of Rachel. Later in the parsha, Jacob seems to deceive Laban as he and his family try to sneak out of Laban's house. All in all, it's just not a pretty picture.

##### Immanuel: What are we supposed to make of all this? Why does the Torah tell us all these stories about Jacob and deception? It doesn't seem like something we would expect from our forefathers, from someone who is continuing the legacy. Is deception really the lesson we're supposed to learn from Jacob? What are we supposed to learn from it?

David: Join us as we explore these questions and so much more, on the Parsha Experiment. Immanuel: Hi, I'm Imu Shalev.

##### David: And I'm David Block.

Immanuel: And welcome to the Parsha Experiment. Before we get into this week's parsha, let's check out what happens in it with a 20 second recap.

##### Jacob runs away, and on his way, he has this dream of a ladder with angels… and God confirms that he'll continue his covenant with Jacob.

Jacob meets Rachel and immediately falls in love.

##### Laban tricks Jacob and gives him Leah instead of Rachel, and Jacob ends up marrying both. Leah has a bunch of kids and Rachel becomes jealous.

Rachel finally has a child.

##### Jacob gets wealthy with a whole plan with spotted and speckled sheeps. Jacob runs away from Laban, and Rachel steals her father's idols.

Immanuel: If you're a long time Aleph Beta listener, you might know that Rabbi Fohrman has a ton of material on these episodes of Jacob's life – a parsha video here, a series there. He goes through each story and uncovers what's going on in magnificent detail. Links below.

##### However, our challenge is to show you how all these amazing theories fit together… we want to give you taste of what might be going on here in the bigger picture. So let's start. What are we supposed to learn from all these deception stories?

David: In the last few videos – we discussed not just what it means to be chosen for a divine mission, but also about the built-in challenges that come along with being favored. When you get gifts of wealth and land, it's easy to focus on yourself, and to flaunt what you have.

##### When God gave Abraham and Isaac gifts, they had to be careful not to be insensitive to those who weren't given those same gifts, but to actually be the opposite – to use the gifts sensitively to positively impact others.

Immanuel: Abraham and Isaac's challenge was about how to properly deal with being favored, in a sense. But there's always another side to the favoritism coin… when someone is favored, it means that someone else is not.

## Who

Was Isaac's

## Favorite

Son?

##### David: And that is where Jacob comes in. Even before Isaac was born, God made it clear to Abraham that Isaac would be chosen as the one to carry on his father's legacy. It was never a question. But that wasn't true with Jacob.

Esau was clearly his father's favorite. עֵשָׂו אֶת ִצְחָק י ּאֱהַב ֶ וַי– Isaac loved Esau. He favored one son over

##### the other, and Jacob got the raw end of the deal. That's not something that Isaac had ever experienced, his father never loved one son over the other.

Jacob was the unfavored son. Yes, it's true that ַעֲקֹב י אֶת אֹהֶבֶת ,ִרבְקָה וְ– Rebecca favored Jacob – but in terms of continuing his father's legacy, Jacob was the unfavored son.

##### Immanuel: And just like being favored and chosen has its challenges – as we saw with Abraham and Isaac

– not being favored has its own set of really difficult challenges. How do you react to those who have more than you? What happens when you feel like you're being mistreated, when you feel like others are unfairly getting what you deserve? How do you deal with it? That is going to be Jacob's challenge.

## The

Outcome

## of Isaac's

Love

for

## Esau?

##### David: And with that in mind, let's look at the blessings story. It all started when Isaac made it very clear that he was going to bless Esau, that he was going to continue his legacy with him. Rebecca and Jacob realized that's what was really going on. And they thought Isaac was wrong. They saw what Isaac didn't see, that Jacob was really going to be the one to continue Abraham's legacy, not Esau.

Immanuel: So what did they do? If you're looking at the story through the lens of the two sides of favoritism and the challenges that come along with it, this moment right here is an epic, defining moment for Jacob. How would Jacob handle not being favored? Being passed over, not given what he thought he deserved?

##### We often read stories with the end in mind – we assume that things had to have happened the way they did. Jacob had to deceive Isaac to get the blessing. But maybe that's not true. What were Jacob's options?

What about just being honest? He could've called a meeting… He could've sat down with his father and mother and had an open conversation. Who knows if it would've been successful, but at the very least, he could've tried to voice his feelings, maybe make the case as to why he should get the blessing. Isaac was probably a reasonable guy.

##### David: The other way is to do it is to bypass all of that, to go behind Isaac's back and to justify it. To say to yourself: "Okay, if my father is making a mistake, if I'm getting the short end of the favoritism stick, if I'm not getting what I deserve, well… I'll do whatever it takes to get it." Perhaps Jacob could've have that honest conversation. Instead, he chose the second option.

Immanuel: The question is, was he right? The story ends and leaves us pretty uncomfortable. I mean, he tricked his father, and that seems terrible. But maybe he had legitimate justification for it. He clearly saw something that Isaac didn't see. And, Jacob was right in the end… God really did continue Abraham and Isaac's promise through Jacob, not Esau! But do the ends justify the means?

David: If you keep reading, if you don't see the story in isolation, you'll find something fascinating. And that brings us to this week's parsha. In the next major story in Jacob's life, the text itself seems to become almost a commentary on Jacob's deception of his father.

## Jacob

Works

for

## Laban

for

## Rachel and Leah

##### Immanuel: Here's what happens. Jacob runs away from Esau and winds up at his uncle Laban's home. Laban invites Jacob to stay with him, and asks Jacob what his wages are for his work. Jacob says that he'll work for Laban for seven years in exchange for his daughter Rachel's hand in marriage. And Laban seems

to agree.

##### Well, Jacob completes his seven years, but things don't go as planned. Laban deceives Jacob and switches his daughters… he gives Jacob Leah, Laban's eldest daughter, instead of Rachel.

David: Needless to say, Jacob's angry. Like anyone would be. He calls Laban to task:, לִּי עָשִׂיתָ ּאת זֹ מַה– what did you do to me? ,עִמָּך עָבַדתִּי בְרחֵל הֲלֹא– I worked these years for RACHEL, not Leah!

##### רמִּיתָנ ִי

רמִּיתָנ ִי

##### וְלָמָּה– why did you decieve me?

– deceit – what an interesting word Jacob uses to describe how he was victimized. We've seen

that word before… After Isaac realizes that he'd been tricked and that he'd given the blessing to Jacob, Isaac says to Esau: בְּמִרמָה אָחִיךָ בָּא ,ּאמֶר וַיֹ; בִּרכָתֶךָ ,ּקּח ִ וַי– your brother, Jacob, came in deceit and took your blessing. במרמה– in deceit. רמתני– it's the same word. But who was Isaac deceived by? Ah, that was Jacob.

## Why Did Laban Trick Jacob?

##### Immanuel: It's like the text is drawing our attention to the connection between the stories. Jacob is all up in arms – he's furious! – because he's been the victim of deceit. Laban, why did you do that – it's not right!! But he didn't see it that way when, just a few chapters earlier, Jacob himself did something similar to his brother. Only when he's the victim does he feel how unfair that is.

David: And now look at how Laban responds to Jacob's accusation. ּ בִּמְקומֵנו כֵן ֵעָשׂה י לֹא ,לָבָן ּאמֶר וַיֹ– Laban said, that's not how its done in our place, הַבְּכִירה ֵי לִפְנ ,ּעִירה הַצְ לָתֵת– to give the younger before the older. On the surface, he was simply saying: Yeah, we agreed on Rachel, but sorry, it doesn't work like that.

##### But listen more deeply and try to feel what Laban is saying: "Jacob, I know what you do in your home – you, the younger son took the blessings from your older brother – but we don't do that here. We don't put the younger before the older." It's an implicit critique of Jacob, a bit of his own medicine.

Immanuel: But let's take a step back. Are these connections just there to show us a story about how Jacob tastes his own medicine? Why are the connections there? What are we supposed to learn from this?

Here's a possible suggestion.

## Connecting

Jacob

## and Laban's Deceit

##### David: The Torah textually links the blessings episode to a story that we all intuitively know was immoral and wrong, Laban's deception, and by doing so, the Torah gives us commentary on Jacob's own actions.

Even though Jacob may have felt unrecognized by his father, and even though Jacob may have found justification in tricking his father, he went about it the wrong way – just as it's clear that Laban did. The

##### answer isn't deception.

When there's an issue, when you feel like you're not being given a fair shot, you have to face it head-on. You have to confront it, honestly and openly. After all, Jacob knows this; it's what Jacob himself demanded of Laban – "Laban, you deceived me! That's not okay! If there was an issue, there are other ways to go about resolving it."

##### Immanuel: But look at how the Torah goes about teaching that lesson – to us, and to Jacob. This was really a lesson in empathy. Jacob obviously felt that what he did with his father and brother was okay. But as soon as he was on the receiving end, he all of the sudden had this incredible moral compass and immediately realized the immorality of Laban's deceit.

It seems that the text is pointing to something really powerful: sometimes, in order to understand the impact you have on others, you have to try to put yourself in their shoes – to experience it through their eyes. And when Laban turned the tables on Jacob, it was almost like a wake-up call for him. Jacob, how does it feel to be on the other end of deception?

## Jacob's

Lesson

## from

Laban's Deceit

##### David: The story doesn't end here. Rabbi Fohrman suggested in last year's Vayishlach video that Jacob does turn himself around and becomes a man of truth.

He confronts Esau in next week's parsha face to face. He gives Esau gifts and says: ברכתי את נא קח– please, take these gifts… take ברכתי– that also means, take my blessing. It seems that Jacob does try to turn himself around and to reconcile with Esau.

##### And that's reflected in Jacob's name change. Jacob's name is Yaakov, which comes from the word that means crookedness, or slanted, and his name gets changed to Yisrael, and the verse tells us that that means one who confronts directly.

But there's a hidden meaning to the word Yisrael also. Look at how it's spelled. Yashar kel – the one who is straight with God. He gets his name changed from crooked, to the one who is straight, one who is honest.

##### Immanuel: And look at the first thing that Jacob conveys to Esau during that encounter:

עָתָּה עַד וָאֵחַר ,ְרתִּי ַּ ג לָבָן עִם– I have been living with Laban and have been delayed until now. It almost sounds like an excuse: the reason I haven't met you earlier is because I've been delayed. Really? Jacob has been delayed for 20 years?? What a strange thing to say.

##### But now we can understand what Jacob might really be saying: Since the time I took the blessings, I've been with Laban... you remember Laban, our deceptive uncle? I didn't know how it felt, I didn't realize the pain that I caused you, until someone did the same thing to me. I've been delayed with Laban, but I had the opportunity to see things the way you see them, and now, I'd like to reconcile.

David: These themes of favoritism, not being favored, deception, reconciliation – we'll see them a lot throughout the rest of [Genesis](https://www.alephbeta.org/torah/genesis). And Jacob's actions – even though he ultimately reconciles with Esau – will have echoes that will be felt later with his own family, with his own children: Rachel's deceit of her father when she takes the terafim, the deceit of Shechem by Levi and Simeon over their sister Dinah, the deceit of Jacob's children in the sale of Joseph, and the list goes on.

##### All of these are challenges that come along with being favored, or being on the other end of favoritism. And, ultimately, they're about figuring out how to reconcile – how to learn from past mistakes, how to grow, how to become people of integrity… How to become God's model nation.

Immanuel: Join us next time on The Parsha Experiment.

##### Hi everybody, this is Rabbi David Fohrman, welcome to Parshat Vayeitzei, you are watching [Aleph](https://www.alephbeta.org/) [Beta](https://www.alephbeta.org/).

So the beginning of this week’s parsha tells of a dream – a famous vision, beheld by Yaakov.

## What Is the Meaning of

Jacob's

## Ladder?

##### He sees this ladder, with its feet planted on the ground, and its top reaching into the heavens. Angels are going up and down the ladder.

In his dream, God declared to Jacob that He will give him this land, the land Jacob is resting upon, right now. He’s going to give this land to him and to his children – and those children are going to be numerous; they're going to be like the dust of the earth.

##### So the question I have for you is: What’s the deal with the ladder? Was that ladder, you know, just a nice visual effect – a little heavenly CGI, to make the whole scene seem more dramatic? Or did the image of the ladder somehow contribute to the message of the dream? Did it actually refine or enrich what the dream meant to say?

I think the latter possibility – pardon the pun – might just be the case. And here’s why.

## Connecting

Jacob's

## Ladder to

Bible

## Stories

in the Bible

##### It turns out that there are two other stories, elsewhere in the Torah, that seem to correspond, in an eerie way, with the words, the images of Jacob’s dream sequence here. I want to look at those other stories with you.

I have a feeling that they each shed important light on the meaning of Jacob’s dream, and the meaning of the ladder that he envisions in that dream.

##### So what are those two other stories, with these resonances of Jacob’s ladder? Ok, so to discover the first of these stories, let’s just pause a minute and set the scene for Jacob’s dream.

Here is Jacob; his father, Isaac, has just blessed him and said goodbye to him. Jacob, of course, is trying to run away from his brother, Esav, who he has just deceived. And so:

##### וַי ֵ ּ ֵצ ֥א י ַעֲקֹ֖ב מִבְּא ֣ר שׁ ֑בַע

Jacob goes and leaves Be’er Sheva,

##### וַיֵ ּ֖לֶךְ חָרֽנ ָה,

and he goes. heads off toward the land of Charanin, leaving the Land of Canaan.

##### וַי ִ ּפְג ַּ֨ע בַּמָּק֜ום. sudden: a of all And place. a with up meets he

I know it's a strange choice of words, I grant you, but you know, who am I to argue? That’s what the text says. He meets up with a place, and there, Jacob falls asleep and in that place has a dream, a dream of angels going up and down a ladder. Jacob names the place after the vision, calling it ‘beit el’, the House of God.

##### So here’s my question for you: where else do we meet a scene that reminds you of this? When else in the Torah is Jacob on the road, journeying between Charan and the Land of Canaan? When else in the torah does Jacob meet angels? When else does that same, peculiar word – vayifga – get used to describe the encounter with those angels?

Turns out, there’s another story just like this, and it happens in just a few chapters from here. It happens at the very end of Parshat Vayeitzei, this week’s parsha.

## Jacob's

Encounters

## with Angels

##### You see there, at the end of Vayeitzei, Jacob is again on the road – except this time in reverse direction. He is going from Charan back to the Land of Canaan. You see, at the beginning of Vayeitzei, Yaakov was leaving his father’s house. And now, at the end of Vayeitzei, he is leaving Lavan – his father-in-law’s house.

Back at the beginning of Vayeitzei, with that dream with the ladder, father had blessed his child and said goodbye. And now, at the end of Vayeitzei – same kind of thing happening…

##### וַי ַ ּשְׁכֵּ֨ם לָבָ֜ן בַּבֹּ֗קֶר וַי ְנ ַ ֵּשׁ ֧ק לְבָנ ֛יו וְלִבְנות ֖יו

Lavan, father in law, woke up in the morning and kissed his children goodbye

##### ב ֣ ֶרךְ אֶתְה ֑ם

וַי ְ

##### and blessed them…

As you can tell, it is starting to sound – as Yogi Berra might say – like deja vu all over again. And, you know, picking up at the story at the end of Vayeitzei, listen to what happens next:

##### רכּ֑ו ב֖ווַי ִ ּפְג ְּעו ּ־ מַלְאֲכ ֥י אֱלֹקים׃

וְי ַעֲקֹ֖ב הָל ֣ךְ לְד

##### And Jacob went on his way, and angels of God encountered him…

So once again, after leaving father, this time father-in-law, Jacob encounters angels. Same unusual word

##### – ּ ְּעו ּפְג ִ וַי– used to describe the encounter with them. And, just like the first time, Yaakov names the place:

ֽי ִם מַחֲנָ

##### שׁ ֽם־ הַה֖ו ּא

ה ֖ים זֶ ֑ה וַי ִ ּקר ֛א הַמָּק֥ום

##### ראָ֔ם מַחֲנֵ ֥ה אֱלֹ

וַיֹ֤ ּאמֶר י ַעֲקֹב כַּאֲשֶׁ֣ר

##### And Jacob said when he saw those angels: ‘this is the camp of God’; and he named the place: ‘camps’.

So you know, its hard to escape the feeling that these two stories, they’re somehow connected. Except, for all their similarities, there are some contrasts between these two stories also.

## The Differences in

Jacob's

## Angel

Encounters

##### For example: The first time around, in his dream with the ladder, Yaakov encounters a place, and in the place… there were angels. But he doesn’t encounter the angels directly. He actually sleeps while the angels go up and down the ladder. The angels pretty much ignored him. He is an observer, we might say, not a participant, in the drama.

But not so the second time around, at the end of Vayeitzei, he and the angels are moving towards one another, on the same plane. And Jacob doesn’t just encounter the place; he encounters the angels themselves, directly.

##### This time, he is not just an observer of a drama; he is a participant in it. And it kind of makes you wonder. What changed? Why are things different now?

Ok, so let’s move on to that second story that I was telling you about. What other story in the Torah – besides Yaakov’s encountering the angels of machanayim – seems to line up, somehow, with Yaakov’s vision of the Ladder?

## Deeper Parallels to

Jacob's

## Vision of the Ladder

##### So, I personally first got clued into the connection I’m about to tell you about, when I was traveling on a trip to the Grand Canyon last summer; and along the way, I was studying with my daughter, Ariella, in the car, and she asked me about the Torah’s description of Jacob’s Ladder.

The Torah says about the ladder that it starts on the earth, and ‘rosho bashamayim,’ its head is in heaven. So Ariella turns to me and says: Abba, that sure sounds a lot like another structure in the Torah that starts on the ground and rosho bashamayim – its head is in the heavens.

##### What, folks, is that other structure? Well, what Ariella was thinking about was the Tower of Babel. It’s actually the only other structure the Torah described this exact way.

יֹ ּאמְר֞ו ּה ֣בָה ׀ לָּ֣נו ּנ ִבְנ ֶה־ עִ֗יר ו ּמִג ְ ָדּל֙ וְרֹאשׁ֣ו בַשׁמַ֔י ִם לָּ֖נו ּוְנַ ֽעֲשׂה־ שֵׁ֑ם,וַ

##### The builders of the tower, they say: come, let’s build a city and a tower, with its head in heaven, and let’s make a name for ourselves.

So could these two structures have anything to do with each other?

##### The Tower and the Ladder; they do seem to be eerily related. And it’s not just the words ‘rosho bashamayim’ that seems to connect them; there’s actually a whole host of other parallels between the stories. I actually did a webinar a while back exploring the broader connections between those stories and you can find that webinar in the description of this video below.

So I want to suggest to you that, in a way, the Ladder may well be a kind of mirror of the Tower: The tower, of course, is this great building project embarked upon by man; and the ladder, it's built by God. The tower gets condemned by God; but the ladder, seemingly, the ladder is wonderful.

Which brings us, of course, to the heart of the matter: For the Tower and for the Ladder… What was the purpose of each structure?

## What Is the Significance of

Jacob's

## Ladder?

##### Well, here, too, maybe the tower and the ladder are actually mirrors of each other. You see, the Tower, it seemed designed to help humans make the leap to the stars, so to speak, to God’s realm. And that makes you sort of wonder: If the tower is a way that humans imagined they could get to the heavens, is the ladder a vehicle through which heavenly beings – maybe even God Himself – could reach the earth?

You see, through the Tower, people actually sought to build a name for themselves. “שֵׁם ,ּ לָּנו ַעֲשׂה וְנ” in the words of the text. Which means, even if they scatter and even if their civilization suddenly disappears, still, the tower that they have built, inasmuch as it pierces the heavens, it’s a great monument to them as a civilization. It’s going to be their legacy.

##### So, could the ladder have had an inverse purpose to that? God’s domain is in the heavens – but this ladder, it is a bridge between worlds... Could its intent be to somehow help God ‘make a name for Himself’, as it were – to establish some sort of legacy for Himself, in our world?

So, such thoughts are, you know, rather intriguing, but the question that immediately comes to mind is: How, exactly, would a ladder do any of those things? How would this ladder help a heavenly God make His mark, as it were, upon the earth? How would it help God establish ‘a name’ here?

##### And the answer to that might lie in the message that Jacob receives from God in the dream. ‘Cause remember, while he’s looking at the Ladder, God had told Yaakov that his children would become like the dust of the earth, and collectively, they would come to possess the Land of Canaan.

We asked, before, why that message was accompanied by this mysterious vision of a Divine Ladder. And maybe the answer is that the two parts of the dream we’ve been talking about – the vision and the

message – are actually... one and the same. There’s gonna be a nation. But the nation isn’t just a blind fact. It has a purpose, a reason for being. The reason the nation exists is to become the ladder.

## Explaining the

Story of

## Jacob's

Ladder

##### The nation, somehow, its going to connect heaven and earth. It will be a vehicle for bringing God’s Name into the world – our world – for leaving a Divine mark upon this very physical world. How would it do that? And when would it begin to do that?

It all happens, maybe, at the end of Vayeitzei – with that parallel story we’d been talking about, the one with the angels of machanayim.

##### You see, Vayeitzei begins with a lonely Jacob on the lam, running away from his brother, leaving the Land of Canaan; if those are the circumstances under which Jacob has his dream of the Ladder, Vayeitzei ends with an inverse of those circumstances: Jacob is on his way home, back to the Land of Canaan. He is not a lone individual anymore. He’s got a family, comprised of children. The children who are the incipient Tribes of Israel. The dream is happening now. The nation... is actually being born.

And when it's happening, Jacob begins to become the ladder. How? Not just because he’s becoming a nation, but because he is actualizing, in his life and the life of his family, something that the nation needs to actually stand for. He is beginning to bring Godly values from heaven, as it were, down into this world, he’s beginning to make them a reality in this terrestrial sphere of ours.

##### A brave and noble thing is happening at the end of Vayeitzei – a Godly thing. Jacob, who once fled his brother’s wrath, is coming now, proactively, to meet his brother in person. He does not evade him, as before; he seeks him out. He comes to meet him. He sends him gifts. He embraces him and he kisses him. He does his best to reconcile with him.

Isn’t it interesting that it is at this very moment that Jacob, once again… just happens to meet up with angels? Angels that are not oblivious to him, but are coming to actually meet him. Angels that are not just in a dream, but angels that are there in real life. Angels that are not perpendicular to him, but angels that are actually aligned with him.

What changed?

## The

Metaphorical

## Meaning Behind

Jacob's

## Ladder

##### Maybe the answer is: The angels haven’t really changed. They, perhaps, are the same angels that were on the ladder. The angels haven’t changed; Jacob has changed.

His perspective has shifted. No longer is he asleep on the floor as angels ascend to heaven in a mere dream. No, the dream has started to become real: The ladder isn’t imagined anymore. Jacob is becoming the ladder, in ‘real-life.’ And so of course, the angels, whose whole goal is to get to the ladder, to go

##### down to it, those angels are meeting him now, head on, eye to eye.

What does it mean to say he has become a ladder, in real life? Well, the ladder is a conduit – a way the Divine could connect to the earth. And how does the Divine connect to the earth? The answer is: through human action.

##### When human beings act nobly, courageously, when they bring Divine values into the world through their actions, they become a kind of ladder.

You see, a Divine value is just a thought; it is intangible. It is all very nice for God to have all these values, but if they don’t affect life here, we all merrily go on our way without them. By embodying God’s values in our actions, we build a shem – a name – for God in the world; we help make a lasting mark for the Divine here, in our very tangible, physical reality.

##### At the end of Vayeitzei, Jacob takes a fateful step. Laden with the children that will become scions of his nation, he approaches his brother and seeks to make things right with him. That overture may seem small, but it is the beginning of a journey for this incipient nation – a journey of bringing heavenly values into the real world.

Jacob has begun to make his dream real. And in doing so, with his feet planted firmly on the ground, he has begun to pierce the heavens.



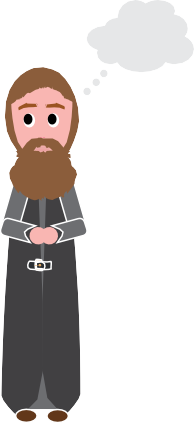
**VAYEITZEI: CONSEQUENCES OF JACOB’S DECEIT**

elcome to the Aleph Beta Study Guide to Parshat Vayeitzei!

W

**Black, White and Gray**

One of the great challenges that faces us when reading the Book of Genesis is how we come to grips with the story told in last week’s parsha involving Jacob’s deception of his father Isaac and his brother Esau. How are we meant to look at that story?



?

There are statements of our Sages that seem to suggest that Jacob was in the right: that either he had no choice but to deceive and was therefore in some way justified, or that his deception - at some level - was not *really* a deception. There are, however, other strains of interpretation which suggest a picture that is more gray. They leave open the possibility that we are meant to struggle with whether Jacob’s resolution of the situation is something we should applaud - or something we should view with some level of concern.

We want to share with you a Midrash that seems to lead us in that latter direction and explore with you some of its implications. That Midrash is inspired by an episode in this week’s parsha, Parshat Vayetzei: Jacob’s first encounter with Rachel, the woman destined to become his beloved wife.

Let’s dive into the verses and the Midrash and see it for ourselves.

### Not Like In The Movies

The first encounter between Jacob and Rachel is one of the Bible’s great moments of romance:

**Genesis 29:10-11**

במדבר ג:א–ד

**10** And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel

ָל ָבן ֲא ִחי ּבת-

ּכ ֲא ׁ ֶשר ָר ָאה ַי ֲעקֹב ֶאת-ר ֵחל,

**י** ו ְי ִהי

the daughter of Laban his mother’s brother, and the

א ּמ ֹו, ְו ֶאת-צֹאן ָל ָבן, ֲא ִחי ִא ּמ ֹו; ַו ִ ּי ַּג ׁש ַי ֲעקֹב, ַו ָ ּי ֶגל

sheep of Laban his mother’s brother, that Jacob went

ה ְּב ֵאר, ַו ַ ּי ׁ ְש ְק, ֶאת-צֹאן ָל ָבן ֲא ִחי

את-ה ֶא ֶבן ֵמ ַעל ִּפי

near, and rolled the stone from the well’s mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother’s brother. **11** And Jacob kissed Rachel...

ל ָר ֵחל....

ו ִ ּי ׁ ַּשק ַי ֲעקֹב,

אמּ ֹו. **יא**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

There are a lot of divrei Torah on the parsha. How is this different?

At Aleph Beta, we believe that the Torah is a guidebook that answers life’s biggest questions, offering profound insights about how we should live our lives. Moreover, we believe that Jewish tradition has always recognized the right of all readers, in every generation, to look at the text themselves and try to decide what they think it means. That means you. That’s why you are the most important author of this quest through the sources. We think that this guide offers a fun, stimulating and relevant path through the sources, but if you get wrapped up in a stimulating discussion and never make it past page 2, we’ll consider that a success!

Is this guide for self-study or should I study it with others?

Either works! You can gather a small group of friends to explore it together, share it with a chevruta (learning partner), or go through it by yourself.

Do I need to prepare anything or can I just jump in?

Just jump in! Even if you’re planning to use this for a group discussion, just open up to page 1 and get going. (If you read it in advance, it will spoil the fun!) The only thing you should do in advance is print out copies of the “Source Sheet” for the other participants, so everyone can follow along and engage with the sources.

About the Author

Most of the material within – although not the particular language contained in this guide - was first developed and taught by Rabbi David Fohrman, founder and CEO of Aleph Beta, and is presented in his video, “Parshat

Vayeitzei: Consequences of Jacob’s Deceit” (available for viewing at [www.alephbeta.org](http://www.alephbeta.org/)). This guide was written by Beth Lesch, edited by Rivky Stern, and arranged by Laura Schembre.

Jacob sees Rachel and it’s love at first sight. He finds himself filled with strength he didn’t know he had; he flexes his muscles and single-handedly removes the heavy stone that is blocking the mouth of the well, the stone that no man could budge. After giving water to Rachel’s flocks, our hero turns to her and kisses her.



But then the verse chronicles something strange:

**Genesis 29:11**

ל ָר ֵחל; ַו ִ ּי ָּ ׂשא ֶאת-קֹל ֹו, ַו ֵ ּי ְב ְּך

ו ִ ּי ׁ ַּשק ַי ֲעקֹב,

And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept

The obvious question here is: why is Jacob crying?

#### PONDER THIS



Why do you think Jacob is crying? See if you can come up with more than one reason.

The most straightforward interpretation here is probably that Jacob is crying *tears of joy*. But it’s not the only reason. Our Sages discuss why Jacob cried, and their answer has nothing to do tears of joy. Their explanation seems bewildering at first -- but let’s take a look.

### The Benefit Of The Doubt

#### LOOK INSIDE: Studying the Midrash



Read through the midrash below.1 What are the **two** reasons that the midrash gives for Jacob’s cry? Does this explanation resonate with you? Why or why not?

**Rashi on Genesis 29:11**

**and wept:** Since he foresaw with the holy spirit that she (Rachel) would not enter the grave with him.

Another explanation: Since he came empty-handed, he said, “Eliezer, my grandfather’s servant, had nose rings, and bracelets and sweet fruits in his possession,

and I am coming with nothing in my hands.” [He had nothing] because Eliphaz the son of Esau had pursued him to kill him at his father’s orders; he (Eliphaz) overtook him, but since he had grown up in Isaac’s lap, he held back his hand. He said to him (Jacob), ”What shall I do about my father’s orders?“ Jacob replied,”Take what I have, for a poor man is counted as dead.”

רש”י על בראשית כט:יא

**ויבך:** לפי שצפה ברוח הקודש שאינה נכנסת

עמו לקבורה. דבר אחר לפי שבא בידים ריקניות, אמר אליעזר עבד אבי אבא היו בידיו נזמים וצמידים ומגדנות, ואני אין בידי כלום. לפי שרדף

אליפז בן עשו במצות אביו אחריו להורגו והשיגו, ולפי שגדל אליפז בחיקו של יצחק משך ידו. אמר לו מה אעשה לציווי של אבא, אמר לו יעקב טול

מה שבידי, והעני חשוב כמת.

Let’s just take a moment to recap the Midrash, so we’re all on the same page. According to the midrash, there are two possible reasons for why Jacob cries when he kisses Rachel:

1. According to the **first reason**, Jacob saw, through some kind of divine inspiration, that he and Rachel would not be buried together.
2. According to the **second reason**, Jacob cried because he didn’t have any money or gifts to give to Rachel. To explain why, the Midrash launches into this strange story about Eliphaz, a story which takes us back to the end of last week’s parsha, to Jacob’s deception of his brother Esau. According to the Midrash, after Jacob steals Esau’s blessing, Esau dispatches his son, Eliphaz, to hunt him down. Eliphaz catches up with his uncle Jacob and he overtakes him. He holds the dagger up to Jacob’s neck and is about to kill him… but in the last moment, Eliphaz can’t bring himself to do it. After all, he was raised in the household of Isaac, so murder doesn’t come easily to him. So he drops the dagger. But he wonders aloud to Jacob: “What am I going to do? My father commanded me to kill you.” So Jacob offers: “Take my money. Being poor is as good as being dead.” That seems to satisfy Eliphaz; he takes Jacob’s wealth, but leaves him alive.

1 This midrash is originally from *Genesis Rabbah*, but we’ve quoted it as Rashi brings it in his comment on the verse, Genesis 29:11.

What a strange set of stories this Midrash tells. They really leaves you scratching your head. First of all, the explanations are just plain odd. And second of all, they really seem to come out of nowhere. Why do the Sages feel the need to complicate things? Divine prophecy, this whole convoluted story with Eliphaz - none of that is in the text, and the Sages don’t offer any evidence to bolster their claims. And what message are we supposed to take away from it all?

Let’s not give up on this midrash so quickly. We want to invite you to delve deeply into it and to try to understand where it’s coming from. By the end, you may even find yourself defending its surprising interpretation.

#### PONDER THIS



Indeed, if you’re up for a challenge, take some time now to see if you can “defend” the midrash’s claims. Can you think of any evidence in the text to support them?

### A Cry For The Ages

To figure out where this Midrash is coming from, let’s go back to the verse itself. What are the words that the Bible uses to characterize Jacob’s tears at the well?

**Genesis 29:11**

ַו ִ ּי ָּ ׂשא ֶאת-קֹל ֹו, ַו ֵ ּי ְב ְּך

and he lifted up his voice and he cried

“Lifting up a voice and crying” is a very particular expression, one which doesn’t appear that often in the Bible. Let’s explore other times this phrase is used, and see if it sheds any light on this strange midrash.

#### PONDER THIS



Who was the first person in the Bible to “lift up their voice and cry”?

**Hint 1:** It was a woman.

**Hint 2:** She was a member of Abraham’s household.

The first time the Bible uses this expression2 is to describe Hagar, Abraham’s maidservant:

**Genesis 21:14-16**

בראשית כא:יד–טז

**14** And Abraham arose up early in the morning, and

ּב ּ ֹב ֶקר ַו ִ ּי ַּקח- ֶל ֶחם ְו ֵח ַמת ַמ ִים

**יד** ו ַ ּי ׁ ְש ֵּכם ַא ְב ָר ָהם

took bread and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and

ׂשם ַעל- ׁש ְכ ָמ ּה, ְו ֶאת-ה ֶ ּי ֶלד--ו ְי ׁ ַש ְּל ֶח ָה;

ּב ִמ ְד ַּבר ּב ֵאר ׁ ָש ַבע. **טו** ו ִ ּי ְכל ּו ה ַּמ ִים,

ו ִ ּי ֵּתן ֶאל-ה ָגר

ו ֵּת ֶל ְך ַו ֵּת ַתע,

sent her away; and she departed, and strayed in the

מן-ה ֵח ֶמת; ַו ַּת ׁ ְש ֵל ְך ֶאת-ה ֶ ּי ֶלד, ַּת ַחת ַא ַחד ה ִּ ׂשי ִחם.

wilderness of Beer-sheba. **15** And the water in the

ּכ ְמ ַט ֲח ֵוי ֶק ׁ ֶשת, ּכי

ְר ֵחק ה

**טז** ו ֵּת ֶל ְך ַו ֵּת ׁ ֶשב ָל ּה ִמ ֶּנ ֶגד,

bottle was spent, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs. **16** And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bow-shot; for she said: ‘Let me not look upon the death of the child.’ And she sat over against him, and lifted up her voice, and wept.

ה ָ ּי ֶלד; ַו ֵּת ׁ ֶשב ִמ ֶּנ ֶגד, ַו ּת ָּ ׂשא

ֹות ּבמ

א ְמ ָרה, ַאל-א ְר ֶאה

את-קֹ ָל ּה ַו ֵּת ְב ְּך.

After being expelled from Abraham’s house, Hagar finds herself in dire straits: she’s stranded in the desert with her son Ishmael and there’s no more water left in the canteen. She knows that death is coming, but she can’t bring herself to watch her son die. She casts down the child and, sitting from afar, lifts up her voice and cries. She is filled with a

sense of anguish, an utter loss of hope. Something is lost and it’s not coming back again.3 *That’s* what is implied by this expression of lifting up one’s voice and crying.



Bethlehem

So when Jacob lifts up his voice and cries, is he, too, sensing something precious slipping through his fingers? Yes - Rachel. He sees prophetically that he won’t be buried with her, that somehow that ultimate union symbolized by being buried next

to your soul-mate -- he’s never going to have that. He sees that he will lose her and be powerless to stop it. It’s just like Hagar and Ishmael at the well.

### Looking Backwards And Forwards

And there’s yet more meaning contained in this expression of lifting up one’s voice and crying. It turns out that we find it once more in Sefer Bereishit. What was the context there and how does it shed light on Jacob’s cry?

#### PONDER THIS



Can you think of someone else in the Book of Genesis who lifted up his voice and cried? Someone else who experienced a profound sense of loss and was powerless to stop it?

**Hint:** It’s in last week’s parsha…

2 This is the same exact expression that we find by Jacob in our parsha, except that here, it is conjugated in the feminine form since Hagar is the subject.

3 Ironically, in Hagar’s case, it turned out not to be true. Ishmael *wasn’t* lost, he *did* come back. Hagar didn’t see the well, the well that would allow Ishmael to live.

It turns out that the other person who lifts up his voice and cries is none other than Esau. And would you believe it? It happens just after Esau finds out that Jacob has stolen his blessing:

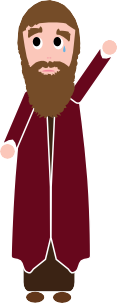
**Genesis 27:38**

**38** And Esau said unto his father: ‘Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father.’ And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.

בראשית כז:לח

**לח** ו ּיֹא ֶמר ֵע ָ ׂשו ֶאל-א ִביו, ה ְב ָר ָכה ַא ַחת הוא- ְל ָך

א ִבי-- ָב ְר ֵכ ִני ַגם-א ִני, ָא ִבי; וַ ִ ּי ָּ ׂשא עֵ ָ ׂשו קֹל ֹו, ַו ֵ ּי ְב ְּך.

Our Sages knew full well that the last time these words were used in the Bible, it was Esau crying because Jacob had deceived him, Esau resolving to kill Jacob. Is it a fluke that the last time this expression was used, Esau was crying because of something that Jacob had done to him… and a mere chapter and a half later, Jacob himself lifts up his voice and cries? No, the Midrash is saying, it’s no coincidence. If you want to understand Jacob’s cry, you need to understand Esau’s cry. This tale that the Sages tell about Esau dispatching his son Eliphaz to kill Jacob, leading to Jacob’s cry -- it serves to connect the stories. It’s the Sages way of saying: **One led to the other.**

### The Eliphaz Connection

Because what happens as a result of the dispatch of Eliphaz? Sure, Jacob manages to escape death, but he still has to face consequences. The consequence is that he shows up at Laban’s home empty-handed.

#### PONDER THIS



What is the significance of Jacob showing up at Laban’s home without any money or gifts? Why does that make him cry?

When Jacob arrives at Laban’s house without any gifts, he’s in a position of weakness when negotiating with the greedy Laban. Laban takes advantage of Jacob, pressing him into service for years on end. Because Jacob showed up empty- handed, he will spend twenty years playing the victim to Laban’s deceits, to his petty ploys to extract as much wealth from Jacob as he could.

Imagine how things might have been different if Jacob had come from a position of strength, if he had shown up with wealth in hand? Perhaps he could have appeased his greedy father-in-law with generous gifts right from the start.

Perhaps he could have been with Rachel from the start. Instead, not only does Rachel elude Jacob in death, but in life, too. The two reasons given by the Midrash: they’re both really talking about the same thing, about the loss of Rachel. That loss, the Sages seem to be saying, stems from what Jacob did to Esau.

### The Evidence Builds

#### PONDER THIS



Can you think of any other textual evidence in this parsha to connect Jacob’s act of deception to his later loss of Rachel? (If you’re up for a challenge, consider Genesis 29:23-26, see the Source Sheet.)

Consider what Laban says to Jacob when he deceives him at the chuppah, switching Leah for Rachel:

**Genesis 29:26**

ה ְּב ִכי ָרה

ְפ ֵני ל

ה ְ ּצ ִעי ָרה,

ּב ְמקו ֵמנ ּו-- ָל ֵתת כן

לֹא- ֵי ָע ֶ ׂשה

It is not done in our place, to give the younger before the firstborn

What’s the implication here? Laban seems to be taunting: “Maybe where you come from, Jacob, *you* give the younger before the older.” **Laban’s words harken back to Jacob’s deception of Esau.** And when you think about it, their crimes were awfully similar. They both involve family deception, the disguising of one sibling for another, and the tension between the older and the younger. In fact, one crime seems to be the exact inverse of the other:

With Jacob, the **younger** sibling was disguised as the **older.**

With Laban, the **older** sibling was disguised as the **younger.**

With Jacob, the siblings were **brothers.**

With Laban, the siblings were **sisters.**

With Jacob, the **mother** advises her **son** to deceive.

With Laban, the **father** advises his **daughter** to deceive.

The resonance is hard to ignore. This must have been what the Sages were seeing, what inspired their bewildering comment. What Jacob did to his father and his brother: now the inverse is happening to him.4

### Cause And Effect

So what do we make of all of this? Well, it’s all a commentary on Jacob’s deception of Esau. Whether we find a way to justify it, or even to say that it was somehow not even a deception at all, our Sages seem to be saying that “whatever goes around, comes around.” Jacob can’t escape the effects of that action. The tears that he caused his brother to shed would be repaid with his own tears. Rachel would always just barely elude Jacob’s grasp, both in life and in death.

Of course, this all leaves us with a difficult question. When we look at this kind of Midrash, one which seems - at least implicitly - to be critical of Jacob’s actions, it’s hard to know exactly how to process that. After all, Jacob is one of our forefathers; we look to him as a spiritual role model. There are many sources in our tradition which associate Jacob with the trait of “truth.”5 How do we reconcile one with the other?

We hope that our guide to next week’s parsha, Parshat Vayishlach, will shed some light.

4 And here’s another piece of evidence. Consider this: how did Laban manage to pull off his deception at the wedding canopy? The answer is: because it was dark. That’s the only way he was able to make Jacob think that Leah was Rachel. The Bible pointedly emphasizes that Laban’s subterfuge happened in the evening. (See Genesis 29 and contrast verse 23 with verse 25.) Does that remind you at all of Jacob’s deception of Isaac? It certainly does. That account opens by informing us that “Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see” (Genesis 27:1). Jacob tricked his father by taking advantage of his inability to see, just as Laban would later take advantage of his son-in-law’s ability to see.

5 This understanding probably originates with Genesis 25:27 and Micah 7:20, but is stated more explicitly in Genesis Rabbah 70:7 (also see Midrash Tehillim 15:2 or Tanna Devei Eliyahu Zuta 2).

Genesis 29:10-11

**10** And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother’s brother, and the sheep

ֵחל, ּבת- ָל ָבן א ִחי ַו ִ ּי ַּג ׁש ַי ֲעקֹב, ַו ָ ּי ֶגל את-ר א ּמ ֹו;

**בראשית כט:י–יא**

**י** ו ְי ִהי ּכ ֲא ׁ ֶשר ָר ָאה ַי ֲעקֹב

א ּמ ֹו, ְו ֶאת-צֹאן ל ָבן, א ִחי

of Laban his mother’s brother, that Jacob went near, and

ל ָבן א ִחי את-צֹאן

את-ה ֶא ֶבן מ ַעל ִפי ה ְּב ֵאר, ַו ַ ּי ׁ ְש ְק,

rolled the stone from the well’s mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother’s brother. **11** And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept.

את-קֹל ֹו, ַו ֵ ּי ְב ְּך.

ו ִ ּי ׁ ַּשק ַי ֲעקֹב, ל ָר ֵחל; ַו ִ ּי ָּ ׂשא

אמּ ֹו. **יא**

Rashi on Genesis 29:11

**and wept:** Since he foresaw with the holy spirit that she (Rachel) would not enter the grave with him. Another explanation: Since he came empty-handed, he said, “Eliezer, my grandfather’s servant, had nose rings, and bracelets and sweet fruits in his possession, and I am coming with nothing in my hands.” [He had nothing] because Eliphaz the son of Esau had pursued him to kill him at his father’s orders; he (Eliphaz) overtook him, but since he had grown up in Isaac’s lap, he held back his hand. He said to him (Jacob), ”What shall I do about my father’s orders?“ Jacob replied,”Take what I have, for a poor man is counted as dead.”

###### רש”י על בראשית כט:יא

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**Genesis 29:22-27**

###### בראשית כט:כב–כז

**22** And Laban gathered together all the men of the place,

ה ָּמקום, ַו ַ ּי ַעש מ ׁ ְש ֶּתה.

**כב** ו ֶ ּי ֱ ֹאסף ל ָבן את- ָכל-א ְנ ׁ ֵשי

and made a feast. **23** And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him;

ב ֶע ֶרב--ו ִ ּי ַּקח את- ֵל ָאה ב ּת ֹו, ַו ָ ּי ֵבא אֹ ָת ּה בא, אֵ ֶלי ָה. **כד** ו ִ ּי ֵּתן ל ָבן ל ּה, את-ז ְל ָּפה

**כג** ו ְי ִהי

אֵ ָליו; ַו ָ ּי

and he went in unto her. **24** And Laban gave Zilpah his

handmaid unto his daughter Leah for a handmaid. **25** And

ִש ְפ ָחת ֹו-- ְל ֵל ָאה ב ּת ֹו, ׁ ִש ְפ ָחה. **כה** ו ְי ִהי ב ּ ֹב ֶקר,

it came to pass in the morning that, behold, it was Leah;

ו ִה ֵּנה-הוא ל ָאה; ַו ּיֹא ֶמר אל- ָל ָבן, מה-זֹאת ע ִ ׂשי ָת

and he said to Laban: ‘What is this thou hast done unto

ַב ְד ִּתי ע ָּמ ְך, ְו ָל ָּמה ִר ִּמי ָת ִני. **כו** ב ָר ֵחל ע

ִלי--הלֹא

me? did not I serve with thee for Rachel? wherefore then

ה ְ ּצ ִעי ָרה,

ל ָבן, לֹא- ֵי ָע ֶ ׂשה כן ּב ְמקו ֵמנ ּו-- ָל ֵתת

ו ּיֹא ֶמר

hast thou beguiled me?’ **26** And Laban said: ‘It is not so

מ ֵּלא, ׁ ְש ֻב ַע זֹאת; ְו ִנ ְּת ָנה ל ָך

ל ְפ ֵני ה ְּב ִכי ָרה. **כז**

done in our place, to give the younger before the first-born.

בד ע ָּמ ִדי, ע ֹוד,

ֲע ַת

א ׁ ֶשר

ּגם-את-זֹאת, ּב ֲעב ָדה

**27** Fulfil the week of this one, and we will give thee the other also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years.’

ֵחר ֹות. א

ֶש ַבע- ׁש ִנים

**Genesis 21:14-16**

###### בראשית כא:יד–טז

1. And Abraham arose up early in the morning, and took

א ְב ָר ָהם ּב ּ ֹב ֶקר ַו ִ ּי ַּקח- ֶל ֶחם ְו ֵח ַמת מ ִים

**יד** ו ַ ּי ׁ ְש ֵּכם

bread and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away; and

ׂשם על- ׁש ְכ ָמ ּה, ְו ֶאת-ה ֶ ּי ֶלד--ו ְי ׁ ַש ְּל ֶח ָה;

ּב ִמ ְד ַּבר ּב ֵאר ׁ ָש ַבע. **טו** ו ִ ּי ְכל ּו ה ַּמ ִים,

ו ִ ּי ֵּתן אל-ה ָגר

ו ֵּת ֶל ְך ַו ֵּת ַתע,

she departed, and strayed in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

ַת ַחת א ַחד ה ִּ ׂשי ִחם.

את-ה ֶ ּי ֶלד,

מן-ה ֵח ֶמת; ַו ַּת ׁ ְש ֵל ְך

1. And the water in the bottle was spent, and she cast

the child under one of the shrubs. **16** And she went, and

מ ֶּנ ֶגד, ה ְר ֵחק ּכ ְמ ַט ֲח ֵוי ֶק ׁ ֶשת, ּכי

**טז** ו ֵּת ֶל ְך ַו ֵּת ׁ ֶשב ל ּה

sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bow-shot; for she said: ‘Let me not look upon the death of the child.’ And she sat over against him, and lifted up her voice, and wept.

**Genesis 27:38**

ה ָ ּי ֶלד; ַו ֵּת ׁ ֶשב מ ֶּנ ֶגד, ַו ִּת ָּ ׂשא

א ְמ ָרה, אל-א ְר ֶאה ּבמ ֹות

את-קֹ ָל ּה ַו ֵּת ְב ְּך.

###### בראשית כז:לח

**38** And Esau said unto his father: ‘Hast thou but one

ָכה א ַחת הוא- ְל ָך ה ְב ָר

**לח** ו ּיֹא ֶמר ע ָ ׂשו אל-א ִביו,

blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father.’ And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.

ע ָ ׂשו קֹל ֹו, ַו ֵ ּי ְב ְּך.

א ִבי-- ָב ְר ֵכ ִני ַגם-א ִני, א ִבי; ַו ִ ּי ָּ ׂשא

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This is Rabbi David Fohrman, welcome to Parshat Vayeitzei.

It seems to me that one of the great challenges that face us is how we come to grips with the story told in last week's parsha involving Yaakov's deception with Yitzhak his father and his brother Esav. How are we meant to look at that story?

## Was

Jacob's

## Deception to

Isaac and Esau Justified?

##### There are statements of our sages that seem to suggest that Yaakov was in the right, that either he had no choice but to deceive and was therefore in some way justified, or that the deception at some level was not really a deception. There are, however, other strains of interpretation which suggest a picture that in some sense is more gray and leaves open the possibility that the reader of Chumash is meant to struggle with whether Yaakov's resolution of the situation is something we should applaud or view with some level of concern.

I want to share with you a Midrash that seems to lead us in that direction and explore with you some of the implications. So the background of this is Midrash is something that takes place in this week's parsha, Parshat Vayeitzei. And that background event is Yaakov's first encounter with Rachel, the woman destined to become his beloved wife.

##### The moment he sees her, he seemed to see that she is destined for him. But the verse chronicles something strange that happens. " ּבְךְּ ֵ וַי ,קֹלו אֶת ּשׂא ּ ִ וַיHe raises his voice and he cries." The obvious question, of course is, why is he crying? And here Chazal, our sages, tell us a thing that is both fascinating and completely bewildering. Let me read Rashi with you. He gives two interpretations as to why Yaakov cried. Here's the first: .לקבורה עמו נכנסת שאינה הקודש ברוח שצפה לפיBecause he saw through some sort of divine inspiration that in the end, לקבורה עמו נכנסת אינהshe would not be buried with him.

אחר דבר: Here's a second interpretation: .ריקניות בידים שבא לפיThe reason why he cried is because he came empty-handed, he didn't have any money with him. אמר: Yaakov said to himself, according to the Midrash, אבא אבי עבד אליעזרEliezer, my grandfather's servant,

##### family. bride's the give to gold jewels, wealth, of sorts all hadהיו בידיו נזמים וצמידים ומגדנות

nothing. have Iואני אין בידי כלום.

##### Why did he have nothing? The Midrash continues because Eliphaz, the child of Esav, was running after him to kill him. The Midrash is referring to the aftermath of Yaakov's deception of his brother Esav.

After that Esav dispatches his son, Eliphaz, to go hunt Yaakov down and Eliphaz catches up to Yaakov but because Eliphaz grew up in the household of Yitzhak, murder didn't come easy to him. The last moment he couldn't bring himself to do it. He dropped the dagger. Eliphaz says to Yaakov, what am I going to do? My father commanded me to kill you!

##### Yaakov says to him, "Take my money, being poor is as good as dead. Go tell your father I am not alive

anymore." What a strange story this Midrash tells. What are the sages trying to tell us? The sages are coming from somewhere in the text and once you realize, you see not only what the evidence is for what they are saying, but why it matters so much as well.

## Biblical

Connections to

## Jacob's

Deceit of

## Isaac and Esau

##### What are the words that the Torah uses to characterize Yaakov's tears when he first sees Rachel? It turns out that those words are ּבךּ ֵ וַי ,קֹלו אֶת ּשׂא ּ ִ וַיand he lifted up his voice and he cried.

That expression doesn't happen all that often. When it does occur, it seems to suggest, something precious slipping through your fingers, being lost irrevocably. For example, another time we have that is when Hagar cries, after she casts down her child and sits from afar. There's no more water left in the canteen. She thinks Ishmael is dying of thirst and she lifts up her voice and cries.

##### It's the sense of anguish, of utter loss of hope. Something is lost and it's not coming back again. Ironically in Hagar's case, it wasn't true. She didn't see the well that was there to allow Ishmael to live.

But when Yaakov cries, Chazal are saying he too sees something precious slipping through his fingers, only in this case, that which is precious is Rachel.

##### She is slipping through his fingers in one of two ways. He sees prophetically that he won't be buried with her, that somehow that ultimate union symbolized by being buried next to your soul-mate, he wouldn't have that. Rachel would elude him. And she would elude him not just in death but in life too. Because, remember, Yaakov, as desperately as he wants to marry Rachel, is tricked by his father-in-law Lavan. He ends up marrying Leah in place of Rachel, then has to spend seven more years working for Rachel. It's as if he spends his life, trying to have Rachel, only to somehow have Rachel constantly elude his grasp.

And when he first met her, that sense of foreboding that he wouldn't really have her, that something would always get in the way, was something he sensed even then, that very first moment he met her. But

##### Chazal are saying something more too. They know something about these words ּבךּ ֵ וַי ,קֹלו אֶת ּשׂא ּ ִ וַיabo

ut the last time they were used. It turns out that the last time someone raised his voice and cried, it was Esav. When he realized he had been deceived by Yaakov about the blessings. What our sages seem to be doing is connecting these two events. If you want to understand the ּבְךְּ ֵ וַי ,קֹלו אֶת ּשׂא ּ ִ וַיwith Yaakov, you need to understand the last ּבְךְּ ֵ וַי ,קֹלו אֶת ּשׂא ּ ִ וַיin the Torah with Esav, because one led to the other. When Esav lifted up his voice and cried, after realizing that he was deceived, then, they say, he dispatched his son Eliphaz to kill Yaakov, only to have Eliphaz, in turn, foiled by Yaakov.

##### Yaakov suggests that he deceive his father Esav much as Yaakov himself had deceived his own father Yitzhak. "Take my money. Tell him I am dead." And then what happens? Well at face-value Yaakov escapes harm; he survives the threat of Eliphaz, but it comes at a cost. He has no money left and indeed, perhaps, a poor man is as good as dead. At least when it comes to dealing with Lavan. Lavan takes advantage of disadvantaged people. Yaakov would like to marry Rachel but he has no money to give the

bride's family. Lavan presses Yaakov into service for seven years and then takes advantage of the penniless Yaakov, switching Rachel for Leah under the Chuppah.

## The

Consequences of

## Jacob's

Trick to

## Isaac

##### When Yaakov challenges Lavan and says, "Why did you deceive me this way?" Lavan answers and says, "We don't do that in our place, where we come from, to give the younger before the older." What's the implication? Maybe where you come from Yaakov, you give the younger before the older. Lavan's words, too, hark back to Yaakov's deception of Esav. Chazal seem to be connecting the dots for us. One

another. to leadsוַי ִ ּ ּשׂא אֶת קֹלו, וַי ֵ ּבךּ

Whatever it is that we think about Yaakov's deception of Esav, Chazal seem to be saying, what goes around comes around and Yaakov can't escape the effects of that action. The tears he caused his brother to shed when Yaakov replaced the older son with the younger son, would be repaid with the tears that Yaakov himself sheds when his father-in-law, Lavan, replaces his younger daughter with his older one. Rachel will always just barely elude Yaakov's grasp, both in death and in life and upon first seeing her, he gets a premonition of that. He raises his voice and cries, as his own brother did before him.

## Jacob

– a Man of Deceit or

## Truth?

##### Jacob – a Man of Deceit or Truth?

Now just to pull back the zoom-lens, one of the great challenges that now faces us when we look at this strain of Midrash that seems, at least implicitly, to be critical of Yaakov's actions in last week's Parsha, one of the questions that faces us is, Yaakov is one of our forefathers; we look up to him as a role model. So how are we to deal with this? Yaakov is associated with the idea "emet," of truth. And yet he seems to have been involved in this deception, so how do we square all this?

##### The answer to how this strain of Midrash would view those questions, I think they may become clear in next week's parsha. I am going to pick up with you next week and talk with you about that.