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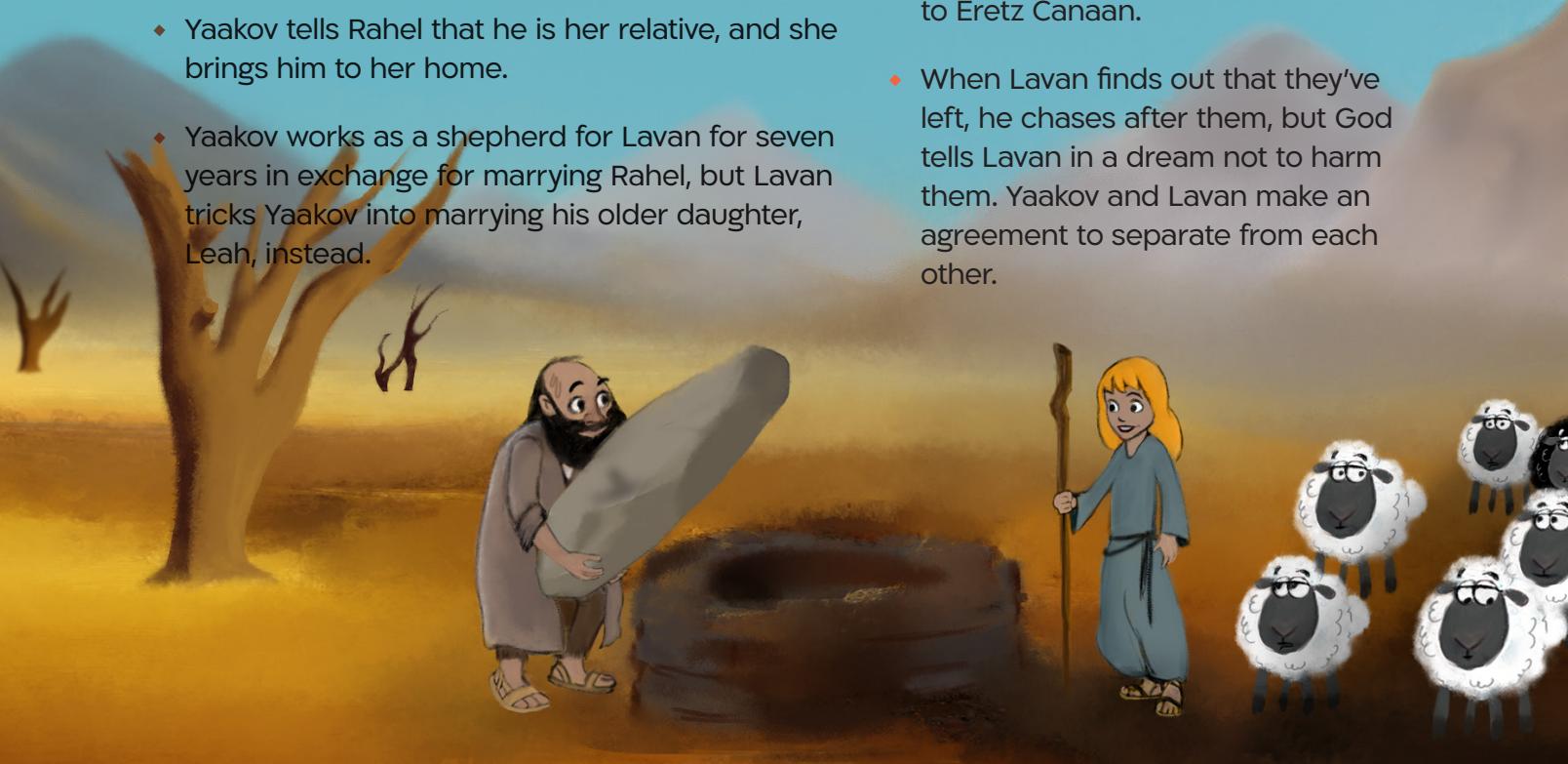


ג' - ט' בָּשַׂלְוּ תִשְׁפַּג November 27 - December 3, 2022



זה בפרק זה • In This Week's Parashah

- ◆ Yaakov runs away from Be'er Sheva and travels to the home of his uncle, Lavan.
- ◆ Yaakov dreams of a סֻלָּם (sulam, ladder) going up to the heavens.
- ◆ God tells Yaakov that his descendants will inherit אֶרֶץ כְּנָעֵן (Eretz Canaan, the Land of Canaan) and that God will protect him.
- ◆ Yaakov continues his journey until he encounters a well, where he meets Rahel, daughter of Lavan.
- ◆ Yaakov tells Rahel that he is her relative, and she brings him to her home.
- ◆ Yaakov works as a shepherd for Lavan for seven years in exchange for marrying Rahel, but Lavan tricks Yaakov into marrying his older daughter, Leah, instead.
- ◆ Yaakov agrees to work for an additional seven years after marrying Rahel as well.
- ◆ Rahel and Leah, along with their servants Bilhah and Zilpah, give birth to 11 boys and one girl in total.
- ◆ Lavan is upset at Yaakov, and Yaakov says that Lavan hasn't treated him fairly, so Yaakov, Rahel, and Leah decide to return home to Eretz Canaan.
- ◆ When Lavan finds out that they've left, he chases after them, but God tells Lavan in a dream not to harm them. Yaakov and Lavan make an agreement to separate from each other.





פְּשָׁת הַפְּסֻקִים • Understanding the Verses

Yaakov is fleeing to Haran to escape Esav's anger and also to find someone to marry. On his way, he lies down to sleep, and he has an amazing dream.

Bereishit 28:12-13

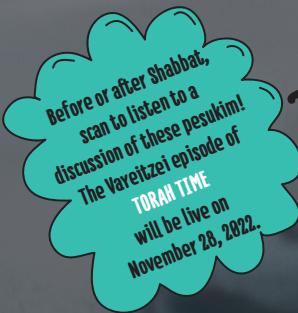
Yaakov dreamed. And behold: There was a ladder standing on the ground, and its head reached the heavens.
And behold: Angels of God were going up and down on it.
And behold: God stood there and said,
"I am the Lord, God of your father Avraham, and God of Yitzhak.
This land where you are sleeping – I will give it to you and your children."

בראשית כח: יב-יג

וַיַּחֲלֹם וְהִנֵּה סֶלֶם מִצְבֵּן אָרֶץ
וּרְאָשׁוֹן מִגְעַן הַשְׁמִימָה
וְהִנֵּה מֶלֶאכִי אֱלֹקִים
עָלִים וַיַּרְדִּים בָּו:

וְהִנֵּה ה' נִצְבֵּעַ עָלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר
אָנֹה ה' אֱלֹקִי אֶבְרָהָם אֶבְרָהָם
הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָתָה שָׁכֵב עָלָיה
לְךָ אֶתְנָהָה וְלִזְרָעָה:

- ◆ What is the meaning of the angels on the ladder? Do they connect to God's message?
- ◆ What do you notice about the direction the angels were going? What direction would you expect angels to travel?
- ◆ How many times do these pesukim say וְהִנֵּה (vehinei, and behold)? What do you think this repetition means?
- ◆ How do you think this dream might have made Yaakov feel? (The Torah tells us a bit about Yaakov's reaction: **Look it up!** Bereishit 28:16-17.)
- ◆ Have you ever had a dream that made you feel better about something going on in real life? What kinds of dreams do you wish you could have?





• פָּדָרֶשׁ • Midrash

Bereishit 28:10

Yaakov left Be'er Sheva, and went to Haran. He came upon a certain place and stopped there for the night, for the sun had set...

The place where Yaakov stops is the place he dreams about angels going up and down a ladder, and where God speaks to him.

But the order of events here is a bit confusing. In the first pasuk, it sounds like Yaakov went to Haran. But then, in the next pasuk, we hear about him stopping at a place along the way to Haran. What's going on here?

This aggadeta (midrash in the Gemara) explains with a story.

Talmud Bavli Hullin 91b

R. Yitzhak said: ... Yaakov arrived in Haran and realized: 'I just passed a place where my ancestors prayed, and I didn't stop to pray there!'

Since he wanted to return to that place, a miracle happened. The land became smaller, so Yaakov could quickly jump right back to that place.

The miracle that Yaakov experiences has a special name: **קְפִיצַת הַדֶּרֶךְ** (kefitzat ha-derekh). It literally means "jumping the way," and it describes a miracle when a path gets shorter in order to speed up long journeys! According to this gemara, Avraham's servant also experienced kefitzat ha-derekh on his way to find a wife for Yitzhak in Parashat Hayyei Sarah. And this gemara also says the same miracle happened to a warrior named Avishai ben Tzeruya on his way to save King David from a Pelishti giant!

בראשית כח:י

וַיֵּצֵא יַעֲקֹב מִבְּאָר שְׁבֻעַ וַיֵּלֶךְ חֶרְנָה:
וַיִּפְגַּע בַּמִּקְוֹם וַיַּלֵּן שָׁם בַּיּוֹם הַשְׁמַמְשׁ...

Bzzzz

A lot of midrashim are
bugged by something
unusual in the Torah text



תלמיד בבל מסכת חולין דף צא עמוד ב

אמר ר' יצחק: ... כי מטה לך אמר אפשר עברתי על מקום שהתקפללו אבומי ואני לא החטפלי?!

בדין היב דעתיה למי הדר
קפזה היה הארץ מיד.

- What might be special about kefitzat ha-derekh? Do you see any clues for why Yaakov got to experience this miracle?
- Think about the reasons that Yaakov left Be'er Sheva. How might he have been feeling on his journey? How would a supernatural experience have affected Yaakov?
- Even though you probably haven't experienced kefitzat ha-derekh, have you ever felt like you are on a mission, on the way to doing something important, and God is supporting you along the way? How can we notice the small and big ways God helps us?



• פָּרְשָׁנוֹת • Commentary

Leah names her fourth child Yehudah.

Bereishit 29:35

She again became pregnant and gave birth to a son and she said: "This time I will thank (odeh) God."

That's why she named him Yehudah...

בראשית בט:לה

ונתַהֲר עֹז וִתְלַד בֵּן וַתֹּאמֶר
הַפְּעֻם אָזְדָה אֶת הָ'

עַל בָּן קָרָא חָסָן יְהוּדָה...

Our parshanim (commentators) wonder: **What was it about Yehudah's birth that made Leah want to give thanks?**



Rashi (France, 1,000 years ago)

This time, I will thank – Because I got more than my share, from now on I should give thanks.

הפעם אודה – שגנוטלתי יותר מחלקי, מעטה עלי להודות.

Rashi draws from a midrash that Leah believed it would be fair for her to be the mother of three tribes. That's because she knew, through prophecy, that there would be 12 in total, which meant that Leah, Rahel, Bilhah, and Zilpah could each have the same amount: three. When Leah had a fourth, she realized she had more than her fair share, and she said a special thanks to God for that gift.

Targum Pseudo-Yonatan

This time, I will thank God, that from this son kings shall come forth. This son will be an ancestor to King David, who will give thanks before God...

תרגום המירוש ליוונtan

הרא זמְנָא אוֹדֵי קָרְם ה' דָמָן
ברִי דַיּוֹן עֲתִיד לְמַיְפִּיק מֶלֶכִין
וּמִגְּנִיה פּוֹק דָוד מֶלֶכָא
עֲתִיד לְאוֹדוֹדֵי קָרְם ה'...



- ◆ Can you explain, in your own words, what was special about Yehudah's birth, according to Rashi and according to the Targum?
- ◆ Leah is married to Yaakov, but the Torah tells us that Yaakov loves Rahel more. How do you think Leah might have felt?
- ◆ If you look at the names Leah gives her first three children, you can see her yearning for Yaakov's love (see p. 10 and Bereishit 29:32-34). As far as we know, at the time of Yehudah's birth, Leah's relationship with Yaakov hadn't changed. What can we learn from Leah's ability to give thanks?
- ◆ When is it easy for you to give thanks? When is it more difficult?



רַגֵּן שֶׁל עֲבָרִית • A Moment of Hebrew

Bereishit 29:26

Lavan said, "It is not the practice in our place to marry off the younger before the older."



= הַצְגָתָה בְּכֹרָה
Premiere, the first showing of a performance or a film (hatzagat bekhorah)



Find the Word!

Check out Devarim 21:15-17. Can you see how this שֹׂרֶשׁ (shoresh, root) is used in two different ways in these pesukim? What does the Torah's ruling tell us about the status of the firstborn?

= בְּכֹרִים
Bikkurim: first fruits grown in Eretz Yisrael that would be brought to the Beit Ha-Mikdash



דַּקָּה בְּשֵׁל דָּי • One-Minute Debate

Yaakov thought he was marrying Rahel, but Lavan tricked him into marrying Leah (Bereishit 29:21-27).

Debate: Lavan should not have tricked Yaakov.

How to play:

- ◆ Here are some arguments to get you started, but try to come up with your own. Then debate someone!
- ◆ For a true one-minute debate, give each side 30 seconds to make its best case.



Agree



Agree!

- ◆ Yaakov worked really hard for Lavan for seven years, with the goal of marrying Rahel. Lavan didn't keep up his end of the deal, and that wasn't fair.
- ◆ Honesty is the best policy.

Disagree!

- ◆ It would have been socially unacceptable for Rahel to marry before her older sister, Leah.
- ◆ Yaakov and Rahel were married just one week later.
- ◆ Lavan's scheme saved Leah from marrying Esav (which, according to midrashim, she really, really wanted to avoid).
- ◆ Since Yaakov tricked his own father, Yitzhak, in last week's parashah, it's not really that unfair that Lavan tricked him in this one.



הֲלֹכַת • Halakhah

Deception

In Vayetzei, Yaakov runs away without telling Lavan. Notice how the Torah describes this:



Learn one way
the parashah
practically impacts
our lives

Bereishit 31:20

Yaakov stole the heart of Lavan the Aramean, by not telling him that he was running away.

בראשית לא:ב

וַיִּגְנֶב יַעֲקֹב אֹתָהּ לִב לְבֵן הָאָרָם עַל
בְּלֵי הָגִיד לוֹ פִּי בִּרְךָ הַזֹּא:

גנבת דעת (geneivat da'at, stealing someone's mind) is one way of talking about deception. This is because deceiving someone means you steal a true picture of reality from them (by preventing them from knowing the truth). In Yaakov's case, deception might have been justified because Lavan no longer liked him and was out to hurt him. (See Bereishit 31:1-2.)

But normally it is forbidden to deceive people; we are expected to be honest and straightforward. This is particularly true when it comes to business and personal relationships:

Shulhan Arukh Hoshen Mishpat 228:6

It is forbidden to trick people in business, or to deceive them. If there's a flaw in an object you're selling someone, you must tell them... It is even forbidden to deceive people just with words, by making it appear that you are doing something for them that you aren't. How so? You shouldn't plead with someone to come over for a meal when you know they can't make it, and you shouldn't offer them lots of gifts when you know they won't accept them...

שולחן ערוך חושן משפט רכח:ו

אסור לרמות בני אדם במקח וממבר או לגנב דעתם, כגון אם יש מום במקחו צריך להודיעו ללווקח... וכך לגבן דעת הברהיות בדברים, שטראחה שעשו בשבילו, ואיינו עוזה, אסור. כיצד? לא יסרךב (בחברו) שיטעד עמו, והוא יודע שאינו סוד, ולא ירבה לו בתקורת והוא יודע שאינו מקבל...

These rules recognize that it is natural to consider doing some of these things, but we have to push ourselves to be honest. Other ways to avoid geneivat da'at include:



- ◆ Not bidding on something in an auction just to drive up the price, even if it's for charity (Minhat Yitzhak III:97)
- ◆ Never deceiving the government in order to get more public funding, even if it's for good causes like schools (Iggerot Moshe HM II:29)
- ◆ Refusing to copy someone else's work in school, which would deceive the teacher (Peninei Halakhah Likkutim II 2:19)



שאלות הפלבינה • Parashah Scavenger Hunt

The answers to the first seven questions can be found in the matching numbered aliyah in the Torah reading. **The answers to questions 8 and 9 are harder and can come from anywhere in the parashah. The answer to question 10 is in this week's Haftarah.**

Good luck!

aliyot:

- 1) Bereishit 28:10 to 28:22
- 2) 29:1 to 29:17
- 3) 29:18 to 30:13
- 4) 30:14 to 30:27
- 5) 30:28 to 31:16
- 6) 31:17 to 31:42
- 7) 31:43 to 31:55

Haftarah: Hoshea 11:7 to 12:12 for Sefardim and 12:13 to 14:10 for Ashkenazim

- 1 What did Yaakov do with the rock that had been under his head while he slept?
- 2 Who kisses whom in this aliyah?
- 3 What is Zilpah's job?
- 4 What is the name of Leah's youngest child?
- 5 What kinds of sheep and goats belonged to Yaakov under the deal he made with Lavan?
- 6 How long does it take for Lavan to discover that Yaakov had run away?
- 7 What place has two names?
- 8 How many years did Yaakov work for Lavan in total?
- 9 Of the 12 children born in the parashah, how many does Yaakov name himself?

*
Look for
the answers
on page 11!

10

Haftarah for Sefaradim: Where did Yaakov supplant his brother?
Haftarah for Ashkenazim: What does Hoshea recommend we take with us, in order to return to God through תשובה (teshuvah)?

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• בואו נדבר על זה • Tell Me More About This!

In our פירושנות / Commentary section (p. 4), we paid special attention to Yehudah's name and its meaning.

In fact, 12 children are born in this week's parashah—to four different mothers. Nearly each child's name comes with an explanation. Together, the names tell a story.

- What emotions can you detect in these names? How are Rahel and Leah feeling when they give each name? What are they learning? What changes might be happening in the family relationships?

Rahel

- יוסף (Yosef) "May God add (ישאף/yosef) for me another son"

The previous pasuk has a possible other meaning as well: "God has taken away (אסף/asaf) my shame."

5



Leah

- יששכר (Yissakhar) "God has given me my reward (שכרי/skhari)"
- זבולון (Zevulun) "God has given me a great gift (זבד/zeved)"
- דינה (Dinah) No explanation is given for this name, but its meaning connects to judgment (What other name here does Dinah's connect to?)

4



Parashah Scavenger Hunt Answers:

1. He set it up as a pillar and poured oil on it (28:18)
2. Yaakov kisses Rahel (29:10), Lavan kisses Yaakov (29:13)
3. Leah's maid servant (29:24)
4. Dinah (30:21)
5. Brown sheep, along with all spotted and speckled sheep and goats (30:32)
6. Three days (31:22)
7. The place where Lavan and Yaakov make their agreement—Lavan calls it Yegar Sahaduta and Yaakov calls it Gal-Eid (31:47)
8. 20 (31:38)
9. None! (But Yaakov does name Binyamin in next week's parashah)
10. Haftarah for Sefaradim: In the womb (Hoshea 12:4)
Haftarah for Ashkenazim: Words (Hoshea 14:3)

Zilpah

(children named by Leah)

- ◆ **גד (Gad)** "Luck (גָּד/gad) came!"
- ◆ **אשר (Asher)** "In my fortune (בְּאַשְׁרִי/be'oshri), daughters will count me fortunate"

3



Leah

- ◆ **ראובן (Reuven)** "God saw (רָאֹבֶן/ra'ah) my suffering, and now my husband will love (יְאֵהָבָנִי/ye'ehavani) me"
- ◆ **שמעון (Shimon)** "God heard (שְׁמַעַן/shama) that I am hated"
- ◆ **לוי (Levi)** "My husband will be attached (יְלִזְהָה/yilaveh) to me"
- ◆ **יהודה (Yehudah)** "I will thank (יְהֹדָה/odeh) God"

1



Here's the order in which the Torah describes the children being born and getting names.

Bilhah

(children named by Rachel)

- ◆ **דן (Dan)** "God has judged me (דָּנָנִי/danani)"
- ◆ **נאftali (Naftali)** "I am connected (נְפִתְחָתִי/niftalti) to my sister"

2



- ◆ Why do you have your name (Hebrew or English), and what does it mean? Were you named after someone else? Was it because of hopes your parents had for you? Or because of something that was going on in your parents' lives at the time?



תפלה • Prayer in the Parashah

In our parashah, Yaakov has a dream about angels going up and down a ladder to heaven. When he wakes up, he is startled and he says, "Wow, I had no idea that God was in this place!" (Bereishit 28:16)

Yaakov's dream helps him realize how special his place was. One midrash explains what his state of mind had been before:

Midrash Sekhel Tov

"I had no idea" - and I wanted to pass it by, if not for the sun setting right then and delaying me.

מדרש שביל טוב (בובר)

וְאָנֹכִי לֹא יַדְעֵתִי – וְהִיִּתִי חֲפֵץ לְעֹבֶר
לֹוְלָא בַּי בָּא הַשְׁמָשׁ וְאַחֲרָתִי.

Have you ever felt like you were in such a rush, that you weren't able to notice the place you were in? Sometimes when we stop for a moment to look around, it's possible to see more in our surroundings. Then we can find beauty, or even holiness, where we are.

Tefillah can help us do this. When we take time to pray, we slow our pace, and we transform the place where we are into a place of prayer. That can make us more able to recognize God where we are.

- ♦ Can you think of ways to slow down and better appreciate the space you are in?
- ♦ Are some places holier than others? If God is everywhere, why do some places feel more holy?
- ♦ Can you think of ways to add holiness to places that don't stand out or seem so special all on their own?



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