

# *Shiur L'Yom Chamishi*<sup>1</sup>

[Thursday's Study]

READINGS:    ***Torah Vayetze:***            **Genesis 30:25 - 31:29**  
                  ***Haftarah:***                        **Hosea 13:14-16**  
                  ***B'rit Chadasha:***            **John 1:48-49**

*Why did you run off secretly and deceive me?*  
[Genesis 31:27]

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Today's Meditation is Psalm 85:10-11;

This Week's Featured Amidah prayer is Petition #4, *Ga'al* [*Kinsman-Redemption*]

Parsha *Vayetze* is all about sons and daughters of the Covenants learning to recognize, resist, navigate around, and overcome the toxic effects of the vast pools of dark energy that exist in this world by reason of Adam and Chava's ingestion of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Our ancestor Ya'akov [Jacob] is currently the man on the point of the spear. We are watching him fight for survival *behind enemy lines*. He is destined to be the prototypical *Hebrew of the Diaspora*.

For a son or daughter of the Covenants, life anywhere outside of *Eretz Yisrael* – the land promised to Avraham and his seed forever - is life in Exile. Such a life may at times be pleasant and prosperous; at other times such a life is fraught with persecution and pain. It usually starts with some level of favor from the locals. But it is Exile nonetheless, and the favor eventually fades. Indeed it quickly turns from favor to persecution. And when that begins to happen we are supposed to realize that our toxic season of separation from our homeland needs to come to an abrupt end. Bags need to be packed. Goodbyes need to be said. Exits need to be made. Our next destination? It may be another land of exile, and another challenging obstacle course of pools of dark energy. But one day, and hopefully soon, our destination will be *Eretz Yisrael*. That is home. Everything else will eventually turn into a death trap.

We **need** the soil of Eretz Yisrael. It is life and health and peace to us. We **need** to walk the hills around Jerusalem. We **need** to breathe the desert air of the Negev around Hebron and Be'er-Sheva. We **need** to make *mikveh* in the Yarden and at Gihon spring. We **need** to experience silent awe at the sight of Hermon, the Golan,

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Karmel, Kinneret, the Judean Desert, the Dead Sea, and the Valley of Megiddo. We **need** to see the date palms rising up majestically from the desert floor around En Gedi, the fig, olive, and pomegranate trees bearing fruit in the Galil, and majestic oaks and cedars swaying peacefully in the breezes of places like Beit-El, Petach Tikva, Haifa, and Safed.

It isn't 'Holy Land Tours', bargains at the *shuk*, or even prayers at the *Kotel* we need. What we need goes deeper than any physical structure or modern city or marketplace. It goes deeper than history or religion or politics or philosophy. It goes deeper than bloodlines and Bible characters. What we need is to reconnect our souls to the blessed Land itself. We need to reconnect with the blessing of Creativity and Fruitfulness the Holy One placed upon that soil. And we need to reconnect with the Divine Purpose and Plan the Holy One wants to release from there to the world – in our day, in our time. May the Holy One end the present separation – and heal our hearts. And may He do it soon!

### ***In Exile – But Not Alone!***

For us, Exile is happening in places like America, Africa, Europe, Asia, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Japan, and Iceland. For our ancestor Ya'akov the location of exile was the village of Charan in Mesopotamia. Charan was a place of ***compromise*** and ***settling for less than God's best***. So it is with our places of Exile. Charan is also a place that we in these studies have come to call Laban's *world*. But Laban's influence and ways of deception are felt in every land of Exile known to man.

As today's aliyah begins Ya'akov has already been in Laban's world for approximately 14 years. What exactly has our ancestor been doing all these years in Laban's world, you ask? Well, the purpose for which Ya'akov initially came to this place was to take himself a wife from among the daughters of Laban. That he has done. In fact Ya'akov has been tricked into taking not just one but TWO DAUGHTERS OF THE HOUSE OF LABAN AS WIVES.

Ya'akov left his father's camp at Be'er-sheva with nothing but a blessing. He acquired no material possessions at all along the way. So upon arriving at Charan he had no choice but to sell himself as an indentured servant in order to acquire the 'bride price' for the maiden he had been sent to find and take as a wife. He has labored a total of 14 years for nothing but the hand of Laban's youngest daughter, Rachel. Laban insisted on Ya'akov also marrying his oldest daughter, Leah, so he now has two wives. And yet Ya'akov still owns absolutely nothing in the way of

material possessions except the tunic on his back. Laban and his sons will soon dispute his right to possess even that.

Ya'akov owns not one ounce of silver to start a new life in Eretz Yisrael. He owns not a single nugget of gold with which to barter for food for his family. Laban has made sure that Ya'akov owns not so much as one sheepdog – much less any herds, no flocks, no land, no wells or watering rights. He does not even allow Ya'akov the dignity of owning the tent in which he lives. Everything around him – including his own labor - belongs to Laban. And Laban will never let him forget it.

### ***The Balance Sheet of Life – Which Side Should Be our Focus?***

As we begin our study today the asset side of Ya'akov's earthly balance sheet reflects that all he has in the world are two wives [Leah and Rachel] two maidservant/concubines [Bilhah and Zilpah], 11 sons, and one daughter. There is some really good news about Ya'akov's balance sheet, however. That good news is found on the opposite side from the listing of assets. The side I am talking about is the liability side of the balance sheet. And finally, for Ya'akov, that side reflects a big fat ZERO. After 14 years of indentured servanthood Ya'akov is finally 100% debt-free. He now owes no human being – including - so much as a farthing.

Ya'akov's days of indentured servanthood in 's house are now accomplished. He is free at last - free to go wherever he wants, whenever he wants. He is free to stay . . . or he is free to leave. He has nothing more to bind him to 's house. Well, there is ***one little thing***. If he leaves Charan now, you see, he will leave without a single shekel of silver, without a single nugget of gold, without a single ram or ewe or donkey or camel. Indeed, if he leaves now he will leave without so much as a pigeon or turtledove. If he leaves now he will leave without a single morsel of food for the journey, much less a cent of capital with which to establish himself when he makes his return to Eretz Kena'an. That is not the way Ya'akov's grandfather Avram left Charan. And that will not be how Ya'akov will be leaving Charan either.

### ***Returning to the Theme of Radical 'Departures'***

Make no mistake - before today's aliyah is over our ancestor *Ya'akov* [Jacob] will indeed leave the house of Laban. He will indeed depart from Charan and begin in earnest his journey of return to the fragrant and fruitful hills of Eretz Yisrael. And mark my words – when that happens the 'departure' scene will be an experience which will foreshadow both *the exodus from Egypt* and the final return of the remnant of the Holy One's people from the present ***Diaspora***.

As Pharaoh will do with regard to Ya'akov's offspring a few centuries hence Laban will resist Ya'akov's exodus and will refuse to let the people of the Covenant go. And as will be the case in the time of the escape of Ya'akov's descendants from Egypt the result of Pharaoh's resistance will be that by the supernatural working of the Holy One the Holy One's people will carry with them, from their exile, *the wealth of the one they have been made to serve*.

Ya'akov will not leave Charan empty-handed any more than his descendants will leave Egypt empty-handed. But prepare for a lot of bricks and storehouses to be forged by hard labor in the interim!

### ***Ya'akov First Attempt to Make Aliyah***

As soon as the fourteen-year period which *Ya'akov* had worked for Rachel had expired, Ya'akov went to Laban seeking permission to take his new family and ***“go back to [his] homeland”***.

***Vayehi ka'asher yaldah Rachel et-Yosef vayomer Ya'akov el-***

*After Rachel had given birth to Yosef Ya'akov said to ,*

***shalcheni v'elchah el-mekomi ul'art'zi***

*'Let me leave. I would like to go to my own place and to my own land.*

[Genesis 30:25]

That was the 'deal' wasn't it? 7 years for *Leah-in-Rachel's-clothing*, then 7 more years for Rachel herself? As stated above however had Ya'akov left at this point he would have left *empty-handed*. The Holy One therefore *hardened 's heart* - much as He would later do to Pharaoh. Hence refused to simply let Ya'akov and his family go.

***Vayomer elav im-na matzati chen***

*'Haven't I earned your friendship?' replied .*

***b'eynecha nichashti***

*'I have made use of divination*

***v'yevarcheni Adonai b'g'lalecha***

*and have learned that it is because of you that the Holy One has blessed me.'*

***Vayomar nakvah secharecha alai v'etenah***

*'Just name your price!' said [Laban]. 'I will give it!'*

[Genesis 30:27-28]

The Labans of this world know all the tricks and pull out all the stops. Look

carefully at his tactics. He starts by **laying on a ‘guilt trip’** – i.e. 'Haven't I earned your friendship?' *Pretty slick, huh?*

*Then he proceeds to claim to a special insight that God's will is for them to work together* in shared ministry [I have made use of divination and have learned that it is because of you that God has blessed me.] Oh, *this guy is GOOD! Pssst. – Ya'akov . . . Serpent alert! Serpent alert!* The last time we saw someone this good at manipulating people was in the Garden, and had to do with a piece of fruit.

And then, while Ya'akov was still reeling from the ‘God has put us together’ bullet-point brings the *piece de resistance* – he plays to Ya'akov's pride and ambition by offering to let Ya'akov become a **partner in ministry** [*Just name your price!* said [Laban]. *I will give it!*].

### ***Hook Line and Sinker!***

Ya'akov falls for it hook, line and sinker. Laban has stroked Ya'akov's pride and ambition. In exchange for even more years of labor, Ya'akov proposes that he receive all [a] spotted, [b] streaked, and [c] off-color animals in or born to the flocks Laban has placed under his charge.

Laban orally agrees to Ya'akov's terms because it is a relative oddity, in Syria, for a sheep to be born anything other than white or a goat to be born anything other than black. What a fool he thought Ya'akov was! And even the more so because he had a plan to assure Ya'akov got virtually nothing.

### ***The Great Pretender's Fateful Last Trick***

What was 's devious plan? Torah tells us plainly:

***V'yasar b'yom hahu et ha-teyashim ha-akudim***  
*That day [Laban] removed the ringed and streaked he-goats,*

***v'hatlu'im v'et kol ha-izim ha-nekudot***  
*and all the spotted and streaked she-goats –*

***v'ha-tlu'ot kol-asher- bo v'chol-chum baksavim***  
*every one with a trace of white, and every sheep with dark markings.*

***V'yiten b'yad-b'nav***  
*These he gave to his sons.*

***V'yasem derech shloshet yamim beyno uveyn Ya'akov***  
*He then separated himself from Ya'akov by the distance of a three-day journey.*

***v'Ya'akov ro'eh et-tzon Laban ha-notarot***  
*Ya'akov was left tending Laban 's remaining sheep.*  
[Genesis 30:35-36]

Now wait a minute. Had not just agreed to let Ya'akov have all spotted, streaked, an off-color animals that Ya'akov found in his flocks and herds “today”? Now he is personally running through the flocks and herds pulling out every animal Ya'akov might claim and giving them to his sons –all before Ya'akov can get out to the fields to inspect the animals and claim his property. not only gave the animals he had promised to Ya'akov to his sons, he covered up his deception by removing the promised animals three days' journey away. This meant that:

[a] Ya'akov would start with absolutely nothing, and  
[b] the spotted/streaked/off-color animals in the existing herds and flocks could not crossbreed with the solid-color animals he left for Ya'akov to tend, making it almost impossible, in the natural, for Ya'akov to develop any significant flock or herd.

Laban thought, in accordance with every principle of natural genetics he knew, that he would thereby prevent Ya'akov from getting any benefit whatever from his bargain. Basic principles of science as he knew it – and a lifetime of experience – told him that if solid color animals mated with solid-color animals, they would have solid-color offspring – forever! That would mean Ya'akov would never get a single animal.

Laban is such a schemer! But wait a minute . . . *who is really fooling who?*

***Who's Fooling Who?***

All Lavan's best efforts at manipulating the situation notwithstanding, we are about to see that the promise the Holy One made to Ya'akov at ***Beit-El*** fourteen years previously<sup>2</sup> was far more powerful than even natural principles of genetic science. The Holy One over-ruled natural genetics. He instructed Ya'akov in ***supernatural*** genetics. It was through supernatural genetics that the Holy One planned to transfer virtually all the wealth he had allowed Laban to acquire during Ya'akov's tenure from him to Ya'akov.

The Holy One had Laban on a leash all along. Laban was merely a pawn in the Holy One's hand. And pawns must always eventually bow before knights.

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<sup>2</sup> This promise is found at Genesis 28:13-15. The conclusion of the promise was: ***Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.***

The Holy One let both Laban and Ya'akov think Ya'akov had done something to reverse the natural genetic propensities of 's sheep and goats – but what really happened was that the Holy One supernaturally intervened on behalf of Ya'akov in accordance with his Covenant promises (see **Genesis 28:13-15**), with the blessing Yitzchak had spoken (see **Genesis 27:28**), and in faithfulness to his covenant with Avraham. What really happened was that the Holy One made good on His promise to *be with* and to *bless* Ya'akov. What really occurred was that the Holy One honored the prayer Yitzchak spoke over Ya'akov-in-Esav's-clothing twenty years ago, when he said:

*... may the Holy One give you of the dew of heaven,  
of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine.  
May peoples serve you and nations bow down to you.  
May you be master over your brethren, and may your mother's sons bow down to you.  
Cursed [be] everyone who curses you, and blessed [be] those who bless you!"*  
**[Genesis 27:28-29]**

In other words *don't be in a hurry to run out and try Ya'akov's striped-poles-at-the-watering-holes trick on your livestock at home* – it probably won't work. It was not the shrewdness of Ya'akov's *plan* that allowed him to prosper, you see – it was *the outworking of the Covenant his grandfather had made with the Creator of Heaven and Earth!*

Of course, the source of the wealth that Ya'akov is experiencing matters not to Laban or his sons. They see merely that Ya'akov – who is definitely not one of them - is prospering while they are not. And that DOES NOT MAKE THEM HAPPY! Just as the Ph'lishtim had begun to hate Yitzchak as soon as the Holy One caused him to prosper in their land, so Laban and his sons began to hate Ya'akov as soon as the Holy One caused him to prosper in their land. Torah describes this in the opening lines of Genesis chapter 31:

***Vayish'ma et-divrei b'nei- l'emor**  
And Ya'akov began to hear things that Laban's sons were saying,  
**lakach Ya'akov et kol-asher l'avinu**  
'Ya'akov has taken everything belonging to our father.  
**ume'asher l'avinu asah et kol-ha-kavod hazeh**  
and from that which was our father's he has made all this glory.*

### ***Making a Living? Or Making Glory?***

Did you catch the last phrase Laban's sons just threw out? They accused Ya'akov

of taking that which was their father's and *making kavod*. Some English Bibles translate the Hebrew word *kavod* in this instance as 'wealth'. But more frequently, and more accurately, it is translated 'glory'.

Why would the sons of Lavan the pagan deceiver refer to what Ya'akov made as 'glory'? The sons of Lavan may just be on to something. While we thought Ya'akov was just trying to make a living since he started his new arrangement with Laban, perhaps he has been doing something far more important. Perhaps instead of making a living, Ya'akov has really been 'making glory'.

What is 'glory' you ask? Glory is 'weight'. What is 'weight', you ask? Weight is different from mass. Mass is the quantity of substance in a thing. "Weight" on the other hand, is not a substance at all, but the evidence of a **force**. Specifically it is the evidence of the force which the *applicable sources of* gravitational pull exert on an object.

What Ya'akov has done is simply to *tap into the glory*. He has just taken advantage of the gravitational pull which the Words of the Holy One inside of him are exerting upon the material possessions of Laban and his sons. Picture a snowball rolling down hill, collecting snow from the hillside as it goes. The Words of the Holy One constitute the snowball. Laban's wealth is the hillside. The force of Divine gravity is pulling everything Ya'akov gets close to away from Laban and attaching it to Ya'akov.

That is the glory principle – it is *the force that draws resources from both natural Creation and Heaven to its activator . . . like a magnet draws steel*. May each of us learn to be good stewards of, and may the whole earth be filled with the knowledge of, this glory!

### *Ya'akov's Second God-Encounter: Twenty Long Years after Beit-El!*

Remember that Ya'akov's first God-encounter - at **Beit-El** on the way to Laban's house - had been an indirect one. It had happened in the midst of a dream. **Genesis 28:12-15**.

Why had the first revelation of the Holy One been in the form of *a dream*? Probably because a dream is regarded as *the lowest realm of revelation* - the realm of revelation for those who are not at all intimate with the Holy One (e.g. Avimelech, Laban, the baker and the cupbearer of Egypt, Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, the magi of Matthew), or who are having trouble listening to Him on a particular subject due to misinformation or mistaken teaching of spiritual leaders (e.g. Kefa [Peter], regarding

the appropriate level of interaction with goyim/gentiles). That was Ya'akov's condition in a nutshell.

Ya'akov's father Yitzchak and his grandfather Avraham had been *men of prayer* who *worshipped the Holy One*. Ya'akov, however, was not 'getting' it yet. Prayer is not something you can learn – prayer is a reverential response to the revelation of the Majesty and Kindness of the Holy One. Without a revelation of the Holy One's Eminent Majesty and Kindness, there can be no meaningful prayer life.

So the Holy One caught Ya'akov in an unconscious dream-state where he could not run or talk his way out of the encounter - and He showed the young man just a fleeting glimpse of the fringes of His Majesty.

Now in Genesis 31:3, after 20 long years of silence, the Holy One decides to Divinely interact with Ya'akov again. This time, however, the Holy One *raises the level of revelation* from *dream-revelation* to *speaking directly into Ya'akov's stream of consciousness*. A dream-line image of someone enthroned atop a stairway manned by angels is one thing; but hearing the actual Voice that Created the Universe speaking in real time is something else altogether! Here is how Torah records this God-encounter:

*Vayomer Adonai el-Ya'akov*

*The Holy One said to Ya'akov,*

*shuv el eretz avotecha ul'moladetecha*

*'Go back to your birthplace in the land of your fathers*

*v'ehyeh imach*

*I will be with you.'*

[Genesis 31:3]

The *Shofar of Heaven* has sounded. It is finally Ya'akov's *year of Jubilee*. The appointed time on Heaven's calendar for Ya'akov to *go home* has finally arrived. Ya'akov has finally been freed and empowered to *return again - to the Land* from which he has been Exiled now for so long. May it be so for us as well! All that is left to work out and work through is *the process* of the next radical departure.

***We're On Our Way Home!***

Hearing the word of the Holy One that he is finally released to leave, Ya'akov catches Laban away from home for a few days at sheep shearing time and uses the opportunity to speak to Leah and Rachel about leaving. Ya'akov is apparently not quite ready to tell Leah and Rachel that God is speaking to him *directly* - so he

relates to them a story about a “dream” which he did not really have [at least according to the record of Torah]. See **Genesis 31:10-13**. To give his story an air of legitimacy he related it not to the previous day when the actual interaction with the Holy One occurred but to “breeding season” when the whole striped-poles-at-the-water-holes routine came into being. **Genesis 31:10**.

Laban’s manipulations are about to come home to roost. Rachel and Leah did not agree on much, but when Ya’akov mentioned leaving their father’s house forever they did not hesitate to agree on one very important thing:

*Rachel and Leah answered and said to him,  
“Is there still any portion or inheritance for us in our father’s house?  
Are we not considered strangers by him?  
For he has sold us, and also completely consumed our money.  
For all these riches which God [Elohim] has taken from our father  
are really ours and our children’s;  
now then, whatever God [Elohim] has said to you, do it.  
[Genesis 31:14-16]*

With Leah and Rachel in total agreement, Ya’akov is ready to take his leave (remember, the name of this week’s parsha is “and he departed”). It is time to pack the camels . . . and make a prototypical Exodus.

### ***Rachel’s Little Souvenir of Laban’s World***

Ya’akov will not go out of Exile empty-handed. He will take with him the abundant possessions his presence brought to Laban’s house, which have by the Holy One’s grace and blessing, now become *his*. Unbeknownst to Ya’akov however, as his little ‘God-squad’ is preparing to leave Laban’s world forever his younger, more impetuous and self-willed wife, Rachel, is doing something of which he would not approve. As she is packing her things to leave, Rachel made one little ‘impulse acquisition’. She decided to take a little something of her father’s with her, as well - something that absolutely guarantees that Laban will come after them in hot pursuit, much like Pharaoh will do with regard to Ya’akov’s descendants a few centuries later. Torah describes Rachel’s actions as follows:

***Rachel et ha-t’rafim asher l’aviha***  
*Rachel stole the fetishes that belonged to her father.*  
**[Genesis 31:19 (b)]**

Rachel, Beloved Matriarch of Israel - what on earth were you thinking?<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The sages have found ways to justify Rachel’s actions despite the compromise they represent and the trouble they caused. According to the commentary of Bible.ort.org. for instance, “some say [Rachel’s theft of the household idols] was to prevent her father from worshipping them (*Bereshit Rabbah* 74; Rashi).

## ***The Covenant People Become the Objects of Hot Pursuit For the First Time***

When Laban and his sons returned from sheep shearing, he found his little encampment very, very quiet. Ya'akov, Rachel, Leah, his grandchildren, and even his household idols were gone – vanished as into thin air. Laban was absolutely *furious*. He mustered an army [does this sound like Pharaoh and his chariots to you?] and pursued Ya'akov all the way to the hill country of Gilead. His statements at the encounter that ensued provide a perfect example of revisionist history at work.

***Vayomer Laban l'Ya'akov meh asita***

*Laban said to Ya'akov, 'How could you do this?'*

***Vatig'nov et-levavi v'tenaheg et-b'notai kishvuyot charev***

*You stole behind my back and led my daughters away like prisoners of war!*

***Lamah nach'beta livroach***

*Why did you have to leave so secretly?*

***Vatig'nov oti v'lo-higadeta li***

*You stole behind my back and told me nothing!*

***v'ashalechacha b'simcha uv'shirim betoch uv'chinor***

*Why, I would have sent you off with celebration and song, with drum and lyre!*

***V'lo netash'tani l'nashek l'vanai v'livnotai***

*But you didn't even let me kiss my grandsons and daughters goodbye*

***atah hiskalta aso***

*What you have done is very foolish.*

**[Genesis 31:26-28]**

Clothing himself in self-righteous indignation, Laban took up an offended air and a victim's rage and accused Ya'akov of not leaving under proper terms. “*If you had just told me you wanted to leave, I would have sent you out properly, with prayer and laying on of hands*”, he might have said.

It all sounds so *spiritual*, doesn't it? But it was not spiritual at all. Remember that the Holy One had told Ya'akov in no uncertain terms to go. He *had* to go . . . whether – or anybody for that matter - liked it or not. Moreover, the Holy One had revealed to Ya'akov - and even to Leah and Rachel - that Laban was what in

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Others maintain that it was to prevent him from using them in divination to find Ya'akov. (*Tanchuma* 12; Rashbam; Ibn Ezra; cf. **Genesis 30:27; Hosea 3:4, Zechariah 10:2**). Still others maintain that Rachel took them to gain her father's pardon (Josephus 1:19:9).

today's lingo we call a *control-freak*, and simply could not be trusted. Had Ya'akov gone to and told him he was considering leaving, what do you think Laban would have done? Remember what he did the last time Ya'akov tried such a thing!

The Labans of this world, you see, are *takers*. They are experts at making themselves appear as "victims" by twisting the facts - and at laying "guilt trips" on people. If Laban had known any, I am sure he would have quoted Scripture at Ya'akov - out of context, of course.

Laban was a highly-skilled manipulator. What is more, his heart was hardened, and he could not be reasoned with. So when the Holy One said "go" Ya'akov went. He departed.

Ya'akov had finally learned that he did not need Laban's *permission*. He now understood that he did not need Laban's "*covering*". He even realized that he did not need Laban's *blessing*. Why did Ya'akov not need these things? Because Dear Reader – and this is VERY important - because ***he had a covenant with the Holy One, and the Holy One, his covenant partner, had said he could – indeed must – go.*** That is all any of us needs. So don't let -like manipulators - or the guilt trips which they spin your way - fool you or hold you back from your destiny.

### ***Questions For Today's Study***

1. In the last few verses of yesterday's aliyah we were told that the Holy One released Rachel from her barrenness, allowing her to bear *Ya'akov* [Jacob] a son.

[A] What does Torah say brought about the opening of Rachel's womb?

[B] In Strong's Concordance and Gesenius' Lexicon look up the word translated as "remembered" in Genesis 30:22 [NIV]. Write the Hebrew word and its definitions. In this context, what definition do you think is most appropriate?

[C] Do you see any evidence of a change in Rachel's heart between the birth of *Naftali* [Genesis 30:7-8] and the birth of her own son? Explain your answer.

2. With regard to Ya'akov's initial approach to Laban concerning going back to Kena'an:

[A] List all the things Ya'akov asked of Laban.

[B] Laban's response to this approach consisted of 3 parts. List the parts.

[C] The third part of Laban's response [name your wages] played on Ya'akov's materialistic tendencies, so he "bit" on that aspect. What were the terms he spelled

out for staying and taking care of Laban's flocks?

[D] Immediately after Laban agreed to Ya'akov's terms, what unethical thing did he do to make sure Ya'akov did not get any benefit from the bargain?

[E] After Laban took steps to totally deprive Ya'akov of the agreed wages, did Ya'akov back out on the "deal"?

[F] What did Ya'akov do to remedy the situation, and cause Laban's deception to "backfire"?

[G] How do you think what Ya'akov did at the watering troughs of the flocks led to him acquiring not only large flocks, but also "maidservants and menservants, and camels and donkeys" as Genesis 30:43 indicates occurred.

[H] When Ya'akov began to accumulate wealth, what did Laban's sons (brothers of Rachel and Leah) begin to say about him?

3. In regard to Ya'akov's second God-encounter, as described in today's aliyah:

[A] What instructions does the Holy One give Ya'akov?

[B] What promise does the Holy One make to Ya'akov?

[C] How do you think this message to Ya'akov relates to the "deal" Ya'akov made with the Holy One back in Genesis 28:20-22?

4. When Ya'akov spoke to Leah and Rachel about leaving the story note that there is no reference to prayer or to an agreement with God's will in the response of Rachel or Leah.

[A] What reasons do Rachel and Leah give for agreeing to leave with Ya'akov?

[B] As Ya'akov was gathering up his wives, children, and belongings and departed Charan, what was his declared destination?

[C] What did Rachel take with her that belonged to Laban?

[D] After he actually escaped Charan, how did Ya'akov's destination change?

[E] How many days did Ya'akov and his caravan travel before Laban and his army caught up to him?

[F] In Genesis 31:24, the Holy One appears to Laban in a dream. What did He tell Laban?

[G] Did Laban *sh'ma* this instruction of the Holy One's? Explain your answer.

[H] What did Laban say he would have done to "send Ya'akov off/out" if Ya'akov [Ya'akov] had told him he was leaving?

[I] About what did Laban try to lay a "guilt trip" on Ya'akov?

[J] How did Laban attempt to make himself seem more "righteous" than Ya'akov?

5. In today's haftarah reading the Holy One indicates that even though Efrayim (the tribes of the Northern Kingdom) will not step up and fulfill the destiny for which the Holy One had called them forth from Rachel, he would not let that destiny fail - even if it took RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD. In verses 15 and 16 he then explains why resurrection from the dead will be exactly what is necessary!

[A] In Strong's and Gesenius look up the words that our English Bibles translate as "*power*", "*graves*" and "*death*" in verse 14. Write each of the Hebrew words and their definitions.

[B] In Strong's and Gesenius look up the words that our English Bibles translate as "*plagues*" and "*destruction*" in verse 14. Write both of the Hebrew words and their definitions.

[C] In Strong's and Gesenius look up the words that our English Bibles translate as "*ransom*" and "*redeem*" in verse 14. Write both of the Hebrew words and their definitions.

[D] After telling how He will resurrect the bones of the "10 lost tribes" under Efrayim in the end days, list all the things that the Holy One says he is going to those 10 tribes that will make resurrection necessary.

[E] Why is the Holy One going to allow the horrible things of verse 16 to happen?

[F] What does the Holy One say is the "*guilt*" of the 10 tribes whose capitol was Samaria?

[G] In Strong's and Gesenius look up the word our English Bibles translate as "*guilt*" (NIV) in verse 15. Write the Hebrew word and its appropriate definition.

6. In today's reading from the account of Yochanan regarding the life and deeds of Y'shua of Natzret, we study the initial encounter between Y'shua and Natan'el.

Let's set the stage for this narrative. Y'shua has been called by Pilipos [Philip] to "come and see" Y'shua of Natzeret, who he describes as "*the one Moshe wrote about in the Torah, and about whom the prophets also wrote*". **John 1:45**. Natan'el has replied half-jokingly "*Can anything good come [from Natzeret?]*". **John 1:46**.

Upon meeting Natan'el Y'shua has exclaimed: "***Here is a true son of Israel (Ya'akov [Ya'akov]) - in whom there is nothing false!***"

[A] Natan'el is taken aback by Y'shua's characterization of him. What question does he ask?

[B] In Strong's Concordance look up the Greek word our English Bibles translate as "know" in verse 48. Write the Greek word and its definitions. What Hebrew word do you think Natan'el probably used (assuming the actual conversation

took place in Hebrew, not Greek), and in what way, if any, does that word contain a different shade of meaning. You will probably want to go to Richards' Expository Dictionary of Bible words and Gesenius (accessed through Strong's) to answer this question.

[C] How does Y'shua's response to Natan'el's question convince Natan'el that Y'shua is in fact the Messiah? Before you answer please read I Kings 4:22-25, and Micah 4:1-9.

[D] What *title* and what *two descriptions* does Natan'el actually give to Y'shua?

*May the Holy One speak to you continually,  
with ever-increasing clarity of revelation -  
and may your testimony be true and trustworthy.*

### ***The Rabbi's son***

### ***Meditation for Today's Study***

**Psalm 85:10-11**

*Mercy and truth have met together;  
Righteousness and peace have kissed.  
Truth shall spring out of the earth,  
And righteousness shall look down from heaven.*