

Torah: B’resheet (Genesis) 28:10-32:3(2)
Haftarah: Hoshea (Hosea) 12:13(12)-14:10(9)
B’rit Hadashah: Yochanon John 10:1-18

	<i>year 1</i> 28:10-30:13	<i>year2</i> 30:14-31:16	<i>year 3</i> 31:17-32:3
1	28:10 – 12	30:14 – 16	31:17 – 21
2	28:13 – 17	30:17 – 21	31:22 – 24
3	28:18 – 22	30:22 – 27	31:25 – 35
4	29:1 – 8	30:28 – 36	31:36 – 42
5	29:9 – 17	30:37 – 43	31:43 – 45
6	29:18 – 33	31:1 – 9	31:46 – 50
7	39:34 – 30:13	31:10 – 16	31:51 – 32:3

and Reuben went, in the days of the wheat harvest / and found mandrakes in the field and brought them to Leah his mother / and Rachel said to Leah give-please to me from the mandrakes of your son

*va’yélekh Re’uvén biymey q’tziyr-khitiym
 va’yim’tza’ dudaiym ba’sadeh
 va’yavé’ otam el-Leáh imo
 va’tómer Rakhél el-Leáh t’niy-na
 liy mi’duda’ey benekh*

וַיֵּלֶךְ רְאוּבֵן בְּיָמֵי קְצִיר־חֹטִים
 וַיִּמְצָא דוּדָאִים בַּשָּׂדֶה וַיָּבֵא
 אֹתָם אֶל־לֵאָה אִמּוֹ
 וַתֹּאמֶר רָחֵל אֶל־לֵאָה תְּנִינָא
 לִי מִדּוּדָאֵי בְּנֹתַי:

Aliyah Highlights

- Gen. 30:14-16** The agricultural season is commonly used to establish the setting and for dating purposes in Torah. Here, the beautiful grazing grounds of nomadic pastoral society connects with local agricultural activity. The term, mandrakes (*dudaiym* - דוּדָאִים) is a play on the word for “my love” (*dodiy* - דוּדִי) – see Song 7:13-14. Re’uven likely felt bad for his mother and sought to encourage her. Rakhel may have been reaching out to share deep pain that both sisters experienced for different reasons. Leah’s self-justifying accusation was the opposite of reality, portraying herself as the victim when, in fact, she is the victimizer. Not only brothers have conflict in Torah. Yet a deal is struck: Ya’aqov “sleeps” with Leah that night. Ya’aqov seems to readily acquiesce to the women in his life.
- Gen. 30:17-21** Yissakar (יִשָּׂכָר) can mean “reward” (Je. 31:16(17), 2Ch. 15:7) or “hireling” (Ge. 49:14). Add this to the negative sexual nuance of the verb “to sleep with” above, and the relationship of marital love becomes very unsavory circumstances. Leah’s desire for deeper intimacy with Ya’aqov after the birth of Z’vulun parallels her plea after the birth of her third son (29:34). Dinah’s brief introduction anticipates the episode to come in chapter 34.
- Gen. 30:22-27** HaShem’s focuses on Rakhel, resulting in his acting to open her womb (not mandrakes!). Two verbs provide the basis for Yosef’s (יוֹסֵף) name. First, looking backward at anguish, “to take away” (*asaf* - אָסַף), and second, looking forward to joy, “to add” (yosef - יוֹסֵף). The birth narrative opened with the divine name, HaShem (29:31). With the announcement of Yosef’s birth, it now closes with the same (30:24). Ya’aqov brought no assets into marriage but worked to pay a “bride-price.” His obligations to Lavan are now complete. In accordance with the promise at Beit’el (Ge. 28:15), it is now time for Ya’aqov to head home, which he formally requests. He has most certainly been a major contributor to the prosperity of Lavan, and both are quite aware. Ya’aqov was not an indentured servant – but paying off a “bride price.” Ya’aqov is

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due a filling-of-the-hands as he departs (De. 15:13-14). He was not an ordinary slave, so his children are his (Ex. 21:2-4).

4. **Gen. 30:28-36** Lavan treats Ya'akov's request as opening negotiations for future service. He is not looking for regular wages, but assets that can sustain his household. Lavan accepts Ya'akov's proposal, believing he is getting a bargain. Ya'akov outwits him over the next six years (Ge. 31:41)
5. **Gen. 30:37-43** Ya'akov's technique reflects either ancient husbandry practices, or the sovereignty of HaShem.
6. **Gen. 31:1-9** Lavan's sons resort to exaggeration, believing that people become rich by taking from others, rather than seeking to learn from their success and emulate them. Ya'akov calls a family pow-wow (Rakhel first), expressing his integrity, concern for his wives, and prosperity from God.
7. **Gen. 31:10-16** Ya'akov credits his success to inspiration from HaShem, and now a call to return home. His wives agree – they have no future with Lavan, no present status, and a bitter past.

Thought Focus

I want what you have: Romantic love is a mysterious thing – it can't be manipulated, forced or bought. Leah wanted what Rakhel had – the love of Ya'akov. Rakhel wanted what Leah had – the love of a son. One of the keys to happiness and satisfaction in life is to accept reality.

Daily Devotional questions for reflection and application

1. (28:10) Two locations are stated here - a "from" and a "to." Have you crossed over "from" death "to" life (Joh 5:24)? Are you living in the freedom of Messiah? (1Pe 2:9, Joh 9:25, 1Co 6:11, Rom 14:17)
2. (29:1) This verse literally says that Ya'akov "lifted his feet" and walked, suggesting enthusiasm and determination. Are you excited to get to your next destination? (Isa 30:21, 1Co 9:24, Mat 28:19)
3. (29:18) Ya'akov served 14 years for Rachel. How committed are you to walk out your path to achieve God's purpose in your life? (Luk 9:51, Phi 2:8 Heb 12:2)
4. (30:25) Despite how he was treated, Ya'akov asks permission to leave. Is it time for you to move on in some aspect of life? How will you decide? How will you handle the change? (Jer 29:11, Heb 13:17, Pro 12:15, 1Co 14:33)
5. (30:28) Integrity in life and business is important. Torah insists that wages be paid promptly. (Deu 24:15, Jam 4:5). How are your accounts with others? With God? (Mal 3:5, Mat 20:1-16)
6. (31:18) In spite of Lavan's double-dealing and dishonesty, Ya'akov leaves with much. How do you view your possessions and how you acquired them? (Luk 12:16-21, Luk 18:29-30, Mat 6:19-21)
7. (31:43) Lavan's claims are ridiculous. Even so, in God's economy He owns everything, and we are only stewards. How tightly do you hold on to that which God entrusts to you? (Ecc 5:15, Job 1:21, Lev 25:23, Mat 5:40,42, 16:24-26, Jam 5:1-3, Heb 11:8-10)