

**Torah:** B’resheet (Genesis) 28:10-32:3(2)  
**Haftarah:** Hoshea (Hosea) 12:13(12)-14:10(9)  
**B’rit Hadashah:** Yochanon (John) 1:43-51

	year 1 28:10-30:13	year2 30:14-31:16	year 3 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 Ya’aqov arose and lifted his children / and his wives on the camels	<i>va’yáqom Ya’aqov va’yisa’ et-banayv ve’et-nashayv al-hag’maliym</i>	וַיָּקָם יַעֲקֹב וַיִּשָּׂא אֶת־בָּנָיו וְאֶת־נָשָׁיו עַל־הַגְּמָלוֹת׃
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This action-packed portion focuses upon the journey of Ya’aqov beginning with his departure from home, his dream of The Ladder, the years of his service to Lavan to marry Leah and Rakhel, the birth of 11 of his 12 sons (some by Leah and Rakhel's handmaidens) and his daughter Dinah, and the conflict of his departure from his father-in-law.

The haftarah speaks of Ya’aqov’s journey and his service keeping sheep to earn a wife, which connects to this Torah portion that tells that story.

**Aliyah Highlights**

- Gen. 31:17-21 Ya’aqov’s flight:** Ya’aqov loads up his camels (a sign of wealth) and takes all that is rightfully his. Rakhel steals Lavan’s idols. This is combined with Ya’aqov’s “flight” – literally, he “stole” Lavan’s heart – during sheep-shearing season. Lavan, the heartless has been beaten at his own game. Just as Ya’aqov “arose” and “fled” (Ge. 27:43) from his father’s home to shelter with Lavan, so now he “flees” by “arising” from Lavan to return to his father.
- Gen. 31:22-24 Lavan’s pursuit:** Symbolic numbers: 3 can represent completion of a significant spiritual transition time through HaShem’s interaction with humanity. 7 points to divine completion, perfection, and sanctification, especially through covenantal relationship. Lavan’s night dream is similar to warnings given to Avimelekh (Ge. 20:3) and Bil’am (Nu. 22:9-12, 20). He is warned not to say anything at all (a merism) to Ya’aqov.
- Gen. 31:25-35** Ya’aqov “drove in his tent (pegs),” as does Lavan with Ya’aqov in sight – separate but adjacent. Lavan speaks first in irony: “what have you done?” (echos of Ge. 4:10, 12:18, 26:10, and 29:25), inferring Ya’aqov coercing his daughters. The misleader complains of being misled. Feigning empathy, he then levels the serious and real charge: the theft (*ganav* – גָּנַב) of his gods. Ya’aqov retorts his fear of forceful kidnap (*gazel* – גָּזַל) by Lavan, justifying his flight, and offers the death penalty and the invitation to search (see also Ge. 44:12), certain that he has been careful to separate what is his. Only Ya’aqov, Leah and Rakhel are mentioned specifically in the search, highlighting the first confrontation between Ya’aqov and Lavan.
- Gen. 31:36-42** Twenty years of abuse, mistreatment and suppressed anger spew forth from Ya’aqov in righteous indignation. Lavan now stands as the accused before a tribunal of kinsmen from both sides. Ya’aqov does not embellish or claim superior virtue on his part, rather accuses Lavan of unscrupulous violation of common customs and law (e.g. Ex. 22:12). He finishes his response by calling out Lavan on his pretense of normal generosity. The Fear of Isaac (*pakhad Yitz’khaq* – פַּחַד יִצְחָק) references Lavan’s recognition of the God of Ya’aqov’s father (v.29).

## Parashah 7-3 Vayetze / נצַיַז

- 5. Gen. 31:43-45** Lavan does not apologize but offers empty rhetoric (“All the same, were it not for me, you’d still be a nobody! I’d never harm my own kids!”). He does concede that Ya’aqov is now a separate and independent clan, even granting equal status: two standing stones, two meals, two named places, two recognitions/names of deity, two provisions (family issues / political issues).
- 6. Gen. 31:46-50** Physical markers and witnesses on both sides form a treaty with a covenant meal, appealing to HaShem as the overseeing authority.
- 7. Gen. 31:51-32:3** The stone monuments secondarily were to serve as boundary markers. (This would be an area of dispute in monarchy times - 1Ki. 22:3, 2Ki 9:14, 1Ch. 7:14) Ethnic diversity is represented in the treaty, but the narrative comment notes the significance of Ya’aqov ignoring Lavan’s statement, invoking only “the One Yitz’khaq feared.” The entire treaty process is sealed with sacrifice and a meal. The next morning, Ya’aqov and Lavan part ways, finally severing the Mesopotamia connection. Angels appear to Ya’aqov as he returns to the land.

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### Thought Focus

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**Why did Rakhel steal her father’s idols?** The text does not say. Lavan’s “idols” (*terafim* – תִּרְפִּימַי) represent what is rightfully his, which would be passed on as a birthright or inheritance. Rakhel’s thievery, clearly identified as an illegal act, seems to conflict with her words in v. 14. Commentators say that her purpose may have been to secure Ya’aqov’s title to Lavan’s inheritance, or at least clan leadership and/or spiritual power. More likely, she never truly let go of her family’s polytheistic heritage and depended on them for divination or protection. At the end, Rakhel outsmarts Lavan, in a hidden defiling act – yet in his very presence (Le. 15:19-24) - in retribution for his fraudulent treatment perpetrated on what was supposed to be her wedding day. Her sad future circumstances show there are always consequences for our actions.

**Angels at Makhanayim (מַכְּחַנַיִם):** As Ya’aqov returns to the land, the angels of God (*mal’akey Elohiym* – מַלְאָכֵי אֱלֹהִים) appear to him with no apparent role in the story – not even a specific revelation – just as they did when he left (28:12). Perhaps their presence is to infer protection as described in Ps. 91:9-11 – “for He will order his angels to guard you wherever you go...” In any case, the angelic appearances form bookends for this narrative unit in the larger story of the patriarchs.

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### Daily Devotional questions for reflection and application

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- (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)
- (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)
- (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)
- (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)
- (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)
- (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)
- (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)