

# Sheepfold Gleanings

## VAYEITZEI / AND HE DEPARTED

Genesis 28:10 to 32:3  
Hosea 11:7 to 12:12  
John 1:43-51

### Jacob's Life: Part Two

Last week closed with Jacob fleeing his brother's wrath that forced him to leave his family. As he journeyed from Beersheba to relatives east in Haran, he reached a "certain place" and stopped for the evening. Taking one of the *stones* as a pillow, he laid down to sleep.

Would you use a stone to fall asleep on? This stone proved to be more than just a rock. As Jacob slept on it, YHVH gave him a dream with divine purpose. Jacob saw a ladder resting on the earth reaching heavenward with angels, messengers of YHVH, that ascended and descended on it (Genesis 28:10-12; John 1:51).

**1 Corinthians 10:3-4** "They all ate the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, *and that Rock was Yeshua.*"

Jacob then saw YHVH *standing* above it. He *spoke* to Jacob saying, "I am YHVH the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. 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."

When Jacob awoke he said, "Surely YHVH is in this place, and I did not know it. How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of YHVH, and this is the gate of heaven!"

Seeing the ladder and the angels, Jacob was given a rare glimpse into the heart of YHVH. YHVH confirmed the blessing of the firstborn upon Jacob, the Covenant of Abraham. Jacob realized the responsibility and personal response this invoked and praised YHVH, exclaiming that the place was indeed the house of YHVH and the gate of heaven!

### The Stone

The Stone is the title for YHVH (Genesis 49:24). Stone is also the title of the Messiah (Isaiah 28:16). Correspondingly, rock refers to Yeshua; He is the Rock that gives Life. As the children of Israel were taken out of Egypt and led into the wilderness, the Stone provided "living water." The Word of YHVH was written on stone tablets and the Messiah is the carrier and embodiment of this Word. YHVH's Word is the foundation we are to build our lives on. This Stone (Messiah, the carrier of YHVH's Word, Torah) the builders (called shepherds, pastors, teachers and rabbis) rejected. It was this rejected Word that became the *capstone* or *corner stone*. The Stone or Word (Yeshua) causes men to stumble and makes them fall because the Word shows up the condition

of man's hearts and disobedience of their ways (Genesis 49:24; Isaiah 28:16; 1 Corinthians 10:4; 2 Corinthians 3:3; Ephesians 2:20; 1 Peter 2:6-8).

**Matthew 16:18-19** "Yeshua said, 'And I tell you that you are Peter (which means *rock*), and on this rock I will build my *ekklesia* (YHVH's people), and the gates of Hades will not prove stronger than it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.'"

Not that man would be built upon, but that Yeshua in man was given the discernment and understanding to the *realms* at work in YHVH's universe, along with the Spirit directed qualities or principalities (613) called *keys* to the Kingdom of Heaven. Living and serving in Yeshua's Kingdom means to understand the difference between the clean and unclean realms, holy and unholy realms and about keeping His Sabbaths, moedim/Feast days and Rosh Chodesh/New Moon celebrations. The King of this Kingdom is Yeshua. He is called *The Rock*. To learn about these keys or realms of the Kingdom we must look into the Book He authored, the Word YHVH gave His people through Moses. A child of YHVH walking in obedience to the realms, or teaching and instruction, of the King's Kingdom is the Hebrew understanding of being *in Torah*. According to Scripture, if we walk in obedience to His Word, this *binds* the enemy. If we miss the mark or walk outside the King's realms or Kingdom written about in Torah, this *looses* the enemy, which then causes difficulties in our lives. Obedience to YHVH's Word brings the blessings. Peter was appointed overseer or judge by Yeshua to teach and guide the people in the realms of the Kingdom after Yeshua left. The rock Yeshua was pointing to in the Scripture "on *this rock* I will build my *ekklesia*" was the Word Himself that would guide Peter. Yeshua has given us the "KEYS" to build our house upon the Rock, for the "building plans" are written about in the Torah and confirmed in the Brit Chadasha/New Testament (Ezekiel 43:10-12; Matthew 7:24-27; 1 Corinthians 3:9-17).

This is the difference between the two trees: The Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. One brings life and the other brings death. One is life in the Spirit of YHVH and the other is life in the sinful nature. "The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, envy and drunkenness. Therefore, lay aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking" (Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Peter 2:1).

If, as believers in Yeshua, we still have these characteristics operating in our lives, this reveals we have not allowed Messiah to rule and reign in our lives or chosen to obey His Word. It shows we have rejected His Word to us. These characteristics belong to the realms that bring death (The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil). We are told to take these unclean characteristics and behaviors off us by taking responsibility for these sins, repenting and allowing the Ruach HaKodesh to circumcise our hearts. We are to put on that which brings life (The Tree of Life). When we live and walk in the realm of life, the fruit of the Spirit operating in our lives will evidence it. The characteristics of Spirit Life in us is "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Yeshua have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and

envying each other” (Galatians 5:22-26). By this fruit we know we truly have surrendered our life to Yeshua.

**Hebrews 6:4-6** “For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come (from the Tree of Life), if they fall away (eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil), to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.”

Being *in* Messiah (Yeshua) means we are obedient to walking in His Word. Being *in* Yeshua also means we, too, are called living stones. As Scripture says, “Coming to Him as to a Living Stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by YHVH and precious, we also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to YHVH through Messiah Yeshua. We are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that we may proclaim the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. In whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in YHVH in whom we also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit” (1 Peter 2:4-5, 9; Ephesians 2:21-22).

**Isaiah 51:1** "Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness and who seek YHVH: Look to the *rock* from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were hewn.”

Christians have stumbled over the *written* Torah, while the Jews have stumbled over the *Living* Torah. Believers are coming to know and understand *whom* Torah is, and when we do we will become *one new man* in Him (Yeshua) as the prophets have declared.

**Ephesians 2:13-20** “But now in Yeshua Messiah you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Yeshua. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two (groups: House of Judah and the House of Israel), thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of YHVH, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Yeshua, Messiah Himself being the chief cornerstone.”

### **The Ladder**

Yeshua is the ladder between heaven and earth. The ladder to heaven that Jacob saw had one end planted, established in earth, with its top or head reaching to heaven. This is a picture of the Messiah, the flesh of YHVH, as Yeshua himself declared to his disciples, “Verily, verily, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of Elohim ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.” Therefore the “ladder” between heaven and earth is the body of Messiah, a picture of His sacrifice on our behalf at His crucifixion when He was suspended between heaven and earth (John 1: 1, 14, 43-51; Galatians 3:13).

The ladder represents the Tree of Life. As the Tree of Life, Yeshua is the head of the assembly of believers (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 5:23). The Jewish sages say that Jacob's ladder is Torah. The Torah is the pathway of righteousness leading to a deeper walk with YHVH in his heavenly kingdom (Matthew 19:16-19). The rabbis say that the ladder (Torah) is a bridge from heaven to earth. In the same way, Yeshua, the Living Torah or the Word of YHVH made flesh, is the Way to the Father, the Way of Salvation, the Source of Eternal Life, and the One who redeems man and reconciles him to the Father through His Body, "the Ladder".

As YHVH stood above the ladder to heaven, He pronounced the blessing of Abraham onto Jacob. Jacob and his descendants would indeed receive the land he was laying on. His descendants would be so numerous they would stretch out to the west, east, north and south. All people on earth would be blessed through Jacob's offspring. YHVH promised to always watch over the people of Jacob wherever they were and to bring them back to the promised land. This is a promise for us today. Those who follow the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will never be forsaken or neglected. He will watch over us until He has fulfilled His promise to us! (Genesis 28:13-15)

We are told in Hebrews that Jacob never received this promise in his lifetime, nor did Abraham or Isaac. "All these people were still living by *faith* when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth" (Hebrews 11:13). So what was YHVH saying to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Who are the promised children of the patriarchs? Where are the children who received the Covenant of Promise? "If you belong to Yeshua, then you are Abraham's seed (physical), and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29). Those who "believe" in the Messiah are the heirs of the Covenant of Promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Galatians 3:7). This word spoken to Jacob spanned many generations to this present day and beyond. We are the promised seed; we are the ones spoken about to Jacob those many generations ago. What an awesome inheritance and responsibility we all carry as heirs according to the Covenant (Ephesians 1:3-14).

### **The Door**

When Jacob awoke from his dream he was awe-struck and declared, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God. This is the gate of Heaven" (Genesis 28:17). It is believed that Jacob woke from his dream in the land of Mount Moriah, the same place Abraham offered up Isaac and the same place where the Messiah died. This was the place where heaven and earth met. Yeshua is the door; He is the access between heaven and earth (Ephesians 2:18). Yeshua answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).

**Genesis 28:20-22** After receiving the Covenant of YHVH, Jacob took the stone and poured oil on it, vowing, "*IF* YHVH will be with me and will watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear so that I return safely to my father's house, then YHVH will be my Elohim. This stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God's house, and of ALL that you give me I will give you a tenth."

Whenever the Covenant was initiated or reconfirmed the tithe was also present, as we see with Abraham and Melchizedek. The tithe is eternal and is a glimpse of life in the Garden. The

Garden represented YHVH's house which man enjoyed before the fall. Jacob came across YHVH's house that evening. He knew he had been in a place where heaven and earth met; therefore when the covenant was confirmed to him, as it was with Abraham, Jacob gave the tithe as his *sacred portion*, in obedience to the holiness of the word spoken to him (Genesis 14:18-20). In Hebrew tradition the thought is that this evening had fallen on a Sabbath or a moedim/Feast of YHVH.

The House of YHVH, the tithe and Sabbath are eternal and not to be separated. When the House of YHVH and the Sabbath are present, the service of YHVH's House is set in motion or activated in our hearts when we walk in the redemptive process laid out in His Word. Jacob would have learned this from his father Isaac and his grandfather Abraham, who paid tithes to Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18). Wherever the House of YHVH is, the tithe is paid. Jacob knew the principle of the tithe and gave it willingly, as he was reaching for a righteousness and holiness not his own but that which came from allowing Yeshua to work obedience in him to YHVH's Word. From that time on, blessings flowed to Jacob. Jacob was walking in the truth and gave the sacred portion over to YHVH. May we be a people who, when proclaiming Yeshua and walking in the Renewed Covenant by taking of the elements of the bread and wine, place our tithe before Yeshua our High Priest, bringing glory to His Name (Hebrews 7:1-10).

### **Genesis 29 Jacob Arrives in Paddan Aram**

Jacob continued his long journey to Haran where his mother Rebekah came from and his uncle Laban, Rebekah's brother, lived. There, Jacob saw a well. When we see wells in Scripture, we know a prophetic story is about to unfold. Wells represent the *Ruach*/Holy Spirit, and "the field" usually represents the wilderness. Three flocks of sheep were lying near this well waiting to be watered. A stone was over the mouth of it preventing the sheep from accessing the water. As Jacob approached the shepherds of the flocks he asked them where they were from. "Haran," they answered. Hearing this Jacob knew he had reached his destination and was now about to walk into his assignment. He continued by asking them if they knew Laban, Nahor's grandson. They knew Laban and he was well.

At this point, Laban's daughter Rachel approached the well *with the sheep*. The meaning of Rachel's name (TWOT #2145a) is ewe or sheep. Isaiah 53:7 "As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he (Messiah) opened not his mouth." The Hebrew word for sheep used in this scripture is the root of the feminine name Rachel and points to the crucifixion of Yeshua (Mark 15:3-5).

Jacob was not distracted by her approach but was focused on the care of the three flocks of sheep waiting by the well in the heat of the day. Jacob said to the three shepherds, "Look, the sun is still high; it is not time for the flocks to be gathered. Water the sheep and take them back to pasture." We can see Jacob's great concern for these sheep. The three flocks can be said to represent the three tribes of the southern kingdom, the House of Judah, consisting of the tribe of Benjamin, the half tribe of Levi and the tribe of Judah. They are all waiting for the living water, the Messiah. The guides over these sheep have them wait in the hottest time of the day when they should be in the cool pasture, gleaning in the field (Torah). The sheep are parched (as they have no life-sustaining food or water) in this heat and are not able to help themselves. Instead they are dependant on others for their survival, thus making them weak.

The shepherds answer Jacob, “We can’t water the sheep until all the flocks are gathered and the stone has been rolled away from the mouth of the well. Then we will water the sheep.” This is prophetic of all twelve tribes uniting to become one in the Father’s hand. Even still, the shepherds have been set in their ways or their religious order, not willing to change regardless of the needs of the sheep they were put in charge of. House of Judah was given the responsibility to teach Torah to the sheep until the Messiah came (Genesis 49:10). The sheep of the House of Judah could not see the Messiah’s coming, as they have lacked proper care and guidance.

**Hosea 4:6** “My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests; because you have ignored the law of your God (by not teaching it to YHVH’s children), I also will ignore your children.”

As Jacob shared with them under the hot noonday sun, Rachel brought her *Father’s sheep* to the well. As soon as Jacob saw Rachel approach the well, he walked over and *rolled the stone away*, watering the sheep himself (a picture of Yeshua, the Messiah’s resurrection life for all). Rachel’s sheep represent the ten lost or “*hidden*” tribes of Israel called the Northern Kingdom or the House of Israel. The stone covering the well represented the heart of stone resisting the living water. Rolling the stone away from the tomb released the life-giving source, Yeshua. Note: It was Rachel’s sheep that were the first to receive this life-giving source.

There are two groups of sheep here. The one group waiting at the well (House of Judah) and the sheep Rachel brought to the well (House of Israel). Rachel brought YHVH’s sheep. They are the other sheep Yeshua spoke of when He said, “I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd” (John 10:16 Ezekiel 37:15-28).

At Yeshua’s tomb “when the Sabbath was past, (*three* women) Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. And they said among themselves, ‘Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?’ But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away” (Mark 16:1).

In the story of Jacob, he represents Yeshua who rolled the stone away from the tomb, revealing the Living Water (representing the Messiah) for His sheep.

Another picture of the rolled stone is in John 4:4-30 when Yeshua traveled through Samaria (the capital of the Northern Kingdom, representing the House of Israel, the other sheep) at the sixth hour (when the sun was highest and hottest) and approached a Samaritan woman at *Jacob’s well*. She represented the ten (hidden) tribes of the Northern Kingdom (Rachel’s sheep). Yeshua asked the woman for a drink of water, and then shared with her about living water.

She questioned Him where He would get this living water from when he did not have anything to draw deep from the well. Did He think He was greater than *her “father Jacob* who gave them the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds” (which represented all twelve tribes)? Yeshua told her all about herself and revealed that He was the source of the living water. He also told her of a time coming when worshippers would worship YHVH in *spirit and truth*. She, being the House of Israel, informed Him the Jews (House of Judah) were

waiting (the sheep waiting at the well) for the Messiah, when He would come and tell them everything. Yeshua said to the woman, “The one speaking to you is He.”

**Matthew 4:12-17** “When Yeshua heard that John had been put in prison, he returned to Galilee. Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali-- to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah: ‘Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, along the Jordan, Galilee of the Nations-- *the people living in darkness have seen a great light*; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned’ (Isaiah 9:1-2). From that time on Yeshua began to preach, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near’” (Luke 1:78-79).

At the time of Yeshua’s crucifixion, darkness came over the whole land from the *sixth hour* to the ninth hour. At this point, “knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Yeshua said, ‘*I am thirsty.*’ When he had received the *drink*, Jesus said, ‘It is finished.’ With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.” Later, when the soldiers came to remove the bodies, “one of the soldiers pierced Yeshua’s side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of *blood and water* (representing *Spirit and Truth*)” (Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44-45; John 19:28-34).

When Jacob watered Rachel’s sheep, he kissed her and wept. This was prophetic of the Messiah Yeshua, who wept for his sheep before His death; His “kiss” of love to them would bring about His death (Luke 22:44).

Later Jacob shared his story with his uncle Laban, whom he stayed with and worked for a month’s time, working until wages were set between them. Jacob suggested working seven years for Laban’s younger daughter Rachel whom he had fallen in love with. Laban agreed to the terms, and when the time had come, Laban put on a feast for them. But when evening came, Laban took his older daughter Leah and gave her to Jacob.

Seven years represented a Sabbatical year cycle in Torah for the land. Every seven years the land must have a period of rest. They were not to reap the harvest from the land but live off whatever the land produced in that seventh year. During that year of rest, they were to cancel all debts. Any Hebrew man or woman who had agreed to worked for his or her freedom (from slavery or debt) would be freed on the seventh year and given a generous supply of flocks, as well as grain and wine from the land which he/she helped produce. This seemed to be the case with Jacob. In the Sabbatical year he came to claim what rightfully was his, and that was Rachel. Instead he was tricked, just as he had tricked Isaac seven years earlier.

This was also prophetic imagery of the assembly of believers who, in the seven thousand year plan of YHVH, return back to the beginning, back to Torah, to our roots and a redeemed lifestyle, back to the Garden. This image was given to us through a wedding; the last of the yet unfulfilled feasts of YHVH.

The Stone’s Edition Chumash traditionally describes Leah and Rachel as twins, just as Jacob and Esau were. The main difference between the two women, Scripture states, was Leah had “weak eyes” and Rachel was “lovely in form and beauty.” Character was being described here; weak

eyes in the Scriptures meant tender, soft, weak, delicate (of flesh), weak of heart; timid, and soft and gentle (of words). This was a reference to Leah being shy or timid, lacking self-confidence, compared to Rachel whose character and beauty was balanced inside and out.

Discovering he had been tricked, Jacob confronted Laban. They again made arrangements for Rachel, determining that Jacob must work another seven years. During that time Leah produced four sons for Jacob, while Rachel remained childless. The sons of Leah were Reuben, the firstborn, Simeon, Levi and Judah. Because of this, Rachel became very jealous of her sister.

Rachel took her frustration of being barren out on Jacob. Jacob pointed out the fault was not his but that it was YHVH who had not released children to her. Rachel offered her maidservant Bilhah to Jacob that she might act as a surrogate mother; Bilhah produced Dan and Naphtali for Rachel. Leah, seeing she had stopped having children, offered her maidservant Zilpah to surrogate more children for her. From Zilpah came two more sons, Gad and Asher. After more sisterly rivalry, Leah again had children, this time giving birth to Issachar and Zebulun, and later a daughter she named Dinah. “Then YHVH remembered Rachel; He listened to her and opened her womb. She became pregnant and gave birth to a son saying, ‘YHVH has taken away my disgrace.’ She named her firstborn Joseph, and said, ‘May YHVH add to me another son’” (Genesis 30:22-24).

This was the birthplace of the tribes of Israel. The two houses or kingdoms came from the wives of Jacob: Leah and Rachel. The jealousy that existed between the two sisters during this time has continued to this day between the two houses of Israel. When Leah and Rachel’s children recognize their identity and heritage in the Covenant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that has been renewed in the Messiah, then the jealousy will end and they will start acting as a united people (Ephesians 2:14).

“Ephraim's jealousy will vanish, and Judah's hostility will be cut off; Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah, nor Judah hostile toward Ephraim” (Isaiah 11:13).

After the birth of eleven sons Jacob asked Laban to let him return to his homeland. They discussed Jacob’s due wages and agreed that all the marked or colored sheep, lambs and goats would be Jacob’s. This is a reference to YHVH’s sheep that are a multi colored people! Jacob journeyed three days to separate his flocks from Laban’s. This is a reference for us as believers to be a separate and set-apart people. We are told not to mix clean with unclean or holy with unholy. Not only did Jacob care for his own sheep during this time but also Laban’s. Jacob’s flock increased by Jacob placing fresh branches from poplar, almond and plane trees, with white stripes on them made by peeling the bark and exposing the white inner wood of the branches, in all the watering troughs (Genesis 30:37). This is a reference to being obedient to Torah and the blessings that flow for obeying the Word of YHVH.

**Genesis 30:40** “Jacob set apart the young of the flock by themselves, but made the rest face the streaked and dark-colored animals that belonged to Laban. Thus he made separate flocks for himself and did not put them with Laban's animals.”

Jacob increased and grew exceedingly prosperous with an abundance of flocks, maidservants, menservants, camels and donkeys. Seeing this, Laban's household started talking slanderously against Jacob. Laban listened to them and his attitude toward Jacob changed. *Lashon hara* (gossip and slander) will always come against YHVH's children and their purpose and assignment. Our natural thought is that this would cause destruction among His people. However another outlook would be that this can *elevate* His people if they understand the challenges they are experiencing can be there for *empowerment* not failure. What should our thoughts be when we are faced with many kinds of trials? They should be that of pure joy, according to the author of James, in order that *perseverance* might finish its work in us to perfect us to maturity, not lacking anything (James 1:2-4). If in our hearts we choose to walk in His ways and persevere under challenges, the Ruach HaKodesh/Holy Spirit activates, working through us, as YHVH is faithful to His covenant over us. In turn, may we also be a people who never destroy others with our words, thoughts, behavior or deeds, but may they instead ever build others up. In so doing we will have LIFE and blessings!

With this change of attitude toward Jacob, YHVH commanded Jacob to leave Haran and go back to his native land. Rachel and Leah saw how their father had treated them like foreigners, showing no love or respect, wanting to sell them or use them as barter. Through Jacob's life example and kindness they saw the truth and learned to put their faith in YHVH (Genesis 31:18).

Do married couples leave their fathers and mothers today and cleave to each other? A healthy relationship with parents and in-laws is great and encouraged; but when a spouse has a co-dependent relationship with one or both parents or carried an inherited iniquity from past generations into the marriage, they have not truly left their parents and cleaved to their spouse. In a sense they have instead brought the parents into the marriage relationship. This brings contamination, encumbering the couple struggling to become one with each other. This can weaken the marriage and in some cases bring death to it. Looking through the parents' lenses or continuing to operate in generational curses can lead to an imbalanced, unhealthy marriage that will also involve any children in the marriage. While married couples need to have a healthy respect for their own parents, they also must get on with the business of creating their own identity, especially one that is directly focused on YHVH. He alone has the plan and purpose for our lives, and only He can guide us (Genesis 2:24).

Without saying good-bye to Laban, Jacob gathered up his family and left. While packing, Rachel stole her father's pagan household gods. She did not obey YHVH by leaving her family. In stealing her father's household gods she essentially took her father's identity with her. This act brought a curse upon her that eventually led to her death (Genesis 31:19).

The flocks went before them as they made their way to the land of Canaan and back to Jacob's father, Isaac. On their *third* day out Laban was told of their leaving. It took *seven* more days for him to catch up with them. Warned in a dream not to speak *lashon hara* (slander) of Jacob, Laban confronted Jacob for leaving without allowing him to say good-bye to his daughters and grandchildren. As the story unfolds we find what seemed more important to Laban were his idols which he swiftly inquired after. The impression is Laban held his gods in higher priority than his daughters. Jacob was so sure of the purity and loyalty of the camp that he told Laban if anyone had stolen Laban's gods, *the guilty party would not live*. Then he allowed Laban to search

through his tents. The vow Jacob pronounced was irrevocable; he had pronounced a curse over his beloved wife Rachel. He had no idea she had taken her father's idols. When Rachel married and left with her husband for Canaan, she did not leave her father but invited Laban and his pagan ways into the camp and into their marriage. These idols contaminated their marriage and eventually the whole community (Genesis 31:22-35).

Jacob stood up to Laban's dominance and intimidation. Laban in turn saw it was time for him to let Jacob and his family go. They made a covenant, and the next morning Laban kissed his family good-bye and returned home minus his gods (Genesis 31:36-55).

Jacob now set his sights on preparing to meet his brother Esau. Angels of YHVH met him. When he saw them he said, "This is the camp of YHVH!" So he named that place Mahanaim meaning *Two Camps*.

**Hosea 12:2-5** "YHVH has a charge to bring against Judah; he will punish Jacob according to his ways and repay him according to his deeds. In the womb he grasped his brother's heel; as a man he struggled with Elohim. He struggled with the angel and overcame him; he wept and begged for his favor. He found him at Bethel and talked with him there YHVH our Elohim Almighty, YHVH is his name of renown!"

*To Be Continued...*

Shabbat Shalom  
Carl and Julie Parker

**Reference:**

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